

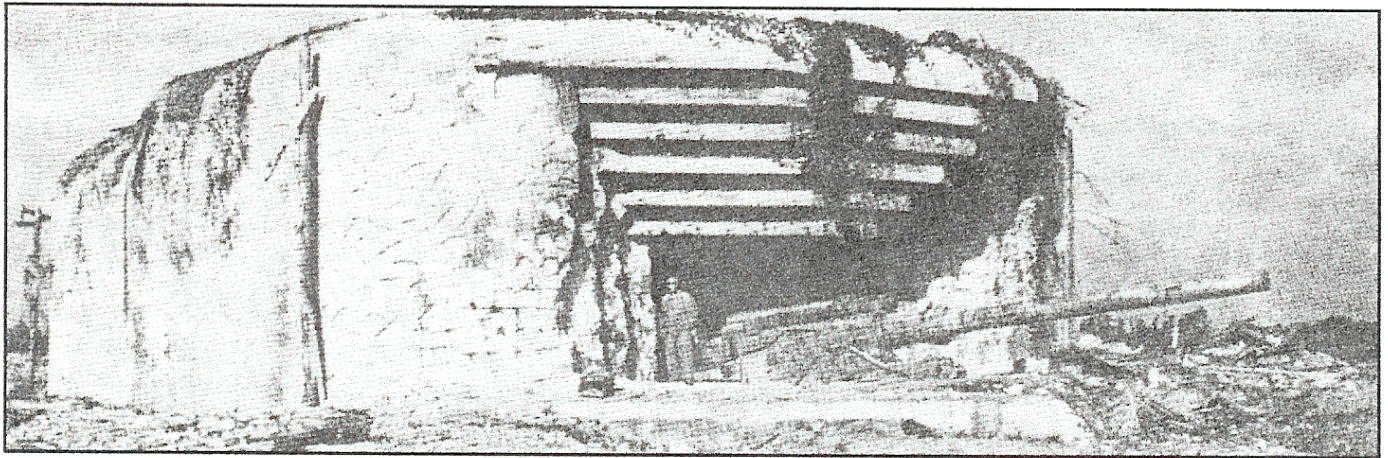


# Dispatches from the Bunker

DISPATCH

## FALL 1997

# 2



**For ASL Players Everywhere  
From ASL Veterans in New England**



**Fall 1997  
IN THIS ISSUE:**

**Greetings from the Bunker:** In this issue we have two more action packed scenarios. Also on tap is a review of Critical Hits' Gembloux Campaign, a look at New England's ASL scene, and our usual ASL Tips, playtest news, and future series notes.



**Unhappy Trails:** After securing the beachhead, the Marines of the 3rd Raider Battalion push up the Mission Trail and establish a blocking position. Can they hold it against the Japanese counterattack? Will the 9th Marines succeed in their own offensive?



**Devil's Play:** In a running battle of paratroopers can the *Green Devils* of Koch's Fallschirmjaeger Regiment 5 stop the beleaguered *Red Devils* of Frost's 2nd Battalion? Or will the Brits escape and reach friendly lines in the hills of Tunisia?

**Dispatches from the Bunker:** is dedicated to the ASL game system and all the players who play it, veterans and novices alike. This Newsletter is a labor of love from all who contribute to it and is published on an approximate quarterly schedule by Vic Provost of the 'Bunker' Crew. Subscriptions may be ordered as follows: 4 Issue Subscription - \$10.00, Shipping and Handling - \$3.00 in the continental USA and \$5.00 otherwise. Back issues will always be available at \$2.75 per issue with \$.75 S & H in the continental USA and \$1.25 otherwise. Issue #1 is free of charge and can be obtained with a Letter sized (# 10 Envelope) SASE. Send Check or Money Order in USA Funds to:

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*Dispatches from the Bunker:*  
 Published by Vic Provost of the 'Bunker' Crew

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**Signals:** Having introduced you to the grognards who are the 'Bunker' crew, I will now give you a peek at where we intend to take the content of this publication. We, like many players in the ASL community, have played and enjoyed Historical Modules and the campaign game format that is an inherent part of them. We like the idea of participating in an ongoing string of scenarios which in their own way are a narrative of events which we play out over the course of a campaign. Well, we've decided on a new angle. Being simply a regional Newsletter, with no interest in producing Modules (Maps/Counters) or Campaign Games, but wanting to keep the concept of related series of scenarios, we decided to focus on *Subjects* which can be individuals, famous units, weapon types, or battles/campaigns. These *Subjects* will be the focus of a number of related but stand alone scenarios in various *Series* that we will be showcasing in the pages of 'Dispatches' in the coming months. On the docket we will be exploring *Series* with subjects such as the two unveiled in our first issue: German Pioneer Sgt. Rudolf Brasche and the 1st SS Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler Division throughout the entire war, from the beginning as a motorized infantry regiment in Poland to its ultimate fate as a remnant of a proud Panzer Division in the final days of the war. We see the initial offerings of our next two subject series in this issue with UNHAPPY TRAILS, from the Bougainville series and DEVIL'S PLAY, from (Continued on Page 3)

## THE NEW ENGLAND ASL SCENE

By Vic Provost

Greetings from the 'Bunker'. It's hard to believe the explosion of interest in ASL in the past eight years here in NEW ENGLAND. When I first started playing SQUAD LEADER back in the early '80s with my wargaming brother Tom Morin, we could only dream that it would lead to a long standing gaming club, foster friendships that now span the globe, competing in (and in Tom's case *WINNING*) world championship tournaments (AVALONCON '96), and publishing a newsletter about a game we truly love. It has been quite a trip to this point and if you'll indulge me for these two columns, I'll tell you how we got here and the state of the ASL community here in NEW ENGLAND at the present time. Tom and I are friends dating back to our young adult days of the 1970s, and had been playing the 'Classic' Avalon Hill games I'm sure most of you are familiar with. We always had a keen interest in tactical simulations such as the PANZERBLITZ series. We then became aware of the 'buzz' in the hobby about this new series of games taking the hobby by storm. We somehow resisted until CRESCENDO OF DOOM came out but then one day I picked up SL, COI, and COD. I was amazed at the quality and detail but a bit overwhelmed by the rules. After a couple of months of immersing myself in the rules and multiple playings of 'Guards Counter-attack' I convinced Tom to give it a try and he was instantly hooked. Needless to say we've been on a crusade ever since to find new opponents, play as many scenarios as possible, and design our own actions based on the large libraries of research material we've accumulated over the years. My main method of contacting new opponents, like so many others in this hobby was the GENERAL magazine. It served me well in this regard for many years and you can still see my ads in most issues. By the late '80s we had formed the core of a fine group of players, who regularly beat up on each other in friendly competition and had a great time doing so. Let me mention two names who left the region earlier in the decade who provided us with great competition and comrad-

Dave Levigne. Forming the (hard)core of the 'Bunker' crew this decade are myself, Tom, Allen Loiselle, Kiri Naiman, and Ralph McDonald. In the last four years we have added the considerable talents of Tom Ruta and ex-marine Bob Sistrunk. We began to run small regional tournaments like CONTRARY, which though primarily a non-historical event allowed us to meet other stalwarts like Carl Nogueira and get our feet wet at administering such events. Our next step was to reach out of our local area, and we started to do demonstrations at the HAVOC miniatures convention, which opened up contacts in the Boston area and laid the foundation for the championship event we hold today. Having established contact with the ASL comrades in eastern Massachusetts, headed by Bob Walden of the Boston Area ASL group (BAASL), we put plans in motion for inter-club meetings and reaching out to ALL ASL players in the NEW ENGLAND region. This directly led to finally organizing a true regional ASL championship tournament - The Nor'Easter at HAVOC. After a trial run put together by Carl in April of '96, we put together our first full-fledged attempt this past April. I'm glad to report it was a fine initial success, with twenty eight participants and a tough final matchup between Allen Loiselle and Rhode Island's Randy Knight. Allen's Mauraunders prevailed as the Japanese were annihilated in 'Last of their Strength'. All who attended had a great time and we expect an even larger turnout (over thirty) next time (April '98, I'll have full details in Issue # 3 Winter 1998). Concurrently with organizing all this competition, we were planning on getting our very own platform for ASL players in NEW ENGLAND to be heard in the ASL universe. What you have in your hands now is the culmination of a lot of work by many people over the past few years. Tom and I had been long time playtesters and contributors to the now defunct ASL newsletter ON ALL FRONTS and with the demise of it and the ROUT REPORT in the past year we felt we could both fill the void caused by the loss of these periodicals and at the same time give the NEW ENGLAND ASL community it's own outlet for the considerable talents that have come together over these past eight years. With the alliance of the 'Bunker' crew, BAASL, and players throughout

