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SPECIAL ISSUE



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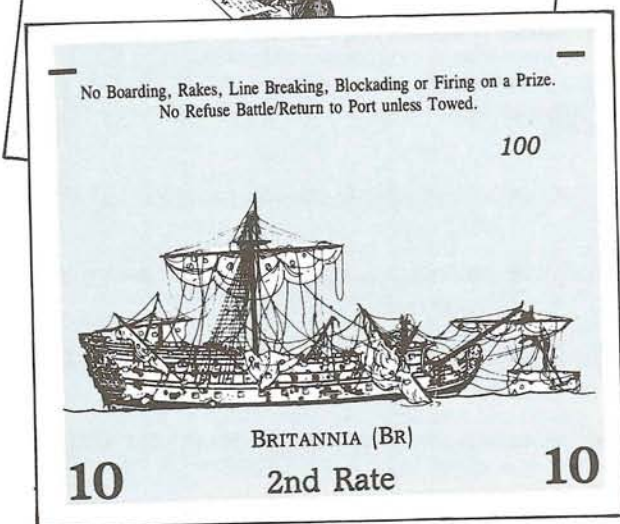
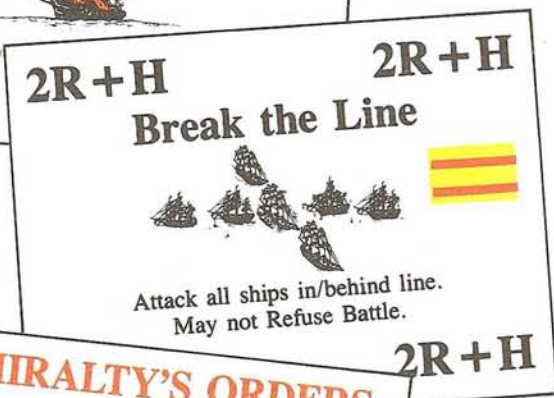
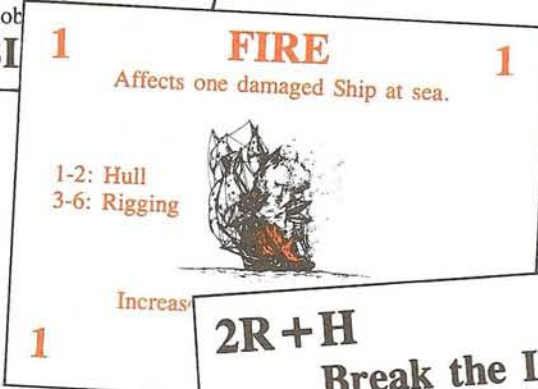
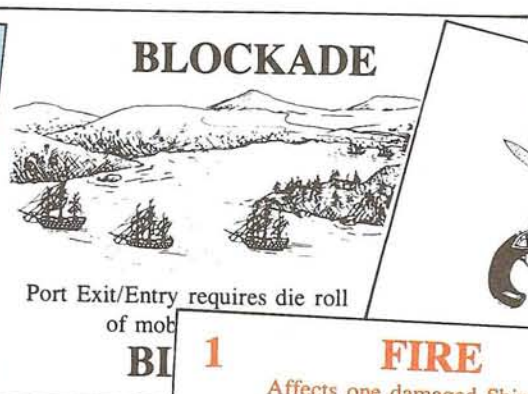
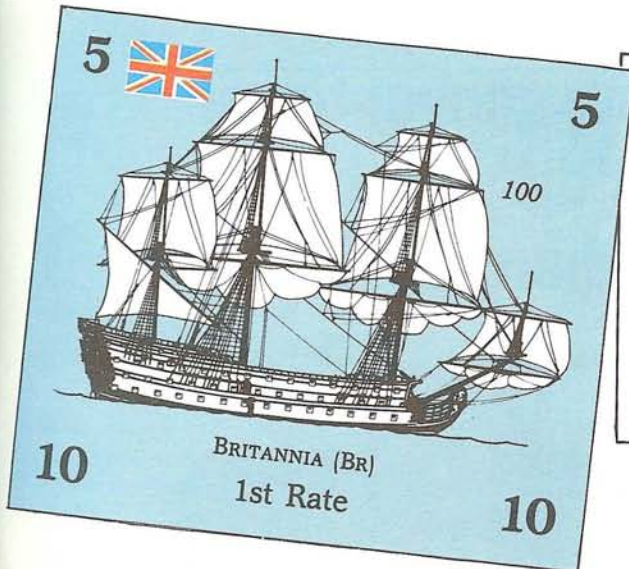
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ENEMY IN SIGHT is a fun little card game following in the best tradition of such Avalon Hill classics as NAVAL WAR and UP FRONT. Not as simple as the former, ENEMY IN SIGHT actually does blend visions of fiercely-contested struggles on the High Seas with an opportunity to test your skills of diplomacy, timing and intelligent card play. And while the ebb and flow of the variable hand capacity of each player is vaguely reminiscent of UP FRONT, its four-page rules folder is a far cry from the intimidating manual of that classic game of infantry combat. A ten-minute reading will enable anyone to instruct a table full of cutthroats in the art of ship demolition with no more than quick reference to the cards themselves.

Each player commands a fleet of six randomly-dealt ships at start and seeks to gain points by sinking or capturing the vessels of other players. Each is free to attack any of the others, but only the player who actually sinks or captures an enemy ship gets points. So losing a broadside at a tempting target may just make it easier for someone else to finish off your victim before you have the opportunity to do it yourself. It is also wise to keep in mind that folks tend to get upset when you ventilate their sails; before long you can expect lead flying in your direction. A bit under-stated perhaps, but this frenzied naval free-for-all is the basis of the game.

Ships are rated from 1st to 6th Rate depending on their size. The more guns a ship can carry, the more Broadside cards it can fire and the more damage it can take before it sinks. Broadside cards can be used to sink an enemy, dismast it, or used as Grape to help board it. A captured ship can be pressed into service in the captor's line or returned to port for double points. But scoring points is dangerous because it tends to unite the other players against a common enemy—you. Then too, taking a prize invites blockades of your port or the breaking of your line to prevent that prize from getting home. While you can seek refuge in Refuse Battle cards and the deep reserves of a large fleet for awhile, ultimately the combined guns of a united enemy will make any attempt to win the game a hazardous affair, because regardless of the power of your fleet, you will have only one opportunity to fire per turn while your opponents can mass several times your attack opportunities. Therein lies the trick—to convince them that their best interest lies in making driftwood of someone else. All of this is further influenced by a class of mandatory-play Action cards that not only rob players of their turn but beset their fleets with all manners of calamity.

The result is a hilarious, light-hearted, good time for all concerned with curses and epitaphs filling the air with the same frequency as the cannonballs that evoked them. ENEMY IN SIGHT is a great party ice-breaker and a welcome break from the rigors of serious simulation games.

ENEMY IN SIGHT is available at better game stores for \$12. If you can't find it, chastise your game store and order direct. Please add 10% for postage and handling (20% to Canada or Mexico, 30% overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax. For quick credit card purchases, call Toll Free 1-800-638-9292.



The Avalon Hill Game Company

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Play TAC AIR—the brand new conventional warfare game that examines the capabilities of the U.S. VII Corps in Southern Germany

Sometimes the best way to understand a large event is to focus on a small portion of it. **TAC AIR** highlights the possibilities in a hypothetical conventional war in Europe by examining only the forces and terrain located in the United States VII Corps area in southern Germany. This approach allows for the breakdown of the opposing forces into their component combat battalions, air defense batteries and aircraft flights. This scale also permits the representation of the often neglected "soft" command and logistics "tails" that play an essential yet vulnerable role in modern combat. While other modern era wargames abstract command, logistics, engineers, armor and combined arms tactics, this unique game system practically revels in these factors, although without overloading the game with details. Securing a victory in **TAC AIR** is much more than a matter of pushing units around to secure "high odds" attacks, just as real modern combat is much more than the advances or retreats of the headline-grabbing armored units. **TAC AIR** examines the elements that underlie the mechanized movements that appear on maps.

With the game's mixture of units of varying combat capabilities, winning requires a thoughtful and proper combination of forces. Employing ground combat organizations successfully calls for the proper allocation of all types of units. Armor and infantry are required for frontline combat, headquarters to command other ground units, supply columns to provide fuel and ammunition, artillery for support, engineers to create and clear obstacles, and mobile air defense batteries to throw a defensive "umbrella" over all. Tactical air units are the "kickers"—their ability or inability to provide essential air cover, support and reconnaissance can prove decisive to the units maneuvering below.

These "combined arms" game mechanics are provided by a deceptively simple and straightforward Turn sequence. This sequence of play provides for much player interaction, with few "dead" periods when only one side or the other is busy. Even while the other side is moving, players are watching for opportunities to engage with air defense units or deciding the best ways to employ artillery in coming maneuver combats.

Hits from combat are marked on ground units in the form of "disruptions", and it takes four of these to eliminate a unit, although lesser numbers can seriously degrade a unit's effectiveness (one disruption prevents attacking and two or more disruptions prevent movement and negate zones of control). At the start of a Turn, players may automatically remove a disruption from headquarters units and from units adjacent to their commanding headquarters units and also roll a die to attempt to remove disruptions from *supplied* units. *Supplied* artillery and air defense units can receive ammunition for the coming Turn. Determining proper chains of command and supply lines for these purposes is simplified by the colored symbol on every ground unit that shows its organization at a glance. Then, aircraft servicing is performed and available air units assigned to air control or a variety of air support missions for the coming Air Phase.

One side (usually the attacking Warsaw Pact) then moves its capable ground and helicopter units that are *in command*. These can fight "maneuver combats" versus enemy ground units after movement. Close attention must be paid to which side of a unit shows; the non-moving side is superior for defense and taking advantage of terrain, but the moving side is necessary for rapid movement and superior for attacking, although frighteningly vulnerable to the unfriendly attentions of roving attack helicopters and fighter-bombers. Engineers destroy and build bridges and create and clear obstacles in support of these moves. Attack helicopter and airmobile units are fast-moving and especially effective, but can be engaged by enemy air defense units as they are moved—nap of the earth flying and clever use of terrain are necessary to maneuver them safely into position.



As maneuver combats are announced, the attacking side can lay artillery barrages on the defenders and the defending side can reply with barrages on the attackers and counter-battery fire on the attacking artillery. This artillery fire is resolved *before* a maneuver combat and its effects can greatly influence that maneuver combat. The other side then follows suit by moving its ground and helicopter units, etc.

The "Air Phase" is next and really puts the tactical airpower into **TAC AIR**. Fast-moving air units are alternately moved during ten "Air Rounds" to perform the missions assigned to them earlier. Enemy air defense units may engage air units as they are moved. "Wild Weasel" units engaging in air defense suppression can turn the tables by attacking air defense units and electronic combat aircraft can degrade enemy air defense and air effectiveness. Air control units attempt to protect and intercept other air units by providing close escort and engaging in air-to-air combats by using radar guided missiles or engaging in classic dogfights. Air units with direct air support orders can use forward air controllers to attack front-line ground units, while those with interdiction orders seek to penetrate into enemy rear areas to attack headquarters, supply and reserve ground units and key bridges. These "iron haulers" may employ conventional bombs or stand-off munitions to accomplish their missions. Units with air reconnaissance missions attempt to fly through enemy airspace to spot targets for the coming Turn's interdiction missions. Paratroopers to be air dropped also enter the mapboard during Air Phases.

Look for further **TAC AIR** information in Vol. 25, No. 2 of *THE GENERAL* magazine, due out in early 1989, which will feature the game.

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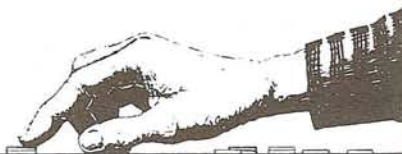
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SERIES REPLAY

MIDWAY

JAPANESE: Mick Uhl
AMERICANS: Donald Greenwood
COMMENTATOR: Harold Totten



0500 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I am attempting to blanket the entrance to the board. By searching the north half of the board first and the middle sector (row 4 and 5) on the second turn, I can assure that he doesn't doubleback on me undetected into the searched area. Thus, if not found he is in the very SE corner of the board. I have moved less than my maximum so that his first search will be fruitless.

MOVE: Fleet to H4A
SEARCHES: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A
OPERATIONS: Ready AC

JAPANESE COMMENTS: The best system of evasion is to analyze the best method of American search. For the Americans to have the best chance of finding me on Turn 2, they must call four consecutive areas from top to bottom, thus allowing the Japanese eight maximum on their second turn. This results in a 50% chance of discovery on the second turn. Any method other than this decreases the likelihood of American search success. I think the best defense against a contiguous search of this nature is to come on in either 3 or 5A. 4A is likely to be searched regardless of whether the American makes a northern or southern sweep. This gives me six areas to reach on Turn 2 and the American eight areas to search. Starting in the corners makes a group too easy to track once spotted. Fortunately, my opponent searched the northern half of the board. I thought he might as that was his pattern in the earlier Replay played in Vol. 10, No. 2. War-gamers are creatures of habit too and this formed the basis for my educated guess. I also think it is important for the Japanese to stay near the eastern edge to consolidate their forces. I am at my weakest on the first day. Joining battle now would be a mistake—a tragic one if the Americans get the first raid. I must await further aircraft cover in the form of the *Mikuma* group, and try to avoid a US attack before nightfall. If Don tries to hit me before night, the American fleet must be in C, which will give me a 50% chance of finding him that turn and launching a retaliatory raid. Even if I should find the Americans before nightfall I won't risk getting close enough to attack until I have consolidated my forces. My strategy then will be to stall at the edge of the board and await reinforcements before moving on Midway under cover of darkness.

MOVE: Fleet to ASF
OPERATIONS: Ready AC

0700 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I am moving down the center of the board in hopes that my opponent will ignore the obvious and search the northern or southern approaches first. I will then slip into the area he has just searched.

MOVE: Fleet to G4B
SEARCHES: 4A, 5A, 4B, 5B
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in A4I

Ah—my search has found him doubling back into the area I searched last turn. His infiltration tactics are much the same as my own, which leads me to think that perhaps my doubling back into a searched area is not a wise move after all.

JAPANESE COMMENTS:

MOVE: Fleet to A4I

He found me on his first search of the 2nd turn. I had hoped he'd try 4-7B but he guessed my strategy. He's still too far away to do too much with the information though.

0900 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I am assured of finding him this turn but am too far away to launch a strike as we have agreed to outlaw kamikaze attacks. I assume he'll make for B4 or B5E to set me up for a shaking maneuver at 1100 so he can double back to meet the *Mikuma* cruiser force at 1500.

MOVE: Fleet to F4P
SEARCHES: 4B, 5B, 4A, 5A
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in 5BE

JAPANESE COMMENTS: My searches will be aimed at one area behind the area he can reach at maximum movement until 1700 when I will concentrate on C. This is to determine if he tries to evade my search by slowing down. I'll call C but not this turn, for to stay out of F now will force him to forfeit three zones of movement which guarantees my not being attacked today.

MOVE: Fleet to B5E
SEARCHES: F5, F6, F7

1100 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: My opponent searched 5-7F, but I get the feeling he expects me to backtrack there. I'll continue on course hoping that he duplicates his search pattern. Then I will move into 5F. My searches are predicted on cutting off the northern half of the board. I doubt whether he'll move into C yet as his searches cover enough area from where he is and to advance towards me without cruiser support would be foolhardy. Yet, if he moves back to A he won't be able to search F—so I'll concentrate my search on B.

MOVE: Fleet to F4D
SEARCHES: 5B, 4B, 6B
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in B6B

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I have nine areas to move to. He can't afford to lose me in C within striking range so he should call 4-6C. I think he'll avoid A as that can always be searched again when *Mikuma* comes on. I will stay in B which will give me the most options if found. I'll also be out of his range and close to the edge when reinforcements arrive. I'll search in F again, repeating call F5 in case he moves into an already called area. He must stay fairly centralized to ensure hitting all areas of the eastern edge on the first day, so I have outlawed the possibility of an extreme northern or southern penetration.

MOVE: Fleet to B6B
SEARCHES: F5, F4, F3
SIGHTINGS: Enemy Fleet in F4D

1300 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: Curses—I've been sighted. I knew I should have retreated to G but I hated to give up the chance of a first day raid. All

chances of that is gone now. I must attempt to hit without getting hit back. I will remaneuver for an attack tomorrow while trying to shadow his main fleet until the new groups come on. No doubt I'll find his fleet when the *Mikuma* force enters. I am switching the bombers from Midway to the *Enterprise* to increase my striking power. Hopefully, I'll catch him without CAP. My plan is now to lose myself—pick him up on the morrow—make him nervous while I keep him under surveillance and then attack with a good chance of escape. As for finding him—he has everything to lose by advancing. I don't think he'll take that risk so I'll search the rearward areas. If I don't find him he should be in 7A or B. If in C—so much the better—further away from his arriving cruisers, but I think he's too good a player to give me a shot at his carriers on the first day if it can be avoided.

MOVE: Fleet to F3G
SEARCH: B5, B6, A5, A6

JAPANESE COMMENTS: Now that I've found him, I've got a 50% chance of keeping him in view. Now is the time for good second-guessing. Will he move into E knowing that I will probably call that area, or stay in F? I will stick to the obvious and search E. Rather than withdraw, I will move into C so I can search F. Even if sighted, he can't do anything to me. He can't reach me from E3 or any F zone so a search of E5 and E6 is a must.

MOVE: Fleet to C6D
SEARCHES: E5, E4, E3

1500 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: My failure to sight him last turn doesn't really disturb me. I'll lay odds on finding him in 6-7A with the *Mikuma* group. Of course, if he has advanced and finds me, he could get in the first raid without retaliation, which would be the game in a nutshell. I don't think he'll take that gamble, though just to be sure I'll move out of his possible range. The trick now is to avoid being sighted. He probably figures I moved into E3 last time so I should be able to avoid his search and then start the game tomorrow. My search this time is based on securing the southern approaches to the *Mikuma* group. Sooner or later, I'm sure he'll combine the two forces.

MOVE: Fleet to F3B
SEARCHES: 4A, 5A, 6A, 7A
SIGHTINGS: 4 cruisers in A4F

JAPANESE COMMENTS: Now that he's lost sight of my CV's he'll probably try to locate them by finding the *Mikuma* group and hoping I join forces so I will wait to rendezvous at night. By delaying his eastward penetration I can still stay out of his striking range. I will repeat my search in the central E area, leaving him in F where he can do no harm.

MOVE: CV Fleet to B7B; CA Fleet to A4F
SEARCHES: E5, E4, E3

1700 June 3

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I am a bit worried now. If his carriers have advanced I am in a precarious position. An unreturned Jap raid at dusk would

end the game here and now. However, I still think he'll rendezvous with the cruisers and hence will track them. As for my move—I'm hoping he'll start to worry about the possibility of a southern penetration and will switch his searches there.

MOVE: Fleet to F2E
SEARCHES: 3B, 4B, 5B, 5A

JAPANESE COMMENTS: If the American lost me by moving to E3 two turns ago, he can hit my task force only if he is in D4 or D5. I'll base my search on that assumption.

MOVE: CV Fleet to A6F; CA Fleet to A4E
SEARCHES: D4, D5, E4

0500 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: It has been a poor day. I must try again to seek without being found. Failure to attack today may cost me the game as the enemy is growing much stronger. I'll ignore the enemy carriers and try to locate the *Atago* group, using the same tactics used yesterday to cut the board in half. Hopefully, the enemy is even more confused about my location than I am about his. During the night I steamed north hoping to skirt his air searches and come down behind him where I will track him until ready to strike.

MOVE: Fleet to DIE
SEARCHES: 4A, 5A, 6A, 7A
SIGHTING: Combined enemy fleet in A4F

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I've joined forces with all three groups during the night for optimum AA protection and will steam for Midway, searching in the D's because those are the only areas from where he can reach me.

MOVE: Combined Fleet to A4F
SEARCHES: D3, D4, D5

0700 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: As suspected the enemy has combined forces. I cannot slug it out with him now—he is too strong. I must shadow him until dusk, strike, and get away unobserved. He should not be too hard to track—Midway beckons him. I'll let him sail past me and maneuver behind him.

MOVE: Fleet to C1F
SEARCHES: 4B
SIGHTING: Enemy Fleet in B4E

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I was sighted immediately last turn but was not attacked. He is either out of range or waiting for me to commit myself to a raid on Midway.

MOVE: Fleet to B4E
SEARCHES: D3, D4, D5

My opponent has found me again. I think that he is trying to force me to commit my planes prematurely. Ha! It didn't work—neither of us wrote operations. He was bluffing.

0900 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: My opponent is no fool. He sent up no CAP last turn despite my faking a raid. We'll have to try his nerves some more. How long can he be observed without committing a CAP? Let's see how he reacts to being constantly under surveillance. I have four more turns to maneuver for the kill and if he's not climbing up a wall by then I'll turn in my swizzle stick. 1700 may be too obvious a time for the strike though. If I can't get him to commit his CAP by 1300, I'll strike at 1500 from an E zone, hoping that he saves his CAP for dusk and trusting to luck to outguess him on the following turn when he'll have one chance in three of finding me.

MOVE: Fleet to C1G
SEARCHES: C4, C5
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in C4D

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I can't avoid search indefinitely as he knows I must head for Midway.

I have no idea where he is, so my searches are random now. But I'll continue to search in central areas. Sneaking back into previously searched areas is a favorite trick of his.

MOVE: Fleet to C4D
SEARCHES: D4, F5, E3

Still haven't found him but he's got me again. Writing operations once more—this time I think it's for real. After two failures to get me airborne he probably thinks I won't go up until 1700 and can hit me now with loaded decks. I'm putting up full CAP and sending the bombers to bomb a vacant zone to get them off the decks.

1100 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: The plan is working thus far. I've faked his fighters into the air on the wrong turn. What's more important; he's informed me he is not rearming them for fear of an impending attack. I must now maneuver to an E zone five squares from his fleet on my 1500 turn. I've got him now if I don't let him off the hook.

MOVE: Fleet to C2E
SEARCHES: C5, C4, C3, B3
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in B3I

JAPANESE COMMENTS: He faked my planes into the air last turn so my carriers are stripped of fighter cover. I will not rearm my planes—it would give him too easy a shot at my carriers. I will alter course from Midway for a turn to try to lose him long enough to rearm my planes and move on to Midway. I must keep him under 15 points for Midway. Darn! He found me again with his last search and I still haven't located him. Time to forget distant searches and play my hunches nearby where they'll do me some good if I get lucky.

MOVE: Fleet to B3I
SEARCHES: G3, G4, G5

1300 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I'm probably pressing my luck too far. I should have attacked last turn, but his northern change of course has brought him too close to me. It cuts my escape route by two areas. I must try to get further away before striking but I can't let this opportunity pass. If night falls before I strike, I'll have let the game slip between my fingers. Luckily, he is afraid to rearm his planes. If he stays that timid and I find him I'll strike next turn from D2E.

MOVE: Fleet to C2F
SEARCHES: 3C, 4C
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in C4E

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I might as well forget about avoiding him. That change in course already cost me two points for Midway. He can hit me at any time. I will head straight for Midway and ready my planes during the night.

MOVE: Fleet to C4E
SEARCHES: D3, D4, D5

1500 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: My worst fears have been realized. He moved to the obvious C4E where I may not find him this turn. It is possible that he could move out of my range with a southern diagonal move, so I've had to alter course to H rather than E to insure the raid. He cannot strike back anyway because his planes are still unarmed. I think he believes I'll strike on the 1700 turn so there's a chance he'll stay on C4E in hopes of shaking me next turn.

MOVE: Fleet to D2H
SEARCHES: D4, D5
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in D5A
OPERATIONS: All bombers to D5A; Midway fighters to Enterprise at D2H

His fleet is too strong to do the kind of damage I would like. I want a heavy carrier to increase my

Neutral Commentary

THE OPENING ROUNDS

0500 June 3: The Japanese comments are very good. Don's search pattern is the best possible, with a 57% chance of finding the Japanese fleet on the first turn, and a 50% chance on the second and 44% on the third. An alternate search pattern along the lines A2-5 (57%), then A1-2, B1-2 (40%) with a 33% chance on the third turn is also good. Despite the fact, you're lessening your chances to find the Japanese fleet, it helps to avoid being a creature of habit.

0700 June 3: The American usually moves down the center of the board, as it gives them a better position. The reason is that if the American goes north and the Japanese south (or vice versa), he will not be in a good position to attack. I doubt he'll ignore the obvious.

1300 June 3: The American decides to lay back—and although it gives up a strike against the carriers at their weakest, it also prevents an early weakening of the American fleet. It also keeps the Japanese jumpy. The American can strike from E4, but the Japanese player is more aggressive than most, and he lays his carriers on the line. He still should have searched E4 for safety—even though the fear was unfounded.

1500 June 3: Rendezvous at right (considering the situation) is about the best idea. The Japanese move C6d to B7b is to move away from the American threat.

1700 June 3: The Japanese player continues to search to keep the CV's safe. Both players maneuvering clearly—especially the American who departs from safety occasionally to savor the element of surprise.

0700 June 4: Don is right. The only real hope for the American is to get away at night. The bluff of operations is great.

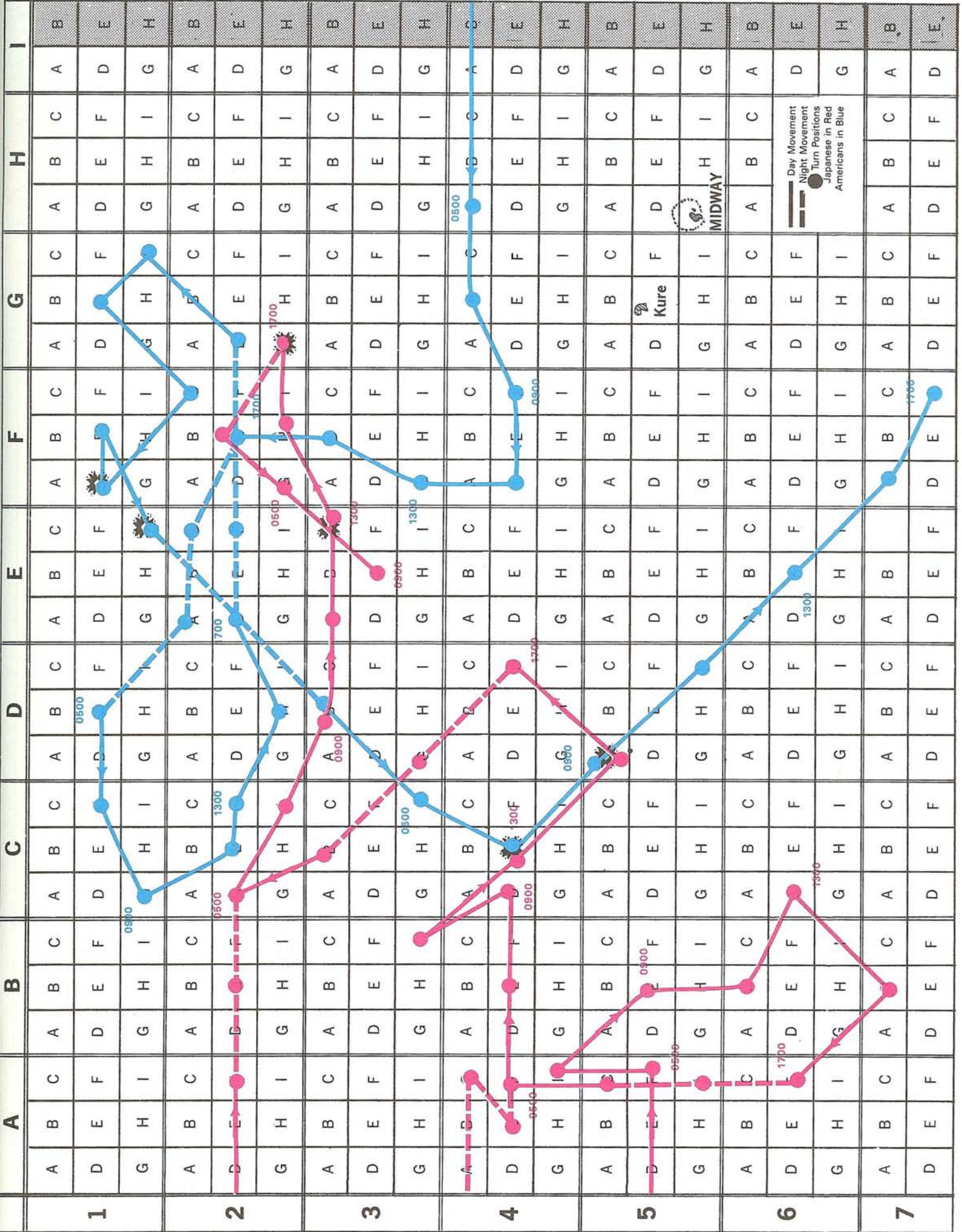
0900 June 4: Don's first sentence is *quite* accurate. But (as it turns out later), he's no tactician either.

1300 June 4: The American should have moved to C2b and attacked, as he has a 100% chance of finding the Japanese fleet. Next turn the American would be *very* safe with his fighters on CAP (move to C2e) and *no* Japanese fighters readied, so even if the American is found, he can't be attacked unless the Japanese are interested in kamikaze the easy way.

1500 June 4: The American was lucky and found the Japanese fleet. The move to D2h instead of D2e was smart. Unfortunately, Don is following his earlier strategic thought in leaving the board, when he should just lose himself in the night.

The sinking of the *Atago* is the single most decisive event in the game. It gives the American 20 points, four for the CA itself and 16 for Midway. The Japanese BB's are amazingly misplaced, and cannot bring their AA fire into play. The fleet formation is mediocre at best. The American does come away well, with the exception of the loss of 14 T's; the bulk of his torpedo force.

fighter superiority, but he's just too strong. He is forcing me to take the *Atago* rather than a carrier. As it is, I'll lose nearly all my valuable torpedo planes on anvil attacks to just get the *Atago* and *Zuiho*. I figure the *Atago* is worth 35 points though; four for the cruiser, 16 for holding Midway, and the 15 he won't get for taking Midway. The disadvantage, of course, is that he'll be tracking my fleet with no regard for Midway and a practically un-



touched air arm. My mission now is to get off the board, use my thin fighter edge to advantage, and hope he breaks up his fleet for surface combat, giving my surviving planes easy targets.

BATTLE RESULTS: The *Atago* sinks, as does the *Zuiho* with her complement of eight sqds. One hit each is registered on the *Sorya* and *Chikuma*, while the *Myoko* takes two. 14 torpedo sqds and six DB factors are lost in the attack.

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I still can't find him and he's had me in his sights for five turns. Seems he is staying out of range on purpose to hit the *Yamato* force when it comes on while my main fleet is out of range at Midway. I'll search directly north this time to test out that theory.

MOVE: Fleet to D5A
SEARCHES: B3, C3, D3

1700 June 4

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I am tempted to go hunting for the *Yamato* group which is due on this turn, but without torpedo planes I could do nothing against those battlewagons. The best I could do is knock off the *Hosho* and *Sendai*—hardly worth the risk. My mission is accomplished—the transports are sunk—I will attempt to withdraw. If he finds me he can hit me twice before I get off the board. My slim fighter edge will have to protect me.

MOVE: Fleet to E2D
SEARCHES: 2A, 3A, D4, 4A
SIGHTINGS: BB fleet in A2F; CV fleet in D4F
OPERATIONS: Ready aircraft

JAPANESE COMMENTS: Losing the *Atago* was a mistake on my part. I honestly forgot about its importance when I set up but it was either that or a heavy carrier with 21 squadrons. And every cloud has a silver lining. Now I can ignore Midway and concentrate on smashing his fleet which will mean high casualty, but effective, wave and anvil attacks. Also, I must insure losing few other ships. He already has a 26 point lead. I will try to consolidate my entire fleet and give him as few easy targets as possible. With his torpedo planes decimated, he can't do much damage unless I split my force into small groups.

MOVE: BB fleet to A2F; CV fleet to D4F
SEARCHES: C2, D2, E2
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in E2D
OPERATIONS: Ready aircraft

0500 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I actually hope he does attack this turn so I'll be free to leave the board.

MOVE: Fleet to G2D
SEARCHES: E2, F2, F3, F4
OPERATIONS: Full CAP

Have been sighted without locating the enemy. There is no excuse for an American being sighted immediately following a night turn. I may have been too cocky. If he fakes my CAP into the air this turn without attacking I may be in for it. Nevertheless: Full CAP.

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I have found him but due to concentrating on defense rather than offense, he is out of range. At last I know where he is and he can't leave until I've attacked him this side of Midway. There is plenty of time to catch up and deliver a mortal blow.

MOVE: Combined fleet to C2D
SEARCHES: G1, G2, G3
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet on G2D

0700 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: The situation is now extremely dangerous. He faked my CAP into the air last turn. I can only hope that he is out of range through some stroke of luck. I'll grasp at that chance and move northwest—increasing the range between us—but putting myself in a corner. If he delays his strike until he's right on top of me, I could

be annihilated. I regret my decision to leave the board now. The proper strategy would have been to steam south or east to lose myself during the night and stay hidden on the board for the duration of the game—content with a 24-0 victory. But that's hindsight.

MOVE: Fleet to G1I
SEARCH: E2, F2, F3, F4
OPERATIONS: Ready all aircraft

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I think he will stay where he is. He can't leave the board until I attack him. Now it's his turn to sweat. Unfortunately I am still out of range and he is rereading his planes so faking his CAP up last turn did no good.

MOVE: Fleet to C2I
SEARCH: F3, G3, G2

0900 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: My fighters are again armed for defense but I'm getting caught in a corner and can't leave the board. He has outsmarted me apparently and will not take my bait. He has no intention of attacking me until he is virtually on top of me. If he is unable to reestablish contact this turn, I'll doubleback into the board rather than be trapped against the edge. I fear a surface engagement but don't want to search too close for fear of giving away my position.

MOVE: Fleet to G1E
SEARCH: 3E, 3F, 3G, 3H

JAPANESE COMMENTS: None.

MOVE: Fleet to D3B
SEARCHES: E2, F2, G2

1100 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: Must try to get out of here—a chance surface engagement is becoming more and more likely. I'll try to "search" an escape route. Hopefully his failure to sight me is perplexing him also, although he certainly has a better grasp of the picture than I do at this point. I'll move into his last search zone—we've been doubling up on our searches so much that he may not repeat this time.

MOVE: Fleet to F2C
SEARCHES: E1, E2, E3
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in E3A

JAPANESE COMMENTS: Have lost him again. I must reestablish contact while I still know his general vicinity. If he makes it to another night turn without my launching an attack, I'll have lost.

MOVE: Fleet to E3A
SEARCHES: F3, H3, I3

1300 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: At last I know where he is—and all in one group—most convenient! I feel much better. He seems reluctant to break his force down into groups although my DB's can do nothing to his battleships. He seems to have lost me. There is a chance that I can slip by this turn.

MOVE: Fleet to F1D
SEARCHES: E2, E3
SIGHTINGS: Enemy fleet in E3C
OPERATIONS: All bombers to E3C; all fighters CAP over fleet

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I am trying to back him into a corner of the board before attacking. If he retreats too far west of Midway my attack on him will not free him to leave the board so I assume he is staying east of Midway and perhaps is growing apprehensive and trying to leave the area entirely. My searches will try to prevent that.

MOVE: Fleet to E3C
SEARCHES: F1, F2, F3
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in F1D
OPERATIONS: All aircraft to F1D

I've spotted him and farther from the edge than I had hoped. I must have been correct in assuming

he was getting nervous waiting for me to hem him in in the NW corner and was trying to break out. I am attacking with full fighter escort as I'm sure he'll have full CAP over his fleet. I will go after as many ships as I can, ignoring plane losses. By using anvil attacks for my torpedo planes and wave attacks for the divebombers I assure myself of crippling the American fleet. I may get as many as seven ships. Unless he sinks more of my vessels in his counter-raid, I should recapture the lead this turn for good.

BATTLE RESULTS: The Japanese attack is unstoppable but costly. *Yorktown* and *Enterprise* are swamped without resistance. The *Pensacola* and *Northampton* also go down to a series of 1-1 attacks. The *Hornet* barely escapes with four hits while the *Astoria* took two, and the *Atlanta* one. Both sides lose five fighters while the

Neutral Commentary

THE CONCLUSION

0500 June 5: To the American: Stay on the board and hide! The move west will keep him from attacking you before you leave the board.

0700 June 5: The American realizes his mistake, but now it's going to be tight, and his inability to locate the Jap fleet makes things look worse than they are.

1100 June 5: The American gets another chance to launch an unreturned attack but declines, hoping to conceal his position. He may regret it if the Japanese find him with the carrier he might have sunk this time.

1300 June 5: The Anvil attacks are very nasty. I do not use these usually, as the play balance swings heavily in favor of the Japanese player. The American fleet formation is good but perhaps not best in the light of the use of anvil/wave attacks. My hesitancy to criticize here is a personal weakness, as I have yet to do any theoretical work in the tactics of anvil/wave attacks.

The Japanese flees formation is not too bad, but with that many BB's you really have to be bad to make major mistakes. I personally like the "in-line" formation better, as I think the American could not have gotten any CV's attacking an in-line formation (that is, the CV's lined up in the center, BB's concentrated on both sides, the CA's on the periphery).

1700 June 5: The *Hornet's* survival is the key to the game. The odds for this are 25 in 144, or about 17% that the *Hornet* would survive. The remainder of the game is an instruction in "fog of war." The Japanese player looks a little foolish, but only because of what the American did. His wrong guesses will seal the fate of the game.

Final comments: All in all, quite a good game with lots of suspense. Both players exhibit a good deal of strategic virtuosity, despite tactical flaws. But then again, the tactical end of the game is more a mechanical procedure (and, as such, usually unexciting for most) whereas the strategic end of the game demands cleverness and innovative thinking. Always try to come up with a new twist: players who follow dogmatic strategy lose. In closing, I'd like to congratulate both players on a well fought, daring, and exciting game.

0500 June 6: The Japanese approach is all wrong! He is behind—he cannot play defense anymore. His air strength is too minimal to cause any real damage. His only chance is to force a surface engagement. The battleships should be out providing additional searches and looking for a chance engagement. The American divebombers can do nothing to even a solitary battleship.

Japanese lose 6 DB sqds and 31 torpedo factors. The Americans realizing they still have a carrier to go back to, are more conservative with their planes; concentrating on the previously hit *Soryu*. The *Soryu* sinks and additional hits are secured against the *Suzuya*, *Kumano*, and *Yura* at a cost of seven DB and the last three torpedo squadrons. The American fighters return to the *Hornet* while the bombers land at Midway, which in this game at least, will prove to be an unsinkable aircraft carrier and the American's salvation.

1500 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I am trapped. If he moves north and ship searches he must find me. At this point my obligation to stay on board is over, but if I head west he'll have two more cracks at me from the air and a chance at surface combat. The *Hornet* is bound to go down in the next raid and that will give him the lead. At present my lead is limited to the eight points I got for *Soryu* last turn. At least his torpedo planes have been decimated. Hopefully, as long as I can keep the *Hornet* afloat and in range of Midway with the enemy in between, I'll be able to take as heavy a toll of his ships as he'll be able to take of mine. At least they are preventing him from splintering into search groups.

MOVE: Fleet to F1E
SEARCH: 2F
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in F2H
OPERATIONS: Ready aircraft

JAPANESE COMMENTS: I can guarantee sighting him this turn by making a ship search with my fleet. I'll be able to hit him again next turn for sure, but it will be necessary to be more conservative with my planes now that he has an eight point lead. When I get the *Hornet* I'll be only two points ahead.

MOVE: Fleet to F2H
SEARCHES: E1, E2, F1, F2
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in F1E

1700 June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: He has me cut off. If I continue into the corner he can force me into a surface engagement which I'll lose. If he splits his force to ship search he is sure of finding me this time, but it is my only chance. I've altered course to the southeast—hoping to at least catch him moving the bulk of his force to the NW. I don't expect to get away but I do hope to put some distance between me and his battleships. The Midway force can still shuttle one more time before the *Hornet* sinks, so I'll have to try to sink some points this turn with wave attacks if he finds me.

MOVE: Fleet to E11
SEARCHES: G2, F2, E2
SIGHTING: CV fleet in G2G; Mutsu in E21; Yamato in F2H
OPERATIONS: Full CAP over fleet; bombers to G2G

JAPANESE COMMENTS: The question now is whether I should split my fleet into splinters or stay consolidated and risk losing him? I've opted for sending my battleships out on scouting missions. Without torpedo planes, there's little he can do to them.

MOVE: CV fleet to G2G; Mutsu to E21; Yamato to F2H
SEARCHES: E1, F1, G1, E2, F2, G2
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in E21
OPERATIONS: All aircraft to E21

All my efforts against the *Hornet* came up with a goose egg. I'm in trouble now. My next raid will have only a 50% chance of success whereas this one should have sunk the *Hornet* with average luck. To make matters worse he knocked off another cruiser and now leads by 11. I must attempt a surface engagement without losing any more ships to his dive-bombers, which are still strong.

BATTLE NOTES: The Japanese swarm over the *Hornet* but are unable to score a hit, losing their last torpedo planes and six more DB factors. The Americans, after seeing the *Hornet* survive, elect to conserve their planes and concentrate their efforts on the *Suzuya*—sinking her while losing six DB's. The bombers fly on to the *Hornet* while her protective CAP makes for Midway.

Night June 5

AMERICAN COMMENTS: I can't believe it. Terrific defense by the *Hornet* has kept me in the game. Had I known the *Hornet* would survive I'd have tried to damage the *Mutsu* instead of going after his main fleet. I now can conduct at least one more raid before the *Hornet* goes down and her chances of escape are increasing as his air strength declines. Moving to the east will soon take me out of range of Midway's protective cover however, so a straight eastward move is out of the question as long as the *Hornet* stays afloat. The spectre of surface combat looms very real now and there is little I can do to avoid it. Without torpedo planes, his battleships are safe. The *Mutsu* stands between me and a win. If I continue eastward while he parallels me he will eventually catch me in a corner again and, once out of range of Midway, he can split his forces with impunity. I will chance an encounter by moving southward. If he goes to G, as I suspect, it will force him to go south next turn and give me some breathing room. If he should climb to A, I'll have clear sailing to the SE. It's worth the gamble—against the *Mutsu* alone I can chance it. He'll have to keep me on the battleboard for three turns before he can sink anything if I maneuver correctly and I'll have a good chance of getting off by then.

MOVE: Fleet to E2D
OPERATIONS: Ready aircraft

JAPANESE COMMENTS: Further dividing my force for maximum night search. Dispatching the *Nagato* to cover 2G. I am trying to force a battle with *Mutsu* and *Yamato*; I imagine he'll stay out of range—but eventually he'll get caught in a corner.

MOVE: Yamato to E2F; Mutsu to E2A; Nagato to G2G; CV Fleet to F2E
SEARCHES: E2, F2, G2
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in E2D
OPERATIONS: Ready all aircraft

Night June 6

AMERICAN COMMENTS: It worked! He is north of me in A, having passed in the night. I should have clear sailing to the SE although I must look out for the *Yamato*. But I think I've broken free.

MOVE: D3B

JAPANESE COMMENTS: Can't let him get away, separating light cruisers for ship duty in the darkness. *Nagato* rejoins the fleet.

MOVE: Yamato to E2D; Mutsu to D2E; Fleet to F2E; Sendai to E11; Nagato to E3C
SEARCHES: D2, E2, E3, F2, E1

0500 June 6

AMERICAN COMMENTS: Still not out of the fire. Judging from his ship searches he's right on my heels with what appears to be the *Yamato*. I'll wait for this turn's recon to give me the overall picture before altering course.

MOVE: Fleet to C31
SEARCHES: D2, D3, D4, E4
SIGHTING: Mutsu in D2E
OPERATIONS: CAP over fleet; bombers to E3G

Have been sighted. My bombers can't strike at *Mutsu* so I'll take a blind stab at E3G just to get my bombers off the deck and safely on Midway. Once the *Hornet* goes, I'd rather have my bombers than the fighters.

JAPANESE COMMENTS: *Yamato* and *Nagara* rejoin the fleet in daylight to protect crippled ships from air attack. I've found the enemy and he has been unable to locate me. I'll try to fake his CAP into the air and strike next turn.

MOVE: Yamato to E3C; Mutsu to D2F; CV Fleet to E3C; Sendai moves off alone to the NW
SEARCHES: D3, C3
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in C31

0700 June 6

AMERICAN COMMENTS: He has faked my

CAP up in the air. I figured it was coming but had to use it while I had the chance. Regardless of air superiority, his attack will involve a 1-2 on the *Hornet*; he hasn't got enough planes for anything else. And if he misses this time he may be able to manage only a 1-3 next time.

MOVE: Fleet to C4E
SEARCHES: D3, D4, E4, F4
OPERATIONS: Ready all planes

JAPANESE COMMENTS: This may be my last chance to hit him. He can outrun me to the south now and I won't have enough planes to stop him. I need to sink both the *Hornet* and a cruiser but attacking both now would be foolhardy—it wouldn't increase my odds any, but would cost me more planes. I'll have to concentrate on the *Hornet* this turn and try to pick off a cruiser next time.

MOVE: CV fleet to E3E; Mutsu to C3C
SEARCHES: C3, C4, D3, D4
SIGHTING: Enemy fleet in C4E
OPERATIONS: All planes to C4E

BATTLE NOTES: The Japanese hit the *Hornet* with 16 DB factors against the American's concentrated AA fire; securing the needed hit to sink her on a 1-2 attack and losing four more squadrons.

0900 June 6

AMERICAN COMMENTS: Curse it! *Hornet* goes down to a 1-2 attack. No bother—I'm home free now—he hasn't enough planes to sink any more of my ships barring lucky 1-3's and I have no intention of getting into a surface combat. My fighters went in the drink last time, but no matter. I'll move to the SW now—my searches show he has nothing in that area.

MOVE: Fleet to D5A
SEARCHES: D4, E4, F4, F3

JAPANESE COMMENTS: With the *Hornet* sunk, I can afford to break into search groups. He can't attack me as long as I stay eight hexes from Midway, and even then I can put up enough CAP over the westward ships to blunt his attacks. I think he has sailed to the SE and will try to bottle him up in that corner.

At this point the American loses his pursuers for the last time—the Japanese having guessed wrong and vainly searching to the SE. The Americans steam back towards Midway and are never sighted again—content to escape with a narrow 37-36 win.



FAME & FORTUNE

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Once there was a mighty Galactic Empire, peopled by an uneasy alliance of intelligent species. Politicians schemed for power under a figurehead Emperor, while warlike species kept the peace and dozens of worlds traded in ideas, resources and products. Richest of all were the traders of interspecies luxury goods, who cleverly terraformed a world to produce these rare luxuries. Their planet (an unused Rim world named for a minor local deity of the softer pleasures) was a byword for wealth, luxury and shrewd trading; and



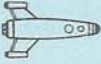



when the Empire finally collapsed into a dark age of savagery, the memory of the **MERCHANT OF VENUS** lived on, a legend of the shrewd trader who brought wonderful things from beyond the stars.

Now it is the 32nd century, two centuries after the fall of the First Galactic Empire, and a young, lusty civilization is bursting forth into the Galaxy with the newly-rediscovered star drive. It is the heyday of the independent interstellar merchant, a time when a few daring entrepreneurs can make fortunes and build trade empires.

In **MERCHANT OF VENUS** you play the part of such a merchant, exploring a cluster of stars to find what remains of the civilizations that once dwelt there. The map portrays a small cluster of star systems, where 14 intelligent species lie hidden in the ruins of the First Empire. Each species is the dominant culture of a different system, but after centuries of savagery, no one knows where each culture dwells. As you discover the cultures you can trade with them, buying and selling exotic trade goods and special devices. In your journeys you can also stumble across other remnants of the First Empire, including unique treasures and weapons that automatically attack passers-by.

MERCHANT OF VENUS is a game of luck and skill. You start with a small spaceship racing to accumulate wealth by transporting, trading and investing. You make money by buying trade goods from one culture and selling them to other cultures. You can use your profits to buy bigger spaceships, with high-speed drives and shields to protect you from the dangers you will meet! As your profits increase, you can build ports and factories to make trading more profitable. As the game progresses, profits will accelerate until one merchant accumulates enough wealth to win the game. The optional rules allow you to play a darker version of the game, in which the cluster is torn with strife and warfare. These rules introduce weapons, forts, swindles, revolts, piracy and the Rastur, an army of xenophobic megalomaniacs who are trying to conquer the Galaxy.

MERCHANT OF VENUS is a design with remarkable versatility. Few, if any, games can claim to be equally exciting whether played solitaire, head-to-head or with three, four, five or six players. Not only can this game claim that distinction, **MERCHANT OF VENUS** uses it to vary the strategy dramatically as the number of participants change.

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COMPLEXITY	VERY HIGH	SOLITAIRE SUITABILITY
	HIGH	
	MEDIUM	
	LOW	

- CONTENTS:**
- 1 22" x 24" mounted Mapboard
 - 394 die-cut, double laminated Playing Pieces
 - 12 Ship Cards
 - 6 Reference Cards
 - 6 plastic Pawns
 - 39 Deed Cards
 - four Dice
 - Play Money
 - 16 page Rulebook and Designer's Notes

PLAYERS: 1-6
PLAYING TIME: 1-3 hours
depending on number of players

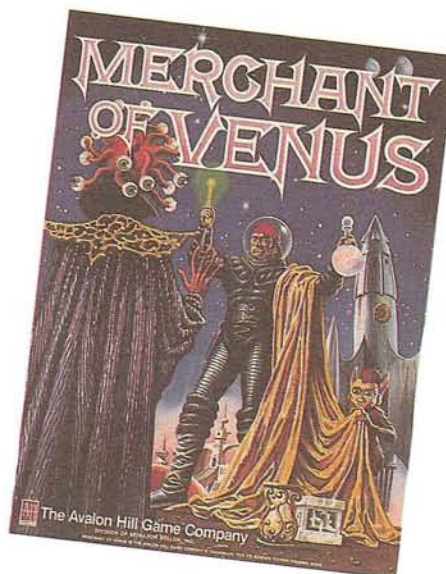


Dear Gamer;

When they first came to me with **Merchant of Venus**, I moaned: "not another space conquest game". Space exploration/conquest games are second only to football as the subjects most commonly thrust upon us by freelance designers trying to peddle their wares. "Dime-a-dozen" is the phrase I usually dismiss them with. To say that I was prejudiced against this game before I ever set eyes on it would be an understatement. So, its publication is a triumph of sorts and proof positive that it has won over at least one tough convert—because I'm usually a pretty hard nut to crack when it comes to my pre-conceived notions about what will sell and what won't. Fortunately for you I can also be had by a great design—and that's just what happened.

