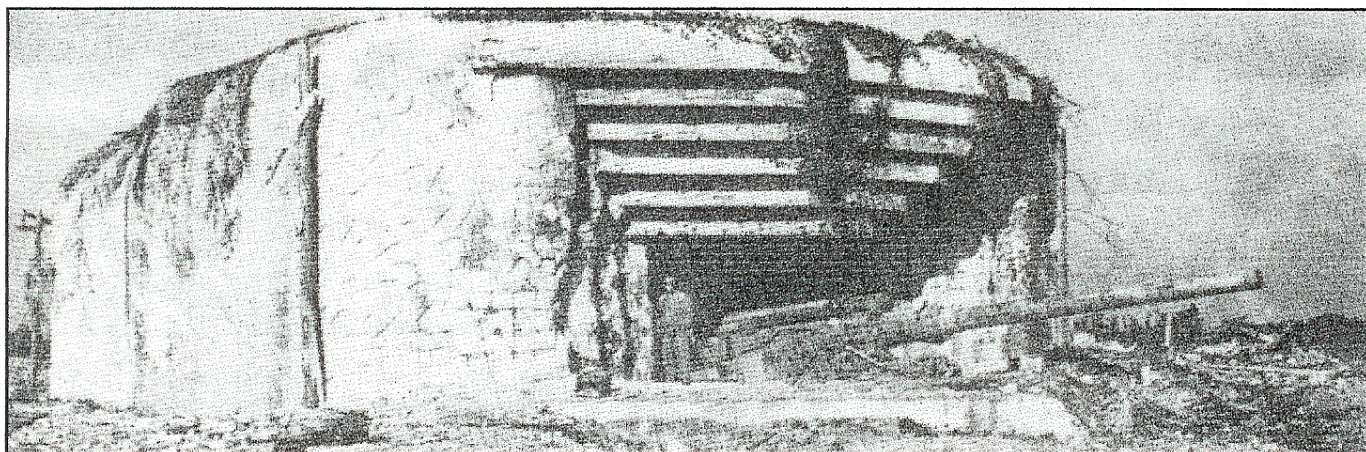
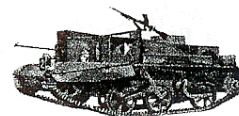


Dispatches from the Bunker

Dispatch # 06



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

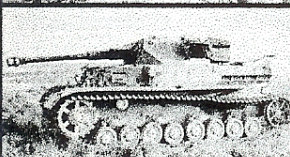


IN THIS ISSUE:

Greetings from the Bunker: In this issue we have two more action packed scenarios. Also on tap are articles on 'Fighting With Conscripts', 'Concealment in the ETO', a preview of The Nor'Easter New England ASL Championship, and all our usual features.



Dropping like flies: The *Ida Group* of the Japanese *2nd Tank Division* had their orders: to hold Munoz at all costs. It was the mission of the US **20th Infantry Regiment** to kick them out and open the way to San Jose. Who will win in this brutal urban struggle?



First Clash in Tunisia: As *Kampfgruppe Witzig* approached Djebel Abiod they were unaware of the presence of elements of the British **36th Brigade**, dug-in in the village at the base of the djebel. Can the *Panzerpioneers* overcome their surprise, and win the day?

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 approximately every 3/4 months 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, Money Order, (Foreign Subscribers *please* send cash or a Postal Money Order) in USA Funds (make checks/money orders payable to Vic Provost) to:

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Dispatches from the Bunker is published by Vic Provost of the 'Bunker Crew'.

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Welcome to the fruits of our Labors.

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Signals: Hello to one and all. Today I want to talk about the importance of ROAR, the automated Scenario Results Archive that is a potentially very valuable Archive for all ASL Players. Basically any player can go to the website, and once registered, can enter the results of any game he or his group of players has played in. The value in doing this is that over time the data that accumulates becomes more 'valid' as more results are tabulated. Scenarios that at first glance may look like unbalanced dogs may prove to be surprisingly balanced as players of all experience and skill levels report their results. So after 100 or more playings, the data we have is much more valuable than after only 20 or so playings. This is of great help to tournament directors trying to make up their scenario lists. It is also a great way to 'check' on that scenario you and your playing partner have been meaning to play but are not sure of the perceived balance, and with all of the choices we have in this 'Golden Age' of ASL, you want to play something you have a reasonable expectation of being balanced for both sides. So Please go to the ROAR site at <http://www.netreach.net/~jrv/> and report each game that you play, each time you do adds value to the entire database and helps us all down the line. J R VanMechelen has put together a wonderful resource for the entire ASL community and is to be commended for picking up the torch from the original ASL Scenario Record that Will Scarvie and others kept going for so long. Please remember to report *All* your 'Dispatches' scenario playings, thanks for your participation, *Vic*.

ATTENTION: NEW ADDRESS - Yes indeed, gentlemen, I've moved to a more 'Permanent' address in the wake of the events of last year. It is listed above in the subscription info of the credits box. Sorry about having this change two issues in a row but sometimes life is full of many twists and turns, *Vic*.

THE NEW ENGLAND ASL CHAMPIONSHIP: The Nor'Easter '99

It is that time of year again, with our own **NEW ENGLAND ASL CHAMPIONSHIP: The Nor'Easter '99** being held this April 23-25 at our new site in the spacious cellar of *The Citadel* Hobby Store in Groton, CT. The action starts on Friday evening at 6:00 with one round that night, two rounds on Saturday, and two rounds winding up the tournament on Sunday. Admission is dirt cheap with a \$5.00 Pre-Registration Fee or \$10.00 Admission at the door. We expect over 30+ participants this year, and look forward to seeing some of you there. To Pre-Register send the above mentioned \$5.00 to: **The Citadel**

**537 Long Hill Road
Groton, Ct 06340**

Pat Flory, the store owner, ASL Player, and all-around nice guy will provide directions to the site and any other Info you may need when you pre-register, any inquiries that you need before hand may be directed to his e-mail at: citrngr@sprynet.com or phone at: (860)445-0641

Lodging will be available at:

The Quality Inn (860)445-8141 [\$65.00 per night] or **Econo Lodge** (860)445-6550 [\$55.00 per night]

Here is the Scenario list, AVALONCON Style Format with two columns of three scenarios each:

COLUMN A

Winter War Round 1
Fighting Withdrawal (1)
Hakkaa Paalle (G17)
Surprise Encounter (A88)

Desert Round 2
Khamsin (37)
Desert Citadel (ASLUG 8)
And Here We Damned Well Stayed (A50)

Italy Round 3
Faugh A' Ballagh (A93)
Surrender or Die (BB10)
To Clear a Roadblock (A99)

Arnhem Round 4
Zon with the Wind (A32)
Driel Team (A37)
Close Order Driel (CH26)

PTO Round 5
Mayhem in Manilla (A103)
Stand and Die (WCW10)
Block Busters (A115)

COLUMN B

France '40
Brasche Encounter (DB001)
Le Herrisson (77)
In Front of the Storm (A104)

Stalingrad
Bread Factory # 2 (RB3)
Turned Away (RB6)
Guryev's HQ (DASL 1)

Normandy
Gavin Take (T1)
Death at Carentan (A59)
Royal Marines (AD9)

Battle of the Bulge
Pieper's Last Gasp (KGP10)
Rocket's Red Glare (G6)
Duel at Rueller (SP3)

Fall of the Reich
Broich Bash (A69)
Operation Nordwind (CH44)
Pomeranian Tigers (SP11)

The scenarios were picked by a vote of the entire New England ASL Community, and as you can see many old 'Classics' won out and made the final cut. Carl Nogueira and Bob Walden have assumed the administrative duties this year and I know they will do a great job. Prizes will be from MMP, HOB, Bounding Fire Productions, and from this humble publication. The entire 'Bunker Crew' plans on attending,

**HELL ON WHEELS BATTLE PACK
BOUNDING FIRE PRODUCTIONS**

**HELL ON WHEELS
BATTLE PACK**



\$22



Bounding Fire Productions' collection of WWII tactical warfare scenarios based on the history of the U.S. Army's 2nd Armored Division

Bounding Fire Productions' HELL ON WHEELS Battle Pack is a collection of 13 scenarios, a deluxe-sized map, and two sheets of DASL Rubble Overlays which follow the exploits of the US 2nd Armored Division throughout the campaigns in North Africa, Sicily, and Northwestern Europe. It is the first offering from the Texas ASL Community and is a very handsome initial offering in FULL Color. The Brainchild of Captain Chas Smith of Fort Hood and the Austin, Texas ASL Club led by Matt Shostak, Mike Austin, and Sam Tyson, this Scenario Pack is highly recommended by the 'Bunker Crew', who did playtesting on several of these fine actions, and we are most impressed with the final result. To get your copy send: \$22.00 plus \$3.00 S & H (\$1.00 for each additional pack, \$5.00 outside the continental USA [Plus \$1.82 Sales Tax in Texas Only]) to: **BOUNDING FIRE PRODUCTIONS
P.O. BOX 743**

ATTENTION: Time to Re-Subscribe?

