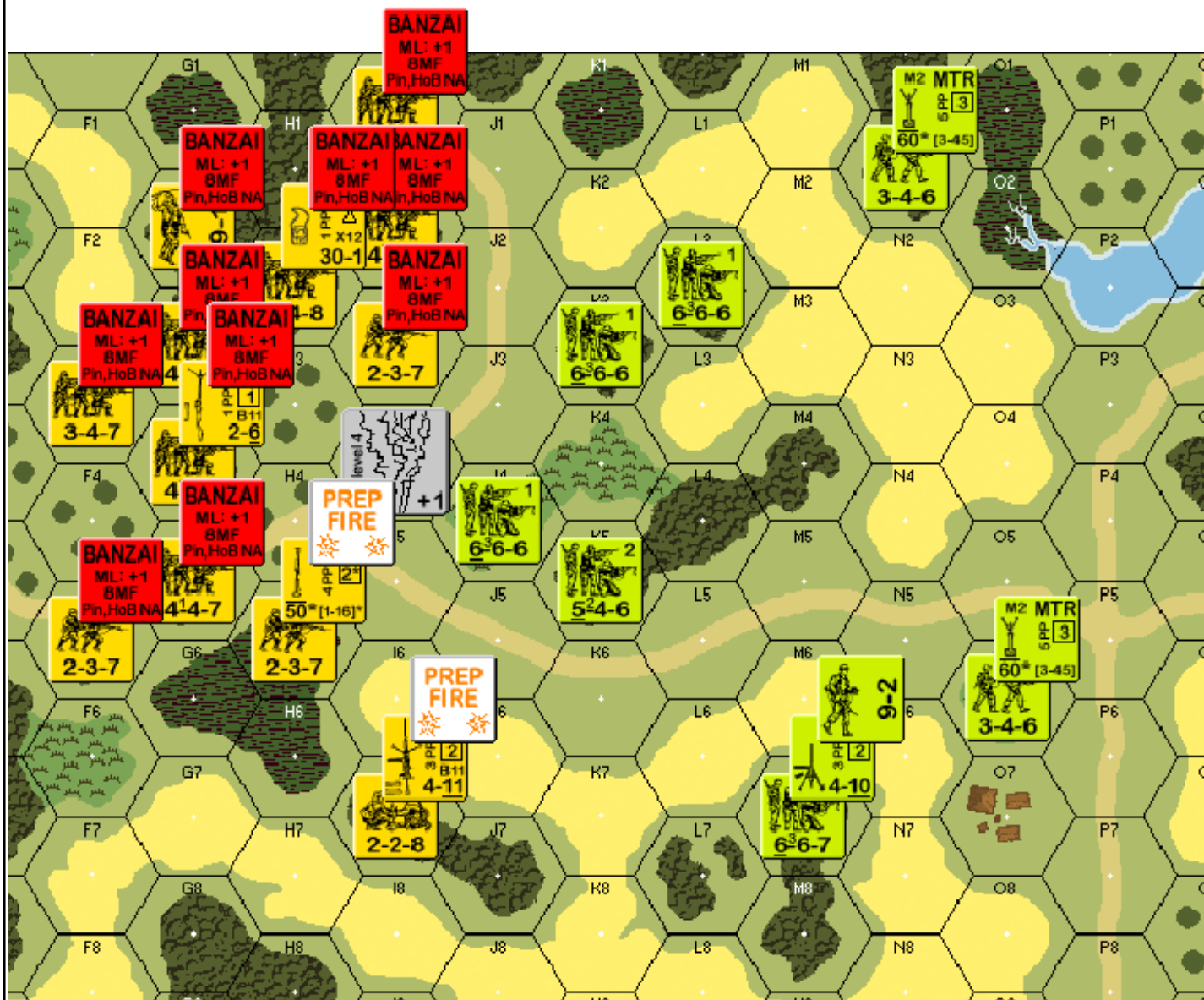


# BANZAI!!!



The Newsletter of the Texas ASL Club

October 2018      Volume 23, Number 2

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## IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Foxhole	2
Scenario C: The Streets of Stalingrad (or Breathing Life Into An Old Classic)	2
Scenario Analysis: Barbarossa D-Day [FrF4]	4
SK Corner	7
AAR: Primosole Bridge - Campaign Game 3 (When Devil's Collide)	9
A Series of Unlikely Coincidences	14
Rules Tip	15
26th Annual Texas Team Tournament Results	15
26th Annual Texas Team Tournament Wrap-up	18
Club Notes	20
Next Issue	20

## EDITOR'S FOXHOLE

### Rick Reinesch



We have a jam packed issue of Banzai!! for you. Rich Spilky helped me out this year with the scenario for Ferocity Fest at the Texas Team Tournemant by taking a stab at freshening up an old classic in *The Streets of Stalingrad [C]*. He takes us through his thought process in the edits he made. Matt Shostak gives us an insightful scenario analysis of *Barbarossa D-Day [FrF4]*. Alan King provides an AAR of his playing of CG3 from *Primosole Bridge*. We present another excellent SK-related article from Kevin and Amanda Boles. Finally, I do a debrief of the results of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Team Tournament. All that and more awaits you in this issue. Thanks to everyone who submitted material for this issue. Without you we can't publish, so keep those articles coming! Enjoy.

## SCENARIO C: THE STREETS OF STALINGRAD (OR BREATHING LIFE INTO AN OLD CLASSIC)

### Rich Spilky



#### Background

After the June 2017 Texas ASL Tournament in Austin, Texas I became captivated by the whole Ferocity Fest (FF) concept. For those who have never had the opportunity to participate in this annual event, it is a unique facet of the Texas ASL Tournament in which most players who arrive for the first

day of the tournament are able to play a featured scenario which contains particular attributes and incorporates the tracking of exceptional events during the game in order to win points. The 2017 Ferocity Fest featured the Japanese v. the Marines in the scenario, *Just a Drive Along the Beach (BFP49)*. I enjoyed playing this scenario and especially appreciated the whole FF experience involving trying to achieve certain outcomes during the scenario beyond simply satisfying the victory conditions. I especially appreciated the 'calling out' of the outcomes achieved (each of these in a generally politically correct fashion, of course) as a prerequisite for earning the points involved. Consequently, I volunteered to help Rick Reinesch pick out and plan the scenario itself along with the associated events pertaining to the FF the following year. Rick and I discussed ideas about a potential FF scenario for the June 2018 tournament and we agreed that it might be a good idea to put in place a scenario pertaining to the Battle of Stalingrad since that confrontation ended in early 1943, and therefore 2018 would represent the 75th anniversary of the conclusion of that conflict.

There are numerous scenarios involving different aspects of that battle and of course the entire *Red Barricades* module is devoted to it as well. After thinking about it, I recalled that I had enjoyed playing "Streets of Stalingrad" (Scenario C) a couple of times in my playing past and Rick had also recalled that scenario as a positive playing experience from back in the day. This scenario was in fact one of the first that was converted over from SL to ASL during the early years. In a nutshell, Scenario C is really Scenarios A and B played at the same time with some AFVs thrown in for both sides for the fun of it. It is all played out over the expanse of good old board number 1.

#### Preparations for FF 2018

As mentioned, I did recall playing this scenario once or twice in the past in a positive light but I also recall it being quite unbalanced in favor of the Russians both from my own experiences and from the Remote Online Automated Record (ROAR) (see Table 1). I suspected that the current version of Scenario C would take some amount of adjustments to bring it into balance to make it suitable for use during the FF event. Furthermore, I felt that Scenario C needed some administrative things cleaned up as well to help it become more user-friendly and hopefully a more positive gaming experience.

Table 1: Scenario Statistics\*

Scenario #	Scenario Name	German Wins	Russian Wins	Draws	German Win %	Game Turns
A	Guards Counterattack	240	233		50.7%	5
B	Tractor Works	39	76		33.9%	8
C	Streets of Stalingrad	29	46	15	38.7%	7

\* as of July 4th, 2018

It is clear from Table 1 that Scenario A itself is very balanced as it stands and I suggest that this has been generally accepted

as the case for a long while. Scenario B looks somewhat unbalanced in its current form with about a two-to-one ratio of Russian wins to German ones. Meanwhile, Scenario C in its present form also shows a nearly two-to-one Russian-to-German win ratio (draws are also possible in both Scenarios B and C).

In reviewing Scenario C, I think the reasons for its current win/loss record are explainable. First off, while Scenario A is balanced with five game turns, if we add two more game turns (as we do when we embed it into Scenario C), then the Russians are often going to roll over the Germans. Meanwhile, Scenario B is already a bit unbalanced with 8 game turns. I suggest that lowering it to seven game turns (which is done when we insert it into Scenario C) may help the Germans a touch as this would represent one less turn for the Russian reinforcements to counterattack the factory, but does not make a material difference in the win/loss department. Finally, I don't think the current allocation of AFVs in the original Scenario C makes much of a difference either way. While the German AFVs outnumber the Russian AFVs (5-4) in the original version, they come on a game turn later and are not too helpful against Russian infantry as they are without machine guns. This makes them particularly ineffective in a scenario where the Germans need some help confronting the more numerous Russian infantry. It also makes the AFVs themselves a bit more susceptible to CC attacks from the Russian infantry.

