

BACKBLAST

The Tactical Journal for ASL Enthusiasts

No. 2 Spring 1995



8 NEW SCENARIOS • PANTHER GEGEN SHERMAN • OVR TACTICS



OFFBOARD

OBSERVER

Last spring when we cooked up the idea for *Backblast*, things were looking pretty bleak on the ASL scene. The *Annual* had gone under, *KGPII* was on indefinite hold, and nothing was happening with *The Third Bridge (TTB)*—DAGGER's long awaited mini-module on Arnhem. *ASLUG* was finished, *FFE* was undergoing reorganization, and the *Rout Report* was looking more sporadic than ever. We figured that where others were falling down, we would stand up. Not riding to the rescue, but desperately trying to fill the void lest ASL itself fall by the wayside.

We need not have worried about that. Others were just as concerned, and just as determined to do something about it. *Critical Hit!* blossomed out of *FFE*, bigger and brighter. *ASL News* from Belgium underwent a transformation from a photocopied newsletter to a full-fledged magazine. *Tactiques*, already in 'zine format, started providing an English translation. The *Rout Report* reappeared at Oktoberfest (with a special quadruple issue). And the *Annual* was back; that is, Gary Fortenberry was working on it, and TAHC soon had too much invested in it to just abandon it again.

The reception *Backblast* #1 received at our Oktoberfest debut was gratifying, and reinvigorated us for the hard work to come before #2 could come out. Then, just in time for the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, *Time On Target* released a very well-produced scenario pack centered around the Bulge. Twelve scenarios, plus SSRs, plus designer notes. All interesting, all gorgeous, from the guy who had been producing *ASLUG*'s scenario cards. Closely followed by an Arnhem mini-module—*God Save The King (GSTK)*—from a group most people had never heard of, Heat of Battle (HoB).

At about the same time in Europe, *ASL News* was releasing its Bulge Jubilee issue, complete with new geomorphic map to represent the train station at Stoumont, special Railroad rules worked out in conjunction with *Tactiques*, and a shorter version of the Stoumont CG. This on the heels of the English translation of the impressive *Tactiques* issue featuring *Bocage* (complete with 11 professional-looking color overlays).

Whew. *ASL News* and *Tactiques* are showing that Euro-ASL is a force to be reckoned with, while here in the States choices and options abound. This is a good thing. The more ASL the better; the more choices the better. As the field gets crowded, however, it is important for all of us to remember that the health of the hobby is the real goal here, not making a quick buck or a quick splash. A quality product must be the bedrock of ASL publishing. Historical, balanced scenarios; informative, accurate articles; attractive, user-friendly

components.

The three American 'zines—*Rout Report*, *Critical Hit!*, and *Backblast*—may ultimately be direct competitors, but it is hard to imagine this as a cut-throat competition. As long as quality comes first, there should be room for all three, but it is important that we try not to step on each other's toes. With more and more scenarios flying through the air, it is almost inevitable that some will smack up against each other. The '95 *Annual* has a scenario ("Airborne Samurai") similar to the recent *Tactiques* scenario "Rakkasan Butai." Our own "Ambitious Plans" in this issue represents exactly the same action as "Out Of The Frying Pan" from the latest *Rout Report*. (Rumor has it that *CH!* has also done a scenario on this action.) While direct scenario competition isn't a big problem, neither is it a recommended way of approaching things. On the other hand, *TOT* published a fairly extensive SSR for bayonet charges, while a completely different SSR on the same topic appeared in *GSTK* shortly thereafter. This rules duplication is a more serious problem, potentially leading to variantism and splits in the hobby.

ASL News and *Tactiques* have approached the question of special rules in a cooperative manner, joining forces to develop special rules for railroad tracks. We think this is such a good idea we have joined up with them, and have invited *CH!* and *TOT* to come along. It remains to be seen what will come of this. Probably each 'zine would give up a little sovereignty to the collective. If it works, the results could be outstanding, with truly universally-accepted additions to the rules. We shall see.

Where does that leave the consumer? Mostly sitting pretty, but with responsibilities of his own. With so much good material currently available, it can be difficult to buy it all. Nevertheless, that is indeed the consumer's responsibility, to buy all the good stuff available. If he doesn't, what is the point of producing good material? It is also the responsibility of the consumer not to buy any dreck that may be floating about. Once upon a time he had an excuse, that there was no other game in town and he had to get his ASL fix somehow. That is no longer the case. Dollars spent on dreck are usually dollars not spent on something else, but even if that were not the case, the consumer's responsibility is still there. What is the point (economically speaking) of producing good material if dreck sells just as well?

With that in mind, what should the responsible consumer be buying? Of everything mentioned above, the only product that *Backblast* cannot endorse is *GSTK*. Not only is the quality of its components not where we want it to be, but, more importantly for many, the CG

rules leave much to be desired. It sure looks like *GSTK* could have benefitted from some additional development. Add to that the knowledge that a better version of this action appears to be waiting in the wings (TAHGC's collaboration with DAGGER on *TTB*), and you almost have to save your money. Could we have done better? Not necessarily, but that is not the point. We realize that *GSTK* is a labor of love and that a lot of hard work went into it, but that, too, is besides the point when you start charging \$15. We do want to encourage HoB to keep at it and keep improving. No one will be happier than us to see that happen.

The *Rout Report* remains a wonderful source of quality scenarios and alternate view points. Production values remain at the photocopied stage, but content wins out over presentation here. While still sporadic (except for the annual Oktoberfest special), *Rout Report* will always have a spot in our hearts.

Critical Hit! was the first of the American 'zines to look like more than just a newsletter (beating us out by two months), and we expect big things from it. *CH!* looks like it will be a keeper. (We just hope their production schedule holds up, so that they do not end up publishing at the same times of year as we do, and that their marketing department does not overshadow their editorial department.)

ASL News, which has always published its scenarios in English, has been completely written in English for a while now, although English obviously isn't the primary language of the editor. While this may seem picky, it is annoying, in the middle of an excellent article, to have to struggle with English that gets in the way of the message. And *ASL News* does have more than its share of excellent articles, thanks to one of the sharpest minds in ASL publishing, editor Phillippe Leonard. While its first attempt at a new format last fall had several problems, its Bulge Jubilee issue is most impressive. If they can keep this standard up, we are all in for some very enjoyable reading.

The only thing wrong with *Tactiques* is that it's written in French, and they have taken care of that by providing an English translation, although not until six months after each issue originally comes out. The first of the "professional" looking 'zines, *Tactiques* still looks good, besides providing fun scenarios, interesting articles, and the occasional mini-mini-CG. The color hedge overlays in its *Bocage* issue were state of the art.

Tactiques is such a value that we are helping to distribute it here in North America. We accept orders, along with payment in U.S. funds, and relay the information to our friends at *Tactiques*. They then mail the 'zines directly to you, cutting out the messy international postal money order nonsense. *ASL News* also accepts major credit cards, though we don't know the exact details there. Write to them for more information.

We hope that this cooperation in the sales area will combine with cooperation in the rules development area, so that these different organizations are all supporting each other instead of directly competing against one another. Pie in the sky, you say? Perhaps, but *Backblast* supports all efforts to advance the hobby, even ones we are not interested in actively pursuing. Competition is important to maintaining a quality product, and will ultimately decide the directions the hobby takes, but there are goals here more important than the success of any individual enterprise.

Even if you can't do anything else for the hobby, be a responsible consumer. Shell out for quality ASL products and vote with your dollar. Try not to let it end there, however. Get involved. Go on-line and ask some questions that have been bugging you. Write a letter, write an article, design a scenario, do some playtesting. ASL is an interactive game. Be interactive.

Backblast, a bi-annual periodical published by Multi-Man Publishing, is dedicated to the promotion of The Avalon Hill Game Company's ASL game system and further growth of this hobby. The articles and scenarios herein are for use in expanding the reader's knowledge and enjoyment of ASL.

EDITORIAL STAFF

MANAGING EDITOR

Brian Youse

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Perry Cocke, Chuck Goetz

ART AND GRAPHICS EDITOR

J.D. Frazer

SCENARIO DEVELOPER/EDITOR

Steve Petersen

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Valaria Vorlop

SCENARIOS

SCENARIO DESIGNS: J.D. Frazer, Patrick Jonke, Shawn Kenny, Evan E. Sherry, Bill Sisler, Rick Troha, and Brian Youse.

PLAYTEST GROUP COORDINATORS: Robin Crudge, Andres Riaguas Guedan, Veikko Hyyrynen, Peter Ladwein, Doug Loss, Bruno Nitrosso, and Jeff Thompson.

PLAYTEST MEDAL OF HONOR: Veikko Hyyrynen.

SPECIAL THANKS to Dale Wetzelberger.

Our playtest coordinators led their squads through the harrowing "trial by combat" that is our scenario playtest. If you have a squad, half-squad or are just a couple of SMCs that would like to join in on our playtesting, please write to: *Backblast* Playtest, 112 Vernon Ave., Glen Burnie, MD, USA 21061 or s.petersen3@genie.geis.com for electronic mail.

SUBMISSIONS

We encourage all ASL players to submit for publication letters, articles, scenario designs (based on historical actions only), and ideas concerning ASL and the ASL hobby. All rights in letters and unsolicited editorial and graphic material will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyright purposes and material will be subject to *Backblast's* unrestricted right to edit and to comment editorially. Submissions will be returned if requested, and only if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please send all submissions to: *Backblast* Submissions, 8191 Turn Loop Rd., Glen Burnie, MD, USA 21061.

Electronic mail submissions are encouraged and may be sent to: p.cocke@genie.geis.com.

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THE READERS BLAST BACK

Brian and gang,

I received my "Premiere Issue" of *Backblast* and I had to write and say that I felt I received every penny's worth of the \$5.00 cover price that I spent on this issue. I thought that the articles were informative, well written, and interesting. As far as the overall content was concerned I thought it was on par or slightly better than most ASL *Annuals*. Now for the downside. The graphics/figures. The one major area where the *Generals* and *Annuals* outshine *Backblast* is the quality of the scenario and article graphics and figures. The figures accompanying the articles are another degree worse than the scenario graphics. In particular the figure that goes with the *Crossfire* article is, in the spirit of Halloween, ghastly. Also, the back cover "Cut and paste job" on the info counters could look better.

Taking these facts into account I'm wondering if raising the cost of an issue of *Backblast* by \$1 - \$3 dollars per issue might make for a better product that ASL consumers would feel was worth more per dollar spent. I for one, would be more than willing to spend a few more dollars to increase the overall quality of the finished product. I would hate for *Backblast* to be known as the "Ferrari with an Earl Scheib \$49.99 paint job!"

William Cirillo

Backblast #1 did not look as good as we would have liked. The illustration for the Crossfire piece did look a little ghoulish. Between our scanner breaking down at the last minute, some beginner's errors on our part, and some mis-communication with the printers, there are plenty of excuses to go around. We have taken steps to improve the appearance of #2. We've upgraded some equipment, learned some lessons, and changed printers. We hope you can notice the difference in our look. Unfortunately, there is an obvious \$2 difference in the price.

To be frank, the \$5 price for Backblast #1 was based on a smaller 'zine. We just had so much good material, however, we couldn't find anything to cut out. And even if we had published #2 exactly as we had #1, our printing costs were going up. Factor that in with our improved look, and we think Backblast is still a bargain at \$7.00. We remain dedicated to providing a "quality rag at a decent price." We hope you agree we have succeeded.

Dear *Backblast* Guys,

Nice job generally with *Backblast* #1. By now you have probably already heard [Rob refers here to a piece in the Windy City Wargamers' *Intelligence Report*—Eds.] about the couple of errors in Brian Youse's otherwise fine article on Caves ("Cave Busting 101"), but—just in case— let me bring them to your attention here. First, the +2 Search

drm does *not* apply vs Caves, see G11.33. Also note that G11.3 *specifically* points out that E1.16 and G.2 apply to Cave counters, which would therefore be revealed when the G.2 Location containing the Cave counter is entered by a non-dummy enemy unit. Hence, the statement that "an attacker in the same hex with a Cave might not see it" would only be true for Caves in non-G.2 terrain. Yes, odd as it seems, Caves in Jungle, Kunai, or Bamboo are easier to find by just running units through the suspected Cave counter Locations than are Cave counters in other kinds of terrain [where LOS is required]! Well, I think that this is a rules glitch, and that all Cave counters should be revealed when an enemy unit enters their hex. I guess it depends on how much of a literalist you want to be with respect to ASLRB interpretation.

Seeing as how these two points were the only criticism I could come up with for *Backblast* #1, I think you will understand how impressed I was with your product. Can't wait to see #2.

Robert Banozic

Part of the reason for the critical success of Backblast #1 was Rob's valuable contribution (we hope his Crossfire piece here in #2 will be just as well received), so we take both his praise and his criticism seriously. We do not exactly agree with his rules interpretations here, however.

Section E1.16 indicates that Fortifications are revealed when you enter the Location containing them. Since Caves are a separate Location unto themselves, we argue that you have to actually enter the Cave Location to reveal the Cave in this manner. Unfortunately, the obvious parallel is with Pillboxes, and we are less sure that Pillboxes should remain hidden when the enemy enters the hex. Pillboxes have a LOS to the hex they are in (even if units can't fire at each other) and are Accessible from the hex they are in, more than you can say for Caves. Like Rob says, Caves in Jungle, Kunai, or Bamboo should not be easier to find than those in regular concealment terrain. We don't think the solution is to make all Caves easier to find, however. Regarding G11.33 and the +2 Searching drm, we do not think that units hiding in Jungle should be easier to find just because there is also a Cave in the Hex—the implication of Rob's interpretation. This points out what we think is a real glitch. The way the rules are written, the +2 drm applies even if there is no concealment terrain in the hexes being Searched. Concealed Japanese in Open Ground are, therefore, harder to Search for than are Japanese HIP in a Woods-Building hex. We really think that the +2 drm should only apply for concealment terrain. If this were the case, the exclusion of Caves (which are also concealment terrain) from the benefits of the +2 drm would make a lot more sense.

A WORD FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

By now you've skimmed the pages and may have noticed the changes that we've undergone since our premiere issue. Changes which we hope will give you a better buy for your gaming dollar, and which will allow us to continue to provide the ASL hobby with a quality player aid well into the future.

The most obvious change is in the graphic quality of our magazine. We were disappointed with how issue #1 looked, but more digging in the printing field has resulted in a higher DPI output and a magazine with crisper, cleaner graphics. We've gone with a slightly lighter weight cover and scored the crease so that there is less chance of the cover splitting, a problem with the heavier weight of the first issue's cover. To reduce "bleed through", we've gone to a higher quality paper resulting in a cleaner, sharper magazine.

Besides the physical changes, there are some other changes as well. Upon reflection, we felt that the first issue was too text dense. We've added more illustrations to hammer home the pertinent points of our articles, thus reducing the eye strain of reading too many all text pages. We enjoyed the theme of the first issue, but creating a "theme issue" is not a priority of our staff. We want to provide articles which assist the ASL player with his game and to offer scenarios which challenge beginner and expert alike.

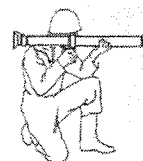
With these goals in mind, if we have several articles available on a similar subject we'll attempt to present a theme, but we're not counting on this occurring too often. If pressed, we'd have to admit that the "theme" of this issue (besides armor and anti-armor tactics) is based on our tournament-sized scenarios. Seven of the eight we've gathered together are two maps or fewer with low unit densities. While they may involve a few odd rules, they are mostly fast playing.

We continue to evolve towards our goal of the "perfect" independent magazine for the ASL player. If you have any comments or suggestions about our format, content, or layout (or, better yet, a juicy article) please drop us a line! With your help, *Backblast* #3 will be even better.

Until then, roll low and TAKE THE BLAST!

Brian Youse
Managing Editor

A WEDGE IN THE ICE



SCENARIO BB9

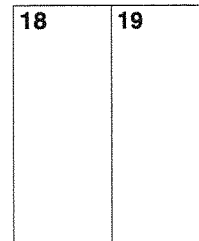


Near VIIPURI, FINLAND, 11 February 1940: After a week of forceful probes and measured attacks, General Timoshenko's major offensive against the Mannerheim Line was finally ready. The 123rd Division and 35th Tank Brigade were to spearhead the offensive, having undergone intensive training behind the lines. After a massive two-hour artillery bombardment, the Russian forces plunged headlong into the Finnish positions.

BOARD CONFIGURATION: 18 19

HANDICAPS:

- F3: Use F2, and the Russian OBA receives one Pre-Registered hex.
- F2: Use F1, and the Russian reinforcements enter on Turn 1.
- F1: Add one 8-1 and one Russian HMG to the Russian OB.



- R1: Increase the Finnish SAN to "6".
- R2: Use R1, and increase the number of Mine factors in the Finn OB to 60.
- R3: Use R2 and in the VC, change "the three pillboxes on board 19" to "four of the five pillboxes."

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Russians win at game end if they have exited ≥ 20 VP (excluding prisoners) off the west edge of board 18 and there are no Good Order Finnish MMC in the three pillboxes on board 19.

TURN RECORD CHART

	FINN Sets Up First [181]	1	2★	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	END
★	RUSSIAN Moves First [135]										

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment [ELR: 3] set up on/west of any board 19 hexes numbered ≥ 6 (See SSR 2): {SAN: 4}

5-4-8	5-3-8	2-4-8	10-0	9-0	3	2	3-8	50	7	36 factors
5	6	4					2	2	9	

	Trench OVR, OBA: +4 Other: +2	Foxhole 5 1S OVR, OBA: +4 Other: +2	Roadblock
2+3+5	13	4	4

Advance elements of the 123rd Rifle Division [ELR: 3] set up on board 19 in hexes numbered ≤ 3 : {SAN: 2}

4-4-7	2-3-7	8-1	8-0	7-0	3	2	2-8
18	3					2	

Elements of the 35th Tank Brigade enter on Turn 2 along the east edge of board 19:

45L	16
2	3

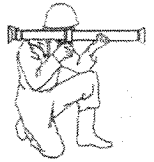
SPECIAL RULES:

1. Weather is Falling and Ground Snow (E3.71-72), with no wind at start. All building and Orchard hexes are Open Ground.
2. One trench counter must be placed in each of the following hexes: 19H10, 19I10, 19J10, 19K10, 19L9, 19M9, 19N8, 19O8, 19P8, 19Q9, 19R9, 19S10, and 19T9. One pillbox must be set up in each of the following hexes (use any convenient counter for the extra pillbox needed): 19O8, 19T9, 19H10, 18Y7, and 18G8. At least one MMC and one SW must set up inside each of the three pillboxes on board 19.
3. After the Finns set up, the Russians may place up to six shellhole counters anywhere within the Finnish set up area; then for each counter, a Random Location DR (C1.31) is made, with the extent of error halved [FRD], to determine that counter's final location. All mines in a shellhole hex are eliminated, after which all shellholes in Woods/Trench/Pillbox hexes are removed.

4. The Finns may use MOL (A22.6). To simulate the Finns' use of *Klorihartsis* pipe grenades, Finnish units may utilize ATMM (C13.7); however, placement of one adds only a -2 DRM to CC resolution.
5. The Russians receive one module of 100-mm OBA (HE and Smoke), directed by an Offboard Observer at Level 2 in an east edge hex of board 19 secretly recorded prior to Finnish setup. Prior to scenario start, remove one black chit from the Russian OBA draw pile; the Russians begin their Turn 1 PFP having already gained Battery Access.

AFTERMATH: Directly behind the curtain of falling steel came the Russian infantry and tanks. Despite facing a well-rehearsed attack spearheaded by confident troops, the stalwart Finnish defenders halted the Russian advance. Grimly determined to protect their country, the Finns held off attack after attack, strewing the snow with dead Russian soldiers until the late afternoon. Then, with their support weapons knocked out and their bunkers smashed, the 2nd Battalion finally fell back.

SURRENDER OR DIE



SCENARIO BB10



CISTERNA, ITALY, 30 January 1944: Spearheading the 3rd Division's breakout from the Anzio Beachhead were the 1st and 3rd Ranger Battalions. They were to stage a commando-like raid on the little town of Cisterna di Littoria by passing undetected through what was believed to be the thinly spread front line of the Hermann Goering Division. Moving out at 0100 hours, the Rangers carried no heavy weapons other than bazookas and mortars, with extra shells for the former and only three shells apiece for the latter. Each Ranger carried an extra bandolier of ammunition, hand grenades, and British "sticky" anti-tank grenades. Making their advance along the Pantano Irrigation Ditch, the raiders stopped frequently for the enemy's flares and his nearby presence. At sunrise, the lead elements of the 1st Battalion were a half mile from Cisterna. Leaving the cover of the ditch, the Rangers charged toward the town's outlying buildings. Immediately, German fire exploded around them from all sides. The two battalions had been allowed to pass through the German lines, which then closed behind them to seal the ambush. Further, the "lightly held" area around Cisterna had, in fact, been reinforced by the 26th Panzer Division. By noon, both Ranger battalions were nearly destroyed, with the remnants surrounded. German armor was playing havoc and many Rangers were being taken prisoner. One of several groups which refused to give up was a handful of men pulled together by Sergeant-Major Robert Ehalt. From a farmhouse, they were determined to make a stand.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Germans win at game end if all buildings on/between hexrows O and W are devoid of unbroken U.S. MMC.

HANDICAPS:

- U3: Use U2, and add one Pz IVH to the German OB, and one BAZ 43 to the U.S. OB
- U2: Use U1, and in the German OB, replace two 4-6-7s with two 4-6-8s, and the 8-0 with one 8-1.
- U1: The U.S. Bazookas suffer from Ammunition Shortage.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

- G1: Add 6 "?" to the U.S. OB.
- G2: Use G1, and in the German OB, replace the 9-1 and MMG with one 8-1 and one German LMG.
- G3: Use G2, and in the U.S. OB, replace the 9-1 with one 9-2.



TURN RECORD CHART

☆ AMERICAN Sets Up First	♣ 1	2	3	4	5	END
♣ GERMAN Moves First						

☆ Elements of the 3rd Ranger Battalion [ELR: 3] set up on/between hexrows N and X: {SAN: 3}

	3					2

♣ Mixed elements of Panzer Division 26 and Fallschirm Panzer Division Hermann Goering [ELR: 3] enter on Turn 1 along the north edge: {SAN: 2}

	2	4				2	2

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moist, with no wind at start.
2. All buildings are stone.
3. The U.S. receive an extra -1 DRM when resolving CC attacks against vehicles.
4. The U.S. [EXC: Bazookas] suffer from Ammunition Shortage (A19.131).

AFTERMATH: With panzers racing about them, the tenacious Rangers held their position. Colonel Darby, in radio contact with the desperate battalions since 0730 hours, urged Ehalt's group to fight on and wait for reinforcement from the 4th Battalion and the rest of 3rd Division. At one point, an English speaking German officer called upon the hold-outs to surrender or be killed. A fierce firefight ensued with Ehalt's brave group holding off the Germans. In the end, two German tanks closed in on the farmhouse and fired high-explosive rounds into the roof. At 1230 hours, Ehalt radioed Darby that his men were out of ammo and he was destroying the radio—their fight was over. The break-out from Anzio had been contained and its spearhead shattered. Moreover, the battalions' destruction was a calamitous loss for the anguished Colonel Darby, signalling the end of the gallant force known as *Darby's Rangers*.

TAKING SOME HEAT

BY PERRY COCKE



The definitive article on shaped-charge weapons (SCW) in ASL, “No Hollow Threat” by Jon Mischon, appeared in the Squad Leader Clinic in issue 24/6 of the *General*. This article taught me a good bit about the real-life mechanics of these weapons. Admittedly, there was (and is) a lot of room for learning on my part. My personal storehouse of knowledge is fairly vacant when it comes to how many of these weapons we play with actually work. If you are interested in this area, I direct you forthwith to Jon Mischon’s article. Dr. Mischon also included some valuable tactical hints for the use of SCW in ASL, about which I am more competent to comment on. While his article is packed full of good ideas and a great starting point, I fear, however, it took several important ideas for granted, overlooked some others, and some I just plain disagree with.

First, let’s mention what Mischon ignores concerning Light Anti-Tank Weapons (LATW). He does not discuss at all the two C13 LATW that are not SCW: the Anti-Tank Rifle (ATR) and the Anti-Tank Magnetic Mine (ATMM). The latter is purely a CC weapon, and thus beyond the scope of this article (meaning, I don’t want to talk about it just now). That leaves the ATR, the only LATW that uses the standard C3 To Hit Table and the C7.31 AP To Kill Table. (Each SCW uses its own, special TH Table.) All LATW are exempt from those C5/C6 DRM which are not marked with an “L.” Point Blank Range (Case L), Boresighting (Case M), and Acquisition (Case N) do not apply. Leadership DRM do apply to LATW, although that’s not listed on the C5 chart. The ‘89 errata and the ‘93a Debriefing reemphasize that almost all of the C6 Target Based DRM (excluding the aforementioned Cases L, M, N)

apply to all ordnance (including LATW), not just to Guns. See the accompanying sidebar for more about ATR.

Next, let’s discuss what Mischon was talking about, i.e., the SCW of C13.9: Panzerfaust (PF/PFk), Bazooka (BAZ43, etc.), Panzerschreck (PSK), and PIAT. All these LATW fire HEAT, and thus are limited to firing at hard targets (C8.31): vehicles, Guns, bridges, and units in buildings and pillboxes and behind walls (and in caves, per G11.835). Their TK# is shown in the C7.33 HEAT To Kill Table (no range modifications apply), and their FP for use on the IFT is shown on their respective counters (the counter-less PF attacks with 16 FP). Summarized here in a TK/FP format, those values are: PF-31/16; PFk-22/16; BAZ43-13/8; BAZ44/BAZ45-16/8; PSK-26/12; and PIAT-15/8.

Lots of Guns and AFV use HEAT, but SCW are the only weapons for which it is the primary ammo. The two things to remember when firing HEAT from these other weapons is that you still have to use it against a hard target (just like SCW do) and its HE equivalency is reduced one column on the IFT from its normal caliber-based FP. Why, you ask yourself, would one ever fire HEAT on the Infantry Target Type when every Gun with HEAT also has non-depletable HE which is more powerful by a column? When would we EVER use the HE equivalency of a Gun’s HEAT?

Certainly, HEAT is more valuable against AFV than against Infantry, and you very well may want to save your depletable HEAT to use only against AFV. Just don’t forget its HE equivalency affect on CE crews. And haven’t you—ace gunner that you are—used APCR or HEAT sometimes to get a “free” second shot against an AFV in some low odds To Hit situa-

tion (spinning to fire at a moving AFV, for instance), knowing that if you gack the availability DR you can always try again with AP/HE? Sure, you are more likely To Kill the enemy AFV, once hit, using APCR or HEAT than using your regular AP/HE, but often the hard part is hitting the target to begin with. Well, why not try the same thing against Infantry that you just have to hit? Fire HEAT first. Then, if you gack the availability (meaning you would have missed anyway), go for HE. Your IFT attack with HEAT will be a column lower, but you have definitely increased your odds of hitting.

“Dead Of Winter” is a fun little scenario, set in that first Russian winter, in which the Germans have lots of weapons but none that can kill any of the T-34 M40s with a front shot (barring a CH). Don’t get me wrong. There are plenty of tricks the Germans can pull and the Russians have a tough row to hoe. They just don’t have to worry too much about ordnance through the front target facing. Jim Stahler unleashed this update of “Dead Of Winter” at his Team Tournament at Atlanticon 1990. At least two games in the tournament saw several smashed T-34s. When the Germans were questioned about how they had accomplished this feat without a CH, each replied “I got hot with my HEAT.” Without a doubt, both the PzKwIVE and the 37L AT Gun (the German ordnance in question) do have a HEAT Depletion # of 6 (the latter representing the Stielgranate 41 ammo). Equally doubtless, however, as Jim points out in his analysis of the scenario in issue 27/2 of the *General*, is the unavailability of any HEAT prior to May 1942 (C8.3). Which leads us into Dr. Mischon’s first tactical hint for the use of SCW.

1) “If you got ‘em, use ‘em.”

A handy reminder to use your PF (and other SCW) not just against AFV but also against Infantry in buildings or behind walls. (Of course, I’ve seen people zone out and forget about them completely.) The corollary to this rule is, as any Atlanticon ‘90 vet could tell you, if he ain’t got ‘em, don’t let him use ‘em. I have yet to see someone blow away an AFV with an illegal pre-10/43 PF, but I am sure it has happened sometime. And just when are we going to see a PFk?

2) “Don’t forget Deliberate Immobilization (C5.7).”

Another handy reminder for those times when you can’t maneuver for a side shot.

