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**A PANORAMA OF  
WORLD WAR I  
GAMES**

R SANDELL



# PHOENIX

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# EDITORIAL

JOHN SPENCE

I opened my latest copy of S&T recently to find Richard Berg's game *The Desert Fox* (TDF) staring me in the face. My immediate response was — "Oh no, not another North African Campaign game — it looks like PanzerArmee Afrika!". Further thought led me to asking two questions that have some bearing upon current attitudes to gaming; they were:

1. Is it fair to suggest that this is just *another* game on a well-worn subject or does it supply a new insight into the campaign?

2. Was my response likely to be a common one amongst gamers — are they, too, looking for pastures new at the expense of any situation already covered?

A further look at TDF showed very nice graphics and counters that were a great improvement over those in similar games of this campaign at this level of complexity. The rules showed the presence of reaction phases, air allocation to Malta, relatively complex supply rules and morale that, together, produce a game with a unique set of rules for this well represented campaign. Obviously there is something there to look at for everybody so my attitude is unfair to the game, prejudiced as it is.

A slightly broader examination of the game system could say that, "yes, it does have a new amalgam of rules but they have almost all been tried elsewhere in some shape or form and they are all applied to the "age-old" components of a hex map, CRT and counters with combat strengths and movement allowances so, really, the game is not all that new; not what I am looking for anyway!". Are games then becoming stereotyped? Not really, TDF is but one game and looking around suggests that innovation is not dead — *A House Divided* by GDW with its unusual map with flow boxes and *Task Force* with its application of megahexes suggests that newer design techniques are still being developed though they may not be widely used — they don't suit every situation!

Right, so my opinion is not a reflection of the true current game quality — do, then, other gamers have the same or similar opinions? My recent reading and discussion with friends suggests that I am *not* alone in having this attitude to new games so why then do we have this view? A quick mental census of sources of this cynicism comes up with the one common denominator that they are all experienced gamers with over 5 or 6 years gaming under their belts. It follows that most saw the ancestors of the games appearing now — PAA, the first quad games, etc. and probably played them as well, there weren't so many games to choose from then.

Two points of discussion arise from this. Firstly, this group, whilst very vociferous and with wide access to the hobby press, are a minority of all gamers. Were one to solicit the opinions of the newer gamer I don't believe one will find the same apathy — TDF will be *new, grand* and sparkling in their eyes and they will delve into it with much relish. I believe that we must be careful to ensure that we don't imbue the whole hobby with our patina of weariness and, conversely, the newer gamer should look on people's views with some degree of wariness and tend to look more optimistically upon games and the hobby than the hobby press would make them believe. I am not suggesting that there is no such thing as a "turkey" or bad game or that there aren't problems but I believe we dwell too much on the gloom at the present.

The second point must be the publishers attitude to repeat games. *Avalon Hill* obviously believe that updating a game in the light of new design techniques and generated errata is worthwhile and expect to get a return from it. A whole new generation of board gamers, or adventure gamers if you wish, have entered the hobby since the first edition of these games (such as the new *Bulge*) so these games are meeting a completely new though more sophisticated market. The production of such games as TDF are a living reflection of this policy and probably should be looked at as the first recent game on the subject, rather than just another game, for the newer gamer. I do hope, though, that the game companies see their way to covering some of the more esoteric and less popular subjects that may satisfy the more experienced, battle weary gamer!

Lastly, as we draw to the end of another year which has seen the demise of a number of aspiring companies, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and more fruitful New Year.

## Feedback Results for Issue 31:

The questions on your reading habits show that 60% of the readers take 3 or less magazines and that 85% of those that answered took less than 6 magazines. The majority of these were taken on subscription and were only read by one or two people — even those in a largish group of gamers tended not to share their magazines! The most popular magazines were those supplied by Simpubs (surprised?) and the *Wargamer*.

## Phoenix 31 rating = 6.47

Strategy, Tactics & Choice = 7.39/7.38 (That is high)  
Thin Red Line = 6.70/6.31 (1st prize of £10)  
Doro Nawa = 6.46/6.13  
Atlantic Wall = 6.43/6.72 (2nd prize of £7.50)  
Armor = 6.28/5.98  
A Metaview of History = 6.18/5.63  
Dragonquest = 6.07/4.64  
Ypres = 5.56/5.33 (3rd prize of £5)  
Squad Leader errata = 4.90 subject choice  
La Bataille errata = 4.71 subject choice  
Grapevine = 6.70  
Mailcall = 6.02  
Book Column = 5.77

## Phoenix 32 rating = 7.00

Avalanche = 6.95/6.18  
Mythology/Hammer of Thor = 6.82/5.50  
Panzergruppe Guderian = 6.77/7.00 (1st prize £10)  
Kaisers Battle = 6.67/7.12 (2nd prize £7.50)  
NATO Div. Commander = 6.60/5.98  
Microcomputer Games = 6.33/5.59 (3rd prize £5)  
Stalin's Tanks = 5.93/5.84

Mailcall = 6.27  
Book Review = 6.03



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# BOOK REVIEW

HAMISH WILSON

My editor, John Spence, has received comments in the feedback about the fact that many of the books in this column come expensive and therefore why don't we review more paperback books? The answer to those comments lies in the fact that, for the most part, books dealing with military history are published in response to a specialised demand and one which is not part, therefore, of the mass market. The rule of thumb is roughly that the more books you print the cheaper each individual one requires to be and the bigger the market for any one title the more likely it is to be published in paperback. There are ways of breaking or reversing those rules but that kind of decision requires a kind of courage and dedication that is not often found in publishing — especially in these recession hit times. Despite all these restrictions there are still publishers who manage to turn out good titles of interest to us and, in this issue, there are reviews of a number of paperbacks and some hardbacks which are quite honestly cheaper than we should reasonably expect them to be.

Let's begin with another, and sadly the last of them all, work from the pen of Professor **Arthur Marder**. *Old Friends, New Enemies — The Royal Navy and the Imperial Japanese Navy from 1936 — 1941*. Now this one does cost a little more, £19:50 to be precise, but it is undoubtedly worth a great deal to any student of naval history and will take its place of pride alongside the other major works from Prof. Marder. Sadly he died just before the book was published and he had not yet assembled the notes which were to form the basis for the next part of the work which was to conclude the story of the period from '41—'45, therefore there will be no more to be learned from this formidable man who was recently made an honorary C.B.E. for his services to British Naval History. Nevertheless this work is as readable, entertaining and as full of insight as anything else that he has written and will amply repay reading and re-reading. After briefly recounting the historical association between the two navies, he then shows us how the changes in the Japanese political regime altered over the years, as did the relationship between the two countries. Ultimately, inevitably, the work concludes at the sinking of 'Force Z', and allows us to see the ramifications of the victory on the forces and politicians on both sides. Typically Prof. Marder tells us all this without neglecting the story of the feelings and attitudes of the men on both sides. 25 plates and three maps complete this volume. There is no bibliography since this was to be part of the second and final volume. The publishers are, of course, **Oxford University Press**.

There are two bargains that I'd like to tell you about and, as it happens, they are both naval books as well. The first is published by **Webb & Bower** and will be priced at £9:95 until the end of February, 1982, when it will go up to £12:50, which is a price which more accurately reflects the quality of the book. *The Cree Journals* is the title of this work and it is a joy of a book. Taken from the diaries of **Edward H. Cree**, Surgeon R.N., the book has been edited by **Michael Levien** who has also written a valuable introduction. Covering the period from 1837, when Cree joined the navy, until 1856 when he was invalided home from the Crimea, the journals include Cree's experiences in the First Opium War, a couple of periods on the China Station (including one which involved hunting Chinese pirates), his honeymoon in London and Paris in 1852, the Baltic and finally the Crimea. Apart from the text, which is full of interest and new information on the life of the iron men who lived behind the wooden walls, the book is very beautifully illustrated by reproduced water colours which were composed by the author, in the manner of Victorian diarists, and which show the detail and broad sweep of battle as well as the minutiae of the lives of the people of the countries he has visited. This one really is a bargain and one

which I recommend you check out at your local bookshop before the end of February next.

The next bargain will be less easy to lay hands on since there are only going to be five hundred of them available. **E.H.H. Archibald's** two volume history of the Royal Navy's fighting ships has been published and in print for over ten years. It is a brilliantly illustrated history which contains much of value. To be sure the illustrations tend to diminish, a little, in value as the scale of the vessel in question increases. Thus the size of drawing which displays the private parts of a 17th Cent. ship of the line in intimate detail is of less use when dealing with the vast size of H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth* of 1915. The variety of information within these covers is enormous, however, and the books will be of the greatest assistance to either the tyro or expert student of naval history. Why then the fuss? Well, Messrs. **Blandford**, who publish the books separately at £8:95 each, are offering five hundred boxed sets at £14:95 which is a saving of £3:00 on the cost of the two volumes and will allow you to have a pair of volumes which cover the *History of the British Fighting Ship from A.D.897 until 1970* and which will adorn your bookshelf at the same time .... that, to my way of thinking, is a bargain, but one which won't be around for long!

From bargains to paperbacks and from **Arms and Armour Press** comes the second of their ventures into re-issue in paperback. I mentioned the first volume (*Combat Aircraft of WW II*) in an earlier issue but, *British and American Tanks of WW II* by **Peter Chamberlain** and **Chris Ellis** is the second and I've taken a close look at this one just to see what, as a paper back, it is like. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the excellent series of AFV books that A&AP did in the early days, the format is highly illustrated book with an intensive text containing as much information as can be reasonably crammed into about two hundred eleven by eight inch pages. These books were the first really comprehensive volumes published in the field and included an edition of von Senger und Etterlin. If this paperback is anything to go by the transfer will not harm the reputation of **Arms and Armour**. The binding of this volume is tough enough to support the large pages on good quality paper and yet flexible enough to allow what is essentially a reference book to lie flat on the desk without a finger being required to hold it open at the desired page. But the great victory of the paperback is, of course, the price. Published first in 1969 the book cost 95/- (£4:95) and that's what it's costing in paperback. If A&AP do the same deal on all their tank books they will receive the blessings from many AFV buffs who could not otherwise afford their product.

From **Penguin Books** comes a number of titles of interest. *Nuclear Nightmares* by **Nigel Calder** is one such. Mr. Calder is probably better known to television viewers as the author of *Einstein's Universe* where he allowed Peter Ustinov to pretend to be all sorts of different people to explain 'the new physics' and succeeded only in confusing us all even more. There is no confusion in this book. Mr. C. takes a long cool look at the technology and politics facing the super powers and then takes a look at the apparently inevitable spread of nuclear weapons and then at the possible ways in which we may all finish up on an Earth fried to a radio active crisp. £1:50 will buy you this interesting and admirably polemic-free book but it doesn't make cheerful reading. **John Cox's** book, *Overkill*, is the other side of the polemical coin. This **Penguin** revised, updated and expanded re-issue is full of information and polemic. Mr. C. was, and may still be, the Chairperson of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and is therefore presenting his view of the world less objectively than Mr. Calder and, of course, much more emotionally. Nevertheless there is much food for thought in this book and, whether we agree or disagree with Mr. Cox's stance, I believe that it behoves us all to have a read at this and the preceding volume. At least you'll know all the information there is to know at the end of the reading. *Overkill* costs £1:75.

Perhaps as an antidote to the foregoing **Penguin** have also published an account of the work of the United Nations Forces which is by **Anthony Verrier** and is called, *International Peacekeeping*. Costing £5:95 it is, I think, too expensive and should have been made in the same price range as

other paperbacks on Penguin's list. For all that, the book is a very interesting one. The author follows the history of seven U.N. operations including the Congo, Cyprus and various times in the Middle East between Egypt and Israel and in the Lebanon. A policeman's lot is not an Happy one as Gilbert wrote. Imagine then what it must be like trying to be a policeman between two armies .... a bit like trying to separate a battle between husband and wife. If you try to interfere then they'll both turn on you as like as not. But it's far from being as funny as that sounds. Anthony Verrier has tried to make sense out of situations which don't appear to have any and has shown why, on some occasions, it appears that the forces involved in keeping the peace are doing more fighting amongst themselves than anything else. The essence of the book is that there are people trying to make peace work and it may be that if they are supported by enough of us the U.N. will become an organisation to which we may genuinely look for help in keeping the hellish dawn of Armageddon away from our world. Eight maps (of varying degree of clarity) and a number of diagrams of radio nets support the text of this interesting book.

The last of the paperbacks for this issue is a massive tome published by **Abacus**. Called, *Weapons*, it is by American writer and journalist **Russell Warren Howe** and it takes up with the international trade in arms and munitions where Anthony Sampson left off in his work, "The Arms Bazaar". Following the growth and development of the big arms firms world wide and the incredibly complex politicking surrounding arms buying and building in America and other parts of the world, this book rattles along at a pace that is both refreshing and alarming. Mr. Howe is far too old a hand at telling a story to allow his reader to become bored or even complacent in his apparent understanding of what's going on and while there are nearly eight hundred pages to get through it doesn't feel like it by the time you've got to the end. £3:95 secures this book which will guarantee you a couple of laughs, a couple of grins and may even turn your hair grey when you read the story of a B-52 whose navigational gyros are kept going by a crushed orange juice can, a pocket knife and a bandage from the first aid kit. "Happens all the time," said the pilot!

The Dorniers, Messerschmitts and Heinkels of the Nazi Luftwaffe didn't bother too much about gyros when they were coming across the channel in 1940, for most of them could probably see the airfield they took off from as they crossed the English coastline over Kent. It also appears to be true that most of the people below them didn't bother too much about the aircraft or their intentions. This becomes clear from a study of **Dennis Knight's** splendid book, *A Harvest of Messerschmitts* which is a **Leo Cooper** book published by **Frederick Warne**. Mr. Knight has found the diary of Mary Smith, who was the school teacher, and daughter of the postmaster, of Elham, a small village which lay north of Folkstone, on the Kent coast and just down the road from Hawkinge, an airfield which played a major part in the battle of Britain. Combining her diary with his own expert knowledge of the passage of the battle Dennis Knight has made a book which must be, in many ways, unique. There, amongst the kettens of 109s and Geschwader of bombers Ms. Smith was concerned about 'tiles off the roof', 'Joan came to dinner and tea' and, from time to time, 'a few pops at a stray Jerry,' or, less frequently, '3 raids but only bad in morning.' Beneath these clipped, almost cryptic entries Dennis Knight tells us, with all the wisdom of hind sight and vast research, just what was happening, even down to knowing just who shot down whom and where over Elham during the battle. Don't let me give you the impression that this is altogether a light hearted book for it is not but it is the first that has given me a genuine realisation of the lack of immediate effect on the population who were under the battle that was the first turning point of WW II. Ms. Smith cared who won but also cared that the hounds had a good outing at Christmas of that astonishing year, 1940. Innumerable photographs support this fascinating text together with some maps and a couple of very nice drawings of oblique aerial views of Elham and of Hawkinge when it was under attack. £8:95 is the price of the volume and not one which I would consider unreasonable.

Continued on page 31



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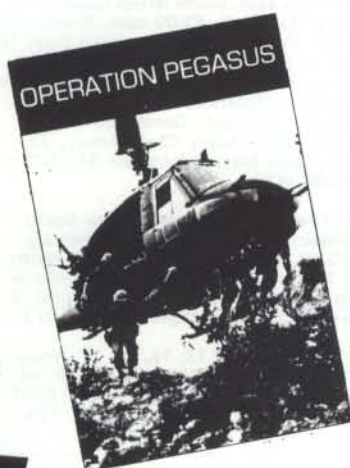


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By any standard the war of 1914 is the key event of the 20th century. Few issues that feature in today's news, issues as diverse as East-West tension, Ireland and women's liberation were not shaped by what happened in 1914-1918.

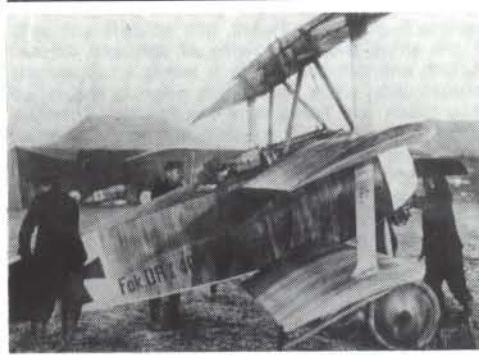
However, while the other two great upheavals of the last two centuries, the Napoleonic Wars and World War II, have between them inspired a very large part of our hobby's output, World War I lags very far behind as a topic for games. At first this seems surprising, since many of the images and experience of 1914-1918 still shape modern ideas and attitudes about war. In fact it is probably these attitudes which are the reason for the absence of World War I games.

For many people World War II conjures up images of panzers sweeping irresistibly across the Western Desert or the Russian steppes while aircraft duel overhead. The Napoleonic Wars conjure up visions of splendidly uniformed cuirassiers charging down on stalwart grenadiers. By contrast the common image of World War One is of ravaged grimy faced soldiers plodding through the mud to certain death on the barbed wire. Such an image is hardly calculated to sell games.

Nevertheless a fair number of games on World War I have been published over the years. Although their merit varies widely they are an interesting bunch. Certain topics have been so widely treated in the hobby that a consensus on how to deal with them has emerged. Thus most WWI operational games have a mechanised movement phase while Napoleonic and American Civil War tactical games nearly all use the defensive fire/offensive fire/melee sequence. However no such consensus has emerged in the case of WWI and so, for good or ill, practically every WWI game has unique features. This article is an attempt to provide an overview of the way the hobby has treated WWI.

To begin with though, a couple of clarifications are necessary. First, the list will inevitably be incomplete. I can only point out in mitigation that I am not a millionaire and do have to work (any advice on how to rectify either of those matters

would be gratefully received) and so I do not have the ability to buy or play every interesting game. Second, in all honesty, I should point out that I have recently designed a game on a World War I topic myself, which I hope to see published. However, if I am critical of some other World War I games, I am not merely trying to discredit possible rivals. In fact, by being critical, I may be encouraging others to be equally critical when my game finally appears. With these clarifications out of the way down to business ...



### Air Tactical Games

*"Curse you Red Baron!" Snoopy*

Since the exploits of air aces like von Richthofen are one of the few areas of World War I with any aura of romance, it is not surprising that the air combat of the period has inspired several games. The earliest one was SPI's *Flying Circus*. This appeared in S&T in 1972, in the far off days when the idea of a magazine game seemed new and exciting and the thud of S&T through the letter box was eagerly awaited (Yes, younger readers, there really were such times). In the case of *Flying Circus*, the thud was somewhat louder than usual, since *Flying Circus* contained more paper than any other S&T game before or since.

Although *Flying Circus* seemed, at the time, to be a radical departure for games, much of its format has become standard for air games. While planes manoeuvre around the map, details of their performance are recorded on a separate record card which records height, ammunition expended, damage taken and similar information. Each type of plane has its own card giving details of maximum speed, armament and ability to turn.

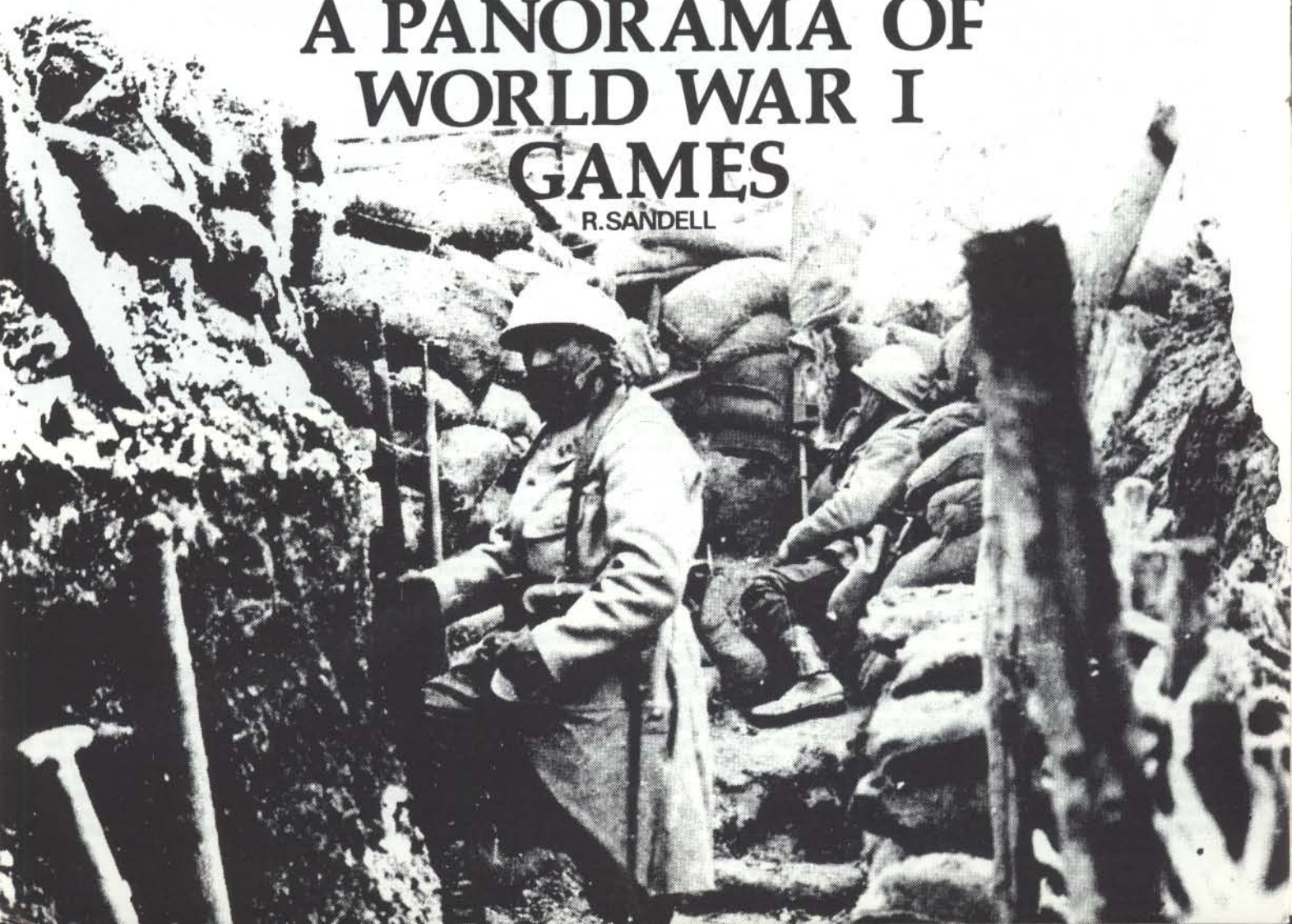
The game was well received and, imitation being the sincerest form of flattery, was soon followed by Avalon Hill's *Richthofen's War* which used a very similar system but featured more impressive components plus more detailed rules covering such matters as hits on specific areas of the plane and pilot skills and, unlike *Flying Circus*, it remains in print.

One area that neither game really explored was that of the many types of manoeuvre available to aircraft. Planes may climb and dive but the various loops and turns that enabled pilots to avoid the enemy or to place themselves on his tail go unsimulated. This is remedied by *WWI's Aces High* which adapts the manoeuvre rules from the WW2 games *Air Force* and *Dauntless* to a WWI setting. This game also scores over its predecessors by including not just generalised scenarios for types of air combat but reconstructions of famous fights of the various aces.

A radically original approach to the topic is taken in *Aces of Aces*. (Gameshop Ltd). (See elsewhere in this issue). This game has no map but instead each player has a booklet depicting 200 pilot's eye views from the cockpit of a WWI fighter. Each turn consists of a player selecting a manoeuvre after which a matrix system directs each one to a picture depicting the view each has a result of the combination of manoeuvres. If one is lucky it will be the tail of the enemy plane vulnerable to attack, if unlucky it will be an over the shoulder view of the enemy firing from behind or, equally disturbing, empty sky signifying the opponent has been lost completely. Manoeuvre and combat are very simplified but the end result still conveys rather more of the atmosphere of WWI air combat, since it

# A PANORAMA OF WORLD WAR I GAMES

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forces the players to contend with problems such as limited intelligence and the restricted field of human vision. Not only that but it can be easily played down the pub or on a train (Although you may get funny looks from your companions, especially if you have your flying helmet on).

Unlike most fields dealt with in this article, the list of WWI air games includes no real failures and all these products are of interest. Probably it will not be long before this topic attracts the attention of the makers of computer games.



## Naval Tactical Games

*"Seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today". Admiral Beatty, watching the sinking of HMS Indefatigable 1916*

The hobby's first WWI tactical naval game was also of interest as being the first game designed by Jim Dunnigan. This was Avalon's Hill's "Jutland" which appeared in 1969. Although this game included maps on which the British and German fleets searched for each other, as they did in the North Sea prior to the Battle of Jutland, the centre of the game is its tactical system which uses no board. Instead the counters representing the fleets are deployed on any flat surface and moved with the aid of measuring rods. The resulting game is very long and requires a great deal of floor space. Nor is it very realistic since, on the living room floor, the two fleets in line intertwine with each other in elaborate patterns which bear more relation to the mating habits of snakes than anything that happened in the North Sea in 1916.

The game has been revised by Avalon Hill since its original publication, its current version includes scenarios for some of the smaller Anglo-German North Sea engagements. Even so, it is a not very happy half way house between board and miniature gaming and does not really give you anything you could not get cheaper by buying a good set of miniatures rules and making your own cardboard counters to use with them.