So how does **Merchant of Venus** stand out above the aforementioned glut of space games? First and foremost, this is a game about commerce—the principles of which remain the same regardless of time and place. We could just as easily be discussing a game about independent truckers, camel caravans or shipping magnates. But we aren't ... it's much, much more. The star systems and species populating the game include a cross-section of famous and popular science fiction themes that will amuse avid fans of the genre and fascinate others. We're talking more than just dealing in intergalactic wickets here ... Rock Videos, Immortal Grease, Space Spice, Psychotic Sculpture and Designer Genes are just a few of the cargoes you'll be hauling to the stars. An extensive Designers Notes section goes into considerable detail in exploring the whys and wherefores of this fantastic universe (but is not required reading for play of the game). The basic game is explained in a four-page folder—half of which is devoted to quick play charts summarizing the game mechanics.

I like to compare **Merchant of Venus** to **Rail Baron**, for it is in our railroad classic that this game found its beginnings. However, here the tracks lead to undiscovered worlds populated by strange beings with fantastic trade goods. Along the way you can be delayed by radiation zones or sucked into Tele Gates instantly hurling you across the Galaxy. Each game is a race not to own the most efficient rail net, but to discover the 14 species of alien beings hidden on the map, secure their trade goods before the next intergalactic freighter satiates their demand for your goods, and move on to deploy the best trading empire by building spaceports and factories in strategic locations. Along the way



you'll want to acquire bigger or faster ships or any of numerous weapons and technologies that will enhance your abilities. No strategy survives intact from one game to the next because the makeup of this galaxy changes by random setup at the start of every game. And if that isn't enough to keep the game fresh, you will find play varies greatly with different numbers of players and time limits—not to mention the inclusion of such optional rules as forts, piracy, swindles and revolts.

Merchant of Venus rewards skill while allowing luck to play a major role. Skilled players and novices can compete side by side as players combine forces to bring any obvious leaders back into the pack—especially when the optional combat rules are used to turn freighters into veritable Death Stars intent on empire busting. This is an amazingly versatile game that plays quickly, but its strongest point in my opinion is the ease with which it adapts to any number of players. I've seen few games that are equally satisfying whether played with two players or more, and virtually none that are as much fun solitaire as they are with six participants. This game has an excellent solitaire version worthy of publication in its own right, and will defy all but the sharpest players to beat the programmed ravages of the Rastur—an invading species intent on conquering the Galaxy before you can finish your trading.

I've fancied myself a connoisseur of fine games for over two decades, and in that time I've never seen a better game. I think you'll find **Merchant of Venus** equally delightful.

Sincerely,

Donald J. Greenwood
VP, R&D, TAHGC

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BEYOND MANIFEST DESTINY

American Play in PAX BRITANNICA

By James P. Werbaneth

PAX BRITANNICA is essentially a game of European competition for dominance of the vast uncolonized areas of Africa and Asia. Yet the United States can become a leading power, especially if the American player relies on the resources of his own hemisphere. If the American player establishes his state as the predominate power on the western map section, he will accumulate military power and use prudent investment, expansion and diplomacy to end the game in a vastly improved position.

The United States player must systematically implement a coherent strategy that takes advantage of the country's unique advantages and recognizes its long-term disadvantages. Its most important advantages are an early access to Latin America that can be challenged by only the most determined European power, a steadily growing merchant marine service that will carry American investment and expansion throughout the New World and across the Pacific, and the possibility that American "yellow press" journalism will allow it to wage an unprovoked war to add Spain's colonial possessions to the ascendant American empire. Its principle disadvantages are a small initial overseas empire, the need to expand the American military from a pathetic size to adequacy, and a relatively low colonial office income.

American investment and expansion must be centered on the Western Hemisphere. Because European attention will be almost always concentrated on Africa and Asia, particularly in the early game turns, the United States will have relatively little competition on the western map. Furthermore, rules presenting the United States with a *casus belli* against any other power expanding into the Western Hemisphere increase the chances that the only new control markers placed there will bear the Stars and Stripes.

Early American Investment and Expansion, 1880-1892

The placement of markers in *PAX BRITANNICA* represents two distinct but related efforts—investment and expansion. The establishment of interest and influence markers represents investment, as their primary purpose is to gain new revenues. Though protectorates, possessions and states/dominions sometimes produce impressive income, their most important function is to extend the power's sovereignty, gaining new territories and overseas military bases, thus representing expansion.

The United States has to engage in constant investment and opportunistic expansion. Its first investments should be an influence marker in Mexico and interests in Central America, Colombia and Venezuela. The first reinforcing merchant fleets are best placed in the South Pacific, then the South Atlantic, allowing the introduction of influences to Argentina and Brazil with interests in every other coastal area. The American Latin America investments will provide economic power to fuel expansion, military construction and further investment. Without a web of interest and influence on its own map, the United States is doomed to poverty, weakness and unimportance in this game.

Early American expansion is necessarily restricted by a low initial income, a weak army and navy, and rules limiting expansion in independent areas to those in unrest or beset by some political crisis (mostly, relevant South American war). Because of these factors, the United States is seldom able to

expand in more than one or two areas before 1896.

It is imperative that the United States makes Hawaii a possession in 1880. In that year only, the United States has a merchant fleet prepositioned to provide a supply line back to a major power. Control of Hawaii is vital to the American player, and he has to insure that his control of the islands is indisputable as early as possible. Even if the American player has to spend every available treasury point to take control of Hawaii, the expenditure and neglect of other investments are worth it. Because Hawaii borders both the North and South Pacific, naval units maintained there can safeguard the sealanes to Latin America as well as those to Alaska and Asia. Strategically, Hawaii is as vital to the United States as the Cape Colony is to Great Britain. Later in the game, The American player should concentrate most of the units of his navy based in the Pacific basin at Hawaii. At that time, statehood will become necessary. Income will be reduced, but the ability to base large military forces in Hawaii will make the upgrading cost-effective.

If the United States is to expand anywhere else in the early period, it must be against "targets of opportunity" created in the Western Hemisphere by unrest of South American war. Such opportunities must be exploited with extreme care, as the early American army is a small and brittle instrument. Panama and Central America, especially the former, are attractive areas because they are the possible locations for the Caribbean-South Pacific canal. The least attractive areas are Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. Though their high economic values would make their control highly desirable, they possess high combat strengths as well that make them unwise sites for colonial combat.

Should the player feel tempted to engage in questionable expansion and flag-waving, he should remember that at no time is expansion on the New World's mainland imperative. The only area that must fall under American control is Hawaii.

Middle American Investment and Expansion, 1896-1904

During the middle period of *PAX BRITANNICA*, the United States investment effect in Latin America is one of consolidation. Interests in Brazil and Argentina are upgraded to influences, and interests are played in any as yet empty areas on the western map. Thus the great Latin American money machine is completed.

American investment should reach the Asian mainland in 1896. Siam and the coastal areas of the Chinese Empire are the most probable entry points for American investment. Interests in these areas pay for their costs of placement in two turns or less, and influences have the additional benefit of frustrating others' colonial ambitions. In this region of multi-lateral imperial competition, investment can have some heavily political connotations.

As the American army expands, the risks of exploiting Latin American unrest or war in South America decrease. By 1900, every Latin American area but Brazil and Mexico should be regarded as a potential target for expansion. However, influence markers established by competitors may prove to restrict United States expansion more stringently than the area's intrinsic combat strengths.

The American player should also seriously consider expansion into any heretofore uncontrolled area of Oceania. These tend to be unprofitable, but are very easily controlled. Furthermore, American

expansion here in the middle turns may inhibit Japanese investment and expansion south of China later in the game.

Late American Investment and Expansion, 1908-1916

The late game turns are those in which the American player uses his assets to insure his country's status as one of the premier colonial powers. In the New World, interests are converted to influences. Often this means sacrificing income, but it always results in doubling the victory points extracted at game's end from areas in which the investment was interest.

American investments should be in every coastal Chinese Empire zone not controlled by an imperial power. Also, the American player should be ready to place investments in any accessible areas in the Indian Ocean. Almost always, British-Russian competition will keep Persia independent and thus open to American investment.

By this time, the prudent American player will have expanded his military forces to the point that he has an extremely impressive ability to wage colonial combat. Yet his opportunities to do so in the Western Hemisphere will diminish sharply, often disappearing. As the formerly empty spaces of Africa and Asia become saturated with European status markers, every power except Russia will have the treasure to invest heavily in Latin America and the merchant fleets to maintain their investments. Though the United States will have more extensive investments than ever in its own hemisphere, the New World will cease to be its exclusive economic preserve.

But the American player finds new opportunities to expand in the Chinese Empire, particularly during the inevitable Chinese rebellion. Perhaps the American player will have to settle for a co-dominion with one or more competitors in China, but American expansion in some form should reach China. Also, it is occasionally possible for the United States to seize an Oceania area, or an African area on the Indian Ocean. "American New Guinea" or "American East Africa" might sound strange, but they can and do happen in *PAX BRITANNICA*.

Military Construction

Military construction can present a profound problem in this game. Military units are needed to take and hold controlled areas, protect supply lines, deter major powers from war against your power, and prosecute when it does occur, and they usually contribute to the country's desirability as an ally and its undesirability as a member of an opposing alliance.

Yet expenditures on military power can be wasted money if excessively large forces are built and maintained overseas. Often players construct large armies that they cannot afford to maintain beyond the home country, and thus are unuseable for empire-building and of limited usefulness in deterring war. Such bloated forces reach their full level of usefulness in war—an unpredictable, destructive, and destabilizing phenomenon that even the strongest powers do well to avoid. Players on the course of such self-defeating policies do far better to scale back their military construction and devote the freed treasury points to investment and expansion. Status markers ultimately win *PAX BRITANNICA*, not armies and navies.

It is very easy for Britain, France or Germany to make this mistake. The historical example of Kaiser Wilhelm II's attempt to build the world's greatest navy can be viewed by game player's as military construction at its most wasteful, destabilizing and ultimately counterproductive worst. The temptation to build inflated military establishments tends to be the most pronounced among powers with the greatest disposable income and the most extensive empires, and those with fewer holdings who feel that their most ambitious imperial designs are about to be realized.

However, this is hardly a problem for the American player. The initial forces of the United States are so inadequate that throughout most of the game, practically any military construction can be justified if it does not divert treasure from necessary investment and expansion. In terms of military power, the United States has nowhere to go but up; and the basic question of whether to build or not to build has less relevance to the American player than on any other.

The most important question to the American player is whether to build army or naval units. Only army units can defeat an area's inherent combat strength. The arguments of Alfred Thayer Mahan that large navies are necessary to gain and hold overseas territories against competitors largely hold true in *PAX BRITANNICA*, but naval units are useless in colonial combat. Massive navies do not automatically equate into empire.

Yet his navy is vital to the American player. The United States can seldom hope to gain naval parity with Britain, but can deter naval-centered hostilities by even the strongest major power. The United States player should strive for local naval supremacy on the western map, with roughly equal fleets based on the Caribbean-North Atlantic coast and on the North Pacific and adjacent sea zones, with flexibility enhanced by control of a Caribbean-Pacific canal. The navy should grow to its maximum size as the United States reaches its final form as a colonial and commercial empire.

Thus the United States needs both a large army and a large navy. Just how large is a subjective judgement to be made by the American player in light of his investment, expansion, ambitions and the military power of his competitors.

In the early stages of the game, American military construction should be modest, in line with the country's economic resources. Normally, the American player does best by constructing army and navy units in roughly equal strength and quantity at this time. Most new naval units should be deployed on the North Pacific coast or in Hawaii. Almost always the Pacific sealanes are far more vital to the United States than the sea zones of the Atlantic.

During the middle turns, the player can expect to build his first ten-point counters. Construction should continue to be balanced between naval and land units, with the largest naval commitment still in the Pacific. American military construction reaches its zenith in the latest game turns. Most new units will be corps or fleets. Also, at this time, construction should be imbalanced in favor of naval units. The construction of a transoceanic canal makes deployment a less critical decision than in prior turns.

Special Problems

United States strategy and foreign policy must take advantage of special opportunities inherent in a war with Spain, construction of the transoceanic canal, and the partition of China. All three are important to the growth of American power and the emergence of the United States as a leading colonial empire.

In most cases, a war is the result of adroit foreign policy by a player who views war as in his interest, inept play by one for whom war will only erode his

country's power, or a freak of fate in which a non-player minor power becomes unnaturally aggressive. But a Spanish-American war is far different. Though the game is almost exclusively concerned with the rational accumulation and use of quantifiable national power, the "yellow journalism" random event allows the American player to expand on the basis of a *casus belli* derived from irrational domestic hysteria. No player is better served than the American by randomly occurring domestic illogic.

Spain's overseas empire is weakly garrisoned, overextended, and ultimately indefensible. Yet the United States is so weak at the outset of that any declaration of war against Spain in the early turns must be made cautiously. Often, the best option is to use the extra income derived from yellow journalism for investment and military construction, foregoing the declaration of war, and hope that yellow journalism reasserts itself when the United States is better prepared.

By the middle period, the United States should be able to seize Cuba, Puerto Rico and eventually the Philippines with little or no trouble. Spanish naval units in Cuba and the Philippines should be defeated quickly and all three possessions forced to surrender by naval blockade. Ideally, the Spanish navy will be defeated in detail and the Spanish army neutralized without the engagement of large American army units, before reinforcements from Spain can complicate local decisions. Proper preparation and careful planning always results in a quick and decisive American victory.

If the American player has built up his military forces at even a moderate rate, Spain will literally not have a chance of winning a Spanish-American war; late in the game, it will be hard-pressed even to make the American player momentarily uncomfortable. The American player can consider adding to the fruits of inevitable victory by placing a merchant fleet in the North Atlantic, possibly from the Caribbean, and seizing Rio de Oro as well as the rest of Spain's possessions. In this way, it is possible for the United States to gain a foothold in Africa, albeit an impoverished one.

Of course, there is no guarantee that the United States will ever have a *casus belli* against Spain. An American player with an early *casus belli* has to realize that an excuse for war may not arise later in the game. Yet he cannot declare war if the risk is unacceptable. The growth of the American military should be with a view toward relieving the Spaniards of their colonies. But the American player should never assume that he will have the opportunity to go to war, let alone fight on favorable terms. He must be prepared to end the game without the Philippines and the Spanish Caribbean colonies. The Spanish-American war is a contingency for which the American player should prepare; it is not an entitlement.

If American seizure of the Spanish possessions depends largely on luck, completion of a South Pacific-Caribbean canal is strictly a matter of determination. It is absolutely imperative that the United States build a canal in Panama or Central America. The fifteen special victory points awarded for building the first canal are important. But even if another power builds a canal first, the United States must complete one of its own. By having a canal under its control, the United States gains guaranteed freedom of movement and redeployment for its naval units. In addition, a canal of his own allows the American to foster friendly relations with potential allies who desire insured South Pacific to Caribbean transit.

The United States receives ten victory points if no other power has acquired permanent control of a Chinese Empire area in the course of the game. By no means should the American player make any effort to receive these points. It is in the best interests of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and Japan to

strive to establish control throughout China, particularly after the Chinese rebellion that is always a consequence of substantial major power investment in the Middle Kingdom. For the United States, trying to preserve the political integrity of China is almost as realistic as trying to keep a pack of starving wolves from a bloody side of beef.

Such unrealistic aspirations may have a great bearing on the influence of domestic politics on foreign policy, but they have no place in playing *PAX BRITANNICA*—or at least in playing *PAX BRITANNICA* well. Expansion in the Chinese Empire will normally result in more victory points at the end of the game than the unlikely preservation of China. Furthermore, by becoming a full partner in the partition, the United States can acquire a voice in the Empire's final disposition, and can subtly redirect competitors' energies from the Western Hemisphere. Seriously trying to prevent Chinese subjugation serves neither end, and is a bad investment.

Foreign Policy

In this game, foreign policy performs the same function that strategy and tactics perform in other, more purely military simulations. For game purposes, foreign policy is the use of previously acquired power and interplayer relations to increase one's objective and subjective power. As defined by Hans Morgenthau, the seminal foreign policy scholar, in his work *Politics Among Nations*, power is the ability of one actor to determine the thoughts and actions of other parties. For the purposes of both Morgenthau and of the *PAX BRITANNICA* player, the most relevant form of power is political power. Objective sources of political power include military force, economic resources, and support assets such as overseas bases and naval coaling rights. Subjective components of political power are less quantifiable character traits and abilities of the player himself, and assets derived from the player's use of power—primarily influence, prestige, energy, determination and applied aptitude.

The concept of power is central to everything that the player do. Use of military forces in a war is an obvious manifestation of power, against another player or against a minor power. Colonial combat is also the use of power, in this case against the indigenous peoples or government of an area. Convincing one or more other players to support the player's initiative in a treaty or the restriction of investment and expansion in a region of the world is a primarily subjective example of power.

The American player has to accumulate both objective and subjective power. The program to increase objective power has four components. Aggressive investment, primarily in the Western Hemisphere, is to dramatically increase the United States' income. Using this new revenue, military units are built in increasing strength and quantity. Third, the proceeds of investment and the new military power fuel opportunistic expansion, almost always in the western Hemisphere and Asia. Fourth, the United States builds a transoceanic canal, regardless of whether one is already in place.

Subjective power is related to objective power. Constructing a sizeable military and acquiring a network of investments and colonies contributes toward the nebulous asset of "prestige". Sometimes nothing can earn more respect than a big fleet in the right place. In addition, the player has to act as a willing and eager member of the world imperialist community, staking claims and making deals like the more powerful Europeans. Acting as a New World "King Canute" ordering the major powers' tide from the beaches of China is not the way to build subjective power, and subtly working to turn the other players from China is self-defeating from an objective point of view.

PAX BRITANNICA's system of emerging alliances

represents a growing opportunity for the American player to increase his subjective power. Every European power, at some point in the game, is likely to consider joining an alliance; often this desire leads to the active recruitment of possible allies. If a country has a low level of objective power, the chances of it becoming a leading member of an alliance are small. A weak ally will find itself manipulated by its more powerful partners. As repudiation of the treaty of alliance before its expiration results in a *casus belli* by the other signatories, repudiation is difficult, especially for a weak power. Thus, the weak ally is caught in a dilemma between manipulation and destruction—a dilemma of its own making.

The situation changes if a country has significant objective power, or if its power is rising. It is much harder to manipulate an ally that can and is willing to resist encroachments on its autonomy. The more powerful a country is, the more likely its allies will make decisions affecting all members of the alliance by consensus, or at least by consultation. A strong ally is likely to be a full partner, and a weak one liable to be a pawn.

Despite the likelihood that it will be of a more independent mind, a strong ally is more valuable than a weak one. An alliance's strength is the strength of its members; an ally that brings little power to an alliance does little for that alliance.

Alliances are not associations of sentiment. They are the rationally (even cynically) concluded partnerships between powers with converging interests, primarily the advancement and defense of investments and colonies. In this game, the so-called "traditional friendships" between countries have even less bearing on play than domestic politics. Any major power can find strong reason at one time or another to sign a treaty of alliance with any other major power.

A basic tenet of American foreign policy should be to increase the desirability of the United States as an ally; and to consequently increase the chances that if it did enter into an alliance, the United States will not be a pawn of its partners. The American player should sound open to the concept of any alliance but negotiate towards getting significant, tangible gains as the price of that alliance—preferably concessions out of proportion to the United States' value as an ally. Possible American demands include reduced European investment in the New World, restrictions on non-American naval deployment in the Pacific, and guarantees that the United States has the exclusive right to build a trans-oceanic canal. Of course, any such concession must be written into the treaty of alliance.

The American player has to take great care in concluding alliances. In the early game turns, alliances are generally ill-advised and result in the exploitation of the United States. Even when the United States is at the zenith of its power, alliances are fraught with hazards, and the gains inherent in proffered alliances must be carefully weighed against the dangers.

An historical example of value to the American player is that of England between the reign of Henry VIII and the end of the 19th century. In that long period, England was alternately allied with and against Spain, France, Austria, Prussia, the United States, and Russia though it mainly held itself aloof from alliances. Britain's role was to play the "balancer", entering coalitions at the last moment to decide which alliance would prevail. To its detractors, the "balancer" was "perfidious Albion", but the policy did allow the British to repeatedly decide the outcome of war and other political phenomenon in Europe though the resources at their disposal were often less than those controlled by other major powers. With eventually massive economic power and carefully husbanded military power, especially on the seas, Britain became the

premier colonial power in the 19th century. When Britain did enter into an alliance, it was mostly on a temporary basis. It would join forces with other powers for a time, then slip back in nonalignment at the first opportunity, eventually to join another alliance at the proper time. This is the central principle of relevance to the American player.

The United States is seldom strong enough to effectively play the "balancer". But it can reap many benefits by entering into alliances of short duration rather than those intended for prolonged validity. This will signal that the American player is open to alliance with any major power, gain the aid of allies, and avoid extended entanglements. In addition, if the United States is to be manipulated by its allies, it will not be for long. By avoiding alliances in general while negotiating with a view toward joining one that can offer the most, then signing a treaty of short duration, the American player significantly increases the probability that any agreed-to treaty of alliance will be largely on his own terms.

For *PAX BRITANNICA* players, war is a political phenomenon that can result in massive territorial and economic gains, loss of territory and investments, or the complete destruction of the game's "world order". In the early stages of the game, war is improbable as there are so many accessible areas open to investment and expansion that there are few "flash points" worth a confrontation. In short, there's enough of the world for everybody. Only when the "empty spaces", as Morgenthau called them, are filled and the means of investment and expansion are greater than the opportunities does war become a real danger to major powers. In addition, by the later game turns the players have built many naval units, seen South American and Balkan wars, witnessed domestic agitation by irredentist and expansionist elements within Europe and Japan, and maybe even fought a war or two. Consequently, the European Tensions Index is often high and the "Great War" looms on the horizon.

Throughout the game, the American player must strenuously avoid war with the other major powers. Military units are vital components of power, but when players turn them against each other, imperial futures are gambled. Going to war against a European major power, even with the help of a powerful ally can be suicide for the United States. Even declaring war against a weak major power can result in the loss of carefully accumulated military units for debatable gains. It is best for the American player if he leaves war to the less wise.

Conclusions

Despite entering the game with negligible power and only one overseas possession, the United States goes into 1916 with a potent army and navy and possessions on three continents. A canal allows the navy to quickly shift from ocean to ocean, and in most of its own hemisphere what the United States does not control outright it has significant investment in. It is an active participant in the world order. By the early 20th century, the United States is respected as much for its prudently fluid and activist foreign policy as for its far-flung and amply defended empire.

This is the goal of the American player. He must increase the assets at his disposal and use them to further his standing in the global community. Though his efforts concentrate initially on the New World, they carry him to China and the rest of East Asia.

In the seven-player game, it is extremely difficult for the United States to amass more victory points than Great Britain, France or Germany/Austria. All enjoy generous colonial office incomes, and Britain starts the game with an already sizeable empire. Early access to the "empty spaces" of Africa and Asia allow them to expand and invest quickly and

profitably.

But the United States should be able to surpass Italy, Russia and Japan. These countries share relatively low, and sometimes, downright poor, colonial office incomes. Italy is perennially weak and easily tempted in the race to divide Africa. Japan poses the greatest problem of the three, for it shares with the United States a need for substantial Asiatic investments and colonies. In fact, whereas Asia is the site of the American empire's completion, it is the core of *dai-Nippon's* future. If the United States has any natural antagonist, it is Japan. But because Japan's merchant fleets multiply less rapidly than those of the United States, the American player may be able to preempt much of Japan's planned investment and expansion.

The goal of the American player is to finish ahead of Japan, Russia and Italy, with such a gap in victory points between the United States and its closest competitor that it can finish with a rank no lower than fourth. This increases the chances that because of the players' relative skills or fate either Britain, France or Germany/AH finishes marginally lower than the United States, raising the American finishing rank from third.

PAX BRITANNICA is unusual in that a player should be gratified to finish third or fourth out of seven. But when playing the United States, one's concern lies not in building the "Empire to End All Empires", but in making something out of nothing. In the end, the American player should have something indeed, including mastery of his own hemisphere.



SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed: 112

Total Responses: 405

Rank:	Title	Pub	Rank Times		
			Last	On	Freq.
			Time	List	Ratio
1.	Advanced SL	AH	1	13	4.2
2.	Diplomacy	AH	10	14	2.6
3.	B-17	AH	6	10	2.4
4.	Russian Campaign	AH	10	42	2.3
5.	FlatTop	AH	—	1	2.2
6.	Empires in Arms	AH	18	5	2.1
7.	Panzer Leader	AH	12	2	2.1
8.	Thunder at Cassino	AH	—	1	2.0
9.	Partisan!	AH	—	1	1.9
10.	Beyond Valor	AH	5	8	1.8
11.	Fortress Europa	AH	7	2	1.8
12.	Patton's Best	AH	16	3	1.7
13.	St. Nazaire	AH	—	1	1.6
14.	Squad Leader	AH	11	42	1.6
15.	Russian Front	AH	19	4	1.4
16.	Third Reich	AH	2	42	1.3
17.	Civilization	AH	—	1	1.2
18.	Yanks	AH	3	4	1.1
19.	Bulge '81	AH	14	2	1.0
20.	WS&IM	AH	17	3	1.0

This regular column, introduced in Vol. 17, No. 6, reports the latest results of a survey of what the readership has been playing in the two months past. Naturally, it tends to be dominated by Avalon Hill titles, for—of course—the readership is playing our games. However, any title, should it garner enough "votes", can appear and a number by other game manufacturers have over the years. This survey is of more than passing interest to the designers and developers here at Avalon Hill, for it shows what we've "done right". And it helps indicate to the editors of this periodical what games would be pleasing topics for upcoming articles. It should be noted too that the survey results also tend to reflect recent coverage in the pages of *THE GENERAL* for specific games, since quite often good articles encourage long-time readers to re-acquaint themselves with older favorites. Hence, in the survey above (from Vol. 24, No. 5), the dominance of *ASL* and *DIPLOMACY* reflects the response to articles on these games in three previous issues.

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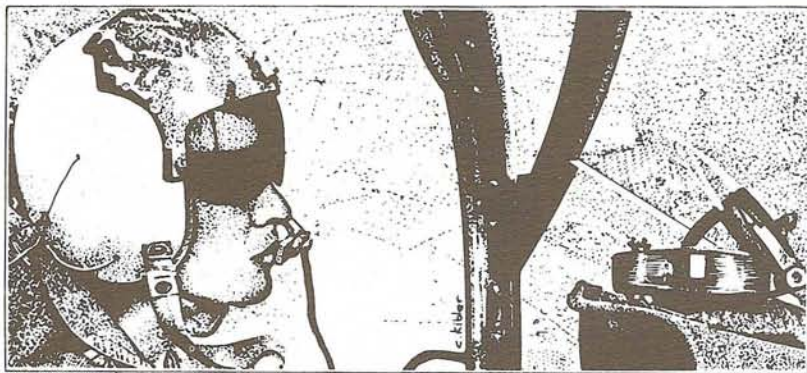
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FIGHTERSPEAK: The FLIGHT LEADER Vocabulary

The fighter pilot business, like any other specialized and technical profession, has its own unique language. If you were to listen to modern fighter pilots brief before flying, or talk on the radio, or be debriefed after flying their mission, you would hear a great many abbreviations, acronyms and "brevity code" that would be puzzling to your untrained ears, this hodgepodge of undecipherable jargon emanates from several sources. Some comes from abbreviations (usually of aircraft systems) and some from regulations. Other terminology arises out of the phonetic alphabet (*Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta*, etc.).

Much comes from the brevity code, which is composed of individual words given unique and unequivocal meanings for the air combat arena. In many cases, a single word can mean the same as an entire phrase or sentence. During the tense seconds of an air engagement, with flight leaders and wingmen and radar controllers all needing to communicate, radio discipline can mean the difference between life and death. So finding the shortest way to convey the greatest amount of information is paramount. Try using the terminology below especially when you are playing more than one player to a side; try to limit your communication to only what is essential and use these words. Below is a representative assortment from various sources. More is contained in the accompanying article and the *FLIGHT LEADER Pilot's Manual*.



Abort: Discontinue. In the air, return to base due to unforeseen circumstances.

Affirmative: Yes; also "Affirm", "Firm" or "Roger" used.

AI: Air Interceptor.

Angels: Target altitude in thousands of feet.

Arcing: Using "Cutoff" or Lead Pursuit.

Bandit: An enemy aircraft.

Beam: Put the threat off either wing.

Bingo: Fuel required to return home safely.

Blind: Can't see leader/wingman; opposite of "Visual".

Blow Through: Keep going at high speed; don't start turning.

Bogey: Unidentified aircraft; could be friendly or hostile.

Bogey Dope: Asking radar controller for target information.

Bracket: Usually an intercept or maneuver which puts friendly jets on both sides of a bandit so if he turns toward one, the other will have an advantage in turning room and angle-off.

Break: An instantaneous maximum performance turn, usually against a missile attack.

Bugout: Let's separate out of here; usually given with a direction—"Bugout West".

Burner: Afterburner(s), also "Blower" or "AB". An afterburner increases thrust by spray-injecting raw fuel into the hot aft stages of the jet engine to produce a sustained, controlled rocket-like explosion. Use of afterburner is not fuel-efficient and uses up fuel at a rate several times that consumed in Military power.

Buzzer: Electronic Countermeasures (ECM).

Check Six: Look at your six o'clock position (behind you).

Chicks: Friendly fighters.

Chicken: See "Jink", "Doin' the Chicken". Evolved due to the strain put on the neck during a guns jinkout from G forces.

Conning: Flying high enough that your vapor trail is crystalizing, like most airliners. Makes you very easy to see.

Contact: Radar contact.

Decoy: Attract fighters, usually into an ambush.

Drag: Target is turning in front of you—watch out for the ambush!

Driver: Pilot, as in "Eagle Driver" or "MIG Driver".

Electric Jet: F-16, referring to "fly-by-wire" computer flight controls.

Eyeball: The jet whose primary responsibility in an intercept is to get a "Tally Ho" on the bandit.

Extend: Fly straight to get distance, usually in a slight dive trying to gain speed.

Fence: The line separating friendly lines from enemy territory.

Fox I/II/III: Ordnance attack: radar missile/heat seeking missile/gun shot.

Foxtrof: Phonetic alphabet for AIM-7F.

Furball: A turning air combat engagement.

G: Force of gravity; see sidebar.

Gadget: Radar, may be "Sick" (degraded) or "Bent" (inoperative).

GIB: Guy In Back; Weapon Systems Officer in a two-place aircraft.

Gomer: Enemy pilot/soldier, or nickname for Aggressor.

Grape: An easy victory; little competition.

Hard Left/Right: A high-performance, energy-sustaining turn; not quite a "Break".

Heads Up: Warning to radar controller or flight that bandit got through.

HUD: Heads-up Display. Necessary information is displayed on combining glass (gunsight) so pilot doesn't have to look down into the cockpit during air combat.

Jam: Use electronic countermeasures or, sometimes, maneuver to deny turning room.

Jink: Unpredictable defense against a gun attack.

Joker: Fuel state to trigger a separation for home, based on distance from home.

Judy: Aircraft is assuming control of intercept from radar controller.

Knock It Off: Stop the engagement—used in training.

Knots: Nautical Miles per Hour, the measure of airspeed.

Lag: I can't help you right now.

Lawn Dart: F-16, derogatory in referring to crashes during initial development and testing.

Lima: Phonetic alphabet for AIM-9 missile.

Lips: A head-on shot, usually near minimum range.

Lufbery: Named for Raoul, the WW1 ace. Refers to chasing each other around a circle in a stalemate.

Mike: Phonetic alphabet got AIM-9M missile.

Mil: Military power, 100% RPM. Most power available from jet engine without using the afterburner.

Music: Jamming or electronic countermeasures observed on radar.

Negative: No.

No Joy: I don't see bandit; opposite of "Tally Ho".

Padlock: I have a "Tally Ho", but can't look anywhere else or I might lose it.

Parrot: IFF, or Identification Friend or Foe transponder; tells radar controllers you are a good guy.

Popeye: I am in the clouds and can't search visually.

Press: Continue what you are doing; you are clear of threats, or I can support you.

Punch Out: Eject from aircraft.

Reno: Ability to discriminate multiple aircraft on the radar as the blips separate.

Raw: For RHAW (Radar Homing and Warning) or RWR (Radar Warning Receiver); tells pilot that someone has lockon to his aircraft and an approximate direction.

Rhino: The F-4 Phantom II nickname.

ROE: Rules of Engagement. Restrictions to combat.

SA: Situation Awareness; to know what is going on around you.

Snap: Snap vector, a quick heading to fly.

Spitter: Radar controller telling flight that an aircraft observed departing the "Furball".

Splash: Target confirmed destroyed.

Strangle: Turn off something.

Tally (Ho): I see the enemy aircraft.

Unload: Point the nose down to gain speed.

Viper: Nickname for the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

Visual: I see my leader/wingman.

Warp: Accelerate or high energy state.

Weeds: Minimum altitude, usually several hundred feet above the ground.

Winchester: Out of ordnance.

Winder: Short for Sidewinder or AIM-9 missile.

Zulu: Air Defense Alert.

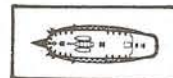
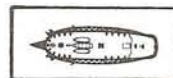
FIGHTING SAILS

Tactics of The Age of Sail as Applied to WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN

by S. Craig Taylor, Jr.



The transition from the more "traditional" strategic and operational level land boardgames to a tactical level naval game such as WS&IM leaves some wargamers "all at sea" regarding the tactics and strategy to apply in such an alien environment. There are many principals which can be used equally successfully both ashore and afloat, but these similarities are often overlooked as players tend to concentrate their attentions on the differences. It is the purpose of this article to draw attention to these similarities and, at the same time, to also consider the differences by covering some of the tactical fine points of the game for the benefit of those still trying to gain their "sea legs."



The first point is that, at sea as on land, there is absolutely no foolproof formula for victory. Bad luck, adverse conditions, or unforeseen circumstances can ruin the most brilliant maneuvers and tactical combinations. There are, however, factors to be kept in mind that, when given proper consideration, will yield a victory more often than not.

To mass superior forces at the enemy's weak point is as important in a naval action as in a land campaign. For the *WS&IM* game this is best explained by the statement. "When superior to the enemy get as close as possible, when inferior stay as far away from the enemy as possible." Basically, the closer an inferior force is engaged, the more hits will be inflicted in a given time, the faster it will be defeated, the less time the superior forces will be tied up, and the less time the opposition will have to maneuver in attempts to overcome this inferiority. The reverse, when inferior in force, is also true. At longer ranges the number of hits per turn is smaller, superior forces count for less, and an inferior force can hold on for much longer. This is easy to see, and to understand, in theory. What is difficult to decide, considering the conflicting factors of comparative numbers of ships, crew quality, and position, is how to determine the superiority or inferiority of a force in any particular situation. A large number of factors must be evaluated in making this critical decision.

The most obvious single factor is the comparative numbers of ships on both sides. This is complicated by the often great differences in the strengths of the various ships, so that just counting the number of hulls available may not be an accurate indicator of comparative strengths. A comparison of the point values of the ships available is usually a more accurate reflection of the power of two opposing forces. A numerical superiority is useful as this permits enemy forces to be overlapped, doubled, or raked, but is not always a decisive advantage. Superiority in crew quality and/or the power of individual ships can often more than compensate for inferiority in numbers.

The relative maneuverability and mobility of the ships is another important consideration. A force of well-handled two-deckers should be able to handily outmaneuver a squadron of three-deckers. A squadron with intact sails should be able to outmaneuver a squadron that has considerable rigging damage. Superior mobility should enable a force to fight on at least equal terms with a force that is more powerful, but less maneuverable.

Superiority in tactics must be taken into account. An honest evaluation of one's own tactical skill, as compared to the tactical skill of the opposition, is the key to evaluating this factor. What margin of material superiority do you need to win? Are you so tactically superior to your opponents that you can win even when inferior in the factors discussed earlier! Or, are you so inferior in tactics to the enemy that you will require a greater than normal

superiority in every respect before you wish to close to decisive ranges? As in any boardgame, good sound tactics can be learned by experience, by the application of common sense, and by learning from your own and others' mistakes. Some of the others' more important tactical practices, or "tricks of the game," as many wargamers prefer to call them, are covered below.

1) When vastly superior to a portion of the opponent's force, do not hesitate, but rush upon him before he has a chance to realize his danger, and make an escape. If, in rushing boldly forward, a few ships lose some rigging, the enemy is too weak to capture them, and repairs can be made later. Enemy ships that fail to escape are out of the game for good.

2) Generally speaking, it is a waste of time to completely disarm a ship. Once one rigging section has been destroyed, the ship loses full sails capabilities, and its battle sail speed is reduced. Thus crippled, the ship is not much harder to catch or to run from than if it were totally disarmed. If it is desired to hinder the ship's movement, therefore just take down one rigging section, then switch to firing at the hull. If possible, it is usually a good idea to destroy a rigging section on a ship in the center of any enemy line, as this will greatly embarrass the maneuvering of the entire line.

3) Ships with high quality crews can cause damage at ranges where a lower quality enemy cannot reply. This ability to hit an enemy when he cannot hit back is very useful in "softening-up" an enemy, or in carrying out a delaying action against an otherwise superior foe. However, such firing will produce a relatively low number of hits per turn, as it is necessarily from a fairly long range. This advantage should not blind one to the even greater advantages of moving in to closer, more decisive ranges if a real superiority to the enemy does exist.

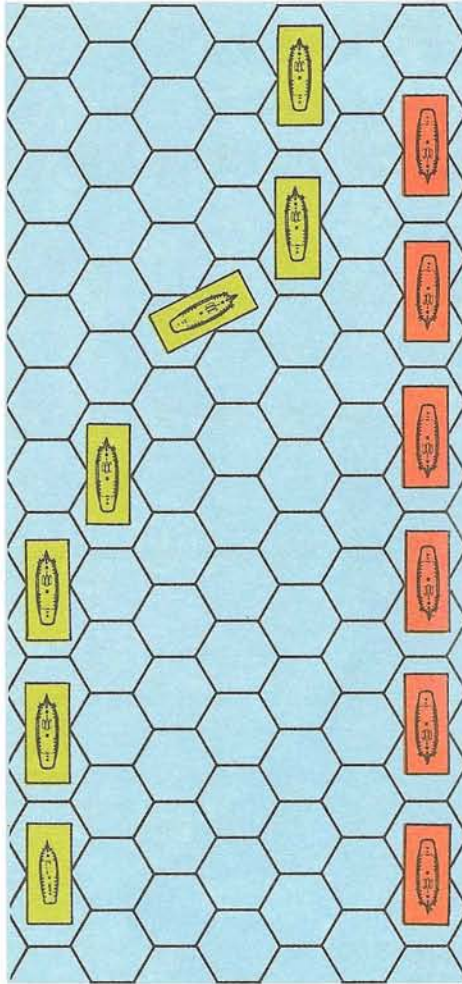
4) Keep the enemy guessing as to your intended maneuvers. An opponent can often be fooled by ships switching to full sails, then making a move that could have been done under battle sails.

5) In squadron or fleet actions, keep line formation as long as possible, as breaking it leads to exposure to defeat in detail. Do not, however, keep the line formation when the situation (and a real superiority at some point) calls for wading in after having gained all advantages possible from the line.

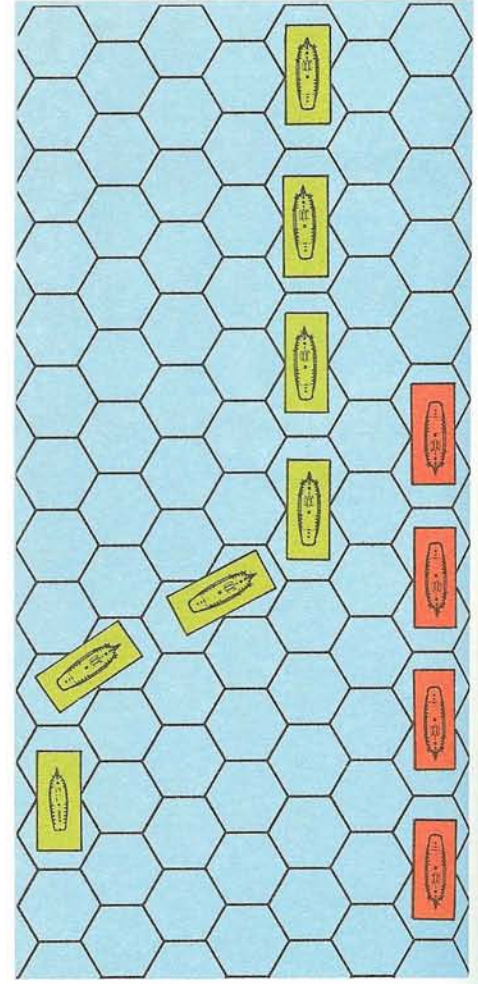
6) If the crew quality of the ships varies, lead the line with one of the lower quality ships. That way, if any ship gets raked and disarmed, it will be this weaker one, thus giving the more valuable higher quality ships a better chance of reaching decisive ranges in good condition.

7) Ships should be used in the roles for which they are best equipped. Ships of the line should be used against enemy liners. Frigates and small vessels should be used against vessels of their own rates, and for the attack and defense of merchant convoys.

These points will now be covered in more depth in a discussion of the operations of the various classes of ships as they relate to one another. Much of the discussion assumes that both frigates and ships



PHASE ONE: The green Van engages the red Rear squadron.



PHASE TWO: The green Center and a portion of the Van engage the red Rear squadron.

of the line, plus possibly some merchantmen, are present in the same battle. This can vary, as for instance in a game where only frigates were involved; the factors applying to ships of the line would then apply to frigates, as they are the most powerful units present.

IN HARM'S WAY—THE HANDLING OF FRIGATES

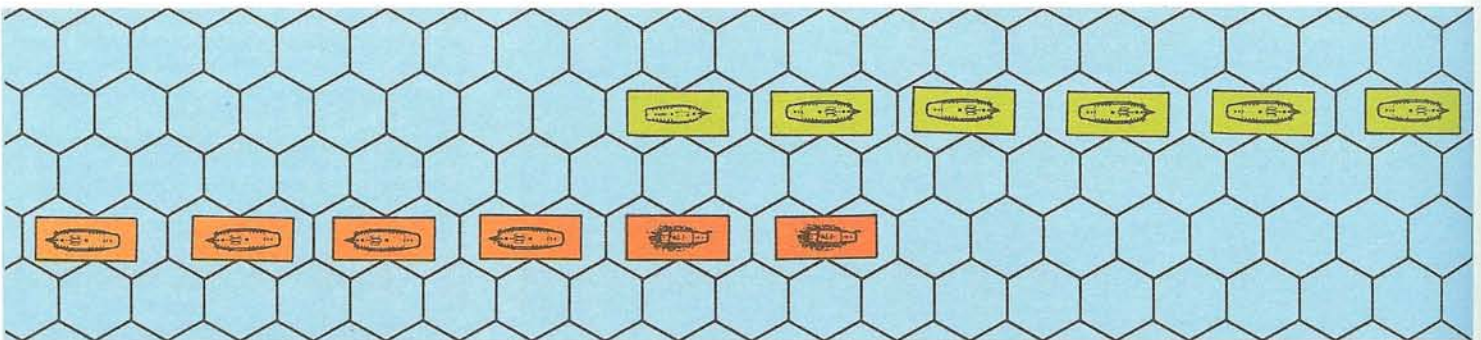
A ship of the line was built to carry as many, and as heavy, guns as possible, and to engage anything afloat. It was expected to be able to stand in a line of battle and trade blows with anything that might pull alongside. Being relatively slow and unmaneuverable. SoLs operated in squadrons to support and cover one another. A frigate was not expected to fight anything that came its way, only ships of its own class or lighter, indeed, taking on a ship of the

line with a frigate is usually poor tactical usage for the frigate.

There are a number of good reasons why frigates should not be placed in a line of battle with the ships of the line. First, a frigate keeping station in a battle-line cannot make full use of its superior speed and maneuverability without disrupting the line. Second, the space a frigate occupies in the line could be taken by a larger ship capable of dishing out more punishment. Third, a frigate represents a weak link in the unbreakable chain of the line. Its vulnerability will invite a concentration of enemy fire that will swiftly destroy it. A stricken ship in the midst of the battle-line causes great problems in reforming the line, and in sailing around the obstacle.

A better case can be made for the use of frigates on the fringes of the main battle. Frigates can be useful for moving on the ends of a line for raking broadsides to aid the liners, or for keeping enemy

PHASE THREE: The green Rear and a portion of the Center engage the red Rear squadron.



frigates from doing the same. However, extreme care must be exercised anytime frigates are moving within gun range of the SoLs, as a miscalculation can be fatal!

What then, is the optimum use of frigates? The answer is to engage other frigates, lighter vessels, and transports/merchants. Frigates are most usefully employed singly, or in small flexible groups. Full use of a frigate's mobility also entails remaining under full sails as much as possible. Do not drop to battle sails and close for a gunnery duel unless the odds are highly favorable. If the odds appear to be even, or unfavorable, continue at full sails, maneuver to avoid combat, and wait for a favorable opportunity to pounce.

Frigate-to-frigate engagements fall roughly into two categories. In the first, a decisive action is not sought. The wish is to quickly cripple an enemy frigate to prevent interference with more important tasks. In this case, chainshot is employed from close range (preferably in a rake) to destroy a rigging section. Then full sails are used to avoid the cripple, leaving the foe far behind. In the second category, the actual defeat of the enemy frigate is the objective. This type of action should be avoided without a large superiority in size, grade, and/or numbers. A smaller superiority makes a victory possible, but leaves a crippled victor as effectively out of the game as its prize. This type of action should also be avoided in the close proximity of enemy ships of the line; victory is futile if an enemy ragwagon can easily move up to recover the prize, and (to add injury to insult) capture the crippled victor.

By far the most interesting scenarios involving frigates revolve around the protection and/or attack of merchantmen. The escorting frigates have several advantages in games of this type. For one, they know exactly where the merchantmen will be at the end of the turn; therefore, they know where the vulnerable spots will be, and can maneuver to cover these gaps. Second, the escorting frigates need only to cripple an opponent, not necessarily to defeat it—a frigate missing a rigging section is slower than a merchantman. Defense of a slow-moving convoy requires only the occasional use of full sails, so that the escorts are ordinarily less vulnerable to being crippled than the attackers.

The attacker, of course, has the initiative, and is not restricted to any particular pattern of sailing. Maximum use should be made of feints, that is, moving into a threatening attack position to force the commitment of the defenders, then veering off abruptly at a new angle for a more promising attack with the defenders out of position. Pincer attacks, presenting many possible avenues of attack, are very difficult to defend against, so split the attackers to threaten the convoy from as many directions as possible.

Smaller ships, although no match for a full size frigate, can be useful for defending merchantmen; if nothing else, they can get in the way, delay until larger ships arrive, etc. When attacking, these ships should definitely keep their distance until a clear opening appears. They can be very useful in pincers maneuvers, especially those with fore and aft rigging as they can maneuver to leeward of the convoy, and catch merchantmen while beating upwind.

HANDLING OF SHIPS OF THE LINE

Important as the smaller ships were in the great age of sail, if the situation called for any serious fighting, the ships of the line were sent for. The dashing, racy frigates may have been the "glamour" ships of the period, but in most cases their commanders were the most junior officers. There came a time in the careers of most competent captains when their skill and seniority placed them on the quarterdeck of a line-of-battle ship. The fate of nations and empires often rested with these ships, and no government could afford to trust them to any

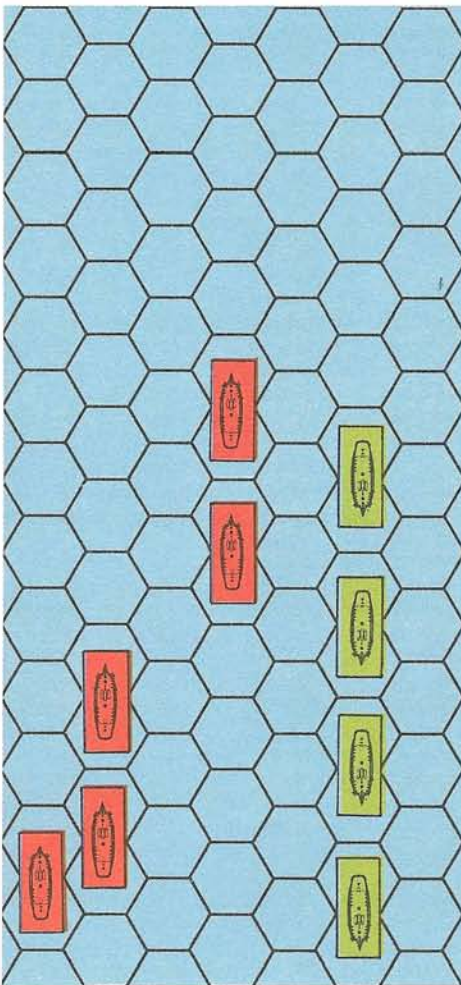
but the best available officers.

The tactics of frigates are largely the tactics of opportunity, maneuvering to cause or to take advantage of any mistakes by the foe. The tactics of handling a line of battleships are far more precise.

Ships of the line maneuvered in tight, well-ordered line formations. The advantage of this formation is that it is very difficult to approach without taking at least as much damage as is caused. The line formation develops the maximum possible firepower as all ships have clear lines of fire, and are mutually supporting. To maintain this line formation through periods of complicated maneuvering calls for a bit of planning ahead, and an overall plan of action. The decision to break up a line is often the critical decision that determines victory or defeat in actions between contending battle fleets. Novice players often try opportunity maneuvers such as detaching a ship to obtain a rake on an enemy ship. This maneuver usually results in the detached ship being left far behind, and out of the action, or in its being overwhelmed by a much larger force of enemy ships. Single ship detachments should normally not be made in a fleet or squadron size action; if the reasons for making a detachment are important enough, several ships should be sent, forming their own line of battle and acting for mutual support. If the reason for the detachment is not important enough to warrant sending several ships, the detachment should not be made.

The essence of fighting a battle with ships of the line is the establishment of a superiority over some portion of the enemy's line. There are two main methods of doing this.

PHASE ONE: The red Van engages the green Rear squadron.