After examining the scenario and thinking about these things, I recommended to Rick that we make a handful of adjustments to bring the scenario into balance. However, we wanted to be careful not to change the look and feel of the scenario in the process. It should also be noted that I played it a couple of more times with opponents in the Chicago area over the past year and made a couple of other tweaks based on these playings. We ended up with the following changes affecting balance from the original Scenario C that were incorporated into the FF version of Scenario C that was used in the June 2018 FF.

### Changes made to FF Scenario C – Streets of Stalingrad (affecting balance)

- a. Added 4 concealment counters to the first German setup group
- b. Added 2 German squads and an 8-0 leader to the first German setup group in M9
- c. Added a German AFV to the T3 reinforcements (from 5 to 6)
- d. Subtracted a Russian AFV from the T2 reinforcements (from 4 to 3)
- e. Subtracted 3 Russian squads from the fifth Russian setup group (from 26 to 23)

- f. Added a FT to the fourth German setup group (from 2 to 3).
- g. Gave MOL capability to Russians
- h. Lowered SAN from 6 to 5 for both sides.

### Reasoning

- Items a and b were added to give the Germans a little more staying power on the “Scenario A” side of the board to counteract the extra two game turns which benefit the Russians.
- Items c and d were incorporated to help the Germans out a bit more overall and give them a bit of an edge in the AFV department (keeping in mind that the German AFVs still come on a turn later and are still without MGs).
- Items e and f were utilized to beef the Germans up on the “Scenario B” side of the board with an extra FT while lowering a bit what was an overwhelming counterattacking force for the Russians. It is still powerful with 23 squads, but 26 was too many in my opinion.
- Item g was the only provision designed to aid the Russian side. Since the German AFVs now outnumbered the Russian AFVs two to one in the revised version, I did not want the German AFVs to become too powerful. Giving the Russians MOL would cause the German AFVs pause before coming up adjacent to the Russian infantry.
- In my previous playings, my opponents and I all agreed that a SAN of 6 was just too much and too consequential. Lowering it to 5 still makes for an active sniper effect, but statistically does lower the number of sniper attacks a bit. Accordingly, the final adjustment (item h above) appears to be neutral on the surface, but I suggest that this change ends up as slightly pro-German in effect. This is because the Germans have superior leaders which are key to their victory chances not to mention a group of 8-3-8 assault engineer squads which are seeking to take the factory. Consequently, lowering the SAN a bit from 6 to 5 may decrease the chances just a bit that the Germans will lose their 10-3 or 10-2 leaders too soon or a key 8-3-8 squad that is about to fire its FT at a Russian unit in the factory.

Administratively, there were a few other items that we felt needed to be clarified and adjusted to make the scenario more user-friendly and agreeable. Here are the items we addressed with that objective in mind:

### Administrative Clean-Up

- Placed all information on one scenario card

- Clarified the setup order more clearly
- Consolidated the SSRs
- Provided more detail on how to apply the combination of VCs

## Results

In the end, I think we did reasonably well as far as balance and playability are concerned. In general, the feedback I heard afterwards was that the scenario was still a tad pro-Russian despite the numerous adjustments made to address this concern. The results that Rick shared with me right afterwards were:

- 3 German wins
- 3 Russian wins
- 3 draws

While not a large sample size, it was satisfying to see the revised version come out this way. I did hear some of the players that had lost as one side or the other express astonishment that their side had won in other playings! Such is ASL.

*[Ed: A copy of Rich's efforts is included at the end of this issue if you want to give it try yourself.]*

## SCENARIO ANALYSIS: BARBAROSSA D-DAY [FRF4]

Matt Shostak



**Attraction:** Well-balanced tourney-sized actions are popular for good reason. This one is playable in a short amount of time, but it has some interesting matchups and decisions to be made by each side as they fight for the iconic board 43 compound. The light tanks on display at this time of the war can be fun to drive around. The level of rules knowledge required is not especially high; the most exotic items here are the motorcycles, which are pretty easy to get the hang of. At the time of this writing, the Germans lead 27-25 according to ROAR (the Remote Online Automated Record).

### German Advantages: Initial Mobility, Armor Quality

This fierce biker gang can get pretty far if they're not shot off their rides, which means the Soviet defenders might hedge their bets a little and keep some men in the rear area of the compound to defend against a possible wide flanking ride. It's not an especially big advantage for the attackers; in most cases they'll probably be used only on the first turn, with the troopers dismounting to kick off the attack proper. With the

exception of the armored car, the German armor is clearly superior to their opposition. They have better guns, better rate of fire, better machine guns, faster movement, and can maneuver independently since they have radios. Toss in an armor leader as a bonus and they clearly outclass the Russian T-26s.

### German Disadvantages: Low TEM Approach Routes, Numbers

There's a lot of open ground, grain, and brush on the approach routes to the compound, which could lead to some squads breaking under fire at inopportune times. It could even mean some soldiers getting chewed up by the Russian armor if they get caught away from the cover of trees and buildings. More importantly, they only have a 7:6 advantage in squads on the attack, which seems a bit less than typically expected.

### Russian Advantages: Tank Numbers

It's easy to dismiss the T-26s, but they're not useless, especially when present in large numbers. Here they have a 6:4 advantage over the German vehicles, and a 2:1 advantage if you don't count the PSW which might already be under a stun counter by the time the tank battle gets underway. The 45L guns of the T-26 tanks are capable of knocking out the German tanks, especially at the close ranges that are likely in this battle. Since the Germans must have at least one Good Order AFV at game end, pressing the armor engagement might be the way to victory for the Soviets. There are only 4 German vehicles and two of them have B11 main armament, so it's definitely possible to win that way. They can also tear up enemy infantry, especially if they catch them out in a poor position, such as the big grain fields or open ground near the compound.

### Russian Disadvantages: ELR, Platoon Movement

The defenders can turn to rabble pretty quickly with this low ELR of 2, because the 4-4-7s degrade directly to conscripts. Platoon movement is clumsy, making the tanks even slower than their already slow 11 MP, and less flexible. Swarming enemy tanks from multiple angles is a rarity when maneuvering tanks like these.

### Defensive Plan

With a low ELR and the need to hold out tenaciously in the farm compound, it seems that exchanging the 8-0 leader for a 9-0 commissar is a good idea. The infantry will have to pick their shots wisely. In the early going, that probably means retaining concealment rather than taking defensive fire shots unless the modifier is negative, and eschewing prep fire for skulking when possible. In general the task of holding out is simple, though that doesn't mean it's easy. Keep in mind that picking shots wisely does not mean never shooting. There may be targets that are just too good to pass up, such as when the enemy is moving fast in the open or is bunched up too



closely in a stack that offers the opportunity to break multiple units with one shot. The tanks should probably stay together, maybe even all 6 of them in the same area, though probably not moving as one platoon. The thought of facing all 6 guns at once might make the German tank commanders think twice before engaging.

## Attack Plan

There aren't a lot of squads available, but it may still be worthwhile to split up so as to approach the compound from more than one angle. The armored car is great in the role of getting behind the enemy. Depending on how the defenders set up, it may even be possible to drive some motorcycles way into the Russian backfield. If wide flanking maneuvers and gambits are not your style, a more conventional approach should be just fine and can still generate opportunities to encircle the defense. Consider an approach where the

armored car and one squad come in from the left, angling for the 43I10 area, and for the PSW 222 to get behind the walled compound in the 43M6-K6 area. Meanwhile a platoon with the HMG and a leader can drive to the 44X1 area and dismount, then approach the victory area from the 43T10 woods. Lastly one more platoon and a leader go up the center, maybe dismounting in the vicinity of 44M5 with an eye toward engaging the Russian picket squads. Even if they can't break them right away, they may hold them in place long enough to put them in grave danger of being cut off by this micro-Cannae attack. Don't forget that these Germans have packed extra smoke grenades for this task; each squad's smoke exponent is increased by one. That could make a difference when trying to cross some low-TEM areas under fire.

The panzers are critical to this attack. They have to keep the T-26s off the German infantry and they can also give a boost



*An example defensive setup. The 8-0 has been exchanged for a 9-0 commissar. Two squads are at upper levels to protect against a possible German joyride to the rear. The picket squads plan to fall back to the compound early on. All units would start the game concealed.*





*An example end-game situation. The German tanks have defeated a platoon of T-26s in the grain and now are positioned to hammer the defenders in the buildings, while the PSW 222 in M6 hits them from the other side to encircle them. The remaining Soviet tank platoon and surviving infantry have their work cut out for them to retain a toehold.*

to the assault by using their machine guns and cannons against infantry targets. With only 4 vehicles available, it may seem that there are too many demands on their resources. If there are any German squads out in poor cover and within range of the Russian tanks, it might be a good idea to have a friendly panzer or two nearby to counter a Russian tank assault intent on bullying their vulnerable comrades. Remember that the Germans need at least one Good Order AFV at game end. Since two of them have B11 main armament, it would not be surprising at all to see one or both of them malfunctioned. The open-topped PSW 222 is also vulnerable to small arms so seeing it recalled wouldn't be that surprising either. Thus it might be wise for the German rules of engagement to call for always firing machine guns first (and maybe not firing the cannons at all) when targeting infantry. The German tanks have a lot of advantages over their opposite numbers, though, so they need not cower in

fear of taking them on. The Germans can fire when crew exposed, they have APCR (and get a +1 bump to the availability number because this force is elite by SSR), and their rate of fire number of 2 means they can expect some extra shots in many games. They can wreck the Soviet tank force here, but they just have to be careful not to lose everything when doing so.

