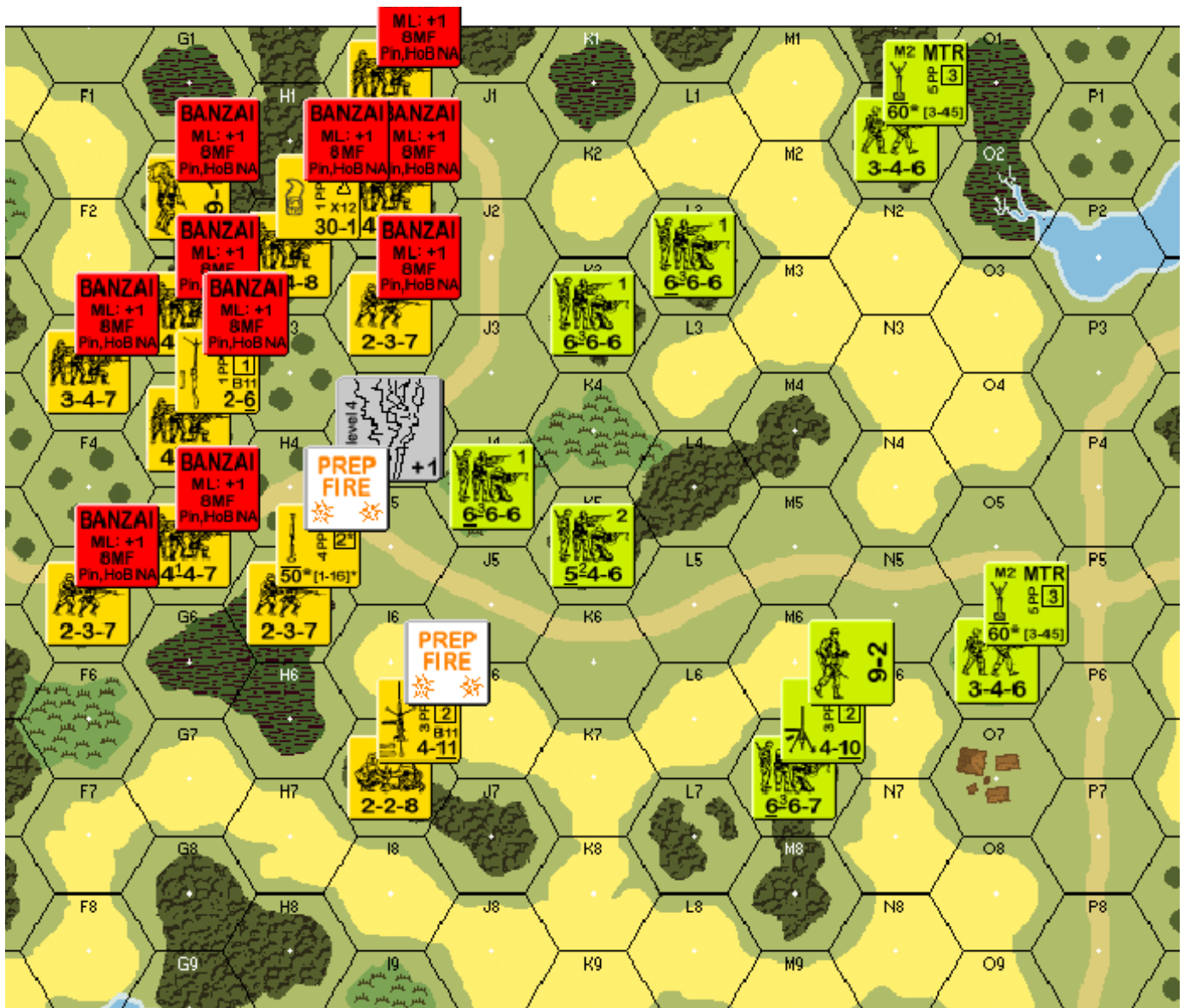


BANZAI!!!