You can tell which issue is your last by looking at the bottom line of your address label on the shipping envelope. To make the re-subscription process as easy as possible, I have included a re-subscription form for those whose subscription is about to expire. Merely fill it out and send your remittance to the address on Page 2. There is also a short questionnaire on the form. Your feedback will be read and can influence how we do things in the future, so please take a few minutes to fill it out. It has been our sincere pleasure to serve the ASL community, and I look forward to publishing many more issues of 'Dispatches'. I personally want to say a big 'THANK YOU' to all who have given me such great encouragement and support. I look forward to your replies, *Vic.*

Fighting with Conscripts

By Robert Delwood w Vic Provost

Welcome to another talented writer, this time from the other side of the continent, from the Seattle ASL scene one Robert Delwood. Here he takes a look at how to handle those inexperienced troops that we all must lead from time to time.

Having a force with conscript or green troops is difficult in many ways. Their small firepower, low morale, and minimal movement capabilities penalize the owning force but these restrictions are only a portion of their true limitations. So are they worthless? Pretty much, but there are ways to make them more useful in battle.

The Rules:

First we must understand the rules governing them. A19.2 covers the majority of the rules. There is a distinction between conscripts and green troops. Green Units, while still considered inexperienced, are generally troops that have not been battle-tested but are properly supplied and motivated. This mostly refers to American Troops but could apply to several nationalities. Occasionally SSRs will designate battle-worn or exhausted troops as green to reflect extreme conditions. Conscripts, on the other hand, are troops raised by a nation by forcing enrollment. They are usually poorly trained, under-supplied, and lacking leadership. Keeping these restrictions in mind, the rules accurately reflect the quality of these troops.

Movement:

All inexperienced have three MFs, not the standard four. Green Troops, unlike conscripts, can move as if experienced when stacked with a leader, thus they would be able to use the standard four MFs. All inexperienced troops still can receive the two MF Leader Bonus.

SW:

Inexperienced troops have the B#/X# number of a SW reduced by one.

Cowering:

Inexperienced troops, or a FG that contains an inexperienced unit (Random Selection to determine exactly who cowers), cower *two* columns, not the standard one.

PAATC:

Inexperienced Troops are reluctant to attack AFVs, and must take a 1 PAATC rather than a normal TC that all experienced troops would take. In addition, the CCV of the inexperienced unit is reduced by one.

Capture:

Inexperienced Troops are more prone to surrendering, thus a capture attempt versus an inexperienced unit in CC/Melee receive a -1 DRM rather than the +1 DRM that other capture attempts have. Inexperienced troops are also LAX, which adds a +1 drm to their ambush dr.

Substitution:

Since inexperienced troops are the lowest quality level of units for a nationality, they may not be replaced further because of an ELR failure, and will be Disrupted (A19.12) instead. A disrupted unit may not attempt self-rally, nor rout unless in open ground and/or adjacent to an AFV. It may not use low crawl if it does rout, and will surrender in either the the rout phase if adjacent to an enemy personnel unit or at any point it is in the same location as an enemy unit. Furthermore, disrupted units DO NOT prevent enemy movement through their hex.

Leadership:

In all cases, Green Units are exempt from Inexperienced penalties if currently stacked with a

leader. Conscripts are never exempt for any reason.

The Bad and the Ugly:

Those are the explicit rules covering inexperienced troops; however, there are a couple of ways to get inexperienced troops. The most obvious and common is by your OB at scenario start. The other way is through ELR failure which forces unit substitution. This is most severe for nationalities such as early war Russian and Minor country units. First line Russians substitute directly to conscripts, which means the first time a unit suffers ELR failure it becomes inexperienced. Minor country units suffer the same problem. This is in contrast to major nationalities which at least have have an intermediate step of second line troops to substitute to. Low ELRs present several problems. First, an ELR of two (or less) means the unit will be replaced more frequently. A seven morale unit that fails a NMC by more than two (a ten or more) will be replaced. A 2MC represents close to 50% replacement probability, and this likelihood increases in proportion to the severity of the MC. It is easy to see at this rate how an attacking force could be decimated by MCs alone. The second problem is that by their very nature conscripts have a lower morale. That 4-4-7 unit that fails a MC by more than its ELR is now a 4-2-6 with a broken morale of five. In other words, not only is its combat effectiveness lessened (range, cowering, etc.), it is weaker still by its lower morale. Taken to extremes, a DM, broken conscript squad needs snakeyes to rally. Third, a low ELR force is likely to have poor leadership. This is portrayed by having lower quality leaders (8-0,7-0, 6+1) and/or fewer leaders than normal, or, worst case, BOTH. The combination of poor troops and poor leadership is often fatal, and manifests itself in a number of ways including few if any negative Mods. to effect the enemy in good TEM, cowering to ineffectiveness, slow to move, harder to rally, easy to be made a prisoner. Taken together, these three cases form a very bad situation. You have low morale units that break easily and need leaders to rally. If the unit is disrupted the leader must go to him, rather than the unit normally routing back to the leader. The unit will be difficult to rally under the best circumstances, and you may be exposing the leader to the same fire that broke the conscript in the first place. Many disrupted units are thus 'written off' for the scenario as not to risk valuable leaders, and pulling them out of critical (and sheltered) rally points. Disrupted troops tend to disappear with only a few MCs, while your front line units that do break will rout back to rally and fight again. On the attack it is even more frustrating to handle inexperienced troops, with their tendency to break and disrupt. In early East Front actions a Russian OB filled with conscripts can expect at least a third of his OB to be disrupted or worse, thus effectively out of the battle. This often takes newer players by surprise when conducting an assault with Russian troops and they notice a large portion of their troops are 'gone' through disruption and simple NMCs and IMCs from 4 to 8 FP attacks. Again these problems are most acute for our Early war Russians and Minor Nationalities, but can effect just about every nationality at some point in the war.

The GOOD:

On the Attack:

No, this is not *really* good, but there are ways to maximize a inexperienced troops' performance. Being expendable, they are perfect for first wave assault troops, especially in situations where the first wave stands little chance of succeeding. They will draw DF that could be used against your better troops. If the defending player waits to fire at the better quality troops, then the inexperienced first wave makes it

across the assault area to pose the threat of moving around or even behind the defense, thus threatening both encirclement and CC/Melee. If the assault is through open ground the onus of disruption is lessened in that they can rout through open ground (but will face interdiction) and back to rally terrain. If you are the Russian and you have enough units to spare, you have the option of a Human Wave. It is a perfect first wave option that is bound to attract plenty of DF, and make the way for the second echelon much easier. You just need one leader and six MMC to get the wave going, and your morale is increased by one to seven, same as a front line unit, plus you have 8 MFs for that Movement Phase. Another good use of inexperienced troops is to get them in CC/Melee. While getting into CC is the hard part of this process, once in, morale no longer matters. Their firepower, while usually the same as first line units, is what will determine the outcome and there will be no more MCs (barring fire into a Melee, a favorite tactic on the Eastern Front). If they win the inexperienced troops can take out a much better unit. Conversely, these units are prone to surrendering. Capture attempts against them are made with a -1 DRM. However, in many situations the attacker may not be interested in taking prisoners and may not do so. So in the attack the inexperienced unit is a good lead unit, but don't expect them to take objectives by themselves, or hold them for very long without help. Search out CC opportunities whenever possible but avoid being CX when doing so, your chances of being ambushed are greatly increased. Use them to force DFF, sacrifice a conscript everytime before a first-line unit.