*Signals ~ Continued ~*  
the Tunisian series. We also are doing two parallel series set in the Philippines. One will deal with the Japanese invasion of 1941 and following events through to the siege of Bataan and the eventual surrender on Corregidor. The second series will see the return of MacArthur to Leyte, the bloody battle for Manila, and the long pursuit of Japanese forces into Northern Luzon. We are contemplating several other subjects and are of course open to suggestions from our readers. There are no set limits to the number of scenarios that may eventually make up a series. The only limits seem to be the available research material and how much time and effort we can devote to a particular subject. So get set for some storytelling, ASL style; glad you're along for the ride, Vic.

### - ERRATA: Issue # 1 -

As much as I tried to stamp out the errata bugs from Issue #1, the gremlins still somehow infiltrated our position and for this I truly apologize. I'm very grateful to JR VanMechelen and Vince Lewonski for pointing these minor snafus out to me. These 2 occur in DB001

#### BRASCHE ENCOUNTER:

- (1) In the French Guard Detachment set up make the Capital A in Adjacent lower case - i.e. - adjacent.
- (2) Add to SSR:3 - Contrary to A12.12 the 4 OB designated ? may set up in a foxhole.

For pointing out these gaffes both JR and Vince have earned themselves free issues; this offer goes out to any one who finds something contrary to standard rules that we have not explained via SSR or anything that would fall in the category as official errata. Also in the first printing of Issue # 1, which we did 2 days before Tom Morin took them to AVALONCON, we had in SSR:2 the term steel span bridge counter, which of course does not exist and we changed this to stone bridge counter for the second and all subsequent printings. We truly are serious about proofreading and correctly editing this newsletter and welcome ALL feedback regarding this, both positive and negative. So again, please accept our apologies for these minor problems and let me restate the motto of the 'Bunker' crew:

**Quality is our objective,  
And ZERO errata our Goal.**

## Lost Sentinels - Gembloux the Feint, A Campaign Analysis By Jim Torkelson & Vic Provost

*Recent events between Avalon Hill and Critical Hit have cast a shadow over the entire ASL world. By printing this article we in no way condone the policies or actions of either side and hope a resolution to the dispute may be found to everyone's satisfaction. This article was the first of several I have received from one Jim Torkelson, who lives a long Drew Bledsoe pass from the Patriot's stadium in Foxboro. I met Jim at our regional ASL touney earlier this year and found him to be a skilled player and writer. I found this article well done, enlightening and worthy of publishing in these pages, no matter the source (AH/CH). He's also done a real nice job on the Classic RB scenario 'One Down, Two to Go', which will be in Issue # 3.*

Here we have one of the better efforts in the Platoon Leader campaign game series from Critical Hit Magazine. As those familiar with Platoon Leader 1 & 2.0 are aware, there are minor problems in the rules which at times seem more like an outline than a comprehensive set. With some common sense use of specific sections of the *Red Barricades* and *Kampfgruppe Peiper* campaign games, this system can work. Last word before the dispute broke was the CH staff working on fixing these problems, we'll have to see if they get the chance.

In *Gembloux the Feint* we have a face off between the rampaging panzers of Panzer Divisions 3 & 4 versus the Somuas of the 3rd DLM. Let's look at 'What's going on here'?

### TACTICAL SITUATION:

What is going on here are a series of German combined arms attacks against a concealed French armor - infantry - artillery force defending a hilltop village. The Germans have the weight of two Panzer divisions behind them, but are running into some of the best troops the French have to offer. These are definitely NOT

the panicked reservists that are starting to fold in the Ardennes. The Germans are trying to capture the village and interdict the road leading to the rest of the French lines without taking too many casualties or letting the French defenders escape. A quick examination of the map shows that there are 3 level 2 hills, with good lines of sight for some heavy weapons. There is a shallow stream and a gully that tend to divide the the board into regions. There are also some very expansive grain fields to both slow down and provide cover for movement. There is a village in the middle with rolling hills to the rear. The patches of woods and other obstacles keep same level LOS ranges low.

**TIME & PLACE:** The Year is 1940, the Place is the village of Gembloux, Belgium. No Tank riders, No HEAT! The French have radioless and 'partially' radioless tanks with RST and IMT. Some German tanks have eggshells instead of armor plate.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** A French victory is established when they amass  $\geq 120$  VP. CVPs are accumulated normally and the French get exit VPs for infantry that exit off the west edge during the LAST CG date. An accumulation of CVPs over 4 CG scenarios plus a sizeable group of escaping infantry gives the French player real hope for a win, but Victory is also within the grasp of the German, who needs to put 80 FP factors on the board 16 road to the west edge at campaign end AND control  $\geq 15$  buildings on board 41. These are realistic and attainable conditions for both sides and is one reason this campaign is so appealing, with reasonable luck both sides should be in the running for a win in the last scenario.

**PLATOON LEADER 2.0 SYSTEM:** (Note that we are discussing the version 2.0, there are some minor edits and major rethinking done here between 2.0 and 1.0, and problems which one way or another need to be resolved). The tricky thing for the German is the 2.0 system for Strategic Locations (SLs) and setup for future scenarios. A SL is an important position i.e: a bridge, ford, building, entrenchment, level 2 crest, woodline hex, and cemeteries. Stuff with strategic importance. A side can setup within 2 hexes of a friendly controlled SL, provided the other side does not have a SL of it's own within 2 hexes. If so then you have No Mans Land.

So what you have is not a perimeter like RB, but a group of regions with allowed setup. It is going to be tricky for the German in the initial scenario, trying to establish SLs for the 2nd scenario. The main problem is the shortage of defined SLs on their entry boards. In order to get to the bountiful supply SLs on Bd 41, they need to cross the relatively open Bds 33 & 43. Other than the slow approaches through the grain fields (In season per SSR), the German must try to cover a lot of ground in a series of dashes, and begin to dig foxholes along the way to create the badly needed SLs. There are serious penalties for not being within friendly lines at scenario end (Having to roll for escape - ugh). With the short scenario length (5 or 6 turns average) and all that grain to run through under fire, expecting to go greater than 10+ hexes in scenario 1 is optimistic. The idea of all those light panzers running around and popping smoke for the infantry while dodging AP rounds is neat, though.

**TERRAIN:** The three major hills on Bd 41, with the only level 2 hexes on the board configuration, are set up in a triangle, with hill 520 to the east, hill 513 in the center, and hill 497 to the south. There is also a upper level building location (effectively level 2) in the rowhouse 41V7. Each hill has serious blind spots where the attacker can get close. The hills are only partially mutually supporting. Hill 513 has a great LOS to the west, and concealment terrain on the crest to hide in. There is also a wedge of good LOS to the NE. This hill is the key to the French defense. When the Germans take it, the French reinforcements will have to fight to enter the town. It correspondingly frees up German movement without worrying about ATGs up there. Its weakness is in the woods due north, with all the grain past that. Also, it cannot see due east into the village. The upper level rowhouse location is good for firing to the north/northeast. Hill 520 can see E/NE/NW but not N. It too has the woods/grain running up to its north side. Hill 497 has brush on the crest (No TEM or Airbursts in this OBA rich campaign) for a HIP ATG and sees off to the NW.