The Newsletter of the Texas ASL Club

October, 2012 Volume 17, Number 2.1

This newsletter is **FREE!** Don't let anyone charge you for it

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Editor's Foxhole

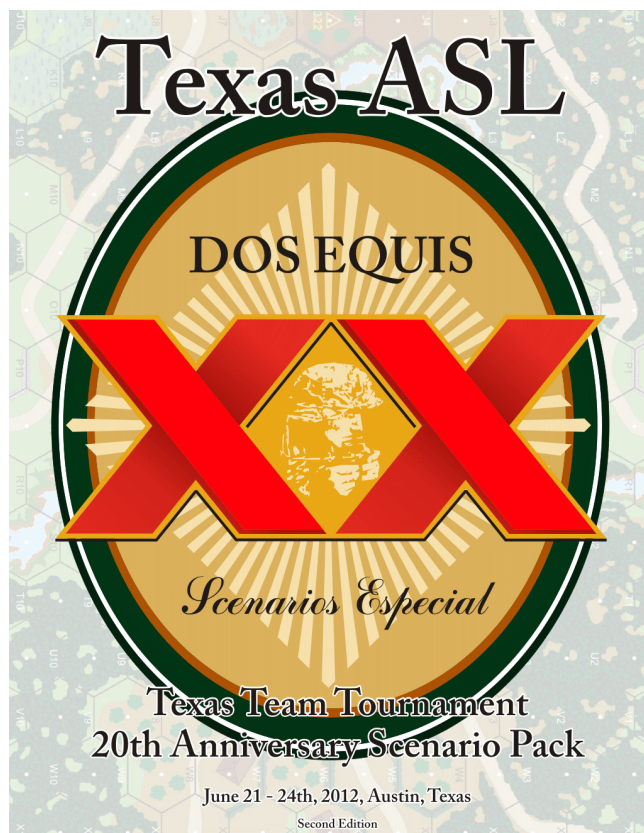
Matt Shostak



We are pleased to bring you another newsletter chock full of goodies. Fresh off a resounding success with the 20th Annual Texas Team Tourney, and looking forward to the upcoming North Texas Shootout, we hope this issue provides some interesting entertainment. Good gaming!

Not Just Beer and Pretzels: The Texas ASL Dos Equis Scenario Pack

The 2012 Texas Team Tournament featured the debut of a special scenario pack put together to celebrate 20 years of great ASL by tournament director Rick Reinesch. The *Dos Equis Pack* features 10 scenarios from local designers Mike Seningen and Dan Preston, along with contributions from renowned scenario designer Pete Shelling who has been a regular attendee at the TTT for several years now. What better place to take a closer look at these scenarios than the pages of *Banzai*? In this issue and (we hope) subsequent ones, we'll feature analysis, after action reports, and reviews of these scenarios. In this issue we have after action reports for *TX-5 Rush Hour* and *TX-6 Tough Enough* from Matt Zajac and Mike Seningen, respectively. We hope you enjoy reading about and playing these scenarios. If you play them, tell us about it. Or better yet, write it up and send it to us and we'll feature it in an upcoming issue of *Banzai*!!



The pack is currently in its second edition. The only difference between the first and second editions is the inclusion of all known errata at the time of the second edition publishing. You can check out any errata (and sticky errata) at the Texas ASL (<http://www.texas-asl.com>) website. The pack is still available for \$15, but you will need to head on over to The Gamer's Armory (<http://www.gamersarmory.com>) to get it.

North Texas Shootout

Ed Beekman



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

Come on out to the 2nd Annual North Texas Shoot Out on November 11 through the 13th in Fort Worth, Texas. This year we have the Champion and Runner Up trophies for the "Big Shoot Out" as well as two Master Sergeant trophies for our Mini-Competition.

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

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

Captain Carry 5PP

Dan Preston



Yes, it's another bad pun, this time a knockoff of an old Alan Ladd movie. For years now, there has been a small but important rule neglected in the rulebook. I am specifically talking about the last two sentences of A17.2. Briefly, a good order MMC may portage a wounded leader at a cost of 5PP, and the MF bonus for an accompanying leader still applies.

This cursory treatment of a potentially important situation leaves many questions unanswered. A leader, even a wounded leader, is a critical game piece. In a world full of snipers and boxcars lurking around every corner, a wounded leader may be the only one the player has left. Getting a leader up to where troops need to be rallied may make the difference between winning and losing a scenario.

Then, too, a leader is not an ordinary portage item. A dismantled mortar does not shout orders at the troops. The situation is unique, and it combines elements of several rules and rules sections.

I have written numerous articles, and now, four scenarios. I would like to try my hand at drafting a short rules section. This exercise is for my own sense of curiosity. I would call it an itch that I need to scratch. I would not presume that more rules are needed; the rulebook has plenty already. I seek to expand on one rule that I perceive requires clarification. Above all else, I would not presume to try to tell the MMP staff how to do their jobs. The *Advanced Squad Leader* rulebook is an enormous masterpiece of writing that has taken decades to produce and refine, and the job is still not finished.

This is just for me.

A17.21 Portaging a Wounded Leader/Hero: In order for an MMC to portage a wounded SMC during the MPh, both units must be Good Order and stacked together in the same location at the beginning of the phase. A wounded SMC may be considered automatically Possessed (A4.43) by any available eligible MMC at the beginning of the MPh. An unwounded SMC may apply his one PP portage capacity to increase the portage capacity of the carrying MMC normally. A wounded SMC has no portage capacity (A17.2). A portaged wounded leader may be considered unpossessed at any time during the MPh, subject to A4.4.

An SMC is never considered possessed in other than the MPh and APh, since an SMC is not a SW that needs to be fired, repaired, etc. A good order leader (or Hero) is assumed to be in charge of any friendly infantry IN the hex. Therefore, at the beginning of the MPh, that leader would make the determination whether or not to be portaged, and transfer or recovery procedures in the RPh would be unnecessary.

A17.22 Combat Effects: If the portaging MMC or the wounded SMC breaks, pins, disrupts, or becomes berserk, the SMC is considered unpossessed. A wounded SMC that becomes unpossessed for any reason during the MPh loses any movement capability through the end of the phase. A portaged SMC is subject to the same benefits and penalties during the MPh as its carrying MMC, and is considered infantry and not a SW for all other purposes.

Both the portaging MMC and the wounded leader must remain Good Order throughout the MPh in order to continue moving without some sort of penalty. Such is the hazard of being able to portage the wounded SMC in the first place.

