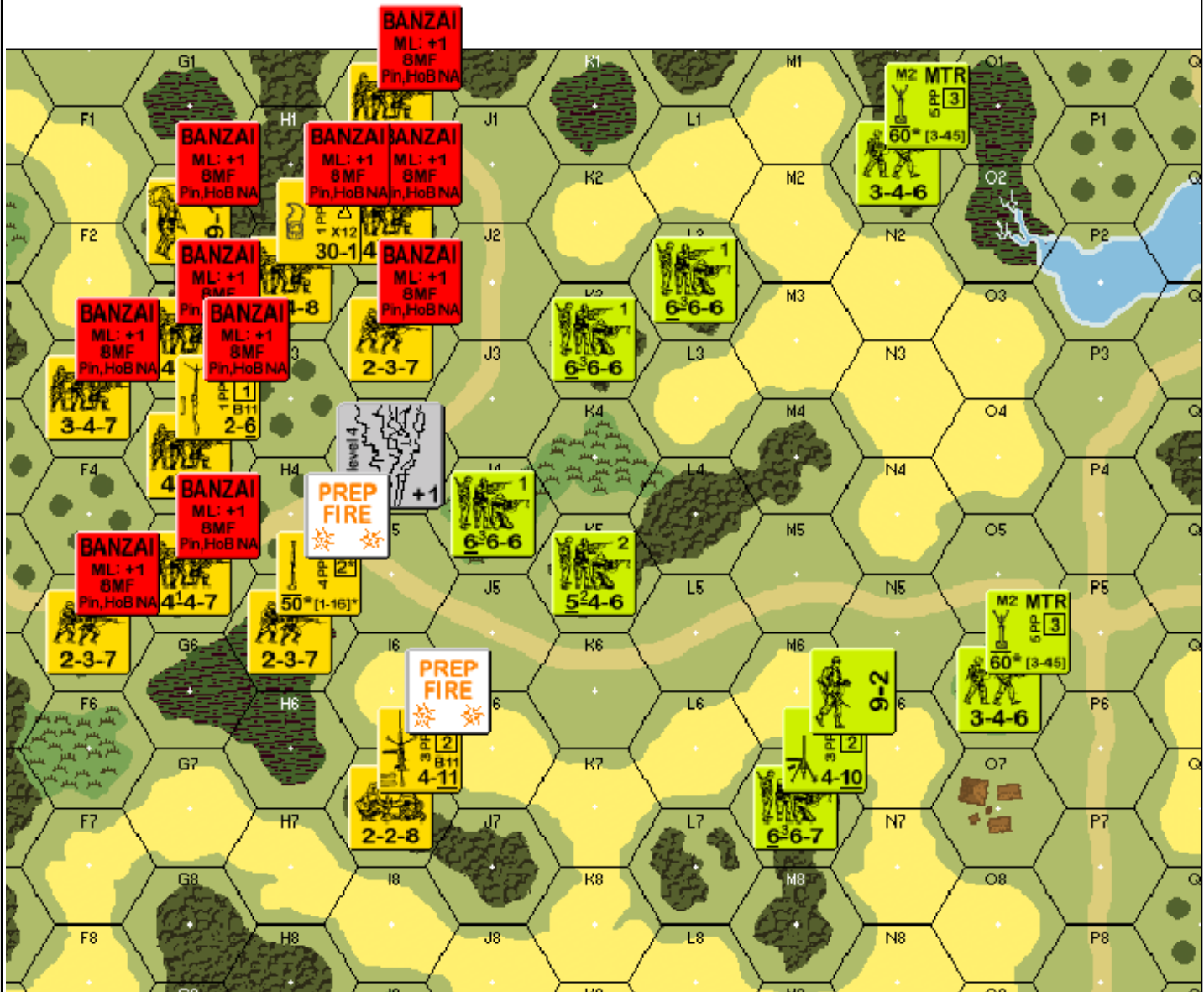


# BANZAI!!!



The Newsletter of the Texas ASL Club

March 2025

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## EDITOR'S FOXHOLE

Rick Reinesch



Welcome back to another edition of the newsletter of Texas ASL, *Banzai!!!*. This issue has been on the back burner for quite a while now, and with the next Team Tournament coming up fast, I needed to get this issue out sooner rather than later. We start out this issue with one of Matt Shostak's legendary scenario analysis. This one of BFP's *Slaughter at Nanyaun [BFP32]*. We have a couple of great articles on Fire Lanes and Converting a Spotting Round to an FFE by Jim Bishop that he has graciously given us permission to cross post from his blog, **The Bishop Says**. His Fire Lane article gives some great insights and tips into how to effectively use this key MG capability. And Jim's other article helps to correct some common errors when utilizing OBA. And finally, I present the results and give a wrap up of the 30<sup>th</sup> Texas Team Tournament and give a preview of the upcoming 31<sup>st</sup> Texas Team Tournament that will be held in Austin, TX this June 19-22, 2025. We wrap it all up with Doug Rimmer giving us a rundown of the ASL Player Rating System. All this and more await you in this issue of *Banzai!!!*. Enjoy.

## SCENARIO ANALYSIS: SLAUGHTER AT NANYAUN [BFP32]

Matt Shostak



Attraction: Fans of combined arms actions that also enjoy the Pacific theater have plenty to entice them in this scenario.

This Sino-Japanese brawl from 1938 has infantry and armor on both sides, with the Chinese getting some guns and the Japanese calling on 70+mm offboard artillery. To spice things up a bit, the Chinese even have some horses and wagons, while three of the Japanese tanks sport flamethrowers. The battle takes place on boards 43 and 17, which are mostly rural, featuring several large fields of grain, and lots of woods and orchards along with a few scattered buildings. There's even a mild breeze at start, which should make burning wrecks and smoke placement a bit more interesting. Note that PTO terrain is not in effect, which might make this scenario more or less appealing depending on your point of view.

Japanese Entry area



### Japanese Advantages: Flamethrowers, Initiative, Casualty Points

Flamethrowers are scary weapons, especially when mounted in tanks. Although these attack with only 20 firepower (and with X11 may run out of fuel quickly), they can still have a big impact on the battlefield. Not only can they be very effective at burning out defensive strong points, they can also have a hefty psychological effect on the defenders, as they may hold their fire while waiting to see what the flamethrowers do, allowing the other Japanese forces to move forward a bit more easily. Be sure to read the vehicle notes for these tanks (Armored Engineer Vehicle SS), and note that the ROF 2 on the counter is not a true rate of fire, but rather an indicator that the tank has two side-mounted flamethrowers, that can each fire in the same fire phase, but only to each side as per the diagram. [But temper your enthusiasm a bit--these tanks are radioless and hence will have trouble moving about as freely as you'd like.] The Japanese also have the advantage of the initiative, being able to move first and pick their spot to attack, and possibly therefore manage to attain a local superiority of force, since the Chinese will likely be spread out across a wide front.