On The Defense:

Defensively, they expose a higher risk. Often since they will start in some positive terrain they can not rout any further once broken. The low ELR will cause them to disrupt frequently, and with no normal rout be stuck right where they are. The attacker can then bypass the position, collect some prisoners, or move right through the disrupted position without any additional cost in movement factors. In situations where CVPs are part of the VCs, these troops are even more of a liability, literally and doubly so as prisoners count double for CVPs. A wise attacker will try extra hard to take prisoners in these situations. Inexperienced troops need to be placed very carefully do to their many frailties. Look for reverse slope defensive positions, they get the first shot and it is PBF. Players often use them as 'speed bumps' or the 'outer crust' of a layered defense. While logical you may want to reconsider this strategy. If the intent for your first line is to stand and then fall back, inexperienced troops are not well suited to this because of their low morale, low ELR, and chances of disruption. Better to put 1st Liners up there who have a better chance to withstand at least Advancing Fire, and may be able to rout back to a rally point. Even low advancing fire attacks can incapacitate conscripts. If not as the 1st line, maybe a counter-intuitive idea of using them at the core of your defense, where many of their deficits can be hidden amongst better quality troops. Keep them in the best TEM and concealed for as long as possible. Sprinkled in amongst 'Dummy' units they may be a nasty surprise for the attacker. Also remember that the Green troops can man those SWs normally if stacked with a leader. Finally, conscripts, like Dummy counters are perfect Sniper Bait near to your most important firebase. In summary, Fighting with Inexperienced troops presents many challenges, but offers very nice rewards for those who win with those Conscripts.

Hide & Seek: Concealment For Defense In The ETO

by Jim Torkelson

Why are you on the defensive? It is because the other side outclasses you in numbers, quality, leadership, vehicles, or all of the above. So what asset do you have that may even up the situation? The answer is Concealment, either partially in the form of ? counters, or totally in the form of HIP units. There are three ways this fog of war may occur: some number of ? counters to cover your real units, a mix of ? counters plus some HIP units, or have your entire force be HIP. Let's examine the two extremes, a lot of ? counters, and then all HIP.

Lots of Concealment Counters

Concealment is first and foremost a shield. It is a shield against enemy fire, forcing an IFT attack to be halved as Area fire. Ordnance attacks also gain the +2 To Hit modifier as Area fire. HE OBA Battery Access requires an extra black chit draw when only concealed units are in the prospective blast radius. Concealment is also a shield against enemy decision-making. The ability to have dummy stacks to absorb enemy firepower is great. Equally important is the use of ? counters to make a single squad look like a squad with a SW plus a leader. It comes down to what the attacker does not know, can't hurt you.

The cosmic truth of ASL is that if you shoot in the Prep Fire Phase, you are not moving in the Movement Phase. You as the defender can force the attacker to make tough decisions by placing a threatening number of possibly real units within normal range of Open Ground hexes that the attacker needs to cover in this Movement Phase. This could be Prep Firing at those concealed stacks, using Smoke to provide cover, attempting a flanking maneuver, or just hoping that there are no real units there at all. If the Attacker Prep Fires, then that firebase, which shoots at half strength in the first place, is not going to Move. If the attacker tries for Smoke, it might become depleted or it might not be there at all. A flanking maneuver eats time, and can be as risky as the direct route. Movement in Open Ground is a defenders' dream. Any way you look at it, you are forcing the attacker to expend precious resources, in time, in special ammo, or in units themselves, to

break through your first line. And then, with successive lines, the defender watches the attacker run out of time short of the objective.

All HIP

While there are innumerable scenarios where the defender has concealment, there are relatively few where the defender is entirely Hidden Initial Placement. A few examples of these are A28 "The Professionals", E "The Hedgehog of Piepsk", and S "The Whirlwind". In "The Whirlwind", the American defenders have decent inherent firepower, but have 6 morale, no MGs, only two bazookas, and poor leadership. The German attackers have superior numbers of squads & MGs, a 9-2 leader, and the FlakPanzer for added punch. Since the Americans break so easily, they need to be very careful to retain an orderly battlefield, one in which they can rout back to safety, then rally and fight again. This will take planning and good timing as to when and where their units will be revealed.

There are several advantages to this kind of defense: surprise, getting to pick the point of contact, and reducing the degree of exposure. There are two major disadvantages that go with it. You cannot react to unforeseen moves without losing HIP. And the being outnumbered/outclassed situation is usually even worse. Yes, there are some times when it is better to have a swarm of concealment counters than being all-HIP.

There are a number of necessary elements to an all-HIP defense. Somebody has to be revealed, becoming Known to strip the basic concealment from the attacker. This enables the defender to gain the ambush concealment modifiers, and makes non-MPh attacks reasonable. The units that do reveal themselves immediately are primary targets for the attacker. Then as in a 'normal' setup, there is the main line of defense, with multiple units in mutually supporting positions. The additional components are the 'HIP traps' that cause the most damage and disruption to the enemy efforts.

Since the HIP defender cannot react to a threat without moving (and losing your HIP status), 'reading' the terrain and betting on which route the attacker is going to take towards the objective is vital. A bad setup quickly turns your great trap into a disaster when the attacker avoids your kill zone.

Types of HIP unit trap:

■ **Movement Phase Kill Trap:** Place several MMCs together with lots of firepower and during an enemy MPh, reveal them as a massive firegroup with negative modifiers. The goal is to get a KIA result on the attacker, not just to break somebody. It is one thing for the psyche of the attacker to take an 8FP-2; something else entirely to take a 24FP-2.

■ **Movement Phase Delay Trap:** For those scenarios where you just KNOW that the attacker is going to follow a certain path, you can count out how far a Double-timing MMC can move plus advance. This is more workable at Night, when the attacker is Cloaked [constant 6MF] and the Defender can HIP in Open Ground. Place the HIP unit one hex farther than the enemy can reach. As soon as the attacking unit spends a MF to move in the next MPh, reveal your defender and shoot. This is guaranteed to screw up his movement in that sector. However, your speedbump is often converted to roadkill by being so far in harms way. Don't expect it to survive.

■ **Rout Phase:** This is the trickiest of all of these to set up. First you predict the enemy attack route, then place a HIP unit in a position where it will not be detected, such as a level one building location, which are often bypassed. Then your main line of resistance breaks one or more of the enemy attackers. When they try to rout back to safety, your HIP unit reveals itself and kills the broken guys for failure to rout. Just because I have never been able to pull it off does not mean you can't...

■ **CCPh:** Advance into the target hex with concealed friendly units 'from nowhere', hopefully into a hex with weakened enemies [CX, pinned, broken], to deliver a vicious Ambush and kill enemy units.

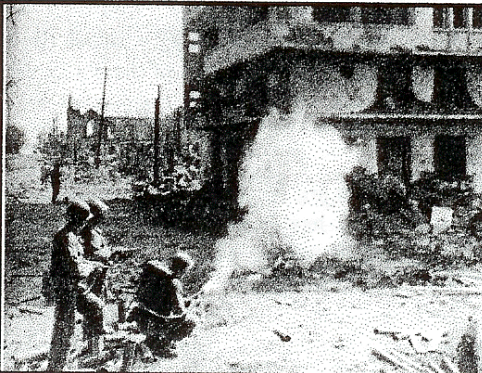
■ **VC Trap:** The cheapest way to pull off a victory in ASL is to HIP a unit near the VC objective [terrain of some kind], and reveal your MMC while moving into/onto the VC on your last movement phase.

I hope to write an article on PTO and concealment in the near future...JET

**ASL:
MORE THAN A GAME,
~ IT'S A LIFESTYLE! ~**

DROPPING LIKE FLIES

Munoz, Luzon, Philippines, February 4, 1945:
Japanese General Yamashita knew it was vital to hold the supply hub at San Jose for as long as possible, in order that as much of the huge cache of ammunition and other supplies could be sent into the mountains of Northern Luzon, for the last ditch defense of the *Shobu Group*. The overall plan for the defense called for a series of 'Fortified Localities' to be set up on the approaches to San Jose. Among these are Umingan and Lupao to the North-West, and Munoz to the South West. Munoz was not only the largest of the outlying towns, but also sat astride Routes 99 and 5, the later which went straight to San Jose. On the 27th of January the **6th Reconnaissance Troop** had reported the town to be 'unoccupied, but upon reinvestigation the following day discovered a strong Japanese force in and around the town. On the 30th one rifle company of the **20th Infantry Regiment** tried to take the town, but was repulsed. The **20th** knew they were in for a very stiff fight.