Ideally the Germans would like to achieve an end game where the compound is taking fire from several sides, using encirclement to hasten the defense's collapse. Remaining German tanks should be able to use point blank machine-gun fire to make things very uncomfortable for the Soviet infantry. The PzIIIF can generate a 16+2 attack against adjacent infantry in a wooden building, with its formidable 8-firepower coaxial machine gun, for example.

## Notes

- Brush up on the rules for wall advantage.
- Not all of the T-26s might have the same machine gun armament, depending on the counter mix available. Both players should review rule D1.84 to see why, and make sure they're in agreement.
- Review the rules for rear machine guns (D1.82).

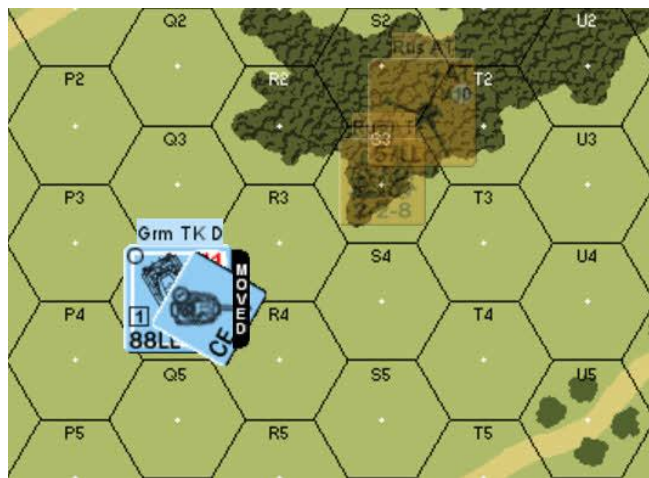
## SK CORNER

### The Squadlets



Hello again ASLSK fans! Welcome to the next installment of SK Corner. In these articles we cover anything and everything related to the *Advanced Squad Leader* Starter Kits.

This edition of *SK Corner* features a battle in October 1944, *Last Ally, Last Victory*, which Lt. Squadlet played as his first scenario in the new VASL ASLSK League being run on GameSquad.com. During that scenario, Lt. Squadlet's opponent felt certain that my antitank gun was located on the other side of the board, and a situation very similar to what is shown occurred. Actually, in reality it was much worse, as *both* King Tigers were in LOS of the gun, along with 2 other tanks!



Anyway, as you can see a King Tiger has just moved into a very unfortunate position! We will make this a one-turn engagement scenario, and your objective is to destroy the King Tiger using optimal tactics with the dice rolls coming up as shown below. It is now the Russian DFPh, and the hidden gun is the nifty 57LL. There is one turn remaining and no other units can see S3. Please be specific in all steps, actions, counter placements, etc.

4,3 2,6 1,2 1,1 4,5 6,5 3,5 6,6 1,1 3,3

The range is 2 so base hit number is 10. Note that Russians always use red hit numbers, but at range 0-6 they are the same values as the black numbers. Firer-based to-hit DRMs: the 57LL is one hex spine out on the CA facing. Changing the CA one click (clockwise in this case) for a NT Gun is +3 on the TH. Doing this spin in woods (or building) doubles the penalty (Case 8 TH DRM), so it's +6 for the covered arc change.

Target-based to-hit DRMs: the tank did move, but it is stopped now and 2 hexes away so -1 for point blank (Case 25). We get a +2 for being a moving target (Case 24) and the King Tiger is double large (red on both armor factors) so a -2 for that.

Totaling this up we have: +6 -1 +2 -2 = +5 net TH DRM.

Oh, you *did* remember to review the vehicle and ordnance notes for both the 57LL and the King Tiger before starting to try to figure this situation out, *right*? Actually, it is *imperative* that you review said notes (for *all* equipment – both yours *and* your opponent's) *before* you start your setup! If you did, you would find that the 57LL has an APCR of 5 in 1944. Note that you have a final TH of 5 and APCR depletion of 5. This is actually the perfect situation for calling an APCR shot, because it effectively doubles your chances. You either hit and have at least one round of APCR or you miss and nothing happened other than marking that you forgot to hump some APCR ammo to your emplacement. Note that a TH DR of 12 would break the 57LL and you would be out of APCR.

We call APCR on our shot. Make sure you state this before you roll the dice! The first DR is 4,3. This is > 5, so no APCR (noted off-board) and no shot. Now you resort to regular AP. The second DR is your TH roll of 2,6. Whenever you make a TH roll you should *always* state three things out loud:

- 1) Hit or not (and once you are practiced you can state hull or turret at the same time)
- 2) ROF or not
- 3) ACQ or not

Sometimes there is a fourth thing that you should state, which would be no/last/more special ammo.

Did you remember the -1 ROF modifier for turning your CA? With that you have a ROF of 2 for that first shot after the CA change, but only on the first shot. So here we state: miss, ROF, ACQ. We place a -1 ACQ marker on the King Tiger. So far so good!

Having retained rate on the first shot, we are rewarded with our ROF returning back to its original value for any subsequent shots! This is covered in the middle of the To Hit Procedure of rule 3.2.4. We fire AP at the tank again. The modifiers are *much* kinder for the Germans this time. That +6 CA change DRM? Gone! This is covered in the same rule



section as ROF, just a bit further along. Now we have base TH 10, -1 ACQ, +2 moving, -2 double large, -1 point blank for a net TH DRM of -2. Sweet—now we either hit or break our Gun (boxcars is always a breakage, even if modifiers would make it a hit). That is a 97.2% chance to hit. I like those odds!

The next DR is 1,2. So hit, ROF, ACQ (flip to -2). The colored die is < white die, so it is a turret hit. That is most unfortunate for us because the turret front armor on the KT is a circled 26. It drops to an 18 due to inferior turret. Sadly, we already know from our prior research of the QRDC before we started play, that the 57LL AP TK is a 16 at range 2. Well, that sucks - we can't even dent the turret if we roll snake eyes on the TK DR!

It turns out the dice gods are laughing at us, because we do in fact roll 1,1 on the TK DR! If you fail your personal 2MC here you will miss something very important. We didn't affect the armor, but our round shattering against the turret's armor sends a spray of shrapnel out from the point of impact and causes a Collateral Attack on the CE crew (rule 7.12). From the Armor Piercing section of rule 6.2, we find that AP has an IFT value of 1 if  $< 37\text{mm}$  and 2 if  $\geq 37\text{mm}$ . This gives us a 2FP attack on the crew. Note that they get a +2 DRM for IFT hits due to only being partially exposed. We use the original TK DR for the Collateral Attack, so we have a 2+2 or a 4 net on the 2 IFT column. That is a lovely 1MC.

Wait, how to we handle that? Hmm, remember reviewing the Vehicle Notes prior to play? There you will find that the King Tiger section's last sentence is "See German Vehicle Note K". Scanning down we find that German Vehicle Note K says that the Tiger crews were stud-muffins and have a nine morale! This is also on the back of the tank's counter as ML:9. So, 1MC against 9 morale. The next DR in line is a 4,5. Oooh! Failed morale check on a CE tank. Uh, what the heck does that mean? After 20 minutes of rules diving, you find rule 7.10 AFV Effects on the next to last page of the 28-page (*Decision at Elst*) rulebook! Near the end of that section you find that failing a (non-Possible-Shock) MC gets you a small red hat of shame with the letters **stun** on it. You flip the turret marker over to BU, dig out the **stun** counter and place it on top of the BU turret counter. Note there are multiple other effects of the little **stun** that you should be aware of, in addition to the automatic button up.

Hmm, back to the hit roll you recall that you still have rate! I personally place a 1 FP resid marker next to a weapon to indicate that it still has rate. Recalling the guidance of the great Mike McGrath in his seminal *Tactics 101* article found in *The General* Volume 30 No 1, you note that it is quite appropriate to kick your opponent while he is down. Now we technically have a 13 TH (math left to the inquisitive reader), but still break on a 6,6. The next DR is 6,5. Your opponent grumbles something about the stupid monstrously large hunk of metal getting hit on a roll of 11. You on the other hand

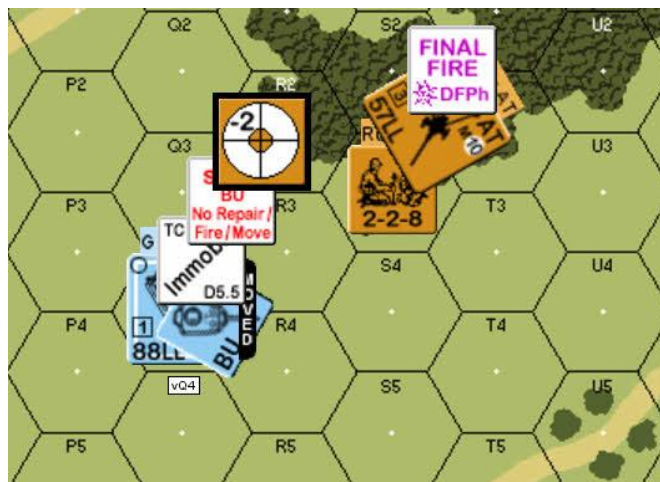
state Hit, no ROF, no ACQ. You also note that you got a hull hit this time since the colored die is >= white die. Now we're talking! This time we do get a side facing hit. The tank's side armor is a boxed 8, so just 8 AF on the hull. Our kill number is still a 16, so the final TK is an 8.

