



The AVALON HILL

GENERAL

Mar-Apr 1974 Vol. 10, No. 6



FEATURING: GUADALCANAL;
The Campaign, The Island, and The Game

★ The AVALON HILL GENERAL The Game Players Magazine

The Avalon Hill GENERAL is dedicated to the presentation of authoritative articles on the strategy, tactics, and variation of Avalon Hill games of strategy. Historical articles are included only inasmuch as they provide useful background information on current Avalon Hill titles. THE GENERAL is published by the Avalon Hill Company solely for the cultural edification of the serious game aficionado, in the hopes of improving the game owner's proficiency of play and providing services not otherwise available to the Avalon Hill game buff.

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Avalon Hill Philosophy Part 43

MORE CHANGES IN THE WORKS

The response to Vol. 10, No. 5 of the GENERAL has been the heaviest we've ever received. It would be nice to report that feedback as 100% favorable—nice but not true. "ANZIO—Portrait of a Game" has elicited as much controversy as anything we've ever published. If nothing else it has decided our course of action for the GENERAL in future months.

The main objection to the issue was, of course, the large percentage of the magazine devoted to ANZIO—a discontinued game which many did not have or could expect to obtain. This, in effect, limited the issue to articles on just 4 games and those readers without the games in question were obviously dissatisfied. Yet, there's a bright side to every problem. Those who had the game were generous with their praise of the "in-depth" approach of the new feature article premise. So, in an attempt to "have our cake and eat it too" we've decided to go ahead with plans for increasing the GENERAL to 34 pages. This way we can continue to offer detailed features while still providing the variety which the GENERAL has always been noted for. "Something for everybody" will be the slogan for 1974.

Despite all the fuss, Tom Oleson's extravaganza "ANZIO—Portrait of a Game" ran away with "best of issue" honors setting a new record for points scored in our 600 point maximum scoring system whereby 200 random responses are scored, giving 3 points for each 1st place vote, 2 for 2nd, and 1 for 3rd. However, the issue itself—bogged down by 9's and 10's from the ANZIO haters drew only a 3.98 rating—a considerably poorer performance than previous efforts. In addition, only 53% thought that this issue was better than the last as compared to figures of 96% and 72% for previous issues. Perhaps this reflects our overall improvement in recent months but we've decided to interpret it as a blackball vote against features on discontinued games. Therefore, it is unlikely whether any more shall appear in future issues. Unfortunately, the wheels of publication had advanced too far to cancel this issue's GUADALCANAL feature. We thought that reading articles on discontinued games served a dual purpose—providing interesting background data and playing information for those who had the game, and satisfying the curiosity of those who didn't. Right or wrong, this issue's GUADALCANAL feature will be the last attempt to turn back the hands of time for a discontinued game.

The GUADALCANAL feature is somewhat of an experiment in itself. We really don't know how you're going to react to this type of article which places so much emphasis on the battlefield as it appears 30 years later. No doubt you'll let us know. We thought it an immensely interesting article, if only for its uniqueness. In any case, next issue will find

us on hand with a more conventional feature and a 34 page format with which to diversify our efforts. And if it's any comfort to those of you who were so impressed with ANZIO last time, we are giving strong consideration to rereleasing it after a redesign job due to the flood of mail the article has generated. For those interested in the complete voting breakdown for last issue it follows below:

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As is readily apparent, only the Series Replay gave the lead article any real competition. From the comments we've received the Series Replay would be even more popular if the quality of play was improved. We think that problem has been solved now with 4 completed, well-played games in our files awaiting publication. The first, which appears in this issue pits Randy Reed and Don Lowry in a BULGE match—two rather esteemed players whose abilities pale only in contrast to this issue's expert judge, Dave Roberts. Next time we'll have a couple of Ph. D.'s slugging it out in PANZERBLITZ in a feature which should prove a 100% improvement over our previous PANZERBLITZ Series Replay in Vol. 10, No. 1. While on the subject of the Series Replay, 43% of you selected the MIDWAY approach used in Vol. 10, No. 2 as the best Replay thus far. 34% opted for the STALINGRAD technique, while only 14% liked the strategic overview approach of the 1914 Replay. You really showed your unhappiness with the PANZERBLITZ Series Replay Preview which drew only 9% of the vote. This is especially surprising in view of the great popularity of PANZERBLITZ as a game. We feel we're getting out of the experimental stage with the Replays now though and have the technique refined to the point where the next PANZERBLITZ Replay will be much more warmly received.

The remainder of the Readers Response Results provided some rather interesting food for thought. Again we found that less than half of you were using the 2 for 1 deal to recommend the magazine to your friends. To recap briefly, the 2 for 1 deal states that anytime you send in a paid subscription for someone else who has not subscribed to the GENERAL since 1972, your own subscription will be extended for 1 year free of charge. This offer expires at the end of May and will not be reoffered. 2 for 1 deals submitted after May, 1974 will not be honored. Now is your last chance to extend

GUADALCANAL

THE ISLAND, THE CAMPAIGN, THE GAME

by Joel S. Davis

Joel Davis is a graduate student at the University of Colorado and a longtime wargamer of the first order. By the time *GUADALCANAL* came out he had already mastered the remainder of the Avalon Hill line of that time. His fascination for the period has remained high ever since.

That's why when we heard he was about to set out on an extended tour of the South Pacific we handed him this *GUADALCANAL* assignment. An excellent photographer in his own right, Joel took all the photographs of the island used in this article, and blended them with a keen historical knowledge of the battle, expert gamesmanship, and an eyewitness account of the island as it is today to provide us with the very unusual feature which follows.



THE CAMPAIGN

When *GUADALCANAL* was first introduced by Avalon Hill, I bought a copy almost immediately. What a fantastic group of innovations it contained! Factor reduction... hidden movement... invasions... long-range artillery. Of course, check-off pads may be a bit cumbersome, and you really need two copies of the game to make hidden movement convenient, but what a challenge! Guadalcanal was the first U.S. counter-attack in the Pacific War, and was probably the only one where both sides had a chance of victory. It's a name that rings down through history—few may remember Truk, or Peliliu, or Tarawa, but almost everyone has heard of Guadalcanal.

Later, some of the game's problems began to appear. I played Basic *GUADALCANAL* a few times, but I found the game terribly restricted and one-sided. The tournament version IS very interesting—and moderately balanced—but it has problems of its own. Even late in the game, the American player is almost forced to play a very conservative strategy—it's far too easy for the hidden Japanese to trap you while extended. On the other hand, with all that force bunched around Henderson Field, Japanese attacks are pretty much limited to mid-September. For the most part, Japanese strategy centers around staying within artillery range of Henderson Field without getting caught, while the Americans make occasional, cautious forays to flush them out.

Then there are the sages who will tell you that all the really decisive action went on at sea... so why play out the land campaign at all? Things were decided—they say—in the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal (the last in a series of six major engagements in that area).

To this contention I give a qualified "Poppycock"! Qualified, because some of the naval engagements were decisive and could have thrown things either way. No one really disputes that the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal was a decisive factor in leading the Japanese to evacuate the island. But "Poppycock" because the war on land had several decisive battles too! If the Japanese had won any one of them—and



Rusting landing craft on Takra Beach are the last signs of the pivotal combat which took place on the island 32 years ago.

the potential was there—it could have been the United States Marines who were forced to abandon the island.

As I shall point out, the situation pictured in *GUADALCANAL* the game doesn't match that which existed in the campaign very well... but this merely represents some problems in design, not a failure of the basic concept. To understand why this is so, you must be familiar with the story of the 1942 campaign.

In the summer of 1942, most U.S. force was committed to Europe, while the primary ground force available in the Pacific was the largely untried 1st Marine Division, under the command of Major General Alexander Vandegrift. In the battles of Coral Sea and Midway, the United States Navy had wrested the strategic initiative from the Imperial Japanese Navy, and was looking for a way to use this initiative to best advantage. When it was learned that the Japanese were building an airfield and seaplane base in the lower Solomons, it was clear that the intent was to cut the ocean link between America and Australia. Admiral Ernest King proposed to the Joint Chiefs that America act to halt this operation—by the capture of Guadalcanal and Tulagi.

So it was that on 7 August, 1942—the very day the first Japanese aircraft were to land on the newly constructed airfield on Guadalcanal—10,000 Americans drove ashore to capture "Henderson Field" (named after an American pilot lost at Midway) with no resistance. The two labor battalions engaged in its construction fled into the jungle. About 6000 troops were landed on Tulagi and other nearby islands to eliminate the seaplane base and other pockets of resistance. Here the fighting was bitter, but the garrisons were small. In a few days, the mopping up was over.

Japanese efforts to throw the Americans off Guadalcanal began almost immediately. Bombers began attacking from Rabaul, and in the early morning hours of 9 August, five heavy cruisers, two light cruisers, and one destroyer badly mauled the Allied (U.S. and Australian) covering force in the Battle of Savo Island.

While the Japanese force did not gain the objective of bombarding the beaches, the covering force did withdraw—an inauspicious beginning to the months of naval dueling that lay ahead. Transports were also dispatched from Rabaul... Colonel Kiyono Ichiki landed on Guadalcanal on 18 August with 1500 troops (An earlier reinforcement attempt was turned back when transport *Meiyo Maru* was sunk by submarine S-38). With the 900 troops already on the island, that made 2400. That isn't much with which to attack 10,000, even supported by the Japanese combined fleet. But the Japanese were under the impression that the Americans had only landed a raiding force to destroy the airfield—a regiment of 2000 to 3000 men at most. Such optimistic underestimations—usually by a factor of five or so—were to plague the Japanese throughout the campaign. The Japanese, though, had great faith in the spirit of their own troops. One would think they invented the line, "My strength is as that of ten, for my heart is pure!"

On numerous occasions, the Japanese Naval Command set up combined air-naval-ground operations to recapture Henderson Field. The reason that Henderson Field was so crucial was that, while it remained operational, the "Cactus Air Force" limited Japanese reinforcement to Destroyer runs at night by the "Tokyo Express." Transports were just too slow... Henderson's aircraft would catch them unloading by morning light. Destroyers were fast—but destroyers cannot carry heavy equipment, horses, or bulky supplies. The usual Japanese plan would bring the combined fleet into action. A large number of troops would be landed by the Tokyo Express (this part usually came off). These troops would launch a combined, multi-pronged attack on Henderson Field (these attacks were usually late, under-supplied, and lacked coordination), while the Imperial Japanese Navy would clear the U.S. Fleet from the area (which sometimes was accomplished) and bombard the beaches in support (again, sometimes managed). As soon as the Japanese ground forces captured Henderson (which never happened, but once almost

did), Japanese aircraft would fly in, putting the United States Navy in the same daylight disadvantage suffered by the Japanese. In some ways it might be worse, since American forces were not used to using destroyers as transports, and were used to more abundant supply than the Japanese would put up with. In addition, Japanese transports with heavy equipment, supplies, etc., could land, greatly expediting the mop-up of American troops. These plans usually included elaborate arrangements for the surrender ceremonies.

What with the over-confidence of the Japanese—on their own combat effectiveness, on how fast they could get to their positions through the jungle, and their general lack of intelligence concerning overall U.S. dispositions and firepower, as well as the tremendous complexity and crucial timing necessary in these operations, things always went wrong.

What finally induced the Japanese to abandon Guadalcanal was the destruction of a transport fleet by Henderson-based aircraft, combined with a naval defeat in the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. But, as most of the histories will admit, things were touch-and-go in spots . . . and if the Japanese had played their cards a little better, things might have gone differently.

★★★★★

THE ISLAND

This was why, on June 18th of 1973, I was so fascinated by the island visible from the window of the Air Nauru jet I was flying to that same island—a little over thirty years after the end of that famous battle. What was I doing on Guadalcanal? Especially since, as my younger brother pointed out, "What's wrong with the French Riviera? How about the Isle du Levant? But no, you choose Guadalcanal. Sigh!"

Actually, Guadalcanal was only three days out of a three month sweep through the South Pacific. I spent about five weeks in Australia . . . but if you're going to buy a ticket to go that far, you really ought to gather in as many intermediate stops as possible. I spent three weeks in the American Trust Territories, Guam, and Nauru. I saw old bunkers at Truk and snorkeled around sunken warships in the lagoon . . . I saw old tanks and artillery on Yap . . . I visited lots of other islands too—often getting the impression that the Pacific islands are like a gigantic World War II surplus store. But Guadalcanal . . . GUADALCANAL—with all the magic in the name, I really didn't know what to expect. Some of the American Trust Territory Islands are awfully primitive, despite the amount of money this nation spends. The British don't spend nearly as much as we do (Guadalcanal is in the British Solomons) . . . my only real expectation was a reflection of the war histories I had read—a totally undeveloped morass of steaming jungles and deadly mosquitos.

Surprise number one—Guadalcanal had paved runways! Most of the Micronesian islands (except the Marianas, where there's a lot of military traffic) handle 727 jets—on runways of crushed coral. Henderson Field (it retains the old name, along with a relic anti-aircraft gun in front of the terminal) is a surprisingly modern airport. The rickety old military control tower is still there—but strictly as a monument. The air

traffic—a mixed conglomeration of aircraft ranging from props to small jets—is handled from a modern tower nearby. The airport itself is only a ten minute drive from Honiara (formerly the village of Mantanikau).



The main road into the hills from Mantanikau is much the same today as it was 30 years ago, although other facilities have improved tremendously.

Surprise number two—as far as Pacific Islands go, Guadalcanal is amazingly modern. This is only true within a mile or so of the north coast, but, in comparison with the U.S. Trust Territories (again, except the Marianas), I found much more "civilization"—especially surprising in view of how much less the British spend than the Americans. Guadalcanal, for example, has good roads. The main coastal road is paved for about twenty miles. It's smooth riding from Tasimboko to Tassafaronga, and even beyond Tassafaronga . . . though you have to drive through streams at fords. This wasn't difficult—but I was there during the dry season. Later in the year, fording streams could have been a real problem.

Another significant difference is that a relatively large fraction of the natives speak ENGLISH. In fact, the overall standard of education compares quite favorably, for example, with that in the Caroline Islands. Public utilities—electricity, phones, and running water—are more widespread.

My initial tour of the island was in a vehicle called a minimoke. It looks like a kind of cross between a dune-buggy and the surrey-with-the-fringe-on-top . . . but it's rugged and will go almost anywhere.



The approach to Mt. Austen is much easier now than it was 32 years ago.

My first stop was Mount Austen. We drove on old U.S. jeep trails—still in use after thirty years—crunching down the tall grass and undergrowth which never stays down for long. There were a few of the Japanese memorials dedicated to "eternal world peace" that one sees on so many of these islands, but many land-downers put up monuments of their own just by stacking up any old military hardware they found on their land. Even the fences brought back war memories . . . they were made of old

Marston matting, salvaged from the military airstrips.

Nearby "Red Beach"—where the Americans came ashore—had little to distinguish it from other beaches, save some rusty scraps which thirty years had made unidentifiable. Not too far away, however, was the Betikama Museum & Souvenir shop. I looked over the numerous pieces of artillery and aircraft in relatively good condition before continuing to Edson's ("Bloody") Ridge, where Edson's Raiders held off numerous determined Japanese attacks. One interesting feature was the unusual lack of trees. While thick forest existed around the ridge peaks, the top of the ridge was virtually clear, except for the ubiquitous high grass. I asked and discovered that this had always been so, which checks with some USMC sources . . . though it is contrary to the *GUADALCANAL* mapboard.



A view of the invasion beach (RED Beach) looking eastward toward Lunga Point.

It was near Bloody Ridge that I saw what looked like airplane hangars covered with earth—old American supply sheds. We drove down an old jeep trail to look at one of them. The trail hadn't been used in a week or two, so there was about two feet of undergrowth! We found only a few rusting supply drums in the first shed, but a second shed was visible further back. From the amount of undergrowth, I guessed that it was rarely visited. Such finds are often more interesting—but my struggle to get there yielded no relics . . . only a nervous surprise when the equally surprised resident bats took off and winged past me in fright. How poignant, though—structures which once shielded men from bullets, bombs, and shells are still shielding bats and spiders from rain, wind, and the tropical sun.



A view of Bloody (Edson's) Ridge from 1/4 mile away to the north.

A brief visit to Henderson Field followed. Despite warning signs, I climbed to the top of the old control tower—safe enough, if you watch your step. The reward was a beautiful panoramic view of that part of the island.



The view south from the Henderson Field Tower gives the reader a first hand look at the terrain in an Avalon Hill hex.

Last on my tour was something the guides like to save for the incurably enthusiastic, since it's some distance away from everything else. On Tetere Beach, I came upon an awe-inspiring sight—dozens of landing craft parked near the coast . . . very overgrown . . . aged thirty years . . . but largely intact. I couldn't count them all—they extended well back into the jungle and remained as an imaginative reminder of the life and death struggle which once took place here.



An abandoned U.S. supply bunker north of Bloody Ridge.

The next day, I struck out on my own. I rented a car for \$2.00 and started driving in the direction of Cape Esperence. I had heard of a sunken Japanese destroyer out that way. I never did find the destroyer, but near Aruligo Point, I did see a cargo barge. With some difficulty I got to the beach, and strolled back along the water's edge to the barge. The identity of the barge was difficult to ascertain although I was able to climb up on it and look the whole ship over very closely. Below the deck was filled with sand washed in over three decades, and any identification marks had long since rusted away. I'd guess it was Japanese, though—they had the most shipping sunk in that area and certainly did try to unload supplies there on occasion.



This wrecked bridge over the Tenryu River is all the evidence that remains of the bloody fighting which once raged across its banks.

Driving back to Honiara, I found something else of interest. I saw some rusting junk near the road. Upon investigation, I discovered some old

40mm shells. Making souvenirs of them was a temptation, but I didn't really feel like dragging questionable World War II vintage ordnance half-way around the Pacific.

I left Guadalcanal for Rabaul on a Trans-Australia Airways DC-3 Thursday morning. Somehow, the airplane seemed fitting—one of the few survivors of the era, the DC-3 has been in use for about forty years . . . and was used extensively throughout the war.



THE GAME

The big question that now arises to the average gamer is what to do about *GUADALCANAL*—the game. I've talked about the island, and reviewed the campaign. Now, speaking as one who has thoroughly investigated the official histories, visited the island, and talked to some of the inhabitants, I believe I can outline a few factors that Avalon Hill did not properly allow for . . . and suggest some modifications to the game.

GEOGRAPHY

Actually, Avalon Hill did a pretty fair job on their board. It coordinates quite well with the actual geography except in places developed since the war. I would make KK-26 (the top of Bloody Ridge) a clear square. It was clear . . . and that fact was significant in the actions that occurred there. There's more forest/jungle between Kukumbona and Tenaro along the coast than what is shown . . . but I don't think changing the terrain in that part of the board would affect the game significantly. During the Dry Season, the rivers don't amount to much—but the Wet Season began early in 1942 . . . just before the Americans landed. Rivers can be left the way they are.



It is easy to see that the Luga River, even in the dry season, was a defensive obstacle.

The current movement allowance through jungle is about right—one mile per day—but it must be remembered that all AH movement is drastically reduced to allow time for precautionary delays and for combat. As things stand, jungle movement is half as fast as normal terrain movement. Even though "clear" terrain on Guadalcanal can be pretty difficult, one quarter speed would probably be more reasonable. Therefore, jungle movement should be reduced to 4 BTA per square. To be even more realistic, include a strategic movement rule such as that used in ANZIO. I suggest that if a unit does not begin its move in an enemy zone of control, if no part of its move brings it into an enemy zone of control, and if it does not attack during its turn, that unit may move twice

during the movement portion of its turn. Along with the 4 BTA jungle movement rule, this should more accurately simulate the movement problems encountered on Guadalcanal.

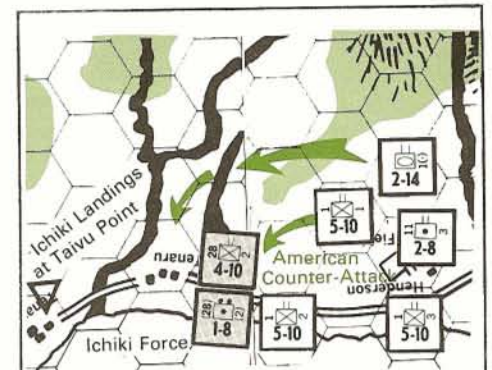
Bridging rivers is a minor point of contention too. Once a unit has built a bridge and controls both sides of a river, there's no reason why units coming later should pay the same penalty to cross. After all, unless you're crossing against enemy fire, bridges tend to be permanent structures. A blank counter can be used to indicate the existence of a bridge. Presumably a ground unit could destroy it in the same amount of time it takes to build by passing through the square, and it could be destroyed by artillery if one of the factors firing upon it rolls a one.