Lastly, the Japanese can win by exiting forces but also by causing casualties, and the Chinese forces have a lot of points available for the taking: the at-start group is worth 51 points, and the reinforcement group is worth 68 points, 30 of which consist of thin-skinned AFVs that should not be very difficult to knock out. As usual, the Japanese have no casualty cap themselves to worry about, so they can win even if it's a pyrrhic victory with very few of their own forces left at the end.

### **Japanese Disadvantages: Small Initial Force, Time**

The initial attacking group consists of only 9 squads, 2 crews, and 6 tanks. They'll have to carry the load for the first three turns, since their reinforcements don't arrive until turn 4. When help does arrive, it may take a while to reach the fighting, so the first group may have to do the bulk of the fighting for 4 or even 5 turns. That's asking a lot, considering they'll be outnumbered by the Guomindang forces, who have twelve 5-3-7 squads available, not to mention several dangerous guns. Chances are the defenders will be spread out at first, so the Japanese will have to make good use of local superiority of forces, picking a good spot to attack and executing it well. To make things worse, the Chinese reinforcements, 15 squads and multiple AFVs, arrive on turn 3, beating the Japanese reinforcements to the punch. Although 8 turns may seem like a lot of time, the late arrival of the second attacking group means they might actually have to hurry a bit.

### **Chinese Advantages: Numbers, Troop Quality, Guns**

The defenders start with twelve squads and five crews, versus the nine squads and two crews of the Japanese, so they outnumber the attackers at start. Fifteen more squads arrive on turn 3, along with plenty of armor, while the Japanese counter with only another nine squads and two crews, plus four tanks. In squads alone, that's 27-18 in favor of the defenders over the course of the scenario. How often do defenders enjoy such a numerical advantage? The five guns can help ward off the Japanese tanks, or punish the infantry. The headliners are the two 150\* artillery pieces, which could really give the enemy the business on the 30 firepower column. They are supplemented by two 75\* artillery pieces (nothing to sneeze at) and a 20L AA gun. Not bad at all. Don't forget to bore sight.

### **Chinese Disadvantages: Flimsy Armor, Weapon Reliability**

The Chinese armor in this fight is pretty flimsy, ranging in armor thickness from 0 to 2. The six AFVs are worth 30 points altogether, which the Japanese would love to score and are completely capable of doing so. Using this armor well will be a bit of challenge for the Chinese player. Every

Chinese weapon except the demo charges has a breakdown number of 11. Expect a lot of broken weapons. Furthermore, all of the Chinese vehicles suffer from mechanical reliability problems, signified by their red movement numbers. An unlucky startup roll resulting in immobilization in a sub-optimal place could add an extra challenge for the defenders.

### **Defensive Plan**

The Japanese can enter across a pretty wide front: anywhere on the north or east edges of board 43. That's a lot of territory to cover. They can score victory points by exiting units on/between 17I10 - 17Y10, which is roughly in the middle of the friendly board edge. This is a pretty wide front to cover, which will spread out the defense somewhat. Trying to be clever by overloading one area may just result in the Japanese striking in a different place, forcing relocation of the main defense anyway. The defense must respect the ability of the Japanese to enter all the way on the east side, so some forces should be deployed to defend this potential axis of attack from the eastern edge of board 43 oriented southwest across board 17 toward the exit area. But what if the Japanese choose instead to come down the far western edge of board 43, through the woods at the northwest of board 17, and then toward the exit? If the defenders have all their eggs in one basket, facing the other way, such a move could force them to relocate, and render the five guns much less effective, since at the very least they'd have to rotate, but more than likely would have to be moved, and those 150s are heavy.

With all that in mind, here is an example defense. It's probably far from perfect, but it should illustrate some of the things the defender in this scenario must keep in mind. The plan here is to guard primarily against an attack attempting to use the shortest path to the victory exit area, from the board join at the corner of board 43 angling toward the 17Y10 exit point. A couple of dummy stacks are in the woods at the very far right, masquerading as leader-led LMG stacks planning to lay fire lanes across that open space to the woods seven hexes away. Fire lanes are indeed part of the plan, but the squads to do that are located a bit farther back, behind the wall and in some woods, spots with better potential for fading back deeper into the defense. They are positioned to crisscross their fire lanes. A couple of guns are deployed a bit farther forward than I might normally like, but they are here supporting the front-line infantry by fending off the flamethrower tanks. Several of these squads have horses with them, in case the attack comes from the other side of the battlefield, so they can quickly relocate. Similarly, the wagons are in the area for the same reason, to help tow the guns to the other side if necessary. If not needed, they should vamoose to keep a few easy CVP out of the Japanese total.

