Moves

KURSK

The Desert Fox

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MOVES

The Magazine for WarGamers

Circulation: 9500

In this issue...

Opening Moves

I suppose that because I've just returned from two conventions (Origins 81 and Gen-Con East) I have a warped perspective as to how interesting those things are to you guys. I restrained myself from printing my gag picture column this year (it does really awful in the ratings every time). Things of note are the $1000 contest for *SPIES* players we had at Origins which was very well received (see the article on *SPIES*) and the winning of awards by *DragonQuest* and *Empires*. Face-to-face feedback at the cons also convinced me that my intuition was right and that you guys really don't want *any* science fiction or fantasy games treated in *MOVES*. So you got it — as of this issue *MOVES* will only carry material on military/political/economic games — no more sf & f.   *Redmond*

Origins Awards

Best Historical Figure Series: *Condotierre* (Ral Partha); **Best Fantasy/SF Figure Series:** *Personalities* (Ral Partha); **Best Vehicular Model Series:** *Micro Armor* (GHQ); **Best Miniature Rules:** *TacForce* (GDW); **Best Role-Playing Rules:** *DragonQuest* (SPI); **Best Role-Playing Adventure:** *Twilight's Peak* (GDW); **Best Professional Miniatures Magazine:** *The Courier;* **Best Professional Role-Playing Magazine:** *Journal of the Traveller's Aid Society* (GDW); **Best Professional Pre-Napoleonic Miniatures Rules:** *Renaissance Rules* (WRG); **Best All-Time Air Combat Miniatures Rules:** *Basic/Advanced Fighter Combat* (Zocchi). **Best Pre-20th Century Game:** *Empires of the Middle Ages* (SPI); **Best 20th-Century Game:** *Crescendo of Doom* (AH); **Best Fantasy/SF Game:** *Azhanti High Lightning* (GDW); **Best Computer Game:** *Temple of Apshai* (Automated Simulations); **Best New Game:** *Streets of Stalingrad* (Phoenix); **Best Professional Magazine:** *Fire & Movement;* **Best Amateur Magazine:** *HMS Review;* **Hall of Fame:** E. Gary Gygax; **Gamers' Choice** (combined H.G. Wells and Charles Roberts Award): *Ace of Aces* (Nova).

Game Designer's Guild Awards

Empires of the Middle Ages (SPI); *Streets of Stalingrad* (Phoenix); *Ace of Aces* (Nova); *TacForce* (GDW); *Azhanti High Lightning* (GDW).

The final round of the $1000 SPIES tournament at Origins 81. Clockwise from lower left: Mattatall (England), Elfbrandt (Germany), Rhoad (Russia), Hambacher (Italy), Eynon (France).

Jackson at the Crossroads
The Battle of Corinth

Two important battles that affected the course of the Civil War have been combined in one package! *Jackson at the Crossroads* simulates the battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic on June 8–9, 1862 in which the Valley Army successfully defeated two encircling Union armies. *The Battle of Corinth* recreates the desperate October 3–4, 1862 sneak attack by the Confederate Army of the Trans-Mississippi to retake the vital railroad juncture of Corinth. Both games use the *Great Battles of the American Civil War Series* standard rules, which cover melee attack, small-arms and artillery fire, cavalry charges, and the effects of leadership. Each game has a 16-page booklet of exclusive rules to cover the unique features of each battle and an historical article about each event. The game include two 22″ × 34″ maps, 800 cardboard counters (200 counters per game plus 400 common markers), Standard Rules and Exclusive Rules booklets, and various playing aids.

Wagon Bridge

BUYER'S GUIDE FOR *JACKSON/CORINTH*
Age Range: 12 years to adult
Number of Players: 2
(Suitable for solitaire play)
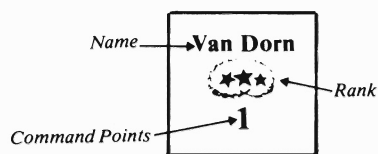**Average Playing Time:** 4 to 10 hours
Complexity Rating: High (6.8)
For purposes of comparison, *Monopoly* is considered to have a complexity rating of 2.34.
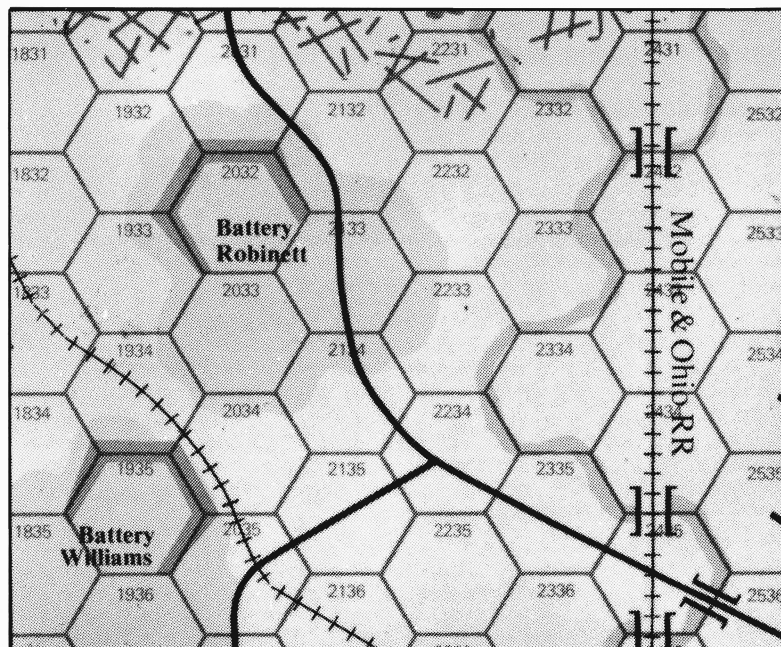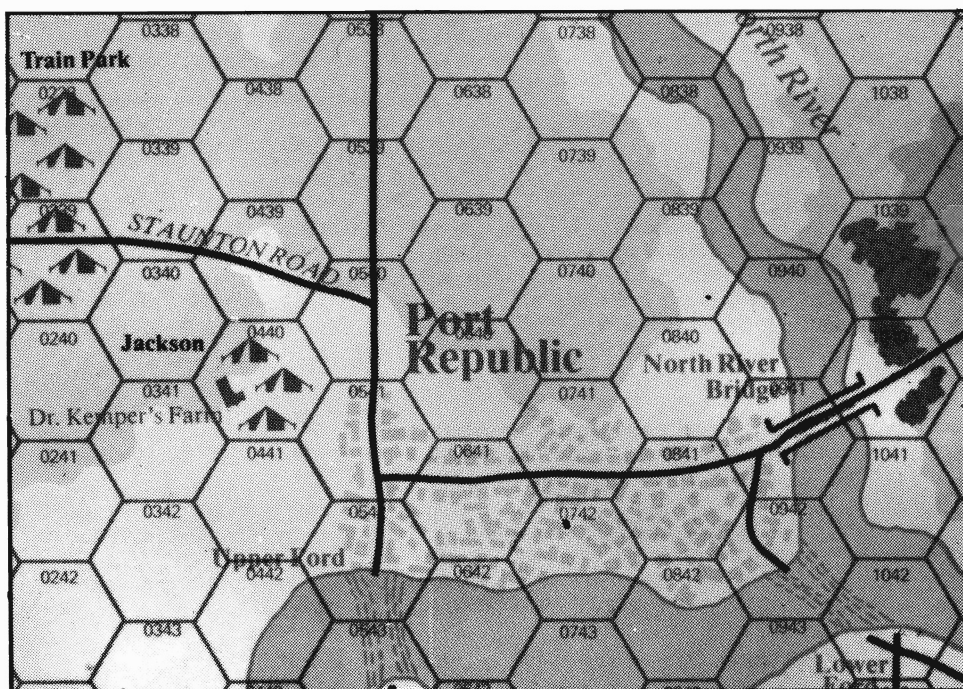
ARMY COMMANDER: Front

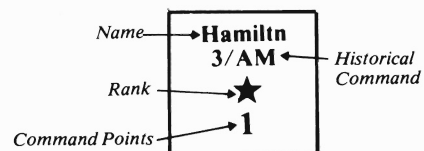Name → **Van Dorn**
★★★ ← Rank
Command Points → **1**

DIVISION COMMANDER: Front

Name → **Hamiltn**
3/AM ← Historical Command
Rank → ★
Command Points → **1**

Available now for $25 in retail outlets nationwide
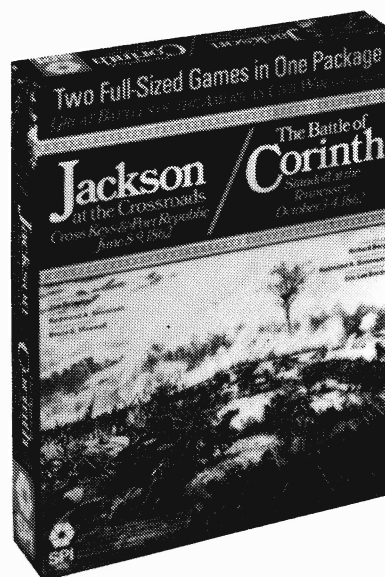
OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

DOCTRINE FOR DESERT FOX
Maxims and Measures for Successful Operations
by J Matisse Enzer

Desert Fox covers one of those perennial game subjects that are virtually cliches in the minds of most gamers. The romantic image of tanks and armored cars making cavalry-like charges through the desert dust; everyone in jaunty hats and desert tans; the chivalric behavior of the British and the Germans. Of course, it was only a very little bit like that at all. Mostly it was a terrible time in a hostile environment. Perhaps the most appealing thing about the subject from a game designer's point of view is that the whole thing is so self-contained and manageable even at a campaign level. Hence, *Desert Fox.*
— *Redmond*

The Desert Fox is an operational-level simulation of the campaign in Libya and Egypt from March 1941 through the end of 1942. The term "operational" is very accurate in this case as a well-played game usually takes the form of a series of distinct "operations," with the more thorough and precise player being the winner. Just as thoroughness and precision are requisites for success in *The Desert Fox*, lack of these same qualities is an assurance of defeat.