ATR

ATR are a lot more universal than SCW. They are available even before 1943 and everyone has one. Well, everyone except the U.S. Army, that is. At least with *Gung Ho!* there is a real U.S. ATR counter—for the Marine Raiders. With a range of 12 hexes, ATR have a lot longer arm than do SCW. You can add in their Small Arms IFP to your firegroup without worrying about trying to hit something. Problem is, it's hard to kill with an ATR anything that has any real armor. Which is probably why the U.S. Army never had one; they seldom fought any tanks an ATR could reliably stop. Of course, the Army could have used everyone else's favorite tactic: give the ATR to your Hero so that he can use his heroic modifier with fire groups out to 12 hexes.

The "regular" ATR of the British, Germans, French, Chinese and Allied Minors have a base TK# of 5 and cost only 1PP to carry. Russian, Finnish, Italian (not the captured Polish one—see Italian Ordnance Note 3), and Japanese ATR have a TK# of 6, all, except the Russian, by virtue of their 20mm caliber. The Axis Minors also have a 20L ATR, although it is not shown separately in red on the C7.31 AP To Kill Table like the other 20Ls. The 20L ATR is heavy (4PP for the Finnish Lahti, 5PP for the rest), but gets ROF (1 ROF for the Finnish ATR and the crewed Japanese ATR, 2 ROF for the Italian and Axis Minors). Although the Russian ATR is without ROF, you have to like its base 6 TK with only 1 PP. Don't forget that the TK# for all ATR goes up 1 within 6 hexes (unlike SCW) and up 2 at ranges 0-1. Maybe you can take out that monster with a point blank (+2 TK) rear shot (-1 AF).

The '93a Debriefing states that only 20mm ATR can try to affect Infantry with HE equivalency via the To Hit process. The other ATR are restricted to the IFP of their Small Arms. No longer can these "light" ATR hit Infantry in a stone building with unmodified IFP attacks (or with the 2FP -3 attack after a CH). The only rules controversy I can imagine now about ATR is whether or not the non-20mm variety can affect Guns with HE equivalency via the To Hit process. I think that C11.52 is clear that an ATR can affect a Gun via either the To Hit process or as Small Arms, and C13.23 merely reiterates the second option.

Mischon points out that a BAZ44 has a 16% chance for the four it needs to immobilize a large, non-Moving target at 2 hexes. No doubt, he is thinking about a Panther, whose circled 18 frontal armor is practically impervious to a BAZ. Hey, those PIAT in North Bank have to be good for something (see point #7).

3) WP is "a wonderful combined offensive and defensive tool that costs you nothing (barring possible weapon malfunction) if you blow the availability roll (C8.9)."

The BAZ45 is a great weapon, thanks in no small part to WP6 (per the C8.2 Q&A, even Marines need an SSR to get WP7 for being elite). Just remember to fire WP first in your Fire phase. Since these beauties have their own TH table, they don't get the +2 modification to their Base TH# for firing SMOKE within 12 hexes. Neither does their SMOKE shot have to add the Case Q TEM DRM (per the C13.42 Q&A—outdating the Tactical Hints section of *ASLUG#5*), since the TEM (even hexside) will get counted in the NMC effects DR. And, unlike HEAT, WP is not limited to hard targets.

4) "For the Germans, stick with squads for best PF availability. Players are advised to use crews, when available, for BAZ and PSK."

Mischon previously mentions the +1 drm for PF availability for half-squads as being of paramount importance in considering their tactical usage. You are doubtless more likely to roll up a PF using a squad than using a half-squad, but you are also more likely to have a unit in position to roll for a PF if you have deployed into half-squads. Depends on the situation, I'd say. If you are playing with Optional Usage (C13.311), definitely go with half-squads. Remember that crews can try for PF, even after surviving the destruction of their own AFV. Wouldn't that be the pits (or the heights, depending)? Vehicle crew remembers to take a PF with it as its tank blows up around it, finds the PF in AFPh, and takes out the enemy AFV that just destroyed its ride. Make sure, though, that the previously inherent crew hadn't fired any of the vehicle's weapons already (C5.8). Contrast that to Japanese crews, which cannot create TH-Heroes (G1.421)

As for using spare crews to man your BAZ and PSK, well, you do get the Self-Rally capability, which can come in very handy (especially when holding down a flank without a leader). Such crews are too vulnerable to the Infantry part of a combined arms attack for my taste, however. Better be sure to have some FP handy to protect them, especially in CC. Even when

supported in CC, a crew is an easy target to pick on, and well worth the effort if possessing an important weapon. I'd rather give my SCW to a squad, even if it does violate 1940s tactical doctrine.

5) "Although rocket-propelled SCW may be fired from buildings without the risk of backblast by using Case C3 (C13.8), it is preferable to take wall advantage (B9.32) when possible."

Another great sleaze tactic outlawed by the Q&A in the 93b Debriefing. Consider instead using Opportunity Fire. Not only do you avoid the +2 for Case C3, but your CX counter will go away, too. Just be sure to survive DFPh unbroken. Per the same Debriefing, a Pinned unit cannot accept the C3 DRM in order to avoid Desperation penalties. A pinned Opportunity Firer, however, would just add the +2 for Case D and still avoid the backblast. Still, walls and entrenchments are the TEM of choice when manning a rocket-propelled SCW.

6) "Don't forget that Guns are acceptable SCW targets. Even if you don't knock out the gun, the SCW may affect the crew (C11.4)."

Mischon gives us another handy reminder, this time that you can fire HEAT at Guns. He also subtly prods us to consider again the whole C11 Guns As Targets procedure: Direct Hits vs. Near Misses, and the proper application of the gunshield DRM. Check out this section of the ASLRB again.

7) "Remember the difference between PIATs and the other SCW."

No backblast, SMC usage OK, not valid vs. lower targets in adjacent/same hex. Also, instead of an X#, it has B10 with R2. Even less potent than the BAZ44+, with a final TK# of 4 vs a King Tiger's side Hull armor (forget about the Turret). But in North Bank, give one to the Hero, direct with the 10-3, move into a building, and roll a 6 or less (with a Hull hit) at two hexes in AFPh to Deliberately Immobilize a King Tiger without risk of Backblast. One thing that goes unsaid by Mischon is that a BAZ or PSK requires two SMC or a hero to operate. A15.23 says "In addition, a hero may use a SW normally requiring two men to fire by adding +1 to its To Hit or IFT DR as appropriate (which is negated by the heroic DRM)." I read that to mean that you can add the heroic DRM to the TH of a SW that normally requires only one man to operate, like the PIAT and the ATR

(the latter being fairly clear in C13.25). This is further supported by the BAZ rule (C13.45) which says that a hero can use his DRM even when firing a BAZ along with another SMC. (Which is further ammo for the proposition [disputed by some, I have heard] that a hero can add his modifier when operating a MG with another SMC.)

8) “Lastly, some mention of Desperation (C13.81) is worthwhile. If you’re in a single-story building and about to be overrun, think twice before firing at that oncoming AFV. If you fire from within restrictive terrain with a rocket-propelled SCW, then you’d best plan on having everyone therein break. Ours always do.”

He then goes on to indicate that the post-overrun attack will always be a rear shot, and that you have a decent chance that the AFV will rubble the building upon entrance, thus avoiding the backblast effects for the defender. Another subtle Mischon paragraph, wherein he tries to say a lot with just a few words. One of the things he is NOT saying here, however, is that he and his friends routinely overrun units in buildings. I’d be very surprised if that were the case.

He does want to direct the reader to the benefits of non-CC Reaction Fire (D7.22), which always allows a rear shot. He does want to indicate that per B23.41, “Rubbling a Single Story House has no effect upon any occupants of the building, but if a rubbled building has an upper level, 24.11-121 applies”—i.e., you die. (Note that there is a 1-in-3 chance of rubbling a wooden Single Story House, a 1-in-6 chance of rubbling either a stone Single Story House or a wooden multi-level building, and no chance of rubbling a stone multi-level building.)

Most importantly, Dr. Jon does want to remind us that the backblast from firing Desperately affects everyone in the Location, not just the firer; that there is a 2/3 chance of facing an NMC or worse from that single colored die on the 1FP column (drm NA); but that the PIAT (being a spring loaded spigot launcher, not a “rocket-propelled SCW”) need not worry. What he should emphasize is that there is no backblast when firing from a Factory or a Rooftop. Of course, I can only think of one or two scenarios with both Factories and SCW in play. I’ve never seen a SCW on a Rooftop; if you could arrange to HIP one up there, it could come as a nasty surprise to your opponent.

He also wants to remind us that C13.8 says that these weapons “may not be fired from inside a vehicle, pillbox, sewer, or building [EXC: Factory and rooftop] without a

Desperation (C13.81) penalty.” Notice the absence of rubble from the forbidden terrain, indicating perhaps that Desperation does not apply in rubble. However, the sentence immediately following reads “[EXC: Fire from ground-level rubble or the ground floor of a building is allowed...but must apply the Case C3 TH DRM....]” Taken in conjunction with the Desperation rule (C13.81), I read this to mean that backblast *does* apply in rubble (just as if it were a building), contrary to what Mischon says. I wouldn’t think it was even worth mentioning as a possible rules ambiguity, if Mischon hadn’t indicated otherwise.

Notice, too, the absence of caves from the restrictive terrain listed above. This should come as no surprise, since Mischon’s article significantly pre-dates *Gung Ho!* As far as SCW are concerned, just treat caves like ground-level buildings (and Upper-Cliff caves like upper-level building locations) per G11.835.

‘Since these beauties have their own TH table, they don’t get the +2 modification to their Base TH# for firing SMOKE within 12 hexes.’

There are several other issues surrounding SCW, mostly concerning PF, that the good doctor could have mentioned but did not, no doubt for space reasons. Of most importance for the whole class of rocket-propelled SCW is the prohibition against firing at a “target two or more levels higher in an adjacent hex, or directly above them in the same hex,” the reverse of the PIAT restriction mentioned earlier. The front-loader has trouble shooting down, the rear-loaders have trouble shooting up.

The PF-only related issues include the Availability drms. Mischon mentions +1 for half-squads and +1 for non-AFV targets. There are also the +2 for SMC, the +1 for CX, and the period-based drm (+1 for pre-10/43 [i.e., for PFk] and -1 for 1945). He mentions the 16% (1-in-6) chance of Pinning (even if heroic or berserk) on an Availability dr, but does not mention the same odds of breaking (or taking Casualties) if already Pinned. He does not mention that a PF is a “one-shot weapon” and thus affects only one MMC per shot (barring Random Selection ties) and leaves no Residual FP. (Of course, we play that it affects only one—barring Random Selection—MMC or SMC at a time.) He does not discuss PF ranges or To Hit chances, perhaps thinking the issue was too obvious. PF have a range of 1 through

5/44, a range of 2 for 6/44-12/44, and a range of 3 in 1945. More than one person has gotten those dates confused, however, usually leading to some severe embarrassment. Don’t let it happen to you. And while the PF’s range increases over the years, its accuracy (unlike the BAZ) does not. Base 10 To Hit at zero hexes, decreasing by 2 for every hex of range. I guess it is pretty obvious. Remember, too, that the DYO cost of German Infantry depends on the current range of the PF; add one BPV per squad for each hex of range. That last hex of range seems a little expensive, given the To Hit probabilities, but it does help keep the IS-2m honest.

He does not mention the limited number of PF available per squad (1 in ‘43, 1 1/2 in ‘44, and 2 in ‘45). Although most Germans do not run out of PF, it pays to keep track of your opponents PF usage, especially when German Infantry is scarce or opposing Armor is abundant. I seldom see the PF Usage Track of the Scenario Aid Card being used, however. Maybe everyone is keeping track on a side record. Nor does he discuss at all Optional Usage, wherein the available PF are secretly allocated among the German units.

He does not mention the following sentence buried in the middle of C13.31: “A unit may not make a PF Check in Subsequent First Fire or FPF—regardless of whether it made a PF Check during First Fire.” No doubt, he did not want to confuse anyone into thinking that a squad cannot make a PF Check after firing its inherent FP in First Fire. That is, of course, not the case.

The sentence immediately following says “Provided that a squad has not yet fired its inherent FP, it can attempt to fire a second PF in the same phase even if its first attempt did not yield a shot, but that would constitute use of two SW and cause that squad to lose the use of its inherent FP that phase.” In light of that, what are we to make of the first quote? Only that a unit which has used all its firing capabilities, whether a half-squad that has fired anything or a squad that has fired twice (any combination of

(Continued on page 41, column 2)

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

Always move your non-acquired AFV first. This forces the defender to decide if it is worth removing the acquisition counter from the acquired target to fire at a “new” threat. If he chooses not to, move the new AFV in front of the acquired unit and go for Smoke!



CROSSFIRE

FINNISH: Robert Banozic

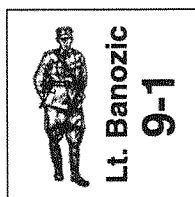
RUSSIAN: Mark Nixon

THE RAATE ROAD



FINNISH PERSPECTIVE

RATING:
55% FINNISH



ADVANTAGES: Morale, Self-Rally, Skis, A-T Weapons, Sniper

The biggest advantage enjoyed by the Finnish player in this scenario is, essentially, the Finns themselves. Morale 8 troops are tough enough to crack in most any scenario, but combined with their extraordinary self-rally capability these may be the best cardboard soldiers in ASL. It's also very nice that, in this Deep Snow scenario, these boys remembered to pack their gear for a little cross-country skiing. The 20L Lahtis (not the 20LL, per the errata in the '93b Annual) and the captured 37L are fine A-T weapons against the opposing armor, with a decent probability of dispatching any of the tanks that might present a target. And of course there's that SAN: 5, which should do some good work in this medium-large, 12 turn scenario. That's plenty of time for Mark to roll lots of fives.

DISADVANTAGES: Numbers, Initial Dispersal

Predictably, my excellent troops are heavily outnumbered by the Reds (but were it otherwise the Russkies wouldn't have any chance at all). Compounding the manpower shortage is the fact that I have a lot of territory to defend, and so my troops must begin the game dispersed. It will take a few turns to concentrate my forces so as to most effectively counter the Russian thrust(s).

FINNISH SET-UP

This is my favorite scenario from the '93a Annual. Unfortunately, because it makes extensive use of the winter rules and is rather lengthy, it probably will not see much tournament play. But I hope that ASLers won't be discouraged from giving this scenario a try in casual games, because it really does have a lot to offer as a unique and challenging situation for each side. And you've gotta love those Finns.

I have played this scenario four times in the playtest and once as published. I thought that the last playtest draft was evenly balanced, but nevertheless AH made a few additional modifications, all of which help the Finns. The changes added six '?', deleted two 447s, and shortened the scenario by a turn. Since I thought it was balanced before, I am now giving the Finns a slight edge.

I expect the Red Army to attack with its tanks and at least some of its infantry down board 5, so that the armor can take advantage of the plowed road. Those AFV represent a lot of potential exit VP, more than enough to win the game all by themselves. I don't think that Mark will want to risk Boggging these in the Deep Snow (D8.23). If all of the infantry isn't committed to board 5, the remainder will be moving through the board 32 woods. I don't see much chance of an attack on board 7; the frozen lake doesn't offer any cover to the infantry, and the tanks would have to risk falling through the Ice in addition to the Bog problem.

The Roadblocks are in place to ensure that neither of my forward groups on the roads can be Overrun on Turn 1. The 648s at 5N4 and N6 provide some opposition to rapid Russian moves up to and through the clearing around L5, while the Dummy stack at N5 might draw some fire away from the real guys. Two OB-provided ?s cover the squad at N4 in the hope of further confusing the enemy. My stacks at 5V8 and 32R9 both start on skis. There's no reason not to, since those boys won't be doing any

shooting on turn 1. All those ski counters will serve to confuse the Soviet spy satellite (no doubt a Sputnik prototype) as to the contents of my stacks. Most importantly, the skis will give these units excellent mobility to move to the action once Mark moves, in case I guessed wrong about his plans. In ASL, even the Finns have first-rate aerial reconnaissance.

One really sleazy thing that the Finns can do with the Trenches is to place them on the plowed road from 5N3-P5 where the tanks would have to drive over them, forcing Bog Checks (although a Trench in P5 would likely come in handy for the Russian infantry). If all four tanks come down the plowed road, that's 10 Bog Checks (assuming the use of Platoon Movement). By my calculations, there's a 44% chance that at least one tank will Bog. Still, Bog doesn't necessarily mean Immobilization, and I prefer to have the Trenches at 5T1-T4 where they serve as a highway for my units moving between boards 5 and 32 without having to fool around with skis. I've found that this is also a good place to discourage the Russkies from bounding out of the woods and through the Open Ground around 5R1. I also anticipate that some of my units falling back from the forward positions will take up residence in these Trenches. Oh, I almost forgot—the Trenches offer substantial protection from the OBA as well. But in five games I have yet to see the Russians land an FFE, so I can't say that I'm too

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

Making a Capture attempt against Conscripts in CC is an easy way to get a -1 DRM, as long as they don't wipe you out. Dead men capture no Prisoners.



worried about the Soviet artillery.

It took me a while to figure out a use for the Sledges. On skis my troops can move about as fast through the snow as the Sledges can, faster if stacked with a leader. But the Sledges can tow the Gun! So I have one in the ATG's hex in case Mark really fakes me out with his tank attack, and the other two in likely-looking locations for the Gun. Even if Mark suspects what I've done, he still won't know in which hex of the three the ATG is hiding. Because of the Captured Use and Extreme Winter penalties, that 37L has an effective breakdown number of X9, and I can't repair it. I have also yet to see the 37L kill a tank, it always malfunctioned first when it came into play at all. Fortunately the Lahtis are also a real threat to the tanks, and I will rely heavily on these (with their Base TK# of 6) to hold off the armor.

My main strategy for this scenario is to contain the Russians within the woods mass on board 5 for as long as possible, while falling back slowly through the board 32 woods if Mark also attacks there. When the tanks make their dash to the exits my 37L will be waiting for them, and ideally the Lahtis will still be around too. My Sniper should take a toll, Booby Traps should hurt a few guys, and many of Mark's troops will soon be reduced to Conscripts, slowing their progress in difficult terrain.

I like my chances in this scenario, but Mark is a worthy opponent and I know that he would give me a good game in an actual match.

FINNISH SET-UP

Board 7:

DD1/6 228/37L (HIP, Bore Sight: 5CC8)
 DD1/4 Sledge
 M2 Sniper

Board 5:

04/6 Roadblock (HIP)
 04 9-0, 2x648, 228/Lahti
 N4 648, 2x?
 N5 3x?
 N6 648, ?
 V8 9-1, 648/HMG, 648/MMG, 228/Lahti
 (all on Skis; MGs Bore Sight: 5P5)

CC6/4 Sledge

T1 Trench (HIP)
 T2 Trench (HIP)
 T3 Trench (HIP)
 T4 Trench (HIP)

Board 32:

N4/6 Roadblock (HIP)
 N4 8-0, 2x648, 648/LMG
 R9 648/LMG (on Skis)
 EE10/4 Sledge

NOTE: All unconcealed units gain Concealment after set-up. All units not on skis are portaging skis (EXC: 37L crew).

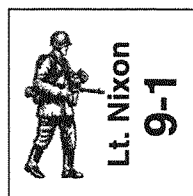
RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE

RATING:
 60% Russian

ADVANTAGES:

Leadership, Number of Squads, AFV, Time

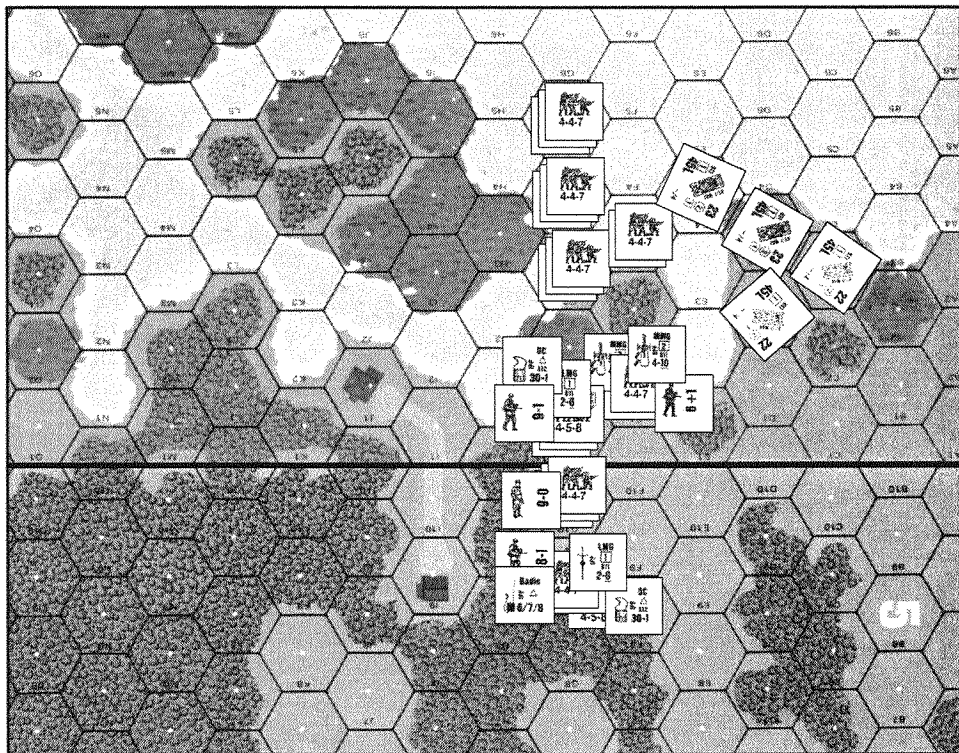
While it does seem odd to list Leadership as a Russian advantage in any scenario prior to about 1944, my two -1 DRM leaders and the 9-0 Commissar I will gladly take to replace that 8-0 do seem a lot better than the Finn offering. It is not a commanding quantity of leaders for the Russian, but better quality which shines here. My big strength slogs forward in the boots of those 22 squads. I will look for chances to trade squads with the enemy, throwing numbers on him at every opportunity. The four tanks are not a big threat to the enemy infantry but are a threat to run off the west edge of board 5 for a victory, so the Finns will have to try to stop them. The passage of time will naturally work against the attacker but with 13 turns available and only 27 hexes to traverse my Russians can exit by averaging a mere 2 hexes a turn (plus a wee bit). After my opening turn of free westward movement I will need to average less than 2 hexes per turn with the infantry and of course the tanks could (could!) exit in just a few short turns. This is an "Assault Move and Advance" pace which will allow plenty of time to grind



away at the enemy with superior firepower. Demos and OBA are nice but of uncertain value here.

DISADVANTAGES: Deep Snow & Extreme Winter, Thin Ice, ELR

There are many Finnish advantages which could be listed here as my disadvantages, but Herr Banozic will surely deal with those. I will limit my whining to the niceties of the weather which slow my movement (E3.733 & 3.7331), may bog my tanks (E3.7332), will surely malfunction my weapons (E3.741), could reduce my troops (E3.742), and could sink a tank (B21.6 & 6.42). Tossing a malfunction # of 11 onto the heap of limitations already on my Radio (6 Contact #, 6B-2R OBA deck, +1 DRM for Deep Snow [E3.731] and general problems of an attacker needing to utilize a leader to urge his troops forward while also trying to call in OBA) and I wonder whether the Radio will see any use at all. A low ELR often seems to be a worse problem than reality ever proves it to be and I am not terribly worried about it here. However, because this is a long scenario, there is more time for the limitations of ELR failure to affect the performance of my troops than would be the case in a short or "tournament" length encounter where ELR is, after all, almost never a substantial problem. My boys will take some hits but I expect them to keep pushing forward even as Conscripts. It's that second ELR failure which would hurt!



Russian setup at game start. After setup all units are Concealed.

CONVEYING ITS MEANING

by Perry Cocke

"Double Time may not be used by a unit that will mount, ride, or dismount any form of conveyance during that Player Turn...."

So begins the last sentence of A4.5. A question arose in connection with this issue's Crossfire scenario, "The Raate Road." Can you Double Time on Skis? (A similar question surrounds the use of the leader Bonus [4.12].) The answer came back: Not if Skis are a "form of conveyance."

But what constitutes a "form of conveyance?" A quick trip to our handy Index revealed...nothing. Once again, the going-on-10-year-old Index does not define an important term. Well, maybe we don't need the ASLRB to define for us what a conveyance is. Perhaps Webster's could do that: "means or way of conveying; esp., a vehicle." No duh, Webster. Well, then we checked "convey": "to bear from one place to another; carry, transport." Not much clearer. All in all, then, we seem to be talking about a form of a means of bearing, carrying, or transporting from one place to another, especially a form of vehicle. OK, maybe the dictionary isn't our salvation. It does give a sense of one thing carrying another thing, but just what does that mean for us? We retreated back to the familiar confines of the ASLRB.

To begin with, only Infantry can Double Time. That simplifies things. Second, lots of us players say a unit will "go CX" when we mean it will use Double Time (which then causes it to become CX). Lots of things can cause a unit to become CX without it using Double Time, like Galloping in a Wagon. Then we reviewed A4.11. Good Order MMC have four MF, Good Order SMC have six MF, wounded SMC and Inexperienced MMC have three MF, and *all* of these have four MF in any Player Turn in which they mount, ride, or dismount a form of conveyance.

Then we asked ourselves "What *might* qualify as a conveyance?" Vehicles (including LC), Motorcycles, Boats, Wagons/Sledges, Horses, Bicycles, and Skis spring to mind. Gliders maybe, but we don't have to worry about them: they don't really move, and nothing (dis)mounts to/from them. Nothing else seems close.

If anything is a conveyance, a vehicle is, and D6.4 and D6.5 specifically state that only 4 MF are available when (un)loading to/from a vehicle. Motorcycles are "vehicular" and also specifically restrict Infantry to the basic 4 MF when (un)loading (D15.41). Boats are considered vehicles when in the water and restrict passengers to the basic 4 MF (E5.21), and so are also a form of conveyance.

A wagon "is considered vehicular in nature except that it expends MF rather than MP..." (D12.1) and "provides transport services in the same manner as a truck (D6.7)" (D12.2), so it is certainly a conveyance. While Horses become CX when Cavalry Gallops, Infantry are again restricted to the basic 4 MF when (dis)mounting a Horse counter (D13.31), thus making Horses a form of conveyance, too.

Bicycles generally use Motorcycle rules except (among other things) "they have four MF (as per A4.11-12) and use Infantry—not vehicular—movement" and there is no cost to mount/dismount one. The inclusion of A4.12 is important here because that is the rule that gives a Good Order MMC a two MF bonus for moving with a leader, provided it "does not expend any of its MF to mount, ride, or dismount any form of conveyance." If a Bicycle were a form of conveyance, how could one utilize A4.12? Therefore, a Bicycle is *not* a form of conveyance.

If a Bicycle is not a form of conveyance, it stands to reason that Skis are not either. Skiing—much like Bicycling—is "subject to all the pertinent rules" of Infantry movement, except as amended by E4.3—which says nothing about being restricted to four MF. On the other hand, all the forms of conveyance mentioned above (except for Wagons) do specifically mention the 4 MF restriction. And while you can switch from Ski mode to foot mode and back again, you do not mount/dismount Skis. Best as we can tell, Bicycles and Skis are not forms of conveyance, while all the others are.

What do Bicycles and Skis have in common, in contrast to the forms of conveyance? One is tempted to say they involve the exercise of human muscle power, whereas the others do not. That would be mostly correct, but most Boats are paddled by humans, too. Perhaps Webster's is the best answer after all. More so than Skis or Bicycles, Boats (even if human-propelled) *carry* people from one place to another. Bicycles and Skis can be seen as means for people to move themselves, rather than to be carried or transported. If Bicyclists and Skiers try harder, they can move faster and become tired. They can, at the cost of becoming CX, Double Time.

We're fairly comfortable with this conclusion, in part because we had an opportunity at the Winter Offensive to discuss the issue with many of the Top Guns. On the other hand, we realize this is not the final word. If the powers that be were to declare that Bicycles and Skis *are* forms of conveyance, very little in the ASLRB would be contradicted. (Just the reference to A4.12 in the Bicycle rules, really.) A true definition of conveyance would be a valuable entry in an updated Index, but there are more important priorities for a new official Index—like correcting what is already in there and adding the new chapters. We salute the efforts of those (like Tom Huntington of Internet fame) who are trying to compile an updated Index to include chapters E, F, and G, but the effort won't be complete until some corrections are made and new definitions are added.

That can't effectively happen anytime soon without the backing of TAHGC. How about it TAHGC? Is the new Index waiting for the Minor Guns and Vehicles first? Or is it just waiting?

RUSSIAN SET-UP

5G9	8-1/Radio, 2x447/LMG, 458/DC
5G10	9-0, 3x447
7G1	9-1, 3x458/LMG/DC
7G3	3x447
7G4	3x447
7G5	3x447
7F1	6+1, 2x447/MMG
7F3	2x447
7E4/2	BT-7
7D2	BT-5 (bypass-4/vca-3)
7D3/2	BT-7
7C3/2	BT-5
5Q5	SNIPER

NOTE: After setup all Russian infantry are Concealed.