Jim Dunnigan's other WWI naval game offers a completely different approach. This is *Dreadnought* which depicts, in different scenarios, Battleship actions from both World Wars. The system used is largely taken from an earlier game, *CA*, depicting cruiser and destroyer actions in the Pacific in WWII. As might be deduced from the use of the same system to depict two very different types of naval warfare, the game is simple and very limited as a simulation. However it does include one interesting device: its campaign game. This gives each player command of a whole nation's fleet and allows the players to secretly commit their ships to a whole series of actions while ignorant of the forces the enemy has allocated. Thus not only are the players faced with the problem of limited intelligence but they must decide when they have lost a particular engagement and then extricate their forces from it to take part in future battles. This helps solve the problem of individual scenarios

in which players risk their battleships, hugely expensive and the ICBMs of their day in terms of strategic importance, in a way that no real commander would ever have done.

A recent addition to the range of naval games is the naval module in *Paper Wars' Gallipoli*. This depicts the attempt of the British Navy to force the Narrows from the Mediterranean to Constantinople in the face of Turkish shore gunfire.

The system is reasonably detailed and includes features such as ship facing, hits on different parts of the ships and the towing of damaged vessels. Turkish ammunition supply is secret, an important consideration since the British gave up and sailed away when the Turks were nearly out of ammunition and planning to abandon their defence. Extra rules deal with the Turkish minefields, the British minesweepers (These were crewed by civilians and in the game they may panic and flee at a crucial moment as they did in real life) and British landing parties.

In spite of this detail the game does not really stand up to repeated plays since the players have only a limited amount of options. The British can do little but steam on whatever the consequences, while the Turks can only blaze away desperately. Counters are provided for the Turkish fleet but, except in desperate situations, the ships are wise to stay in port as they did in real life. However the game is certainly a good simulation and an interesting addition to the rest of the Gallipoli package which will be looked at later.



## Land Tactical Games

*"The Devonshires held this trench. They hold it still."*

*Anonymous inscription, Western Front, November 1918*

The main item here is SPI's *Soldiers*, designed by Dave Isby. This was published in 1972, thus making it one of the oldest SPI games still available from Simpubs. It depicts various company level actions in 1915 by a tactical system that manages to be both straightforward and reasonably realistic, since, not dealing with tanks, it does not have to consider the complexities of armour/infantry or the different effects of artillery on tanks and infantry like WWII tactical games. In spite of its simplicity the individual peculiarities of the various armies are quite well depicted with counters to represent each nation's specialities such as the Russian artillery battalions, the German horse machine gun units and the Belgian machine guns mounted on small carts pulled by dogs. Morale is included in a rule that enables units to dig in but makes some nationalities reluctant to move once having done so.

The problem, from the game's viewpoint is that, since the map depicts in most scenarios the plains of Poland or Flanders, there is little in the way of cover. This, together with an appropriately bloody CRT, means that in most scenarios all the defenders need do is sit tight and slaughter the attackers in large numbers as they cross open ground and in many cases can win without moving a single unit in the whole game.

Another tactical game that deals partly with WWI is SPI's *Patrol*. This game took the system of the

deservedly popular *Sniper*, which dealt with WWII street fighting at a man to man level, and transposed it to a rural setting with scenarios from 1914 to Vietnam. In spite of some clearing up of the *Sniper* rules the idea was not a terribly happy one since, in an open environment, individual action does not have the importance it does in a city where every building must be fought for, and the attempt to produce a set of rules covering all twentieth century infantry combat meant that the peculiarities of each war were not well depicted. The WWI scenarios, in particular, conveyed little of the influence of trench systems, huge fences of barbed wire and the dense masses that were often used in the attack.

Another game dealing with man to man combat in WWI was *PBI* published in the early 70s by the now defunct Third Millenia Co. This strange item is mentioned as perhaps the worst war game ever published. Its rules seem to have been thrown together in a few minutes and inflicted on the public with no playtesting at all. Thus we are told that fire should be written down and then carried out simultaneously but given no hint as how it should be recorded since neither counters or hexes are coded. The rules contain helpful remarks such as "two men may dismantle and carry a machine gun" without any explanation as to how this is done. This game is only mentioned here since its publishers, although no longer active, may receive the infamy which is their due and because this sort of thing tends to crop up second hand for about 25p. If you come across it save your 25p for something faintly more sensible such as Max Bygraves records or nuclear fallout shelters.



## Operational Games: Eastern Front

*"A hundred cities prepared to welcome their warriors. A million homes awaited their menfolk. All suffered in vain. Naught was gained by any. All returned, whether bearing the laurels of victory or tidings of defeat, to homes already engulfed in catastrophe."*  
*Winston Churchill on WWI in the East.*

Four battles between Austro/German forces and their Russian and Italian opponents form the subject of SPI's *Great War in the East* quad. The system gives great prominence to the problems of command control. This is particularly apt for a WWI game since the commanders were controlling large numbers of men with only the limited aid of radios. Instead, they had to rely on field telephones (often absent in the battle zone) and verbal and written communication. Therefore their



ability to deal with unexpected situations was poor and often the best the commanders could do was emulate Moltke the elder, who in 1870 spent the first day of the Franco-Prussian War lying on a sofa reading a novel entitled *Lady Audley's Secret*, confident that his subordinates had been briefed for all conceivable situations and that he was unable to do anything more. However, Moltke had the Prussian Army at his disposal whereas the Russian and Austrian commanders of WWI had forces often consisting of badly educated and unenthusiastic troops and so the problems of command can be imagined.

However the way SPI chooses to simulate it is not particularly happy. HQ units appear and command a limited number of units, forcing all others to roll a die to determine whether they can move or not. A similar system works well enough in OSG's Napoleonic tactical games but here the greater density of units makes rolling for large numbers of them at the beginning of each turn a rather tedious chore.

The quad uses a CRT somewhat like *Panzergruppe Guderian* which gives the defender in many cases the option of retreat or step losses. This is alright in PGG where the armoured units pack a real punch and retreats can be exploited in the mechanised movement phase but in this quad the defence factors are high and there is no mech phase so the defender will find it easy to retreat slowly while forcing the attacker to take losses.

The games of the quad (*Caporetto*, *Brusilov Offensive*, *Serbia/Galicia*, *Hindenburg in Poland* plus *Tannenberg* which appeared in S&T) use the same system with their special rules for each one and, as is often the case with SPI quads, one gets the impression that the special rules were simply devices to enable the games to be balanced with a historical justification thought up later. In addition, the *Hindenburg* rules tell you how to gain victory points but not how many you need to win. As a result of problems like this, the quad, although of some interest comes nowhere near fulfilling its potential.

Another campaign in the East where command control (or rather its absence) played an important role is simulated in the recently published *Gallipoli* (*Paper Wars*). Here the problems of command referred to earlier were compounded by the fact that during the landings most of the senior officers were on ships unable to communicate with their men on shore. As a result, during the Gallipoli landings many opportunities for victory in the early stages, when the Turks were confused, went unexploited.

The game has a great deal going for it. Each side has a detailed order of battle with units of diverse values, including Indians, Australians, French, Senegalese, the Ceylon Planters' Rifles and the Royal Naval Division for the Allies and gendarmes and German sailors for the Turks. The combat system is original and appropriate. Units are rated for combat and morale with the difference between attacking and defending morale being applied as a modifier to the combat odds. Since, even at high odds, nasty things may happen without a good modifier, this means that most units can mount a good defence but only high morale units should be entrusted with an attack. This accurately simulates combat conditions in WWI where defenders were entrenched. In these circumstances troops would hold on and fire for the simple reason that it was probably safer than either getting out of a trench to run away or making a surrender which, in the sort of ferocious hand to hand fighting that occurred at Gallipoli could well have merely resulted in an on the spot bayonetting.

A recent Phoenix writer criticised this game on the ground that it had no command control rules to simulate the confusion of the landings. However, I have usually found that the possibility that units will disrupt when landing, the random arrival of reinforcements and the deployment of Turkish inverted units create enough confusion in the early stages to prevent the Allies from seizing the initiative too quickly. The game's problem seems, to me, to come in the final stages. By this time both sides will have quite a lot of artillery and since the victory conditions involve quite small areas, it is easy to concentrate artillery in the relevant places. The

strength of this artillery means the game tends to end in a series of artillery bombardments with the infantry playing only a minor part. Apart from being unhistorical, this tends to result in a lot of to-and-froing as one side is forced out of an objective but next turn can muster enough artillery to force its way back in. In spite of this the game is still extremely interesting and no WWI collection should be without it.

Although the 1918 armistice brought immediate peace to the armies in the West, the situation in the East was rather different. Civil War still raged in Russia while Greece, Turkey, Rumania, Poland and Lithuania all used military force to defend or challenge the new boundaries set up by the war, with the result that fighting of different kinds continued in Eastern Europe until 1921.

This period of post WWI fighting has inspired two games worthy of note. The first is *Red Star/White Eagle* (GDW) based on the Russo-Polish War of 1920. This war was history's last great cavalry campaign and the system reflects this well.

Zones of control only impose additional movement costs depending on the type of unit. Since most cavalry have movement points of 10 and each side rarely has enough units to maintain a strong line and since the CRT permits advances after combat up to as much as 7 hexes the cavalry has a tremendous speed and momentum.

The interest of the basic situation is further increased by a typical GDW detailed order of battle including exotica such as armoured trains, river gunboats and, for the Poles, a women's battalion and a battalion consisting entirely of Catholic clergy. As usual with GDW the setup time is rather lengthy but this is less of a problem than it is with others of their games. However once set up is finished the action is fast and furious with the front moving long distances in a turn and the game can be confidently recommended.

At the same time as the Bolsheviks were fighting the Poles they were also battling with the Czarists for control of the Ukraine. This campaign is the subject of *Tatachanka* (published privately by Jim Bumpas, its designer, now available from *Paper Wars*). This game triumphs over a rather crude black and white map and somewhat obscure rules because of the interest of the situation and the originality of its ideas.



The action is even more furious than *Red Star/White Eagle* since cavalry moves fast and nobody has enough units to maintain a continuous front. Like the previous game there is a colourful order of battle including armoured cars and trains and even a few tanks. However the main interest comes from the complex political situation and the means used to simulate it. The campaign was very far from straightforward. The Ukrainian nationalists fought against the Bolsheviks but were not overkeen on the Czarists whose victory would probably have meant the re-incorporation of the Ukraine into the Russian Empire. The Makhnovists, local peasants who had seized their lands fought first with then against the Bolsheviks (Incidentally the Makhnovist "secret weapon", the armoured farmcart with a machine gun mounted on it was known as a *tatachanka*, hence the game's title).

This political web of intrigue is depicted very effectively. The different pro- and anti-Bolshevik factions are only allowed a limited degree of co-operation between units. Victories allow players to gain political points representing the effect of subversion and propaganda behind enemy lines which may cause enemy reinforcements not to appear or troops to become demoralised. Most interestingly of all, victory may sometimes result not in the elimination of enemy forces but their defection and incorporation into the victorious

forces. The result is an unusual and flavoursome game which lasts long enough for the tide to turn several times.



## Operational Games: Western Front

The first ever operational level game of WWI was 1914 published by Avalon Hill in 1968 and was another early Jim Dunnigan game which dealt with the opening months of WWI in the West. Its complexity and the number of new concepts it contained seemed astounding at the time. Indeed, there were so many optional rules adding extra details that I very much doubt that anyone ever played all of them together. With hindsight this game looks like a rough sketch for Dunnigan's later career since it contained many ideas later developed further in his subsequent games, such as step losses, a loss or retreat option CRT and simultaneous movement. Unfortunately these ideas were put together in a confusing package which cried out for a good developer and so it is not really surprising that the game is no longer in print. What is surprising however is that Avalon Hill have never produced a revised version. They have an excellent map and a detailed order of battle and need only to simplify the game system to bring it up to state of the art, so it is hard to imagine why they have bothered to revise the far less interesting *Jutland* but not this one.

SPI returned to the opening campaign in France with *Battle of the Marne* published in the mid 70s. This game represented the opposite end of the spectrum to 1914, possessing simple rules and an extremely dull map with little terrain. It did not arouse much interest and is no longer in print.

The trench battles on the Western front remain the subject of very few games. Probably due to a combination of lack of interest and the problems involved in simulating these battles. The slow process of attrition is difficult to make interesting and there is the further problem that the strength of the defensive and the general policy of holding front lines thinly with reserves to the rear created large numerical disparities between the defenders and attackers which make it hard to devise a CRT to cover all contingencies.

One possible approach to gaming a trench battle is taken by SPI's *Green Fields Beyond* designed by Dave Isby. The first thing one notices about this



game is its large and detailed counter mix. Set-up time is long but, having completed it one feels, before a single counter is moved that a WWI offensive is about to begin as one sees, set out on the map, the infantry waiting in the trenches, the huge parks of artillery behind the lines and the cavalry drawn up by the roadside just in case, this time, there will actually be a breakthrough.

When one sits down to play one soon finds that it is not just a simple matter of moving to make attacks at high odds and blasting one's way through. Although, at the start of the battle, the British vastly outnumber the Germans and have tanks, attacks will still be unsuccessful unless they are very carefully planned. Artillery plays a major role with several different types of bombardment being possible and the amount of artillery used by each artillery unit being recorded. Correct use of this artillery is the key to the game and the player is placed in the role of the staff officer responsible for detailed organisation of the attack.

The resulting game is extremely long and most gamers will prefer the shorter scenarios. Unfortunately two of them, depicting the British initial onslaught and the German counterattack are very unbalanced, not in the sense that one player has a greater chance of victory, but in the sense that the attacker does practically all the decision making while the other can do little other than react. It is only the third scenario, depicting the central part of the battle where the British lost the initiative that is equally challenging for both players.

A somewhat different approach is taken in the recent S&T game *The Kaisers Battle* designed by Joe Balkoski, depicting the German attack on the British Fifth Army in March 1918. Although the detail and counter mix are both much smaller than the previous game it still manages to convey an idea of the sort of planning that went into a WWI offensive. Artillery, although represented by abstract points rather than specific units must still be used carefully and above the battlefield aircraft spot for artillery, intercept the enemy and make ground attacks (I am sceptical about this last feature since it does not strike me that the sort of random machine gunning and primitive bombing practiced in 1918 would have had much impact on divisional sized units).

The initial German onslaught of their 1918 offensive enjoyed overwhelming numerical odds and the game will often see British companies attacked by entire German divisions. To cope with this situation the game uses an ingenious combat system without a CRT. The attacker and the defender roll a dice each, multiply the result by their combat factors and divide the attackers total by the defenders. If the final number is higher than the defender's morale the defender will take losses, if not, the attacker will take the losses. In effect the system means that the German initial offensive will sweep all before it practically everywhere but now and then a combination of high defence die rolls with low attacking ones will simulate heroic resistance by an isolated unit.

As in many SPI games HQ units are used and I have my doubts about this device. I realise that it is a device used to simplify the complex process of the organisation of command and communication but it seems to produce unrealistic results with German assaults to eliminate HQ units which bear little relation to real strategies. There is also the problem that German units trace supply from HQs but there is no supply rule for HQs so units completely surrounded can still be in supply.

However, the game is certainly interesting and makes a great change from the rehashes of old ideas or hurriedly thrown together dross that we have seen a lot of in recent S&Ts.

## Strategic Games

Devising a game on all of World War I is no easy task. If it is a simulation the long deadlock in the west must be shown but the player must, if the game is to be entertaining, be given a chance to improve the situation, without departing into the realms of unhistorical strategies.

Jim Dunnigan has attempted this in his World War I game. Published in S&T a few years ago, this game attempts to depict the war on a small, folio

sized map with 100 counters and, surprisingly, does not do badly.

The heart of the game system is the concept of combat resource points. Each nation has an allowance of these and they are used to take losses. The CRT gives each side a numerical loss which must be satisfied by eliminating units, retreating or taking losses on the combat resource table track. As a result most players will take losses in combat resource points and only lose or retreat units when these points are nearly depleted.

The resulting game is an excellent simulation of WWI that gives some insight not merely into what happened but why it happened. Placed in the role of WWI generals players will embark on long battles of attrition and as they do so will look at the enemy's declining resource points and convince themselves that one more attack will break the enemy. Somehow though, as in real life, it quite rarely happens. The game's problems are that, after a few plays, strategies can become stereotyped and it is easy to exploit the rules in various ways. For instance in 1917-1918 the Central Powers player can pursue unrealistic strategies based on the knowledge that the game is going to end. However one should not be too hard on this game since, with its simple rules, small map and 100 counters, it manages rather better than its bigger and more sophisticated rivals on the same topic.

The first of these is *The Great War*, designed by John Prados and available from West End Games. This game is based on an area movement system rather than a hex grid and so rather resembles Diplomacy in its map. Its combat rules utilise a system whereby each nation has an allocation of national resource points rather like World War I combat resource points and also kept track of on a special display.

However the system is considerably more detailed. There are four different types of attack; assaults, which are resolved on a straightforward CRT with attackers and defenders taking unit losses; attrition attacks in which only defenders take losses while attackers expend resource points; tank/infiltration attacks for later in the war with a likelihood that the enemy may have to retreat, and, if playing into 1919 a possibility of proper motorised assaults by large armoured formations.

The ideas, as is always the case in a John Prados game, are original and interesting. However John Prados' ideas tend to need good development and careful rules writing which they do not always get, (as those who purchased the first editions of *Third Reich* or *Pearl Harbour* will testify) and unfortunately they do not seem to have received it here. It seems curious that attackers never take losses when making attrition attacks when one considers that these attacks are meant to simulate trench type battles like the Somme. Presumably expenditure of resource points is intended to depict loss of manpower but why can the defender not take casualties in the same manner?

The provisions for tank and German infiltration attacks are odder still. The *Stosstruppen* who carried out German infiltration type attacks made their debut against the Italians at Caporetto and the Russians at Riga in the Summer of 1917. In this game the Germans can make infiltration attacks from 1915 onward. Similarly the Allies may make tank attacks from 1916 onwards. Although it is true that tanks were first used in this year, they were only employed locally and in small numbers. Tank attacks capable of dislodging the enemy from tracts of land big as the areas on the game map did not occur until Summer 1918. Presumably John Prados is aware of these facts and had some reason for his rules but it is not easy to see what it was.

More serious is the fact that the central concept is not clearly thought out. One is given the choice of playing the whole war 1914-1918 or short scenarios for the various years and as a result the rules fall between two stools. The whole war game at 50 or so turns is very long and the individual scenarios are not terribly interesting since they give little chance to plan ahead and formulate one's own strategy. When one adds to this the not very well written rules and low production standards, the result cannot be recommended.

The final attempt to depict all of WWI is Avalon Hill's *Guns of August*. I eagerly awaited this one and expected it to be something like their Russian Campaign, *Fortress Europa* or *War and Peace*, fairly simple, straightforward and playable but with a reasonable amount of historical simulation. Well, the first thing one notices about the game is that the rules are reasonably straightforward and short. However, where *War and Peace* was able to have a system which, although simple was original and appropriate to the period, *Guns of August* has a very basic movement and combat system which creates an atmosphere rather like Russian Campaign without panzers and mechanised movement. This may well strike some players as extremely dull but if you are interested in WWI you will realise that you cannot expect huge breakthroughs and strong attacks and you will actually start playing the game.

When you do so, you will find that, unlike its AH stablemates mentioned above its simple rules do not make for a playable game. The number of counters in play is large and they are going to be stacked closely together. In addition there is a horrendous rule that states when a nation becomes demoralised it must roll for each of its units to see if the unit deserts. Since the most likely victim of this rule is Russia and since most of the time Russia has about 70 units on the board this tends to be a somewhat time consuming process.

Does the game do any better as a simulation? Here again the answer is no. The whole concept of the game is fatally flawed by the stacking rules. Three corps (i.e. six divisions) may be stacked in a hex. This is a ludicrous underestimate of the concentrations of forces that really were involved in World War I. For example, in March 1918, the Germans attacked the British Fifth & Third Armies with 70 divisions on a front which corresponds to three hexes of the *Guns of August* map in which according to the game's rules they should only have been able to fit 18 divisions.

The result is that it is quite impossible to repeat many real life strategies in the game map. For example, in 1914, the French deployed most of their army on the Franco-German border allowing the Germans to outflank them by moving into Belgium and nearly reaching Paris before their advance was halted. In the game it is totally impossible for the French to concentrate such large numbers on the German border so they have to deploy right along the whole Belgium border thus making it impossible for the Germans to repeat their real life advance. When Russia collapsed in 1917 the Germans moved masses of men off the Eastern front to hurl at the Anglo-French in 1918. The German player who attempts this in the game will find there is just no room to deploy more than a small portion of his Eastern forces in the West.

This error is so serious that it would invalidate the game if the designers had got everything else right. Suffice it to say that they have not got everything else right. Another glaring error is the fact that, although there are weather rules, they merely affect movement, not combat. The result is that players can continue to attack in the depths of winter, blithely ignoring the mud of Flanders, the snows of the Alps or the Russian plains in total defiance of history.

The rules too are poorly written. We are told that the amount of rail capacity on Eastern and Western fronts is limited but are given no indication of where one ends and the other begins. The set up charts give Britain units of a type that simply did not exist. I pondered long over what artillery was supposed to do but eventually found this information not in the rules but tucked away at the bottom of the CRT. In fact the only aspect of the game that indicates any thought is the fact that designers and developers remain totally anonymous.

It is a pity to finish an article on such a rancorous note. However, the fact is that Avalon Hill games are expensive and that Avalon Hill do have a reputation for taking care with their products. *Guns of August* is in every respect except physical production such a considerable fall below the normal AH standards that one can only wonder how it came to be published.





One unit of the United States Army which must be becoming famous to many wargamers is the 11th United States Armoured Cavalry Regiment — the Black Horse Regiment — stationed at the town of Fulda in West Germany. It made its first appearance in the cardboard world when *Fulda Gap* was published, its 'A' and 'B' Squadrons (but not 'C', for some reason known to God and Jim Dunnigan) appearing in the counter-mix, even though they rarely stay in the game for very long! Since then it has reappeared in *NATO Division Commander* in its screening and delaying role, its squadrons (all three of 'em at last) capable of being broken down into their component troops. Now it makes its third game-appearance, this time in *Fifth Corps*, where its part is often as brief as in *Fulda Gap*, although much more vital.

A regiment that played no part in the Indian Wars of 1866-90, let alone in the Civil War (for the simple reason that it does not appear to have been raised until the 1890s), the Eleventh lacks, from the British point of view — conditioned by cinema, television, and certain literature — the fame of the Seventh, the lesser but nonetheless sound reputation of the Fourth (once, under the command of Ronald Slidell MacKenzie in the 1870s, reckoned to be the best cavalry regiment on the frontier) or the cachet of the Ninth and Tenth, the 'Buffalo Soldiers'. Nonetheless it is the first, the very first, NATO unit mentioned in Sir John Hackett's *Third World War*, which opens with Captain Jack Langtry's Troop L of 3 Squadron deployed just east of Bad Hersfeld, covering the autobahn to the border: and with the troop's initial clash with an invading Soviet column.

And it is with the 11th US Armoured Cavalry Regiment (The Black Horse Regiment) deployed and waiting that *Fifth Corps* opens — often with the first clash taking place around Bad Hersfeld. And with *Fifth Corps* opens the Central Front Series. *Fifth Corps* you will have sighted already: *Hof Gap* has joined it: S&T 88 includes *BAOR*, for which I wait with twitching fingers and eyes out on stalks, much as I waited for *Fifth Corps* to appear once I had heard that a new SPI NATO/Warsaw Pact game was on the stocks.

I call this article a mixed bag as it will start with a brief review of *Hof Gap*, written on the assumption that the system will already be known to most readers likely to be interested, and will then go on to an operational analysis. Furthermore the game-system (under the hands of Charles Kamps and of a new developer, Bruce Maxwell) and *HG* contains not only new rules which can be 'bolted on' to *V Corps*, but also certain important revisions which put the entire system into a different light. Last but not least, a lengthy correspondence with Charles Kamps, designer of *HG* and of the upcoming *BAOR*, has produced further highly illuminating facts on the series. The most important changes will be discussed in the article.

#### 'Hof Gap'

As the map display in the advertisement for the Central Front series shows, the *HG* map covers the area south of and adjacent to the *V Corps* map, with the city of Nuremberg lying almost in its centre. Between Nuremberg and the town of Hof, close against the Iron Curtain, are the obstacles

of the city of Bayreuth and the rough terrain of the Frankenwald. Further south Weiden and Amberg are set in heavily-wooded country which is spotted with swamp and rough hexes. While the Hof-Bayreuth-Nuremberg autobahn provides a major axis running diagonally from northeast to southwest, the southern half of the map has no autobahns and only two east-west roads, creating movement problems for the Czechoslovak divisions whose area of responsibility this will be.

Like *V Corps*, *HG* has three scenarios: No. 1, 'Covering Force', is comparable to 'Battle for Fulda', the second scenario of *V Corps* and, like it, uses only the eastern half of the game-map; No. 2, 'VII Corps', is a full-map marathon with cast of thousands; and No. 3, 'Seventh Army', is something of a cheat in that it is not a third scenario for *HG* but a two-map 'medium monster' linking both games in one.

'Covering Force', despite its superficial similarity to 'Battle for Fulda', is a bigger scenario. NATO starts with the 2nd US Armoured Cavalry (the old 2nd Dragoons of the Mexican War) deployed as a screen, with two West German brigades at Weiden and Amsberg respectively; on Turn 2 a third West German brigade enters the map. A small but important change in the 2nd Cavalry counter-mix is that the regimental artillery appears as three separate batteries, one in direct support of each squadron. With attack-defence CF of 1-1 they are ideal for lending support in the face of a WP overrun. The WP player will still succeed but at the cost of being forced into early use of gas and smoke — or of EW points — instead of getting a free 14-1 walkover.