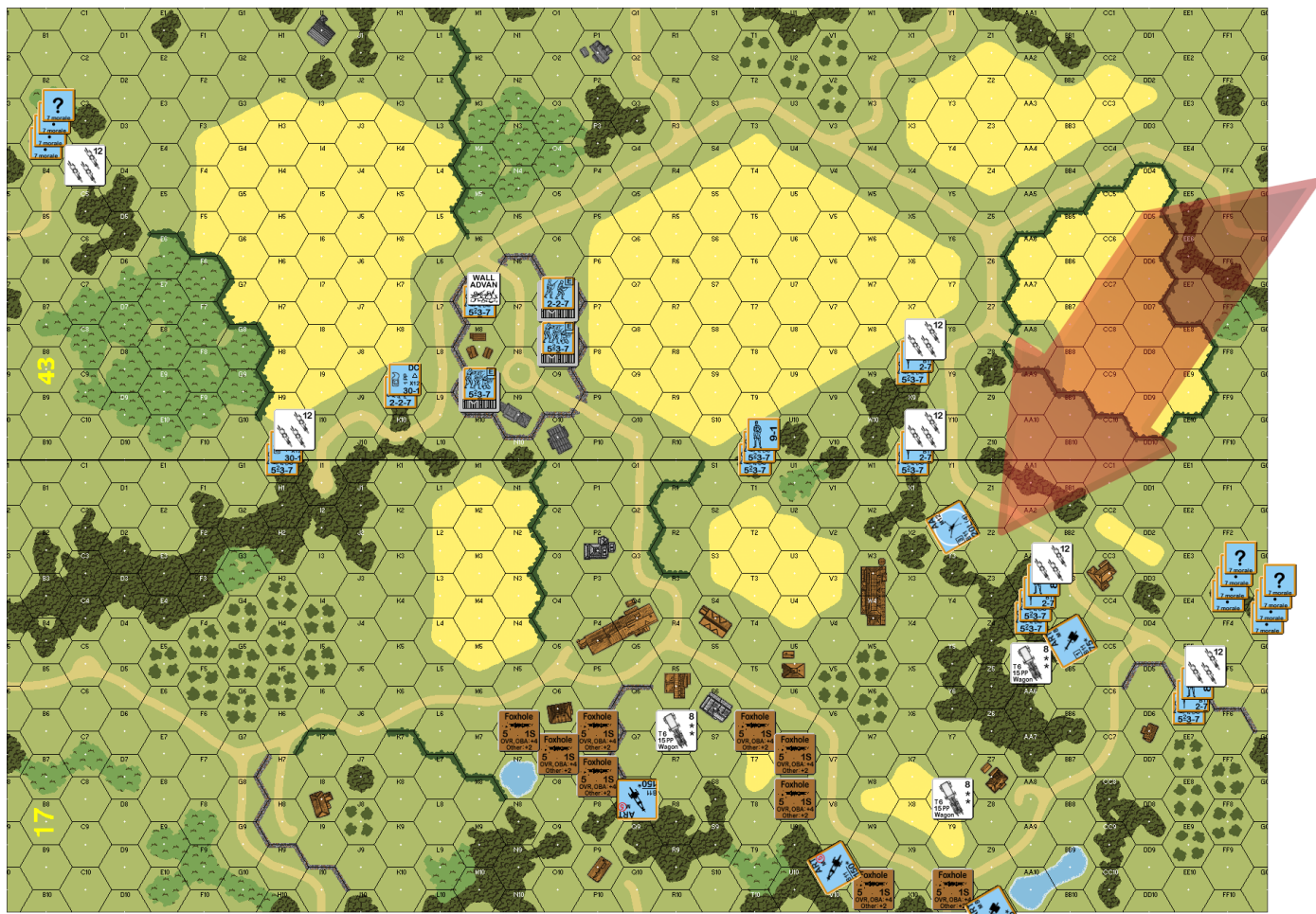


On the far left, there is also a dummy stack with horses nearby, in the hope that this will look like a real unit prepared to ride to the other side of the battle. The rest of the infantry guards other potential avenues of attack, with some upstairs in buildings to get line of sight over the expansive fields of grain and strip concealment from the attackers. The general plan is to conduct a sort of fighting withdrawal, fading back to the area behind the road that loops from 17I10 to 17Y10. This makes a good last-stand position, because it defends the Japanese exit area, and has a lot of open ground to its front. It will also be easily reachable by the Chinese reinforcements, so they may be able to put up quite a wall of bodies. The rest of the Chinese guns backstop this area, mostly oriented northeasterly, anticipating the attack coming mainly from this direction. Hedging our bets a little is the 150\* in 17Q8 and looking northwest, but it does have line of sight to the northeast a little bit as well. The foxholes have been dug to the rear also, and will be occupied by retreating front-line units or reinforcements as circumstances allow.

What to do with the reinforcing armor is an interesting dilemma. They are worth a lot of points to the Japanese and they are easy to kill. But simply playing hide-and-seek all game seems unsatisfying, and the defenders may really want that extra firepower online. It's obviously situation-dependent, so use your judgment.

### Japanese Attack Plan

A broad-front attack is probably a bad idea, because there just aren't enough troops available. Therefore the Japanese should mass against a particular area and try to cause casualties and create a gap for the follow-on forces to exploit. Where to do it? The west is farthest from the exit area, and also there is a large forest stretching from the western edge of board 17 almost all the way to the board 43 compound, which makes it more difficult for tanks. Trying to punch through the center likely means having to deal with the defenders in the stone buildings of the compound, and moreover, both Chinese flanks won't have very far to go



when repositioning. The eastern approach is the shortest, but will probably be the one the Chinese are watching the most. Take your pick, but once committed stick with it.

Depicted here is the third option, with the schwerepunkt in the east. The Japanese infantry will move in stacks, double time, to get to the edge of the grain field at the hedge line with their advance. The tin cans move up in a line such that they and the infantry will be ready for a potential armored-assault banzai on turn 2 if the opportunity arises. Meanwhile the flamethrower tanks move up boldly in support. In this case, the Chinese 20L knocked out the lead tank, the middle tank burned out the defending squad, and the trailing tank created a fanatic and a hero. Those are probably not typical results; your mileage may vary. For the next three turns these Japanese will try to fix the defenders in place and kill them, opening the door for their reinforcements. Then they will all continue to press toward 17Y10, aiming to cause more Chinese casualties and exit units as the situation allows. The offboard artillery observer will support this attack by bringing in a fire mission on defenders in the woods, or perhaps putting harassing fire down to prevent relocation of defenders.

Those Type-94 tanks are pretty lame. Their only weaponry is a 2FP coaxial machine gun, and their armor is pretty thin. Therefor they will be used primarily for armored assault, VBM freeze, and possibly exiting for five points each (though it's hard to imagine any of them surviving long enough to exit).

## Conclusion

When I first got Blood and Jungle, this scenario caught my attention right away among a smorgasbord of interesting scenarios. It looks like a gritty fight with some interesting weapons, particularly the flamethrower tanks. Both sides should have plenty to hold their interest, though to me it looks a bit hard on the attackers. The Remote Online Automated Record has it 12:8 in favor of the Chinese at the time of this writing, and it seems about right to me that the Chinese would win this one about 60% of the time or more, though that's not a large sample size yet. Maybe give the Japanese the balance, and have fun!

## FIRE LANES

### Jim Bishop



From time to time, people have asked that I write an article covering Fire Lanes. For players coming from ASL Starter Kit, I imagine the complex simplicity of Fire Lanes might be a little tough to understand. There is no concept of Fire Lanes in Starter Kit ASL. Yet many ASL Grognards will tell you a well-placed Fire Lane can be a key aspect of a well-organized defense. A Fire Lane's ability to deny the attacker usage of terrain, coupled with the Fire Lane's ability to attack repeatedly, cannot be overestimated. Fire Lanes sow doubts into the attacker's mind. As a defender, any time you cause the attacker to reconsider you also give him a chance to make mistakes. And mistakes represent defensive opportunities and the chance for you to seize the initiative.

Let's look more closely at Fire Lanes to see how they work in ASL.

## Rules Dive

### Placement

Rule A9.22x covers Fire Lanes. The section of rules is not that long but there are some key bits to understand. A Fire Lane is a special form of Residual Fire Power. Only Good Order units or Support Weapon MG which do not Cower can place Fire Lanes. A MG manned by an SMC is not Good Order, nor is a MG subject to Ammunition Shortage. Only

unpinned Infantry may place a Fire Lane and the MG may not be already marked with a First Fire or Final Fire counter. The manning Infantry may be marked with a First Fire counter, but if so marked, may not apply its Inherent FP as part of an attack to place a Fire Lane. Such an attack would be Sustained Fire (A9.3) and the MG covered with a Final Fire counter as part of this attack.

Fire Lanes are placed along the "same level" or along a "continuous slope" (B.5). Fire Lanes have "directionality" meaning you can trace an LOS from the origination to the target Location. As such, DRM never reduces the RFP of a Fire Lane. The DRM applies to the Fire Lane attack instead. Leadership or Heroic DRM do not apply to a Fire Lane RFP attack although they may affect the attack that initially places a Fire Lane.

### Fire Power

The Fire Power of a Fire Lane is determined by shifting one column left on the IFT from the MG's raw Fire Power. A .50 MG has a raw Fire Power value of 8 and would place a 6 Fire Power Fire Lane. A Russian LMG has a raw Fire Power of 2 and would place a 1 Fire Power Fire Lane. Fire Lane counters can be placed out to the range limit of the MG placing the Fire Lane. For placement of this special Fire Lane counter, so-called "soft hindrances" do not affect placement of the Fire Lane counter.

