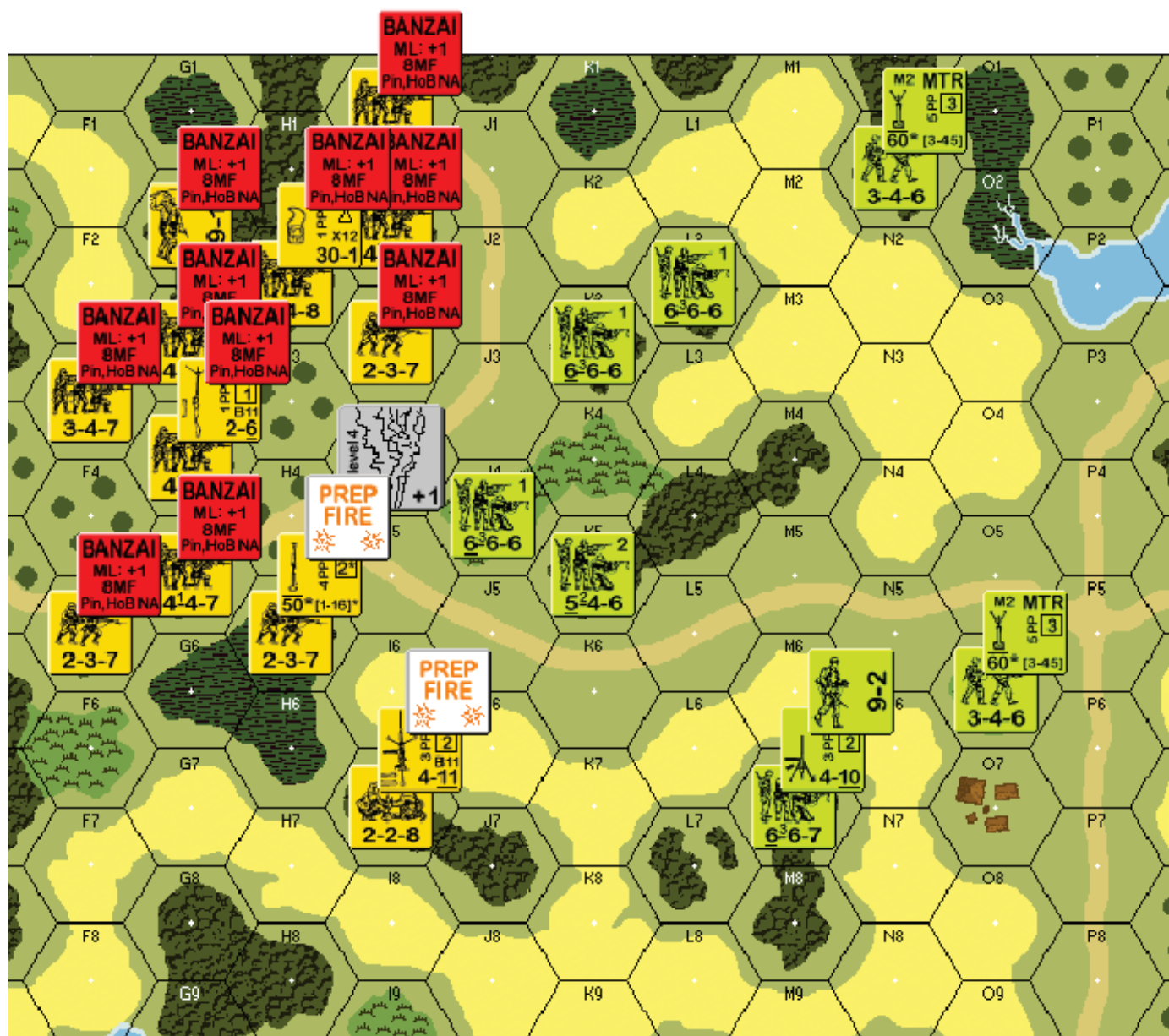


BANZAI!!!



The Newsletter of the Texas ASL Club

August, 2013 Volume 18, Number 1

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Editor's Foxhole

Matt Shostak



We are pleased to bring you another newsletter chock full of goodies. Fresh off a resounding success with the 21st Annual Texas Team Tourney, and looking forward to the upcoming North Texas Shootout, we hope this issue provides some interesting entertainment. Good gaming!

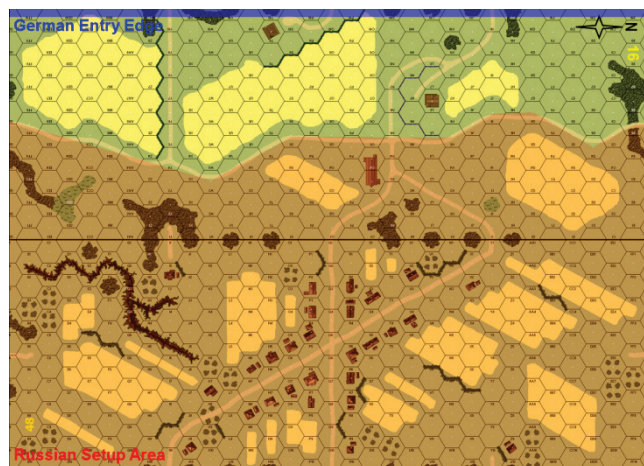
Scenario Analysis: GD10 Apple Sauce

Matt Shostak



Attraction: This scenario from the *Grossdeutschland Pack #2* has a Kursk-like feel to it, despite it being set in 1942. The Russians defend a small crossroads village (the iconic board 48) with the help of some fortifications against a powerful German assault. Both sides have combined arms, and in 1942 the armor match-up is not completely one-sided. A couple of Stukas spice up the affair. Often you'll hear players refer to meat-and-potatoes ASL, and this one fits that bill, a nice juicy pork chop, which goes quite well with apple sauce. I recently had the pleasure of playing Allen King in this battle, and it proved to be a very enjoyable game. As a matter of style and fun factor, however, there are a couple of suggestions I would make for scenarios like this, and I hope designers take note. First, kindling is NA by SSR. This SSR seems to be so common that designers throw it in almost by reflex now, but in this action it seemed to me that it would be cool to allow

kindling—this is the Russian front, famous for scorched earth, is it not? Also, although trenches are provided, they do not connect automatically to adjacent buildings, which just doesn't feel right. I like the SSRs from *Red Barricades* that allow such connectivity as it seems more natural.



German Advantages: Morale, leadership, air support, force balance

German Disadvantages: None

All of the German infantry has morale 8, they have 6 leaders for 18 squads (four of which have negative modifiers), plus two armor leaders, and they have Stukas prowling above. Together with their armor, off-board artillery, and flamethrowers and demo charges, this makes for a very balanced force that can use each part to help the others. The German armor really shines in the infantry support role here, with the ability to put a lot of smoke on the board or just pummel Russian squads from close range.