The Pact opens the ball with two Soviet divisions, one tank and one motor rifle, and two Czech motor rifle divisions; on the following turn another Soviet tank division, a Czech ditto and a Czech motor rifle division all show up. A much greater muster of units, especially WP units, than in 'Fulda', and resultingly longer turns, even though this scenario consists of three turns only; the NATO player does have the advantage of having two German brigades on-map, of course, but, BUT, the improved airstrike rules will break one or two of his fingers before he can strike a blow. Like 'Fulda' 'Covering Force' is a tense, balanced scenario which can end with WP units thundering triumphantly off the map during Turn 2 or with the assault hopelessly bogged down and only an inadequate handful managing to exit.

On first sight the Czech divisions look pretty second-rate, compared with the powerful Soviet formations already encountered in *V Corps*. The MR divisions lack an independent tank battalion and all units are lighter in CF; this is presumably because the Czech MR regiments are equipped with the SKOT armoured personnel carrier, which lacks the gun-and-ATGW armament of the BMP, and the tank regiments are still equipped with the T-55, the T-62 never having been widely adopted by non-Soviet WP nations, according to *The Soviet War Machine*. Moreover the Czechs can hardly be accounted one of the more enthusiastic members of the pact, despite their post-1968 'rehabilitation'. Nevertheless the NATO player who regards the Czechs (as I did) as lightweight, good only for diversionary operations, will receive a nasty shock as they start to gnaw their way through the opposition. Regiments working in pairs and using Overrun can get through the NATO line behind which only the artillery provides depth; when this happens the southern sector can be compromised very quickly and the defender forced into frantic scurrings from one point of crisis to another. Further north the combination of Urban and Rough terrain will be giving the Soviet advance some trouble, but the 2nd Cavalry are fighting on their own — no succour until turn 2 as the Germans in the south will have their hands full, and if that turn opens with simultaneous Soviet and Czech breakthroughs ... well then, the newly-arriving German brigade has a choice of shindigs to attend.

Although the situation in the *HG* scenario is similar to that in 'Fulda' the feel of the game is distinctly different, preventing any feeling of déjà vu. Furthermore the additional and revised rules make themselves very much felt and it is time that we had a look at the more important of them.



## New and Revised Rules

**Soviet Doctrine:** There is no longer any restriction on the direction of movement of WP units, whether on or off roads, nor is there any constraint on the direction in which Overrun attacks may be made. This is intended to apply to all 'Central Front' games, including 'V Corps', as **Charles Kamps** — who is ever consistent in warning us not to underestimate the capabilities of the potential enemy — considers that the 'westwards' concept in **V Corps** (Rule 15.1) is a misleading simulation and an unrealistic restriction on the WP player. The only movement now enforced on the WP is that when a NATO unit retreats after combat at least one attacking unit must advance all the way along the path of retreat until blocked either by the retreating unit or by one through which it has retreated. **HG Exclusive Rule 15.2** is to be entirely deleted — see below for more of this.

**NATO Surprise Attack Bonus:** However Soviet rigidity is recognised in a new rule, again intended to apply throughout, applicable when a WP unit is surrounded by the ZOC of attacking NATO units. The Attack CF of *all* attackers is DOUBLED (other than that of non-adjacent artillery); this simpler ruling replaces that of Exclusive Rule 15.2 of **V Corps**. Note that (1) the doubling applies equally to normal and overrun attacks (2) column shifts for multi-hex attack and for surrounded defender apply over and above the doubling of CF.

**Rough Terrain and Marsh:** This I have from **Charles Kamps**: it will appear in **BAOR** and should apply throughout the series:-

"Units may not move, advance, retreat or overrun either into or out of a rough or marsh hex except through autobahn, road or access hexsides. Units may conduct normal attacks and exert ZOC as usual. Airmobile and Airborne Infantry units are exempt from any of these restrictions."

The terrain costs for these hexes will apply as usual to airmobile and airborne infantry units entering them 'cross country' and for any unit passing through occupied Rough/Marsh hexes via Access hexsides (see Rule 5.33).

This is quite a change, making certain hexes virtually off limits to both sides, and frequently channelling advances. Furthermore, a unit which enters a Rough/Marsh hex from 'behind', as it were, and then exerts a ZOC on to an adjacent road can constitute a formidable block, proof against frontal overrun and thus difficult to shift quickly. A good example of what I mean is a NATO unit in Hex 2441 of the **V Corps** map (due south of Bad Hersfeld); it blocks a swift dash westwards along the autobahn unless it can be winkled out by an overrun from Hex 2341. This new terrain ruling, **Charles Kamps** avers, is a truer portrayal of the kind of ground represented by rough hexes in this series of games.

**Other Changes, in Outline:** **Hof Gap** includes improved rules for pre-emptive airstrike and for Electronic Warfare, both of which I recommend and which can be fitted to **V Corps**. Without going into detail, the airstrike rule allows more variable results and that on EW makes for far less book-keeping on the players' part. Also introduced is a Counter-battery rule whereby artillery can attempt to suppress enemy artillery units prior to the movement and combat segment of each phase — an exception to Rule 8.21 which otherwise forbids attacks conducted solely by artillery.

## The Game-System and its Application

### Force Evaluation — Warsaw Pact

It is chiefly Soviet forces which I will consider as they are the only WP protagonists in **V Corps**, the game which I assume to have been at least sighted by most readers. The 'correct' divisional composition which has already appeared in **NATO Division Commander** is repeated: the MR Division includes a tank regiment and an independent tank battalion. My chief reservation is that all three MR regiments have the same CF in spite of the fact that, to the very best of my knowledge and belief, only *one* of the trio is equipped with the BMP, the other two having the BTR-60, armed only with a 14.5mm KPV machine-gun. **Charles** tells me that, according to his sources, all MR regiments in Germany are BMP-equipped: but my sources

differ! The three artillery counters represent all the surface-to-surface field artillery and rocket units organic to the division. The 4(5)7 RAG and the DAG are respectively the divisional field artillery regiment and the BM-21 MRL battalion *plus* the FROG battalion (the FROG's range is neatly highlighted in the Nuclear Weapons Chart introduced into **HG**); the 'funny' is the 3(4)6 RAG — **Charles** has extracted the 122mm battalion organic to each MR regiment and has shown them as a separate unit, whereas to have left them factored-in to regimental CF would have made the counter-mix a still more accurate reflection of a division.

The use of regimental counters emphasises the place of the regiment as the unit of command and manoeuvre, its battalions very much sub-units, smaller and more centrally controlled than those of a NATO brigade. With its high CF, its generous allocation of artillery and its low unit-count the Soviet division is an instrument of *attack*, able to apply great pressure to a selected point, especially when that pressure is in the form of an overrun supported by the use of chemicals and smoke — all consistent with the Soviet doctrine of the vigorous offensive.

### Force Evaluation — NATO

**General:** The NATO force, being represented at battalion level, is more numerous in terms of counters but considerably more lightweight in CF, especially in attack CF; the artillery is an exception, being equal or nearly so — 3(5)3, 4(5)4 — to stronger WP units. This favourable simulation of NATO artillery is intended to reflect more flexible fire-control systems and a greater variety of ammunition, including items such as projectile delivered mines.

A NATO brigade can cover a fairly wide front, or a narrower front in depth and will normally be deployed in one form or the other by a sensible NATO player: early counter-attacking against a still-fresh opponent is *not* advisable. But a brigade can certainly check the advance of a Soviet division; for how long it will prevent a breakthrough will depend on the WP players' skill, his luck with EW and with counter-battery fire — and, not least, on the terrain available to the defence. NATO can — and has been able to — bring the assault to a frustrated halt, but it will never exit, pursuing a bear, to paraphrase that most haunting of stage-directions.

Now a brief word on the national contingents.

**US Cavalry Regiment:** The squadrons are in fact battalion-sized units and the troops company-sized. Each squadron now consists of: 1 x battery of 6 x SP 155mm howitzers; 1 x troop of 17 x M60 A3 MBT; 3 x troops each of 3 platoons (4 x M60A3 and 2 x TOW (APC-mounted) and a mortar section of 3 x 4.2" mortars). Both the **Sheridan** AFV and the M60A2 (both firing **Shillelagh** ATGW) have been withdrawn from service, the gun/launcher system having proved to be defect-prone.

The game-system gives a fairly accurate portrayal of the US Armoured Cavalry regiment as a screen force, capable of identifying and delaying the initial enemy assault but able to provide only a temporary screen: a single motor rifle regiment can overrun a troop and two overrunning in succession will almost certainly destroy it.

**US Brigades:** The variations in US battalion counters reflect the cross attachment of companies between armoured and mechanised battalions; a 4-5 tank battalion is 'pure' whereas a 4-6 has a mech company attached in lieu of one of its own; a 2-8 mech battalion is also 'pure' and a 3-7 has exchanged a company for a tank company.

**West German Brigades:** **Charles Kamps** reports that the unit-mix and CF are not authoritative: when the 'Central Front' system was being designed the Germans were experimenting with various brigade organisations with a view to the 'Brigade 80' concept, and the organisation finally selected was not that depicted in the present two games. The definitive organisation produces 2-5 Panzer-grenadier battalions and 3-4 Panzer battalions, which will make the brigade more even in CF.

### Some Features of the Game System

I have found that 'bitty' layout of rules regarding artillery and a certain lack of specific information

about multiple assaults has puzzled even experienced and competent players, and that in mid-game. The following precis may be of help to some readers.

### Artillery

#### 1. General

a. May not conduct Indirect Fire when in an enemy ZOC — note that a city hex can NEVER be in an enemy ZOC, by the way (Rules 10.2 and 6.15). *Vitality* important exceptions — see (c) below.

b. May not attack 'solo', i.e. bombardment not in support of a ground attack is not allowed (except when Counter-battery fire is being used) (Rules 8.21 and 'Hof Gap 19.0). N.B. this means that isolated artillery pinned in an enemy ZOC cannot attack the pinning unit — but again see e. below.

c. Can fire chemicals *plus* smoke at the cost of only 1 FP (Rule 10.42); a point not always realised by WP players!

d. Uses a CF of 1 only, when either attacking or defending in an overrun, whether Direct or Indirect fire is employed. This is not clearly specified as regards *defence*, but becomes clear when Rule 10.2 is read in conjunction with 10.11. Rule 8.71 is misleading in that the phrase "included in an overrun" implies the *attacker* only.

e. Now for that *Vitality* Important Exception concerning artillery in enemy ZOC: it is in Rule 10.22, "An artillery unit that is in an enemy-controlled hex and is not eligible to conduct indirect fire may conduct indirect fire if all the enemy units controlling the hex are involved in the current combat."

This let-out means that an artillery unit which has been waylaid and caught in an enemy ZOC may use indirect fire in support of a unit or units attacking that enemy unit, even though it is itself in that enemy's ZOC; thus a trapped artillery unit can be 'rescued'. Obviously, in the Warsaw Pact case, the rescuing unit(s) will have to be from the same division, unless the artillery unit in question is a non-divisional one. Remember also that NATO has a nationality rule which inhibits artillery support.

#### 2. Warsaw Pact Artillery

a. May fire HE in Indirect Fire *only* when supporting a Prepared Attack (Rule 10.23 (2) in conjunction with 10.41)

b. May not conduct Indirect Fire when stacked with a non-artillery unit (Rule 10.23 (1))

c. Has DOUBLE CF when using Direct Fire, in the attack only (Rule 10.14); this reflects the Soviet doctrine of using field artillery in the close-support role and regularly practising it in that role.

### Helicopters

1. May always support any type of attack (NATO and WP alike) (Rule 10.54).

2. May not deliver chemicals or smoke (Rule 10.54). ("Superfluous advice", you say? I've had to prevent more than one WP player from trying to gas me with his helicopters!)

### Overruns

1. The concept behind the Overrun system is that of the swift assault in strength and in *conditions of poor visibility*, whether natural (fog) or artificial (smoke). The attack seeks to bring pressure upon *part* of the enemy unit and to pass through it before it can react. In addition the lack of visibility is very important, greatly reducing the effectiveness of ATGW and preventing the use of laser sights. Given speed of assault, close range and poor visibility, the attacker cannot make use of an elaborate fire-plan nor can the defender's artillery react to best effect; moreover the use of attack helicopters becomes limited. Hence the reduction of artillery and AH CF to 1. As the objective of the overrun is swift penetration of the enemy position rather than its destruction the actual loss of FP inflicted is always one less than that called for on the CRT; nor does the enemy have the opportunity to withdraw in the face of so swift an onslaught.

2. Not only may a multi-hex Overrun be performed (Rule 8.7) but, against a unit with an Overrun strength of 3 or more it becomes an



absolute necessity if it is to achieve success (I recommend that the Overrun should never be used if the appropriate CRT column would be less than that used for 8-1 attacks in Clear — and that is the *absolute minimum*). There can be confusion about multi-hex Overruns in view of Rule 8.35, which says that "after a multi-hex attack is resolved and any advances after combat have been completed the Operation Point expenditure of all the participating stacks, except for one ... is considered completed." Does this apply to a multi-hex overrun? After all, there is no movement after combat in an overrun attack! What to do?

3. I am advised by **Charles Kamps** that this ruling does NOT apply to multi-hex overruns, the whole point of the overrun concept being that the attacking units may continue their movement, the state of affairs is as follows:

a. Given that the attack is successful (see Rule 8.74) *all* attacking units may continue to move up to the limits of their OPs.

b. One attacking unit *may* enter the defending unit's hex at *no cost in OPs* providing that it moves on out, i.e. moves *through* the defending unit. The other unit or units involved in the attack may move *round* the defending unit (which loses its ZOC for the rest of the attacking units' movement phase; Rule 8.75)

c. *Very Important.* Should a second enemy unit be adjacent to one attacked by overrun its ZOC does not, repeat *not* extend into the hex occupied by the unit which has been overrun. This squelches a rather dubious gambit which I have encountered, namely placing units in pairs and then attempting to disallow overrun on the grounds that to enter and then exit the overrun hex would be to move from one ZOC of the second unit to another. Indeed CK informs me that an attacking unit can enter the enemy hex and, while sitting on top of the first defender, may then overrun the adjacent unit — and serve it right!

4. NB: For those of you who already own **HG**, CK has told me that Exclusive Rule 15.12 should be deleted. Rule 8.7 is sufficient.

### Getting Away with It

1. Finally a small but very important aspect of the game-system is tucked away in the tail-end of General Rule 8.92, within the section on Advance after Combat. Look it up, mark it and never forget it, because it is all too easy to miss when the rules are studied.

2. It is this; when a defending unit is eliminated by an attack and the FP-loss called for by the result is more than that which the unit actually possesses then, O joy, any adverse combat-result to the attacker is reduced by ONE. As most attack-losses are 1 FP this means that a strong attack can take on a depleted unit with a very good chance of suffering no losses.

3. This favours the WP player as, frequently, opposing NATO units will be depleted as a result of movement to the front or of preliminary air-strike; he will often find that his attacks remove the opposition entirely and escape a loss called for by the CRT. This is indeed eating one's cake and having it.

### Tactical Notes

Now follows a section on tactics for both sides. I am envisaging that the game being played is either the 'Battle for Fulda' scenario of **V Corps** or 'Covering Force' in **HG**; in both instances a scenario wherein the Soviet player gains VP for exiting units from the west edge of the playing-area, amassing more the earlier he gets off.

The longer scenarios tend to be very long-drawn-out and I believe that the two which I have named, both tense and balanced, are those more likely to be frequently played. However you may be interested to know that improved Victory Conditions will be appearing in **BAOR** and will be adaptable to the earlier games: in brief, one can undertake a long scenario with the option of stopping play at the end of any turn and assessing VP as at that stage of the game — WP success is measured by rate of advance, that of NATO by Urban hexes still held and in supply.

## Warsaw Pact Objectives and Methods

### The Objective

This is to exit the western edge of the playing-area in sufficient strength and sufficiently early in the game to gain at least a Tactical victory, preferably an Operational victory. *Note well* that VP thus gained can never be subsequently lost; i.e. the NATO player can do nothing to erode the total (**V Corps** Exclusive Rule 20.71, **HG** ditto 26.61). Because of this a successful WP player can confront his opponent with an irreversible victory by the end of Turn 2 or before the end of Turn 3.

The objective being to exit the map, the destruction of NATO units en route is merely a means to an end. 'NATO-chasing' could lose the game for the WP player.

### Strategy

Therefore the WP player's strategy must be to break through the NATO defence and move West as rapidly as he can. To do this he must 'play Soviet' and so his assault must be Soviet-style; that is to say he must adhere to the following:

1. The assault will bring overwhelming strength to bear at selected points in the defence, preferably the weakest points.
2. Each attacking force will push forward, paying little heed to its flanks and rear.
3. Enemy units in Urban, Rough or Marsh hexes must be by-passed whenever possible. The mounting of prepared, multi-hex attacks to clear these will consume both time and FPs.
4. Where the lead units achieve success, there the second echelon must exploit that success. Failed assaults should not be reinforced: Soviet doctrine does not reinforce failure.

To achieve the necessary overwhelming strength the WP player must begin by avoiding the pitfall of trying to use each separate half-division column as an assault force. While such a column will probably overrun a screen of light units such as *recce* troops, it will soon be brought to a halt by stronger opposition. This point is made as, more than once, I have, as the NATO player, been able to halt the WP offensive for good, its separate columns worn out and squashed against the NATO front like a handful of mushy peas thrown at a wall: and this not so much because of skilful play on my part as through my opponent's attempts to attack everywhere with something. (Diagram 1).

Divisions must concentrate as they reach the end of their initial movement in Phase 1 of their turn of entry and their frontage should be not more than four hexes, usually with pressure on two hexes; two regiments should be in the first echelon and two in the second — this will be discussed later. In addition it is best to have divisions operate in pairs or in groups, on parallel axes close together; this increases the concentration of force on a sector of the NATO front. (Diagram 2).

Divisions entering in Turn 2 represent the second echelon of the Army (= NATO Corps) making the assault. They should normally be used to follow up the first echelon divisions, exploiting their success; however if the first echelon has been brought to a halt by strong opposition the second may well be able to break through on another axis because the NATO player has been forced to shift too many units laterally to check the first-echelon assault. On the other hand the NATO player's concern over this very possibility may prevent him from countering the initial onslaught in sufficient strength to prevent early breakthrough.

It is sometimes worth entering one second-echelon division on a completely separate axis to mount a diversionary attack in a different sector of the NATO line, especially a lightly-held sector. If the scenario allows for three or more divisions entering on Turn 1 such a diversion could well be made on that turn; it will keep NATO stretched and uncertain as to the entry-point of the second echelon.

### Tactics

**Overrun Attacks.** If the WP player is to break through the NATO defence as many as possible of his attacks must be overruns; these allow the attacking unit(s) to move through or round the

DIAGRAM 1

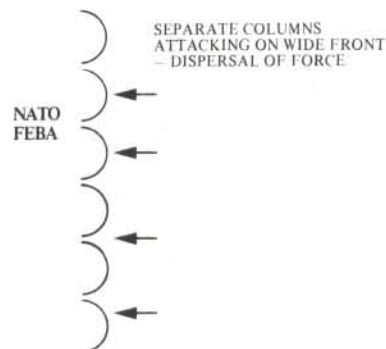
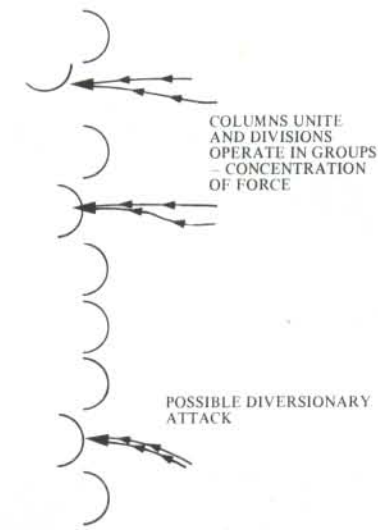


DIAGRAM 2



defender (providing that the attack is successful — high odds are essential) and move on. Usually a unit with an Overrun defence strength of 1 or 2 can be attacked by a single MR regiment, chemical and smoke support being necessary in the latter instance.

Against a stronger unit a two-regiment multi-hex attack is required; even the tough German 3-7 Panzergrenadier battalions will wilt before that. Consider: 28-3 = 9-1; add one shift for a two-hex attack plus four more for chemicals/smoke and you have a 14-1 assault. Even if the defender is in a town (*not* Urban) hex and also has limited FPF from one artillery unit the basic odds will still produce an 11-1 attack, a certain winner. Remember that multi-hex attacks must also be Prepared attacks (Rule 8.33.4).

Therefore *never* mount a 'Normal' or set-piece attack against any unit which is not (i) in an Urban hex (against which Overrun is not allowed — Rule 8.7), (ii) across an unbridged river hexside (Rule 8.7 again) or (iii) in a Rough or Marsh hex lacking the entry hexsides to permit a multi-hex Overrun into it (and even so, see the later section on use of independent tank battalions). To batter against a 3-7 battalion at 6-1 basic odds when to declare Overrun confers 9-1 basic is plain daft, especially when the defender against a set-piece attack can benefit from full artillery support and, worse, from those terrible helicopters.

**The Double Whammy:** This not only reflects the Soviet doctrine of the multi-echelon assault but also usually ensures that the overrun unit is destroyed and not simply left behind to fight another day or to block artillery follow-up. One picture is worth a thousand words, see diagram 3.

This represents a simple situation, common in Turn 1 when only US armoured cavalry or other light units are available to meet the Soviet entry. First echelon unit moves adjacent, attacks, passes through; it may then advance as far as possible, or go on to overrun a 'depth' unit (probably artillery) or bring a defending artillery unit within its ZOC if it lacks the support or the FP to overrun





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but much more so in **Hof Gap**, especially in the case of the two German brigades: set-up of the line in the desired position is not possible but it can be achieved in Turn 1 — and it can be a stinker, as I found out!

### Tactics

**Choice of Ground:** If you can block an axis from the safety of an Urban hex, then do so. If you can block it from a Rough or Marsh hex which cannot be overrun from that axis, do so. When all things are pretty well equal, remember that a Town hex gives you a shift in your favour.

Remember especially that certain Rough and Marsh hexes which are astride a road or autobahn or which have an access side, can be overrun from one hex on the enemy's side. A unit with an Overrun CF of 3 or more placed in such a hex can be a nasty spoke in Ivan's wheel: and even a 2CF unit, given an extra artillery CF, will be nearly as bad for him.

**Withdrawal before Combat:** Yes, 'nice work if you can get it', but well worth a try when the WP player has had to wheel up two regiments — at a cost of one FP each — ready to overrun you right into the deck in his next phase. Simply to withdraw even one hex blows the whole attack and your opponent has to set up the whole thing again, at a cost of one more FP per regiment. Remember that you have a 50% chance of success.

**Harrying the Flanks:** A particularly effectual tactic when applied against artillery, and a useful role for bypassed armoured cavalry troops or HSK battalions. Simply move the unit next to one or more WP artillery units and bingo! they're in your ZOC and thus unable to fire. Without the aid of a manoeuvre unit they are powerless to attack you and the WP player must either bring up a unit to brush you off or move the artillery out of your flexible ZOC — at a cost of 6FP and thus severely inhibiting subsequent movement in that phase.

Now that Soviet doctrine is more realistic, to sit thus on the tail of a tank or MR regiment is a dicey business but if you can do so from an unoverrunnable hex you put your opponent in a nasty fix because even a cavalry troop is a tough nut for a solo attack, even with chemicals in support — 5-1, shifted to 8-1 is quite likely to fail to destroy the harrying unit, especially if it is in good defensive terrain.

This gambit is, I consider, a good reflection of reality and can bring about that unhinging of the components of the WP divisional machine referred to by Sir John Hackett — especially when used to harass artillery emplaced behind the manoeuvre regiments.

**FPF — Artillery and Helicopters:** As you will have gathered, an astute WP player will make maximum use of overrun attacks, thus degrading the contribution of artillery and helicopters to the defence. Even so, that single extra CF added to the defence can at least reduce the defender's FP loss, especially if the unit under attack has an overrun CF of 3 or more. But the use of helicopters to boost an anti-overrun defence is inadvisable for the simple reason that FP losses suffered by the defender must also be borne by any helicopter unit which has taken part in the defence: properly-mounted overruns are virtually certain to inflict such loss and to fly in one's helicopters is to court damaging loss for small return. Save the choppers — especially the 7(30)7 West German AH battalions — to boost defence against 'normal' attacks; here the German AH are so strong as to give the attacker a bloody nose and thus make the WP player very chary of making set-piece assaults.

**Attacks on WP Units:** Mr Punch's advice to those about to be married was — "Don't", an exhortation equally appropriate in this instance. Even with the WP unit surrounded, thus doubling NATO CF, one is likely to obtain no more than 5-1 odds (after shifts) against a tank or MR regiment: such odds may destroy a regiment already at its last gasp, but probably with loss to all the NATO ground units involved. It is better to bring enemy units to a bogged-down halt rather than to seek to destroy them in isolated Pyrrhic encounters: only artillery offers a worthwhile target and the cheaper and more practicable harrying tactic described earlier is my recommended method of depriving the regiments of their essential fire-support.

### NATO Tactics — A Summing-Up

NATO's best bet is not to try to maintain a shield-wall against the assault but rather to absorb it as a sponge absorbs water. The 'sponge' will consist of units posted in depth, making maximum use of overrun-proof terrain and denying the fast routes to enemy probes; in conjunction the harrying tactic will disconcert these assaults by depriving them of the fire support which gives them so much clout. Make the WP force fight so hard to break down the front door, cross the hall and climb the stairs that it drops dead at the boudoir door, leaving Europa shaken but unravished.