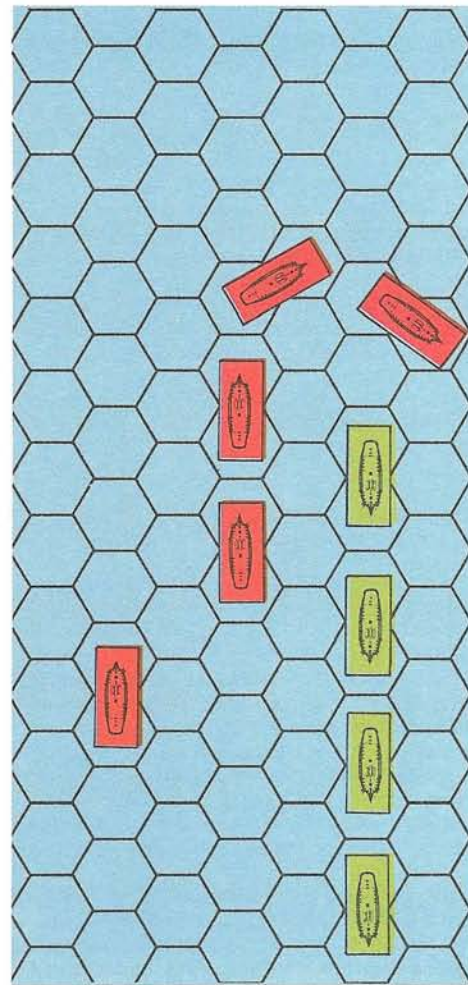
1) **DOUBLE THE ENEMY LINE:** In this maneuver, a portion of the line engages a portion of the enemy's line, while another portion of the line passes into the rear of the engaged section of the enemy's line. This can be a difficult maneuver to make, but when done the results are devastating (as at the Battle of the Nile). This can be accomplished if the enemy is at anchor, if a portion of the enemy line is too slow to avoid the maneuver (as with uncoppered ships of the American Revolution, or ships slowed by some well-placed rigging hits), or by moving through a gap in the enemy line, then doubling back. A section of a line that is too closely engaged to risk the use of full sails can be doubled by some undamaged ships under full sail.

2) **MASS AGAINST ONE SECTION OF THE ENEMY LINE:** This can be done if your ships are sailing at closer intervals than the ships they are opposed to, or by taking advantage of a superiority in ship size and/or crew quality in ship-to-ship duels. It can also be accomplished by advancing obliquely on the enemy line so that all ships deliver their fire into the same part of the enemy line as they pass, while another section of the enemy line can make only long-range shots at best. An example of how this can be done is illustrated on Page 18.

Of course, combinations of the two methods could be used together. For instance, if the enemy Rear were initially massed against, it could then be doubled by the Van squadron (the enemy Rear now being too slowed by damage to escape). This is illustrated below.

If possible, get and keep the wind gauge. This gives the initiative, and the ability to engage when

PHASE TWO: The red Center engages the green Rear squadron while the Van doubles it. The red Rear squadron hangs back to take any ships of the green Center and Van that may try to turn back to aid their Rear squadron.



and where the situation is deemed to be favorable. The wind gauge is the single most important tactical factor to consider when trying to determine or create a superiority to the opposition. The wind gauge, if properly used, can compensate for many other factors of inferiority.

A fleet that cannot get the win gauge is by definition on the defensive. The best way to fight a defensive battle is by maintaining a respectable distance between the fleets. Maintain freedom of maneuver by not allowing the attackers to close. Keep firing roundshot at the rigging, especially whenever a raking shot presents itself. Any attacking ship that loses a rigging section will fall far behind. When enough of the attackers are thus disabled, they may be permitted to close with the now greatly superior defenders. Not all attackers are crazy enough to fall into this trap, and that explains why the often elaborate maneuvers of two fleets of ships of the line sometimes lasted for days.

There are a few tactical "tricks" that can prove very useful in otherwise equal battles. In a broadside to broadside battle, assuming equal numbers of ships, concentrate maximum firepower on the weakest ship in the enemy line. When it has been disposed of, two ships will be available to engage the next adjoining enemy ship, etc. When parallel to an enemy line, move the line no further than it can move without causing a collision should an enemy ship turn and ram—this can lead to an entire line of ships all hopelessly fouled together. When boarding, try to support the action with the raking fire of grape from flanking ships. This will help reduce the ship-crippling losses that can occur in a melee. Also, try not to have too many ships tied up in boarding actions at any one time; this destroys their mobility, and all ability to react to enemy maneuvers.

Psychological factors seem to play a larger part in simultaneous move games than in sequential move games, probably because there is more uncertainty. Study your opponents. What are their weak points and their strong points? What types of maneuvers do they like to use? What are their favorite tactics? Judging from their maneuvers, what are they trying to accomplish? What do they expect to do? What do you think they expect you to do? What can you do to mess up their minds?

To summarize: When superior, get in close and exploit that superiority to the fullest. When inferior, keep 'em guessing, and keep your distance. Be like the judo expert who uses his opponent's strength against him by concentrating on his opponent's weaknesses. Evaluate carefully how you are superior, and how you are inferior. Then plan the battle to maximize your inferiorities. Hopefully, this article will be helpful in finding ways to accomplish this, and will also prove helpful in determining what the "other guy" is trying to do.

A BAND OF BROTHERS? MULTI-PLAYER GAMES

What many people fail to realize about this game is that it is possible to play it a thousand times, and still fail to really have played THE GAME, (the GAME, of course being the multi-player version with timed moves and the multi-player communication rule). An experienced player can take a squadron of ships, and swiftly form more intricate formations than a band at a half-time show. This is a much simpler task than getting three players to all sail in a straight line at the same time. No "idiocy" rule ever devised can match the effects of a group of wargamers just doing what comes naturally.

I consider six (three on each side) people to be the ideal size group for a multi-player game of *WS&IM*. With a larger group there is a problem in seating everyone close enough to the mapboard to

see it, and with a smaller group there is not enough interplay between the various personalities present to be really interesting. Besides, any group of six wargamers is bound to include at least two genuine yo-yo's (one for each side), and these are the people who will really make the game interesting.

An evening spent playing a multi-player game of *WS&IM* can be an enlightening experience, and can enable you to learn more about the other players on your side than you ever cared to know. If you hold the chief command, among other things you will learn that:

- 1) Your subordinates cannot read your handwriting.
- 2) Your subordinates cannot tell left from right.
- 3) Your subordinates cannot grasp the simplest concepts of maneuver.
- 4) Threats of physical violence are often necessary to secure compliance with your orders.

If you hold a subordinate command, you will learn that:

- 1) You cannot read the commander's handwriting.
- 2) The commander keeps issuing orders to turn left when the situation obviously calls for turning to the right.
- 3) The commander must think you can read his mind to even attempt such complex maneuvers.
- 4) The commander has a nasty temper.

All this and more has happened during multi-player games that I have participated in. I have had three Elite 74s lined up to fire into a single enemy ship, only to have their shots blocked by the interposition of one of our resident yo-yo's Green ships (which was dismasted in the exchange, so that it could not even be moved out of the way on the following turn). I have seen large squadrons never get into action because they were hopelessly entangled and fouled with another friendly squadron. I have seen a player get so disgusted with the lack of support he received from another player that he disengaged his squadron, and sailed off of the mapboard and out of the game, leaving the rest of the fleet to its fate. These things can and will occur during a "pick-up" multi-player game. They can be avoided to some extent if some time for planning is available, and if the individual players are willing to modify their individual habits somewhat to conform to the realities of participating in a multi-player game.

Successfully playing a one-on-one game of *WS&IM* calls for an understanding of the various rules of combat and their impact on various aspects of the game, combined with skill in maneuvering a ship or ships. The successful play of a multi-player game calls for an equal grasp of the effects of the multi-player rules on various aspects of the game. The multi-player rules are deceptively simple—the Movement Notation Phase is timed, and all communication must be *written* during this timed period. The effects of these rules on the play of the game can be startling.

During this timed period all messages must be written, and all ship's movements (usually determined by these messages) must be noted. This does not allow time for lengthy discussions about the current situation, or for the outlining of erratic and complex maneuvers. Messages must be short, complete, and precise. The maneuvers covered must be simple with a capital "S". You may be able to sail a squadron through a "figure 8" with the greatest of ease, but that is a far cry from attempting to do so in a tight formation with two other people. A little extra time spent to ensure that your messages are clearly written and easily readable is usually time well spent. All of this will handicap your movements somewhat, but the other side is equally embarrassed, a point that should be kept in mind. Simple plans that would be easily countered in a two-player game will often succeed beautifully in these encounters.

Appoint a commander-in-chief before the game begins. This person should be regarded as a true commander, not merely the "first among equals." A committee system of command will not work with these rules. The commander should usually be the best, most experienced player available, as he is the most likely to be respected and have his orders followed. Sometimes a less skillful player makes an equally good commander if he has tact and is a good organizer (an Eisenhower type). The other players should make up their minds to be good loyal subordinates, even if they disagree with the manner in which the battle is being conducted. Intelligent initiative is fine, but it is foolhardy to follow a plan of battle independent of the rest of the fleet.

If time is available, a meeting should be held prior to the date on which the battle is to be fought by the players on a given side. Admirals of this period always tried to meet with their subordinates on the eve of a battle to discuss plans, iron out any misunderstandings, and cover any special signals that might be in use. Lord Nelson, the most successful commander of the sailing era, was especially noted for these pre-battle briefings. Several important items should be on the agenda of any such meeting.

1) The commander-in-chief should be chosen, if this has not already been decided.

2) The order of sailing should be decided. Who will command the various squadrons: Van, Center, and Rear? The positioning of the commander can be very important. With the Van squadron, the commander is in a position to lead the battle, thus providing an example of what is expected for the subordinates. With the Center, he is in a position to support either end of the battleline, as circumstances dictate. In the Rear squadron, the commander is in an excellent position to use his ships as a reserve where needed. This decision is complicated by the realization that if the line makes a 180° turn, the relative positions of the Rear and Van squadrons change. Yet another option is to divide all the line of battleships between the subordinates, and place the commander in a fast frigate behind the line. This would give the commander more time to study the situation, plan the movements of the fleet, and enable him to move to take personal command where most needed.

3) Discuss various plans, possible maneuvers, what should be done in various circumstances, etc. Resolve the various players' conceptions as to how the battle will be fought *before* the game starts. This way the actual game can be spent fighting with the opposition instead of with each other.

4) Work out some sort of "shorthand" system for sending messages. For instance, it could be established that if a message were sent that contained only a move notation (i.e. "1R2L"), it would be expected that *all* ships would make that maneuver. This is a worthwhile effort to cover all the more common types of messages.

5) Actually lay out the mapboard, position the ships of the various squadrons on it, and actually practice maneuvering together as a group. This drill will reveal any possible problems, and permit their correction before it is too late. One final point on playing multi-player games—try (though it is ever so hard) to control your temper. You will no sooner finish cursing out the player behind you for fouling the rear ship of your squadron, then your lead ship will foul a ship in the squadron ahead of you. It happens to everybody. So be kind to your partner, even if he is a yo-yo.

If this article contains any hints that improve your play of *WOODEN SHIPS & IRON MEN*—terrific—but I like to win too, so please don't use them against me! It is very embarrassing to lose at your own game especially when some of your favorite tricks are turned against you.



KREMLIN...the Game!



A satirical look into how the Russian Politburo works

Arriving on the heels of the latest Summit meeting is a brand new board game, **KREMLIN**, which pokes fun at the serious business of surviving as a Soviet Party Chief on the Politburo.

This elegant game features a single sheet of rules preparing would-be party members for their first game *in minutes*. Each player *secretly* records his allotment of influence to ten of the 26 politicians vying for seats on the Politburo. The player with the *most declared* influence on a politician controls him. The object is to be the player controlling an effective Party Chief for three years—so the game is one of political maneuvering to get your man to the top and keep him there.

A Strategy Game of Wit, Subterfuge and Skill

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CONTENTS:

- 1 16" x 22" mounted Gameboard
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- 24 Politician Cards
- 36 Intrigue Cards
- 1 Easy Basic Game Rules Folder
- 1 Advanced Rules Folder
- 1 20-sided Die

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UNIT SCALE: Individual Politicians
PLAYERS: 3-6 devious people, ages 12 and up
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THE EVOLUTION OF STRATEGY

A Still Evolving Analysis of PANZER LEADER Scenarios

By David S. Bieksza



As the wargame industry churns out more and ever more titles, players seem to be increasingly seduced by novelty. New, innovative games appear, only to be replaced on the shelves and gaming tables a month later by the latest fad. The veteran wargame that can successfully compete against the fresh product is becoming progressively rarer. A singular exception is *PANZER LEADER*, still a favorite after 15 years on the market. Building upon the popular *PANZERBLITZ* system, it revolutionized and invigorated our hobby when it appeared in 1974. To date it has sold well over 100,000 copies, and more importantly it is played by many still. The reason for this is simple; it continues to be one of the best tactical games on the market.

I've placed a lot of armored wreck counters on its mapboards since it first appeared, so its fifteenth anniversary seems an excellent opportunity to reminisce about the odd lot of scenarios I've become familiar with. The game system rewards good principles, and having a sound grasp of what is possible and what is not is the key to victory in all of its scenarios. Each of the scenarios is carefully balanced (one of the reasons for its continued popularity I suspect), and each presents the players with uniquely different challenges. Airpower, combined arms, mobile defense, breakthroughs and positional battles, the entire scope of the warfare of World War 2 is available in the game system. It is unlikely that any player can ever master the game sufficiently to become "unbeatable". I certainly lay no claim to that lofty pedestal. The seven scenarios that follow are my favorites; the discussions that follow are the fruit of experience.

Perfect plans for victory will be conspicuously absent in each discussion, because like most gamers I learn more by committing mistakes than by theorizing about "first principles". Instead, I wish to show how the tactics of each particular scenario evolved in response to the interplay of different ideas. The few paragraphs on these few scenarios—

Situations #7, #8, #9, #10, #15, #16, #20—can barely touch on all the things that must be considered in playing either side. Covering all the detail of all the scenarios in *PANZER LEADER* would fill a magazine this size, and perhaps still be short of being the definitive work. My effort is much more limited: to introduce a few points of play for consideration by the readers.

The historical commentary for each scenario is included as a matter of interest for readers and for fans of this game. Playing *PANZER LEADER* sparked my research into the events portrayed. The historical information helps one to appreciate even more the scenarios, and has indeed triggered some tactics for the scenario in question for me to explore. Often, you can learn what is, and is not, possible by studying the record. And, it brings the game to life.



Situation #7—Encirclement of Nancy The scenario card promises a free-swinging battle. The American player leads almost an entire combat command: a tank battalion, an infantry battalion riding halftracks, and an artillery battalion. The force deploys near the west map edge and must penetrate along the long axis of a mapboard and a half to seize all the town hexes in Grancelles. Casualties have no bearing on the victory conditions for the Americans—not that the Germans are likely to cause many. The scratch Nazi force consists of an infantry battalion (mostly submachine gunners), miscellaneous guns, some Czech-based armored vehicles, and a few trucks and wagons. Though they win by hanging onto a single hex of Grancelles, they cannot lose more than a dozen combat units in the process. Terrain provides an equalizer: to reach

Grancelles the American vehicles must cross a single bridge outside of Artain.

With such a tremendous bottleneck in their favor, it seemed logical for the Germans to place all the antitank artillery in Artain and billet a SMG company there. The rest of the *kampfgruppe* retired to the suburb of Grancelles on the east bank of the stream. (The *Hetzers* and *GW38s* conducted a mobile delaying action west of Artain before fleeing to safety.) When the American arrived on the ridge overlooking Artain, they decided against clogging the bridge with vehicles. Infantry dismounted to spot the enemy lurking in the buildings, thus clogging the *ride* with vehicles. The foot soldiers emerged from the traffic jam in small groups. With no hard targets at the far end of the cannon barrels, the German antitank gunners held their fire and the submachinegunners easily dispersed potential spotters until time ran out.

Thereafter, the Americans coordinated the unloading of the infantry better, but on the other hand the Germans replaced the *ATGs* in Artain with more submachinegunners. The task of spotting proved to be nearly impossible, but on one occasion (thanks to miraculous die rolls) a stack remained in good order. U.S. artillery flattened the town—even the 57mm antitank guns opened up, so that more tanks could exploit the gap. But when the *Shermans* passed through Artain the Germans unleashed their Secret Weapon—trucks and wagons. Trucks parked sideways on the roads to Grancelles forced the tanks into cross-country detours. Then the five Nazi vehicle units occupied the five town hexes on the west bank of the stream; after the armor clanked adjacent they simply backed up onto the five bridge hexes. But once the Americans finally advanced onto the bridges, the Nazi "last ditch defense" proved to be no great threat. The *Shermans* ripped apart the enemy positions, and the Germans salvaged a draw only because a lowly mortar platoon survived a 4-1 attack on the final turn.

Clearly the Germans were doomed if the Yanks entered Grancelles, so to bolster the defense of Artain the *kampfgruppe* commander lined up the AFV crews and asked them if they were ready to die for the Fatherland. Not surprisingly, the answer turned out to be affirmative. The next time the Americans topped the ridge, they found all the enemy armored vehicles neatly lined up on the bridge. Their wrecks limited stacking to such an extent that U.S. spotters had essentially no hope of avoiding dispersal.

Historically, the XII Corps, Third Army, planned a double envelopment of Nancy. While the 35th and 80th Infantry Divisions pressed directly towards the city, Combat Command A of the 4th Armored Division raced deep into enemy territory from the north to cut off the city's supply routes. At the same time, Combat Command B advanced across a large number of watercourses to complete the encirclement from the south. On 14 September, the date of the scenario, CCA shot up columns dispatched by the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division to reinforce the city while CCB crossed the Meurthe River and scattered disorganized opposition from the 553rd Volksgrenadier Division. The scenario reflects the action on the southern arm of the encirclement, though the German player seems to have more troops than is warranted. On a broader scale, the scenario demonstrates the nature of the early portion of the Lorraine Campaign—U.S. units attempting to retain their mobility in the face of adverse terrain and increasing enemy resistance.

Situation #8—Marieulles The description of the engagement undoubtedly caught the eye of every ROTC student as soon as he or she opened the box top: "Elements of the US 7th Armored Division engage a mixed force of German officer trainees at Marieulles." In the scenario, Marieulles becomes Grancelles and the officer candidates become an infantry battalion, one company of which is armed with submachine guns. Three batteries of 88s (plus the trucks to change their facing under the Artillery Field-of-Fire Limitations rule) provide most of the firepower. Victory hinges on how quickly the Americans can take control of the town. Unfortunately, the task force from the 7th Armored is not well endowed with the armor-piercing weaponry necessary to root the Germans out of the buildings. A battalion of armored infantry riding halftracks is beefed up by just one battery of M7 self-propelled artillery, a company of M4/75s, and the inevitable 57mm antitank guns.

The rapid crushing of a pocket required little subtlety. The burden fell on the infantry, who had to fill the dual role of spotter for the AP weapons and close assault force for liquidation of dispersed enemy strongpoints. Usually Grancelles was battered between a two-company hammer and a one-company anvil. The only significant change of tactics concerned the M7 battery. While the indirect fire rules were still a novelty, the artillery remained hidden to crush the 88s with low-risk indirect shelling. Even with the reductions for attacking a stack of four armored targets, the SPA unit was certain to obtain 4-1 odds on the enemy guns. On the other hand, the officer trainees were unlikely to be disturbed by the HE, and friendly A-class units would have to look elsewhere for targets that turn. The Americans found that progress was more rapid when the M7s acted as assault guns firing at point blank range.

The German defense always began with a solid ring of units around the periphery of the town to minimize enemy penetration. (A conspicuous hole was the bridge in AX9, exposed to fire from initially-deployed U.S. units. But the Germans in Grancelles' suburb were in no danger of being cut off by U.S. vehicles moving along the stream. As far back as Vol. 12, No. 1 of *The GENERAL*, vehicles were prohibited from moving directly from

one bridge hex to another.) After that, the German positions contracted into either of two defenses. In one, the troops formed a small number of strongpoints based on the 88 batteries, under the theory that a large defense factor minimized the chance of elimination from direct fire followed by close assault. In the other, the troops spread out into many small stacks, under the theory that the more 4-1 attacks the Americans conducted, the more chances they had of rolling a "5" or "6"! In practice, the outcome of the scenario tended to be independent of the style of both the attack and the defense. Bad luck for the U.S. player would cause a marginal German victory, but most often the result would be a draw.

Historically, Marieulles was located south of Metz, just beyond the WWI-vintage forts ringing that city. Metz not only blocked the advance of the Third Army's XX Corps to the West Wall, but it also formed the cornerstone for Nazi resistance along the Moselle River. The XX Corps ordered the 7th Armored Division to encircle the city from the south. On 16 September, the date of the scenario, the 48th Armored Infantry Battalion from Combat Command A jumped off, aided by the 23rd Armored Infantry from CCB. As soon as the men crossed a ridge overlooking the line of departure (a tiny bridgehead across the Moselle), they encountered a hornets' nest of resistance centered on Marieulles. The armored infantry needed the entire day to eject the defenders, about a battalion of infantry reinforced by 88s, and they succeeded only after tank support arrived. So the scenario is remarkably faithful to the historical engagement...except that the German forces belonged to the 17th S.S. Panzer Grenadier Division. However, German officer trainees did constitute the backbone of the defense of Metz. Their fierce resistance in the old forts completely stalled the Americans for two casualty-filled months.

Situation #9—Operation Market: Nijmegen The Valentine Bridgelayers catches the eye in this scenario, one of only two in which the bulky silhouette appears. It leads a British contingent of Bren Carriers, 25-pounders, and the four-vehicle Sherman platoons. A battalion of infantry with some trucks is identified as an American paratroop unit. Grancelles now becomes Nijmegen, and the stream through it becomes the criterion of victory: the Allies must control two bridges over the stream at the end of the game (excluding one far to the southeast). To halt the Allies the Germans possess an infantry battalion, a small amount of weak armor, a varied assortment of artillery, and an unusually generous allotment of trucks and halftracks.

The Allied player had all the fun in this scenario. When the Germans deployed in a line of uniform strength along the north bank of the stream, the paratroopers pinned down the forces in Grancelles while the Shermans pulverized the defenders in Artain. To complete the victory conditions, the Valentine Bridgelayers dropped its bridge unmolested in the woods west of Artain. The Germans countered this by slashing 88s and plenty of infantry in Artain and sending the armor to lurk in the woods to the west. The British tanks then charged across the undefendable bridge in the southeast and smashed into Grancelles from behind in conjunction with a frontal assault by the paratroopers. For insurance the Valentine dropped its bridge in the woods just west of Caverge. The Germans countered this through the redeployment of some armor and infantry to Caverge. The British tanks then simply supported the paratroopers on the Grancelles bridges from behind, overwhelming the weakened defenders.

The Allies, on interior lines, could threaten any spot in the defense faster than the Germans, on exterior lines, could respond. Only a German counterattack against the 25-pounders could make

the Allies sweat. All too often the Allied player would count off the minimum indirect-fire range and then place the heavy artillery in Nece, just a short drive away from enemy vehicles in either Grancelles or Artain and within enemy mortar range. Placement of the artillery in distant Merden was much safer and the resulting indirect fire was just as effective.

Historically, the battle to capture the Nijmegen bridges by the British Guards Armored Division and the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division involved both a grueling house-to-house siege and a risky river crossing in assault boats. The scenario has almost nothing to do with either. Considering the terrain in the area (the Waal River, for example, would be two hexes wide), an adequate depiction of the battle would be asking too much of the *PANZER LEADER* mapboards.

Situation #10—Operation Market: Arnhem For those "professional Germans" who suffered through total annihilation in Situation #8, this scenario offers the chance to turn the tables. The German player controls four rifle companies, a variety of artillery pieces, and a collection of armor ranging from puny GW38s to invincible Tigers. The British player has only some light artillery and an engineer company to bolster his three infantry companies. Victory depends on how quickly the Germans can eradicate the opposition and control Grancelles.

Like the officer trainees at Marieulles, the British deployed in a circle at the city limits, but unlike the trainees they refused to sit and wait for the enemy. For one thing, the Tommies had no 88s to rally around. For another, the engineers provided a potent close assault threat. So when the Germans closed in the Britishers spent the rest of the game dodging strong stacks and close assaulting weak stacks. At first they were successful. The Germans emulated the U.S. 7th Armored at Marieulles by splitting their forces into two groups in order to squeeze the enemy in between. Due to transportation limitations, the armor had to carry the riflemen into action. Thus a two-pronged attack tended to dilute AP strength too much. Then the armor and infantry consolidated into a unified attack formation, backed up by all the artillery (which customarily unlimbered among the trees north of the stream facing the larger part of Grancelles). This resulted in a slow British withdrawal that resembled squeezing toothpaste out of a tube. But by reversing the direction of the advance, chasing the British into the field of fire of the artillery pieces, the Germans met increased success.

Now the contest was an even match. Yet the Germans enjoyed so marked a superiority that there seemed to be some key factor missing. That factor proved to be the manner in which the infantry entered the fighting. It seemed logical to mount the twelve platoons on the seven AFV units and the five wagon detachments. However, this necessarily spread the riflemen thin until late in the game. Alternatively, a four-high stack of platoons could deploy in one of the wooded areas north of the stream in order to march into town on foot. Such a stack was essentially impervious to close assaults, and it represented a respectable offensive close assault threat. The British now found themselves in a tough position, trying to fend off the armor in the south while the proverbial irresistible force ran loose in the north. Employing this tactic, the Germans began to win rather regularly. (I had the misfortune of learning this as the British player in the middle of a convention tournament. I managed to win only because my opponent became demoralized after I close-assaulted his GW38s out of their misery. Psychological factors can often overshadow material factors!)

Historically, there is some ambiguity as to exactly what engagement the scenario is supposed to represent. The composition of the forces suggests

the stand conducted at the north end of the highway bridge over the Low Rhine at Arnheim. Here a battalion of the 1st Parachute Brigade, reinforced by stragglers, a contingent of engineers, and light artillery transported by jeeps, valiantly resisted ferocious assaults from the 10th S.S. Panzer Division. However, the pocket collapsed on 20 September. By the date indicated on the scenario card, the 1st Airborne Division was pinned against the river by the 9th S.S. Panzer Division ("Kampfgruppe Harzer"), and in the next four days would be annihilated. In either case, the flavor of the battle is adequately conveyed by the game—encircled Britishers standing up to impossible odds.

Situation #15—Elsenborn Ridge Anyone who'd buy a game called *PANZER LEADER* most probably daydreams of occupying the commander's hatch of some big, hulking armored vehicle. (As an aside, ever notice how this always involves the lead tank in the column? Somehow no one ever thinks of the fellow eating copious amounts of dust at the rear of the column.) Anyway, this scenario provides the matchless opportunity to command an entire company of big, hulking King Tigers. In fact, the German player commands a most impressive *kampfgruppe*: three battalions of infantry, four tank companies (Tigers and Panthers accompany the King Tigers), a good amount of transport, and artillery support from flak and mortars. In contrast, the Americans have little to catch the eye. Two battalions of infantry form the backbone of the defense. Light artillery and a few platoons of weak armor provide minimal support. The American player finds most of his aid and comfort in a pair of towed 105 batteries, the bad terrain on Board C, and tough German victory conditions. To win, the Germans must capture the two towns on Board C (St. Athan and Wiln) and exit ten combat units off the west map edge between two streams.

The initial American strategy called for a hold-at-all-costs defense of both St. Athan and Wiln. The former was certain to fall to the *volks*grenadiers, but to exit the map vehicles could find only one nearby gap in the heavy forest cover (which forever after became known as the "North Gap"): The Americans hoped that St. Athan would hold out long enough that the enemy would lack enough time to force a passage through the North Gap. In practice, the defense worked well. Against the two or three companies in St. Athan, the Germans massed most of the *volks*grenadiers in the woods east of town and supported them with a tank company, usually the Tigers. The Yanks customarily retained the M10 company for duty in the north. The tank destroyers were always too elusive for the Tigers to pin down (especially with the North Gap as a sanctuary), so if the Tigers threatened St. Athan they had to tread carefully lest they leave themselves vulnerable to an overrun, and if they operated against the North Gap the M10s cheerfully overran the infantry as the men emerged from the woods. In either case, indirect fire from the 105s dealt out "X" and "D" as the *volks*grenadiers crossed the open field adjacent to the town. St. Athan invariably fell, but the only units to exit would be one or two rifle platoons wading across the stream west of town.

Due to the terrain, Wiln seemed much more secure. Most of the time the Germans exerted some pressure against one of the gaps in the wooded ridge east of Wiln just to spread out the enemy defense. The task called for bulldozers, so naturally the King Tigers spend most of their time there. On rare occasions they even shot their way into Wiln before the main thrust arrived. The swift Panthers took the long way to Wiln. They rumbled up to the first roadblock, one or more rifle platoons, at the bridge near the swamp. Panzer leaders fresh from years of campaigning on the East Front were surprised at how quickly tank cannons could polish off infantry. A U.S. platoon could not quite equal the staying power

of a Russian Guards company. After the bridge was seized, American trucks, halftracks, armored cars, and Shermans doggedly delayed the advance of the panzers. They could never prevent the Panthers from reaching Wiln, and no matter how hard the Americans tried Wiln would always fall to the enemy. But afterwards there was rarely enough time for the Germans to overcome the residual opposition at the far end of the bridge leading westward. Given two extra turns, however, the Germans would have been unbeatable.

Since one or two crucial die rolls always seemed to check the Germans, no new offensive ideas emerged, and the Americans only fine-tuned the defense. Then the Series Replay in *The GENERAL* (Vol. 13, No. 1) came as quite a revelation. Send the *panzergrenadiers* forward on the tanks so that the *volks*grenadiers can use the S.S. transport? Why hadn't I thought of that? The showdown between the new German offense and the old American defense resulted in a crushing German victory. The *volks*grenadiers rode the trucks and halftracks into the woods, then dismounted and marched off to Antwerp. The tanks gained greater efficiency by unloading infantry to help overcome stubborn opposition. Only St. Athan, which held out until the second-to-last turn, proved worrisome. In response, the defense on the U.S. left flank was revamped to abandon St. Athan in favor of positions south of the stream. Besides plugging the North Gap, the GIs had to guard the lateral road through the forest lest the *volks*grenadiers use it as a staging area. Even so, game balance now swung slightly in favor of the attackers, including one memorable occasion where the margin of victory was a pair of Panther platoons which the American player had overlooked because of a "Spotted" marker on top of them.

Optional rules, chiefly Opportunity Fire, had no influence on game balance: German trucks and tank passengers became vulnerable to small quantities of direct fire during the approach to the American lines, but American vehicles delaying the advance could become trapped against high-MP terrain features. Experimental rules, chiefly the Turreted AFV Rule, also had no influence on game balance: the Nazi armor could blow a hole and immediately exploit it, but the American armor could employ Opportunity Fire and still retire to the next delaying position. (That is, the Shermans and M10s could. The poor fellows in the turreted M8 armored cars were expressly forbidden to by their field manuals.)

Historically, the Battle of the Bulge caught the southern wing of the V Corps, First Army, in an overextended posture. The green 99th Infantry Division had been assigned to this quiet area in order to gain combat experience. It held a lengthy sector through which the veteran 2nd Infantry Division attacked toward the Roer River dams. Indeed, the 2nd Division continued fighting even during the first day of the Battle of the Bulge. Not until the morning of 17 December did the American high command realize the scope of the enemy offensive. By then the V Corps right flank dangled in the open while receiving a heavy frontal attack. Only one escape route for the 2nd Division (and two regiments of the 99th) remained open: the twin villages of Rocherath and Krinkelt. In a masterful withdrawal, the 2nd pulled back to the towns under cover from the 99th, which then retired to Elsenborn Ridge through the 2nd's positions. The height of the German assault came on 18 December, the date of the scenario, from a strong *kampfgruppe* of the 12th S.S. Panzer and a regiment of the newly-reconstituted 277th *Volks*grenadier. (The scenario card errs in identifying the *volks*grenadiers with the 276th Division, which was stationed on the southern flank of the offensive.) The battle continued throughout the day. At times the fighting was house to house, but in the end the Americans held on. Sub-

sequently the 2nd Division withdrew in good order to Elsenborn Ridge and thereafter the northern shoulder of the Bulge was secure. The German order of battle in the game seems to be remarkably accurate, but not the American. Since most of the 2nd Division was concentrated in and around the villages, and significant armor and antitank assets were also present, the American player is short-changed. Still, this interesting and dynamic scenario reduces the battle to manageable proportions.

Situation #16—Bastogne: Prelude It seems that no game of WWII tactical combat can be published without including at least one Armored Car scenario. *PANZER LEADER* is no exception. Here we have the usual collection of SdKfz 234 armored cars, in support of five rifle companies on foot, facing six U.S. companies (similarly on foot) stiffened by a light tank company and some self-propelled artillery. This time the prize is not Grancelles but Artain: the winner must control two of the three town hexes.

Claims that the Americans can't lose this scenario are usually based on two widely-ignored rules. The first concerns deployment: the side that sets up second cannot be placed in the line of sight of any enemy units. The Germans line up on the two roads east of Artain first, so the Americans (limited to the road west of Artain) must hide behind the ridge—quite a distance for the riflemen to double-time. The only other legal deployment hex is the bridge adjacent to the town. But if four infantry platoons crowd onto the bridge, no vehicles may enter the town! The sequence of play specifies that all vehicular units must move before non-vehicular units do. (A surprising number of players have no idea this rule exists.) Since stacking limits apply throughout movement, the infantry would bar the tanks and trucks from crossing the bridge. Thus the Americans cannot make Artain invulnerable on the first turn.

The M5 company seemed to be the key to holding off the wolf at the door until the infantry could march into town. Keeping them on the west bank of the stream availed the Americans nothing. The German armor performed armor-piercing urban renewal and the infantry just goose-stepped into the ruins. At long range the light tanks could not damage the armored cars fast enough to save the town. In a considerably more aggressive move, the next time the M5s executed an opening-turn 1-2 Overrun of the four rifle platoons at the head of the southern column. Alas, the two-thirds chance of something good happening failed to materialize. Though the light tanks shot up the armored cars, the town still fell. A German company led by engineers wormed into a town hex next to the bridge, and close assaults against defenders on the bridge choked off reinforcements.

The Americans never found out how useful a successful overrun would be, because their next bright idea placed the M5s in a single town hex. If nothing else, when the tanks were transformed into wrecks the effect on stacking would hinder close assaults against the other two town hexes. The Germans won anyway. But that bright idea led to the final improvement, which was probably implemented by more bloodthirsty players right from the start: using the M7s in the direct fire role. Indirect fire seemed to represent greater finesse: widespread dispersals among the enemy infantry platoons would help the defense of Artain more than outright destruction of a few. Besides, firing positions on the ridge west of the stream were awfully exposed to AP fire. But all too often the IF would scatter harmlessly due to the dispersal of spotters. The correct tactics required the SPAs to occupy that ridge on Turn 1. The Germans thus faced a difficult choice. Suppressing the artillery revealed positions to the light tanks; dispersing the latter with a close assault saved the rest of the town. Holding fire to bash the town's garrison let the 105s

work over the foot troops, especially the valuable engineers. Sure enough, in this manner the Yanks finally managed to win.

Historically, at first glance the scenario appears to represent a rather anonymous action, but a little research shows that it is unexpectedly accurate. In the morning hours of 19 December the lead element of the 101st Airborne Division, the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, marched out of Bastogne headed eastward. The mission was threefold: relieve a scratch force of engineers defending the eastern approaches to Bastogne, feel out the enemy dispositions, and contact the blocking positions held by Combat Command R, 9th Armored Division. Along the way the paratroopers picked up stragglers from the 9th Armored. Finding stiff opposition between themselves and the last reported positions of the tankers, the paratroopers spread out into a cohesive line and fought only scattered actions. One involved a company that penetrated deep into enemy territory to reach the town of Wardin. Not far away, the Panzer Lehr Division was busy mopping up a major portion of CCR. The Germans feared that a rescue attempt was outflanking the Panzer Lehr main body, so the only available force—the division's reconnaissance battalion—was ordered to retake the town. It succeeded after a fierce fight. In the scenario the American force expands from one company to six to keep the firefight from extreme lopsidedness, but the flavor of hammer-and-tongs shootouts for key crossroad villages during the mobile phase of the Battle of the Bulge is retained.

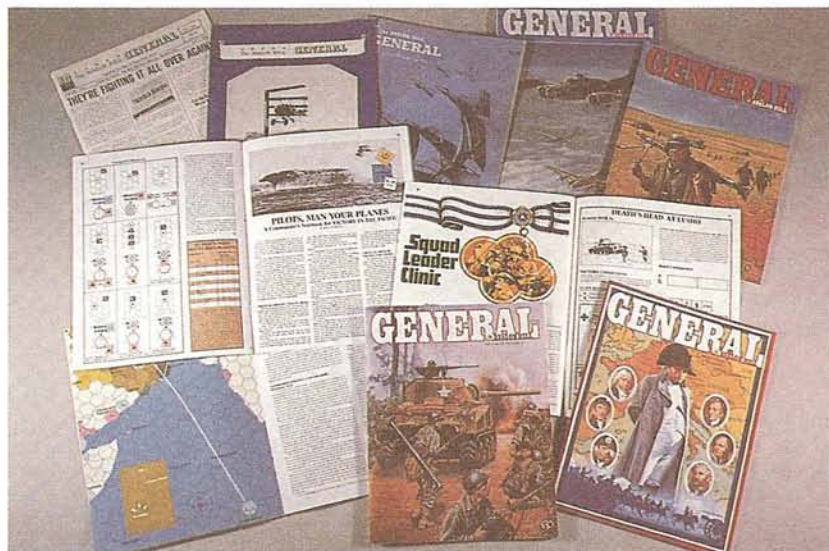
Situation #20—Remagen Bridge Though chronologically the last of the scenarios, this vies with Situation #1 for the title of introductory scenario. The Americans have five infantry units, five halftrack units, and four armored units. The Germans have five infantry units, three transport units, two artillery units, and a block. The U.S. player wins by controlling the bridge adjacent to Artain in eight turns. And lest there be any mistake, controlling a bridge means occupying not only that hex but two adjacent hexes, one on each side of the stream.

Beginners would find scant opportunity to learn about bridge demolition. Placed out in the open on the bridge, the German engineers usually found themselves dispersed by direct fire and finished off by close assault. Instead, the green player would receive basic training; a German defense of the near end of the bridge demonstrated the vulnerability of the infantry in towns to armor piercing ammunition, and a defense of the far end of the bridge showed the value of direct fire from the I-class weapons of halftrack and infantry units. The main lesson to be learned by the neophyte was the value of those seemingly-insignificant wreck counters. Sacrificing the Nazi halftracks in the town slightly cramped U.S. fields of fire. Better yet, sacrificing the halftracks on the bridge crowded the strength out of U.S. occupation of the structure: only one platoon could squeeze between the wrecks and the block. Then either armored infantry attacked the enemy, preventing removal of the block, or engineers worked on the obstruction, risking disruption of the effort through enemy close assaults. Either way, the Germans held the upper hand.

Historically, Combat Command B of the 9th Armored Division faced ill-led and badly-demoralized defenders at Remagen, so the force levels seem to have been adjusted considerably to equalize the contestants. But several aspects are accurate—the lack of artillery fire (for fear of demolishing the bridge), the necessity of approaching the bridge through a town, and demolitions (a ten-meter-wide crater in the approach road and a hole in the bridge surface) bearing vehicular traffic.

BACK ISSUES

Only the following back issues of *The GENERAL* remain in stock; price is \$4.00 per issue (plus 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: H—Historical, DN—Designer's Notes, V—Variant, SR—Series Replay, S—Strategy, Q—Questions, P—PBM (postal), Sc—Scenarios, A—Analytical. 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.



- 14-3: AIW—H, DN, S, Q; TRC—S; 3R—S; STAL—SR; WAS—V; PB—Sc
 14-5: SL—H, A, DN, Q; WS&IM—A; TRC—S; MD—S; SST—S; 3R—S
 15-2: PL—V, Sc; STAL—V; 3R—V; DD—DN; RB—S; VITP—S
 16-1: AZ—Sc, S, DN; 3R—S; NP—S; PB—SR; 1776—S; DIP—S
 16-4: MR—A, V, DN, Q; COI—S; 3R—S; TRC—SR
 17-4: FE—S, P, DN, V; MD—V, Q; COI—SR; VITP—S; 1776—Sc; WO—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; TLD—Q; 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, Sc; AIW—V; VITP—S; DIP—S; DD—S
 18-3: GOA—S, DN, V, Q; AOC—V, Sc; AK—S; VITP—V; SL—S, Sc; WS&IM—SR, P; DIP—S
 18-4: GL—H, V, A, Q; SL—Sc, A; LW—V; W&P—SR; AOC—S, P; FE—V; WAS—S; AK—S
 18-5: 3R—S, A, V, DN, Q; SL—S, A, Sc; TRC—V; TB—V; RW—V; CL—A; DUNE—V
 18-6: FT—A, Sc, V, DN; VITP—V, Q; MD—S, Q; SOTN—A, Q; SUB—Sc; BL—V
 19-1: SOA—A, V, DN, SR, Q; TLD—A, Q; 3R—S, Q; DWTK—DN; TB—A
 19-2: BB—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
 19-4: CIV—A, V, DN; CM—V; DIP—A; GL—V; AL—V; TR—Sc; WO—Sc; SLA; 3R—S, Q
 19-5: SON—A, S, H, Q; W&P—S, Q; DIP—A; WAT—V; WS&IM—Sc; SL—A
 19-6: VITP—PBM, SR; 3R—V, Q; DIP—A; FT—V; BIS—V; NW—A; SL—A, Sc; SUB—V, Sc
 20-1: GI—S, A, DN, V, Q; VITP—SR
 20-2: TT—A, DN, S, Q; MR—V; LRH—A; SL—Sc; W&P—V; GOA—S, Q; DIP—A; PL—V
 20-3: FRED—S, V, Sc, Q; PB—A; 1776—Sc; DWTK—S, V, Q; DIP—A; CON—V, S
 20-4: FITG—A, Q; SST—PBM, V; AW—A; DUNE—PBM; DIP—A; SL—DN, A, Q; BL—S; KM—V
 20-5: BR—SR, S, H, Q; LRT—S; DIP—A; GSL—Sc; GE—A; WS&IM—Sc; SON—Q
 20-6: 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
 21-3: BB—S, SR, Q; 3R—S; SL—A, H; SOTN—V; DIP—A; FRED—S; FE—S, Q; SST—S; TLD—S; PL—Sc; 1776—Q; SOA—Q
 21-4: PGG—S, SR; PB—A; 3R—S; TRC—S, V, Q; DIP—A; STAL—V, S; SL—Sc; PK—Q
 21-5: HW—S, V, A; MR—S, Q; OR—A; DIP—A; 3R—A; RB—S; CON—V; CIV—S; SL—A
 21-6: FP—H, V, SR; AIW—S, Sc; BL—V; TAC—V, Q; SL—A; PK—Q
 22-1: PAA—A, S, Q; TB—A, V; DWTK—DN; TR—V; GSL—PBM; 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; AK—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; PPG—S
 22-5: DEV—S, A, Q; GSL—Sc; BR—S; DIP—PBM, A; SC—V; FITG—A; ASL—Sc, Q
 22-6: ASL—A, Sc, DN, Q; FP—Sc; FE—S, Q; WAS—A; DIP—A; SL—S; TLD—S
 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, Sc; BV—SR; HW—V; BL—V, Q; BB—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, Sc; VITP—S
 23-6: 1830—DN, S, V, Q; FP—Sc; RB—S; DEV—PBM; CIV—S; MR—S
 24-1: ASL—V, S, Sc, Q; SOF—SR; TRC—S; FP—Sc; RF—S, DN; PGG—S
 24-2: ASL—A, S, Sc, Q; SOF—SR; PL—S; 3R—S; DD—S; FE—S
 24-3: DIP—S, A, H; HW—V, S; EIA—S; DE—S; TV—Q; KOTA—Q
 24-4: RSN—H, DN, A, SR, V, Q; ASL—V, S, Sc; FE—S; 3R—S
 24-5: BRIT—A, DN, S; CAE—S; CL—S; GL—V; CIV—S; SOJ—DN; KM—V, S; MR—S, Q
 24-6: CASS—H, S, SR, Q; 3R—S, Q; ASL—S, Sc; B-17—V; AZ—S



K.O. IN ROUND 5...

...Or Give Up the Home Base? Never, Never, Never!

by Frank Preissle

Ah, yes, I know what you're muttering to yourself. Having read "Another Afrika Korps Gambit" (Vol. 15, No. 5 of the *GENERAL*), you're rolling your eyes and mumbling in disbelief. "Good Gawd, is this the calibre of play that represents the *peak* of tournament skills? Is this what goes on in the finals of the AH Classic 500 at *Origins*, that *creme de la creme* of gaming competition? Yecch! Steve Packwood lets Bruno Sinigaglio take the British Home Base on the II May move, and then Bruno *loses the game!* If these two are the best players, what are those 125 or so other odd turkeys who entered the 500 like?"

Wait. Pause just a minute before you find a place on your bedroom den wall for the plaque you'll get when you win the 500 at *Origins* '88. Read further before you rush to the corner mailbox to send in your order for a dozen extra copies of the *GENERAL*, which will memorialize your name forever. Listen to what one of those odd turkeys has to say.

Having been immolated in the fifth round (quarter-finals) at *Origins* '77 and '78, let me offer a few words of hard-earned caution.

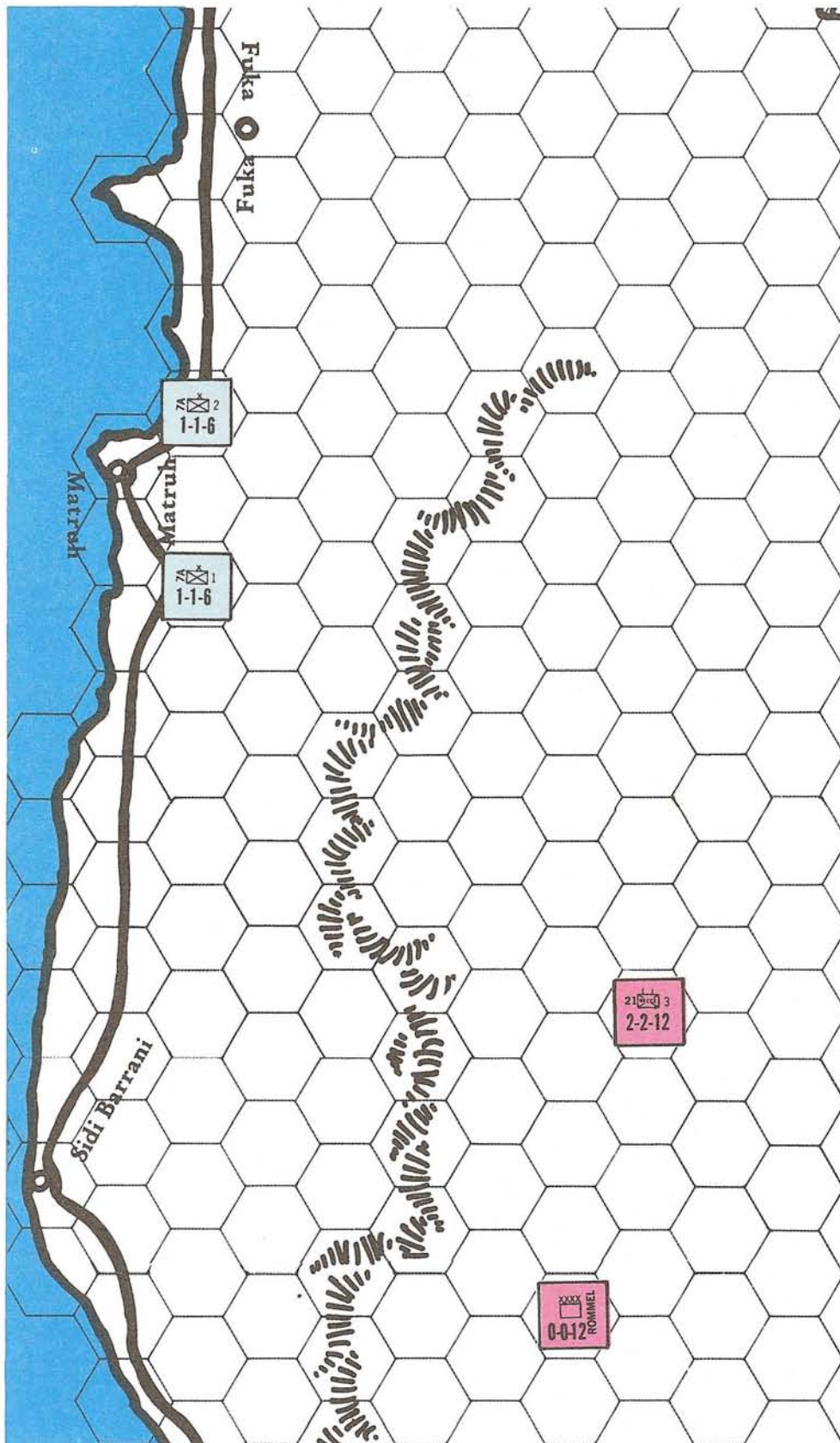
The *Origins* 500 is an experience like no other you've had in gaming. It starts leisurely enough late Friday afternoon. Surviving the first round, you swiftly squeeze in a second round game before the evening's over. Naturally, you get little sleep that night. There're just too many great things going on. So, Saturday morning you stumble out of the sack at 8:30, toss down a cup of coffee, and rush to meet the 9 o'clock starting time for Round 3.

By now well over 90 players have been eliminated. You're down to 32, of whom probably at least a dozen can be found in the AREA Top 50 listing, and another dozen are 1,800-calibre players who either aren't interested in joining AREA or haven't yet gotten around to it.

Your first two games have been easy, but this third round donnybrook goes five hours. You grab a quick burger, and hustle back to start the fourth round at 3:30. Ah ha! Something new. The tournament director smiles broadly at you and your opponent, and says: "Gentlemen, we have to complete four more rounds of play by 2 p.m. tomorrow. From now on, you'll have to time your moves."