A17.23 Recovery: An MMC wishing to Recover (A4.44) and subsequently portage a wounded SMC during the MPh expends one MF and does so automatically. No recovery dr is necessary. The recovering MMC must have at least one MF remaining in order to do so. The recovered SMC may not have expended any MF during that MPh in order to be recovered.

Out of simplicity, a wounded SMC may either be portaged during the MPh or move on his own, not both. No recovery dr is necessary to recover a Good Order friendly SMC, for obvious reasons.

A17.24 APh: A portaged wounded SMC is considered automatically unpossessed at the end of the APh.

The reason for recovering and portaging a wounded SMC at the end of the MPh is to increase the APh capability of the SMC vs. Difficult Terrain (4.72). After the APh, the SMC is considered normal infantry in the hex.

Fear and Loathing on the Dos Equis Trail

(with apologies to HST)

Randy Moorehead



This was my first time at an ASL tournament. Not that I am a total noob – I am 55 years old and have been playing wargames since discovering *Bulge*, *Afrika Korps*, and

Stalingrad in 1968. I played *Squad Leader* since the purple box edition, but dropped out after GI was released. I got into ASL after several years off (work, marriage, the usual) and have been playing regularly since 2001. I've played other games at Origins and GenCon, but this was the first ASL tourney for me. The experience was totally positive, and I would recommend the Texas Tourney to anyone even remotely interested.

The plane flight was the usual clusterf**k. American had a better rate than Southwest, as well as an earlier arrival. Hah! I didn't count on sitting on the runway for 1½ hours while they tried to start the right engine. Of course the AC was off, so we sweated and listened to the crying baby.

"Good morning passengers, this is your captain. We are talking to our maintenance HQ in Tulsa, and think we will have the problem fixed shortly." What? Your mechanics are in Tulsa? How about one here in Albuquerque, that can beat on the engine with a hammer and get this thing started?

This meant the connecting flight in DFW was missed. It was Kinky Friedman who said, "It doesn't matter if you're going to Heaven or Hell, you still have to change at DFW." Actually, DFW isn't a bad place to wait. Plenty of bars with Shiner and Sierra Nevada on tap. And if you need something to read, pull out that rulebook and brush up. Nothing gets stranger looks from the waitress.

Waiting at baggage claim in Austin for the bags – with my buddy's ASL kit – was a treat. Looking at all the bags dumped onto the conveyor belt, one-by-one, and never seeing mine ... the panic begins to set in. How much of the kit can be replaced? Oh, crap, half of it is out-of-print. Damn you, MMP. How can the airline stooges even comprehend what ASL is? How do we explain our obsession?

OK, find the luggage office. Ah ha ... it came in on an earlier flight. Only a few years knocked off my lifespan due to panic.

Rick Reinesch is a pretty cool guy. Not only had he organized the tourney, he was waiting to pick us up at the Austin airport. Being late, we didn't get the downtown tour, but did get a scenic drive up to Round Rock. We checked into the motel, and scoped out the joint. Rooms were decent, and, we are told, nicer than the ones from previous years. Having stayed at the aforementioned chain myself, I believe it.

The hotel bar was consulted for dinner. The pleasingly plump server pointed to the menu board.

"We have jalapeno poppers, shrimp eggrolls, and a 5-inch pizza"

Hmm, sounds like microwave food.

"Yes," she replied, "I wouldn't eat here."

That settled that, although a couple of suspicious characters had claimed the barstools in front of the TV. And by suspicious, I mean ASL players. You can tell by the t-shirts. Genghis Khan World Tour? Specs for a Tiger I? Only hardcore gamers would dare. We're here, there's beer, get used to it.

A short walk out the back door and across the parking lot gets you to the 2-story meeting center. The first floor is filled with the IT crowd from Dell. Geeks, but not gamers. A few of the female persuasion. A couple of guys obviously on the make. Meh.

Up to the 2nd floor. Nirvana awaits. Tables, chairs, ASL kits piled like pirate loot stashes near claimed chairs. Several coolers filled with beer. Not the cheap stuff. Good stuff. Water, snacks, candy. A projection screen running an endless loop of *World at War* and *Kelly's Heroes* [Ed. *The Dirty Dozen* was thrown in for good measure].

Check in and obtain nametag, scenario pack, and t-shirt. Buy one of the HOB scenario packs I was missing. Good to go. Back to start at 0900.

Breakfast included. Cereal, breads, fruit, eggs and sausage. And waffles. Not ordinary waffles, no. This is Texas. The waffles are Texas-shaped.

"Off course," says the local. "Because everything is bigger in Texas."

Not really, I reply. If they were the round, they would actually be bigger, using all of the available space in the waffle maker. I receive only a puzzled look. Does not compute. A.2

The half of the breakfast room not wearing ASL shirts seems puzzled.

"I think it's some sort of club," whispers the woman wearing the church t-shirt. "They do look the same."

I could say the same about you, lady. Still, not as strange as the looks we get from the members of the Lone Star Soap and Toiletries Association that is meeting on the first floor. The ones who walk by the gaming room, and do a double-take, give us the once-over, and mumble something incomprehensible as they shuffle down the hallway to whatever mind-numbing hell awaits them. Not me. I'm here for ASL.