LIMITED INTELLIGENCE

This is the most serious error in the game in that Avalon Hill had the situation backwards. What with aerial reconnaissance, friendly natives, and less faith in their own assessments, the Americans had far better intelligence than the Japanese did . . . but, of course, no one's intelligence in the jungle was very good. One solution would be a set-up involving three boards, three sets of pieces, and a processor to give out intelligence to both sides. Unfortunately, such solutions are only for the most devoted! For a social game, something simpler is needed.

I suggest leaving the current limited intelligence procedure as is, but add some things to make it more difficult for the Japanese player:

- All American units in the jungle are kept upside down.
- If the Americans can form a continuous line of squares containing either American units or American zones of control from one point on the coast to another point on the coast with no Japanese units inside, then American units INSIDE this line may be off the board if they are in the jungle, or flipped over no matter where they are. American zones of control along the coast (including the existence of American units) should be marked by blank counters, tokens, etc., so that the Japanese player will know if he's allowed to land back there or not.



This diagram shows the Battle of the Tenaru, 21 August, 1942, as it would be played in *GUADALCANAL*. Only units taking part are shown. Beginning at 3:10 AM, Colonel Ichiki's infantry and mortars attack 2nd Bn., 1st Marines across the Ilu at 1-2. A two is rolled—each side loses one factor and there is no advance or retreat. The Americans counter-attack. Ichiki's troops are shelled by 3rd Arty. Bn., 11th Marines, taking another factor casualties. 1st Bn., 1st Marines advances out of reserve, around Ichiki's left flank, and attacks from the rear. 2nd Bn. joins in, along with tanks of the 1st Armor Bn. at 11-3-3-1 with no retreat. A one, three, or six is rolled—the Japanese are entirely eliminated with no further U.S. casualties. (Note: 1st Armor Bn.'s exact starting position was unavailable—hence the dashed lines)

There is no way to really simulate the continual Japanese ignorance of American strength, but these two additions will bring the situation into at least a somewhat more realistic balance.

HENDERSON FIELD

Right now, players get a *strategic* advantage—victory points—for holding Henderson Field. In fact, Henderson had some hefty tactical advantages too. Airpower was what forced the Japanese to limit most of their supply and reinforcements to what destroyers could bring in. If Henderson Field were kept out of action or fell into Japanese hands, the Japanese could have landed large numbers of troops, horses, supplies, and heavy equipment. Furthermore, had the Japanese made Henderson Field operational, they could prevent the Americans from conducting major landings of almost any sort—as well as limiting American supply—virtually forcing a United States evacuation.

Extra Reinforcements: If the Japanese put Henderson Field out of commission or capture it at the end of their turn, they are entitled to land up to two combat units from those available at Rabaul (including regular reinforcements for that month that have not yet arrived) and four units of fire. These appear at the beginning of the next Japanese turn. If the Japanese possess Henderson Field—or if Henderson Field is out of commission—at the beginning of the Japanese turn, the Japanese player may land up to twelve combat units from those available at Rabaul and 24 units of fire that turn.

Japanese Air Operations: If the Japanese player holds Henderson Field at the beginning and end of his turn, and if Henderson has or is brought up to ten or more reduction factors (see Henderson Operations), then beginning on the following U.S. turn, each Japanese non-artillery unit fights as if it had one additional combat factor. This reflects the increased Japanese supply, reduced American supply, and support by Japanese aircraft. The American player must also roll for any reinforcements he wishes to land. A die is rolled for each unit—if a one, two, or three is rolled, the unit is eliminated instead. Of course, if Henderson Field is out of commission, or if it is recaptured by the Americans, the Japanese player loses the advantages of air operations.

RABAU REINFORCEMENTS

The Japanese had many forces available in addition to those actually landed on Guadalcanal. Through most of the campaign, tens of thousands of troops on Rabaul, in the Shortlands, and in other areas needed only a safe means of transport to enter the fray. The problem for Admiral Mikawa, on Rabaul, was providing that transport—many units were sunk trying to reach Guadalcanal. Because of the risk, others were never sent.

In listing the additional troops available, numerous problems come up. The Japanese were not German-style record keepers, and American intelligence was not always accurate. Incomplete and contradictory unit identifications were always cropping up. Worse yet, often only a part of a unit was sent to Guadalcanal. Some would be left

behind... some would be sunk in transit... and the elements actually arriving might arrive over a period of many weeks. In trying to stay as close as possible to Avalon Hill's Order of Appearance, I had to contend with the fact that units given sometimes had no real existence—or were far weaker than what is shown—but the extra factors helped represent a myriad of smaller units that couldn't be shown.

I have divided the game into four reinforcement periods, showing additional troops that may be landed only *DURING THE PERIOD(S) SHOWN*. They do NOT accumulate. If a unit is not landed on Guadalcanal, and does not appear in the next period, you can assume that (a) It was sent... but sunk in transit, or (b) It was transferred to the Rabaul garrison or elsewhere, or (c) it is landed during the next period by a regular Tokyo Express run as shown in Avalon Hill's order of appearance. These additional units may be landed in accordance with the "Henderson Field" rules. No unit may land twice—i.e., you couldn't land 29/1 on 18 September as extra troops and land a second 29/1 on 9 October when called for by Avalon Hill. You could, in this case, land 10th Mt. Arty and one other 4-10 infantry unit if any are available. Only exactly equivalent units may swap arrival times.

HENDERSON OPERATIONS

Even though the Japanese never captured Henderson Field, it was put out of action a few times by heavy bombardment, and almost put out of action on a few other occasions. Of course, the Japanese kept the area under continual bombardment, but ammunition limitations usually prevented such attacks from having more than nuisance value.

Henderson Field has twenty reduction factors—it requires at least ten to be operational. Reduction factors may be destroyed by artillery fire against Henderson Field... and may be replaced or destroyed by combat units present on the field. Henderson Field may never have more than twenty reduction factors or fewer than zero.

Artillery: When artillery (including naval bombardment) attacks square KK-22 (Henderson Field), a roll of six for any factor firing eliminates one reduction factor. Of course, if face-up units are on Henderson, these will take casualties on rolls of two and/or one, depending on the number of factors present.

Combat units: If an Engineer or Labor unit is on Henderson Field at the beginning of its move, and remains there throughout the move, two reduction factors may be rebuilt. If the unit is eligible for strategic movement, it may spend half its move (10 BTA) on Henderson and

ACCESSIBILITY OF UNITS ON RABAU

7 August—4 September

Note: Unlimited units of fire are always available on Rabaul.

11 September—2 October

9 October—
6 November

13 November—End of Game

NOTES ON REINFORCEMENTS

- Heavy (H) Regiment: Each Heavy Regiment infantry battalion counts as two units for landing purposes.
- Mixed (MXD) Brigade: The Mixed Brigade was assigned to Guadalcanal in late October from the Far East. It was never deployed.
- 51st Division: The 51st Division was serving in China and was assigned to Guadalcanal in late October. Like the Mixed Brigade, it was never deployed there due to the deteriorating situation. I was unable to find exact regimental identifications, so I used a standard table of organization.
- Artillery Ranges: Additional artillery has the ranges shown:

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 51A/1 Bn 8 sq. | 124 Reg 7 sq. | 38/1 Reg . . . 7 sq. | 49AA Bn . . . 5 sq. |
| 51B/1 Bn 7 sq. | 124/1(1-) AT Bt. . 2 sq. | 46AA Bn . . . 5 sq. | 50AA Bn . . . 5 sq. |
| 51C/1 Bn 7 sq. | 2/1 Reg 7 sq. | 47AA Bn . . . 5 sq. | Ind. AA Bt. . . 5 sq. |
| 51/1 AA Reg . . . 5 sq. | H/1 Bn 8 sq. | 48AA Bn . . . 5 sq. | |

rebuild one reduction factor. Other types of units are treated similarly, except that they are not as effective at replacing reduction factors. If their entire move is spent there, a three, four, five, or six must be rolled for each unit to replace one reduction factor. If eligible for strategic movement and half a move is spent there, a five or six must be rolled.

As above, if an Engineer or Labor unit spends its entire move at Henderson Field, it may destroy six reduction factors—or three if only half its move (including strategic) is spent there. For any other type of unit, the figures are two and one respectively.

If Henderson Field is attacked and the units defending it are retreated, some damage to the field results. Roll one die . . . the number of spots showing is the amount of damage.

NAVAL BOMBARDMENT

On several occasions, the Japanese mounted major naval bombardments of Henderson Field, in addition to frequent minor strikes by the Tokyo Express. To reflect this, beginning with the second (14 August) Japanese turn, the Japanese player may attempt a major bombardment. To do so, he merely announces a bombardment attempt at the beginning of the combat portion of his turn and rolls a die. If a four, five, or six is rolled, the bombardment attempt succeeds. He then rolls the number of dice appropriate for that month and gets that many artillery factors applied to the Henderson Field square. Effects are determined by "Henderson Operations" and "Artillery" rules—note that if American combat units on Henderson are face-down, they are not affected. At least two turns must elapse between bombardment attempts by the Japanese, regardless of whether they are successful or not. If Henderson falls to the Japanese, the Americans may attempt bombardments in exactly the same way, except that the attempt is at the beginning of the U.S. combat segment, and only one turn need elapse between attempts.

NUMBER OF DICE ROLLED FOR A MAJOR BOMBARDMENT

| | AUG. | SEPT. | OCT. | NOV. | DEC. | JAN. |
|----------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| NAVY | | | | | | |
| Japanese | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| American | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |

JAPANESE TENACITY

The value of Japanese "fighting spirit" may be open to question—but it WAS there. They made numerous "human wave" attacks—such as those at Bloody Ridge—often almost to the last man! To simulate this, if the Japanese player rolls a result with no advance or retreat, casualties are removed and he may immediately make the same attack again, though casualties may have changed the odds—in which case the appropriate new odds column is consulted. If the result calls for a Japanese retreat, the Japanese player may take double casualties, ignore the retreat, and immediately attack again, as in the previous case. Both of these tactics are options—not required—and can be exercised only once per attack. Renewed attacks may not be made after the first re-attack.

ARTILLERY FIRE

Artillery used against troops under cover usually did little more than force them to keep their heads down. Where artillery WAS tremendously effective was in supporting and breaking up attacks, and in counter-battery fire.

Before artillery fire is exchanged, both sides designate which of their artillery units are firing—and from where—by the use of tokens, blank counters, etc. If you wish, you can imagine this reflects the initial appearance of muzzle flashes, smoke, and loud noise. Next, each side secretly assigns some, all, or none of his artillery units to counter-battery fire. Each artillery unit assigned to counter-battery fire will also have a target square (containing enemy artillery) assigned. After this is done, each player reveals which of the opponent's units are coming under counter-battery fire. For every artillery factor firing in a counter-battery capacity, roll one die. If a four, five, or six is rolled, the targeted unit may not fire *OTHER THAN IN A COUNTER-BATTERY CAPACITY* during that exchange. If the targeted unit is assigned to counter-battery fire, there is no effect. Counter-battery fire never causes casualties. Units engaging in counter-battery fire use up 1/2 of a Unit of Fire per unit . . . units prevented from firing other missions by counter-battery fire use up no ammunition.

After counter-battery fire, artillery fire proceeds normally, except that only face-up units take casualties—including those about to have combat.

The more perceptive readers among you may wonder why units trying to repair Henderson Field don't take casualties from artillery directed at the field. This is a good question—especially since the Japanese had some nasty tricks right along this line. One was to fire a shell at the field . . . wait for the engineers to start fixing it . . . then fire another shell from the same gun. With no change in gun position, the shell lands in almost exactly the same place.

In point of fact, though, the number of casualties due to such tactics were in the dozens

at most. Nerve-wracking as it might be, the SeaBees got pretty good at second-guessing this sort of thing. They managed to keep the field in good repair as a rule, with a minimum of casualties.

AMBUSH

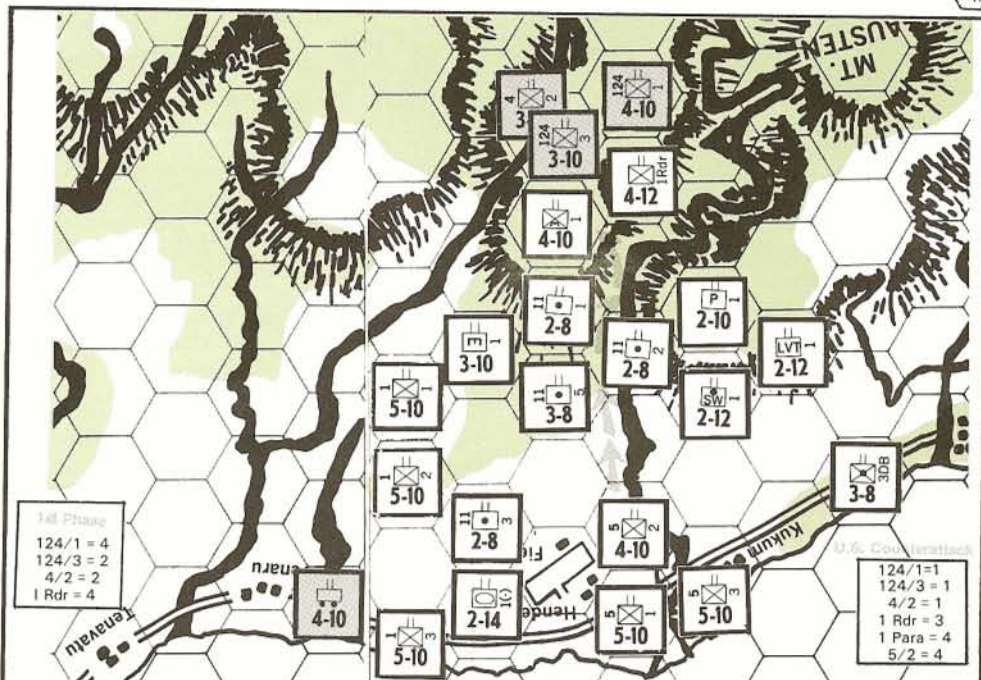
If a unit is exercising strategic movement and moves on top of or into the zone of control of an enemy unit, it is immediately ambushed. It immediately takes one factor of combat losses and attacks the off-the-board unit(s). Regardless of terrain, the defending unit(s) is doubled. Note that the "defending unit" is assumed to be conducting the ambush. If the ambushed unit is on top of the defending unit, the ambushed unit has no retreat.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Japanese Army didn't really care how many casualties it took . . . as long as its objectives were obtained. Therefore, add to tournament game victory conditions the following: "If, at the end of the game (29 January turn), the Japanese are in possession of Henderson Field, they win, regardless of point totals.

* * * * *

These modifications are far from perfect. A major re-working of the game mechanics would be necessary to accurately reflect all of the important elements of the campaign and still leave a reasonably balanced game. These changes will, however, yield a more accurate simulation of the difficulties and goals of both sides—notably in the Japanese determination to capture Henderson Field. If they do manage to capture it, they have probably won the game.



Guadalcanal's most famous battle—The Battle of Bloody Ridge (12-24 September 1942)—gives an interesting example of how Japanese tenacity works. On the ridge, two battalions of the 124th regiment, reinforced by 4/2 infantry, attack Edson's (1st) Raiders. Defensive Artillery fire from 11th regiment and 1 SW leaves the situation as shown at left . . . the attack is at 2-1. The Japanese player rolls a six (lose 2, retreat 1), but rather than retreat, he takes double losses and fights again, this time at 1-1 and rolls a three (Defender lose 1 and retreat 1). The U.S. player retreats 1 Rdr to 1 Para's square, and all three Japanese units advance in. In the counter-attack, the American brings up 5/2 Marines and shells the Japanese again. Being very decimated already, they only lose one more factor. The odds are 3-1 (11-3) with the forces shown. A three rolled, doing away with 124/3. The other two units retreat two—and give up . . . retreating into the jungle.

Near the coast, support elements originally sent to follow up Ichiki's offensive attack 1/3 Marines in a kind of belated diversionary attack. A six is rolled and the Japanese retreat via a round-a-bout route to Tenaru Village. 1 Armor battalion, trying to duplicate its slaughter of Ichiki's troops, races forward and attacks at 1-2. It rolls a three (Attacker lose 1 and retreat 2)—properly chastised, it retreats. The Japanese, finding no weakspot, fade back into the jungle.



GOLD RUSH !!!

AN OUTDOOR SURVIVAL VARIANT

by J. Richard Jarvinen



OUTDOOR SURVIVAL is the only "peace" game which lends itself to "wargame" variation. A number of interesting things can be done with the game on a man to man level. Richard Jarvinen's effort below just touches the fringe of the tactical possibilities.

For hours the brilliant desert sun has been blinding your eyes, parching your throat, and burning into your head like a white hot iron. Each new step brings additional waves of agony, but the thought of gold, GOLD! drives you forward like a machine. If you can only reach it before — Crack! The sharp report of a high-powered rifle drives you instinctively down onto the broiling desert floor. Crack! A near miss sends up a spray of stinging sand into your face. You slowly reach for your own rifle and turn to face the source of the hostile fire.

Sounds like a scene starring Humphrey Bogart in *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*, right? It's a situation that could arise in my new scenario in one of Avalon Hill's more recent releases, **Outdoor Survival**. I personally found the game very entertaining, but I was less than satisfied with the war-gamming aspect of it. Thus I was prompted to generate my own war to sate my quenchless thirst for blood.

The object of my variation is simple: find the hidden gold and get yourself and the gold out of the wilds alive. The only obstacles to overcome are the natural elements and a couple of other men, who just happen to be armed and dangerous.

To start, take four or five blank counters and one counter that you have marked "Gold" and place them upside-down on the center board. Mix them up and scatter them about, preferably in hard-to-get places. With two players, each player takes two men. One places his men on Outposts 6 and 8; the other on Outposts 7 and 9. All rules that apply to the basic game apply here except where otherwise noted.

To locate the gold you must stop on the suspect counter before turning it over. Just passing over a counter without stopping does not give you the right to search. To carry the gold once you have found it simply place it under your man and move normally, with one exception: the man carrying the gold must subtract 1 from his movement allowance. (It is heavy, you know!)

Firing

Firing takes place at the end of each man's movement phase. The only requirements to fire are that you must have a rifle in good condition, a supply of ammunition, and a target to shoot at. You are not required to fire, but you may fire at the end of all your movement phases if you wish (and can do so legally). The one exception to firing after moving is when you have been fired upon the previous turn. Then you may choose to fire before moving but you can fire only at the man who shot at you and you must add one to the roll of the die when firing. You may not fire both before and after moving under any circumstances. Trails are considered clear terrain for firing purposes.

To shoot, first determine the terrain that the target is in, and then determine the range. (Note that you can be on the same square as an opponent, giving you a range of zero.) Consult Table I and cross reference the range with the terrain.

TABLE I

firing into

| | clear | desert | woods | swamp | mountains |
|---------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-----------|
| 0 | A | A | B | C | C |
| Range 1 | B | C | D | E | E |
| 2 | *D | na | na | na | na |

Note the asterisk at range 2 under clear. You may fire at a clear terrain hex at range 2 only if the intervening hex between the target and the shooter is a clear terrain hex. "na" means you are not allowed to fire.

After you have consulted Table I, you should come up with a letter. This letter is the firing column you will use in Table II. Roll the die and pray for results. An "X" means the target was killed; a number means the number of life levels lost by the target; a "-" means you missed; and a "*" means a special hit. Consult the Special Hit Table (Table III) and roll the die again.

TABLE II

Firing Results Table

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | X | X | X | X | 1 |
| 2 | X | 4 | 3 | 1 | * |
| Die 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | * | - |
| Roll 4 | 2 | 1 | * | - | - |
| 5 | 1 | * | - | - | - |
| 6 | * | - | - | - | - |

You may pass your rifle to a friend who has lost his or had it destroyed, or you may pick up the rifle of any dead person. In each case you must stop on the same hex as the person (or body) to whom (or from whom) you are effecting the transfer. Gold may be transferred in the same manner.

Streams and catch basins in no way affect firing.

Direction Ability and Daily Necessities

Use the charts on Scenario No. 3 (Search) for both direction ability and daily food and water requirements.

Outposts

You cannot be fired upon if you are in an outpost. You may move into a hex containing an outpost occupied by an enemy man, but you are not considered in the outpost as he got there first. He may fire at you but you may not return fire.

Each outpost contains enough provisions to supply one man food and water for three turns, or two friendly men for one turn and one man for an additional turn. However used, the total supply capacity cannot exceed three of each item.

You may replenish yourself at an outpost as if it were a food and water hex as there are enough

rations to support you for the required two turns. Once an outpost's provisions are gone they can never be replaced. You may voluntarily destroy the remainder of an outpost's supplies when leaving. You may meet your daily requirements of food and water by passing through an outpost that has provisions left, but you must stop on the outpost in order to destroy the remaining provisions.

The above rules apply only to Outposts 1, 2, 3, and 4. Outposts 6 through 9 are used only for setting up.