Now the fun starts. Five minutes per move, with your opponent or a volunteer onlooker calling out the two-minute and the 30-second marks. As Axis player in *AK*, you're suddenly amazed at how dreadfully long it takes to direct 15 units around the desert. As Allied player, you generally have a few more units but less ground to cover. Yet, in the back of your mind there's always the

With Allied 1-1-6's at J47 and J49, the 21/3 aided by Rommel makes its II May move along the path shown by the red dotted line to K51 (K52, 53, 54 would have same effect). In their II May turn, Allies may advance no further than L53 (shown by dotted line.) They can neither isolate the 21/3 nor slip around it to reach the Home Base. On its I June move (shown by dotted black line), the 21/3 bypasses Allied units to another effective blocking position; L61, for instance. Caught in this bind, unsupplied Allies are helpless. Supplied Allies must try a surrounded 1-1 from L52 and J50.



ragging thought you'll miss an AV which will wipe you out. Counting and recounting hex distances and unit strength seems to take forever.

But you survive. Six hours of real time and 12 months of game time later, your opponent resigns. It's 9:30. As you reel away from the table, your stomach is growling, your eyes smart, your body feels as if it's suffering from the impact of 2Gs.

Another quick break, and at 10 p.m. you start Round 5. (Does this begin to remind you of a blow-by-blow description of a heavyweight title bout?)

Down to the last eight players. Now you're almost certain to be matched against an opponent whose name you simply recall as: an author of 17 articles in the *GENERAL*; an 1,800-rated AREA player; a genius with a 180 IQ who has brought along his own table-top IBM mini-computer to analyze moves, or the guy who invented the game.

Once again your smiling tournament director hovers over your table. "Gentlemen," he smirks with obvious relish, "this round must be finished before you leave tonight. And, the winner must report here at seven in the morning to start the semi-final match." As he departs for the night, you understand why a pre-requisite for choosing a tournament director is proof he served as a whip-cracker on a slave galley during a previous life.

You look across at your opponent. "Incredible," you think to yourself, "he looks as fresh as the Allied 4-4-10 substitute counters in my five-year-old AK game-box." (Unbeknownst to you, he is saying the same thing to himself.)

So now you have to decide. Will you go for broke, have a friend round up the No-Doze and arrange for a supply of coffee to be available through the night? Or will you succumb to the siren's delicious song of cold beers waiting back at the dorm and plenty of good gaming company to last through until the dawn?

What is it to be? Honor? Or Enjoyment?

At *Origins '77* I chose honor. And at 2 a.m. staggered out with the absolutely worst thrashing I've ever had in AK. So much for Honor.

Last year I knew better. Matched against Steve Packwood, my strategy was simple. First, do the "Recce Down-and-Out" (the very same play Steve said he's never seen or heard of until the next morning against Bruno).

Undoubtedly he failed to recognize it because he pulled a 1-1-6 back to a position far enough east of Halfaya Pass (J34) to thwart the move, and thus the Recce didn't roll east of R33. (Steve shares a trait common to top-flight players: an uncanny knack for unconsciously torpedoing opponents' strategies before they even have a chance to be developed.)

To illustrate the fatigue evident at this point, in this II April move Steve came within ten seconds of losing Tobruk. Only at the last instant did he catch the fact he had left a 1-1-6 in position where it could be AV'd by 21/5, allowing the Recce to roll unopposed into Tobruk and grab British Supply #1 for good measure.

Thwarted in Plan A, I shifted to Plan B. Very simple. On my first opportunity, launch a crunching 1-1, 2-1 combo against Tobruk. Now that's the way to end an AK game in the 500 quarter-finals! Needless to say, my gallant lads had as much success as the Japanese Kamikaze pilots did in turning back the U.S. Navy.

It was over by 11:30 and I was off for beer and more leisurely gaming until 6 a.m. But Steve, Bruno and the other two semi-finalists were up again and battling at 7 a.m., with little sleep behind them and knowing ahead of them was the 2 p.m. deadline to complete the last two rounds. By this time, superior gaming gives way to fatigue and the tension of playing for Honor (and yes, Glory!).

Now you know why you're liable to find the 500 finals featuring Allied players who give away their Home Base on II May and Axis players who fail to win after having been given such a surfeit of manna from heaven.

In less than 48 hours the two finalists may have spent 30 hours at the 500 gaming tables, with pressure and tension increasing as each hour passed. They've gotten maybe eight hours of sleep during that time.

Last year, someone remarked that the best way to prepare for an all-out assault on the 500 was to spend the previous month as a mercenary in one of the Third World brush-fire wars. I think that may be a bit drastic, although the source is rumored to have been one of the contingents of U.S. Regular Army officers, who were there. (About a half-dozen of them were entered in the 500. As a former enlisted man, I almost wept as one by one, they all went down to defeat in the first round at the hands of calloused 15-year-olds who sat coolly sipping milkshakes and puffing candy cigarettes. I'd tell you about the 1st Lieutenant, a battalion Supply Officer, who forgot to garrison W3 during his first three German moves, but that's another story.)

But now, on to the real topic of this article, which is an analysis of Steve's discussion about "Another AK Gambit", or what I call the "Recce Down-and-Out." Recall the situation. It is the Allied I May move. The Recce is at P45, with Rommel close-by. Two Allied 1-1-6's hold Halfaya Pass, but can speed no further east than J49.

Steve's comment about not having seen this maneuver should not surprise you. It is not mentioned in any *GENERAL* article for the past four years. It's the old story of reinventing the wheel (or in this case, learning of its invention in a slightly painful manner when the first one you see rolls roaring right smack over you.) The closest reference to it which I've found is in Omar DeWitt's "A Decade with Das Afrika Korps," in Vol. 11, No. 5 of the *GENERAL*. He points out the Recce can reach P31 on II April, but then says it can threaten the Home Base by moving to M42 (the advance Steve had seen before), failing to suggest the P45 location.

Seeing his Home Base could not be held, Steve moved his Halfaya garrison to J49 and J47, while torching his #2 Supply at J62.

The question is, what can Bruno do to make the best II May move for the Axis? My answer is not to place it on the coast road, as Steve considered in his article, but one hex south of the road at K51, 52, 53 or 54. These positions cannot be isolated by the two Allied units. They also block the coast road so the Allies are unable to reach the Home Base, and leave the Recce with a backdoor to use in motoring east if needed later.

If you, as Axis player in this position, can resist the hard-to-fight temptation to strut unopposed into good old J62, you hold a commanding position. Remember, the Axis does not have to occupy the Home Base at this point. By preventing the Allies from occupying it, the Axis job is done.

What can Steve, as Allied player, do on his II May, move if you have hunkered down on the K row? His article didn't specify what he had done with Supply #3 on I May, so let's look at two possibilities.

First, if Supply #3 was not sent to the east of Halfaya Pass on I May, the Allies are helpless (unless it can be sent there on II May.) There is no way for unsupplied Allied units to save the Home Base, since the Recce can block the road for several turns, long enough for the Allied units to be starved into submission after the Axis surround Tobruk on I June. The lesson is clear. If you don't wish to send Supply #3 east, then as Steve suggests in retrospect, don't destroy Supply

#2. Just move it into position where it can sustain the J47/49 units without being captured by the Recce. (Easy enough since the Recce can't move off the coast road once it reaches it.)

Second, even with supply for the J47/49 units, the Allies' only hope is a 1-1 surrounded attack against the Recce. That has a 33% chance of success.

And that's the reason for the sub-title of this article. Anyone who *deliberately* "falls" for the "Recce Down-and-Out" has a 67% chance of losing his Home Base plus the two 1-1-6's. Never, Never, Never!

It's intriguing to speculate about what would have happened at the *Origins '78* final if Steve's Supply #3 wasn't east of Halfaya. In that situation, while his two 1-1-6's were isolating the Recce in the Allied II May move, Bruno's advance onto the escarpment to seal off Tobruk on I June also served to *counter-isolate* the two 1-1-6's. Although the Recce succumbs at the end of the Axis II June move, the Allied units surrender at the end of their II June move. The Allied units can enter the Home Base that turn (and even move out to sea), but a supply cannot be brought into the Home Base then.

Wild conjecture, of course; but wouldn't it be something if this was the case and midst the turmoil of playing out this tense situation Bruno's counter-isolation was overlooked? Stranger things have happened in the heat of a 500 battle.

One final question remains. What should the Allies do when the Axis Recce arrives at R33 or thereabout on II April?

As Steve noted in his article, one possibility is to station a 1-1-6 far enough east of Halfaya Pass so it can counter the Recce's thrust. Steve points out this unit will not be able to assist in the defense of Tobruk. True enough, but tactical weaknesses may have to be suffered to maintain strategic strength. Holding a 1-1-6 in a reserve position is a small price to pay for saving your Home Base (unless, of course, you still believe in Peter Pan and Never-Never Land).

Another reaction is to send a 2-2-6 to sea on II April; I've seen this used quite successfully to counter the Recce's thrust. If the Recce doesn't carry out the threat, the 2-2-6 returns to help your Tobruk defense.

A third possibility, which I don't recommend, is a variation on Steve's suggestion to consider "falling" for the "Recce Down-and-Out." On II May you send a pair of 2-2-6's and a pair of 1-1-6's east to trap and eliminate the Recce. That leaves you with the 4-4-7, a 2-2-6 and four 1-1-6's to defend Tobruk and Halfaya Pass for a turn (assuming the Axis haven't yet drawn blood, which seldom happens). You should be able to hold Tobruk, but the pass will fall, leaving you in a very precarious situation. The Axis will be nipping at the heels of your expedition, and you probably won't be able to reinforce them until II June.

Your decision about which of the first two possibilities to choose should rest on the unit strength required to counter the Axis May I move in Libya. But whatever you do, "Don't Give Up The Home Base" (my apologies to John Paul Jones).

By the way, if you go to *Origins '88* and make it into the fifth Round of the 500, I'm personally acquainted with someone who has an unblemished record as a certain 5th Round victim. For a cold beer, I might be persuaded to introduce you to him.

Excuse me now, I have to catch a plane to the Southern Hemisphere . . . there's this new brush-fire conflict and it's six weeks 'til *Origins*.

I wouldn't miss it for anything.



Dear Wargamer,

I've been developing wargames professionally for 16 years and during that time I've dealt with a lot of game designers—some great, some not-so-good. Some brought me ideas with faulty research that were mere outlines of the eventually published game. Others amazed me with the cleverness of their innovations. They have run the gamut from brilliant to bozos.

It is then with great reverence that I am pleased to present to you the latest game of the individual who has consistently graced me with the best designs during my years at the Hill. Courtney Allen's UP FRONT/BANZAI has long been my personal favorite—embracing an amount of player interaction and excitement level unmatched in other wargames. THUNDER AT CASSINO is no different—players are constantly faced with gut-wrenching decisions that command constant attention as players alternate short, crisp moves that give the feel of simultaneous movement without any of the bother of written moves. By alternating the movement and fire of only one or a few pieces at a time, rather than allowing each player to move and attack with all of his forces in each player turn, a constant action-reaction, move-countermove atmosphere permeates the action. There are no boring minutes waiting for your opponent to finish his move. You must constantly be aware of what he is doing lest he take advantage of a move you've failed to counter in your impulse with an unchecked followup of his own. It is a game which has never failed to excite me in dozens of playings. If you liked any of Courtney's previous designs, you'll love this one. In many respects, it is his best game yet.

THUNDER AT CASSINO is based on the STORM OVER ARNHEM system, but is not restricted by the siege circumstances of its predecessor. Here, it is the Germans who are hammered by a veritable flood of Allied attackers, but who with skillful play can stem the tide and be in position to counterattack as the game reaches its climax on the 9th turn with the arrival of powerful reinforcements. This counterattack in the town will determine the winner or prolong the game to 15 turns as the Allies move from the devastated town up the sides of the mountain to the Abbey itself.

The STORM OVER ARNHEM system has been improved with the addition of terrain and elevation modifiers plus machinegun units that restrict the movement of enemy forces and give the term "Combined Arms" true meaning. Brittle in Close Combat, machineguns need a sufficient infantry screen to protect them from loss—but infantry need machinegun units to keep the enemy at bay. Both are vulnerable to nearby armor but the rubble of the bombardment makes getting it into position difficult. All are susceptible to artillery, which is the true queen of battle at Cassino. It is a simple yet highly effective portrayal of Combined Arms combat with each branch very much in need of support from the others.

The Fire rules of STORM OVER ARNHEM are gone but in their place is an initial bombardment which spews out casualties and scatters rubble randomly throughout the town so that no two games start with the same setup. The Tactical Advantage marker, which allows a player to reroll a critical die roll, is retained but takes on increased importance which, in turn, limits the frequency of its use. Unlike STORM OVER ARNHEM, there are no scheduled night turns. However, either player can declare a night turn at any time by surrendering the Tactical Advantage. As movement and infiltration are easiest at night, the ability to declare a surprise night raid is extremely critical. Consequently, once the Tactical Advantage has been used, the opponent is usually loathe to give it back—preferring to shoulder all but the most severe losses rather than give the opportunity for another night raid back to his opponent. Artillery can be used to fire smoke to aid infiltration/movement on a more limited scale but its effects are temporary and it can be blown away before it can be fully used.

I can unabashedly recommend THUNDER AT CASSINO to all wargamers. It is, in many respects, the best wargame I've ever played. Those seeking more information should order Vol. 24, No. 6 of THE GENERAL magazine due out approximately September, 1988 which will feature the game.

THUNDER AT CASSINO sells for \$22.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company. Please add 10% for postage and handling (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas). Maryland residents add 5% state sales tax. For quick credit card purchasing, call TOLL FREE 1-800-638-9292.

Yours in Gaming,



Donald J. Greenwood
VP, R&D, TAHGC



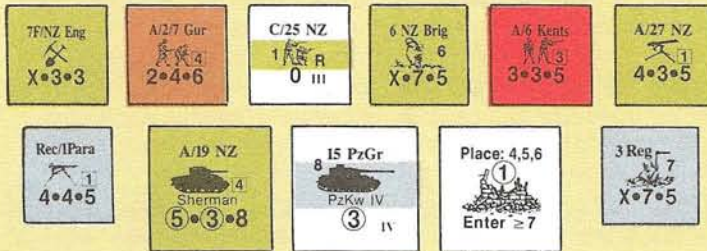
The four separate struggles that composed the battle for Cassino in 1944 were more reminiscent of the slaughter in Flander's Fields some three decades earlier than of the typical World War II battlefield. Stories of virtually impassable terrain and appalling conditions are lent credibility only by the gruesome reality of 135,000 casualties. Hitler himself cited Cassino as the only battlefield of the Second World War that approached those of the First in ferocity. It was a source of ultimate irony that Cassino was a mere sacrificial sideshow to ease the pressure on Anzio beachhead—an invasion hurled ashore to outflank the Gustav Line and make such costly assaults against fortified positions unnecessary. Long after the Germans had withdrawn, the ruins of the devastated town nestled beneath the steep, rocky slope of the eastern face of Monte Cassino gave mute testimony of the inferno which had been Cassino. 80,000 Allied casualties bore witness to the fact that it had been a hollow victory.

While the world's attention was riveted by the controversial bombing of the historic Monastery in the second battle, the real fireworks began on March 15th with another bombing heralding the start of the third battle. 460 bombers dropped 1,000 tons of explosives

on the little town in a bombardment lasting 3½ hours and covering each acre with over four tons of bombs. Awesome as the bombardment was, it killed only half of the defenders, and dusty figures in the baggy smocks and rimless helmets of the 1st Fallschirmjager Division rose from the ruins of this charnel house to repulse the first Allied thrust into the devastated town. The next eight hours saw continuous fire from 890 Allied guns into the tenuous German positions on the massif and the shattered town, but still the German perimeter held amidst—and, in no small part, due to—the rubble created by the Allied onslaught.

THUNDER AT CASSINO is the story of that third battle of Cassino. It is a fascinating struggle of sweeping contrasts. Bitter street fighting in which gains were measured in rooms instead of blocks characterized the battle in the town. Whole divisions had to settle for the clearing of a single house as the prize for their day's work—accomplished at terrible cost. Towering above them, assaults were launched and repulsed by both sides across the rocky slopes of Monte Cassino. And on Castle Hill, a medieval siege was reenacted with machineguns and mortars replacing catapults and arrows as German paratroopers stormed the feudal castle. Tanks, restricted by rubble and the mountain, proved decisive but could be brought to bear only with the greatest difficulty. Artillery and machineguns ruled the battlefield. It was indeed a return to the horrors of The Great War.

THUNDER AT CASSINO recreates the eleven days of the Third Battle for Cassino with a variation of the award-winning **STORM OVER ARNHEM** game system which preserves the "feel" of simultaneous-movement games without the hassle of written moves. By alternating fire or movement impulses, the traditional action-reaction scheme of sequential-movement games is maintained, while realizing constant player interaction as players answer each enemy action with an option of their own. The excitement level remains high throughout as the Allies seek to overcome a tenacious German defense made even more formidable by the rubble of the bombardment. Few wargames give as good a feel of the "Combined Arms" aspect of warfare as the player is forced to position his infantry, armor, artillery and heavy weapons in the correct proportion or pay a fearful price. The fall of the rubble and initial German casualties which precede each game guarantee that no two games will be the same. Unique night and smoke rules turn this slugfest into a surprising game of maneuver and counter-attack worthy of the valor displayed by both sides. An extremely simple wargame to learn, it defies mastery in a rare elegant marriage of historical simulation and competitive game. Several two-turn introductory scenarios are provided for quick play variation and a fast introduction to the game system before tackling the main game. A six-turn end game scenario also provides a quick-play alternative to the entire battle.



The Avalon Hill Game Company

DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.
4517 Harford Road
Baltimore, MD 21214

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CONTENTS:

- 1 22" x 24" mounted Mapboard
- 1 12-page Rulebook and Designer's Notes
- 390 Die-cut, double-laminated, ½" Playing Pieces
- 88 Die-cut, double-laminated, ⅝" Playing Pieces
- 4 OB, Scenario and Strategic Movement Cards
- 4 six-sided Dice

COMPLEXITY	VERY HIGH	SOLITAIRE SUITABILITY
	HIGH	
	MEDIUM	
	LOW	

Time Scale: One Turn = 12 hours; Impulses of variable length

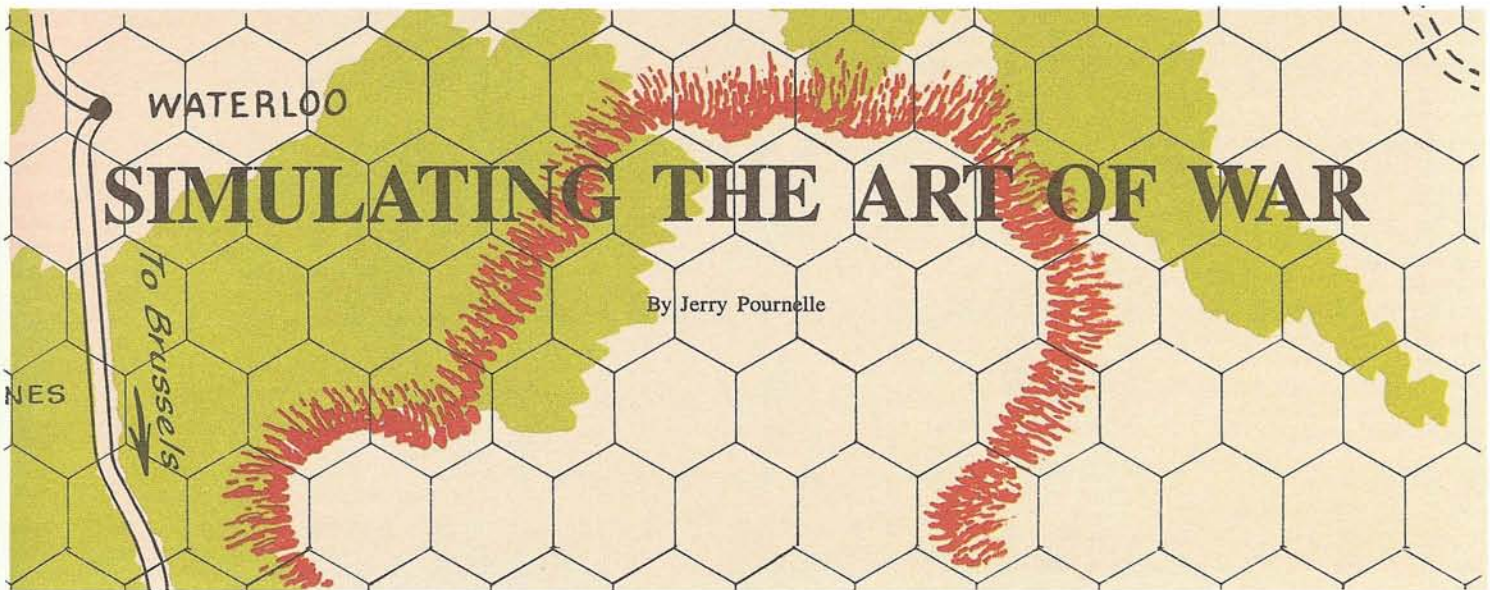
Map Scale: Area Movement; 1" = 300'

Unit Scale: Platoon

Players: 2 (with solitaire possible)

Time: 1-6 hours dependent on scenario

THUNDER AT CASSINO IS THE AVALON HILL GAME COMPANY'S TRADEMARK FOR ITS WWII ITALIAN CAMPAIGN BATTLE GAME



WATERLOO is the most frustrating game Avalon Hill ever published. Although Waterloo certainly wasn't Napoleon's finest battle—had he not made so many mistakes he would have won—it was the only battle in which the two greatest generals of the XIX century faced each other. Had Wellington enough of his Peninsular veterans—many were in America being slaughtered at New Orleans under Packenham—the outcome would have been decided in advance. Instead, he commanded, in his own words, "an infamous army" only one third British (including Scots), the rest composed of King's German Legion, Dutch-Belgians ready to go over to Napoleon (they and everybody else called their King "Frog" and thought him a fool), Brunswickers and Nassauers, with only 196 guns. His allies, the Prussians, were the last army in Europe to employ the old linear tactics. Officers dressed lines with surveying transits. After Ligny, twenty thousand Prussians carried their colors home; they couldn't be induced to rally even under the threats of Blucher's horse artillery.

Although the Prussian army employed rigid discipline and loaded faster than any other army, their marching pace was slow even by Austrian standards, and that was slow indeed. Their cavalry was nearly useless, and although they had 312 guns, the artillery was old, badly supplied, and badly served.

The best Wellington would say of his best troops (and seems to have undervalued them, particularly the Guards) was "they will not run away, and it will take a long time to kill them all." He couldn't even say that of the Dutch and the Prussians.

Napoleon on June 14 could issue this Order of the Day:

"Soldiers! this day is the anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland which twice decided the destiny of Europe. Then, as after Austerlitz, we were too generous! . . . Soldiers! at Jena against these same Prussians now so arrogant, you were one to three, and at Montmirail one to six!

"Madmen! one moment of prosperity has bewildered them! Soldiers! we have forced marches to make, battles to fight, dangers to encounter, but with firmness victory will be ours. The rights, the honor, and the happiness of the country will be recovered!

"To every Frenchman who has a heart, the moment is now arrived to conquer or die!"

This from a man who had never lost a major battle when he commanded a full army, to soldiers who had torn apart every army the allies could put in

the field; whose charge of bayonets had seldom been met no matter what the odds.

Yet Napoleon was not the young general of 26 in Italy, or the Emperor at Austerlitz. His marshals were worse, and he had left the best one, Davout, in Paris under protest. When he was told to stay and keep the city, Davout replied "But sire, if you are victor Paris is yours, and if you are beaten neither I nor anyone else can do anything for you!" So it was to happen, but as dawn broke on June 16 no one could know that. After it was over Wellington with justice could say "It was a damned nice thing; the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life. By God! I do not believe we could have done if I were not there."

The elements of high drama are all there; but the game is disappointing. Easy enough to say, and of course **WATERLOO** was one of the earliest AH games. Harder to improve it, especially if you are, as I am, determined to keep the game equipment. Few of us have time to make new counters or a new board.

Before we can simulate Napoleonic warfare, we have to understand how it was conducted. Here is a description of a French charge in Napoleon's time by General Foy, a contemporary:

"The action is opened by a cloud of skirmishers . . . they harried the enemy, escaped from mass by speed and from guns by scattered order . . . mounted artillery rode up at a gallop, firing grape and cannister at point-blank range . . . the line of battle moved, the infantry in column for it did not depend on fire, the cavalry units mingled so as to be disposable everywhere and for everything . . . the columns took to the double-quick with the bayonet, the drums beating the charge and the air reverberating with cries a thousand times repeated, 'FORWARD! FORWARD!'"

Such a charge generally carried everything before it: if the preparation had been sufficient. Napoleon did not throw men against an unshaken enemy, although imitators including his own marshals did.

The preparation generally consisted of artillery pounding, often combined with a charge of cavalry to force the enemy to close ranks and form square. If the cavalry caught infantry dispersed, the battle was over; just as, after the enemy lines were broken, pursuit by cavalry caused more casualties than the rest of the battle together. Fearing the cuirassiers and hussars, infantry would form packed squares, to be pounded down by artillery. When they began to break, the columns of bayonets moved forward.

Once the enemy line was penetrated, the battle usually ended swiftly. Men surrounded were men dead, and cavalry poured through the gaps, moved behind them, cut them off from retreat, forage, and supply. No army threatened with isolation would stand firm in those days (as few will now). Threats to lines of communication were the object of grand tactics of the time, while to break through enemy lines and roll up the flanks, simultaneously delivering charges of cavalry against the rear, was the object of tactics. And in battle, this was done *quickly*. Two more hours of daylight on the 16th and Napoleon would have won. One hour might have done it.

None of this is possible in the game. The artillery has no function, the cavalry is merely weak fast infantry, and the stacking rules make no sense. The feel of Napoleonic warfare is gone. So is the Principle of the Economy of Forces, the art of combining different kinds of units into an invincible weapon. The force of the charge is gone, although in those times attacking forces quite often won battles in which they were greatly outnumbered.

You cannot maneuver during the battle as the game is now structured. Intelligence is perfect, orders never miscarry, there is no delay between intent and actuality. In almost every respect **WATERLOO** is unsatisfactory.

Yet. Somehow. Despite using an inappropriate combat results table, despite everything else, there is a flavor to **WATERLOO** that makes it one of my favorite games. It is, as I said, frustrating. I keep thinking it could be the finest of all AH games, if only . . .

I don't think it can be perfected with the units furnished, but let's try. The following rules make an *interesting* game; try them, work out your own changes, and let me know the result. I want to see **WATERLOO** both playable and realistic; I'd like once again to hear Napoleon tell Ney "The fate of France is in your hands!"

ADVANCED WATERLOO

1. Add 7 PM as a move on all days. This is self-evident.

2. STACKING UNITS

2.1 At the *END* of a player's turn, no more than two infantry divisions, two cavalry divisions, three cavalry brigades, or a combination of infantry and cavalry, not to exceed one unit of each, may remain in a hex.

2.2 The *TOP* unit of a stack, and only the top unit

of a stack, counts for purposes of defense against an initial attack. (See ARTILLERY rules for exceptions.)

DISCUSSION: A hex is ½ mile across at widest. Given three feet to a man, three ranks deep, that's over 5,000 men. It's simply not possible to put more in that area and have them effective in defense. Actually, it would be somewhat less than that. Nor could you put more than 2 divisions in a half-mile box without so hopelessly mixing them up that they couldn't fight.

French and Anglo-Allied forces may stack ALL INFANTRY units from a single corps, as well as two divisions or three brigades of cavalry, whether from that corps or any other, for the attack. For purposes of this rule, the Allied 5th (Picton's Highlanders), 6th, and Brunswickers form one corps under command of Decken.

2.3 No stack greater than three units may form for attack unless the Corps Commander is in a hex adjacent or in hex with the stack.

DISCUSSION: This should be self-evident as an attack in column form. The Prussian linear tactics did not permit this kind of attack.

3. ARTILLERY

3.1 Artillery units may be added to a defensive or offensive stack without limit.

3.2 Prussian artillery units may NOT be added to any stack containing Anglo-Allied units.

4. COMBAT

4.1 Combat is in phases. The player whose move it is will be designated as the Attacker or "A" throughout the following. The other player will be designated as the Defender or "D".

4.2 Units may NOT engage units in more than one hex in any given fight, although they may engage several different units in successive phases of combat during a single turn.

4.3 Combat opens with artillery; A declares which D units he is engaging with his artillery units. He may engage only the top D unit of a stack, or ANY D artillery unit to which he is adjacent. Artillery has no "range"; it can only fight units in adjacent hexes.

4.4 After A has declared his artillery attack, but before combat is resolved, D may declare a cavalry charge; he may "charge" any A artillery adjacent to any D cavalry unit whether or not the cavalry is engaged, and regardless of position in a stack. Only cavalry may charge; horse arty may not charge. In charges against artillery, combat odds fractions are resolved in favor of the cavalry charging. D rolls the die as if he were "the attacker" in the CRT.

4.5 After A has declared his artillery attack and D had declared his cavalry charges, but before either combat has been resolved, A has the option of a "counter-charge" of cavalry units in the same square as his artillery which is under attack, regardless of the cavalry's position in a stack. Combat odds are rounded in favor of A's counter-charging cavalry as "the attacker." Only cavalry may "counter-charge"; horse artillery may not counter-charge.

4.6 Counter-charges are resolved. Units forced to retreat will be dealt with in the rules for retreats. Units eliminated are removed.

4.7 Surviving D cavalry may choose to continue their charge or withdraw. If they withdraw, they return to the hex where they started (actually they have never left it) without penalty of any kind. If they continue the charge, they may attack the enemy artillery units previously chosen, with odds rounded in favor of the charging cavalry (i.e., 3-2 becomes 2-1), the charging cavalry being "the attacker" for purposes of combat resolution. Destroyed units are removed. Retreating artillery rolls die; 1, 2, or 3

is rolled, the retreating arty is destroyed. If 4, 5, or 6, it is turned upside down, and may take no further part in combat this turn.

4.8 A's surviving artillery now attacks the previously designated targets. Odds are rounded in favor of Defender. Artillery engaged against infantry or cavalry can suffer no adverse effects; treat "A-elim" or "A back 2" as "no result."

4.8.1 Artillery engagements between opposing artillery units are rounded in favor of Attacker. Attacking artillery does suffer adverse results.

4.8.2 Artillery does not retreat. Units required to retreat are turned upside down in place. They may not move or take further part in combat during this turn.

4.9 The attack proper now begins. Only the top three units in the attacking stack may engage the enemy in this phase of combat. The only enemy unit which can be engaged is the Top unit in the defending stack, *except that all enemy artillery units now surviving must be engaged if they are in hexes adjacent to attacking units.* Attacking units may not engage units in more than one hex, but may engage more than one enemy unit, and must engage the top D unit of each stack adjacent to A units (as well as all D artillery adjacent to A units).

4.10 Surviving A artillery units may engage in combat in this phase, provided that no other combat is taking place from that hex and no other A units are attacking the "target" hex. That is, A artillery must have a clear field of fire and may not fire through its own troops or into a hex where its own troops are engaged. Non-artillery A units in hexes with A artillery taking part in this phase of combat take no part in the action.

4.11 Combat odds fractions are rounded in favor of the attacker (that is, 1-1 becomes 2-1, or an even fight). Artillery *under attack* from non-artillery units is eliminated if a retreat is required. Artillery units *attacking* non-artillery units cannot suffer adverse results. Artillery duels are resolved as previously mentioned.

4.12 Victorious units now enter the hexes they have attacked if those hexes are empty of right-side-up units. Upside-down units in taken hexes are removed. The entire attacking stack including unengaged units may advance; the actual attacking units must advance, except that Horse Artillery may advance at A's option, and foot artillery may not advance at all.

4.13 RETREATS: Units forced to retreat fall back one square, enter a stack with any units already there, and are turned upside down. They may take no further part in combat nor may they move as combat proceeds, and if enemy combat units capture and enter their hex, they are eliminated.

4.14 RESERVES: After the 4.9 combat is resolved, D may move any unit not in an enemy zone of control one hex, except that foot artillery may not move at all. Units entering stacks in enemy zones of control come in at the bottom of the stack. Units entering stacks not in enemy zones of control may be placed as D wishes.

4.15 CONTINUED ATTACK: A may now renew the attack as in 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12.

DISCUSSION: There is no space for detailed discussion here; most of the rules are clearly related to the realities of Napoleonic combat. Skill in forming stacks, directing battles, and placing both artillery and reserves decides the outcome of battles. Fractions are rounded in favor of the attacker so that an attacker with slightly more force than the defender has an even battle, and with twice as much force as the defender, has an assured win. This is consistent with battle in that era.

5. MOVEMENT

5.1 Units in enemy zones of control require two

basic movement factors (BMF) (one hour) to withdraw, and receive only one-half of the road bonus to which they would be entitled.

5.2 Upside down units (forced to retreat) require two BMF to reform in place, receive one-half road bonus. Upside down units in enemy zones of control may turn right-side-up and move one hex only.

5.3 (Optional) FRENCH troops receive following road bonus: six hexes first class road; three hexes second class road. Anglo-Allied get four and two Prussian get three and one. This is consistent with marching speed of the various armies.

5.4 To receive road bonus, units must not move in stacks.

5.5 Units joining stacks use *two* moves to enter a stack at the bottom, and *three* moves to go to the top. A formed stack may only move at one-half speed of the slowest unit in the stack.

6. HIDDEN MOVEMENT

All units remain upside down until they come within two hexes (one mile) of enemy units. They are not thereafter turned upside down unless forced to retreat. Each player receives five blank units which move as cavalry and may be placed with whatever force he pleases. When dummy units are revealed they are removed from the board. Players may also use HQ units as they please.

7. HEADQUARTERS UNITS

7.1 A French stack containing Ney gets one additional combat factor per unit in stack, up to four factors. A French stack containing Napoleon Bonaparte gets two factors per unit up to six (except that Imperial Guards units with Napoleon get three per unit up to a total of nine).

7.2 A Prussian stack containing Blucher receives one additional factor per unit up to three. An Anglo-Allied Stack containing Wellington receives two factors up to a total of six. Anglo-Allied cavalry units get one additional factor per unit up to four if Uxbridge is in the stack.

7.3 Rules 5.1 and 5.2 do not apply to units adjacent to their own corps, army, or supreme commanders when the move begins.

7.4 Headquarters units are captured if enemy combat units enter a hex they are in. If in a stack forced to retreat, they retreat two hexes. If in an annihilated stack, they are killed.

7.5 If Blucher is killed, all Prussian units retreat toward Wavre. If Napoleon is killed the PAA player wins the game. If Wellington is killed the French win the game.

8. INITIAL POSITION

Prussian units on board at 7 AM 16th must be north and east of Fleurus.

9. ISOLATION AND FLANKING

9.1 Prussian units are isolated if they cannot trace an unobstructed primary or secondary road route to either the north or east edge of the board. Anglo-Allied are isolated if they cannot trace a road route to the north or west edge of the board. French units are isolated if they cannot trace a road route to the south edge of the board. Isolated units fight at one-half of their combat factors.

9.2 Flanking: Units are outflanked if they are attacked from three different hexes. Outflanked units fight at one-half of combat factor.

Whether through these rules or others, I am determined to see *WATERLOO* what it should be; to hear the drums roll, feel the earth shake as the bearskins of the Guard come over the hill, and the dread cry chills the ranks: "Vive l'Empereur!"



15TH AIR FORCE

A Variant for B-17

By Lawrence Cirelli

The 15th Air Force was activated on 1 November 1943 under the command of Major-General Jimmy Doolittle. Bomber and fighter groups had been transferred from the 9th and 12th Air Forces to form the new command. The 15th was intended to supplement the Combined Bomber Offensive against Nazi Germany. Besides hitting targets beyond the range of the 8th Air Force, it was hoped that during the winter months the supposedly warmer climate of the Mediterranean would allow the 15th to bomb targets twice as often as the socked-in 8th. Unfortunately, the weather never did cooperate. During the first two months of operations (Nov-Dec 1983), weather conditions forced the 15th to fly most of its missions against Italian targets while hitting only eleven of the priority German targets. And during the first two months of 1944, only four German targets were hit in January and ten in February.

Operations began with four B-17 groups (the 2nd, 97th, 99th and 301st), two B-24 groups (98th and 376th), three P-38 groups (1st, 14th, 82nd) and one P-47 group (325th). Five medium bomber groups were temporarily assigned until the end of 1943, when they were returned to control of the 12th Air Force. The maximum size of the 15th Air Force was set at 21 bomber groups and seven fighter groups. Early missions were flown from airfields in Tunisia, but from mid-November on the 15th moved its permanent airfields to Italy. (Refer to the map accompanying this variant.)

The 15th Air Force's top priority was the destruction of the Luftwaffe followed by attacks on targets high on the Combined Bomber Offensive list. The 15th was also assigned the task of assisting the offensive in Italy, attacking German positions in the Balkans, and softening up targets in preparation for the invasion of southern France.

The first mission was flown on the day of activation against two Italian targets—the La Spezia Naval Base and a railroad bridge at Vezzano. (Among the attacking forces were B-17s from the 97th Bomb Group; as one of the oldest groups in the European Theater, the 97th had also taken part in the first heavy bombing raids of the 8th Air Force and of the 12th Air Force.) On the following day, the 15th flew its first mission against a strategic German target when B-17s and B-24s attacked the Messerschmitt factory in Wiener-Neustadt, Austria. Results were good, but not without cost. Six B-17s and five B-24s were lost. American gunners claimed 56 German fighters destroyed, 27 probables and eight damaged.

During its 18 months of operation, the 15th Air Force flew 148,955 heavy bomber sorties, dropping 303,842 tons of explosives. Its targets were located in twelve countries. During the "Big Week", between 20th and 25th February, the 15th flew 500 sorties. It lost some 92 bombers in this concerted Allied attempt to smash the German aircraft industry. From April through August 1944, the 15th sent 5479 bombers on 19 missions against Ploesti, Rumania (13469 tons of bombs dropped with a loss of 223 bombers). On 24 March 1945, the 15th flew its first mission against Berlin. Over 150 B-17s took part in this raid on the Daimler-Benz tank engine works. By the war's end, the 15th Air Force had destroyed one-half of the German fuel production and transport systems in Occupied Europe, as well as its share of enemy fighters.

For this variant, we are concerned with the missions of the 5th Bomber Wing, which flew B-17s from January to April 1944 (the time span of our

game). It was the time when General Ira Eaker (Commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces) referred to the 15th as a "pretty disorganized mob". It is also the period which most closely parallels the mission conditions of *B-17, QUEEN OF THE SKIES* for the 15th Air Force in terms of fighter opposition and crew training.

During these four months of 1944, the B-17s of the 5th Bomber Wing were mainly committed to hit targets in Italy and the Balkans. Operating from airfields around Foggia, 75% of the 5th's targets were rail yards, enemy airfields and aircraft related industries. Besides flying sorties during the "Big Week", the 5th Bomber Wing was called upon in February and March to provide ground support for Allied forces at Anzio and Monte Cassino. The 5th also took part in the April raids on Ploesti; although known for its oil complex, these first raids were conducted against the city's rail yards.

By the end of April 1944, General Eaker was happily reporting the improved performance of the 5th Bomber Wing and the entire 15th Air Force. Eaker credited this improvement to better organization, and the lack of heavy fighter opposition (which was being concentrated against the 8th Air Force during this period).

MISSION TARGETS

Missions 1-25

Roll 2D.

ROLL TARGET	TYPE
11 Anzio*	Ground Support
12 Aviano	Airfield
13 Belgrade	Airfield
14 Belgrade	Rail Yard
15 Brod	Rail Yard
16 Brod	Rail Yard
21 Bucharest	Rail Yard
22 Budapest	Aircraft
23 Fiume	Oil
24 Klagenfurt	Airfield
25 Klagenfurt	Aircraft
26 Maribor	Aircraft
31 Mostar	Airfield
32 Nis	Rail Yard
33 Nis	Rail Yard
34 Piraeus	Dock Yard
35 Ploesti	Rail Yard
36 Ploesti	Rail Yard
41 Pola	Dock Yard
42 Regensburg**	Aircraft
43 Reggio Emilia	Rail Yard
44 Rimini	Rail Yard
45 Rome	Airfield
46 Rome	Rail Yard
51 Sofia	Rail Yard
52 Sofia	Rail Yard
53 Steyr**	Aircraft
54 Toulon**	U Boats
55 Turin	Industry
56 Turin	Rail Yard
61 Udine	Airfield
62 Verona	Rail Yard
63 Verona	Rail Yard
64 Villaorba	Airfield
65 Wiener-Neustadt	Aircraft
66 Zagreb	Airfield

* Subtract -3 from die roll for flak occurrence over target, Table O-2

** Add +1 to die roll for flak occurrence over target, Table O-2

Rules Changes

The following are the changes in the rules for *B-17, QUEEN OF THE SKIES* to accommodate this variant. Except for the specific alterations made below, all other rules for play are in force.

I. B-17G

The B17-G (with chin turret) started to arrive in the European Theater in September 1943. In this variant, the player begins his missions flying the game's standard B-17F model. However, if his bomber is lost in action or irreparably damaged, it is replaced with the B-17G model. The following rules (as adapted from James Meldrum's "The Rest of the Royal Family" in Vol. 20, No. 6 of *THE GENERAL*) reflect the B-17G performance:

1. The chin turret has twin guns and may fire at German fighters attacking from the following positions: all levels of 12:00; 10:30 Level and Low; and 1:30 Level and Low.
2. A German fighter is hit with a die roll of "5" or "6" from this gun position.
3. German fighters attacking from the 12:00 High position may not knock out the chin turret.
4. The chin turret is affected by all other hits that would normally affect the bombardier or nose gun.
5. The ammo supply of the chin turret is the same as that of the nose gun.

II. Pre-Mission

Follow the normal Pre-mission steps except for the following. To begin a mission, place the B-17 counter over Foggia, Italy in Zone 1. There is only one Mission Target City Table to roll on instead of three; use it for all 25 missions.

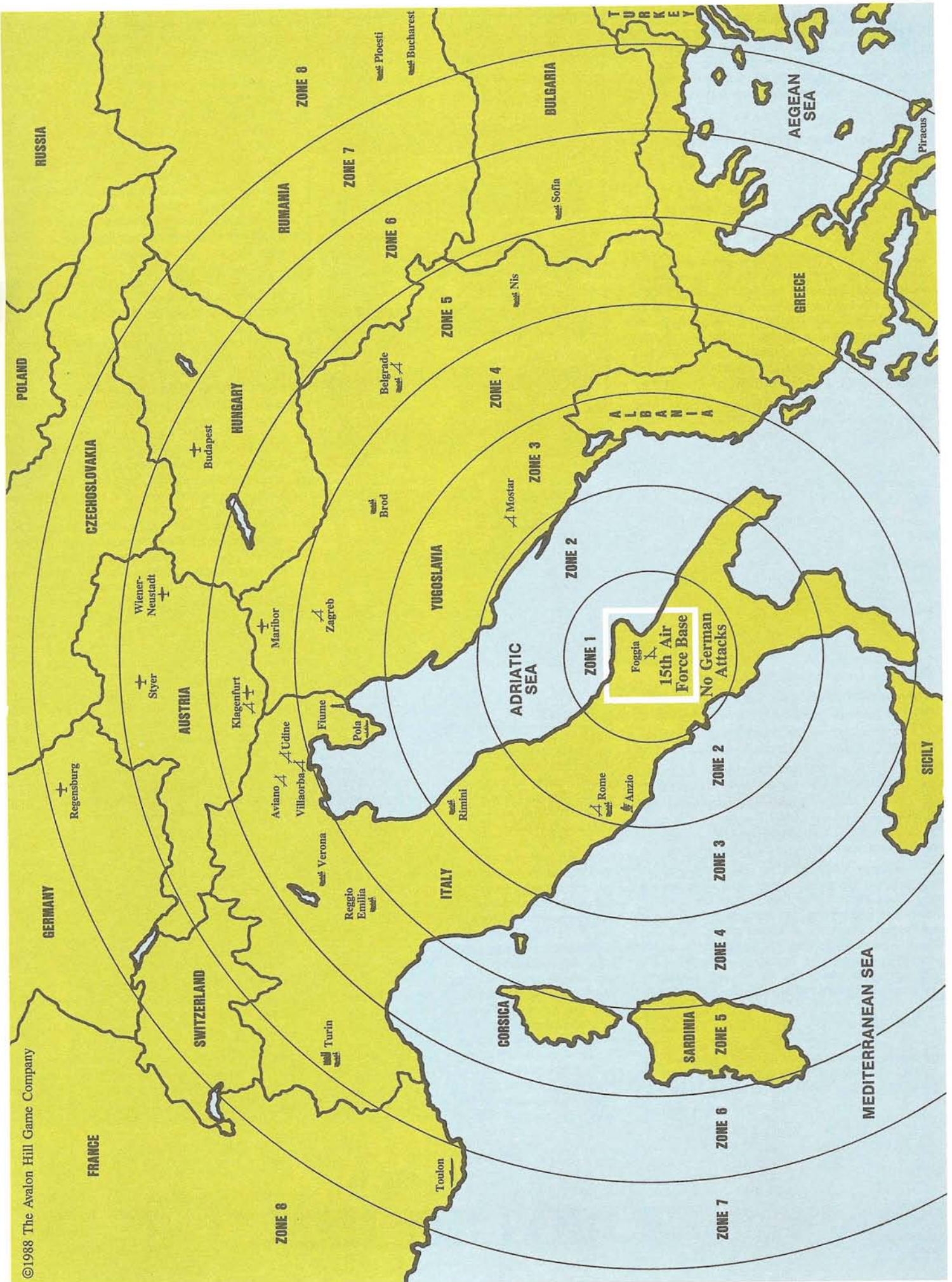
III. Alterations to Tables

1. Revisions to the Mission Target Tables (G1, G2 and G3). When called upon, roll two dice with results applied to the new accompanying Mission Target Table.
2. Revisions to the Flight Log Gazetteer (G-11). When target has been determined, refer to the new accompanying Flight Log Gazetteer.
3. Although the longer ranged P-38Js and P-51s started to appear in Europe in 1944, the 8th Air Force was given priority in receiving these "long-legged" fighters. These aircraft would not become operational with the 15th Air Force until May 1944. As a result, fighter cover was not as good on long ranged missions. Use the following revised table to replace the Fighter Cover Table (G-5). Fighter cover is extended to cover all eight zones however.

ZONES	DIE ROLL		
	POOR	FAIR	GOOD
1-5	1-2	3-4	5-6
6	1-2	3-5	6
7-8	1-3	4-6	—

4. Regarding Bailouts and Landings, the following rules are applied:

A. If a crew member bails out and lands unhurt or survives a forced landing in France, Italy, Yugoslavia or Greece, he will be returned in time for the next mission by the Underground or Partisans on a die roll of "6" (see Note d, Table G-7 and G-10).



FLIGHT LOG GAZETTEER

TARGET CITY	ZONE 2	ZONE 3	ZONE 4	ZONE 5	ZONE 6	ZONE 7	ZONE 8
Anzio	-2/I						
Aviano	-2/W	-1/W	O/W-I	+1/I			
Belgrade	-2/W	O/W	O/Y	O/Y			
Brod	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y				
Bucharest	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y	O/Y	O/B-R	O/R	O/R
Budapest	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y	O/H	O/H		
Fiume	-2/W	-1/W	O/I				
Klagenfurt	-2/W	-1/W	O/Y	O/A			
Maribor	-2/W	-1/W	O/Y	O/Y			
Mostar	-2/W	O/Y					
Nis	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y	O/Y			
Piraeus	-2/W	-2/W	-1/W	-1/W-Gr	O/Gr	O/Gr	
Ploesti	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y	O/Y	O/B-R	O/R	+1/R
Pola	-2/W	-1/W	O/Y				
Regensburg	-2/W	-1/W	O/W-I	O/I	Alps	+1/G	
Reggio Emilia	-2/W	-1/W	O/W-I	O/I			
Rimini	-2/W	O/I					
Rome	O/I						
Sofia	-2/W	O/W-AI	O/AI-Y	O/Y-B	O/B		
Steyr	-2/W	-1/W	O/I-Y	Alps	+1/A		
Toulon	-2/W	-2/W	-1/W	-1/W	-1/W	O/F	
Turin	O/I	-1/W	-1/W	-1/W	O/I		
Undine	-2/W	-1/W	O/W-I	+1/I			
Verona	-2/W	-1/W	O/W-I	O/I			
Villaorba	-2/W	-1/W	O/W-I	+1/I			
Wiener-Neustadt	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y	O/Y-A	+1/A		
Zagreb	-2/W	O/Y	O/Y				

German Fighters attack over the Alps in good weather only.

A—Austria; AI—Albania; B—Bulgaria; F—France; G—Germany; Gr—Greece; H—Hungary; I—Italy; R—Rumania; Y—Yugoslavia; W—Water.

B. If a crew member bails out and lands unhurt or survives a forced landing in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania or Albania, he is automatically captured (see Note c, Table G-7 and G-10).

C. If a crew member bails out and lands unhurt or survives a forced landing in Zone 1 (Allied-controlled Italy), he is automatically ready for the next mission. Seriously wounded crew members roll on Table BI-4 Wounds, Note b.

D. If a crew member bails out over the Alps, roll one die: 1-5—dies of cold and exposure, 6—rescued but captured by Germans.

E. If B-17 force lands in Alps, plane is destroyed and all aboard KIA.

F. If B-17 landing on land in other than Zone 1, modify landing Dice Roll by -3.

IV. Strategic Movement Board

The board accompanying this article depicts a map of southern and central Europe. Missions will take the player's B-17 to 27 cities (including five capitals) in nine countries.

V. The Alps

1. There are two missions that require a B-17 to fly over the Alps—Steyr and Regensburg. Consult the Flight Log gazetteer to see in which zone the bomber must cross the mountains.

2. A B-17 that must descend to 10000 feet for any reason does not have the altitude to cross over the Alps.

3. In case of "Heat Out", a B-17 can re-climb to 20000 feet to pass over the mountains (still out of formation), but each affected crew member must roll for frostbite. The B-17 may return to 10000 feet after crossing the Alps.

4. If the B-17 must stay at 10000 feet because of "Engine Out" or "Oxygen Out" it must either abort

the mission (if unable to reach the target) or the crew must bailout or land the plane if unable to recross the Alps on the return leg.

5. If damage to the B-17 requires descending to 10000 feet while over the Alps, the crew may bailout (except the crewman flying the plane) and the plane must crash with the pilot still aboard.

VI. Weather

1. In all cases except over the Alps, treat weather as in the normal game.

2. When a B-17 enters the zone in which it must fly over the Alps, the player rolls for Weather Conditions in that zone only on Table O-1. Whatever weather conditions exist on the outward leg remain in force for the return leg.