Russian Advantages: Fortifications, guns

Russian Disadvantages: Terrain, time, radioless tanks

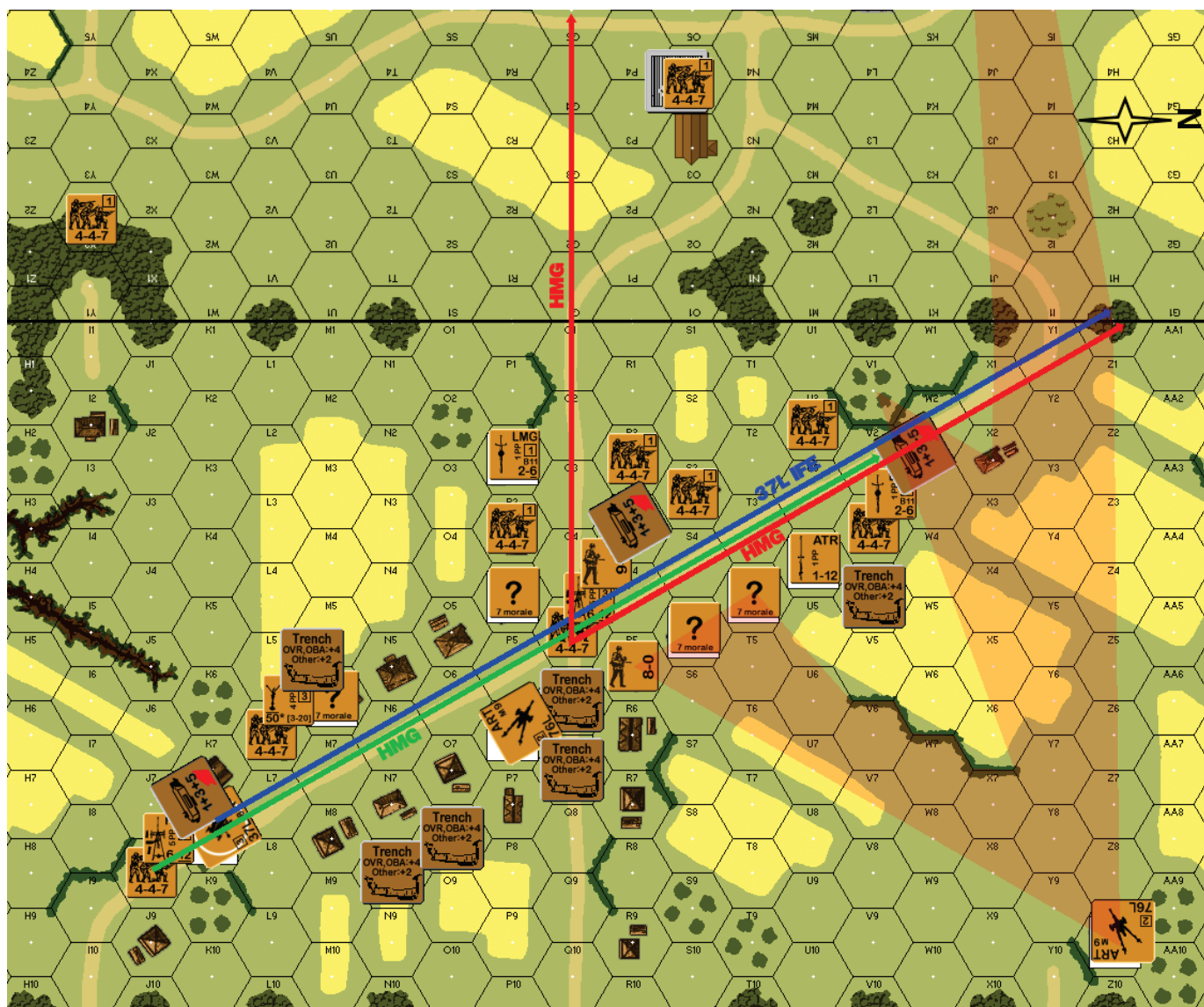
The Russians have had the chance to fortify their position, with 3 pillboxes, 6 trenches, and 3 fortified buildings. They also have 3 formidable guns to play with: two crash-boom 76L ART, and a 37L AA. Their backs are up against it, though. The board 48 village is infamously difficult to defend. The small wooden buildings don't offer a lot of cover, and the gaps between them are big enough that it can be hard to find good locations to skulk into and remain out of sight once the battle is joined. The Germans also have 8 turns to do their work, which is plenty. With an ELR of 3, expect this Russian force to degrade into a rabble as the fight rages on. The T-34 is a powerful tank and over the course of the game the Soviets get 8 of them, which seems rather generous, but they are without radios and hence must suffer platoon movement restrictions if they don't want to

trust to their luck with the dice to drive around independently.

Russian Defensive Philosophy and Setup

The defenders don't want the Germans to enter completely unchecked, but at the same time they don't want to get many units caught too far forward and unable to retreat back to the village for the final defense. Therefore I'd favor placing a few units and dummy counters in locations to keep the Germans honest on their opening moves, strip some concealment, and maybe take a shot or two if some of the Germans get careless in their movement and offer a juicy negative-modifier shot. They will try to get back to the village right away, though. They have to stay ahead of the Germans.

There are many places for the guns. They could all be placed in the village itself, which has the advantage of knowing that they won't miss the battle altogether—the battle must come to them eventually. They are also very good against infantry, so a village placement should help stiffen the defense against the landsers. In such a posture, though, they might not get many good side shots against enemy armor, and also they might be so close together that an artillery smoke mission could render them blind. If that doesn't suit your style, you could try hiding them in any number of places on the flanks, hoping to spring an ambush against the panzers. Since the reinforcing German tanks enter on the north edge of board 48, it might be good to locate the guns somewhere to the northeast of the village if trying such a ploy. Also, the AA gun could be situated with forethought to coordinate with the entry of the T-34s to provide them with support against swooping Stukas. Just



remember to start it in AA mode if doing so. In my game with Allen, I hedged my bets a bit. I had one 76L to the northeast of the village, hoping to help win the armor battle there, but I had the other crash-boom in the center of the town, and the 37L at the south end of town pointed down the road.

The trenches can be combined with the pillboxes to form bunkers, and/or they can be used to help provide skulking positions behind the town buildings. Since the Germans must take 20 buildings on board 48 to win, the Reds must hold on somewhere in the town at least. Easier said than done of course, but it makes sense to think about what might be your last-stand area. Very likely it will be to the east of the long road passing through town from southeast to northwest. That road practically screams for a fire lane or two.

The above accompanying graphic depicts one possible defense, very similar to the one I played against Allen. In this setup the pillboxes house the heavy machineguns, which are each prepared to lay fire lanes down the street, with the one in back supporting the one in front. Moreover the 37L lurks here with a similar design in mind: to project infantry firepower down the road, and if lucky catch a panzer in the side or rear. It is hoped that the tank battle will take place to the northeast of town, so the 76L hiding here can participate and perhaps spring a trap. The intention is that the T-34s will enter in this area, hoping to lure the German tanks forward into a bit of a crossfire.

Beyond those general ideas, the Soviets must just play a cagey defense. They'll have to choose their infantry shots wisely because they will wear down in a firefight much quicker than their adversaries. I think trading for commissars is a no-brainer here. Infantry is going to get broken and sometimes degrade into conscripts, and it will be difficult to shed DM status, so the political officers will be necessary to get troops back into the fight. Sure, they'll probably shoot some of their own soldiers trying to maintain discipline, but it can't be helped. In fact, I'd advocate trading the initial 8-0 for a 9-0, and also the reinforcing 8-1 for a 10-0. Buckle up, because the Germans are coming loaded for Russian Bear.

Commissars



Mission: Rally the troops. Or else.

76L



Mission: Destroy German armor, and/or support the defense of the town against infantry. Keep in mind smoke is available if needed to blind an enemy kill stack, and there is limited APCR against tanks. Be advised the panzers are not

necessarily an easy kill against frontal armor, but it can be done.

37L



Mission: Either lay in wait in AA mode and hope for some luck fending off a Stuka or two to protect the T-34s, or else help the infantry defense with IFE or maybe a side/rear shot against a panzer.

HMGs



Mission: Village defense. Lay fire lanes down the streets to hinder German movement.

T-34s



Mission: Win the armor battle, or at least keep the German tanks at bay. If the panzers won't accept battle, shore up the defense of the town and hit the Wehrmacht infantry instead.

The Infantry



Mission: Hold the town. Choose shots wisely. Perhaps the hardest part of this action will be deciding when and where to shoot with these guys. They are the ones who have to hold enough buildings to win, after all.

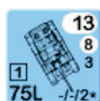
German Attack Plan

No need to be overly cautious with the opening moves here, because as we've just discussed in the Russian section, they can't afford to put a lot on the front line. If they do, then be grateful and work them over where they stand, making sure they can't get back to the village. The upper level of the farm house at 16O3 looks like a good place for the artillery observer. Don't try for contact too early; get your man here first and then try to hit the town with smoke or high explosive as the situation warrants. Because such a broad entry is available, it makes sense to enter at least some units on each side, with the aim of eventually being in such a position in the late middle and end game to be able to interfere with Russian rout paths. As per my usual protocol, I'd join the 9-2 leader with the medium machineguns to form a very powerful buzzsaw. The flamethrowers and demo charges go to half-squads or 8-0 leaders. It can be frustrating to employ these weapons since they draw so much attention that their possessors often break before using them, so the key is to keep them back as a threat and to make sure they always have good rout paths to leaders, and finally bring them forward to do their jobs when the time is right. There's a real art to using these weapons well.



In general the attackers should welcome a firefight—the sooner the Russian infantry loses concealment and starts suffering some unit replacements down to conscript level, the better. Make them fire, get up in their faces and shoot, bring up the tanks and StuGs to close range and hammer on them, smoke them in, and just press them hard. The graphic above shows a possible opening move, assuming no attacking unit got broken, pinned, or knocked out. It also shows the general attack routes.

StuG III



Mission: Lay smoke to help the infantry forward against the town. Defeat the T-34s.

PzIVF1



Mission: Stay away from the T-34s; that fight is for others. Instead find spots to hammer the Red infantry with high explosive and machineguns, or provide more smoke cover.

PzIVF2



Mission: Kill the T-34s first and foremost, and focus secondarily on infantry support.



Stuka '42DB



Mission: The infantry will be difficult to hit, but the T-34s will prove to be very inviting targets. They should be the first and only priority until they are all destroyed.

9-2



Mission: Lead a buzzsaw firegroup and watch the Soviets back off. That -2 modifier will make even the wooden buildings seem very hot indeed for the defenders.