### Fire Lane Attacks

Once placed, a Fire Lane attacks units entering a Location where the MG exerts RFP. Cross reference the Final IFT DR onto the attack column and apply the result to the unit entering the Location. Apply DRM normally with some exceptions. As noted earlier, Leadership and Heroic DRM do not apply to Fire Lane attacks. "Soft Hindrances" (SMOKE, brush, grain, marsh, FFE, LV, DLV, Dust, Huts; A9.22) only cancel FFMO, they do not otherwise apply. "Hard Hindrances"—those not specifically "soft Hindrances"—apply normally. We will see examples of this soon.

A Fire Lane attack never Cowers. If a unit successfully places a Fire Lane and Cowers on another First Fire Attack elsewhere, the Fire Lane is not canceled. A unit which has successfully placed a Fire Lane and is marked First Fired may Subsequent First Fire only as part of a Triple Point Blank Fire opportunity. A unit which could not SFF in this manner can Final Fire normally during the Defensive Fire Phase.

Fire Lane RFP does not stack. Fire Lane RFP does not stack with normal RFP either. If both forms of RFP exist in the same Location, normal RFP attacks first. If more than one MG exerts a Fire Lane into a Location, they attack

separately. The Fire Lane owner determines which Fire Lane attacks first. Keep this ordering in mind. If an RFP attack eliminates a unit, no other RFP attacks are made. Since Fire Lane attacks subject the placing MG to normal Malfunction rules, eliminating a unit with normal RFP spares the MG a breakdown risk. If normal RFP does not Eliminate the unit, roll the least likely to break Fire Lane attacks first.

### Cancellation Of A Fire Lane

Cancel Fire Lanes when a unit takes a TPBF opportunity. Pinning, Breaking, or Eliminating the placing unit also cancel a Fire Lane. An AFV ending its MPH in the same Location as a unit placing a Fire Lane, also cancels the Fire Lane.

An unarmored unit possessing no PRC does not cancel a Fire Lane by ending its turn in a placing unit's Location. An armored AFV without Vulnerable PRC passing through a placing unit's Location also does not cancel a Fire Lane.

### Example, Impulse One



Figure 1

Refer to Figure 1. It is the Japanese Movement Phase and they declare an alternate grain Banzai attack along the orange arrow. The American unit in P7 is the declared target and the American unit in M10 is HIP. Blue arrows show the movement after the First Impulse. After completion of the First Impulse, the unit in P7 attacks L5 and declares a Fire Lane. The attack is +2 DRM for Kunai Hindrances, -1 for Leadership, and -1 for FFNAM. The initial attack is 12 +0. Recall that "soft hindrances" do not affect placement of a Fire Lane counter. Even though there are enough Hindrances to block LOS out to B0, place a 6 FP Fire Lane in B0. The squad exerted 6 FP into L5 which places 2 RFP reduced 2 columns for the Hindrances in N6 and O7. So no RFP from the squad.

The American unit in Q5 declares an attack to place a Fire Lane and opts not to use the squad's Inherent Fire Power. The leader will Direct the attack to avoid covering and the initial attack is 4 +1. Again, "soft hindrances" do not affect placement of a Fire Lane counter so place a 2 FP Fire Lane counter in H9. Mark the leader and MMG with a First Fire counter.

### Impulse 2



Figure 2

Refer to figure 2. Again, blue arrows represent movement. Upon completion of the Impulse, resolve all normal Residual Fire Power attacks first, followed by Fire Lane attacks. There are no normal Residual Fire Power attacks here. Attack the 3-4-7 in L5 with a 6 Fire Power Fire Lane attack tracing LOS to the .50 in P7. Recall that "soft" Hindrances have no effect other than to cancel FFMO. This attack would be a 6 -1 (FFNAM). Attack the 4-4-8 in M7 with a 2 Fire Power Fire Lane attack tracing LOS back to Q5. This attack passes through a "hard" Hindrance in O6. This Hindrance applies a +1 DRM in the normal manner. The attack against the 4-4-8 in M7 is a 2 +0 shot.

The HIP unit in M10 reveals itself, attacking the 4-4-8 in M8. It also declares a Fire Lane as part of this attack. The attack against M9 is 20 -1. If the American does not Cower, place a 2 Fire Power Fire Lane counter in M3. Assume it does not cower. Recall that units using Impulse Movement are subject to Fire Lanes in the Impulse in which the Fire Lane is placed. As such, attack all units in M5, M7, and M8 with a 2 -1 Fire Lane Attack in this Impulse. All of those Locations are attacked with a separate IFT DR. Also remember that if any of those Fire Lane attacks roll doubles the attack does not Cower nor does such a roll negate the Fire Lane. The American Squads in P7 and M10 cannot Subsequent First Fire since there is no TPBF opportunity.

### Impulse Three



Figure 3

Refer to figure 3. The Japanese unit in M9 moved into M10. This represents a TPDF opportunity and immediately cancels the Fire Lane out to M3. No units are attacked by this Fire Lane. There is no “normal” RFP so Fire Lane RFP attacks next. I presented the DRM and reasoning for those in Impulse 2 so I will not rehash those here. The American unit in Q5 can fire at N5 with its Inherent FP since it is not marked First Fired. It now takes a 6 -2 into N5. Even should it Cover on this attack, the Fire Lane remains in place and is unaffected.

I am going to end this example here since it showed so many of the principles I wanted to cover. There are a couple of other examples I wanted to touch on so let’s leave the PTO for now.

### Example Two



Figure 4

Refer to figure 4. The American unit in S6 has placed an Alternate Grain Fire Lane to the “bottom” of the hex grain exerting 2 Residual Fire Power into O6, P6, and Q6 and 4 Fire Power (Point Blank) into R6. The Germans wish to cancel this Fire Lane by moving the halftrack into S6. The American unit in U8 attacks and declares a Fire Lane as part of this attack. Since To Hit DR never cover (A7.9), place a Fire Lane Counter would in O5 provided the MG did not Malfunction. Assume the halftrack was Stunned and the original Fire Lane remains in effect.

Now the German Infantry Moves using Assault Movement. If it moves into O6, the original Fire Lane attacks and would be a 2 +2 attack. Instead, assume it opts to move into P6. Here the Americans have an option. They could opt to attack the unit in P6 normally for a 2 +2 attack. Alternatively, they could opt for a Fire Lane Snap Shot (A9.221) attacking along the P6/P5 hexside for a 2 +0 attack. If they opt for the Snap Shot attack, the Germans would still gain Control of P6 and the P6 Building even if the unit is Pinned, Broken, or Eliminated.

Also note that Snap Shots are only an option for Alternate Grain Fire Lanes. Even though the German Infantry is moving out of the second Fire Lane, it cannot affect it.