A. If the weather is bad, severe icing conditions prevail and the mission is aborted immediately.

B. If the weather is poor, the player has the option of continuing with mission or aborting. If the decision is made to continue, the B-17 flies through dense cloud cover and snow. Player rolls two dice: 2-9—B-17 survives passage unharmed; 10-12—pilot errs and flies into mountainside (bomber is destroyed and all aboard KIA). Player must roll again on return leg.

C. If weather is bad or poor, NO attacks are made by German fighters.

D. If weather is good, roll one die; on a die roll of "6" only one fighter wave will appear. German fighters may make one attack regardless of attack results; no attacks from Vertical Climb or Vertical Dive positions are allowed (disregard if rolled).

E. If a mission is aborted because of weather over the Alps, it still counts toward the required 25 missions of the Campaign Game.



AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	60	2563YOW	1
2.	D. Burdick	59	2270HGP	2
3.	J. Kreuz	54	2190IGR	3
4.	J. Beard	49	2188IIR	4
5.	B. Sinigaglio	45	2179GJJ	6
6.	J. Noel	13	2168DDJ	5
7.	P. Siragusa	54	2110FHK	7
8.	E. Mineman	30	2073DFG	8
9.	D. Garbutt	58	2071HJP	9
10.	S. Sutton	27	2054KHN	10
11.	P. Flory	36	2039EHL	11
12.	P. Gartman	25	2030HHK	12
13.	H. Newby	25	2001UJO	15
14.	P. Landry	34	1997HIN	14
15.	G. Schmittker	7	1983DFJ	18
16.	R. Beyma	35	1979DDG	19
17.	C. Corn	9	1970FEA	13
18.	F. Preissle	57	1967MNY	20
19.	T. Oleson	69	1965ZZZ	17
20.	J. Spontak	4	1963DCE	21
21.	B. Remsburg	43	1960HIQ	16
22.	T. Deane	12	1947EBB	22
23.	W. Scott	57	1944MKW	24
24.	F. Reese	40	1931IDJ	23
25.	E. O'Connor	19	1906FGM	25
26.	J. Eliason	8	1895FHM	26
27.	M. Rogers	20	1880CEH	28
28.	K. McCarthy	14	1872CFI	30
29.	B. Salvatore	27	1871GKO	31
30.	P. Halfman	10	1870GHP	29
31.	L. Barlow	7	1856JKU	32
32.	E. Miller	7	1849HKR	34
33.	S. Johns	13	1831HFI	35
34.	R. Shurdut	5	1827FHL	33
35.	G. Smith	14	1826FGM	36
36.	M. Frisk	14	1818CEI	37
37.	D. Mattson	2	1805JIT	46
38.	K. Kinsel	5	1799GFI	38
39.	F. Lutzstein	43	1786GHH	39
40.	J. Orms	5	1783HGP	42
41.	M. Mitchell	3	1783FHM	44
42.	L. Carpenter	5	1781CEF	40
43.	K. Blackwell	1	1775GFB	—
44.	D. Kopp	5	1774GIN	41
45.	M. Cox	2	1771GDA	43
46.	D. Greenwood	5	1756GFK	45
47.	M. Dultz	2	1720OSZ	49
48.	M. Simonitch	2	1718DFH	48
49.	L. Mogern	2	1705NFC	47
50.	R. Schilb	2	1702EHK	50

MEET THE 50 . . .

The AREA is, quite simply, a pool of experienced and reliable competitors. The organization (at best a weak word for a body whose sole purpose lies in enjoyment of playing) draws its name from The Avalon Hill Game Company which originated it, maintains it, and whose games form the medium for its competition. Since its inception in 1975 and introduction to the readership in Vol. 11, No. 5, over 6000 players have availed themselves of its services in matching and rating them with other responsible gamers. Each issue sees a reporting of the latest rankings of the top 50 members; the above is from Vol. 24, No. 5 of The GENERAL which showed Mr. Tom Oleson reaching the highest goal: the ZZZ rating on his alpha-numeric code. Simply put, it means that he has played 351+ rated games, against 129+ different opponents, of which 94+ games were completed by mail. No small feat, although we are sure that others will someday reach this summit as well. Tom Oleson personifies all that is good about the AREA system, and he was showcased in the column in Vol. 24, No. 2. Indeed, in each issue we turn our spotlight on one of the Top 50, asking them—since all in our hobby are much more than just game players—to report on their profession, other hobbies, family, and concerns within the hobby. For more information on the AREA, readers are encouraged to write to Brenda Parrish, c/o Avalon Hill, the current AREA Technician.

MOVING UP FRONT

A Study of Movement Options

By Rex A. Martin



Combat consists of, when reduced to its basics, two elements—firing/melee and moving. (You pessimists may add a third—ducking.) No game system so clearly displays this as that of *UP FRONT*. Other articles in this periodical (Greenwood's "Playing Your Cards Upfront" in Vol. 21, No. 1; Burnett's "Return to the Front" in Vol. 22, No. 2) have looked at doing as much damage to the other fellow as possible while avoiding it yourself. But you can't shoot them if you don't get close; and the best way to survive I know of remains running away. So let's take a few minutes to consider the various types of movement and their hazards in this most intriguing game.

In *UP FRONT*, there are three directions to go: forwards, backwards, sideways (and with this latter, we must include *Lateral Group Transfers* and *Individual Transfers*). Going forward is fairly obvious even to non-players; your men are closing the Relative Range. Going backwards increases the Relative Range. Going sideways is always intended to get one or more of your men into a position from which they can be more effective (out of a Marsh, to better terrain, into a *Flanking Fire* position, and so forth) without changing the Relative Range. And transfers, which seldom see use even by experienced players, allow you to realign your forces to take advantage of the changing combat situation.

To good players—the *really* good players—the following points all seem to come instinctively. For the rest of us, let's consider some of the finer points of movement.

Advancing

Play a Movement card; exchange the range chit in front of your group for the next higher. Dodge any bullets. Jump in new terrain. Sounds simple? It is. But the pitfalls can be many, and some come from unexpected quarters.

Any Movement card can be used to get you closer to the enemy. Some Movement cards may be used only by specified nationalities, but even the movement-poor Americans have 24 available. However, the deck consists of 162 cards, so even the relatively movement-rich Russians and Japanese cannot afford to waste them. In *UP FRONT*, movement is not at the whim of the player as in most traditional boardgames. Like everything else in this game, it must be a carefully considered proposition

and all must be done to make it effective when you get the chance to move.

A single Movement card in your hand is really not all that useful, for it will not usually be all that effective in getting your men forward. Oh sure, there will be those instances when circumstances or frustration force you into playing it, usually against your better judgement. But some Smoke to hide your dash ahead, a Concealment card to duck with, and/or some Terrain with a negative modifier to get into all help your confidence in reaching the next chit. After all, you don't want your men shot up getting where they are going.

All Movement cards carry a positive modifier (+1), making any attack against them more effective. These are cumulative, up to a +2 modifier. The terrain you are leaving and any Smoke or Concealment cards you can play modify the enemy's incoming fire to your advantage. For example, your four-man group has just left some Woods after having played a Smoke card last turn. The enemy lays down a "Fire 4" attack against the moving men. You, when he shows his attack, play a "Concealed -2" card. Instead of an attack that could have been "5" (4, +1 for Movement), your group faces an attack of "0" (-2 for Woods, -1 for Smoke, -2 for Concealment). Even if a random Breeze blows away the smoke, it is easier to take an attack of "1" than of "5". It can never be stressed enough how valuable those Smoke and Concealment cards are for getting your troops forward.

Even without being fired on by the enemy, your jog across the *UP FRONT* battlefield is apt to be a bit rocky. You don't always get where you want. In lieu of his discard, the opposing player may drop any Terrain card (except Open Ground—a favorite of mine during playtest until Greenwood finally got tired of that ploy) on your moving group. Unless a Stream or Marsh card, you must decide if your fellows will plunge into that terrain, or dash around it. If the former looks inviting, play continues as normal (the Movement card is immediately replaced by the Terrain card). If not, the Terrain card is discarded, but your Movement card is turned to reflect a Sideways move and the Range chit returned to its previous value.

The play of such terrain "discards" is as important a judgement to make as any other you will be called upon for in the game. Dropping a Stream or Marsh card if you hold one is fairly obvious, unless

you want to hang on to it in hopes of the movement of a more vital group (usually the enemy firebase or an enemy group with victory within its grasp). For most, except those playing the Germans or elite troops, the only question lies in whether they wish to forego all action that turn in order to see the enemy stumble. In the case of Stream/Marsh cards, I will gladly pass up one turn to mire even a mediocre enemy two-man group—preferably at a range where I can destroy them. For the Japanese and Russians, it is absolutely imperative to use these cards at first opportunity, simply to open up the options in their four-card hands.

After having been kept from use of Open Terrain cards to befuddle opponents, I cast about for others. Obvious choices were the Gully, Brush and Wall cards—some 12 cards of the 162. These prove exceedingly useful, both offensively and defensively, and are a boon to the small-hand nationalities. (I try to retain multiple-use cards; it opens your options for action and reaction considerably in a game this fast-paced.) I always assume that if an enemy group moves, it has terrain superior to anything I'm going to give it. If I can, I'm going to disrupt his little trip to that building or hill.

Place an unwanted Gully card when the cover it provides will not benefit your opponent (if, say, you've no Fire cards—although he'll not know that) or when his lack of fire from the afflicted group looks to be a distinct advantage to you. One of my favorite ploys is to drop a moving enemy firebase into a Gully. It will be at least two turns before it can trouble you again. (Obviously, however, you should be wary of this if you've somebody crucial on a hilltop in range.) Lay a bit of Wire in that hole, and getting his firebase back into action again will be very costly in terms of Movement cards.

I rarely hesitate to drop Brush on a moving enemy group, assuming that wherever it's headed is likely better defensive terrain than a few weeds (refer to the Series Replay in Vol. 21, No. 1). In many instances it may make that safe forward move from a Gully or -3 Building less inviting for the enemy. In effect, the use of Brush has replaced the use of Open Terrain in my playing style. Play of the Wall card serves much the same purpose, and I use it as frequently unless the moving enemy is directly opposite my own firebase.

A Brush/Wall card is occasionally quite effective in flushing an enemy group forward into range for your devastating fire attack. Let me explain. Sup-

pose that an enemy group is moving to a range just short of the point where you can deliver an effective attack. You, it appears to your opponent, cannot shoot but instead only discard an annoyance—the Brush—to slow him down while you search for a useful Fire card. Many unskillful and impatient players you will face would accept the Brush, even if they hold a better Terrain card, figuring they can immediately play another Movement card and get where they want at a closer range than they had planned; after all, the Brush you bestowed cancels the Movement modifier and you didn't fire last time. You promptly unveil that high Fire card when they move and shoot the hell out of his group. I've used this ploy, under favorable circumstances, several times against new opponents. Try it sometime.

The moving group may, of course, reject your kind offer of terrain and prefer to simply run sideways. Don't be distraught. You've lost nothing, and gained a new card (with all the optimism that implies) for your hand. Your opponent has wasted a valuable Movement card, and may well go into that terrain he was dashing for anyway, but now at the greater range. If he tempts fate and plays a second Movement card to get forward, he has just given you the best opportunity you are likely to get in this game; that -2 modifier makes his boys a prime target.

There is one special form of advance we must consider—the Japanese *Banzai*. Only the Japanese, with their 75% level for breaking, could contemplate such a suicidal charge. Any group under the direct command of a Japanese SL or ASL may have a Banzai declared as its sole action simply by playing a Movement card. All the men in that group, including those pinned who instantly and automatically rally, are committed to charging forward to engage in hand-to-hand combat. When (if) they reach the targeted enemy group, Infiltration and Morale Checks to enter CC are unnecessary.

The disadvantages of this play are, however, considerably more significant than the advantages. The Japanese player has narrowed his options for the group to a single course of action. The Banzai cannot be voluntarily cancelled; it must go in unless the defending group (the Japanese player must declare which enemy group—either ahead or adjacent to the Banzai-ers—the charge is aimed at when he announces it) is eliminated or retreats or moves laterally out of range. The Banzai group may take no action other than movement or Close Combat. Worse, no Movement card may be played on any other Japanese group unless and until a Movement card has been played on the Banzai-ers each turn. Any enemy fire is likely to be much more effective than usual (remember, the only terrain dropped on them will come from your opponent, and you can't play Concealment cards) since any result that would normally "pin" a Japanese character will instead eliminate him. Truly, a "do-or-die" course of action, the Banzai should end the scenario one way or the other.

The Banzai must be reserved for those game-winning situations where there is indeed no other option available (see the Series Replay in Vol. 22, No. 2 for an example). And launching a Banzai from greater than Relative Range 4 is simple foolishness. Unfortunately, many players, when taking on the Japanese role these days, purposely organize their men in such a manner as to create a Banzai-specialized group (high morale and high CC values) in anticipation of launching one. This inevitably narrows the player's options in any scenario, which in turn may lead to precisely the desperate situation demanding a Banzai. A sort of "Catch 22", death-or-glory cycle.

In only one case—Scenario R, the Paratroop Drop—do I anticipate using a Banzai when setting up my Japanese. I do like to create a Banzai-specific "B" group, with the expectation of an enemy group

being dropped nearby. As early as possible, a charge is declared against it. This early in the game, with the enemy hand less than perfect, there is a fair chance the Banzai can reach the target. Usually, either the targeted group will be overwhelmed, or it will retreat (pulling a Movement card from your opponent's hand and allowing you to cancel the charge). In either instance, your surviving members will be closer to the enemy, hopefully in better terrain than they began. At the very least, this play is sure to rattle your opponent—and it may even win the game for you by discouraging him to such a point that he is no longer able to make efficient, logical decisions.

Retreating

Discretion is, in this as in many games, the better part of valor. There inevitably comes that moment in *UP FRONT* when you may want to run away. Indeed, in some scenarios (notably Rear Guard Action, Evacuation, Delaying Action) a judicious withdrawal is the key to victory for the defender. In other cases, one of your groups may be in a tactical stance where disaster looms (facing a Banzai without Fire cards, under Flanking Fire, in an exposed position far forward of supporting groups, infiltrated by superior CC-valued enemy men). The wise commander tries to avoid such predicaments, but even he will make a retrograde move when necessity dictates.

A *Retrograde* move may be made by laying any normal Movement card down reversed (i.e., so the circled "—" and the illustration of the backs of the two soldiers shows at the top). However, unless a red RNC shows on the Movement card, the retreating group may not go beyond Range chit "0". There are only 12 Movement cards with red RNC, so retreat to -2 or -3 Range chits will be unusual—and beyond that exceedingly rare.

However, most retreats won't be near so drastic; rather, they will be undertaken to avoid a temporary tactical unpleasantness. You've the same chances of retreating as you do of advancing. And you face the same dangers—although most opponents will not drop terrain (except those staggering Marshes and Streams at times) if you seem to be running back. The same methods of guarding yourself serve when retreating as when advancing, so hang on to those Concealment and Smoke cards.

At this point, it would be logical to mention another consideration—one that may arise whether advancing, retreating, or just shifting sideways. In *UP FRONT*, any group may move . . . assuming that you are willing to abandon any pinned men in that group. True, the rules prohibit placing a Movement card on a group with a pinned character; however, the rules also allow *Voluntary Panic* at any point in a player's turn, giving you the option of accepting elimination of those pinned men for the ability to move the survivors that turn. This is one of the toughest choices you will face. But, for a host of reasons (to save the several at the sacrifice of one, to advance into a winning position, to outflank an enemy position) you may want to consider leaving weaker characters behind. In the end, only the player can make this decision—and it must be an intuitive one, based on the worth of the character being abandoned as posed against the potential opportunities the movement represents. In your calculations, you should add in the surprise value of such a move. The accepted way to keep an enemy group down is to keep one or more members broken; such an unexpected move may catch your opponent unprepared to react. (I have won a game in precisely this manner, abandoning two men to move into the winning position while my opponent was moving forward with all groups.) The decision to abandon someone comes down to a "gut" reaction—as so much in this game can. I can offer no pat advice for you novices here.

There are other valid reasons besides imminent danger for a Retrograde move. Many of the scenarios demand that a certain number of unpinned men (usually four or five) reach a given range chit for the player to claim victory. It is an axiom that it is easier to move and protect one group than two—requiring fewer Movement cards, fewer Terrain cards, less of everything. If two adjacent groups can neither win the scenario alone, I have often retreated them to a similar, relatively safe distance and then transferred enough men to make a game-winning group. This comes to the fore most obviously when I take on the role of attacker in Scenario R; my forwardmost groups inevitably fall back to Range chit 3 or 2 to regroup for victory.

I have often been chastised for my willingness to retreat; expect your own opponents to have a few good chuckles. But the retrograde move is an important part of your tactical repertoire. It breaks Infiltration and Flanking Fire, increases the range (so lowering the enemy's Firepower), often ends a threatened Banzai. All too many players look upon a retreat as a waste of valuable Movement cards, and not at the long-term advantages it may bring.

Fancy Footwork

Many, if not most, of the Movement cards you will play during a scenario are placed sideways. Forging a Stream, getting out of a Marsh, transfers of a single man or an entire group, slipping into a flank position. All demand the play of one of those precious Movement cards, and all greatly improve your tactical situation.

If you've been so unlucky as to have blundered into a Stream (or begun the game in one), you are—quite literally—up the creek. The afflicted group cannot change range until they ford it; any fire attack from the Stream is modified to your detriment; MMGs and mortars may not fire from a Stream, and LMGs must be fully crewed to fire (and still use their lower Firepower value); malfunctioned weapons cannot be repaired; infiltration of adjacent enemy groups is problematic; and there is *no* defensive bonus for being stuck in it. You want to walk over that water quickly so that you can get on with the business of winning. If you've managed to locate one of the six "Ford" Movement cards, and hung on to it, you can simply grin as your group skips across. But if you haven't, you will have to face the odds (see Jim Burnett's fine article "Up Front by the Numbers" in Vol. 21, No. 2 of *THE GENERAL*). To get across, you must play a Movement card sideways. But only if you immediately draw a black RNC from the Action Deck are you over the obstacle; otherwise your precious Movement card is discarded and your men remain mired in the Stream. Many a player has come to grief when Lady Luck turns against him and either no Movement cards or every red RNC in the deck comes his way. The opponent, between chortles, merrily shoots down the men in the water.

Being bogged in a Marsh is marginally better than being stuck in a Stream. It does modify any attack against the occupying group, and hence is a terrain type that can mean victory. The same penalties accrue for the play of Fire cards. But getting out of it is assured, provided you've two Movement cards to play in consecutive turns. If you don't, don't bother moving that group at all; playing one Movement card while hoping to draw another is wishful foolishness—you could get stuck in motion while the enemy snipes away with no modifier (the Movement card cancels the Marsh benefit). And the worse situation you may face due to being in a Marsh is to have one or more characters broken after having played that first Movement card sideways; why increase the odds of this happening? Personally, I counsel abandoning them, since you can't play a Terrain card, unless you hold Rally and Concealment cards sufficient to await a break in the enemy

fire. The damage is already done and you may as well be bold.

In the rare case when you've blundered into a Minefield (placed as a discard by the enemy), the firm rule is to attempt to remove (24.5) it. You risk a man, but lose no Movement cards. For the timid, the play of two Movement cards sideways can get you out of the Minefield without risk, but the coming enemy fire attack modified by -2 may be much worse. Tiptoeing through the teller mines is not healthy when it makes the soldiers such fine targets.

Enough of what a sideways move can get you out of—how about what it can get you into? At the forefront of any *UP FRONT* player's mind when he draws one of the four "Flank" Movement cards are his chances of doubling the firepower of his fire-base. First, the player must determine which enemy group he can flank—it must be adjacent to the fire-base and it must currently have another of his groups directly opposite. Next he must insure that the flanking group can actually move (no point in wasting it in a Stream or Marsh or on Wire) and survive to get into defensible terrain. Finally, he can only hope that the enemy group remains in place for a moment so that he can use that heavy Firepower (best when the flank is against a group with several pinned men). In actuality, Flanking Fire is rather fragile—it rarely comes about, and generally doesn't last long once attained. But it can be a game-winner.

The real worth of the Flank move is the implied threat. By unleashing such a bluff—declaring the flank move—it is highly likely that the enemy group threatened by it may move. If this is a particularly dangerous group, or one in good terrain, this can work to your advantage by flushing them from their cozy haven. If you've saved a Stream, Gully, Minefield or some other nasty surprise, this is the moment to use it. It may also be that one of your other groups now has a shot at the quarry; make it while they are moving to avoid the Flanking Fire. Few opponents have the intestinal fortitude to face doubled firepower; use this fact to upset his plans if you haven't the Fire cards to back up your threat.

There are, of course, some obvious times *not* to use a flank move. Never use it against an enemy group hung up on Wire; he will simultaneously clear the Wire (something he's probably planning on anyway) and end the flank threat. Never declare it against a group in a Marsh or Gully, they're going to move anyway; and any ford attempt will remove Flanking Fire on a group in a Stream. Never target a moving enemy group; it's rather pointless since the play of a Terrain card cancels your threat.

Note that there is a chance that Flanking Fire could occur naturally in the course of play. If a group has progressed to Relative Range 5, and passes beyond it to Relative Range 4—meaning that you have moved it *past* some adjacent enemy group and it is closer to the opponent's beginning line than the enemy group—Flanking Fire is possible. This form of Flanking Fire is much harder to break, necessitating a Lateral Group Transfer of the threatened group or the elimination of the enemy before it. And, from here, the flanking group may try to shift to create *Encirclement*.

Much more deadly than Flanking Fire, and much less likely, is the play of a Movement card sideways to claim *Encirclement*. In this instance, *all* fire against the beleaguered enemy group is doubled. But your group must be "behind" the enemy lines, meaning that you have had to be very lucky in acquiring Movement cards and dodging bullets simply to get this far. In all truth, the only times that this is a reasonable stance to strive for is when you've a significant number of spare characters to form one more group than the enemy and can expect to have the Movement cards to run it forward quickly; in other words, only when playing the Russians (against the Germans) or Japanese (against the Americans) do I even contemplate an *Encircle-*

ment when setting up at the beginning of the scenario.

Your initial organization of the troops prior to battle is crucial (as Don Greenwood highlighted in his article), and it is the only aspect of the game that a player has total control of (as Ken Whitesell pointed out in the first *UP FRONT* Series Replay). But your decisions are, thankfully, not immutable. As the scenario progresses, you may well find that unexpected situations make you wish to change the composition of a group—or even create a new group. This is accomplished through *Individual Transfer*.

Any unpinned character, which is otherwise free to move, may attempt to join an adjacent friendly group at the same range. A Movement card must be *discarded* for each such man seeking a transfer; place the character's card between the two involved groups, and put a "Transfer" counter on it. So long as he is between the groups, he will suffer all attacks made against either of the groups (and carries a +2 modifier to boot). If pinned during transfer, the character is returned to the group he left. If he survives unpinned, he may take any position among his new comrades. Of course, as in many other activities, an unpinned SL or ASL in one of the groups is necessary to direct the action.

The uses of Individual Transfers are endless and varied. In Scenario R it allows the attacker to build a firebase, or create the game-winning group (see the *BANZAI* Series Replay). In the Armored Advance, you may want to shift that bazooka, panzerfaust or ATMM to where it faces the enemy armor. In the instance where a crewman has been eliminated, I consider transferring a man to that group to keep it firing at full strength. If you've a couple of adjacent, ineffectual groups, use Individual Transfers to merge them together (you can eliminate a group through transfers, but not "beef" one up to more than ten men); or to get survivors out of the line of fire into better defensive terrain (say, if the receiving group is in a building, or under smoke cover, or entrenched on a hill). Remember that the only danger the transferee faces is fire from the enemy—no Marsh, Stream, Wire or other terrain "attacks" will stop him—but that, with the +2 modifier coupled with the fact that the enemy will fire on the most exposed of the two groups involved, is a considerable danger.

Now let's pose a hypothetical situation: you've a four-man Group C at Range chit 2 in a playing of Scenario A; the enemy firebase is his Group B, entrenched on a hill at Range chit 0. But you've just eliminated the enemy Group C. What now?

An expert player will instantly consider a *Lateral Group Transfer* of his Group C to position D. By playing a Movement card sideways on Group C and announcing the transfer, a strong bid to win the game has been made. Once a terrain card has been played on the group, the transfer is complete. The Relative Range to that enemy firebase has increased, your group is safe from infiltration, and your chances of victory have dramatically increased. Your opponent may himself initiate a LGT of his nearest group to meet the threat, but that can only be to your advantage.

The Group Transfer is a powerful tactical ploy, useful both offensively and defensively. You may be able to mount a threat from an unexpected quarter. You may be able to fill that sudden hole in your lines. Why . . . I've even played two Movement cards and announced simultaneous LGTs for adjacent groups, thus exchanging positions, to totally befuddle my opponent's carefully wrought initial set-up.

Getting in Close

Once at Relative Range 5 to an enemy group, you've two methods to go about eliminating it. You can lay down some heavy fire, or you can "waltz

with the devil". I recommend the latter (meaning Infiltration and possible Close Combat) if your group has low firepower (few unpinned characters, malfunctioned weapons, facing a substantial negative modifier to a fire attack), or if one or more of your group has a high CCV. While Movement cards are not a pre-requisite for this hand-to-hand combat, they are a definite bonus in avoiding the *Morale Checks* each step to resolution demands.

Any unpinned man may attempt *Infiltration* of an enemy group at Relative Range 5. To do so, the controlling player merely announces it. In order to succeed however, the player must first draw a RNC less than his current "Morale" value. By displaying and discarding a Movement card, this test of will is waived and the actual Infiltration resolution is made (requiring yet another card draw). Obviously it is prudent to use Movement cards for low-Morale characters, since if they fail the MC they are pinned. Alternately, you may want to insure that a high-Morale man makes it into a game-winning enemy group (many of the scenarios demand a group be uninfiltrated to claim victory).

Once infiltrated into an enemy group, your man must pass another Morale Check before he can hit anybody on the head. Showing a Movement card, which is of course then discarded, makes entry in CC automatic. Personally, rather than risk failing the MC, I inevitably will use a Movement card to avoid the penalties for failure unless in dire straits. If your man should win the Close Combat by three or more, you can even keep him infiltrated in the group. And if the last enemy man in an infiltrated/CC group is eliminated (this combat is all or nothing—you either win or are KIA), you have the option of taking the terrain he occupied for your own without the use of any Movement cards. A nice bonus for valor.

Infiltration also brings some possibilities for esoteric offensive action besides mere Close Combat. The infiltrator may elect to set off a Demolition Charge he is carrying (with a particularly nasty effect on anybody in the group, attacking with a Fire Strength of 8). He may elect to fire normally, but his Firepower values are doubled. If an ATMM is held, the infiltrator may use it against any AFV (as his CC attack). If encircled, an infiltration of either encircling group ends that awkwardness.

When faced with infiltration, you can either accept the attack, try to stop it with some stiff fire (hoping to pin the infiltrators), or—of course—move away. By falling back to Relative Range 4 with a Retrograde move, no Close Combat is possible. The infiltrators still get doubled fire (although this breaks their infiltration), although now at a greater range. The next Movement card increasing the range or the next Terrain card dropped will end the infiltration in any case, unless the enemy group has elected to move to keep pace with you. The psychological edge of having infiltrated an enemy group is not to be denied; but if on the receiving end, comfort yourself with the fact that it is even more fragile than Flanking Fire since by the point in the game you will be facing it you should have either some high Fire cards or a Movement card.

A Final Word

All of the above suggestions are posited on the assumption that you've the Movement cards available to undertake them. This is not always the case—don't base your entire strategy on the hopes of getting that key card just when you want. Likely as not, you'll riffle through the entire deck without drawing it. The best *UP FRONT* players are able to adapt to the vagaries of the deal and draw.

But the best players are also very aware of the potential of every card they hold in every situation they face. The above are only some of those for Movement cards. Bear them in mind.



THE NORWEGIAN CAMPAIGN

Invading Norway in the Third Edition Third Reich

By Michael Anchors

Avalon Hill's *THIRD REICH* is one of most widely owned and frequently played games in the hobby. As wargames go, it has a fairly large literature associated with it. However, there are not many articles on any wargame, including *THIRD REICH*, that go into game strategy and tactics with the attention to detail characteristic of articles on bridge, go, backgammon and chess. I would trade ten published variants of a game for one good idea on how to play it better. *THIRD REICH* is an ideal subject for chess-like analysis because it can be broken down into three or four crucial campaigns and each analyzed exhaustively. I do not think analysis of that nature will make the game less enjoyable to play—it hasn't dimmed the popularity of chess. It makes the game more enjoyable. The Allied or Axis player who gets the best result for his side in Norway, France and Russia will not often lose! Therefore, I have chosen these campaigns for study. Who cares if Celere gets to Tunis?

The key task in the early part of any game against an unfamiliar opponent is to figure out how competent the opponent is, since that piece of information will tell how much you can get away with. In games as finely balanced as Avalon Hill's *THIRD REICH* you need some 'tricks' in order to be a consistent winner. I gauge Axis players by how well they handle the Norwegian campaign. The geography of that region is such that much ingenuity and familiarity with the rules (in this case the Third Edition) are needed to project military force into the region intelligently.

The British player sets up before the German so he must provide for the security of the Home Isles as well as a flexible posture toward Norway. In older editions of the game, an invasion of England on Turn 1 was not a practical German option. The invasion force would reach England with its passenger only if all intercepting British or French fleets failed their interception die roll, an 8% chance at best. In the Third Edition, the German fleets have a technological advantage (a +1 DRM) and naval casualties are reduced so that the invasion force would get to England 59% of the time when opposed by an equal number of British fleets. In the actual situation, if Britain tries to intercept two German fleets with a panzer passenger, using three British fleets in England and two in Gibraltar, the Germans would be turned back 75% of the time. That means the Germans would get ashore 25% of the time, compared to 8% in older editions.

Once ashore, the Germans can be tough to dislodge. If the Germans land at J25, they can receive DAS from Wilhelmshaven; they can secure Great Yarmouth and SR units through it even if the British occupy Harwich. The trouble with J25 is that it's too far away from London. The Germans are better off landing in L23 because there they put London and Portsmouth in a ZOC. If the British counter-attack fails, the British can neither build units in London or Portsmouth nor SR units there; with the defenders in those two hexes weakened by casualties, the Germans can seize one or both hexes and the wicket gets sticky.

Can the Axis provide DAS for their forces in L23? Yep. An air unit can't be placed in the German beachhead on the first turn, but the Germans could seize the Hague, and even Brussels or Antwerp, depending on how many units they would be will-

ing to divert from the Polish Front. The Germans would then SR one or more air units that did not fly an offensive mission to those cities to provide DAS over L23. This exercise need not entail much added cost. The 15 BRPs for the Offensive option was already pledged for the invasion mission. A DoW on Holland is only 10 more. If the Germans use infantry to seize the Hague, they can still get 2:1 odds on Warsaw. Alternatively, they could SR a lent Italian air force to the Hague and leave the German forces facing Poland intact. With the German invasion force covered by DAS from the Continent, the British would have to counterattack 13-23 factors in L23, and an "A Elim" would equate with "Britain elim."

Even if the German invasion bid failed, it would succeed strategically if the British have to use their fleets to stop it because those fleets would then be unavailable to invade Norway or escort British units to France and Africa. The Allies can defuse this problem by basing the French navy in the Channel and using it to intercept a German invasion. The French fleets will intercept the Germans 83% of the time and turn them back only 55% of the time owing to their technological disadvantage, for an overall success rate of 46% compared to 75% for the British fleets. The French fleets can SR to the Mediterranean in time to counter Italy because Italy can't call an Offensive option in the same turn she enters the war.

In summary, for the safety of Britain and the Empire, the best course is to garrison England strongly so that the combination of the French fleet in the Channel and British ground forces able to counterattack with French air support will deter the

Germans from attempting an invasion of England in Fall 1939, especially since the British fleets would still be free to escort units to France and Africa.

I would recommend the following placements: a 3-4 infantry in L23. The other 3-4 infantry and a 4-5 armor set up in the Portsmouth, defending a crucial beach hex and serving as the stuff of a future invasion of Norway. Three fleets to Scapa Flow and one air wing to D28 to intercept a preemptive German invasion at Bergen on Turn 1. We've discussed a German invasion of Britain; now we have to say a few words about a German invasion of Norway.

If the Germans take Bergen, the British, in their turn, will be able to get ground units into Norway only by invading at Bergen, meeting strong German units on the beach instead of weak Norwegian units. The same things said about British and French naval opposition to the invasion of England apply to naval opposition to the invasion of Norway: the British and French navies can block the Germans 75% and 46% of the time respectively. However, there is an important difference: Bergen is guaranteed to be defended by a Norwegian ground unit whereas the Germans can always find an undefended beach in Britain because there aren't enough British units to go around, assuming some units start in Egypt. The Germans will have to attack one tripled combat factor at Bergen without Luftwaffe support. The Germans have only two fleets. They can't transport two armor units even if they could afford them, so there is no way for them to capture Oslo the first turn. Therefore, the Germans will transport two infantry units. Their best odds on Bergen are 2:1, exactly six factors to three. If



The situation at the end of the German fall, 1939 turn—Norway beckons.

the British air unit flying from Scotland can eliminate even one German naval factor, one of the German ground units will be lost, the best German odds fall to 1:1 and the Germans would not be able to get their unit ashore in the event of an exchange. The British air unit has a 73% chance to eliminate one German naval factor so I think putting the air unit in Scotland is worthwhile because interception with the French fleet is far from a sure thing (46%). Many experienced Allied players would set up only one of the 5-4 air units in Britain in favor of adding a 5-4 air unit to the defense of Egypt; but, I think, with the Third Edition rules in force, expert opinion will swing toward starting two 5-4 air units in Britain.

Incidentally, it would be useless for the Germans to attack the other Norwegian beach at D35 on Turn 1. They do not have enough fleets to transport two armor units on Turn 1 and cannot exploit to Oslo. The British in their turn would be able to send numerous units to Norway through Bergen and avert any easy German victory.

Assuming the German player turns down a Turn 1 invasion gambit, the usual move preparatory to seizing Norway by air in Winter is as follows: Germany declares war on Denmark and calls an Attrition option in the West. A Panzer unit moves up the Danish peninsula through F33 ending in H31, rendering those hexes "controlled, supplied hexes". An airbase is built in F33. An infantry unit moves to I31 shutting the Danes up on Copenhagen. In the Construction Phase two infantry units appear in Königsberg. The German airborne unit is constructed and SRs to the new airbase. The stage is set.

If the British don't do something witty, the coup de grace for Norway comes as follows: Germany declares war in Norway and an Offensive option in the West. The best Norwegian defense is to set up both Norwegian units in Oslo, but the defense is hopeless. In the Movement Phase, nine German air factors stage to the airbase at F33 and a new airbase in G32. In the Combat Phase the Danes are conveniently dispatched, and the paratroopers descend on Oslo with air support at 3:1 odds. Losses are subtracted from the airforce, leaving Germany in control of Denmark and Norway. As a finishing touch, a 9-factor fleet SRs to Bergen to lock the British out permanently. Later in the war, a ground unit will have to be stationed in Bergen to avert an Allied paratroop that would drive the fleet out. Until then, Norway and Denmark can be left ungarrisoned except for the fleet at Bergen.

Notice that this sequence of moves for the Germans meshes neatly with the usual order of front options. The cost in BRPs is low compared to alternative methods of blitzing Norway. I have heard protests that Germany cannot spare a panzer unit from the Polish front to muck about in Denmark. Against the best Polish defense the Germans have to knock out two factors of infantry tripled in order to attack Warsaw through a non-river hexside. Let us assume the Germans use two factors of air to counterair the Polish force. Only one hex is available for the German units making the breakthrough attack, an armor and infantry. To get 3:1 odds the Germans would have to add eleven air factors; so be it. The exploiting armor then moves into the breakthrough hex. If the Germans can use only two of their three remaining panzer units because one is in Denmark, they would have to add sixteen factors of air to achieve 3:1 odds on Warsaw; but only seven air factors would be available. Instead, both breakthrough and exploitation attacks could be made at 2:1, but the overall risk of an A Elim in two 2:1 odds attacks is about 6%. Is it worth it? Yes.

If Germany doesn't use an armor unit to make F33 friendly, F33 can't be made friendly at all on the first turn because an infantry unit can't reach it. Unless F33 is friendly, an airbase can't be placed in it and only one German air wing (from G32) can provide support for the paratroopers

attacking Oslo. That reduces the odds of that attack to 2:1 with a 3% chance of an A Elim that would allow Norway to survive and eliminate the airborne unit *permanently*. Now would you rather take the 6% risk with fifteen factors of armor or air in Poland or the 3% risk with the airborne in Norway? I know my answer.

Of course, Germany doesn't have to use the airborne to conquer Norway in Winter. The Germans could invade by sea, either building a third fleet or borrowing the Italian 2-5 armor unit. With air support from Denmark, the exploiting German armor could reach Oslo and get 2:1 odds (remember we didn't make F33 friendly). But the absence of the Italian armor from Libya would have a very deleterious effect on the North African campaign. Moreover, 27 BRPs used to build a third fleet could not be used to build armor and air for the assault on France. France would surely survive one or two turns longer. Germany can't allow that.

Lastly, Germany could leave Norway alone in 1939 (Hitler did); but that would allow the British to conquer Norway themselves and shut the Germans out forever practically-speaking. In that case, the Germans would not be able to use air and naval forces to oppose Murmansk convoys and a submarine campaign against the convoys would be decidedly less effective. Too bad the real British hadn't read my article.

Actually, we had! Churchill had already authorized a British pre-emptive strike on Norway to interdict Swedish ore shipments through Narvik, to be followed by a possible invasion of Sweden to capture the ore fields themselves. Troops were actually embarked in port when the Germans landed a few days before us! And just as well . . . the fiasco resulting from such an aggression would have lost us a lot of support in the U.S. and elsewhere . . . Marcus Watney.

Now here are the nuts and bolts of how Britain should invade Norway in Fall 1939. Britain declares war on Norway and an Offensive option in the West. In the Movement Phase of Turn 1, the fleets from Scapa Flow change base to Portsmouth, sailing west of Britain to avoid the Luftwaffe. The one fleet at Gibraltar likewise changes bases to Portsmouth. In the Combat Phase the invasion force, consisting of three fleets, a 3-4 infantry and a 4-5 armor, sails west of Britain and approaches Bergen from the north. If the Germans defend the beach hex with a Norwegian unit, the odds will be 3:1. There is a 28% chance of British casualties, but some British will certainly get ashore. The Luftwaffe has no chance to intervene, and if the Kriegsmarine sails, it will be attacked by British air and the French navy before it reaches the invasion force. The British beachhead is reinforced by a newly-constructed armor unit in the SR phase. The 4th fleet at Portsmouth provides sea escort.

Actually, the best German defense of Norway is not to place a Norwegian unit *on* the Bergen hex, but instead *adjacent* to it. Defending the beach directly is futile and the Norwegian unit lost would be missed on Turn 2. A Norwegian unit adjacent to Bergen is safe from attack because without two armor units the British cannot exploit. Moreover, by being adjacent to Bergen the British are prevented from moving an armor unit to Norway by SR. The importance of that second armor unit will be seen below. The British could still get an armor unit to Norway in Turn 2 via sea transport, but they would have some difficulties: (1) more fleet factors would be required to do it (essentially two 9-factor fleets), (2) the transport mission could be intercepted by the Luftwaffe which by then would have bases in Norway and Denmark, and (3) one of the armor unit's movement factors would be used in debarkation. Thus, placement of the Norwegian unit adjacent to Bergen usually suffices to prevent a second British armor from reaching Norway for a Turn 2 attack.

Once Bergen is British, the Germans are faced with a logistical problem: how to get German ground units into Norway without a port. The answer: "invade" D35. This was the purpose for which the infantry units in Königsberg (remember them?) were constructed. The fleets from Kiel carry them to D35 where they establish a beachhead. The German ground units cannot move inland in the Combat Phase, but can SR to Oslo since Norway is friendly. One must have been careful during the preceding Norwegian turn *not* to leave any Norwegian units in Oslo so that the stronger German units will not be overstacked when they arrive. The proper placement for the Norwegian army is guarding the approach to the German beachhead through B36 and C36. The Germans should station an adequate force of air wings in the area to inhibit the Spitfires. Finally, in the Construction phase the German player should not forget to leave additional ground units stacked in a Baltic port to reinforce Norway on Turn 3. Until Bergen is captured, German ground units can get into Norway only by invading D35 and that means they must start their turn stacked in a port.

If Britain wants to settle the affair in Norway, a maximum effort has to be made on Turn 2. This will include building an airbase in Bergen and staging two air wings there. The British will have two options: a direct attack on Oslo or a breakthrough and exploitation through C36 to the German beachhead. If the better of the two options is only a 1:2 odds attack on Oslo, the British should settle for a partition of Norway with the British controlling Bergen and the Germans Oslo. With Bergen British, German air and surface fleets cannot oppose the convoys and submarines are less effective. To avoid these penalties the Germans will eventually have to attack the well-stacked beachhead at Bergen. That attack may cost a lot of German casualties, will use forces needed elsewhere, and it will be difficult for Germany to get her ground forces back out of Norway. This isn't so bad for the British, it's better than a lousy 1:2 on Oslo.

If the British can get a 1:1 on Oslo on Turn 2 the decision is more difficult. Depending on the exact units involved, the British would have a 50-70% chance of taking Oslo. If they roll an A Elim, the show is over. If the British even take a lot of casualties, they would be hardpressed to hold Oslo against a German counterattack from D35. The counterattack would be well-supported by the Luftwaffe. With 1:1 odds on Oslo, go for it if you're a lucky roller. If you know how to wait, leave Oslo alone.

One final note: if the Germans neglect to base the airborne in Denmark in the Fall and do not prepare a two-armor invasion force, there is no way for them to take Oslo in the Winter turn. As I said at the beginning you want to find out quickly how competent your opponent is, and failure to put the airborne in Denmark means either that he is not very competent or he is smarter than this author. The British might consider deferring their own invasion of Norway in favor of reinforcing France and Egypt. I recommend invading anyway because it may be inconvenient later. If the invasion is deferred, however, the British must remember to keep a two-armor invasion force ready at all times, in case the Germans threaten Norway. A two-armor invasion force can take Oslo in one turn. *No it can't. Consider the Norwegian defense of 1-3 (Oslo) and 1-3 (C34). The exploiting armor cannot then advance into Oslo after combat since it would break the exploitation chain. The minimum requirement for the British to take Oslo in one turn is then three armored units . . . Marcus Watney.* The armor of the invasion force could be transported to France instead, if needed. Alternatively, the invasion forces could be based at Cherbourg, ready for France or fjords.



PARTISAN!

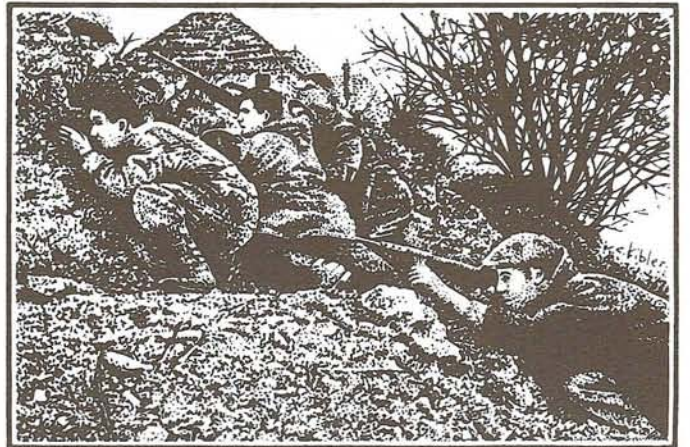
PARTISAN! The very word conjures up images of the grim-faced freedom fighters who willingly put their lives on the line to free their lands and people from Nazi oppression. Often poorly equipped and lacking the tactical abilities of their opponents, these men and women made up for such deficiencies by their numbers and determination as they battled the occupation forces—with quarter neither asked nor given. This is the kind of combat you'll find in **PARTISAN!**, the newest ASL module. If you're an ASL fan(atic) who likes his infantry combat down-and-dirty, tooth-and-nail, then **PARTISAN!** is for you. Its eight scenarios—only two of which are longer than 8.5 turns—offer a wide variety of situations, forces and objectives without involving you in ASL's more esoteric rules sections. Several novel types of scenario make this perhaps the most interesting and diverse set of ASL scenarios yet offered. Note that **PARTISAN!** is not a complete game; possession of the ASL rules, BEYOND VALOR and SL boards 1-4 are necessary to play its scenarios.



As a bonus, the **PARTISAN!** countersheet contains a full complement of Axis Minor personnel and support weapons: three different types of squads and their half-squads, infantry and vehicle crews, leaders (including armor leaders) and heroes, light and medium and heavy MGs, ATRs, light mortars, flamethrowers, demo charges, radios and field phones, 'dismantled' counters and concealment counters. Thus when the Axis Minor vehicles and ordnance are released in a future module, their entire Order of Battle will be available. The countersheet also includes several more partisan half-squads and leaders, and two additional Russian commissars, to add to those you already have in BEYOND VALOR.



Of the three **PARTISAN!** scenarios not mentioned overleaf, one deals with elite, flamethrower-equipped Romanian assault troops going below ground in an attempt to flush an unknown number of Crimean partisans out of a maze of mine shafts. Board 4 is used for the aboveground portion where the Romanians begin their assault down one or more mine entrances, while paved-road hexes of board 1 represent the underground mine shafts where most of the action occurs. Another scenario represents a raid by an elite German force on a well-defended partisan camp deep in the Russian forest. Only the general whereabouts of the camp is known to the Germans, who must risk ambushes by the partisans as they attempt to locate and capture it without taking too many casualties nor allowing too many partisans to escape. The third scenario is an assault by bold but inexperienced Maquisards on a French town garrisoned by a second-rate German security force. This one is a quick, straightforward infantry action in which the optimum use of each unit is vital to success.



PARTISAN! sells for \$15.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Co. Please Add 10% for postage and handling (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas). Maryland residents add 5% state sales tax. For quick credit card purchasing, call Toll Free: 1-800-638-9292.



The Avalon Hill Game Company

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WEST OF ALAMEIN

March 31st, 1941...The 5th Light Division, just recently arrived in Libya, is on the attack. Its goal: to drive the fresh but green troops of the British 2nd Armoured Division out of their prepared defenses in the coastal bottleneck near Mersa el Brega. Men of the 8th Machinegun Battalion battle their way forward across the undulating sand dunes as Stukas prey on the defenders from above. Suddenly in the swirling dust they encounter minefields and wire. "Sappers forward!" comes the cry. A new chapter in the history of war is beginning, and a new legend—that of Rommel, the Desert Fox—is about to be born.

April 7th, 1941...In confused and headlong retreat, the British are falling back across the Cyrenaican bulge to Derna. But German armored cars and motorized infantry have cut the road atop the coastal escarpment, trapping those still in and west of the town. Colonel Drew of the 5th Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment, organizes a breakout with a mixed bag of troops and vehicles. Surveying the situation, he knows he has no options: He must lead his men up the steep, twisting escarpment road past a huge crater blown in by overanxious sappers; and, once over the lip of the escarpment, must locate the German anti-tank and machinegun positions in the shimmering heat haze and blast

a way through. The afternoon promises to be hot in more ways than one.

November 23rd, 1941...As part of the drive to open a corridor to Tobruk, the 25th New Zealand Battalion, supported by Valentine tanks, has just captured Point 175 atop a high inland escarpment. However, instead of halting to prepare for the inevitable German counterattack, the Kiwis continue their advance almost nonchalantly—and walk right into the sights of the veterans of the 361st Infantry Regiment "Afrika", who at the moment happen to be under the personal command of Rommel. For many, Germans and New Zealanders alike, the bloody battle about to begin will make Point 175 their point of no return.

June 13th, 1942...The Afrika Korps is driving for the coast to cut off what remains of the Gazala Line. One obstacle in its path is the Knightsbridge defensive "box" manned by the 201st Guards Brigade. Two panzer divisions envelop it from east and west, but a violent sandstorm—a *khamsin*—hits, putting a halt to all activity. As the *khamsin* subsides, 21st Panzer Division gropes forward in the still-blowing wind and dust, searching for the enemy infantry and A-T guns. Just as it finds them, Grant and Crusader tanks of the Queen's Bays arrive to bolster the defense. In the storm of sand begins a storm of steel...

This is WEST OF ALAMEIN—the long-awaited British addition to the ASL system. As the title implies, it focuses on battles between the British 8th Army and Deutsches Afrika Korps in the North African desert in 1941-43. **WEST OF ALAMEIN** contains the *entire* British order of battle, including all U.S. Lend-Lease vehicles, ordnance and support weapons, thus enabling you to command every major vehicle, gun and troop type used by British and/or Commonwealth forces in *every* theater throughout the war. Also contained herein is Chapter F of the **ASL** rules, which covers the terrain types encountered in the desert and other arid regions: scrub, wadis, hillocks, escarpments, soft sand, dunes, deirs and hammada. Chapter F also provides rules for the special climatic conditions that were so much a part of desert combat, such as dust, heat haze and sun blindness. Of the *five* mounted mapboards in **WEST OF ALAMEIN**, four (#s 26-29) depict flat open desert, with the dominant terrain features on separate, moveable overlays so as to maximize flexibility. The fifth board (#25) represents a rugged hill mass as is found in Tunisia, and can be converted to a large escarpment by means of an overlay specially designed for this purpose. A Design-Your-Own system for the random selection and placement of overlays is also provided, which in combination with the vehicle and weapon point values, historical notes and DYO charts, will provide an endless variety of situations for those who enjoy creating their own scenarios. And as if all this weren't enough, simple rules have been included to enable the desert boards and overlays to represent the steppes of the Ukraine, providing added flexibility for these components. Of the eight scenarios enclosed, four can be played using the **ASL** rules and **BEYOND VALOR**; the other four also require rules, counters and/or a board from **YANKS**. No other boards or modules are needed.

WEST OF ALAMEIN is not a complete game. Ownership of ASL and BEYOND VALOR is required—as is YANKS for four scenarios.