Special Weapons Teams



Mission: Don't be too hasty; wait for good opportunities to come forward for the coup de grace on a pesky position. Remember that these weapons can also knock out a T-34 if necessary.

Artillery Observer



Mission: Get into good position to see the town, then drop smoke or high explosive, dealer's choice depending on the situation.

The Infantry



Mission: These are the guys that have to win by occupying enough victory buildings, but they are well up to the task. They should embrace a firefight with the Soviets and let their higher morale carry the day.

The photo above shows the positions in the late middle game of my match against Allen. Two T-34s were clobbered by direct hits from Stuka bombs, another was recalled due to MA disablement, and yet another was immobilized and abandoned. But the Germans suffered likewise: 4 panzers were knocked out in this area, two from tank fire and two from the 76L. The radio man fell victim to

the Soviet sniper after calling down one mission to the south of town that started the fire in the grain there. One StuG fell victim to a rear shot from the 37L. The fourth StuG was recalled when its commander was killed by the sniper.

Conclusion: This is an enjoyable scenario, featuring the kind of combined-arms so many players enjoy, without being overly big. But give the more experienced player the Russians.

Player Profile: John Hyler

Banzai: Tell us a little bit about your gaming background. How long have you been gaming? What was your first game? Are there any particular games that stood out over the years?

JH: *I started gaming about 45 years ago, with the old SPI line of games. The only one that I remember concentrating upon was Barbarossa. That whetted my appetite for more, so when I saw PanzerBlitz on the hobby shop shelves, I had to have it. Through the years, I have had many pleasurable sessions with Third Reich, Gladiator, Circus Maximus and World in Flames. I particularly enjoyed Gettysburg 77 and Caesar at Alesia. In computer games, I am an addict of Rome-Total War. Have my pre-order in for Rome-Total War 2.*

Banzai: When and how did you discover ASL?

JH: *I started playing Squad Leader in 1978, when it was first released. So when in 1985 Avalon Hill announced the publication of ASL, I was right there in line for the first release of the ASLRB and Beyond Valor. The first cursory glance at the ASLRB confirmed the superiority of ASL vs. SL, so I never looked back.*

Banzai: What nationality do you enjoy playing the most?

JH: *I enjoy the playing the Russians. They have characteristics that simplify play, i.e. no deploying, but they have really cool capabilities, like human wave. Too, they are challenging to play because of the perpetual shortage of leaders. Imagine Hill 621 if the 36 Russian squads at scenario's start had 8 or 9 leaders instead of only three.*

Banzai: Describe your favorite kind of scenario. What kind of scenario do you find less enjoyable?

JH: *I like big and beefy combined arms slugfests. Scenarios that feature multiple force pool options or FPP for the*

defender are great, due to their replay value. What was done last time did not work? Try again using different options. I do not like scenarios, usually smaller, where a single bad DR can totally compromise one side or the other.

Banzai: What would you say are your ASL strengths and weaknesses?

JH: *I believe that I am better at setting up defenses. I am still learning the tactics to attack, especially in analyzing and using all of the capabilities that a given side may possess. David Hailey gave me a great and enjoyable tutorial on using smoke when we played this last tournament, as well as a display of the "geometry of ASL".*

Banzai: What is the best part of ASL, and what is the worst?

JH: *The best part is the friendships and camaraderie that I have gained over the years. The worst part is the reality that our hobby is gradually withering on the vine. There are not enough young people taking up the game. I fear that in 20-25 years that ASL will be nearly extinct.*

Banzai: What are you most looking forward to with regard to ASL?

JH: *Pretty much anything that BFP is going to publish in the future.*

Banzai: What's your favorite game piece in ASL and why?

JH: *.50cal MG. 8FP, ROF 3, normal range 16, 2FP up to 32 hexes away, what is not to like? Couple that with an 8-1 or better leader directing fire and you immediately create an enormous headache for your opponent.*

Banzai: You're playing the Russians in a 1941 scenario, facing a German combined arms attack featuring several AFVs. Would you rather have a KV-2 or a platoon of two BT-7 M37s and two BT-7As? Now turn that around: which combo would you rather not have to face if you were playing the Germans?

JH: *I would rather have the BT-7s and BT-7As. With their mobility, I have seen how effective they can be, even while using platoon movement. Likewise, I would rather not face the smaller tanks. The KV-2, formidable as it is, is slow and clumsy. This makes it vulnerable to flanking maneuvers to get the side/rear shot.*

Banzai: You get to choose your side in a scenario set in the battle for France in 1940. Both sides have combined arms and a decent allotment of tanks. Would you rather command the French side to use their Char B1-bis, Somuas, and Renault tanks, or the Germans, with their PzIs and PzIIs, and a few PzIVs and Pz38ts?

JH: *The French are my least favorite side to play, so the answer to that would be the Germans.*

Banzai: How do you like PTO scenarios?

JH: *I do not play enough PTO, something that I need to rectify. That said, at present PTO represents a niche grouping of scenarios. As an example, ASL 74 Bloody Red Beach is one of my favorite scenarios because of the seaborne invasion element for the Americans, coupled with the defensive cave complex element for the Japanese.*

Banzai: What was your most enjoyable ASL moment? How about your worst, funniest, coolest, and/or craziest?

JH: *In my first tournament, Brian Roundhill and I played J51 Setting The Stage. That game stands out to this day as one of my best ASL memories. The game was decided on the last dice roll after 12 hours. That's entertainment. Coolest? Taking out one of Rick Reinesch's Tigers with a molotov cocktail. Worst/craziest/funniest? Being the recipient of a "Toreki moment" while we were playing Siberian Shockwave. His 10-3 kill stack (24+ FP) and a supporting cast went on a tear during one defensive fire phase. When the dust settled, 8 squads, a couple leaders and 2 halftracks were KIA. David Longstreet came over and looked at the pile of dead Germans and just shook his head.*

Banzai: What area of your play would you like to improve on most over the next year?

JH: *To be able to better able to deduce the correct tactic necessary, be it defensively or offensively.*

Banzai: Is there an area you think is under-represented in ASL?

JH: *Not really. There is a good across-the-board representation of all of the theaters of operation proportionate with their historic activity level. For example, this is why in part that there are many more east front scenarios than France '40 scenarios.*

Banzai: Spanish Civil War scenarios: overrated or underrated?

JH: *I cannot say, never have played one.*

Banzai: Now that *Armies of Oblivion* has been out for a while, have you had a chance to generate some impressions about playing the Axis Minors?

JH: *They feature the same tactical issues as those confronting the major belligerents, but just have crummier troops and hardware with which to do the job.*

Banzai: What advice would you give to players who are just starting out, and what advice would you give to ASL clubs in trying to attract and retain new players?

JH: *For new players, read the ASLRB and have a small scenario continually in play if space and lack of children/cats permits. Even if in a given session you only make it partway through a turn, have the rule book open and try to do something in each rule segment in the appropriate phase as it is presented without worrying about game context. With time and assiduous effort, things will start to click. Against a real opponent, you will be able to concentrate better on fluid tactical play rather than having to thumb through the ASLRB for procedural issues. For ASL clubs, the best example is with Mark and Race Carter. Most of us are middle-aged, many with teenage sons. If fathers can actively encourage and recruit participation from their sons, getting them away from the electronic diversions available, there may be a chance to sustain ASL into future generations.*

Banzai: What were your worst and best runs of luck?

JH: *In terms of luck, I would say that I personify the Law of Mediocrity. The dice giveth and they taketh away. I cannot remember any runs, good or bad that stand out above the others.*

Banzai: We'll get to your favorite ASL scenarios in another issue, so how about telling us what your other favorite games are?

JH: *In computer games, the current iteration of Civilization is always present in the rotation. As mentioned before, my favorite is Rome-Total War. Empire-Total War is also fun, with the musket-era weaponry and enhanced naval combat. With RTW naval combat, whoever gets there "firstest with the mostest" wins. In ETW, one has the ability to do tactical combat with actual ships, from rowed galleys to 1st rate Ships of the Line, which brings me to Flying*

Colors. *Jeff Toreki introduced me to the game and it is great fun. It is a good multi-player game too. You will be seeing many more "off-topic" posts on the CTASL website.*

Banzai: What are your other interests outside of gaming?

JH: *I enjoy cooking, eating and drinking fine food and wine, preparing fireworks displays in season and functional woodworking. With my wife Toni, I patronize the performing arts, symphonic, musical, operatic, jazz and good ol' rock 'n roll. Travel is always in the offing, especially when coupled with one or more of the above activities.*

Banzai: Any final comments to wrap up?