### Conclusion

It has been a while since I last wrote anything. I hope this finds you happy and in good health. For those of you well versed in Fire Lanes, please leave a comment below so others might benefit from your knowledge. This article is not comprehensive. I have covered Fire Lanes and Slopes in my series on Slopes. Fire Lanes across Deirs and Hillocks—are a different animal as well. I tried to focus on the fundamentals here and if there is demand, I will move on to the edge cases in a later article.

### RULES TIP

I ran across this situation the other day and realized that its resolution is not as straightforward as I might have thought. Assume that an enemy AFV is moving along a road and passes between two buildings, thus setting up a street fighting opportunity. In one of the buildings is an SMC (assume a -1 leader in this example) who decides to attempt to Street Fight the AFV. As a leader, he does not have to roll a PAATC (A11.6). The Final Effective DR needed to kill the AFV is not great. As an SMC the base CCV is 2, with a -1 DRM for Street Fighting, and if we assume that the tank is



still in Motion, we must add another +2 DRM for that. A leader cannot modify his own CC roll, so his -1 leadership does not apply (A11.141). So, the DRMs total +1 (-1 [Street Fighting] +2 [Motion] = +1 DRM) with the Final DR needed of a 1 ( $2[CCV] - 1[DRM] = 1$  Final DR). So basically, an improbable attempt. Assume you rolled a DR of 2, A11.501 now kicks in (remember as an SMC you are not eligible for leader creation). Since the original CC chance was improbable, you would now roll a subsequent dr with a dr=1 causing the AFV to burn, dr=2 a kill, and a dr=3 an immob result. Any other dr results in no effect.

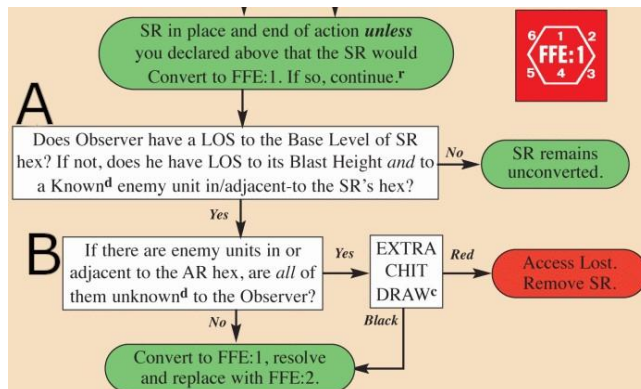
Now let's assume the tank has stopped in the Street Fighting hex so the +2 DRM for Motion/non-stopped no longer applies. The Final DR you need now is a 3 or less to affect the tank ( $2[CCV] - (-1[Street Fighting]) = 3$  DR). With your roll of a 2, the Final DR result winds up being a 1 ( $2 DR - 1 DRM = 1 DR$ ) and since this is equal to or less than half the CCV needed to burn (half of your Final Effects DR of 3 = 1.5) you wind up burning the AFV. But even if you hadn't caused it to burn you still have an opportunity since you rolled a 2 as you are allowed to roll a subsequent dr (A11.501), and if you roll a dr=1 you would still burn it. In any case if you don't roll a dr=1, you still end up with the AFV kill.

## CONVERTING A SPOTTING ROUND TO FIRE FOR EFFECT

Jim Bishop



In August 2021 I attended the ASL Scandinavian Open tournament in Copenhagen. The French have OBA in WO33 "One-Eyed Jacques". Walking around the room twice I observed players incorrectly convert a Spotting Round to a Fire For Effect (FFE). The scenario is an ideal case study for this all-too common error.



For this article I have excerpted a section of the OBA flowchart I will be referring to throughout the article. Understanding this section of the flowchart is key to placing and converting a SR effectively. Conversely, knowing the nuances of this section will help you frustrate your opponent's attempts to attack with OBA. To make our discussion clearer I have labeled two of the bubbles, one called A and one called B. Also recall the errata posted in Journal 11 changing AR to SR in bubble B.

For our purposes, we will assume you have successfully navigated the flowchart to the point where you maintained Radio Contact, announced your intention to convert, rolled for accuracy, and corrected the SR if needed. You are now ready to convert it to an FFE.

It is not enough to simply announce your intention to convert a SR as some players presume. There are a couple of crucial conditions which must be met before a SR can be successfully converted to an FFE.

We will first consider bubble A. There are two possible conditions tested in this bubble to determine how we proceed:

- The Observer has an LOS to the Base Level of the SR hex. Normal LOS rules apply (Blind hexes, LOS Obstacles, LOS Hindrances, etc).
- The Observer has an LOS to the Blast Height of the SR (C1.32) AND a Known Enemy Unit in or adjacent to the SR's hex. Because the blast of an SR is visible two levels above the Base Level of a hex, it is possible for an Observer to see a SR in an otherwise Blind Hex. If there are no KEU's in or adjacent to the SR's hex the SR remains in place unconverted (the "No" path from bubble A).
  - Per footnote d, Concealed Units in non-Concealment Terrain are considered known to the Observer for purposes of conducting OBA actions.



flow from bubble B via the “Yes” path and make an extra chit draw. If the draw is a black chit, we follow the “Black” path and convert the SR to an FFE and resolve the attack. If instead a red chit is drawn, we would follow the “Red” path, Lose Access, and remove the SR.

**SR-B:** The Observer does not have LOS to the Base Level of the SR’s hex but he does have LOS to the Blast Height. Looking in bubble A, when the Observer has LOS to the Blast Height, we need to determine if the Observer has LOS to KEUs in or adjacent to the SR’s hex. In this case, there are two units Adjacent to the SR, but both are out of LOS of the Observer and do not meet the requirements of bubble A to leave via the “Yes” path. As such, we leave bubble A via the “No” path and the SR remains in place unconverted.

**SR-C:** For this one, the Observer is trying to convert the SR to an FFE Harassing Fire. In this case the Observer has LOS to the Base Level of the SR. We leave bubble A via the “Yes” path. In bubble B, we ask if there are enemy units in or adjacent to the SR. There are none so we exit bubble B via the “No” path and convert the SR to an FFE Harassing Fire. Even though the two 4-4-7s will be attacked by the FFE AND they are out of LOS of the Observer, the SR will still be converted. These units are not in or adjacent to the SR’s hex so they do not affect the conversion to FFE process.

Clearly, there is more to attacking with, and defending against, OBA than offered in this note, but I hope this brief article was useful.

## 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TEXAS TEAM TOURNAMENT RESULTS

**Rick Reinesch**



Here are the results and rankings from the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Team Tournament held in Austin, Texas June 13-16, 2024. Where players had the same score, ranking was based on the opponents’ W/L percentage first, and then the players 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 Gary Fortenberry for winning the individual champion bracket this year and Jay Harms for taking the runner-up prize.