Optional Rules

Here are some additional rules to further increase your enjoyment and frustrate your goals:

- 1) Do not reveal to your opponent when you have found the gold, or to whom you have passed the gold, ammo, or rifles. Use appropriate dummy and marked counters underneath each man.
- 2) Use three or more players per side.
- 3) Use the Wilderness Encounter Chart at the end of each man's turn (although the situation seems grim enough already!)
- 4) Limit the amount of rounds of ammunition of each man to seven. Ammo may be passed in the same manner as the gold and rifles.

Table III

Special Hits Table

| Die Roll | Result | Action Taken |
|----------|-------------|---|
| 1 | Weapons Hit | Targets rifle destroyed; it may not fire again; ammo O.K. |
| 2 | Head Wound | Target must Consult Random Direction Chart on board for next two turns; target may not fire for next two turns. |
| 3 | Panic | Target drops rifle, ammo, and gold (if he has it); Target must consult Random Direction Chart next turn only. |
| 4 thru 6 | no effect | |

**Blitzkrieg**

Continued from page 20

with 1 factor every turn, using up his 1-invasion-per-turn capacity).

Finally, a note on Tactics: specialized (airborne and Ranger) units can be vital once Red and Blue have come to grips. To those that haven't become aware of this yet, please note that even 1 factor of paratroops is enough to destroy an enemy pile of retreat. If the specialized forces are dribbled away in this manner, to surround enemy piles, the enemy will run out of infantry before you run out of specialized troops — unless you do something foolish like drop whole divisions of your men into enemy territory. One of my opponents pulled a sort of "Operation Market-Garden" and saw his entire airborne contingent vanish before his very eyes. It's better just to SAC or AV any screening units and then drop one or two factors where it'll do the most good.



Panzerblitz Revisited

by Kurt Nordquest

Many PANZERBLITZ players rush on past Situation One after only one try, dismissing it as an Introductory Scenario with no real challenge. Kurt Nordquest thinks differently and has made a study of how to best defense the German lines of communications against the ravages of the 371st Cavalry Regiment.

In fact, Kurt has done such a good job that he's tumbled onto the reason why we had to change this situation when the revised scenario cards were issued in September, 1971. Those of you who have both sets will recall that the German was not forced to commit two of his forts to the hilltop hexes 129 and 132 and CP units counted as only 3 units for victory purposes, rather than the current five. Keeping these changes in mind, examine Mr. Nordquest's "Imploded Defense" and see for yourself why the scenario had to be changed.

Imploded Defense

German Defensive Position: Panzerblitz Situation No. 1. 580th Signal Regiment, 286th Security Division, 10th Flak Regiment.

When one first plays Panzerblitz, their first situation choice is probably No. 1 due to the small number of units involved. Quite logically they opt for a situation that will allow them to break into the game smoothly by avoiding the problems involved in handling the larger forces. After fighting this situation once they quickly move on to the more complex and glamorous situations. I feel that this is a grave error and situation No. 1 deserves another look. There are many valuable lessons to be learned on both sides but especially for the German as he masters the imploded defense.

The novice German player is immediately impressed by the prospects of using his 88mm anti-tank guns to destroy the Russian before he can even get close. So his set up is designed to make maximum use of their superb range. The fault with this strategy is that he cannot defend all the approaches to his position adequately, so the answer to his problem is not to look outward but inward. The imploded defense does just this. Just like an implosion its force is expended inward and that is its focus.

Since victory conditions don't require any Russian units being destroyed the goal of the German defense is to keep from being eliminated. This is achieved in this case by interlocking fields of fire on the plateau of Hill 132. The Russian has almost complete freedom of movement on any of the other boards. The only exceptions are a few hilltop hexes of no value in this situation. The plateau itself is well suited to defense, and setting up the interlocking fields of fire without regard for the approaches allows the German to make the most of the few units he has.

Because all German units are either in the woods or town hexes the Russian player is forced to come up on the plateau, first to spot and then destroy. The Russian cavalry is excellent for this purpose since they are capable of dispersing a fort quite easily. Once this is accomplished the tanks can move up on the plateau for the kill. It is the task of the German infantry to keep a close watch on the Russian cavalry and attack

when the opportunity presents itself.

The key to the defense of the German position is the fort in the woods and that is why the infantry support is located there. (Keep in mind that they must be ready to shift to the south to assist in repulsing an attack on the east side of the town which can be launched from the south east). If the woods fort and their infantry support are destroyed the Russians can easily hide their tanks at the edge of the woods and safely destroy the town forts.

Since this fort is the key and because the rewards of a Russian victory in the woods are greater than elsewhere the attack will most likely come there. This is where the German infantry stacks come in. They must prevent the Russian infantry/cavalry from clearing the woods, or at least, inflict such losses that spotting and dispersal of forts will be impossible.

As German player your ace card is the engineer reinforced infantry stacks. Their close assault is deadly due to both increased odds and die subtraction. Almost as important is their 21 defense factor which makes them a tough nut to crack; a rare occurrence with German infantry. Another big plus is the terrain which prevents him from attacking units separately while at the same time leaves him with that lingering doubt that comes because no matter how high the odds are against you there is always the chance that you will escape unharmed if he rolls a six. The

psychological effect of such an occurrence can be devastating to his morale.

The Russians can attack this position from any one of three directions (North, Southeast, or Southwest) with the target being any one of the three forts, or they may try to go after all the units not in forts. This will give them a marginal victory if successful but such an attack requires two assaults, one in the woods and one in the town. A dual attack such as this is tricky and the time is very short. It can work if the luck of the game goes in his favor and he is a skilled player.

Rather than try to prepare for all assaults keep in mind that the only mobility the German has is the infantry stacks, don't overextend or commit them too soon or they may not be able to reach critical areas in time. This defense isn't foolproof but most of the time the Russian will be checked and forced, as time runs out on him, into a desperate attack with all the forces he can muster, rushing the plateau. It is in just such an attack as this that he will feel the full force of the imploded defense.

GERMAN DEPLOYMENT

| | | |
|------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Mines | Q-4, V-7, W-5, W-6 | Infantry Stacks |
| Blocks | T-7, U-4, U-7, V-5 | P-5, P-6 |
| | Command Post | Security |
| Fort No. 1 | U-6 | 88mm Anti-Tank Gun |
| | | Quad 20mm Flak Gun |
| | | Submachinegun |
| | | Engineer |
| Fort No. 2 | U-5 | Command Post |
| | | 88mm Anti-Tank Gun |
| | | 20mm Flak Gun |
| Fort No. 3 | R-5 | Command Post |
| | | 50mm Anti-Tank Gun |
| | | 50mm Anti-Tank Gun |



SERIES REPLAY

BULGE

PARTICIPANTS: Randall Reed, Donald Lowry
JUDGE: Dave Roberts



This SERIES REPLAY is probably the best played game of the series to date. Without a doubt, the players and judge are of the highest caliber. However, perhaps for that very reason it may prove hard to follow. To aid you in organizing the exhaustive commentary which follows, the comments of the three parties have been set in 3 separate type faces; that of the neutral judge being italicic. His format in this commentary was to make each move, read each player's comments, and then make his own. Since the game was unfinished when delivered to him with the Germans claiming victory and the Americans not admitting defeat, the judge was asked to declare a winner which he did without too much trouble.

Both the American and German player have a habit of analyzing the other's move prior to making comments on their own move. They also are analyzing the situation before and after the attacks are resolved. This, combined with their widely varying writing styles makes following along somewhat of a chore. We have reduced the type face in some areas to make these breaks more recognizable.

It should also be pointed out that no American turns are shown — only the Germans' since it is they who control the initiative. Where American attacks may confuse the issue they are notated in the underlying captions.

GERMAN 16 AM

1. My weakest attack is the I-1 against 28/110. It should be 2-1 or 3-1 to block road going north. Only—no more troops! Only advantage of I-1 is small percentage of big AMIS retreat and good ENGAGE percentage. Disadvantage is the 30% (PBM) chance of A BACK.
2. I could move 1ss/4 south to support attack on 28/110 at 2-1, but this would allow 14/CAV to make a counter-attack which could block an attack on St. Vith by the northern German forces. Otherwise, there is a decent probability for a clear road to St. Vith.
3. With the attacks constructed as they are, there is no place for the 276/DIV to attack. I feel guilty about wasting the troops; very inefficient. Could really use it in the center, but 28/109 blocks the road.
4. Attacks on 99/393 & 395 may look bad at first sight (ie 3-1 could make it retreatable to the Monschau-Malmédy road and thus deployable in the center) but it gives a better percentage than lower odds attacks. That is, only a Dback 1 and Dback 2 are bad results. At 2-1 the chances of these are 50%, at 3-1 they are 30%. Also, 2-1 has the A back 1 possibility. The Road between Elsenborn and St. Vith must be blocked at all costs.
5. Basically, my attack plan provides for a 70% chance of bottling up everything in the north during the first turn. It all hinges on that one attack...

The opening turn shows the German utilizing all 10 of their allotted attacks and to good advantage. Four U.S. units are immediately eliminated and a fifth, the 106/423, is forced to attack at 1-6 surrounded thus assuring another American casualty.

GERMAN 16AM ATTACKS:

| ATTACKING UNITS | DEFENDING UNITS | ODDS | RESULT | DISPOSITION |
|--|------------------|------|------------|--|
| 1SS/Peip, 2PG 26 Div | 99/393 99/395 | 3-1 | DB2 AA1 | DB to QG8 |
| 9SS Div, 62 Div | 2/38 | 8-1 | DE AA1 | AAdv to RR9 |
| 18/35 | 2/23 | 1-2 | AB2 | AB to VV5 |
| 560/915 | 99/361 | 1-2 | DB1 AA1 | DB to QG9 A advances |
| 340 Div | 106/423 | 1-1s | Con | |
| 79.277.326 Div | 106/422 | 3-1s | DE AA1 | 277 Div.326/562 advances 1 |
| Lehr/2; 3/14,15 167 Div.352/704 2/7.8; 352/703 | 28/109 | 6-1 | DB4 AA4 | advances made to LL27,LL29,MM27, MM30,NN30 |
| 12 Div | 28/110 | 1-1 | AB1 DA1 | AB to PP24 |
| Lehr/1; 5 Div 116/310/312 | 9/CCr | 8-1 | DE AA1 | 5Div advances |
| 2/17; 116/406 150 Pz | 4/8 | 3-1 | DB3 AA1 | DB to VV32 |

AFTERMATH

1. Two very bad things happened, all hinging on that attack against the 99/393 & 395: the D back 2 allows those units to deploy southward. Also, my worst fears about the I-1 against 28/110 were realized with an A back result. If that attack had succeeded, the entire 26/Div would be in the bag.
2. As I see it, he has poor deployment possibilities for 28/Div and 4/Div. With the Wiltz-Clervaux road cut, 9/ARM will have trouble deploying in front of Clervaux. But with 2 regiments of the 99/DIV available, there will be no massive breakthrough.

AMERICAN INITIAL COMMENTS:

I find the German attack to be very effective and well thought out. The assault on the 2nd and 99th Divisions is extremely efficient. However, it leaves insufficient power for use against the 14th Cav and the 106th Div. The flaw here is that attack #5, the 1-1 on the 106/423, has a 30% chance of ending in A Back, which would allow the defender to advance to UU11. If this happens, I can, on my move, bring the 14th Cav out to SS11 and join with the 106/423 in a 1-4 attack on the 1SS/4 and 560/916 with an 80% chance of an A Back or engaged, which would free the 14th Cavalry to join in the defense of St. Vith. The 14th Cav, the most mobile unit in the game, would be a very valuable unit to save. Further, the attack against the 106/422 at only 3-1 allows a 20% chance of "Engaged," stalling 6 of his regiments for at least one turn.

Another weakness in this setup is that the only unit in a position to outflank St. Vith from the south next turn is Lehr/1PzGr and he can be blocked by a reg't from Clervaux, unless these are cut off from the Clervaux-Bastogne road by the results of attack #7. The 3/15 at PP19 doesn't have enough movement factors to do the job.

I assume the 8th attack is for the 30% chance of tying up the defender with an engaged. The supplies would have been better used in a 1-1 on 4/12 & 16. Then an engaged would tie up two units instead of one, and in a much more exposed position. Neither do I see the logic behind the 3-1 for attack #10. 1-1 against 2 or all 3 regiments of the 4th Div. would make more sense. The German has wisely used all 10 attacks allowed him. Since each turn affects the options available in subsequent turns, the first turn can open or close more options than any other in the game.

The major advantage to his move is the good chance of killing quite a few Americans—an average of 4.34 units with 17.36 factors. His losses should average out to 1.4 units with 6.4 factors. However, due to his letting 2 regiments of the 4th Div. go free, a



The German 16PM move adds the 99/393 to the bag while securing an "Engaged" at 1-1 vs. 9/CCB and making substantial advances elsewhere. The American in his turn will counter with a 1-1 on the 12/23 with his 9/CCA and 28/109 made possible by the German advance after combat in his

own turn. The American withdraws his armor from the engagement and pulls back to FF30 while managing an "Engaged" in his attack on the 12/23.

fair chance of the 14th Cav getting loose, and the poor position for flanking St. Vith, I'd prefer a different setup. However, I do envy his attacks on the 2nd and 99th Divs. It remains to be seen if he can successfully transfer all that power from the north to a more important area in the next few turns without letting the 2nd and 99th loose.

Though I had to give more ground than I liked, especially in the Clervaux area, all roads are blocked, and only the 99/393 can be surrounded. I placed it at SS13 instead of St. Vith to block the road as far east as possible. This is where having only 3 movement factors at PP19 and no one at QQ17 hurts the German; no one can get to St. Vith from the south!

16AM German—Agreeing with Don that Randy's attack was "very effective and well thought-out," I'd still like to throw in my 2c worth. The German is presented with the prospect of immediate massive breakthrough. Every attack should be designed to maximize that prospect. The key attacks are those on 28/109 and 99/393-395; breakthrough requires success in both of these. Both players are clearly fully aware of this. The German has the optimum attack on 28/109, but I was surprised that neither noticed that 4-1 is the best attack against 99/393-395 using their interpretation of the retreat rules. 5-1 is possible, but Engaged at 4-1 is better than Contact at 5-1 because on Contact, 99/393-395 will simply move to QQ9 or QQ10, but on Engaged at 4-1 99/393-395 must stay in place in the undoubted square and risk being surrounded, or counter-attack out and risk elimination or retreat toward Monshau. 5-1 also risks the Exchange of a major armor piece and cuts down on the possible strength in TT11 to block in 14/Cav. 4-1 is an improvement over 3-1 by one fewer undesirable D back 2, and no Contact, and with the results actually given would have won for the Germans on the first turn.

I also question the use of 8-1 against 2/38. 6-1 is sufficient to guarantee the objective against 2nd Division, and the use of lower odds here (economy of force) permits the 4-1 against 99/393-395 without cutting strength from TT11, blocking 14/Cav. By the way, the Germans also took a needless risk with 18/36 in TT9. With Engaged or Contact against 99/393-395, they could have counter-attacked Randy's pieces on SS9, permitting 14/Cav to move to SS10 with a 1-2. Placing 18/36 on UU9 guarantees its objective and prevents this needless risk.

I would have to agree with the American about the undesirability of the 1-1 against 28/110. In addition to his observation that Engaged would be more useful against 4/12-16, a D back 2 would have freed this unit in spite of the German's maximum luck against 28/109. A single unit in 0023 would have achieved Randy's stated objective of preventing the 28th from moving north, without wasting an attack.

Lastly, 106/422 should be attacked at 5-1, since Engaged here could be crippling. And the 276th should certainly have been used!

16AM American—Don's move of the 4th Division shows the futility of the single 3-1 against 4/8. Although Randy's advance here might seem to be a victory, actually it was simply a wasted attack. The 4th is free to move to any place it would have wanted to move even if the attack hadn't been made. The only good result would have been Engaged, but this would have been more likely at 1-1, and more economical. On the other hand, if an Engaged had been obtained against 4/12 and/or 4/16, the advance with the 3-1 against 4/8 would have achieved something.

The American places 4/12 in MM33, which is as far forward as he can place it without being subject to surrounding. I would have sacrificed 4/12 in QQ32. Where it is, it should be attacked at 8-1, and 70% of the time it will be eliminated anyway, but the German will have gained needless ground. However if 4/12 survives, as Don seems to hope, the German will gain ground of even greater advantage and be half way to Martelange.

I think Don seriously mishandled the 28th in moving them to MM24. They could, and should have moved to LL26, counter-attacking at 1-2 with a 70% chance to maintain a solid block on the vital Clervaux-Bastogne road. Don has let Randy advance half way to Bastogne without opposition! 9/CCA could have been pushed up one more square to II28. With the 1-2 probably covering the Clervaux-Bastogne road anyway, 9/CCB could probably have been placed to good effect in JJ30. If the 28th is Engaged in MM24 it would be a disaster.

99/395 is correctly placed in 0010, rather than say 0011. In 0010 it can only be attacked from one square, and effectively blocks the road. I would have moved the 2nd Division to PP6 rather than PP7. Followed by 006, LL9, etc.

One has to say that it's hard for the Americans to do anything good when the Germans get the critical advance adjacent to Clervaux, and that Don made a good move, but it could have been better.

GERMAN 16 PM

1. Basically, I plan to attack the 28/ DIV at 1-1 since the only chance to bag the division is to engage it so that it may be surrounded in the next turn.

2. My thinking now is concentrating on pinning down and destroying as many units as possible. Best chances seem to be in the center and in the South. The north is going to be tough to crack because he can so easily reinforce it.

GERMAN 16PM ATTACKS:

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|-----|------------|---|
| 277,328,340 Div SSS/18/19 | 99/393 | 8-1 | DE AA1 | AA to SS13 |
| Lehr/2, 12/24 116/310,312 | 28 Div | 1-1 | CON | |
| Lehr/1, 3/14 | 9/CCB | 1-1 | ENG | |
| 116/406, 3/13, 2/8, 2/17, 150 | 9/CCA | 6-1 | DB4 AA4 | DB to DD32 AA to HH29 |
| 167,352 Div | 4/16 | 2-1 | DB2 AA1 | DB to HH33 AA to II32 |
| 5,276 Div,2/7 5/9 | 4/12 | 6-1 | DB4 AA4 | DB to JJ35 AA to JJ37,LL35 and MM34 |

AFTERMATH

Things went very well in the center. Luck was not with me, however, in the south or on the 1-1 attack against the 28/ DIV.

AMERICAN 16PM COMMENTS:

There are no real surprises in the German move. The attack on the 28th Div is probably in hopes of an "Engaged" to keep these units from scattering in his path. Again he used all of his attacks and wisely so.

After checking the results of his attacks I see he has again lucked out with an "A Adv 4." Note that his advance was calculated to surround the 4/8. The "Contact" against the 28th Div prevents a Reg't of it from proceeding to NN20 this turn to replace the 106/424 which is needed elsewhere. Notice how the position of my 9/CCB blocked a long advance when 9/CCA had to retreat.

I am still hard pressed because of his long advance after combat last turn and have had to give ground faster than I'd like. However, the situation is still not out of hand and substantial reinforcements from both north and south next turn should stabilize things somewhat.

The 1-1 attack I am making is, of course, with the object of occupying the hexes from which I'm attacking in order to block a German advance across country toward Houffalize. This has a 70% chance. I moved 7/CCR to LaRoche in case it is needed south of Bastogne next time and the Houffalize road becomes blocked.

16PM German—As Don says, no real surprises in Randy's move, just sound tactics. Randy's move of his 62nd to QQ5 demonstrates the weakness of Don's move to PP7 rather than PP6 with the 2nd. The 106/424 getting off scot-free demonstrates the flaw of Randy's placement on the Our River of Lehr/1 and especially 3/15. With the 1-1 against 9/CCB Randy hopes to open up a possible big advance in the attack against 9/CCA. This is a well engineered attack that could have been devastating, advancing adjacent to both Bastogne and Houffalize! Randy gets the rout against 9/CCA, but alas, the attack against 9/CCB bogs down, and the day is saved for the American.

The attack on 4/12 should have been at 8-1. Apparently Randy made this attack in the mistaken impression that he would be able to cut off 4/8 with the advance. Evidently the attack on 4/16 was designed to assist in cutting off 4/8, and Randy chose 2-1 odds to avoid Exchange. Aside from the fact that there was no chance to cut off 4/8, this attack should have been 3-1. With the American hurting so badly for units, the Exchange would be far better for the German at this point. The extra force could be obtained by reducing the attack on 9/CCB to 1-2, and utilizing Lehr/1 P.G., and 12/23, which are wasted. In fact 12/23, as placed, only makes the German position weaker. With 9/CCB Engaged, an attack and

advance against 12/23 would stall the German attack here. If 12/23 had been in KK26, and two 8-4s had been left in II28, the German position would have been much stronger.