The map is divided up into several regions by the gully, the stream, and the village on the hills. It is possible for some Panzers to be trapped by heavier French armor against the gully and/or between the gully and the stream. There is enough

grain to act as an obstacle to LOS at ground level, only cover to LOS from a higher level, and a movement barrier to the German infantry coming in from the entry area. It removes the FFMO at the cost of extra movement factors.

The village is classic bad tank terrain. The streets are lined with stone buildings for street-fighting possibilities. The +3 TEM means the tanks need to get close to have a real chance at any effect. The poor lines of sight mean that once you clear one position, you'll probably have to move to see another, quite often against a skulking opponent. Conversely, the village is excellent terrain for the infantry, with the emphasis on close combat. The relatively low numbers of infantry squads and MGs mean you won't see RB style killer stacks with 24+ FP. 8 or 12 column attacks are more common and survivable in the buildings. Having numerical superiority at the point of the attack is once more the key. The village enhances this, being formed of several fragmented blocks that are not mutually supporting. The Germans thus must move his panzers to encircle individual blocks, isolate the French infantry, and use superior numbers at the point of attack to take each block in kind. Taking more than one block in a scenario is the rub...

**PANZER VS. CHAR:** The German tanks have poorly penetrating main armament versus the French Armor. The best TK of the Germans is an 11, and that is from the 47L on the very vulnerable JgPz 1. It is only downhill from there. Against the 4 or 6 Armor aspects the Panzers may need point blank rear shots to improve their chances from poor to mediocre. Unfortunately the French tanks are built with all around defense in mind, flank shots don't have a better chance than frontal shots but will force the French to turn the turret and incur Case A TCA to hit mods. Deliberate immobilization, iffy at best, has the chance of success reduced by half vs the best French tanks because of the track armor on the S35s. The German tanks do have excellent MG armament with nice IFE on the Panzer IIs. If they can attack the French infantry up close they are in trouble, overruns of those unfortunate to get caught outside of a building/entrenchment will be devastating. The other big strength of the panzers is their smoke; all have dischargers and the Pz IVs have an excellent S9. Back to killing the French tanks, the German ATGs (37L Doorknockers) and infantry guns (75 Inf.) have poor odds, but can sure hurt soft targets with ROF. If the French tanks can be lured into the village to support the infantry the most effective weapon the Germans have against them can be their plentiful OBA. All three types of artillery modules have both HE and Smoke and depending on circumstances both can be most effective. One nice combination is to lay down a Smoke FFE on some S35s and then close assault them with your Pioneer sections; if the DCs don't do the job, perhaps the CC will.

The French AFVs are a strange breed as they were designed as infantry tanks but have a remarkably weak punch vs enemy infantry. With their lack of sufficient MGs (only a 2 FP CMG), they have an overrun FP of 7! The French tanks have good penetration vs the Pz Is and Pz IIs. The improvement in German armor after that sharply reduces the effectiveness of the H39s short 37\* gun. Note that the H39 has a AP depletion # of 10, so it can run out of what it needs most.

The 47 on the S35 retains good TK #s vs all the German tanks. The key is whether the French tanks can hit. With 1MT and Red TH #s vs small moving targets, the odds are greatly reduced, and the lack of ROF will limit the # of shots taken. The German armor should stay in motion if the S35s are close by. Note that the Pz I and Pz II have terrible crew survival #s, so a kill is almost surely worth the 5 CVPs. The French 25LL ATGs are slightly better in penetration than the 37\*, especially at close range, but with a ROF of 3 the # of shots taken should be much greater. Any German tanks acquired by an ATG should get into motion, try for a SD, and get out of LOS. If acquired by a French tank, try the above or maneuver another friend to threaten the tank from the rear and force a TCA/VCA change. If possible stay more than 6 hexes away from the French tanks, where the Red TH #s come in effect. Also adding to the Panzer's problems, the French have a number of MGs that have a significant kill probability at close range against all but the best German armor. Stun results vs a 1MT is a recall...the French also have some 81\* Mortars, which attack the German armor with a -1 DRM on the IFT due to all armor factors being  $\leq 4$  for a shock/immobilization effect on a DR of 5...not insignificant. This will also produce a nasty collateral attack vs a CE crew IF the vehicle survives. Needless to say, both sides need to exploit their vehicles' advantages vs the enemies' weakness; the French need to exploit the TK table, the Germans the TH table.

**CAMPAIGN NOTES:**

The French have even or better leadership than the Germans. The PL Leader DRM is a 0 for both sides. The French HQ section with the 9-2 leader is an excellent purchase (a must buy for on map setup in the first scenario) and gives them an edge at start. The German should eventually surpass the French in leadership because they can buy more infantry platoons. This leaves it up to the dice, however, and may take longer than the Germans have to spend.

The French Infantry and Gun RG can use on-board setup only for the first 2 scenarios. Curiously, the German infantry gun RG can utilize this option, but none of the other German infantry RGs or even the PAK gun RG may do so. For the French, this means they have to buy the forces needed to defend the village in the first two scenarios, plus defend the entry area and road into the village for the follow-on units. The PL 2.0 system makes isolation via (lack of) control of Strategic Locations nasty (plan on digging a row of foxholes around the west side of town). For the Germans, the lack of advanced on-map setup is dangerous. To move across the expanses of boards 33 & 43 in a short scenario and still do something once there implies moving with the leader bonus, and stacks are vulnerable to the HMGs up on the hills.

Fate was a bit unkind to the French regarding their initial set-up. They are ordered to set up on Boards 16 and/or 41. They are forbidden from setting up in the half hexes of adjoining boards 33 & 43. Due to the geomorphic nature of the boards, a number of strategic clumps of woods are not 'allowed' spots to set up in. The French troops can advance into some of these on turn 1, but care needs to be taken with the placement of those 10 initial foxholes so the French can set up there in subsequent scenarios, a foxhole in 16K9 as a strategic location would allow set up in 16L10 & 16J10, very good

spots that are important to the defense of the entry area.

As the French in the initial scenario, purchase priorities should be infantry in reserve in the village, the HQ section, a platoon of Somuas, ATGs/MGs, and OBA. Match the 9-2 with HMGs on hill 513, and German infantry movement in the west is strictly limited. An ATG should be up there also, and remember to boresight. The HIP H-39s are a bit of a quandary. Do you put them together so they may use platoon movement if redeployment is needed, or do you position them optimally for armored ambushes to surprise German light tanks and/or infantry while limiting their movement potential?

As for the German, priorities are lots of OBA, at least 2 platoons of infantry, the Pz IIIs, and Pz IVs. A MG section might be substituted for an infantry platoon, and the 81\* Mtrs would be nice to be able to set up for scenario 2, but it's hard to justify spending points on them so early. Buy an off-board observer for any modules purchased with an eye to pounding any hilltop strongpoints. You might save a point for the Battalion Mortars module, given the DRM for radio contact maintenance. In this initial scenario, each German squad should have a specific mission in the overall acquisition of SLs. Make sure they have their shovels in the large grainfields to expand the string of needed foxholes for the 2nd scenario set up area. A foxhole or two in the 33O5 orchard would also help. Initial building priorities include 43I1 and 43P1.

The German Bombardment is an interesting purchase that cannot be put off too long. Once the fighting has shifted into the village in scenarios 3 & 4 your troops will be on the same halfboard as the French which leaves the best use for this to the initial 2 scenarios. A prime time is scenario 2; you have the points to spend, and if you chose to hit all of board 41, you'll probably have a chance at every French ATG, MTR, and MG, possibly in woods hexes! It's a good bet a lot of French infantry will be set up in the woods bordering Bd 41 & 43, and those not in foxholes are in for it. Later on after the German infantry pushes south into the Village a Bombardment of half boards 16 & 19 becomes tempting to disrupt the lines being held open for French reinforcements.