ADDITIONAL FINNISH COMMENTS

Having now seen the Russian setup, I am even more encouraged about my prospects. While Mark has caught me off guard with his plan to strike on board 7 and northern board 5, in my view this is such a bad place to attack that I don't see how my surprise yields any advantage. Mark has assumed the risk of the 16.7% chance that the BT-7 at 7E4 will fall through the Ice, but if it does his other tanks are so far back and behind such dense terrain as to be almost out of the game. The BT-5s could risk the Ice again, but the remaining BT-7 would then be on its own. So I think that their only real choices at that point would be VBM down the northern edge of the woods mass, crashing through woods where necessary (with the attendant risk of Bog), or to make for the plowed road—and the roadblock(s) Mark must be expecting. But his infantry is not well placed to move up to clear any such obstacles, and by the time they are able to do so I will have consolidated my own defense—while the Russians are a tank short. In brief, I think that in testing the Ice the Russians have very nearly conceded victory 16.7% of the time. Regardless, I wouldn't be too worried about the tanks on the Ice even if Tonya Harding was in command. The Deep Snow means that they must risk Bog in every MPH in which they attempt to move. A Final Secret Bog Check DR of 9 (for the BT-7s) or 10 (for the BT-5s) means that the tank (or possibly more than one, determined by Random Selection if using Platoon Movement) will Bog if it moves a number of hexes equal to a Secret dr. Assuming that they move 6 hexes per MPH—and I expect these fast tanks to be on the move—that translates into a 62% chance that at least one BT-7 will Bog in three tries, 42% for the BT-5s. And that's in Open Ground. Any left behind will have to contend with Radioless TC (D14.23) even before attempting to un-Bog, in addition to the D2.51 Mechanical Reliability problems that I'm sure Mark will also mention.

In short, I don't expect those tanks to get very far. For the ones that do clear the various natural and technological hurdles in the early going, however, I will be moving the 9-0 and Lahti crew from 5O4 along the plowed road (with Road Bonus, E3.733) to 5T8 on turn 1, just in case any tanks should drive up to 7O1 or O2 on turn 2. The Lahti crew at 5V8 will be skiing CX to 7Z1 on turn 1, with the idea of Advancing into BB4 on Turn 2 (via the lake from AA2-CC4, thus picking up the E4.31 2 MF downhill bonus in the MPH) to cover the lake and central board 7 land hexes. (Note that with Winter Camouflage, my units can Assault Move/Advance into Open Ground without losing Concealment.) And, of course, there is the 37L, which will stay put as long as Mark's armor is threatening to move toward the plowed road. But if it becomes apparent that the tanks (the ones still mobile) might make a run straight down the lake, I can try to push the Gun into firing position, probably at 7CC2. If the situation is urgent I will accept a Low Ammo counter to increase my chances (C10.3); since I will likely need a 5 or less to hit a tank moving down the lake across the CC hexrow anyhow, the extra X# penalty is almost irrelevant. Meanwhile, my own infantry will be moving to counter Mark's. I expect the big enemy stack at 7G1 to CX and end Turn 1 in 7M1 or M2, although any such move would at least let me know that the MMG aren't there. Accordingly, the 9-1 and both squads and HMG/MMG at 5V8 will end turn 1 in 5S10, Concealed and Skis off (E4.6). The squad at 5N6 and Dummies at N5 should be in hexes like O9 and O8, respectively, and the squad at N4 should finish at N7 or O7. Throughout the struggle in the woods mass I will endeavor to keep my units at least three hexes away from any Russians at the end of each turn, so that Mark will only be able get ADJACENT to my units in the MPH by using non-Assault Movement. I am not sure whether the Russians at 5G9 will be moving toward central board 5 or will concentrate on clearing the

northern edge of the woods, but my squads at 5O4 have the job of getting in their way.

As my units in the woods mass shift toward its northern edge to block the Russians, I expect my 9-1 and MG teams to soon fall back to 7U2, so as to cover both the lake 'U' hexrow and the land hexes of central board 7. A MG could even be stationed in 7U3 to place a Fire Lane should Mark's troops insist on crossing the lake en masse, but I think this unlikely. Any infantry which break in the western lake area will be in deep water indeed. Units advancing on the lake may have a few turns of easy movement, but that isn't going to matter very much when they eventually have to expose themselves, in the open, to my fire. And there just isn't much cover to be found for the Russians on board 7.

While all this is going on, my board 32 units will be hustling toward the sound of gunfire. The squad at R9 started on skis, and so could be in action on board 5 after Turn 2. The stack at N4 will strap on its skis and can be anywhere I need it by the end of Turn 4. That's plenty quick in a 12 turn scenario. My immediate thought is to detail the 8-0 and at least a couple of the squads to the 7Y3 peninsula if Mark should continue his march across the lake, and so protect the Lahti crew I should have there. But this stack is flexible enough to change directions quickly should the Russian attack develop differently. The sledges will be moved off out of the way so as to prevent them from being nationalized by some commissar just in time to haul frost-bitten conscripts off the edge of the board.

RUSSIAN ATTACK

I like the idea of using the frozen lake as a super highway and so start one of my "heavy" tanks on the ice. After setup it must roll to see whether it remains on the ice or crashes through it to the bottom, but at least I will know immediately whether I can move onto the lake with the other three tanks or make other plans. A DR

of 10 or greater loses a tank but a DR of 9 or less allows all four tanks access to this frozen avenue westward. Of course the only way this route will work is if the infantry can move along with the AFV and therein lies the true appeal of this lane of attack. I want to work the terrain along the juncture of boards 5 and 7. The large woods mass on board 5 shields my left flank as I get to the clearing around 7Q1 where I expect a firefight with the Finns. My right flank will be tanks and 447s moving on the ice while the bulk of squads push their way along the tree line towards 5S8.

The enemy are much more nimble and I don't expect to force my way to a win without having to deal with them all. That large concentration at 5V8 will deploy in my front and the four stacks in the center of board 5 will move to reinforce there as well as move onto my flank. I expect the battle to be fought and decided within a five hex radius of 7Q1. The Finns must stop me there for once I attain the gully at 5W9 I will have easy movement to the western board edge.

Initial movements are straightforward. The tall stack in 7G1 moves CX to 7L1 and Advances one 458 with LMG to 7M2 while the rest go to 7M1. My 5G9 platoon also moves CX to 5K9 and Advances two squads with the 8-1 to 5L8. One squad remains in 5K9 on guard duty. The Commissar leads his men CX to 5K10 after which they Advance to 5L9. Coi. Rexikov (6+1) lashes the MMG boys into 7I1 and then to 5J10. They will eventually haul these monsters to the battle and get a chance to use them, although their influence on the action might be curtailed by the Extreme Winter malfunction number of 10. Eleven squads on the ice all slip and slide singly CX and end in 7L3, L4, L5 and K3. They are exposed out there, but the only enemy to harm them would have to be the 37L HIP in 7O3 and I really don't expect it there. My 9-1 lads in 7M1 ought to prevent any Finns from moving into 7P2, although I don't anticipate the enemy desiring that location either. Finally, my tanks move forward cautiously to form an in-Motion line from 7K3 to 7H1. If the ATG is in 7O3 I won't be parking them in its LOF.

Here, then, is a 22 squad wedge of Russian aggression moving like they mean to exit in half the allotted game turns. The Finns will react, however, and I expect the layout of the terrain I have selected to bring a firefight at ranges from 1 to 6 hexes. I will look for chances to mangle small pockets of Finns and will certainly try to bring in the OBA and to use the Demos, but most of the fighting will be squad and MG fire. The tanks may not be called upon to fight although there will be no hesitation should it develop they are needed or a worthy opportunity arises for them. I expect the fight for the 7Q1 region I have defined to last about six or seven turns, and then we will be on to the end game (Turns 9-13) in which the Russians make their



Finnish ski troops watch over the road.

push for an exit past the Finn remnants. The success/failure of the tanks to avoid enemy fire and immobilization will largely influence the nature of the dash to exit.

FINNISH RESPONSE

Having now reviewed the preliminary Russian battle plan in some detail, the only new surprise (i.e., apart from my astonishment at the choice to attack along the board 5/7 junction in general) is in the lackadaisical pace of the advance of the enemy armor. When I calculated the probabilities of seeing some Deep Snow Bogging (above), my benchmark of three Secret Bog Check DRs was not chosen arbitrarily. Three tries is the minimum risk if the armor should race all-out across the lake (assuming the Ice holds), and I suspected that Mark might try this ploy in an effort to exit his armor early, before the Finns can completely redeploy, and perhaps win the game outright on Turn 3 if he's really lucky. Instead the tanks seem intent on multiplying their Bog chances, moving forward quickly enough to guarantee a Bog with bad luck, but not fast enough to minimize their Bog risk. Apparently more of this sort of thing is in store for the remainder of the game if Mark sticks to his plan to have the infantry "move along with the AFV." I am sure that the reader can appreciate how all the additional Secret Bog Check DRs must adversely affect the chances for exiting tanks even without a boring recitation of the probabilities.

Mark's infantry advances pretty much as I expected, so my own plans do not change. If Mark uses only Assault Movement and/or Advance through the woods mass, I will be content to hold him to that as I conduct a non-fighting withdrawal westward until the Russians must emerge into the open area of western board 5. If any of my units are rushed with non-Assault Movement at any time, the Russian troops will find themselves running into a curtain of First Fire, Subsequent Fire, FPF, Residual FP shots ADJACENT to my units, which should cause some damage. With five or perhaps even six squads (if one peels off from the stack which started at 32N4) fighting/withdrawing in the woods mass I don't see much

hope for a Russian breakthrough. Furthermore, I will not hesitate to voluntarily break and rout any Finns when necessary to avoid CC. Thus, I think that Mark will rarely get any chances to trade squads, and my troops' self-starting abilities make the voluntary break/rout a very practical escape tactic.

My HMG/MMG teams will hold fast (I hope) at 5S10 until at least turn 3 to pour fire onto the Russians attempting to force the northern woods edge. With up to 24 FP ROF and Spraying Fire guided by the 9-1, this stack could largely disrupt the Russian advance all by itself, but I will try to get it to 7U2 in time to intercept any enemy squads which might still be advancing blithely across the lake—toward the Finns now relocated to the 7Y3 peninsula. These should be able to retain concealment while edging into better firing positions facing east, particularly for that Lahti crew which will be waiting for a tank to show itself. There will probably be no need to move the ATG for some time, if at all, since it seems that the tanks are in no hurry. As long as the Gun retains HIP, Mark will have to be concerned about its whereabouts, which my Sledge placements apparently did not give away to the enemy after all.

I foresee the Russian infantry being ground to a pulp as it moves into a wall of tough units with good FP in defensible terrain. While many broken Russian squads will be struggling to rally back as Conscripts, Finns that break likely will soon be back in action at full strength. The average 2 hex per turn advance that the Russians need to exit sounds fair enough, but the reality is that most units will have turns when they don't advance at all (because they're broken) or actually move backwards (routing). If the Russians do take 6 or 7 turns to get past the 7Q1 area the game will essentially be over. As I have indicated above, I have no intention of allowing my units to be annihilated in a stagnant shoot-out, but intend to be pulling them ever westward, and so force the Reds to move into my fire. That includes movement through the Woods/Gully line from 5S8 west. And I don't see any "easy movement" for the Russians through the Gully, at 2 1/2 MF per hex, or 4 MF in the Gully-Woods. This will be a big problem for what is likely to be a largely leaderless mass of Conscripts in the latter stages of the game. If any OBA, does show up all bets are off, as Mark might then blow a hole in my defenses that his troops could run through. But as even Mark does not place much faith in this, I think the safe bet is on the Finns.

Well, I can't very well be as critical of the Russian attack as I have been here without outlining my own strategy for the Red Army. I have never seen a Russian concentration on board 5 actually work, as it seems they invariably leave the woods too battered and bloodied to force their way through the relatively open area against the surviving Finns which have pulled back (as I expect will happen here).

What I have seen succeed for the Russians, and what I recommend, is that a force of seven to eight 447s attack on board 5 with the 9-1, 6+1, both MMG, and Radio, with the primary mission of clearing any Roadblocks so that the tanks can eventually make a one or two turn dash down the plowed road to exit. The remaining Russians, with both Commissars (also trading the 8-1 for a 10-0) move through board 32. This forces the Finns to divide their strength, because the Lahti crews which will be waiting for the tanks on board 5 will need some protection from the Russian squads that finish their roadblock clearing duties. Will 5-6 Finnish squads (probably a couple less for the first several turns) on board 32 be able to stop 14 to 15 Commissar-led, DC-throwing Russian squads charging through the woods? Maybe. But I think those Russkies have a better chance of breaking through there than they do trudging across the Deep Snow-covered lake. And if just one or two of the tanks make it down the plowed road, the VP burden imposed on the board 32 attackers is very tolerable.

I mean really, would *you* want to march across that stupid lake?

RUSSIAN RESPONSE

That last full paragraph of the Finn Response seems mostly reasonable to me; at least I agree that a Russian attack on board 32 and/or up the board 5 road could be effective. This is, in fact, one reason I rate the scenario 60% Russian for they can make their move anywhere they like, a point Robert himself acknowledges in a way by mentioning "dispersal" in the remarkably brief "Finnish Disadvantages" section. Nevertheless, while I agree victory is attainable elsewhere on this battlefield, I do still believe the 7Q1 area is the best spot to attack. For one thing my assault on the Finn center will benefit greatly from infantry I have moved out onto Lake Stupid while selectively disregarding enemy preparations for a push further to the west across that lake.

Driving the tanks up that Plowed Road might seem the sane way to go and is probably the avenue most players will select, but as I see it that merely serves to identify a potential opportunity for me to take advantage of my opponent's expectations. In other words, if the enemy anticipate a surge up the Plowed Road, can their plans be disrupted by an effective attack elsewhere? Maybe yes and maybe no, but rather than plug-in the expected response I am willing to try the unforeseen. The only reason that Plowed Road looks so inviting is because it is the easiest avenue for the armor, but I am planning to fight an infantry battle and am not willing to hamper the efforts of my stout 197th Assault Regiment by tying them down to Roadblock Removal chores which would probably lead them right into a Finn trap.

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

SMOKE, SMOKE, SMOKE. At the start of every game, think about what SMOKE capability you have. At the start of every PFPh, and at the start of every MPh, always consider what SMOKE can do for you.



Roadblock Removal itself is not all that difficult (three squads and a -1 leader uninterrupted can make a short job of it), but I see a much better place to the north for this infantry assault. Because I plan to win with my infantry, I am not entering this battle actually expecting to need to exit any tanks (but don't be mislead, of course I will try to exit them). Indeed, any game in which the Russian exits one or two tanks ought to bring an overwhelming Russian victory.

In order for the tanks to exit I must either be lucky enough to run them past an active defense (which is a legitimate tactic but one I will not try except as a "last throw") or else first knock out the ATG and enemy SW with my infantry. Once that is accomplished the infantry should be able to exit on their own for a win. Of course, I will do my best to get the tanks off-board, but this is going to be an infantry battle, not a tank action. My squads will do the fighting and I expect to come out on top with enough time and strength remaining to exit 16 infantry CVP for a win. Unless the enemy offer unexpected opportunities for these tanks to mangle broken units or maybe an isolated squad with no SW, my tanks will lurk in the rear and allow supporting infantry of the 197th Assault Regiment to pave their way back onto the Plowed Road at 5Y10. Near the end of the game after the ATG and enemy SW have been suppressed I will have the tanks poised for a run offboard if needed. I am not concerned about Bogs and believe a little demonstration of the surprising mobility of Snow Platoons will be time better spent than a dry account of the mundane procedure for Roadblock removal on that woods road.

It seems Comrade Banozic was unduly concerned by my move onto Lake Stupid. Perhaps something I wrote distorted the point as my intentions there are not to drive the length of board 7 (I never wrote that), but to force a confrontation in the 7Q1 area (which I *did* write). Of course, he is correct to react to the threat of strong forces marching on the Ice and commit some of his strength to the 7Y3 peninsula. Had he not reacted to this move you can be sure my infantry would have pressed this flanking move along the edge of the shore as far as he allowed, keeping in mind exit victory requires they all eventually sweep back onto board 5 no matter what. Back at the main assault, however, my troops sweep up the shoreline crest towards their 7Q1 rendezvous and those Finns moving toward the peninsula can be expected to redirect their defensive posture to match the flow of my offensive.

My initial target is the stack at 5S10, which we are in agreement is a mighty nice pile of firepower. However, this is the extent of the defense in the area initially and all these Finns happen to be conveniently loaded into one target location. This MG firebase is about to be approached by a ring of mostly concealed Russians which will eventually stretch from

5R8 to 7R1. True, the Finns have 24 firepower here but it is only 12 vs. concealed targets and not even that much vs. all my "Joes" due to range; how many of my squads will *not* be firing back? The enemy has mentioned "defensible terrain" but I see only +1 TEM for woods which happens to be TEM I hold as well and his 8 morale does not overawe my morale 7 and 8 troops. No Finns will beat me into 7R1 even if they want and also would experience ski and PP problems dealing with buildings. How many 4 (+1) and 6 (+1) attacks can these Finns survive? A single effective attack is all it will take to knock out this single defensive position. There are, after all, only two 648s manning those MG and hoping to face down something on the order of 10 Russian squads professionally deployed one squad per Location, wielding equivalent MG firepower and with another 12 squads pushing up behind and around both flanks. My troops are not ski-encumbered and so will not hesitate to enter buildings; Russians will be into 7R1 soon and threaten to sneak in behind 5S10

'I like my chances in this scenario, but Mark is a worthy opponent and I know he would give me a good game in an actual match.'

via 7U1. I can tell you how this showdown will end!

If the battle for the board 5 central woods does not bring mass slaughter on both sides it will be because the Finns pull out and allow an unopposed Russian advance; we will not see only Russians slaughtered while the Finns skip merrily away unscathed, no matter how much the enemy commander would like us to believe the leaflets issued by his Propaganda Department; he just cannot have the best of both worlds. What is particularly baffling about reading this in the Finn coverage is that it is this very same attack on board 32 which the enemy admits just "might work." Well, no matter whether the Finns stand and fight or run at this point, the Russians will be either trading squads or freely advancing westward. Once the Finns have either been wiped-out or pushed far enough to the west and south they will find themselves forced out of the woods and that is when the game really opens up. When these Finns leave the central woods they will find themselves in the open facing Russians still in the woods. Caught in the open between the central woods and the western board edge the defense in this locale will fall apart. We will not be treated to a Russian problem of trying to move through a MF-heavy Gully at this point but to a Finn problem of trying to stand tall out

in the open and scattered cover of western board 5. If the Finns attempt to defend from the Gully, they are in the open to fire along it, but if they do not defend the Gully the Russians can move through it fast enough at their familiar Assault Move and Advance pace. Far from a "Leaderless mass of Conscripts" the Russians at this point will still be in fine ELR health and directed by robust Leaders still issuing orders from the rear where they have spent the game shielded from enemy infantry and providing Rally support for Russian broken units. Maybe the Finn Sniper could get to these Leaders but the only way enemy infantry could harm them would be to go over to a counterattack, and I just don't see that happening.

This is why I expect the Finns to fight for that 7Q1 to 7AA1 region; it is a better area to defend than the open area to the west and south. Unfortunately for the Finns, 7Q1 and environs offer a very interesting geography of woods and open lanes which allow a multitude of shots from both the east and the tree line to the south, while also remaining exposed to swarms of Russians sweeping up from the shores of Lake Stupid in the north. This is specifically why I have chosen this area to fight. If the Finns yield the 7Q1-7AA1 region they will be left trying to defend open spaces to the west and south, yet if they make a stand near 7Q1 the Russians can open up on them from so many locations within 1 to 6 hexes that superior Russian firepower and squad numbers will win the day. This is the best terrain on these three boards for Russian attributes to be brought into focus and decide the battle. Those twin east-west rows of wood lines running through this region are excellent for the attack because anywhere the defense breaks down within these woods will free movement along one open lane or the other, screened from other Good Order defenders by the rows of trees. Likewise, yet another avenue westward is provided by the crest-line of the lake shore; there may yet be infantry running westward on the Ice if the defense relaxes its guard there.

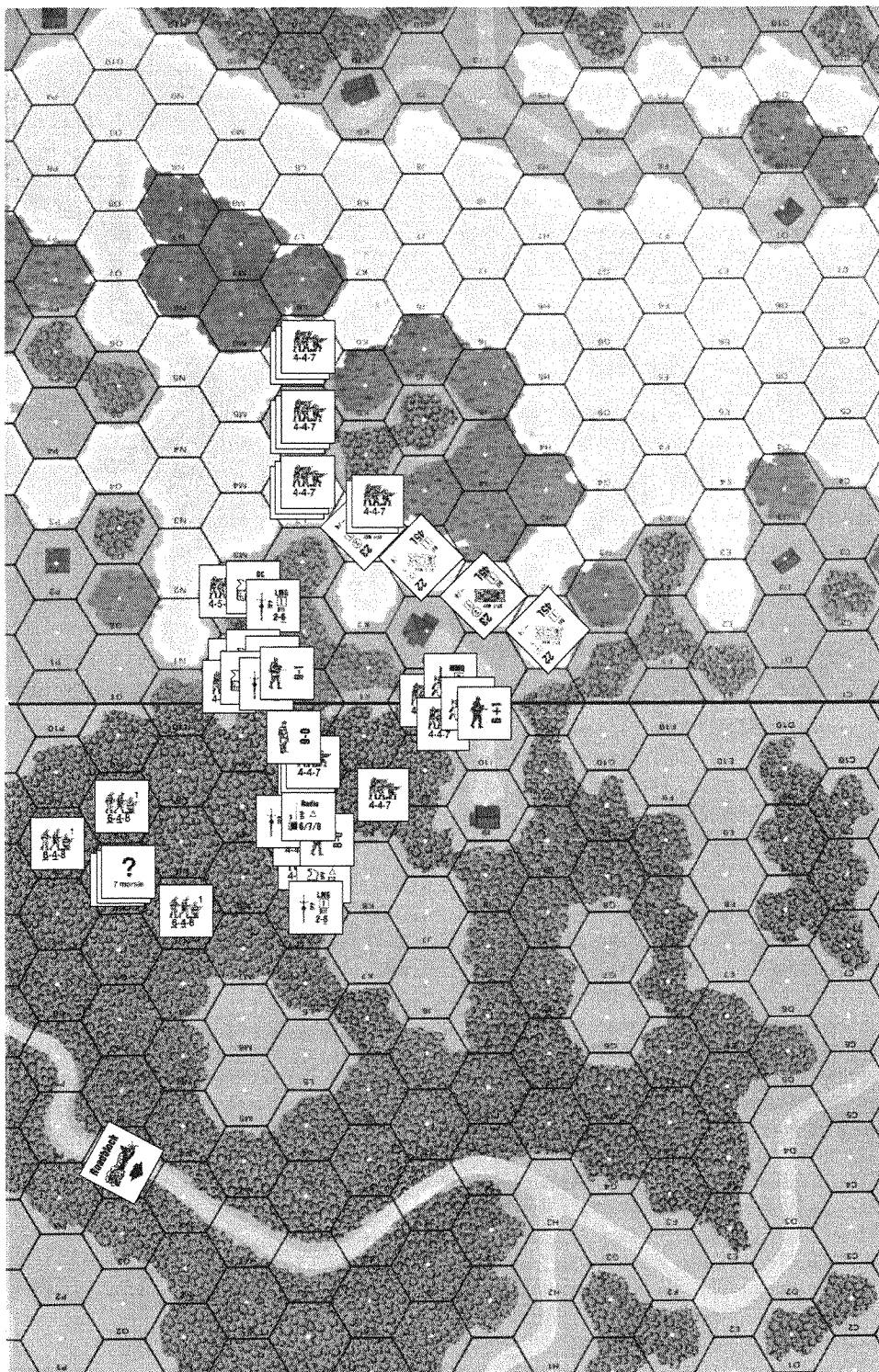
Another big advantage the broken terrain in this area provides attacking Russians is LOS into enemy rear areas, enabling the attacker to repeatedly force DM status on broken Finn units while my own broken have Routed away from the battle into woods cover. This constant harassing of the broken enemy will evolve as a key theme of the battle while Russians relentlessly push toward the Finn broken and away from their own. Had the attack kicked off on board 32 the Finns would normally be able to Rout their broken behind a screen of woods and find time to Rally without DM status; it adds up to a big difference in a long scenario.

Everyone seems in agreement on the prospect of Russian OBA activity, but of course everyone also expects me to try to bring it in if at all possible. I would like to eventually haul my

radio into a position such as 7AA1, advancing concealed with it to the tree line. Even if the Finns are not able to stop my radio man with firepower, at that point he must still roll a 6 Radio Contact (not 5 as erroneously depicted on the scenario card), draw a Black card from a 6B-2R deck, and land a SR somewhere in LOS. This much ought to happen on the first try about 3 out of 10 times and when it works there will be Finns setting cross-country ski records to duck this AR. However, I will need to roll yet another Radio Contact in the next player turn (a 7 to Maintain this time) and then try to direct an FFE onto a Known target who might have been clumsy enough to fall out of his skis and not escape this telegraphed move. Without even worrying about hitting a target, my chances to actually roll Radio Contact twice in a row and draw a Black card to land an FFE right off the bat like this are a mere 18%.

While we can be sure the appearance of a Russian SR roaming around western board 5 would be a very troublesome sight for the Finns (even Harassing Fire could do wonders), the problems involved in just getting to that point are intimidating. Faced with a choice between trying for OBA or lending Leader Bonus to move more infantry forward or staying in the rear to Rally someone, my Leader will almost always choose one of the latter two. By the way, I gave the radio to my 8-1 Leader because if it ever actually comes down to trying to bring in an FFE he will have a better chance shrugging off any Finn retaliatory fire than the 6+1 guy. This same logic might turn the Radio over to my 9-1 or 9-0 except that if a breakthrough situation develops they will be the ones leading that surge; they are not likely to have time to fool with the Radio. Given better Radio Contact chances I would not hesitate exchanging that 8-1 for a 10-0 Commissar with the express purpose of operating the Radio with a 10 morale man, but that situation belongs to some other scenario.

I believe the enemy commander has underestimated Russian strength and minimized his own weaknesses. It is understandable that the Finns want to hurt Russians while avoiding casualties of their own, but wanting it does not count for much; there does not seem to be any way to dodge a fight with 13 Russian movement Phases in the game. Oh, I suppose the Russian might throw away the game by charging stacks of squads blindly into heavy Finn firepower or trying a Human Wave across open ground, and probably about 4 times out of 10 the Finn will win the luck contest or outplay his Russian opponent by enough margin to score a victory. However, in most games (I am saying 60%) those Finn squads will start to fall under the weight of this Russian attack and the



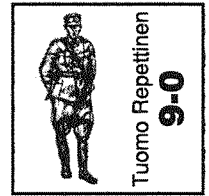
Situation after end of Finnish Turn 1 (assuming no AFV crash through the Ice). All units are Concealed. All Russian Infantry are CX, while all Russian tanks are in Motion.

defense will begin to disintegrate. Just what the Finns will do with their broken squads (especially once pushed out of the central forest of board 5) will be a very large problem. Self-rally capability is an outstanding power to wield but when these Finns fail to Rally themselves from DM status they will be history and my Russians will gladly Recover their discarded SW and reindoctrinate the captured ammo to seek out some deserving Finn targets. Meanwhile my own broken will be safe to Rally

behind my lines while their Good Order comrades sweep the enemy further on to the west.

[We think this one favors the Russian a bit, though nowhere near as much as it did in the playtest. The Finns had it even rougher then, especially before the "forward rout" was outlawed. Imagine elite Russians stacked with a Commissar first Moving and then Routing through the woods. Who needs Skis?—Eds.]

DEAD OF SUMMER



by Tom Repetti

August 1998. Parking lot of Caesar's Palace. Outdoor arena under the glaring lights in the sweltering heat. Bud Light North American ASL Championships. ASL Bowl III. ESPN is here, celebs are here, scalpers are here. Paparazzi in choppers circle overhead. I am defending my title.

Feeling good this time around. Last year called a fluke by many—hey, triple snakes happen, you know? This year different. BAM, I take Avaloncon. POW, Oktoberfest. WHAM, ASL Open. Almost the Grand Slam, except a stomach virus keeps me out of Winter Offensive. I have Stefan look into possible spoilage of my entourage's shrimp puffs through an alleged connection to the Jersey Mob, but nothing can be proven. Damn.