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Gary Fortenberry	5	5	0
Dave Lamb	5	5	0

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Jim Bishop	5	6	1
John Garlic	5	6	1
Ed Beekman	4	4	0
Mike Sengottaiyan	4	4	0
Paul Works	3	4	1
Dave Reinking	2	2	0
John Paul	2	3	1
Matt Shostak	2	4	2
Bryan Lee	1	1	0
Dave Mareske	1	3	2
Doyle Motes	1	1	0
Eric Gerstenberg	1	3	2
Jay Harms	1	4	3
Jeff Taylor	1	2	1
Jim Ferrell	1	2	1
Larry Zoet	1	3	2
Rob Burton	1	2	1
Will Willow	1	2	1
Zoltan Eszes	1	3	2
Bill Dorre	0	0	0
Bill Thomson	0	0	0
Brian Ward	0	0	0
Charles Stampley	0	0	0
Dan Preston	0	0	0
Don Fenton	0	0	0
James Martin	0	1	1
Jason Cameron	0	0	0
Jeff Toreki	0	0	0
Joe Concepcion	0	0	0
John Hyler	0	2	2
Justin Williamson	0	1	1
Kevin Kenneally	0	0	0
Mark Carter	0	0	0
Matt Zajac	0	0	0
Mike Masura	0	0	0
Paul Sidhu	0	3	3
Rick Reinesch	0	0	0
Roy Casagranda	0	1	1
Sam Tyson	0	0	0

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Tracey Love	0	2	2
Woody Lee	0	0	0
Brian Roundhill	-1	2	3
Bryan Register	-1	0	1
Chris Kubick	-1	2	3
Chuck Anderson	-1	1	2
PJ Norton	-1	0	1
Scott Bell	-1	0	1
Todd Hively	-1	2	3
Tom Meier	-1	1	2
David Ellis	-2	0	2
Jeff Darakhshan	-2	1	3
Jeff DeYoung	-2	1	3
Mark Shull	-2	2	4
Roy Connelly	-2	1	3
Arlen Vanek	-3	0	3
Matt Schwoebel	-3	0	3
Scott Mullins	-3	1	4
Troy Turley	-3	1	4
Bud Garding	-4	0	4
Dan Best	-4	0	4
Jeffrey Roloff	-5	0	5
Shane Brannan	-5	0	5

Here's how the Major Johnson standings finished. Jim Bishop was a man on a mission and took home the MJ award this year for his efforts. Great job, Jim!

Player	MJ Total
Jim Bishop	23081.4
Jay Harms	20985
John Garlic	19528
Gary Fortenberry	15802.5
Paul Works	12985
Matt Shostak	12368
Larry Zoet	12268.2
Scott Mullins	11144
Troy Turley	11109
Dan Best	10260
Zoltan Eszes	10080
John Hyler	9415

Player	MJ Total
Brian Roundhill	9396
Jeffrey Roloff	9124
Jeff DeYoung	9030
Paul Sidhu	8370
Jim Ferrell	7855
Chris Kubick	7554
Tracey Love	5970
Jeff Taylor	5765
Roy Connelly	5630
Mark Shull	5621
Eric Gerstenberg	5611.5
Dave Mareske	5210
Bud Garding	5025
Ed Beekman	4845
Todd Hively	4690
Dave Lamb	4581
Will Willow	4440
Mike Sengottaiyan	4435
Tom Meier	3660
John Paul	3515
Shane Brannan	3125
Chuck Anderson	2912
Rob Burton	2176
Matt Schwoebel	2136
Arlen Vanek	1695
Bryan Register	1154
James Martin	1004
Don Fenton	928
Jeff Darakhshan	921
Dave Reinking	692
Roy Casagranda	640
David Ellis	404
Justin Williamson	404
Sam Tyson	402
PJ Norton	394
Joe Concepcion	202
Scott Bell	140
Doyle Motes	107
Bryan Lee	103

Player	MJ Total
Bill Dorre	0
Bill Thomson	0
Brian Ward	0
Charles Stampley	0
Dan Preston	0
Jason Cameron	0
Jeff Toreki	0
Kevin Kenneally	0
Mark Carter	0
Matt Zajac	0
Mike Masura	0
Rick Reinesch	0
Woody Lee	0

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Jim Ferrell,Jason Cameron,Scott Mullins,	-2	3	5
Jay Harms,Scott Bell,David Ellis,	-2	4	6
Jeff Toreki,Zoltan Eszes,Troy Turley,	-2	4	6
Dave Mareske,Tracey Love,Arlen Vanek,	-2	5	7
Jeff DeYoung,Joe Concepcion,Justin Williamson,	-2	2	4
John Paul,Matt Schwoebel,Chuck Anderson,	-2	4	6
Sam Tyson,Chris Kubick,Bud Garding,	-5	2	7
Matt Shostak,Dan Best,Jeffrey Roloff,	-7	4	11

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 Dave Lamb, Don Fenton and Charles Stampley for a hard-fought team win.

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Dave Lamb,Don Fenton,Charles Stampley,	5	5	0
Dan Preston,Larry Zoet,Mike Sengottaiyan,	5	7	2
Mark Carter,Ed Beekman,Will Willow,	5	6	1
Gary Fortenberry,Bryan Register,Bill Dorre,	4	5	1
Jim Bishop,Eric Gerstenberg,Roy Connelly,	4	10	6
Paul Works,Todd Hively,Kevin Kenneally,	2	6	4
James Martin,Rob Burton,Roy Casagrande,	1	4	3
John Garlic,Doyle Motes,Shane Brannan,	0	6	6
Dave Reinking,Brian Roundhill,PJ Norton,	0	4	4
Paul Sidhu,Jeff Taylor,Mark Shull,	-1	7	8
Jeff Darakhshan,Brian Ward,Mike Masura,	-1	1	2
Tom Meier,John Hyler,Woody Lee,	-1	3	4

## 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TEXAS TEAM TOURNAMENT WRAP-UP



### Rick Reinesch

This year we celebrated the 30<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 66 pre-registrants and walk-ons from all over the US to Austin, Texas. We had several faces this year new to the game, along with ASL grognards joining us for the first time, and several returning veterans, which is always fantastic 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 and remembered.

This year's event was notable for being held at our new venue; the Courtyard by Marriott located in far north Austin. The new hotel is definitely an upgrade over the old facility with much newer amenities and plenty of food choices close by. It was interesting trying to tell the event staff what to expect as I don't think they'd ever hosted anything quite like us before. But they were so happy with us that they actually wanted us to come back. So, in all, the setup is working out well for everyone. The venue provides us with plenty of elbow room to play and of course I had the endless loop of WWII-related DVDs going (Sisu was a real fav), which makes for a great ambiance while playing. I've already

signed the contracts for us to be back there for 2025. Details are up currently up on the Texas-ASL website.

In the title match for the individual crown of the Texas Team Tournament, Gary Fortenberry was a tour de force over the weekend in defeating Jay Harms in *Great Vengeance [Hazmo6]* to take home recognition as the 10-3 individual tournament winner in our championship bracket, along with an engraved dice cup. In the loss, Jay took the 9-2 Runner Up engraved dice cup. The championship round is set up as a single-elimination bracket, seeding it with the top 8 scorers after Friday's play with those 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 prize 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 made for some very tight races for the team crown heading into Sunday play. This year, as has been the case in many of the past years, the final games on Sunday determined the team winners and this year the team of Dave Lamb, Don Fenton and Charles Stampley finished with a score of +5. I had to invoke strength of schedule to separate them from the second-place team, so the race was a tight one.