JH: *SL/ASL has been an integral part of my life for 35 years. It contributed to my divorcing my first wife and to the resounding success and happiness of my marriage to Toni. I cherish the friendships that I have made through ASL and the many memories of happy events while playing.*

Easing The Freeze

Dan Preston



I suppose it is time to face my demons. That is, there is one demon that has haunted my ASL playing career for many years. That demon is known as the freeze, VBM freeze, or the sleaze freeze. I have called it many far less polite names. The freeze is a tactic whereby a player imposes target selection limits (A7.212) on an enemy unit or units by driving a vehicle into their location, with either a regular move or bypass. This is meant to prevent opposing units (usually infantry) from firing outside the location, which often provides better freedom of movement for other forces since they don't have to worry about fire from the frozen unit. Often a vehicle freeze is combined with follow-up infantry which move right up to the frozen enemy to suppress them with small arms fire and possibly close combat. Almost overwhelmingly, the AFV that enters a hex to freeze opposing infantry remains in motion in order to stay alive with the +2 modifier on the To Hit and CC attacks against it. I will discuss this more a little bit later. Vehicles can even freeze higher-level units under certain circumstances (usually requiring a close-topped AFV to go CE, for example).

I understand, however, that an old adage reigns supreme in this situation. To paraphrase an old issue of the *General*, one may concentrate on what the rules allow, but the actual rules citations for this maneuver are scattered all over the

rulebook. I am not sure that anyone has tried to collate and collect all of the bits and pieces for easy dissemination. I am willing to give it a try.

There are two situations to be concerned with. The first happens when the AFV actually enters the hex, and this procedure is covered in detail in A12.41. By and large, the vehicle is "broken" if it has no combat capabilities (A12.1). This means unarmed, unarmored vehicles that have no armed riders or passengers. If an empty truck drives into your hex, feel free to ignore it. Another situation occurs when an armed but unarmored vehicle enters the hex with opposing infantry. This case may be dealt with on the IFT or TK#, and is not the focus of this article.

When an AFV *enters* a hex containing opposing infantry, it is either to execute an overrun attack or to freeze, or both. If that infantry happens to be concealed, it may forfeit its concealment voluntarily and suffer no further penalty. The concealed infantry may also take one combined PAATC based on the lowest morale unit in the hex modified by the best unpinned leader present. If one such unit is subject to a +1 PAATC, then all are. If the infantry fails the PAATC, then all are unconcealed and pinned. Dummy stacks have morale of 7. If the infantry passes, then all are still concealed, and the overrun attack is halved accordingly. Of course, those units exempt from PAATC need not take one, but other units in the hex must.

This is also a good time to re-define what a PAATC represents. Infantry are never *forced* to take a PAATC when an opposing AFV enters the hex. The preceding example is a special case, as is the PAATC in question. Infantry must only take a PAATC if they intend to actually attack the vehicle in question.

As one last notation, carefully read the first sentence of A12.41. Infantry in a woods-road are specifically exempt from taking a PAATC to remain concealed. That is to say, if an enemy vehicle enters such a hex occupied by opposing concealed infantry using the road, the infantry may stay concealed with no detriment.

And now, the second situation. A12.41 concerns itself with the rules for an AFV *entering* a hex with opposing infantry. The first sentence of A12.41 also details the other exception besides the woods-road case, specifically, bypass.

A12.42 is a good starting point for a synopsis of the rules concerning the freeze. To summarize this section:

- A vehicle may not execute an overrun attack using VBM.
- A vehicle may not expose a HIP unit by bypassing in the same hex.
- Concealed units in adjacent hexes not being bypassed are unaffected.

A concealed unit in the bypassed hex is only exposed if the AFV remains in the hex, or if it becomes unconcealed voluntarily. (This section is badly worded and was corrected with errata in J10. To summarize, a vehicle may not expose a concealed unit just by bypassing through the hex. If the bypassing vehicle remains in the hex, the concealed unit is unconcealed at the end of that unit's MPh).

Now that it is apparent that the tank coming up the street is going to freeze that squad in the woods, there are certain countermeasures that may be taken. According to A7.307, armored vehicles may not be harmed on the IFT, but units may still fire in order to leave residual firepower (A8.2) normally. This is even more effective if the infantry in question have Spraying Fire (A8.5). By firing (especially adjacent) into one or more hexes, you can prepare a warm welcome for the infantry that is trying to move up, or at least cover one or two of the adjacent hexes they must move into with some kind of firepower. Having an opposing AFV enter your hex also cancels any Fire Lanes (A9.22) a MG may have placed from that hex.

Having considered what may transpire as the enemy AFV approaches the hex, what happens when it actually enters to freeze by going into bypass and remaining in the hex in motion? Your concealed infantry in the hex are unconcealed at the end of the enemy MPh. That is all that happens. Your infantry may ignore the beast until the CCPh. They do not take a PAATC.

Okay, now that there is an elephant in the room, it is useless to pretend that it is not there. First of all, if the infantry in question have a support weapon besides a Gun, DC or Radio/Field Phone, it may now fire at the intruding pest. Let me get the exceptions out of the way first. An AFV entering a hex containing a Gun capable of firing at it is not the focus of this article. Such things happen from time to time, and I will let the reader sort that situation out for himself. Infantry wishing to place a DC must first take a PAATC, and that comes later. Last and not least, if an Observer (C1.6) finds himself in the same hex as an opposing unit (of any kind) he may continue to take action outside the hex. Your artillery observers may therefore continue with their artillery actions unhindered. Spotters for indirect fire (C9.3) are frozen like everyone else.

With the exceptions to the rule noted, let us continue on to the rule. Infantry armed with ordinary support weapons like MGs, ATRs and SCWs may fire away. Infantry firing at a bypassing vehicle in the same hex are presented with side target facing (the last sentence in D2.32) at 0-6 hex range and are not subject to Target Facing (D3.2) because the vehicle in question is not IN the hex. These weapons are also not subject to Case E (C5.5, firing within hex +2) for the same reason.

Infantry armed with DCs, Molotovs and FTs are a little different. In order to attack the AFV in bypass, infantry with DCs and Molotovs must first pass a PAATC to do so. Failure of this PAATC results in Pin and the aforementioned disadvantages. Infantry with a FT may attack without the PAATC. In all three of these cases, the target aspect against a vehicle in bypass is a rear facing.

One final note bears mentioning about Open Topped (OT) vehicles either in bypass or IN the hex with opposing infantry. Such vehicles are subject to Triple Point Blank Fire with a +2 modifier whether they are CE or not (A7.211). These vehicles are eligible to use the freeze, but it is far more dangerous to the vehicle.

Having exhausted all other measures regarding the intruding AFV, we now must get our hands dirty with Reaction Fire/CC. Assuming that the intruding beast is now bypassing in your hex and remains in Motion, it is conducting a Freeze.

An infantry unit may now attack the AFV on the CCT, or ignore it altogether. This first fire attack on the CCT is called CC Reaction Fire (D7.2). I will concentrate on the rules D7.2 through D7.211, because the focus of this article is about being frozen by armored vehicles. The rest of this rules section is about unarmored vehicles and gun crews, and is not directly relevant to the matter at hand.

At this point, infantry with usable weapons must weigh the relative worth of their SW against their CCV. Units that fire SWs (First Fire) are ineligible to use Street Fighting (A7.211) thereafter. Units that take a PAATC and fail are pinned, and may not use Reaction Fire. Take note at this time that infantry that is pinned, regardless of the cause, may not use Reaction Fire at all.

An AFV that enters your hex and remains in Motion does *not* hold your infantry in Melee (A11.15). According to this rules section, units in Melee are locked in Close Combat and may make no attacks that are not on the Close Combat Table. Infantry in the hex, therefore, may break and rout normally, or simply leave the hex in their next MPh, assuming that they are not held in melee by enemy infantry in the meantime.

Let us assume that the AFV entered the hex, and the infantry in question passed its PAATC, and is now eligible to attack the AFV. Enemy vehicles entering a hex using Bypass Movement are subject to a -1 modifier for Street Fighting ambush by the opposing infantry in the hex. Assuming that the opposing infantry unit is a squad, the magic number to harm the AFV would be a 4 (Squad CCV {5} + Street Fighting Ambush {-1}), vehicle in Motion adds +2 to the infantry's attack. So, a 4 DR would immobilize the AFV, and a 3 would kill it. This is only an example, of course. There are many other modifiers that might influence the attack.

Bear in mind that CC Reaction Fire uses the CC rules, but the AFV may not attack back. Assuming that the infantry unit passes its PAATC and is eligible to attack with CC Reaction Fire, it may do as First Fire and Final Fire again in the DFPh (D7.2). Only one PAATC is necessary for both attacks, but the Final Fire Attack is modified by +1 (D7.213).