Despite these minor criticisms, Randy has once again made a very strong move, with potential for devastating results. He has hit hardest against the weakest point in Don's line, 9/CCA. Don has some hard scrambling to deny Randy further opportunities like this or he's going to get punched out!

16PM American—I was most surprised to see Don pull 9/CCB out of the Engaged. I would have left 9/CCB there, put 4/12 in FF30, and 4/16 in HH33. But the attack on 12/23 was brilliant. One could have juggled forces to make this 2-1 with the rest of the 28th, but this would have put a big force in a precarious position for a small increase in likelihood of success. The way he did it was just right, taking maximum advantage of the sloppy placement of 12/23. If only 9/CCB had stayed in HH30! This would have probably prevented any attack on FF30, have cost the Americans nothing in any eventuality, and as it turned out would have seriously stalled the German advance. 7/CCR should have moved to DD24 and built a fort there unless urgently needed elsewhere.

Otherwise a fine move. Note that 99/395 once again sidesteps any serious German attack and secures its position. First class play.

GERMAN 17 AM

1. The bottle-neck created by the attack of the 28/109 and 9/CCA doesn't bother my central attack much. Yet it was a brilliantly conceived move—low risk with a good chance of upsetting the German player psychologically.
2. At this point a better picture of the game is beginning to form: I've made good territorial gains without hurting him enough materially. With his big reinforcements due to hit the board soon, I MUST cause more American attrition. Also, I must attempt to exploit the center so as to put him on exterior defensive lines.
3. The situation in the north does not bother me too much. It will fall by default if all goes well in the center. The troops committed in the north can easily shift south in that event.
4. In the south, I can do damage—real damage, with a D-4/A+4 against the 4/8. A big retreat means I can put the junction south of Martelange in my ZOC and delay the appearance of the 10/ARM for a turn. Also, the 4/16 would be cut off.
5. I'm forcing him, by dint of my infiltration, to beef-up the Vielsalm sector. Hopefully, the northern action will provide something of a drain on his reinforcements.
6. Unless he counter-attacks very well, I will be able to surround the bulk of the 28/DIV in the next two turns.

GERMAN 17AM ATTACKS:

| | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----|------------|----------------------------|
| Lehr/1,9SS/10, 1SS/2,18/36, Div | 7/CCA | 2-1 | DB2 AA1 | DB to MM14 A advances |
| 352/703, 2/7, 50iv | 4/8 | 5-1 | CON | |
| Lehr/1, 2/8, 150Pz 2/17,116/406,3/13 | 9/CCB 106/424 | 2-1 | DB1 AA1 | DB to EE31 2/8,3/13 adv |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-----|-----------|
| Lehr/2, 116/312, 116/310; 12 Div | 9/CCA | 2-1 | CON |
| FuhEs; 167 Div 1SS; P.4; 9SS/19 | 28/109 | 6-1 | DE AA1 |

AFTERMATH:

DISASTER! With any luck at ALL I should have trapped at least one of his counter-attacking units (9/CCA), but the CONTACT saved him. No breakthrough in the south either with the contact result. At this point I feel the situation will deteriorate rapidly for me unless I can slash through to La Roche very hard in the next few turns.

AMERICAN 17AM COMMENTS:

Again analyzing his move prior to checking the results of combat, I think he is devoting too little power to the Diekirch-Martelange route. This is possibly due to the big advance on the Clervaux-Bastogne road, which he is exploiting to the hilt. His 2-1 on the units just outside Bastogne has a 50% chance of driving these away, since a "Contact" should be sufficient if an "A Back" cannot be had. Notice that the 2-1 on my 9/CCA is calculated to surround the 28/109—a 30% chance. Two things stand out this turn. He's finding it harder to get good odds (three 2-1's, one 5-1, one 6-1, and an unused supply), and he seems to definitely prefer to attack at little risk to his own units, rather than go for the long advance. This German doesn't like to gamble.

After seeing the results of his move I believe he got better than average luck this time—especially in the elimination of the 28/109. However, the contact against my 4/8 (which would normally mean its elimination) leaves me a chance to attack his 2/7 at 3-1 surrounded with a 70% chance of eliminating a 6-4. With a 20% chance of an Exchange that leaves a 50% chance of wiping it out at no cost. I'm willing to risk it because not to would be to abandon the 4/8 to sure elimination.

Since the German doesn't seem to want to use the clear terrain south and east of Martelange for mobile armored warfare, I believe I will do so myself. At least it should succeed in drawing some of his armor away from Bastogne. At best it might cave in his entire southern flank!

In the 1-1 counterattack before Bastogne I have a 70% chance of holding the present position and keeping him out of Bastogne for one more turn, including a 20% chance of regaining the important rough terrain hex, FF30. Weighing all this against the 30% chance that "A Back" will leave me in a very poor defensive position, it is another risk I can't afford not to take.

The 1-2 against the 9SS/18 is forced because no escape route is open for these two regiments of the 28th Div. I'd really like to get an "A Back 2," for, while this still leaves my units where they can be surrounded, it would stiffen the defense around Houffalize, and the soak-offs would add complications. However, anything but "A Back 3" continues to block the German advance along the St. Vith-Houffalize road. "A Back 3" would put the 28th into Houffalize but would allow that town to be surrounded. Again, a risk.

(10%) that must be taken. As a bonus should I get "D Back" (20% chance) he is eliminated, since armor can not enter woods!

While my 14th Cav could move out and make an attack on either "surrounding" German unit, I believe I'll hold off on that for awhile. Having that 4-6 loose in the German rear will be far more effective after the panzers move farther west, and become dependent on the roads for supply. Meanwhile, two German units are being kept out of the fighting—a 2 for 1 exchange.

17AM German—Randy throws everything into the fight for the critical FF30, taking full advantage of Don's mistake in withdrawing 9/CGB which permitted this. This leaves Randy nothing left to attack 9/CCA from HH28, and thus this American unit will escape. However the difference between the advance into FF30, and the Contact that would have resulted here at 1-1 odds is probably worth the escape of 9/CCA.

Randy makes a good move against 28/110-112; instead of attacking them and wasting an attack pushing them where they want to go, he bypasses them and puts them in a precarious position. The essence of infiltration tactics!

The rest of Randy's move I do not understand. Even though he has suffered no losses, and has wasted strength available all over the board, he refuses to make a 3-1 against a doubled American unit, and uses "overkill" on 28/109. The best way to destroy 28/109 was to advance into I127 with a 3-1 against 9/CCA. I also would have used 3-1 against 7/CCA. Exchange is the only way to put this unit out of action, and it will hurt the American more than the German in this situation. The German should use 3-1s to kill American units and push forward as rapidly as possible until he no longer has the strength. Then he should use 2-1s if he has to.

17AM American—*Having set up Don's move, but before reading the commentary or checking the combat results, I can tell you there are raised eyebrows at his 1-1 to recapture FF30. If he wants to counter-attack, he should bring in the rest of 10th Armor, and hit the German on the flank where he has a chance to do some damage by surrounding German units. Or at least cut the odds to 1-2, which has the same chance to retake FF30, but leaves some strength to screen EE29 in case of a reverse.*

No doubt about it, a very poor performance by the American this turn. There was no reason to pull 99/395 back again, and 1/16 could have done just as well in LL13. 7/CCA has literally made the worst possible move on the board. This unit could move anywhere else and be better off. Cutting down on the attack on FF30 and dispensing with the misdirected attack on 2/7, would have enabled heavy forces to be placed in Bastogne, Houfalize, and FF25. This done, the units of the 28th might have moved to II25, and with luck eventually return to the American lines. With the move given there is simply no chance whatever that these units will survive. Admittedly with the attack given they have a 20% chance to take a German unit with them, but in II25 they have a 20% chance to go down in a doubled Exchange, unless the



The German 17AM move destroys directly only the 28/109 but manages to "Contact" against the 4/8. This sets the scene for a vain American attempt to free the 4/8 and destroy the German 2/7 in a 3-1 surrounded attack which draws an "Engaged" thus

dooming the 4/8 at 1-4 surrounded, and getting the 10th Armored Division in hot water for its efforts. On the bright side, the American is able to secure an "Engaged" against the German 2/8 and 3/13 at 1-1 with his 9/CCB & CCR, and 106/424, enabling him to

defend in front of Bastogne itself. 28/110 & 112 attacked the 9SS/18 hoping for a "Back 2" which they got but it will not prove enough to save these outflanked units.

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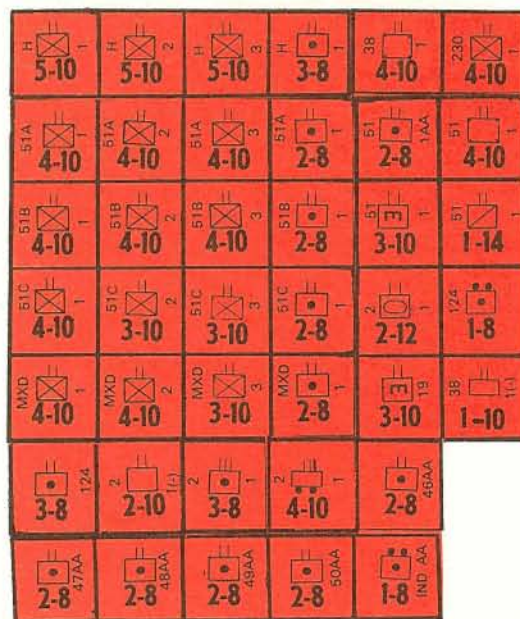
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Vol. 10, No. 6

Mar-Apr 1974



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The German 17PM turn succeeds in destroying the 28/110 & 112 in a 6-1 surrounded attack. But a "Contact" and "Engaged" against the American defenders in the south sets the stage for some crucial U.S. counterattacks. 7/CCA & CCR and 10/CCA manage only an "Engaged" against 352/703 at 4-1 surrounded

thus dooming the 4/16 which must attack at 1-5 from its surrounded position. 10/CCA which must attack at 1-3 surrounded is temporarily saved from a similar fate by a "Contact". Elsewhere, the 4/12 engages 352/704 at 1-1 and the 99/395 is retreated to II15 after losing a 1-1 attack on the 560/915; the

German occupying LL14. But the real crusher comes when the 1/18 attacks 9SS/18, 326/562 at 1-3 and is forced to retreat to EE27 with the defenders taking the vacated square and opening a hole in the American lines.

German uses a 2-1 against them, in which case they would have a 20% to breakout if their flanks had been protected. 7/CCR should have built the fort in DD24 NOW!! There may well not be another chance. With this move the Americans have gotten themselves in deep trouble.

GERMAN 17 PM

Comments on American 17 AM: Very exciting turn. I made a big mistake in having the 326/562 with the 277/DIV because a D back 1 result against the 9SS/18 would have resulted in its elimination. All in all, his expected counter-attack went badly: He lost ALL attacks—the ENGAGED against the 2/8 & 5/13 will cost him the 106/424 at 1-7 odds because he will be hard-pressed to renew it at safe odds. I think this was his weakest turn; the commitment of the 10/ARM against the 2/7 was ill-conceived. He could very well lose the entire 10/ARM because of it! The placement of 7/CCA must have been a gross oversight. There is no reason to sacrifice THAT unit. The attack by 28/110 & 112, while it could have succeeded (20% chance), also could have cost him the 9/CCA, given a D back 3 result.

1. Hopefully, with these 17 PM attacks I can begin to drastically curtail his maneuverability. Besides those attacks against the surrounded units, all other attacks have the purpose of cutting roads (thus isolating the center of his line) supported by a quick thrust through the south.

2. TRICK MOVE: By switching 1ss/Pieper to the south (for the extra movement factor needed in the southern thrust) a turn is cut off the time needed to develop that move. Also, reinforcing the engaged in center forces a 1-7 attack by the 106/424, thus saving a German attack.

GERMAN 17PM ATTACKS:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|-----|----------------|
| 50W,352/703,1SS/P | 4/16 | 3-1 | CON |
| 116/310,312 | 10/CCA | | |
| 3/15, 326/562 | 7/CCA | 3-1 | ENG |
| 18/36, 340 Div | | | |
| 277Div,1SS/2 | 1/18 | 5-1 | DB2 DB to FF22 |
| 9SS/10, Lehr/1PG | | AA1 | 277Div to HH20 |
| 2/8,17, 116/406 | 9/CCA | 1-1 | ENG |
| | 7/CCR | | |
| | 106/424 | | |
| 79Div,326/562, | 28/110 | 6-1 | DB2 DElim |
| 9SS/18,Lehr/1,FuHes,150Pz | 28/112 | AA1 | FuHes to GG26 |
| Lehr/2, 9SS/19 | 9/CCA | 2-1 | ENG |
| 1SS/4 | | | |

AFTERMATH

Disappointed with the results. I am not destroying American units fast enough. Each small delay is a small victory for the other side.

AMERICAN 17PM COMMENTS:

The results of my last attacks were less than hoped for to be sure! At least the 1-1 before Bastogne didn't result in a retreat, which is something to be thankful for. My gamble in the south backfired and the German has turned it to his advantage. If he has reasonably good luck I could be crippled this turn.

Ah—his luck was no better than mine. Getting down to my own turn now, the counterattack on his 352/703 is, of course, primarily to open an escape route for my surrounded units. It has the added bonus of a 60% chance of eliminating his 4-3 at no cost to me. The attack by my 4/12 is designed to put that unit where he can't be surrounded, while, if it doesn't have to retreat, keeping its zone of control on the Bastogne-Diekirch road. This will prevent him from sending units now south of my 4/12 to the Bastogne front in one turn, or vice versa.

The 106/424 is placed so as to block the Bastogne-Houffalize road and thus limit any attack on Bastogne to two hexes. This will keep him from getting odds of better than 2-1 there given the number of units that can reach it. I'm hoping I can hold Bastogne long enough to bring up the airborne divisions. Note that the two glider regiments were sent up towards Rochefort. These will form the nucleus of defense in the Marche-Hotton La Roche area.

The attack by my 1/18 is with the 40% hope of getting an "Engaged" or "Contact" which would allow that unit to be doubled behind the river and insure the same bonus for 1/26. The worst that can happen is a retreat, and the position of 1/26 insures that only the 9SS/18 and 326/562 can cross the river this turn anyway. Note that the 7/CCA is engaging 5 German infantry regiments and blocking the St. Vieth-LaRoche road. This insures that only the 6-4's and the 277th VG Div can attack my 9/CCA. 3-1 are thus the best odds he can get there, which insures against any long advance—and the only way the 9/CCA can be eliminated is an "Exchange" which would take at least 8 German factors. If he sends one reg't of the 277th to join the attack on 7/CCA he can still get 3-1 on 9/CCA but then an exchange would cost him 10 factors!

Finally, the attack by my 99/395 is the only effective position that unit can take up that can't be surrounded next time. And even if it must now retreat that will still put him out of danger—for at a road intersection the retreating unit has the choice of roads and I'll take the one to Stavelot.

GERMAN PREVIEW OF AMERICAN 17 PM:

1. I cannot understand why he persists in committing the 10/ARM and other units in the south like that. When I failed to cut off the 10/ARM in its turn of entry, I assumed he would have shoved it up to the center, but he wants to stand and scrap it out with me! That's fine with me. I'd much rather fight the 10/ARM now, in the open, then in the Bastogne hills. I do not think his counterattacks in the south are nearly so effective as they would be if my units were pinned up against the 'Martelange River', for example. My casualty situation is great—I'm virtually unscathed, so I can easily afford to take casualties in the south in the next few turns. Nailing the 352/703 is not going to upset my plans.

2. He's doing some pretty hairy things in his attacks. The 1-3 involving the 1/18 vs. 9SS/18 & 326/562 could open a BIG hole (30% chance). The 1-1 involving 99/395 vs 560/915 allows me to grab Spa (via a D+1 onto the road/rough terrain hex) if he gets an A back 2 result.

AFTERMATH

Success. Especially in the three areas discussed above. Hopefully, I can do a little crunching of my own now.

Roberts' Commentary

17PM German—Another strong move of Randy's. He shows good strategic insight in wheeling his panzergrenadiers past Vielsalm and hitting 1/18. He should have added 326/562 to this attack to make it the optimum 6-1 odds to try to gain maximum ground or a D Elim, but in the event, he would have only gained one square anyway.

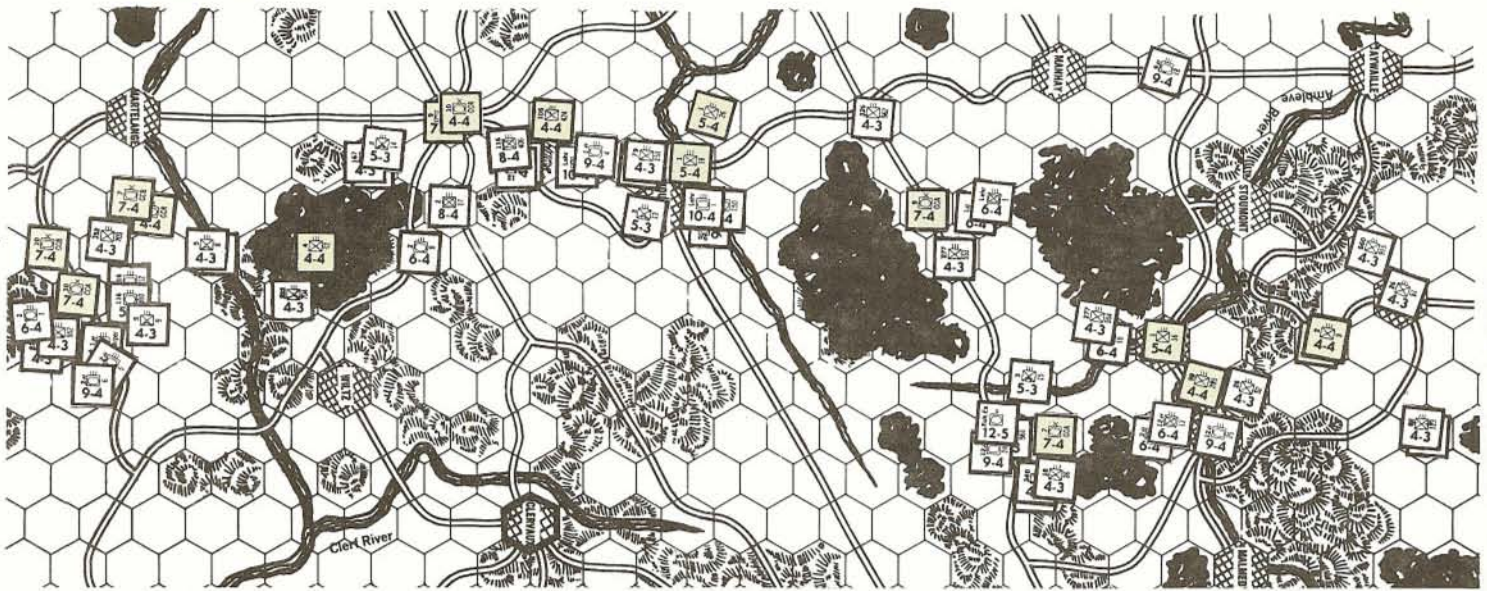
Apparently Randy had misplaced 106/424 in EE30, which explains the confused tactics there. Instead of adding the 12th Division to the Engaged in FF30 and attacking EE31, I would have added my two heaviest units to the Engagement, attacked 9/CCA at 3-1, and the remnant of the 28th at the best available odds. Randy still has extra strength wasted in the rear while hesitating to risk Exchange at 3-1. The final demise of the 28th is the almost inevitable result of the way Don has mishandled this division, starting with the error of placing it in MM24 rather than trying to block the Clervaux-Bastogne road from LL26. Most of Don's troubles in the center stem directly from that mistake.

Don comments, "Randy's luck wasn't much better than mine." In fact Randy got the worst possible result in every battle except the 6-1s against the 28th. This could have been Exchange! Nevertheless the German retains excellent prospects.

17PM American—Don is working himself in deeper with attacks that Randy aptly describes as "hairy." I must admit that the concept of the 1-3 by 1/18 was ingenious, "making do with nothing," but there is no need to put himself in the position where he must do this by continuing to pour units into the "bottomless pit" south of Martelange. I can't imagine what he was thinking in the Spa sector. One unit of the 2nd could have screened Randy's 62nd, and another been used to beef-up the Malmedy-Stavelot line. Luck seems to be against everybody in this game. First Randy, and then Don gets the worst possible luck!

GERMAN 18 AM

1. This is the attrition turn. I feel that I am very close to splitting his seams. I can possibly destroy six units this turn (33 factors). More importantly, I can starve him of units to defend the center sector. Once he is split, I can push a light screen towards the Meuse River, set up a defensive screen on his weakest flank, and attempt to rapidly eliminate his units on his strongest flank.