Our Thursday mini featured the time-honored Houston-originating 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 took players to the East Front and a city slugfest with a meaty scenario out of MMP's *Twilight of the Reich Last Train to Leningrad [290]*, but with a few twists to amp up the ferocity a little. When all the points were counted, the Axis winner was Dave Lamb and the Allied winner was Gary Fortenberry. The winning commanders each took home a very cool combat medal. Second place finishers were awarded with **The Gamer's Armory** gift certificates.

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 4 participants in a single elimination bracket that saw Tracy Love finally capture the first-place plaque besting Tom Meier in *Cooks, Clerks, and Bazookas [S49]*. It is always 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 John Garlic. 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 Paul Works. We presented a nice plaque to the winner of the most Close Combat points collected over the weekend, and that honor went to Dan Best.

The Major Johnson award was hard-fought again this year; with Jim Bishop playing the most ASL over the course of the weekend taking home the engraved dice glass that recognizes this significant accomplishment. So, the next time you see Jim, 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 did something that I've wanted to do for years, that was provide everyone with a ceramic coaster that looks like a T34/85 counter with some TTT twists applied. You never know what I'll come up with but it's sure to be fun.

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:

Bounding Fire Productions

Dispatches from the Bunker

GMT Games

Kansas City ASL

Ken Smith Art

Le Franc Tireur

Lone Canuck Publishing

March Madness Tournament

MultiMan Publishing

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

- Dan Best for entering all of the results into ROAR

- 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! I know I couldn't continue to do this without her help and understanding.

The website (<http://www.texas-asl.com>) has already been updated with all of the information for 2025 and we've even gotten our first pre-registrants already, so it is never too early to throw your hat into the ring. Don't be left out of the fun! I hope to see everyone next year from June 19-22, 2025 here in Austin, Texas.

## 31<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL TEXAS TEAM TOURNAMENT



**Rick Reinesch**

With the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Texas Team Tournament in the books, it's time to look forward to next year. The year 2025 marks 31 years of providing the very best that ASL has to offer down in Texas. So, make those plans now to attend the Texas Team Tournament in Austin, TX, June 19-June 22, 2025. Last year we had a great turnout as we work to build up the numbers after the COVID hit with 66 players from points all over the country registered for the tournament. The website (<http://www.Texas-ASL.com>) has been updated with information on tournament activities, the hotel info and the registration fees. We are constantly updating that information leading up to the start of the tournament, so make sure to check in regularly for all the latest. Note that the last day to get our great hotel rate is June 1st, so don't delay! And while you are checking out the website, make sure to preregister; you never know what goodies I will come up with for those doing so.

As in previous years, Thursday's games will be informal gaming, with those games only counting toward the Major Johnson award. On Friday morning, we will launch the formal phase of the tournament where we will track wins and losses over the course of the weekend to crown the team and individual winners.

Our tournament runs an open format; players are free to match themselves with anyone, and play any mutually agreeable scenario. As the Tournament Director, I seed the team part of the tourney so that every team has (hopefully)

an equal chance at the top prize. Each team consists of three players, which makes for a great race to the finish with the final team winners generally not being determined until those final matches on Sunday. The way we score the team award is not based on total wins or losses, but on the difference between the two. So, a team with 10 wins and 4 losses has a score of 6. Likewise, a team that goes 6 and 0 also has a score of 6. But it ultimately depends on strength of schedule in the case of a tie to determine who will come out on top. Check the website for all the details on how the team tourney works. Moreover, while we call ourselves a team tournament, individual play is still paramount. We offer plenty of individually based prizes, from the single elimination, individual champion bracket, to the Major Johnson award given to the individual playing the most ASL over the weekend, along with any number of mini-tourneys.

Thursday and Friday mini play will be featuring that time-honored institution – *Ferocity Fest*. For those that like their play brutal and deadly, this is not to be missed. Your objective is to do better than the other players of your side, either Allied or Axis. The individuals with the largest number of points at the end of scenario play will be the winner for that side. It's that simple. Last year players fought it out on the Eastern Front. The scenario for this year is still in the discovery phase, so please make sure to keep an eye out on the tournament webpage at Texas-ASL.com for details of the scenario we'll be featuring. *Ferocity Fest* is always a load of fun and well worth the effort, and I give away some great prizes for 1<sup>st</sup> place and runner up for each side. We will kick off Thursday play at 9am, June 19<sup>th</sup>, but you can get in on it anytime. If you are interested in participating in *Ferocity Fest*, just let me know that day. No requirement to sign up ahead of time.

But that's not all for the minis. We will also be sponsoring an SK mini on Saturday for those folks new to ASL and would like to try their hand at some formal SK play. We'll have it as a classic pairing bracket using scenarios from the SKs and SK expansion packs, and who knows we might throw some SK PTO in as well, with one person besting all others and walking away with the prize.

I'll be sponsoring some minis on Saturday, which can include playtest minis for BFP scenarios. So, if you are looking to fill your Saturday, give one of the minis a try. I'll have signups for them during the tourney, so there are plenty of ways to get in on the action.

For the regular part of the tourney, remember that above all else we are an OPEN tournament; play what you want against whomever you want, or even as much (or little) as you want. Mostly, just come have a great time.

That being said, there are plenty of prizes to be had. We give out the Major Johnson Award to the player who plays the most ASL over the course of the weekend. We provide awards for the best team over the course of the weekend as determined by the best point differential between wins and losses (as noted above). And then there are awards given to the overall individual champion and runner-up. But even if you aren't in the running for any of those awards, you can still try for the Audie Murphy Award given to the most snakes over the course of the weekend, or there is the Col. Klink for most boxcars. We also give an award for close combat points earned. But not just simple "I won" points, we give extra points for winning those close combats with style (or brutality, take your pick).

As always, we will be holding a drawing on Saturday of the tourney for all the merchandise our sponsors so graciously provide. As in years past we will be holding this drawing at 3:30 Saturday afternoon. I would encourage everyone to head out to our website and check out the listing of these fine sponsors of the Texas Team Tournament, and make sure to consider them first when you are making your ASL-related purchases.

Registration this year is \$50 for all Thursday-Sunday gaming, \$43 for Friday-Sunday; and \$30 for Saturday only and can be done via PayPal through our website. Your entrance fee includes participation in any mini-tournaments you desire to enter as well as dibs on all of the great swag we give out as well as the 2025 tourney tee shirt.

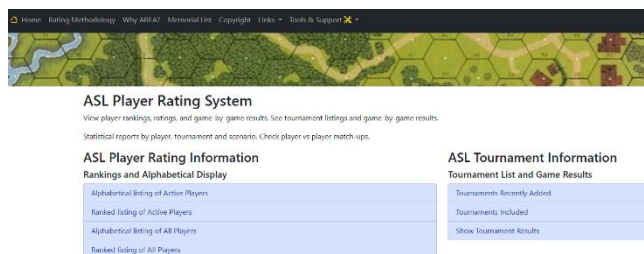
As far as the event facility goes, we are at the same hotel we were at in 2024; the Courtyard by Marriott Austin Northwest/Lakeline at 12833 Ranch Rd 620 N in Austin, TX with a fantastic room rate of \$129/night. For those that have participated in the tourney in the past, our new hotel is a definitely step up in amenities and atmosphere, with lots of food choices close by as well as food the hotel provides.