We make the kid wait a good long time before our entrance. Technical difficulties. What's he gonna do? Finally the long jog under the grandstand and out into the mayhem of the moment. Lawyers, hookers, politicians, everybody screaming their heads off trying to get a piece of the action as we head up to the ring. Nobody lays a hand on me, of course—the local Hell's Angels know what they get paid for.

Finally we make it to the ring, and I dance around a little to shake off some energy. Damn Vinnie for putting these stupid tassels on my shorts—they keep tickling the back of my legs like some midget tapping me from behind asking what time it is. I look over to Carlos to see if he'll cut them off but he's already found a microphone and a camera to talk to, so no help there. Geez, Carlos loves this stuff.

I steal a glance at the kid in the other corner. Wiry little sucker. Real white skin—little fame and fortune will cure that now, son. Notice he's shaved his head for the occasion. No, wait. He's left a "10-3" on one side. How nice. I dislike him already.

Introductions—no big deal. He's wearing these John Lennon shades that make it hard to stare him down, so I settle for a look of disdain like his dog just pooped in my yard. Up close, I notice his chin looks a little weak. Gotta remember that in case this gets ugly later. Physical violence is an automatic Sniper attack (Revised Bylaws, Article 14B, Paragraph III), but I'll take it if I need it. I look over at Stefan and yeah, he sees it too. Good boy.

On to the random scenario selection. Random, uh-huh right. Ref reaches into a big plastic drum and picks out a card. Le Manoir.

Crowd buzzes. We exercise our right of refusal—no way we gonna risk this with only five half squads. Crowd buzzes again, com-

mentators commentate. Ref lays Le Manoir aside and fishes in the drum. Totsugeki! I smirk. Kid waves this off, No Way Man. Smart boy—I'm something like 33-0 in ol' Tot Sue, and the word is that the kid is light on the PTO anyway. Now at least we're evenly hosed—whatever comes up next is gonna be what we play. Somewhere I hear network executives praying for more commercial time than Strayer's Strays.

Age Old Foes. I take the Poles. My sainted mother would approve. Let people talk about somebody *else's* luck with OBA all year.

Turn 1. Miss April 1998 parades around the ring with the turn card and not much else. Kid can't help but stare. I give him a raised eyebrow and he goes, "Oh sorry Pops, you probably forgot all about that stuff by now." The mike picks it up and the crowd loves it. I smile and resolve to mash this punk into the dirt.

Setup bell rings, and I see what the kid has come up with. Pretty standard stuff—you almost always see a minor variation of the Nixon defense, but I bend over the board and without looking up I mutter, "Mark! Nice to see you again!" Can't tell if this scored or not; hopefully the kid has a big ego. Time for my setup. I pull out my Personal Leader Counter, the 8-1 that Avalon Hill printed up special after I won last year. Kid smirks. Yeah, I know you want one of these, punk.

Vinnie wants me to go all out for the eastern edge, but I send some flankers to the west just to piss him off. He gives me this Don't Mess Around look but I shoot him this Mister Innocent, What Me Worry look and he chomps down on his cigar. I do a little cavalry charge, kid does a little Fire Lane, nothing too awful. Cut to a commercial.

Turn 2. Miss May comes out this time, big redhead. Kid makes Radio Contact and gives her a leer before announcing he's gonna Kindle the grain. Crowd roars, Vinnie and Carlos are all over the ref with Unsportsmanlike Conduct stuff, and Stefan is waving the rulebook like he's using it to fly or something. Kid just sits there and grins while his roll sets the grain on fire. We call time.

Vinnie and Stefan are all for ventilating this guy's abdomen, but I get the boys cooled down to a High Broil and we head back to the table. Stefan edges over to the kid's side of the board and a little get-together ensues with some of the kid's handlers, just to show who's on the side of Fairness and Honesty here. The kid ducks a wicked elbow to the head, comes up grinning. Fast little twerp.

Turn 3. Miss June does her thing—neat job of stepping over the blood somebody left lying around. Crowd whistles in appreciation. Prep Fire blows a hole in his line and I send the 10-2 forward with a few squads and an ATR to take out the armored trucks. Vinnie shoots me a look like Are You Crazy but I know he has a fondness for 10-2s, bless his heart. Kid brings down the OBA, Harassing Fire covering the eastern edge out to the CC row. Only units he could possibly hurt are two 458s and my Personal 8-1. Kid grins, shoots me a wink before he rolls, and proceeds to KIA the entire hex. Damn, Damn, DAMN. Crowd goes nuts. Fire starts to spread over the Grain, and what ain't on fire is covered by armored trucks, 447s, or MMGs. TV announcers chatter and I hear things like Looking Bad for the Poles before they cut to commercial. I grind out my cigar slowly, slowly, in Carlos's open palm.

Turn 4. Miss July, leggy blonde. Brushes against the kid as she goes by, and I think he's gonna have a heart attack. Time to mess him up. The 10-2 and his boys pass up Prep Fire and make a run straight for 33R6. Crowd gasps. Kid can't believe it. Vinnie starts a rosary. MMG fires from the upper floor, misses, Poles keep coming. Stefan slides behind the kid's handlers. 447s fire through the grain, miss, Poles keep coming. Armored trucks fire at Long Range, MISS! Crowd on its feet. Carlos edges over behind the ref. Advancing fire breaks the OBA Observer, TV announcers go nuts. We ambush and take out the MMG crew. Crowd roars, cameras flash. Kid throws the dice in frustration, hits me in the chest. Stefan rabbit punches the kid's handlers, Carlos chops the ref's knees, and Vinnie grabs the kid. Madness everywhere, people flood the ring, Hell's Angels' bikes start with a roar, smoke and exhaust fumes all around, choppers start to descend like it's a hot LZ. I elbow my way through and reach Vinnie who still has the kid in a death grip. I grab the kid by the lapels and get right in his face where I can see the fear in his eyes, smell it on his breath, and I growl in a deep-throated animal voice, "I don't care if you're a punk," I say, and I'm shaking him. "I don't care if you have a lousy haircut. I don't CARE if you don't show proper respect. But don't ever mess with my Personal Leader Counter!"

HUNG UP, SKEWERED, AND BLASTED TO SMITHEREENS:

A Short Primer on the Uses of Wire, Panjis and A-P Mines

By Chuck Goetz

It's not often in ASL that a commander has the opportunity to utilize as many different types of "obstacle" fortifications as the Japanese player has in "Jungle Citadel"—Wire, Panjis, and A-P Mines all play an important part in any good IJA setup for this scenario. In general, these fortifications are intended to slow down or obstruct enemy movement; panji and mines have the added benefit of possibly inflicting harm on the enemy through failed morale checks and outright casualties. You can't effectively use these devices, however, unless you know their respective capabilities.

SETUP AND CLEARANCE

Wire, panji, and A-P mines all must set up before play commences and cannot be moved thereafter, only eliminated or cleared. With a few important exceptions, these fortifications are limited to the same types of terrain; or to be more precise, are prevented from setting up in the same types of terrain. None may be set up in rubble, marsh, swamp, or Water Obstacles (although wire may set up in a frozen Water Obstacle). Wire and panjis may not set up in a building hex, while mines can—provided it's not an *interior* building hex. Mines and panjis can set up in bamboo, but not crags or paved roads/runways; vice versa for wire. Mines are the only fortification that can set up in a culvert (but only if non-HIP). Wire and panji can set up in *any* Beach hex; mined Beach hexes must be adjacent to at least one Hinterland hex. Finally, panjis cannot set up in the same hex as wire or mines (or a roadblock), although wire and mines in the same hex is no problem.

Like other fortifications, wire, panji and mines set up using HIP and stay hidden until either within LOS of a Good Order enemy unit (i.e., wire and panji unless in bamboo, kunai, or jungle) or a real enemy unit enters the fortification's Location (Note: the *strength* of a minefield is not revealed, while the number and placement of all panji covered hexsides is). Each of these fortifications can also be revealed by Searching, although mines and panjis may cause casualties as per A12.154.

All three of these fortifications can be partially or totally eliminated by Infantry using the B24.7 clearance rules, although it generally requires some combination of luck, multiple

MMC, good leadership, heros, and time to accomplish successfully. FFE (if a KIA result; a K/# reduces a minefield) or Bombardment (if MC failure) can also eliminate these obstacles, but not with any reliability. Finally, a fully-tracked vehicle can create a trailbreak through a minefield [B28.61], possibly remove a wire counter (with a one on the colored die of its Bog check DR [B26.53]), and clear one panji covered hexside (by expending 1/4 of its MP (FRU) [G9.73]).

THE NASTY THINGS THEY DO

Wire can't actually hurt the enemy, it just slows him down. Upon entering a wire Location, an Infantry unit is hung up until it can make a $dr \leq$ its MF capability. Since a unit can't use Double Time during a turn in which it attempts to move beneath wire (nor can it advance off wire, although it may advance onto wire), it will be unable to move off the wire at least one third of the time (unless stacked with a leader). On the other hand, 17% of the time it only costs your opponent one MF to move off the wire, and before you know it your defenses are breached. While hung up on wire, Infantry units suffer a +1 penalty to *any* attack they make (To Hit, IFT, CC, etc.), are more vulnerable to CC attacks against them, and cannot Place, Throw or Set a DC. Vehicles may enter a wire Location at a set MP cost (2 MP + COT for fully-tracked, 4 MP + COT for all others) after undergoing a Bog check.

Mines can hurt the enemy, but other than attacking (and possibly breaking, pinning, immobilizing or eliminating) units entering or exiting their hex, minefields do not impose any movement penalties. Of course, a minefield attack is never halved against concealed units and doesn't apply any TEM or FFMO/FFNAM modifier. Unarmored vehicles are attacked on the star vehicle line while armored vehicles are unaffected unless the minefield attack results in a KIA. There are no combat penalties for being in a minefield.

Available only in the PTO, panjis both hinder movement and potentially inflict harm on traversing units. In addition to prohibiting bypass (along or across a panji covered hexside) and use of a Bank counter, Infantry and fully-tracked units entering a hex across a panji hex-

side must expend an additional MF or MP to move underneath the panjis. Nonfully-tracked vehicles (including wagons) are immobilized when entering, horses/bicycles are eliminated when ridden into, and Guns eliminated when Manhandled into, a panji hex across a covered hexside. Unless using Assault Movement, Low Crawl, or making a normal advance, an Infantry unit (random selection for stacked units) moving across a panji hexside (or disembarking from transport above a panji counter) must take a NMC (leader modifier and HOB are NA) and also suffers Casualty Reduction if it rolls doubles. In addition to suffering from the same attack penalties incurred when hung up on wire (EXC: DC used by Japanese as per G1.424), Infantry above a panji counter are always engaged in concealment-loss activity, may only use inherent FP/SW, LMG, LATW (but *not* 20mm ATR), and FT, and may not interdict.

WHAT TO DO WITH THEM

First, remember that none of these three fortifications is a rigid barrier—all can be penetrated by a determined opponent. So don't rely on wire, panjis, or mines to actually block enemy movement. Instead, use them to supplement a defense by slowing down the enemy enough to allow your own units to respond to the threatened penetration. Second, obstacle fortifications aren't very effective unless used in depth and/or breadth; one or two hex obstacle zones are easily bypassed. Thus, wire, panjis, and mines should be clumped together, in conjunction with other natural terrain obstacles such as ponds, bamboo, cliffs, marsh/swamp, and frigid streams, to guard one (or more if you have an ample quantity of fortifications) flank or victory objective. Finally, try to have your fortification barriers guarded by sufficient troops to make the enemy pay for any penetration attempt.

As you sit down to construct a defense with obstacle fortifications, remember that each type has strengths and weaknesses making it better or worse for different types of terrain. For example, panjis aren't a serious threat to Infantry aware of their existence and willing to safely assault move through them. Therefore, panjis need to be hidden in concealment terrain to give them a chance to inflict a NMC on enemy units attempting to move quickly through them; several "layers" of panjis will increase both the MF cost to units moving through the panji zone and the likelihood that hasty enemy units will impale themselves. In "Jungle Citadel," the jungle and bamboo concealment terrain of the Japanese right flank is perfect for panjis. Wire, on the other hand, doesn't depend on surprise for effectiveness. Accordingly, in "Jungle Citadel" it's the perfect obstacle to block the open ground road hexes running from 22R1 to 22Y2, especially when enhanced by covering fire from the 22U3 building or 22W4 woods (in fact, wire is the only one of these fortifications that can be placed in hard-surfaced Locations such as paved roads). Meanwhile, mines are perfect

to stymie infantry movement through single-hex buildings (e.g., such as 22Z1, 22X2, and 22AA2 in "Jungle Citadel").

Another important aspect to consider is the protection wire and panjis give from enemy units advancing into CC against friendly units underneath the fortification. The enemy will think twice before advancing into CC with your units, especially those in jungle, kunai, or bamboo, if he knows or suspects that your units are guarded by panji or wire. Also don't forget about the effect that these fortifications can have on broken units. While a broken unit need not rout across a panji hexside or through a minefield if it has an alternative rout path, it may be forced by circumstances to risk the consequences. Wire can be especially dangerous for a broken unit ADJACENT to a Known enemy unit—roll too high and it will be eliminated for failure to rout. Savvy defenders should be alert to traps and mini-counterattack opportunities exploiting such possibilities against broken enemy units. Finally, don't forget that a stream is not a Water Obstacle unless frigid, so all three of these fortifications can set up IN a stream.

CONCLUSION

Which is best? As usual in ASL, that depends on the circumstances—the Victory Conditions, the terrain, opposing units, etc. Your best bet is to know how to most effectively use each type, either alone or in conjunction with the others. While no substitute for experience, this primer should get you started in the right direction.

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CONSTRUCTING THE PERFECT JUNGLE CITADEL

JAPANESE SETUP TIPS FOR ASL SCENARIO 71



by
**Dade
Cariaga**

There are few published scenarios with as much appeal as "Jungle Citadel," ASL Scenario 71. The thought of a Chinese-Japanese PTO street fight positively puts my salivary glands into overdrive! This scenario offers a lot for any ASL enthusiast: elite troops, an impressive array of assault weapons, air support, large OBA fire missions, plenty of fortifications, and dual victory conditions. Truly, there is something here for even the most discerning ASL palate.

A cursory inspection of this scenario might indicate an advantage for the Chinese. First and foremost, they have roughly a 3:2 advantage in troops and, with the inherent advantage of the attacker, can increase that ratio considerably at the point of attack since the Japanese must guard all possible approaches. The Chinese OB also includes flamethrowers and demolition charges—weapons specifically designed to add impetus to an attack. In addition, the Chinese fire suppression capabilities are considerable. Two SMOKE-capable OBA batteries (each with a Pre-Registered hex) can effectively shut down any irritating defensive firebases. The three guaranteed fighter-bombers which automatically arrive on Turn 1 will definitely slow any attempts by the prudent defender to shift his forces once the attack is underway, as well as provide extra firepower in the form of bombs (or even better, napalm) and machinegun point attacks to reduce Japanese strong points. Further, the Chinese have the ability to create a big, dominating machine-gun firebase (9-2 leader, HMGs and MMGs) that will give the Japanese player cause to worry about keeping anyone in LOS, regardless of protective TEM.

To complete the list of Chinese advantages, the optional Victory Conditions allow the

Chinese to keep his opponent off-balance by forcing the Japanese player to guard two different victory areas. The Japanese player must protect building 22W8 to prevent the quick victory and still cover the entire expanse of board 22 for 12 long turns. If the Chinese player opts for victory by controlling 8 or more building hexes on the south side of the board 23 canal, he can advance at a rate of less than 2 hexes per turn and still be in position to win at the end of the game.

But a closer inspection of the scenario and the respective OB shows that the Chinese advantage is not nearly so clear-cut. In fact, I feel that this scenario can be a real nail-biter that comes down to the wire. The Japanese OB offers all sorts of devious options that can drive the Chinese player to distraction as he tries to mount a coordinated attack. What follows is an attempt at a Japanese defense which stands a good chance of surviving the hammering it is bound to receive and still have enough left to deny the Chinese player victory.

Like any similar scenarios that involve a large number of fortifications, setup is all-important for the defender in Jungle Citadel. At best, a good setup can keep you in the game until the end; a poor setup can't easily be overcome because of the difficulty of moving laterally due to the Chinese Fighter Bombers. The nature of the terrain and the Chinese OB requires that the Chinese player employ a "viper" attack: gather, strike, advance, gather, strike, advance. Therefore the Japanese player's defense should be constructed with two objectives in mind—deny momentum and disrupt coordination in the attack. Be prepared to give ground, but make him pay for it and don't let him muster his strength. If the Chinese

attack devolves into piecemeal forays with little impetus behind them, you've got the game in hand.

First off, be aware of all the benefits to which the Japanese are entitled. Up to 10% of squad-equivalents (FRU) can use HIP. That's 2 squads (or 4 crews/half-squads) for this scenario. Although fortifications/guns in non-concealment terrain cannot, by SSR, set up hidden, this restriction does not prevent the Japanese from setting up some or all of his two HIP squad-equivalents IN an otherwise non-hidden pillbox. Of course, the inherent HIP for units that set up in HIP pillboxes or emplaced Gun positions still applies. In Jungle, Kunai, and Bamboo, HIP fortifications are not easily revealed—only if a fortification is entered/exited while in the LOS of an enemy unit, in a Location that is successfully searched/entered by an enemy unit, or if its protective TEM is claimed. All told, much of the Japanese force can be HIP or concealed at the beginning of the scenario, making it very difficult for the Chinese player to determine your Japanese strengths and weaknesses. The Japanese are allowed four fortified building locations that can (and should) be exchanged for tunnels, and each pillbox in the Japanese OB comes with an inherent tunnel. In this scenario, where the defender must be wary of moving due to the Chinese air support, a tunnel offers a safe method for falling back to a new line of defense.

As you inspect the terrain of board 22, note that the favorable approaches, from the Chinese point of view, fall on either side of the Y1-Y6 road that bisects the board. The eastern approach involves tramping through the light jungle in the BB-EE hexrows to building 22CC6, which then forms the jumping off point for a renewed thrust to the southern half of board 22, and thence to board 23. The western approach lets the Chinese player amass his forces in the S-X jungle hexes in order to force his way across the S1-Y2 road and beyond, threatening building 22W8. (Realistically, I don't think the Chinese player can expect to take this building in 6 short turns, but the Japanese player must still guard against the possibility.) Of course, the Chinese player could opt for the center thrust down the X-Z hexrows, but that route lacks protective TEM. Most savvy ASL players are wary of such an approach because it allows the defender to concentrate his forces with a minimum of maneuver, and denies the attacker one of his main advantages (namely, numerical superiority at the point of attack). If the Chinese player *does* choose to "go down the middle," let him. As we'll see, the Japanese setup discussed herein will be able to deal with such an approach quite effectively.

So, the first line of the Japanese defense should be constructed with an eye to disrupting Chinese attempts to use the jungle hexes on either side of the board as jumping off points for

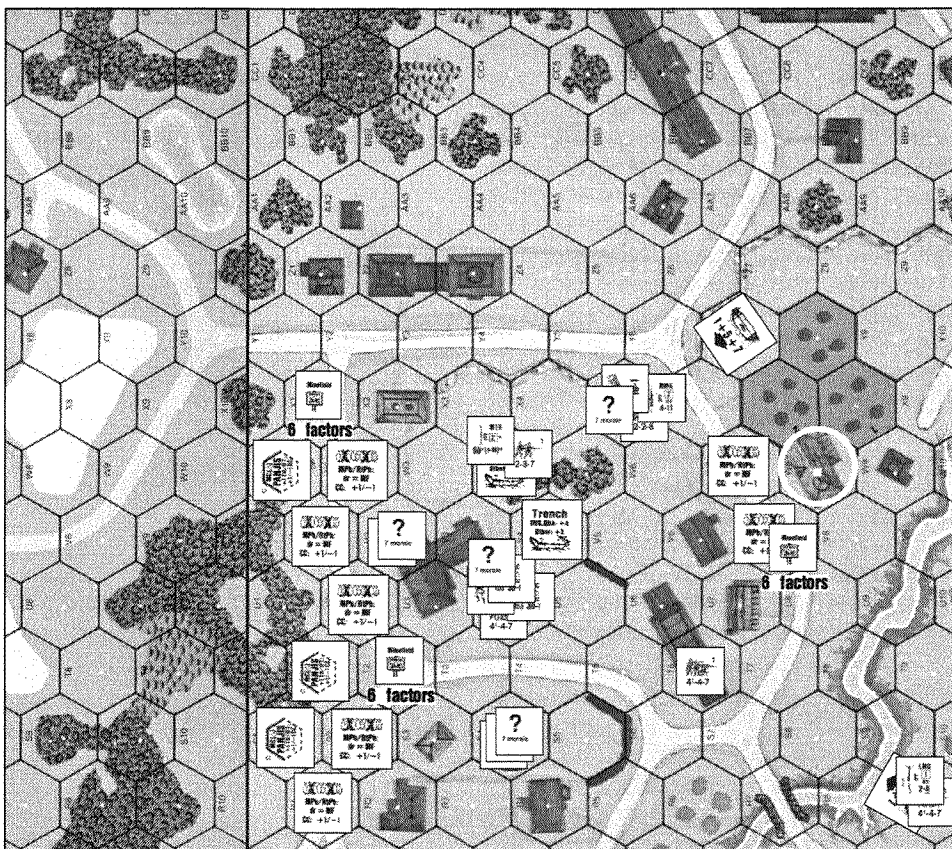


Figure 1: Western Defenses. Circled building is Fortified.

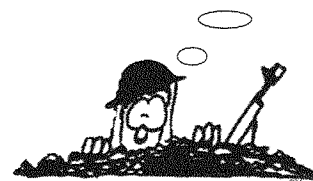
the attack. On the west side, place wire or mines (6FP) in each of hexes R1, S2, T2, U2, V1, W2, and X1. This blunts any Turn 1 drive to get across the road. To further slow things down, I put Panjis in hexes S1, T1 and W1 (see Figure 1). On the south side of the road, I place 3 or so squads, an 8-0 leader, and a couple dummy stacks in the smattering of buildings between hexrows R and X. The dummy stacks go toward the front, to absorb the initial Chinese advancing fire. The 8-0 and a squad set up somewhere just behind the front line, say in building U4. Give them both DC in the hopes that they can move up to U3, V3, or V2 and throw a "welcome" basket on any Chinese hung up in the wire along the T2-W2 road. A couple of trenches in the V4-W4-W5 area provide a good fall back position when the pressure drives the Japanese out of building U3. Also, a half-squad and knee-mortar with LOS to the jungle hexes on the northern side of the street (W4 and T3 are excellent locations) can really punish any Chinese units gathering for a thrust across the wire. One word of caution: try to set up your troops in positions where the Chinese can't get an LOS to them for Turn 1 Prep Fire. Make him come to you. Despite the resilience of Japanese defenders, the Chinese firepower is awesome and you need to avoid early losses. As the scenario unfolds, the time will come when you have to stand and defend. Don't be too obstinate too early!

The anchor for this flank is the 10-1 leader with MMG and crew in building X5. They're

set to really hammer any Chinese that congregate in the W1-W2-X2 area and can also offer support to the defenders on the eastern side of the board with LOS to both hexes of building Z2, and hexes BB3, CC4, and DD4. Of course, this firegroup (and particularly the leader) is very important to the defense so an escape route that allows them to get back across the Y6-U8 road without being gunned down is essential. I like to put a tunnel in X5 that leads back to a

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

There are lots of personnel carriers (PC) in the system. Some are armored (APC), like the Ram Kangaroo and the Renault UE. Some are unarmored, like the Loyd Carrier and the various Lafflys. Some are even amphibious, like the LVT2s. None of these, however, are Carriers as defined in D6.8. Only *Carriers*, i.e., British Vehicle Notes 64-67 (and their Chinese and French counterparts), are D6.8 Carriers, signified by British Multi-Applicable Vehicle Note U. Even *IP Carriers* (British Vehicle Notes 70 & 71) are treated as Carriers only for D6.82-.83 (British Note V).



pillbox in hex Y7. That way, the 10-1 can give the Chinese a bloody nose, then fall back to the next line of defense with relative impunity.

The pillbox in 22Y7 is an important position: a fire-lane cutting down the Y1-Y6 road can really hinder any Chinese attempts to reinforce one flank or the other. I usually start with a crew and the .50-cal in this position. A good argument can be made for starting the 10-1 in the pillbox with the big MG, but I like putting him in X5 because that position has a wider range of targets for the Turn 1 Defensive Fire Phase. When the 10-1 and his gang come back through the tunnel (usually no later than Turn 3), he'll link up with the .50-cal crew to give them that added punch, while the MMG can move as the situation demands. Note that if the Chinese player chooses to do so, he can really hammer the Y7 pillbox during his Turn 1 Prep fire. But the position is important and I believe it is worth the risk. Besides, to hit your pillbox, he'll have to set up somewhere in hexrow Y with very little protective TEM opportunities.

Building 22W8 is the only building I fortify, and only at the ground level (exchange all the other fortified building locations for tunnels). Put wire counters in hexes V8 and W7, and another 6 mine factors in one of these hexes to limit the Chinese approaches to W8. A tunnel leads from W8 back to 22X10 where one or two squads are positioned to move into the building right after the Pre-registered Chinese fire mission

comes down (in my experience, 22W8 is always the target for one, if not both, of the pre-registered fire missions).

To complete the defense of the western flank, put a pillbox (with a squad and LMG) in hex 22R9. The CA points to hex S8, which offers the opportunity for a 1FP fire-lane right across the stream and down the road to hex X6. If the Chinese player tries for building W8, this, coupled with the wire and mines in V8/W7, may be the *coup de grace* for his men as they make a mad dash to get there by Turn 6.

Next, let's look at the eastern half of board 22. Again, the strategy here is to disrupt momentum and coordination. Once again, the jungle hexes in the BB-EE hexrows are ideal for panjis. I like to set panjis in BB2, CC2, DD2, and EE3. If the Chinese player moves aggressively in this area, he could easily suffer some panji casualties. If he takes his time and assault moves/advances, you've at least slowed him down, and you'll have some more surprises waiting for him. Hex FF3 is ideal for mines, and more panjis and wire in FF4 and GG2 will ensure that he can't pull the old "end-around" too quickly.

Hex DD3 offers a great place to use part of your HIP capability for the 6FP HMG, crew, and 9-1 leader, with a tunnel leading back to hex CC6 or DD5 as well (the leader is essential in this position, since only with his added IPC can the crew move the HMG back through the tunnel). Although this position is pretty far forward, your panji complex will

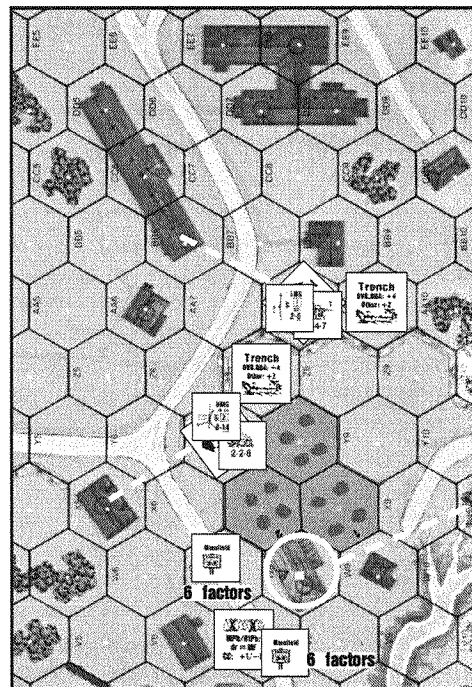


Figure 3: Bunker Complex

ensure that it won't be overrun in the first turn, and, being a bamboo hex, the Chinese player will have to think hard about advancing in to close combat against you here. Add in the Japanese stealth, the 9-1 leader, and the Attacker's ambush penalty (G.6), and an Ambush in favor of the Japanese is all but guaranteed. If the Chinese player attacks on this side, punish him as he moves adjacent, or, if he's concealed, stay hidden and wait. If things get too hot, use the tunnel to back out safely and set up your next line of defense in the CC6 building. This position is also good for laying down a firelane all the way to R9 if the Chinese player attacks hard on the other side. One word of warning: flamethrowers could make this position extremely untenable. Save your first fire opportunity for any such weapons in the area. Again, this position incurs some risk, being as far forward as it is. Put another squad somewhere nearby in close support, maybe EE4, and a dummy stack nearby as well. The dummy stack will draw more attention than a seemingly empty bamboo hex, and the squad offers some additional fire opportunities if things get hot fast. A HIP knee mortar and half-squad in hex CC5 can also make life difficult for the Chinese as they try to get through the jungle and bamboo (see Figure 2).

Put 1 or 2 reserve squads in the CC6 building so that they're in place when your HMG stack comes sneaking back through the tunnel. Another tunnel, leading from hex CC6 or DD5 back across the road to the DD7 building will allow you to give ground again when the Chinese pressure gets too great.