First day I played from 9:00 AM until 1:30 AM, with only a 45-minute break for dinner. That is 15-plus hours of pure ASL goodness. Second day I played from 0900 until midnight. Same for the third day. Last day until noon. Only sparse time out for lunch or dinner breaks. Variety is what you want it to be. "Play what you want." This is the pure, unbridled core of the Texas Tourney.

Want to play a scenario from the latest HASL? Did it. Want to play some ABTF using the black SS counters? Did it. Desert? PTO? It's there. Third party? DFtB, Schwerpunckt, LFT? Yep. Characters? Oh, yes. Guy with a bottle-cap opener on his hat -yes. Sound effects guy – check. Fierce competitor vs. the laid back just-want-to-play-something dude – all there.

Raffle/prize drawing? That, too. Late night eurogames? Yep. *Up Front?* Yes (thanks, Sam). First-timer made to feel welcome – in spades..

Will I be back next year? Better believe it.

20th Annual Texas Team Tournament Results



Rick Reinesch

Here are the results and rankings from the 20th Annual Texas Team Tournament. Where players had the same score, ranking was based off of W/L percentage first, and then the W/L percentage of their opponents. So players with the same score who competed against stronger opponents would be ranked higher.

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

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Gary Fortenberry	7	7	0
Matt Shostak	4	5	1
Mike Denson	4	4	0
Mike Rose	3	3	0
Jay Harms	3	4	1
Pete Shelling	3	4	1
David Hailey	3	5	2
Jeff Toreki	2	2	0
Walter Eardley	2	2	0
Ed Beekman	2	3	1
Johnny Johnson	2	3	1
Mike Seningen	2	3	1
Sam Tyson	2	3	1
Brian Roundhill	1	2	1
Mike Bistodeau	1	2	1
Scott Bell	1	2	1

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Chris Buehler	1	3	2
David Longstreet	1	3	2
Jim Ferrell	1	3	2
Paul Messina	1	3	2
Dan Best	0	2	2
Jack OQuin	0	1	1
Matt Zajac	0	2	2
Roy Connelly	0	2	2
Tom Gillis	0	1	1
Brian Ward	0	0	0
Bernie Howell	-1	2	3
Peter Wegener	-1	2	3
Bruce Earls	-1	1	2
Dan Preston	-1	1	2
Mark Carter	-1	1	2
Matt Schwoebel	-1	1	2
Race Carter	-1	1	2
John Hyler	-1	0	1
Rick Reinesch	-1	0	1
Rob Burton	-1	0	1
Arlen Vanek	-2	2	4
Andrew Muller	-2	1	3
Bud Garding	-2	1	3
Doyle Motes	-2	1	3
Randy Moorehead	-2	1	3
Steve Salin	-2	1	3
Eric Gerstenberg	-2	0	2
Hondo Nelson	-2	0	2
Kevin Kenneally	-2	0	2
Will Willow	-2	0	2
Nathan Wegener	-3	1	4
Jeff Taylor	-3	0	3
Chris Kubick	-5	0	5
Will DeMorris	-5	0	5

Here's how the Major Johnson standings finished. Gary Fortenberry took home the MJ for the second time in three years. Great job, Gary.

Player	MJ Total
Gary Fortenberry	22054.5
Matt Shostak	15684
David Hailey	14864
Bernie Howell	12635
Brian Roundhill	12048
Pete Shelling	11865
Jim Ferrell	10325
Arlen Vanek	10101
Jay Harms	9858
Will DeMorris	9504
Ed Beekman	9474
Peter Wegener	9352
Mike Rose	8635
Dan Best	8235
Randy Moorehead	7765
Matt Zajac	7725
Bud Garding	7644
Mike Denson	7446
Roy Connelly	7236
Nathan Wegener	7122
David Longstreet	7080
Sam Tyson	6565
Jeff Taylor	5490
Doyle Motes	5052
Matt Schwoebel	5032
Mike Bistodeau	4791
Andrew Muller	4776
Dan Preston	4690
Hondo Nelson	4176
Chris Buehler	4160
Mike Seningen	3880
Will Willow	3828
John Hyler	3663
Jeff Toreki	3651

Player	MJ Total
Paul Messina	3615
Chris Kubick	3340
Rick Reinesch	3093
Steve Salin	2700
Scott Bell	2685
Johnny Johnson	2136
Bruce Earls	1401
Race Carter	1389
Tom Gillis	1320
Mark Carter	1176
Jack OQuin	870
Walter Eardley	694
Eric Gerstenberg	678
Kevin Kenneally	594
Brian Ward	458
Rob Burton	220

Here is how the teams fared. The foreigners came out on top again this year.