If not yet available at better game stores near you, as a last resort you may order directly from the factory. Send a check or money-order (no cash, please) for \$45.00, adding 10% to cover postage and handling. For credit card purchasing only, call **TOLL FREE 1-800-638-9292.**



The Avalon Hill Game Company

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COMPLEXITY	VERY HIGH	SOLITAIRE SUITABILITY
	HIGH	
	MEDIUM	
	LOW	

CONTENTS:

- 5 8" x 22" mounted Mapboards
- 560 1/2" Counters laminated on both sides
- 704 5/8" Counters laminated on both sides
- 8 ASL Scenarios
- 1 Pad of Terrain Overlays
- 1 7" x 22" Escarpment Overlay
- 1 ASL Chapter F

TIME SCALE: Two minutes per Game Turn

MAP SCALE: 40 meters per hex

PLAYERS: Two (also suitable for solitaire and team play)

UNIT SCALE: Five to ten men with individual leaders, vehicles, guns

PLAYING TIME: Variable based on scenario played; four hours average



THEY SHALL BE PLAYTESTERS

By Mark C. Nixon

ON THE BRINK

One of those dingy grey, midwest winter evenings was encroaching upon the village of Perrysburg, namesake of the famous American naval hero, Commodore Oliver Harmless Burg, as the Wargamer kicked snow from his boots, slid the key into an ice-encrusted lock and opened his door to an evenings' delights of food and family. Home from the day's labors. Home from freeway driving. Home from petulant others of a demanding world. Home for the weekend.

"You have a letter from 'That Place'," came a feeble response from the bedroom to his greeting.

Of course. The empty ice bag box; the half-empty ice tray in the sink, several cubes lying in growing puddles around the kitchen in no certain pattern; the baby screaming in his crib; the sensation of impending doom in the air; perhaps these should have indicated something big was in the offing. And yet all were pushed into the dark recesses of his mind, banished beyond recall by the realization of what 'That Place' meant. He had almost given up hope during the past few months.

His hands even trembled slightly as they tore open the legal-sized envelope with familiar hexagonal pattern in its return address. Desperate now, he whipped out the contents and read from the cover letter:

Dear Squad Leader Enthusiast;

It has been a long time since I last corresponded with you in reference to your interest in participating in the GI playtest.

The long wait was over. The playtest had begun!

But wait, What did he read in the third paragraph? Three months to test 45 scenarios, handwritten rules, scenario cards in Sanskrit, information for the new counters to be found in the Library of Congress? How could they do this to him? Not that these posed any insurmountable problems in and of themselves; but, how best to present this to the wife?

How could he tell her she wouldn't be seeing him for the next three months, except for occasional meals and the inevitable morning struggle to wake up from two hours of a restless, revised-rule infested sleep to shower, shave and do all the other regrettably necessary things required by an 8-to-5 job which he conceded would have to be kept despite the inconvenience.

Or, worse, yet, suppose she jumps for joy at the possibility of three glorious months of continuously knowing exactly where he would be, and her resultant freedom to do as she pleased. She might actually grow accustomed to that and expect it to continue beyond the playtest. Yes, he would have to take a serious look at the long-range implications of this whole undertaking.

TAKING THE PLUNGE

After lengthy consideration (about ten minutes was all he could handle with *GI* hanging in the balance), he opted for the only responsible solution available. He would enlist the aide of his local

cronies and ruin their marriages as well! Then, when the test was completed, they could wargame every night instead of this once a week hooley. No more shopping trips and playing handyman around the house. No more dirty diapers and washing dishes. They would all eat out every day on the money saved from not buying all those useless homeowner knick-knacks and kitchen gadgets, diapers and expensive 'cultural' outings (such as seeing every Alan Alda movie which crawled along), not to mention the savings from not remodeling some part of the house every year.

But slowly, fears of alimony, eating stomach-defying fast foods and, worst of all, moving into an apartment and once again frequenting laundromats crept into his thoughts and demanded the battle plan be revised. Arranging a three-month binge of wargaming without offending everyone within a hundred mile radius would require utilizing his most persuasive diplomatic skills. He would lie!

There was already one strike against him, the headache he could actually feel pounding in a wife's inner anti-wargame cranium, which had been brought on by the mere sight of those little hexagons in the return address of 'That Place'. She remembered the end of the last playtest, when instead of his practiced, soothing voice walking her through a Lamaze delivery of their first-born she was treated to a recitation of why British and French armor cannot breakthrough and exploit in conjuncture in 1939. He should have realized that breakthrough and exploitation were not exactly the subjects she wanted to discuss at that sensitive time. But his own senses were still reeling from the labor room where she had floored him by speculating that inclusion of the new Intelligence Rule might lead George Carlin to revise his 'Mutually Exclusive' routine from Military Intelligence to Wargame Intelligence.

Later, in the recovery room, she claimed the excitement in his voice hadn't really upset her that much. But he remembered the scene in the delivery room, how she had almost become hysterical when he had pulled out a black magic marker, drawn a hex pattern on her exposed abdomen, and begun moving those yellow and blue armored units around to illustrate the point. His excitement had been quenched only when the big nurse, they called her 'Bomba', heisted the unsterilized objects, never to return them. The lesson continued to be driven home every time the unfortunate wargamer played *THIRD REICH* with homemade British and French armor counters.

With a second child on the way it was not difficult to imagine the nature of thoughts which had generated today's headache. Nevertheless, this thing had to be nipped in the bud; he ventured a few opening remarks.

"Sheesh, you can't imagine how much work this playtest will be."

"I can imagine, I can imagine."

"I don't see any way it can be done, what with periodic trips to the Library of Congress to check armor listings."

"So don't do it."

Obviously, this was not the correct approach.

"I wonder who will be willing to help? I can probably get Pat, Tim, Russ and Ken at least." ("And drag them down with me!")

"What about your cousin Chuck in Cincinnati? Why don't you just send the whole mess to him?"

"But he's in law school. I doubt he'd have enough time."

"Why not? You're always saying that all the world needs is more rules lawyers."

It was one thing when she outmaneuvered him. Being outwitted literally drove him berserk. Heavy artillery time!

"Okay, if you really don't want me to do this; if you want me to spend the next three months in agony knowing someone else is using what should have been our playtest materials; if you want everyone else to hate me for working them up with all the big talk of a playtest and then finking out at the last minute; if you want me to hold this over your head for the rest of what will become your unnatural life, I won't do the playtest."

Had he gone too far? That last bit was perhaps too much, but he was on a roll and couldn't stop.

"Alright, have it your way. I didn't want to stop you, and probably couldn't anyway. But how about if this time we don't play the game in the delivery room?"

He had won! The playtest would go on.

"Certainly. I won't do that again. That was only because it was my first playtest and time was running out. There will be no time crunch with this one because I'll have lots of people helping me."

To himself, he began calculating what kind of monster paperwork would be required to get his playtest team into the labor room. Would a typewriter exceed hospital noise limits?

WHO ARE THESE CRAZIES?

"Hello, Pat?"

"Yeah."

"Are you ready to start the playtest?"

"Sure. Did you get the stuff?"

"Yes and no. I got 45 scenarios and handwritten rules."

"What about the counters?"

"Pat, how soon can you pack for a few days in Washington?"

"Washington? What do you mean?"

"That's where the Library of Congress is. I know. I looked up their street address for you. Your flight leaves Toledo Express Airport at five o'clock."

"Hello, Russ?"

"Oh no! What do you want?"

"It's time for the *GI* playtest."

"But I just finished two weeks of vacation. Why didn't you call me then?"

"Well, I didn't have the materials until today. Anyway, how did you spend your vacation?"

"Oh, mostly playing golf and pondering the existence of the universe."

"What about your Sanskrit? Surely you spent a great deal of time brushing up on your Sanskrit."

"What in hell are you babbling about?"

"Hello, Ken?"
 "Yes?"
 "Are you ready to start the playtest?"
 "You have got to be kidding! I've been laid off for eight months."
 "So?"
 "So yesterday I found a new job. Where have you been for eight months?"
 "Well, it's not entirely my fault. We can pin some of the blame on the postal department and our friends in the Ivory Tower in Baltimore, and a great deal on all the Squad Leader fans who haven't written abusive letters to the editor in the past two years. After all, they are the ones who didn't put enough pressure on Baltimore to move faster."
 "No, it's easier to just blame you."
 "Thanks."
 "Hello, Tim?"
 "Hi Mark. What's up?"
 "I have the materials for *GI*. Are you ready to start?"
 "Sure. How about Wednesday?"
 "Great, but everybody else wants you to promise you'll lose a few games."
 "Ah, come on!"
 "I'm serious. How will it look if one member of our group wins every game he plays? The rest of us will look like ninnyes. We'll be submitting analysis such as 'Tim played the Allies in scenario 48, so they are favored to win 95% of the time'. I'm talking either throw a few games or you're out."
 "Well, it goes against my ethics, but I'll do you this favor and lose a game."
 "Only one?"
 "Well, after all, with only three months I'll probably only get to play about 50 games at the most."
 "Heaven help us!"

GEARING UP

Five. That made five dedicated players. It was the perfect number. Four at home constantly playing and one in Washington researching Armor Listings. There would have to be a shuttle arrangement to and from Washington to prevent any one tester from contracting researchphobia due to the torrid pace of information requests, microscopic typeface of the *United Counter and Armor Listings for Wargames Compendium* which contained most of the information used to make all wargames, and the guaranteed hassles with representatives from other playtest groups who would be there researching the same data. The shuttle could fly at night, permitting sleep during flight to maximize time. He could anticipate the accusation this would draw from his wife that he was running a 'fly-by-night' outfit. But it didn't bother him. He deplored the obvious.

The Sanskrit dilemma might have been a very large problem. In fact, since Russ had wasted his vacation chasing golf balls in the rough and doing a 'Carl Sagan' with his psyche (Russ had billions and billions of mind-blowing ideas), there was danger the translation would have to be jobbed out to the university and actually paid for! But Russ booked through and declined offers from a summer bowling league and two golf leagues so he could catch up on his Sanskrit between 7:00 Thursday night softball and 9:00 euchre. It was often difficult to ascertain whether Russ was coming or going.

SCENARIO #33

FRANCE: "Where do You Go When You're Already in Paris?"

"Your turn to move, Mark."
 "I'm thinking."
 "We're doomed!"
 "No, really, I can't decide whether to roll for entrenchments or wait to try setting some fires, whether to Prep Fire, charge your positions, or run away, or maybe everybody should just sit and gain

concealment."

"You really have a problem."
 "Yes, these all seem like good options."
 "No, I mean a mental problem. And I have a time problem. Are you going to move or stake a home-steading claim? I have to get up at 6:00 AM to go to work."
 "Well, that's only four hours away, so why don't you just stick around? I'll concede this game; we can switch sides and play it again."
 "I'll meet you halfway. You concede and I'll go home."
 "Alright. I'll roll for entrenchments. Where are those TI counters?"

"You're using them for Concealment counters for your troops on board 3."
 "Oh. So then I'll Prep Fire."
 "No. Here, you can switch these CEs for the TIs and roll for your entrenchments."
 "Why do you want me to roll for entrenchments?"
 "You wanted to. I'm just trying to help out. You obviously need help."

"Now you've done it. I'm sending my boys over the top. They'll probably sweep you right out of that chateau. Where are those CE counters?"

"You just exchanged them for the TIs on board 3. I can't take any more of this! You win. I'm going home."

"HA! And I thought I had lost. But now I see the strength of my position. Yes, I'll have to revise my analysis of this scenario to consider the implications of the TI-CE Counter Offensive."

It would not be until much later, after this analysis had been consumed at the Ivory Tower and the new game released with additional TI and CE counters specifically to preclude the Counter Offensive, that he would conclude the whole thing had only been counter-productive.

SCENARIO #34

NORTH AFRICA: "Battle Beneath the Dust"

"Whose turn is it?"
 "I can't remember, and the turn marker is buried in dust."
 "In that case you have to roll a 4 or less with two dice in order to move next."
 "You mean . . . ?"
 "Yes, rule 634.9285 on page 473."
 "What are the modifiers?"

"You get a -1 because the dust is blowing from the East and you're using Muslim troops, a -2 since your 10-3 leader has successfully emplaced his handkerchief (it would have been a -4 without the handkerchief because then everybody within 5 hexes would have known he was a 10-3 and not just a common 9-1 or 10-2, but of course he would have had to pass a CDC [Choke Determination Check] every turn), a +1 because you used the last of your water counters on turn 4, a +1 for moving with open umbrellas in a crosswind, and a +1 because you rolled a '12' on your last Well Digging attempt and malfunctioned your shovels. But . . ."

"But?"
 "But first you have to roll four dice and apply the cumulative difference between the white and red ones and the red and blue ones as a negative number to your PDQ (Pre-Dust Quality) roll, using any available leader modifier as a positive number on the index chart on the back of the PDQ marker, provided it is not also buried in dust. And don't forget . . ."

"Oh no!"
 "The green die has to be higher."
 "AAAAAAAAAARRRRGGGGHHHH!!!!!!"

LAYING THE BIG ONE ON THEM

With two scenarios completed, the Wargamer compiled a 49-page typed report, single-spaced, and

sent these first playtest results to the Ivory Tower in Baltimore. Let them chew on that, he thought. Now they'll see how *SL* is really supposed to be played, how it's played in the Midwest!

His excitement only increased when he arrived home that evening to find a package from the Ivory Tower itself waiting for his eager hands to rip open. Probably an offer to fly in and assume control of the company, his rather large head surmised.

But it wasn't. It was something called 'ERRATA #1', several pages containing new and revised items and rules to be put into immediate effect. Well, that should be no problem. He would use red ink to note all the changes in the rulebook, run copies of the ERRATA for everyone else to do the same, and they'd be in business again.

But what are these changes? There will no longer be a -1 for Muslim troops attacking from the East? The new umbrella section has been dropped completely? And even more changes! How can this be? He just sent in 49 pages of analysis based on everything this ERRATA #1 monstrosity has changed. Forty-nine pages wasted! All this ERRATA to go into immediate effect!

"GAK!" He realized his only chance for redemption was to waylay the UPS overnight van carrying the 49 pages of garbage somewhere along the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Who could he drag out of bed for a midnight raid across the state line?

Russ was at some pea-picking softball tournament or geek show somewhere, Pat was with every other fireman in Toledo fighting a nuclear power plant blaze which had been touched off by excessive Bic flicking, and Tim was in Georgia of all places. Where was Ken? Of course! Ken was at the Library of Congress. No problem for him to be at the Ivory Tower in the morning, knock the UPS man senseless, and the 49 pages would be brought back and revised before anyone read them.

Revised? Wait a minute. Let's not be hasty here. His index fingers were already out of action from typing the 49 pages. A revision typed with middle fingers and thumbs would take a fortnight (whatever that was, but it sounded good). There had to be a quick dirty way out of this predicament.

When pressured he usually came up with something and this was no exception. The ERRATA list itself provided the ammunition he required. If they could spew forth this sort of affront from the Ivory Tower, he'd spew some back. Thus was born the ERRATA of ERRATA #1.

It was the perfect retort. Fight fire with fire. Should they attempt an ERRATA of the ERRATA of ERRATA #1 he would counter likewise. Should they elect to sneak an ERRATA #2 in on its belly, the ERRATA of ERRATA #2 would be shot back at them.

"MESS WITH MY 49 PAGES WILL THEY!?" he actually screamed aloud to the basement walls.

Realizing his grasp on reality was ebbing precariously near low tide, he grabbed the last can of the twelve-pack and staggered toward the telephone. Some poor UPS man would be laying his life on the line in a few hours if Ken wasn't stopped in time.

"Hello, Ken?"
 "Ugh."
 "Ken, wake up. This is Mark. Don't do it!"
 "Wha?"
 "Don't go to Baltimore."
 "Don't go to Baltimore. Right. Why would I go to Baltimore? Why would anyone go to Baltimore?"
 "To get the 49 pages from the UPS man."
 "Okay. Why would I do that? What 49 pages? What UPS man?"
 "The one who's trying to ruin our credibility as playtesters."
 "He is? Why would he do that? Where is he? LET ME AT HIM!"
 "No, it's okay now. We're taking care of it at this end."

"Oh yeah? Well I'm sure glad you woke me up to tell me not to do something I wasn't going to do in the first place."

"Weren't going to do? You mean you were going to let us down?"

"How should I know? I don't have any idea what you're talking about, and, by the slur in your speech, I doubt that you do either."

"Well, that's okay. Actually we're lucky you don't remember. That UPS man can rest easy now. You must have been drunk when I called earlier."

"DRUNK? You're out of your mind! You're the one whose drunk. You never called ear . . . "

CLICK!

SCENARIO #45

ARNHEM: "Who has the Rubber Bands for the PIATS?"

"Are you sure you want to move those squads into the building?"

"Sure, why not?"

"Well, you'll probably leave a lot of equipment behind."

"What equipment?"

"The MMG, LMG and two PIATS."

"No, they go with the squads."

"Not anymore. Didn't you read the new rules for this scenario? They have to pick up the equipment before they can carry it."

"I read the rules. Those weapons are in possession so there's no problem."

"Then you must have missed the changes in ERRATA #18."

"On come on now!"

"Yes, you have to roll for dropping, tripping, slipping and falling."

"Where did you find that?"

"Revised section 998, 'Klut Generation'."

"Great. You dropped the LMG and tripped the geek carrying one of the PIATS. Where are those Klutz counters?"

SCENARIO #74

NORMANDY: "Row Your Boats Ashore"

"Engine failure?"

"Sure, you better break out the oars and stroke it into shore."

"But you'll chew me to pieces at that pace."

"Naw, my boys will have sighting problems because of rule 872.34, 'Hysterical Laughter'."

"Sure, so then I'll lose a morale level due to 872.498, 'Embarrassment'."

"Tough."

"Well, I'm not putting up with it. We're going into the water."

"In the Channel? 800 yards out?"

"We'll swim."

"Please don't do this. We'll have to look up rules for Swimming, Tides, Exposure, Surf, Equipment Loss, Undercurrents, Drift and god knows what else. We'll never finish the game."

"Tough. I'll wear you down before I'll let you win."

"Okay, call out for pizza and get ready to roll dice!"

Twelve hours later, with the GIs still in the water, the assault is at full tide. That is . . . the attack is breaking upon the shore. Er . . . that offensive is cresting? Well, you get the picture.

"Uh, did you roll for squad D to drop their LMG?"

"I'm so exhausted I don't remember. Uh, wait a minute. Yeah, I think so. Aren't they the ones who dropped it but rolled snake-eyes twice in a row to catch it with their feet as it sank? Yeah, I'm sure they are. There should be Foundering counter on them."

"Let me see now. I don't think there are any more. I'm sure we can only use the eight counters

that came with the game. I know I read that somewhere. You aren't allowed any more than eight, so squad D is eliminated."

"Not this again! Why would it be eliminated just because there are only eight Foundering counters provided in the game?"

"Well, maybe we better call Tim. What time is it in Washington now?"

"9:00 AM."

"Great, he should be at the library. I hope none of those other goons are using the telephone."

Ring . . . Ring . . . Ring . . .

"Hello, I must be joking."

"Cut the comedy, Tim. We have a serious question. Can we use more than eight Foundering counters at once?"

"As luck would have it, I just ran across that yesterday in the *Encyclopedia of Allied European Amphibious Landings in 1944 for Months Beginning with the Letter 'J', volume II*."

"You must be joking."

"No, it's an 1880 page monster. Volume I is 1500 pages. It has a lot of information you can't find elsewhere."

"I guess it would. How about an answer?"

"The answer is yes, provided the sum of the squares of the two sides is equal to the square of the third."

"What?"

"Well, I saw this great movie here yesterday, and have been dying to try out some of the lines."

"Oh no! Was the first part in black and white, and were there a lot of winged monkeys flying around near the end?"

"Yes, how did you know?"

"Never mind that. Just get on the next flight out of Washington. You've been on the East coast too long. You're beginning to talk like an inhabitant."

SCENARIO #77

GERMANY: "Atta-Boy George"

"Holy cow! How many Shermans do you get in this scenario?"

"Let's see. Counting the six with front mounted potato-peelers and the four with trash-mashers. I make out a grand total of thirteen."

"And I start with only one immobilized Tiger and a handful of PFs?"

"That's right. But look at what a PF can do to a Sherman. Why, in just a few turns we'll have punctured potato-peelers and smashed mashers all over the board."

"Great. So your troops who aren't committed to taking out the garbage will keel over due to a potato deficient diet. I am not impressed."

"Well, you're not looking at this in the proper perspective. You have to realize that in WWII the entire US economy was geared toward producing Sherman tanks, which it did very well. Consequently, other items such as potato-peelers were in short supply. As the war progressed these deficiencies became so pronounced that substitutes had to be jerryrigged in the field. To fill this need, the army turned to the most common denominator, the one item they had in surplus, the Sherman tank. Of course the potato-peelers and trash-mashers of this scenario are only two examples. There were also tank-mounted barber shops, dry cleaners, brothels, porta-johns, APOs; in fact, almost everything the army needed was eventually mounted on Sherman tanks. So the fact that these potato-peelers are tank-mounted is only coincidental. Those 75MM guns are actually no more than obstructions to efficient potato peeling; and you should think of the vehicles as part of the Commissary, not as AFVs."

"Oh, I'm glad you cleared that up. History never was my forte. So I'll just start moving these squads up next to this potato-peeler."

"SPLOOSH! Ha! You've just been peeled like a potato!"

"What?"

"Your troops were skinned alive."

"No, quit it!"

"Yes, they cashed in their chips."

"No, I mean cut the rotten potato jokes."

"Just because you got a few of your boys fried?"

"Why am I punished so?"

THE WRAP-UP

The playtest was complete. They had played 285 games of the 45 scenarios in 82 days. Tim had honored his promise and posted a 57-1 record. The loss had been to Pat and his incredible Scouts who carried the day, and were usually enough on their own to win any scenario.

It was almost as though Pat knew something about the game none of the others knew. In fact, he probably knew a great deal about many things the rest of them knew absolutely nothing about at all. But, of course, almost everybody knew much more about almost everything then all of them put together. But they knew one thing nobody else knew. They knew 285 games was their limit. They were ready to play *VITP* and *WAS*, anything which didn't require as much dice rolling as *GI*.

They had recorded 570,928 dice rolls, which averaged out to 4.2389 per roll. They had heard reports of a great mathematician in Detroit who postulated a hypothesis that two dice rolled 'x' number of times should yield an average roll of 7, with a general tendency to be more accurate as 'x' increased. Based on this revolutionary proposition, they immediately realized that the 4.2389 average meant their level of play was light years ahead of everyone else!

Probably a great many uninformed players (mostly in California which was usually about two or three years behind the majority of innovations), had not yet even heard of this incredible breakthrough in gaming theory and consequently were unaware of how poorly they measured up to those who could roll 4 and 5 averages on demand (or 9 and 10 averages when playing *RAIL BARON*).

Well, let them enjoy their innocence. Let them attempt to compensate for their inadequacies by memorizing rules, playing constantly, pouring hours upon hours into situation analysis and continuously seeking improvements in overall strategy. If they were inept at rolling dice, not much could be done for them anyway.

HELLO NIRVANA

But, at least for some, such recognition is not necessary because they have what they desire. For in a small hospital somewhere near Toledo, a birth of a different sort is occurring. A birth the like of which very few people will ever see. For in the delivery room, as the situation draws to its inevitable conclusion, a demented and severely mindwarped father-to-be suddenly whips out a black magic marker and exclaims, "No, see, I'll draw a hex pattern. Now, with a 9-1 and a 7-4-7 adjacent to the building, what should the GI do?"

Behind him, four masked figures clad in hospital green rise as one to examine the situation.

"Roll to dig a swimming pool," says Russ.

"Roll to weed the garden," declares Ken.

"Roll to paint the house," Tim shouts.

"Roll for a scout," Pat, of course.

The others stand back in awe. A scout. Of course, always roll for a scout. Then get him to help paint the house.

At least for some, the playtest will never truly end.





PLAYING YOUR HAND IN KINGMAKER

The Play's the Thing Wherein to Catch the King

By Richard Berg

Of the 300 or so historical simulations that have appeared in the last decade undoubtedly one of the most unusual is *KINGMAKER*, Andrew McNeil's politically-oriented game on the Wars of the Roses. It never ceases to amaze me that a game which covers so esoteric a period in history (at least for Americans) as the baronial conflicts in the English 15th century has caught on with such rapid facility.

The reasons for this are interesting because they cast light on the thought processes of the gamer, an area into which publishers and designers have tread with great trepidation. Until the arrival of *KINGMAKER* (it first appeared in the US in its first edition in the early spring of 1975 but had been circulating throughout England for at least a year prior to that) only one game of similar design had ever held the public's interest more than briefly: *DIPLOMACY*. This simulation of power politics and abstracted military aggrandizement had been a cult ever since its introduction in the early 1960's. It was immensely popular and, now that we can look back at it, quite simple in its intent. It made its players assume roles so much so that they were forced to play the game with a psychological insight never before used in even the most complex simulations. The player was not only playing the game, he was playing the other players! And this does not mean he was playing *against* the other players; rather he was using them to further *his* own aims. Luck was eliminated; the player survived on his own wits entirely. He controlled destiny, and he controlled it absolutely.

The formula worked, and *DIPLOMACY* was a raging success—at least within the finite but growing circle of simulation enthusiasts. Now, what usually happens with success is that it gets copied. But a decade passed without *DIPLOMACY* receiving a serious challenge. To be sure, other games of similar

ilk appeared: *ORIGINS OF WWII* is a sort of poor cousin of *DIPLOMACY*, but it has neither the interest or clan of its more successful relative. *DYNASTY* was a short-lived, "local" effort to translate role-playing to the Far East. It had all the elements to produce success, but it never got off the ground, which is too bad as it contains some truly intriguing ideas.

Thus the Role-Playing, Power-Politics field was left entirely to *DIPLOMACY*, a vacuum that I, for one, never quite understood. The game was so obviously successful; and it certainly was no brain-twister in the design department. That it ruled the field as sole occupant for so many years is still a mystery. Yet, Nature abhors a vacuum and into this drought of design stepped Andrew McNeil. Working for a long period of time testing designs, shaping ideas and molding theories, he came up with the first new Power Politics game to seriously challenge—and intrigue—the Dippy buffs. But *KINGMAKER* was different, for *KINGMAKER* did not rely solely on the players' wit to produce a result. McNeil was too familiar with the history of the period to keep the play in the hands of the players, for the "play" of the Wars of the Roses was never really totally in the hands of even its best practitioners. There was too much fate, too many uncertainties, too much out-and-out luck—both bad as well as good. And this is what provides the tremendous drawing power of *KINGMAKER*, for not only does the player have to play the other players but now he has to battle the Hand of Fate. The players are easy to watch; it is Fate that often deals the cruelest blow.

The heart of *KINGMAKER* is the marvelous series of cards which direct the play of the game. Cards had never before been used to such an extent, and with such amazing effect, in a conflict simulation. Perhaps other designers felt constrained to avoid the

"Monopoly" influence, or the seeming utter randomness of such a system. But in *KINGMAKER* it worked. The two series of cards—Event and Crown—are the game. The excellent article in *The GENERAL* (Vol. 13, No. 1) by Robert Harmon is well-worth referring to as a reminder of what each card in the game can do, and how often it can do it.

And knowing what the cards can do is the key to the game.

Strategy in *KINGMAKER* is like going over Niagara Falls in a barrel: you know what you want to do, but once you start doing it you are no longer in control. And the player who sticks to a strict plan in *KINGMAKER* will usually find himself suffering the same fate that befalls the old Barrel-Driver.

The best players in *KINGMAKER* follow the age-old adage: Hope for the Best, but Expect the Worst. The former may be fleeting, but the latter is sure to arrive somewhere along the line. Moreover, do not despair! *KINGMAKER* is so cunningly contrived that even total elimination means little, unless it occurs during the latter portion of the Middle Game or in the End Game itself. If such a fate befalls you, you will have to be content with being some major Baron's pawn. You might also try breathing in people's faces: Plague always makes for quick changes in power hierarchy and spreading a little disease doesn't hurt.

Generalities aside, the best strategy in *KINGMAKER* is preparedness and knowledge. The player who knows the board, knows what is going on and what *has* gone before, and then has the flexibility to handle all of this knowledge is a successful Baron, a veritable Neville amongst the Scropes. (A bit of historical byplay: Alas, poor Scrope, your time has passed. No longer may players launch the once infamous "Scrope Attack," made infamous in the 1st two editions, wherein the hapless Scrope went around like a Kamikaze in kilts and buckler, sacrificing himself in attacks the odds of which staggered the

imagination, just to kill off some nobles. TAHGC's edition of the rules has removed this bit of dastardly—and often infuriating—byplay. Poor Scrope has now been relegated to the scrapheap of nobles—a place he fittingly deserves.)

The first cardinal rule for success in *KINGMAKER* is knowledge of the game-board. The board has undergone some fairly radical changes since its initial design (changes which I greet with mixed feelings), but the important locations and passages are still the same. For example, the most important town on the map, in terms of movement, is still Shrewsbury. (I have assumed—as do virtually all players—that Shrewsbury *does* control that fork in the road, a matter which should officially be clarified somewhere!) [Ed. Note: *Shrewsbury does control the road.*] Control of Shrewsbury allows a player in York to whisk on down to London in one, fell swoop (providing he gains Conisboro Castle, a not-too-difficult feat). This type of knowledge is what renders success from opportunity and allows the wise Baron to always remain within reach of some objective. (It is often wise to hide control of Shrewsbury, revealing it only when a major opportunity presents itself).

For a more cogent analysis of *KINGMAKER* lets us play a sample "hand" and see what opportunities present themselves and how best even the worst hand may be managed. Let us assume a four-player game (in my opinion the best configuration for *KINGMAKER*). We will also use the Advanced Rules which give us an eighth member of the Royal Household—Edmund, Earl of Rutland—as well as the Dukes of Lancaster and York. We will be examining the different hands not so much for play examples as for strategic possibilities, weaknesses and opportunities.

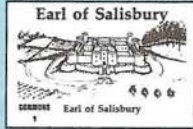
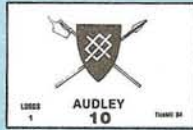
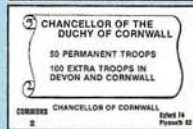
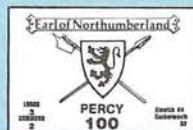
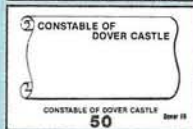
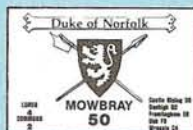
The random deal at right is a bit unusual; however, there is no "normal" hand in *KINGMAKER*. The beauty of the design is that each play is different, each game a new situation. Here is an obvious improvement over the static initial situation inherent in *DIPLOMACY*. The latter produces what are known as "Standard Gambits", somewhat in the vein of Chess. *KINGMAKER* has none of that, so to speak (the merits of which will not be debated at this time); however, there are definite things that each player must accomplish in his initial maneuvers. Basically, his intent is to solidify his position and gain himself a Contender—*any* Contender. Without a Contender your play tends to be aimless and, worse, useless. You will find yourself at the mercy of the stronger factions, who will use you as a pawn and then drop you like a hot Yorkshire Pudding. Get that "prince", even if you have to steal the packet boat to Ireland to do it!

Each player must decide what his best deployment is (some of the nobles being given variable locations). This is where knowledge of the gameboard comes in. The Lancastrian pieces are located in the center of England, with Margaret and Edward right next door to each other, while the Yorkist Household is spread around the fringes of the country. If you have a faction that is powerful in the center by all means take advantage of such a situation. Otherwise, try to base your power in *one* of the fringe areas where you can grab—and maintain in relative safety—one of the Yorkists.

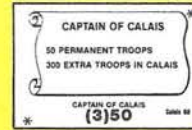
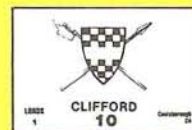
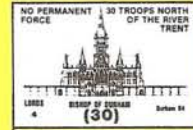
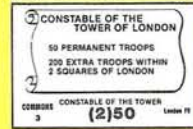
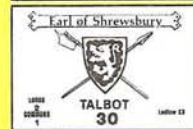
Further use of game knowledge can be made in assigning the offices and titles. For example, unless you want to create a Power Base in the North (which is foolish unless Percy, Earl of Northumberland is one of your barons), the Warden of the Northern Marches can prove an extreme annoyance. He has an irritating habit of heighing off to Scotland just as you are hopping down to London. Embarrassing at best. But if you are so lucky as to combine Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, with the Chamberlain of the County Palatine of Chester you have created quite a formidable Baron, with an exceptionally

SAMPLE RANDOM DEAL:

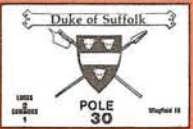
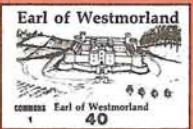
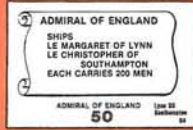
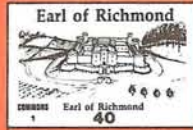
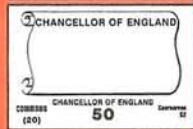
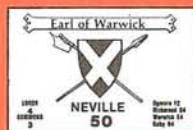
Player One:
Basic Strength: 330



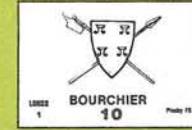
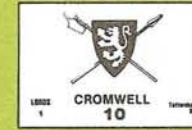
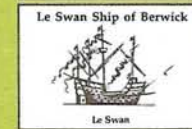
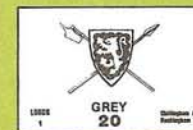
Player Two:
Basic Strength: 100 (300)



Player Three:
Basic Strength: 290



Player Four:
Basic Strength: 130



powerful stronghold in Wales—a difficult area of the board to approach without notice.

Let us look at the Sample Hand to see how the principles of the Gambit may be applied.

First, note the imbalance between the hands: Player One has a basic total of 330 Strength Points, while Player Four has, at best, 130. Player Two has a seemingly minuscule strength of but 100. However, he possesses the Constable of the Tower of London, and Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury (The Constable) should have little trouble claiming the extra 200 men that go with this office (see below). That would give him 300 rather quickly and pull him up to par with the other major factions. (It also makes him King, as Henry is his as soon as he enters London). However, as we will see from the example of Player Two, initial strength is misleading. It is *position* which is important—and it is position which will remain important throughout the game. You must always be ready to grab an opportunity, and being ready means being in a location from which you can strike quickly. Sequestering yourself in the Cheviots might be great for your health (especially if you like oatmeal); but you'll be a petty baron all your life if that's your idea of preparedness.

Player One's hand initially appears quite strong—after all, he has two of the great Barons in the game (Norfolk & Northumberland) and an initial strength of 330, with the possibility of an extra 100. However, this strength is illusory, for while his baronial strength is in the North, his Office strength (Dover Castle, Canterbury, and Chancellor of Cornwall) are far to the South. Thus much of his strength is diffuse and dissipated, useless to him as a Power Base. Yet his position is enviable: he has the 300 points necessary to take York, and he has the Archbishop to crown Richard of York King. This move, which cannot be accomplished until at least the second turn of the game, is a very strong one and one which should be one accomplished at all costs. It gives Player One the leading Yorkist contender and it nullifies Henry as King, should he be grabbed (and he will, as we will see below).

The three nobles of One's faction are thus placed as closely as possible for quick consolidation. As they are all oriented to the North this positioning is easily attainable. Norfolk is placed at Wressle, adjacent to York, while Northumberland is deployed in Cocker mouth for no other reason than it is an interesting sounding place. Northumberland can be quite a pain—a sort of Junior League Warden of the Northern Marches. He has power, but it's too far away from the center of things to really do any good. Here he has been assigned Cornwall, giving him a second Power Base, albeit far to the South. Norfolk, in the meantime, has been given the two "sister" cities of Dover and Canterbury. This seeming diffusion of power (noted above) may now work to Player One's interest, for he now has a base of operations close to London—a base he may find useful when operating in that area against the Lancastrians. There could be some argument for assigning one of the Offices to Audley, now Earl of Salisbury. However, Northumberland is too strong to waste and Norfolk is too well situated. Furthermore, the faction will consolidate rather quickly and Audley, being the weakest of the barons, will prove somewhat of a liability in this area.

The one major thing to note here is that Player One has had the luck to go *before* Player Two (who controls the Tower, and with it, London). Player Three will move first (he is the Chancellor) and thus One will move before Two. This will enable One to crown Richard King before Two can call a Parliament (a foolish move at this stage of the game anyway).

Thus, One has good strength and good position. He will soon, barring unforeseen complications (Plague, etc.) have a rival Contender and become the leading faction in the North.

Player Two has had the unfortunate happenstance of having to discard three nice Offices. Things like that happen all too often. His strength as well as his position is also basically weak, and his bases of power are divided between North and West. Clifford and Scrope are of little help to Talbot, and furthermore, they are in great danger in the center of Player One's Power. *But*, Player Two is the Constable of the Tower of London, and that means Henry is his—if he can get there without mishap. And that is why Bristol has been assigned to Talbot (among other reasons). Talbot can use Bristol as a refuge (praying that the Black Death doesn't catch him there) and a jumping-off point for a quick one-turn trip to London. By the second turn of the game he will have Henry. Unfortunately, Player One will probably also have Richard (York) by this time, so the effect of this will be nullified. Once having gained Henry, Player Two will have to rely upon a good draw from the Crown Pack to give him aid. His barons are weak, and he is strong only in London and its environs. His opportunities to garner other Lancastrians (and thus strengthen his position *vis a vis* that House) are minimal, considering Player Three's strength in Central England. He thus seems to be tied to London, and only some shrewd politicking will get him out of that hole. Players who hang around London usually end up hanging, literally.

Player Three's situation is enviable. He has strength—290 points—and exceptional position. Furthermore, he is Chancellor of England. Not only will he go first, but, in the obvious stalemate that will quickly occur, he will, under certain circumstances, be able to call Parliament (if he lives that long). Warwick is placed in Warwick, right next-door to Margaret and Edward, where he, Roos, and Pole can grab Margaret and then Edward right off the bat. Furthermore, Herbert can waltz right into Cardigan (an open town) and pick up George, a Yorkist contender, on the first turn. Player Three's position in terms of bargaining power and alliance is thus quite enviable. He will hold three contenders in short order, and his power base in the center will make him quite capable of unloading on Player Two in London, should he get some reinforcements in the draw.

Three has not had much say in how to divide his hand. Chancellor obviously goes to Warwick, a very powerful noble (and the namesake of the game's title). Admiral of England provides some interesting sea maneuverability, but Three hasn't the coastal Nobility to take advantage of it. Note that Pole and Roos have been placed within striking distance of the Lancasters by deploying Roos at Belvoir. Player Three has some very interesting times ahead!

Player Four has problems. He has little inherent strength, and his positioning is mediocre at best. But he still has possibilities, and this is what the players should be aware of. From the way he sees things developing on the board in the initial deployment, and from the lack of strength in his hand, it should occur to Four that he will have to act boldly if he is to succeed. The key to his success is the ship Swan. The ship is in Berwick, but fortunately no one controls Berwick by the time of Four's initial move. This means the Swan will be free to move. With the intent of using this ship as a catalyst, Fitzalan has been placed in his Southern holding. Arundel, but given cards which essentially give him power further north, near his Welsh holding in Chirk. The reason for this is that Four's best move is to get to Ireland as quickly as possible, grab Edmund, and bring him back to the Northwest (thus Fitzalan gets the Bishop of Carlisle and the City of Lancaster). Grey, Cromwell and Bouchier should be able to join with him quite easily (there is usually little interference and/or combat in the initial moves as players are too busy getting organized), and Four should be at least able to set up some sort of Power Base in the West. It's not much, but it is a start.

And it also places him near Edward of March should he attain the strength to take Harlech.

From studying the above dispositions and tentative opening moves we can formulate some basic precepts that players should keep in mind as they begin play:

- 1) Study your initial faction carefully, evaluating it not so much for what it appears at face value but as to what it means in terms of position. This means knowing the game-board and the potential power bases of the players.
- 2) Initial strength (in terms of mercenaries, Offices, etc.) should be given to Nobles who can take Royal Pieces early in the game. This will discourage other players from picking you off. If possible, consolidate your Barons before grabbing the Royal Piece.
- 3) Try to get an early Power Base, a position from which you can operate and to which you can retreat in times of danger. Position is everything, and if a player can make himself overpowering in one area his chances of success are greatly improved. Of course this Power Base/Position should not be so far from what's happening that you become a veritable hermit. Position means the ability to strike as well as to consolidate.
- 4) Get a Royal Piece as quickly as possible. George and Edmund are virtually freebies; others are more difficult. However there is usually always one member of Royalty who is attainable. Study the initial dispositions *vis a vis* your strength and act accordingly.

In essence, the object of your initial deployment and opening moves is Power. You must obtain some sort of power, be it a Royal Piece or a strong Power/Base Position. If you have neither you will soon be at the mercy of the players who do, players who will be seeking to destroy the lesser factions before they get on to bigger business. If you have neither you will soon be at the mercy of the players who do, players who will be seeking to destroy the lesser factions before they get on to bigger business. If you have Position in the form of a Power Base you can at least maintain your dignity.

THE MIDDLE GAME

The success of a given player in the important Middle Section of the game (the portion where power divisions and factions solidify, Royal Pieces are discarded like sacks of mouldy flour, and two or perhaps three major Baronial groups emerge) is entirely dependent on the Positioning he has devised in the opening portions. The reason for this is not that the game will depend on who controls what, but rather that the player who has good position—and power in and from that position—will be able to take advantage of those incredible and all-consuming turns of fortune that stride through the game like a horde of Huns.

As players' factions become bigger they will become more and more susceptible to the annoying Raids and Revolts that spring up about once every two turns (at least). Remember, nobles called to other places may not take other members of their factions with them, so a major faction can quickly become splintered. The good player is one who has enough power and position to a) overcome these sudden changes of fortune when they occur to him, and b) take advantage of them when they occur to others.

Now, there is no way for a player to ignore these events. Nor is it possible to ignore Plague. However, at least the latter is somewhat forecastable. And, in the words of the original edition, "The Player who has his whole force wiped out by Plague really deserves to lose." And that is the truth. Remember that Royal Castles do not suffer plague and, furthermore, that plague is cyclical—once it has occurred in one city it will not occur again in that city until the Event Pack is finished and reshuf-

fled. (This has been specifically designed into the game, and it is somewhat unrealistic to shuffle the deck every once and awhile as plague—which represents other misfortunes as well as actual disease—tended not to reappear in cities it had hit in the recent past.) Thus a careful player can take advantage of cities that *have* been hit, using them as havens knowing that they are safe for a while.

As for the Revolts and Raids, the player must learn to anticipate, to realize that certain of his nobles will be called to places undesired at times unwanted. These calls are unavoidable, but the effect of such can be minimized by careful planning (within the parameters of the amount of planning you *can* do in *KINGMAKER*). Establishing a Power Base in an area to which you are likely to be summoned is one way of handling these emergencies; actually, it is probably the *only* way. Otherwise you must trust to luck and the allegiance of the other players, which is usually feeble at best.

The Middle Portion of the game is thus best played by players who minimize misfortune and capitalize on that of others. To this end alliance can often be quite important. Now, be not mistaken about alliances in *KINGMAKER*: they are invariably consummated in greed and dissipated in mistrust. Moreover they are rife with irony and hypocrisy for the simple reason that two factions helping each other are usually after one goal, and that goal can be attainable by only one of those factions. This is not to say that all alliances should be avoided; just the opposite is true. You usually cannot survive without the help of another faction, unless you control most of the major nobles in the game. And if that happens you usually spend most of your time running errands throughout the countryside.

No, alliances are necessarily and even helpful. They can act as buffer zones to certain areas, and they can often help lesser factions survive while building or rebuilding their strength. However, most alliances in *KINGMAKER* are short-lived. Unlike *DIPLOMACY*, where alliances can be mutually advantageous as the players involved divide the spoils of new areas conquered, in *KINGMAKER* there is little gain in controlling areas for the sheer sake of control. You are after Royal Pieces. And, as at least 50% of those personages will most likely have had their proverbial throats slit after just several rounds, the prize may be difficult to attain. In this fashion wheeling and dealing is infinitely more difficult and requires an even more devious personality in *KINGMAKER*, for there is usually little to bind two factions together. It is the superior player who can use his fellow players to accomplish his aims without giving them anything worthwhile.

As the Middle Game progresses the factions begin to solidify, if they can avoid Plague and other disasters. The Faction controlling the King usually has a great advantage—whether you are using the optional Parliament rules or not. This advantage may be offset by having a rival faction-crowned King, creating a temporary stalemate, or, as is more likely, by the annoying arrival of Embassies. The key thing to remember with embassies is that the player who controls the King must keep a strong faction of nobles around him at all times. Quite simply, an unprotected King dragged off to Weymouth or some other such tank-town to meet the Scots or French ambassador will be devoured before he can move an inch. However, unlike Raids and Revolts, when the King is summoned to embassy he may take any nobles in the same area with him. Thus it behooves the player to protect his King in this fashion.

Of course, such strong factions are usually dissipated by the very Raids and Revolts mentioned above. Sometimes this can be avoided—aside from the ways we spoke of before—in an unusual and daring fashion. Certain nobles are called by Raids and Revolts more than others—these are usually the

powerful barons (e.g., Mowbray (Norfolk) has *five* such calls in the Event Deck): such Offices as Warden of the Cinque Ports (with five calls) and the “globe-trotting” Marshal of England (with ten!) calls are likewise embarrassing. Obviously, if you want to make key use of Norfolk you can never make him Marshal of England. (However, doing so as King in a Parliament, if the opportunity arises, is a sure way of sabotaging your worst enemy!) But if you want to create a powerful noble who is relatively free to do as he wishes it might be worth your while, if the opportunity arises, to take a minor baron such as Grey (with 20 points and no calls), assign him a Title to build his strength and an Office with good power and little Raid/Revolt interference such as Constable of the Tower (*the* richest prize in offices, especially at the beginning of the game) or Chamberlain of County Palatinate, and then give him a multitude of mercenaries, cities, bishops and other accoutrements. You now have a formidable baron who is free to move almost anywhere.

To this end, players should note that Neville, Earl of Warwick, is far and away the best noble to hold. He has good initial strength (50), he controls four well-placed castles (Richmond and Raby are in excellent position just to the north of York; Warwick gives a Power Base in the important Central counties; and Ogmores is well located between Wales and Cornwall with excellent coastal opportunities), and he has only *one* call-card! He also has the largest vote faction in Parliament of any one noble. Thus, the player who controls Neville should use him to his fullest. Through Neville the player can maintain several Power Bases (given the location of Neville’s castles) and he can move with relative freedom from call, especially if Neville can be assigned an important Office. Unless it is totally unavoidable, never waste a lesser Office on Neville. To do so is to diffuse your major weapon. Because of his position and freedom Neville is the single-most important noble—or piece—in the game.

Neville is, of course, only one of three “major” nobles. However, the other two—Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, and Percy, Earl of Northumberland—have almost as many drawbacks as they have advantages. Percy has the largest household, and as such, his strength is formidable. But his base of power is far to the North—too far to be of any use as a true Power Base. His westernmost castle, Cocker-mouth, is in the unusual position of being a coastal castle with virtually no access to the sea! Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, has good strength (50) and some excellent castles (five of them) spread around the country. However, Mowbray is a one-man travelling circus and he is so susceptible to calls for Raid Revolt that he cannot be trusted. As for Stanley, who also has a basic strength of 50, his drawbacks are self-evident (lack of power base and constant calls to Douglas). To give Stanley any power other than he has or cannot be avoided is to waste such Offices, etc. Of course if you have several ships at your disposal Stanley can become more useful. But he is a question-mark at best, and players should be ultra-cautious about using him or relying upon him to any great extent.

An important point to remember during the Middle Game is that cards drawn from the Crown Deck may be concealed. This is a powerful weapon, as the players may not know that you are holding Neville, who is Chancellor of Cornwall with several groups of mercenaries and some bishops. To spring such a surprise on the other players is usually to carry the day, at least locally. Knowing just when to spring that surprise is the essence of good timing, which is a very important sense to have. The obvious faults of “too soon” or “too late” are magnified in a game such as *KINGMAKER* where the other players are equally as capable of taking advantage of presented opportunities. Actually, it is almost impossible to act too soon in this game; players

should strike when they can and then not wait around to see what develops later. But you can reveal hidden cards too soon, wasting them on trivial conquest. If you are lucky enough to have a pocket baron with the power of a Neville, as above, make sure you use him on a worthwhile mission.

There are other mechanisms in the game that players should be aware of, particularly Free Moves and Writ cards. They, along with the new King’s Pardon cards, are virtually self-explanatory in their worth, and players should be careful they make the best use of them. Free Move cards can be very valuable in planning a quick, decisive raid from an area which seems far removed from the center of play. And the combination of a surprise noble plus a few Free Move cards can be incredibly devastating.

THE END-GAME

Time was, in the early editions, when the player with the most power would simply take his pretender and sail for Calais, the healthiest city on the block (no Plague!). Now we have a Plague in Calais card, as well as other French sidelights, so that scheme is no longer valid. The end-game, however, *can* bog down when there are two players with equal strength possessing the only two pretenders. By this time all the cards are in play and there are few surprises left. Play tends to become somewhat static as neither side is willing to take a chance.

Plague, of course, can loosen this up, as can Embassy cards, and players must be ready to jump at the first opportunity. Strong factions should get rid of as many pretenders as they can. While Royal Pieces are an asset in the beginning and, to some extent, the middle of the game, they become an increasing liability as the game progresses. They slow down movement and make factions more of a target. (And remember Beaufort!) Usually, an embassy card here, a raid card there and a huge battle occurs with the winner emerging with the sole royal piece. It can sometimes take a bit of waiting for this to occur, as players have solidified their positions and are unwilling to make deals.

I have purposely omitted discussing Parliament and its uses until now. Briefly, each player tends to use Parliament—as King—according to his own personality. That to call Parliament is important goes without saying—if you have the power and there are strong Offices and Titles to dispense. The strength of the King is nowhere more apparent than in Parliament—if his faction is strong enough to override the votes of the others. Here is where deals are made—and consummated. Never underestimate the power of Greed, and use it to your fullest advantage. As King you should never hesitate to give yourself the choicest appointments, and the player who is shy and unassuming or, even worse, generous, will not be King for long. To be King means to have power; and to win you have to know how to use that power. The best players in *KINGMAKER* are those who use a baronial mentality to the fullest. Trust no one, and grab, grab, grab. *KINGMAKER* is *not* subtle; you cannot finesse 300 pounds of armored illiteracy. You club him into submission—and Parliament is where you pick up your bludgeons.

KINGMAKER is not a game which can be discussed in specific strategic details. Success depends on a state of mind. It is a game which demands concentration from its players, a game in which trust is an anachronism. Speed of movement and ruthlessness are the two key ingredients for success. And both of these ingredients use one source: power. Throughout the entire course of the game you are playing for power. Whether it be local power or total control, no player can survive for long in this atmosphere without some form of power. And to that end you must always plan your strategy.



DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD

Three Games in one: Children, Adult and Solitaire Versions

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Deep in the impenetrable Amazonian wilderness of South America, an unscalable plateau rises from the jungle floor. This strange land has never been trod by Twentieth Century man—until now. Your band of intrepid explorers has made the ascent and now stands at the edge of a veritable scientific treasure trove of unmeasurable value. Before you lies a land teeming in flora and fauna long thought extinct or never even imagined in the mind of man. Strange, terrible bellows reverberate from the dense forest before you until, at last, the very ground shakes to the approach of a prehistoric beast. Truly, riches beyond measure await those who bring proof of these discoveries back to civilization. But behold...the cruel twists of fate or the greed of man has betrayed you. Your tenuous bridge across the gaping chasm is gone! Marooned, the task now becomes one of survival and escape...certainly a frightening enough prospect against the background of such terrible prehistoric monsters, but even now other eyes are watching you from the recesses of the trees.

DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD is inspired by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic work of fiction: **The Lost World**. And just as that famous book was the prototype for a whole new genre of "Lost World" literature, **DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD** breaks new ground in the field of innovative game design. Players explore this Lost World, ever wary of its horrible inhabitants, in search of sites where they can embark upon adventures yielding great scientific discoveries and means of escape. Each adventure site leads the player through an illustrated trek of great peril and reward. Comic book style story lines give vent to the player's imagination as his adventures are virtually pictured before him in an ongoing narration as he proceeds from frame to frame. Front and back, full-color views of the dinosaurs actually stand erect and loom ominously across the plateau.

DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD is different from anything you've ever played before and changes with every game you play. No two games are the same. Although simple in concept, the game comes in two versions—a basic game suitable for 8 year-olds, and the full game which will challenge even the most erudite game player while allowing his children to be competitive in the same contest. With a playing time of approximately 90 minutes per game, it is great family fun. Actually three games in one, **DINOSAURS OF THE LOST WORLD** also contains an excellent solitaire version for those wishing to play alone—pitting themselves against the forces of prehistoric nature in a race against time.

\$20.00



The Avalon Hill Game Company

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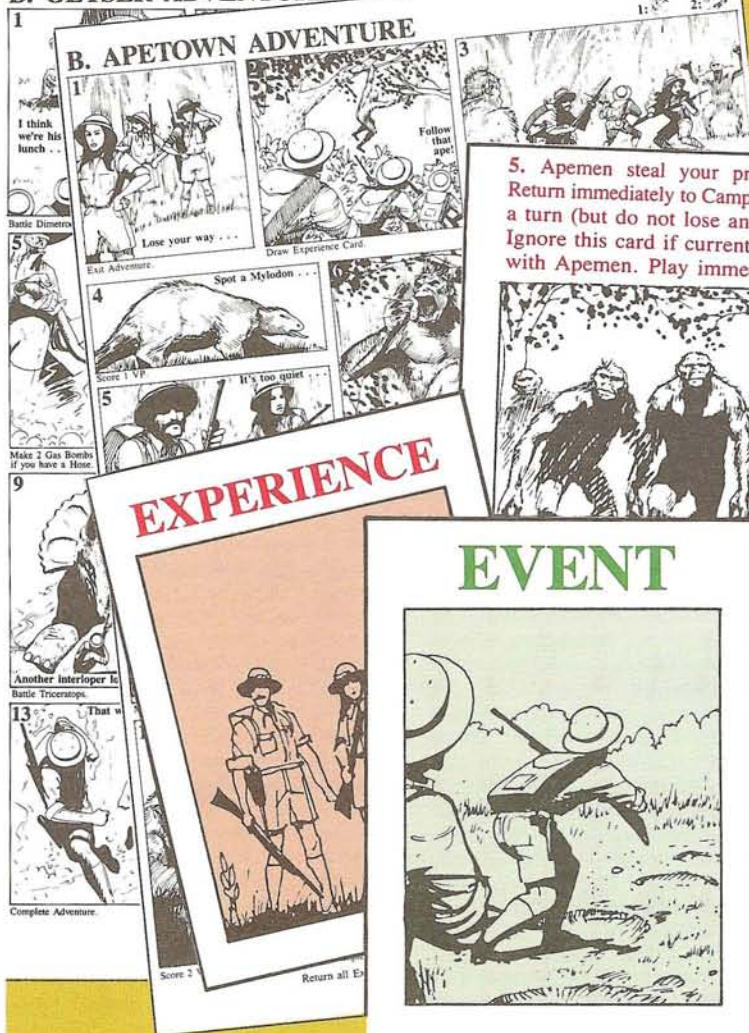
CONTENTS:

- 1 16" x 22" Mapboard
- 15 9" x 12" illustrated Adventures
- 30 1" hexagonal Site Tiles
- 36 1" die cut, double laminated Playing Pieces
- 4 Plastic Pawns
- 17 Plastic Stands
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- 34 Event Cards
- 1 four-page Rulebook & Creature Glossary
- 1 one-page Rules for simplified version

TIME SCALE: Two hours per turn
MAP SCALE: 10 square miles per hex
PLAYERS: One to four
PLAYING TIME: 90 minutes

An Adventure Game for Ages 8 and Up

D. GEYSER ADVENTURE



Stegosaurus
Meadow

1 VP ★

Pit Trap

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GETTYSBURG®

Civil War Battle Game

The all-new 1988 "125th Anniversary Edition" of *GETTYSBURG* is the fifth version of this popular title to be published by The Avalon Hill Game Company since 1958. To mark the gala occasion and plow through all the hype and hoopla, our crack roving reporter and all-round nice guy went to one of the ubiquitous "better game stores everywhere" and cornered the new game for a hard-hitting investigative report.

Roving Reporter And All-Round Nice Guy: So, you're the new kid on the block. I've heard rumors that the old 4th and most complex version of *GETTYSBURG* was sold out. Rather than reprinting it, the merry moguls at "the Hill" decided to design *you* and return a title with high public name recognition to its original "introductory game" traditions. True?

All-New *GETTYSBURG* Game: Yes.

RRAARNG: So, you're sort of a "return to basics" kind of game, trading on your high name recognition to lure unsuspecting new people into the historical gaming hobby.

ANGG: Exactly.

RRAARNG: Hmmm. I seem to be doing all the talking here. For a fellow with such colorful components, you certainly are a game of few words.

ANGG: Only two rules pages.

RRAARNG: Oh, really? [*A very short time passes . . .*] Amazing! I read your rules and was ready to start play only 15 minutes after peeking into the box, and you know how dense reporters can be. Of course, now you have to 'fess up. That's not really all there is, is it?

ANGG: Nope.

RRAARNG: Then you admit that this is your rather lengthy Battle Manual, jam up and jelly tight with scenarios, optional rules, period photographs, historical notes and other rantings and ravings by your designer. Also, you come with Order of Appearance Cards, unit counters and dice—in short, everything needed to play and a real bargain at \$15.

ANGG: Yep.

RRAARNG: OK. Well, let's get into some nitty-gritty detail, now. You feature rectangular combat units that are infantry divisions and cavalry and artillery brigades like the old '58 and '64 versions, but you use a hex grid like the old '61 and '77 versions. Comments?

ANGG: Big hexes this time.

RRAARNG: Yes, your hexes are big enough to hold the units without shuffling through stacks of counters to see what's there. You know, despite your simplicity, the generals have a real command role in giving their combat units more movement and permitting the massing of two combat units in a hex. Your Turns are pretty "big", too. Each daylight Turn represents about two hours of real time so with the night Turn, each of your game "days" is only 8 Turns long. Why this particular time scale?

ANGG: I play *fast*.

RRAARNG: Yeah. That's how it looks to me. I'll bet that my twelve year old and I could finish a "July 1" scenario in under an hour. You may become known as the "fast" version of *GETTYSBURG*. All right, so speed and ease of play display your sterling qualities as an introductory game. Now, I can't help but notice that your shelf in this game store is surrounded by beverages, munchies and enough cheese dip to float a battleship. What do these tons of junk food signify? Do they show your suitability as a "beer & pretzels" game for those old grognards who have been gaming since Tom Shaw was a pup?

ANGG: Darn straight!

RRAARNG: Even your combat system is fast and simple—no CRT. Instead, each player rolls a ten-sided die which is modified by the engaged units' combat factors and by any good defensive terrain held by the defenders. High rolls win and, depending on the differential, can result in retreats and losses. Casualties are shown by flipping units over to their reduced-strength side. Clever, you Avalon Hill games.

ANGG: Right.

RRAARNG: Thank you for your detailed and insightful comments. Somehow, I feel that you might be more fun to play than to interview, so how about a quick game. I know that no one else is around, but that's all right because you look like you solitaire pretty well, too.

GETTYSBURG is available now for \$15.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214). Please add 10% shipping and handling to all mail orders (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

A. of N. Virginia R. E. LEE 10 5	Rodes 2 4  6-5	Wainright 1 2  1-5	Doubleday 1 2  3-5	1 Corps REYNOLDS 10 1
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Time Scale: One Turn = two hours.

Map Scale: 700 yards per hex.

Unit Scale: Headquarters units representing the generals commanding army, corps and cavalry divisions, infantry divisions, artillery brigades and battalions and cavalry brigades.

Playing Time: From 40 minutes to 4 hours, depending on the scenario used.



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THE GIVER OF THE LAW

TITAN Design Notes

By Jason McAllister



TITAN is a fantasy wargame. Its conception arose from our strong desire to create a game that reflected our interests in myth and mythology. At the time (the early '70s) there were very few games—other than some unsatisfactory entries in the infant role-playing genre—on the market which dealt with such a subject. As we developed our ideas, we moved away from a topical game on any specific mythology or story line and the necessary restrictions of such toward a generic setting in which players could begin on an equal basis and develop their own forces and strategic styles. The trappings of the *TITAN* have remained firmly ensconced in fantasy; its characters have been drawn from several recognizable myth systems and adapted to fit the needs of the unique game system. The "magical" elements—so beloved of most fantasy gamers—are admittedly limited, teleportation and dragonfire being the only obvious examples. But the firm base of our effort rested on the elements of tactics and strategy—military, that is.

The premise of the game is simple—there exists a world where godlike beings gather to raise up armies and do battle in search of victory for their own unknown purposes. The game has no social, economic or political pretenses; the players' only goal is domination of the map by elimination of all opposition. The world of their conflict does not consist of continents or conform to our limited view of geography. Instead, it is but a matrix of lands connected not by mere proximity but by a system of selective gateways which control movement in such a manner that adjacent lands may well be several moves apart. The Battlelands (tactical displays) depict each of the various terrains of the world. With hexgrids of only 27 spaces, these may seem small; but in the hundreds of games I have played. I have engaged in or observed thousands of battles and I have never noted one engagement to precisely repeat another. The premise of the game and its mechanics may be simple, but the exponential product of all its elements creates a framework for a nearly infinite cycle of maneuvers and situations.

Aside from being a fantasy wargame, *TITAN* is also a fine multi-player game. The multi-player aspect was decided on very early in the game's long development, but we also wanted a design that would not require more than two players to be challenging. One of the earliest Masterboards had twelve Tower lands (and about half-again as many lands in total) which would have allowed for up to a dozen players, but the problem of boredom while waiting for eleven other people to make their play and the fact that the board was simply too big to force two players into conflict caused us to cut it down to a reasonable size. Six towers fit well within the hex-symmetrical layout we finally arrived at; and six is also about as many people as you can fit comfortably around a card-table without serious overcrowding. Still, some people I play with refuse to play in games of five or six, not liking to wait even that long for their turn; while others I know won't bother to sit down to a game with less than four players. Luckily, *TITAN* accommodates both types.

About half the games I play now have been one-on-one, and I truly feel that two-player play is as enjoyable as multi-player. In fact, the game is the same; there are no rule changes to accommodate a different number of players. Although, certainly, slight differences in play derive from the diplomatic

element inherent in any multi-player game, actual diplomacy is restrained by the game itself. Teamwork is limited by the mechanics of play which do not allow such things as trading units or free passage through occupied lands, and in battle the only help any "ally" can offer is advice. Alliances can occur when some other player gains an advantage, but because there will ultimately be only one winner, a player has little reason to want an ally to succeed to the point of pulling ahead in the game. Alliances tend to be opportunistic and short-lived. More common than formal alliances are the strategic trade-offs (as when a player might offer to move or not move a specific Legion in return for similar consideration from another player on his turn). In developing the game for multi-play, we sought to avoid the abuses of alliances and unspoken truces, so there are no special rules to facilitate collaboration, although limited cooperation is certainly possible. One-on-one play works well; and multi-play tends to be a free-for-all—something for every gamer's taste.

The split level of strategic and tactical play serves the free-for-all nature of the game well and is also an important element in speeding the play. Our earliest attempts at developing a fantasy wargame held to the conventional format of a mapboard on which the players engaged their forces along fronts without the benefit of separate tactical displays. The adoption of the split level system allowed us to represent the world of the game with only a tenth as many spaces and cut the number of units employed in strategic play by that much or more. Game turns were quickened considerably. At the same time, the addition of tactical battle displays introduced a simple yet intricate method of combat that we found to be much more interesting than the odds computation/chart resolution employed in most wargames. The elimination of solid fronts allowed players' (especially in the multi-player version) forces a much higher degree of interaction and got away from the problem of what to do when three opposing players have units mutually adjacent.

The units of strategic play have no zone of control, and being adjacent does not provoke combat; a Legion must advance into an enemy-occupied land to engage in battle, and the battles never involve more than two Legions. Players cannot combine their Legions to attack a stronger foe; they must each wait their turn. And since a relatively large Legion would be necessary to do significant damage to a powerful enemy, a player would be understandably reluctant to waste one of his armies so that another player could reap the fruits of victory (the points accrued by defeating another in battle). In fact, the intricate nature of play can allow a player with a single, strong Legion to survive for some time against two or more foes in better positions—for neither may want to lose what it would cost to eliminate that last Legion and so weaken his position vis-a-vis his stronger opponent. On two occasions I have found myself with a single Legion in the last stage of long games, struggling against opponents with ten or more Legions apiece (on one of those occasions I emerged victorious—proving that there is always hope in *TITAN*). The split-level system of *TITAN* downplays mere numeric advantage and emphasizes the independent action of powerful Legions and aggressive players.

One of the more important elements of play is that a player must be active to improve his position; he

cannot merely sit safely in castles or defensive positions and amass great strength. Strategic movement is required to augment one's armies; winning battles is the only method of adding to one's score. Early versions of the game experimented with Tower Lands that produced a creature on every turn that they were occupied; players did little more than send out scouting parties, and games were interminable (one game spanned many weekends across the space of several months; when we quit, three out of the original four were still in the game). The elimination of such free enlistments was a major improvement in the speed of play. The requirement that a player must move at least one Legion each turn prevents a player from retiring to the Tower with his Titan for the duration; for, unless he has other Legions to move, he cannot long remain there.

Much of the final development of the game centered on speeding play, and requiring activity not only as a matter of mechanics but as a matter of strategic importance served this end well. Still, the most common complaint I hear concerning the game is that it "takes too long"; some people have remarked that they have played for hours on end, yet never completed a game. My only rebuttal to this is that they must either play very slowly or lack aggressiveness. Because the game has no set turn limit, the ending depends on the action of the players. If they refuse to attack, the game will not end. Avalon Hill's rules include two tested methods of speeding play and one of limiting play to a specific time which encourage or ensure a conclusion. Tournaments I have run in the past are limited to a certain time period (generally three or four hours) and lengthy turns are discouraged without resort to timed moves. In our local play, we neither time moves nor games, yet our games usually draw to a conclusion within a few hours (five being about average). It is the actions of the players that determine the quality of their play and the length of their game.

The other prime complaint I have fielded concerning *TITAN* is that it makes too much use of dice—in particular, that the use of dice to determine movement degrades it to a parlor game or, at best, a "beer-and-pretzels" game. The use of dice is endemic to wargames, very few of which make do without recourse to some randomizing element. The use of so many dice in the battle resolution system is, to some extent, a compensation for the small size of engagements, but they more directly serve to leaven the effects of probability. Having at times in other titles lost entire flanks to the roll of a single die. I appreciate rolling a lot of dice to decide my fate. The burden—if it is a burden—of rolling many dice is alleviated by the simple nature of the resolution chart, which can easily be committed to memory. In a later section, I will describe a method whereby dice can be eliminated from combat resolution altogether.

The use of a die in movement on the Masterboard can be compared to the use of a die to determine the effects of weather in other wargames: both affect the distances that units can move. In *TITAN*, the movement roll adds an element of uncertainty to a player's planning, in sharp contrast to the certain element of the signs which proscribe his Legions' motions. He can never be sure how far enemy Legions will move on their turns nor how far his will go on his next turn. But this element of chance does not decrease the importance of his choices to

make), it forces him to choose most carefully. For the first half of the playtest life of *TITAN*, dice were also used to enlist Creatures: when a Legion moved, a die was rolled to determine what was acquired from whatever terrain the Legion happened to be in, and any Legion could enlist anywhere with the only difference between the Lands being that some offered a better selection of creatures. We switched to the progressive method of recruitment that the game now employs to underscore dramatically the importance of careful movement and long-range planning; Legions now have more character than mere size and they tend to develop as the game goes on into better—rather than merely larger—armies. The *Muster Progression Diagram* (next page) describes how enlistment is a selective process among the various types of Creatures and their respective terrains. Choosing to retain dice for strategic movement and eliminate them from the process of enlistment have both served the same end of forcing players to be more careful in their movements and the choices they make regarding creating new Legions, attacking and enlisting. Like any game that utilizes a random element, a string of luck can ruin a player's chances. But probability has its own laws which tend to even the rolls out. One cannot wait forever for the right die roll; playing the odds is all part of the game of *TITAN*.

Tips for Strategy

An understanding of the strategy of the game best begins with a clear understanding of the objectives of the game. You want to win; there is no "second place" here, so don't even consider taking the role of a minor ally of the leading player in the hope that he will eliminate you last. The primary objective of *TITAN* is to eliminate your opposition, and a successful strategy leads unerringly in that direction. The secondary objectives of amassing powerful Legions and winning battles are the most important factors in the development of your position, but the most crucial component of your play is the continued existence of your Titan.

Because of the vagaries of dice and the movements of other players, it is not possible to precisely plan the entire game out, although one can work for specific goals within the game which will further chances of ultimate victory. Decide what you want your Titan Legion to eventually be able to muster. If you want Serpents, give your Titan Legion the two Gargoyles at the beginning of the game, for this is its best start along that road. If Colossi or Hydras are wanted, put the Ogres with your Titan, for Ogres are as good a start toward either as Centaurs and have the added benefit of providing the Titan with greater protection along the way. If you want to salt all your Legions with brush/jungle Creatures, split the Gargoyles between your Titan and your Angel. How you split the initial Tower Creatures will influence the composition of your Legions for the rest of the game; it is the first vital step in your strategy.

The best method of ensuring the proliferation of your forces is to develop a territory in which you will be free to operate. Blocking forces of brush/jungle or marsh/swamp Creatures placed in their respective terrains about the perimeter of an area will deny access to enemy Legions and give room for the other Legions to move. Optimally, this territory should encompass at least two Towers and include all the Lands between them, and as many other nearby Lands as possible. Full control of such an area allows Legions on the inner brush, swamp and desert Lands to move full circle on a movement roll of "6", promoting the development of those Legions toward Serpents and Hydras. The area also includes useful loops along the outer ring which allow Legions to move and recruit, yet still stay close enough to the central ring of mountains and tundra and the large Creatures they provide. If, later in the game, the opportunity arises to dominate the

central ring, do so; this will deny Giants, Dragons and Colossi to your opponents and increase your own chances of obtaining them. Territories are fluid; each time a component Legion moves, the parameters of the territory are altered. Your movement rolls may draw you in one direction or another, or the advance of enemy Legions into your area may cause you to shift over rather than engage in a costly campaign to hold your position. Conversely, a Legion advanced into an enemy area will disrupt his movement, and leaving a strong stack in the Tower of a territory you depart will hinder an enemy's use of that area and also serve to slow his advance in your general direction. Pressuring enemies with adjacent territories together may not provoke a major conflict, but their Legions will certainly be in each other's way.

Aside from territorial development, players sometimes use the grouping known as the "Caravan". The Legions are bunched on or near the outer ring and advance in almost single file, leapfrogging and snaking their way forward. It is not a desirable position, but it is infinitely better than a wide dispersal of one's forces. It is limited by the more restricted choices of movement and recruiting along the outer ring—and by the fact that the grouping can cause friendly Legions to get in each other's way and can allow the entire line to be held up by a single, strong blocking Legion. The caravaner may make one or more complete circuits of the mapboard but always with an eye toward ceasing his wandering and establishing an area of his own. If a caravan approaches your territory and you cannot hold it or turn it aside, let it through. If your blocking force can stand up to its best, let him suffer; he may try to batter his way through anyway, and you will benefit from the victory points, although a stalled caravan on the periphery of your territory will pose a potential threat and may restrict your movements along that border. If you do open the way to him, it will generally entail vacating the outer ring of your area; guard those lands well that connect with that outer ring, for you don't want him setting up shop in your neighborhood. Hurry him through with threats and promises if necessary, for the caravan's presence will impede your own development.

The manner in which you split your Legions will have a significant impact on the success of your strategy. If the position in regard to your enemies assures you several turns of safety at the beginning of the game, split quickly and often; if you divide both Legions on the second turn, you double your potential for immediate recruitment. Those first splits that are taken should cut out whichever pair of Tower Creatures has already recruited the next larger Creature. Don't concern yourself over much with the fate of these two Creatures; if they go on to muster other Creatures, fine—if not, almost as good. Since the number of Legion markers are limited, overpopulation can be a problem, and you don't want to breed a horde of weak Legions. Having all twelve Legion markers in play can cost you important recruits if a Legion with seven characters in a good position to muster cannot do so because it cannot split. After you have dispensed with the Tower Creatures, concern yourself more with the contents of the smaller Legions by giving them Creatures from different terrains to increase their opportunities for further recruitment. A Ranger and a Cyclops are the most productive pair possible; they result in two-thirds of the lands and can quickly lead to a very powerful force. The development of Legions based on squadrons of Gorgons and/or Rangers will give you a potent offensive capability during the development of the game and allow those of your Legions that are working toward the largest Creatures to concentrate on recruitment rather than "front-line" duty. After a Legion has attained one of the largest Creatures, a good choice would be to split off a pair of the Creatures that spawned it.

Two Wyverns may not be much by themselves, and they are very limited in regard to where they can recruit, but they provide the immediate basis for another Hydra Legion. Splitting, as part of your overall recruitment strategy, should promote the development of your best Legions toward the best Creatures: Colossi, Serpents and Hydras.

A special consideration is the development of your Titan Legion. Late in a game, a weak Titan Legion usually ensures doom. It is essential that its growth in power keep pace of the general course of the game. Give priority to your Titan Legion in both movement and recruitment, even if this means passing up a valuable recruit for another Legion to keep it out of the path of your Titan's. If you develop a territory or a caravan, your Titan Legion should be part of it to benefit from their protection. Don't let your Titan Legion become trapped or isolated, for even if it eventually escapes, turns of inactivity will delay the progress of its enlistment. Avoid becoming dependent on Demilords or the secondary "top-outs" (Rangers, Gorgons and Unicorns) for your Titan's strength. Such Creatures lead nowhere in regard to enlistment and lack the power to take on a truly strong Legion; a Titan stuck with six Rangers in the end game has little hope of victory.

Your Titan Legion should always be unerringly aimed toward recruiting the largest Creatures. Serpents are easier to obtain than Colossi and stronger than Hydras, but they run out fairly quickly. By the time all Serpents are gone, the stock of Behemoths will also be depleted, and your Titan will have scant chance for further major recruitment while its best defensive position (in the jungle) will be weakened for want of reinforcements. Hydras may be weaker and Colossi may be harder to obtain and both may well run out, but there virtually always remains a stock of the Creatures that lead up to them. It is a fine idea to concentrate on a specific line of development with all speed.

One manner in which the Titan Legion can gain strength that other Legions cannot is through the growth in power of the Titan itself. A Titan with a strength of "15" or more becomes almost un-touchable to any but the mightiest Creature of similar-sized Titans. Gaining victory points to increase the power of your Titan is as important a reason to attack as the diminishment of enemy forces, and your score can be a critical element of the game. If your Titan falls far behind the strength of its foes, its Legion will be outmatched even if its recruitment has been successful. If, in the end, your Titan Legion fails to develop into a strong Legion, try to get it into a Tower and keep it there as long as you can; it is a good defensive position and allows a chance to muster Warlocks by teleporting (Warlocks may be the best characters to be recruited at that point in the game). If your Titan has lost its attendant Creatures in battle, you may have to rely on Angels rather than wait for Warlocks. A strong Titan can risk attacking a small Legion that would allow it to summon or earn an Angel. It isn't the best position to be in, but it may help a desperate situation.

Along with a sound recruitment strategy, one must develop an offensive policy. Too early an emphasis on aggression will deplete the few forces you have at the start of the game; too intense an emphasis in the middle game will distract you from recruitment; too little emphasis at any point will harm your score. Don't simply attack every enemy you can reach—or even all the ones you know you can beat. If you can both win, muster and not be in danger of immediate damaging retaliation, go for it. Enemy Legions including Creatures with dangerous recruiting potential (such as Griffons or Warbears) are excellent targets; try to destroy them before they become powerful. Even two Tower Creatures can rapidly develop into a force to be reckoned with early in the game, so do not let small

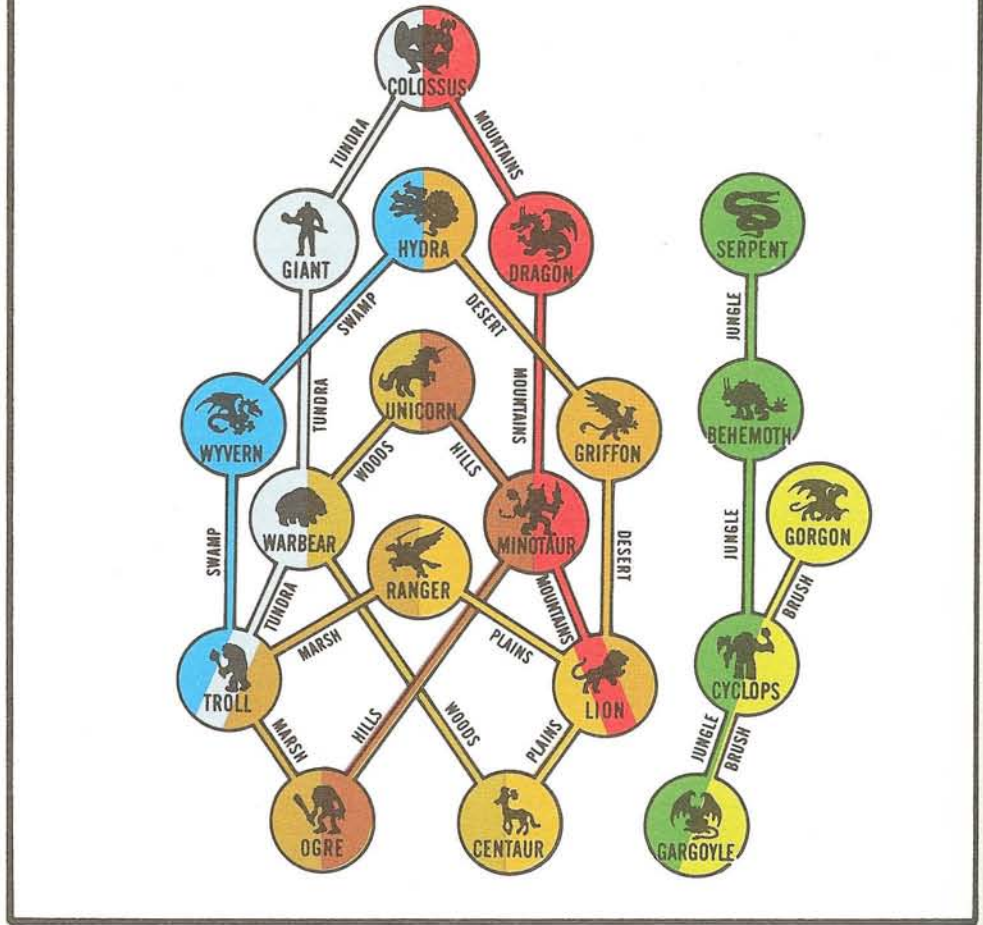
Legions pass with impunity. If the owning player complains or swears vengeance, ignore him unless he can offer something concrete and immediate in return for not attacking. (A player willing to start a vendetta over the fate of a puny Legion this early is probably not going to last long anyway.) This is not to say that one should go out of their way to chase down small Legions, for the turns of pursuit may allow it to build and cost your pursuing Legion recruitment possibilities. Blocking forces are instrumental, albeit passive, elements of aggression; by pinning enemy Legions in place, they may allow other of your strong Legions the opportunity for favorable attacks or provoke the enemy into unfavorable engagements.

Avoid attacking into dense terrain; even non-native defenders benefit from the restrictive hazards of wooded or hilly countryside, and Towers can be tough to crack. If the defender is in native terrain, an attacking Legion with a similar affinity will often nullify the hazards. Plains, brush and marsh lands are better locations to attack because their potential reinforcements are less powerful. Unless the defending Legion is in an unfavorable terrain that favors the attacker, the plains are generally the lands most vulnerable to attack; the lack of terrain features gives the defender nowhere to hide and maximizes the attacker's freedom of movement. An attacking Legion may emerge even more powerful from a hard-fought engagement by mustering a Creature or summoning Angels. The best attacks will improve your Legion, your score and your position on the Masterboard. If you don't win battles, you have no chance of winning this game.

Despite the importance of victories, it will sometimes be to your advantage to involve a Legion in a losing battle. Small, expendable Legions can be used to scout out enemy positions or, by assaulting stacks of seven at the proper moment can cheat your enemy out of an Angel. If all your Legion markers are in play and you have a pressing need to split, have one of your small Legions commit suicide either by direct assault or by moving it into a position where an enemy is likely to attack it. Another case arises when a Legion faces the threat of imminent destruction by an enemy Legion that will be able to muster an important Creature in that land in which the Legion stands. Moving that Legion into certain destruction may give your opponent extra points since attackers cannot flee, but staying would benefit his score and his recruitment strategy. Legions making suicidal attacks should concede immediately so that the defending Legion cannot muster a reinforcement or be given the chance to cast out its weak Creatures. Later in the game, sacrificial attacks are important as a means of weakening large, powerful enemy stacks, especially after the stocks of the large Creatures have been exhausted. Be careful in a war of attrition that such an attack will not leave the defending force even stronger, for by earning Angels and mustering a reinforcement it may more than make up for whatever damage you do.

Some characters are more suited to the attack than others, and the Legions composed of such will form your main offensive arm. Tactics tend to favor fast characters on the attack, for slow Creatures may grant the defender a reinforcement solely due to their lack of speed. Attacking rangestrikers generally benefit from a free shot on their first turn, while defending rangestrikers may not get a chance to shoot at all. A Legion able to put down a curtain of fire can compensate for the detrimental effects of hazards by forcing the defender into the open. Flying characters nullify many of the movement restrictions of hazards and increase the chances of attacking the enemy from the rear. A Legion composed primarily of Rangers can be significantly more powerful in the attack than in a defensive position; Rangers have speed, rangestrike and flying ability, but their small size lacks staying power. Also, in

MUSTER PROGRESSION DIAGRAM



an attack such a Legion might add an Angel to its tactical strength, but on defense a Ranger Legion will most likely only muster another Ranger. The summoning of Angels is the only counterbalance that attacking Legions have to the defender's reinforcement; a lack of Angels will hinder or cripple your offensive capability. In the final analysis, speed and rangestriking and flying are secondary to simple raw power. If your recruitment strategy succeeds, you will develop Legions that contain the largest Creatures which will become the basis of continuing offensive strategy. Legions of lesser Creatures cannot match the punch or staying power of the major "top-outs", and the Legions which you will most want to defeat will by then probably also contain big Creatures.

The part that your Titan Legion plays in your offensive strategy deserves special consideration. Engagement will reveal the position of your Titan and expose it to the possibility of elimination, but good players will already have an idea of where it is anyway, and careful tactics will avoid exposing it to excessive danger. The fact remains that from the beginning of play your Titan is one of the best characters you have, and should your Titan Legion shun *all* battles, it will limit the flexibility of your offense and impair the strength of your defense. Since your Titan Legion should concentrate on its recruitment, you don't want to use it in expensive battles of attrition, for the loss of even a few Creatures may cause its mustering potential to suffer. A serious reduction in mustering potential may force you to be aggressive with your Titan so that it can be augmented by Angels and Archangels. Early in

the game the relative weakness of Creatures makes Legions with Titans and Angels more powerful, you can exploit this by stomping even medium-sized Legions with a well-stocked Titan Legion. If you do take some lumps, the summoning of your Angel should compensate for your losses, whereas early attacks with your Angel Legion will lack this ability.

Later in the game, teleportation makes every enemy Legion on the Masterboard a potential target, and failing to utilize this ability squanders some of the momentary advantage that your scoring has given you. A mighty Titan Legion can be the most potent force on the board at game end (you simply can't have a better Legion than a large Titan surrounded by Colossi). A targeted Legion of sufficient size to damage such a Legion would probably be worth enough points to earn a couple of Angels and add two more points to your Titan's power, so don't worry about combat. But be careful that losses do not expose your Titan to immediate teleporting attack of another large Titan Legion. Games often end in a showdown between two massive Titan Legions. Your recruitment and offensive strategies must prepare your Titan to win this last encounter. If you have other large Legions capable of doing damage to a strong enemy Legion, use these to soften up the enemy Titan for your final attack. If your enemy has other Legions capable of threatening your Titan, avoid them and go straight for the kill. Defensive positions are often weakened in the end game by lack of powerful reinforcements, and the offense is correspondingly stronger. Try hard to hold an Angel or an Archangel in reserve in another of your Legions to augment the attack of

your Titan Legion. If a chance arises to attack your final foe in terrain that favors you or at least does not favor him, force the last showdown—it may be the only chance you get.

Two other elements of play worthy of mention are secrecy and cooperation. The secrecy of Legions is tempered by their exposure in battles and the revelation of the Creatures they use to muster; but in a game with many Legions on the Masterboard, buyers are likely to soon forget much of what they see. Players are not allowed to keep records of the other Legions in play, but they may freely reveal what they learn of enemy forces in unfought engagements. Secrecy fosters uncertainty in regard to the composition of other players' Legions, and this allows latitude for bluffing. A stack of seven lesser Creatures looks as imposing as a stack full of "top-outs" to someone who does not know what it contains. A stack that contains very little of worth may serve well as a temporary blocking force, and you may even be able to chase off a much better enemy Legion with little more than a larger pile of Tower Creatures. Purposely not mustering with a Legion that moves into range of an enemy legion can trick him into thinking you're non-native and may goad it into a poor attack. Splitting a major "top-out" from one of your best Legions may somewhat weaken that Legion, but it will also surprise the attacker who engages a small force to find a Serpent or Hydra waiting for him. Deception can be a useful tool.

Alliances can also be useful, but remember that any cooperative effort should benefit your position at least as much as your partner's since the arrangement is bound to be temporary. If another player has gained an advantage in the size and number of his Legions, a mutual offensive aimed at eliminating that advantage may well be helpful to all. Allies can also help each other by feeding each other their unwanted Legions, thereby benefiting both of their scores and denying those points to other players. Temporary truces can allow players to get out of each other's way and increase their opportunities to recruit. Game long alliances are undesirable; they detract from the free-for-all nature of play and can seriously impair your freedom of action. Even if you are allied for one reason or another, avoid softening up enemy Legions for the follow-up attack of your partner, especially enemy Titan Legions. You will simply lose a Legion for the benefit of your enemy's and your ally's scores—and even your ally is the eventual enemy.

Much like your Legions in battle, you are on your own in the game; your decisions regarding moving, mustering, splitting, bluffing, cooperating and attacking will determine how well you play. And if you play well enough, you will win.



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BLITZ JAPANESE

How to Pronounce Oi, Ise, Hiei, et al.

by
Chris L. Roehl

Translations by
Grace Beard
Trinity University, San Antonio

を超越
ロンヒ
たパス

The written Japanese language includes fifty-one phonetic signs—an alphabet of sounds. Though ideographic, Japanese can be written in arabic letters using a syllabary. However, this only hints at how a word is pronounced. Inflection and speed of pronunciation are unknowns and some letters are silent or not pronounced as they appear. The result is fractured Japanese.

The translations given here are from the ideographic characters (calligraphy), as read by Grace. Don't let her name fool you. She is a native Japanese, born of a Christian family, and while a young woman, lived in Tokyo throughout the Pacific War. The phonetic interpretations are my own based on her pronunciations in face-to-face sessions.

With a few exceptions, the type of Japanese warship may be determined by its name (if you can read Japanese). Aircraft carriers are named after mythical flying objects, animals, or large birds. Some conversions retained their original hull name: *Kaga*, *Akagi*, *Chitose*, *Chiyoda*, and *Shinano*. Some did not: *Shoho*, *Zuiho*, *Ryuho*, (former submarine tenders *Tsurugizaki*, *Takasaki*, and *Taigei* respectively), and *Hiyo* and *Junyo*, (former luxury liners *Izumo Maru* and *Kashiwara Maru*). Battleships are named after ancient provinces similar to our practice of naming battleships after states. Heavy cruisers are named after mountains, as are the four *Kongo* class fast battleships originally classed as battlecruisers. Light cruisers are named after rivers. (The *Mogami* and *Tone* class CA's were laid down as CL's, hence the exception.) Destroyers are paradoxically given poetic interpretations of weather conditions: *Kawakaze*, (*River Wind*); *Shigure*, (*Drizzling Autumn Rain*). When in 1944-45, construction concentrated on more destroyers of smaller design, their names included flowers, fruit, and trees. The three types of submarine are I, RO, and HA—the first three sounds of the Japanese "alphabet" thus corresponding to A, B, and C.

The names of Japanese aircraft carriers are quite picturesque and often convey an intangible idea and are thus quite difficult to translate accurately as one can the names of mountains, rivers, and provinces. For example, the *Hosho* translates *Auspicious Bird*. However, the *idea* conveyed is of a gigantic imaginary bird with a 3,000 mile wing span, and able to fly 90,000 miles in one hop! It is a name full of great expectations for The Imperial Japanese Navy's first aircraft carrier. Important ships were given appropriately portentous names—see *Kongo*, and *Yamato* for other examples of this practice, keeping in mind not their fate but their significance to Japan as the finest of their kind in all the world's navies.

The ship names translated below are grouped by type, class, and order of construction, or conversion. The information given is the arabic spelling, the phonetic pronunciation showing emphasis over the appropriate sound, and an indication of the speed in which the sounds are pronounced, (*Fast*, *Normal*, *Slow*), and a definition or origin of the name.

The phonetic interpretation shows the pronunciation of the ship names as they *sound*. In some cases the vowel sounds are pronounced as one sound—a compound sound of two vowels pronounced so closely together that they cannot be distinguished as two distinct sounds. An example is the *Zuikaku*. "Zui" is pronounced more like "Zwee" than "Zoo-ee". Some names are pronounced with equal emphasis on all sounds, (or no emphasis at all depending on your outlook). The vowels, (A, I, U, E, O), are pronounced as follows: A as ah, like "Open wide and say ah."; I as a hard E, like "easy"; U as ooo, like "ooze"; E as a hard A, like "ale"; and O as a hard O, like "Oh, no!". The consonants are pronounced as in English with a few exceptions which will be explained individually.

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

HOSHO

HOE SHO (S S) Auspicious Bird.

KAGA

KAH GAH (N N) Old name for Ishikawa Prefecture. ("Increased Joy", S.E. Morrison.)

AKAGI

AH KAH GEE (N N N) (Hard "G", like "geese".) Mountain in Gumma Prefecture. ("Red Castle", Morrison.)

RYUJO

REEOO JOE (N N) Vigorous Dragon.

SORYU

SORE REEYOU (F S) (Equal emphasis.) Green Dragon

HIRYU

HEE REEYOU (F S) Flying Dragon.

SHOKAKU

SHO KAH KOO (F F F) Soaring Crane.

ZUIKAKU

ZWEE KAH KOO (F F F) Happy Crane. ("Zui" means everything good—a good omen.)

SHOHO

SHO HO (S S) True (Righteous) Gigantic Bird.

ZUIHO

ZWEE HO (F S) Happy Bird of Paradise. (The bird of paradise is a good omen.)

HIYO

HEE YO (N N) Flying Hawk.

JUNYO

JUNE YO (N N) Obedient Hawk.

RYUHO

REEYOU HO (N S) Dragon and Gigantic Bird.

CH YODA

CHEE YO DAH (N N N) Chiyoda Castle. (Emperor's Castle.)

CHITOSE

CHEE TOE SAY (F F N) Thousand Years. (Longevity.) (As a CVL she survived ten months.)

TAIHO
SHINANO
UNRYU
AMAGI
KATSURAGI

BATTLESHIPS

KONGO
HIEI
HARUNA
KIRISHIMA
FUSO
YAMASHIRO
HYUGA
ISE
NAGATO
MUTSU
YAMATO
MUSASHI

CRUISERS

KAKO
FURUTAKA
KINUGASA
AOBA
MYOKO
NACHI
HAGURO
ASHIGARA

TAKAO
ATAGO
CHOKAI
MAYA

MOGAMI
MIKUMA
SUZUYA

KUMANO

TONE
CHIKUMA
KITAKAMI

OI

SPECIAL NAVAL LANDING FORCES

YOKOSUKA
KURE
SASEBO

THAI EE HO (N N S) Gigantic Bird.
SHE NAH NO (N N N) Ancient name for Nagano Prefecture.
OON REE YOU (F N S) Cloud and Dragon.
AH MAH GEE (N N F) (Equal emphasis. Hard "G".) Mountain on Izu Peninsula.
KAHT SOO RAH GEE (N N N N) (Equal emphasis. Hard "G".) Mountain bordering Osaka and Nara.

KONG GO (N N) Mountain bordering Osaka and Nara meaning diamond-hard and unbreakable—the hardest metal.
HEE AY (N N) ("EI" is pronounced as a hard letter "A".) Mountain northeast of Kyoto City.
HAH ROO NAH (F N N) (Equal emphasis.) A hot springs mountain in Gumma Prefecture.
KEE REE SHE MAH (N N N N) Mountain in Kagoshima Prefecture.
WHO SSO (F F) (The "F" is pronounced as an "H". The Japanese do not bite their lips when speaking, I'm told.) Ancient Chinese name for Japan.
YAH MAH SHE RO (N N N N) (Equal emphasis on "YAMA".) The area surrounding Kyoto City.
HEE YOU GAH (N N F) Miyozaki area in northeast Kyushu City.
EE SAY (F F) An area in Mie Prefecture, central Honshu, noted as the location of the Emperor's ancestor's shrine.
NAH GAH TOE (N N N) Yamaguchi Prefecture at the southern tip of Honshu.
MOOT SEH (N F) ("SU" is pronounced as the last sound of "Tecumseh".) Aomori and Iwate Prefectures.
YAH MAH TOE (N N N) Ancient name for Japan.
MOO SAH SHEE (N N N) Tokyo and vicinity.

KAH KO (F F) River in Hyogo Prefecture.
WHO ROO TAH KAH (N N N N) (Equal emphasis.) Old Hawk.
KEE NOO GAH SAH (N N N F) (Equal emphasis.) Mountain north of Kyoto City.
AH OH BAH (N N N) (Equal emphasis.) A castle in Sendai City.
MEEOH KO (N S) Mountain in Niigata Prefecture.
NAH CHEE (N N) Mountain in Wakayama Prefecture.
HAH GOO RO (F N N) Mountain in Yamagata Prefecture.
AH SHEE GAH RAH (N N F F) Mountain in Kagagawa Prefecture.
TAH KAH OH (N N N) (Equal emphasis.) A hill in Kyoto City.
AH TAH GO (N N N) Another hill in Kyoto City.
CHO KHAI (S N) Mountain in Yamagata Prefecture.
MY YAH (N N) (Equal emphasis.) Mountain near Kobe City. Also the name of Buddha's mother.
MO GAH MEE (N N N) River in Yamagata Prefecture.
MEE KOO MAH (N N N) (Origin unknown.)
SOO SSOO YAH (F N N) (Pronounce the "Z" as a hissed "S".) Bell Valley.
KOO MAH NO (N N N) (Equal emphasis.) River in Wakayama Prefecture.
TOE NAY (N F) River in Kanti area.
CHEE KOO MAH (F N N) River in Kyushu.
KEE TAH GAH MEE (N N N F) (Pronounce the second "K" as a hard "G".) River in Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures.
OH EE (S N) River in Shizuoka Prefecture.

YO KOSS KAH (N N F) (The "U" is silent.)
KOO RAY (N N)
SAH SAY BO (N N F)

SUBMARINES: There were three categories of submarines: I, RO, and HA corresponding to the first three letters of our alphabet. Pronounce EE, ROW, and HAH.



A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

If you've read this far, I'd like to take the opportunity to extend a welcome to our special issue of *The GENERAL*, wargaming's oldest professional periodical. As you will no doubt have noted, all of the articles in this issue are reprints from among the many fine pieces that have graced our pages over the past 24 years. If you've never had the chance to see a copy of *The GENERAL*, the collection of articles contained herein gives a fair idea of the vast scope of our contents—from Series Replay to strategy, from historical to humorous. If you have read *The GENERAL* before, it is my hope that this collection of articles will bring back some pleasant memories.

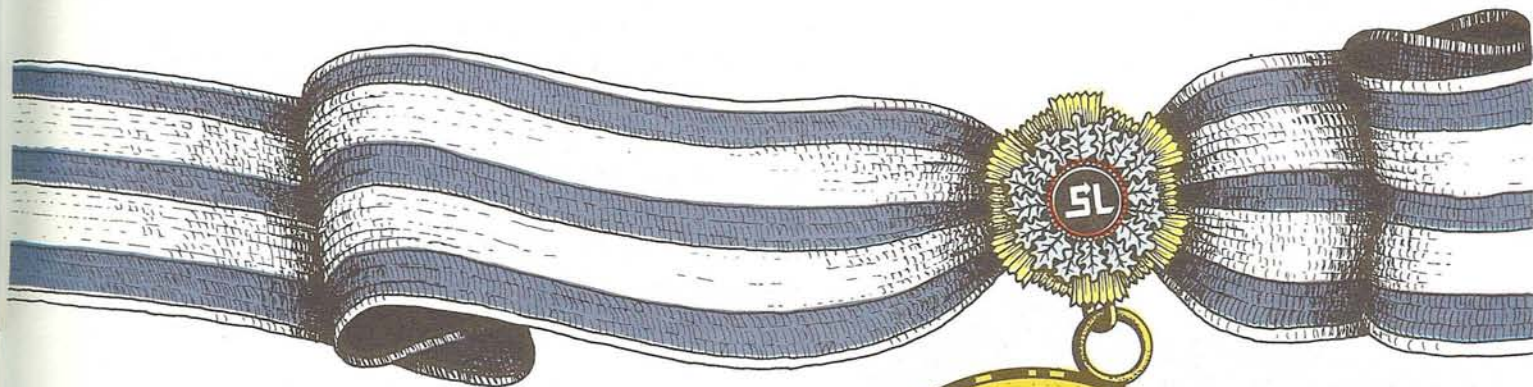
A word about the format of this issue is in order. With Vol. 25, No. 1, I've increased the size of *The GENERAL* to sixty-four, full-color pages. To give our thousands of fans a chance to see what this means in practice, the editors decided to lay out this special issue along those lines. However, due to the fact that this issue is outside our normal schedule, certain features that regularly appear but are timely in nature (the Convention Calendar, the "Opponents' Wanted" ads, the "Avalon Hill Philosophy", the contest, and such) were left out. If you are intrigued by what you see in this special issue and wish to know more, I'd urge that any potential subscribers pick up a recent copy and give it a glance.

As this special issue is due to be released at ORIGINS '88, I've taken the liberty of devoting a significant percentage (about double the usual) of these pages to advertising some of Avalon Hill's newest games. Since we've no articles yet in print on them, and since these games are certainly deserving of a close look by any true gamer, this seemed the best compromise. I'd hope that, if an advertisement for a game catches your eye, you'd keep your other one peeled for articles on it in future issues of *The GENERAL*. For articles on it there will surely be; that is the reason for *The GENERAL*'s long existence and its continued success.

But, first and foremost, this special issue is a celebration. A celebration of our 25th year of continuous publication; a celebration of ORIGINS; a celebration of our hobby. I would hope that this effort has made your celebration a little brighter.

Ray A. Markson





Squad Leader Clinic



NIGHT MOVES

By Jon Mishcon

"Escape from Velikiye Luki" [Scenario 6 in the original *SQUAD LEADER*] and night rules in general, must appeal to the *ASL* gamer who likes things a little wild. Even the player most jaded to fortune's whim (allow me to here mention my two, consecutive "snake-eyes" MG shots against Joe's 10-3 leader in our playtest of the 1987 tournament scenarios) will find each playing unique. Play-balance is, at best, a "guesstimate".

The very first question that must be answered is why bother to have night rules at all? My guess is that there are three reasons. The first is to satisfy the player who loves uncertainty; night rules insure that you'll never be certain of anything. The second is the desire to have the *ASL* rules become a complete reflection of 1935-1945 combat. Night attacks were standard fare and there will be players who desire to recreate those actions. The final reason is the use of *ASL* as a teaching tool for military history. For all the supposed flaws in the system, it may well provide the best insight as to what local commanders did and why. If you want to learn why night attacks was purposeful madness, then a couple of playings of this scenario will be enlightening.

Thankfully, the night rules are all optional. Their inclusion in *YANKS* is "icing on the cake" and allows me to continue our efforts to redo all the original *SL* scenarios.

Well, what works for night combat and what doesn't? Delightfully, the game is true to history.

Simplicity works. Or at least it may work. Complexity doesn't. Or at least, not often enough to be worth a damn.

The attacker should go with every man clumped together moving towards one objective. Don't be shocked if 25% of your force starts to drift off. If at all possible, use column movement to maintain cohesion. Even if you can't get the Column rules in play, try to keep all your eggs tucked neatly together so you'll have a chance to obtain local superiority. Use one "dummy" Cloaking counter with your real force to, hopefully, absorb sniper and other fire. Use the extra Cloaking counters to feint in another direction; but if your march is long enough, no-one (including you) will know exactly what the original lines of attack were.