A Game-Turn in *The Desert Fox* represents one month of real time. Counters range in size from battalions to divisions, the most common units being brigades and regiments. Zones of Control are active and semi-rigid for most units, though battalion-size, artillery, and non-combat units lack ZOC's. Unit characteristics include combat strength, movement allowance, morale rating, armor rating, and stacking point value.

A Player-Turn consists of Reinforcement, Air Allocation, Initial Movement, First Enemy Reaction, First Combat, Motorized Movement, Second Enemy Reaction, Second Combat, and Refit Phases. Each player has two opportunities to move (once with mechanized units only) and to react to enemy movement. Supply logistics are treated semi-abstractly; supply may be drawn through either supply dumps or through mobile supply units (MSU's), which represent convoys of trucks.

The players have two main resources which they must learn to manipulate with care: combat units and supply lines. Victory or defeat will often be determined by the degree to which a player succeeds in integrating his supply units into supply grids. Techniques of integration can be broken down into the following five maxims:

1. Plan everything to the last detail, then plan again.

2. Do not attack unless confident of a smashing victory.

3. The best defense is…a good defense.

4. Massage your supply grid.

5. Territory is more important than casualties.

Planning

Planning is of the utmost importance in *The Desert Fox* from the Commonwealth player's placement of his units before the first turn, right up to the last moves of the game. The player who calculates movement points, traces supply lines, considers probabilities, and so on, will defeat a more tactically skillful but less methodical opponent every time.

The key to the game is learning to plan "operations" — discreet detailed plans of action for 2 to 4 Game-Turns with definite goals, territorial and otherwise.

The following sequence should be considered in planning an operation: (1) Determine long range goals; (2) Evaluate the resources available, and decide what percentage of these can be expended on the operation without detrimental effects; (3) Determine the opposition's goals and resources; (4) Use this information to set up a self-contained project that brings you closer to your long-range goals.

For example, a reasonable operation for the Axis player to plan for Game-Turns 1 through 3 is the capture and control of the coastal road from El Agheila through Tobruk, allowing that city's capture, bypass, or encirclement. Planning this operation involves breaking it down into moves for each of the three Game-Turns. Counting movement points will show that the lead units must travel at full speed across the desert or along the coastal road. Faster units using the coastal road will be able to deal with Commonwealth units between Benghazi and Gazala. Since units tied up with the Commonwealth forces in L0705 and L0704 past Game-Turn 1 will not be available for an assault on Tobruk by Game-Turn 3, the first step of the operation is the elimination of these units by the end of the first Combat Phase of Game-Turn 2.

The next point at which resistance can be predicted to be encountered is along the road near Benghazi. Contingency plans must be developed, if the coastal road is blocked. The only way to cut off the Jebel Achdar may be to send units across the desert towards Mechili.

Making sure that all units are in supply on their way to an assault will take up a good part of the planning of the operation. Supply units move more slowly than most combat units, but, at least in the particular operation in question, one can plan on capturing Commonwealth dumps with fast reconnaissance units. Care must be taken, however; Commonwealth troops have been known to sally forth from the Tobruk area and cut Axis supply lines as early as Game-Turn 2.

It is very important to plan the allocation of supply assets (dumps and MSU's) as far in advance as possible, especially during offensive operations where poor planning can cost the chance of advancing. Before moving units, know where they will draw supply from at the beginning of the next friendly Movement Phase.

Little elements have to be taken into account, too. Make sure pure armor units will be matched with infantry or mech units so that combined arms effects won't sap your strength. Also, always check for annoying possibilities that an opponent can take advantage of. (For example, can any of the other guy's recce units make a suicide dash on your primary supply line? Very embarrassing.) Above all, make sure you have sufficient supply for an attack before announcing it.

A Smashing Victory

An attack should only be conducted as part of a well coordinated operation, with some ultimate territorial or positional goal in mind. Given these criteria, no more than a few attacks per turn will usually be necessary. Once you have decided that an attack *is* necessary, pile everything you can into it. The CRT is structured in such a way that to do more than disrupt the enemy you have to attack with a lot of artillery, or with heavy odds in your favor.

For example, an assault on Tobruk in the first few turns is generally a worthwhile objective. Most playings of *The Desert Fox* will find Tobruk garrisoned with 6 to 8 Combat Strength Points and 1 or 2 artillery units by the time the Axis has a supplied unit at the gates, however. This means that even with 30 to 40 Combat Strength Points and 2 or 3 artillery units, the Axis will have only a 50% chance of taking the bloody place. If the attack fails and the Commonwealth player is competent, the Axis player might well lose his offensive capacity for the early part of the game. An assault should not be staged unless one is confident of success, and the consequences of failure would be acceptable.

The Best Defense

Continuous defensive lines don't work in the desert; if a line has one weak point, it might as well not be there at all. Instead, large quantities of troops should be concentrated in a series of positions occupying alternate hexes along a limited front. Each such position should contain a dump, if possible, in case worse comes to worst and it is surrounded. While keeping these defensive positions between your supply lines and the bad guys, keep some fast recce units close by (but not in the thick of things) to exploit openings resulting from a poorly executed enemy attack. Enhancing a defensive position with fortifications is nice, but expensive in terms of supply expended. Desert combat is so fluid that by the time a fortification is built, chances are it won't be needed anymore anyway. This is not to say that fortifications should never be used; their use and positioning does have to be planned out well in advance of the moment they will be needed, however.

Even better than defensive positions are retrograde operations (i.e., retreating). Retreats should be used when the friendly units in question occupy poor defensive terrain; it is not worth fighting over territory you can capture later. Of course, if your opponent's attack seems weak or poorly coordinated, it may very well be worthwhile to let him bash his head on your brick wall. Retreating can also be used as a ploy to get your opponent to overextend himself. Most players just can't resist filling up empty spaces with their units, even if it means leaving a tenuous supply line or a vulnerable vanguard.

For the Commonwealth player, the problem of defense lessens as the game progresses. The constant replacement of units and supplies available to the Commonwealth player makes losses less painful. Indeed, at times the Commonwealth player will enjoy such a numerical superiority over the Axis that he will be able to set up a string of positions stretching 200 kilometers or more. This is not to say that such lines are in any way more efficient than a small series of defensive hard points, but they are conceivable if the Commonwealth player is setting up for a flanking operation, or if he enjoys a favorable territorial situation.

Assuming that Tobruk does not fall early in the game, the Axis will probably have to garrison the road bypassing the fortress for much of the game to keep lines of supply open. The Italian infantry divisions are ideal for this task; they are too ponderous to be used effectively in offensive operations (and are gluttonous consumers of combat supply), but are sufficiently large to cover any but the most determined sortie. Italian infantry can also be used to cover other rear areas, or to cover the notorious southern flank in situations where combat ability is not vital, but a rigid zone of control is.

Supply Grids

A good supply grid cannot be created unless the player setting it up has a pretty good idea of where his units will be a turn or so ahead of their being there. If this information is uncertain or unascertainable, it will be necessary to keep some supply units in MSU form, but in general MSU's should be used as little as possible. Since an MSU is not an end supply source, keeping supply units in MSU form in effect is a waste of supply capacity. Usually about a third of a player's supply units will be MSU's, but this should be increased to about a half or more in highly fluid situations.

Supply lines must be protected at all times from enemy action. Only rarely will the loss of a supply chain not seriously affect a player's situation, and both players will always find it well worthwhile to sacrifice a recce unit to cut a supply line. The Axis player will have the quickest advances, and thus the longest supply lines for most of the game, and so his task to defend them will be the hardest. El Agheila should be used as a supply terminus only for units within 20 or 30 movement points. Dumps will have to be used to supply units occupying positions further forward.

The perfect supply grid does not exist, but if the technique of operational planning is mastered, it will be a lot easier to create supply grids tuned to support a variety of operations.

Figure 1: Reaction Movement

A feature of *The Desert Fox* which provides the defending player with unique versatility is **reaction movement**. Using this rule, the defending player can reinforce hexes under attack, and adjust defensive positions after the attacking player has commited his forces. Effectively, this rule accounts for the effects of reserves; a player can hold his mobile (armor) forces back until battle is joined and critical areas are determined.