The axe begins to fall with the German 18AM turn. Four units; 10/CCA, 7/CCA, 1/18, and 99/395 are eliminated outright while two "Engaged" and a large advance north of Bastogne further complicate the situation. The American is getting desperate and replies in his turn with 7 low odds attacks. The first, a 1-1 surrounded with the 101st Airborne and 10/CCB and 7/CCB

against the German 167th Div. and 3/14, meets with success—causing the first German casualties of the game. The 4/12 which supported the attack with a 1-1 vs. 352/704 is retreated to EE34.

Elsewhere the American is not as successful. His 2-1 surrounded on the 9SS/18 meets with an "Engaged" as do the 10/CCR,

82/505 & 508 which attack 12/24 at 3-1. 106/424 manages only a "Contact" against 326/562 in its 1-1 attack while the 82/504 which attacks 2/17 at 1-2 is retreated to CC33. The American prepares to build forts with his glider troops which are sent to V26 and S29—too far west to be seen in this view.

2. The mistakes he made last turn are catching up to him very quickly. At the strong risk of losing the 9ss/18, I can bottle up those two divisions coming in from the north. But I must be able to take Manhay before those divisions pass through it! Touch and go now.

GERMAN 18AM ATTACKS:

| | | | | |
|--|---------|------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| 5/9, 116/310, 312, 2/7 1SS/P, 2SS/5, 6, 276Div | 10/CCA | 8-1s | DE AA1 | 1SS/P, 2SS/5, 6 to HH37 |
| Lehr/1PG, 1SS/2PG 277/553 | 9/CCA | 2-1s | Eng | |
| 18/38, 340Div, 3/15 12SS/24, 4th SS, 326/561 | 7/CCA | 6-1s | DE AA2 | Advances to KK18, JJ17 and JJ19 |
| 26/51, 12SS/25, 13 2SS/3 | 99/395 | 6-1s | DE AA1 | 2SS/3, 12SS/13 advance |
| 277/554, 9SS/10 | 1/16 | 1-1 | ENG | |
| 9SS/19, Lehr/1, 150Pz 3/13, 79 Div | 1/18 | 8-1 | DE AA1 | 3/13 to EE27 |
| Lehr/2, 1SS/4, 120Div, 116/406 | 106/424 | 8-1 | DB3 | 106/424 to BB30 Adv to DD29, CC31 |

AFTERMATH

Again DISASTER! How could so many surrounded attacks eliminate so few American units? It looks as if I could be tied down on the offensive to 'mopping up' actions. I must punch through before 19 AM!

AMERICAN 18AM COMMENTS:

After seeing the results of my attacks I am feeling very frustrated. His 352/703 survives a 4-1 surrounded thanks to an "Engaged"—a mere 20% possibility. This leaves the escape route blocked for my surrounded troops and eliminates my 4/16!

To add insult to injury, the 1/18 retreats and Randy has used a technicality of the rules to retreat him to an unexpected position leaving a hole wide open in my center. The problem is that the "Explanation of Tournament Game Battle Results" defines "Back" thusly: "Same as in the Basic Game with the following important addition: whenever possible losing units must be retreated to and/or along the nearest road. Where there is more than one road equidistant, and at intersections, the loser has the choice of retreat route." This neglects to include giving the loser a choice of directions when retreated to a road other than at an intersection. So, instead of being able to retreat the 1/18 north along the road I have to watch it move south and leave a road wide open.

His move is very effective, and it is clear I cannot hold Bastogne much longer. He has reached the edge of clear terrain which will aid his advance considerably. This is the point in the game where I believe many American players go wrong. Any attempt to maintain a connected front between the Germans and the Meuse will be extremely difficult from now on. So don't try.

He must move towards the Meuse in order to fulfill the victory conditions. If I pull back to the north and south, instead of west, I avoid confrontation with his larger units while maintaining a threat to his supply lines and stay closer to my reinforcements. Naturally, I cannot just let him move directly to the Meuse, so I will place delaying units in his path to slow him down while waiting for my reinforcements. The point is, if I stay between him and the Meuse he can chew up my smaller force while always advancing toward his objective. When I assume a flanking position he can do one or the other but not both. If he continues to move westward with most of his panzers he exposes his supply lines to counterattack.

To increase this threat I need to confine him to as few supply lines as possible. Since all roads to the Meuse must pass through either Bastogne, DD24 or CC18 I will try to hold Bastogne and CC18 as long as possible. I'm getting ready to prepare fortresses at Marche and Hottot to delay his move up the middle through DD24. If I can confine him to this one, central supply line my chances of cutting it with a counterattack are greatly enhanced.

German Preview of American 18 AM Move:

He seems to be attempting desperation-type measures. Yet, on second look, what is so desperate about a 70% chance of stopping my breakthrough? (reference to the 106/424 vs. 326/562 attack) I can get hurt really bad here. I expected the 2-1 vs. my 9ss/18. My wish is that it can just hold on until relieved. I foresaw the possibility of the attack against the 167th Div & 3/14, but it is a chance that must be taken. I must always be aggressive in the face of his counterattacks. As a side-light, I have been waging a quiet, good-humored, propaganda/psychological warfare campaign against Don in the margins of the PBM sheets in which I swear to take Bastogne by storm. This is a ploy. I have no intentions of attempting to take Bastogne with a high-odds frontal assault. I am hoping he will be intimidated into defending Bastogne too heavily, to be cut off by the quick southern thrust. (One reason why I am not hot-to-trot in the south—yet.) German losses nil, I'm in very good shape. 9ss/18 MUST hold the intersection at CC-18!

AFTERMATH

Egad, what luck that man has! BOTH of his 1-1 attacks worked for him. Thirteen German factors down the drain with no German breakthrough. The only thing salvaged out of this turn was that gorgeous ENGAGED against the 9ss/18. I must relieve it, but the 106/424 blocks the way and I have engaged the 9/CCA in the Vielsalm gap.

18AM German—This is a good move except that it left to chance, what it should have arranged to accomplish with certainty. When Lady Luck didn't smile, Randy achieved far less than he should have.

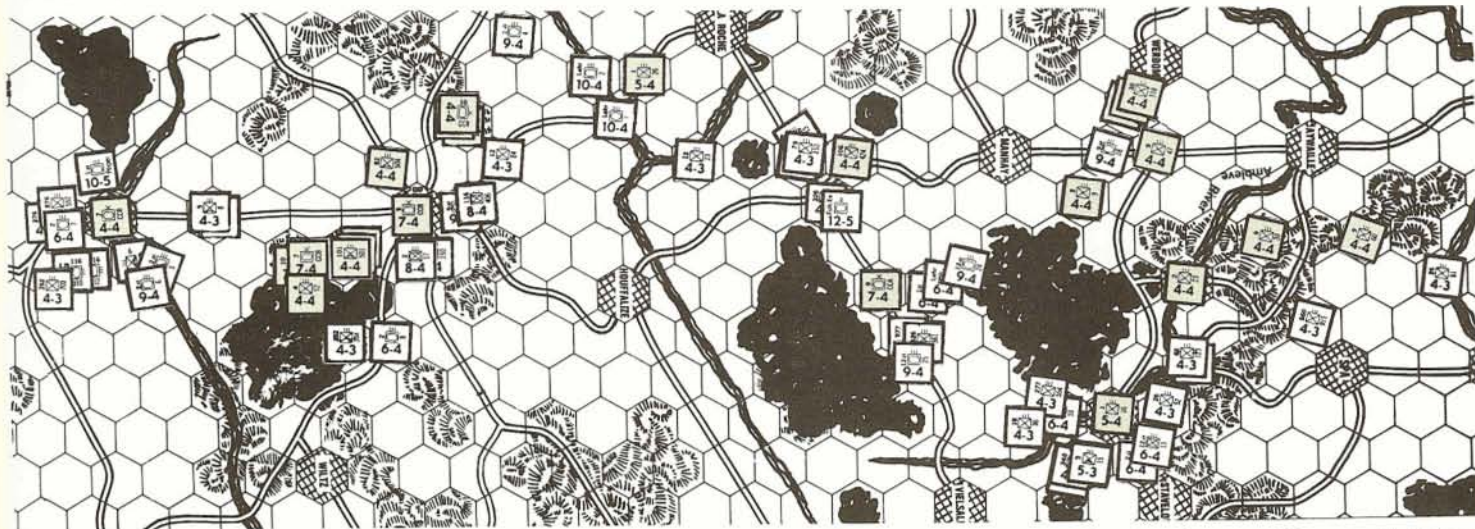
9SS/18 and 326/562 achieve a panzer leader's dream, finding themselves suddenly in the open, to their surprise

as much as anyone's. Knowing that today's good fortune may be tomorrow's adversity, the wise player analyzes a "gift" situation with the same careful thoroughness that he uses on any other. Randy indicates that he considers Manhay to be of greatest importance here, but I can't see why. La Roche is just as important a road juncture, and has the great additional advantage of breaching the Ourthe. Besides, 326/562 can reach La Roche, leaving 9SS/18 to support the attack on 9/CCA. If 277/554 and 9SS/10 are also used against 9/CCA, its destruction is assured at 5-1. The only point in attacking 1/16 could be to block the retreat of 99/395. Surely it was more important to assure the destruction of 9/CCA, the only unit that can block deployment of massive German forces in this critical area. Even as given, 9SS/10 should have attacked 9/CCA instead of 1/16. 277/554 was adequate to block the retreat of 99/395, and the odds against 9/CCA would then have been 3-1, and in fact it would have been destroyed. It would have risked an exchange of 10 for 7, but that is of no significance here. Instead the most likely result obtains in the 2-1. Randy is hardly justified in calling his luck a "disaster," it is only what you would expect.

Randy also missed the opportunity to destroy 2/9, and 2/23. Instead of the 1-1 against 1/16 he could have had a surrounded 1-1 from HH13 and JJ12 with 26/52, and 560/915, 26/51 taking the place of 26/52 in JJ14. Overall, this was a good move, but it could and should have done more.

18AM American—I was most interested in Don's comments this turn. They go a long way toward explaining some of his moves. "Snapping it out" with Randy south of Martelange, and denuding the center were not done without thinking as I had thought, but quite intentionally. Don's explanation of the rules misunderstanding goes a long way toward explaining the ill-fated 1-3 by 1/18! In this light I have to change my assessment of Don's last few moves. They were by no means as careless as I had thought, it's just that Don was thinking along quite different lines than I was. I am also intrigued by the interface between Don's comments and Randy's at this point. From Don, "... confine him to one central supply line..." From Randy, "... attempt to isolate Bastogne and drive in a twin axis toward Hottot and La Roche." They both seem to be playing into each other's hands! Where the advantage lies I can't say, but eagerly await the next move.

Tactically, Don's move was superb, taking maximum advantage of every weakness in Randy's position. It would have been frosting on the cake if 82/508 had retreated one square into Bastogne! The way 106/424 bottled up the center was especially nice. There always seems to be one point though. 1/16 should have counter-attacked out of the Engaged. Where it is it will certainly be destroyed, whereas an A back 2 or 3 would save it.



BB33 with 1SS/4 advancing to Z33. 82/505 & 508 engage 12/24 again; this time at 2-1 odds while 1/26 is eliminated while attacking Lehr at 1-4. The 30th Division is met with another

"Engaged" result to its repeated 2-1 surrounded attack on 9SS/18. The U.S. glider troops complete their fortifications out of view at V26 and S29.

1SS/P: 276 Div.2/7
116/310.312.5/9
352/703.2SS/5.6

AFTERMATH

I've taken quite a few casualties as a result of my attacks. The attrition level is about normal now, although I'm still not in trouble in that department. I was unable to advance next to Manhay but managed to cut the Manhay-Hotton road. No advance in the south, but Bastogne has fallen. The engaged against the 1/26 protects my 1ss/4 from a surrounded attack.

Well, I certainly can't gripe about the results of my attacks this time! Though the "Engaged" against the 9SS/18 is frustrating to say the least, all else went quite well, and the Germans start their casualty list with a whopping 13 factors!

His move is again well thought out and effective. I'm very disappointed to see Bastogne fall to a 2-1, and the "Engaged" against the 1/26 is troublesome because it prevents that unit from falling back to a better position. At least his casualty list continues to grow.

I had many difficult decisions to make this turn. Mostly because there are several things I wanted to do with the units in Marche and Hotton, while of course, they can perform only one task at a time. I was tempted to move one of them to Z23 to protect the unit in Manhay from being surrounded. Unfortunately this would not block the Manhay-Hotton road. It would

also have been nice to have moved a unit to LaRoche to protect the rear of the 1/26. And I would have liked to have moved one to Y32 to surround his 1SS/4 block the Bastogne-Marche road. However, I believe it is essential to build fortresses now at Hotten and Marche before these positions can be compromised.

The attack on the 1SS/4 has two purposes; hopefully to block the Bastogne-Marche road, and to protect the rear of the stack engaged at BB32. The 1/26 is attacking to try to extricate itself from the trap about to be sprung. Here's hoping I can dispose of the 9SS/18 this time, clear that intersection, and release those units for other purposes.

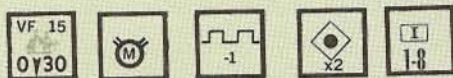
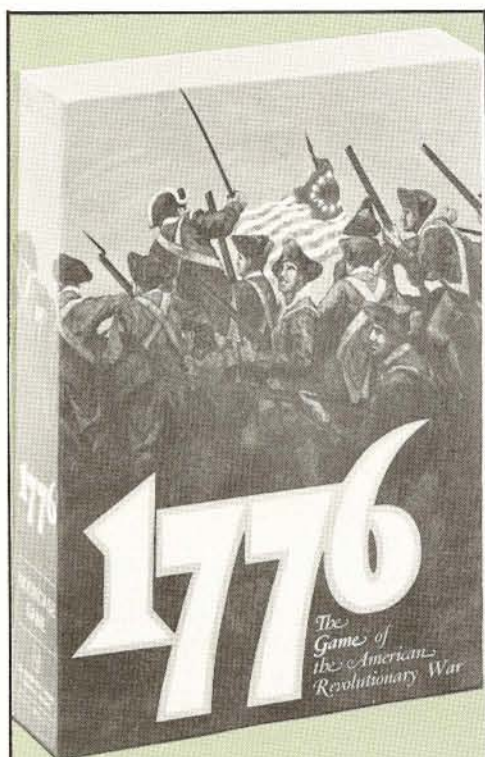
| | | | |
|--|---------|--------------------|--|
| 12/13/2,3/340 Div 36/27/554 955/10, 26/51 | 1/18 | 4-1s DE AA3 | Advance to II18 |
| 12SS/24,Lehr/1PG; 1sa, 2 12SS/25; 326/561; 277/553 | 9/CCA | 5-1s EXC AA1 | 326/561,277/553efirm 12SS/25adv to FF22 |
| 790iv,3/13:FuhEs 326/562 | 106/424 | 7-1 D84 AA4 | D to CC21 A Advances |
| Lehr/1,2 | 1/26 | 2-1 ENG | |
| 95S/19,116/406 2/17; 150Pz | 9/CCB | 2-1 D82 AA1 | A CDB to BB34 A Adv to DD32 |

18PM American—*The American attacks are desperate measures, long-shot gambles to save a rapidly deteriorating situation. However I think Don's logic in making these moves was nearly flawless. Most of the possibilities hinge around the use of the 101 and 82nd Glider units. These include moving to Z22 to cover the flank of 106/424, moving to Y22 to surround 1SS/4, and holding their present positions to try to establish a strong fort in Marche. Establishing a strong fort in Marche is the key, and this is the purpose of Don's move of 4/12 to X38. If the 1-1 on 1SS/4 had held its ground (70% chance), and the 1-4 on Lehr 1 & 2 had survived, (80% chance), 4/12 would have been able to make it to Marche and create a strong delaying position. If 9SS/18 could be knocked out, a fort could probably be built in CC18. The CC18 Marche forts, and the strong position in the*



are held motionless by "Engages." The German 79th Division has advanced westward out of view to X25 and W28 as has the 3/13 which moves to X22. Only the American glider units in their forts

and the 4/12 at X38 are between them and the Meuse.



1776 is our long awaited spring release. A grand strategic game of the American Revolution, 1776 has been on our drawing boards off and on for over 4 years. We had originally contracted with one of our previous designers for this game but we felt his initial prototypes were sorely lacking so it was back to the drawing board with a different designer. But the wait was worthwhile judging from playtest comments.

Randall Reed, designer of *RICHTHOFEN'S WAR*, has created a truly innovative grand strategic wargame which we feel correctly addresses the tender balance between naval superiority and land prominence in the winning of the American Revolution. A unique blend of hex and area rules govern movement, combat, and the order of battle as British successes in the north are quite often offset by failures in the south, and vice-versa.

Forget all your past experiences with zones of control. There are none in this game. Combat does not occur unless opposing units occupy the same hex, and sometimes not even then. The unique new "Sustained Combat System" designed to reduce the luck of the die roll can limit a battle to a mere skirmish or allow it to turn into the decisive battle of the war. It's all in how you play your cards. Each player is provided with 8 Tactical Maneuver cards for use when confrontations occur. The cards played are cross-indexed on a combat matrix which will influence the die roll of the battle. And unlike *KRIEGSPIEL*'s matrix system, this one works to perfection.

The game includes an easy to play Basic Game as well as a Campaign Game for really involved simulation play. Also included are 4 mini-game scenarios which last about an hour each for those who like shorter games. The scenarios focus on the American invasion of Canada, Saratoga, Greene's Southern Campaign, and Yorktown.

1776 is available now for immediate shipment for \$10.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling charges. But try your local dealer first and save that postage money if you can.



Bastogne hills that would have resulted from success against 1SS/4 would have blocked all German supply routes to the Meuse!

Randy says, "I can't see why he holds so tightly to the Bastogne hills." It is because Don is still playing to win. To move to the St. Hubert area is to give the Germans their supply route to the Meuse without a fight, and admit defeat. If the American attacks had gone well, they would have had at least a faint ray of hope.

It turns out that it wouldn't have made any difference, but on one tactical point Don went wrong. Last turn he failed to counter-attack out of Trois Ponts when he might have saved 1/16. This turn he counter-attacked out of Engaged with 1/26 when there was no hope to save the unit and needlessly lost the piece a turn early. This would have needlessly frustrated his entire plan if the attack on 1SS/4 had succeeded, because it enables Lehr 1 & 2 to reach T29 or T31, and prevent the reinforcement of the newly built Marche fort by 4/12.

18PM German—Another strong German move which achieves almost every desirable objective. Manhay does not fall, but cannot be reinforced, and will certainly fall next turn if not abandoned. Although all objectives were obtained, once again he takes unnecessary risk of failure by not using the best odds available. By juggling forces he could have improved every battle this turn as follows: vs. 1/16, 5-1 (no Engaged); vs. 9/CCA, 6-1 (better advance); vs. 106/424, 6-1 (better advance); vs. 1/26, 3-1 (better advance); vs. 9/CCB, 3-1 (better advance); vs. 7/CCR 6-1 (better advance). Randy seems to have a strong preference for the 2-1 when the 3-1 is possible, but when he is so far ahead in attrition, and when he is leaving extra force wasted every turn, he shouldn't be in the least concerned with Exchange, but should press forward as vigorously as possible. The 2-1, like every other attack in *Bulge*, has its proper place and time; this just isn't it.

The German advance into Bastogne, and the big advance against 106/424 puts Don's strategic plan to a severe test. Don can't simply pull out since the two Paratroop regiments are engaged against 12/24. He could try a 1-2 to retake Bastogne, but since this won't leave him enough strength to protect his flanks, it will certainly result in the surrounding and eventual destruction of every unit in this area. On the other hand, to abandon the Bastogne area now will be a crippling blow to his strategic concept. In the north Don is paralyzed by the necessity to repeat the 2-1 against 9SS/18. He must win this now to build a fort in CC18. Otherwise he will be swept out of this area also.

GERMAN 19 AM

Finally! I get some good battle results. He lost every attack. Maybe I can save the 9ss/18 after all!

Opinion: He shouldn't have attacked the 1ss/4. He should have let those two para regiments take their chances. He should have pulled the bulk of his armor out to the St. Hubert area (to be moved to the center for a mobile delaying action). Bastogne should have been only lightly screened. As it stands now, I can bag nine units owing to his retreat against the 1ss/4; but otherwise I still could have surrounded five (including two armored) units.

GERMAN 19AM ATTACKS:

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|------|-----|------------------------------|
| Fuhrer 2SS/24:1SS/2 | 106/424 | 6-1s | DE | A adv to AA21,223, CC21,EE20 |
| 12SS/13, 9SS/10, 2SS/3, 326/562 | | AA4 | | |
| 150PF: 276/552, | 7/CCB | 2-1s | DE | A adv |
| 12SS/25, 116/406 | 10/CCB | AA1 | | |
| Lehr 1:933/19, | 9/CCB | 3-1s | DE | No advance |
| Lehr 1PG: 2/17 | 10/CCR | AA2 | | |
| 276/551: 12/24 | 82/508 | 1-2s | DA1 | |
| | 82/505 | AB2 | | |
| Lehr 2 | 101/502 | 1-1s | ENG | |
| 2SS/5.6.2/7.2/8 | 101/506 | 3-1s | ENG | |
| 5/8.9/116/310.312 | 101/501 | | | |

"G.I., for you da War iss ofer!"