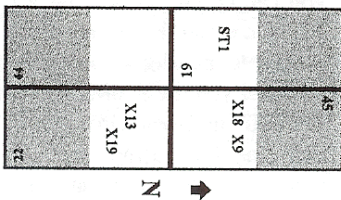


Historical Result:

The Defense of Munoz was entrusted to the 'Ida Group' of the **2nd Tank Division**. Knowing full well their tanks were no match for the US Shermans, the Japanese instead used them as Static Pillboxes, digging in over 80% of the Divisions tanks in conjunction with a maze of pillboxes, trenches, wire, mines, and booby traps of all sorts. The **20th Infantry** started the attack in earnest on the 1st. They were stopped cold by a series of irrigation ditches to the west of town, and the withering fire from the defensive positions pinned them down. Adding to the GIs suffering was the 105' Heat, which caused many casualties of heat exhaustion to 'Drop like Flies'. Finally after three brutal days a toehold was established in the south-west corner of the town. The 4th found another major push, but saw only minor gains. The attack had become a siege, and on the 6th General Patrick ordered a halt to the offensive. Munoz was then subjected to a saturation Air and Artillery Bombardment. The Japanese pulled out on the 7th, leaving 52 wrecked tanks and 1500 dead.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

Only Hexrows A-P on Bd. 19 and R-GG on Bds. 45,44, & 22 are in play.



VICTORY CONDITIONS:

The side that controls the most multi-hex buildings in the Japanese Set-Up Area at Game End Wins. The American Loses immediately if he suffers ≥ 40 CVPs.

BALANCE:

American: Add one Bow Mounted FT (US Vehicle Note F) for one M4A3(75)W. Also add one 9-1 AL.
Japanese: He receives Reinforcements on a dr < the Turn # in the form of two Type.1 CHI-HE Tanks, which enter anywhere along the East edge of Board 45.

● Japanese Sets Up First

☆ American Moves First

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 END



Elements of the 20th Infantry Regiment, 6th Infantry Division: [ELR: 5/4/3 See SSR# 3] Set-Up ON/West of Hexgrain: 19P2-22R7: {SAN:4}

7-4-7	6-6-7	6-6-6	5-4-6	2-2-7	9-2	9-1
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3 3 7 5 3

8-1	8-0	7-0	.50 Cal HMG	HMG	MMG	M2 60* Mtr.
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2 2 3 3

BAZ 45	DC	FT	Radio	?	M4A3 (75)W	M4 105
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4 3 8 3



Elements of the Ida Group, 2nd Tank Division: [ELR: 4] Set-Up East of Hexgrain 19P2-22R7 but not west of any oST1 hex: {SAN: 6}

4-4-8	4-4-7	3-4-7	2-2-8	10-1	9-1
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2 8 3 6

9-0	8-0	?	HMG	MMG	LMG
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16 2 2 5

50*Mtr	DC	AP Mines	AT Mines	Cupola	Fortified Building	X 6
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2 2 18 Factors 6 Factors 4

47L ATG Type 1 Machine Moved Gun	105 Art Type 91 10cm Field Howitzer	1-3-5 Pillbox	TRENCH	WIRE	Roadblock
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2 4 3 3

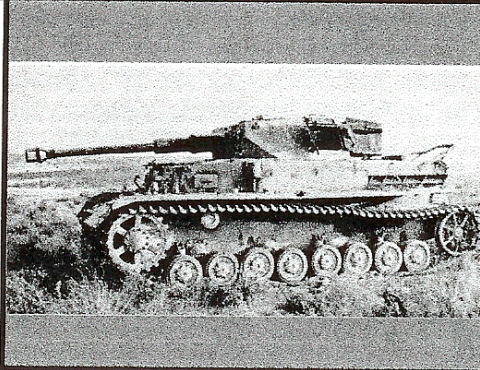
SPECIAL RULES:

1 - EC are Dry, with No Wind at start. Intense Heat Haze (F11.621) is in effect. PTO Terrain (G1) is in effect [EXC: Brush is still Brush (B12) and Grain is still In Season Grain (B15)]. Light Jungle (G2.1) and Huts (G5) are in play. All Roads are Dirt Roads (B3). Kindling is NA.
2 - Place Overlays as follows: ST1 on 19L6 - 19K7, X9 on 45R4, X18 on 45T5 - 45T6, X13 on 22Z4 - 22Z5, X19 on 22X7 - 22X8. The stream overlay represents the irrigation ditches that were to the west of the town, consider it a Flooded River(B21.122) for all purposes. The stream on Board 22 is shallow. Building o22X7 represents a Church. Hexes o22X7 and o22W8 are 1.5 level Factory Hexes (B23.74) Hex o22X8 is treated as a normal 1.5 level Building Hex with an inherent stairwell. At the level 1 'Quasi' level of Hex 022X7 there is a Balcony with a stacking limit of One Squad Equivalent and 10PP of SW/SMCs which may not be overstacked (EX: Enemy Units in CC). This Balcony does not Block LOS to other locations in the church. Additionally, Hex o22X7 has a Steeple (B31.2) at level 2. An inherent stairwell connects the Balcony to both the ground level and the steeple. Place Wooden Rubble in 22T6, 22U6, 22V2, 22V6, 22X5, 22Y3, and 22Z2.
3 - The American 7-4-7/3-3-7 MMCs are Assault Engineers (H1.22) and Sappers (H1.23) which MUST possess the FT/DCs at Start. They have an ELR of 5, all other American Elite/1st Line Personnel have an ELR of 4, all American 2nd Line/Green Personnel have an

ELR of 3. Due to the extreme heat and exhaustion of the troops, any American unit that becomes CX must take a PTC (Leadership applies to units stacked together) at the conclusion of the Movement/Advance Phase in which it became CX. All US Personnel that sets-up west of Hexgrain 19P2-22R7 may set-up Entrenched if in suitable terrain.
4 - The American Radio represents one module of 100-mm OBA (HE/SMOKE) with one Pre-Registered Hex (Barrage Capable - E12). The American Player has the option of taking the Radio or a Field Phone (Security Area would lead to the West Edge). The Observer/ Radio/Field Phone may set-up HIP. For his First Player Turn only, the American automatically has Contact and Battery Access (If the Fire-Mission is used Remove 1 Black Chit).
5 - The Japanese Cupolas (D9.5) represent dug-in Type 1 CHI-HE Tanks (Japanese Vehicle note H9). They are Slow Turreted, with a 47L MA (ROF of 1), 2 Factor RMG, have a Front Armor Factor of 6, and Side Armor of 3. The Cupolas may set up HIP as if an Emplaced Gun (A12.34), once HIP is lost D9.5 applies. Both Japanese Guns Must set-up in the Pillboxes. The Japanese have Booby Trap Level C. AP and AT Mines are not interchangeable, nor may they be exchanged for added Booby Trap capability. Any Japanese Fortifications that set-up adjacent to Hexgrain 19P2-22R7, or set-up anywhere in open ground [EXC: Mines] must set-up Known and on board regardless of LOS to an enemy unit. No more than 2 Fortified Building locations may be exchanged for Tunnels (B8.6).

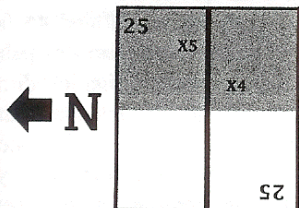
First Clash In Tunisia

DJEBEL ABIOD, TUNISIA, November 17, 1942: The German XC Corps, comprised of various units which had been rushed to hold Tunisia, was attempting to expand the bridgehead perimeter by pushing combat groups towards Medjez El Bab, Bedja and Djebel Abiod. The Allied command had the British 78th Division spearheading the drive on Bizerte and Tunis with its 11th and 36th Brigades, supported by Blade Force (an Anglo-American armored unit). The first major engagement between them would take place at Djebel Abiod, where lead elements of the 36th Brigade had dug-in to protect the vital highway junction. Approaching the village was Kampfgruppe Witzig, which consisted of Maj. Rudolf Witzig's 11th Para-Engineer Battalion reinforced with Panzer IVs, 2cm FlaK, 10.5cm artillery and Italian self-propelled guns. As they neared the east edge of the village the Germans were unaware of the well concealed British positions, and it wasn't until the lead tanks were at point blank range that they opened fire.