Now that the AFV is in the hex, and assuming that it survived Reaction Fire, it may now muster whatever FP it can for its AFPh attack. Non-turreted AFVs may not fire at units in the Bypass hex. Turreted AFVs may use the side TCA described in D2.321. However, such fire is restricted by adding Case A against the bypass hex, in addition to the penalties for Motion Fire. This penalty applies to fire on the IFT as well as the To Hit Table. Such fire cannot use the Area Target Type (the last sentence of C3.3). Last and not least, the penalties for Motion Fire and AFPh fire are cumulative (D2.32). For most purposes, the AFV can freeze infantry in the hex, but it probably won't do much damage to them

Now that the smoke has cleared from the freeze, our combatants are headed for the Close Combat Phase, and there are just a few more points that must be made. The Nahverteidigungswaffe may only be fired at infantry that has already attacked the vehicle (there are rare exceptions; read A11.622). That means that if the infantry declines the attack, the SN remains idle. Infantry that are Pinned in Close Combat vs. a vehicle are subject to a +1 modifier, not halved. If the infantry declined to attack the AFV in any way during the freeze, then no PAATC is rolled. If that same infantry is in the same hex with an enemy AFV during the start of the CCPh, then the infantry needs no PAATC to attack it. Also note there is one more rule regarding the use of the SN during the CCPh if the vehicle is in Motion. Carefully read the first word of D2.42. *All* fire from a Motion Vehicle is halved. Therefore, the SN will only have a FP of 8.

Now the rules are laid out, collated, and in understandable form. The freezers and the frozen now know the risks and the benefits. Good luck to all.

Rules Tip

Be careful to provide support to that MG laying a fire lane as the only way the MG can cancel the fire lane (other than the end of the MPPh or the manning Infantry becoming broken/pinned/eliminated) is if a TPBF/CC-Reaction-Fire situation occurs. It would be kind of frustrating to have enemy Infantry moving past your MG happily firing away down a hexgrain, and there is nothing you can do about it. [A9.223]

Starter Kit Korner

Every Scenario has an Angle (or I didn't see THAT in my Starter Kit Rulebook!)

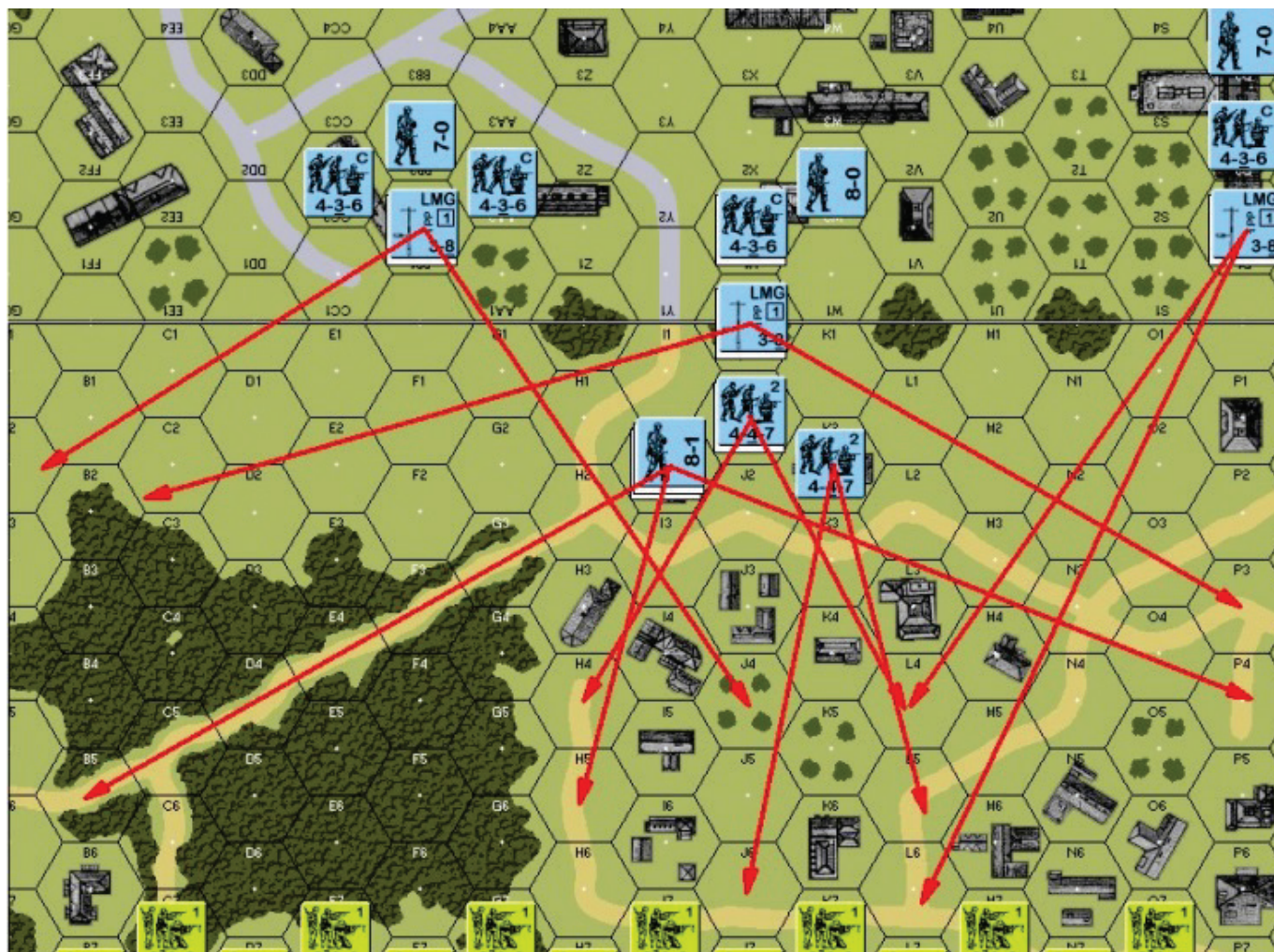


Vincent Maresca

Our gaming group is "young" in that we all came together (thank you GameSquad) wanting to play ASL but didn't have a single, grizzled veteran to lead us. Some had played ASL (and even SL) a long time ago and others were intrigued by the contents of their *Starter Kit* box that they were drawn to through some unknown force with its tactile contents of cool-looking squads, shiny death-dealing special weapons and boards modeling terrain all over the world! It made sense for our intrepid band to start at the ASL beginning--the *Starter Kit* (SK). From booting out the Nazis in the Normandy villages to torching the rats in Stalingrad, we progressed scenario by scenario while continuing to pick up new recruits along the way.

Now with some experience under my belt, I was asked to share some thoughts on how to teach new players to improve their game. Reading the rulebook is a great start but I've noticed it doesn't really click with a novice player until they've seen their first defensive "skulk" or drew off Defensive First Fire with a half squad and then they have the "aha" moment. While there are many subjects and not a few articles out there, I thought I would start with a discussion of using angles in the game as they are critical for both attacking and defending. Most novice players are still fighting to understand how the rules all fit together and are shocked when their 9-2 leader stacked with 3 squads and all the toys is struck down by a 4FP MMG with a -2 DRM as they move behind what they thought was the impenetrable woods hex. It's all in the angles. ASL and SK are full of them! Understanding the basic hex grid will go a long way towards improving anyone's game.

Take a look at the graphic below. This is one possible German defensive setup for the SK Scenario S3 *Simple Equation* with the US storming German defenses at Aachen. Setting up a good defense with this pretty crummy German 2nd line and conscript force against the 14 US 6-6-6 semi-supermen looks pretty daunting to a novice player. The novice view is that the Amis can advance unopposed through all those buildings right up to the German perimeter on turn 1. "It's all over for sure -- who designed this thing?" is running through his mind. But if we look closer, the angles show us a chink in the US armor. All those supposed blocked attack routes all of a sudden can be hit with the proper troop deployment sending fire down on



the advancing US from what look like concealed approaches through a thorough review of the board's geometry (and we all thought we would never use geometry after high school).

If the US player doesn't see these lines of fire, he most likely will walk right into the defending fire with the dreaded -2 [FFNAM and FFMO]. Now the novice player sees – what if I wait and fire at units moving through the open hexes between the buildings so that I can leave Residual Fire (RF). And what if I use RF at key terrain choke points creating a field of RF “flowers” between the buildings? The US player is now looking at either attacking though residual (hopefully a maze of RF) to quickly close with the enemy or spending precious time moving slowly through the buildings. The German defense is not looking too bad now.

Now, the novice says, what if I find a spot that has the most angles to the enemy advance routes and put my minus leader with a MG with a good Rate of Fire (ROF) there. The German HMG with 3 ROF has a 50% chance of

striking multiple hexes [no MG CA restrictions but also no Fire Lanes in SK] so the novice quickly learns to put his MGs in locations with the maximum field of fire but also the best angles (or keyhole shots) along long-range likely enemy approach routes. Using these concepts with other key defensive principles (a lesson for another day), the defense can be maximized for best effect.