1. As a result of his attacks, and my D+1 advance of the 1ss/4, I have surrounded five infantry regiments and four armored combat commands in the 'Bastogne Pocket'. There is little chance of any of them escaping without a combination of lucky low-odds counter-attacks.

2. In the north, Manhay will fall to German forces with the loss of 106/424. American forces in the north are one turn away from being encircled and eventually eliminated in place.

3. Considering that I have a six turn breather before the arrival of American 4/ARM, 26/DIV, and 80/DIV, I consider the game won at this point. The breakthrough has been accomplished.

4. Some tactical considerations worth noting:

Advance after Combat: American low-odds counter-attacks can be very effective. But they are not without risks. Many novice German players fail to take full advantage of a D+1, or D+2, resulting from American counter-attacks. These small advances often make excellent jumping off points for the next German move; the creation of the 'Bastogne Pocket' was made possible because of a D+1 advance.

When attacking adjacent units in separate attacks, it is always better to overlap the attacking units. In a three-hex frontal attack, for example, against two adjacent enemy occupied hexes, both attacks should originate from two hexes. The middle hex in this case would contain units involved in both attacks. In low odds attacks, this improves the chances of forcing the enemy to give up the position.

The relatively EXCHANGE-ridden attacks this turn are part of an attempt to convince the American player that further resistance is futile. The Bastogne attacks could be carried out at lower odds to avoid the losses incurred unnecessarily when attacking surrounded units, but it is more important that he see graphically the extent of his misfortune. A quick, clean end is always desirable.

5. I still cannot understand why he let the middle go like he did. I would have sent the bulk of the airborne troops to the center via Rochefort-Marche-Hotton.

6. In the north, the 9ss/18's position dictated the situation. Still, even if that unit had been quickly eliminated, the entire Aywaille-Manhay-Houffalize axis was under my control to make deployment of those two American divisions extremely difficult.

19AM German—The last Armored Combat Commands are destroyed near Bastogne, and 9SS/18 singlehandedly paralyzes any withdrawal by the 2nd, 9th, or 30th Divisions, which will be pocketed and destroyed shortly. For this G.I., "Da War iss ofer!"

Aftermath—The most interesting question that arises in an overview of the game is, what conclusions might it lead to about the correctness of Don's strategic concept for the Americans? Unfortunately there were too many tactical errors to use the outcome of this game as a test of this. These started with the failure to use the 28th to try to block the Clervaux-Bastogne road. The decision to pull 9/CCB out of the Engaged on HH30 that needlessly permitted the attack on FF30. The questionable counter-attack on FF30 when he should have been building prepared positions and strengthening his lines. Abandoning Spa to scattered German infantry units without a fight. Of course I now realize that the heavy commitment south of Martelange and consequent weakening of the center was part of the strategy, and thus to call this an error would prejudice the question. The 1-3 "bloopers" by 1/18 that permitted 9SS/18 to reach CC19 simply need not have been made, and with a clear understanding of the rules certainly wouldn't have. It would have helped tremendously to have had a fort in DD24 at that point though.

Randy's tactical errors hardly equaled the significance of Don's errors. While habitually attacking at other than optimum odds, Randy always hit Don's weakest points with attacks that were capable of grievous damage. This kept Don constantly off balance, and scrambling to react to Randy's latest threat, rather than making the moves that he would have wanted to, to put his strategy into effect. Even so Don came very close to establishing the strong position he wanted. The two 2-1s on 9SS/18 had a combined chance of 75% to knock out the unit, and this would have given him a fort in CC18 and strong flank support here. And if Bastogne could have held just one turn against Randy's hesitant 2-1 it would have helped tremendously.

So in conclusion I would have to say that Don's strategy wasn't fairly tested by this game. Don lost by a series of tactical, and not necessarily strategic mistakes. Randy won by a series of powerful and well directed attacks. It was a fine and instructive game.



DESIGN ANALYSIS



Although Larry Pinsky holds a Ph.D. in Physics and an important position in the NASSAU program, he is not generally well known among the wargaming fraternity. Only the comparative "old-timers" will remember him as one of the original Avalon Hill designers, let alone the originator of **BATTLE OF THE BULGE**—perhaps his best design effort, still selling well after 9 years on the market. Like many wargamers, Larry drifted away from the hobby due to outside pressures and has only recently rekindled his interest in wargames. Among the projects we have in mind for Larry is the handling of the **BULGE** rules rewrite when the game goes into its next printing sometime in 1975. It will be Larry's job to correct all the ambiguities and rules problems which presently plague the game and provide us with a "perfect" set of rules free of ambiguities and inconsistencies. This is a problem made greater by several faulty rulings in past issues of the **GENERAL**'s question box. If you'd like to help with these problems drop us a list of problems you've encountered with the **BULGE** rules so we can turn them over to the designer for the final wrapup of **BULGE**.



DESIGN CREDITS: BATTLE OF THE BULGE, GUADALCANAL, BLITZKRIEG, D-DAY '65, MIDWAY

"Are you any relation to 'Lake Pinsky'?" That's usually how most AH wargamers respond when I'm introduced. I've been known to reply upon occasion, "Yes, and I am also tributary of the North and South Lawrence Rivers."

I was first introduced to Avalon Hill games in September, 1961. At the time, I was in high school and living in suburban Washington D.C., and one evening while I was toying around with designing variations to chess, my next door neighbor just happened to drop by. He listened quietly while I described my efforts, and when I finally gave him a chance to get a word in edgewise, he said with an air of condescension: "Have you ever heard of Avalon Hill?" When I said that I hadn't, I noticed that a gleam appeared in his eyes. You see, he was a *Tactics II* buff of sorts, and his lifetime record included no defeats. He could hardly wait to add one more quick victory to his tally. Before I realized what was happening, the *Tactics* board was spread on the kitchen table before me. After a quick 30 minute lesson which included some rule reading, some examples of combat odds calculations, and a lot of seemingly incoherent mumbling, the game was on, and he moved first. He used almost all of his tricks that first move, and it turned out to be a considerably more useful education in how to play *Tactics* than the earlier 30 minute lesson had been. Well, it was a good game, and I made him frown several times during the course of the evening; but eventually

I conceded (due to the lateness of the hour, of course). When I said good night at the back door, the gleam had shifted to my eyes, and I invited him to come back very soon. I have never succeeded in getting him to play any Avalon Hill games with me since, and to my knowledge his undefeated record is still "intact".

Well as if anyone really cares, that's how I was first introduced to Avalon Hill games. Since 1961 was a big year for new AH titles, it took me a few months to save up the scratch to buy a copy of each one; and since I was already interested in military history, it took even less time for me to start picturing unit counters and combat factors in everything I read. By late spring of 1962 I had already designed (for my own consumption) a WW II Russian Front game remarkably similar to *Stalingrad*, which was released by AH over a year later. In those days blank hex sheets were not available, so I had to draw my own with my father's T-square and triangle. My "Stalingrad" game used army level unit counters with the actual corps substitutes counters available for breakdown when required.

Over the next two years, I designed a few other games including two naval games based on the battles at Midway and Coral Sea. These games were inspired by the AH game *Bismarck*, and included the land combat portions as well as *Bismarck*-style surface combat. The air to ship combat was very similar to the eventual AH *Midway* system except that rather than rolling everything on an odds table of aircraft factors vs. anti-aircraft factors, the attacker was allowed to roll once for each aircraft factor that had survived an odds table anti-aircraft fire. The aircraft attack rolls were made using results tables based on the target (i.e., the ships size, speed and maneuverability).

This type of combat resolution is sometimes employed with miniatures, although I was not aware of that fact at the time. One day in the late spring of 1964, I was preparing to play a game with one of my close friends, when he suggested that instead, it might be worthwhile to take the 35 mile drive up the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and look in on these AH people and their (assumed to be) magnificent operation. Of course, our real goal was to get a sneak preview of their next release. Well, when we arrived in the rather dingy, dust covered combination warehouse, shipping dock, ad department, and "magnificent operation," I met Tom Shaw and Lindy Schutz for the first time. (Ed. Note: We have since moved to a larger dingy, dust covered combination warehouse, shipping dock, ad department and "magnificent operation.") While I was shaking hands (taking care of course at the same time to guard my wallet from these seedy looking characters), I noticed over their shoulders, a game that bore a striking similarity to my Midway game. Well, it only took a few minutes to break the ice, and before long Lindy and I were discussing the similarities

and differences of our games. None of my approaches were ever incorporated into the basic game, but I managed to persuade Lindy (after several subsequent discussions) to incorporate some of them into the tournament game and optional rules, (e.g., "anvil attacks" with torpedo planes.)

From that time on, I communicated frequently with AH, and in 1965, Tom Shaw offered me a job designing games. I was then in college. The idea had been that together, Lindy and I would design two games. I was to work principally on *Battle of the Bulge*, and Lindy on *Guadalcanal*. Since *Bulge* was to be released first, it moved ahead quickly and *Guadalcanal* took a back seat. As this is an article entitled "Design Analysis", I intend to make some comments about game design in general and "*Bulge*" in particular, but first let me attempt to finish this rambling "historical" narrative. Well, when Lindy left in the late summer to get married, I had virtually completed "*Bulge*", but the design of *Guadalcanal* was still in its infancy. I wound up finishing the design during the fall semester back at school. I had originally wanted to make *Guadalcanal* a campaign game including the entire Solomons. Clearly that would have meant another predominantly naval game, and Shaw wanted a primarily land battle game that employed marines.

As a land battle game, *Guadalcanal* was relegated to its real life scenario, a struggle for Henderson Field. I realized this, and I had a decision to make about the scale. I could include the entire scope of land operations on the island with a battalion level game—or I could have confined the game to a company-platoon level tactical scale in the immediate vicinity of Henderson Field. Well, I chose the former which probably sealed the fate of *Guadalcanal* from the outset. The reason for this choice was partly playability. Since all of the units in the eventual battalion level games would have participated in a company platoon level game, it would have meant at least tripling the number of pieces, and that unit inflation would have caused a severe curtailment in the playability of the hidden movement rules. I felt that hidden movement was essential to reproduce the situation accurately. I think the game as published did a faithful job of simulating the actual campaign conditions, which may be one of the reasons why the game was eventually doomed.

As a side job during the summer of '65, I was chosen to revise *D-Day*. That's right. I'm also the son-of-a-gun to blame for *D-Day*—'65. I have been given to understand that some people feel that things went a little too far overboard with *D-Day* '65. Since I really don't desire a flood of blustery challenges, let me say that with a really competent German commander, his chances are fairly even with those of a competent Allied commander. Be advised, however, that the German commander must be very careful. Mistakes are much more prone to produce immediate disaster for him than they are for the Allied commander.

My next effort was *Blitzkrieg*, where I was given a free hand to create a sort of designer's workshop for "the nuts". I was somewhat disappointed in the types of games and strategies that resulted when the game was released. I tried to provide "the nuts" with the tools to design their own games, but I failed to give them explicit scenario ideas along with an obviously dynamic model as an example. Tom had originally envisioned *Blitzkrieg* as a

scenario game, but it didn't get into print that way, and it's my fault. Backing up a bit, let me say that I think the design as published, is generally sound, but the basic scenario given does not entice the *average* player to become dynamic and aggressive. Let me quickly suggest a single rule change that might help push bashful trench diggers out into the open. One should employ a second move and second combat for armor as employed in *France '40*. Actually, I considered putting such a rule in when the game was first published. I was originally introduced to this type of rule in 64 by my friend, the indomitable Frenchman, Alain London, a master game designer in his own right. Returning to *Blitzkrieg*, I believe there are better versions of the "Second move rules" than as employed in *France '40*, but I leave it as an exercise to the reader to discover these for himself.

After I finished *Blitzkrieg*, my studies became more demanding and I spent succeeding years working in my academic field. I remained associated with Avalon Hill for awhile, and I continued to answer some of their mail for them. Eventually, however, it became time for a new release, and it was unfeasible for me to continue for several reasons, so my formal tenure with Avalon Hill came to a close. Since that time, however, I have continued to think about many of the design ideas and philosophies that were kindled during those years, and I shall attempt to relate some of them to you here.

Bulge Revisited:

There has been quite a lot written about *Bulge* over the years, and a fair amount of that has been criticism. I shall not attempt to meet these objections head on, but rather describe my intentions at the time that I designed the game.

In *Bulge*, I was primarily trying to obtain an exciting game that would remain so from beginning to end, and I wanted to remove the awesome fear of attacking, that the old "ELIM" CRT had spawned. I felt that first of all, one should consider the CRT and the details of combat resolution as being as fundamental a part of the design as the mapboard and the OB. This is not to say that every game *should* have a different CRT, but rather that one should not start with the age-old dogma and work around it, as had been done for all of the games before *Bulge*. So, what was the rationale for the CRT as designed? As stated above, it was intended to overcome the bloody annihilation that occurred at moderate odds with the old table. The old CRT was unrealistic for the type of combat and time frame (turn length) depicted in *Bulge*. From a game playing standpoint, it tended for the wrong reasons to deter the attacker from launching anything other than desperate (or soak-off) attacks at less than 3-1. In real life regiment level, 1-1 and 2-1 attacks are undesirable because they have a lower chance of success than 3-1 and higher attacks; but unlike the old CRT, 1-1 and 2-1 attacks almost never (statistically) result in complete annihilation of one side and/or the other. It is interesting to note that tactical objectives (even at regiment levels) are almost always terrain oriented! Translated into a CRT, it means at lower odds the deterrent for attacking should be primarily the lower chance of success (gaining the terrain objective) and the increased vulnerability to counterattack because of your exposed position for your opponent's next turn. This implies D-back 2's, A-back 2's and Contacts. So where did

this screwy "engaged" business come from. Well, the Ardennes is a fairly heavily forested region. The so-called "woods" squares on the map represent the really dense "impenetrable" forest. Most of the "clear" squares (especially on the eastern half of the board) still contain substantial forest, and in this type of terrain it is possible for units to become entangled during an attack to the extent that immediate one turn disengagement and break off is not feasible without unwarranted losses. Further, the "engaged" result implies that command and control problems occurred during the attack and these were sufficient to preclude rapid disengagement and movement elsewhere. The greater command and control capability of armor lead, in the later *Bulge* printings, to the rationale and rule that armor can, at its option, withdraw from an engaged situation.

I've said enough about the *Bulge* CRT vis-a-vis my intentions. Let me only add some comments about O.B. The British units that participated in the late stages of the battle in real life were left out intentionally. They were under strict orders from Montgomery to remain on the defensive (well) behind the Meuse River until the German offensive had completely spent itself. One might argue that some provision should be made for their inclusion after German units have crossed the Meuse, or even that if "you are allowed to *command* the actual forces" etc., you should have the option to commit them earlier since they were generally available. I can only say that given the scope and the balance of the game as I designed it at the time, I decided to exclude them. Perhaps they should have been included as an optional rule. Aside from some regiment numbering conflicts (which neither add nor subtract any units) the major U.S. oversight is the 83rd infantry division which was committed from the north as early as the 22nd AM turn. The German units are fairly complete. Some of the "discrepancies" that have been noted by various people, occurred because the unit counters represent the subdivided Kampfgruppen that were used in the actual command organization, rather than the traditional regimental structures of the various divisions. Well, I hope I haven't stirred up a nest of hornets. To those of you who feel that too much designer's license was used, I apologize; and if you really don't *enjoy* the game as it stands I owe you a more fundamental apology.

Bits and Pieces

What is the real attraction of this "hobby" anyway? Why do the games have such wide appeal? I do not pretend to be, nor presume that you have any great interests in the opinion of a professional psychologist on these matters, but as one individual who has given it some thought, let me attempt to sketch my views. Essentially, the games represent and exemplify conflict and competition between individuals. This form of competition is symbolic, ritualistic, and intellectual *not physical*. The last point is the most important. These games present an arena where a participant can organize and evolve impersonal intellectual strategies in a known predictable environment, against an opponent who is a single "intelligent" entity, and where the stakes are generally and basically intellectual. Ironically, the feeling that these games are a simulation of "real life", break down at the most fundamental point. They mimic overt real life scenarios in facade and style, but they fundamentally do *not*

present the player with the same psychological influences and uncertainties. This is part of the so called "fog of war"; for the fog of war is not only an environment typified by less certain military intelligence, but by personal psychological involvement, and the basic unpredictable uncertainties rampant in almost every aspect of war in real life. Thus, abilities displayed as a master designer or player of these games, do not *necessarily* portend any real life potentials as a great military leader. (I apologize for stepping on the Walter Mitty in all of us). I refer the reader to Scott Duncan's fine article in the May-June 1973 Design Analysis column (General, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 18), where he comments "...a true 'simulation', is highly unlikely and perhaps equally undesirable." I agree! I feel that if the games really simulated war and combat, at least in their psychological effect on the players, they would rapidly become as unpopular and unenjoyable as war is to the majority of those who actually participate (even as commanders).

The foregoing dissertation does not mean to imply that as a game designer historical accuracy is unimportant. One of the primary attractions of these games as contrasted with Chess or "Go" for example is their charismatic and intellectual appeal as "*representing*" a significant historical situation where the rules and procedures are based on practical analyses and logical considerations rather than completely whimsical and arbitrary choices. A strict adherence to history and realism in the design actually makes the game more playable because one can then base strategic planning on realistic considerations rather than on arbitrary rules. Thus, to me the ultimate AH type game is one that combines playability and a diversity sufficient to allow the players to evolve a spectrum of reasonable strategies. One can argue that in some historical situations (including *hypothetical* scenarios) there is only one reasonable strategy. I feel that if this is truly the case, then that battle may not be the most suitable for design into a game that will remain rewarding over the long run. This is one reason why many games fall from favor after only a few playings. I think if you consider the past games that you have enjoyed the most, they are the ones that were a contest of new strategies, and not the games that seemed to settle into the same old routines that differ only in the results of the die rolls. In summation—as a game designer—you should strive for a product that allows (and elicits) a variety of strategies.

My Last Two Cents

Hang on, it's almost over. I just couldn't resist throwing out a few final "where do we go from here" suggestions. First of all, I like to see attention paid to real differences in the capabilities of different types of troops (armor, infantry, etc.) in all facets of the rules. Further, rules should not lead to arbitrary ridiculous strategies. In some cases, the biggest offenders here, are the victory point systems, where in the final moves, players are led to make unrealistic moves for "points". As an aside to this comment, I think in the design process it is instructive to simulate a game that faithfully duplicates the actual campaign and strictly adheres to the rules. If this simulation requires an extraordinary amount of (die roll) luck on the part of one side that was not present in the

A REALISTIC SOLUTION

During the past few weeks, I have been reading over back issues of the *GENERAL*. The articles on Avalon Hill's *GETTYSBURG* have increased my attention to the fact that there are some discrepancies affecting the play balance and realism of this fine battle game. I intend to clear some of these difficulties with a brief treatise on the subject. Avalon Hill has cleverly designed their games on this premise by allowing flexibility in all their games to both stimulate interest and imagination on the part of the wargamer.

The Army of Northern Virginia, fresh from giving the Army of the Potomac two successive bloody noses at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, was ready for another invasion of the North. Lee and his superiors decided on this move for strategic reasons: (1) to carry the battles out of war-torn Virginia, (2) to obtain necessary supplies for the Army of Northern Virginia, (3) imposing a threat to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. and (4) recognition by England and France and the fruits which this backing would entail. The Army of the Potomac had a new commander on the 28th of June in the person of George G. Meade. Meade was a solid brigade and division commander from the Seven Days' Battles through Chancellorsville in the respect that he made no serious mistakes. Lee knew this to be true of Meade and that he would have to win the battle with effective tactical maneuver, execution, and coordination. Lee also realized that he had many untried brigade and division commanders. Jackson's loss at Chancellorsville was the most notable but there were many others which would affect the efficiency of Lee's "Invincible Legions." We all know the result of this great battle, called by some the turning point of the American Civil War. However, what I propose in the following paragraphs will achieve playbalance and realism in this fine battle game.

I agree with the other authors of articles in the *GENERAL* that the book rules stifle realism. The *GETTYSBURG* Battle game has been out for some time and the wargamers across the country have both increased in experience and intelligence. Naturally, they desire far more in a wargame. What I propose here is but one solution and I am sure there are many more solutions "dancing like sugar plums" in the heads of the cardboard generals.