The biggest change in the PL 2.0 is in the Reinforcement Phase with the Redeployment process. You don't just pick up all the friendly units off the board after marking SLs and isolated groups any more. The farthest an infantry unit can move is 6 hexes and even this has an element of risk! No longer does the attacker look at the defender's setup, and move all but a handful of units to go after the weakness. You now need to set up the schwerpunkt near the end of the previous scenario. Planning, planning, planning...And now if the French have a sizeable lead going into the 4th scenario, knowing they can win by exiting their infantry, they can't just setup near the board edge after fighting in the village in scenario 3. Redeployment is a realistic innovation especially suited to these smaller campaigns and their correspondingly shorter time frames.

The CP differential for scenarios after the first is interesting. The Germans have the advantage in scenarios 3 & 4, and it's even in the 4th. The Huns have enough CPs to buy four Platoons of infantry, panzers, pioneers, MGs, OBA and

*Continued on Page 11*

# UNHAPPY TRAILS

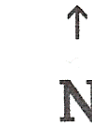
**The Mission and Numa-Numa Trails, Bougainville, November 5-11, 1943:** Following the main landings at Empress Augusta Bay on November 1, and the successful establishment of the beachhead perimeter, the Marines of the 3rd Marine Division & 3rd Raider Battalion were ordered to push inland to expand the perimeter, recon Japanese positions, secure a sight for an airstrip, and establish a jumping off point for the eventual assault on the ridgelines inland, where IJA artillery was dug in and shelling the beachhead. The only way of proceeding inland in the dense tropical jungle was along the few native trails running into the interior. Whoever controlled the trails would have the upper hand in the coming campaign, and the race for both sides was on.



**Historical Result:**

The Japanese moved first after the Raiders had established a block on the Mission Trail which led inland from the beachhead in an east-northeast direction. The Japanese attacked the blocking position, and though outnumbered the Raiders beat off the assault. The Marines then counterattacked up the trail, with the Raiders being relieved by the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines for the final push to the intersection of the Mission and Numa-Numa Trails. This occurred on Armistice Day, with the Marines securing the intersection after much hard fighting and the Japanese pulling back up the Numa-Numa toward the East-West Trail and Hellzapoppin Ridge. They left behind some 550 dead.

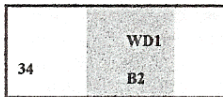
**BOARD CONFIGURATION:**



All ON Board Terrain not in play still exists for units entering play.



Part 1: Only Hexrows B-K are playable.



Part 2: Only Hexrows L-U are playable.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:**

The side with the most Total VPs accumulated over both parts wins (the Japanese win if tied). Both sides earn CVPs normally. In addition, each Pillbox is worth 6VPs and each Trench 3VPs for the side that controls it at game end of the part being played. (EXC: The Attacker in each Part also earns these VPs for the Fortification's destruction). The Attacking player in each part must earn  $\geq 9$ VPs or he loses the entire scenario.

**BALANCE:**

**Japanese:** Add a 4-4-7 to Part 1, change the MMG to a HMG and add a Hero to Part 2.

**Marine:** Add a 2-3-8 and a MMG to Part 1, change the 8-0 to a 8-1 and add a 3-4-8 to Part 2.

● Japanese move 1st in Part 1, Set up 1st in Part 2

☆ Marines Set up 1st in Part 1, Move first in Part 2

This is a 2 Part Scenario. Each Part is 5 Turns long. Restart on Turn 1, Part 2 at Game End, Part 1.

● 1 2 3 4 5 END  
☆

● Part 1: Elements of the 23rd Infantry Regiment, 6th Infantry Division [ELR:4] Enter on Turn 1 on Trail Hex K6 {SAN:4}, See SSR #1

MMC/ SMC/	4-4-8	4-4-7	2-2-8	10-1	9-0	8-0
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2 6 2

SW	dm MMG	LMG	DC
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2 3 2

Part 2: Elements of the 23rd Infantry Regiment, 6th Infantry Division [ELR:4], Set up in/adjacent to the Pillbox/Trench Hexes : {SAN:5} - Fortification Set up: The Pillbox sets up in oQ5 with CA: P4/P5. The Trench sets up in R4. Both are known and on board at start.

MMC	4-4-8	4-4-7	2-2-8	10-0	9-1	?
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5 2 4

SW/ Fort.	HMG	MMG	LMG	DC	1-3-5 Pillbox	Trench
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2



Part 1: Elements of the 3rd Marine Raider Battalion [ELR:5], set up in/adjacent to the Pillbox/Trench Hexes: {SAN:4} - Fortification Set up: The Pillbox sets up in E6 with CA: F5F6. The Trench sets up in D6. Both are known and on board at start.

MMC/ SMC	5-5-8	2-3-8	9-2	9-1
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6 2

SW/ Fort.	MMG	DC	?	1-3-5 Pillbox	Trench
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2

4

Part 2: Elements of the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment [ELR:5], Enter on turn 1 on Trail Hex L6: {SAN:3}, See SSR # 1.

MMC/ SMC	6-6-8	3-4-8	9-1	8-1	8-0
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7 2

SW	dm MMG	DC	BAZ 43
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2 2

**SPECIAL RULES:**

- #1 - EC are Wet at start. PTO Terrain (G.1) is in effect. Place overlays Wd1 on Q5 and B2 with 1 on O8 and 2 on P7. All hut hexes are Bamboo. Only the road depictions are paths (G1A), no other paths (B13.6) exist. All on board terrain not in play still exists for units entering play, which must set up on paths.
- #2 - This is a 2 Part Scenario. Part 1 is played with the units allotted for Part 1 and at game end VPs are then Totaled, the board is cleared of Part 1 units & Part 2 is started. At the end of Part 2 VPs are again Totaled and the winner determined as per the Victory Conditions. For the Marine Raiders in Part 1 and the Japanese in Part 2 there must be  $\geq 1$  Squad Equivalent &  $\geq 1$  SMC and/or SW in both fortifications at start, and NO unit may leave either until there has been an attack on any unit in it's OB other than a successful ambush, or there has been any LOS to a Known enemy unit.
- #3 - The Marine Raiders in Part 1 are Stealthy, have Assault Fire, and may use HIP for 1 squad equivalent. The Marines in Part 2 must designate 2 squads as Assault Engineers (H1.22) who must possess the DCs at start. The Japanese Elite squads in both parts are Assault Engineers, must possess the DCs at start and retain these capabilities as long as they remain Elite. There is NO Tunnel for the Japanese Pillbox. The Japanese in Part 2 may use HIP for 1 squad equivalent and any SMC/SW stacked with it in addition to normal HIP capabilities.

**West of Oudna, Tunisia, December 1, 1942:**  
As part of the Allied drive on Tunis, British Paratroopers were to make a diversionary attack on the Axis forward airbase at Oudna, after which they would be relieved by armored elements of *Blade Force*. Relief would not be forthcoming however as the Allies were stopped cold at Djefna and Djedeida in heavy fighting. With the success of the paratroop now imperiled, permission was sought to cancel the operation; unfortunately approval was not given in time and on the evening of November 29th the *Red Devils* of Frost's 2nd Battalion, making their first combat jump, floated to earth near Depienne. They then moved north to the Oudna Airfield, which they found deserted. After conducting demolitions of the airfield they faced a hazardous trek of 30 miles to reach friendly lines near Medjez el Bab.