The next DR, your TK roll, is a 3,5. This equals the Final TK on a hull hit, which garners us an Immobilization as found on the AVF Destruction Table of the QRDC2. You pull out that counter and place it on top of the collection the KT now has.

So, with some hot dice you have caused two negative effects against a King Tiger? You might think you have a decision to make about whether or not to use Intensive Fire. I submit that would be a poor decision. And no, I am not saying that because I am omniscient and know that a 6,6 is the next TH roll I would have! ☺ Think about it: it is coming on the end of the German turn. There is still another turn in the engagement. No other unit has LOS to the 57LL. And the tank is **stunned**, so it cannot do anything the remainder of this turn, including any form of fire against you. But even if it could, the odds of affecting you are very slim! I encourage you to examine the probability of getting an NMC using the KT's MA and MGs in its AFPh as Bounding Fire. In any case, you have the next player turn, and you are guaranteed one regular shot and one Intensive Fire shot - assuming no 12 on your first TH DR. And you could get several shots with that ROF of 3.

However, it is not actually legal to Intensive Fire. The next to last sentence in the Intensive Fire section of rule 3.2.4 To Hit Process states that the target must be Adjacent for Intensive Fire in the DFPh. This is a situation where knowing the rules actually helps prevent you from making a poor decision.

We now place a Final Fire marker on our 57LL and the DFPh is complete. The state of the board at the end of the turn is shown below:





## AAR: PRIMOSOLE BRIDGE - CAMPAIGN GAME 3 (WHEN DEVIL'S COLLIDE)

Allen King



Way back in Journal Twelve, MMP put out a nice series of scenarios and three campaign games of varying length covering the short but sharp conflict for control of the Primosole Bridge. Monty's drive for Messina planned to go through the town of Catania on the east coast of Sicily. The main highway at that time went over the Primosole Bridge located about ten kilometers south of Catania. Control of the bridge meant access to the coastal plain south of Catania and crossing the last barrier to that key town. Monty wanted it fast and, if possible, cheap. The British 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne was assigned the tasks of a night drop near the bridge, capturing the bridge intact and holding the bridge until relieved by regular forces.

Don Fenton and I decided to play Campaign Game 3 (CGIII) as it covered only the night drop and following day of what was historically a four-day battle. July 13 (night), and both AM and PM scenarios on July 14 constituted the CG. I drew the task of leading the British airborne troops into battle.

Obviously, things led off with a night paradrop. I had never played the night rules and had infrequent experience with paradrops. But, after a lengthy study hall, I was ready to wing it.

Don's initial force consisted of a reduced company (8 squads) of sleepy, Italian 1<sup>st</sup> line infantry arrayed along the road leading to the bridge and village on the north side of the river. In addition, he had a pair of 47mm antitank guns, some strong pillboxes and an assortment of machine guns. Finally, the Italians were protected by both antitank and antipersonnel minefields. Significantly, they were hampered by a night vision range (NVR) of 3 hexes under a half moon and scattered clouds. Those scattered clouds would prove to be a decisive factor over the course of the night.

Because the trigger-happy US naval AAA gunners had shot down and disrupted some of the airborne and glider force on the way in, the British force consisted of two platoons of paras and a third platoon entering from the south. The latter's arrival was determined by a dr against the turn number. In addition, four gliders each bearing a jeep, crew and a 57L AT gun were also set to swoop in. The paras were subject to depletion (i.e., if they deplete, each platoon is 3, rather than 4 squads with a reduced chance for support weapons and leaders). Fortunately, all three platoons came in full-strength, although some support weapons were lost in the dark.

### Jump into Black

I split my force and landed a platoon and two gliders north and south of the bridge, in clear terrain and somewhat distant from the sleeping Italian defenders. I had hoped they would land well outside the mine fields. As it happened, the landing zones were fairly accurate and the scatter of the paras was manageable. The gliders all made it down without incident. The Italian garrisons slept soundly. The paratroopers spent the remainder of turn one gathering their chutes and preparing to move out. Due to the darkness and distance from the nearest Italian, the paras grew concealment.

The reinforcing platoon came in from the south on turn two and all began a slow advance on the Italians south of the bridge and north of the village. First contact occurred on turn three when an Italian starshell illuminated the night just after the gathering clouds had reduced visibility to two hexes. "Drat!", muttered the British commander. To make matters worse, an Italian corporal (7-0) and his LMG-wielding squad woke with a start as silent, dark forms entered the other rooms of a small stone building. The Italians opened fire and pinned a squad, broke a squad and broke a surprised 8-1. Other paras closed the gap, but had to move slowly to avoid concealment loss. "Drat!", muttered the British commander. On Italian turn three, the now wide-awake Italians opened up again at 8+3 and broke the remaining, adjacent para. Half a platoon and a rare enough leader were broken. The delay concerned me as the scenario could be as short as 4 ½ turns, and I was nowhere near the bridge or the important village just north of it.

### From Deep Gloom to Pitch Dark

Turn four arrived and the clouds thickened to the point that the NVR went to zero. In other words, it got "can't see your hand in front of your face" dark. With this stroke of good fortune, the paras finally began to show their mettle. Because they could run right up next to the Italians and remain concealed, they were able to engage in very favorable close combat against the lax Italians. Some infiltrated by just running past the Italians to their objectives. By the end of turn four, the south end of the bridge was mine and the Italian force had been reduced by two squads, a 47 AT gun and its crew.

Turn five opened with the paras advancing across the bridge and engaging the Italian pillbox on the north side of the river. Further north, they prepared an ambush for a convoy of four trucks towing an 88, with crew and three half-squads of German troops that were required to enter play and convoy themselves to near-certain death. Close combats favorable to the British continued, but the pillbox occupants at the north end of the bridge really did not want to give up their cozy location. The ensuing melee resulted in gun flashes and would lead to starshells in the Italian turn.

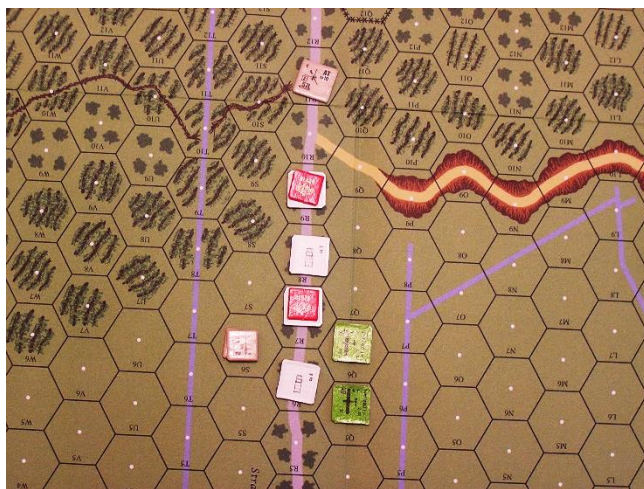
In addition, there was a possibility (dr of “1”) that the scenario would end after each half of turn 5. As it happened, the scenario continued through British turn 7. At that point, the Italians had lost all but a wounded leader located south of the river. The German truck convoy was completely destroyed along with the deadly 88 and all German troops. The paras had taken the village and were in great position to face the coming daylight and the inevitable German counterattack. The paras had done this at a cost of one half-squad.



*End of night south of bridge*



*End of night north of bridge*



*British ambush of German 88 convoy*

## And Dawn Came on Forever

CG III does not leave either the German or British player with a large number of options regarding the reinforcement phase purchases. As a result, I knew that Don would very likely select two companies of infantry, likely increase his sniper level and maybe take his one and only StuG III platoon. Naturally, I would not know if any of these forces were to come in depleted (9 squads rather than 12).

In addition, he could be certain that I would buy some additional para platoons and maybe the one section of fighter-bombers (FB) that the Brits can purchase over the course of this short CG. Nevertheless, the choice on when to buy the StuGs and FBs is significant. The StuGs have a very short life expectancy in the presence of the FBs and there is almost nothing the Germans can do to counter the close air support. It is a guessing game of sorts, which makes any CG really fun. Don took his StuGs and I selected my FBs for the AM turn. So, as the sun rose, the Brits waited for the onslaught from the north.



*Setup south of bridge: start of 14AM*





*Setup north of bridge: start of 14AM*

Because they had basically lost the map during the night action, the Germans had to make a long approach starting from off the north edge. This was significant not only for the space to be covered, but also because it required the Germans to cross a lot of open ground. There was a 50-50 chance the British would receive the two FBs on turn 1 (I didn't) and catch some of the German troops in the open on their turn-two move. As expected, two full German companies and a full StuG platoon started the approach, and the German sniper was increased to a 6.

On turn two, the Germans were still approaching the paras through the entangling vineyards and olive groves. On British two, the reinforcement platoon (full) and the FBs (full) roared into the game. Don commented that he'd played this CG before, but the British opponent did not buy or use the FBs. I was amazed as the FBs are a potentially decisive weapon. They made their presence felt during German turn 3. A CE StuG with a HS passenger started, moved and was spotted by a newly arrived FB. One FB had a bomb, the other did not. A plane initiated a strafing run, spotted the StuG and killed it along with the crew. The rider broke, but survived. The other FB strafed a line of three stacks of Germans and created mayhem. Several squads and a leader broke. One squad went berserk. The German approach was partially disrupted and had yet to engage the waiting British.