You can check everything out by following the ASL Team Tourney link from the Texas ASL home page at <http://www.Texas-ASL.com> . Hope to see you in June!

## RATINGS, RECORDS, AND ASL TOURNAMENTS

### The ASL Player Rating System: What it is and what it does

Doug Rimmer



The ASL Player Rating System (ASLPR) will soon reach the 40,000-game mark, marking its 28th year of storing ASL Tournament game results and using those results to provide a numerical rating to each player who has participated in one of those games.

While not a definitive ranking system nor a complete database of all ASL Tournament games, it is nevertheless an excellent compendium of ASL history and allows us to create a valid comparison point between players who have never faced each other across the table, or increasingly, on the screen.



#### Ranked List of Active ASL Players

This list includes all active players, meaning they have played in a tournament within 800 days before the last update to the database. To see which tournaments have been added in the last three months, see [Tournaments Recently Added](#).

To view game-by-game results for a player, click on the link under ID.

New players added since the last Rating recalculation will have a rating of 0 until ratings are recalculated on the first of the month.

#	Name	Country	Id	Current Rating	Highest Rating
1	Steve Pleva	USA	<a href="#">PAS</a>	2037.7	2061.5
2	Bill Cirillo	USA	<a href="#">COW</a>	2026	2055.9
3	Gary Fortenberry	USA	<a href="#">FYG</a>	1988.5	2022.6
4	Toby Pilling	UK	<a href="#">PGT</a>	1988.4	1988.4
5	Bob Bendis	USA	<a href="#">BSB</a>	1976.6	2010.3
6	Melvin Falk	Sweden	<a href="#">FKM</a>	1976.6	2019
7	Lionel Colin	France	<a href="#">C2L</a>	1963.9	1975
8	G. Tournemire	France	<a href="#">TEG</a>	1947.2	1971.3
9	Paul Works	USA	<a href="#">WSP</a>	1924.9	1924.9
10	J.R. Tracy	USA	<a href="#">TYJ</a>	1911.7	1975.4

As of March 2025, Steve Pleva ranks as the top-rated player and may be the best of our bunch, but Rich Domovic is certainly the most active, having played in 666 recorded tournament games, the only player with over 500 games! Just a few of the fun facts in the data! There are other metrics



available such as the players with the best win streak and those that played with the most different players. Each player can see his own playing history with detailed stats when Tournament Directors provide the ASLPR with sufficient data. In addition, a nice feature allows players to see what past games they have played along the tournament circuit against players of their choosing.

Just under half (about 17K) of the data in the ASLPR comes from the former AREA system, which Bruno Nitrosso managed for good number of years. The very first entries cover the Scandinavian Open held in April 1998. Those 5 games are the entire data for that year. Two years later, in 2000, five tournaments were included, and in 2001 that number rose to 10. In 2017, we transitioned from AREA to ASLPR and undertook a major effort to obtain missing data from tournaments. Marc Hanna in particular, put in a great deal of work to get the data current. By 2025, more than 700 individual tournaments have been created in the database, averaging over 20 a year. It is a tremendous witness to the history of ASL!

higher rating. Players lose points when losing in an inverse manner. The wider the gap between the players, the bigger the difference in points received/lost. A player's current rating is the sum of all of their points won and lost added to their initial rating of 1500.

The ASLPR differs from other ASL tools, such as ROAR and the ASL Scenario Archive, in several important ways: firstly, it is based on tournament games only whereas they will record any match result. Secondly, ASLPR's purpose is to provide player ratings whereas ROAR's primary focus, for instance, is to provide W-L results for scenarios in the ASL system. Needless to say, all tools are complementary and useful for our community.

**You can find the ASLPR at <https://asl-ratings.org/>.**

### List of Games by Player included in ASL Player Ratings

Player: Rich Domovic (DHR) ELO 1749.6 [See Statistical Summary](#)

Player	Att/Def	Al/Ax	Result	Player	Att/Def	Al/Ax	Scenario	Date	Tourney	Change	Rating
Oddgeir Drevdal	attacker	allies	loses to	Rich Domovic	defender	axis	ASL75	2024-12-01	CC2024	8.9	1749.6
Mike Augustine	defender	axis	beats	Rich Domovic	attacker	allies	AP171	2024-10-01	LEAG0_24	-23.9	1740.7
Andy Bagley	attacker	allies	loses to	Rich Domovic	defender	axis	J232	2024-10-01	CC2024	8.5	1764.6
Eric Bongiovanni	attacker	allies	loses to	Rich Domovic	defender	axis	WO37	2024-09-15	ARNH_24	19.3	1756.1
Rich Domovic	defender	allies	beats	Martin Vicca	attacker	axis	AR4	2024-09-14	ARNH_24	26.8	1736.8
Olav Heie	defender	allies	loses to	Rich Domovic	attacker	axis	FT179 Landstorm Over Arnhem	2024-09-14	ARNH_24	21.3	1710
Rich Domovic	defender	allies	beats	Bruno Nitrosso	attacker	axis	ABT17 Among the Braves	2024-09-13	ARNH_24	19.5	1688.7
Melvin Falk	defender	allies	beats	Rich Domovic	attacker	axis	J58 No. 8 Platoon Overrun	2024-09-13	ARNH_24	-6.9	1669.2
Rich Domovic	defender	allies	beats	Will Willow	attacker	axis	WO4 I Don't Like Retreating	2024-09-12	ARNH_24	8.7	1676.1
Rich Domovic	attacker	axis	loses to	Hans Bugge	defender	allies	J23	2024-08-01	CC2024	-23.1	1667.4
Rodney Callen	axis	beats	Rich Domovic	allies	Commandos at Kalagit			2024-07-28	STLOU_24	-29	1690.5

The rating methodology that has been used throughout the database's lifespan is known as ELO, and is a well-established methodology used in chess, board gaming, and sports. Following the creation of ASLPR, changes were made to the methodology, in particular to add a mild penalty factor for those no longer active. The ELO system is not without its critics and some exploration has been made of other methodologies, notably Glicko but as of 2025, ASLPR continues to be ELO-based.

ELO works by comparing the ratings between two players (all players begin with a rating of 1500). Players are awarded or lose rating points for winning or losing a game. Since it is expected that a player with a higher rating would win more often than the player with a lower rating, the player with a higher rating will receive fewer points for winning against a player with a lower rating while a player with a lower rating will receive more points for winning against a player with a

## CLUB NOTES

### Lunch Gatherings

Lunch gatherings have been more sporadic lately, but they still happen. Stay tuned to our 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 last 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 [texas-asl@groups.io](mailto:texas-asl@groups.io) or you can point your favorite browser to <https://groups.io/g/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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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!