**Historical Result:**  
Not about to let the British incursion go unhindered, the Germans dispatched Fallschirmjaegers of Koch's 5th Regiment to intercept. Supported by armored cars and Italian self propelled guns, the *Green Devils* of Jungwirt's 1st Battalion engaged in a running battle with the *Red Devils* of Frost's 2nd Battalion, with the fighting becoming hand to hand at times. After two long days of combat the remnants of Frost's battalion finally contacted friendly forces, having suffered 289 casualties out of the 500 who started the operation.

### BOARD CONFIGURATION:

↑  
N

11
18

### VICTORY CONDITIONS:

Providing he has not lost  $\geq 32$  DVP (which would result in an immediate British Victory), the German wins the instant he has accumulated  $\geq 27$  casualty DVP or at game end if the British fail to exit  $\geq 19$  DVP off the West edge (Doubled VP for captured equipment/prisoners are NA).

### BALANCE:

**British:** Add a 50\*Lt. Mtr. and a 3-3-8.

**German:** Add a dm MMG.

⊙ British Sets up first

⊕ German Moves first

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 END



**Elements of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Parachute Brigade, [ELR:5]**  
Set Up in Hexrows Z-DD (inclusive), on Boards 11 & 18, See SSR 3, {SAN:3}

MMC:

6-4-8	4-5-8	3-3-8	2-2-8
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12 2 3

SMC:

9-2	9-1	8-1	8-0
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2

SW & Ordinance

LMG	ATR	DC	50* Mtr.	76* Mtr.
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4 4 2 3



**Elements of Battalion I, Fallschirmjaeger Regiment 5 [ELR:5], Panzerspaeh Kompanie 190 and attached Italian Gruppo Semovente enter turn 1 anywhere along the East edge, {SAN:2}**

MMC/SMC

5-4-8	2-3-8	9-1	8-1	8-0
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13 2 2 2

SWs

dm	LMG	dm
MMG		50*Mtr

4 2

Vehicles

PSW222	Opel Blitz	Kfz 1	Semovente L40 da 47/32
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3 2 3

### SPECIAL RULES:

- #1 - EC are moist, No wind at start. North Africa Rules (F.0) are in effect including treating boards 11 and 18 as Desert Boards (EXC: Hill hexes use non-desert movement costs as per F.2A).
- #2 - Woods depictions are treated as Brush, Gullies are Wadis (F5.0), Grain hexes are Olive Groves(F13.5), Orchard hexes remain orchard, and all Buildings are stone. All level 2 Hill hexes are also Crags.
- #3 - British Personnel that set up in Hexrows Z-AA are CX at start. British mortars may set up dismantled. The 76\* Mtr. may not be emplaced. British 4-5-8/2-4-8 have underscored morale and are Assault Engineers (H1.22); they must possess the DCs at start.
- #4 - The German may use AFV riders with a maximum of 8PP per AFV. The SMV 47/32 crews are Italian.
- #5 - Hand to Hand CC is in effect (J2.31). Boresighting is NA.

# UNHAPPY TRAILS

## An Analysis

By Vic Provost

Average Playing Time: 6 Hours

Scenario Design: Vic Provost

**Introduction:** This unique two-part scenario gives both players a sense of the ebb and flow of the fighting that took place over the course of a week in November 1943. The Japanese have the initiative as they are on the attack in Part 1, but the tables are turned in Part 2 as the Marines get the chance to hit back. Whoever does the best *overall* job in this rumble in the jungle will pull out the win.

*This is the first in our Bougainville Series of Scenarios, a preview of at least a half dozen actions on that bitterly contested island. We will be focusing on the Marines in the first few offerings, but we'll also give the U.S. Army units their just due later on in the sequence. Needless to say with the Strategic situation turning against the Japanese, they fought with utter ferocity if not tactical finesse and ultimately American operational planning proved two steps ahead of their counterparts. The campaign as a whole offers a wealth of material for the PTO enthusiast and we are happy to help bring these actions to the pages of this publication for you. Vic*

### JAPANESE PERSPECTIVE:

#### Part 1

**Advantages:** Japanese Characteristics, Initiative on attack, Leadership, Demo Charges.

**Disadvantages:** Japanese Characteristics, Inherent Firepower in CC, Time.

The Japanese player has a strong force with which to launch the attack but needs to decide early on how to proceed versus the Marine strongpoint. The five turn length gives enough time to set up an attack from two or even three directions against the ten-hex Marine setup area, but success in capturing the Bunker will probably take up to two full game turns. So the decision becomes whether to go after the fortifications in a straight ahead assault

with a small flank attack or take the time to develop a multi-directional attack in which the main goal is to inflict maximum casualties on the marines with the possible byproduct of securing unoccupied fortifications on the last turn. The straight ahead attack can commence almost immediately but a rash run down the trail on turn one will insure cheap CVPs for the Marines if you're CX and you try crashing into the Raider's setup area. A better idea is to pull up a couple hexes away and advance adjacent *concealed* with the majority of your force. If the Marines skulk back and forth put your MMGs together and get ready for your prep fire. Prep with your highest fire power units (MMGs, 10-1, three squads with LMGs), but keep half of your units concealed to advance on any Marine unit that loses its Concealment or to take any hexes left vacant by broken units. After peeling away the initial perimeter defense, attack the strong points with Banzai/DC combinations. You can put quite a hurt on the Raiders if you can get a unit to survive its charge in good order in a US unit's hex and then hit it with a DC attack which will attack only the defender in advancing fire, and leave the IJA with the upper hand for CC. If you can get WP grenades from an Engineer squad to precede the Banzai, it's an even more effective tactic as the Marines are taking a MC before the real 'fun' begins. All hell is sure to break loose about now; it's helpful to the cause if even a 'minor' flank maneuver can hit from around the D7 Bamboo to tie up valuable defenders needed to hold off the main thrust. This straight ahead attack was usually quite decimating to both sides in playtest and the player who got in the best punches first would hold the advantage going into the end game. A quite different approach was to divide the force into two or three fairly equal elements, one with the main firebase with the MMGs and 10-1, the other(s) with maneuver elements to go around the E3-H5 gully with the idea to come up in the northern flank or even the rear west of the Trench when the attack is sprung on turn 4. A third prong might come around the aforementioned D7 bamboo to cause even more havoc. This attack plan, due to the long flank march, takes much longer to develop but offers the potentially devastating prospect of Marine squads dying for failure to rout as there is nowhere to go with the sons of Nippon coming from

all directions. There might not be time to occupy the Bunker in this attack, but the possibility of taking out most of the Marine OB may be too good to pass up.

The Japanese nationality characteristics are two sides of the coin, as always. They are really in their element in the claustrophobic close quarters of dense jungle where they can use their concealment and stealth to seek out CC opportunities. The ability to stay in good order after failing MCs is a tremendous asset in this in your face slugfest, especially in the case of DC-toting elite squads looking to cause death and destruction. Barring an outright KIA or pin result, these engineers will deliver the goods. This is one of those times where you need to think hard about using those pesky DC heroes. They are more fragile than the squads but they soak up tons of defensive fire. Of course, the byproduct of not breaking is the slow but sure erosion of the Japanese strength. The Japanese leadership is a listed strength not because of their grand total -1 DRM, but because there are three of them available to start Banzai charges and for early/mid game maneuvering. The Japanese also count the initiative of being on the attack here as an advantage because the defense is limited in their setup area, and those units that start in the fortifications are frozen in place. This effectively limits any redeployment of the defense, allowing the attack to probe for weakness and overwhelm them. The Japanese actually find a foe willing to stand toe to toe in CC here. The Raiders are also stealthy and can actually get the ambush dr advantage as the Japanese stealth is negated by being an attacker in jungle. If the Japanese are ambushed, the Raiders had better kill them, and have two cracks with a five firepower versus a four in head to head matchups, so they fire on the 1-1, and the IJA on the 1-2. Once HH takes effect count on mounting casualties for both sides. Time is a factor, of course, with only five turns to take the position and as mentioned above depending on the offensive plan and execution it may not be enough.