The most significant change is the conditions for victory. Very rarely does one army completely wipe out the opposing army in battle. On this premise I have made the following alterations which are open to comments and criticism. Number 1: utilize the step reduction system, similar to ANZIO and 1914. Example: When Heth's Division of the Third Corps is forced back in combat, reduce that unit's combat factor, from 4 to 3 and continue this reduction each time this unit is forced back until it is eliminated from the board. Number 2: on the Combat Results Table (CRT), use attacker-defender odds of 1-3 to 3-1 inclusive. On this reduced CRT, substitute "engaged" for elim and utilize the same rules for this situation from *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* (Avalon Hill's version, of course). Example: Heth's Rebel Infantry Division (factor 4) attacks the Third Division First Union Corps (factor 3) on clear terrain (no terrain effects). A die roll of

4 at 1-1 odds gives a Def back 1. This results in the Union Division moving back one (1) grid square AND REDUCTION IN COMBAT FACTOR FROM 3 TO 2. It will be necessary to have an acetate covered chart of all units to record these reductions. If Heth is able to effect another attack on this same unit, he would then be attacking at odds of 4-2, reduced to 2-1. However, if in this attack General Lee rolls a 6, the CRT reveals a 2 back 1. In this case Heth would move back one (1) grid square AND BE REDUCED IN COMBAT FACTOR FROM 4 TO 3. This would continue UNTIL . . . Number 3: Confederate victory is causing the Union opponent to lose 20 Combat Factors. Union victory is causing the Rebel opponent to lose 20 Combat Factors. These losses parallel the actual losses caused in the actual battle. The Battle of Gettysburg produced no real winner or loser in the true sense of the word but Meade did prevent Lee from obtaining his objectives. Lee's army was technically defeated in this respect but he still retained an effective, hard-fighting army which prolonged the war for almost two more years. Gettysburg was not a tactical victory but a strategic victory for the Union and I don't believe this game should be altered into a tactical victory situation if realism is the desired result.

I have also noticed while perusing articles in the *GENERAL* on *GETTYSBURG* on the discrepancies with the relationship between Union and Confederate artillery. Union Artillery was organized into batteries of six (6) guns per battery. Confederate artillery was organized into batteries of four (4) guns per battery. This would account for more batteries for the Rebels in *GETTYSBURG* but no realistic adjustment has been made for this in relation to combat factors for these units. The Union Army had 362 guns; the Confederate Army 287 (*They Met At Gettysburg*, Edward Stackpole, 1956). This would give a ratio of 5 to 4 in favor of the Union. So this could revert to five (5) counters for the Union and four (4) counters for the Rebels or any such combination desired by the wargamer to achieve realism. For my own use, I have eliminated the combat factors for the artillery units and have devised an artillery firing table. With these changes I have tried to establish the importance of the artillery but not to over extend it to the point where it begins to effect playbalance and realism. During battle, artillery pieces were often exchanged. This can be done in *GETTYSBURG* when a non-artillery unit finds itself adjacent to enemy artillery, thus capturing it and utilizing it as it would its own artillery. These artillery units must be supplied. The Union artillery had abundant supplies so this rule will not apply to Union artillery units who can fire once each turn. The Confederate artillery units can fire each turn until 3PM July 3rd. At this time, they can fire only on the even hours of the clock. This takes into account the shortage of artillery ammunition which occurred at this time. Range of these artillery units will be $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile or three (3) grid squares. Artillery units can not fire over their own units since this would cause casualties in a real-life situation. With the artillery firing table that I use, artillery units can effect a Def back 1 on a hit and force that unit back with resulting losses. Time delay penalty is utilized to account

by JOSEPH M. BOSLET



for set-up and take-down time for the artillery units. This penalty is only exercised while unit is moving into position. This artillery unit can not fire until it has been in position for one (1) time unit or one (1) hour. The unit is permitted to change its direction of fire without incurring any time delay or movement penalty. This is but one solution for utilizing artillery at *GETTYSBURG* but I hope it gives you a more definitive method in handling these units.

I have tried to alter some of the mechanics in the battle game *GETTYSBURG* only to achieve realism without effecting play balance. I invite comments, criticism, and questions on my idea of establishing realism in *GETTYSBURG*.

Artillery Firing Results Table

| Number of units firing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Roll of Die | | | | | | |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | * |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | * | * |
| 3 | - | - | - | * | * | * |
| 4 | - | - | * | * | * | * |
| 5 | - | * | * | * | * | * |
| 6 | * | * | * | * | * | * |

Key: - means no result

* means a hit, defender back one and loss of one step in combat factor (CF)

Note: a unit is equal to an artillery battalion or a number of batteries grouped together to form a unit of realistic size to be determined by the individual.



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Blitzkrieg Invasion Possibilities

by Robert Harmon

Robert Harmon is rapidly gaining a reputation as a concise and knowledgeable writer of considerable skill in the wargaming field. Here Bob favors us with a discussion of invasion area sites for both Red and Blue in Blitzkrieg. His comments on coastal defense are well taken and should be of special interest to anyone who has ever lost a game through inept handling of rear area defenses.

It seems rather strange that essays dealing with general strategy and tactics in "Blitzkrieg," have been so scarce. It is to this end, and with the novice and amateur Blitzkrieg players in mind, that I offer the following thoughts on this classic.

The opening game

Chess has its opening moves, which happen to be vital to win; so does Blitzkrieg. Avalon Hill's most advanced example of military chess. Roughly, both Red and Blue must, before coming to grips with one another, make key strategic decisions when moving through the minor countries. These decisions will affect the entire course of the game.

(Before continuing, it might be well to mention the fact that each of the minor countries is designated with a code-color. The center country is Brown, then, reading clockwise around Brown and starting with the minor country adjoining Blue, the minor countries are Yellow, White, Black, and Green.)

Blue's strategic options are simple: attack Yellow and follow with an attack on Green or Brown on the second turn; attack Yellow and mass at EE25 on Turn 2 to await developments; attack Green on turn 1.

Although Blue has the initiative, it is difficult for him to execute a one-turn conquest of either Yellow or Green because of geographical problems. Massing at EE25 will only allow Red to decide the course of the game. But one minor country must go on Turn 1 to even allow Blue the option of continuing or not.

Invasion of Green (only) holds some interesting strategic possibilities. But it is risky, especially if Red is in force around NN48. The main problem is taking the country. Even with tactical air support and a naval landing, there still isn't enough available force, even if all airborne forces are used. Of course, Blue can flatten one of the cities with a strategic strike, but that doesn't give him enough local supplies for his trouble (we can assume that the bulk of his supplies will come in by sea). It is food for thought, however...

If Blue expects to take a minor country on the second move, (preferably Green — it's closer to Blue's airbases and can serve as a springboard for later offensives) then a large airborne/seaborne force must be kept available. This means sending at least 24 infantry factors out to sea in Zone C on turn 1 to replace whatever lands at CC15; this also means keeping the airborne units close to some city in eastern Blue or Yellow. More on this later.

Red's first-turn options are: attack White only, attack Black only, attack White and Black, or attack Black and Green. Attacking White only is a dead-end; Red will pick up only 3 cities to the 6 Blue will have in Yellow, and it means a

dangerous desert campaign that Blue is better equipped to handle with his supply situation. An attack against White and Black will net 7 cities, but will throw Red off for at least another turn while he reorganizes. Better to leave White neutral; it can serve as a buffer on the northern flank.

The Black-only attack is the safest. The country will fall easily and Red will have a large mass of troops on hand (especially if most of them were massed at NN48 and then moved to the JJ38-0040 area on turn 1). Red will then have many attractive possibilities to consider.

The Black and Green attack is the Danish gambit of Blitzkrieg. If he has chosen to do so, Red will have ample forces at sea that won't be as strategically committed as Blue's, who finds that he must land in CC15. Red can send these troops, the airborne forces, and some of his armor into Green, leaving the other troops to knock over Black in passing. A mass at NN48 is necessary but Blue will have little idea of what's coming. If Blue is prepared for turn 2 festivities, Red will be in trouble. But if Blue cannot force the isthmus between BB31 and EE34, Red will have Green securely. But he must guard against invasions and parachutists.

The center game.

In an average opening, Blue has taken Yellow, and Red has taken Black and possibly White. This moves the focus of attention to the center, specifically Green, Brown, and the desert. I hinted at some of the importance of these earlier, but some elaboration is necessary.

Blue is at a disadvantage on the ground in Green. If he chooses to be defensive, his holding action will take place on the isthmus, denying him most or all of Green's supplies. He has an advantage in that his airbases are close, and that seizure of all of Green will put him within striking distance of Red's home turf. But Blue must be offensive-minded for this to have any promise. Red is at a disadvantage in that he will be facing north, rather than west, and that his supplies through the isthmus can be easily cut — unlike Blue in a similar situation, such a cut will leave him with no port to get an alternate source of supply. But Red can use Green as a defensive region — the isthmus is easily defended, there are 4 cities to provide supply, and Red is free to strike into Brown.

Brown has no seacoast and is equidistant from major supply areas on both sides. Blue doesn't have as many airbases close by, but Red cannot afford a reversal in Brown. If Brown falls to Blue, Red will suddenly find his back to the wall, as he cannot yield in Black or White without ominous possibilities; if Red seizes Brown, Green will be outflanked — but he will have a long way to go before he reaches Blue's home country.

The desert is a troublesome battleground. The supply problem will strain both sides; the supplies can only go down one road — running along a coast that is solid beach. Red can invade CC15, but not if a decent garrison is left — and any support from White will betray the plan long before it comes. Desert campaigning is too much trouble in most circumstances — better to leave garrisons in VV25 and CC15 and forget the place exists.

Coastal Defense.

Red has some advantage in that his northern side is covered by the neutral country; but, unlike Blue, all of his coastal cities are near or on beaches. Blue has a large coastline but his major problem is keeping away Ranger raids.

Coastal defense is basically an exercise in numbers. Each side will have a maximum of 40 factors at sea — 4 Rangers and 36 infantry generally. The question is: how many of these factors can reach the city in question with enough left over to achieve a 3-1 (and even this is risky; a 2 or 5 meaning probable annihilation by retaliatory forces). Take for instance NN48. The nearest beach square is 4 squares away; only 12 factors can land per square before moving inland; therefore only 12 infantry and 4 Rangers maximum can attack the city immediately on landing. Or, as another example, V33. The beach is close, but the city is at such an angle that only 2 stacks of infantry can reach (plus Rangers and airborne). Figure, then, that unless airborne or tactical air units are close, that a city can be hit by 16, 28, or 40 factors of infantry maximum. Figure also that if a city like I33 is partly out of reach, then one factor placed in the outermost square of the city will deny its supplies to the invaders long enough for a defending force to arrive. So, the coastal defense placements should look like this: (in infantry factors)

BLUE

V33-AT LEAST five, but as much as twelve factors of any ground troops are advised.

G4-7

C20-5

C30 (SE square) — 3

I33 (NW square) — 1

D7, I12, Q16, L19 (and U11,

M14) — 1 ea.

S25-1 or 2

RED

RRR54 (S square) — 5

RRR39, ZZ48, BBB54-5 ea.

JJ56-1

NN48-3 or 4

Because of their proximity to the fighting fronts, NN48, V33, S25, (and CC15 and X27), must be considered in light of the tactical situation. The same goes for any coastal cities in Black or Green. In those areas there is extensive aerial, airborne, or overland assistance available.

An invasion deep in the enemy home country is not a good strategic plan. It means dividing the war effort and makes reinforcement difficult. Most players will not allow an enemy to land without at least putting up a fight for the next few cities inland. An invasion is entirely feasible, however, in endeavors connected with the main front. V33 especially can serve as a site for a raid on aircraft or as a location for an invasion supported by air units in Green, and ground units from AA42. Invasions are also effective against an enemy flank or rear in Green. (He will have to garrison most of the beach or else reinstate it

Gentlemen:

Scott Duncan's *Luftwaffe Analysis* is a remarkable piece of work by one of the finest thinkers in the gaming field, and certainly bodes well for the "new" *General*. However, I think his main premise is worth discussion: he says "the game demands" play according to freedom-of-individual-fighters rule and urges "this step be taken as soon as you have a grasp of the fundamental...rules." And he freely admits that, as a result, the game "seems...to be intended to last several sessions over several weeks of play," but claims he "could not play...with any enjoyment or realism without freeing all units from the demand to act as one according to type." Now, if this is true it obviously means *Luftwaffe* is one of those esoteric games to be enjoyed only by the hardest core of game nuts with unlimited time — even 1914 begins to pale by comparison.

Fortunately, I don't believe this is true. It's my experience that the average gamer can learn to play the Advanced Tournament Game in 4½ to 6 hours on a Sunday afternoon and enjoy it. This includes all optional rules (Strategic Target Variant: Industrial Complexes, German Spies, etc.), except for the "individual freedom" rule. Moreover, even for "individual freedom" there's a compromise that works; my opponent and I use a "common sense" rule that fighters of the same type operating against different "fronts" may fly as independent "groups." Those of you rigid kriegspielers who require a more formal ruling may wish to limit the number of fronts to, say, three. The player owning the fighters is free to exercise the option at any time during a turn, but of course is never obligated to do so.

Even with this simple adjustment, many of you may be doubtful the Advanced Game can be played in a few hours or at one sitting. After you've become familiar with the game, you'll be surprised. If you've been into gaming for a while, you may remember back in the days when you thought STALINGRAD and D-Day were hard and first efforts dragged out long into the night. It's the same with *Luftwaffe* — with the above rules, it's really no more difficult.

But Scott claims this sort of play results in "unrealistic" and even "ridiculous" strategies and tactics. While I have no argument with his "full complexity" version — which I greatly admire, if you have time for it — I think my "cleaner" and shorter version may be just as valid on its own level, and so worthy of CON play too. Let's start with that word "realism"; it's one of the most common used in evaluating a game's value, so it's time somebody unpacked it to see just what it meant. Wargaming is a form of simulation gaming, specifically conflict simulation gaming. Now, I don't think anybody would argue that a good conflict simulation is one that accurately simulates the crucial or essential element of the action under study, often at the expense of other elements. A classic example is *FRANCE '40*: the harmless absurdity of allowing only three brigades in one hex while three corps are in the next, makes possible a beautiful simulation of the blitzkrieg technique. This is to say, of course, good simulation of the crucial element doesn't guarantee an exciting game, but most gamers have come to expect and even demand it: *Stalingrad*, simulating the necessity of swift and decisive action when a country of limited resources attacks one of virtually unlimited resources; *FRANCE '40*, the coordination of specialized arms (infantry, air, armor) to create the blitzkrieg technique; *PANZERBLITZ*, highly specialized weapons interrelationships on so small a scale that the entire action would not even constitute a single die roll in a *BULGE* game.

If you are familiar with these games, perhaps you can see the instinctive tendency to assign a higher "realism" rating to the more tactical games. This, I submit, is unfair to games of higher strategic level — since both have value. Perhaps, in the future, we might substitute or at least add "faithfulness of simulation of the essence of the action" in rating a game. I'll rest my case with one final example: we all know air-to-ship combat in *MIDWAY* is so highly abstract and unrealistic that this aspect of the game is easily reduced to mathematical formula. But nobody complains, and the game is among the most exciting in the catalogue. Why? Because the essence of simulation here is to outguess and outmaneuver an opposing commander — and mass your airpower against his fleet when it is most vulnerable. This is the challenge of the game; once you've accomplished it, the plane-to-ship combat itself is merely a gathering of the fruits of the higher (strategic) victory which was in fact the essence of carrier warfare.

Letters to the Editor ...

Now, back to *Luftwaffe*. The campaign this game simulates is the strategic bombing of Germany. The essential simulation is of very long range strategic planning, and on this high a level I'm frankly doubtful that realistic tactics are all that possible — even in the "full freedom" version. If it's fighter tactics that interest you, you can't do better than *Richthofen*. And if you want to refight the strategic air war against Germany, overly detailed tactics may serve only to prolong the game — just as they would in *MIDWAY*.

No, I'm not against the "complete" *Luftwaffe* that Duncan advocates — I'm sure few games can rival it for depth and excitement, for those who have time to play it. But I'd hate to see such an excellent product as *Luftwaffe* get such an esoteric reputation. The "compromise" version may well have equal strategic validity — and besides, it's fun to play on a Sunday afternoon! Weekend gamers shouldn't hesitate to pick it up...it's not another 1914, and you'll have a good time.

Mark Saha

★★★★★

Dear Avalon Hill,

Despite its age, *Stalingrad* has been, and will remain, one of my very favorite games. However, it seems to me to be a rather one-sided affair. As the German commander, I have launched my war machine from the banks of the Vistula and seen my armored columns race across the vast plains of Russia to capture Leningrad and Moscow. By the summer of 42, my armies, now depleted by more than ten months of campaigning, near the banks of the Donets for the final showdown with the remains of the Red Army. Then, to my great frustration, during the Russian player turn, my adversary decided to utilize the 70 plus accumulated replacement factors and out of the depths of *Stalingrad* come ten or eleven fresh Soviet corps. Having already lost some four or five panzer corps and drained my meager replacement supply, I throw in my Iron Cross and call it quits. True, I have brilliantly out-maneuvered my enemy time and time again but the massive Soviet industrial capability continually stares me in the face. I like realism in a game and therefore use the 4-6-8 replacement rate for the Russians. At any rate, having been robbed of ultimate victory more times than I care to remember, I decided to do something about it. That's right gang, it's variant time again. I know there have been *Stalingrad* variants ad infinitum but please bear with me, all you Stavka men out there can listen in to for you might find it interesting. I'm sure a lot of you Wehrmacht commanders have experienced something similar to the above more than once. Myself, I like a challenging game and when it gets down to fighting over the last city on the board, I have found that the Russian conducts a mild defense and sits behind his rivers to wait for the May 43 turn to come around, confident in the knowledge that the German is completely incapable of attaining military victory. But how about this? If the German cannot achieve a military triumph, why not try for a political one?

When the shattered remnants of the German VI Army surrendered at *Stalingrad* in February of 1943, the Soviets knew that they would win and after the Germans failed at Kursk in July of the same year, this fact was confirmed.

The Germans were now militarily too weak for any possible hope of victory, survival of the Reich and the military arm became the Wehrmacht's objective. The Soviets, having attained their military goal, namely, the smashing of the Germans offensive capability, went on to consummate their military victory with a political one, the seizure of all eastern Europe. Do you kids out there see what I'm driving at? The very nature of Communism demands a political triumph, the military being the means to that end. If the Germans had successfully kept the Russians from entering Poland and the rest of eastern Europe until the conclusion of the war, then the Soviet Union would have been robbed of the political conquest they so desired. They wanted a good strategic position in dealing with the Anglo-Americans, who would have introduced democracy to these nations had they got to them first.

Getting back to the game, there are now two types of victory a player can achieve, military and political. If the German occupies the three replacement cities, obviously he has won both forms. However, if after a certain turn it has become apparent that the Germans can no longer win militarily because of the Russian replacement capacity then they must go on the defensive and hold the line, i.e., prevent the Russians from penetrating into east Europe on the west edge of the board. In order for the Russians to win a complete triumph, they must destroy the German ability to attack effectively and occupy the nations of Poland, Hungary, and Rumania by the end of the game. To clarify this, the Russian must be in effective operational control of these nations, in a position whereby they cannot be forcibly ejected from them by the German.

Now the Russian cannot just sit behind rivers and laugh at you while the clock runs out, he must take the offensive and secure his political victory for possible future confrontation with the Anglo-Americans. The game now becomes a true test of tactical and strategic ability.

In order to adapt *Stalingrad* to this concept, certain game mechanics had to be altered. For one, all months are divided into two turns (like Afrika Korps) thus adding a more realistic approach to the campaign.

The system of replacement factors works in the usual manner except that now a month's supply will have to last two turns instead of one. In September 41, for example, the Russian may bring his twelve factors in on the first half but will receive no additional factors the second half. A judicious use of replacement factors is critical in this game. The Russian cannot afford to throw out 2-3-6's and 4-6-4's as sacrifice units as freely as he did in the past. Lastly, the game length has been extended, to May 1945. This may sound like an inordinately large number of turns (94) but *Barbarossa* was a long and arduous campaign lasting almost four years. Cutting the game time to a random figure like May 43 doesn't do it justice. Many interesting and important actions took place after this date such as the German offensive at Kursk and the Soviet summer offensive in 1944, to name but a few.

Richard Drozd
APO, San Francisco

Ed. Note: If you try this I suggest giving the Russians a 6-8-10 replacement rate rather than 4-6-8. With twice as many turns in the early stages Russia will be hurting.

★★★★★

Dear Sir:

I've received considerable comment regarding my article "Breaking Par" which appeared in Vol. 10, No. 5 of the *GENERAL*. Almost to a man they expressed an interest in seeing the individual par breakdowns for the various planes I rated in that article. They follow below.