Figure 1 shows an example of effective utilization of defensive reaction movement. The Commonwealth player has deployed a defensive line just strong enough to prevent overruns, and has kept 7Spt/7 Mech, 4/7(2) Armd, and 7/7(2) Armd in reserve, in positions from which they can react to aid any part of the line which is threatened.
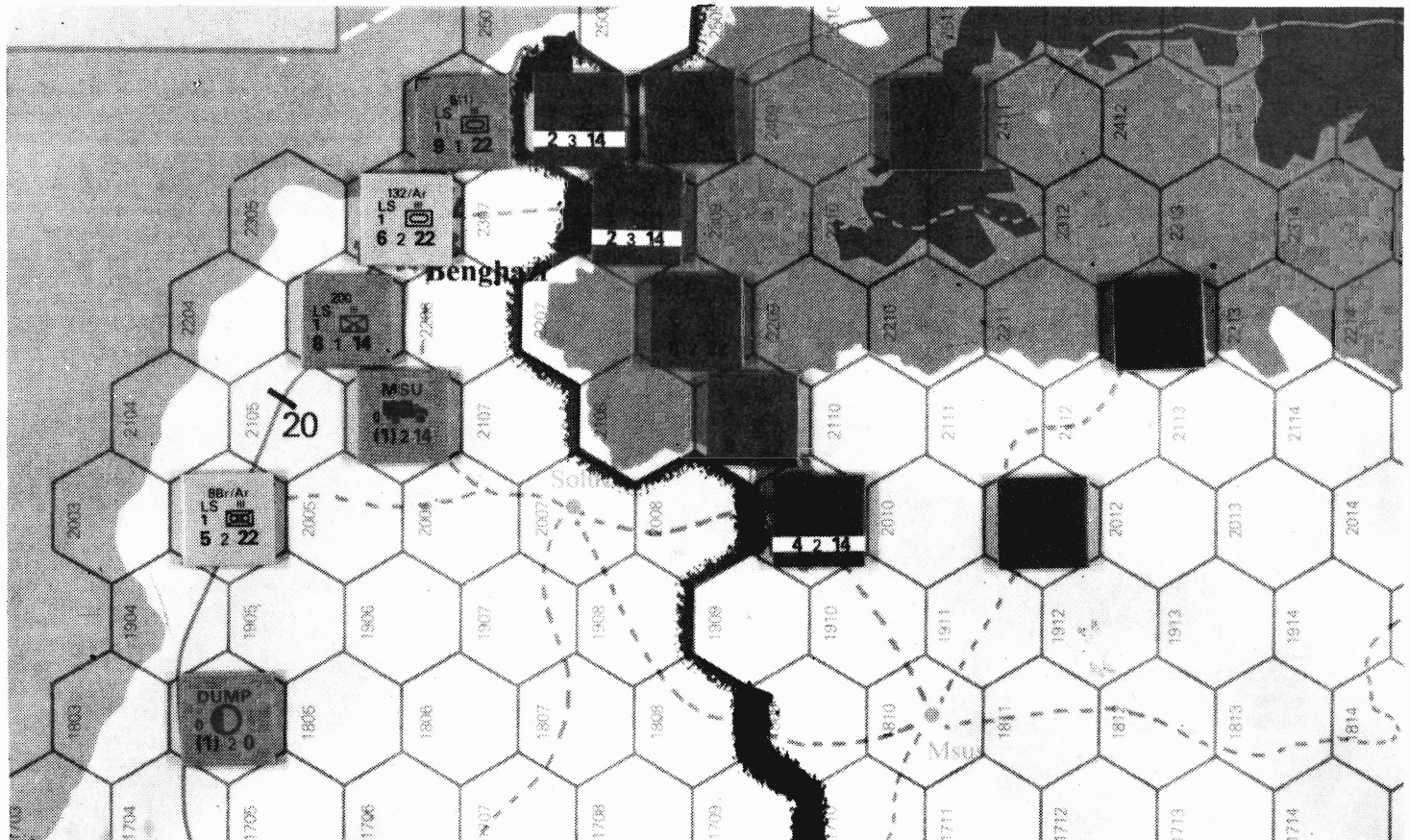
The exact placement of MSU's and dumps does, of course, depend on the specific situation. However, some concepts are worth keeping in mind: (1) The closer a dump is to the units supplied by it, the better; (2) Supply lines that run north-south are better than ones that run east-west (this is because a north-south line has a smaller southern flank than an east-west line, and is thus easier to protect from a flanking maneuver); (3) Always, always check that your supply grid is out of range of all enemy units, regardless of whether or not such enemy units would die after cutting your supply lines; (4) If you find you must have a vulnerable spot somewhere, keep dumps stacked with your forward positions, so that they will still be in supply if cut off.

Territory

It is an inhumane but correct observation that territory is worth more than casualties in *The Desert Fox*. The victory conditions speak only of territory, not bodies. The only exception to this is a Commonwealth failure to withdraw units on schedule, which is worth a small town for each unit not withdrawn. Units are only valuable in *The Desert Fox* as vehicles for capturing and holding territory. This is not to say that they should be thrown away recklessly, but only that one should not be overly concerned with losing them if a valid objective can be accomplished by their sacrifice.

Optional Rules

The following three Sections are additional rules for *The Desert Fox*. They may be used individually, or together. The first Section was designed by Eric Sven Ristad, the second by J Matisse Enzer, and the third by Richard Berg.

[16.0] Operation *Herkules*

COMMENTARY:

The effects of logistics was of paramount importance in the North African campaign, and the island of Malta was crucial to the war of supply. The island dominated the Axis supply and communications lines, oftentimes to deadly effect.

A plan was proposed for the invasion of Malta as early as April, 1941. Although the plan was accepted as feasible and considered at several points during the war, it was never implemented. The plan for the invasion was code-named Operation *Herkules*, and was scheduled for mid-1942. Airborne and amphibious forces consisting of the Italian "marines," the Folgore Glider Infantry Division, and the German Ramcke Heavy Airborne Infantry Division were to assault the island, supported by elements of the Italian Navy. Amphibious landing craft were prepared in Italy, and in March of 1942 Kesselring's Sicilian Luftwaffe intensified its bombing raids on Malta, destroying planes on the ground, and preventing supply ships from reaching the island. In April alone, nearly 7,000 tons of bombs were dropped.

Churchill realized that Malta was in deep trouble, and ordered a major offensive in North Africa to seize the airfields in western Cyrenaica and enable the Desert Air Force to come within range of Malta and provide the island with air support. Reluctant and ill-prepared, Auchinleck, the British commander in the desert, promised a June offensive. At the same time, Rommel decided to

throw the British out of eastern Cyrenaica. The Gazala campaign ensued.

After Gazala, when the British army seemed to have been completely demolished and the way to the Nile delta open, Rommel decided to use the forces slotted for Herkules (the Sicilian Luftwaffe in particular) in his drive on Egypt. The Malta invasion was scrapped, despite the overwhelming opposition of the German General Staff. Malta recovered, and its deleterious effect on Axis supply lines grew. Within a few months, more than a third of the Axis materiel which took ship for Africa was falling prey to Allied interdiction.

If Operation Herkules had taken place as scheduled, Malta would almost surely have fallen, Axis supply lines would have remained open, and the course of the war in the desert might have been drastically altered. The following rule gives the Axis player the option to go through with the assault on Malta.

GENERAL RULE:

During the Air Allocation Phase of his Player-Turn on Game-Turns 15, 16, or 17, the Axis player may announce that he is launching an invasion of Malta. Depending on the forces allocated to the invasion, Malta will either stand or fall. If the island stands, Axis supply will continue to be interdicted. If the island falls, the Axis player will almost immediately begin to profit in the way of increased materiel and reinforcements.

PROCEDURE:

After the Axis player has declared that he will launch the invasion, he states what units will be committed to the assault. The **Assault Index** is determined by Case 16.3. The die is rolled, and the effects of the invasion are assessed.

CASES:

[16.1] AXIS RESTRICTIONS

[16.11] The Axis player must commit one or both of the following units to the Malta invasion: Folgore Glider Infantry (Italian) and Ramcke Heavy Infantry (German). A unit committed to the assault *never* arrives as a reinforcement, regardless of the success of the invasion. Which units he assigns to the invasion is up to Axis player, but his decision will affect the chances of the assault (16.3).

[16.12] The invasion may not be launched before the Axis Air Allocation Phase of Game-Turn 15, nor after that Phase of Game-Turn 17.

[16.13] The Axis player may not initiate a raid on Malta (6.3) during the turn of an invasion. He may commit Air Points in exactly the same manner as is described in 6.3 (expending supply units as normal), but their effects are determined differently (see 16.3).

[16.14] If an invasion is attempted, the Axis player must permanently expend one Air Point, in addition to Air Points assigned per 16.13. No assault may be attempted unless this one Air Point is available to be expended.

[16.15] No more than one invasion may be launched during the course of a game.

[16.2] COMMONWEALTH RESTRICTIONS

No more than one Air Point may be transferred to Malta during a given Air Allocation Phase if no Commonwealth unit is in General Supply in a hex west of Lxx23. This rule supercedes 6.31, and is applicable throughout the entire course of the game, regardless of whether or not an invasion is ever attempted.

[16.3] ASSAULT INDEX

The Assault Index for an invasion is calculated as follows:

Add...

...2 if Ramcke Heavy Airborne Infantry is committed

...1 if Folgore Glider Infantry is committed

...1 for each Axis Air Point committed (16.13)

Subtract...

...1 for each Commonwealth Air Point at Malta

...2 if any Commonwealth unit is in General Supply and west of Lxx23

The Assault Index is totalled, and the die is rolled. If the roll is less than or equal to the Assault Index, the invasion succeeds and the provisions of 16.4 apply. If the roll is greater than the Assault Index, the assault fails. There are no specific penalties to a failed invasion.

[16.4] SUCCESS

If the invasion succeeds (per 16.3), the following provisions apply:

1. Subtract 3 from all future rolls on the Axis Convoy Arrival Table (supercedes 7.55).

2. The Axis player receives one additional Refit Point of each nationality each Reinforcement Phase following the invasion.

3. Any Commonwealth Air Points assigned to Malta are eliminated. No Air Points may ever be assigned to Malta in the future.

[17.0] DETACHMENTS

GENERAL RULE:

In some circumstances, a player will want to delay a hostile advance without sacrificing an entire regiment to do so. In such a situation, the player may detach small formations from his units. These **detachments** function as any other units friendly to the owning player, within the provisions of the following Cases.

PROCEDURE:

A player may announce his intention to form a detachment during any friendly Movement Phase by declaring from which unit the detachment will come. A detachment counter is placed with the friendly unit, and a die is rolled to determine if the friendly unit is depleted as a result of the formation. The detachment may then move (but not attack) until the beginning of the next friendly Reinforcement Phase, at which point it is removed.

CASES:

[17.1] RESTRICTIONS ON THE FORMATION OF DETACHMENTS

[17.11] Detachments may only be formed during a friendly Movement Phase.

[17.12] Detachments may only be formed from a friendly unit of one of the following types: infantry, mechanized infantry, armor, motorized infantry, heavy weapons, heavy infantry, heavy airborne infantry.