#### Part 2:

**Advantages:** Boresighted MGs, HIP, Stealth, Concealment

**Disadvantages:** Small force, known setup area, firepower in CC

The defenders in both parts of this scenario share the problems of a relatively small force defending in a small, known,

limited area where the fortifications that might normally be HIP are on map (both sides had scouted and done probing attacks leading up to the climatic actions portrayed). The Japanese defenders do have the luxury of two HIP squad equivalents, and though the Marines know the extent of their setup area they don't know exactly where they are until the inevitable ambushes are sprung. Remember to skulk at first contact and feint with your dummies to keep the Marines guessing. The assault engineer with his DC is a potential game saving Ace in the hole and should be held for the decisive moment in this battle of survival. By SSR, a SW must setup in each fortification, the Japanese have the flexibility to put either or both the HMG/MMG in the bunker, or he could opt to put a 4-4-7/LMG in there instead and utilize the increased field of fire in hexes P5, Q6, or in the bunker hex itself using HIP *outside* the fortification. This can be a nasty surprise for the girenes working their way through the perimeter defense. Boresighting is advised on hexes O5, Q5, and/or P6. The marines may try to flank the IJA position by going around the N4/M6 gully and/or the oO8/oP7 Bamboo, but as we've seen with the Japanese attack options in Part 1 this will take time and depending on the VP totals from the first part it might be too time consuming to take the fortifications that way. The IJA player must be ready for some semblance of a flank attack as a straight ahead assault by itself probably will be repulsed and plays in to the defenses hands. These Marines are not as eager for CC as their stealthy Raider brethren in Part 1, and will prefer to bash the Japanese with their very potent 6 inherent FP. If they do try to advance in they face +1 Attacker in jungle versus -1 stealthy defenders, an ambush situation which the IJA will chance everytime. If not ambushed the Marine FP advantage probably insures the Japs will die, due to their small numbers they need to take the attacker(s) with them. Keep tabs on VPs and remember your Banzai option toward game end to try and grab back fortifications/ inflict needed CVPs. The IJA need to hang tough here but their well known characteristics give them a fighting chance to pull out a hard earned victory.

**MARINE PERSPECTIVE:**

**Part 1**

**Advantages:** Firepower, Leadership, Morale, Stealth, Boresighting

**Disadvantages:** Small force, Known setup area, No HMG

As do their Japanese counterparts, these Marine Raiders have to weather the storm against superior numbers but with the added lack of heavy MG support. They have to make do with the MMGs allotted to their TO & E but do have boresighting for them, and combined with the 9-2 leader can be devastating if they can get that 1 out of 3 chance at ROF. Target hexes G8, F6, or F7 & hope for ROF. They do have an advantage in inherent FP, both leaders have a morale of 9 and negative leadership mods. Being stealthy this is one of the few troop types that is not afraid of IJA advances and can hold their own in CC. What these Raiders do fear is a multi-directional Japanese attack that leaves them nowhere to rout. To break is to die if these dire circumstances come about and they must take precautions against the possibility. If the IJA are taking the scenic route around the gully, redeploy a squad or two to D2 or D3 to meet the threat. Likewise beware of infiltrators coming around the D7 bamboo trying to attack the rear, with the trench as their ultimate target. You must be flexible and use your interior lines to meet the shifting threats. Remember your own 'parcel post' and save it for when the IJA are moving in for the kill on the pillbox. Things may get desperate enough to toss the DC. Your HIP squad may come as a surprise in the Bamboo, hitting flanking infiltrators on the way by. In any event remember to skulk if possible, keep a buffer around those fortifications, meet the threats head on, and pass those MCs.

**Part 2:**

**Advantages:** Firepower, Morale, Assault Engineers and DCs.

**Disadvantages:** Not Stealthy, Time.

These Marines have the same mission as their Japanese counterparts in Part 1. Although the attack plans may be similar they must be executed to take advantage of their own characteristics. With a morale of eight and inherent firepower of six these girenes can stand toe to toe with the Japs and by sheer firepower eventually wear them out. What they should not do is play into Japanese hands by getting too up-close and personal, i.e. CC. Although they have a perceived 3-2 advantage in CC head to head, they may never get off a shot due to the ambush modifiers. These Marines,

unlike the Raiders, are NOT stealthy, the IJA are, and being attacker in jungle puts them in a +1 vs -1 drm for a net 2 advantage for the defenders. Bad news against most, disastrous against these HH demons. So the Marines need to do a straight ahead, methodical assault, with a platoon flanking element to tie up a significant portion of the IJA defense. Remember to advance through every hex of the setup area, as per G4 if you merely move through them the Japanese may opt to stay hidden and let you pass by, only to 'appear' during defensive fire or the beginning of the rout phase with disastrous results for broken Marines. Use your fire power as brute force to strip away the initial defense line. When adjacent to the fortifications watch out for HIP units in the hex, an occupied Bunker often has hidden friends waiting to spring a trap. The bazooka can be a big help clearing the Bunker; combine it with a DC attack and remember the smoke exponent of 5 (WP on a 4 or less) from your assault engineers. Try to locate the IJA's own assault engineers; they're the most dangerous asset they have and they'll try to wax the climatic Marine attempt to gain control of the Bunker. Do not get fancy and overextend the attack with multiple flank moves, this may work for the Japanese in part 1 because they don't break and the Marines do, but here it gives them a chance to defeat squads in detail, and they'll dog them into perpetual DM status. In summary, use a sledgehammer, straight ahead attack from the main body, one platoon to hit either flank, and pray for good dice on those fire attacks and MCs.

**Designer's Notes:**

This scenario came together rather quickly after reading some interesting passages in the US Army in WWII. I was struck by the ebb and flow of the battles for the trails and decided the best way to portray this was a 2-part scenario where both sides had to attack/defend. I then set VPs for the fortifications to make them the focus of the actions. Next was deciding on the size of the defensive forces, giving both sides equivalent CVP value. Throughout the 15 game long playtest process tinkering was applied to both sides until you see the end-product we have today. The main thing that happened mid way in the playtest was to add a squad to both defensive forces and lessen the leadership quality of the attackers. The playtest ended with 8 Marine and 7 Japanese wins and we are quite happy with the end result. I hope you will too. Bloody good fun, PTO style.

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## DEVILS PLAY:

### An Analysis

### By Tom Morin

**Average Playing Time: 5+ Hours**  
**Scenario Design: Tom Morin**

**Introduction:** This scenario portrays one of the first combat engagements between British and German paratroopers, taking place in the rugged terrain of northern Tunisia very early in the campaign. The *Red Devils* must escape the grasp of the *Green Devils* or inflict a stinging defeat on them. The German will look to prevent this while trying to likewise inflict casualties.

*This is the first in our Tunisian Series of Scenarios, and gives you a taste of things to come. Tom has been working on and off on this particular group of designs for a half dozen years. They were targeted for 'ON ALL FRONTS' before that venerable publication went out of circulation. Now with the opportunity that this periodical gives us we can begin to share these with the ASL community, Vic.*

#### BRITISH PERSPECTIVE:

**Advantages:** Elite Troops, Leadership, ELR, Mortars, Smoke,

**Disadvantages:** Poor Anti-Tank capability, lack of mobility (i.e. no vehicular transport), must traverse mostly open country to exit.