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Gary Fortenberry, Johnny Johnson, Peter Wegener,	8	12	4
Brian Ward, Mike Denson, Mike Seningen,	6	7	1
David Hailey, Ken Joyner, Mark Carter,	2	6	4
Arlen Vanek, Chris Buehler, Pete Shelling,	2	9	7
David Longstreet, Kevin Kenneally, Sam Tyson,	1	6	5
Doyle Motes, Ed Beekman, Scott Bell,	1	6	5
Jay Harms, Nathan Wegener, Paul Messina,	1	8	7
Jim Ferrell, Race Carter, Roy Connelly,	0	6	6
Chris Kubick, Dan Best, Matt Shostak,	-1	7	8
Jeff Toreki, John Hyler, Steve Salin,	-1	3	4
Mike Rose, Tom Gillis, Will DeMorris,	-2	4	6
Andrew Muller, Brian Roundhill, Rob Burton,	-2	3	5
Jack O'Quin, Jeff Taylor, Matt Zajac,	-3	3	6
Bernie Howell, Jerry Simmons, Randy Moorehead,	-3	3	6
Bud Garding, Dan Preston, Matt Schwoebel,	-4	3	7
Bruce Earls, Eric Gerstenberg, Will Willow,	-5	1	6

20th Annual Texas Team Tournament Wrap-up



Rick Reinesch

It was banner year for the Texas Team Tournament. We had a number of things to celebrate in addition to the 20 years we've been holding this little get-together here in Austin. We welcomed 58 pre-registrants and walk-ons from all over the southern part of the US and from locations as far away as the East Coast (and beyond), a record turnout for us in this our milestone year. We were able to welcome several new faces this year and even our first international attendees. Nathan Wegener and his son Peter happened to be back in the States from Australia and decided to attend, and are certainly glad they did. Hopefully their travel schedules will line up next year as well as we would love to see them back. We were also able to give out a lot of great prizes and debut our very first scenario pack as a club. And the biggest thing we celebrated this year was the christening of our new tournament facilities. We are now in the Tech Room at the Wingate Conference Center, which not only provides us with plenty of elbow room to play, but provided some neat perks as well. They allow us to bring in our own drinks (which were provided in abundance) and the connectivity in the room allowed us to show an endless loop of WWII-related history DVDs, which made for a great ambiance while playing. Except for the Wet EC every evening at 11pm, things went smoothly and I've signed the contracts for us to be back there again next year.

Getting down to the details, in the title match for the individual crown of the Texas Team Tournament, Gary Fortenberry bested Matt Shostak in *Requiem for a Dreadnaught [SP194]* to take home the 10-3 Award as overall champion. This is the second year in a row for Gary to take the top prize and fittingly it was Gary who won it in the very first edition of this tournament 20 years ago. In the loss, Matt takes the 9-2 Runner Up award.

The Team Tourney continued the use of three-man teams this year. This makes the possible absence of one person on a team less of an issue in allowing all teams to stay in the hunt throughout the weekend. This format has also made for some very tight races for the team crown. Again this year the final results were determined by the final games on Sunday with the winning team of Gary Fortenberry, Johnny Johnson, and Peter Wegener finishing on top. It was great to see new (young) player Peter walk away with some hardware. Peter played a good solid set of matches over the weekend and definitely helped his team take it all.

As usual we held two minis on Thursday this year. Well, really one mini and one featured playing. Our featured playing was *At The Narrow Passage [FB14]* out of the

recent MMP release *Festung Budapest*. What appears to be a small 5 turn scenario was anything but. This true 3-player scenario has a lot of great action to it and some great play dynamics. We had them set up front and center in the game hall so that all could observe. Matt Zajac, Randy Moorehead, and Jeff Toreki took on the challenge starting play at 9am and finishing up at about 1am the next morning. At the end of the day Jeff Toreki walked away as the winner of the random drawing for participating. The mini featured the time-honored Houston institution, Ferocity Fest. This is always a brutal and deadly mini as evidenced by its name, and this year the scenario being highlighted was *FB12 The Black Ravens Are Flying*, also out of *Festung Budapest*. When the dust had settled, Sam Tyson and Brian Roundhill took home the great dioramas built by Rob Burton for this mini as the winning Axis and Allied Commanders, respectively. Gary Fortenberry and Jay Harms received **The Gamer's Armory** gift certificates for their second place finishes.

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

The John Van Marter Sportsmanship Award this year went to Texas's own David Hailey. This is a recognition award that is based on nominations from the greater community and presented at the tournament to the individual who, win or lose, is the type of person whose attitude is such that you just want to play ASL with them again and again. David is certainly well deserving of the award.

We present a number of dice awards for play over the weekend. The winner of the Audie Murphy award for the most snakes over the course of the tourney went to Mike Rose. 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 back to Georgetown, TX was David Hailey. We also present a nice plaque to the winner of the most Close Combat points collected over the weekend, and the winner of that was David Longstreet.

The Major Johnson award was hard-fought again this year, with Gary Fortenberry staking a leading position over the course of the weekend and keeping everyone else at bay. Through his continuous play over the course of the weekend he was able to lay claim to the title. The Major Johnson can be won in many ways, and over the past few years it has been the balanced approach of a large number of moderate-sized scenarios that has prevailed. In the past it

was the big scenarios that would do it. But win or lose you're always in the hunt just by playing (a lot).

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

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

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

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

Rob Burton for producing those great dioramas and scenario selection for Ferocity Fest on Thursday. Rob also did a great job on the tee shirts for this year. Glenn Schools for coordinating the trophies. John Hyler for setting up the tournament room.

As soon as I get this article out of the way, I'll start the planning for next year. For all of the old and new faces, I hope to see you again next year. For those that have never been to our tournament, I encourage you to give us a try. The 21st Annual Texas Team Tournament will be held June 20th-23rd, 2013 at the Wingate Conference Center in Round Rock, Texas. The website has already been updated with all of the information for next year and we've even got our first pre-registrants already, so it is never too early to get your hat into the ring. Don't be left out of the fun!