[17.13] A unit may not be used to form a detachment if it is depleted, disrupted, has a Morale Rating of 3 or 4, or is out of General Supply.

[17.14] No more than two detachments may be formed by a player in a Player-Turn, and no more than one detachment may be formed from a given unit in a Player-Turn.

[17.15] The unit from which a detachment is formed loses 2 Movement Points during the Phase in which the detachment is placed on the map (i.e., if a detachment is formed from a unit with a Movement Allowance of 22, the unit would have a Movement Allowance of 20 for that Phase).
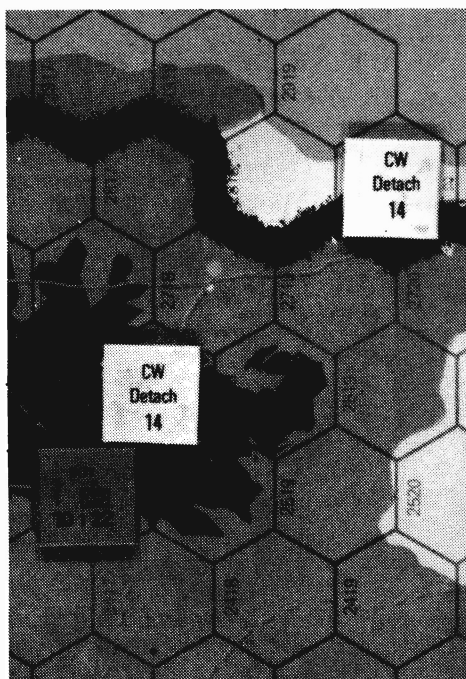
Figure 2: Detachments

Commonwealth detachments left in the positions indicated greatly hinder Axis advance. The Movement Point cost for 8(1) Armd to move from its present position to 2819 would be 2 if the detachments were not there; with the detachments, the Movement Point cost is 16 (7 for 2617, ½ each for 2718 and 2719 and 8 for 2819).

German

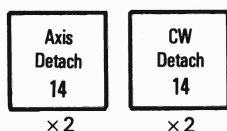During any friendly Reinforcement Phase, a player may announce that he is converting a friendly reconnaissance unit meeting certain requirements (see 18.1) into a desert patrol. During the Refit Phase of that Player-Turn, the reconnaissance unit's counter is replaced by the appropriate desert patrol counter.

CASES:

[18.1] CREATING DESERT PATROLS

[18.11] The following reconnaissance units may be converted to desert patrols: German 33 and 580; Commonwealth CIH, Royals, and 12 Lanc.

[18.12] A unit may only be converted to a desert patrol if it occupies L0701 (Axis) or Alexandria (Commonwealth), is undisrupted, and is not in a depleted state.

[18.13] A unit may not move or attack during the Player-Turn in which it is converted into a desert patrol.

[18.14] If a desert patrol is eliminated, and is eligible to be rebuilt (13.1), the appropriate reconnaissance unit is put in the Refit Box in its place.

[18.15] A desert patrol may be returned to reconnaissance status by following the exact same procedure for conversion to desert patrol status; i.e., it must spend an entire Player-Turn in L0701 or Alexandria without moving or attacking.

[18.16] No more than one Axis desert patrol may ever be on the map or in the process of being formed at a given moment. No more than two Commonwealth desert patrols may ever be on the map or in the process of being formed at a given moment during the game.

[18.2] ABILITIES AND RESTRICTIONS ON DESERT PATROLS

Desert patrols function exactly as any other combat units with parenthesized Combat Strengths, with a few exceptions, as listed in the following Cases.

[18.21] Desert patrols never need supply of any kind. They always are considered to be in both General and Combat Supply.

[18.22] Desert patrols may never force march.

[18.23] Desert patrols may conduct supply overruns. They are considered to have a Combat Strength of 4 for purposes of supply overrun (only). If a desert patrol succeeds in a supply overrun against an enemy supply unit, the results of the overrun are treated differently. If the overrun would normally have resulted in the supply unit's capture, the supply unit is destroyed instead. Any other result has no effect.

[18.24] Disrupted or depleted desert patrols may not attempt supply overrun. Disrupted desert patrols may recover normally from their disruption. Alternatively, the owning player may roll the die during any friendly Refit Phase. On a 1, 2, or 3, the desert patrol is undisrupted where it stands; on a 4, 5, or 6, the desert patrol may not be undisrupted that Phase. Depleted desert patrols must return to L0701 (Axis) or Alexandria (Commonwealth) to be refit. One Refit Point is all that is required to undeplete a desert patrol. ■ ■

[17.16] Whenever a detachment is formed from a unit, the owning player immediately rolls a die: on a 1 or 2, the unit is immediately depleted; on a 3, 4, 5, or 6, the unit suffers no disability.

[17.2] PROPERTIES OF DETACHMENTS

In order to use detachments, it will be necessary to make the following counters:

[17.21] Detachments may move as any other unit friendly to their owning player. They may never force march, however.

[17.22] Detachments have no supply requirements. They are always considered to be in both General and Combat Supply.

[17.23] Detachments exert no ZOC's into adjacent hexes. Instead, they exert a ZOC into the hex they occupy. This ZOC is subject to infiltration (10.3). Except for this ZOC and 17.27, enemy detachments may be completely ignored.

[17.24] Detachments may never attack, be attacked, or be overrun. Their only effect is to impede the passage of enemy units.

[17.25] Detachments are removed at the end of any Phase in which they are stacked with any enemy combat unit (including enemy detachments), or at the beginning of the first friendly Reinforcement Phase following their placement (whichever comes first).

[17.26] There is no additional effect to having two detachments in the same hex. Similarly, a detachment stacked with any other friendly unit is treated as if it were not there. It is not affected by any attacks against the friendly unit, nor is it affected if the friendly unit is overrun (although the overrunning unit would have to pay an extra Movement Point to conduct the overrun because of the detachment's ZOC in the hex, as per the normal rules for overrun).

[17.27] No roads or railroads (*not* trails) leading into or out of a hex occupied by an enemy detachment may be used. For example, if a road led across a ridge hexside into a rough hex occupied by a detachment, if would cost an enemy motorized unit 8 Movement Points (3 for the ridge, 4 for the rough hex, and 1 for the detachment's ZOC) to enter the hex. If the unit moved on to another rough hex, it would only cost 4 Movement Points to do so, as the detachment exerts no ZOC into the surrounding hexes.

[17.28] Each detachment has a Movement Allowance of 14, regardless of the unit from which it was formed.

[17.29] A detachment may never enter an enemy ZOC, nor may it ever enter a hex occupied by an enemy unit.
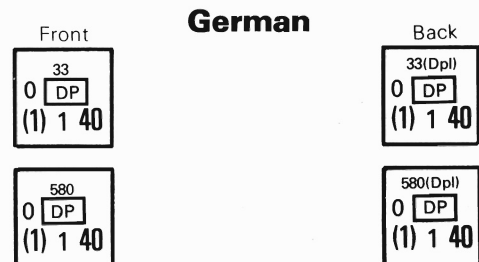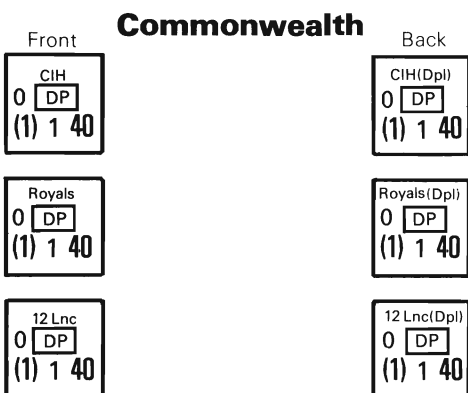
[18.0] DESERT PATROLS

GENERAL RULE:

Certain reconnaissance units may be converted into **desert patrol** units. Desert patrols have increased movement and supply capabilities, but no combat ability. Historically, they were used to conduct raids against rear area supply lines. In essence, these units represent the Commonwealth Long Range Desert Group and Special Air Service Brigade, as well as the German Sonderkommando Almasy, admittedly on a somewhat abstract level.

PROCEDURE:

The following counters must be produced before desert patrols may be used:

Commonwealth

SCENARIOS & VARIANTS

EMPIRES FOR TWO
A Play System for General Application to the Scenarios
by James F. Epperson

Empires was well regarded at this year's awards ceremonies: It took both an Origins Award and a Game Designer's Guild Award. *Empires* sells well although (I think) not as well as it deserves. The nominal subject probably deflects a good number of people who would really enjoy the game if they'd just imagine that it's a science fictional or fantastic continent instead of Europe. Perhaps when I get around to having most of it transferred to microcomputer format, some of you foot-draggers will take up the scepter. — *Redmond*

Empires of the Middle Ages, or just *Empires* for short, is one of those dream games that comes along once in a very blue moon. It is original, innovative, challenging, and best of all, one helluva lot of fun! Unfortunately, a geat deal of that fun is lost when there are only two or three people to play a scenario. The game loses much of its flavor with each empire that is not active in the game.

This article is an attempt to present a mechanism by which *any* of the scenarios can be played by as few as two people, without losing all of the multi-player flavor. The key idea is that those empires which are not player-controlled still enter into the game, as empires. They may either function as *Independent Empires* (operating according to a standard procedure, sort of like a peaceful Magnate), or as *Allied Empires* (controlled by one of the "live" players). The status of a given Empire may change over the course of time, from Independent to Allied and back, and even to Alliance with different players. Players can gain or lose Victory Points due to the handling of their Alliances.

[33.0] INDEPENDENT AND ALLIED EMPIRES

COMMENTARY:

These rules can be used whenever the number of Empires in a scenario is greater than the number of available players. There are three kinds of Empires: *Player Empires*, directly controlled by a player; *Independent Empires*, which function according to a set program; and *Allied Empires*, which are more or less controlled by the player with whom they are allied.