Further strafing was planned for the next turn. The Germans passed on prep fire in order to get into position to assault the buildings. The Germans came on like a gray-green avalanche. The fighter-bombers lined up to turn it into a bloody avalanche. Their attack reduced a couple of squads and broke a couple more. A hidden 57L AT gun engaged the surviving StuG and shocked it. The berserk squad was mowed down. But now the Germans had closed in on the north and northwestern side of the village and were ready to launch a real assault. On Brit turn 4, the paras held firm in the face of mounting fire and extended to their right (east) to

prevent a German platoon from retaking the captured eastern entry area.

German turn 5 arrived with the StuG failing to recover, but the Germans ready to make the Brits pay. Minor prep fire did little, but the Germans moved quickly toward the wall surrounding the village. The RAF lined up to stop this rash move. The first plane failed its sighting check and the second not only failed, but was recalled. The Germans advanced some infantry over the wall in places adjacent to British-occupied buildings. No close combat occurred and the paratroopers remained mainly concealed. Don had to make his initial roll to see if the scenario ended.

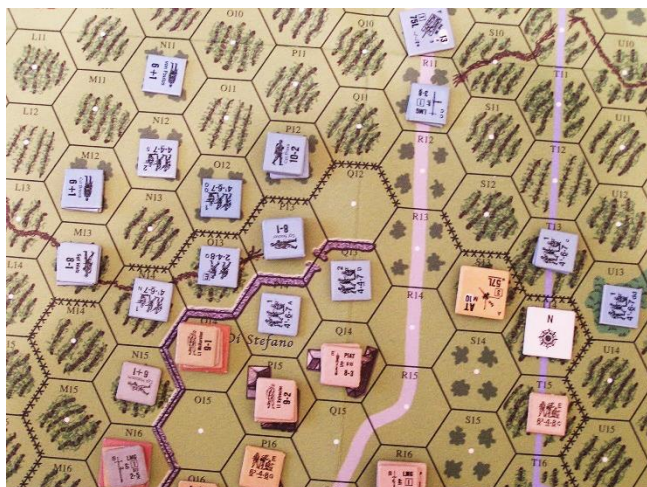
How long would the scenario last? That was a pressing question now that the Germans had closed the distance. A long scenario would give the Germans a strong set up area for the PM scenario if they could capture the northernmost stone buildings. A "one" would end the scenario. Don rolled ... and it was a **one**! The scenario ended just as the Germans were ready to get some traction. Instead, about 50% of the German infantry now had to "escape" from British-controlled territory. As a result, an additional 2½ squads perished along with the Italian officer that had escaped and recovered from his wound.

For the scenario, the Germans lost a StuG and 5½ squads with a leader demoting to a 6+1. The Brits lost no one and held their commanding position going into the PM (and last scenario). Despite losing my FBs early and watching the surviving StuG recover in the reinforcement phase, the Brits had been blessed with a remarkably short AM scenario.



*North bridge situation end of 14AM*





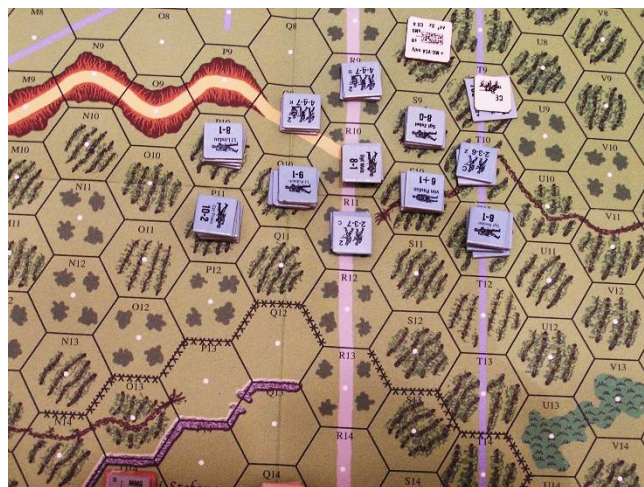
*North bridge situation end of 14AM*

## Where Are Those Northumbrian Chaps?

Ideally, the 50<sup>th</sup> Division was supposed to relieve the paratroopers no later than noon following the night landing. As the paras glanced south, they saw no evidence of the 50<sup>th</sup> Division or the attached 4<sup>th</sup> Armored. Instead, they watched the German soldiers regroup just north of the village. They also knew that the Germans would add yet another infantry company (2d line) and an OBA artillery module (81mm). This would make things very difficult.

Further, all the paras could add was a platoon (depleted) and an increase to their sniper. The remaining points could be used to reduce the German purchase points, but that would not be sufficient to affect the German buys. The paras had another problem as well. Ammo was short. No fire lanes would be allowed. If ammo ran out, the paras would be in deep trouble. July 14<sup>th</sup>, PM wasn't shaping up as a fun afternoon for the beleaguered Red Devils. Monty, as usual, was dragging along at a snail's pace.

But, given the victory conditions, the paras felt confident in their ability to win through. The Germans had to capture all buildings and pillboxes north of the river or grab four buildings in the village and two strategic locations south of the river. With their new setup area just north of the village, a third company, no hectoring FBs, and artillery support, the Germans were ready to make a go of it. The paras had to again hope for a short PM scenario and count on skillful fighting to secure the victory. It didn't take the Germans long to regroup and attack.



*German setup: 14PM*



*British setup: 14PM*

## Red Devil Afternoon

Given what we both had left as allowable reinforcements, it was not difficult to figure out what was going to be added to each side's force. The Germans added an alert infantry company and an 80mm (HE only) artillery module along with some recons, while the Brits added a depleted platoon of paras. The German sniper remained at 6 and the Brit sniper increased to 5. As a result, snipers would potentially play a big role in the decisive PM battle.

Further, it was anticipated the Germans would pay an extra 20% for the infantry company and bring it into play immediately by setting up in the German setup area just north of the village. Therefore, the Brits would likely face an immediate onslaught of German infantry from the north, rather than watch them run across open terrain for two or three turns before they could engage. As expected, they lined up on map right in the face of the British.



Fortunately for the Brits, while the Germans had three companies of infantry, those companies were garrison level troops (4-4-7s) and the signals company of the German paras (4-6-7s). Both types lacked many support weapons (one LMG for each company). Also, other than a 10-2, Don had rolled up poor leaders for the first two companies. In addition, he had suffered losses of 5.5 squads and a StuG in the AM turn. Only his 80mm (HE only) artillery module could make up for his lack of support firepower. Nonetheless, unless the new company came in depleted (it did not), the Germans were going to quickly smash into the Brits with about ten 4-6-7s, twenty 4-4-7s, a StuG, and the artillery. The Brits defended in depth with 17.5 squads, 5 guns and a depleted platoon (3 squads) coming in. They were under ammo shortage, so troops, guns and SWs were under higher risk of breakdown. One hopes for short scenarios in such a case!

The Germans uncorked their recon rolls and took a look at all the concealed troops and many of the “empty” hexes within six hexes of their frontline troops. Anticipating this, the British pulled all but one gun out of range and the Germans did not spot the one within range. Once seen, the Brits resumed concealment and the turn began.

German 1: The PM turn opened with wind gusts, but it affected nothing. The Germans radioed the battery and got access, but did not place an AR. After thumbing through the rules, we determined they would retain battery access for later use as long as radio contact was maintained. As expected, a horde of German “scouts” then came barreling down the road and over the wall around the northernmost building. Most were killed or broken and a great deal of residual fire coated the hexes around the first building. No one got in. The crew-exposed StuG was stunned by a sniper shot. The Germans advanced the radio-toting leader (6+1) to the stone wall to carry out later mischief. A half-squad advanced adjacent to the front stone building.

British 1: The Brits faced a big decision. Should they skulk or fight hard for the frontline stone buildings? They decided to fight in order to keep the Germans out of the stone buildings for as long as possible. Luckily, their depleted reinforcement platoon came on immediately. My first prep fire went in against the stack at the wall with the 10-2 and the 6+1 holding the radio. The mighty 10-2 was pinned and the 6+1 promptly broke and ELR'd. Bye, bye arty, at least for a while. Other fire resulted in numerous units breaking, and the half-squad next to my building going berserk! It was a very good fire phase for the Brits. However, the Germans got some payback in defensive fire when they pinned my 9-2 and broke the squad in the front building. The squad died for failure to rout due to the presence of the berserk half-squad! Another squad advanced to hold the fort and protect the 9-2 leader. Other troops maintained concealment and

edged toward the front line. Despite the loss of the squad, it was a good turn for the Brits.

German 2: German prep fire broke the squad in the forward foxhole. The berserk half-squad ran into the building with the Brit 9-2 and squad and was promptly cut down. A leader attempted to recover the precious radio only to fail recovery and get shot by an alert sniper. The Brits went on a sniper tear, breaking some squads, pinning others and wounding another leader. The Germans, however, continued to push forward in an attempt to overlap the British flanks. The StuG started, pivoted and promptly bogged in the vineyard. A 57L opened fire and got acquisition but no hit on it. The forward building remained in British hands.