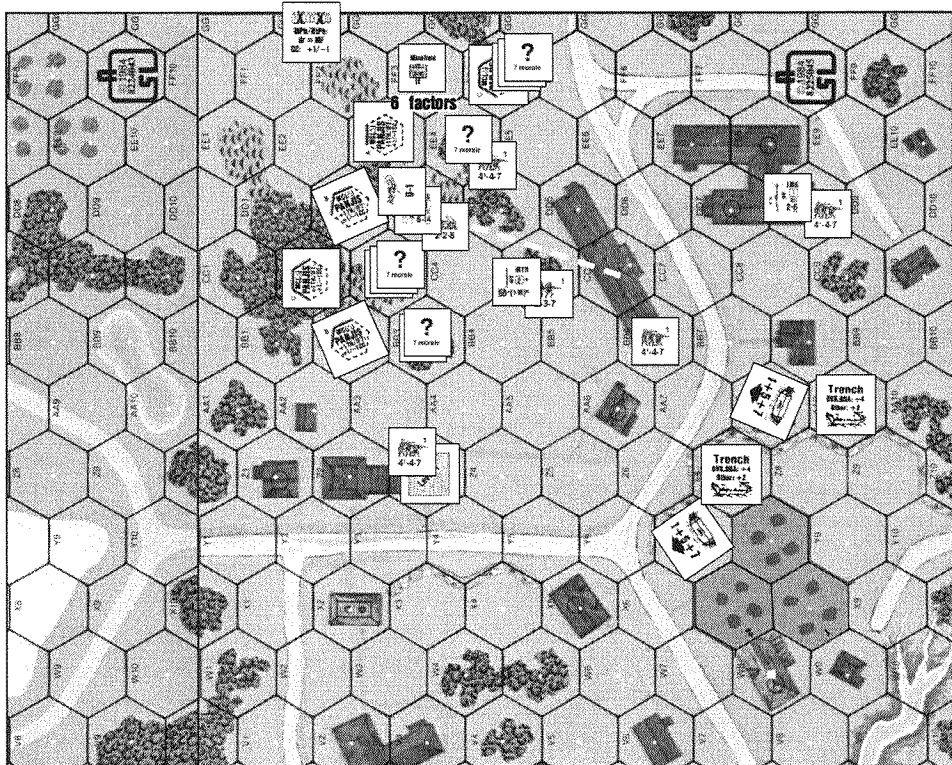


Figure 2: Eastern Defenses

Also, put another pillbox with LMG and squad in AA8 so that its covered arc points to BB6. This will give you another fire lane opportunity to make the Chinese think hard about crossing the BB7-GG5 road. The tunnel for this pillbox can lead to building CC6, building CC10, or back to AA10. The beautiful thing about tunnels is that they are useless to your opponent. Further, if he doesn't destroy them when eligible to do so, make him pay for it by reentering them and either advancing out concealed for close combat, or suddenly appearing to the rear of the advance elements of his attack.

One last word about the pillboxes in AA8 and Y7: put trenches in hexes Z7 and AA9. This will establish a bunker complex and offer your 10-1/.50-cal stack a safe way to get into position on either flank (see Figure 3).

These forces should let you really punish the Chinese player as he advances across board 22. But make no mistake, you won't stop him, and you probably won't have much left of your board 22 forces left when he makes his dash for the board 23 buildings at the end of the game. Board 22 survivors should make their last stand in the buildings just north of the board 23 canal. As the Chinese player makes his final push, your last reserves come into play. I like to put the 70*INF gun in hex 23W2 with CA to Y2. This offers a nice view down to hex 23BB4 for any infantry jumping off from building 23AA3. The last pillbox, crew, and MMG should go in Z5 with CA to 23AA4 so you can lay down a firelane out to 23FF2 as the Chinese make their way toward the canal. I

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

Don't you just hate it when you are about ready to Advance into CC on the last turn with your 9-2 stack to wipe out the defenders and capture the Victory building, and your opponent self-breaks and routs upstairs to win? I know I do.



put the AA gun in CC6 with CA to BB4. Although, by SSR, you can't use HIP for this unit in this Location, you can still be emplaced since the roads are unpaved, and thus you can still set up concealed. This position gives you a shot at any infantry north of the canal from S5 to EE5. One word about this Gun: avoid the temptation to fire at the Chinese FB. With only a 4 IFE, your chances of doing any damage are small, and if you fire while in LOS of enemy ground units you risk giving up your concealment and suffering the wrath of the Chinese FB.

I put the Japanese artillery observer on the second level of 23Z6. Arguably, one could place the observer somewhere closer to the action, but the limited LOS opportunities in first level building Locations are too restricted. 23Z6 puts your observer in position to have an effect right when you need it most — the end game. Have him call in a spotting round as soon as possible, and keep it at the ready. When the Chinese concentrate for their final push (perhaps in building 23AA3 or in the jungle around 23W2) bring it down. Use Harassing Fire to broaden the area of effect, since at this late stage in the game a 4FP FFE that covers 12 hexes is more valuable than a 12FP FFE that covers only seven.

Finally, a few rules of thumb for the Japanese player in this scenario. Be selective about using close combat. If there is an opportunity to take out a Chinese leader, or if a good hand-to-hand attack would take out a lot of enemy squads, go for it! The Japanese (with their negative DRM for hand-to-hand combat) are the masters of the up-close-and-personal fight. Avoid trading squad for squad—that only works in your opponents favor. If you've got an extra squad or two after constructing your setup, consider putting one HIP in a completely unexpected location (e.g., the first level of 22Z3). If the Chinese player moves in proximity, wait until the Advance Phase, advance into the Chinese Location concealed, and with only a little luck, ambush him. Although its effectiveness is, for the most part, out of your control, don't forget that your sniper (SAN 6!) will definitely have an effect.

In summary, the Chinese OB in this scenario is capable of absolutely trashing anything that gets in its way. But, with a good set up, careful decisions about when to stand and when to fall back, and constant denial of momentum, the Japanese can take this one down to the wire.

JUNGLE CITADEL SETUP

Board 22

R1	Wire
R9	Pillbox (CA:S8), 447/LMG, tunnel to 23S2*
S1	Panji C*: 1
S2	Wire
S4	?x3
T1	Panji C*: 1
T2	6 mines*
T6	447
U2	Wire
U4	?, 8-0/DC, 447/DC
V1	Wire
V2	?x2
V4	Trench*
V7	Wire, 6 mines*
W1	Panji C*: 1
W2	Wire
W4	Trench*, 237/MTR
W7	Wire
W8	Fortified*, tunnel to X10*
X1	6 mines*
X5	?, 10-1. crew/MMG, tunnel to Y7*
X10	447, 447
Y7	Pillbox (CA:X5), crew/.50-cal, tunnel to x5*
Z3/1	447*
Z7	Trench
AA8	Pillbox (CA:BB6)*, 447/LMG*, tunnel to BB6*
AA9	Trench
BB2	Panji B*: 2
BB3	?x2
BB6	447, tunnel to AA8*
BB8	447
CC2	Panji C*: 1
CC3	?x3
CC5	237/MTR*
CC6	447, tunnel to DD3*, tunnel to DD8*
DD2	Panji B*: 2
DD3	9-1*, crew/HMG*, tunnel to CC6*
DD8	447/LMG
EE3	Panji A*: 1
EE4	?, 447
FF3	6 mines*
FF4	Panji C*: 1, ?x3
GG2	Wire

Board 23

S2	tunnel to 22R9*
W2	crew/INF 70* (CA:Y2)*
W6	tunnel to Z5*
Z5	Pillbox (CA:AA4)*, crew/MMG*, tunnel to W6*
Z6/2	8-0/PHONE*
CC6	?, crew/20LAA (CA:BB4)*

*denotes HIP

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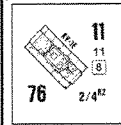
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OVERRUN QUIZ

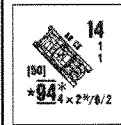
by Carl Fago

(Unless otherwise mentioned, all weapons are functioning and all CT AFV are BU.)



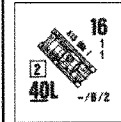
Q1. What is the OVR FP of the KV-1E?

Q2. A vehicle Bounding First Fires and maintains ROF. May it then overrun?



Q3. What is the OVR FP of the A9 CS tank?

Q4. After being OVR, a squad uses CC Reaction Fire vs. a Panther. Can the Panther use its sN capability to attack the squad?



Q5. What is the OVR FP of the A13 Mk1?

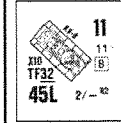
Q6. Having used CC RF as First Fire vs. an overrunning vehicle, may the DEFENDER use non-CC RF as SFF during the same OVR?



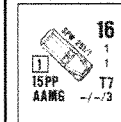
Q7. What is the OVR FP of the FlakPz IV/20?

Q8. After passing a PAATC to use CC RF vs. an overrunning AFV, a defending unit suffers another OVR. Must it take another PAATC to use CC RF against the new foe?

Q9. What is the OVR FP of the Italian L3 Lf?

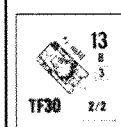


Q10. What is the OVR FP of the KV-8 with malfunctioned BMG?



Q11. A BU M4A1 overruns a Motion CE German SPW 251/1 with a 467 passenger in an Open Ground hex. What are the FP and DRM?

Q12. A BU M4A1 overruns a stopped BU SPW 251/1 with a 4-6-7 Passenger. What are the FP and DRM?



Q13. A PzKpfw III(F1) overruns a squad entrenched in Brush and shrouded in Dispersed (+2) Smoke. How many MP does this cost? What FP and DRM apply to the attack?

Q14. An immobilized CE German PzA III/IV is overrun through its side CA by a BU Russian T34/85. What are the options of the German PzA III/IV with regard to Reaction Fire?

Not sure about some of the questions? Turn the page and read "Dance with the Tiger" for an excellent explanation of the OVR rules before the checking the answers on page 39.

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DANCE WITH THE TIGER

OVERRUN ATTACKS AND DEFENSES

by JR VanMechelen

INTRODUCTION

In ASL, the maneuver most evocative of Blitzkrieg is the overrun (OVR) attack. A steel monster mows down helpless, running soldiers at point-blank range, grinds others beneath its treads, disrupting and devastating with impunity. Survivors are crushed psychologically if not physically. With enemy mechanized forces about, the wise commander deploys his troops to minimize his opponent's opportunities for OVR because such an attack—even by the most primitive vehicle—can decimate the defender.

The OVR attack in ASL has a general pattern which I have used as the outline for this article. First, the ATTACKER moves his vehicle adjacent to his intended target while the DEFENDER uses DFF attacks to try to stop him. The ATTACKER then enters the target's Location. When there is an unconcealed unit in the target Location, the ATTACKER has to declare the OVR (and pay MP for it) as he enters; if there are no Known units, he *must* wait. Any concealed DEFENDER must either reveal itself or (unless exempt) take a PAATC. The DEFENDER can then DFF at the vehicle in his Location. If the ATTACKER did not declare an OVR because there were no Known enemy units, he can do so at this time, which may again allow DFF. Once all DFF attacks (and any necessary Bog checks) are performed, the OVR is resolved. The DEFENDER can (and sometimes *must*) use Reaction Fire to attack the vehicle again.

Overruns in ASL are not *too* difficult, but several pertinent rules are not in the OVR section [D7] and others involve a few subtleties which may not be obvious on the first reading of the rules, especially Reaction Fire [D7.2] and Overrun Prevention [C5.64]. This article summarizes the procedure for an OVR attack and includes examples that, I hope, will help the beginner execute these attacks (and defend against them) almost as well as an expert.

MOVING TO THE HEX

A player makes an OVR attack by announcing the attack and moving a vehicle into a Location containing enemy units (the announcement sometimes follows the entry of the Location, as explained below). Almost any vehicle can perform an OVR attack (as discussed later in "Unusual Overruns"). It need not be armed or armored, but it has to be capable of movement, obviously, and can't be marked with a Bounding Fire counter (other than one from another OVR). It must also have sufficient MP both to enter the Location and to conduct the attack. An OVR costs 1/4 (FRU) of



the vehicle's printed MP allotment, and ESB is an option to obtain the necessary MP. Unlike most MP expenditures (e.g., entry of woods at 1/2 of a vehicle's MP allotment or (un)loading), the OVR cost (but not the COT) has fractions rounded up.

The OVR will attack any soft targets in the Location. This includes Infantry, Cavalry, Guns, soft vehicles and exposed PRC (the last can be a bit of a surprise to an inexperienced opponent). Unpossessed Guns and SW can also be eliminated with an OVR attack.

Any Location that vehicles can enter can be attacked with an OVR, not just Open Ground. Units in brush, orchard or grain are quite vulnerable to OVR; those in woods and buildings are less vulnerable because OVR can't be conducted from bypass, requiring the overrunning vehicle to enter the actual obstacle (and possibly incurring Bog [D8.2], Cellar collapse, or Rubble creation [B23.41]). Units in Crest can also be OVR, and the ATTACKER doesn't have to enter Crest status or cross the Crest hexside to perform such an attack [D7.15]. Because vehicles can't enter caves, Pillboxes or upper-level buildings, these Locations can't be attacked by an OVR. Reverse movement cannot be used for an OVR.

As a general rule, CT vehicles should be BU when overrunning. Exposing the crew to DFF could result in an embarrassing Morale Check. The BU ATTACKER loses the use of any AAMG, but in most situations those extra FP aren't worth the risk to the crew. Open Top vehicles can be attacked by DFF when they enter the hex even when BU (with the usual +2 DRM) [A7.211], so there usually isn't much point in being BU once it enters the target Location. Also, units that can't fire back (bro-

ken units, Leaders, etc.) can be OVR safely while CE.

The best defense against an impending OVR is eliminating the vehicle before it begins its OVR attack. If the DEFENDER has a weapon that can penetrate the armor of the ATTACKER before it enters the hex, then that DFF shot is frequently the best choice. If the DEFENDER can't destroy the ATTACKER, or can only do so on a CH, he should consider other tactics. Deliberate Immobilization is one possibility. The odds of success are not all that great, though, with the +5 TH DRM. If the OVR will almost certainly break or eliminate the DEFENDER, it may be worth a shot. Be alert to possible Underbelly shots if the overrunning AFV is crossing a wall or Bocage or exiting a Gully or Stream. Finally, the DEFENDER can wait for the ATTACKER to enter his Location so he can use in-hex DFF with the hopes of getting a side or rear hit, as discussed below. In some cases, however, the DEFENDER may actually be better off allowing the attack to proceed without DFF, then using Reaction Fire.

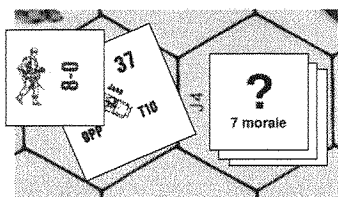
All of the above assumes the DEFENDER has a weapon capable of using DFF against the vehicle. If the DEFENDER is Infantry without a Gun or SW, and the vehicle is a BU, CT AFV, the DEFENDER has no DFF options. The unit can only wait for the results of the OVR and hope that it can retaliate with CC Reaction Fire.

MOVING INTO THE HEX

First, note that a vehicle entering an enemy-occupied Location need not OVR the occupants. The vehicle can fire using TPBF instead (halved for Bounding First Fire, and halved again for non-stopped fire if it does not stop),

end its MPh phase in the hex (if allowed per D2.6), or just move through. Using TPBF can be attractive if the vehicle doesn't have enough MP to OVR or if it does not want to (or cannot) enter a woods/building obstacle. Upon going into Bypass, however, the vehicle will become vulnerable to Street Fighting. If the vehicle is going to OVR that hex, the player *must* announce the OVR MP expenditure as the vehicle enters the hex unless *all* the targets are unknown [D7.1].

If there are concealed units in the Location, and the vehicle entering is "unbroken" (i.e., it has either Inherent crew, Passengers or Riders [A12.1]) the concealed units must either voluntarily give up their concealment or take a combined PAATC (unless exempt from PAATC; 1PAATC if Inexperienced). The lowest Morale of the concealed units is used [A12.41]. If the concealed units fail their PAATC, they are immediately revealed and pinned. If they pass, they remain concealed, and the units need not take another PAATC in order to subsequently attack the same vehicle using CC Reaction Fire [D7.21]. HIP units are placed on board only if they fail a PAATC.

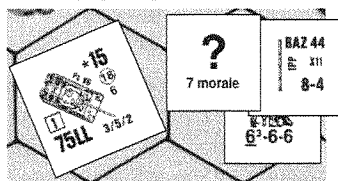


Example: An unarmed American Jeep with an 8-0 enters a Location with a German concealment counter and two more counters underneath. The German Player wants to keep concealment, so he must take a PAATC with the worst morale of the stack, or a 7 morale level if the stack is all Dummies. The German Player shouldn't announce the passing morale; he should just roll the dice. Without the 8-0 on board, no PAATC would have been necessary because an unarmed Jeep has no inherent crew and so is considered "broken" (A12.1). If the concealed stack were composed of German SMC, the stack could remain concealed because SMC are exempt from PAATC [A11.6]. Regardless of whether or not the concealment was stripped, the Jeep could declare an OVR after the PAATC (or announcement of exemption) was completed. If there had been unconcealed units in the Location, the Jeep would have had to declare the OVR before it entered the hex.

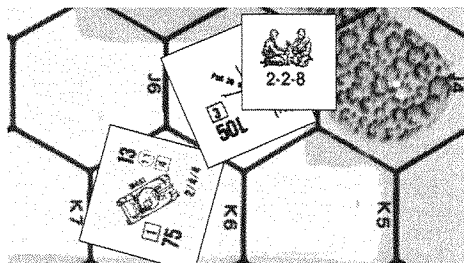
A great deal of fuss is made in the OVR rules about Reaction Fire. One could easily miss the fact that an overrunning vehicle can be attacked with DFF in the OVR Location before the OVR is resolved [Q&A 93a]. Successful DFF (i.e., Immobilization, Shock, Stun, or destruction) won't prevent an attack that already has been announced, but it does halve the OVR's fire-power strength. The potential number of DFF shots is equal to the number of MP expended by the vehicle to enter the hex and conduct the OVR. Units both outside and in the OVR Location can DFF, with DEFENDERS in the hex unaffected. The ATTACKER may not declare a Gun Duel in an attempt to resolve the OVR first [D7.1].

An in-hex DFF attack by a Gun against an overrunning vehicle suffers several penalties. If necessary, the Gun must change its CA so that it includes the hexside being entered, adding the Case A TH DRM. If that CA was fixed (by previous fire from building, rubble or woods, from behind Bocage, or by being pinned), the Gun can't change CA and so can't DFF (although the manning Infantry might SFF with its inherent FP). Also, the Case E (same hex) To Hit modifier applies to Guns. Finally, a non-vehicular Gun also incurs OVR Prevention penalties [C5.641], which means that the TH DR is also a NMC against the crew, regardless of whether it had previously fired. If the crew fails or is pinned, the effects of the shot are voided except for any Gun malfunction.

All other TH DRM apply as usual (moving target, target size, Intensive Fire, etc.), though Point Blank Range (Case L) is often N/A since the target is usually non-stopped. The target facing hit by an in-hex DFF shot is randomly determined by the TH roll [D3.2] (and presumably on the IFT roll for an IFT attack if there is more than one possible CE DRM). Accordingly, a small caliber weapon has a greater chance at a kill because it may hit the side or rear target aspect. LATW, especially ATR, Bazookas and PIAT, are likely candidates for same-hex fire. They are not subject to the Case E DRM and aren't affected by the OVR Prevention penalties because they aren't Guns [C5.5, C5.64]. In many cases these weapons won't or will barely penetrate the frontal armor of enemy AFV, so the possibility of a side or rear hit is a boon. Regardless, even if the ATTACKER is affected, the OVR is still executed, though perhaps at half FP.



Example: A BU Panther moves into LOS adjacent to an Open Ground hex containing a concealed 6-6-6 with a '44 Bazooka. To use a Bazooka against the frontal armor of a Panther mostly means hoping for a CH, so the 6-6-6 refrains from firing. The Panther enters the squad's hex. Rather than risk a PAATC, the American reveals the 6-6-6 and its Bazooka, but does not DFF right away because of the Case J1 DRM. The Panther announces an OVR of the squad, and the American First Fires the Bazooka at the Panther after waiting two MP. The TH# is 11 with a +1 DRM (+2 Case J Moving, -1 Case P Target Size). The TH DR is (4,1) (colored, white), a side, hull hit. The TK DR eliminates the Panther, so the OVR is resolved at half strength, i.e., 8 FP -1 DRM (OVR vs. Open Ground). If the 6-6-6 had killed or Immobilized the Panther before the OVR was announced, there would have been no OVR attack.

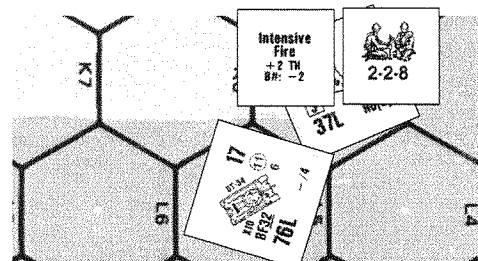


Example: A German 50mm AT Gun is emplaced in J5 (CA K4). An American M4A1 moves adjacent to K6. The TH #

is 10 with a +4 DRM (CA +3, Moving +2, Target size -1). The Gun needs a 3 to kill on the hull and a 6 on the turret, and has about a 12.8% chance of affecting the Sherman. If it waits until the Sherman enters its hex, the CA change still applies as well as the Case E DRM, so the TH DRM would be +6, but with a greater chance of actually affecting the target (roughly 15% after a hit) due to the possibility of a side or rear hit. The TH DRM is also a NMC on the Gun crew, and the OVR will be executed whether the Sherman survives or not. In either case, the Gun may fire again (ROF or Intensive Fire), this time without CA penalties. Because of the high penalty for changing CA, the results for firing at the Sherman while adjacent and while in-hex are not very different. If the CA of the Gun had been facing the Sherman, the Gun would get a result 24.15% of the time firing at the adjacent M4A1, while the chance of a result for an in-hex effect would be 45.65%. Again, the in-hex shot risks a NMC on the TH roll and the resolution of the OVR at half strength even if the vehicle is eliminated. The TH # for Deliberate Immobilization would be 10 with a +6 DRM (+2 Motion, -1 size, +5 Deliberate Immobilization) for an 11.11% chance of an effect versus the adjacent Sherman.

One DFF possibility easily forgotten is small-arms fire on the IFT vs. CE crews and OT vehicles. Even BU OT vehicles can be so attacked from within the same hex [A7.211]. Such fire is TPBF, with the crew and Passengers of the OT vehicle getting the +2 CE DRM whether it is BU or CE. The rules are silent as to the affect on the declared OVR if attacking Passengers pin, break, or die. [Given that the total destruction of the vehicle (and the possible elimination of its Passengers) only halves its OVR FP, it seems reasonable to say that the FP of affected Passengers is halved or full strength according to the fate of the overrunning vehicle—Eds.]

A non-vehicular Gun that has Intensive Fired can DFF one last time against an overrunning vehicle. This is an Overrun Prevention shot [C5.64], conducted exactly the same way and with the same penalties as an Intensive Fire shot. A Gun is allowed only one Overrun Prevention shot per MPh. If the Gun can't use Intensive Fire, it also can't take an Overrun Prevention shot. Moreover, this shot can be the only one taken by the Gun during this OVR; if the Gun has already fired during this OVR attack, it can't get an additional Overrun Protection shot. In addition to the Intensive Fire penalties, the Crew uses the TH DR as a NMC. If the crew fails the NMC or Pins, the shot is voided except for any Gun malfunction. A non-vehicular Gun not marked with a fire counter still suffers the NMC penalties of OVR Prevention when defending against an OVR.



Example: An emplaced German 37mm AT Gun is in K5 (CA L3) unconcealed. It has already Intensive Fired at another target and is covered with an Intensive Fire marker. A BU Russian OT-34 enters L5 and announces that it will enter K5 and OVR the Location. When the Russian enters the hex, it expends 6 MP. The German Gun could conceivably DFF six times had it not already Intensive Fired. Because it has, it can only fire once using an OVR Prevention shot. The crew opts

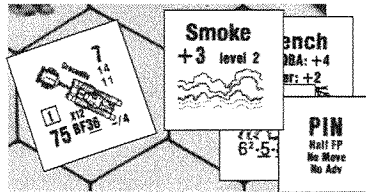
to do so, figuring that an OVR by a flame tank will be fatal and given that it must FPF anyway if it survives the OVR unbroken. The TH turns its CA to 4M5 to include the hex-side being entered. The TH number is 10 with a +9 DRM (CA change +3, same hex +2, Intensive Fire +2, Moving +2), which means its best result will be an Improbable Hit. The TH DR (which is also the crew's NMC) is a 6, a miss, but the crew doesn't break or pin and the Gun doesn't Malfunction. The Gun and crew are marked with a No Fire Marker. If the TH DR had been an 8, the crew would have pinned and any effects of the shot (none in this example) would be voided. If the TH DR had been 9, the crew would have broken and any hit would have been voided. If the TH DR had been a 10, the crew would have broken, the Gun would malfunction, and any hit would have been voided.

Clearly, certain DFF shots against in-hex overrunning vehicles are potentially dangerous to the Gun crew, while others are well worth waiting for. Non-vehicular Guns must use the Case E same-hex DRM and the TH DR acts as a NMC. These penalties are balanced against the use of a random target facing, allowing for the possibility that a small Gun can kill a well-armored tank. Obviously, Guns that can easily kill the overrunning vehicle should fire before the vehicle enters the hex; other Guns have the unenviable choice of hoping for a CH, firing for Deliberate Immobilization, waiting for the in-hex shot, or, if Concealed, retaining Concealment and hoping for the best. LATW such as bazookas don't suffer the OVR Prevention penalties nor the Case E DRM, so they are more likely to make an in-hex attack, especially when they can't penetrate the ATTACKER'S frontal armor. Units making IFT attacks (using Small Arms and MG, IFT equivalency, etc.) must decide whether to attack the vehicle outside the hex with (at most) doubled FP (but no OVR attack takes place if the DFF is successful) or attack after the vehicle enters with tripled FP (but the OVR attack takes place even if the DFF attack eliminated or otherwise stopped the ATTACKER). As discussed later, waiting until *after* the OVR is made may be the best option.

EXECUTING THE OVERRUN

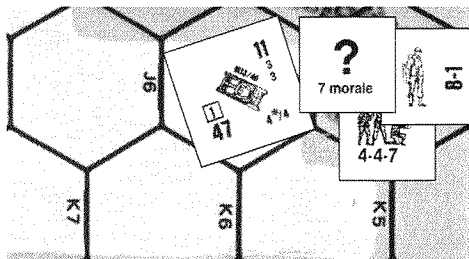
The FP strength of the OVR attack is the total of all usable MG [EXC: RMG] and IFE weapons, tripled for TPBF then halved for BFF. Note that there is no halving of the OVR attack for Motion/Non-Stopped Fire [D7.11]. Passengers of CE, armored HT can also add their FP, again tripled and halved. Riders and CE Passengers of vehicles other than armored HT can add their FP, tripled for TPBF, halved for BFF and halved again for mounted fire. Passengers pinned prior to the OVR declaration will have their FP halved again. Flamethrower FP is added unadjusted, without tripling or halving. Finally four FP are added if the ATTACKER is an AFV with a usable MA that is not MG, FT, MTR, ATR or IFE capable, two FP for any other AFV, or one FP for any other vehicle (again not tripled or halved). An Armor Leader will modify the OVR attack, and a Passenger leader may direct an OVR attack that includes other Passengers.

The DEFENDER receives the benefits of applicable TEM in the Location except when the OVR is conducted with only a FT [D7.15]. The DEFENDER also receives any SMOKE Hindrance DRM. Hedge or wall TEM also apply when the OVR vehicle enters across such a hex-side, but isn't cumulative with any in-hex TEM. An OVR attack vs. Infantry or Cavalry in an Open Ground hex gets the -1 FFMO DRM. The Open Ground DRM applies in all Open Ground hexes, even if the unit in question wouldn't be subject to FFMO because of other TEM (e.g., entrenchment, emplacement, shellhole, vehicle or wreck, bridge, wall, bocage, as well as SMOKE) in the hex, but such TEM is cumulative with the FFMO DRM. Infantry manning a Gun may receive the benefit of emplacement, but a non-emplaced Gun does not receive its Gunshield DRM because the attack occurs from within its own hex [C11.5]. An OVR attack against a Motion vehicle (and its PRC) receives a +2 DRM.