[33.1] COURSE OF PLAY

[33.11] Every Empire listed in the scenario description is used in the game. **Exception:** The Millenium Scenario (28.0) lists seven possible empires,

and there are only six different marker colors. Therefore, the players may decide to eliminate one of the smaller empires from the game.

[33.12] The normal Sequence of Play is followed. The order of play is determined as usual in the Initiative Determination Phase. Independent Empires always take their turn as soon in the Round as possible; Allied Empires choose spots according to the desires of the player to whom they are allied.

[33.13] All Empires, regardless of status (Player, Allied, or Independent) use their own markers to indicate claims, ties, possessions or conquests. The fact that one Empire is allied to a player does *not* mean that that player "takes over" the Allied Empire as part of his own.

[33.2] INDEPENDENT EMPIRES

[33.21] Independent Empires function according to a standard procedure each turn. Although the procedure as given below is fairly inclusive, we do not even hope to have covered every possible circumstance of play. For this reason, it is suggested that a different player run each Independent Empire each turn, and that this player's interpretations be regarded as binding. Serious disputes can be resolved through diplomatic parley.

[33.22] The general course of action for an Independent Empire is as follows: 1) draw and act upon Event Card; 2) tax, if possible; 3) conduct *four* endeavors, if possible; 4) tax, if not possible in #2 and possible now.

[33.23] The general order of endeavors for an Independent Empire is as follows: 1) Rule Areas in Unrest; 2) Rule other Areas; 3) Fortify; 4) Conquest or Pillage. The specific rules governing endeavors for Independent Empires are given in Case 33.24. Note that an Independent Empire *always* saves one Year Card and two gold units for a Defensive Endeavor, even if there is no one following the Independent in the Round who could attack it. Independent Empires *never* conduct Diplomatic Endeavors, although they do have Diplomatic Statures. Furthermore, Independent Empires always conduct Defensive Endeavors if they have the necessary funds and Year Cards to do so.

[33.24] Independent Empire Procedure

A. Event Card: Draw the Event Card, which is immediately revealed to all players. If it is the Missionary Fervor Card, it is replaced in the deck and another card is drawn. If it is *not* a Holding Card, it is treated normally and all effects of it should be duly noted (see below for special effects of the Leader Dies Heirless Card); if it *is* a Holding Card, it is kept and played as soon as possible. Since only three cards may be kept at any one time, discards will have to be made of unplayed cards; those cards held longest are discarded first, regardless of content.

Holding Cards which are played and kept (like the Tactical Systems or Enlargement of King's Per-

sonal Demise Cards) are never discarded so long as there are any unplayed cards still held by the Independent Empire.

B. Taxation: If there exists at least one Area in the Independent Empire, besides the Court Area, which may be profitably taxed at a rebellion value of *one or less*, then all such Areas, including the Court, are now taxed for the maximum gold which can be obtained for a rebellion value of one or less. If the Court is the only Area which meets the above criterion, or if no other Area does, then taxation is postponed until after endeavors are conducted. Independent Empires never plunder.

C. Endeavors: The choice of endeavors to be attempted is made by following the decision flow chart below. Note that only four endeavors are ever attempted, sometimes less. The last Year Card is saved for a Defensive Endeavor, even if there are no Empires that follow play next in the Round. The manner in which gold may be spent to increase Effectiveness Ratings is given below, as outlined in Case 33.25.

To determine what endeavors are attempted, the following series of steps is followed four times in succession; the result, each time, will be the next endeavor to be attempted.

1. Has the Empire been attacked since its last turn? If so, attempt a *Fortification Endeavor* in one of the Areas which was attacked. ("Attacked" means either a Pillage or Conquest Endeavor from a Raider, Magnate, or other Empire.)

2. Is there Unrest in the Empire? If so, attempt a *Ruling Endeavor* in one of the Areas in unrest.

3. Are any Areas at less than maximum possible Social State? If so, attempt a *Ruling Endeavor* in one such Area.

4. Are any Areas totally without Fortification? If so, attempt a *Fortification Endeavor* in an unfortified Area.

5. Do any Areas have Fortifications of only Level 2? If so, attempt a *Fortification Endeavor* in such an Area.

6. Is there gold to pay for a Conquest Endeavor? If so, a *Conquest Endeavor* is attempted, with the target being picked as though the Independent Empire were a Magnate.

7. Attempt a Pillage Endeavor. Pick the target as though the Independent Empire were a Magnate. Any gold *is* collected.

Note that the endeavors are only "attempted." It is, of course, possible that the first endeavor called for by the above steps will be impossible: The Empire may not have sufficient gold to fortify, or may not have the Administrative Stature to rule with a high enough Effectiveness Rating, etc. If this is the case, then return to the series of steps above, at the step after the one which called for the impossible endeavor. **Example:** If the Empire had just been attacked, but had no gold at all, then it could not pay for the Fortification Endeavor called for by

Step 1; therefore, play would proceed to step 2, and if necessary, step 3, and so forth.

In an extreme case, it may be that the Empire will be unable to do anything whatsoever. Simply save the Year Cards for possible leader stature checks at the end of the Round, and proceed to the next Player-Turn; Independent Empires are not bound by the normal requirement that at least one endeavor be attempted.

If there is more than one possible target for an endeavor, then choose the one Area most like the Court Area of the Empire as target; if there are still multiple targets, resolve the situation by means of a die roll.

D. Second Taxation: If the Empire were unable to tax at Step B above, then it taxes now, using the same criteria.

[33.25] Gold is spent to raise the Effectiveness Ratings for endeavors according to the following schedule. If the basic (i.e., pre-gold) Effectiveness Rating is less than + 1, then gold is spent to raise it to + 1, but no higher; if the basic Effectiveness Rating is greater than + 1 but less than + 5, then gold is spent to raise it to + 5, but no higher; if the basic Effectiveness Rating is greater than + 5 but less than + 8, then gold is spent to raise it to + 8, but no higher. The gold is always spent, if available, except that two gold units are always saved to pay for a Defensive Endeavor.

[33.26] Independent Empires are subject to stature checks in the normal fashion.

[33.27] Independent Empires may vote in parleys. Their votes are controlled by the real players, according to dice rolls. For each Independent Empire, each player rolls two dice and adds his Diplomatic Stature; the player with the highest total gets the votes of that Independent Empire. The dice rolling is done for each individual issue being voted upon in the parley.

[33.28] It is not at all uncommon for an Independent Empire to be an interested party in a parley. For example, a player could attempt to gain a claim to one of the Independent's Areas. In this and similar cases the Independent votes its own self-interest, regardless of Case 33.27.

[33.29] If an Independent Empire is forced to move its Court Area, then it chooses the Area of appropriate language and religion which has the highest total of population plus maximum possible Social State. If the Court cannot be relocated, see Case 33.6.

[33.3] ALLIED EMPIRES

[33.31] Allied Empires are controlled by the player with whom they are allied. (See 33.4 for procedure on how to gain and lose alliances.) That player conducts the Player-Turn for his Allied Empires just as if he were playing them himself. Each Allied Empire has its own spot in the rotation of play during which the controlling player conducts its turn; he may tax as he wishes, conduct endeavors as he wishes (using, of course, the stature of the leader of the Allied Empire, and not his own), and, in short, do all that a player of a "normal" Empire might do.

[33.32] Deals may be made between a player and his Allies and even between two of his Allies at his behest, but they are strictly regulated. Gold may only change hands if it is being used to pay the direct costs of an endeavor, or as directed below. (Gold from an Ally may *never* be used to pay endeavor costs for the player's own Empire.) Claims and Areas may be exchanged, but on a strict one-for-one basis: a claim for a claim, an Area for an Area; an Area which is claimed and possessed may only be exchanged for another Area which is also claimed and possessed. When Areas are traded,

any difference in Social State is made up in gold; if an Area in unrest is involved in a trade, the Empire receiving it obtains an extra five gold units as compensation.

[33.33] Allied Empires undergo stature checks in the normal fashion. Such checks may affect the status of the alliance, however; see Case 33.4.

[33.4] GAINING AND LOSING ALLIED EMPIRES

[33.41] Allied Empires are gained by conducting Diplomatic Endeavors against the Court Area of an Independent Empire. (This is an exception to Case 12.12.) The process is similar to conquest in that, in general, several ties will be needed to gain the Alliance. The number of ties required is equal to the maximum possible Social State of the Court, plus the population value, using a population of "one" for all Areas of smaller population. **Note:** The actual Social State of the Court is not important — the maximum possible is. A standard Diplomatic Endeavor is carried out, using all appropriate modifiers; a "C" result counts as enough ties to reach the maximum number required for Alliance. Note that these diplomatic ties are against the Court of the Empire, not that particular Area. So, if the Court of the Empire is moved to another Area, the ties move with it. The number of ties held by any one player does not change when this move happens, even though the number needed for alliance might change.

[33.42] An Independent Empire may *not* play a Diplomatic Coup Holding Card to remove ties against its Court. However, a player may use such a card to remove ties against the Court Area of one of his Allied Empires. The Card must have been drawn by the player's Empire.

[33.43] If one player is allied to a given Empire, and a second player obtains the requisite number of diplomatic ties, there is no immediate change in the status of the original alliance. However, the second player may, at his whim, subtract *two* from the Effectiveness Rating of any endeavor attempted by the Allied Empire. Moreover, he will be in a position to acquire the Allied Empire for his own should a stature check occur (see 33.44).

[33.44] If a stature check is made on a non-player Empire (i.e., Independent or Allied), the status of the Empire *may* be changed. Each player having sufficient ties to qualify for an alliance rolls two dice, adding his Diplomatic Stature to the result; a similar die roll is made on behalf of the non-player Empire. The player with the highest total retains/acquires the non-player Empire as an Ally, and continues that Empire's turn. If the non-player Empire itself has the highest total, then it retains/acquires Independent status, and the turn is completed via the procedure of 33.24.