While the defender is not allowed to check the LOS with a string while setting up the defense, you can use the next best thing – the board hex grid itself. For example, it is clear the German 447 hiding in YJ2 has a perfect LOS to the advance road in YH4 just by using the hex grid. A really good player will see these angles and be able to strike 10 or more hexes away while you are happy running obliviously down a road behind a village until – BAM!

Being able to spot and employ these angles will help any novice player become a journeyman with either setting up an effective defensive or maneuver the field of battle increasing his chances of success (but remember the dice gods can be fickle!).

[As a companion to this article, some helpful hints on how to assess lines of sight using the geometry of the hex grid can be found in *The Geometry of ASL* by David Hailey, published in issue 5.2 of this newsletter. – Eds.]

Tourney AAR and First-Timer Impressions

Ed Hack



I've been a wargamer since the mid-60s, cutting my teeth on the AH classics like *Bulge*, *D-Day*, and *Blitzkrieg*. In high school, I got a sub to S&T and bought SPI and AH games as finances permitted. In college, I got sidetracked into D&D when it first came out and played quite a bit with my wargaming friends, including Steve Jackson, who went on to be a designer with *Metagaming* and later his own company. I did playtesting with *Metagaming* and *Steve Jackson Games* in college and after, and played a number of PBM wargames from *Flying Buffalo Games* and others.

I bought *Squad Leader* and some of the modules as they were released, but a lack of opponents and a heavy work schedule after I moved to Dallas led me to put it aside. I did get a copy of the ASL rules when they first came out, along with *Paratrooper*, and played a game or two back then.

After a move back to Houston to get my Master's, starting work as a contractor at the Johnson Space Center, and the birth of my daughter, I put most traditional boardgaming aside. I had time to play a few computer games on my PC, with the *Civilization* series getting the most play. When the *ASL Starter Kit* came out, I got a copy in 2007 and played a few games at Owlcon and with the Houston ASL group, but my work schedule ramped back up and I went inactive again. During all these times away from wargaming, I tried to keep up with events, a task made much easier by ConsimWorld, BGG, and the Gamesquad forums.

Last December, I was forcibly retired due to budget cuts at NASA, so I decided to get back into ASL. I got all my stuff out of storage and made contact with the Houston ASL group. I was able to get a game in April and was hooked. I decided to go to the Texas Team Tournament and made all the necessary arrangements. Only able to get through the infantry and ordnance rules in the rulebook, I was going to need some opponents willing to forego playing Pacific, armor or OBA scenarios.

I went with some trepidation, as the Texas players are well-known to each other and here I am, the new kid on the block, with only one real ASL game under my belt since I started back. I got to Austin on Thursday afternoon after stopping at Louis Mueller BBQ in Taylor for a beef rib and

some brisket. They deserve their ranking as one of the best BBQ joints in the US. I had hoped to have dinner with my brother, but he was going to be on set of the movie he was working on until late.

So, I wandered up to the convention building to pick up my badge and check things out. Things started out on the right foot and continued that way all week. Rick Reinesch did a great job of making me welcome, introducing me around, and getting opponents to for me to play against. All of my opponents were gentlemen in the best sense of the word. The venue worked well, everything ran smoothly, there were snacks and beverages galore. A special thanks to all the game companies that donated prizes. I got a \$50 LFT gift certificate for winning a playtest mini. (It came down to a last dice roll. Literally. I rolled off against Brian Roundhill for it! My 7 vs. his 8.) And in the door prize drawing I got a *Dezign Pack* from *East Side Gamers*. I cashed the LFT certificate in for two scenario packs, numbers 3 (an SS pack) and 5.

Here are sketches of the games I played over the weekend.

On Thursday evening I played *T1, Gavin Take*, against Daniel Virobik. I defended as the Germans. Dan's Americans were able pin my major defenders and work the flanks, taking full advantage of the hill on my right. He easily got the required number of squads off the board and won.

Friday morning, I started with *SP 51, Stryker's Charge* against Matt Shostak's American attackers. My German defenders on board 22 had a number of infantry guns and squads in a town, some of the guns HIP. After some back and forth, Matt was able to sweep the defenders out of the required buildings.

My next game was *RPT 13, A Handful of Howdy*, against Robert Esparza's defending Germans. Played on boards x and v, the Americans start on x and must clear defenders from the hills and two multi-hex buildings on board v. I was able to work through the first hill quickly, using my MGs and mortar to good effect. I then set up a flanking move to pin the units on the second hill and push the defenders out of the buildings. Again, after some back and forth, I was able to clear the hills and occupy the buildings at the end for the win.

My last game of the day was against Jay Harms, a playtest of *Stossguppe Schlichter* for an upcoming *Dispatches from Bunker*. The 5.5- to 6.5-turn scenario uses the low letter sides of boards 34 and 37. The attacking Germans start out with 10 infantry squads and some SW, entering from the A edge, and get a half-track with 1.5 sapper squads, an LMG, and a DC on turn 3. The defending Norwegians have 8 squads, some SW, and a roadblock on the road running down board 34. Three squads and an MG reinforce on turn 3. The Germans have to clear the roadblock and amass 14

or more net VPs, with the length of the game and the number of VP determined by the location of the roadblock. I defended and set up the roadblock in 34G7, so the game would last 4.5 turns. I set up a line flanking the roadblock on 37, and put some dummies on the left and a squad, LMG, and leader on the right covering board 34. Jay quickly closed up the road and to my left. He deftly engaged the troops at the roadblock, causing a number of breaks and routs that led to squads surrendering. He cleared the roadblock area before the sappers arrived. The sappers came on, and using the surrendered squads as labor, they were able to clear the roadblock on the last turn, while the other troops kept the pressure up on the remaining Norwegians. The consensus was that the roadblock clearing is perhaps too dependent on one or two rolls, either from labor clearing or by using the one DC.

Saturday, I played Chris Kubick in a playtest of BFP's *Death Throes* for their upcoming Polish pack. The scenario had my Poles (trenches, infantry, and SW) defending the village on the low half of board 62 against a larger German force, who set up on the adjacent board (which I forgot to note). The Poles have some morale advantages when defending the buildings. Chris sent a few troops and SW onto the woods along rows M&N, while the rest shot at my trenches on F/G/H5 and went into the woods at B&C. An early, lucky shot by troops I had in K9 broke one of his firegroups, who had trouble rallying. I had a few other good shots at critical times that stalled his advance just long enough for me to win. The breaking of the firegroup on my right was critical, as it prevented Chris from adding fire across the depression to help clear the buildings. His plan was probably sound, but was derailed by bad dice. If this scenario is typical of the others in the Polish pack, I'll be getting it as soon as it's available.

Next, Hondo Nelson whipped me twice in *RPT 11, Butchers and Bakers*. A very small scenario, it has 5 squads of British with 2 LMGs attacking 4 squads of Germans in the buildings on the R-GG rows of board y. The Germans have an LMG, an HMG with a crew, and 12 factors of mines. The British need to clear the buildings in 5.5 turns. I attacked first, but got bogged down and was unable to get the job done. We then reversed roles and Hondo showed me how to do the attack as the Brits. Needless to say, he cleared the buildings.

Finally, I played Race Carter, also an ASL newbie, in *Scenario A, The Guards Counterattack*. The turning point came early, as the human wave attack on my left came apart at the start, as I broke the 10-2 leader, who decided to commit suicide on the first rally attempt. The resulting lack of a leader on that flank allowed me to push out the remaining shock troops over the next few turns. Snipers were very, very active and were adept at wounding leaders. A few morale checks by the Russians resulted in berserk

squads (one abandoning an HMG) and one leader. Race's other attacks were unable to push the Germans out of their locations and the result was a German victory.

Thanks again to Rick, all the attending ASLers, the prize sponsors, my opponents, and all the other players. You made me feel welcome and I'll be back, "God willin' and the creek don't rise!" as we say here in Texas.

21st Annual Texas Team Tournament Results



Rick Reinesch

Here are the results and rankings from the 21st Annual Texas Team Tournament. Where players had the same score, ranking was based off of W/L percentage first, and then the W/L percentage of their opponents. So players with the same score who competed against stronger opponents would be ranked higher.

Here's where folks ended in the individual standings. Congratulations to Gary Trezza for winning the top individual award this year.