Historical Result: The opening hail of fire knocked out several panzers, and the column halted with the battle-tested Fallschirmjäger quickly deploying into a skirmish line. Under cover of a bombardment the lorries were withdrawn, and Witzig's men began to assault the village, supported by a 2cm FlaK gun setup in the road. The Para-Engineers quickly seized the high ground, with the 2cm FlaK pouring blistering fire on the British positions until a direct hit from a 25-pounder smashed the gun and crew. In the end the Germans were unable to wrest control of the village from the West Kents, having lost 8 Panzer IVs and 29 casualties. The British had however suffered heavy losses in personnel, along with many vehicles, most of their anti-tank guns and several field guns. For the better part of the next week or so, Witzig's men would frustrate the British efforts to advance beyond Djebel Abiod (this in spite of having the panzers and heavy weapons withdrawn from them), showing again why they were regarded as one of the Wehrmacht's finest elite units.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



Only hexrows A-P on the north board and R-GG on the south board are in play.

VICTORY CONDITIONS:

Providing he has earned more casualty DVP than the British, the German wins at game end by controlling 4 of 6 building/rubble hexes in the British setup area.

BALANCE:

German: Ignore last sentence of SSR#5.

British: Change VC requirement to 5 of 6 building/rubble hexes in the British setup area.

🎯 British Sets Up First

⚔️ German Moves First

1

2

3

4

5

END



Elements of the 6th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regt, 360th Battery/138th Regt R.A., "C" Squadron/56th Recon Regt and 5th Battalion/Northamptonshire Regt (Hartforce) [ELR:3]: setup within 4 hexes of hex V1; units in suitable terrain may setup concealed; vehicles may setup in motion; also see SSR#2 [SAN:3]:



4-5-7	2-4-7	2-2-8	9-1	8-1	8-0	HMG
13	3					
LMG	ATR	51* MTR	40L AT	88 ART	Humber II AC	
2	2			2		
Daimler AC	Carrier A	Carrier B	Carrier 2" Mtr	Sangar		
2			2	9		



Reinforced elements of 'Kampfgruppe Witzig' (Fallschirmjäger Bataillon 11 and Panzer Bataillon 190) [ELR:5]: setup on/east of hexrows F/BB; vehicles may setup in motion; also see SSR# 3 [SAN:2]:



8-3-8	2-2-8	10-2	9-1	8-1	LMG	DC
9				2	4	4
FT	9-1AL	20L(20) AA	PzIVF2	SMV L40 47/32		
			3	2		

SPECIAL RULES:

#1 - EC are moist, no wind. Place overlays X5 on I1 and X4 on U2. Orchard hexes V1, W1 and Y4 are Olive Groves (F13.5); all other Orchard hexes are Cactus Patch (F13.4).

#2 - The British must setup 2 of his 3 guns non-HIP (but may be emplaced and concealed) such that each gun has LOS to at least one wreck and each wreck has LOS to at least one gun. The British may use HIP for ≤ 2 squads/equiv (and SMC/SW stacked with them); E1.16 applies to sangars that setup in concealment terrain.

#3 - The German 20LAA FlaKvrig 38 must setup non-emplaced in/ADJACENT to a road hex. The German 8-3-8/3-3-8 are Assault Engineers (H1.22). The inherent crews of the SMV L40 47/32s are Italian. The 9-1 Armor Leader is German.

#4 - Place PzIVF2 wrecks in hexes BB0, AA1, Z0, Z1 and Y1.

#5 - After setup but prior to play the British setup area must undergo a Bombardment (C1.8); there are no immune hexes. There is an extra -1 DRM to all Bombardment morale checks.

DROPPING LIKE FLIES

Scenario Design and Analysis

By Vic Provost

Average Playing Time: 8 Hours

Introduction: Well, here we finally have the first in the Scenario Series dealing with the actions taking place in the Late War campaigns (1944-1945) in the Philippines. The Philippines campaigns, both in the early Japanese blitz through the Islands in 1941-1942, and here are a gold mine for potential scenarios. In this case we see elements of the Japanese *Shobu Group*, thrown on the defense after the US invasion at Lingayen Gulf. The American attack split into two main thrusts after the beachhead was established, with one headed south down the Coastal Highway toward Manila, and the other wheeling to the east, trying to split the Japanese defenders and take the main supply hub at San Jose. Directly astride the main Routes 5 and 99 sat the town of Munoz, one of several localities forming a semi-circular web of strong points to the south and west of San Jose. Munoz was the largest of these and the most heavily defended, with a Regimental size battle formation dubbed the '*Ida Group*' of the *2nd Tank Division* firmly entrenched there. It is here that the unfortunate dogfaces of the **US 20th Infantry Regiment** have been ordered to clear the town and press on to San Jose. The Japanese defenders have been ordered to hold the town '*at all costs*', and at the time of this scenario we see the 4th day of a week long siege in progress.

Japanese Perspective:

Advantages: Japanese Characteristics, HIP, Concealment, Building TEM, Fortifications, SAN

Disadvantages: Japanese Characteristics, Relative Fire-Power, AP to Kill Numbers of Ordnance, Time.

The Japanese have to decide right off the bat how much of his force he will sacrifice on Board 22, as there are many more multi-hex buildings to defend on Board 45 (13 vs 4). Board 22 is very important never the less as it affords the potential to tie up a sizeable portion of the US OB, making the US waste time he can ill afford to lose. There are many excellent places for HIP units here, plus the only level 2 location

on the entire board configuration lies in the Church Steeple o22X7. This is a location of prime importance as any US player that has taken a Radio for his 100+mm OBA Module will want to get his observer up there to get prime LOS into the heart of Board 45. A platoon of infantry, a leader, and a MG or two should defend the Church and make the American player waste as much time and units in order to secure this valuable building. The rest of the multi-hex buildings on Board 22 should be lightly defended, with Dummy ? counters mixed in to make them look more formidable than they really are. There is the potential for some nasty HIP ambush positions here, and due to SSR # 5 the Cupolas may set-up HIP as well. Look for spots to get side/rear shots at unwary Shermans lumbering by, 22AA8, CC9, and FF9 are prime spots for them. Look for a main thrust by a good portion of the US OB through the jungle from 22BB1, CC2, DD1 bearing northeast toward the woods that string from 22DD4 to GG4. The 50* Mortars should be zeroed in on this area, ready to rain down a hail of air-burst modified HE or WP on these hexes. This whole corridor should be sprinkled with wire and/or mines, making each step toward the gateway to board 45 a deathtrap. The option of setting up HIP Tank Hunter Heroes in this area should be contemplated. At least a couple Shermans undoubtedly will accompany the infantry thrust. Having the THH 'appear' at the most inopportune time for the US can soak up tons of firepower that otherwise may be pounding on other, more important defensive positions. If placed where the tanks have to change a CA is even better, try to coordinate such efforts with the placement of the Cupolas/Guns so that a side/rear shot can be obtained. Make damn sure to have some mines in the open ground that begins where the irrigation ditch ends, from 19E10 to 45E10, along with strong covering units, a criss-cross of fire-lanes here is a must. This is the most direct route to board 45 VC Buildings and must be made an utter killing ground. Be prepared to be SMOKED by the US player. He has it in abundance, and being 1945 even the 60*Mtrs. and Bazookas are a threat in this regard. If he SMOKES you do NOT stay around for possible CC unless you have a Ambush dr Modifier advantage of 2 or more. Pull back to the next line of defense to fight on. The urban layout of the town makes for many lines of defense and mutually supporting