[33.45] If a non-player Empire draws a Leader Dies Heirless card, then a different process is employed. Each player having *any* ties to the Empire's Court now rolls two dice, adding in his own Diplomatic Stature and the number of ties he has, and subtracting *twelve*. The result is the number of ties he now has to the Court, up to the maximum of the number required for alliance; the negative results are treated as zero. If, after all this is done, any players have enough ties to qualify for an alliance, then 33.44 is used to determine which, if any of them, gains the alliance.

[33.46] Players may spend gold to improve their dice rolls in either of Cases 33.44 and 33.45, but the amount to be spent must be secretly declared prior to any dice rolls being made.

[33.47] If a player goes through a stature check and emerges with a *lower* Diplomatic Stature as a result, then the status of each of his alliances is checked using Case 33.44

[33.48] If a player draws a Leader Dies Heirless card, then he loses all alliances (since he loses all ties). Any other players who possess enough ties to his (former) allies may then attempt (via 33.44) to gain these alliances.

[33.49] Alliance may be voluntarily terminated at any time by the player involved.

[33.5] VICTORY POINTS

Clearly, players must be judged on how well they manage their allies, else they will just suck them dry. Accordingly, whenever a player acquires an alliance, the current Victory Point total for that Empire is noted, as of the instant the alliance takes effect. When the alliance is terminated, any change in Victory Points is added directly to the player's own Victory Point total. Thus, if his allies go down in Victory Points, so will he, and vice versa.

[33.6] DEMISE OF EMPIRES

[33.61] If an Independent Empire ever loses its Court Area and is unable to establish a new one, then it must either be granted asylum by some player, or cease to exist entirely. If more than one player wishes to grant asylum, a procedure similar to 33.45 is used: each player adds his Diplomatic Stature, number of ties to the Independent's Court (before it is lost, of course), and the result of rolling two dice. The player with the highest total is able to grant asylum to the Independent Empire, and necessarily gains an alliance to the Empire in exile. This is treated in all respects as a normal alliance, but the rules governing exile apply in full force (see Section 21.0).

[33.62] An alliance to an Empire in exile is represented by granting the player Empire which has the alliance a number of diplomatic ties sufficient to gain an alliance to the last Court of the Empire now in exile. When the Allied Empire leaves exile, this is the number of ties which the player Empire has to the new Court. It thus behooves the player Empire to so arrange things that the new Court does not require too many ties for an Alliance!

[33.63] If an Allied Empire loses its Court and cannot establish a legitimate new Court, then the player to whom the Empire is allied has a choice: either grant asylum to his ally, or voluntarily terminate the alliance, thus letting 33.61 take effect.

[33.64] If no one wishes to grant asylum to an Independent Empire, then the Empire is more or less dismantled and removed from the game. All of its claims, however, do remain in place. If a Magnate ever appears in an Area of the same language and religion as the Court of the "dead" Empire, and if this Area was *ever* possessed by the "dead" Empire, then instead of a Magnate the original Empire reappears. Leader Statures are determined as though from a Stature Check on a 3-3-3, and six gold units are placed in the Empire's treasury.

The original purpose behind the development of these rules was to allow two friends to play any of the scenarios without having so much extra space on the map. It makes a great deal of difference to the German player that Burgundy, France, Denmark, and Poland are real, semi-coherent Empires on his borders, rather than just more areas to conquer and rule. This difference becomes acutely obvious when the Byzantine gains alliances with some of his neighbors. It makes for a much more interesting game, even with only two players.

There are two reasons for gaining alliances: one, to do nasty things to your live opponents; and two, to get cheap Victory Points because almost any fool can run an

GAME PROFILE

SPIES EVERYWHERE!
A Game for the Entire Player Spectrum
by Steve Fisher

In addition to doing the graphic design, I did some of the final development and testing on this very elegant game. Bob Ryer and I made it a personal challenge to pare the rules down to fit on one 8½″ × 11″ sheet (and succeeded). One of my main jobs was to act as policeman and keep the staff from needlessly complicating a basically simple design. For this reason we have a separate folder of rules known as the Long Game and set in smaller type to actually *discourage* you from using them (even though it's there if you *really* want it). Experienced gamers have a tendency to play the more complex version of a game even if they suspect they might like the simpler version better. It has to do with pride and built in expectations as to what makes a good game. In *SPIES!* the standard (short) game is truly the better game. I here offer personal testimony that just about all of you (and your non-gamer friends) will like *SPIES!*

— Redmond

In its eleven year history SPI has attempted several times to create a game which would appeal to a mass audience. Due to the complexity of the rules, the sheer size of the game or the obscurity of the subject, such games have met with only limited success. All of this will probably change with *Spies*. *Spies* focuses on the five major powers in pre-World War II Europe, and combines the best aspects of games such as *Diplomacy, Stratego,* and *Conquistador.*

During a player-turn an event tile is played, and spies in any cities listed on the tile may obtain money, action chits, or secrets. A player may then move his spies around the board, trying to pick up foreign secrets to return to the home country to cash in for money. Along the way, police may try to intercept a spy or a counterspy may appear and capture the spy. The object of the game is to obtain as many foreign secrets as possible while at the same time preventing friendly secrets from falling into enemy hands. *Spies* is vastly different from most adventure games; while it is an extremely simple game, there is no end to the variety of strategies the five countries can employ.

Spies' appeal to the inexperienced gamer is obvious. With a small four-page rules booklet (approximately equal to one page of standard SPI rules) the game takes only fifteen mintues or so to learn. The large print on the map and the lack of hexes remove the complex-technical look of most wargames. The lack of dice means that the players are relying solely on skill and need not consult any complex combat tables.

Experienced players should not shy away from the game because of the above mentioned features. The entire playtest staff of *Spies* was composed of experienced gamers who were not hindered by the game's lack of complexity. Several features are necessary to make the game more challenging to the veteran gamer. Each player should be allotted five minutes in which to move, and this

time limit should be strictly enforced. In addition, diplomacy should occur only during the turn of one of the players wishing to negotiate. Such rules will greatly reduce the time required to play the game and force the players to pay constant attention to the game and plan out moves in advance; players will find five minutes pass very rapidly. Those looking for a real challenge might try reducing the time limit to three minutes.

Balance

Spies is an extremely well balanced game; in playtesting the order of finish was radically different each game. The five countries can be divided into two groups: the central countries and the outer countries. Germany, Italy and France comprise the former group while Russia and Britain comprise the latter. The central countries are in an ideal position for gaining secrets. France has an easy access to Britain and Africa, Germany has easy access to Scandanavia and Eastern Europe, and Italy has easy access to the European Mediterranean nations and North Africa. While their central position affords Germany, France, and Italy this access, it also makes them good targets. Germany borders on all four other countries (airlines make the countries adjacent). France borders on three other countries. Italy borders on only one other country but is within easy striking range of Britain and Germany. The central countries must play the game offensively to the extreme, endeavoring to obtain as many secrets as possible; it is usually useless for these countries to withhold spies to protect friendly secrets, since too many enemy spies will enter the country in search of these secrets during the course of a game. Rarely do central countries end a game in possession of friendly secrets.

The outer countries are in a different position. While their access to foreign secrets is more difficult, their own secrets are better protected because of their distance from the other countries. Britain is actually not that distant from the majority of the action since it borders on France and Germany, and generally many enemy spies will enter Britain once the supply of secrets in Central Europe has been depleted. Only Germany has rapid access to Russia, via the Berlin-Moscow airline, and if NKVD units are placed in Moscow, use of this route is hindered. Because of the distance between Russia and foreign capitals, other countries will usually send their spies to Russia only after most of the secrets on the board have been captured. The outer countries usually do not capture as many secrets as the central countries, but they often manage to retain some of their original secrets, and often a game is decided on the value of these secrets. Counterspies are of little value to Russia and Britain.

Diplomacy

Players must use diplomacy to reap the benefits of event tiles and to prevent a single player from taking too great a lead. Each player starts the game with ten event tiles. Gaining action chits or money from the "neutral" (white) tiles may not require any negotiation. Since the seven colored tiles received usually list friendly cities, however, and since players do not receive money or action chits for a friendly spy in a friendly city, diplomacy is a necessary part of the game.

An example of such diplomacy is as follows: The German player wishes to play tile "Ge 6." He negotiates a deal with the British player where to move his spies in order to obtain action chits from the play of the event card. In this instance he allows the British player to move his spies into Essen, Hamburg and Berlin. The German police units do not search for these spies. In exchange for the information and the actions of the German player, the British player gives the German player three of the six chits he received from the event tile. Diplomacy should also be used to prevent a single player from gaining too great a lead. Chits may be exchanged, money loaned, or spies exempted from police searches in various countries to achieve this end.

Players may find that they lack the action chits or financial resources to use all of their spies in a given turn. In such instances players should position their spies in foreign cities where they will be able to collect action chits or money from event tiles. Sometimes players will be able to move into cities mentioned on their own tiles. Often, however, such cities will be in friendly territory, and no action chits or money will be received for occupying these cities. In these circumstances, spies should be moved to foreign cities, for it is possible that another player's event tile may list the city the friendly spy occupies. Geneva and Istanbul are two such cities, for they are free of foreign police units and are listed on many event tiles (Geneva on ten, Istanbul on nine). Players who possess papers or escape chits may find it more profitable to occupy foreign capitals, for these cities are listed on far more tiles than the spy-haven cities of Geneva and Istanbul. Berlin is listed on twenty tiles, London on eighteen, Moscow and Paris on seventeen, and Rome on fifteen.

Rules Change/Clarification

One major change and one clarification are necessary in *Spies'* rules. When playing with fewer than five players, the rules state that Germany and Italy are to be controlled by the same person. While this is feasible in the two player game, it is not practical in the three or four player games, especially the latter.