PAR BREAKDOWNS

| Plane | VM | HM | DA | SP | FP | PAR |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| SOP/Snipe | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 10 | 88 |
| SOP/Cam | 8 | 10 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 86 |
| SPAD/13 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 86 |
| SE/59 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 78 |
| SOP/Dol | 7 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 76 |
| NIEU/28 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 10 | 10 | 74 |
| BR/72 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 70 |
| SOP/Td | 7 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 69 |
| SPAD/7 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 62 |
| HD/1 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 58 |
| SOP/Pup | 5 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 56 |
| DH/5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 54 |
| DH/4 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 52 |
| NIEU/17 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 50 |
| SOP/11 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 42 |
| RE/8 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 38 |
| FE/2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 36 |
| FCB/1 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 34 |
| NIEU/12 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 32 |
| BE/2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 30 |
| NIEU/11 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 28 |
| DH/2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 26 |
| FOKI/d7 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 10 | 88 |
| FOKI/g7 | 7 | 10 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 76 |
| ALB/05a | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 72 |
| ALB/05 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 66 |
| PFAL/03a | 6 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 66 |
| ALB/03 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 64 |
| PFAL/03 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 62 |
| ALB/02 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 60 |
| ROL/C2 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 52 |
| ALB/05 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 48 |
| HALB/03 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 46 |
| ALB/03 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 40 |

Possibly the best feature of *Richthofen's War* is the ability to draw up new situations. All that is really necessary is to pick 1-3 machines for each player BUT — and this is important — the aircraft should be fairly close in quality or otherwise even. (Use of the PAR factor would be good if the totals are close — a Halberstadt would be a match for either a Nieuport 17 or two DH-2's.) It would be a little ridiculous — not to mention inaccurate historically — to match a Fokker D-7 against a Nieuport 11.

Most important of all, new situations can be an enjoyable way of expanding and studying "Richthofen's War." Not only do new situations afford wider vistas, but they can also be a laboratory for testing and analyzing aircraft. Practical studies (against "trial balloons"?) are a good way of applying what you know, and learning more. It works.

Robert Harmon
San Francisco, CA

★★★★★

Dear Sirs,

I have been playing the *OUTDOOR SURVIVAL* game, and have found one or two rule changes which seem to enhance the realism of one of the scenarios, "RESCUE".

One basic flaw in the Rescue scenario is that the Missing Person (MP) remains in fine shape until found by the rescuer. No account is taken of the very likely fact that the MP is inexperienced in woodlore (and hence unable to fend for himself). Also, the Rescue scenario is not too interesting when played solitaire, since you have an unlimited time to find the MP.

Rather than add a fixed time limit to the game, I made one rule change which beefs up the scenario.

Take one of the Life Level Index Charts, and same-colored MP, Water, Food and Life Level pieces. Hide the MP per the scenario. Set the LL indices to maximum.

After all the players have completed one turn, roll the die once on Wilderness/Personal Encounter, and set the MP's indices accordingly. When playing solitaire, I ignore the roll if one or two comes up. For two players, ignore a die roll of 1, and change GAIN to LOSE. For 3 players, change all GAIN's to LOSE's. "Remain Stationary" is ignored. When found by a player, the Wilderness roll is discontinued; rescuer and rescuee encounter the same fortunes from then on. When first found, the rescuer has the option (necessary if the MP's Life Level is below K) of building up the Life Levels of the MP by sacrificing his own food and water on a one-for-one basis, for one turn (the turn of location). The two then try to walk out at the pace of the slower (as determined by life levels). I allow the sacrifice to be made once on the turn of location; others might want to allow it to take place on any turn subsequent to location, as many times as desired. If the rescuer and rescuee both become incapacitated, other players may aid them as per the building up of food and water by self-sacrifice. The winner is the last rescuer to also escort all other players incapacitated after rescue (plus the MP) off the board.

Very truly yours,
Craig Ransom
Baltimore, Md.

★★★★★

Dear Sir:

In the section on Football Strategy, you mentioned OOPS Football League in Seattle. Unless there's some other nut around the country who thinks OOPS is an irrelevant way to put on the super serious wargaming nuts, I think you meant to mention the OOPS Football League which meets monthly during football season at my place in Santa Ana, California.

We play face-to-face only and have players from all over the Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino County area. We are considering a regional organization for next year which would make our league more convenient for a greater number of players. OOPS is now in its 5th consecutive year of competition, with 14 members active.

Plans are already underway which will make the 1974 season our best ever, including revised rules which we hope will include the use of both offensive and defensive audibles. Anyone in the area who is interested should contact me as soon as possible.

Jim Reilly
Santa Ana, Ca. 92704

READER BUYER'S GUIDE

TITLE: D-DAY SUBJECT: Division level battle battle for France, 1944

D-DAY, the 9th game to undergo the reader's rating in the RBG fared rather poorly in comparison to its brethren setting "worse-ever" ratings in the "Physical Quality," "Mapboard," "Components" and "Play Balance" areas. Although all of these areas were still "above average" they tend to show a dissatisfaction with the older flat box games which is hard to understand. The actual physical production of D-DAY is the same standard which we utilize for all our games. The only problem we are aware of with the components is the inclusion of corps counters which are not mentioned in the '65 edition of the rules and hence are useless. But having "more" counters than you need is not really much of a problem.

The other negative mark was set in the "Play Balance" department where STALINGRAD managed to best it by .01 of a point. It is assumed that most readers feel that the German can't win. Again, as was the case in STALINGRAD, we feel this is a misconception based on the skill level of the players. When played on an expert level the Germans stand at least an even chance of victory. Granted, the German side is harder and a mistake there more costly, but a well played game should find the German with at least a 50% chance of winning, regardless of the skill level exercised by the Allied player. It is all a matter of using their advantages to the fullest. The lukewarm rating for realism is also upsetting but is explained in part by the excellent rating for the "Ease of Understanding" category. Realism and playability do not often go hand in hand.

One fault that the RGB fails to clearly show is in the "Completeness of Rules" category where it polled a commendable 3.09, despite a very loosely worded section on SAC attacks which the GENERAL's Question Box has had to correct.

The 3 hour playing time shown below is probably a bit short; a factor caused by people rating the "Length" category in the same terms as the others rather than in 10 minute intervals as instructed. Although a good German player who defeats the Allies on the beaches will end a game in less than an hour, one that goes the limit will more realistically take 4-5 hours.

D-DAY, with a cumulative rating of 3.43, seems to be falling from favor among the hard core in comparison to newer games with more realistic and complicated steps of play. However, it remains a good introductory game with few rules problems and as such is still considered a classic and is used in many competitive tournaments.

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Physical Quality | 3.72 |
| 2. Mapboard | 4.54 |
| 3. Components | 3.69 |
| 4. Ease of Understanding | 2.56 |
| 5. Completeness of Rules | 3.09 |
| 6. Play Balance | 4.38 |
| 7. Realism | 4.50 |
| 8. Excitement Level | 3.60 |
| 9. Overall Value | 3.56 |
| 10. Game Length | 2 hr., 58 minutes |

THE QUESTION BOX

ANZIO:

Q. What is the stacking value of Allied replacement counters?

A. One, so they count against build-up limits, etc., just like regular counters.

Q. Do the Allies automatically make friendly all the beach hexes in the zone they invade?

A. No; only the ones they pass through.

Q. If the Allies subsequently make friendly more beach hexes in a beach-head area which already has a port counter, can they build up through them with the original counter?

A. Yes, with one exception: any beach zone hexes which the Germans pass through after the Allied invasion turn. A fresh port counter would be needed to build up through such hexes when and if recaptured from the Germans. Should the Germans do it again, then another port counter would be required, etc.

Q. What is the movement factor cost of the first hex ashore for the Allies?

A. If it is a port through which buildup can come; one. If it is not a port, then it would be the movement factor cost of plain terrain if there is any, rough terrain otherwise. This is true even if the road runs through the coastal hex. Of course, once ashore one could move off along that road if nothing interferes.

Q. If a unit on a certain river is attacking another unit on that same river, is the defender doubled? How about if the attacker is also on a second river, the defender not?

A. In the first instance, unless the defender is also on a mountain, it is not doubled, even if due to the meandering of the river, the two units are not immediately adjacent along its course. In the second instance, due to the second river, the defender would be doubled.

Q. Suppose a unit is required to retreat through zones of control, losing additional steps, but it does not have enough steps. Would the attacker get extra movement as in AV-II?

A. No. The unit would be destroyed.

Q. Do partisans need supplies?

A. No. In that respect they are like commandos.

WATERLOO:

Q. Can reinforcements be brought on in "column" such that the Cav. Batts. which enter on 1 PM on June 16th can be placed 8 hexes from the edge even before they move?

A. No!!! If brought on in column, they would start at the first playable whole hex.

RICHTHOFEN'S WAR:

Q. Can you dive at overdrive speed while only diving within your maximum dive limits?

A. Yes, it's considered an overdrive (because of velocity), even though the aircraft is diving beyond its normal dive (altitude) limit.

Q. Why don't the ACC figures correlate with the Battle Manual data for aircraft performance?

A. The ACC data was cross correlated and worked up to include other factors. The Battle Manual data was, for expediency, pulled from one standard (and questionable) source. Sorry...

PANZERBLITZ

Q. Isn't it true that the Target Elevation Table is incomplete and therefore misleading as a "quick reference"?

A. Yes. You can add the following to your TET: Note A to the Units Firing from Hilltops at Ground Level; Note E to Units Firing from Hilltops at Slopes; and Note E to Units Firing from Slopes at Hilltops.

GUADALCANAL:

Q. If at any point all the units of one side are eliminated, are all the units of fire accumulated up to that point eliminated also?

A. Yes.

AH PHILOSOPHY

Continued from Page 2

your own subscription for free. On a similar note, 83% indicated a desire to see more variants on the order of the "Leyte Gulf" feature in Vol. 10, No. 3. Therefore, more will be forthcoming. The lead article this month is one such.

The survey revealed that our readers own an average of 4.69 nonbattle games of which only 1 is from Avalon Hill. The most frequently mentioned competing line was Parker Brothers, followed by 3M, and Milton Bradley. It is hard to fathom Avalon Hill in a subordinate position to these companies among adult gamers but it is likely that many of these games were acquired before the individual became acquainted with Avalon Hill and wargames in general. It says a lot for the variance of wargames from the adult game market at large. Wargames, as a group, seem very uninterested in non-wargame titles, although from a strictly gamesmanship point of view many of the non-wargames are superior excitement generators to most wargames. Breaking it down further we find that the average reader possesses 2.24 sports games of which only 1 in 9 is an Avalon Hill title. What is even more puzzling is that the 6 major "super realistic" sports game companies which rate individual pro stars in their games controlled a very negligible part of the remainder. Therefore the bulk of those sports games owned by the readership must have been television advertised items of marginal adult gaming quality, or other lesser games. This is especially disturbing to us as we pride ourselves on the excellence of our sports line. However, it speaks well for BASKETBALL STRATEGY as a future title for although it pulled only 21% favorable response from the GENERAL's readership—the divorce of wargames from sports gamers makes this statistic misleading. The 21% actually looks pretty good when compared to the 23% which our entire sports line polled. To make a long story short, we feel we have a pretty good basketball design and will probably come out with it sometime this fall. The political game looks even more promising with a 48% affirmative vote. We know this game will sell well to the public at large if nearly half our wargame following is interested in it. We are not as enthused about the present design we have in the works on this subject though so we'll probably delay publication for a year or more while we work on it some more. Back to the old playability-realism debate we find the issue still divided, but with the playability school gaining strength on the long end of a 63-37 percentage breakdown.

54% of you said you'd be willing to buy 3-5 AH games a year while another 28% opted for 6 or more. This backs up the trend we've foreseen and therefore you can expect increases in the number of AH titles being released in future months. The subject of the PANZERBLITZ expansion kit was less successful with only 16% opting for the \$7 kit, while 43% went the other extreme for a \$3.00 kit. We probably couldn't produce it for less than \$4.00 so will shelf this idea temporarily.

Back on the subject of the GENERAL, we found that 92% of you were willing to fork over another buck to see the GENERAL expand to 34 pages, 17% of you even went so far as a \$10 subscription price, while the bulk of you (40%) favored a \$2.00 increase to \$7.00. It is comforting to know that the vast majority is willing to put up with a price increase but in an effort to increase circulation still further we're going to maintain the

\$5.00 price and still go ahead with expansion. The larger our circulation; the smaller the per issue cost to us. So, if we can gain enough additional readers we will actually be saving money through this expansion. Part of this plan to increase circulation includes our first effort to pull the magazine on the shelf in hobby shops. Increased exposure of this type is a great way for the GENERAL to grow and help newcomers become aware of the hobby. You can help us by taking your copy down to your local dealer and encouraging him to stock the magazine. Tell him he'll have return privileges and to contact us direct for further details. Finishing up the survey, we find that each GENERAL is read by approximately 1.9 people. Comparatively speaking, this is a rather low figure so we can't complain too much about the sharing of subscriptions. Apparently people find the price and services offered beneficial enough to warrant having their own rather than borrowing a friend's.

As for the play balance referendum, we were overruled in only one game—that being D-DAY where the majority of you give the edge to the Allies. However, enough dissenting votes cast for BLITZKRIEG, BULGE, and AFRIKA KORPS as to divide the issue pretty much in half, so as to say that neither side is clearly favored.

Elsewhere in this issue you'll find news of our spring release; 1776. Designed by Randall Reed, the creator of RICHTHOFEN'S WAR, 1776 encompasses all that a grand strategic game should have, and does it in a way never before attempted. We think this design is revolutionary in more ways than the subject matter. A look at the announcement of the game should give you an inkling of what we mean. Unfortunately, the game is the first of our bookcase games to be produced without the supporting sleeve; a necessary sacrifice to the god of inflation. Although the game will still sell for \$10.00, it features our largest (and perhaps most carefully detailed) mapboard yet. We think you'll like it—we certainly enjoyed designing it.

Enough ramblings for this month. We have to save some surprises for next time.

★★★★★

DESIGN ANALYSIS

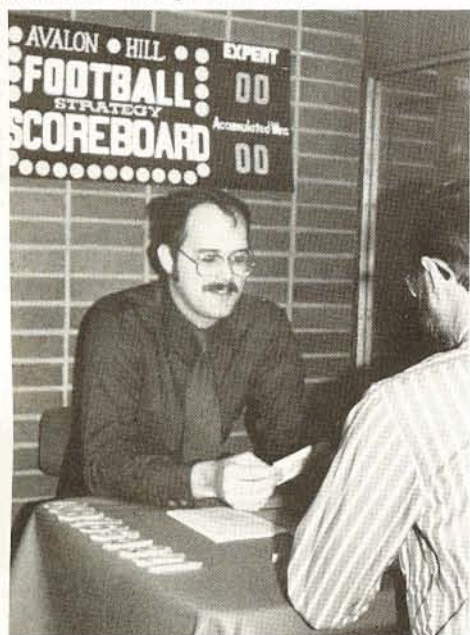
Continued from page 18

actual battle, then there may be a design problem. I would also like to see combat odds calculated in such a way that the entire attacking force is relevant. Under the conventional system, for example, if the defender has 10 combat factors and the attacker 35, then the presence of the last 5 attacking factors has no effect upon the probability of success. An alternate system that also has problems is the so-called attack superiority system where rather than odds, one computes the number of excess factors the attacker has and consults the appropriate table. One problem with this system is that attacks of 12-10 are resolved under the same column as 3-1. Perhaps there is a solution on middle ground somewhere! Finally, the ultimate observation that is clearly obvious to everyone is the need for a playable limited intelligence, simultaneous movement system. I confess that the only system I have come up with, involves the use of a computer and 2 remote terminals! Well, let me conclude with the advice that if you have found a game or game variation (either of your own design or otherwise) that you thoroughly enjoy playing, and have no trouble obtaining opponents who will regularly oblige you; then enjoy—by all means enjoy—and ignore all of those frustrated sayers of malcontent.





FOOTBALL STRATEGY was the most asked for game this past Xmas season which really didn't surprise us. It's by far the favorite of our office personnel and received rather poor distribution to the trade due to the proliferation of football games on the market. It appears that everyone recognizes the fact that Avalon Hill is the leader in battle games but when it comes to sports, they stock the television advertised item even though it may be an inferior product. This is particularly galling to us because we honestly believe ours is the most exciting gridiron game on the market. That's one of the reasons we chose **FOOTBALL STRATEGY** as the subject of our Thanksgiving window display promotion for Brentano's 5th Ave. store in New York. Avalon Hill salesman Erwin Lewis (above left) and VP Tom Shaw (above right) challenged passersby for a week to "beat the expert" at **FOOTBALL STRATEGY**. For winning, the challenger received a free game. AH's staff of experts lived up to its billing by posting a 42-3 record during the week and proved that **FOOTBALL STRATEGY**, unlike its many imitators, is not a game of luck.



Back in Baltimore the Avalon Hill Football Strategy League drew to a close after 14 weeks and found AH designers R. Reed, T. Shaw, and D. Greenwood among the play-off contenders. As the play-offs progressed and Super Bowl week drew near the league drew major newspaper coverage in the Baltimore area as the local media picked up on the novel idea. Super Bowl week found Tom Shaw's Baltimore Colts (13-3) facing

Infiltrator's Report

the 14-2 Packers of Don Greenwood's Green Bay franchise with the latter triumphant 22-21 in an exciting battle played before dozens of mesmerized fans.

Greenwood received \$100 plus possession of the prized SICL Super Bowl Trophy (below) which is the league's symbol of supremacy and rotates from winner to winner each year. Spartan International's sponsorship of this league marked the first time that Avalon Hill and S.I.C.L. have combined in a competition event. The league has raised its franchise fees and has already sold out for 1974. However, if you want to be put on the waiting list or join a similar league for sister game **BASEBALL STRATEGY** contact Don Greenwood c/o Avalon Hill.



Seventy-five Northeastern gamers braved the weather to attend Winter Con II, sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Strategic Games Society and the American Wargaming Association 12 January 1974, on the MIT campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Traveling to the Boston area from as far away as Maine and Pennsylvania, the gamers came to compete in events ranging from a single elimination **Stalingrad** tournament to **Diplomacy-Hill** (a variant crossing **Stalingrad's** movement and combat with **Diplomacy's** player interaction and situation) and **Tactics Pi** (eight player super **Blitzkrieg**). When the dust had cleared, Paul Siragusa (of Burlington, CT) had placed first in **Stalingrad**. Virtually the entire fourth floor of the MIT Student Center had been reserved for the use of conventioners, but owing to poor weather that week and to the gas crunch in the Northeast, total attendance was below the originally anticipated level. Nonetheless, Winter Con II was still quite successful, yielding a profit to the sponsors and a full day of gaming to all who attended.

A ray of wargaming light is being shed in Houston, TX where Ross Callender has started his own Interest Group Houston which meets every other Friday to play AH games and armor miniatures. For more info we suggest you write Ross at his 2601 Esther, Pasadena, TX 77502 address.

Cincinnati gamers have a mini-con on the 2nd Saturday of every odd month at the University of Cincinnati Tangeman Student Center. Admission is \$1.00 for the next meeting which will be held May 11th from noon to 10 P.M. For additional information contact Jack Hesselbrock at his 311 Miami Valley Dr., Loveland, OH 45140 address.

Many of you are ordering parts from outdated parts lists and as a result are receiving credit slips in return. Check the following items off any parts lists you currently possess: 1914 mobilization pads; **BISMARCK** pads; **GUADALCANAL** pads; **C&O/B&O** boards; 1914 allied counters; **JUTLAND** German counters; **ANZIO** counters; and boxes for both **U-BOAT** and **BISMARCK**. All of these items have recently sold out and are no longer available.

Most of our readers took the correct strategic course in Contest No. 59's **AKRIKA KORPS** situation but many lost out due to faulty tactical placement. The solution was to capture both German supply units. Thus, all the axis units are attacked at 1-6 odds while the 41X7 and 7AX1 units capture the German supply units and evacuate them out to sea via Tobruch, expending their own 2 supply units in the process. This leaves Axis combat units adjacent to 7AX1 without benefit of supplies, forcing them to withdraw or perish in their turn. Although Ariete can slip to G23 and units on H25 can move to G24, the 15th Panzer and Pavia cannot get away and will be eliminated. Although isolation is not yet in force if the German receives supplies that turn, the Allies can easily complete the isolation of the Axis pocket with 4I23 and the Carpathians while 7AX1 and 7X7SG move westward to keep Savena and German supplies at bay, thus dooming the remaining German units.



Although 60% of the entries correctly went after the exposed German supplies, approximately 80% of these ruined their chances with faulty tactical placement. A drawing had to be held to determine the winners from the remainder. Those surviving the luck of the draw were: J. Cox, Flat River, MO; N. Topolnicki, Baltimore, MD; B. Kindig, Davenport, IA; M. Gilmartin, Olmstead Falls, OH; E. McKenna, Mt. Pleasant, MI; D. Parshall, Wilmington, DE; T. Hertz, Bremerton, WA; K. Neill, Iowa City, IA; T. Kuhn, Indianapolis, IN; and G. Rubin, Ithaca, NY.