positions. Determine where your main line of defense will be first, the buildings in hexrows 45CC and DD are a formidable obstacle and should be fortified. The building cluster in the very southeast corner of board 45 is a good buffer for the main line of defense and a strong forward group of infantry should start there to delay the US offensive, with the idea of falling back to the main line when the pressure becomes too intense. The trenches should be place in the hexes between buildings to allow a more concentrated defense and possible BOG terrain for tanks trying to shoot the gaps. The Pillboxes can be set-up HIP of course, with the jungle straddling Boards 19 and 45 favorite spots, along with that stand of palm trees just to the east of the Irrigation ditch on board 19, but don't forget the many jungle hexes on Board 22. The Guns, once these pillboxes are revealed, may be bypassed as the CA is fixed, so choose their set-up wisely. In conjunction with all the other fortifications, the roadblocks should be used to either block off an entire section of the road net from armored movement and/or to channelize the Shermans into your AT defense such that they will have to change CA to go around them, thus presenting that elusive side/rear shot the Japanese ordnance desperately needs. Once the US inevitably gets to the main line of defense tough decisions need to be made as to how long to stand up to superior US fire-power. Being able to skulk for even one player turn may be enough to preserve your units for that last stand defense. Remember you need to preserve enough of your force to hold onto a majority of those multi-hex buildings, especially early on in the scenario make wise decisions on when to pull back out of LOS of all that firepower. This is never an easy decision for the Japanese, players can get carried away by their 'super-human traits', but a force that does not break, rout, and rally is one that literally disappears in front of your eyes if not used carefully. Lastly, keep those elite squads and their DCs for late game counterattacks, a Japanese Elite Squad is a terrifying unit with a DC in hand, barring KIAs they are almost guaranteed to 'deliver the mail', and could literally snatch Victory from the jaws of defeat with late game heroics. They are extremely difficult to dislodge from fortified buildings, and in a pinch can Banzai with a leader to retake a key building.

Now lets take a look at the summary

of those advantages and disadvantages: The Japanese Nationality Characteristics are a definite double edged sword, as they both help, and can ultimately hurt their chances of a successful defense of the town. They (other than their half-squads) don't break, which makes them extremely tough to remove from stone buildings, but over the course of a scenario this long with this much potential enemy firepower, a Japanese player that is not careful will not have enough of a force left with which to defend those buildings. He does get his usual HIP, and combined with his advantages in concealment makes effecting his units in stone buildings very difficult until large quantities of US firepower can be brought to bear. Having a SAN of 6 all but guarantees the Shermans will be buttoned up for the entire scenario or risk Recall of the US players most potent assets. Once the OBA observer is identified the Sniper counter should be moved as close as possible to him to get him out of the scenario. As is common knowledge for most experienced PTO ASL players, the Japanese come up short in firepower vs. US troops, and should not look to trade shots until the action moves into Board 45, or when the US is at a big disadvantage in TEM, i.e. they are in +1 TEM or worse while the IJA is in +3. The Japanese ordnance does not have much of a chance of penetrating the front armor of those Shermans; he must look for optimum placement of mutually supporting ordnance in order to get those side/rear shots he badly needs to actually penetrate that thinner armor. And time is listed because it is most uncertain that the IJA can survive the firepower that can be thrown out by this US OB, the US player will whine about not having enough movement phases to get to the heart of Board 45, so both players have very different time-oriented problems to deal with. So it is a difficult balancing act for the IJA, but with proper planning, a deft touch on when to fight and when to retreat, and some good 'ole ASL luck he can hold off the GIs and stave off defeat for one more day.

American Perspective:

Advantages: Firepower, 9-2 Leader, MGs, Tanks, SMOKE, OBA, Engineers.

Disadvantages: 6 Morale for a majority of squads, TEM disadvantage, Time.

Big surprise seeing Firepower as the first asset in their advantages, eh? These Yanks, as always can throw a ton of lead around, but the flip side of the coin is they

do NOT like to take it. But it will take a fully co-ordinated effort by *all* US assets to win this Pacific urban nightmare. The first thing the US player needs to do before set-up is pick the pre-registered hex for his OBA. This is potentially the most critical decision he'll make as the success of the whole operation in no small part depends on not only where to drop that 100+mm Module, but what kind of mission to use. HE or SMOKE, and if SMOKE, will it be WP or a regular smoke concentration? Complicating the decision is whether to use a Barrage (E12). Much depends on the main axis of the advance, will he try the most direct route, through the open ground just south of the Irrigation Ditch? If so a full strength SMOKE concentration near 45D9 seems best. If through the central woods mass maybe some WP to bring out any HIPsters might be needed. The Barrage option is also intriguing, as a long stretch of real estate can be screened off, but not blocked entirely, but this works quite well if the thrust is made on a broader front, spreading out the targets for Japanese DFF. Of course there are those partial to good ole' HE, and this is most effective if there is a strongpoint you are sure is going to be manned by some of the better Japanese assets. In any event, this decision will more often than not lead to how effective the initial offensive thrust is in gaining ground with minimal casualties. Another interesting decision is whether to take a field phone or radio for the module, the phone is much more dependable, especially in the PTO, but LOS considerations may make the phone pretty useless later on in the scenario. The radio's mobility is a big advantage in this regard. That Church steeple is a perfect location for the observer, but expect a stiff fight for it. The three 60* Mtr. may also be traded in for a OBA module as per US Ordnance Note 1. A 4 FP HE concentration is not much to fear in a stone building, but the availability of WP (which is NOT depletable, which the on board individual mortars will be subject to) is an intriguing option, and in conjunction with the Shermans (especially the 105, that SMOKE making machine), the Baz45s, and all those smoke grenades, gives the US player an abundance of SMOKE potential, which he should be using at every opportunity. This ability to cover the advance allows all those 6 morale units the chance to get into position to bring the hammer down with large, multi-hex fire groups and the nasty kill

stacks that can be put together. The 9-2, coupled with the HMGs is an awesome weapon that will clear out any opposition that stays in his LOS. The Shermans should lay SMOKE initially, and then accompany the infantry up to the front line, but be wary of those THH and HIP Cupolas/ordnance, be very careful of potential flank shots from locations that have not been cleared yet. In conjunction with the main thrust, or as part of the main thrust, Board 22 needs to be mopped up of enemy units, not an easy job when the Japanese are the enemy. A considerable force of 6 or so squads and probably 2 tanks will be needed to accomplish this, and it must be done in a timely manner as those units will be needed in the assault on Board 45. The Engineers surely will be needed soon in clearance procedures as the plethora of nasty fortifications are encountered, of special note are the mines and roadblocks that impede the progress of the armor. Make sure to give them cover (SMOKE) in order to make removal survivable, you need them and their DCs/FT for the grim business of clearing out the Japanese die-hards from those VC buildings in the last few turns. Remember they have a SMOKE exponent of 5 (WP4), and make use of this capability as much as possible. Once board 22 is 'secure' the main thrust into the teeth of the Japanese defense can really commence with full force, Blast or SMOKE everything in LOS, bound from house to house, and remember to deploy some of those 5-4-6s, they make expendable scouts for the US player, and can reveal nasty Japanese units that could rip up more valuable assets. You have time, but not an abundance of it, eight movement phases give just enough to weather a delay of a turn or two before you need to make some more real headway into the VC area. Seek out CC where the ambush dr mod is close to even, and you have 3-1 odds or better. Press home the attack, keep track of the HIPsters, and overwhelm your crafty opponent with withering firepower. Beware of late-turn Banzai Charges, and hope for plenty of SMOKE and a fair shake of the dice.

Designer Notes. I tried to bring out some of the terrible elements the GIs were facing in SSR # 3, with the PTC rule showing the exhaustion of the troops. I also tried to really define my own idea of how a Church can be laid out, hope the rule is clear and does not cause confusion.

Sources:

Smith, Robert Ross - *The US Army in WWII: Triumph in the Philippines*, US ARMY, 1963/1994
 Steinberg, Rafael - *Time Life Books: The Return to the Philippines*, Time-Life Books, 1980
 Lieutenant Colonel Eddy Bauer, *World War II Encyclopedia, Volume 18*, H.S. Stuttman Inc; 1978

First Clash In Tunisia Scenario Design and Analysis

By Tom Morin

Average Playing Time: 4.5 hours

Here is the next in Tom's fine Tunisian series of scenarios, we hope you enjoy it as much as we did in the design/development process.