The British must decide whether he will attempt to win by exiting or by killing the German and their Italian Allies. The initial setup is very crucial in this scenario as a significant breakthrough will spell doom for the *Red Devils*. The best setup would be one that keeps BOTH options open. It is unlikely that all of the German and Italian vehicles can be prevented from getting through the front lines, but the Brit's must prevent any infantry from doing so. They must also prevent the early capture of the level 2 hill hexes, especially 18X5 with its commanding view. Due to the hill hexes there and its isolation from the rest of the battlefield, the southern half of board 18 should be heavily defended. One suggested setup that has worked well in the past is as follows: the 9-2 and the 76\*Mtr. both go in that sector, the 9-2/6-4-8/LMG in BB7, the 76\*Mtr./2-2-8 in Z7, a 6-4-8/LMG in DD7, a 6-4-8 in AA9, a 3-3-8/ATR

in BB8, a 6-4-8/8-0 in AA6, 3-3-8/ATR and 3-3-8/50\*Mtr. in BB5, and a 3-3-8/ATR in crest status in the CC3 wadi. This setup allows them to punish any thrust along the south board edge as well as provide enfilading fire on the road. Should the Germans strike elsewhere, this group and it's 21 DVP can run for the west edge. On board 11 the 9-1/6-4-8/LMG go in DD8, a 6-4-8/LMG in CC10, a 3-3-8/50\*Mtr. in BB9, another 3-3-8/50\*Mtr. in CC8, and a 6-4-8/3-3-8/ATR go in Z8. these units block the center while being able to enfilade the Board 18 road and the Board 11 gap between the olive groves. The rest of Board 11 is covered by a 8-1/6-4-8 in BB6, a 4-5-8 assault engineer with DC in BB5, 6-4-8 in BB3, 8-0/6-4-8 in AA2, and the other assault engineer 4-5-8/DC in AA1. Wherever the German strikes those units become the delaying force and all others should attempt to exit. Should the German be foolish enough to attack along a broad front or with separate, non-supporting thrusts, the British should strongly consider going after the casualty Victory Condition with aggressive counterattacks. This also goes if the Axis suffer heavy AFV casualties early in the game, given the British anti-armor capability this is not likely unless the Axis vehicles get close. They are very vulnerable in that they need to be CE to use their MA, and the Italian Assault Guns are always CE. If stunned in close proximity of the British they will be in extreme danger in CC with NO MG armament, the German ACs will be BU the next turn, and won't be able to use their MA while those Italian AGs will still be CE and susceptible to IFT fire attacks. The mortars are also a threat to the AFVs, not that big a chance to outright kill a vehicle, but with OT modifiers collateral attacks versus the crew can hurt. Also of course, with regards the mortars, don't forget the smoke, both to shroud the German firebases and to cover your retreats. With good luck on smoke depletion, a couple of turns of filling the terrain with smoke rounds may be all the *Red Devils* need to escape for a win.

#### GERMAN PERSPECTIVE:

**Advantages:** AFVs, Elite troops, ELR, MGs, Mobility.

**Disadvantages:** Open-topped AFVs with NO vehicular MGs, Unarmored vehicles, must attack across mostly open terrain.

Barring poor play (and/or lousy

dice) it is unlikely the German will get a chance to win by the CVP route, thus he must focus on breaking through with some mobile units, and/or capturing the all important level 2 hill hexes (especially 18X5) from which the MGs can harass the retreating *Red Devils*. This can be best accomplished by making one concentrated *Schwerpunkt* or two mutually supporting thrusts. The German must not be too aggressive/reckless or he could see the casualties pile up early on, and risk losing by the CVP cap. AFV losses especially can put him in danger of this fate. But he does need to force a breakthrough somewhere and he does have some room to work with, both in the literal sense with terrain, and the figurative sense with CVPs. It is definitely worth the risk to put a 5-4-8/LMG and a 2-3-8/50\*Mtr. in each truck, and as soon as a breakthrough forms blitz them through, and work their way to blocking positions to prevent a quick exit. Remember with these boards treated as North African terrain. Open ground only cost wheeled transport one MP per hex, so they can go a long way in one movement phase off road. A dilemma for the German is whether to use the ACs to try to breakthrough (they can BU; the Italians cannot) or assist with the assault with their excellent HE and smoke capabilities. Circumstances will dictate what course to take, but typically they need to run the gauntlet and get into blocking positions with whatever troops that may have made it through in the trucks. Remember SSR:4 allows for limited rider capacity and you should have some 2-3-8s taking advantage of this, despite the obvious risks. The Italian Assault Guns should help cover the attack with Armored Assault, however their poor firepower (No MGs) and as before mentioned vulnerability (Always CE) are liabilities.

There are three attack routes to consider: (1) along the southern half of Board 18, (2) along the Board 18 road, and (3) through the Board 11 gap between the olive groves. What must be kept in mind when choosing the attack route(s) is whether the vehicles (especially the trucks) can quickly traverse the area; getting caught in close terrain like the olive groves can result in a quick and fiery demise. The trucks must also have a sheltered place to hide until the assault makes a hole to run through. Each of the three approaches has such a

spot; hexes 11GG1/GG2, 18FF10/GG10, and the board 18 wadi. Wherever the assault is made, expect to suffer casualties right away due to the open ground you must initially cross. Attempt SDs immediately to screen the infantry and more vulnerable vehicles. After making a breakthrough run, the AFVs and trucks through but remember it is imperative to get some infantry along for the ride; without infantry support all of these AFVs are vulnerable to close in IFT and CC attacks. We found in playtesting that the German lost more often due to casualties than to a mass British exit; careless or too aggressive play will result in a loss. Remember you only need stop that 19th DVP to prevent an exit win; you don't need to try and stop everyone from exiting, simply by pinning/delaying can be enough. See where the most valuable units are and try to pen them in. Get the MMG and 9-1/8-1 leader up on a level 2 hill as quickly as possible to interdict westward movement. Keep your mobility in mind; if stronger British forces approach your blocking units, fall back and harass at a distance. Remember that Hand to Hand CC is in effect and casualties can quickly pile up for both sides. Also remember to keep your forces concentrated enough for mutual support; if it becomes apparent that the British will not be able to win by the exit victory conditions you can expect the *Red Devils* to turn around and live up to their name by making ferocious suicide attacks in attempts to garner CVPs. If your units are dispersed and/or your AFVs are unsupported, you could be in BIG trouble. This is one of those tough scenarios that really forces you to think on your feet and alter your plans from turn to turn as the flow of events dictates new, critical, decisions with each subsequent turn.

**Designer's Notes:**

For the British O.B. I used Steve Swan's excellent article 'Red Devils', along with the usual Chapter H notes. The British paratroops were traveling light but I felt the 76\*Mortar was necessary to give them some more punch, and it was on the TOE for the Battalion. There was also some photographic evidence in the Kurowski volume to support its inclusion. This book is where we found the unique picture you see in the scenario with both the German AC and the Italian

Semovente AG in the same shot. The inclusion of an engineer detachment was assumed due to the nature of their mission; this also gives the British some extra anti-tank and smoke making capability. The 4-5-8s also have underscored morale, so use the 'Pegasus Bridge' counters if available. These paratroops have the standard excellent ELR of 5 and high grade leadership to go with their elite status. The airborne 50\* light mortar was not available as of yet, so the standard 50\* is used. As for the German O.B; the usual 5-4-8 paratroop squad type is used, with the ELR of 5 reflecting the veteran status of the 5th Regiment, which was made up of many battle-hardened *jaegers*. Chapter H was used for the SMC/SW allocation while keeping in mind their lightly armed/highly mobile status. Both text and photographic evidence showed the presence of the 75\*AC and the 47/32 SMV, as well as AFV riders. Since riders are normally not allowed on these smaller AFVs I used the PP capacity allowed to Bren Carriers, which are about the same size. The SAN are minimal in this mobile battle for both sides, and Hand to Hand CC is allowed as it was mentioned in some accounts. The CX restriction is to show the British units are on the move, and also prevents a mass CX move by the western most units on turn 1, which would make it very tough for the German infantry to ever catch up. This also dampens the effects of British firebases on level 2 hill hexes in the German Turn 1 movement phase, making it a little more survivable to enter that open ground. The terrain itself represents the rough, hilly and barren landscape of Tunisia. I almost used desert boards, but too many overlays would have made setup a real pain, and I wanted to keep this reasonably simple. The crags on the hilltops were for both for AFV overrun prevention as well as preventing an AFV from staking a claim to a position with such a dominating view.