### 'Central Front' as Simulation

The keystone of the game-system is its introducing the one-unit-at-a-time, move-and-fight mechanic, already used in **Next War** and **NATO Division Commander** to an operational-level game while dispensing with the multitudinous details and the laborious bookkeeping of these two games. In terms of operational games it is as much a step forward from **Fulda Gap** as was that game from **Wurzburg** and **Bundeswehr**: in particular it brings out the feel of the remorseless assault of powerful mechanised formations, of the determination to break through and of the swift exploitation of any breach created. Liddel Hart described the mechanised assault as an 'expanding torrent' and that is what the NATO player will experience if a thinly-stretched line breaks or a line of advance is overlooked, the more so for the fact that SPI cannot be accused of playing down the strength of the Soviet Army in this series.

But much will depend on the WP player's handling of his powerful compact divisions as the instruments of attack which their originals are, as fighting machines which have forward gears and reasonable steering mechanisms but which are not intended to go into reverse and which should not stop. He must use them ruthlessly but not rashly, getting maximum forward movement out of every expenditure of FPs and coordinating his divisional echelons so that the second can quickly and fully exploit the success of the first.

The system is basically simple and there is little chrome and less 'dirt' — nor do the games suffer from their lack. The artillery rules could, I consider, have been more lucidly expressed and more attention could have been paid to explaining the mechanics of the Overrun (which I trust the 'wrap-up' rules will take care of when these appear): this apart, most of the mechanics are easily retained in the memory and it will be noted that book-keeping consists of no more than chalking up air and EW points as they are expended.

Nonetheless it is no use pretending that the **Central Front** games are short, even the three- or four-move shorter scenarios. Lengthy turns are inherent in the one-at-a-time system and this characteristic is enhanced by the fact that not one single unit can be moved heedlessly by either player. The attacker must attack at exactly the right places and must envisage each unit's next phase of movement as well if he is not to end up in a cul-de-sac. The defender, for his part, must place his units at the vital points and must achieve and maintain a flexible defence with the minimum of movement — to dash about the map, even to shift so much as one hex, is to use up FP that will be badly needed once the hour of battle strikes.

The 'short' scenarios can be longish and the full ones can be very long indeed and can bog down completely — but the revised Victory Conditions of **BAOR** are a distinct improvement and can be adapted to the two earlier games, making it possible to undertake a longer scenario without committing oneself to ten turns. (Note, though, that the fewer the turns played the more likely the WP player will be to win as his initial progress will be rapid.) I can imagine that many players will find the new line interesting but rather ponderous and that **Fulda Gap** will retain a firm place in their affections, despite the advent of 'AFCENT Operational Game Mk III'. But those who are prepared to devote the necessary time and attention and who are prepared to adapt the innovations of one game to another and to experiment with Turn 1 situations (as they are bidden to do by the designer) will find that they are dealing with an absorbing package which combines ingenuity and depth with a refreshing lack of complexity rare in recent 'modern' games.



With the unlaudable aim of making writers for **Phoenix** just that little bit more self-conscious, I have been having a look at the various titles with which articles in **Phoenix** have been graced over the years. Titles used fall fairly easily into seven categories: the plain unadorned name of the game being written about (e.g. "Cityfight"); the straightforward descriptive title including the name of a game (e.g. "Dreadnought Scenarios"); the straightforward title of a general nature (e.g. "Micro-computers in Wargaming"); the historical title ("Montrose") — this is usually applied to a new scenario, though there has been the odd historical article (remember the fuss over "Tannenberg 1410"?); the quotation title ("Ein Feste Burg...") — which you might be forgiven for thinking would be the title for a review of "Mighty Fortress"; the humorous, or mock-humorous title ("Gotta Pick a Pocket from Two" must be an example of the influence of the "gotta press"); and the purely fanciful title ("From Wilderness to Western Shore").

Taking the first thirty issues of **Phoenix**, it is interesting to note that the first of these categories is far and away the most dominant, scoring 42% of the total, with the second listed, that is, the longer title including the name of the game under discussion, coming second with 19%. And just to show what a straightforward magazine **Phoenix** is, the straightforward non-game title comes third with 12%.

The pattern has not been constant, though. Consider the quotation title. After one premonitory appearance in issue 4 ("The First Casualty" — a man ahead of his time, Jim Hind) there is virtually nothing until issue thirteen, when three appear in a burst, marking, among other things, the arrival of Major Mack as a regular contributor. Thereafter, there is a regular stream of them (many appearing over Major Mack's articles).

Certainly it seems that it is about this time that **Phoenix** writers started becoming more imaginative, for about this period the first humorous titles start appearing, though the first is perhaps "How not to fight Rommel" in issue 10. There is some overlapping of these categories, as when a quotation with humorous overtones is used ("Exit Pursued by a Bear"). But despite the increase in more imaginative titles, there is a counter-trend towards titles containing only the name of a game, which have a greater relative edge over category two in the last ten issues or so than in early issues.

Finally, some records. The longest title award goes to Charles Vasey for "What Country, Friends, is This? 'This is Illyria, Lady' And what should I do in Illyria?". The shortest title comes from Michael Stoner with "GEV", one character ahead of S.J. Hackett's "1942" and his own "Ogre". The award for the most mysterious title is won by Andrew McGee with "In my End is my Beginning" which apparently has something to do with "Kriegsmarine" and WWII naval operations in the European area.

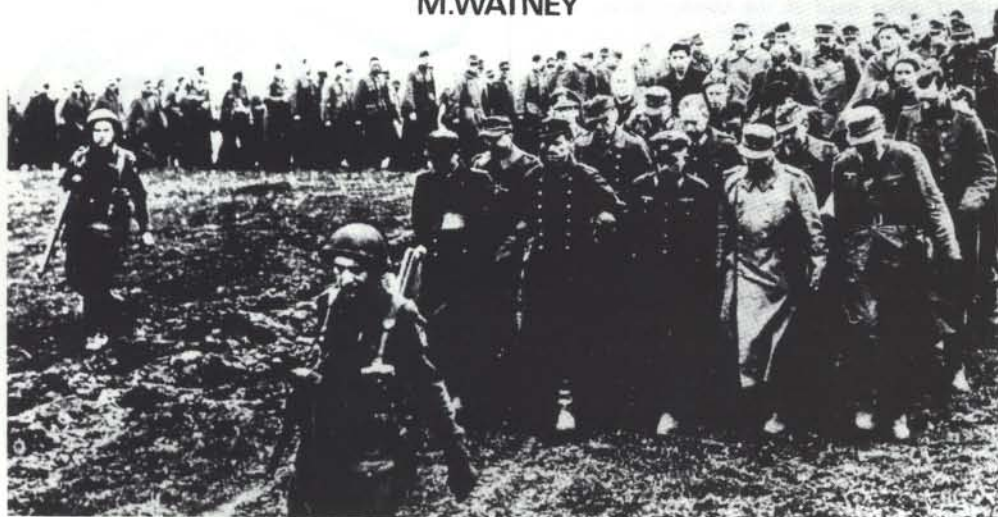
To your typewriters, gentlemen, and see what you can produce by issue 60.

(... and a Merry Christmas !)



# THIRD REICH REJUVENATED

M. WATNEY



For many years it has been a strange paradox that one of **Avalon Hill's** top-selling games is also one of the most ambiguous. The problems associated with the incomplete rules of **Third Reich** are not only due to what Don Greenwood himself admits, was his own inexperience in game development at the time of its publication. Any game dealing with strategic situations will require pages of special rules and clarifications, simply because in real life nations are almost invariably very different from each other and do not take kindly to being lumped together under any single generalised heading. Tactical and operational games are not cursed with this problem: a particular manoeuvre in one corner of the map can reasonably be expected to generate a similar range of effects in the other. Yet it is this increasing importance of politics in play rather than sheer military might which enamours strategic games to their supporters, even if the price to be paid is extremely dirty rules top-heavy with special cases.

**Third Reich** is a superlative game, and this opinion is reinforced not just by sales levels, but (more importantly I believe) by the frequency of play. In the March-April 1981 issue of **The General** is a list of the top twenty games being played by readers, from a sample space of 1201. **Third Reich** (4.29) is number three, narrowly beaten by **The Russian Campaign** (4.93). The cult of **Squad Leader** has first place sewn up easily (12.07). Thus a game published in 1974, full of holes and blatant inaccuracies, is still able to beat more youthful challengers such as **Victory in the Pacific** (2.93), **War and Peace** (2.71), and **Kingmaker** (1.14). Even that old grand-daddy **Panzerblitz** scores only 2.29. How much higher might **Third Reich** climb in popularity then, with a new map and a new rule-book?

**Avalon Hill** are now about to find out. In deference to **Third Reich** fanatics throughout the world very little of any consequence has actually been changed. A great deal has been clarified and a number of rules have been amplified but, apart from that, its essential flavour remains. One problem cannot be avoided however: the ambiguities themselves have led to the adoption of a variety of house rules over the years, house rules which differ from one country to another, from one town to another. And every-one believes that their's is the correct interpretation. So, as the new rules are read and the new map examined, there are bound to be cries from offended grognards. It is inevitable. I can only suggest that the greater advantages of uniformity of interpretation are worth the pangs of second-birth. Of course, it is easy for me to say that since, as one of the more vociferous play-testers, I was fortunate to get many of my interpretations adopted as official!

The new map is likely to be the least controversial change. It is beautiful. I have been unable to find a single ambiguous hex. And at long last a set of grid co-ordinates has been provided.

The most important change is that The Hague has been moved to its proper location on the coast. Since the Dutch force pool remains the same as before, it is now possible for the Germans to gain a breakthrough at Brussels itself, or even capture Belgium using infantry alone. During playtesting I was concerned lest, even with the two extra replacements now allowed to the French 'At Start', the Germans found a Fall 1939 offensive in the West too inviting. Having tried that strategy, I can report that lack of BRPs in 1939 discourages the Germans from applying excessive pressure on the French in 1939 regardless of the ease with which Brussels can be taken. I reckon that this change has brought forward the fall of France by not more than half a turn.

Other important changes are the promotion of Tunis to port status and the relegation of Bengasi to mere city. This encourages a more historical Axis retreat into Tunisia and enhances the value of Tobruk. Vichy France has been expanded to include Lyons and the hexes adjacent to the Italian border. The Yugoslavian, Albanian and Greek mountain ranges at last appear. Istanbul is now a two-front port and Sevastopol a fortress. In response to criticism that it is, in fact, to the west of the Rhine, Aachen's name has been changed to Bonn. Iraq is now a British colony, which is strange since there was a genuine Arab government albeit very heavily influenced by the British presence: within game terms I suppose colonial status is reasonable.

The British Isles themselves have received major revisions. At last the neutrality of Eire is recognised, though it is perhaps a little insulting that Ireland is worth no BRPs at all: after all, even Luxembourg gets five! Loch Ness has been reduced to the status of a river, the Highlands of Scotland and the mountains of Wales now appear, and the Thames has been added. That most famous of Essex's ports, 'Dover', has been rechristened Harwich. East Anglia still looks rather odd though, with the fictitious Great Yarmouth peninsula retained in order not to disturb invasion tactics.

All the Greek islands have been carefully delineated, the Suez Canal is a navigable river and all ports have been named. It is a pity though that one major blunder has slipped through: Bremen and Wilhelmshaven are the wrong way round!

Turning now to the rules, with only a few exceptions the changes, clarifications and amplifications

are all very desirable. So let's start with the bad news and examine these exceptions first.

One of the most far-reaching amplifications in the new rules relates to air combat: although the mechanics of applying counterair, ground support, DAS (Defensive Air Support) and air interception remain unchanged (except that DAS (Defensive Air Support) is now limited to three times the combat factors of the defender), losses are no longer at the whim of the attacker. Rather, each player rolls a die, the lower 'loses' the combat, suffering losses equivalent to the difference between the rolls, and the winner then suffers half these losses. Each extra airfactor contributes a +1 DRM and there are also nationality DRMs favouring the Germans and penalising the Russians. Note that winning or losing the combat only affects losses taken: it does not alter the status of surviving units which have, for instance, been counteraired. Provided a minimum one-to-one ratio is achieved between counterairing units and their target, the surviving attacked aircraft will remain incapacitated as in the original **Third Reich**: indeed, there is even a chance that inferior attacking aircraft will achieve a counterair.

While counterair tactics are therefore unchanged, the picture is not so rosy in the case of the interception of DAS. Here there is a major flaw. In the original edition, to stop DAS it was necessary to actually destroy it. Regrettably, this old requirement has been grafted on to the new air combat resolution rules with little thought for how the combination of the two might change tactics. Since losses are determined using two dice (one rolled by each player), extreme results such as total elimination of the defender are hard to achieve and almost impossible to guarantee. So it is virtually impossible to prevent at least one or two factors of DAS surviving and, according to the printed rules, getting through to alter the odds of the ground combat.

As a playtester, I can reveal that these new air rules were never tested by us: they were tacked on at the last minute, after our reports on the new rules had been submitted. Fortunately, after considerable debate following publication of this new edition of the rules, **Avalon Hill** have recently issued an important errata, rephrasing the interception of DAS so it is now executed in a manner similar to counterair (i.e. in general surviving DAS may not be added to the defence after successful interception): the net result is that only the method of determining losses has been changed.

This flaw in the rules as printed may not be noticed in early games using the new system because it is mitigated by a very strange change in the Sequence of Play. Defensive Air Support is now committed after movement and Ground Support but *before* the attacker announces his attacks. This may not change things in France, North Africa or Italy where the target will be pretty obvious. But in Russia where there is a long front line and plenty of targets it devalues DAS considerably. For example, consider the following deployment. In each of three adjacent hexes facing four enemy occupied hexes, place one armoured unit. If the centre armoured unit attacks either of the two enemy units to which it is adjacent, both remaining armoured units on the flank are available to exploit. If DAS makes these two targets unattractive, one of the other units (originally intended for exploitation) can attack the flank while the armoured unit in the centre exploits. So, by placing units about to exploit in the front line, the attacker keeps his options open to the last possible minute and can switch his breakthrough hex if he thinks that DAS is too strong. Instead of defending against specific attacks, DAS must now be used to defend against threats of attacks, threats which may never actually materialise. With these new rules and when (as is usual) the strategic defender is moving second, in my experience he will prefer to save his airfactors for ground support in his own turn rather than fritter them away flying DAS over targets which the opponent is not even obliged to attack!

A second major flaw is rule 14.4. This is a classic example of one step forward resulting in two steps backwards. This ill-conceived rule allows armoured units to exploit away from empty hexes, if they go to the trouble to 'attack' such hexes first. It has obviously been added as a sop to those critics who



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point out that in the past no defence has often been better than a weak defence since a weak defence merely offered attractive potential breakthroughs to the enemy. But it is impossible to convert an exploitation phase into a mechanized movement phase merely by writing one rule. The abuses to which this rule can be put are laughable: for instance, there is nothing in the printed rules to prevent a unit moving as far through a mesh of ZOCs as possible and then 'attacking' an empty hex behind the enemy armour: from the resulting breakthrough he can exploit deep into the enemy's rear and thus the whole concept of an armoured line has been circumvented. Of course, there is also no way that an empty hex under 'attack' can be protected with DASI. This is such a stupid rule (again, completely untested by us) that I tend to completely ignore it. Fortunately, **Avalon Hill** are now aware of the problem too and the more obvious abuses have just been halted with an errata for the dreaded rule 14.4.

One other remarkably poorly conceived rule, which at least does not actually destroy the game, is 37.3. This allows SR around Africa to Suez (and vice versa) even if Gibraltar is friendly. The cost is one sea escort and two SRs. This neatly circumvents the desirable Gibraltar bottleneck of four units per turn. It also allows the Allies extraordinary flexibility in deploying into North Africa. Short of SR? Then send the boys through Gibraltar (one SR, two sea escort). Short of sea escort? Then route them round Africa (two SR, one sea escort). With six SR and six sea escort, a player could send two units through Gibraltar, and two all the way around Africa on a pleasant sea cruise. The crowning glory of this farcical rule is that even the Axis can SR around Africa if they capture Suez: can't you just picture the tiny Italian merchant navy slinking quietly down hundreds of miles of hostile coastline, the only friendly landfall Italian Somaliland and Madagascar?

Well, that is the worst of the new rules. They can at least be dealt with, the first and second by inserting the accompanying errata and the third by unbelieving hysteria. Fortunately, by and large, the rest of the game is a considerable improvement.

The naval rules, for instance, have been completely reworked in much greater detail. To prevent a mission continuing to its destination it is now only necessary to win a naval engagement rather

than actually sink the ships from under the unit being carried. Winning involves rolling more than your opponent does, with suitable DRMs favouring the larger fleet and certain nationalities. This means that there is no longer much danger of losing one's entire fleet in one massive confrontation, so players are more willing to actually use their fleets offensively. A vitally important change has been made to shore bombardment: this can now only be used to assist an amphibious assault, so the American player can no longer rely on the combined might of the Allied navies to blast a path along the French coast into Germany. Excess fleet factors not required to lift a small ground unit which is amphibiously assaulting may now contribute to shore bombardment. Although amphibiously assaulting ground units must begin the player-turn in the port of embarkation, the fleets need not: they can move there in the movement phase. The transport of air factors has been restricted. During the transport mission, fleets need not be based at the port of embarkation; but they must be to pass on supply. A new combat resolution technique has been provided for air attacks on fleets. Minors' air and naval units can attack outside the home country. By and large, these are excellent changes.

There have been a number of changes in ground combat too. Most significant is that Minors must now set up before Option Determination: a long overdue adjustment which gives the initiative back to the attacker again. When the defender counterattacks all combat values are basic, as usual; but if the attacker counterattacks, the defender *does* continue to benefit from terrain. Bridgeheads may be placed even after paratroops have untripped a river: this is a shame, since it is now much better for the Germans to capture Paris with a cross-river assault and paradrop than attack across open country! On the other hand, partisans can no longer untriple rivers. Attrition is permitted even if there is no contact, so in the face of a Soviet invasion the great Turkish wall of nothingness is no longer a potent defensive tactic. Replacements no longer contribute to attrition. A player may destroy his own units at the start of his turn but may not immediately rebuild them. Crossing arrows prevent attrition capture (with the new restriction on shore bombardment, capturing the toe of Italy is now a dreadful prospect) and allow SR adjacent to a hostile unit. Attrition retreats and advances are no longer done sequentially. The

permanent elimination of airborne units is now only possible within one turn of a drop. Apart from Malta and Gibraltar, fortresses lose their status upon capture: this is bad news for Finns who have their eyes on a certain Russian port and objective!

Perhaps the greatest number of changes and amplifications concern strategic rules. There are now, for instance, Italian and even British partisans! The number of British SRs has been increased to seven. There is an entirely new procedure called an Intelligence Effort by which, for five BRPs, a player rolls two dice in the hope of gaining information on the opponent's variant counter. In my experience this rule is only used by the very rich, or by the Russians and Italians when they are feeling bored! There is also an ability to bribe potential minor allies into staying neutral through Foreign Aid: again, in my experience, neither side has enough BRPs in the early years (when Foreign Aid is of most value) to use the rule except perhaps to dispose of a few odd BRPs immediately before the Year-Start Sequence. A tacit understanding soon develops that neither side will unbalance the status quo by throwing BRPs away (i.e. giving Foreign Aid).

Many of the changes and new rules affect the Russians. At last the Soviets now always move at the same time as the Western Allies, regardless of neutral Soviet BRP levels: there are no longer stunning Axis opportunities following a declaration of war in Winter 1940. The Russian player may now voluntarily postpone the Russian Winter rule for one year, subject to the fall of the dice, if he thinks that not enough Axis units have entered the hinterland to feel the cold. This is rather a strange rule in concept, although it does work in practice: a German declaration of war in the winter is now no longer particularly attractive. Loss of the Soviet fleets does not contribute to Russian defeat, the minimum number of ground and air factors in play being reduced to 50 accordingly, and the ratio changed to 3:2. The new fortress of Sevastopol retains its fortress status only so long as the Russians control a second Black Sea port: an important rule this, since Sevastopol can only be attacked from two hexes and is therefore potentially twice as strong as Leningrad. Russia may not receive BRPs until she is at war with Germany: Lend-Lease capabilities have been halved to encourage the use of Murmansk Convoys which have themselves been completely reworked and amplified. The effects of Axis interference with convoys is now very uncertain. There is also a new 'Free Siberian Transfer' rule which allows Russia to receive some of her 1942 reinforcements for free. These units are supposed to represent the movement of Siberian units from the border with Manchukuo to the European theatre. Unfortunately this good rule has been marred by an exceptionally heavy penalty for its use: all Russian victory requirements are raised by two objectives. Considering the tough time the Russians have in this game anyway, I cannot see many players wanting to take advantage of this new rule just to save a few BRPs.

A particularly vicious change in the rules outlaws the use of fleets in the East Front Garrison, which will greatly slow the drive on Paris. But in a brilliant revision, the penalty for failing to maintain this East Front Garrison is now merely an opportunity for the Russians to declare war on Germany prematurely! The size of the garrison has been reduced slightly to compensate but even so it will be tempting to the Germans to take the risk and strip the frontier of troops for service in France. Will the Russians really be willing to spend 35 BRPs (reducing their growth accordingly) in 1940 just to take some of the heat off the French? Or might the Germans trick them into doing so, only to head east immediately? If the German player wants to play 'chicken' he may now do so.

Stricter supply rules mean that the Russians cannot take supply via Western Allied fleets; however a clarification does allow supply to be drawn from east Persia once Lend-Lease has been opened, so the defence of the Caucasus is not affected. The Russians are further helped by rather artificial restraints set on the Axis Minor Allies: the Bulgarians for instance may now only operate in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece and European Turkey!

Other wide-ranging political rules at last make the Mediterranean a worthwhile theatre in which to





fight. In particular, Italy may now surrender prematurely without the need for the Allies to capture Rome. The four conditions which must be fulfilled are: a supplied Allied ground unit in mainland Italy after an Axis combat phase, no Axis forces in Africa, Allied control of either all Sicily or all Sardinia and Corsica, and the Allies holding the initiative. Upon the fall of Italy, the Germans now get a few factors of the Italian navy to keep outlying islands in supply but against that now face Italian partisan activity. An Allied campaign in Italy is made all the more attractive by the prospect of Turkey becoming a British Minor Ally and rampaging through Bulgaria and Rumania! This will occur if the Allies have more ground and naval factors (reckoned separately) in the Mediterranean than the Axis, and the Allies control at least seven Mediterranean objectives. That seventh objective is likely to be Rome, which means that between the fall of Rome and the Soviet conquest of Rumania and Bulgaria the Axis must now match the Allies one-for-one in ground factors in the Mediterranean or open their back door to a Balkan stab. Another delightful new political rule penalises the Axis if they choose to attack Franco's Spain. Four Axis variants (Iraqi rebels, Vichy France as a German Minor Ally, early activation of German Minor Allies, and Turkey as a German Minor Ally) fizzle out as duds, in addition to which the Balkans and Vichy France become suddenly very uninterested in activating normally too!

A Vichy Syria is now no longer the threat to Suez it used to be. A new rule has been devised to complement the Malta rule: Allied air factors in

Cyprus, Crete or Rhodes, or fleets based east of the Suez Canal now whittle down the Axis ability to supply units through Antioch, Beirut, Haifa or Port Said on a factor for factor basis. But has this rule come too late? I am sad to report that instead of penalising Britain by 50 BRPs for the loss of either Gibraltar or Suez/Alexandria, Britain now suffers a loss of only 25 BRPs for each. To capture one was always a tough proposition, made only palatable by the hope that a sudden 50 BRP loss might bankrupt Britain and thus allow an Axis paratroop attack to seize a British port without being counterattacked. That, at any rate, is the only way I have ever defeated Britain. But 25 BRPs is less than the cost of two offensives: hardly a significant penalty. The thinking behind this rule-change is hard to fathom. Surely the penalty represents the cutting of communications between London and the Middle East? This would be achieved by the Axis capturing either Gibraltar or Suez/Alexandria. Having captured one, the other seems almost superfluous. Anyway, if any-one does ever bother to capture Suez, there is now an entertaining piece of chrome which allows for the temporary destruction of canals like Suez and Kiel. As far as I am concerned though, playing the Italian I shall advance no further east than the safety of the Qattara Depression!

By concentrating on the more spectacular changes to the rules, I may have given a wrong impression. The new game is a definite and very major improvement. But that improvement is largely thanks to many humdrum clarifications too numerous to mention here. The balancing of the

Strategic Warfare rules, the re-worded supply rules and the unambiguous highly detailed sequence of play make the new game a worthwhile purchase in itself. The extra chrome, and the entertaining new political rules which so effectively broaden the scope of the game, are the icing on the cake. As for the three problem areas mentioned at the start ... well, you can always agree to play the old-fashioned way as I do, announcing all ground attacks before placing DAS; and, as gentlemen, who is to blame you if you both 'accidentally' fail to take advantage of exploitation from empty hexes or the roll-on-roll-off facilities at Suez? We are all older more sensible gamers these days and such gentlemen's agreements are no longer looked upon as heretical variants. For, since its original publication, all our tastes have become much more sophisticated. In this context, it is interesting to note that the rules have now been unified as a single whole: there is now no Advanced Game as such. And it is gratifying to remember that in this crazy self-defeating period of dud monstrosities and seven-day wonders, **Third Reich** is still the third most-played of all Avalon Hill's games. It is hard to remember that this great classic, still going strong today, was published in the Halcyon days of 1974.