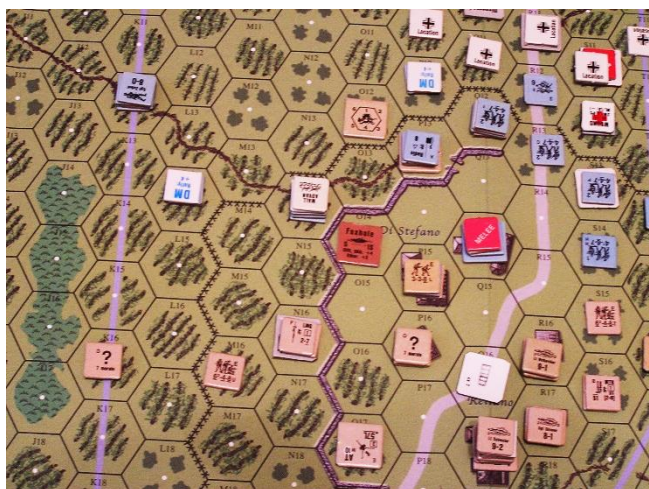
British 2: Prep fire hit a stack of three 4-4-7s, killing a half-squad, breaking another and causing the surviving half-squad and another squad to go berserk! “Geez, not again”, muttered the Brits. The gun burned the StuG, only to be destroyed when shifting fire to German infantry (ammo shortage “12”). Another platoon of Germans on the Brit left flank broke to small arms fire. The 9-2 and squad in the forward building were broken to a 30-firepower shot, but were able to rout safely away. Another squad advanced in. The British sniper continued his deadly ways, killing another leader. The Germans still did not possess the radio.

German 3: German prep fire caused some misery on the British right flank, killing a half-squad and disrupting the survivor. Most of the Germans prepared to move out after the berserk squad and a half made their charge. The berserkers lost a half-squad running into the forward building. However, they killed a half-squad and broke the survivors with their triple-point-blank shot. The surviving British half-squad was able to rout away. Other attempts to advance by the Germans were met with withering defensive fire from the Brits. More units broke. However, at long last, the radio was back in German hands.

British 3: The British reinforcements arrived at the front. The Germans rallied several units and prepared to continue their surge. Not a lot happened with fire attacks, but the sniper managed to break a squad and wound yet another German leader. In the advance phase, the Brits moved a concealed squad into the forward building just captured by the formerly berserk squad. Ambush was achieved and a German half-squad was eliminated, but the British concealment was lost and a melee ensued.



German center-right: 14PM Turn 4



German right flank: 14PM Turn 4

German 4: At this point, the Germans felt the press of time. If they were going to grab the needed victory locations, they had to rush the Brits and break or kill as many as possible. After rallying a full platoon plus on the British right, they tuned in their radio to call for artillery. The radio check was good. But, bad luck struck hard as Don drew a red card. The infantry charged forward only to be met by a hail of Brit fire and bloody rout. Things had gone from bad to desperate.

British 4: Brit prep fire ended nearly all hope for the Germans as several of their remaining squads broke. The Brits observed that they now outnumbered the Germans in unbroken squads. In response the Germans called for artillery again, but again drew a red card. The artillery module was lost without ever getting off a round. Don decided further bloodshed was futile and threw in the towel.

## Conclusion:

Well, what can you say? Things could hardly have gone better for the Brits. The drop produced no casualties. By night turn four it was so dark, that the Brit paras just ran uninhibited by the Italians or advanced into their hexes for close combat at very good odds. It takes a heck of a lot of luck for the darkness to increase two levels in that short time. This resulted in the Brits taking the bridge, all the buildings and pillboxes and an important German entry area for the loss of one half-squad. Added to these woes is that the night turn went 6.5 turns. Normal would be 5.5 turns. Not a bad night's work.

Because the Brits took every strategic location on the map at night, the Germans had to enter from off map the next day. Normally, they would have held some of, if not all the village, thus allowing them to set up near the bridge. Instead, they had to run about half the length of the map to even get at the Brits the next morning. The British fighter-bombers made that run expensive. From there, things just snowballed downhill for the Germans.

However, despite the bad luck the Germans experienced, we both agreed this is a fun, highly playable campaign game. It offers great variety in play with para drops, night rules, fighter-bombers, some armor and a lot of light infantry attacking a smaller, but elite British force. It offers a lot of replay value too as night drops are highly variable and generally the Brits won't get down without scattering widely and suffering casualties. We both highly recommend it for those interested in campaign games, but with a shortage of game play time. Try this seldom-played game. It is great fun.

## A SERIES OF UNLIKELY COINCIDENCES

Chris Kubick

It often happens in ASL that the outcome of a scenario hinges on the outcome of a particularly opportune dice roll. Less frequently will it depend on the outcome of a series of seemingly random, yet still interrelated rolls; below is a description of one of the strangest twists of fate handed down by the dice gods that I've ever been a part of in 24 years of play.

For a brief overview, we were playing *Valor of Guards CG IV*, scenario 23/9, with myself as the Soviets, and my opponent Arlen Vanek as the Germans. For the last three scenarios, the focus of action on the northern area of the map had been a German assault on the area of Pavlov's house, the Flour Mill and the Warehouse. The Germans seized Pavlov's House pretty quickly, and were attacking the Flour



Mill/Warehouse complex as part of the effort to isolate the northern map edge from the Soviet perimeter, part of the German victory conditions for the CG. The Russians had been pushed to the very southern edge of this building complex, holding only two or three hexes, although reinforcements had been moved up, and a Soviet counterattack was imminent. The German player had a module of 150mm OBA that had already been used to good effect elsewhere on the map, and was in process of dialing it in to finish the Soviets off, hampered somewhat by the close proximity of his own forces and limited LOS.

Finally, during the German player turn five, he got the SR in the perfect place, and things looked bad for the remaining Soviet forces holding out in the area in question; it also pretty much canceled any plans I had to reinforce.

So we came to the beginning of Soviet game turn five. The wind change dice roll resulted in Civilian Interrogation for the Soviets. The interrogation die roll yielded a Defenses Compromised result. Wouldn't you know it, the nearest (in fact the only) German HIP unit was the radio observer for the 150mm OBA. Of course, during the Prep Fire Phase, the Soviets attacked him with a stack of two HMG directed by a 9-2 leader, which, alas, only resulted in a PTC (no ROF), not enough to stop the OBA from coming down. But wait! The observer's dice roll was eleven, which just happened to be the Soviet Booby Trap Level B activation number, which was a wound result for the SMC. The leader failed his wound roll, so no OBA came down on that player turn, or ever again for that matter, and I was able to reinforce the position and turn the tide of battle.

It's also funny how a series of dice rolls can come together and make a story, with a little imagination thrown in. We had another incident in the same CG that also involved a HIP OBA observer. In this case, the German player had a hidden observer in a debris hex very close to the southern map edge. A unit entering from offboard came under fire, and the attack, resolved at half firepower against the observer, resulted in his loss of HIP, although he remained in good order.

In a subsequent player turn, this leader was eliminated by a "1" sniper attack, so now there was an unmanned radio in the debris hex. Another leader moved up and gained possession of the radio, only to immediately malfunction it with a "12" contact dice roll, and eliminate it with a "6" repair roll during the next player turn.

I took all of this in, looked over at Arlen, and said, "Here's how this played out in 'real' terms; the leader was killed, and when another leader came up and tried to talk to the battery, they didn't recognize his voice, and cut the connection, suspecting a Russian trick".

It's funny how these things play out sometimes.

## RULES TIP

I had something pointed out to me recently that I've been playing wrong for basically as long as I've been playing ASL. And since it is the first time I've had it pointed out to me, a lot of other folks are probably playing it incorrectly as well. Near the end of A4.61 on Assault Movement is the sentence, "A unit using Assault Movement which uses all its MF to move beneath Wire (B26.4), or which breaks, or becomes berserk, due to Defensive First Fire is no longer considered using Assault Movement and is subject to the -1 FFNAM DRM for the remainder of *its* MPh." The key phrase pointed out to me was "...and breaks...". What does this mean? If I have a unit assault moving into a woods hex for 2 MF, for example, and Defensive First Fire breaks the unit on the first MF expenditure, if the defender conducts any additional Defensive Fire at the now-broken unit, it now qualifies for the -1 FFNAM.

## 26TH ANNUAL TEXAS TEAM TOURNAMENT RESULTS

Rick Reinesch



Here are the results and rankings from the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Team Tournament. Where players had the same score, ranking was based on the opponents' W/L percentage first, and then their own W/L percentage second. 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 David Lamb for winning the individual champion bracket this year, and Robert Loper for taking the runner-up prize.