Example: A BU Churchill Crocodile overruns a pinned 6-5-8 entrenched in Open Ground and entrenched in +3 Smoke. Assuming the German player has used up all his PF capability (C13.31), the squad has no DFF. The Crocodile can attack in a number of ways. Among them, it can use its FT alone at 32 FP plus 3 (+4 Smoke, -1 Open Ground, but no TEM because only the FT is being used), or it can use all its weapons at 42 FP (4 FP MG tripled and halved, 4 FP for AFV with functioning MA, 32 FP for FT) plus 7 (+4 Smoke, -1 Open Ground, +4 foxhole), or it could use some other combination of weapons. Note that the -1 DRM for Open Ground applied even though the squad was entrenched and in Smoke, and that the Smoke DRM was +4 due to fire within the hex [A24.8].

If the overrunning vehicle becomes Immobile or is destroyed before the OVR MP expenditure is complete (e.g., it Bogs in the terrain in the hex, is eliminated by DFF, etc.), the OVR attack is still performed, but the FP of the attack is halved. Of course, if it Bogs in the hex it is exiting (Bocage or Stream) or is eliminated or Immobilized by mines as it attempts to exit, no attack takes place.

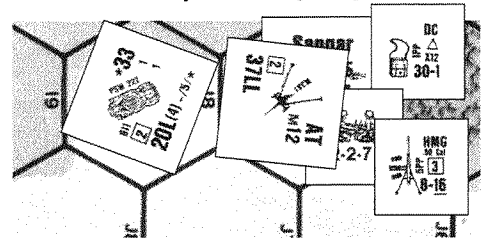


Example: A BU Italian M13/40 moves into a woods hex with a concealed British 4-5-7 and 8-1 at half its MP allotment. The 8-1 is immune to PAATC, but the British squad does not want to lose concealment, so it takes a PAATC with the Leadership DRM. It fails, loses concealment, and is pinned. The M13 must roll for Bog, which it passes, placing a partial Trail Break. The M13 now announces an OVR attack. The attack is at 16 FP (8 FP MG tripled and halved, plus 4 FP for

AFV with qualifying MA) +1 DRM (woods) vs. the squad and 8 FP +1 DRM vs. the still-concealed leader. If the M13 had failed its Bog check, no OVR would have been possible. If the British had not been concealed and the OVR had been announced outside the woods hex, the OVR attack would have been resolved even if the tank Bugged, but at half FP.

Guns and SW possessed by units eliminated by a final KIA, or those unpossessed when a KIA is achieved in the Location, are subject to Random SW/Gun Destruction [A9.74]. If the overrunning vehicle is a fully-tracked AFV, the Random SW/Gun Destruction dr has a -1 drm. An overrunning, fully-tracked vehicle can also check for Random SW/Gun Destruction against unpossessed or non-portable SW/Guns not in an entrenchment or Pillbox if it ends its MPH in their Location even if the OVR did not result in a KIA. If there are no Personnel in the Location, a fully-tracked AFV can declare an OVR attack against unpossessed SW/Guns and eliminate them automatically when they are not in a Pillbox or entrenchment.

Terrain in the hex also may be affected by the vehicle's entry. Only a CT, BU AFV can enter a building, possibly resulting in Rubble, which may eliminate other occupants of the hex or fall into other hexes [B23.41, B24.11, B24.121]. Entry into woods, forest, jungle or bamboo by a fully-tracked vehicle allows a Trail Break [B13.421] in that hex. A Final KIA via OVR eliminates a Sangar [F8.41], and a fully-tracked AFV automatically eliminates a Sangar (and any Gun in it) if the vehicle is Mobile when the OVR is resolved. Huts automatically collapse when entered by a vehicle [G5.4].

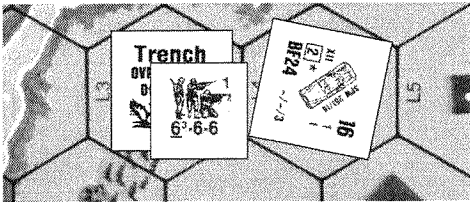


Example: A German PSW 222 Overruns a non-emplaced American crew manning a 37mm AT Gun in a Sangar. The crew also possesses an HMG, and there is an unpossessed DC outside the Sangar. The attack uses 12 FP (9 IFE & CMG FP tripled and halved, and 2 FP for an AFV with an IFE MA) with a net zero DRM (+1 Sangar TEM, -1 Open Ground). If the result of the OVR is a KIA, the Sangar and the crew are eliminated. The Gun, HMG and unpossessed DC all roll for Random SW/Gun Destruction.

If the ATTACKER had been a fully-tracked AFV, the Sangar and the Gun (because it was in the Sangar) would have been eliminated automatically if the AFV were still Mobile, and the ATTACKER could have rolled for Random SW/Gun Destruction on the unpossessed DC if the tank had ended its MPH in the Location no matter what the result of the OVR, even if the DC had been in the Sangar (an entrenchment). If the DC had been in a Sangar that survived an OVR, it would be safe. The HMG would only roll for Random SW/Gun Destruction if a Final KIA were achieved, as would the Gun if it had not been Sangared. All Random SW/Gun Destruction rolls would have a -1 DRM because the vehicle was a fully-tracked AFV.

An OVR attack may cause one or more of the ATTACKER'S weapons to malfunction. If the attack DR could malfunction more than one weapon, the weapon that malfunctions is determined by random selection per A9.71. If the

attack was directed against inanimate objects (e.g., Guns, SW) exclusively or was performed without weapons (using only the base FP of the vehicle itself), an IFT DR of 12 will Immobilize the vehicle instead. In all cases, the results of the attack still apply normally, e.g., the FP of the weapon that malfunctions still counts and the FP of the attack is not halved for *this* Immobilization.



Example: A German SPW 251/16 overruns an American 6-6-6 entrenched in brush. The HT can attack using the FT alone at 36 FP zero DRM (using both FT). Per German Vehicle Note 66, both these FT are eliminated on an 11 or 12. If the German attacks using the AAMG and the base FP of the vehicle along with both FT, the attack would be at 36 FP plus 4 for the foxhole. On a DR of 11, both FT would malfunction, but on a DR of 12 the weapon(s) that malfunction would be determined using Random Selection between the AAMG and the two FT.

REACTION FIRE

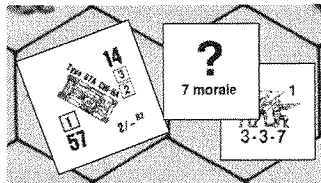
Reaction Fire (RF) usually takes place after an OVR has been completed. There are two types of RF. The form most commonly used is Close Combat RF (CC RF), where Infantry/Cavalry attack the vehicle using the Close Combat rules. CC Reaction Fire also can be used whenever a vehicle enters the Location of Infantry/Cavalry, not just after an OVR, or when Street Fighting is possible. These non-OVR CC RF attacks are identical to post-OVR CC RF. Another form of Reaction Fire, non-CC Reaction Fire (non-CC RF), is DFF by Ordnance, Small Arms, etc., that occurs *after* an OVR has been completed. Use of either type of Reaction Fire is voluntary, unless the DEFENDER being overrun is marked with a Final Fire counter (or is a Gun marked with any fire counter), in which case it is required to attempt Reaction Fire. DEFENDERS thus *required* to make a Reaction Fire attack are making a Final Protective Fire (FPF) attack and any IFT or TH DR also acts as a NMC against them. A unit may RF as many times as MP were spent in its Location (less any MP used as the basis for DFF by that defending unit before the OVR attack).

CC REACTION FIRE

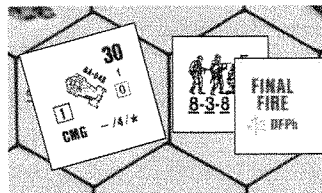
If an Infantry or Cavalry unit is unbroken, unpinned, armed, not in Melee, and in a moving vehicle's Location, it may attempt to attack the vehicle using the CC rules. This is true whether the vehicle is overrunning the Location or not. If an Infantry or Cavalry unit is marked with a Final Fire marker, it *must* attempt to use FPF Reaction Fire against an overrunning vehicle, even if pinned, though not against a vehicle that merely enters its Location.

Before first using CC RF, the DEFENDER must pass a PAATC (1PAATC if Inexperienced) unless exempt or the unit took a PAATC when the vehicle entered the hex. If it fails the PAATC, the unit is pinned and cannot make the attack unless it is a FPF CC RF attack.

The CC attack is performed using the CC vs. vehicles procedures [A11.5-.612]. The vehicle can't attack back at all using the CC rules. If this is a FPF CC Reaction Fire attack, the CC DR is also a NMC against the attacking unit, but its attack is unaffected by its breaking or pinning. An already pinned unit can't make a CC RF attack unless it is FPF CC RF. If the unit is pinned and doing FPF CC RF, its CCV is reduced by 1 since its FP is halved. Note that a Japanese squad/HS can attempt to create a Tank-Hunter Hero (T-H Hero) per G1.421; the T-H Hero can either attack separately with a CCV of 5 or add 1 to the CCV of its creating MMC. Also, Japanese T-H Heroes and late-war Germans can roll for Anti-Tank Magnetic Mines after declaring a CC RF attack per G1.4231 and C13.7 respectively.



Example: A BU Japanese Chi-Ha tank overran a concealed Chinese 3-3-7 but inflicted no damage. The squad passed a 1PAATC to retain concealment when the AFV entered the hex and doesn't have to take another 1PAATC to use CC RF. The squad attacks with a CCV of 5 and a +2 DRM for the tank's Motion status. The squad is marked with First Fire and CC markers. If it had been pinned—either before the OVR, by the OVR, or by the 1PAATC—it could not use CC RF. Assume a similar situation, but this time the squad is marked with a First Fire marker, and again survives the OVR unscathed. Although not required to attack, it does so, passes its 1PAATC, and attacks using CC RF. The CCV is again a base 5 with a -1 CCV modifier because of the First Fire marker and a +2 DRM for the tank's Motion status. Again, had the squad been pinned, it couldn't have attacked.



Example: A Finnish 8-3-8 is OVR by a Russian BA-64B. The BA-64B is an OT vehicle and is CE. The Finns Subsequent First Fired at the Russian when it was adjacent. After the Russian OVR attack has no effect, the squad, because it is marked with a Final Fire marker, must perform some kind of FPF attack. It can use non-CC RF with its Small Arms because the Russian is OT, or it can use CC RF. If it uses CC RF, it must first take a PAATC. If it passes, its base CCV of 5 would be reduced to 4 due to the fire marker, with +2 DRM for Motion and -2 DRM for OT. The CC DR would also be a NMC against the squad. Failure of the NMC would not negate any effect of the attack against the tank. If the squad failed its PAATC, it would be pinned, but must still use FPF RF, with an extra -1 to its CCV for being halved by the pin.

NON-CC REACTION FIRE

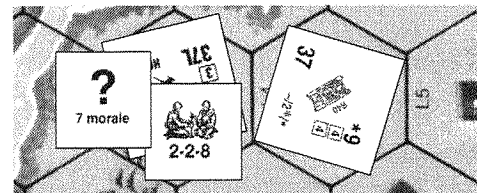
Non-CC RF has an awkward name which makes the concept more difficult to grasp than

it ought to be. It comprises all RF attacks except those by Infantry/Cavalry using the CC rules. This includes Direct Fire by Infantry using Small Arms or IFE, FT, Ordnance (including LATW), MOL, or thrown DC (though only Japanese may throw a DC in their own Location unless the target is a vehicle in Bypass [A23.61]). Unlike CC RF, non-CC RF can only be used after an OVR attack. Because the attack is made with weapons and not "bare-handed," units making a non-CC RF attack aren't required to pass a PAATC.

Non-CC RF is optional for a Gun and crew being OVR if not marked with a fire marker or if the overrunning vehicle is an unarmored vehicle with no PRC. Otherwise, a non-vehicular Gun which is marked with *any* fire marker (First, Final, Intensive) *must* attack as FPF non-CC RF. A non-vehicular Gun marked with a First Fire marker must Intensive Fire if it can. If the Gun is incapable of firing (e.g., because it can't change CA or because it can't use Intensive Fire), the crew must make a non-CC RF attack using its inherent FP or use CC RF. This FPF non-CC RF uses the TH or IFT DR as a NMC against the attacking unit.

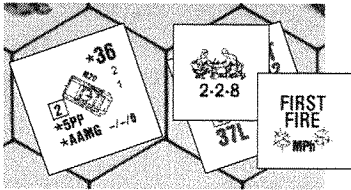
Units not manning a Gun are required to attack only if they are marked with a Final Fire marker. When so required to attack, they are not forced to use non-CC RF as their first option, but the TH, IFT, or CC DR is still a NMC against the attacker.

There are advantages to non-CC RF, especially when used by Ordnance. A Gun must turn its CA to match the CA of the vehicle, but it doesn't pay Case A or Case E (same hex) TH DRM. Further, the attack is automatically against the rear target facing.



Example: A French R40 moves adjacent to a German 37mm AT Gun emplaced and concealed in brush preparatory to declaring an OVR attack. The AT Gun would have to turn two hexspines to fire, making a hit by DFF either in the adjacent hex or in the same hex very unlikely; the heavy armor of the French tank makes a kill even less likely. The German player decides to wait. He could either reveal the Gun when the French tank enters or take a PAATC. Passing the PAATC means the OVR will be at half FP, but failing it means that the Gun can't change CA and so won't be able to attack, so he drops concealment. The AFV then declares an OVR, which has no effect, and the German Player can now use RF. If the vehicle was CE, OT, or unarmored, the crew could make a non-CC RF attack with its Small Arms. The crew could attack using CC RF, but this is not a particularly clever move, since the Gun could use non-CC RF with a much greater chance of success. The Gun changes its CA to match that of the tank (one hexspine) but it does not pay the Case A TH DRM. It also doesn't pay the Case E (same hex) TH DRM, so the final TH # is 10 with a +3 TH DRM (+2 Moving vehicle, +1 target size). Any hit is automatically on the rear target aspect. If the Gun crew had been pinned by the OVR (and so couldn't change CA), the Gun couldn't make a non-CC RF attack (and the crew couldn't make a CC RF either because it is pinned). If the crew had been pinned but the Gun's CA was

in the right direction, it could still make a non-CC RF attack with a +5 TH DRM.



Example: A CE American M20 Scout Car overruns a Japanese 37mm AT Gun. The Gun is marked with a First Fire marker, and its CA is such that it would have to turn two hexspines to attack the M20. If the Gun fired while the attacker was adjacent, it would probably miss due to the turning CA and the Intensive Fire DRM. An in-hex DFF attack would be even worse because of the case E TH DRM and the NMC for OVR Prevention, so the Gun decides to wait for Reaction Fire. The OVR results in a MC on the crew. The crew fails, but this only step-reduces the Japanese crew, leaving them still able to make the RF attack. In fact, the crew *must* make a PPF RF attack because it is manning a Gun and is marked with a First Fire marker. The crew could make its PPF RF as a non-CC RF attack with its Inherent FP, make a CC RF attack, or make a non-CC RF with the Gun. The Japanese player chooses the last; it changes CA to match the M20's CA, but does not use CA change or same hex TH DRM. This is Intensive Fire, however, so there is a +2 TH DRM for that. Any hit is a rear hit. Because this is a PPF attack, the TH DR is also a NMC on the crew, and pinning or breaking would void this attack. If the Gun in this example wasn't capable of Intensive Fire, or it already had Intensive Fired, or the crew was Pinned or couldn't change CA, it couldn't fire. The crew would be required to make a PPF RF attack, either a non-CC RF attack using its inherent FP or a CC RF attack. In both cases, the attack DR is also a NMC.

EXITING THE HEX (OR NOT)

Once the OVR and any Reaction Fire is complete, the vehicle can leave the hex. Depending on the circumstance, however, it may be better to remain in the hex. The presence of the vehicle in the Location will prevent enemy fire out of the Location (unless the vehicle is unarmored with no PRC) [A7.212]. The vehicle, however, would face CC in the CCPh.

Vehicles remaining in-hex with enemy units frequently do so in Motion to make them harder to kill in CC. This does not hold Infantry in Melee [A11.7] but because there is an eligible TPBF attack opportunity, the Infantry can't fire out of the Location [A7.212]. If the vehicle is going to remain in hex, it may want to expend extra MP to enter the hex (allowed per F11.74) if it will remain in Motion. Technically speaking, a vehicle can remain in Motion at the end of its MPH only if it doesn't have enough MP to enter the next hex [D2.4], and Delay MP can only be spent by a stopped vehicle [D2.17].

When the vehicle exits the hex it may be vulnerable to a rear shot. If there is any possibility of this, consider turning the turret to face the rear as you exit the hex. The vehicle is especially vulnerable if a Gun has taken a non-CC RF shot and so has its CA facing the same way as the ATTACKER's VCA. One possible action in this situation is to turn before exiting the hex.

SUBSEQUENT OVERRUNS

While a vehicle can perform more than one OVR in its MPH, a hex can't be OVR twice by the same vehicle unless it leaves and re-enters. Under ideal circumstances, a vehicle could perform at most three

OVR attacks without using ESB because each attack uses 1/4 of the MP allotment [FRU], and the vehicle must expend MP to enter each hex.

UNUSUAL OVERRUNS

Strange combinations of rules can lead to some odd OVR attacks. For example, a vehicle can OVR as part of an armored assault with a Human Wave. Because the participants of the Human Wave entered the Location, the DEFENDER must fire per A8.312. If the DEFENDER has already First-Fired, it will be marked with a Final Fire marker. Because it was not marked with a Final Fire counter when the OVR was declared, however, it isn't required to make a PPF RF attack.

Bulldozers are also capable of OVR attacks [G15.26]. They can OVR at the same time they are dozing, so potentially one could OVR units outside a Pillbox and then use clearance to eliminate the Pillbox. Alas, the OVR strength of a bulldozer is only 2 FP (whether armored or unarmored).

Trucks and other unarmed, unarmored vehicles can perform OVR attacks at 1 FP. While trucks are very vulnerable to DFF, truck OVR is an option to draw enemy fire away from more valuable units or to attack (and DM) broken units, especially if the target units are in the open on a Road.

A wagon, on the other hand, can't OVR because it expends MF, not MP. Landing Craft are not allowed to use OVR [G12.5]; Boats and Amphibians in the water are not explicitly forbidden from using OVR, but it seems reasonable to assume that they can't. *[In fact, the whole issue of unarmed, unarmored vehicles conducting an OVR is subject to debate. While A20.54 is apparently referring only to Personnel when it forbids Unarmed units to enter an enemy occupied Location, the same prohibition arguably could apply to trucks. After all, just what happens when an unarmed Jeep Overruns and breaks the CE crew of a King Tiger? Whiplash? Or did the tank commander hit his head while doubled over laughing?—Eds.]*

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION...

If a Player anticipates OVR by his opponent, he will want to minimize the effects of those attacks if possible. Keeping vulnerable units in terrain that vehicles

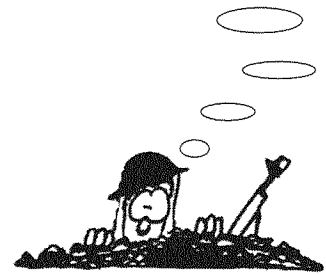
avoid such as woods or buildings will help. Dispersing vulnerable troops will also make OVR attacks less of a threat. Entrenching will substantially improve the defense against OVR attacks.

AFTERMATH

The tank rushes towards its intended victims into a swarm of shells and bullets. As it enters the enemy position, its guns blaze at targets in all directions. Over the din, a loud crack cuts the back armor, a shot from an ATR that waited until the tank had passed. The crew's ears ring, but there is no permanent damage. Some defenders run while others hold their ground despite (or because of) their fears. One even tries to throw a grenade bundle on the engine grates without success. The tank crew is grateful to get away; they are nearly as pale as the mangled dead, and as terrified as the living they leave behind.

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

It is easy to forget that Dense Jungle has a normal stacking limit of two squad-equivalent (G2.2) while Light Jungle has the regular normal stacking limit of three. Once you have this firmly established in the memory banks, don't forget that stacking in Dense Jungle goes back up to three squad-equivalent in a road/building hex.



OVERRUN FIREPOWER TABLE

$$\text{Total FP}^a = \text{Base FP} + \text{any additional FP}$$

Base FP	Additional FP
Unarmored Vehicle... 1 FP	Tripled & Halved FP: MG/IFE
AFV...2 FP	Full FP: FT ^b
AFV with non-MG/-FT/ -MTR/-ATR/-IFE MA. 4 FP	3/2 FP: CE Armored HT Passengers
	3/4 FP: All other non-BU Pass./Riders
	NA: RMG

a: Total FP is halved each for concealed target and/or if vehicle becomes eliminated/Immobilized.
b: TEM NA if only FT FP used.

UP NUMBER ONE ROAD



SCENARIO BB15



MANUS ISLAND, the ADMIRALTIES, 16 March 1944: Control of the Admiralty Islands was another step in the strategic encirclement of the Japanese base at Rabaul. The primary objectives in the Admiralties were the two airfields: Momote on Los Negros and Lorengau on Manus. The 1st Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division successfully secured Momote Airfield on 29 February and the rest of Los Negros by 8 March. The 2nd Brigade, which included the 8th Cavalry Regiment, was assigned the task of taking Manus Island. On 9 March, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team went ashore near Lugos Mission, 2.5 miles west of Lorengau. In a two-pronged attack one week later, the 1st Squadron of the 8th Cavalry moved eastward along Number Three Road, while the 2nd Squadron moved southward down a trail. The 2nd's mission was to reach Number One Road and follow it northward to the airstrip.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

HANDICAPS:

- U3: Use U2, and add one Roadblock to the Japanese OB.
- U2: Use U1, and add one 1+3+5 pillbox to the Japanese OB.
- U1: In the Japanese OB, replace three 3-4-7s with three 4-4-7s.
- J1: Add one 3-4-7 and one FT to the U.S. OB.
- J2: Use J1, and none of the pillboxes receive tunnels.
- J3: Use J2, and increase the game length to 12 Turns.



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The U.S. wins at the end of any Game Turn in which they Control all existing pillboxes, provided they have not lost ≥ 24 Casualty VP.

TURN RECORD CHART

JAPANESE Sets Up First [165]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	END
	AMERICAN Moves First [161]											

Elements of the 14th Naval Base Force [ELR: 3] set up on/between hexrows E and BB (see SSR 2): {SAN: 5}

	1 4-4-7	2 3-4-7	2-2-8	10-1	9-1	3 3-8-14	2 4-11	1 2-8	2 50+ [1-10]	1+3+5	
	5	5	5	2	3	2	3		4		

Elements of the 2nd Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment [ELR: 3] enter on Turn 1 along the south edge: {SAN: 3}

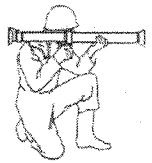
1 6-6-6	3-4-7	10-2	9-1	8-0	7-0	2 4-10	4 8-4	2 30-1	3 75	
13	3		2			2	2	3		

SPECIAL RULES

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect [EXC: the road running A5-P5-Q6-GG5 still exists; the V5 Bridge becomes a Ford as per G.1].
2. All pillboxes must set up in road hexes.
3. In addition to losing HIP normally, any roadblock will be revealed when a Good Order U.S. unit gains an LOS to its hex across the roadblock hexside.

AFTERMATH: At the juncture of the trail and Number One Road, the 2nd Squadron found three pillboxes. It took a combined assault from tanks, bulldozers and infantry to overcome them. Then, accompanied by one tank and one bulldozer, the 2nd Squadron started the arduous task of fighting its way up Number One Road. The Cavalrymen took advantage of the heavy jungle bordering the road as they approached the airstrip. In the process, they reduced eight enemy pillboxes blocking the road. Progress was slow, and their advance cautious and measured. At dusk, they were 100 yards south of Lorengau Airstrip, but had suffered few casualties during the day's fighting.

AMBITIOUS PLANS



SCENARIO BB16



POINT CRUZ, GUADALCANAL, 27 September 1942: After the series of Bloody Ridge engagements earlier in the month, General Vandegrift knew that a sizable Japanese force was operating from Matanikau village east of Point Cruz. A series of ambitious offensives in regimental strength were planned to clear out the enemy. Forces under the commands of Colonel Edson and Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller attacked the Japanese forces from the east, but met with very heavy Japanese resistance. A message sent to Edson led him to mistakenly believe that the Marines were making good progress. In order to exploit this misinterpreted success, Edson sent Chesty Puller's 1st Battalion, 7th Marines to land west of Point Cruz and attack Matanikau from the rear supported by fire from the destroyer *USS Monssen*. No sooner had the first ridge been gained when two Japanese columns attacked the flanks of the battalion and cut it off from the shore.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

HANDICAPS:

- U3: Use U2, and expand the Japanese setup area to include hexes numbered "10" east of hexrow Q on board 39.
 - U2: Use U1, and in the U.S. OB, replace three of the LCP(L)s with three LCVs (Landing Craft Note 3).
 - U1: Add one 9-0 leader, and one Japanese MMG and its crew to the Japanese OB.
- J1: In the U.S. setup instructions, replace "> 6" with "> 5".
- J2: Use J1, and in the VC, replace "> 35" with "> 31".
- J3: Use J2, and one 7-0, one 5-5-8 and one U.S. MMG to the U.S. OB.



OC1	OC2	OC3
Be4	Be5	Be6
37		
	O3	
39		

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The U.S. wins immediately when they have exited ≥ 35 Exit VP off the north edge of any Ocean overlay. This VP total is increased by a number equal to the circled number on the turn of the Turn Record Chart in which the U.S. Air Support arrives.

TURN RECORD CHART

U.S. Sets Up First [181]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	END
JAPANESE Moves First [135]		3	3	2	2	1	1						

Elements of the 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment, 1st Marine Division [ELR: 5] set up on board 39 on Level 2/3 hill hexes numbered ≥ 6 : {SAN: 3}

3	10					2

Elements of ad hoc landing craft flotilla enter on Turn 2 along the north edge of any Ocean overlay:

4	6

Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 124th Regiment [ELR: 4] set up on board 39 on/west of hexrow Q in hexes numbered >9 and/or enter on Turn 1 along the south edge of board 39: {SAN: 5}

10	2			2	2	2

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect including Light Jungle (G2.1). All Gullies are Paths.
2. Place overlays as follows: O3 on 39H1-H2; Be4 with hexes 401-402 on 37L2-L1; Be5 with 501-502 on 406-405; Be6 with 601-602 on 566-567; OC1 with 1001-1002 on 505-504; OC2 with 2001-2002 on 618-617; and OC3 with 3001-3002 on 677-676. Beach slope is Moderate.
3. Despite the possibility of the Japanese entering play from entirely offboard, the U.S. may not Bore Sight. Contrary to G1.631, the Japanese may not utilize HIP.
4. The U.S. is conducting a Seaborne Evacuation (G14.3). Prior to setup, the U.S. may secretly designate one LC which will add a -1 DRM to any attack using its MA (Landing Craft Multi-Applicable Note C). The U.S. receives random Air Support (E7.2), which will consist of one FB armed only with one 4 FP MG.
5. The U.S. receives one module of 120+mm NOBA (G14.6; HE and WP) which is directed by the initial U.S. hero; this hero is considered an onboard Observer (C1.6) for all purposes, but only if he has LOS to Level 1 of the battery's pre-designated Ocean hex (G14.62). All NOBA actions conducted by the hero are concealment loss activities. The hero's Radio Contact value is "8"; radio malfunction and G.7 are NA. Once Contact is gained or maintained, no further Maintenance DR are required provided the hero does not exit the hex from which he last conducted a NOBA action; otherwise a normal maintenance DR is required. While the hero is directing the NOBA, Battery Access is gained automatically [EXC: subsequent Battery Access draws are required as per C1.21].

6. Direction of the U.S. NOBA battery will be permanently assumed by a Shipboard Observer (G14.68) immediately when the initial U.S. hero loads onto an LC, becomes wounded, or loses Good Order status.
7. To represent flanking fire, during the MPH/DFPh of each U.S. Player Turn, the Japanese may conduct up to three 1 FP attacks against any Ocean hex(es), resolved as though they were Residual Fire attacks.

AFTERMATH: Lacking radio equipment with which to communicate their plight, the isolated Marines were able to signal a liaison aircraft by spelling out "HELP" with their t-shirts. Once word of the Marines' predicament was reported to HQ, Chesty Puller boarded the *Monssen*, and with a band of landing craft headed to the initial landing site. When the *Monssen* reached station, it could not communicate with the retreating Marines until Sergeant Robert Raysbrook exposed himself to fire in order to semaphore fire directions to the destroyer. Under cover of the *Monssen's* guns and occasional strafing runs made by the liaison plane, the Marines reached the beach and setup a hasty perimeter. As the landing craft approached the beach, they began taking flanking fire from the promontory of Point Cruz. As soon as the boats beached, the Marines boarded under the covering fire provided by the craft's manning Coast Guardsmen. For his outstanding performance contributing to such fire during this evacuation, Coast Guardsman Douglas Munro was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor—the only Coast Guardsman to receive this award. In the end the 1st Battalion was successfully evacuated, but at a cost of 18 Marines killed and 25 wounded.