**STOP PRESS!** The July/August **General** has just announced that **Third Reich** is now the second most-played game, beaten only by **Squad Leader**! Watch out for the January/February 1982 edition of **The General** which is scheduled to be devoted to the new **Third Reich** and will include a few errata and copious clarifications.

#### Check-List of Third Reich Changes

- 2.1 Neutral objectives benefit no one, even in the 1944 Scenario
- 2.212 Two-player victory conditions: Allied concession
- 2.31 New victory conditions for France and Italy
- 2.32 Crossing arrows do not inhibit SR adjacent to an enemy unit
- 2.34 Loss of fortress status
- 5.5 Sevastopol: limited supply
- 5.71 Doubled defence, even during counterattack, for the defender
- 5.72 Partisans do not untriple rivers
- 5.75 NN26 (Qattara Depression) unplayable
- 7.1 Hexes cannot change hands between allies
- 9.12 BH may be placed even after paras untriple a river
- 9.4 Mandatory removal of BHs
- 10.21 New ASW-submarine ratio
- 10.23 Conversion of airwings into interceptors
- 10.5 Strategic Warfare losses taken every turn in 1945
- 12.13 Russia always plays at the same time as the Western Allies
- 12.21 Minors set up before Option Determination
- 12.23 Attrition permitted without contact
- 12.24 Minimum of one attack must be made in any offensive
- 12.5 Voluntary destruction of own units; may not be rebuilt that turn
- 14.26 When attacker counterattacks, defender continues to benefit from terrain
- 14.4 Exploitation from undefended enemy hex
- 15.4 Construction permitted in Sicily and Ulster
- 15.55 Russia may not receive BRPs until at war with Germany
- 15.6 Free Siberian Transfer
- 16.1 Free SRs raised to seven
- 18.32 Crossing arrows prevent attrition capture
- 18.34 Attrition retreats and advances are not done sequentially
- 21.4 Revocation of DoW due to inactivity
- 22.1 Minors set up before Option Determination
- 22.7 Minors' air and naval units may attack outside home country
- 24.5 Loss of BRPs if partisans capture capital in all scenarios
- 24.7 Free division of spoils following Co-operative Conquest
- 24.8 No transfer of objectives allowed between allies
- 25.22 Spain and Turkey automatically become minor allies of intervening power
- 25.4 Geographical limitations on the movement of Axis Minor Allies
- 25.6 Not more than five factors in Finland before activation
- 26.3 BRPs awarded in 1942 and 1944 scenarios for capture of Paris or Rome
- 26.7 Premature surrender of Italy; Germans capture up to 8 Italian fleet factors
- 26.92 New conditions for Russian surrender
- 26.924 Failure to garrison defeated Russia
- 27.1 Limited supply from Tunis, Beirut, Mosul, USA, Greek Islands, Tangiers, Konigsberg,

- 27.23 Durazzo Overseas supply must embark at supplying fleet's base
- 27.232 One naval factor supplies an airbase
- 27.24 BHs and ports are not treated as supply sources with regard to ZOCs
- 27.34 Loss of supply privilege for armour and paras following SR
- 28.14 Nationality restrictions on use of airbases
- 28.43 Counterair contested by unused airfactors only; results adjusted according to nationalities involved; new combat resolution technique
- 28.44 Interception of DAS also uses new technique
- 28.45 Air attacks on naval units: new combat resolution technique
- 28.52 DAS limited to three times the strength of the defenders
- 29.13 Closure of the Kiel Canal
- 29.14 Gibraltar: two-front port for all purposes
- 29.15 Istanbul: two-front port for all purposes
- 29.413 Shore bombardment only possible in support of seaborne invasions
- 29.422 Transporting fleets need not be based in the port of embarkation
- 29.423 Embarkation and disembarkation costs during Transport Mission
- 29.425 Transport of air factors restricted
- 29.428 Transport only possible between ports controlled at the start of the player-turn
- 29.433 Excess naval factors during seaborne invasion may be used as shore bombardment
- 29.434 Fleets may move before embarking seaborne invasion
- 29.54 Fleets at a single base may only intercept a single target
- 29.571 New model detailed naval combat resolution technique
- 29.573 Loser of naval battle aborts his mission, even if actual losses are negligible
- 29.574 Breaking off naval combat
- 29.66 Limitation on SR through Turkish Straits, Gibraltar, and past Danish Islands
- 29.82 Port at which destroyed fleet is being rebuilt must be named
- 30.3 Replacements are not counted in attrition attacks
- 31.4 Permanent elimination of paras is only a danger within one game turn of a drop British and Italian partisans
- 32.12 Limitation on partisans in Vichy France
- 32.13 Restriction on partisans receiving Ground Support or DAS
- 32.2 Partisans do not untriple rivers
- 32.6 Partisans only displace enemy naval and air units by ending their turn at the base
- 33.41 Axis chits 2 and 10 expanded, chit 5 changed
- 33.42 Allied chits 3 and 5 changed, chit 6 expanded
- 33.5 Intelligence Effort
- 33.6 Foreign Aid
- 33.7 Turkey as a British Minor Ally
- 34.2 No French units in British colonies
- 35.5 Restrictions on Axis supply to the Middle East
- 36.1 German and Italian units may stack together, even in multi-player games
- 37.1 Penalty for loss of Gibraltar reduced to 25 BRPs
- 37.3 SR around South Africa
- 37.4 Gibraltar may be invaded from either front
- 40.2 No free offensive in the Mediterranean when opening Lend-Lease
- 40.5 Lend-Lease through Turkey
- 40.6 No Lend-Lease until war between Germany and Russia
- 40.7 Pay again if power that opened the Lend-

- 42.3 Lease route is defeated
- 42.4 Uncontested Murmansk Convoy: 100% of BRPs arrive
- 43.2 New Murmansk Convoy combat resolution technique
- 43.3 East Front Garrison reduced to 20 ground and/or air factors, but may not include fleets; must be maintained at end of German movement phase as well as at end of German player-turn; if garrison falls too low, Russia may attack
- 43.3 German units remaining east of Nazi-Soviet Pact line allow Russia to attack
- 44.2 Postponement of Russian Winter
- 45.6 Not more than ten Western Allied factors may ever enter Russia
- 46.3 Penalties for Axis attack on Spain
- 47.2 Penalty for loss of Suez/Alexandria reduced to 25 BRPs
- 47.3 Destruction and repair of the Suez Canal; blockade of Suez
- 49.11 Naval factors are exactly halved to determine the size of the Vichy fleet
- 49.14 Vichy Corsica
- 49.42 Changes to Vichy Activation Table, including DRM for Axis attack on Spain
- 49.5 Vichy surrenders upon the loss of Vichy or Paris
- 50.24 No Axis units may set up in Vichy territory in the 1942 Scenario
- 50.27 The relief of Tobruk
- 50.35 Germany has six Italian naval factors in the 1944 Scenario
- 51.4 An ally's consent is required to move across his controlled hexes

#### Official Avalon Hill Errata

- 12.24 & 20.3 To resolve the conflicting statements, delete "Offensive or" from 20.3.
- 14.4 Add: "However, exploitation from an undefended breakthrough hex is not allowed if the breakthrough hex is adjacent to an enemy ground unit, or if a supply line cannot be traced to it at the moment of combat."
- 24.5 Add: "See also 49.8."
- 28.443 Delete the last two sentences.
- 28.444 Replace this section with: "If the defender had the larger force in combat and wins the aerial combat, his survivors may continue their DAS mission or return to base and invert at his option. Otherwise, his survivors (and, always, intercepting survivors) must return to base and invert."
- 33.42, No 3 Delete "Winter", substitute "Fall".
- 25.45 Add: "If Spain, because of Axis attack, becomes an Allied Minor Ally, her geographical limitations change to Mediterranean Front and Western Front."

#### Official Avalon Hill Clarifications

- 9.12 & 14.4 Can armour attack a vacant hex across a river and create a bridgehead counter?
- Answer: No — if there is no defender in the hex the defence is not tripled and therefore a bridgehead is not eligible to be placed.
- 18.33 When retreating after attrition combat, may the defender retreat to an enemy controlled hex or into a hex creating an overstack if there are other alternative retreat routes available?
- Answer: No. Add the words "if forced to do so" after "overstack" in the fourth sentence so as to agree with 6.13.
- 27.14 What constitutes the "east edge of the board"?

Answer: Any non-playable hex off the east edge (e.g. 060) as far south as Z54 inclusive is considered a Russian supply source. If the Lend-Lease route has been opened this is extended south to GG46.

28.4322 Does the winner remove half of the total defending factors lost including any inverted factors which were lost?

Answer: Yes

28.4322/28.641 The die says the loser has to eliminate one airfactor. He happens to have some of his partials in use, and it develops that he has to lose two factors because of this, per 28.641. Does the winner now have to eliminate a factor per 28.4322?

Answer: No

28.4323 Does the "smaller force" include inverted factors? For example, if 3 factors attack a hex with 2 active factors and 3 inverted factors and a drawn battle results, what is the greatest number of factors each side can lose: two or three?

Answer: Yes; three.

28.435 & 28.454 Suppose 5 factors of air attack a single naval factor and the latter is eliminated on the first roll. Must the remaining four airfactors still attack and chance their own elimination?

Answer: Yes.

29.572 How many naval factors are lost in a naval battle where the modified die roll is a tie?

Answer: None; although the interceptor wins the battle and forces cancellation of the mission, there are no naval losses.

33.6 & 49.4 Exactly what is the inter-relationship between Foreign Aid and the Vichy Activation/Deactivation Table?

Answer: Germany and Britain may roll on the 49.42 table until Britain rolls a modified '1' or less, or Germany rolls a modified '6' or more. If Germany rolls a '6' or more, play moves to the Foreign Aid die roll of 33.63. If that first roll fails, Germany may roll on subsequent turns at no cost (except for possible Foreign Aid) and does not have to roll on the 49.42 table again because Vichy France is already "activated" and is now awaiting only clearance of the Foreign Aid die roll restriction before becoming a fully fledged German minor ally. Similarly, Britain may not roll on the 49.42 table as Vichy France is already due to activate. If Britain were to roll a modified '1' or less prior to Germany rolling a modified '6' or more on the 49.42 table, Vichy France is immediately deactivated at the end of the British construction phase without any Foreign Aid die rolls.

33.64 Does one reveal the exact amount each recipient receives?

Answer: Yes.

35.5 Is it possible to trace supply from a Libyan source to east of the Suez Canal?

Answer: Yes, but such supply capacity is limited by 35.1 and 35.2.

44.2 If the German declaration of war comes in a Winter turn after the time for the Russian Winter dice roll has passed, is that turn automatically subject to the severe winter rules?

Answer: No. The Russian Winter dice roll could not occur until the next winter turn.

49.42 If Britain controls Suez but not Alexandria or vice versa, does the +2 modification apply?

Answer: Yes; in this case interpret the slash as "and/or".





# Thoughts for the Airwar Gamer

R.K.JORDAN

There is an ideal way to play any wargame, and AirWar is no exception. The only problem is that in this particular case the ideal setup consists of several controllers, preferably computer aided, a game set for each (isolated) player, and a lot of that elusive phenomenon, time. Perhaps one day some enterprising person will arrange it, but until such time we will have to be content with one game, 'n' participants, a calculator and lots of paper; the latter two are not necessary, but in some scenarios very, very helpful.

It is with this in mind that I have compiled these 'thoughts'; it is all too easy when dreaming up 'improvements' to such a complex tactical game to let your imagination run wild with the result that 'realism' is increased except in one case — 2½ seconds real time tends to stretch towards 2½ weeks. Not a very satisfactory state of affairs!! I think that I have avoided this trap, and that none of the following suggestions will be much of a blind timewise; anyway, I'll let you be the judge.

So what, then, do these 'thoughts' consist of? They can be summarised as varying from identification to bombing, from 'new' aircraft variants to tracking cone errors, but your best answer is probably to carry on reading .....

'He who sees Wins' is a motto very well suited to aerial combat, and opposing pilots' eyesight (and luck) can act as a great leveller between all-singing, all-dancing aircraft of the F15 ilk and their more modest cousins. No air combat game could claim to be anything approaching reality without some sort of spotting rules and, quite rightly, AirWar gives us the opportunity of conducting Visual, Radar, and IR searches. These are all fairly straightforward to conduct (if a little tedious), and the results are easy — yer sees 'im or yer doesn't. This is fine for the casual face-to-face gamer (I mean, dogfighting is what it's all about, isn't it?!), but can be improved upon if you can spare a little extra time.

The game designer suggests (again correctly in my view) that the maximum distance at which a pilot will see another 'plane' is 60 hexes — about 6 miles. What is neglected, probably in the interests of shortening the search phase, is that though you may see your target it is not always so easy to identify it. Put yourself in the place of your pilot: your flight leader is swearing at you for getting out of formation, you've the sun in your eyes, and a million other worries, not least of which is whether you are about to get a large and unfriendly missile up your exhaust pipe. And you see a speck at 4 o'clock. Is it a Mirage III or Mig 21?? They both look suspiciously similar even as close as 1½ miles, as an unfortunate Israeli found out in 1973 ....

You may see your target from miles away, but unless you are willing to risk your superiors' wrath, or have confirmation from ground control, I think you'll want to investigate further before loosing off those missiles! To aid you I have tabulated the following guidelines as to what you'll see and at what distance.

30 hexes (plus)	Aircraft position (including altitude), heading and speed (number of hexes moved each game turn, <i>not</i> movement allowance).
30 hexes and less	As above, and also identify all aircraft of visual size 7 (see "Aircraft" note [a]).
25 hexes and less	Identify all size 6 aircraft and also angle of bank and dive/climb type.
20 hexes and less	Identify all other aircraft.
10 hexes and less	Confirm external store presence, but <i>not</i> numbers or type.

The following are never known:

Acceleration, throttle, and movement allowance settings; weapons types and numbers, pilot capability, and non fatal damage, including that caused by your own shooting.

Visual methods are still far and away the best for identification purposes, indeed, it is not possible to identify an aircraft positively from its radar blip alone. Most modern airforces carry radar identification devices, but their usefulness in battle conditions is dubious. I therefore think that radar (and IR) searches will give positions at the time of each search phase, and aircraft radar size ONLY. Heading and speed can be deduced from successive positions, but all other information must be gleaned visually.

The second edition of the game includes the effect of vapour trails (contrails) in increasing a 'plane's size for visual searches, but I do not think it goes far enough. Vapour trails are visually very obtrusive!! To reflect their effects more truly I think that in addition to the size increase already mentioned in the game all distances in the Visual Search Base Probability table should be trebled. Contrails will not change the ease of identification to any great extent and so all identification distances are unchanged.

While still on the subject, a coat of paint can greatly affect the chances of your being seen. For

instance, an F15 Eagle sporting the new Lizard scheme will be practically invisible near the ground, but will stand out against a clear sky in a way that its brothers in air superiority blue wouldn't. There is tremendous variation between times, types, and nationalities using camouflage, and I think that thrashing out the 'who's' 'when's' and 'where's' is best left to the gamers concerned. The results of camouflage are easier to determine, and I suggest the following:

Camouflage	A	B	C	D
1) None	+25%	+50%	*	*
2) Light grey/blue etc.	+25%	+25%	-25%	-50%
3) Land	-50%	-25%	NA	+25%
4) Sea	-50%	-25%	NA	NA
5) '½ - ½'	—— see text ——			

# — alteration to final visual search probability  
NA — no effect  
\* — no effect, but roll two dice for sun's reflection. A 2 or 3 increases the base probability by 50%.

A: Target is ¼ spotter's height (or less) or 20 levels above the ground terrain, whichever is greater.

B: Target is ¼ — ½ spotter's height, or 40 levels above the ground terrain, whichever is greater.

C: Target is below the spotter, but greater than half its height above the ground.

D: Target is level with the spotter or higher.

The order of priority is D over A over B over C.

Notes:

a) If category 2 aircraft fly over a cloudbank A and B values become -25%.

b) For category 3 aircraft flying over sea and category 4 aircraft flying over land the values in columns in A and B become NA.

c) '½ - ½'. Upper surfaces are one scheme, lower surfaces are another. Decide which surface the spotting aircraft would see and use the appropriate row.

Before I leave the subject I would briefly like to mention the effects of Night, Fog and Rain on Identification. Each reduces the relevant distance by 50%. for example, to identify a size 5 aircraft in Night and Rain you would have to be 20 x 50% x 50% = 5 hexes, or less, away from it.



In most standard games the distances covered are so small that radar searches and radar missile launches are often redundant, and it helps enormously if one can expand the size limits short of buying many new map sections. I have got around the difficulty by drawing an 18mm by 16mm grid on a standard A4 graph paper. Numbering each full size map section and representing their position on the graph-map with suitably numbered pieces of 18 x 16mm paper an area of 270 by 170 hexes can be easily covered, even if the aircraft are in several far-removed groups.

If the graph paper shows millimetre squares each individual hex may be represented, and you can design whole landscapes readily translatable onto the full size map as and when required. Let your imagination run wild! You can have ports, cities, permanent SAM sites at your fingertips. I have, amongst other things, an airport, which brings me neatly, if somewhat contrivedly to my next topic for discussion: namely acceleration by power while climbing .....

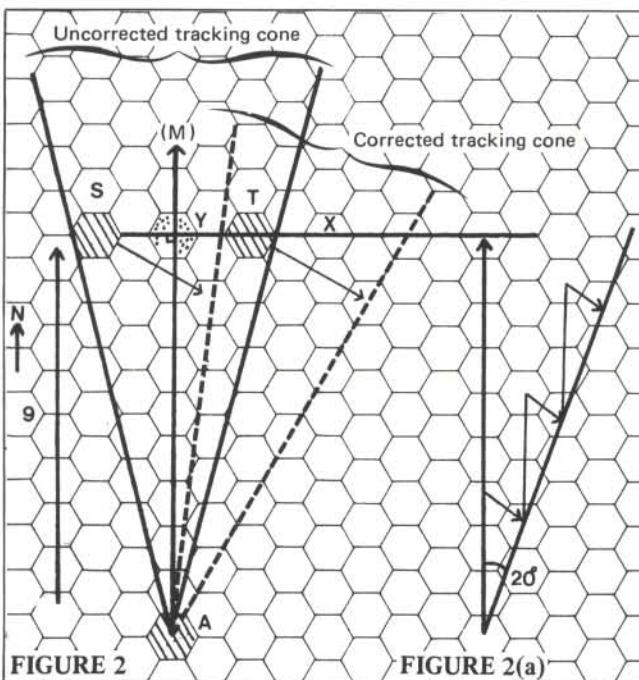
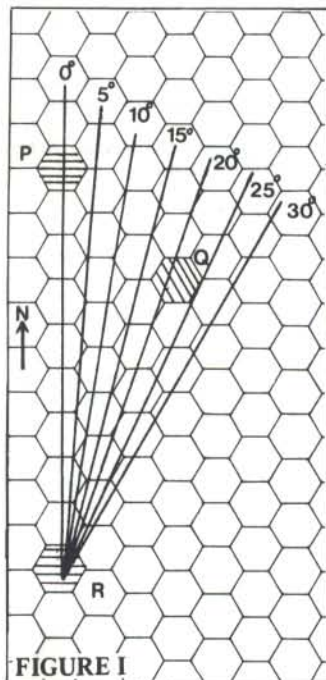
It is ridiculous to say that aircraft cannot increase their throttle settings while they are climbing; most airliners reach cruising speed while climbing from takeoff to their cruising altitude. On the other hand, it is true that such acceleration will be slower than while flying level, and these two points have led me to amending the acceleration-by-power rules:

a) All aircraft may accelerate by power while climbing until their throttle setting is equal to their cruise speed for the altitude in question (F15's and others listed in their data sheets as being able to accelerate while climbing are not limited to this restriction). ANY 'plane that is accelerating by power when climbing does so with its acceleration mode rounded down by 50%. Modes of ½ remain at this value, though.

b) All aircraft that may accelerate can do so when diving with a mode increased by 50%, rounding fractions down to the nearest half integer.

You will probably find that this changes dogfighting capabilities somewhat, as will my following suggestion. If all acceleration/deceleration by power and opening/closing of Airbrakes is performed in secret before any movement takes place this will turn the close-range dogfight into the tactical battle of wits and guessing that it is in real life.

The size of a target can be a major factor in whether or not you hit it, on purely random principles a B52 is easier to hit than a Mig 15 — it takes up more airspace! This is not reflected in the hit probability table, but it is a simple matter to take size into account. Assume that the hit probability table is for size 5 aircraft, and for all aerial guns add (or subtract) the following figures per size point away from this:



Range	1-2	3-4	5-6
Modifier	+4	+3	+2

NB. "Size" is unmodified visual size

All the topics dealt with so far are fairly minor — you can take or leave them as you please. There is, however, one major problem in the rules, one that cannot be accepted or glossed over, and this occurs with the limited tracking cones: if you have a 14° cone but can only turn it through increments of 30° you're in big trouble; aircraft can fly out of them and there's nothing you can do. (I suspect that anyone using radar homing missiles has come across this one and so I won't describe it further.) In fact my solution to the problem (which I'm afraid is slightly time consuming) revolves around another mistake in the rules, the sideslipping table.

"Oh no!" you cry, "what's wrong with it?!" Nothing, providing you recognise it for what it is — an angular correction chart, not a side-slipping one. To explain what I'm getting at refer to figure 1.

A plane leaves hex R turned 20° east of North. In real life its ninth hex of movement should be Q but you will find in the game you move through P. If you "sideslip" as defined in the game rules you will find you pass through Q. Trying out the other angles you will see that the table is correct for 5°, 10°, 15° and 20°. (For 25° replace "2" by 2 then 3 then 2 ....)

The upshot of all this is that your table can be used for positional correction and for tracking cone correction. The format is rather tedious in practice, but I will include it for completeness:

For each hex entered while turned left or right between 5° and 25° inclusive add a fraction — see below — to a running total.

Turned at: 5° 10° 15° 20° 25°  
1/12 2/12 3/12 4/12 5/12 fraction added per hex entered

When the total reaches 1 left or right, Sideslip 1 left or right. Simple!

Returning to the tracking cones: consider a 'plane facing North in hex A (figure 2), a 'plane which is banked 20° right and has a limited radar tracking cone. Does hex X lie within this cone or not?

To find out, draw an imaginary line from X through the arrow indicating the 'planes facing (M) so that it cuts it at right angles as shown. This will define one hex (only) — Y. Count how many hexes Y is away from A (in this case 9) and consult the so-called sideslip table: 20° yields a value of 3. This means that to move at 20° to the right you must 'sideslip' once every three hexes you moved forward (figure 2(a)).

Since Y is 9 hexes forward of A this means that to get to the 'real' Y you should "sideslip" 9/3 = 3

times to the right (with fraction round to the nearest whole number). Next determine the tracking cone boundary hexes which lie on XY — S & T (sorry!) on the diagram. Move these three hexes to the right as shown — they now define the true tracking cone which, as you can see, includes hex X.

Notes:

a) If there are two possible hexes for Y, (S and T) — the line from X runs along a hex boundary, use the nearer.

b) For easy reference (i.e. to see if X is within the cone or not, but without determining the actual cone position) divide the number of hexes between A and Y by the relevant number in the table. Determine hexes S and T, and if X is less than this number of hexes from T but more than this number from S then it lies within the cone.

What about the real sideslipping? Aircraft may sideslip *once* per game turn, regardless of velocity provided that they are banked at 45°. The direction of slip is that of the lower wing.

Enough of this babble, and onto the really important stuff .....

## Missiles:

### Red Top:

This is an all angle heat seeking missile; when in its target's frontal sectors it has a limited cone.

### Sky Flash:

"Look down Shoot down" version of a late Sparrow. In use with RAF and Sweden C. 1981.

### RH-AA1 Alkali:

Beam Riding RH missile.

### Firestreak:

Heat seeking missile  
1958 — 1962 limited tracking cone  
1962 — 1970 normal tracking cone

### Turns of flight: 4

Tracking Range: 35  
Max. Energy add: 2  
Probability of malfunction: 10  
Minimum Launch Range: 3  
Counter Measures: As Aim 9-B

Maximum MA	15	14	13	11
1st game turn add	4	3	3	2
Turn mode	7	7	7	8
Energy maximum	7	8	9	10
	LO	ML	MH	HI

Dive	Levels Dived	MA
I	3	0
	6	+1
	8	+2
II	10	+1
	12	0
	16	-1
III	19	-2
	23	-3
after 1962	(26)	(-4)

Climb	Levels Climbed	MA
I	3	-1
	6	-2
II	7	-3
	8	-4
	9	-5
III	10	-6
after 1962	(11)	(-7)

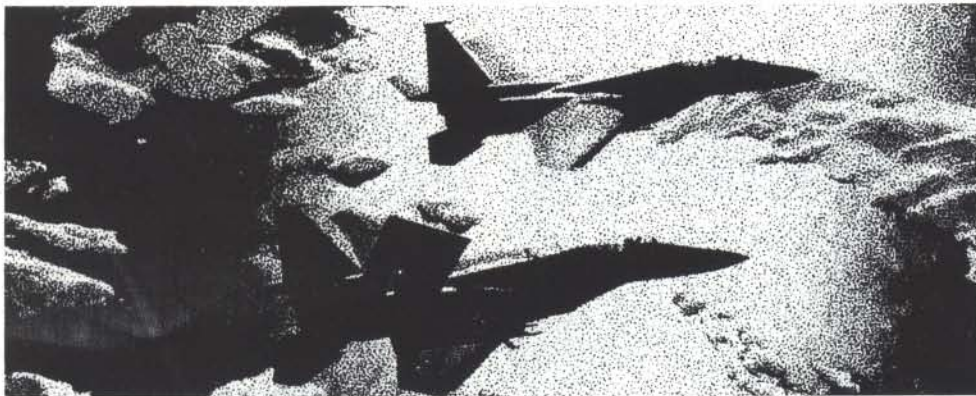
## Aircraft:

Notes:

a) Sizes. Where quoted '(n)' refers to radar and 'm' to visual/actual size. 'm' may vary due to smoke, contrails etc, for visual, but not 'actual' purposes.

b) Missile Numbers: Where these differ from those already quoted in the game the smaller number is the usual complement, the larger the maximum usually carried: the aircraft is not loaded but may carry no external stores without becoming loaded.





c) Since missiles and other ordnance are carried on the same pylons, carrying the one may exclude the other — gamers should research this themselves since such data are too plentiful for an article of this size!