Stuck in "Rush Hour" - An After Action Report of TX-5



Matt Zajac

In September 1944, following the rapid establishment of bridgeheads over the Meuse River, the American 80th Recon Troop and the 2nd Cavalry Squadron advanced towards the town of Martincourt. Martincourt controlled access to high ground overlooking the Americans' next hurdle - the Moselle River. American hopes of rapidly capturing the town ended abruptly however as paratroopers and armored recon forces belonging to Kampfgruppe Himmler had also just arrived. The rush was on to seize the town.

Recently Tom Gillis and I sat down for a game of *Advanced Squad Leader*. Tom and I have been playing regularly for about two years now and I can always count on an interesting game with him. We decided to play *TX-5 Rush Hour* as the simultaneous setup and the unique alternating "I Go - You Go" concept of the first turn intrigued us. Further, the scenario pitted the armored recon forces of both nations against each other, requiring both of us to find a way to successfully employ the speed, limited infantry capabilities, and varied armor/gun combinations of each of our dozen vehicles. This was no armor slugfest or overwhelming American firepower scenario. With a random die roll, Tom drew the Americans while I fought the Kampfgruppe.

The victory conditions of this 6-turn scenario require careful assessment. The side that moves first in turn 2 wins by amassing more victory points than the opponent. Victory points are awarded for controlling road intersections (5 VP each), for normal casualty victory points, and for exit victory points. There's a catch though to the exit VP - only forces that exit on/after turn 5 on the opposite board edge count as EVP, and double at that, but with very mobile forces on either side and only 6 turns, there's a challenge in deciding how to maintain control of the road intersections and when/if to exit overwatching vehicles. Further, by SSR, vehicles can gain control of road intersections and those locations remain under that player's control even if the vehicle exits the location. This really gave a feel of fighting a recon battle to this scenario.

How about that "the side that moves first in turn 2" part of the victory conditions? The SSR states that the player with the *lesser* amount of victory points at the end of turn 1 is the first player to move in turn 2, and thus must meet the scenario victory conditions. Given that no force counts as exit VP during turn 1, the player moving first in turn 2 is going to be decided by the number of road intersections controlled and casualty victory points. So each player has a

decision to make during setup and while alternating movement during turn 1. Does one try to minimize victory points gained in turn 1 but if so, then by how much without placing yourself at risk to meeting the endgame victory point requirements? With the severely restricted mobility of a dense urban battlefield, and only six turns of movement, any terrain not initially seized could easily come back to haunt you.

The terrain of Martincourt is depicted using board 21, a heavily urban board with long, winding roads running along both long axes with multiple connecting roads allowing for rapid lateral force shifts. There are 26 road intersections, and if row R is taken as the centerline, then roughly 14 intersections lie on the side that the German forces enter and 12 on the American entry side. Vertical line of sight is significantly reduced though as by SSR all buildings are ground level only. One key piece of terrain is the R2-R6 and O8-Q7 rowhouses which effectively allows a player to cut the board in half and create choke points at Q1 and P9 to control the main roads. With both forces simultaneously setting up off-board, the unique alternating moves during turn 1, and the turn 2 attacker determined by the side that seizes the most victory points during turn 1, both Tom and I had the challenge of racing forward to get men and vehicles into optimal overwatch positions while not overextending and leaving a force or flank overexposed to the turn 2 attacker.

Tom's initial plan was to push heavily along the relatively more open south edge while placing a blocking force along the T6 wall / S8 building to deny any German penetration and protect the American flank. Once past the R row rowhouse, the massive wall-enclosed graveyard really canalizes vehicles, however the US at least has the ability to breach the walls surrounding it with tracked vehicles – although at risk of bogging. The M5A1s and the M24s were the backbone of the force, while the ability to fire-group the halftracks with the few squads offset the small dismounted infantry force available.

I decided that reaching the R row rowhouse was too risky for turn 1 and instead wanted to control the P row after turn 1, particularly road hexes P9 and Q1. I planned to place the elite infantry as far forward in the north as the O8-P8 rowhouses as I saw the graveyard as a potential avenue for panzerfaust-wielding German infantry to move back and forth to deny American movement along either main road. The remaining second line infantry would establish a blocking position in the large J3-K4 building where they could theoretically skulk and shoot. With their mobility and capable 50L gun, I decided that the three PSW 234/2s could set up forward overwatch positions while the two SP 251/22s with their 75L guns but B10 limited ammo would hang back and wait to see where the American M24s and M5s headed.



Figure 1: End of Turn 1 Force Dispositions

With initial plans made, we pulled the screen and saw each other's deployments. It was clear that this would be interesting as Tom had weighted the southern axis while I had done just the opposite - in effect we would both attack each other's planned weaker flank. Turn 1 began with a German move, per SSR. I moved a PSW 234/2 far forward to P2 to threaten anything the Americans move along the north edge and hopefully deny defensive fires at the vulnerable halftracks soon to be moving towards the O8-P8 rowhouse. Tom responded by moving an M5A1 to a hull-down position in T6, and the game immediately got interesting as an unlikely defensive fire shot from the just-moved PSW 234/2 turned the M5A1 into a burning wreck! We continued our alternating move / defensive fire sequence until everything was on board. At the end of turn 1, the Americans controlled the S row road and in effect the R row rowhouse and a small reserve was positioned on the W row allowing for a rapid shift to either flank. However, German vehicles were overwatching both the P9 and Q1 road hex choke points and infantry were established in the O8-P8 rowhouse. Victory points were tallied, and even with the loss of the M5A1 the Americans had fewer VPs, and are thus the first to move in turn 2 and now had the game end victory conditions to achieve.