AMBITIOUS DESIGNS

DESIGNER'S NOTES FOR BB16 AMBITIOUS PLANS

by Brian Youse

Ambitious Plans is the final product of that long series of steps which constitutes designing a scenario. It takes at least several months and often much longer to get a scenario to a state where we're comfortable releasing it in *Backblast*. What does it take for us to be comfortable releasing a scenario? Well, when the editors would happily play either side, we pretty much consider a scenario balanced. Let's run through the design process followed when developing "Ambitious Plans."

The scenario concept came to me while reading Osprey's Guadalcanal book. If you're familiar with the Osprey Campaign Series, they do an entire battle or campaign in around 100 pages with lots of illustrations. You don't expect to find many scenario ideas within these books, but they sometimes contain little gems. While reading this book, I noticed an interesting action where the Marines retreated to landing craft. With naval supporting fire and air cover, they got in the boats and ran away. I saw immediately the incredible scenario potential for this battle. The scale was right for ASL. I'm a PTO nut so the theater was excellent. Naval artillery, landing craft and a seaborne evacuation, and planes, too. What's not to like?

Taking the above with a grain of salt (it was, after all, just one Osprey book), I picked up a copy of Frank's *Guadalcanal* and the U.S. Army in WWII's *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive* and did some digging. While there are a few differences between the three sources, they are close enough to be "historical" for me.

The Marines landed a flanking force, pushed inland some 400 yards to a ridge, then were counterattacked by a strong force of Japanese. The IJA flanking maneuvers may or may not have entirely encircled the Marine force while it pulled back to the beach (the reports vary), but the Japanese certainly tried valiantly to do so. The Marines called in covering naval fire (one heads-up leatherneck used semaphore to direct it), and made it to the beach where they fought off the Japanese until the Higgins boats came to the rescue. Timely strafing runs by a Douglas dive bomber acting as a liaison plane combined with the powerful machine-guns on the landing craft to give the Marines time to mount up. They then sailed away, having suffered some 45 casualties in this abortive attempt to encircle a larger-than-anticipated Japanese force defending the Matanikau river.

In designing the scenario, I started with the maps. I needed a ridge and a map between the ridge and the beach and ocean overlays. The

ridge the Marines had taken was jungle covered to the landward side while grassy on the seaward side so the map that sprang to mind was board 39. This board works well, with one side predominantly open ground while the other is heavily wooded (Jungle, since PTO terrain is in effect). I felt that the other hill boards were too exposed to reflect the terrain in question, although a good many hills on Guadalcanal were quite bare besides kunai and grass. The generic mix of PTO-type terrain on board 37 more than adequately reflected the Guadalcanal countryside. Beach size was easy, as pictures of the beaches near the Matanikau exist in any Guadalcanal book. The real beach was no more than 20-30 feet wide, so I went with one hex of beach and only two hexes of shallow ocean to reflect this. An overlay to blot out the obvious "out of place" terrain and I think we have a good representation of the ground in question.

Victory conditions were also easy. The U.S. had to exit a percentage of its squads from the map. They were, after all, retreating and the goal was to save the unit from obliteration. I toyed with the idea of giving the U.S. a win if the Japanese lost some amount of CVP. But why? The Japanese were intent on destroying the flanking force, and the U.S. plan should not be to duke it out, but to head home. Given enough time, the Japanese would have eliminated the Marines to the man. A U.S. win by any means other than saving the unit was ahistorical and unrealistic.

Orders of battle? Well, we know the exact U.S. units in question and can nail down the Japanese formations to battalion level. Good enough for government work. Scenario size is important to me, as I don't often care for monster scenarios. My preference is for small to medium-small scenarios, so I gave the U.S. 13 squads. This seemed a good size, representing elements of a company or two. I assigned "historical" leaders, that is I followed Chapter H. There was no mention of any leader who was outstanding so I stayed away from the Ubermensch mentality. No -2 leader. I read no mention of Marines using heavy weapons, so I didn't give them mortars or heavy machine guns. They may have pitched them in the run to the beach, or were just traveling light. The liaison dive bomber which strafed the Japanese on the beach was easy enough to represent by giving the U.S. a single fighter with no bombs and a weak 4 FP MG.

The NOBA is standard caliber for a U.S. destroyer. The sergeant who exposed himself to

fire to signal the destroyer's support fire is represented by a hero, and only he can direct the NOBA from on-shore. I'd have liked for this ability to kind of "happen" somehow in the course of the game, but it would have been too tough to balance a scenario with an SSR that says "the first created hero can direct NOBA". Wow, talk about an impact HoB DR! So for purposes of the scenario we say the guy is already a hero and can get to work from the get-go. Similarly, letting *any* SMC (or even any hero) call in the NOBA gave the U.S. more flexibility than was warranted.

I wanted the NOBA to be able to shift to a Shipboard Observer when the hero either loaded-up or became *hors de combat* but did not want the U.S. player to be able to make this change at will. I also wanted the U.S. to have a definite incentive to use the hero to direct the fire mission. The SSRs capture both of these important elements, treating the hero like a (mostly) regular Observer but with automatic access (and no need for Maintenance unless he moves). Since the *Monssen* had no distractions during the course of the evacuation, automatic access seemed justified as long as our hero was jumping up and down in plain sight. He makes himself more vulnerable by doing so, of course; thus the loss of concealment. I considered invoking Hazardous Movement or TI for being a human semaphore, but then he was *too* vulnerable.

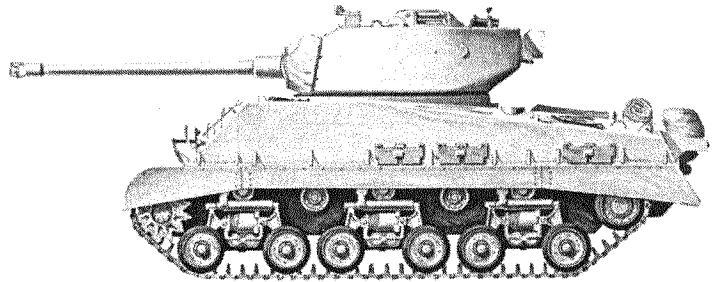
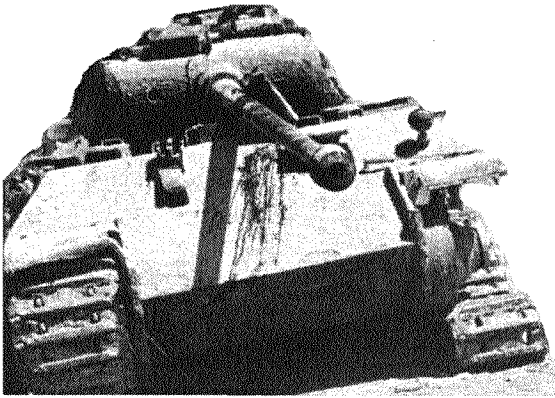
The LC are described as "Higgins boats," which is the nickname by which Chapter H refers to the LCP(L). There were both armed-and-armored LC and unarmed-and-unarmored LC in the vicinity at the time, but these LC were definitely armed (and thus armored). I felt that the partially-armored LCP(L) best captured both the strength and vulnerability of these vehicles. Highlighting Coast Guardsman Munro from amongst the other LC skippers presented further problems. LC can't have Armor Leaders (for good reason), and the multiple MG on the LC complicated this simulation. Wording this SSR "just right" didn't come easy.

Since something like 1400 Japanese troops were in the area, the Japanese OB could have been much larger, but a smaller, well led force seemed to work better. Figuring that the Japanese would always be on the attack in the game, their force had to be large enough to sustain some losses. Because the Marines would be constantly on the move (and so offer less resistance than a set defense), giving the

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PANTHER GEGEN SHERMAN

by Rodney Kinney



Sooner or later, every ASL player has to deal with the Panther-Sherman problem: you're facing a tank that will kill you on every hit and which you can only kill from the side or rear. The Panther's frontal Armor Factors (18 hull, 14 turret) are pretty much impervious to the 17 TK# of the American 76L carried by the M4A3(76). The Panther's side AF of 6 should go down before the 76L but still provide a degree of protection against the 14 TK# of the M4A1's 75. At least with the 76L, the M4A3(76) has a chance for APCR, with its 22 TK#. Throw in the range modifiers (+3 for 1 hex, +2 for 2 hexes, and +1 for 3 hexes) and APCR can have a better than even shot at taking out a Panther even through the front.

APCR isn't always around when you need it, however, and the Panther-Sherman dilemma can be very frustrating for the U.S. player. There are several things the U.S. player can do to maximize his chances of success. This article explores one such approach in depth. The accompanying sidebar briefly discusses several other avenues.

First, never lose track of the scenario goal. Don't assume that you must kill the Panther. Depending on the VC, you may only need to avoid it while your tanks harass the enemy's infantry, or you may only need to rush by it and exit. The first rule is to avoid contact whenever possible. If the Panther has to get by you, then you might arrange a cross-fire for a side shot or try to Deliberately Immobilize it. There are, however, situations in which you simply must kill that monster, you can't wait for it to come to you, and you don't have any infantry to help out. That situation is what this article addresses.

The plan is to use superior mobility and/or quantity to overcome superior quality by maneuvering into position for side/rear shots during the MPh/AFPh. The

name of the game for the Panther is to keep its frontal armor towards the current firer, using its various weapons to rotate its facing.

The relevant rules include C3.22, D2.11, D3.12, D3.5, and D3.51. The Panther may rotate the entire vehicle with every shot it takes—MA, CMG, and BMG. At the end of its DFPh, it may rotate once more if any weapon either remains unfired or kept ROF. It is specifically legal to fire the AFV MG at a BU tank (although not as ordnance)—ostensibly to check LOS. AAMG fire will not allow a facing change, however, since it does not require that the target be in the CA. All told, then, there will be no fewer than four opportunities to rotate (not counting ROF): BMG, CMG, MA, and one Intensive Fire MA shot. Accordingly, AFV marked "No IF" or without BMG/CMG are correspondingly

'Your first tank will die. Accept it. Don't send anything valuable with the first one. The Panther might miss, especially if it has to rotate to fire, but don't count on it.'

easier to kill.

The plan calls for killing the Panther in your MPh or AFPh; if it lives to its PFPh, you are in trouble. You will probably have already lost a Sherman or two in your turn, and the Panther should be able to take out at least one more in Prep Fire. Even if you begin the PFPh with one tank in front of it and one behind it, the Panther can destroy the one in front and rotate to face the other. If you have three optimally-placed tanks surrounding it, one of them could get a side shot in the DFPh, but why put yourself through such stress? Resolve the

issue in your turn; kill it during your MPh or AFPh.

Hitting in the MPh is not as hard as you might think, even without gyrostabilizers, once you're close enough and stopped. If you're BU, you'll have—absent any visibility factors—a net +4 To Hit DRM at the 3-6 hex range (+4 Case C3, +1 Case BU, -1 Case Large Target). Get adjacent (-2 Point Blank Case L) and go CE, and you are looking at a net +1 DRM, a dramatic improvement of your odds. If you fail to roll that Original 9, or if you bounce one, you might retain ROF or use Intensive Fire, neither of which is possible in the AFPh.

If you can get into position where you have a side shot and can win the Gun Duel, do it. With either a gyrostabilizer and/or the fast traverse 75 (like the M4A1), your Sherman has a good chance for winning a Gun Duel if the Panther must pivot. The Gyro reduces the Case C Bounding Fire DRM from +4 for a turreted weapon to +3, the same as for a Panther spinning its turret two hexspines. For Gun Duel purposes, the fast-traverse 75 (signified by the white background of the ROF—U.S. Multi-Applicable Vehicle Note R) has its firer-based DRM cut in half (FRD), giving it a good chance of winning a duel with a spinning Panther.

The trick, of course, is to enter LOS outside the Panther's TCA, making it spin if it wants to shoot. If you can do this *and* win the Gun Duel, your Sherman can get in the first shot on the Panther's side or rear armor. Even the lowly 14TK# of 75AP has a better than even chance against the Panther's side AF of 6. One important factor to remember when figuring your Gun Duel modifiers is that the restricted-aim/limited-aim modifiers of Cases C1 and C2 used by the Bounding Firer are firer-based (thus counting for the Gun Duel), whereas the corresponding Case J1

and J2 modifiers used by the DEFENDER are target-based (thus not counting for the Duel).

Circumstances (and your opponent) will often conspire so that your Sherman *has* to approach the Panther through its TCA and/or cannot win a Gun Duel. This means it is liable to get blown away before a side shot develops. If this is the case, one Sherman is not going to get the job done. You will need at least three, maybe four. More is better. Let's call this a swarm.

You should only begin the swarm when your tanks are already fairly close. It is important to make the engagement at close range for two main reasons. The first has to do with target facing. Moving from the front VCA to the side VCA to the rear VCA takes only two hexes when you're adjacent, takes three hexes if you're two hexes away, and more when farther away. The Panther will want to keep the immediate threat in its VCA, and the more hexspines it needs to traverse, the better for you. The second reason for getting in close is to avail your Bounding Firers of the Case L Point Blank DRM. Additionally, being close will help your TK's, especially APCR (if you are lucky enough to get some).

Your first tank will die. Accept it. Don't send anything valuable with the first one. The Panther might miss, especially if it has to rotate to fire, but don't count on it. In your mind, the only purpose of the first tank is to exhaust ROF. (If it keeps ROF, bad breaks. Call off the swarm if you only had three tanks to begin with.) To lure a wily Panther commander into shooting, however, you will have to at least threaten to gain a side shot.

The fun really starts with the second Sherman. Head for an adjacent hex in the Panther's side TCA, and stop. Sherman #2's job is to exhaust as many of the enemy's CA changes as possible. By threatening a side shot, you force the Panther to rotate to present its frontal armor. You then start up, move to another hex, stop, and again threaten to shoot. Repeat as needed. Because only the ATTACKER ordinarily can declare a Gun Duel, your opponent cannot wait for you to declare a shot before he announces his intention, but must commit himself before he knows whether you're going to fire. A simple MG shot gives him the opportunity to change his VCA, and you will not win such a Gun Duel, so hold your fire. Keep spinning him dizzy.

If the Panther ever fails to rotate towards you when you stop, fire immediately at its side armor. Don't forget to try for APCR, if available. If you find APCR, you should have a hit. If you don't have any, then try AP. If you get ROF, spend a Delay MP to fire again. If not, consider Intensive Fire. After firing, think

BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

by Perry Cocke

The best way to deal with a Panther is to hit it with APCR shots from the side after swarming it with four to five Shermans—like Rodney describes in "Panther Gegen Sherman." (An IS-2m or two will also do the trick.) What to do, though, when you only have one Sherman? Parallel to Rodney's preferred approach, let's take a look at some alternate means of dealing with the Panther when neither a side shot nor APCR is available.

The first thing Rodney mentions, and rightly so, is avoiding contact with the Panther if your Victory Conditions allow you to do this. If so, you want to be sure to use the terrain to your best advantage. You want to have some terrain obstacle near by that you can duck safely behind on the first MP of your Turn. You do not want the Panther to have terrain to Delay behind and then pop out, with a clear shot and at close range, having expended only two MP in your LOS. A mere two MP spent in your LOS will not guarantee you the successful Motion attempt (with its VCA change) you desire in order to be ready to duck behind that handy terrain obstacle in your next MPh (instead of getting toasted on your Start MP). Regardless of whether you do or don't get into Motion, if the Panther is the only threat, try to use your Smoke Mortar to dispense some dispersed Smoke (after your Motion attempt). It will disappear at the start of your PFPh, but should interfere with his advancing fire. After the Motion and Smoke attempts, then you can try Defensive Fire (the act of which rules out Motion/Smoke attempts), hoping for a lucky hit.

If you are caught flat-footed and out of position by the Panther, the first thought to spring to mind in your Turn should be more SMOKE, either ordnance Smoke/WP or the Smoke Mortar again. Ideally, your infantry support can drop some mortar WP on the Panther and some bazooka WP along the LOF (assuming either it's 1945 or you are playing KGP). Then more Infantry can drop Smoke grenades along the LOF. With enough help, the LOS to your Sherman will be blocked (even without SMOKE of its own). Your Sherman's best friend could be its Infantry support even if they don't have ordnance WP. A few Bazookas will get any Panther to start worrying about its flanks. And what Panther commander is going to count on even American Infantry failing the PAATC?

Without significant support, however, you

will need to add your Sherman's SMOKE into the mix, at which point you have to decide whether or not to try for its ordnance SMOKE. If you knew your Smoke Mortar would work, you would probably use it and then change positions. While trying for ordnance SMOKE will greatly increase your chances of getting some kind of SMOKE, getting it means you won't be moving. A lot of different factors will be involved in the decision here: What are the TH's with or without SMOKE? Is it possible to find ordnance SMOKE but still miss due to high DRMs (like if you are pointing the wrong way in Woods), thus totally screwing you? Are you in Motion? Are you CE? Do you have sM8 or sM5? (With the latter, consider instead Vehicle Smoke grenades if CE.) Do you have support? How badly do you need to move? Only you will be in position to make this call.

If, despite your best efforts, the odds say that the Panther will still Hit (and thus Kill) you, remember that the best defense may be a lucky offense. If the Panther is CE, fire MG first and then HE. A 12+2 attack (perhaps from both the MA and the MG) has Stunned many an eight morale crew. Once the Panther is Stunned, your forces can swarm it with impunity (at least till his PFPh). And if the MG merely Pin the Panther crew, causing them to BU, the MA has other things it can do.

If the Panther is close and easy to hit, go for Deliberate Immobilization. Perhaps immobilizing the Panther will win the game for you by itself. Even if not, perhaps the crew will fail its TC and bail out—only to get gunned up by your MG while moving Hazardously. If all else seems lacking, don't ignore the Area Target Type. While the base TH# at close range will probably be lower than on the Vehicle Target Type, the 16% chance (assuming you hit) of rolling a 4 or less (one greater than a K/#) to Shock/Immobilize does indeed beat waiting to score a Critical Hit. None of these can be depended on with any certainty, but each is much better than just sitting around cursing your luck.

[A special tip of the hat to Phillippe Leonard and ASL News (#3, Sept. 1988) for being the first to print the Area-Target-Type method for taking out a Panther.—Eds.]

about moving out of LOS. If the Panther survives till next Turn you don't want to be around when it gets ROF in PFFh. It's likely, however, that he will be able to keep his front armor towards you, in which case you should hold your fire, because here comes Sherman #3.

Number 3 is the hit man. Once your opponent has used his MG for the cheap VCA changes, he suddenly needs to make some tough decisions. His last remaining CA change opportunity is an Intensive Fire shot with the MA, but because of the +2 DRM for Intensive Fire, he is more likely to lose any resulting Gun Duel. This Gun Duel might still be close, and probably hangs on who's BU, who's CE, and who's got an armor leader. If the Panther will win the Gun Duel, he should wait until you stop to fire. That way he swings his front armor around in time and gets a decent shot at you. If he will lose the Duel, however, life for him is harder. He can't afford to wait till you stop, since you will shoot first with decent odds. He will need to gamble on getting lucky by shooting before you stop. You could still win that Gun Duel, but your odds of hitting would be dramatically lower. If his TH odds are low enough, you might want to give him that shot and wait till you can stop Point Blank before shooting. Sherman #3 has a good chance of surviving long enough to take a shot, but the Panther also has a chance of killing this tank with Intensive Fire, so you should ensure that, in order to take that shot, he has to expose his rear to Sherman #2 (assuming he hasn't fired yet).

It's quite likely, by this point, that either Sherman #2 or #3 (or both) will get a side shot on the Panther. Those shots may miss or the Panther may do something tricky like rotating only its TCA to fire on #3, leaving #2 having to hope for a turret hit. This is why a fourth tank is highly desirable. By now, the Panther should have no way to change its CA further, so you can roll right up to the target facing of your choice and fire away. This should be enough to take him down with a high probability of success.

According to German Vehicle Note 27, the U.S. Army estimated that 5 Shermans were necessary to destroy a single Panther. The swarming technique I've outlined gives you a chance with 3, a good chance with 4, and a near guarantee with 5. I find myself once more humbly dumbstruck by the ASL system's ability to capture the essential nature of what such an encounter must have been like.

[For a comprehensive overview of the whole armor game, see Bruce Bakken's "Panzer Gegen Panzer" in the '93a Annual. For some real number crunching, see Robert Medrow's article in issue 23/2 of the General. For a brief look at the mechanics of Gun Duels, see Curt Schilling's piece in FFE (Vol.1, No.1). For a brief discussion of "shoot and scoot" tactics with the fast-traverse Sherman, see Robert Banozic's piece in At The Point #6.—Eds.]

MEMORY GAMES

by Chuck Goetz

You're sitting down at ASLOK or Winter Offensive or Avaloncon to play your first face to face tournament game. You choose up sides, do your setup, and the game begins. Your opponent takes his first shot, rolling a 5 on a 12FP(+2) shot. Without consulting the IFT, he tells you that your stack of squads must take a 1MC. Glancing at your own IFT, you see he's correct and you wonder...WHO THE HECK IS THIS GEEK AND WHY DOES HE HAVE THE IFT MEMORIZED?!

Does this scene sound familiar? If it does, this article is for you. Read on to find out why that "geek" has the IFT memorized (or so it appears) and, more importantly, why it's not such a difficult trick to learn yourself.

Many novice players assume that grognards have the IFT memorized in order to overawe and psychologically rattle impressionable opponents. While this is often the result of such a display, the main reasons most ASL "pros" know the IFT cold are more prosaic: it speeds play and it's hard *not* to learn the IFT by sheer osmosis once you have played a couple hundred games. Speeding play is always important in a game where the rulebook is inches thick; the less consulting of charts you do during a game, the more games you get to play. And isn't it worth a little effort to play more of wargaming's best tactical simulation?

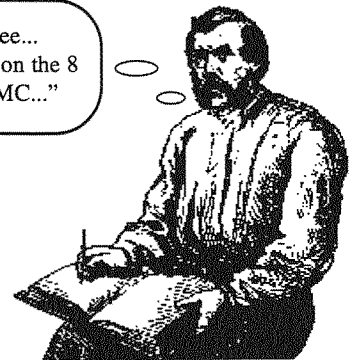
As for the IFT itself, learning it (or most of it) by heart is easy. First, look at the 8FP column. Notice that a Final DR of 8 on the 8 column results in a NMC. "An 8 on the 8 is a NMC"—how difficult is that to remember? Next, notice the progression as you move up and down in firepower strength from the 8 column. As you move down, column by column you need one lower on your Final DR to achieve a NMC: 8FP=8, 6FP=7, 4FP=6, 2FP=5, 1FP=4. It works the same way as you move up in firepower strength (i.e., you can roll one higher and still achieve a NMC): 8FP=8, 12FP=9, 16FP=10, 20FP=11, 24FP=12, 30FP=13, 36FP=14. That's not so bad, is it?

OK, now you know "an 8 on the 8 is a NMC" and a NMC result is sequential as you move up or down the columns from 8. Next, look at the progression of results within an individual column, say the 20FP column. The first possible result is a PTC (on a 12 Final DR), followed by a NMC (11), two 1MC (10-9), two 2MC (8-7), a 3MC (6), a 4MC (5), a K/4 (4), 1KIA (3), 2KIA (2), 3KIA (1), and 4KIA (0). Check out the three higher firepower columns—they follow exactly the same pattern. The only differences being the highest DR you can roll to obtain a particular effect rises by one as the

columns increase in firepower and the maximum KIA strength increases by one as the columns increase in firepower to a high of 7KIA on the 36+FP column. So if you remember the pattern of the 20FP column, you pretty much know the three higher columns as well.

What about the really important stuff, though, the 1FP to 16FP columns, the columns that actually get used on a regular basis? These also follow a pattern similar to the 20FP column, although not exactly the same. All the columns start with the "PTC, NMC, two 1MC" pattern of the four highest columns. Thereafter, the pattern starts to break up a little. Instead of exactly following the 20FP pattern, each column follows this pattern until the K/# result, with the K/# occurring sooner in the pattern as your firepower decreases. Therefore, it's important to know what DR results in a K/# on each column. This isn't as hard as it sounds. Just remember that the Final DR result needed on the 1FP column for a K/# result is a one ("1 on the 1 is a K/1"), and that this number increases to 2 on the 2FP column, to 3 on the 6FP column, and 4 on the 16FP column (incidentally, each of these columns also adds a KIA result at the bottom). Thus, the 8FP column results run as follows: PTC (9), NMC (8), two 1MC (7-6), two 2MC (5-4), a K/2 (3), and the KIAs (2-0).

Let's see...
"An 8 on the 8
is a NMC..."



The last piece of the puzzle is the star vehicle line. (Well, maybe not the very last piece as one could memorize the Gun calibers assigned to each column for effects resolution after a successful To Hit DR, but that's beyond the scope of this article.) Like the rest of the IFT, it falls into a readily memorized pattern: for each FP column, the star vehicle number is one less than the number needed for a NMC. For example, the star vehicle number for the 8FP column is a 7, because the NMC result is an 8; similarly, the star vehicle number for the 20FP column is a 10, because the NMC result is an 11.

Voila! Now you have all the information you need to know to speed your play and to amaze your face to face opponents with your grognardian memory of the IFT.

AMBITIOUS DESIGNS

Continued from page 33

Japanese a force roughly the size of the U.S. force seemed to make sense. Fine tuning during the playtest eventually bore this out. Standard allocation of SW for the Japanese works well with this generic OB. (If anyone has a good, English-language source for Japanese unit histories, please drop me a line!)

With the terrain, VC and forces sketched out, all I needed were start lines and a game length. Since I was looking at turning this into a Pacific "Fighting Withdrawal," I wanted the Japanese (moving first) to be able to just reach the Marine line on their first MP. Then, the Marines would pull back to their next defensive line during their MP. After a couple tries at getting the timing right I finally came up with setups that worked well. The Marines set up just over the ridge from the beach so they can't get to the shore too quickly. The IJA setup/entry area puts them close enough to the U.S. start line that they can hound the withdrawal all the way to the beach. An aggressive Japanese player can use the easier terrain on the east and west board edges to actually get ahead of an unwary or unlucky U.S. player. This worked out nicely with the historical Japanese attempts at encirclement.

To get a good guesstimate at game length, I added up the amount of time it took a LC to get to the beach, pick up some waiting infantry, and exit the map. Add a few turns to allow for beaching/boarding problems, and that's good for a start. I did decide early on that I wanted the Marines to get to the beach and form a perimeter while the boats came in, fighting off the attacking Japanese as the Coast Guard comes to the rescue! While the scenario is 12 Turns long, those last few Turns (if it gets that far) fly right by.

With all the major components in place, this scenario was ready for a test or two, and I quickly suckered Steve Petersen into a couple of games. The initial version played out remarkably close, with two Japanese wins as the U.S. was unable to exit enough squads (six in the initial version).

There was a problem, however, as the U.S. player was more than happy to leave all the leaders and a small force behind to work over the surviving Japanese while a few LC headed off map. This also left several LC happy to stay on the beach and pound the Japanese with their 8FP MA. This just wasn't right, as the *entire* unit was trying to exit, not just a cadre. Also, balance was a problem since that pesky liaison plane can really slow a rapid Japanese advance. If it enters the game early, the Japanese could be hard pressed to get to the

beach with any real force. If it enters late, the Japanese could, with careful maneuver, encircle the Marines and slaughter them. This wasn't going as planned.

Talks with head scenario guru Petersen and playtest buddies Jim Turpin, Kevin Meyer, and Carl Fago hammered out our difficulties. We changed the squad exit VC to exit victory points (making Kevin & Jim happy—now the hero is worth a VP), and increased the number of EVP to include the LC. This gives the Marine player *real* incentive to get the LC and leaders off the map. Still, even though the LC are counted into the Exit VP, a gambling U.S. player has the option to leave an LC beached to get the full benefit of its machine-guns. A tough decision for the likes of Carl, who argued that some LC would lag behind to offer covering fire. Then we added to the required EVP a number based on the turn in which the DB enters the game. Now the U.S. player might not want that DB to enter early, but cannot decline or delay its entry.

Finally, representing the flanking fire from Point Cruz also took some figuring. We couldn't just set a MMG off on the side of the board edge. That begged too many questions. An abstract form of attack, simplified to avoid LOF and target facing considerations, seemed in order. It finally dawned on us, since Residual Fire treats partially-armored LC as unarmored, that was the way to go. Rolling a 3 to get a Collateral Attack or a 2 for some real damage means the IJA will have to rely on its ground forces to foil the evacuation. On the other hand, since Passengers Casualty Reduce on a failed MC, those Collateral Attacks can be downright painful on the way home—the Marines will need to bring along some extra VP to hedge against these attacks.