#### F4 Phantom:

Cannon shots. Note that only E and F carry an internal gun; the F4D carries a belly pod. This may be carried on all subsequent Marks, but is not an internal gun and reduces external ordnance (bar Air to Air Missiles) that may be carried by 1/3. An aircraft carrying this pod is not loaded unless it carries other stores (excluding Air to Air Missiles).

Any aircraft carrying 6 RH or any HS missiles has its maximum ordnance load reduced by 1/3.

1000 lb. bomb and bomblet capacity is 16, not 11.

#### F4 K/M:

These have a maximum speed of 11.

#### F 111:

The outer wing pylons are non-movable and when used the wings can only be held unswept. If any aircraft are used with more than 75% maximum ordnance (even if the excess is subsequently launched/dropped) its movement allowance may never exceed 5.

#### A10 Thunderbolt II:

Radar size (7); visual size 7.

#### F16 Fighting Falcon:

RH missiles: carried 1983 onwards.  
HS missiles: usually 2 aim — 9L carried.

#### F 15 A:

7; The Eagle carries an 'Eagle Eye' visual augmentation device from 1980 onwards. This has a limited tracking cone in which targets may be sighted, and may only be used on aircraft onto which the Eagle has a lock-on. Its effect is to increase the identification range five-fold. The Eagle may not use any other type of search during the gameturn in which the 'Eagle Eye' is used.

#### Meteor:

(5); 5.

#### Draken:

A: G cannon (3 shots).  
2 or 4 sidewinder; maximum velocity 10.  
No other ordnance carried.  
Radar: 2 C 125 2 L B

D: As F, but G cannon and missiles are 4 sidewinders.

F: Missiles; may also carry 4 sidewinders as well as Falcons.

Danish version: This has 9 1000 lb. hardpoints plus rails for 4 sidewinder.

Availability: A 1957 — 1963  
D 1962 — present  
F 1966 — present

#### Viggen:

(6); 6. RH missiles are Skyflash.  
HS: may carry up to 4 regardless of RH.

#### Lightning F1:

(6); 6.  
Use: 1961-1964 Radar 3 D O O O B  
Cannon type G, 3 shots

Missiles: 2 Firestreak  
Stores: None  
Throttle: LO: 7; ML: 8; MH: 9; HI: 10.  
Climb: Reduce MA by 1 for all Type II and III  
Reduce MA by 1 for all Type I except where it is already 1.

Throttle:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
LO	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	-	-	-
ML	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	½	-	-
MH	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	½	½	-
HI	2	1	1	1	1	1	½	½	½	½

The F1 is identical to the F6 in all other respects.  
Use: 1961-1964.

#### Lightning F2:

(6); 6.  
Identical to the F6 except that it carries Finestreak missiles and has G cannon (3 shots).  
Use 1963-1970.

#### Lightning F6:

(6); 6.  
Use: 1966-

#### Hunter F1:

Use 1954-1958 (RAF)  
Cannon: P 3 shots

MA/ Throttle	Climb			
	LO	ML	MH	HI
5	3 2	3 1	2 -	2 -
4	2 1	2 1	2 -	2 -
3	2 1	2 -	1 -	1 -
2	1 1	1 -	1 -	1 -
1	1 -	- -	- -	- -

MA	Turn			
	LO	ML	MH	HI
1	2	2	2	3
2	2	2	2	3
3	2	2	2	4
4	2	2	2	4
5	2	2	3	4
6	3	3	3	5

#### Flight Parameters:

Add 1 to Wingover, pull through and Immelmann at MH and HI; change 'type II' to 'type I' for MH and HI in these manoeuvres.

#### F 104 Starfighter:

Turn modes — LO (9) is 10  
ML (10) is 14/15  
'S' version may carry up to 6 HS and 2 RH though usual maximum is 4 + 2.  
C-104 carries 4 1000 lb. bombs!

#### F8E Crusader:

Turn modes — LO (7) is 4; (8) is 6  
ML (8) is 6; (9) is 8  
MH (9) is 9  
HI (9) is 10

#### Mig 19D:

All Alkali armed Migs carry 4 RH and NO GUNS.  
Radar-less Migs carry 4 HS and guns

#### F18 Hornet: F18L Cobra

Only 2 HS (AIM-9L) usually carried (along with 2 Sparrow). Maximum speed is 1190 kt = a maximum MA of 10.

#### Mig 17 D/E:

See Mig 19D

#### Mig 17 A:

This has cannon F, but increase all hit probabilities by 5. Shots: 2.

#### Su 7:

Carries 4 bomblets (not 24).

#### Mig 23:

5, (5).

#### AAF-L:

Aircraft Munitions and Radar Charts are unchanged from the 1st edition, and so use the Mig 29 rows (for 24 read 2). Ceiling 276.

#### Foxbat E ('New' Mig 29):

Radar characteristics: 8 B 500 7 N B  
Munitions: As Mig 25

#### Tornado F2 (ADV)

Radar: 10 B 700 9 N E  
Cannon: R; 3 shots

Tornado generally:  
(6); 6.

Strafing destruction probability table: for P read R and vice versa.

My final comment concerns bombing, a field greatly improved in the second edition, though I still haven't found the munitions scatter table!!

From what I can make out hit probabilities represent the chance of hitting a particular hex (for unguided munitions), while destruction probability takes into account direct hits and indirect blast damage. Guided munitions are different in that if they hit, they hit a specific target (tank, bridge, or whatever), rather than a specific hex. Since direct hits have a far greater chance of destruction than indirect ones, I think target destruction probabilities should be correspondingly greater. Thus:

a) Players should state the targets of all p.g.m. on launch.

b) If hits are achieved alter the destruction probabilities according to the following schedule:

Destruction probability	Modifier
1 → 10	+ 10
10 → 20+	+ 15

All other targets in the hex are affected by the blast as normal.

As the rules stand the more junk you fling at a hex, the greater the chance of hitting it. Since not all munitions will fall in exactly the same spot in the hex the chances of a direct hit on, and thus destruction of, a target will increase. I suggest that for the 'n'th bomb (1000 lb. or 750 lb) increase target destruction probability by n (e.g. the 5th 750 lb. bomb falling on a bridge hex will have its destruction probability raised to 7; 2 + 5).

I hope that these thoughts have been of use and/or interest, and it only remains for me to say two things:

Firstly — Happy Hunting.

Secondly — Please Mr. Isby, Sir, can we have some more? And can you throw in a few bombers as well?!

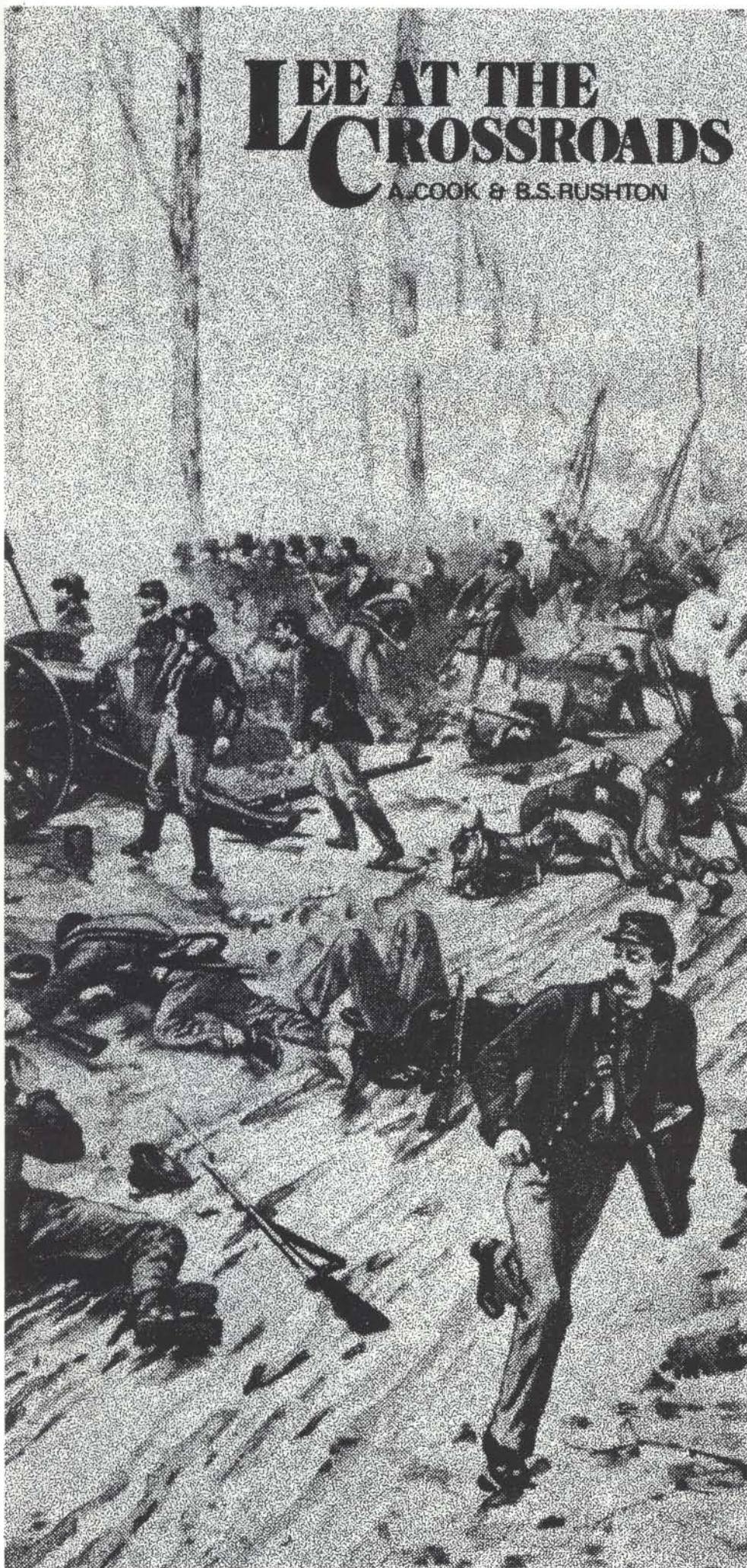
The second edition omitted cannon type J; below is a table copied from the first edition:

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	E	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	Ef	1	2f	2	2f
3	2	2	E	2	2	2
4	3	3f	3	Ef	3	3f
5	3	3	3	4	E	4
6	4	4f	4	4f	4	Ef



# LEE AT THE CROSSROADS

A. COOK & B.S. RUSHTON



Lee at the Crossroads by Simulations Canada simulates the battle of Gettysburg during July 1863. It's not easy to be original about such a well worked, well researched, well simulated, well played theatre of war and consequently our review will concentrate less on the historical period covered by the game and more on our impressions of it as a simulation. Inevitably, however, one must consider historical accuracy and this we will try and do through a game replay.

Lee at the Crossroads comes with a smart 14-page booklet, four pages of which are taken up with unit lists and various scenario descriptions. The remaining ten pages are closely printed with the rules. These are, for the most part, conventional — movement is on a hex pattern, there are normal terrain effects, most units have a zone of control, combat is calculated as a ratio between attacker and defender and resolved on a CRT, etc. etc. Each unit displays its type (infantry, cavalry, artillery, leader), its commander's name and the commander's commander's name. Artillery is battalion strength; other units are brigades. The underside of each unit gives a unit's morale classification from A (brave) to D (cowardly) and an initial unit strength. The map, whilst displaying some geographical information, is sadly lacking in more detailed aspects. It is also basically uninteresting (two colours) and in some respects difficult to interpret. This is also true of the rules which are also ambiguous in places. Game turns represent either two hours during the day or five hours at night; the scale is one hex equals 350 yards. There are three scenarios representing historical set-ups on July 1st, 2nd and 3rd together with a full campaign version which can incorporate several 'what-if' alternatives including one for a fourth day assuming that Lee had decided to stay and not run.

From the above, it is obvious that the basic game mechanics would be familiar to most board gamers. There are, however, a few rules which are not normally encountered. Units are given a 'facing' and the movement cost for an opponent to move into the six surrounding hexes varies with this facing e.g. two extra movement points to move into the forward hex; one extra point to move into the rear hex; no extra points to move into the rearward flanking hexes. Facing also affects attack. Units may attack 'forwards' at full strength, 'backwards' at half strength and never through the rear flanks, though defence capabilities are unaffected by facing. The combats are resolved either as 'skirmishes' which are rather conventional or as 'assaults' in which the attacking unit must be in the same hex as the defender. The chance element is removed from combat by having a CRT with no die rolls. The attackers' classification and strength is cross referenced to the defenders' classification and strength giving a percentage loss for the attacker and another for the defender. These tables are derived from historical casualty data. There are some odd things going on with artillery, but we'll come back to that. Any unit which suffers a loss due to combat is subject to a die roll to determine if it has lost effectiveness. This loss of effectiveness can be devastating since such a unit cannot attack, defends at a quarter strength, takes double the percentage loss indicated by the CRT and only moves at half the normal rate. Recovery can only take place at night whilst stacked with the appropriate leader.

For us, the most novel aspect of the rules was the command control. After playing this game for the best part of 30 hours we still have only a sketchy appreciation of the intricacies of these rules when organising defence, attack or movement. Basically, the command rules are as follows. Firstly, out of command is like being out of supply — half or no attack, half movement, half defence capabilities. Secondly, each unit has a level I commander who may only command a limited number of his own pieces — always fewer than you actually have — and only if they are within range. A level II commander may either command extra units in his chain of command or may allow his level I commanders to bring more of their units under control. The level III commanders, Lee and Meade themselves, operate in the same way but have their effects through level II leaders. These comparatively simple rules spawn other rules concerning promotion to replace dead or captured leaders, methods of capturing leaders, extra Union leaders' units directly assigned to them, etc.



In Lee at the Crossroads a Confederate victory is achieved simply by his taking more than 1.5 times as many strength points as the Union forces. A Union victory results if the Confederate forces manage to take only 1.2 times as many points. There are no geographical objectives which provide victory points.

It is in these victory conditions that the game starts to fall down. Since the Confederates must take more strength points than the Union player, the onus is on the Confederates to attack. The Union can easily (?) win by avoiding conflict. Not only that, but the attacker *always* takes a percentage loss in strength. Consequently, not only does he run the risk of becoming ineffective but also, even at overwhelming odds, may still lose more strength points than the defender. Let's take an example. The attacker attacks with four units, five strength points each (a total value of 20 points) all with a morale classification of C. The defender has one unit of strength 5, morale C. The odds are 4-1 for a skirmish and the result is that the attacker loses 12% (= 2 strength points) and the defender loses 26% (= 1 strength point). The attacker also runs the risk of four units being made ineffective, the defender only one. For an Assault, the stacking limit of 20 friendly strength points cannot be exceeded. If attacking any defender over about 5 strength points (including bonuses of up to 5 for terrain effects), the attacker loses more than the defender. The 'advantage' of Assault is that it can be followed by a Support Assault which entails moving more units into the hex again observing stacking limits and attacking again and again .... The opponent's decreasing strength has two effects. First it increases the odds in the attacker's favour for the next attack and second it means that the attacker must inflict an even greater percentage loss in order to reduce the strength of the opponent by one point, e.g. a 6% loss will reduce a 9 to an 8 but it takes a 25% loss to reduce a 2 to a 1.

This system of resolving combats not only discourages attacks but also fails to remove playing pieces from the board since it is extremely dif-

ficult to remove the last strength points. The consequence of this is that the board becomes littered with pieces of low value, and here we come to another difficult feature of the game. Each unit has only its initial value on its underside so it is essential to keep accurate records of losses separately. Each hex may contain 20 strength points plus 20 artillery points and an unlimited number of leaders and markers for retreated and straggled units. Eventually, hexes begin to resemble mini-skyscrapers. For each combat, each unit must be picked up, its facing checked, its leader identified, its current strength obtained and its classification noted. Having attempted to replace these units in correct facing and revealing as little as possible to the opponent (since he's not allowed to peek!) it is then necessary to determine which units may be in command for attack. If the commander is too weak to command all the units required, then level II and III commanders may be involved — but remember that if the level II bonus has been given for movement, it cannot also be given for attack. So you may have enough command to get the units to an attack but not enough to actually carry it out. Even then, the opposing units are concealed so attacks are always made with limited intelligence. We found this aspect exceedingly tedious and very cumbersome. All you need is patience to keep going and long fingernails to pick up great stacks of units. We had neither. The Players Notes say "each attack must be planned 2 to 4 turns ahead" to get leaders and combat units in position. But the Union is in the process of continual withdrawal over the first day — first into Gettysburg and then to the high ground to the south. Planning ahead in detail is just not possible against a fluid line and when it's difficult to know your own forces let alone your opponents. After the first day, things are likely to become more stable, and planning may be more important at this stage. With no geographical objectives to be attained or held however, the Union player is quite at liberty to run all over the map. It is only the thought that such a tactic would not have been employed by Meade which keeps the Union army in a steady orderly retreat.

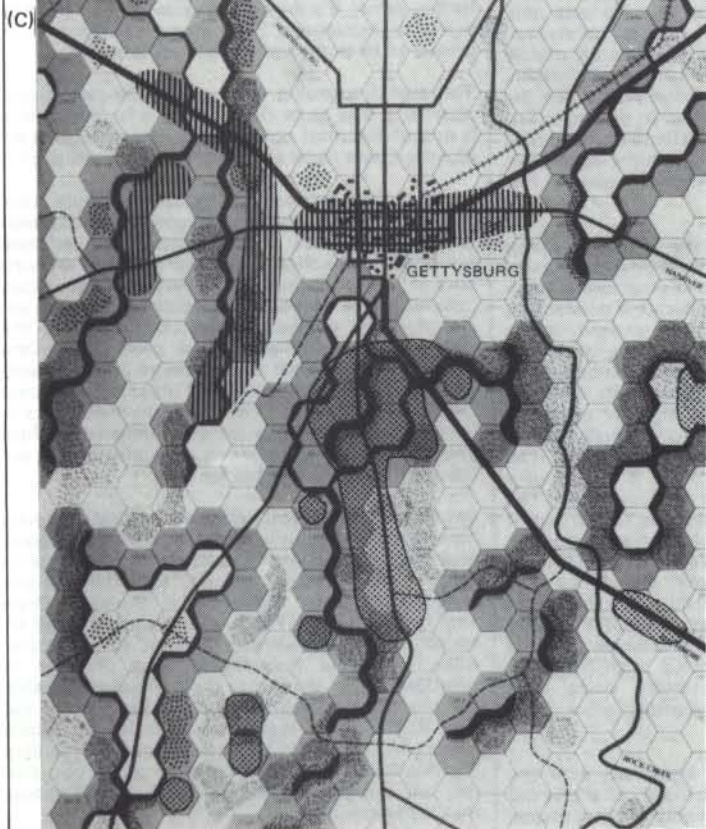
Artillery may be used for either ball or canister attacks, and its use involves a range, firing cone and terrain effects.

The rules concerning artillery being attacked are not clear. If artillery is attacked when alone in a hex, then it defends at 1/10th of its artillery strength. If artillery is stacked with other units, only the other units may be attacked and may subsequently suffer losses and be forced to retreat leaving the artillery by itself! There must be something wrong somewhere there. Also, artillery appears comparatively ineffective.

Many of the grouses outlined above could have been avoided by greater attention to rule writing, in particular to illustrative examples for difficult rules. So, on to a record of how one game went.

The game begins with a virtually white canvas. To the north-east of Gettysburg, along the road to Cashtown (C) and sitting on slope hexes, are two Union cavalry brigades commanded by Gamble and Devin, under command themselves of the 1st Cavalry leader, Buford. Since, according to the historical set-up on the second day, these units are found to the south-east of Gettysburg, well away from the main battle front and with very few losses, it can only be surmised that they eventually turned and ran. On this occasion, this was not to be. Along the Cashtown Road, a small group of Confederates appear under the command of Heth. An initial attack resulted in not only losses on both sides but also Brocken (CSA) becoming ineffective. C'est la vie! The Union brigades then retreated along the Cashtown Road towards Gettysburg, a process that was to become a feature of the early game turns. On turn two (9 a.m., yawn, yawn) the Confederate brigades, having decided that a slog was not in their long-term interests began an outflanking movement to the north, making contact with the Mummasburg Road and threatening to move into Gettysburg for elevenses. Although out of command, this brave (= foolhardy) brigade led by Pettigrew nevertheless represented a thorn in the Union's psychological

HISTORICAL POSITION — DAWN JULY 2nd, 1863



TURNPIKES OR ROADS HIGHGROUND

POSITION — DAWN JULY 2nd, 1863, IN DESCRIBED GAME

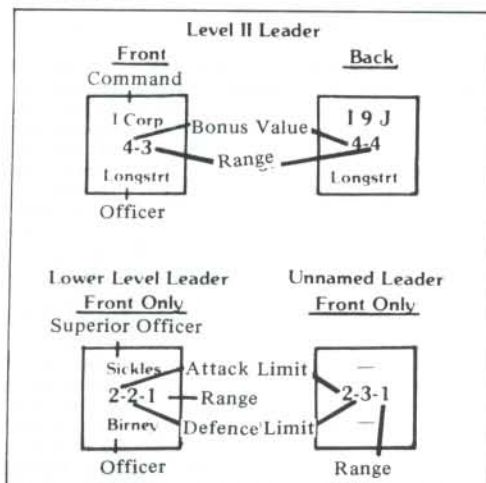


U.S.A. C.S.A.

1000yds



flesh. The rest of the Confederate forces moved south, threatening this time to come up to Gettysburg from the south-west. The centre, between these two outflanking movements, was held by Confederate reinforcements charging down the Cashtown Road. The Union response to this was to withdraw — well, what would you do?! Thus, Devin and Gamble found themselves taking mid-morning coffee on the outskirts of Gettysburg with Buford, their level II leader in Gettysburg itself. Union reinforcements under the guise of Howard from the south and Reynolds from the south-west entered the map and indeed by some miracle (or incorrect reading of the rules maybe) Howard managed to make it to within four hexes of Gettysburg.



On turn three, Confederate forces continued outflanking and attacked Gamble (USA) who, although inflicting losses on his tormentors, also received a retreat result. A foolhardy charge by the level I leader, Heth (CSA), actually into Gettysburg caused a few raised eyebrows in the Union camp — had this idiot had a touch too much sun of late or did he really only want his name emblazoned in the history books? We shall never know since this maniac in attempting to hold up the US Army in the main street of Gettysburg was finally killed but only after receiving a slight injury and evading capture by pretending to be Ronald Reagan. The Confederate forces gained in one sense because Pettigrew, promoted into Heth's position turned out to be a much more powerful leader. Of course, the Confederate player boasted that this is what he intended all along, but we know different.

The Union player realised that his chances of being able to retreat from Gettysburg were being thwarted since it now looked unlikely that Union forces would even get there before the CSA! He decided therefore to force march reinforcements under Reynolds' control but one unit straggled. At this stage, with both sides building up forces, attacks were minimal.

Turn four (1 p.m.). The Confederate player saw the potential of the force march used previously by the Union and brought on reinforcements in this mode. Generally, to the west and north of Gettysburg, the Confederate forces were beginning to mass but some forces were out of command and those under one leader had become disorganised. Consequently, over lunch, the Confederates reorganised and had a small bash at Union forces foolish enough to be adjacent. The Union, also taking the opportunity to regroup, moved the majority of his forces to the west of Gettysburg, with a light cavalry screen left to the north and east. The Union attacked Confederates on the outskirts of Gettysburg but this proved rather costly. Even more serious was the ineffective result suffered by two Union brigades.

The reorganisation of the Confederate forces in the previous game turn now allowed a massive push forward and the cavalry screen and general Union defensive positions on the west came under sustained Confederate attacks. Defensive skirmishing by the Union player resulted in greater Union losses than Confederate and two more Union brigades became ineffective. Superior Confederate forces to the north forced the cavalry screen back towards Gettysburg whilst attacks by the Confederates in the west resulted in quite massive

Union casualties. The Union responded to this by retreating ineffective brigades to the hill south of Gettysburg. The remaining Union forces, now depleted, formed up in a light screen to both the north and west. However, at this stage, the writing was on the proverbial wall since the Confederate push had resulted in two hexes of Gettysburg being occupied by Confederate forces.

Turn six — time 5 p.m. The Confederate forces began another outflanking movement. A massive presence was retained to the northern and western outskirts of Gettysburg, whilst forces sent to the south-west, east and south-east of the town threatened the retreated Union forces and threatened to cut off Gettysburg from incoming reinforcements. In the east, Confederate attacks on Union cavalry forced a Union retreat. The Union response to this was to retreat all units from Gettysburg to the heights of Cemetery Hill to form a more or less L-shaped defensive line with the central line running north-south. Gettysburg had thus fallen in late afternoon which left the Confederates two hours of daylight to take advantage.