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Gary Trezza	4	4	0
Randy Shurtz	4	4	0
Mike Rose	4	5	1
Will Willow	3	3	0
Eric Gerstenberg	3	4	1
Mike Seningen	2	2	0
Lee Jennings	2	2	0
Matt Shostak*	2	3	1
Doyle Motes	2	3	1
Pete Shelling	2	4	2
Mike Bistodeau	2	4	2
Chris Kubick	2	4	2
Chris Buehler	1	1	0
Paul Messina	1	1	0
Steve Pleva	1	2	1
David Longstreet	1	3	2
David Hailey	1	3	2
Ed Beekman	1	3	2

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Ryan Kent	1	3	2
Scott Bell	0	1	1
Jeff Toreki	0	1	1
Jay Harms	0	3	3
Roy Connelly	0	2	2
Michael Rodgers	0	2	2
Ed Hack	-1	3	4
Kermit Mullins	-1	2	3
Mark Carter	-1	1	2
Steve Salin	-1	1	2
Andrew Muller	-1	1	2
Johnny Johnson	-1	0	1
Dan Preston	-1	0	1
John Hyler	-2	2	4
Phillip Johnson	-2	2	4
Bud Garding	-2	2	4
Arlen Vanek	-2	2	4
Daniel Virobik	-2	2	4
Race Carter	-2	0	2
Brian Roundhill	-3	2	5
Hondo Nelson	-3	2	5
Dan Best	-3	2	5
Jack OQuin	-3	0	3
Matt Schwoebel	-3	0	3
Robert Esparza	-5	0	5

* Matt is the individual runner up as a result of playing in the championship round.

Here's how the Major Johnson standings finished. Dan Best took home the MJ in a tour de force. Great job, Dan!

Player	MJ Total
Dan Best	28134
Kermit Mullins	17073
Mike Bistodeau	16480
Brian Roundhill	14337
Chris Kubick	13118
John Hyler	12670
Phillip Johnson	12608

Mike Rose	12514
Pete Shelling	11732
Daniel Virobik	11187
Jay Harms	10652
David Hailey	10521
Doyle Motes	10374
Roy Connelly	10188
Ed Beekman	9877
Arlen Vanek	9764
Matt Shostak	8911
Bud Garding	8899.45
Hondo Nelson	7686
Michael Rodgers	6843
Ryan Kent	6666
Gary Trezza	6315
Randy Shurtz	6037.5
Ed Hack	5533.5
David Longstreet	5225
Andrew Muller	4865
Matt Schwoebel	4393
Eric Gerstenberg	3925
Steve Pleva	3640
Scott Bell	3348
Steve Salin	3228
Robert Esparza	2715
Johnny Johnson	1830
Jack OQuin	1728
Will Willow	1659
Dan Preston	1656
Mark Carter	1617
Jeff Toreki	1398
Lee Jennings	756
Race Carter	492
Mike Seningen	490
Chris Buehler	206.5
Paul Messina	132

Here are how the teams fared. Congratulations to Pete, Chris B, and Chris K:

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Pete Shelling, Chris Buehler, Chris Kubick,	5	9	4
Ed Beekman, Mike Bistodeau, John Farris,	3	7	4
Eric Gerstenberg, Rick Reinesch, Dan Preston,	2	4	2
David Longstreet, Michael Rodgers, Scott Bell,	1	6	5
Steve Pleva, Lee Jennings, Phillip Johnson,	1	6	5
David Hailey, Mark Carter, Ryan Kent,	1	7	6
Gary Trezza, Kermit Mullins, Daniel Virobik,	1	8	7
Matt Shostak, Johnny Johnson, Steve Salin,	0	4	4
Mike Rose, Ed Hack, Jack OQuin,	0	8	8
Jay Harms, Roy Connelly, Andrew Muller,	-1	6	7
Hondo Nelson, Dan Best, Will Willow,	-3	7	10
Matt Schwoebel, Doyle Motes, Arlen Vanek,	-3	5	8
Jeff Toreki, Bud Garding, Race Carter,	-4	3	7
Brian Roundhill, John Hyler, Robert Esparza,	-10	4	14

21st Annual Texas Team Tournament Wrap-up

Rick Reinesch

It was another great year for the Texas Team Tournament as we celebrated 21 years of ASL camaraderie here in Austin, Texas. We welcomed 50 pre-registrants and walk-ons from all over the southern part of the US and from locations as far away as the Canada. This was a an off year for a number of the locals who are normally regulars to the tournament as work/surgeries/life got in the way of them being able to attend. But nonetheless, we were able to welcome several new faces this year and a couple of returning ones, which is always great. We certainly welcomed Michael Rodgers (see, I finally spelled it right Michael) who drove down all the way to Texas from Canada to attend and was able to take home some of the prize loot. We also were glad to host Steve Pleva, who decided to join us at the last minute. Always enjoy having the gents from the Northeast come on down. A number of the new faces were getting back into the game after being away from it for a while. The tournament is a great way to get back up to speed as the immersion of play over the weekend helps to reinforce rules learned/remembered. Ed Hack, Scott Mullins, Phillip Johnson, and Ryan Kent were just a few of the new faces we hope to see back again next year. For those folks returning, we were happy to welcome



back Randy Shurtz and Gary Trezza after being away for several years. Hopefully it won't be several years before they make another appearance.

We held the tourney in the Tech Room of the Wingate Conference Center again this year. This is our second year at this hotel which works out especially well for us as they cater to conferences all the time, so coordination goes very smoothly from my standpoint. The venue provides us with plenty of elbow room to play, they allow us to bring in our own drinks (which we provide in variety and abundance) and the connectivity in the room allows us to show an endless loop of WWII-related DVDs, which makes for a great ambiance while playing. I've already signed the contracts for us

to be back there again next year.

Getting down to the details, in the title match for the individual crown of the Texas Team Tournament, Gary Trezza bested Matt Shostak in *Die Gurkha Die!* [SP80] to take home the 10-3 Award as overall champion. Gary certainly earned his title this year with one of his victories coming on the last DR, and with dice so bad he considered throwing in the towel against Matt at one point in the championship round, but Gary persevered through it all. In the loss, Matt takes the 9-2 Runner Up award for the second year in a row.

The Team Tourney continued the use of three-man teams this year. This makes the possible absence of one person on a team less of an issue and allows all teams to stay in the hunt throughout the weekend. This format has also made for some very tight races for the team crown. Again this year the team results were determined by the final games on Sunday with the winning team of Pete Shelling, Chris Buehler, Chris Kubick finishing on top.

As usual we held one mini and one featured play on Thursday. Our featured playing was *A Winter Melee* [U27] out of the MMP release *Turning the Tide*. Our sponsored feature is an opportunity for folks to get in on a big multiplayer scenario that they might not normally get a chance to play, since we have the room and the time to finish it. This scenario is a true 3- to 4-player scenario that has a lot of great action in it and some great play dynamics. Dan Best, Mike Bistodeau, Doyle Motes, and Scott Mullins took on the opportunity. I already have plans made for what we will feature next year. This year I was fortunate enough

to have a preliminary copy of Critical Hit's combined Omaha East/West, which I had laid out in all of its 12 foot of glory. My intention now is to get 6-8 guys to commit to playing this for I hope at least 2 days of the tournament next year. We will do all day Thursday for sure, and I would like to do a good part of the day Friday as well. Some folks have indicated that they would like to do all 4 days, which I am up to supporting as well. I have copies of the rules so if you are interested in participating, let me know (my email is at the end of the newsletter), that way I can get the rules to you so that you can begin to read up on unique rules. The next year of prep time will also give the US players a chance to brush up on their landing craft and beach rules.

Our Thursday mini also featured the time-honored Houston institution, **Ferocity Fest**. This is always a fun but brutal and deadly mini as evidenced by its name, and this year the scenario being highlighted was *Die Gurkha Die!* [SP80]. When all the points had been counted up, Michael Rodgers and Mike Bistodeau took home the genuine WWII replica kukris as the winning Axis and Allied Commanders, respectively. **The Gamer's Armory** gift certificates were awarded for second place finishers.

On Saturday we featured a Starter Kit mini-tournament for those folks new to the game or getting back into it, and offered them a chance to take home a great prize. This year it was Paul Messina defending his crown for the third year in a row, narrowly besting the other contenders looking to knock him off. There was some great competition for the award with each of the SK matches being very close. As always it was very encouraging to see the number of folks getting involved with SK, and we certainly encourage their participation over the weekend.

We present a number of dice awards for play over the weekend. The winner of the Audie Murphy award for the most snakes over the course of the tourney went to Scott Mullins. The winner (if he wants to be called that) of the most boxcars over the course of the weekend and taking the Col. Klink award was Dan Best. We also present a nice plaque to the winner of the most Close Combat points collected over the weekend, and the winner of that was Dan Best, as well.

The Major Johnson award was hard-fought again this year; with Dan Best playing ASL like a madman over the course of the weekend and taking home the cup and Japanese officer flap cap that accompanied it. So the next time you see Dan, ask him to display his Maj. Johnson. Dan played a mix of large- and moderate-sized scenarios over the course of the weekend and thereby laid claim to the title. The Major Johnson can be won in many ways, and over the past few years it has been the balanced approach of a large number of moderate-sized scenarios that has prevailed. In the past it was the big scenarios that would do it. But win or lose you are always in the hunt just by playing (a lot).