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Kevin Boles (SK)	6	6	0
David Lamb (10-3)	4	5	1
George Tournemire	4	5	1
Paul Works	3	5	2
Bill Stoppel	3	3	0
Robert Loper (9-2)	2	4	2
Jim Bishop	2	4	2
Orlando Ortiz	2	3	1
Brian Roundhill	2	4	2
Ed Beekman	2	2	0

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Philippe Barbaroux	2	2	0
Doyle Motes	1	3	2
Robert Zinselmeyer	1	3	2
Don Fenton	1	2	1
Amanda Boles	1	3	2
Dave Reinking	1	3	2
Chris Kubick	1	2	1
Felipe Zavala	1	3	2
Mark Pandori	1	4	3
Matt Schwoebel	1	2	1
Shane Brannan	1	3	2
Gary Krockover	1	1	0
James Woodall	1	1	0
Rich Spilky	1	1	0
Mike Seningen	0	1	1
Matt Evans	0	3	3
Jeff Toreki	0	1	1
Jim Ferrell	0	2	2
Michael Stubits	0	2	2
Juan Franco	0	1	1
Ed Hack	0	2	2
Sam Tyson	0	3	3
Brian Ward	-1	0	1
Kevin Kenneally	-1	0	1
Randy Strader	-1	0	1
Chuck Anderson	-1	1	2
Ross Zarzecki	-1	1	2
John Powell	-1	1	2
Roy Connelly	-1	1	2
Robert Hammond	-1	2	3
Bud Garding	-1	1	2
Bob Davis	-1	2	3
Eric Gerstenberg	-1	2	3
David Nailing	-1	0	1
Mark Carter	-1	0	1
Steve Desrosiers	-1	0	1
Will Willow	-1	0	1
Jack OQuin	-1	0	1
Dennis Donovan	-1	0	1

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Scott Bell	-1	0	1
Steven Duke	-1	0	1
Gary Bradley	-2	1	3
Woody Lee	-2	1	3
Dan Best	-2	1	3
Ray Woloszyn	-2	1	3
Devon Davidson	-2	0	2
Steven Miller	-2	0	2
Dean Rogers	-3	0	3
Arlen Vanek	-3	1	4
Steve Swann	-3	0	3
Tracey Love	-5	1	6

Here's how the Major Johnson standings finished. Paul Works took home the MJ award this year. Great job, Paul!

Player	MJ Total
Paul Works	15547.5
Jim Bishop	14982
Brian Roundhill	14850.5
Dan Best	12912.5
Tracey Love	11342.25
Dave Reinking	10038
Sam Tyson	9526
Robert Loper	9513
Matt Evans	8651.25
George Tournemire	8112
David Lamb	8093.75
Arlen Vanek	8018.5
Kevin Boles	8000
Jim Ferrell	7495
Michael Stubits	6754
Doyle Motes	5929
Chris Kubick	5736
Eric Gerstenberg	5642
Dennis Donovan	5172
Bill Stoppel	4860
Felipe Zavala	4810
Bud Garding	4776
Robert Zinselmeyer	4632



Player	MJ Total
Roy Connelly	4572
Ray Woloszyn	4473.75
Steve Swann	4472
Mark Pandori	4340
Dean Rogers	4254
Bob Davis	4122
Amanda Boles	3666
Robert Hammond	3235
Shane Brannan	3160
Ed Beekman	2756.25
Ed Hack	2387.5
Gary Bradley	2335
Don Fenton	2136
John Powell	1986
Orlando Ortiz	1899
Ross Zarzecki	1770
Woody Lee	1665
Kevin Kenneally	1442
Matt Schwoebel	1434
Philippe Barbaroux	1299
Chuck Anderson	1143
Mike Seningen	1016
Juan Franco	992
Rich Spilky	890
Gary Krockover	714
Will Willow	692
Devon Davidson	518
Jeff Toreki	512
Steven Miller	342
Steven Duke	229
James Woodall	206
Scott Bell	206
Steve Desrosiers	168
Mark Carter	148
Jack OQuin	93
Brian Ward	92
Randy Strader	91
David Nailing	60

Here are how the teams fared. If teams wound up with the same score, the team with the higher strength of schedule was ranked higher. Congratulations to Robert, Kevin, and Woody. They beat the 2<sup>nd</sup> place team in a tiebreaker by a scant 0.012 of a point based on strength of schedule.

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Robert Zinselmeyer, Kevin Boles, Woody Lee,	5	10	5
Ed Beekman, Amanda Boles, Orlando Ortiz,	5	8	3
David Lamb, Ed Hack, Juan Franco,	4	8	4
Bill Stoppel, Bryan Register, Scott Bell,	2	3	1
Brian Roundhill, Tom Meier, Bernard Howell,	2	4	2
Jim Bishop, Robert Hammond, Norman Harman,	1	6	5
Doyle Motes, Roy Connelly, Shane Brannan,	1	7	6
Chuck Anderson, Randy Strader, Philippe Barbaroux,	0	3	3
Paul Works, Jason Cameron, Dean Rogers,	0	5	5
Eric Gerstenberg, Steven Duke, Robert Loper,	0	6	6
Dave Reinking, James Woodall, Gary Bradley,	0	5	5
Jim Ferrell, Michael Stubits, Mike Masura,	0	4	4
Jeff Toreki, Steve Desrosiers, Felipe Zavala,	0	4	4
Rich Spilky, Mark Carter, Bill Dorre,	0	1	1
Sam Tyson, Gary Krockover, John Powell,	0	5	5
Matt Schwoebel, Bob Davis, David Nailing,	-1	4	5
Steve Swann, Mark Pandori, Don Fenton,	-1	6	7
Dennis Donovan, Ross Zarzecki, Matt Evans,	-2	4	6
Ray Woloszyn, Chris Kubick, Steven Miller,	-3	3	6
Will Willow, Arlen Vanek, Brian Ward,	-5	1	6
Dan Best, Bud Garding, Tracey Love,	-8	3	11

## 26TH ANNUAL TEXAS TEAM TOURNAMENT WRAP-UP

Rick Reinesch



We achieved another significant milestone this year as the largest turnout ever came to Austin to celebrate the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Texas Team Tournament. The tournament has come a long way from its humble beginnings back in 1993 to welcoming a record-breaking 78 pre-registrants and walk-ons from all over the southern part of the US, and from locations as far away as California to Vermont, and our first overseas participant from Belgium (welcome, George Tournemire!) to Austin, Texas. We were able to welcome several faces this year new to the game, along with ASL grognards joining us for the first time, and several returning locals, which is always great to see. The tournament is a great way to get up to speed if you're learning ASL as the immersion of play over the weekend helps to reinforce rules learned/remembered.

As we have in previous years, this year's event was held in the Tech Room of the Wingate Conference Center located in far north Austin. Given the number of folks this year, we wound up spilling over into the adjoining room. At this rate we'll soon take over the entire floor. This is our seventh 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, I can provide an open bar for us to enjoy some beers, 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. Details are up on the Texas-ASL website.

In the title match for the individual crown of the Texas Team Tournament, Dave Lamb came down from Michigan to beat Robert Loper in *Meet the Old Boss* [SP264] and take home the 10-3 Award as overall individual winner in our championship bracket, along with the engraved dice cup and very cool BattleSchool OBA chits that went along with it. In the loss, Rob took the 9-2 Runner Up dice cup and a smaller set of BattleSchool OBA chits, as well. The championship is set up as a single-elimination bracket for the individual award, seeding it with the top 8 scorers after Friday's play who wish to challenge for it. This helps me to narrow the winner down and gives the folks who are really interested in vying for the overall individual championship the chance to do so.

The Team Tourney continued the use of a three-man team format. This makes the possible absence of one person on a team less of an issue and allows for all teams to stay in the

hunt throughout the weekend. This format has also made for some very tight races for the team crown heading into Sunday play. Again, this year the team results were determined by the final games on Sunday with the winning team of Bob Zinselmeyer, Kevin Boles and Woody Lee finishing on top through their strength of schedule over the second place team of Ed Beekman, Amanda Boles and Orlando Ortiz by a scant 0.012 strength of schedule points. It doesn't get much closer than that.

Our Thursday mini featured the time-honored Houston institution, **Ferocity Fest**. This is always a fun and brutal mini which has a decidedly mean streak to it as suggested by its name. This year the scenario being highlighted was an old classic in recognition of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Stalingrad, the *The Streets of Stalingrad* [C], but with a few twists provided by some tweaks from Rich Spilky. Rich was kind enough to outline those in an article enclosed in this issue, and we have provided a copy of the scenario. Give it a whirl! When all the points were counted up, the Axis winner was Rich Spilky, with the runner up being Mike Stubits, and the Allied winner was Paul Works with the runner-up being Brian Roundhill. The winning Axis Commander took home a German Iron Cross medal and the Allied Commander earned the Soviet Order of Lenin medal, with **The Gamer's Armory** gift certificates being awarded to the 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 to boot. This year we had 8 participants in a 3-round tourney that was won by Kevin Boles taking home the first-place plaque and BattleSchool dice, besting his daughter Amanda in *Operation Natzmer* [S54]. It was very encouraging to see the number of folks getting involved with SK over the weekend playing SK either full time or at least for some of their games. We certainly welcome and encourage their participation over the course of the weekend.

We presented several 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 Brian Roundhill. 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 Jim Bishop. We presented a nice plaque to the winner of the most Close Combat points collected over the weekend, and that honor went to Mike Stubits.

The Major Johnson award was hard-fought again this year; with Paul Works playing the most ASL over the course of the weekend (and getting a last game with Jim Bishop on Sunday to put him over the top) and taking home the engraved dice glass that recognizes that accomplishment. So, the next time you see Paul, ask him to show off his Maj. Johnson. The Major Johnson can be won in many ways but



win or lose you are always in the hunt for MJ just by playing (a lot).

For swag this year, I gave out a 20 oz. coffee mug with an array of ASL cover art on it. For those interested, MMP picked up the mug design up to sell to everyone, and it is now available on the MMP website under Products > Parts > ASL Game Parts.