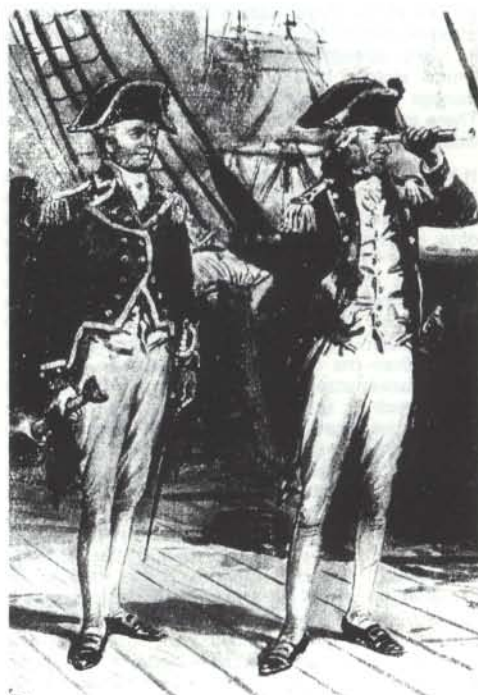
Consequently, the last dying hours of daylight saw a massive Confederate assault on the slopes of Cemetery Hill and, particularly, in the east, the Union lost ground. In the centre and west, although the Union forces lost three or four hexes, they remained reasonably secure. In order to prevent Union reinforcements entering on roads directly to the east and west of Gettysburg (which happens during the first night move), the Confederate player moved some brigades along these roads. Ultimately (under the rules), Union forces would then have to enter in the south.

As night progressed, both Union and Confederate forces readjusted to stabilise command structure. But also, the Confederate, seeing the difficulties of assaulting and capturing Cemetery Hill directly, began to move brigades out to the east threatening to cut the Baltimore road in the south-east which forced the Union to defend on all but the southern front. Whether this plan would be maintained during the second day would depend on how much pressure the Confederates could put on the north and west fronts to force the Union to maintain units on this front at the expense of the eastern front. Think ahead the game designer said!

Overall, although the Confederates did better geographically than history tells us, this was only accomplished at a great loss of strength points and, indeed, a Union counterattack towards the middle of day two would probably be highly successful. Therefore, a resounding numerical defeat for the Confederates, but a moral victory in getting so far, so fast. Perhaps threatened outflanking combined with only overwhelming attacks might have been the answer rather than many attacks made at low odds.

Just because we have been critical of the game does not mean that there were no elements of the game worth looking at. The command structure is interesting but would be easier to operate if no stacking were allowed. This would mean expanding the scale of the map. The lack of stacking, of course, would have other effects, the major one being that the opponent would see all the units and this would destroy the 'limited intelligence' aspect of the game. Moving information to the underside of the unit might redress the balance a little. The game would be vastly improved if there were geographical objectives to be held or taken. The Union player should, we suspect, be forced out of Gettysburg and a victory point schedule for the time at which the Confederates take the town would help, as would some points for the Confederates taking Cemetery Hill. Since the Union can win by avoiding combat, the CRT should either be more in favour of the attacker (but the CRT we are told was drawn up with historical accuracy in mind) or the victory point ratio modified to give the Confederates more of a fighting chance!

In conclusion, we were not impressed with the game. Some features we liked, many others we did not. As a simulation, it is probably fairly accurate. Scenarios seem to go with historical accuracy. However, as a game, it leaves a lot to be desired.



# BEAT TO QUARTERS

A review of  
COMMAND PERSPECTIVES'  
simulation of  
the age of fighting sail  
1775-1815  
by Rob Gibson

When John Spence presented me with Beat to Quarters for review, my first thought was "This isn't a game, it's a posh paperback — or a set of rules for miniatures." On closer examination, it proved to be both, and much more besides.

The first impression of a superb 28-page glossy paperback was quite right, for so it is ... but inside is one of the most comprehensive and readable set of rules I have come across on any game situation.

What do you get for your money? The rule book itself is colour-printed on the cover, and black-and-white on the inside: clearly printed with half-tone prints of naval actions, and clear diagrams showing how to use the game aids — a very professional job indeed. To be fair to the publishers, the rules are intended for miniatures play; to be fair to the purchaser the publishers have provided on the die-cut sheets enough ship counters in three background colours, (red, white and blue) to encompass most single-ship and some multi-ship encounters — in short, the means to get you underway before you splash out on miniatures. The playing aids are beautiful — the only word for it.

Before we lose all you hardened boardgamers who never touch miniatures, consider that many a good boardgame has come to us through 'miniatures' — Avalon Hill's classic Jutland, and their recent acquisitions from Battleground — Wooden Ships and Iron Men, Air Force and Dauntless — all of which owe a considerable amount to miniatures rules. Command Perspectives' own pedigree in boardgaming is excellent, their Sharpsburg being the subject of well-justified critical acclaim as the best ACW tactical system available in two recent issues of Fire and Movement (notwithstanding Terrible Swift Sword and variants) and if you, like me, are a regular reader of F&M you will know that is praise indeed.

There are two ways in which to review Beat to Quarters: treat as a pure set of miniatures rules, and compare with other sets of rules such as



Action under Sail, or to treat it as a Napoleonic Jutland, and compare it to the best of the board-games on the period so far — **Wooden Ships and Iron Men**. I have chosen the latter because I think **Beat to Quarters** will be very popular with board-gamers because of its unusual solution to the limitations imposed by hex grids on the finer points of movement and gunnery in the age of Howe and Nelson.

The best way in which I can illustrate the basic differences between the two games is to use flowcharts (see Diagrams 1 and 2). The scale for **Beat to Quarters** is clearly given as 1 millimetre equals 4 ft. (1.33 yds), and one turn as 4½ minutes. The scale of **Wooden Ships and Iron Men** is cutely concealed, but if you search, you will discover that the game turn represents 3 minutes; allowing an average length for a ship-of-the-line of 250 feet, this could be deduced to a 125 feet hex or 1 millimetre equals 2.65 yards — maybe there really is no precise way of telling. This gives us all kinds of difficulties in assessing the time values given to various activities in the two flowcharts, but experience with other **Battleline** productions tells me that **Beat to Quarters** is probably more accurate as there is no need to fudge time scales to fit the hex grid limitations of **Wooden Ships and Iron Men**. Before anyone accuses me of running down **Wooden Ships and Iron Men**, let me say I consider it the very best hex grid simulation of its kind —

it captures the flavour of the sailing ship era beautifully, but even its strongest advocates must have felt its movement and combat results are not finely enough tuned to demonstrate the finer points of fighting under sail, especially at close quarters. In a stern chase, for example, no provision is made for stern or bow chasers, nor can you fire the deck broadsides of a two-decker or of three deckers separately. (see chart below right).

Meanwhile, back at the flowcharts .... basically, the two turn sequences are much the same, the only major differences being in the timing of certain activities, and the frequency of melee and wind checks. The placing of the unfouling phase before movement and the grappling/ungrappling phase after movement in **Wooden Ships and Iron Men** is there, I feel, for playability — there is no good reason why two ships should unfoul before movement; it is possible that it was originally after movement, and moved forward during the game development phase (I have playtested this theory, and it makes good sense, as any ship using post-movement unfouling becomes a sitting duck under the game system)

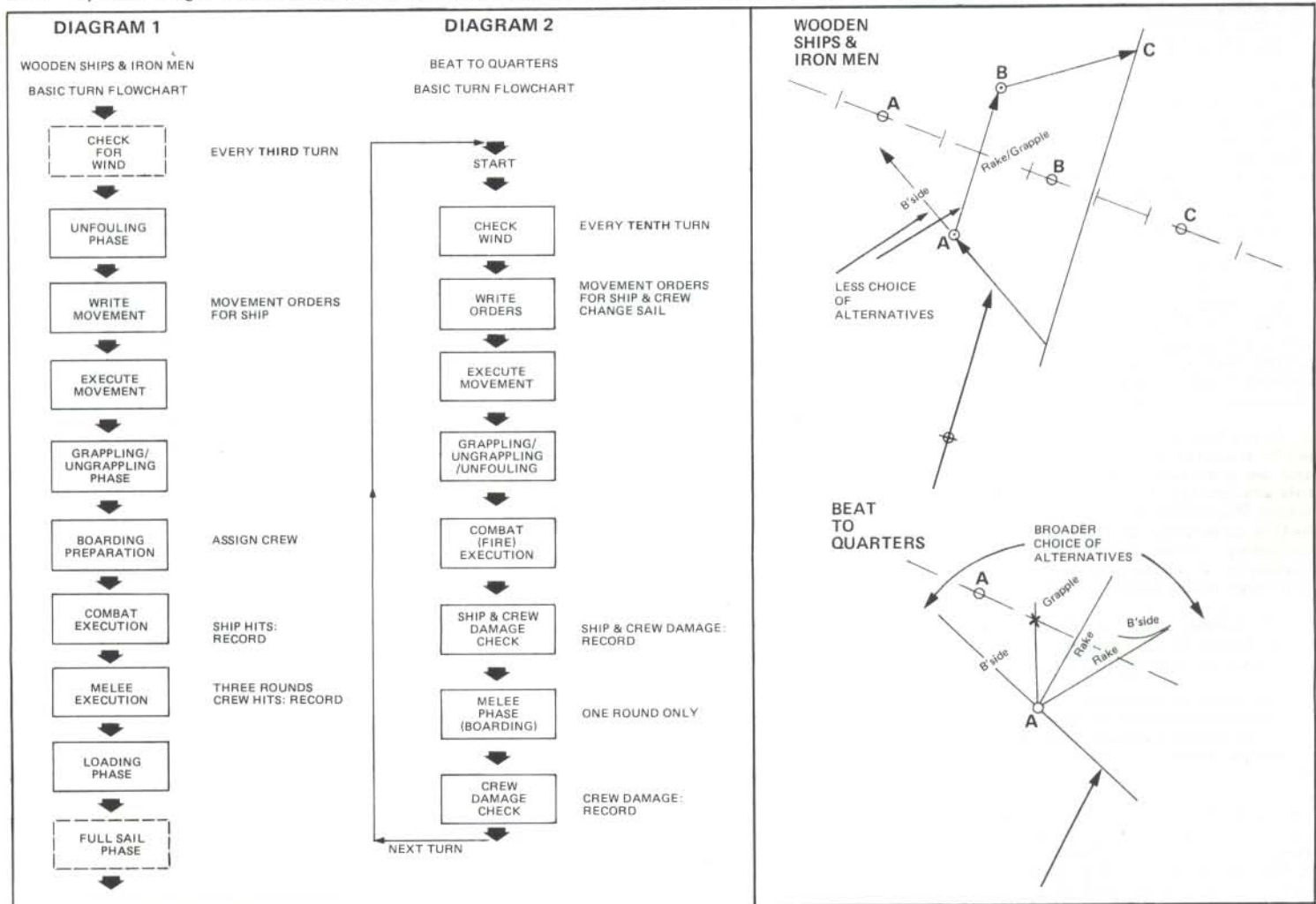
Melee execution is another bone of contention — not so easily resolved, though. **Wooden Ships and Iron Men** has three rounds of melee per turn — i.e. one charge per minute, whereas **Beat to Quarters** has one round per turn, one charge in 4½ minutes.

In his Designer's Notes, Barry J. Fox says that his boarding rules were 'based on the theory that it takes a certain amount of crewmen of one nationality to inflict one casualty in four and one half minutes. That "certain" number is determined by a table of probabilities based on data from dozens of actual boarding actions.' Since that data was collected from eight years of part-time research of awesome proportions, I'll go along with that for authenticity, having often felt that the melee phase in **Wooden Ships and Iron Men** was one of the game's weaker points and open to dispute on the grounds of accuracy.

Wind change is once again widely divergent in both games: wind direction in **Wooden Ships and Iron Men** is checked every 3 turns — i.e. every 9 minutes, with only a 1 in 6 chance of no change in direction, a 3 in 1 chance of a 60 change, and a 3 in 1 chance of a 120 change.

Wind direction in **Beat to Quarters** is checked every 10 turns, i.e. every 45 minutes, with an even chance of no change in direction, a 40% chance of a 45 change, and a 10% chance of a 90 change.

Wind velocity change is less radically different, with 50% no change in **Beat to Quarters** (33% in **Wooden Ships and Iron Men**) and the remainder (25/25 or 33/33) between increase or decrease by one level.



**6.12 Range Charts (in centimeters)**

Long Guns

	Point Blank	Close	Medium	Long *	Extreme *
Guns					
48#, 42#, 36#	0-2	2.1-23	23.1-41	41.1-63	63.1-150
32#, 30#, 28#, 26#	0-2	2.1-23	23.1-43	43.1-66	66.1-158
24#	0-2	2.1-23	23.1-52	52.1-79	79.1-188
18#	0-2	2.1-25	25.1-54	54.1-82	82.1-195
12#	0-2	2.1-20	20.1-40	40.1-60	60.1-143
9#, 8#, 6#, 4#	0-2	2.1-19	19.1-37	37.1-57	57.1-135
3#	0-2	2.1-8	8.1-21	21.1-40	40.1-75
Carrónades					
Guns					
68#	0-2	2.1-14	14.1-23	23.1-35	35.1-94
42#	0-2	2.1-14	14.1-21	21.1-32	32.1-86
36#, 32#	0-2	2.1-10	10.1-20	20.1-30	30.1-83
24#	0-2	2.1-13	13.1-19	19.1-29	29.1-79
18#	0-2	2.1-14	14.1-18	18.1-27	27.1-75
12#	0-2	2.1-10	10.1-17	17.1-26	26.1-68

\* When firing at long or extreme range all hits score sail damage.

**6.95 Single Ship Actions Surrender Chart**

"Enemy to Friendly Ratio"	"Surrender Points Caused"
1.0 to 1.0	0
1.1 to 1.0	3
1.2-1.4 to 1.0	4
1.5-2.0 to 1.0	5
2.1-2.4 to 1.0	6
2.5-3.2 to 1.0	7
3.3-Inf. to 1.0	8

**6.96 Multiple Ship Action (Unsupported Ship Surrender Chart)\***

"Enemy to Friendly Ratio"	"Surrender Points Caused"
0-1.9 to 1.0	0
2.0-2.9 to 1.0	2
3.0-6.9 to 1.0	5
7.0-Inf. to 1.0	6



In essence, this signifies that in the time between wind checks in *Beat to Quarters*, the wind in *Wooden Ships and Iron Men* could at worst have swung nearly twice round the compass — the mind boggles ... In practice, it doesn't work that way, and the wind stays fairly much in one place in both games .... though it does oscillate more alarmingly in one game than in the other. Frankly, as a sailing man, I prefer the *Beat to Quarters* version, but it's a small quibble.

Let's have a look at the more unique features of *Beat to Quarters*. One of my favourites is the use of bow and stern chasers; as the rules have it — "Generally, sloops (corvettes) and larger ships carried a few guns (one or two) on their bow and stern ... long 6, 8, 9, 12 and 18 pounders were used in this capacity, although there were exceptions. Carronades (c) being short-ranged weapons, were seldom if ever used in this capacity". The guns themselves are deducted from the total carried by the appropriate ship. The advantage of this is that you can still engage a ship ahead or astern of you, provided it is within an arc from 45° to port of dead ahead through to 45° starboard — if you are faced with a stern chase, and your opponent is in full sail, a well-aimed shot could bring down sail and rigging to slow him down. The stern chaser obviously gives the fleeing ship a chance to slow down the opposition. *Wooden Ships and Iron Men* fanatics will welcome this way of enlivening a boring sailing exercise. To be fair, you need to be fairly close point-blank or close range to ensure a hit — but it is a realistic option.

Another nice touch is the use of Surrender Points, reminiscent of the factor built into fleet actions in SPI's *Frigate* — a sort of naval demoralisation level resulting in instant disengagement and precipitate retreat. The Surrender Point concept is less dramatic and applicable down to single ships. It works like this: Each ship starts (before the first game turn) with 10 Surrender Points. This total may be added to or subtracted from thus:-

(a) In single-ship actions, the Point Value Number (PVN — an overall assessment of the ship's battleworthiness) of both ships is estimated, and the larger PVN divided by the smaller PVN. If the result is 1.1 or less, no Surrender Points are lost. If larger than 1.1, then the Single Ship Action Surrender Chart is consulted to find the number of Surrender Points lost (between 3 & 8) (see chart).

(b) In multiple-ship actions, where single ship(s) become separated from their consort(s) the PVN ratios are examined, and if the ratio against the newly unsupported ship is 2.0 or greater, the Multiple Ship Action (Unsupported Ship Surrender Chart) is consulted, and Surrender Points are lost immediately. These points are also regained immediately if support is regained (support is within 40cm in line astern, or 15cm in line ahead.)

(c) All Turkish and Tripolitanian ships get a starting bonus of 5 Surrender Points — i.e. a starting total of 15 points in 1.0 to 1.0 scenarios.

The advantages of this concept will not be lost on the land-lubbers amongst us: divide and conquer — split off the weaker ships and kill them off, holding the stronger ships in — dare I say it — soak-off attacks.

In terms of scenarios offered, both games offer roughly equal proportions of the same three periods i.e. American Revolution, Napoleonic and the War of 1812. The advantage with *Beat to Quarters* is that it offers so much more in terms of possibilities, since it lists all the fleets for these periods, even beyond the major powers to include the Barbary States and pirate fleets, and the Bombay Marine (the Navy of the Honourable East India Company), enabling any actions of the periods to be fought, since it also gives data on the ships they used. The research which went in to *Beat to Quarters* is truly impressive — even Doug Davies would be impressed.

The quality and scope of *Beat to Quarters* is such that it must become a best-seller here, as it already is in the land of its birth. Very highly recommended indeed.

# CHRISTMAS QUIZ

## CHRISTMAS "ARMS & ARMOUR" PRIZE QUIZ!

The Prize Quiz consists of two parts. In Part I are a number of game counters that I would like you to identify along with their publisher, whilst Part II has a number of military history questions. Arms & Armour Press have most kindly donated three books to be given to the suppliers of the three most correct sets of answers that arrive before publication of Phoenix issue 35.

### 1st Prize:

"A Military History and Atlas of the Napoleonic Wars" by V.J.Esposito and J.R.Eltng (£16.50)

### 2nd Prize:

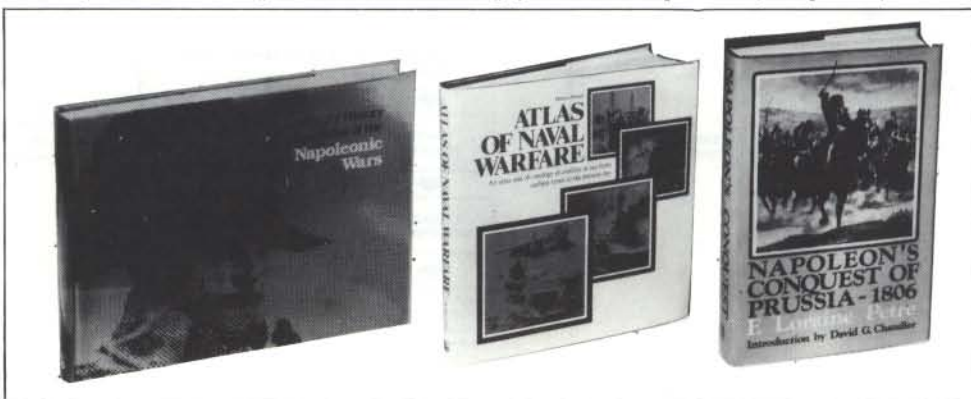
"The Atlas of Naval Warfare" by Helmut Pemsel (£11.95)

### 3rd Prize:

"Napoleon's Conquest of Prussia" by F.Loraine Petre (£6.00)

### THE BEST OF LUCK!!

(and don't be frightened about entering, you could be pleasantly surprised!).



### PART I




## PART II

1. Which was the most numerous RAF fighter in the Battle of Britain – the Spitfire or Hurricane?
2. 'In Harm's Way' was the title of a major film and naval war novel. What is the source of the title?
3. Yom Kippur is the name of the Jewish holiday which coincided with a Muslim holiday in 1973. What is the name of the Muslim holiday?
4. The conflict which involved the USSR between 1941 and 1945 is not known as part of the Second World War in the Soviet states. What DO they call it?
5. A 'Stringbag' was a Swordfish, a 'Wimpey' was a Wellington: what, more recently, is a 'Thud'?
6. The Battle of Jutland has a different name in German naval history. What is it?
7. The British navy came originally from five ports on the south east coast of England. What are they called collectively?
8. Who was the General commanding British forces in North Africa during the period of the first advance to Benghazi?
9. What is the FEB?
10. What is a Franc-tireur?

*To all our readers  
we wish  
the Seasons Greetings*

## CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

Where clues are in the form of initials the word length is given as if they are one word. Ampersands, if present, are given as one letter!

### CLUES:

### ACROSS:

1. Source of these counters. (5,5) (see example A)
6. Who? (6) (see example B)
6. Briefly, a reviewers product (4)
10. Prefaced the french Battle of Austerlitz (2)
12. An explosive diminutive (3)
13. Partial to cities? (8)
14. (and 33 down) From where? (5,2,4) (see example C)
15. Publisher of 15 down (2)
17. Sounds like a dull girl (5)
18. A misspelt source? (7) (see example D)
19. Very necessary for travel around 16 down! (6)
20. By all that's holy, how does this appear in a dungeon ... and get ahead too! (6)
22. Source? (6) (see example E)
24. See 2 down
25. Intimately connected with Oflags and Colditz (6)
28. Have Colonel Blimp and some balloons got this in common? (3,3)
30. A battle in the Franco-Prussian War, 1866 (6)
32. Game by Guidon on an ACW battle (7)
33. Without these everything in "USN" would come to a halt! (5)
34. Who? (2)
35. (and 39 down) Almost but not quite (3,5) (see example F)
37. Thought it was found in barrows but not on the moon! (8)
38. You couldn't get much higher in the Wehrmacht (3)
40. A crazy mixed-up lad from Dallas? (2)
41. ? (4) (see example G)
42. A gluey sort of company suitable for the birds? (6)
43. The latest half of TSR? (3,7)

### DOWN:

1. Source? (5,2,3,7) (see example H)
2. Strategic ancient game on a grand scale (8,7)
3. & 24 Across. Divisional commanders slang for modern defence techniques and lists of material and equipment? (3,3)
4. Source (4) (see example I)
5. Tank egress (5)
6. Commonest type of board wargaming? (4)
7. Briny transporter for 27 down? (3)
8. Proposed game from SPI not too far divorced from 18 across (6,4,7)
9. A people well represented in ... (5) (see example J)
11. Town that featured in the 1916 Italian campaign north of Venice and present in the Caporetto game (6)
15. The original "Ah am the greatest"? (9)
16. Out west, the sole prominence? (4)

18. Elite troops (2)
19. Catch of gun-lock holding hammer at half or full cock (4)
21. Initials of the English for the guerilla group in Argentina – Ejertico Revolucionaria de Pueblo (3)
22. Initials for a sea based and a cavalry unit (2,2)
23. Largest selling board wargaming magazine? (3)
26. A war immediately following the end of WWII (4)
27. Source (6) (see example K)
29. NATO is an ... (8)
30. Brown shirts (2)
31. Source (5) (see example L)
33. See 14 across
34. What? (4) (see example M)
36. A clean Greek warrior doubling up as a ship? (4)
37. A fresh start at a corrupted wane (4)
39. See 35 across



H



I



J



K



L



M

CROSSWORD  
ANSWERS  
CAN BE FOUND  
ON PAGE 31



A



B



C



D



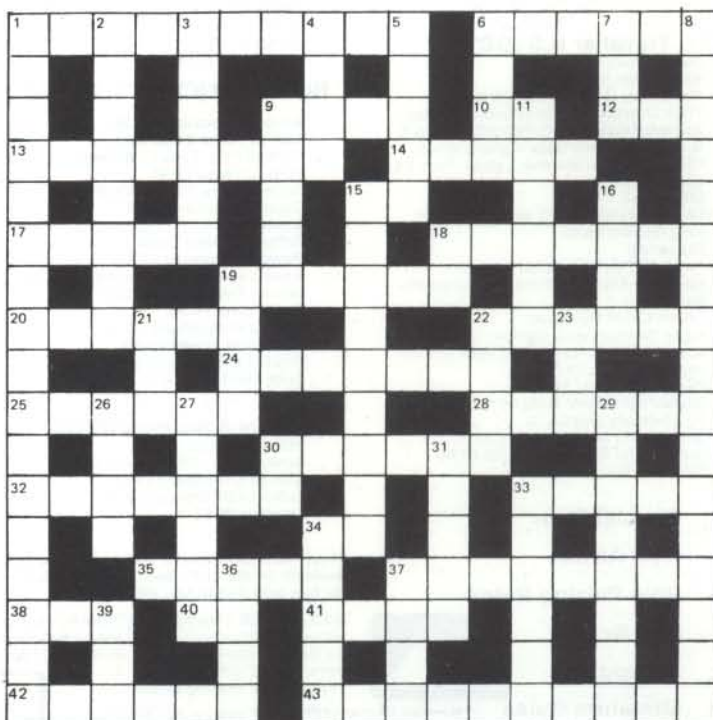
E



F



G



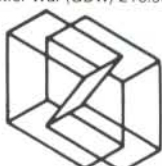


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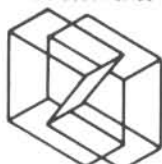
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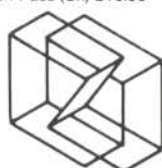
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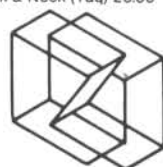
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## CHRISTMAS IMMEDIATE QUIZ

For those of you who don't have the patience to wait until the next issue for the answers to your **PRIZE QUIZ** attempts (see page 26) we enclose a more select batch of questions to try your hand at. In general the questions are harder than those found in the **PRIZE QUIZ** but the answers can be found on page 31 of this issue.