During turn 2, Tom shifted the American reserve and additional armor to the north to deal with the threat created by the loss of the M5A1 in T6 and a potentially exposed flank. Meanwhile, the main effort's armored infantry established itself along the brush line from N3 to P2 where it could overwatch the graveyard and possibly deny further German advance along the southern edge. This however left the halftracks dangerously exposed. An aggressive German main attack against the American blocking force in the north resulted in a close-in fight which turned against the

Germans during the next two turns. The remaining German forces tactically withdrew and fought a delaying action along the north edge while the game was decided in the south. However, things went equally badly for the Americans in the south. Along the southern edge of the graveyard, punishing German fire against the exposed US halftracks caused them to retreat back west, with heavy loss to the US infantry.

Turn 3 saw the Americans attempt a southern board edge push in the confined O1-N1-M1 area but to no avail. Stationary PSW 234/2s took their toll of the moving American armor in the south while an assault by the second line infantry ended the American O1-N1-M1 push. By the end of turn 4, Tom conceded the game after the loss of the last armored vehicle repositioning to support his main effort in the south - the M18GMC was destroyed by a close-in blitz from a PSW 234/2 and a SPW251/22 in the graveyard.



Figure 2: End Game Force Dispositions

Rush Hour is truly a unique scenario. The first turn design concept really captures the battlefield uncertainty inherent in a recon / scout unit's mission and the conundrum of engaging an enemy force with a force designed to gain information while avoiding battle. The initial back-and-forth turn 1 action-reaction cycle forced flexibility and we both had to alter our initial plan. Throughout the game, we found ourselves constantly shifting vehicles back and forth from north to south while our limited infantry did its best to hold key positions and successfully execute close-in attack opportunities. Additionally, the fact that the Germans were able to focus on denying the American's victory conditions, as opposed to also trying to obtain them, allowed the Germans to trade time for space - as long as they could inflict enough casualties on the American force to offset the

loss of road junction victory locations. The Germans' ability to prevent a breakthrough and deny a path to exiting the board then sealed the Americans' fate. However, the simultaneous setup and the uncertainty of who will be required to achieve the victory conditions give this scenario excellent replay-ability. *Rush Hour* is well worth adding to your play list.

Rules Tip



Rick Reinesch

Here's one that I came across the other week while looking up a rule, and one that I've been playing wrong for years. While Subsequent First Firing we all know about not being able to fire at a unit further away than the closest armed, Known Enemy Unit, but in that same sentence in A8.3 a unit may not SFF outside of it's Normal Range, either.

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

Banzai Staff

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

Scenario Analysis: TX6 - Tough Enough



Mike Seningen

TX-6 *Tough Enough* is designed by the illustrious Pete Shelling. His name practically guarantees a well-balanced and classic slugfest. Pete is the only guest scenario contributor to the pack and we are happy to have his submission as well as his participation in the ASL Team Tournament for so many years.

As was expected, *Tough Enough* was the most enjoyable scenario I played during the 20th Anniversary tournament weekend. I had the pleasure of pairing up with Bernie Howell of El Paso. Bernie had been defending most of the weekend and chose to attack. The Russians have a lot of ground to cover and face a tough German force led by a 10-3, that are determined to hold the village of Facuti, Romania depicted by the new board 59. The victory conditions center around the bridge hex 59S5, requiring the Germans to muster a certain amount of FP upon the bridge at game end.

The Russians initially have a 2:1 numerical advantage in squads and 4 uncontested T34/M43s. However the German force has higher morale, a pair of 8-3-8 assault engineers, a 10-3 leader, Pak 40 AT gun and a defense bolstered by 6 wire counters. Mid-game the Russian attack is reinforced by some stout armor in the form of 4 IS-2s accompanied by 4 elite guards squads. The Germans get to check the Russian assault with some 100mm OBA with battery access eligible just as the Russians enter the IS-2s. Lastly, and what will often feel like forever late, the German armor counters the unmolested Russian armor with a pair of Panthers and two PZIVHs. Not only are the panzers late to the battlefield, they find themselves outnumbered and arguably out gunned facing those four IS2s.

As I began to assess the scenario it quickly became evident to me that I couldn't fight the Russians head-on and that there was even a serious concern for being flanked and attacked on 3 fronts. One little wild card to the scenario is the ability for each side to place a flame counter on a building hex. An astute Russian is likely to set one up in the 59S4 or 59R5 building. An even more astute German might set up troops to attempt to extinguish the flame. Unfortunately, I was not quite as sharp at the time and missed that opportunity. However, I did put a flame in 59M1 and this proved to be a lynchpin of my defense. Over the course of play it spread to the neighboring woods, and bolstered with the adjoining wire made the front left-center of my line virtually impenetrable. This also forced the Russians to clearly split their avenues of approach, ultimately making it very difficult to time the attack. The Germans with their interior lines were able to successfully shift to the left or right from their main pocket as necessary to brush back attacks whose timing was not optimally coordinated.