These changes made the scenario, in our opinion, very close. Luckily, this turned out to be one of the "easy" scenarios to design and balance. Let me tell you sometime about the scenario we really want to work, but have had to put off for two issues due to continued balance problems.

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AMBITIOUS TIPS

Selected thoughts to help smooth over the rough edges of a Seaborne Evacuation with NOBA.

In general, use the LC Destruction Table on page G27 (and the accompanying rules in G12.6-69) for gauging damage to an LC and its PRC. Don't just treat LC like vehicles in the water.

Specifically, non-ordnance Direct Fire uses half FP unless the LC is Beached; versus the armored target-facing of an LCP(L), it can only affect the PRC (via a Collateral Attack); versus the unarmored target-facing of an LCP(L), any Final IFT DR > the * Vehicle Kill # has no effect on the LCP(L) or its PRC (12.61).

Residual FP treats partially-armored LC as unarmored, and is not halved (12.613).

As an LC approaches the Beach, it must roll for Bog (12.21) when it enters a shallow-Ocean hex. The Bog DR of an LCP(L) uses only the +2 DRM on the counter. Since this Beach is Moderately Sloped, hexes within 2 of the Beach are shallow-Ocean.

Other consequences of a Moderately Sloped, one-hex wide Beach are that the Sand is Hard (ordnance/OBA attacks are *not* halved), and LOF across a Beach-Hinterland hexside treats all Beach and Ocean hexes as Level 0 Deir hexes (+1 TEM generally if firing *across* a Hinterland hex).

An LC may Prep Fire (12.5) only if it is Fast Aground (12.11—Beached and Immobilized), so the LCP(L)s will be doing a lot of Bounding Fire instead. LC Passengers may not attack at all. An LC does not expend Stop MP (12.2—except when using Reverse Movement) and may not voluntarily end its MP *having* Stopped (12.22—as opposed to *being* Stopped after Beaching).

An LCP(L) is (per 12.84) worth 4 Exit VP: 1 for being an LC, 1 for having functioning MA, 1 for having a crew, and 1 for its PP capacity. If it were fully armored (like the LCVP), it would be worth another VP. By contrast, the unarmed-and-unarmored LCV is worth 3 VP. In a Seaborne Evacuation, broken units and heroes count for Exit VP (14.42). A hero counts for 1 VP.

NOBA may never be continued (14.671); one must always start over with a new AR. A Shipboard Observer (14.68), however, may dispense with the SR and instead immediately place a FFE:1. Since a Shipboard Observer is otherwise mostly treated as a normal Offboard Observer, it attains Accuracy only on a Final dr≤1, but gets a -1 drm to that dr, and its Extent-of-Error dr is halved. The Shipboard Observer must draw an extra black chit if a Known, friendly ground unit is within 6 hexes of the AR.

WINTER OFFENSIVE 1995

AFTER ACTION REPORT

by Perry Cocke and Brian Youse

Winter Offensive (sponsored this year by Multi-Man Publishing) is proud to announce the 1995 results of the world's second-biggest (next to the ASL Oktoberfest) ASL-specific tournament.

- First: Steve "Elvis" Pleva
6-0 \$60 and engraved dice cup
Second: Ray "Gaston" Tapio
5-1 \$35
Third: Mike "Chaney's Friend" McGrath
5-1 \$25

Winner of the WO'95 trivia quiz (and a free Backblast): Bill "Fish" Conner

Bigger and Better

Winter Offensive 1995 returned to the scene of last year's event, the Comfort Inn in Bowie, MD. Once again, everyone loved the facilities, and WO has already put down a deposit for 1996. Counting staff and illustrious guests (like Bob McNamara), WO'95 saw 70 people attending, a significant increase from prior highs in the fifties. More people meant more space, and we were able to expand into two rooms to relieve the crush. Attendance was already at record levels Friday evening. Several games were going as early as 11:00 A.M. Friday, and by the 6:00 PM kickoff, the place was jamming. Players could count only one game started before 8:00 P.M. Friday towards the tournament, however.

More people meant more games were needed to decide a clear-cut winner. While five games had been sufficient in the past, this year six games were needed. There were also more people with outstanding records. Besides the top three, eight more players finished with a record of 4-1 or better. Leading this list were the fourth and fifth place finishers Alan Bills and J.R. Tracy at 5-1. Ray Tapio and Mike McGrath beat out Alan and J.R. based on strength of schedule. Then there were six players at 4-1: Stephen Frum, Bret Hildebran, John Kelly, Dan

Stanhagen, Neil Stanhagen, and Ross Sutton.

More people also meant more food (and more trash) and more free pizza Saturday night. While some people preferred to step out for dinner Saturday, 14 large Pizza Hut pies meant no one went hungry. The on-site restaurant also did a booming business, especially the Friday night seafood buffet and the morning brunches. Next year should see several new restaurants opening next door.

More people did not, however, mean more responses to the WO'95 quiz, "The Truly Trivial." Apparently, it was just too hard. Previous WO quizzes had tricked people into thinking they might know some answers. Out of 33 possible points on the quiz, Bill "Fish" Conner won with 20, followed closely by Kevin Meyer at 19. More people did not mean more hassles, either. Once again, a good-natured spirit prevailed at WO. While rules questions abounded (as usual), rules arguments were absent and the championship decision was clear-cut.

A new feature this year was the Winter Offensive tee-shirt. This all-cotton black-on-white beauty was a very popular item at \$10 (tax included), no doubt due to "The Dead Of Winter" picture of chubby Russians chugging across the snow that graced its front. Sorry, all sold out. Next year we hope to include shirt orders with the pre-registration.

Brothers in Arms

The Three Musketeers of ASL (Chaney, McGrath, and Fortenberry) did not fare well overall. Defending champ Guy Chaney was hit by a flu bug and barely managed to limp in Saturday to go 1-2. Both Dale Wetzelberger and Bret Hildebran whipped up on a weakened Chaney. Bret's British also beat up on another past champ—Bill Conner—in "Cold Crocodiles." (Fish also lost to Lance Ribeiro in BB5 "Going To Church.") Fort and McGrath faced off against each other after mutual Ginnard losses in the first round, with Mike getting incredibly lucky (according to Fort) with his armor vs. armor kills. After this loss Fort faded from the scene, resurfacing later to playtest some possible scenarios for the next Annual.

Mike was just getting started, however, and battled back to go 5-1. His last victory, against Phil Pomerantz in "The Fugitives," was notable for an especially sleazy move. Mike rubbled a hex of the church so that it blocked the exit from one of the bridges, thus ensuring that no vehicles would be scooting through that inter-

section. This is not the first tournament in which Mike has battled back into the money after an early loss. Let this be another McGrath lesson for the rest of us.

The Ginnard brothers, Dave and "Johnny," brought their inimitable style out east from OH and proceeded to turn the tourney upside down by beating, respectively, Gary Fortenberry and Mike McGrath in the first round. Dave ended up losing to Steve Pleva, Mike McGrath, and J.R. Tracy to go 2-3. We don't know the record of "Johnny," because he didn't turn in his Player Information Sheet. C'mon "Johnny," how hard can that be?

The Stanhagen brothers, Dan and Neil, came up from VA to be prominently displayed on the leader board for much of the weekend. These two have been regulars on the East Coast circuit since at least the '90 Origins, though not always in tandem. Always fun to play and kibitz with, it was nice to see these two get some recognition. They were no match, however, for that icy wind blowing from the north.

New York, New York

Those guiding lights of *Critical Hit!*—Steve "ASLOK'88" Pleva and Ray "Bridesmaid" Tapio—dominated the headlines at WO'95 and ended up facing each other in the championship match. Too bad issue #2 of *CH!* wasn't ready to bring down with them. Steve provided the only loss not just to Ray, but also to John Kelly and Ross Sutton, while Ray was the only player all week to beat Alan Bills or either of the Stanhagens.

Faced with having to decide which scenario to play in the final round, these two turned to The Management for some help. Short but not too short. Fun but not too involved. Maybe PTO. Something they hadn't played to death already. The perfect scenario quickly sprang to mind. There were, in the mock-up of the '95 *Annual* that Fort was displaying, the four *Tactiques* scenarios that we and Chuck Goetz modified for the Atlanticon '93 tournament we ran (along with an article about it all by Chuck). We knew that all four were quick, fun, and balanced, and picked the one we felt best suited them, "The Last of Their Strength." Merrill's exhausted Marauders kick the Japanese off of Overlay 1, and defend against a counterattack. Ray and Steve accepted this choice, but then their faith wavered. Each wanted to play the U.S., and each was willing to give up the balance (an extra Japanese squad) to do so. We can't say for sure that this made the difference, but Ray lost a close game as the U.S. in what is,

TIPS FROM THE TRENCHES

Don't Intensive Fire a high ROF weapon in DFPh unless absolutely necessary. Ordinarily, you should get the next good shot in your PFPh, with a good chance for ROF. If you gack Prep Fire, then you can Intensive Fire too.



in our opinion, a balanced scenario.

Steve's superior play impressed people all weekend and obviously was the major ingredient in his well-deserved victory. Steve won with the U.S. in "No Better Spot To Die," (with the G2 handicap from Chaney'N'McGrath). He played the U.S. in "KP 167" (versus Dave Ginnard) and the Germans in "No Farther" (versus Phil Pomerantz)—sides we would consider the favorite. Phil Pomerantz won our early-bird preregistration contest (and a free *Backblast*) by picking Steve to win the tourney. J.R. Tracy had the same pick, but his preregistration didn't get in on time.

The Bottom Line

The "official" (but not mandatory) scenario of WO'95 was BB5 "Going To Church" which we promoted as a fun, fast tourney scenario. Fun and fast were well-attested to, but the Germans went 10-3 in this at WO'95. A couple of comments said that the Canadians needed help, but even more said what a tight game it was all around, or how lucky the Germans had been in their game. One Canadian player even won against the C2 handicap. We're not convinced the Germans are truly favored in this one, and the *Backblast* staff remains willing to take either side.

The next most played scenario was "Tiger 222" from *TOT*. The U.S. went 7-1 in this one. The consensus seems to be "take the U.S." in this one. Another scenario with multiple playings was "Acts Of Defiance" from the *Rout Report*, *CHI*, and the '95 *Annual*. (*Backblast* is thinking about jumping on the bandwagon and publishing our own version, heh, heh.) This scenario saw the Germans go 3-2 in some mighty close games. All reports indicate that this is one of the best scenarios around, which must be why everyone wants to publish it. (But what is the ELR of the Hitler Youth?)

Lots of people played lots of scenarios and had lots of fun. And that's not counting the *Backblast* staff, which dedicated itself to playtesting over the weekend, enslaved Carl Fago for that same purpose, and shanghaied several others for some playtest games (thanks to Kevin Meyer, Jim Turpin, Bob Lyman, and Matt Noah). Even the African drum concert next door was shorter than last year and nicely balanced by a decent jazz band.

Last But Not Least

Thanks to our mid-western guests, Russ Gifford from NE and Kent Smoak, Steve Frum, and noted game designer Joe Sylvester from the Chicago area for coming so far. The Purple Heart with clusters goes to Jim Turpin, who lost to Steve Pleva in the opening round and then lost five more to go 0-6. Even good players can have a bad weekend.

Congratulations again to Steve Pleva for a classy victory. He joins our classy past victors Bill Conner, Mike McGrath, and Guy Chaney. Thanks again to all participants for making it happen. See you next year, same time, same place.

(Taking Some Heat, Continued from page 9)

SW/inherent-FP), and thus is marked fully with a First Fire (or Final Fire) counter, cannot try for a PF. It means a unit that has Final Fired cannot try for a PF and that a PF cannot be Sustain Fired or Intensive Fired. Not the first time Chapter C may have confused someone.

A few final words about SCW. The best way for an AFV to deal with Infantry toting SCW is to stand off at 6 hexes and blast away. Hindrances aside, no advantage is gained by being 3-5 hexes away, and there is zero risk at 6 hexes. Except for the BAZ45, however, no SCW is very accurate beyond 3 hexes. The BAZ43/44 and PSK have a base TH# of only 4 at 4 hexes, and the PF and the PIAT can't reach that far at all. Unless you are driving a Large Target, or facing an influential leader, or simply cannot afford to lose that vital

AFV, do not be too intimidated by these SCW at their extreme range. If you are a Moving/Motion target and there is a legitimate advantage to be gained, give that PSK a rear shot at 4 hexes. Sure it'll Blaze you if it hits, but you have to take some chances sometimes.

It's mighty difficult to pick any nits off of the prose of Jon Mischon, and some might think it presumptuous to even try. I have no doubt that he was limited as to the space he could use to address the issue of SCW in "No Hollow Threat", and yet he still did an excellent, comprehensive job. With much more space available to me, I have been able to expound—intelligently, I hope—on what he has already said. I don't always agree with Mischon's scenario setups, but I highly recommend the Squad Leader Clinic articles to all players interested in improving their game.

LATW TH (TK) NUMBERS

Range	BAZ 43 (13)	BAZ 44 (16)	BAZ 45 (16)	PSK (26)	PIAT (15)	PFk (22)	PF(31)	MOL-P (6) ^c
0	11	11	11	11	11	10	10	10
1	10	9	9	9	9	8 ^a	8	9
2	9	8	8	8	7	6 ^b	6	8
3	8	7	7	7	5	4	4	6
4	6	4	4	4	-	-	-	4
5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

a - Maximum range for pre-6/44

b - Maximum range for 6/44-12/44

c - TK Modifiers: +1 if CE CT or +2 if OT; -2 vs. Moving/Motion Vehicle

Stop digging through your opponent's stacks to find out what his LATW needs To Hit you. Paste the table to the left into your rulebook.

ANSWERS TO OVERRUN QUIZ

A1. 12 FP. (6 tripled and halved) + 4 base = 13. The RMG is not useable in OVR (D7.11).

A2. Yes, since it is "not already marked with a Bounding Fire counter" (D7.1).

A3. 20 FP. (14 tripled and halved) + 2 base = 23. Per British Vehicle Note S, the 94* does not count as MA for OVR.

A4. No. While the sN may only attack in CC, the overrunning AFV may not conduct any CC attacks (D7.213).

A5. 12 FP. (6 tripled and halved) + 4 base = 13. MA counts, despite the absence of HE.

A6. No. CC RF results in placement of a CC counter while the AFV remains in the Location. Per D7.22, in order to use Non-CC RF, the attacking units cannot be beneath a CC or Melee counter.

A7. 36 FP. (23 tripled and halved) + 2 base = 36.5.

A8. Yes, because it is not "the same vehicle" (D7.21).

A9. 36 FP. (2 tripled and halved) + 32 FT + 2 base = 37.

A10. 36 FP. 32 FT + 4 base = 36. The MA for

the KV-8 is the 45L Gun, qualifying the AFV for a 4 FP base (D7.11).

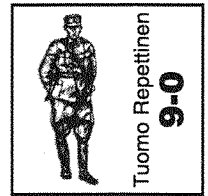
A11. 12FP +4 DRM. (6 tripled and halved) plus 4 base = 13. The CE Crew and Passengers receive +2 CE DRM (D7.150 and +2 Motion DRM (D7.12), but are not Infantry and thus do not receive the -1 FFMO for Open Ground.)

A12. Since there are no vulnerable PRC, no OVR occurs. The TPBF provisions of A7.211 vs. BU HT Passengers and OT crew only apply against AFVs that "enter an enemy-occupied hex during the MPH."

A13. Entry is 7 MP. (One-quarter of 13 rounds up to 4, + 2 for Brush + 1 for Smoke.) The attack depends on what weapons are used. If only the FT is used the attack is 30 FP +3 DRM (for firing IN Smoke). If all are used, it is 36 FP +7 DRM. [(4 tripled and halved) + 30 FT + 2 base + 38] plus +3 Smoke and + 4 for entrenchment.

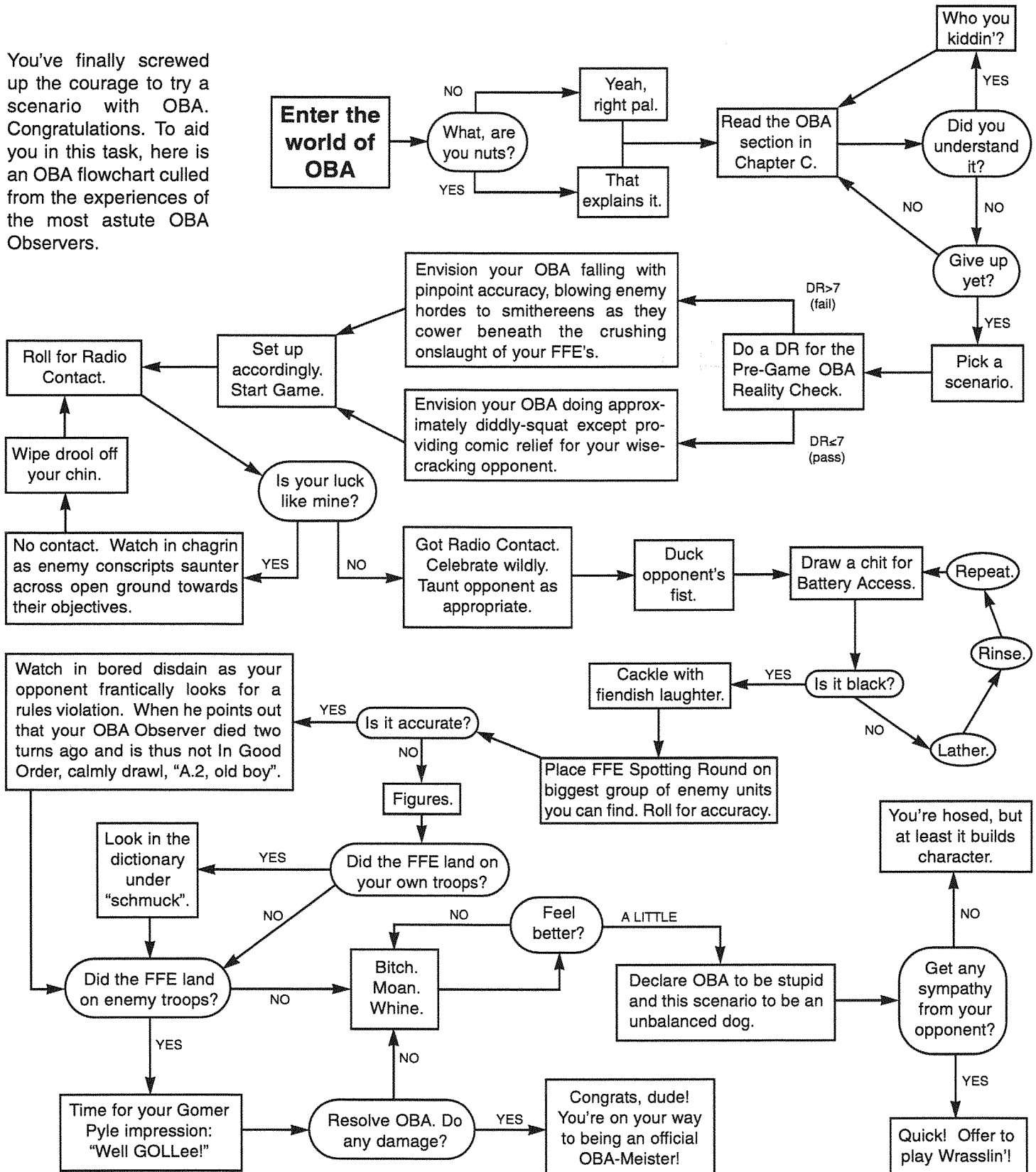
A14. No Reaction Fire is possible. Since the crew is not Infantry or Cavalry, it cannot use CC Reaction Fire (D7.21). Since this NT AFV cannot change its CA to coincide with the over-running vehicle, it cannot use Non-CC Reaction Fire (D7.22). However, if the T34's VCA were to coincide with the PzA III/IV's CA after entry of the hex, non-CC RF would be possible since no CA change would be needed.

The Real-World OBA Flowchart



by Tom Repetti

You've finally screwed up the courage to try a scenario with OBA. Congratulations. To aid you in this task, here is an OBA flowchart culled from the experiences of the most astute OBA Observers.



BACKBLAST#1

ERRATA



Scenario BB5

"GOING TO CHURCH":

In the Victory Conditions change "building 22F3" to "building 23F3."

Scenario BB8

"CASTELLO FATATO":

Exchange the Italian 8-0 leader for an 8-1 leader. In SSR 3, change "This blaze will only spread...." to "Blazes only spread...."

NIGHT RULES PLAYER AID

on back cover:

In the LOS section, in the third bullet ["Moving vehicles"], delete "fully" so that it reads "(...or 2x if tracked)."

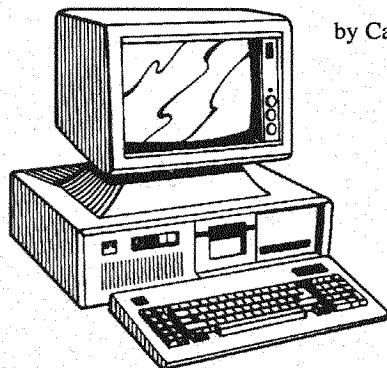
In the STARSHELLS/IR section, under "Usage dr," "mortar IR" has a usage dr of ≤4.

SCHWEREPUNKT!

Schwerepunkt '95, the Florida ASL tournament, will be held in the Tampa Bay area sometime in November 1995. The tourney is expected to be two days in duration, will feature a scenario pack of all-new ASL scenarios, and should cost less than \$10.00 to attend.

Please contact Evan Sherry at (813) 645-6264 or e-mail Bob Walden at waldenr@gate.net for information on exact dates and location.

ASL ONLINE



by Carl Fago

In *Backblast* #1, Brian Youse wrote of the numerous advantages of discussing ASL over the computer via the Internet and gave information as to how to connect to the ASL Mailing List. Well, things have changed a little. His discussion of the advantages is still valid but the maintenance of the mailing list has changed as well as the procedure to subscribe to the mailing list. Now the mailing list is maintained by Carl Fago who is using a LISTSERV program to automate signing on, signing off and user control of their subscription.

To subscribe to the Internet ASL Mailing List, send mail to:

LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU

with the body of the message reading SUB ASL-L.

You will receive a mail message identifying that you are now subscribed to the ASL Mailing List. Take a close look at the this intro message. It has details on how to unsubscribe, subscribe, and get information as to how the listserv service operates. Save that message as a ready reference.

In addition to receiving each message individually, there is now the ability to get the mail-

ing list in a digest version. This version is just a simple compilation of each message during the day into one large mailing. For those who access the internet through the pay providers like GENie, CompuServe, AOL, Prodigy or Delphi this version might better suit your needs.

To have your subscription changed to the digest version, send mail to:

LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU

with the body of the message reading SET ASL-L DIGEST and to revert back to individual mail messages, send mail to:

LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU

with the body of the message reading SET ASL-L MAIL.

Other on-line Internet ASL resources include the World Wide Web (WWW) ASL page at <http://access.digex.net/~jappel/ASL.html>, and ftp sites that contain scenarios, OBA flow-charts, an ASL Rulebook Updated Index and other interesting information created by Internet ASL players. For more information on the Internet ASL List and resources available, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list is available from the WWW ASL Page or via FTP from carlo.phys.uva.nl in the subdirectory /pub/bas/asl/misc. To reiterate what has been said about the advantages of the mailing list, it is world wide. You get to talk to people from Australia to Austria and Sweden to Taiwan. You find out about new ASL happenings and publications within hours of the news becoming public. You can communicate with excellent players and find other interpretations of that arcane rule you and your ASL buddy have been agonizing over for the last couple of years. And, finally, the ASL Mailing List is not one person's list.

It belongs to all the members of the list. It is just one way that you can have an impact on the ASL hobby and be interactive.

ASL WINTER OFFENSIVE 1996

FEBRUARY 16 - FEBRUARY 18
Friday 1800 Hours - Sunday 1800 Hours
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Unstructured format, mutually agreeable scenarios, minimum of five scenarios needed to qualify. Cash prizes based on attendance, plus special 1st place trophy. **ASL BOP TILL YOU DROP.** Sponsored by Multi-Man Publishing.

The fifth annual Winter Offensive is once again on President's Day weekend and will be returning to the site of its 1994 and 1995 triumphs—the Comfort Inn,

Bowie. Conveniently located not far from BWI Airport at a major crossroads just ENE of DC, the Comfort Inn is a brand new facility, with all the amenities.

Come join past champs Conner, McGrath, Chaney, and Pleva, along with the 65 other 1995 attendees for some non-stop gunning. Attending the 1995 tourney were the winners of the last seven ASLOKs and all four Avaloncons. Winter Offensive supports all levels of play, from beginner to expert. Whether you are trying to expand your ASL horizons, boost your AREA rating, or just get in a few games against fun opponents in a non-pressure situation, Winter Offensive is the place for you. Checks payable to Multi-Man Publishing. Contact: Perry Cocke 1664 Forest Park Ave Baltimore MD 21207, Tel: 410-944-3342, Email: p.cocke@genie.geis.com.

YES, sign me up for the non-stop action at WO'96 so that I can improve my game and have fun at the same time. Here is my check for \$_____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

SPECIAL EARLYBIRD CONTEST

Registrations postmarked before 01/01/96 win a chance for a free copy of Backblast by picking the WO'96 winner (any tie resolved randomly):
I think _____ will win WO'96.

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER

TIMELINE

1/38+	Mopping Up NA and No Quarter in effect (both sides) for Chinese vs Japanese scenarios (G18.7)
3/41-	In Extreme Winter, Russian B#/X# for all ord/SW [EXC:DC] are reduced by 1; Fate on Rally DR >= 11 (E3.741, E3.742)
9/41-	All Axis vehicles [exc: motorcycles] in North Africa have RED MP (F.4)
11/41-	German Paratroopers land partially-armed [5-4-8s use 2-2-8s; 2-3-8s use 1-2-7s] (E9.7)
1/42+	Russians may be Riders (D6.2)
3/42-	In Extreme Winter, Axis [EXC: Finn] B#/X# for all ord/SW [EXC:DC] are reduced by 1; Fate on Rally DR >= 11; First Start MP of all on-map, setup vehicles immobilize on dr= 6 (E3.741, E3.742)
5/42+	Germans so equipped may use HEAT (C8.3)
6/42-	Russian Radio Contact 6 (C1.2)
6/42+	Mopping Up NA and No Quarter in effect (both sides) for any PTO scenario (G1.621)
7/42-6/43	Russian Radio Contact 7 (C1.2)
9/42+	Italians so equipped may use HEAT (Italian Multi-Applicable Notes "H")
10/42-	Russians may exchange 8-0/8-1 for 9-0/10-0 Commissar (A25.22)
12/42-	German MMC generally Lax at Night (E1.62) Tank-Hunter Heros may not exceed 10% (FRU) Japanese <i>squads</i> (20% vs. Russians) (G1.421)
1943	Tank-Hunter Heros may not exceed 20% (FRU) Japanese <i>squads</i> (G1.421)
1/43+	U.S., British, and Russians so equipped may use HEAT (C8.3) All nationalities may be Riders (D6.2)
7/43+	Russian Radio Contact 8 (C1.2)
7/43+	Certain German AFVs may have Schuerzen (D11.2)
9/43-	+1 PF Check drm (C13.31)
10/43+	German Inherent PF available; 1x #squads possible (FRD) (C13.31)
1944	German Inherent PF 1.5x #squads possible (FRD) (C13.31)
1944	Tank-Hunter Heros may not exceed 33% (FRU) Japanese <i>squads</i> (G1.421)
1/44+	German Inherent ATMM possibly available (C13.7) U.S. use black TH Numbers (A25.32) SS Squads Assault Fire available (A25.11) Tank-Hunter Heros may use HIP Setup (G1.422) No drm for Tank-Hunter Heros ATMM Check (G1.4231) Non-Russian Interrogating Japanese MMC receives -1 DRM (G1.621) WP available to British (A25.46)
5/44-	PF Range 1 hex (C13.32)
6-12/44	PF Range 2 hexes (C13.32)
7/44+	Napalm available for US FB and Chinese FB in Burma (G17.4, G18.831) Possible German Nahverteidigungswaffe Available (A11.622)
8/44+	Napalm available for U.S. FB vs. Germans (G17.4)
1945	German Inherent PF 2x #squads possible (FRD); PF 3-hex range; -1 PF Check drm (C13.31, C13.32) Tank-Hunter Heros may not exceed 50% (FRU) Japanese Squads (G1.421) Napalm available for British FB vs Japanese (G17.42) Japanese may use A-T Set DC (25% of DC [FRU]) vs non-Russian (G1.6121)
4-8/45	Napalm available for Chinese in China (G18.831)

Dates with a "+" apply from that date forward; dates with a "-" apply prior to and including that date; single year entries apply for the entire listed year