Introduction: This is the third in the series of Tunisian scenarios in Dispatches, taking place at the very beginning of the fighting for the Tunisian bridgehead. The Axis, having won the 'race' for Tunis, were trying to expand their perimeter with strong patrols, in this case a powerful motorized column consisting of the *11th Para-Engineer Battalion* supported by a company of Panzer IVs (that had been earmarked as replacements for the *Afrika Korps*), along with flak, artillery and Italian self-propelled guns. The *Fallschirmjüngers* were battle hardened veterans of Russia, Crete and Eben-Emael, and were commanded by Major Rudolf Witzig, hero of Eben-Emael. The British force, consisting of the relatively inexperienced *78th Division*, had reached the key highway junction at Djebel Abiod hours earlier with elements of the *36th Brigade* hastily digging in, reinforced with a battery of 25 Pounders, some armored cars, and *Hartforce* (a detachment of carriers). In spite of their recent arrival the British were well camouflaged and this along with their excellent fire discipline caused the Axis to approach unaware of their presence. The British waited until the lead vehicles were at point blank range before commencing fire, quickly knocking out many *panzers*. The experienced *Para-Engineers* reacted quickly, deploying rapidly for an assault on the village, while the soft-skinned vehicles were withdrawn under cover of the artillery. The men of the *West Kent Regiment* braced themselves for the hurricane of fire that soon enveloped the crossroads.

British Perspective

Advantages: 88ARTs, TEM, HIP/?, HMG, leadership, numerical advantage.

Disadvantages: Bombardment, ELR, light armor, 2 guns not HIP.

The VC indicate the British can win by having an equal or greater # of casualty DVP than the Axis; while certainly this is an option the British should work to achieve, the main path to victory will be through building control. Needing to control 3 of the 6 building/rubble hexes at game end means that building W2 will be the key, buildings V2 and U2 unlikely to be threatened unless the Axis conducts a flanking maneuver. Buildings I2, Y2 and X3 must be defended as long as possible, and the majority of the action will take place around them. The British is forced by SSR to set up 2 of the guns with LOS to the wrecks; while not hidden, they will be emplaced and concealed. There are several locations to consider putting the guns in, such as (level 2) hexes M3 and S4, both giving excellent fields of fire, however at the risk of being exposed to the quad 20. More forward locations would be in a building (for the 40L) or an Olive Grove/Brush hex; either way they must be in concealment terrain or lose their at start concealment. The HIP gun could go in U5 or maybe W1 or Y4, a nasty surprise up front. For the vehicles, the Daimlers both go hulldown in Wadis P0 and V4 (a bonus of concealment in V4) to duke it out with the Axis armor. The carriers and Humber go in other Brush or Olive Grove hexes, taking advantage of concealment, or start the game in motion if planning on some offensive moves or just ducking out of sight. Hexes M2 and N1 have LOS to the Z2/AA3 and Y1/Z1 approach routes, good places for the Humber or MG carriers; the mortar carriers should SMOKE any priority Axis threats like the quad 20, Panzer IVs or 10-2 stack. The 88s also have the option of SMOKE or trying to kill the Panzer IVs (final to kill #7). The infantry should spread out, setting up in either buildings or Sangars (guns too) to protect against the Bombardment. Take care with stacking in the buildings, as an 11 or 12 during Bombardment will cause early demise from rubble. As far as the Bombardment goes, the 7 morale troops only break on a 10 or more, pinning/losing ? on a 9; the open topped vehicles are in trouble on a 9 or more, so expect a couple casualties there. The guns should be safe in Sangars, again fearing only an 11/12 final DR. The final consideration is the HIP infantry; this should likely be a 4-5-7, 9-1 and HMG, probably in a building hex; building W2 has great LOS and is a key position, X3 is also a good spot. The other squad or 2 HS could provide

some nasty little ambushes, perhaps in the Z3/Y3/Y4 area or maybe in the I2 Crag hex. The British plan of action should be to fight up front and delay as long as possible the Axis advance on building W2; the loss of the other 3 forward buildings by game end is likely barring some bad Axis luck. Use concealment and SMOKE as much as possible, and at every opportunity inflict CVP on the Axis, including taking some offensive action like a flanking run by carriers which could cause routing problems/ conduct some overruns or by Daimlers to get flank shots on the Panzer IVs. In the end CVP losses mean nothing to the Brits, as they can win just by building control, so they can afford to be aggressive.

Axis Perspective

Advantages: Panzer IVs, quad 20, ELR, Elite, Leaders, FT/DCs, Smoke.

Disadvantages: Poor TEM, quad 20 not emplaced, SMV weak armor, CVP VC.

The Axis have a powerful but small force to accomplish their objective of taking the town. This they must do while maintaining an edge in CVPs. They also are limited by time, and thus must be in constant motion, rarely using Prep Fire. The exception to this should be the the Panzer IVs initial placement, with them attempting to go hulldown (in hexes BB5 and F5 with great LOS) to try to wreak havoc in Prep Fire and take out some armor (especially the Daimlers) or by using Smoke to cover the attack (perhaps placing it on the guns). If the pre-game hulldown maneuver attempts fail, the Panzer IVs should setup in Motion and get quickly out of LOS, avoiding the sure hail of AP shots. The Semovente can be used to flank the Brits, or to setup hulldown and try to rack up some CVPs, or to use Armored Assault. The quad 20 has it's mission, to pour fire on any/all targets, with the priority being the exposed guns. Trying to manhandle it is foolish unless no targets are available. Some good spots to setup are Crest in the D1 Wadi or in BB0 with the wreck for cover. The *Pioniers* can be split into one fire support group with the 10-2, and 3 assault groups. The I1 and Y2 buildings are the initial objectives, using the wrecks for cover. Another approach route is on Hill 758 via the Crag/Brush or using armored assault via the AA3/Z2/Z3 corridor.

Another gambit would be to start an assault group in the BB10/BB9 area to flank the British position by moving quickly up the road, being in position along the hillside wall in just 2 turns; definitely a tempting idea. A couple 8-3-8s, 8-1 and a Semovente should be enough to make this a valid threat without weakening the main attack. An attack along the North flank is less appealing, as there is little/no covering terrain, unless of course the British setup very weak there; it could be feasible to send an AFV there just to cause problems, or an assault group to assist taking building II. The Axis are hamstrung by the CVP requirement and thus should conserve their armor until they have a significant edge in CVPs and should endeavor to destroy as many British as possible (especially the AFVs). With the generous Smoke exponent the *Pioniers* can cover their approach through the open terrain, using Advancing Fire, FT and DCs to reduce the opposition, with Close Combat taking care of any stubborn holdouts. The Axis should take as many buildings as avail themselves, and should gird themselves against the inevitable last ditch counterattack that the British will surely fling at them.

Designer Notes:

I can hear it now, "aw jeez, two board 25s?!". Yup it's true, and believe me I tried so many other board combinations, overlays and the like, but none came close to the look and feel that the current configuration gives. The terrain in Northern Tunisia is very rough/ mountainous, and board 25 just has it all, crags, brush, wadis, and of course hills. The SSR for the Cactus/Olive groves was necessary due to the presence of both in the area (historically the Germans withdrew to "Cactus Wood" nearby for refuge). A couple extra buildings were needed to make it look more like a village, easily done with a couple overlays. The road junction matches the historical configuration with the east/west Mateur to Tabarka highway joining the route south to Bedja. The board configuration is the one thing that has survived through many versions of this scenario. This was my first Tunisian scenario, with the original design depicting the actual start of the ambush, with the Axis column setup on the road, *Pioniers* loaded in trucks and guns in tow (yes there were 2 quad 20s then), and the entire British force was HIP. This design was fun, with lots of brutal action from the opening shot, but it turned out to be much