### COUNTERS

Please decide where these counters appeared and who published them.

3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26

## PART I

## ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

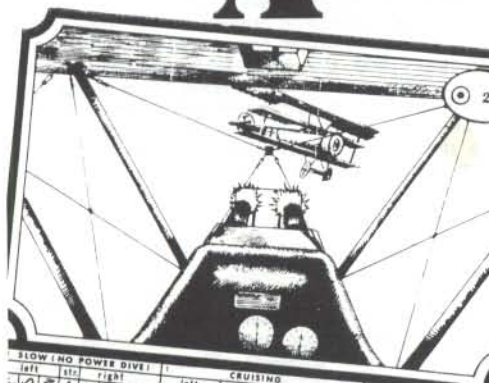


## PART II

1. In Liddle Hart's view, who was the Man of Orleans?
2. One of the most important writers on British Naval history was the son of a West Point professor. Who was he?
3. To get the 17-pdr into the turret of a Sherman they modified it for left hand loading, altered the turret stowage and something else. What?
4. The first Royal Navy submarine was launched in 1902. What was its name?
5. The first nuclear powered submarine, the USS Nautilus, was commissioned when?
6. Who said, "Steady the 93rd — damn all that eagerness!"
7. Where did he say it?
8. Who first proposed the 'domino theory'?
9. Robert Whitehead, a British naval engineer, produced the first self powered torpedo. Who bought it from him first?
10. From 1868 — 1874 the Secretary for War in the British Govt. brought about a number of reforms in the Army including stopping the purchase of commissions and the starting of the linked battalion system. Who was he?

# ACE OF ACES

D. ALDRIDGE



Would you believe that I shot a Sopwith Camel down the other day? Nothing remarkable about that, you may say, you can do it in *Flying Circus*, *Richthofen's War*, *Fight in the Skies* and *Aces High*. But this time I did it whilst sitting behind the steering wheel of a car on the M1!

All right, we were in a traffic jam at the time, but the point is that it was possible to play an air combat game at all under those conditions. It was *Ace of Aces*, first of a promised series of WWI games to come from Nova Game Designs of Connecticut, USA and designed by Alfred Leonardi.

*Ace of Aces* has no board or counters, just two paperback books (6"x4½"x¾" thick) and a leaflet of charts and tables. The system works like this, the main part of each book consists of 223 pages showing views from the cockpit of your aircraft. You are looking in one of eight directions. The enemy plane, if visible, might be in the left, centre or right of your view at close, medium or long range. It can be pointing in one of eight directions relative to your own plane's heading.

The pages in each book have been so arranged that, for example, where page 16 of the Allied book shows that you are on the tail of a Fokker Triplane with your guns blazing merrily away, at close range,

page 16 in the German book shows a Sopwith Camel right behind you with streams of bullets coming from his guns, an unnerving sight indeed. In other words you can see where the other chap is for most of the time.

Beneath each view is a table of symbols each depicting one of 25 possible manoeuvres, eight at slow speed, ten at cruising speed and the remaining seven at high speed. Each symbol is more or less self-explanatory and is accompanied by a page number. Their identities and usage are fully explained in the comprehensive rules to be found in the front and rear sections of each book. The rules are rather long-winded but quite understandable, whilst most problems can be resolved by reference to the page of errata thoughtfully included in the chart leaflet.

To play, each player chooses his manoeuvre and notes the associated page number. Strictly speaking this means writing it down but it is possible to get by without the scribbling bit if you are so minded.

Next, the firing, if any, is resolved. After which the players now tell their opponents the page number that they had noted previously, the opponent turning to that number in his book. This is but a half-way stage, for on this page you look at the symbol denoting your chosen manoeuvre, turn to the page number against it, and there you will find your new relative positions. It looks complicated, but in fact the whole operation can be performed in a matter of a few seconds with just a little practice.

The game has three levels, basic, intermediate and advanced. In the basic game both planes remain at the same altitude, firing is automatic when the enemy is in your sights and you automatically score a certain number of points depending on the range. Six points and down he goes.

The intermediate rules bring in climbing and diving, voluntary firing of different lengths of burst (the more ammo you fire the more damage you may do but your guns are more likely to jam and furthermore you now only carry a certain amount). Damage is now allocated to different parts of the target and it is possible to have critical hits. You can also choose from a selection of aircraft with varying flying abilities and armament, and aces now make their appearance.

The advanced game expands on the above rules by introducing restrictions on flying ability (an ace can run rings around a rookie), even more detailed

damage like cracked windscreens and tearing fabric, the effects of target speed and deflection on hitting the target, and a campaign game with yet more optional bits and pieces.

Although each version is fully playable in its own right it is quite possible to use any desired combination of rules from any level, according to taste. Thus you may employ the basic flying rules with some of the intermediate firing rules plus some of the optional campaign rules should you so wish.

At intermediate and advanced levels dice are required for combat resolution and a certain amount of paperwork starts to creep in (recording altitude and damage, etc). However, it is not that burdensome.

The game is expensive, nearly £10 seems at first sight to be quite a lot of money to pay for two paperbacks and a four page leaflet. However, you do seem to get a greater sense of involvement than you do from shoving counters around a board. Indeed, when you are looking over your shoulder at your foe spraying streams of lead about your ears you can almost hear the guns firing! And, by the way, should you ever find yourself in such a position you are in trouble. The designer has not forgotten to include a rule on tailing, and next turn will find the enemy having a rough idea of your movement; there may well be an empty chair in the Mess tonight!

The physical quality of the game varies. The books show no signs of coming apart under hard usage, and they certainly get plenty of that. On the other hand, the standard of drawing in the views from your cockpit ranges from excellent to poor.

My own feeling is that the game is over-priced, although you do have to bear in mind that what you are really paying for is the tremendous amount of work that must have gone into the making of it. However, I for one do not regret the expenditure, the game plays quickly, can be taught to anyone in a couple of minutes in the basic version, and it does seem to impart something of the feel of WWI aerial combat.

A final word on tactics. It is unlikely that anyone will ever write learned articles on perfect plans for playing *Ace of Aces*, because those articles have already been written. This is one game where the advice of the WWI aces applies still. Anybody want to buy some old Biggles books?





I find myself in complete agreement with Roger Musson (Phoenix 32) in his opinion of S&T.

As one who has just let his subscription to that magazine, lapse, I've thought long and hard on the subject. My initial reason for buying S&T was, as a novice on the wargaming scene, to discover the intricacies of that esoteric world.

Now, after twenty issues the novelty has worn off, and in my new found maturity, I find S&T stilted, lacking direction and certainly unimportant. Of course, there was the game in each issue, but as numbers grew the quality decreased, until we now have the veritable pot-pourri of card and paper, frequently unresearched and unplayable.

With no sub to S&T, I can pick and choose among the many games available, and not have what was an all too frequent occurrence, of the brown envelope containing a game I didn't want, then having to write to the For Sale column to get rid of the damn thing! Either way I lose money.

By maintaining my sub to the Phoenix, I can buy the interesting S&T games as they come along, by keeping an eye on the very informative Grapevine column. In this way I get the game I want but prevent the unhealthy accumulation of waste paper in my cupboard. Now I come out on top with more money to spend on games proven in quality and less hassle.

Alan H. Wright.

R.K. Jordan calls for a comprehensive games register (in Phoenix No 31) to help purchasers find their ways through the glut of games now available. But such a register already exists. "The Best of Board Wargaming" (Arthur Barker, 1980: £8.50) by Nicky Palmer contains 134 detailed reviews of the better games available. Almost all the games have at least one page devoted to them. The reviews are written by Nicky Palmer, myself, Geoff Barnard, Graham Buckell, Mark Gleeson, Jack Greene, Fred Helfferich, Major Mack, Tom Oleson and Ron Wheelhouse. Each game is rated for excitement, rules clarity, complexity, realism, and suitability for solitaire play, and these ratings are to a common scale. The *real* playing times are also mentioned and dissenting opinions by other reviewers noted: altogether a well-balanced book. Marcus Watney

One just cannot draw a line between fantasy SF and adventure games on one hand and straight war games on the other as some of your readers seem to want. Where does interpolation of present trends become SF "The Next War?" "Objective Moscow?" "Invasion America?" Are Conflict's "Iliad" or OSG's "Robin Hood" history or fantasy?

The truth is surely that all the fields of the hobby can learn from each other. From "D&D", the role playing field has branched out into role playing games on historical topics such as life in feudal Japan or the American West (I notice after denouncing the inclusion of non wargames in your magazine Donald Mack praises "NATO Divisional Commander" whose gamesmaster format is borrowed from role playing games).

Similarly a game like SPI's "Gondor" although it is based on the works of Tolkien and includes magic uses a combat system which could be adapted to any mediaeval battle.

No-one is suggesting that Phoenix should devote itself to designs for new dungeons and similar items that appear in specialised fantasy

and SF 'zines. However, as one who plays a little fantasy and SF but not much, I hope it will still inform us what is going on in these areas and what new ideas such games contain that are relevant to the rest of the hobby.

Roger Sandell

I can't remember when I've read a game review as meritorious as Geoff Barnard's on *Avalanche*, not only because his analysis was unusually penetrating, but because there is a regrettable tendency to neglect anything but the latest games. Of the several games on the Allied invasion of Salerno, *Avalanche* is far and away the most ambitious, and therefore just as worthy of consideration today as when it came out. In my opinion, a game is only dated when something superior comes along.

I remember clearly my disappointment with *Avalanche*, which — before one actually played it — promised so much. Big games were still very novel then, and we had not yet discovered that GDW could cut almost as many corners as SPI!

Although Geoff mentions that "victory is based solely on the relative losses of the German and Allied forces ...", he doesn't mention that this is, in my opinion, the single worst point of *Avalanche*, both as a simulation, and as a game. The Allies landed at Salerno not primarily hoping to kill more Germans than their own losses. The Germans counter-attacked the beachhead to crush it, not in the expectation of a favourable casualty ratio. A really good game on *Avalanche*, as on so many other great battles, has yet to be done.

Tom Oleson

I have certainly caught some flak from Paul King and from the Rev S. Heals; nonetheless I think that some of it was off-target and I estimate that I am sufficiently airworthy to make one more strike before turning for home.

The criticisms levelled at me seem to be as follows; (1) the Rev Mr Heals thinks that I am judging the general from the particular by referring to three issues to prove a case against the entire run of the magazine (2) Paul King reckons that my statistics are without real meaning and who am I trying to kid? (3) both consider that I seek to suppress those types of wargame with which I disagree (4) both justify FRP games as wargames on the grounds that these are played on boards or maps, with counters/figures, feature conflict and have rules.

I would like to answer these criticisms in the same sequence. (1) If the Rev Mr Heals re-reads my original letter in No 30 he will see that I was referring to the percentage of Phoenix-space allotted to SF/F in RECENT issues; to go on to take examples from three recent numbers is surely to illustrate my point, not to fudge it? I agree that earlier issues did not feature SF/F to the same extent (2) I contended — and still contend — that SF/F articles receive a lower average interest-rating in 'Feedback' than do articles on other wargames and that this indicates that perhaps the oft-cited assertion that games of this genre rate highly with the readership requires re-examination (3) I consider that the FRP game has no place in the magazine as it is a branch of SF/F which has taken a completely different road and which probably has a hard-core following which has no interest in wargames and which does not bother with 'Phoenix'. I do not seek to war against types of wargames which do not appeal to me; these include most of WW2, all of Russian Front, much of the Napoleonic and all air games; come, gentlemen, have you heard me rail against any of these? (4) if we are to take the definition of board wargames made by Messrs King and Heals at face value, then they have made a strong case for 'Risk', 'L'Attaque!', draughts (the Rev Mr Heals did say 'boards', did he not?), backgammon and even 'Monopoly', to name a few. I do not exaggerate; the definitions of FRP games employed have, of necessity had to be so catholic as to permit many other species to qualify for the pages of 'Phoenix'.

Let me conclude by addressing all readers. Assume that you are trying to convince an intelligent but sceptical friend that your hobby of wargaming is a sensible and reasonably serious one which combines amusement with instruction. Would you be happy for him to pursue investigations by taking up your copy of 'Phoenix' 31 and straightaway turning to the article on 'Dragonquest' with its account of the doings of characters named Isiya Dandyuffa and Miss Wendy Bowtumsin? Or would you prefer that he chooses the article on 'Thin Red Line' or that on 'Atlantic Wall', Which do you think would be more likely to convince him that wargaming is a hobby worthy of the attention of intelligent adults and teenagers?

Major D.I.A.Mack

# OPERATION STAR

Martin A. Chadwick

## Strategy

Operation Star is a good game in that optional play follows the course of history. The historical background notes explain that Hausser — commander of the two SS Panzer divisions initially in the Kharkov area — considered, in spite of opposition from Hitler, abandoning Kharkov without a fight.

Paul King in his review in Phoenix 23 tries to defend Kharkov. He clearly fails as he talks about isolating the Germans around Kharkov by sending Russians to cut the railroad supply lines. Finally he ends by writing about which type of victory the Russian should try for.

In contrast I prefer Hausser's abandonment. On turn 1 all three German mechanised divisions to the north-east of Kharkov should be withdrawn to the Belgorod region and, on turn 2, complete the junction with German Second army North of Volchansk. This plan has the advantage that two small but easily defensible concentrations of units are formed quickly namely: the area north of Volchansk and in the south the area between the Donet and Krivoi Dor rivers. This situation is much more desirable for the German player because a much shorter length of front has to be defended. This is very significant as, initially, the German is short of units and needs to keep his panzers intact for local counterattacks. Secondly, due to offensive mode movement restrictions and fears about his centre later on, the Russian player has difficulty in attacking either concentration effectively. Thirdly the German player has no supply worries, the sources at 0107 and 3906 are securely protected.

The German is not expected to sit passively in these concentrations. They should simply be regarded as strong bases from which to launch increasingly damaging attacks on the Russians. In the north the German has two 24-18-10 SS Panzer Divisions and the 12-12-10 Gross Deutschland. These have considerable striking power as they are stacked intact on the south side of the northern concentration. Each turn they should easily be able to destroy all nearby exposed Russian units by surrounding together with others in frontal 10-1 assaults.

Meanwhile the Southern German concentration should gradually extend its operation. All the good reinforcements come on in this area. (A competent Russian can stop the German crossing the Donets as he can easily take step losses in a cross Donets attack and overruns across major rivers are not allowed). Thus these Germans should normally simply smash everything south of the Don. By turn 4 there will usually be no Russians left in this area on the southern half of the map so move up toward Kharkov and from turn 5, in conjunction with the ex-northern concentration, start mass unit killing. The German players armoured might is sufficient to allow Kharkov to be surrounded and taken.

From this account it appears that the Russian stands little chance. Undoubtedly he stands no chance of fulfilling the Decisive Victory conditions (as Paul mentioned area L is surely the relevant one). However if he can hold on till the mud, which cripples German overrun capability, he may be able to hold Kharkov.

## Tactics

The disengagement rule as it stands is misnamed. It should be called the German infiltration rule. It allows German units to walk through Russian ZOC's at a small movement cost. Just think of any Panzer Group Guderian game with a rule like that included! I play with the following modification:—units entitled to disengage may only do so at the start of a movement phase. I have assumed this modification throughout this article.

German strategy is designed here to allow full use of the Panzers. Multiple overruns and surroundings



are the order of the day. One should not even consider unstacking decent Panzers for defensive work. Ignore victory point towns. Try to kill Russian leaders as these are vital to a decent Russian defence. Finally take advantage of the fact that Russian corps cannot retreat on top of other corps or divisions.

The Russian player can substantially reduce the effects of Soviet Doctrine by swapping headquarters back and forth: withdraw offensive headquarters in the second movement phase so that units are controlled by defensive headquarters and hence can disengage and move normally in the first movement phase. Bring the offensive headquarters back to the front, for the combat and second movement phases, during the first movement phase.

## Summary

Operation Star is a challenging game. It is also very subtle. The German player has several strategic options and even then implementation times are difficult to judge correctly. I feel, even with the disengagement modification, the game is biased in favour of the Germans.

I suggest the following modification:

The German player receives only 2VP for each Soviet rifle or cavalry division or Guard rifle division step loss. There is considerable historical justification for this. Manstein, the German commander claimed many divisions destroyed in this battle but only claimed a small number of prisoners explaining that due to lack of German troops many Russians escaped from these divisions.

# CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

## CHRISTMAS IMMEDIATE QUIZ ANSWERS

### PART I

1. Cry Havoc (Standard Games & Publications)
2. Kanev (Peoples Games)
3. Across Suez (SPI)
4. Fortress Europa (AH)
5. Bonaparte in Italy (OSG)
6. Road to Washington (Command Perspectives)
7. Campaign for North Africa (SPI)
8. Ironbottom Sound (Quarterdeck Games)
9. Gallipoli (Paper Wars)
10. Moulai Ishmael (Bearhug Games)
11. Kursk (SPI)
12. Rommel and Tunisia (OSG)
13. Commando Operations (Yaquinto)
14. Streets of Stalingrad (Phoenix Games)
15. Winter Storm (Vanguard Games)
16. Acre (SPI)
17. Panzer Pranks (Chaosium)
18. The War in Virginia (Powdermill Games)
19. Okinawa (International Team)
20. Napoleon on Leipzig (OSG)

21. The Battle for Cassino (SPI)
22. Raider (Yaquinto)
23. Bismark (AH)
24. The Guns of August (AH)
25. Arcola (OSG)

### PART II

1. Foch
2. A.T. Mahan
3. Turned on its side
4. Holland One
5. September 1954
6. Sir Colin Campbell
7. Balaclava in the Crimea
8. Dwight D. Eisenhower
9. Austrians
10. Cardwell

## BOOK REVIEW CONTINUED

Much to the disgust of a number of readers of this august organ fantasy role playing games and fantasy wargaming are the major growth aspect of the war game publishing industry. Apart from the SPI games like *Wars of the Ring*, *Wreck of the Pandora* and the very funny *Creature that Ate Sheboygan* there is a vast amount of gaming going on in areas which, up until now, I have known nothing about. I say 'up until now' because I've been having a look at two books which deal with these areas of gaming in detail. The first title was almost not published in Britain because H.M. Customs and Excise very nearly impounded the whole consignment of books as they landed in the U.K. from America because they were called, *Fantasy Role Playing Games* and written by a man who had a medical degree. Not being lateral thinkers the customs men thought that this meant the books were some kind of kinky sex manual! It may even be that as a result of this idiocy the man who was entrusted with the task of discovering the true nature of the books may be a convert to D&D gaming .... because, of course, that and other allied games, is what this book is about.

Dr. J. Eric Holmes is the editor of the basic set of D&D rules and his book, which *Arms and Armour Press* publish at £7:50, is a gentle introduction to the art of subterranean mayhem, magic and monsters. Over half the book is devoted to D&D but there are mentions of other fantasy games and

a study of available magazines and metal figures with which to play the games. Accompanying the text are photographic illustrations which are good fun and created from sets and little metal figures and the general tone of the text is light hearted and fully informative. I cannot yet confess to being a convert but having read this work I am sufficiently intrigued to want someone to give me a game of this not really very new kind of game .... any offers?

Also dealing with the fantasy game is a book from Patrick Stephens. While Dr. Holmes writes from and about the American origins and state of art of the D&D, Bruce Galloway writes from the standpoint of the British player of Fantasy games. He still seems to think that all wargaming is done by people who play on table tops with metal models but that apart seems to be well informed about fantasy gaming, or one school of it, in this country. "Fantasy Wargaming" is, however, less a commentary on the state of the art in Britain than it is an introduction to a game system which he and fellow gamers have devised over a period of time since they first fell under the spell of the fantasy game after playing D&D. While they enjoyed playing the game they became disenchanted with it and sought to devise a better way of doing things with magic. (Beginning to sound familiar? — Stay tuned) Messrs. Galloway, Hodson-Smith, Lowe, Quarrie & Sturman have dug back into history and created a set of game rules,

monsters and weapons which, they claim and I have no reason to disbelieve them, relates to our history very much more closely than that offered by D&D or any other competitor. It is, I believe, not without significance that the above named people intend to publish their own game "Following the publication of this volume" .... so look out for a game called, 'Liegh Cliffs'. To return to the book, the first ninety, or so, pages are a commentary on the motivation which lies behind their enjoyment of fantasy games and their decision to make a new game, together with some of the background which has informed their thinking about this new game. The rest of the books' 222 pages are devoted to the playing rules favoured by the authors. It makes impressive reading and would have been even more impressive had I been a committed fantasy gamer. Since I'm not let me tell you only that I enjoyed much of the early part of the book and some parts of the rules — the monsters are great fun — but £7:95 is a lot of money to pay for a book which tells you less about the whole field than you would like to know as a tyro to fantasy gaming. In other words the two books above are less competitors than complimentary one to another .... but unless you're into that kind of gaming I can think of better things to do with £15:45. Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year.

# FEEDBACK

How to use your Feedback Response Card after you've finished reading this issue of Phoenix, please read the Feedback Questions below and give us your answer/numbers on the insert in the response boxes corresponding to each number. Please be sure to answer all the questions. Incompletely filled out cards cannot be processed. What the numbers mean. When answering questions "0" always means NO OPINION or NO QUESTION "1" means YES and "2" means NO. When the question is a rating question, "1" is the WORST rating "9" is the BEST rating "5" is an average rating and all numbers in between express various shades of approval or disapproval. PLEASE DO NOT USE DECIMALS OR HALVES

The deadline for the return of these responses is 4 weeks from the receipt of this issue.

- (1) How long have you been playing board wargames? 0 = less than one year, 1-1 year, 2-2 years .... 9=9 years or more.
- (2) How many board wargames do you have? (Quad games count as 4 games) 1-1-10, 2-11-20 .... 9=81 or more.
- (3) Did you send in the Feedback card from Phoenix 32.
- (4) Do you read any other conflict simulation publications other than S&T and Phoenix? This includes magazines covering SF/F/role playing games and magazines not totally devoted to conflict simulations. 0=none, 1=1 other, .... 9=9 or more magazines.

I continue to monitor your tastes so would be obliged if you could rate the following aspects of board wargaming on a scale of 0 to 9 with 0 = no interest through to 9 = fanatical (unless requested otherwise).

- (5) Fantasy board games.
- (6) Science fiction board games.

- (7) Fantasy role playing games e.g. D&D.
- (8) Science fiction role playing games e.g. Traveller.
- (9) Historical role playing games e.g. En Garde.
- (10) Present and near future board wargames.
- (11) Which present and near future game type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic and 4) no preferences.
- (12) WWII to Korean War games.
- (13) Which WWII to Korean War game type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic and 4) no preferences.
- (14) Early 20th Century games.
- (15) Which Early 20th Century wargame type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic and 4) no preferences.
- (16) Napoleonic games.
- (17) Which Napoleonic game type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic and 4) no preferences.
- (18) Other 19th Century games.
- (19) Which 'Other 19th Century' game type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic, 4) no preference.
- (20) 18th to 18th Century games.
- (21) Which 18th to 18th Century game type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic, 4) no preference.
- (22) Games prior to 16th Century.
- (23) Which 'Ancient' game type do you prefer most: 1) Tactical, 2) Operational, 3) Strategic and Grand Strategic, 4) no preference.
- (24) Computer 'arcade' type games.
- (25) Computer simulation games of any sort.
- (26) Computer conflict simulations — fantasy/SF.
- (27) Computer conflict simulations — historical/present.

- (28) It has been suggested that I feature 'games replay' articles — the details of the playing of a specific game in some detail. Rate your interest in this sort of article, irrespective of whether the game featured may or may not be to your liking, on a scale of 1 to 9 with 1 being a positive dislike for the idea and 9 being very much in favour of it. 0 = no opinion.
- (29) Rate this issue of PHOENIX on a scale of 1 to 9. 9 being excellent and 1 being poor. To help me improve the magazine I would appreciate a few constructive comments below if you rate it 4 or less

Rate the following articles in this issue on a scale of 1 to 9. 9 being excellent, 1 being poor. PLEASE ENTER '0' IF YOU DID NOT READ THE ARTICLE

- (30) WWI Games — article quality
- (31) WWI Games — choice of subject
- (32) Black Horse, Red Star — article quality
- (33) Black Horse, Red Star — choice of subject
- (34) Untitled — article quality
- (35) Untitled — choice of subject
- (36) Third Reich — article quality
- (37) Third Reich — choice of subject
- (38) Air War Thoughts — article quality
- (39) Air War Thoughts — choice of subject
- (40) Lee/Crossroads — article quality
- (41) Lee/Crossroads — choice of subject
- (42) Best to Quarters — article quality
- (43) Best to Quarters — choice of subject
- (44) Ace of Aces — article quality
- (45) Ace of Aces — choice of subject
- (46) Operation Star — article quality
- (47) Operation Star — choice of subject
- (48) Mail Call
- (49) Book Review
- (50) Christmas Immediate Quiz
- (51) Christmas Crossword
- (52) Prize Quiz

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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Moves issue 22 StarForce scenario; Bull Run profile

Moves issue 31 Firefight variants; Conquistador analysis

Moves issue 43 Stonewall variants; hidden movement

Moves issue 45 War in the World — an interface for War in the Pacific & War in Europe (Part 1)

Moves issue 47 Conquerors variant; WiEu/Pac interface Pt 3

Moves issue 48 Firefight solo variant; Alesia profile

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S&T issue 67 Shenandoah Campaign

S&T issue 69 Tannenberg; The Next War

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