We had a great list of sponsors for this year, without whose assistance we could not offer such a fantastic drawing of prizes. And here they are:

ArtbyStudioWhite

BattleSchool

Bounding Fire Productions

Broken Ground Design

Columbia Games

David Lamb

David Pentland Art

Dispatches from the Bunker

Friendly Fire

George Tournemire

GMT Games

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Robert Hammond

SoCal ASL

St. Louis ASL

The Gamers Armory

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 always stepped up to the plate to help out and make the tournament an enjoyable experience for all. They all did a fantastic job and I can't thank them enough:

- Ed Beekman for the use of his vast military video library during the course of the tourney

- 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!

The website (<http://www.texas-asl.com>) has already been updated with all of the information for 2019 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! I hope to see everyone next year from June 20-23, 2019 here in Austin, Texas.

## CLUB NOTES

### Biweekly Lunch Gathering

Lunch gatherings have been more sporadic lately, but they still happen. Stay tuned to our yahoo groups email list. The club sends out email reminders, or you can call Matt or Sam 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](http://www.texas-asl.com) or better yet join our email group. You can post a message at [central-texas-asl@yahoogroups.com](mailto: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.

## The BANZAI!!! Staff

Founder, Editor Emeritus, and Grand Poobah	Matt Shostak (512) 899-4560 <a href="mailto:mshostakster@gmail.com">mshostakster@gmail.com</a>
Managing Editor and Keeper of the Game Tracker	Sam Tyson (980) 428-4113 <a href="mailto:styson@gmail.com">styson@gmail.com</a>
Editor in Chief, Copy Editor, and Layout Ninja	Rick Reinesch (512) 375-2044 <a href="mailto:ctasl@aol.com">ctasl@aol.com</a>
Contributing Authors	Rich Spilky, Matt Shostak, Chris Kubick, Allen King, Kevin Boles, Amanda Boles, Rick Reinesch
Publishing Schedule	<b>Whenever we feel like it!</b>
Club Information	Matt Shostak or Rick Reinesch
Club Web Site	<a href="http://www.texas-asl.com/">www.texas-asl.com/</a>

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Thanks to Rodney Kinney for VASL, Carl Fung for his VASL counter images, and the VASL Map Cabals for their VASL map images. We use a combination of VASL counter and map images for scenario layouts with permission of use for that purpose.

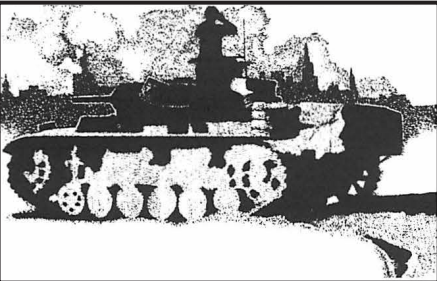
## NEXT ISSUE

- More articles about ASL
  - Player Profile
  - Favorite Scenarios
  - Club Meeting Recaps
- And much more!



ASL SCENARIO C THE STREETS OF STALINGRAD

Modified from the original for use in Ferocity Fest at the 26th Annual Texas Team Tournament



**Stalingrad, Russia, October 6, 1942:** After an extremely successful summer campaign, the Germans came upon the Volga fortress of Stalingrad. Here the Red army had dug in and was determined to make a stand. Sensing total victory, the Germans threw more and ever more troops into the fighting. But for the first time in the war, German infantry found the Russians their equal. Rebuffed by stiff resistance, the Germans committed crack assault engineers. Gradually, the Germans cleared one block, then another-only to lose them again to sudden Russian counterattacks. By October 5, the Germans had almost taken the key Dzerzhinsky Tractor Works. However, the fighting had been so heavy that the line troops occupying the surrounding area were exceptionally weak from the previous week's combat. The German command decided to crush this island of resistance and to help, brought up a crack team of assault engineers. Advancing elements of the 389th Infantry Division squared off against a contingent of the 308th Rifle Division in the crucial Dzerzhinsky Tractor Works. However, the Russians had noted a critical weakness in the ring around the Tractor Works and had decided to launch a major counterattack to relieve their garrison there. At that point, the Russians counterattacked with their crack 37th Guards to break the ring the Germans had thrown around the factory and reinforce the desperate defenders.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS: A:** The Russians win at game end if they Control  $\geq 2$  more *stone* buildings initially controlled by the Germans than they lose of their own initially-held *stone* buildings to German Control, (see SSR 6) and **B:** At game end, the player that Controls at least six hexes of building X3 wins. A hex containing a Melee is controlled by neither player. If only one player has an unbroken unit in the building at game end, that player is the winner. Any other result is a draw.

- OVERALL VICTORY CONDITIONS:**  
There are five possibilities for each side:
1. Complete Defeat: One side loses both VC A and VC B.
  2. Partial Loss: One side draws on VC B and loses on VC A.
  3. Draw: One side wins on VC A while the other side wins on VC B (or vice-versa).
  4. Partial Victory: One side draws on VC B and wins on VC A.
  5. Decisive Victory: One side wins both VC A and VC B.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



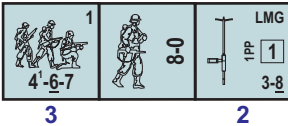
Sequential Set Up	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Roll Die to Determine Who Moves First							

**Company H, 389th Infantry Regiment** set up *first* as indicated:

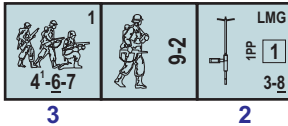
In building F5:



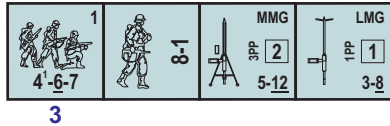
In building K5:



In building I7:

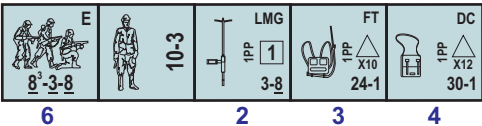


In building M7:

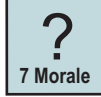


Set up *fourth* as indicated (must have at least one unit in each building listed):

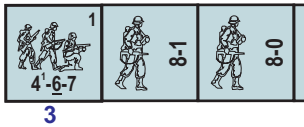
**Company A, Assault Engineer Battalion 50** set up in buildings AA4, CC3, and Y8:



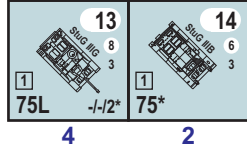
Any group of Co. H



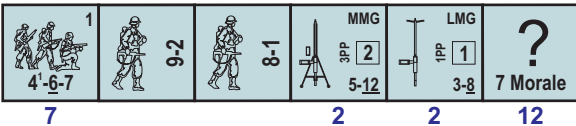
In building M9:



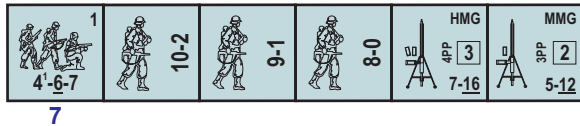
Enter Turn 3 on hex Y10 and/or GG5-GG6 (SSR 4):



**Kampfgruppe Stahler** set up in buildings U3, T4, R7, and T7:



**Kampfgruppe Tienham** set up in buildings Y8, CC7, and AA4:



**Elements of the 308th Rifle Division** set up *second* as indicated:

In building N4:



In building J2:



In building M2:



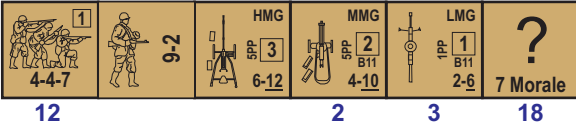
In building N2:



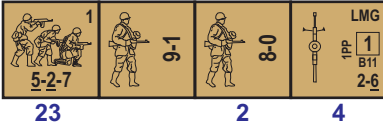
**Elements of 2nd Battalion, 37th Guards Division** set up in building F3:



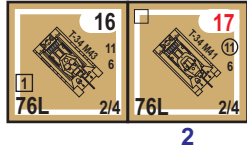
**Elements of the 308th Rifle Division** set up *third* in building X3:



**Elements of the 295th Rifle Division** set up *fifth* in buildings P8, P5, Q4, and R1 (must have at least one unit in each building listed):



Enter Turn 2 on hex I1:



**SPECIAL RULES:**

1. EC are Moderate with no wind at start. No-Quarter is in effect for both sides.
2. Each non-prisoner Russian unit is Fanatic (A10.8) in building X3.
3. Building X3 is a Factory (B23.74)
4. German armor may delay entry one game turn and thereafter enter on any southern or eastern mapboard edge hex.
5. H-t-H may be declared by both sides. Russians have MOL (A22.6) capability.
6. The only stone buildings considered in Victory Condition A are:
  - Initially German Controlled: F5, K5, I7, M7, and M9
  - Initially Russian Controlled: N4, J2, M2, and F3

**AFTERMATH:** Both the German and Soviet attacks jumped off at about the same time, and the entire area erupted in bloody street fighting. Utilizing overwhelming numbers, the Soviets overran the strung out German defenders, but at so high a cost that by the time they reached the Tractor Works their reinforcement value was much abated. The German assault engineers, meanwhile, had done their work and another section of the factory was cleared, but they too had taken heavy casualties and their attack soon fizzled in the face of a die-hard group of Russians still hanging onto a corner of the Works. The overall result was that the Russians had recaptured a few city blocks, but were still being slowly eroded in the factory complex. Neither side, despite desperate efforts with mounting casualties, was able to achieve a decisive result that day. In essence, it was a draw-with both sides pouring fresh troops into those same few blocks where so many more men would die in the days ahead.