too volatile and difficult to balance (although it's still playtester Ralph McDonald's favorite version). The Victory Conditions are simple, requiring the Axis to control a majority of the buildings (thus controlling the road junction), with the proviso that they gain more desert CVPs, as historically they inflicted heavy losses on the British (and lost 8 Panzer IVs in the process!). This also makes both sides (but more the Axis) keep an eye on conservation of force/losses, a reality that is often missing from scenarios. The game length is nice and short, and along with the modest size OBs makes for a quick scenario (and if your not a slow player like me, a good tournament scenario). The balance in playtesting turned out 50-50, much to our delight. The British force has roughly a 3:2 edge in infantry, as historically they had 3 companies to 2 German (the *Pionier* battalion had 1 company with the *Ramcke Brigade* in Rommel's *Afrika Korps*). They are less experienced, reflected by their ELR:3. The 40L represents the inherent AT battery for the *West Kents*, and while they probably had 57Ls, these proved to be too powerful during early playtesting. The 88s are from the attached artillery battery, the Humber and Daimlers from the Recon unit, and the carriers from *Hartforce*, a mobile unit from the *Northamptonshire Regiment*. It was due to the carriers' function as a mobile unit that made me elect to not start the 2" mortars dismounted, although this is certainly an option during play. The SSR about the guns was necessary to represent that those Panzer IV wrecks were created by someone! The Bombardment causing some concealment loss also abstractly represents that some infantry units also had opened fire (without having to get too complicated with more SSRs). The at start concealment, HIP and Sangar SSR reflect the excellent British camouflage which caused the Axis to approach unaware of their presence. The wrecks are the Panzer IVs that were knocked out in the initial ambush, and also provide some cover in the otherwise open terrain (and keep in mind they can become burning wrecks during the bombardment). The British SAN:3 is the minimal expected for a defender, the Axis SAN:2 what one would expect for a mobile attack force. The Axis force consists of an elite battalion of *Fallschirmjäger*, represented by 8-3-8 MMC with Assault Engineer capabilities, equipped generously with machine guns, demo charges and an always nasty

flamethrower. Their leadership is excellent what with most of the officers being veterans going all the way back to the 1940 campaign in Belgium/Holland. The Panzer IVs are of the newer F2 type as they were on the way to replace losses in the *Afrika Korps*. The Semovente are from an attached gruppo, one of two present in Tunisia at the time. The quad 20 was selected to represent the attached flak battery due to the devastating impact it had historically, though restricted by SSR to reflect its hasty unlimbering during the ambush. The Bombardment (historically used to cover the withdrawal of the unarmored transport) is tempered to reflect that it's from a battery of 105mm guns as opposed to 150s or heavier; this also makes it less likely to skew the game with some bad dice at start. Last, the desert CVPs were included on the scenario card (in the upper left corner of each vehicle/gun) for ease of play, and remember the crew is *not* included in this value. I feel that this is one of my best scenario designs to date, and I hope you have as much fun playing it as I had designing and playtesting it, I would welcome any commentary on it.

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**NO ERRATA FOUND IN ISSUE # 05
WE WILL CONTINUE TO STRIVE
FOR OUR MOTTO:
~ High Quality is our Objective ~
And ZERO Errata
~ Our Goal ~**

TIPS For Veterans: Tank Hunter Heroes as Decoys. Tank Hunter Heroes (THH), the Japanese human equivalent of the German Panzerfaust, are a great Anti-Tank threat by themselves, but can best be utilized as a single component in a combined arms defensive web. The Japanese must, by low To Kill #s, and the unique characteristics of their personnel, use unconventional means to take on and take out Allied armor. The trick is to lure enemy AFVs into your defensive web, then to attack them with several different components (Ideally from at least 2 different directions) of your anti-armor assets. The G1.422 use of THH (where in 44/45 they may set up HIP) works best in this concept, but the more conventional use of generating them from MMC also works if the dr will co-operate. Basically, you need to offer the AFVs some 'bait' (such as a previously HIP Pillbox/Bunker/Gun/MG/MMC etc.) to lead them into the kill zone. Once the AFV has moved into the desired area you need to force it to change CA, lose ROF, and thus offer a lower AF to a nearby Gun, or a clear path for a THH/MMC to attack. A THH unexpectedly charging from a HIP position, especially from outside the AFVs TCA/VCA is an unnerving site, especially if there is no accompanying infantry with the AFV (a very risky tactic against these soldiers of the Rising Sun). The THH is sure to draw a quick and heavy response, and if it exhausts all ROF from Allied First Firing weapons; consider it to have accomplished it's mission whether it makes it to the AFV or not. If there is accompanying infantry they need to be suppressed, often times the best way to do this is have the 'bait' (say a HMG in a Pillbox) suddenly open up, stripping away the tank's friends and protectors, and prodding it to react to your co-ordinated 'offensive/defensive' tactics. If the AFV has lost all ROF *and* turned in the manner you wanted it to, open up with that ordnance piece you have been waiting to use. A shot by a 47L at the side/rear armor aspects actually has a better than even chance of penetrating most AFVs it will face, and the Japanese player needs to bring these odds into his favor if he has any chance at winning the war against allied tanks. If the AFV survives the shots by the ordnance attack it from another direction with either another THH (having a spare DC to give him helps a lot in this regard) or with an MMC if none are available. If a leader is nearby then a Banzai Charge could be just the thing to finish the armored monster off. The big issue here is to keep the pressure on once the trap is sprung, do not let the Allied player have a chance to recover from the initial surprise. Make the tank(s) dance to your tune. Also remember those DC THHs can of course attack infantry, sending one against the AFV/Accompanying Infantry will surely cause a massive response from anyone who can still fire, and may cause utter chaos from bad DRs on FPF attacks. In summary, THHs are best utilized in concert with other Defensive Assets, and should not be wasted as lone-wolfs making suicide attacks. There is a big difference between the calculated loss of a THH in a well orchestrated defensive scheme, as opposed to throwing them away piecemeal. When looking at defensive set-up possibilities keep an eye out for these potential kill zones in your overall defensive web, and set-up with the above concepts in mind. Give your troops a fair chance against those AFVs.

TIPS For Novices: Firelanes - Who mans that Machinegun? For the Novice player, there are several 'traps' to consider when setting up those MG positions. MG positions are often manned/deployed differently depending on whether you are on defense or offense in a given scenario. In the offensive mode the so called 'killer stack' will usually find 2 or even 3 MG (or more in some monster scenarios/campaign games) are stacked together with your best leader (a -2/-3 preferably if available) to form your Main Firebase. This 'killer stack' can have either squads (to pump up the volume of that initial attack to at least the 20 IFT Column), 1/2 squads, or crews (if available) to man them. Squads lend firepower to the firebase, and can absorb casualties and still possess the MG, where 1/2 squads/crews neither add FP factors, nor can take casualties. Crews that are actually assigned to MGs in your OB are usually found as assets in campaign games or in scenarios by an innovative designer. The bad thing about this whole concept is it is an inviting target for everything the enemy can bring to bear, and will be the big priority for target selection by any ordnance he may possess. Also you can count on the enemy Sniper being deployed right near their location with the idea of disrupting the firebase. So think twice about all you eggs (MGs) in one basket (location), you may wield a whole lot of firepower but you are guaranteed to be under intense enemy scrutiny for as long as it is together. On the defense a different mindset comes to the fore, as MGs are seen as one component of an integrated/combined arms scheme. Stacking here is not as prevalent as on offense, with maybe 2 MGs seen with your best leader in the hub of your defense, and the rest deployed in interlocking positions to funnel enemy movement into designated 'kill zones'. In this regard the best use often times is in laying down Firelanes (A9.22). Firelanes set up a 'lane' of Residual FP that last until the MG malfunctions/cowers/its manning infantry is broken/pinned/eliminated/end of the enemy movement phase. An important thing to remember about them is the manning unit, once the FL is placed, may not Subsequent First Fire unless confronted with a TPBF (A7.21) situation. It is best to use 1/2 squads/crews for this, and save your squads and their multiple defensive fire options for holding valuable real-estate. Do not forget Dummy concealment counters to act as sniper bait and protect your manning MMCs. Also remember Boresighting (C6.4), if the enemy is not setting up on map. Use some common sense and sound offensive/defensive principles when setting up those most valuable of ASL assets, the MGs.

ASL NEWS: MMP, as most of you are aware have officially taken over the reigns of 'Official' Developers/Curators of the Game System. Tom Morin has recently been given the go-ahead to continue with the design/development/playtest of the CENTRAL STALINGRAD HASL Module. Don Petros continues to labor on the final version of the CS Map, once he finishes with it we will be going full speed ahead with this very worthy project, look for updates here in 'Dispatches'.

A LOOK AHEAD: Next up we are looking at continuing with the Sgt. Brasche series of scenarios, plus we have some fine independent designs from the Boston Area ASL Club (BAASL) to also work on. We will also take a look at **Action Pack # 2**, the **Hell On Wheels** pack, an analysis of the ASL Journal Scenario **A1 URBAN GUERILLAS**, continue with the Tactical Tips, and all our usual features. Until then, enjoy, *Vic* 3/28/99.