By giving the control of Germany and Italy to a single player, the rules lead to the

creation of a barrier down the center of the map through which no player may safely pass. In addition, in the four player game the German-Italian player is the only player to control two countries, and because Germany and Italy border on each other, it is quite simple for each country to take the other's secrets. Since it is unlikely that the Italian police will be used to stop the German spies and the German police used to stop the Italian spies, the German-Italian player has a tremendous advantage over the other three players.

In the four player game, it is better for one player to control Britain and Russia rather than Germany and Italy. While one may argue that such dual control implies an alliance that is not historical, the rules state that the countries should be controlled independently, as though they were two separate countries. Hence no alliance is supposed to exist. In the three player game, combining Britain with Germany and France with Italy prevents any north-south lines of control; units have much greater east-west mobility.

One additional clarification in the rules is necessary. The rules state that friendly secrets may be placed anywhere in friendly territory. It is important to note that France has territory in North Africa and the Middle East, Italy has territory in the Balkans and North Africa, and Britain has territory in the Middle East. Secrets may be deployed in these areas. Using the change in rules above and distributing secrets throughout the map should enable players to enjoy *Spies* to its fullest. ■■
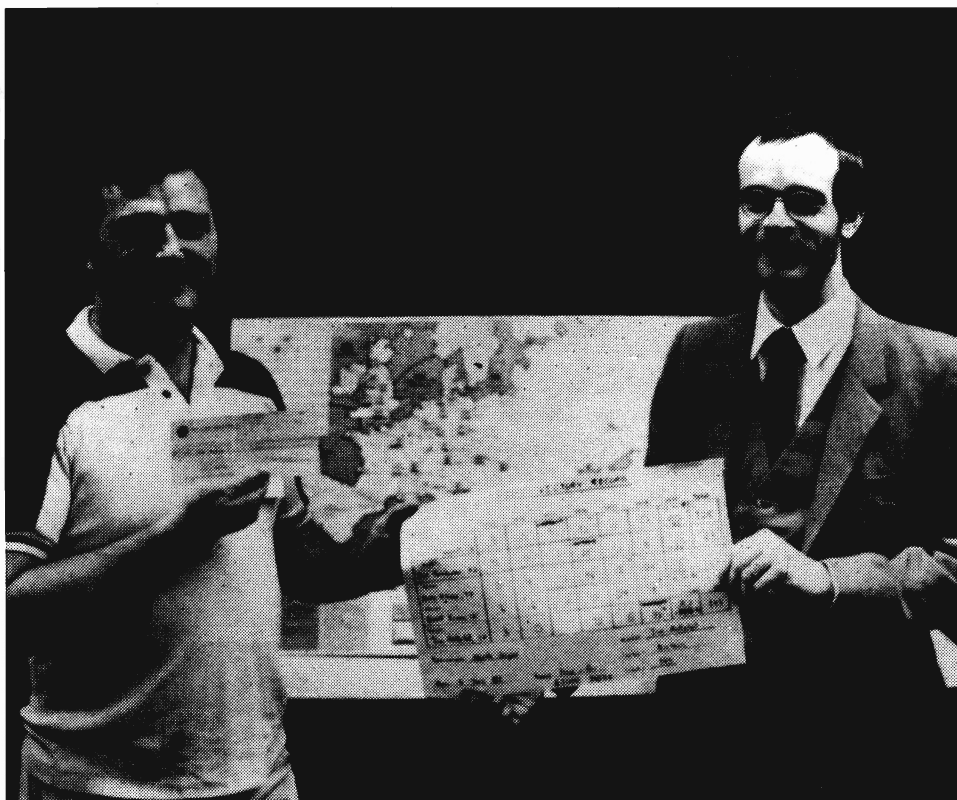
Congratulations to the Master Spy: *Brad Hessel hands a check for $1,000 to Jim Mattatall of Torrance, CA, winner of the Origins 81 **Spies!** contest. Second through fifth place winners were Barrett Eynon, Eric Elfbrandt, Rusty Rhoad, and Jim Hambacher.*

OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

KURSK
Salient Points and Basic Strategies
by Neil K. Hall

Mr. Hall is one of those good friends that SPI is fortunate enough to garner. He greets us (and helps us) at many conventions; provides intelligent and incisive criticism; interacts in an independent but friendly and constructive style on products and systems in products (particularly rules). The terrific thing for SPI is that Neil is a prime example of a fairly substantial body of people who transcend the simple customer relationship with SPI and are in fact part of its basic identity and resource. Without such people as Neil, SPI would be just another small publisher in a special interest field.

— Redmond

Kursk: The Battle

Many wargamers have heard of the battle for Kursk, the major strategic offensive campaign in the East that broke the back of the Werhmacht during World War II, but few know the details. Like many wargamers, my own knowledge was sketchy and for the most part based on hearsay. A few books mention the campaign, but fewer go into detail.

For example, shortly after I started this article, I read *The First and the Last* by Adolf Galland, the noted German pilot and Luftwaffe commander. I was struck by one passage in particular: "In July (1943) the German troops at Kursk lined up for the last large-scale offensive. It was repulsed." Admittedly, his book concerns itself primarily with the war in the air but nevertheless here we have one of the top German leaders, the man in charge of her fighter forces, stating rather laconically that an offensive that was the largest armored battle in history (including any to date) — involving more than two million men, 6,000 AFV, over 4,000 aircraft, and a tested battle plan whose basic strategy had worked since the beginning of the war — "was repulsed." The statement is true, but in light of the facts, it elevates the understatement almost to the level of an art form. Given the size, ferocity, and strategic implications of the battle, more needs to be said.

The German battle plan was elemental and straightforward. The Eastern Front was practically a straight line from the Baltic to the Black Sea except for the bulge near Kursk where the Soviet Kharkov offensive had been stopped in March 1943. As a result of that offensive, and with the war going badly in Africa, Hitler felt he had to gain offensive control of the war. However, even he had doubts about the forthcoming fight. On May 10 Hitler, after outlining his plan to his generals, was asked by Guderian, "Why do you want to attack in the East at all this year?" Hitler

replied, "You're quite right. Whenever I think of this attack my stomach turns over."

The general plan called for the Ninth Army under Model to strike south from the Orel area and for Army Group South under Manstein to go north. Kursk would be the goal of both forces. The armies would have to fight their way through 60 to 75 miles of enemy territory — that was taken into account — but, to date, the panzers had always managed to achieve their goals by punching a hole through the front line so that the infantry could exploit the breach to advantage. At Kursk, however, this was not to be.

There are many reasons why the attack failed. The "Lucy" spy ring, headquartered in Switzerland and operated by Rudolph Rossler, a German World War I veteran completely opposed to Nazism, intercepted the plan. Copies of Operations Order Number Six, code named *Zitadelle* (Citadel), dated 15 April 1943, reached Zhukov and other Soviet leaders before the order was received by the German field commanders! Hitler himself delayed the attack from the first part of May until 4 July because he wanted the new Panther tank (Panzerkampfwagen V) to be available for the fight. The delay added a few hundred, but the Soviets used the additional sixty days to increase the strength of their reserves by 75% and to build at least four more defensive lines: in the north facing the Ninth Army, and around Kursk itself.

Whether the May attack would have succeeded or not is a question which cannot be answered with any certainty. However, the July attack did take place and, as Galland wrote, "It was repulsed."

The German Army, attacking with the major portion of the total war strength available to the Werhmacht, was without doubt the finest strike force in the world at the time. Morale was high, the commanders experienced, and the equipment the finest available. By 10 July, Model's Ninth Army had achieved about six miles of penetration while in the south Manstein's group achieved gains of 25 to 30 miles before being stopped by the Soviet reserves. In one week the finest attack force in the world was shattered and stopped cold; approximately 70,000 men were killed and almost 3,000 tanks were destroyed. Then the Russians counterattacked.

By 23 July, the Russians had not only recovered all the ground taken by the Germans but had made significant inroads into the Orel area as well. By the third week of August, the Russians had taken Orel, were facing Bryansk, and were besieging Kharkov in

the south. In doing so, they effectively destroyed about 100 German divisions.

Eric Goldberg's Kursk: The Game

A complete description of the game mechanics and components would be redundant. The write-up by Mr. Goldberg in *MOVES* 49 (February/March, 1980) and the review by Mr. Thomas Hudson in *MOVES* 51 (June/July, 1980) cover this ground very well. There are a few points, though, that deserve comment.

The finished components of the game are a maze of color, with the red, pink, green, and grey counters. However, it is immediately apparent that a great deal of thought has gone into the layout (my compliments to Mr. Redmond Simonsen). For example, all the armored units have a band across the bottom of the counter for ease of identification in play. Since the headquarters units have the same band, it is obvious that HQ units have mech movement too.

The layout of the map board is also clear. The shape of the Kursk salient is easily delineated by the red and blue fortified hexes. The Terrain Effects Chart details both the terrain and the fortifications in play during each scenario. I could not find any ambiguous terrain hexes, either.

However, there is at least one omission as I see it: there is no victory point value for Belgorod (see accompanying addenda). The only other problem with the map is the trigger hexes for the Soviet off-map May reserves are not complete. These hexes should be marked on the map as triggers because the German player, while knowing the values of Lgov and Kursk, might forget the others (as I did in one game — I was forcibly reminded when I saw the hordes of Russian tanks all around me). The German has a good chance of reaching Oboyan, and may reach Belev or Sukhinichi (by accident or as the result of a trap as there is nothing for the German to gain by attacking toward the north or east). The Belgorod omission was obviously a "human error" while the trigger hexes were probably an oversight by the designer or the playtesters.