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**LOST SENTINELS - GEMBOUX THE FEINT  
 A CAMPAIGN ANALYSIS**

*Continued from Page 5*

AND a bombardment for scenarios 3 and 4. The French can't match the German numbers in infantry but can get sufficient armor and plenty of OBA. PL 2.0 allows 3 modules of OBA compared to the 2 usually seen in these campaigns. The French will need as much as they can get operating to hold out against all that infantry. Scenario 2 is crucial for the French; they need to maximize their on map setup while they can. If they have not bought the AT/Mtr section, NOW's the time! Buy as much infantry as possible; some in reserve in the village, but it's worth the extra point for on map setup for at least half your infantry. Depending on losses in the 1st scenario more armor may not be needed. We believe this scenario can be the deciding moment in the battle. If the French can stack up the CVPs and hold the high ground, then they have a good chance to win; if not and the German hordes get into the village in force it will be very difficult for the French to pull it out.

Scenario 3 is difficult to prognosticate. So much can happen in the second scenario that prediction is mainly guesswork, but with the advantage in CPs the Germans should make a fight of it if things went wrong and impose their will and momentum if things went right. The Germans also get a second entry area on the east edge of board 11 for some more panzer reinforcements. These should aid in the clearing of the east end of the village. The campaign winds down in the 4th scenario with less CPs for both sides to augment the on board survivors. The German infantry should have an edge by this time, and unfortunately for the French, the S35s are subject to recall by SSR. Unless the scenario ends quite suddenly they will probably take their balls and go home. Loss of the dominant armor at this juncture may be the *coup de grace* and hand the win to the Krauts. At this point, if the French are still in the game do they try for the CVP Victory and exit what they can? Or have the Germans completely cut off the troops in the village from the exit area? If so, their fate may be sealed and they have to fight for the village. There are too many variables to gauge; only playing out this fine campaign game can answer these questions.

In conclusion, this is going to be an exciting, highly mobile brawl. Lots of vehicles dashing about, clouds of smoke drifting over the battlefield, and all that OBA crashing down. The French fight and stand for their Honor. The German infantry run through the bullet swept open ground for the questionable shelter of the stone buildings in the village. Their luck at dodging shrapnel decides the battle. Tanks and artillery can blow things up, but only infantry can take and hold ground.

*A salute to Tim Robinson who submitted the original scenarios for Gembloux the Feint, to Pedro Ramis who designed it, and Steve Pleva for developing it.*

Sorry about the font size change in mid-stream, it was done to fit it all in this issue, Vic.

~ ASL ~

**NOT JUST A GAME,  
 BUT A LIFESTYLE.**

**TIPS For Veterans:** Did you know that you DON'T need to take a PAATC if the AFV's location you are about to advance into is not in LOS? As per the first sentence of A11.6, you must take a PAATC if you are advancing into the location of a manned Known enemy AFV. The key in this case is the term Known. Re-read the definition of known enemy unit and you will see that a unit must have LOS to another unit for it to be known to it. The prime circumstance to take advantage of this is when an AFV is in bypass of a woods hex such as 34EE5 (on either the EE5/FF4 or EE5/EE4 hexsides). You have a squad in 34EE6. the squad does not have LOS to any of the potential Covered Ars Focal Points from which to check LOS due to the intervening woods in EE5 so the squad can Advance in free of any PAATC. Try this out next chance you get and watch your opponent scramble around the rulebook to try and prove you wrong. Works especially well for those six morale troops who I can never get to pass a PAATC. Good Hunting.

**TIPS For Novices:** Last time we discussed the much practiced tactic known as Skulking. Now let's look at some tactics to counter it. Unless you have overwhelming firepower, a large advantage in numbers, or all the time in the world, what needs to be done is a combination of fire and maneuver. A typical situation is a city fight where you need to take a multi-hex building to win the scenario. You've fought all the way across two mapboards to get across the street from this block and now you're confronted with what are probably two concealed squads in adjacent ground level locations, with what looks like another squad and a leader backing them up. So do you just sit there and blast away every fire phase hoping to eliminate them by fire? Not in +3 TEM stone buildings. Deploy a squad (or two if you have a 2-1 advantage in men). Next put a bounding fire counter on your firebase to designate them as opportunity firers. If you have a decent infantry smoke exponent, you might try to put some covering smoke into the street for what comes next: run two half squads right at the enemy positions. If they hold their fire you continue into their position and strip their concealment. If they open fire, and don't kill the half squads, then you can try flanking the position as they won't be Subsequent First Firing at any thing but adjacent units. If the scouts died, you might try for more smoke grenades and assault move into the street, facing whatever residual firepower they laid down. Hopefully someone survived in good order (it would be great if also unpinned) to aid in the advancing fire and to advance in for some CC. Hose down the position(s) with your opportunity firers and hope for the best. Depending on the size and depth of the enemy position, these tactics may need to be repeated for another turn or two, especially if facing fortified positions with their added TEM, and the need to at least pin a squad in order to advance in. Needless to say the tactic we all fondly know as Skulking is a time tested, legitimate (if not 'realistic'), ASL defensive tactic that can be very frustrating to impatient attackers who don't keep in mind their fundamentals of fire and movement to combat such tactics. Keep your cool, think it through, and hope for a fair shake of the dice.

**PLAYTEST NEWS:** The latest on the CENTRAL STALINGRAD Module that Tom Morin has designed and all of the 'Bunker' crew are helping to develop is that our artist who is redoing the map, Don Petros, brought a copy of the playtest map to ASLOK (Oktoberfest) with some of the changes he is in the middle of applying to the final 'production' version of the map. It was a big hit there as it has been everywhere it has been seen. We still expect to have the finished version sometime late in the winter. As soon as we do, playtesting will go into high gear on adapting the scenarios developed for the old map to the new one. The devastation of the downtown area was even more widespread than first thought, and with the newly unearthed photographic evidence, it should be one of the most accurate and stunning peices of ASL artwork yet seen. This project is being developed with the support of MMP and will eventually be in the AH ASL pipeline. Work continues on a variety of series projects for this newsletter, with the early war 1941/42 Philippine campaign getting the lion share of our attention right now. We are presently working on a cool scenario involving the Philippine Scouts, and the heroic stand at Binolan, in the coastal plain south of Lingayen Gulf. They held up elements of the 2nd Formosa Division and 4th Tank Regiment for several hours while the remnants of the 71st Infantry Division, various coastal defense units, and their own supply train made its way south away from the rampaging invaders. It will feature a combined convoy/column representing the fleeing units, some odd ordinance, and the Scouts riding in on horseback into the town one step ahead of the Japanese spearhead. An interesting, complicated, but very entertaining bit of fallback defense, PTO style. We've also been working on the next scenario in the Leibstandarte series, which takes place in a Belgian town just outside of the Dunkirk perimeter and features a nasty battle for the Marketplace.

**A LOOK AHEAD:** The two scenarios just mentioned have been penciled in for Issue # 3 Winter 1998, and we have quite a few options to choose from the issue after that. Work continues on Ralph McDonald's Sgt. Rudolf Brasche series and Tom Morin's Tunisian series, with a truly BIG Kasserine Pass scenario being added to the playtest agenda. Also on tap for Issue # 3 are another fine article by Jim Torkelson, this one on the RB Classic 'One Down, Two to Go'; a Preview of the 1998 New England Regional ASL Championship - The Nor'Easter at Havoc, a listing of all known ASL clubs in the region, and our usual features: Tactical Tips for Veterans and Novices, Playtest news from the 'Bunker', and a look ahead at coming 'Dispatches'. We are also looking at several possibilities for our next *Subject*, and we'll inform you of our decision in this regard next time. Until then, **OVER AND OUT, Vic.**