We had a great list of sponsors for this year, without whose assistance we could not offer such a fantastic drawing of prizes. I would especially like to recognize Bounding Fire Productions, GMT Games, Wargame Depot, EastSide Gamers, Ken Smith Art, Le Franc Tireur, Stackpole Books, Osprey Publishing, and Wargame Depot, as major sponsors for this year. Here is the full list:

Bounding Fire Productions
Break Contact
Dispatches from the Bunker
EastSide Gamers
Friendly Fire
The Gamers Armory
GMT Games
Ken Smith Art
Half-Price Books
Le Franc Tireur
Lone Canuck Publishing
March Madness Tournament
Multi-Man Publishing
Osprey Publishing
SoCal ASL Club
Stackpole Books
Wargame Depot

Please make sure to frequent these folks with your product orders and let them know that you appreciate their support of the Texas Team Tournament.

I would also like to recognize a number of people that really stepped up to the plate to make this year's tournament an enjoyable experience for all. They all did a fantastic job and I can't thank them enough:

Rob Burton for the scenario scoring sheet for Ferocity Fest on Thursday

Ed Beekman for the use of his video library during the tourney

John Hyler for helping set up the tournament room

And especially my terrific wife Rhonda who ran a number of errands for me during the tourney. To say she is supportive of me doing this would be an understatement!

Plans are already in process for next year. I've already noted the play of Omaha East/West. For all of the old and new faces, I hope to see you again next year. For those that have never been to our tournament, I encourage you to give us a try. The 22nd Annual Texas Team Tournament will be held June 19th-22nd, 2014 at the Wingate Conference Center in Round Rock, Texas. The website has already been updated with all of the information for next year and we've even got our first pre-registrants already, so it is never too early to get your hat into the ring. Don't be left out of the fun!

Tactical Tip

Dan Preston



High firepower open topped AA vehicles like the Meat Chopper and the Wirbelwind are very useful assets. However, these vehicles must be CE to fire, and are so devastating that they invariably draw return fire. Sometimes the +2 modifier on the IFT seems barely adequate. Try setting up these units a little further away from the target hex, and fire through a couple of hindrances. Most infantry stacks should not be able to muster more than a six or eight FP attack, and that +4 modifier on the DR provides much better protection for the exposed crew. That 20 or 24 FP attack, with the chance of rate of fire, is still a powerful attack with an extra +2 or more modifier.

This Happened to Me

The power of the half-squad. The value of the venerable half-squad was certainly proven to me over the course of the tournament. In MM25 *Futile Bravery*, I had a single German 2-4-8 up in the church steeple. Its primary focus was to keep the advancing Russians visible to me. Dan Best decided he needed to be rid of the pesky 2-4-8 and before long the board resembled something out of *Inglorious Basterds* with Russian squads surrounding the church as my Zoller-like half-squad kept away all comers. Finally, a Russian commissar made the climb and went into CC with my brave little band. After a turn of melee, the brave Commissar eliminated my half-squad. They did not die in vain however, as they managed to tie up plenty of Russians for two turns.

A US half-squad under control of David Longstreet dealt my Germans terrible damage in the opening turn of *Among the Ruins*. That single half-squad eliminated and/or routed nearly 3 squads and completely stalled my attack right out of the gate. Though they fell in the next turn, I never quite regained my balance or my personal ELR.

And finally **on Sunday**, in *Holding the Rear* against Philip Johnson, I again encountered a hardcore US half-squad bent on German destruction. This little band on the edge of the board stalled my entire advance and fired bazooka round after bazooka round at MKIVs and held off infantry attack after infantry attack (hyperbole included). The German assault lost critical turns of movement, while working hard to eliminate this single half-squad.

So the Texas Tournament will always be memorable for me as the proof that half-squads are a gamer's best friend or worst enemy! – *Kermit Scott Mullins*

I once had the pleasure of running an elite Italian attack against a stalwart Russian defense. The Church in the center of town was the key. If I could gain entrance and control that, his defense would have virtually no LOCs. Of course, it was resolutely defended. After much abuse and shameful dirtying of my comrades' fine uniforms, I finally managed to get my Italian Engineer in place and with demo in hand. Off he went to save the game. Up the steps of the Church my boys ran... A shot rang out, bullets flew nearby...and the Italian Engineer took a measly morale check. They showed their disdain by rolling snake-eyes, for which it was subject to Heat of Battle, which caused it to...you guessed it:

My boys had an attack of conscience at the doors of that miserable Church, and flinging away the demo charge in horror of what they were about to do, they promptly dropped all weapons and went genuflecting in the door, surrendering en masse in a show of penance. I remember thinking unkindly that THEY would not be counted in the "Few Returned". – *David Longstreet*

North Texas Shootout

Ed Beekman

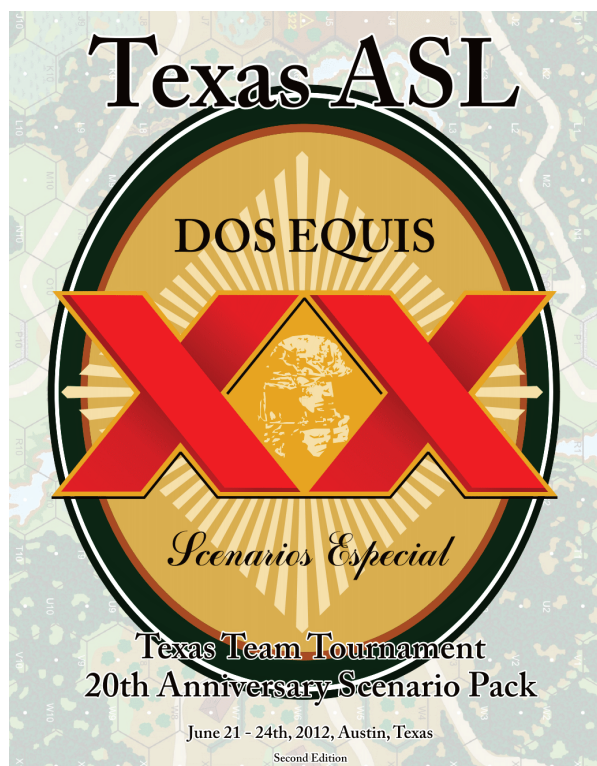


Looking for face-to-face cardboard carnage with players you may only otherwise see at the Texas Team Tournament?

Come on out to the 4th Annual North Texas Shoot Out on November 8th through the 10th in Fort Worth, Texas. This year we have the Champion and Runner Up trophies for the "Big Shoot Out" as well as two Master Sergeant trophies for our Mini-Competition.

The All Around ASL Player Prize Raffle returns as well as the traditional Texas Hold 'Em Poker Best Hand/Worst Hand event.

Visit our website at <http://www.ntasl.com> for additional details and preregistration details. T-shirts will be available to all preregistrants.



Our 20th Anniversary Scenario Pack

The Texas Team Tournament 20th Anniversary Scenario pack is currently in its second edition. Make sure to get your copy and enjoy some of the best efforts of a few of our local (and not so local) players. The only difference between the first and second editions is the inclusion of all known errata at the time of the second edition publishing. You can check out any errata (and sticky errata) at the Texas ASL (<http://www.texas-asl.com>) website. The pack is still available for \$15, but you will need to head on over to The Gamer's Armory (<http://www.gamersarmory.com>) to get it.

Don't Just Talk About the Scenarios You've Played, ROAR About Them

Banzai Staff

If you play a scenario, please report the result to the Remote Online Automated Record (ROAR). This is a database for recording games that can be a valuable resource for balance and activity related to a specific scenario. You can find a link to the ROAR website on the Texas ASL page at <http://texas-asl.com/> or go directly to the ROAR website at <http://www.jrvdev.com/ROAR/>.

Club Notes

Biweekly Lunch Gathering

Don't forget to join us every other Friday at 1200 hours down at Kneaded Pleasures on Far West (just west of Mo Pac). The club sends out email reminders, or you can call Matt or Rick for information on the next get-together.

Game Days

The Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas/Ft. Worth groups have remained active, hosting various gatherings for club members to get together and knock cardboard heads. If

you missed any of these you missed a lot of fun. It's like a tournament atmosphere for a day. The Austin group meets on the first Saturday of every month. The DFW group has been meeting on the second, the San Antonio guys on the third Saturday of every month, and the Houston group on the fourth Saturday of every month. To stay informed of upcoming club events, stop by our club website, www.texas-asl.com or better yet join our email group. You can post a message at central-texas-asl@yahoogroups.com or you can point your favorite browser to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central-texas-asl> and take a look. For those still not connected, give Matt, Rick, or Sam a call for club information.

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 - Player Profile
 - Favorite Scenarios
 - Club Meeting Recaps
- And much more!