Spending 10 BPV on Recon is a real gamble for two reasons. There's a lot of terrain to hide in, so you tend to get into guessing games when you pick search sites and I often don't end up where I thought I was going anyway. (Does anyone recall that old WWII song about, "You never know where you're going till you get there"?)

The defender should huddle on the objective with at least 75% of his force. Use as light a picket screen as you can get away with. Now, in this particular scenario, you've got to spread out; but it's still best to put your units in packets rather than in a thin line. Hide your leaders with some of your best troops and perform sit tight.

The most important consideration for the defender is the placement of his best leader, the troops he can stack with, and the troops he can reach in one Movement Phase. Unless there is an absolute contraindication, you must plan to put your best leader in the rear center with your best troops and put two stacks of good troops one Movement Phase away toward both flanks. Thus your chances of getting two stacks rolling are greatly improved.

The thought will occur to any experienced player that using hidden units may allow traps to be formed. So you set up certain areas with no units, almost inviting attacks; while you cover other areas heavily with both hidden and non-hidden forces. Good luck chums. This may work if the opposing player can control his advance. It tends to fall apart if the attacking units that get lost on the advance waltz right through that little hole.

The bottom line is that the night rules are a play-tester's nightmare. Want to find out why Japanese coordinated attacks failed in Guadalcanal? Try marching two or three columns up five boards and check out what happens.

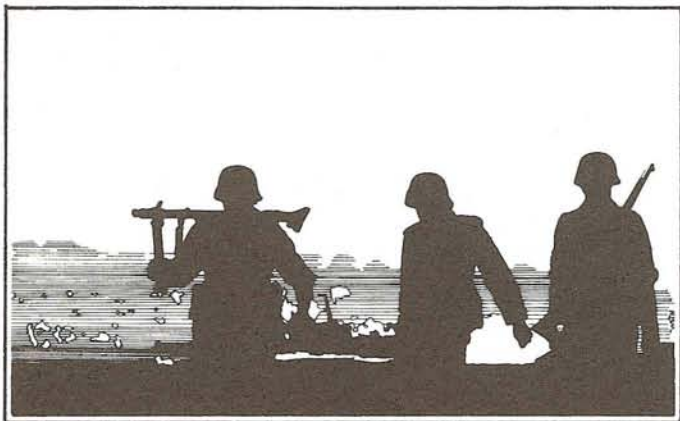
Our re-working of "Escape from Velikiye Luki" is included on the next page for players to get a chance to further experiment with the night rules (Chapter E) of *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*.



ESCAPE FROM VELIKIYE LUKI



ASL Scenario H



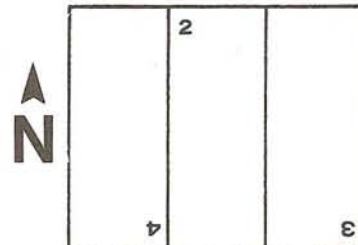
VICTORY CONDITIONS: The German player wins immediately when he exits ≥ 8 VP off the west edge of Board 4.

VELIKIYE LUKI, RUSSIA, 12 January 1943: During the fatal winter of 1943, the German disaster was not confined to Stalingrad alone. All along the line, Russians were cutting off pockets of Germans. At Velikiye Luki, the entire 277th Infantry Regiment was in dire straits. Surrounded and with further relief efforts abandoned, it was over for the 277th. The Russians were tightening their vise. Elements of four rifle regiments with massive armor and artillery support had broken the perimeter and were now in the process of slaughtering what remained of the unit. As the headquarters fell, the German commander gave the order for all who could save themselves to do so. As night fell, many isolated groups headed for the German lines some ten miles distant.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

BALANCE:

- ✚ Add two additional Cloaking counters to the German force.
- ★ Increase HIP allotment (E1.2) to six squads.



TURN RECORD CHART

★ Russian Sets Up First [91]	✚	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	END
✚ German Moves First												

Elements of 3rd Battalion, 129th Rifle Regiment [ELR: 3] set up on Board(s) 2/3: {SAN: 4}



13

3



Remnants of Company 1, Battalion II, Infantry Regiment 277 [ELR: 4] enter Turn 1 anywhere on east edge of Board 3: {SAN: 2}



5

4



SPECIAL RULES:

1. Weather is Ground Snow (E3.72) with Wet EC and no wind at start.
2. Night rules are in effect. The initial Base NVR is six hexes with no Cloud Cover and no Moon. The Russian is the Scenario Defender (E1.2); the German is the Scenario Attacker.
3. The Germans receive *two* cloaking counters per squad (instead of one; E1.411).
4. All infantry of both sides are Winter Camouflaged (E3.712).
5. Due to the boisterous nature of the Russian troops following the victory at Velikiye Luki, all Russian units are Lax (E1.62); and all German units are Stealthy.

AFTERMATH: The weakest part of the Soviet corridor lay to the southwest in the area of the 129th Rifle Regiment. There, a few groups were able to escape the ever-tightening noose, although they came out in no way resembling a combat formation, but in ones and twos. Company A of the 2nd Battalion, in their attempt, lost everyone save one squad and a few officers. Technically, it was a disaster of the first magnitude, but the fact that *somebody* made it was a source, albeit a small one, of considerable hope for those who would face the same plight in the months ahead.

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pasteboard divider replete with the system's Tables and Charts for the utmost in accessibility. New modules containing added nationalities, rule chapters and fresh scenarios are printed regularly.

ASL even comes in two distinct scales. **Deluxe ASL** uses the same rules and pieces but is played on large 11" x 26" geomorphic maps featuring 2.2" hexes that eliminate stacking and are playable with 1/285th scale miniatures.

So, if you fancy yourself a true wargamer, do yourself a favor and enlist with the ultimate wargame. **WARNING: ASL** is addictive—you may never have time to play other wargames again. On the reverse side is a list of what's currently available for the system so far, listed in the order that we recommend you acquire them.



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PARTISAN!—This module adds the infantry and support weapons of the Axis Minor nations, and contains two mapboards and eight scenarios depicting engagements fought by the Resistance forces of several different countries. Ownership of **BEYOND VALOR** is required... \$15

YANKS—The entire U.S. Army makes its appearance here complete with no less than 17 variations of the Sherman tank in eight scenarios and four more geomorphic mapboards. It also contains Chapter E—a compendium of optional rules depicting night actions, amphibious operations, air landings and air power. Ownership of **BEYOND VALOR** is required... \$35

STREETS OF FIRE—This is a **DELUXE ASL** module featuring four of the large geomorphic boards with

2.2" hexes for ten urban firefights in Russia.

AFV playing aid cards are also provided for most of the major Russian and German vehicles.

Ownership of **BEYOND VALOR** is required*... \$28
HEDGEROW HELL—**DELUXE ASL** goes rural with four more of the larger mapboards, U.S. AFV cards, information markers and eight scenarios depicting the bocage of Normandy. Ownership of **BEYOND VALOR** and **YANKS** is required*... \$28

* Some players of the old **SQUAD LEADER** system use these boards without **ASL** materials by making appropriate unit substitutions in the scenarios. In general, however, only the mapboards of the **SQUAD LEADER** system are completely compatible with **ASL**.

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**The Avalon Hill
Game Company**

DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.

4517 Harford Road ★ Baltimore, MD 21214

Sirs,

Just thought I'd write to you in appreciation of your constant dedication to wargaming. I played wargames about ten years ago, but as the group I played with drifted apart I lost touch with the hobby. Last year a friend and I decided to start playing again. Imagine my surprise when I found that your company was the only one of those I remembered still in business.

I have twenty-six wargames now and fourteen of those are Avalon Hill games. Some of the others are nice, but the Avalon Hill games are played more—especially *PGG*. I also like *PANZERKRIEG* and would like to see more articles on this topic. Thanks for the hours of pleasure, and keep up the good work.

David White
Reno, Nevada

★★★★★

Rex,

Along with the latest issue of *The GENERAL* came my subscription renewal notice. This caused me to ponder over what's happened with my favorite gaming magazine the past year.

The first things that came to mind were the high points. The many new *ASL* scenarios and the excellent "Going All Out" (guidelines for *ASL* DY0). I also enjoyed the regular features such as "So That's What You've Been Playing", "Letters to the Editor" and the "Infiltrator's Report".

As for the low points of the past year, "The Empire Strikes Back" immediately comes to mind. I've written you concerning this before so there's no need to go into it again. Another low point is the continuing distillation of *The GENERAL*. There are already more *AH* games than can be covered, and now *VG*'s titles also pry away space from *AH* titles. The major disappointment here is that it looks as if *VG* games won't get their own magazine.

Well, did I renew? Of course! Free back issues and games aside, I'd renew regardless. It's not those "let's make room in the warehouse" incentives that keep me coming back. It's not even the quality of the magazine. However, as it says somewhere in your ad copy, *The GENERAL* is value. It increases the enjoyment value I get from my 100+ games much more than adding another title would. It's my favorite read.

Tom Slizewski
Thornton, Colorado

★★★★★

Dear Rex:

While additional comments may be superfluous—given the fairly thorough nature of the "1988 Readers' Survey" on the reverse side—I am taking the liberty of including a few remarks. May I say that I very much appreciate *TAHGC*'s enclosed readers' survey and am certain that others who read *The GENERAL* feel similarly. Despite the presence of numerous companies in the gaming field, I continue to feel that *TAHGC* sets the standards by which the hobby is measured.

Although I am certainly not an "insider" among the hobby's leadership, and I am not privy to an "Insider's" awareness of hobby intentions, I have nevertheless been a wargamer of long standing. I have been a devotee of *TAHGC* games since 1960, an attendee at the *ORIGINS* conventions since 1980, and have about two dozen assorted articles published in various historical board-gaming oriented publications since 1977 . . . including one or two in *The GENERAL*. In addition, I own nearly 400 "wargames" from a wide variety of publishers, and subscribe to eight periodicals. I mention this because I feel that I do possess a certain perspective on the hobby as a result of my own level of involvement. Otherwise, of course, my opinions are no more valid than those of any other hobbyist or consumer.

Of late, my sense of things is that *TAHGC* is undergoing a period of reassessment. These concerns include the direction which future game designs ought to take, the changing demographics of the hobby's devotees, and the fear that the hobby may be losing a measure of its earlier dynamism. All of these matters also have potential implications for economic "bottom lines" of existing and would-be publishers. While *The*

Letters to the Editor . . .

GENERAL is contemplating a "face lift" to increase its attractiveness. I sense that similar considerations extend throughout *TAHGC*. The intent is to present a more attractive product to the public, and to rejuvenate a company and a hobby that are inexorably related.

I applaud these efforts. Despite the fact that some changes may be largely cosmetic, a "new and improved" presentation is probably wise. Although most gamers whom I know still consider *TAHGC* as the standard for quality, there is also a preception among many that *TAHGC* has become increasingly insular. *The GENERAL* seems occasionally to be dominated by "insiders" and unresponsive to the more general gaming public. Obviously you cannot publish what you do not receive and there is a natural tendency to be more receptive to top-drawer submissions. In the process, however, it appears that *The GENERAL* has lost a measure of its humility.

The enclosed "Readers' Survey" is an excellent first step towards reconnecting *The GENERAL* with the hobby population. For this reason, my survey responses advise an extension of the "AH Philosophy" and "Letters" columns. Many of your recent "philosophy" pieces have been excellent because they address questions which are integral to the hobby's future (e.g., the demise of game clubs, the restructuring of the awards formats, etc.).

Should you decide to publish a 25th Anniversary issue as described in the "Readers' Survey" sheet, I would be happy to submit "a few words" for inclusion. Whether the submission would be useful is something that only you and the compilers would decide, and I certainly would not expect any form of remuneration. After all these years of quality service, perhaps it is time for we gamers to give something back for all of the underpaid, under-appreciated hobby assistance. In fact, a future "AH Philosophy" might do well to address this very issue, however unpopular. Perhaps hobbyists need to be reminded that this is indeed *their* enterprise as well. Gamers may need to be encouraged to advance the hobby in personal terms, rather than simply assuming that the publishers will provide this service. The publishers are here because the hobbyists are here, not vice versa.

In any event, I appreciate your willingness to read these additional remarks. I understand that your time is very valuable and that "nut mail" does not ease your burden. May I close by saying that I stand ready to assist *TAHGC* and the hobby in any way that I can to foster growth. If I can help in any reasonable way, please feel free to write.

Terry Alan Baney
Waterbury, Connecticut

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

While I can't claim to be a long-time subscriber, I proudly claim to be an avid one. Therefore, please find enclosed a money order in the amount of \$18.00 to renew my subscription to *The GENERAL* for another two years. A lot goes into the motivation for my renewal, only part of it being the quality of the publication.

In addition, there is the unqualified courtesy I have encountered in every dealing with the staff of *TAHGC*. Nobody hits a homer every time at bat, and sometimes I've bought an *AH* title for which I needed a little help, clarification, or just a friendly ear to bend regarding what I thought might not be a "feature" but a "bug"! This has taken the form of the ambiguous rule here and there, the off-register counter trim or wrinkled map-mounting job.

In sixteen years of dealing with your company, not only have those problems been rare in the extreme, they have been faced up to (when deserved) and rectified (whether deserved or not), and always with polite attention to my problem.

I hear a lot of gamers out there refer to *TAHGC* with phrases like, "Well, they're turning into another big corporation." For the life of me, I can't figure out what they're talking about. If they complain about *AH*'s responsiveness to customer grief, I usually ask them who they wrote to (assuming they had the good manners to write) or who they spoke to (assuming they at least brought their gripe to your attention). The loudest complainers always return

the blindest stares. Not too surprising when you think about it. It seems they never really bothered to address their complaints to anybody at your offices, but that doesn't stop them from blaming "The Corporation" for not answering their questions. It would seem that in addition to being a small, slim profit margin company doing what you do for the love of the hobby, you are also required to be psychic. Well, not a grievance I've ever had.

So, mostly from the selfish enjoyment I expect to glean from its pages, but not a little from simple buyer loyalty, I happily renew my subscription to *The GENERAL* (at what, I might add, are the best rates I've ever seen for any publication). And you needn't write me again in a year, or even two. I'll be along. I hope you will be too.

Don Hawthorne
Clayville, Rhode Island

★★★★★

Among all this praise, it is wise to remember that The GENERAL is not for everyone. And those who know me had to know that I was bound to give space to another viewpoint. While I don't agree with all of Mr. Rivas' comments that follow, they are certainly worthy of some thought and debate among the readership.

Dear Mr. Martin:

I received your form letter that goes out to "lapsed" subscribers to *The GENERAL* today, and while I was just going "to fade away like an old soldier", the letter prompted me to at least give you my reasons for finally giving up on your publication. Please don't misunderstand the purpose of this letter, however. It is not meant to threaten or to force changes in your magazine. I just thought, after reading your letter, that you might be interested in why a longtime subscriber (since 1975, I believe) would leave the fold.

To begin with, I'm now just shy of 53 years old, a semi-retired one-man ad agency owner (I was the writer, designer, photographer, planner, account rep and janitor), and an honors graduate from Michigan State University. Avalon Hill introduced me to wargaming back in 1963-1964 with *TACTICS*, *GETTYSBURG* and *U-BOAT*. It was a new concept to me and I found it stimulating, challenging and very exciting. It appealed to my historical curiosity. From this humble beginning I progressed to *LUFTWAFFE*, *PANZERBLITZ*, *RICHTHOFEN'S WAR*, *PANZER LEADER*, etc. Along the way I began subscribing to *The GENERAL* because of the in-depth articles on the games that I was interested in and, more importantly, the additional scenarios, counters and variants. I would say that over the long haul, I probably read about 20-25% of each issue.

As the years moved on, I continued to subscribe to *The GENERAL* as my wargaming expanded. About this time I discovered *SPI*'s old *Strategy & Tactics* magazine. Suddenly, here was a publication that I wanted to read almost from cover to cover. Here was history, photographs, maps, orders of battle, interesting sidelights to well-known events—plus a game and all the history behind it. Articles were not devoted to the statistical chances of rolling a "kill" or "disruption" and paragraphs of mathematical dissertation on this or that little known aspect of the game rules. I guess back then I saw what I wanted, and *The GENERAL* was regulated to "second-best".

With the more than 100 games I now have in my collection, Avalon Hill represents about 25%. The rest are from *SPI*. But when *SPI* went under, it was really like losing a close friend. It left an empty place in my old wargamer's heart that will probably never be filled. *TSR*'s purchase of many of the game rights was like the final, single pistol shot to the head of the condemned man. Anyway, I continued to subscribe to *The GENERAL* hoping that one day the statisticians and mathematicians would lose the control over the editorial content of the magazine. But I finally came to the conclusion that this would never happen.

The GENERAL is a publication devoted to increasing your odds of winning one of your wargames through the proper use of numbers and formulas. You have reduced (or the articles attempt to) the simulation to a game of chance. History and strategy—and the unexpected—are

relegated to footnotes as the proper mathematical equations are presented to your number-crunching readers. Charts and tables devoted to orders of battle, weapons and personalities—yes; to numerical odds and probabilities, no. At least I feel this way.

I play a wargame because I want to learn what happened at that time and place. I want to see what it was like to command a defending force against seemingly overwhelming odds. *The GENERAL* sells "the steak", but I play wargames for the "sizzle". The magazine is too boring to wargamers like me to read, and the few non-technical articles are too few and too far between. I'd like more historical articles dealing with the various games you publish—not just brief scenario descriptions.

Your old articles, such as the "Pieces of *PANZERBLITZ*" were fun to read and made playing the game more interesting. The counters became almost flesh and blood and steel. But over time, the mathematicians and number-crunchers became a louder voice in the market place I suppose, and the direction of the magazine veered to meet their needs.

A case in point. The initial publicity for your game *UP FRONT* really made me look forward to buying it. The cards were a "turn off", but as I played my first game, slowly forgot about the decks of cards and became involved in the pseudo-historical conflict taking shape on my kitchen table. I eagerly looked forward to the game's write-up in *The GENERAL*; but what did I get? History and simulation conflict—NO! I was hammered again and again about counting cards, shuffling the decks, ratios of black numbers to red, the chances of drawing this card if so many have already been played. Welcome to Las Vegas, *UP FRONT*. When I finished the articles, I didn't have to ask "where's the beef" because that's all there was—pounds and pounds of beef, raw beef. And not a sizzle to be found.

Sure, I'll miss the interesting variants, the scenarios and variant counters; but for the most part, the magazine is about as interesting to read as my old college text book, *Introduction to Statistics*. To reiterate—I'm not asking you to change or even justify your company's editorial policies. You write to who your readers are. Unfortunately, I am not one of them. In foregoing the bi-monthly arrival of *The GENERAL* I've doomed my old Avalon Hill games. No new scenarios. No new counters. I realize all of this is true, but the magazine has just become too tedious. The excitement that could have been there never quite made it—and I don't honestly believe it ever will. The number-crunchers will applaud your tenacity, and I am sure that there are enough of them to keep *The GENERAL* in gold braid forever. Readers like me will hardly be missed. We play wargames because we enjoy living in the past in a painless recreation of conflict, and the expansion of our knowledge as to what happened—or could have happened.

Paul A. Rivas
Delavan, Wisconsin

*For my part, I have always been glad that there was ONE magazine among the many in the hobby that concentrated on the PLAY of the games. Not on the history behind the games; not on presenting still another 90-day "wonder game"; not on gossip about the hobby and the "insiders"; not on glowing reviews of the latest "hot property". But one that looked at how to play, how to play better, and how the games worked. To me, the hobby is about playing games—not about war or about the egos of the folk involved in the industry. Oh, we have the occasional article on history, on hobby news, and on the other "stuff". But *The GENERAL* is, and always be, devoted to the play of our games. So long as I'm here, it will remain so.*

★★★★★

Dear Sir:

Your company's magazine, *The GENERAL*, is a big hit with me. I believe it is the best tactical game magazine anywhere. The hints on play are great. Extra counters and new rules make old games lively! Take *AIR ASSAULT ON CRETE* for example. My father and I thought we had it mastered, but one look at *The GENERAL* changed our minds. The review gave us new hints. Variants and the tactical analysis told us why the Germans always win! Now we're mastering the variants. So we have deduced that some other magazines compared to *The GENERAL* are flops.

R. Danial Taylor
Wallington, Pennsylvania

THE QUESTION BOX

This regular feature of *The GENERAL* allows the designers and developers to respond to some of the more significant rules questions that are received on our popular games. Each installment carries such on one or two of the games spotlighted in articles in the issue. While significant errata occasionally appears in "The Question Box", the bulk of the responses are instead clarifications of rules about which misunderstandings have arisen. The sample below comes from Vol. 24, No. 4—which featured the solitaire game, *RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE*.

RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE

4.82 Can a demolition attack be made in the same game turn that its Preparation roll is passed?
A. Yes.

6.1 Can Gun and Searchlight units with a Disrupted or Out of Action marker roll to remove it if Commandos occupy the same area.
A. Yes.

8.1 Does the *Campbeltown* need one MF to enter LZ 111 and one MF to ram the Southern Caisson?
A. No, the act of ramming is considered entry of the Landing Zone.

8.4 May torpedo attacks be made against Swing Bridges?
A. No.

8.4 Must torpedo attacks be pre-designated?
A. No.

8.4 Is the Southern Caisson a "Lock Gate"?
A. No.

8.4 Is the Lock Gate in Area 313 a single target for a torpedo attack, or would it take two torpedo attacks as the artwork suggests to eliminate the Lock Gate?
A. A single attack destroying one of the gates earns all 4 Victory Points. No further VP are earned by attacking the same gate twice to destroy the other gate.

9.3 If a Triad activates a Stosstruppen in a VP Area that has already been destroyed by Demolition attack, is it still activated?
A. Yes—unless it is an "over-water" Area.

9.5 and 11.7 What happens if a fourth Armored Car is activated (the counter mix only contains three)?
A. Any eliminated Armored Car is eligible for re-Activation; but if all three Armored Cars are presently in the game, bring in another Stosstrupp unit instead.

10.3 Does it cost a land MF for Commandos to land?
A. No—but they "have one less MF during the turn they are landed", which amounts to the same thing.

10.3 Does the extra MF expended to leave an enemy-occupied area apply if the enemy unit is a Disrupted/Out of Action Gun or Searchlight?
A. Yes.

12.4 If a Demo Attack against an already damaged target results in another "Damaged" result, is the Prepared Charge eliminated or—because it has no effect—does it remain in place?
A. The Prepared Charge has been used in causing the "Damaged" result; remove it. It is the effect of multiple damage results that has no additional effect—not the non-detonation of the charge.

13.21 If a Commando unit enters a ship already containing another Commando unit, is another Stosstrupp activated there?
A. No. However, if a ship has been entered previously by a Commando (thus activating a Stosstrupp) and that Commando is no longer present, the ship would again be subject to activation if reboarded while no Commando unit was on board.

13.21 If a ship withdraws with a Commando aboard attending an already Prepared Charge, is the Prepared Charge taken off with the Commando or is the Charge lost?
A. The Charge is lost; the previous ammunition expenditure attends (12.1).

14.2 Does the prohibition against leaving the hexagonal Areas apply to Stosstruppen brought to Area 443 by ship?
A. Yes.

15.2 Are units not withdrawn from the map-board "survivors" if they can't be fired on at game end?
A. No—they must be withdrawn.

16. When varying "Landing Areas", can you select a Landing Area other than 366, 336 or 111?
A. No—a landing anywhere else would constitute a Forced Landing (8.5).

AH RBG RATING CHARTS

The following games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly.

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness of Rules	Playability	Authenticity	Length Shortest	Longest	Year	Sample Base
1. ASL	1.67	1.44	10	1.81	2.80	1.98	—	—	1985	133
2. SOF	1.84	1.54	10	1.89	2.27	1.70	17.71	43.64	1986	79
3. RF	2.00	2.78	5	4.15	2.56	2.36	15.54	89.64	1985	88
4. GI	2.02	1.93	10	3.01	3.38	1.88	12.84	35.33	1982	264
5. COI	2.06	1.95	9	3.29	3.13	1.99	11.61	29.27	1978	532
6. BV	2.09	1.95	10	—	2.82	1.86	13.14	39.20	1985	95
7. 3R	2.21	2.67	10	3.81	3.40	2.73	25.94	69.24	1981	273
8. COD	2.23	1.97	10	3.12	3.08	1.85	12.15	30.20	1980	224
9. TRC	2.29	2.53	4	2.52	2.12	3.11	17.44	37.74	1976	540
10. SL	2.31	2.09	8	3.48	2.87	2.45	10.17	27.90	1977	680
11. UF	2.42	2.26	4	2.57	1.31	2.84	4.84	13.05	1983	58
12. B-17	2.51	2.62	3	2.52	1.86	2.21	3.30	11.50	1983	87
13. WS&IM	2.53	3.04	6	2.93	2.67	2.39	7.01	34.90	1975	464
14. FP	2.57	3.10	4	3.12	2.91	2.87	5.42	16.81	1985	85
15. HW	2.59	3.27	4	3.68	2.13	4.25	8.27	21.73	1984	63
16. W&P	2.61	2.76	5	3.46	2.93	3.04	13.04	57.19	1980	374
17. BB'81	2.67	2.46	4	2.53	2.94	2.91	19.62	35.09	1981	277
18. TLD	2.68	1.95	8	3.72	3.54	2.04	24.44	170.68	1980	119
19. VITP	2.72	2.86	2	2.89	2.22	4.52	16.96	22.36	1977	420
20. CAE	2.85	3.01	4	2.32	2.89	2.52	25.14	32.57	1976	252
21. SON	2.92	3.03	10	3.72	4.09	1.92	29.50	81.78	1981	123
22. SOA	2.97	2.79	3	2.73	2.41	3.88	18.22	22.57	1981	232
23. FE	3.00	2.72	7	3.21	3.21	3.00	21.17	49.05	1980	345
24. FRED	3.00	3.41	4	2.93	2.58	2.75	12.25	24.67	1983	58
25. SUB	3.08	2.64	8	3.13	3.08	2.74	9.41	26.15	1978	281
26. CON	3.12	3.64	7	3.08	2.52	3.52	25.8	49.1	1983	73
27. MD	3.13	3.51	3	2.80	2.21	3.44	14.75	20.74	1964	395
28. AZ	3.17	2.72	7	3.18	3.86	2.68	18.63	63.40	1978	292
29. PL	3.19	2.94	7	3.31	3.13	3.50	9.49	25.80	1974	479
30. 1776	3.21	2.97	7	3.09	3.03	3.10	10.16	45.09	1974	373
31. FT	3.23	3.12	10	3.22	3.67	3.16	24.51	57.39	1981	196
32. PK	3.34	4.02	4	3.48	2.85	3.27	11.85	20.34	1983	59
33. PB	3.35	3.08	6	3.73	2.90	3.94	10.35	23.07	1970	448
34. BIS	3.45	2.96	6	3.43	3.25	3.06	12.41	26.35	1979	248
35. AAOC	3.52	2.95	5	3.02	3.26	3.07	15.52	26.53	1978	239
36. FITW	3.53	3.14	4	3.17	2.94	3.72	16.14	30.01	1981	100
37. CL	3.54	3.35	5	3.15	3.33	3.79	12.53	25.53	1975	136
38. DL	3.61	4.02	7	3.85	3.22	3.29	6.66	19.94	1981	120
39. GOA	3.66	3.37	5	3.67	3.79	2.98	18.68	60.06	1981	297
40. WAS	3.71	3.67	1	2.48	2.37	5.98	9.09	12.71	1976	396
41. GE	3.72	3.12	6	4.64	4.41	2.84	13.25	57.13	1977	248
42. AF	3.74	4.16	7	3.98	3.34	3.35	5.61	16.02	1980	192
43. AIW	3.74	3.05	8	2.92	3.52	3.06	8.69	25.36	1977	308
44. LRT	3.75	3.60	4	3.53	3.39	2.96	13.04	17.00	1982	56
45. TR	3.80	3.76	3	3.33	3.60	3.70	9.51	25.79	1980	72
46. WAT	3.83	4.17	2	2.95	2.64	5.00	17.08	23.13	1962	296
47. NP	3.87	3.29	3	3.27	2.56	4.89	9.69	14.40	1978	159
48. AK	3.92	4.38	2	3.30	2.48	5.09	14.49	19.13	1964	492
49. AL	4.03	4.05	5	3.69	3.18	3.57	12.34	17.93	1974	217
50. TB	4.06	3.53	7	3.48	4.47	2.50	11.28	32.50	1975	304
51. RW	4.14	3.14	5	3.32	2.91	3.98	4.22	21.15	1973	311
52. JU	4.17	3.20	6	3.61	3.83	3.22	16.01	36.66	1974	193
53. PAA	4.17	4.24	5	3.79	3.99	3.70	15.51	25.24	1981	144
54. DD	4.22	4.07	2	3.04	2.88	4.64	17.54	26.25	1977	367
55. CH	4.39	3.80	4	3.35	3.52	4.67	14.76	24.96	1961	140
56. STAL	4.39	4.29	2	2.88	2.75	5.83	20.57	28.85	1963	320
57. LW	4.45	3.75	5	3.77	3.79	4.79	13.36	34.14	1971	372
58. FR	4.79	3.49	4	3.47	3.75	4.06	16.27	26.95	1972	244
59. BL	4.73	4.16	7	3.65	3.77	5.27	20.43	41.44	1965	336
60. TAC	5.62	5.25	1	2.79	3.23	6.34	11.70	19.29	1961	285

ASL Rulebook

Tactical Ground Combat of World War 2

\$40.00

What can be said? Not unexpectedly, the many who responded to our reader-generated rating of the *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER Rulebook* consider it the best ever seen. The Overall Value (1.67) vaults it to the top of the 57 titles shown. The ratings for Components (reflecting the quality and care of the effort expended on this rulebook) and for Completeness of Rules (to be sure) are the best to date. And, of course, since this is only the rulebook for a system, all this bodes well for the modules which will bring new counters, mapboards and scenarios.

A few words of explanation for the ratings are needed in response to some of the comments and questions by those who responded to the RBG survey for this title. The rating for Player's Aid obviously represents the acceptance and approval of the organization of a mass of critical information in easy-to-use tables on the full-color cards used as dividers between sections of the rulebook. Playability relates to functionality and ease of accessibility as well as to the Excitement Level and Play Balance. With regard to the latter category, many felt this to relate solely to the scenarios as so entered no value under this heading, but as many others felt it to reflect their perceptions of how the system deals with the various nationalities and their equipment in relation to

each other.

This long-awaited system seems to have, despite delays in production and the expense, pleased all who have taken the time to give it a fair-minded evaluation. There is no doubt that ASL will stand in the first rank of wargames. The complete ratings for the *ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER Rulebook* will show on the continuing RBG Chart as follows:

Overall Value: 1.67

Components: 1.44

Map: —

Counters: —

Player's Aids: 1.59

Complexity: 8.73

Completeness of Rules: 1.81

Playability: 2.80

Excitement Level: 1.75

Play Balance: 2.04

Authenticity: 1.98

Game Length

Shortest: —

Longest: —

Year: 1985

Sample Base: 133

The Avalon Hill "Readers' Buyer's Guide" has, since it first appeared in Vol. 9, No. 3, striven to evaluate as fairly as possible the wargames of The Avalon Hill Game Company. To accomplish this thankless task, we've made use of the toughest critics known—the consumers. Each issue, we ask the readership, using a convenient form found on the insert, to evaluate a new game release. The categories range from the artwork to the completeness of the rules to the playability of the game; in distinct variance with most other surveys, the lower the value assigned by the reader, the better his reaction to the game in question. Two issues later, we report the collation of their input (the example at the left is from Vol. 23, No. 2). If enough response is received—at least fifty readers rate the game—the values are added to our ongoing chart (the example above is from Vol. 24, No. 6) so that the game may be compared to others in our extensive line. Readers are reminded that the "Game Length" categories are measured in multiples of ten minutes (thus a rating of "18" equates to three hours to play the game). Periodically, discontinued games are dropped from the list to make way for newer titles. And, occasionally the entire survey is revised—the latest being in Vol. 25, No. 2 when the products of Victory Games were added to the survey.

This regular feature is our chance to pass along news of the hobby, as it relates to the products of Avalon Hill and Victory Games. Since Vol. 3, No. 4 (when the first "Infiltrator's Column" appeared on Page 4), the editors have made use of it to alert the readership to unusual products (from T-shirts to variant kits), wargame conventions, amateur publications, gaming clubs, awards and honors, the doings of gamers and professionals, calls for playtesters, and a wide host of other tidbits. For instance, since Vol. 21, No. 1, we've given plugs to some 30 amateur periodicals, from as far afield as Belgium and Australia. (This is nothing new, of course; why, in Vol. 4, No. 5, there was a plug for the infant *S&T*!) The "Infiltrator's Column" also grants a ready forum to report on the reader ratings of the previous issue (giving the number of votes for each article therein), to offer our best solution to the game contest from the previous issue (challenging readers to chart the best course in a given game situation), and to announce the winners of a recent contest (who are awarded merchandise certificates). Over the years the "Infiltrator's Report" has become our pipeline to the readership. We are constantly combing and culling hobby news in the hopes of increasing their enjoyment of the play of our games. The following are some sample entries:

One of the reasons for *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN*'s popularity is doubtless its relatively short playing time in postal format. Not only has the AREA *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* tournament ended, but the champion—Pat Flory—has successfully defended his title against the first challenger, Dale Garbutt. Challenge matches take the form of duel games with each player playing both sides once. In the case of a split decision, the victor is the player who won his game first or with the most victory points. Such was the case here as the Germans swept both games, but Pat was able to hold onto three Russian cities while Dale could but manage two. Congratulations to champion and challenger alike for a well-played and exciting match—which is what wargaming is all about. Any other members of the AREA Top 50 list wishing to challenge Mr. Flory for the AREA *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* crown should forward their challenges to Don Greenwood (c/o The Avalon Hill Game Company). As always, current AREA rankings will decide the next challenger.

Interested in playing *DIPLOMACY* by mail? Then you would certainly be well advised to look over a copy of *Diplomacy World*, the flagship 'zine of the hobby. For over a decade it has been providing articles on the doings of that select group of fanatics. Each issue is filled with original articles on

Infiltrator's Report

strategy and tactics, statistics and variants, events and personalities, sample games and in-depth commentaries. For all the latest information about *DIPLOMACY*, there is no better place to turn. Current subscriptions run \$15.00 for a year of this quarterly, 80-page, black/white periodical. If you can't wait, \$4.00 brings a *Diplomacy World* "Sampler". For more information, contact Larry Peery, Editor, *Diplomacy World*, P.O. Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102.

Want to display your loyalty to your favorite game company? No better way to do it than to wear its name proudly on your chest—and I'm not talking about a tattoo, but the next best thing . . . a T-shirt. Shown below are our svelte models (from left to right: Craig Taylor, Bill Peschel and Don Greenwood) wearing the latest versions. If you are interested in spreading the gospel of wargaming, you can order any of these direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214) for \$6.00 each, plus the usual shipping costs of 10%. Simply indicate which shirt you wish, and specify size (sm, med, lg, or X-lg).

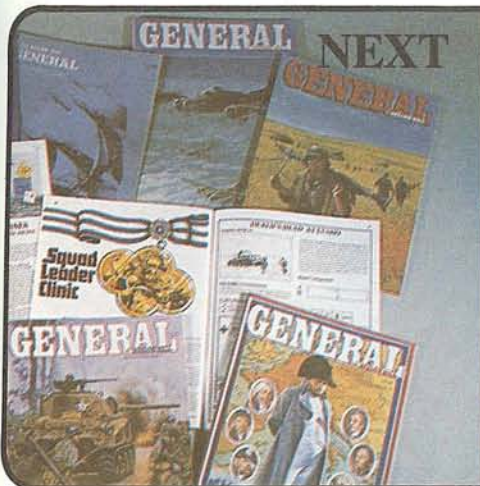


The SAFRA Wargame Club, founded to promote wargaming among Singapore Armed Forces reservists, has extended an invitation to all wargamers who may be in the city for short visits. They play, according to the club secretary Mr. Tan, a wide variety of games, including 95% of all Avalon Hill wargame titles. They'd welcome any expatriate wargamers for a session or two of their weekly get-togethers. If you happen to be traveling to the Far East, drop a line to Mr. Terance Tan, Secretary, SAFRA Wargame Club, 32 Sian Tuan Avenue, Republic of Singapore (2158).

The annual British "blood bath", Games Day, once again expanded its scope and scale over the conventions of previous years. Similar to ORIGINS, the 1985 convention saw hundreds of enthusiasts engaged in competitions, seminars and product previews. The usual Game Day Awards (the British "Charlies") brought The Avalon Hill Game Company all three awards in the *Best Historical Boardgame* category, in order: *DIPLOMACY*, *KINGMAKER* and *SQUAD LEADER*. Placing second in the *Best Fantasy Boardgame* category was our *DRAGON PASS*; and third among *Best Science Fiction Boardgames* was *DUNE*.

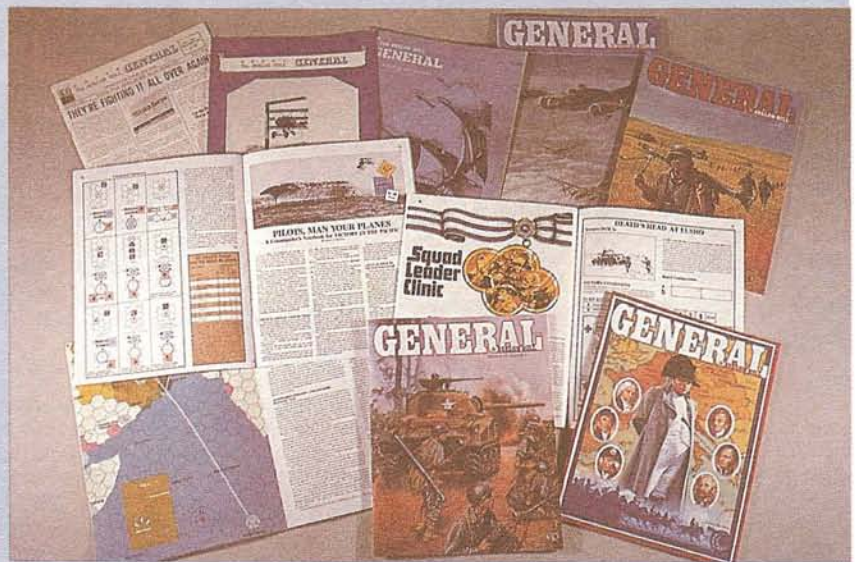


COMING UP:



Vol. 25, No. 3

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For 24 years, **THE GENERAL** has printed insightful analyses of the best wargames available—games that have been nurtured through a painstaking development process by the company that started the wargaming hobby back in 1958 with its publication of **Tactics**. **THE GENERAL** is a wargaming magazine—not a magazine wrapped around a game. We don't rush a game into print to meet a bi-monthly publishing schedule, and our game components are not limited by a magazine format's restrictions on size, number or type. Our games have mounted mapboards, sturdy index-stock charts and, when necessary, cards, pads, stands, dice and other accessories not found in a magazine format. In short, for 30 years our games have set the standard by which wargames are measured. Standards which our competitors have struggled to match for years.

Times change. Lots of companies have made wargames. Too many. Today there are more wargames than wargamers—or so it seems. If you're a typical wargamer, you are probably more concerned about finding the time and opposition for your next game than in adding to your collection of unplayed titles. And that's where **THE GENERAL** can't be beat—we cover only the hobby's most popular games and let you advertise for opponents among a readership devoted to playing those games. We offer opportunities to study the classic games played by the bulk of the wargaming fraternity, rather than the challenge to learn the rules of the latest game of the month before it is replaced forevermore by the next game in an unending stream of designs never tested in competitive play. Put your limited time to good use...spend it with the best magazine on the best games that wargaming has to offer. Return with us to the era when that "new car smell" from removing the shrinkwrap was just the beginning of a gaming high. Relive the exhilarating challenge of discovering all that a game has to offer before racing off to the next set of rules. **THE GENERAL** is undergoing a facelift to mark its 25th Anniversary and we want you to be part of the festivities. Look around and compare.

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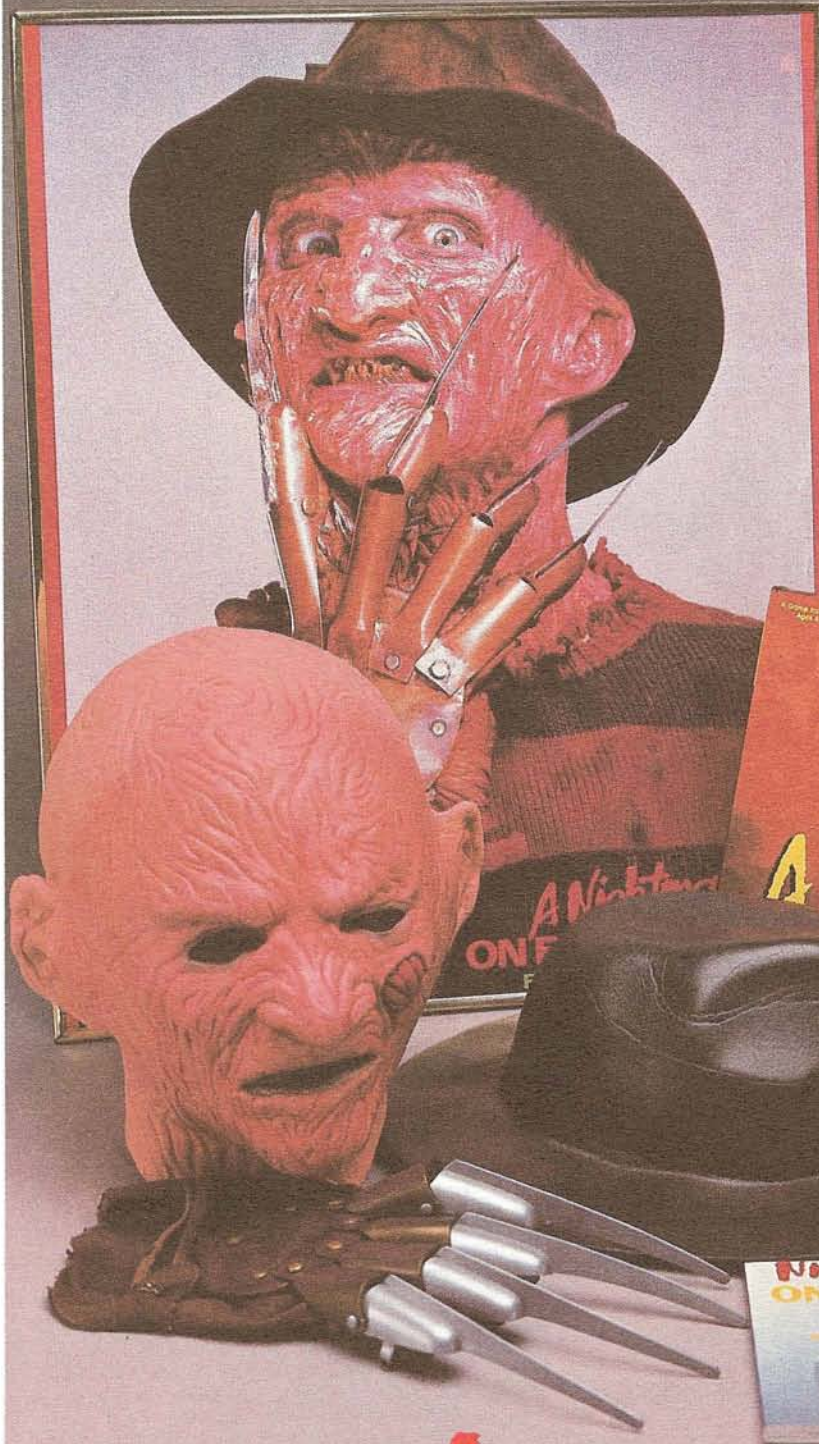
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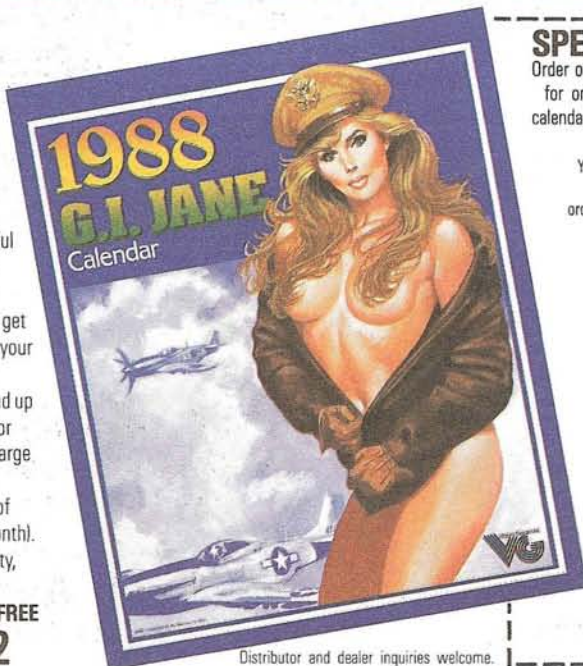
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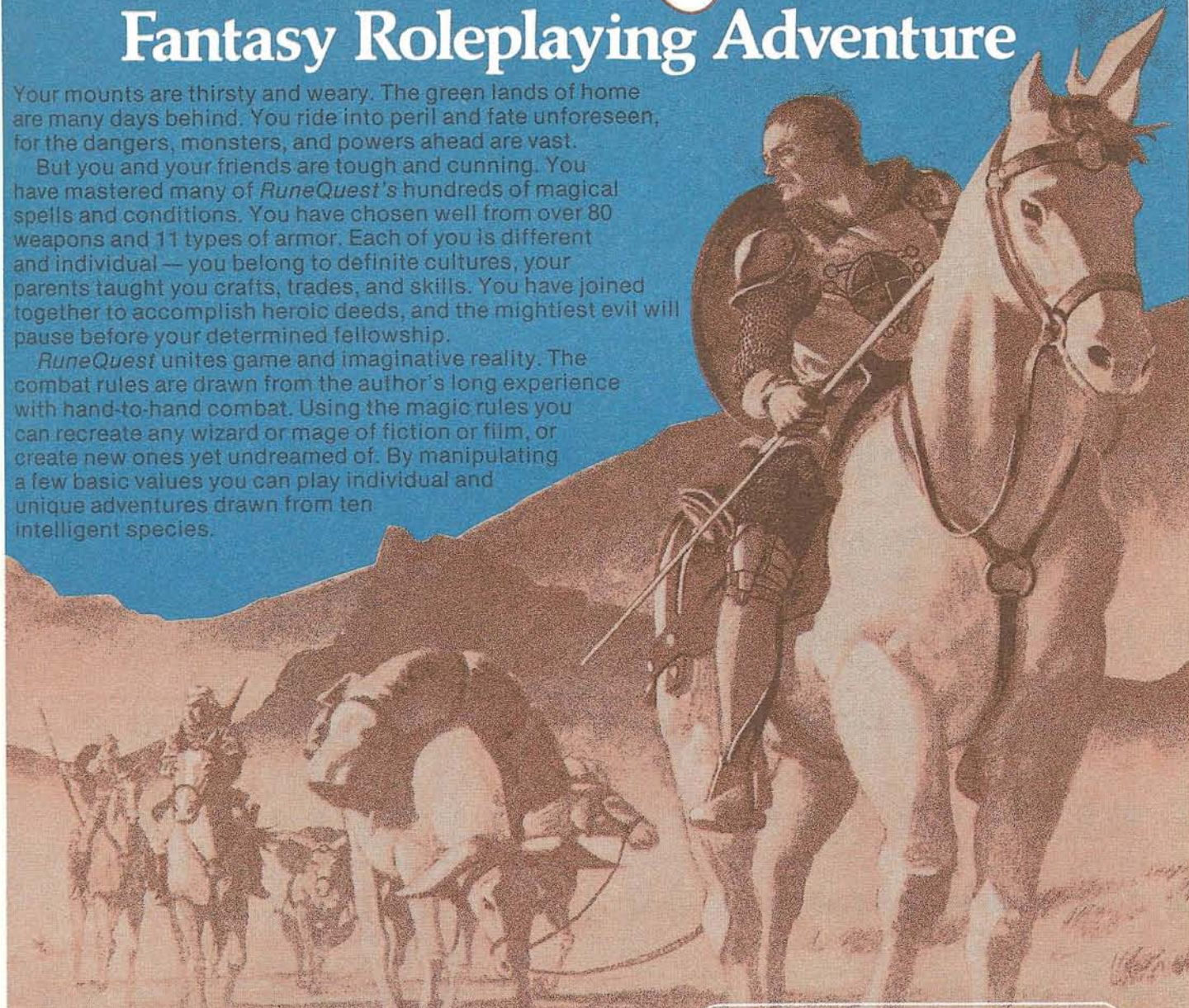
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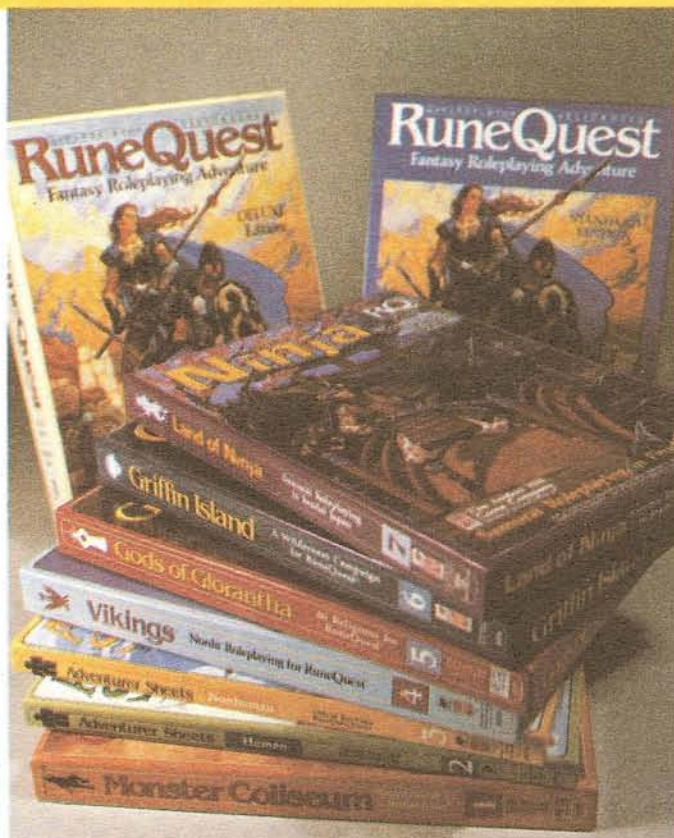
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