ASL is full of tough decisions and tradeoffs. One the Germans face is the dilemma of putting some units on the board 13 front line. There is a lot of open ground to cross and the Russians appear to be hard pressed for time. Intuitively it seems like a good idea to get up in the Russians' face and interdict the assault even before it gets started. However, even if a squad or two can break a few Russians – they will be quickly overwhelmed by a sea of

the enemy, chewed up by a 9-2-directed HMG and cut off by well played armor support. There is just not enough cover and just as much open ground that will ultimately lead to broken squads and interdicted escape routes. Those Germans set up on board 13 will never have the opportunity to contribute to the VC. I did throw a couple ? on the board 13 front for good measure – but just like the squads I considered deploying there – the ? were proven to be essentially useless.

I also considered anything east of the creek to be equally vulnerable. However, I did put a pair of squads to influence the 59I1 road junction and ultimately fall back into the rowhouses. I placed a couple units and a leader in the 59S4 building with the idea of interdicting the creek and having the ability to deploy to the 59R1 woods line. The rest of my force hid behind the wire and clustered around the 59O4 courtyard with the 10-3 and MMG with the HIP ATG crammed into the 59P3 building. My plan was to hunker down behind the fire, wire and make a beehive of the western buildings hoping to hold on long enough and preserve enough of my firepower to achieve my VC. I'd reach out and smack any units that got a little too far ahead of the main effort, but the majority of my units would be skulking and laying low.

The Russians came on full force with a center and slightly eastern entry. As I expected, it was a sea of Russians, never more than one squad per hex. The Russian armor struck towards the 59Z3 area with some riders to quickly threaten my eastern flank.

As difficult as it was to watch the unmolested Russians stroll across board 13, my setup was proven wise when I deployed some units to the 59P1 and 59R1/S1 hexes to snipe at them. What little damage I did was more than returned by a 9-2-led KIA of a complete squad on the R1 woods line. I expected to break – for I only went so far out as I knew I could safely route back – but you don't route away from KIAs. Had I unwisely setup in the board 13 building cluster of Q7/T6/T7, I'm convinced I would have lost them all with little to show for it.

While the Germans might not have any armor to counter the Russian tanks, the panzerfaust can be a great equalizer. In our playing, the eastern German infantry was sniping at the Russian 5-2-7 squads, whilst keeping the Russian armor honest. In what was probably the turning point of the scenario, the Russians had pushed several squads and all their tank assets in/around the 53V5 orchard cluster and were pushing the last German squad on that flank back through the rowhouses. Just as twilight for that last squad looked to be falling, two Russian squads were ambushed as they entered the 53V6 rowhouse. The brave German squad elected to withdraw into V5, placing them ADJACENT to the lead T-34 in W5, whilst several more were parked in bypass and around the W4 woods hex. A PF took out the

W5 T-34, and the squad shrugged off a stout attack from the recently ambushed but CX infantry. Hiding behind plumes of smoke from the now-burning T34 also gave ample cover from the other AFV weaponry. The German squad then advanced into V4, smack dab in the midst of Stalin's finest. Another PF found its mark dropping an IS2 this time. This squad would later survive friendly artillery fire and nab another T-34 in a subsequent fire phase. I had saved one of my wire counters for the T5 hex as a minor speed bump to the S5 bridge. However, while the T-34s thought they could clear the wire themselves, one bogged in the wire and both fell to the deadly accurate fire of the ATG as they attempted to cross the S5 bridge.

Meanwhile, back on the western side of the battle, with the woods ablaze, with fear of getting entangled in the wire and no armor to support their efforts the Russian flanking maneuver proved futile. With my eastern flank buoyed by the superhuman squad, steel rain of the artillery & the stout fire of the ATG, on turn 4 the arriving Mark IV armor support was sent to mop up what was left of the Russian western flank. I kept the Panthers in the J6/I6 area to guard

my southern flank and keep at arm's length from the Russian IS2s. From the German viewpoint, victory was looking achievable; I just needed to keep the Russian eastern attack at bay and make sure I had enough resources in position to fire upon the bridge hex.

In classic form, in my best attempt to pull defeat from the jaws of victory, I broke the radio, gacked the gun, and malf'd the MMG all in the same fire phase. It was but a fleeting ray of hope for the Russians for the following fire phase saw the Panthers thwart an armored probe of my southern sector as an IS2 got itself whacked as it maneuvered to S3T7. Down to only two functional IS2s, no T-34s and a good bit of the Russian infantry broken and demoralized, Bernie failed his personal morale check and declared the Germans the victors.

As nearly all of Pete's great scenarios, this has toys aplenty, a good ebb and flow, and will likely go down to the end in most playings. In was the most enjoyable scenario I have played in quite some time.

Club Notes

Biweekly Lunch Gathering

Don't forget to join us every other Friday at 1300 hours down at Schlotsky's on South Lamar and Toomey (just south of Riverside Drive). 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 or better yet join our email group. You can post a message at central-texas-asl@yahoogroups.com or you can point your favorite browser to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central-texas-asl> and take a look. For those still not connected, give Matt, Rick, or Sam a call for club information.

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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!