There is one area of the map which might occasionally cause a problem. A fight will often devleop in the southwest part of the map during the August scenario because the west side of the salient is lightly held by both sides and because the German reinforcements arrive in that area. However, the Terrain Effects Chart is in this corner of the map and, as all good wargamers know, the

"map edge is the edge of the world" syndrome can become a factor. It is easy to overlay a hex grid on the Terrain Effects Chart as the terrain is mostly clear in that area. This will cause a problem only occasionally, at least in the games I've played, because the Soviet player can't quite get through the German defense in time to do a lot of damage before the reinforcements arrive. Overall, I was quite pleased with the map presentation and the counters with their color coordination by command. Disregarding the human error factor, the map and counters are up to the standards Mr. Simonsen has set for SPI and, for that matter, for the wargame industry.

When the counters are punched out and set up on the two Deployment Displays, the importance of the color coordination is evident. Each of the German Armies and Soviet Fronts are arranged by one specific color combination. This not only speeds setup, but also greatly increases the speed of play because each corps must be kept together and it is relatively easy to spot a dark green unit in a stack of grey ones. The Deployment Displays help here too because there is no tabular listing of the units under each HQ per se. Without the Displays, a player wouldn't know if he had dropped a unit on the floor or if he had too many units in play.

Even with the Displays, setting up the game is time consuming. First, you have to put all 360 combat units and step reductions on the Displays. Then you have to go through the paragraph describing the scenario in use and put each HQ into the noted hex along with all of the units under it. You then have to check the letter designation of each unit to see if it is in play or if it's a reinforcement that will show up later, and you also have to determine the strength of the unit. Needless to say, set-up takes 30 minutes to an hour, based on your familiarity with the game and how well pieces were sorted to begin with. Finally, after much hunting and sorting, the players set up their pieces, leaving the HQ's in the location noted in the rules.

There are a few counter "glitches" (which are noted in the following addenda, page 19), but most are quite minor. Overall, the physical systems are quite acceptable, very attractive, and functional.

The rules are quite detailed and complete. To date there have been very few questions on them. There are a few "gray" areas, but this will always be the case with any game beyond the *Monopoly* level of complexity.

One paragraph should be noted: The *Warning to Experienced Gamers* on the back of the rules folder (it means what it says!). In discussing the rules with Mr. Goldberg, we found that the rules *as written* are usually correct in what they say, and are clear enough to eliminate much of the "interpretation" many gamers are wont to imply. For example, Cases 9.76 and 9.78 taken together allow an overruning unit to retreat into an enemy ZOC. Obviously, retreating into a vacant hex which is in an enemy ZOC is contrary to "normal" wargame rules. The reason for this exception is that an overrun retreat is different from an ordinary combat retreat in that the direction of the overrun retreat is specified and a retreat is required if the enemy stands.

It is worthwhile emphasizing this warning. This game does have many of the mechanics inherent to other East Front games, but it has any number of subtle differences which can easily "trap" an experienced player. Some players may assume that because of the similarity to other games, rules like those governing ZOC to ZOC movement are the same as in other games. We played the game 5 or 6 times before Cases 8.32 and 5.22 soaked in: "A unit which disengages in a given Movement Phase may not enter an Enemy-controlled hex during that Movement Phase." This means that even if you have the movement points to leave the ZOC, you cannot re-enter another ZOC during that phase. The reasoning here is obvious when you think about it: it forces you to keep your armor in reserve. If the armor is in the front line it can't pull out to strike somewhere else during that Movement Phase. However, I can't remember any other game with this rule and we assumed that movement from "ZOC to clear to ZOC" was legal. As stated, we assumed... and we were wrong.

These rules are meant to be read and used *as written*. Granted, a player can change any rule to suit his whim. Personally, I like to play a game as the designer/developer meant it to be played. If I want to design a game or variant I will do so, but in general and especially while learning a game, I want a hard "bible" to go by: one with answers to all the questions I will come up with, and organized so that the answers are both easy to find and to understand. *Kursk* does a better than average job here — the rules are good.

Kursk is a clear step forward in the state of the art of wargaming and, as such, has a number of innovations (with valid if not necessarily obvious reasons for inclusion).

There are a few quite interesting variations that can be developed from these rules. For example, Case 5.51 does not allow a German unit to infiltrate (move ZOC to ZOC) across a dragontooth or river hexside. Case 5.56 does not allow a Soviet unit to infiltrate. However, Cases 6.16, 9.76 (retreats) and 9.78 allow an overrunning unit to retreat into an enemy ZOC and do not prohibit retreats across dragontooth or river hexsides. You can develop a very vicious tactic to exploit these rules (see Figure 1). There are also times when a unit can use the "infiltration by overrun" tactic to extricate itself from a trap.

Some attention should be drawn to the Combat Results Table and the entire attack sequence. This game is one of the few I've found that throws a great deal of uncertainty into almost every attack. The value of the uncertainty is obvious: for once an attacker knows that he has to do more than get 3:1 odds (or whatever) to win the attack. The reason for the uncertainty lies in the CRT and the attack sequence. The CRT was designed to be non-symmetrical — there are some instances (especially when different Modes are involved) when a high die roll will actually give you a worse combat result than a low one. Although the effect is frustrating for the attacker, it does not occur often enough to significantly affect the game and it does add a bit of realism by cutting down the luck of the die, especially when your opponent is a lucky roller.

A part of the combat sequence worth noting is the defender's option to avoid losses in exchange for retreats. The maximum length of a retreat, dictated by the defender's Mode, in turn limits the defender's ability to retreat. This means that an attacker cannot predict the results of an attack, and his entire strategy, for as much as 12% of the game, can be foiled by the defender simply doing something the attacker did not plan on. A single stack can conceivably be attacked as many as six or seven times in one turn, and since the attacker will often make as many as ten or more different attacks on any given turn, it is easy to see how the "fog of war" has been built into this game, at least as regards predicting combat results.

Needless to say, having six or seven attacks against a single stack would be expensive, but it can be worthwhile. One such attack is shown in Figure 2, wherein the German units defending the village of Tomarovka (hex 1818) can be subjected to two overruns in the first Movement Phase, a regular attack in the first Combat Segment, an Assault Mode attack during the second Combat Segment, and possibly two more overruns during the Mechanized Movement Phase. Although the German player would probably retreat rather than face all these attacks, he might decide it was worthwhile to sacrifice a unit to stop a Soviet offensive in that area, or to cause unacceptable armor losses to the Soviet player. Since the Soviet player does not know how the German player will react (and vice versa), the "fog of war" concept is brought out for both sides. The combination of the CRT design and the multiple overruns/attacks create nasty surprises for both sides.

Personally, I like the idea of trying to outguess my opponent and do *not* like the foreknowledge inherent in most games and CRT's. Even though it makes a wargamer's life easier when he knows he can't lose an attack, an actual combat situation cannot be predicted — you never know when a company commander in an untenable position is going to refuse to surrender because he doesn't have the authoriy to do so ("Nuts!"). Both players have to make decisions during "real-time" — they can't just set up an attack, roll the die, and have the assault come off with expected results. This makes the game significantly different from all other wargames I've played.

The Game vs Reality

SPI stands for Simulations Publications, Inc. A simulation (according to my 1957 college dictionary) is something that has the external characteristics of something else. In wargames we have a paper model of a real life event. Since no game is perfect, the game designer/developer has to build mechanics into the simulation that attain three goals.

1. Given the historical data, the end result of playing a simulation wargame should approximate the real-life results;

2. The mechanics of play should give you a "feel" for the more important aspects of the real life event or at least those aspects the designer/developer wants to emphasize;

3. The mechanics of the game should exemplify for the player something of the history

and the strengths and weaknesses of the units and equipment in play.

Jim Dunnigan has often said that a wargame is a paper time machine used by a game designer to show his view of a past event. I believe this is valid. It has been my observation that a good simulation is often a good game, but a good game is rarely a good simulation.

Kursk is an excellent simulation, one of the best I've seen, *and* a good game, especially in the August scenario.

We played the July scenario a number of times using the historical plan of attack and found that the game results modeled history very closely. For example, as the German player, I usually advanced somewhat farther in the north than Model did (2-3 hexrows vs the one hexrow achieved by the Ninth Army) while I could usually get to Oboyan in the south; then the Soviet reserves would show up and push me back to the start line. In the meantime, a Soviet assault force would strike from the north toward Orel, usually making a fairly deep penetration before being stop-

ped. The Victory Point total usually resulted in a draw or a Soviet tactical victory, with the Soviet taking just about the same territory that he did historically! We were quite surprised at exactly how well the game modeled history.

In general, then, *Kursk* does meet the first criteria I set as a good historical simulation of what actually happened, and it therefore shows what would probably have happened if the Germans had used a different axis of attack.

Criteria two: What about that overworked word "feel"? From reading the rules and playing the game I believe the heart of the game is in its Command System. The German player has to think in terms of moving corps containing many units, and keeping track of their location with respect to their HQ's for supply and artillery support. This is very different from finding a spare unit or two to set up an attack or get better odds. It does give the game a "feel" that is different from any other game I've played. I often found myself thinking in terms of: "I'll

shift part of the 20th east to join with the 46th and use the armor of the 47th to try to exploit through towards Dmitriyev-L'gorskiy, and then shift the GvE (Group von Esebeck) armor to reserve in the northwest..." Effectively, I was thinking in terms of moving a corps to do a job and of positioning the appropriate HQ for artillery and supply. I found myself thinking as would a front commander facing many of the same problems of command and logistics. I believe this is what Mr. Goldberg wanted to emphasize and I think he did so remarkably well.

Does *Kursk* show the history of the situation and the thinking of the leaders, Stalin and Hitler? I think so. The Soviet player is limited on the number of reserves he can activate and is always faced with the choice of granting Victory Points to get his reserves in play quicker or delaying the reserves one or even two turns to save the points. (Remember, at this point in the war, the Soviet high command was still worried about Hitler being able to attack Moscow again.)
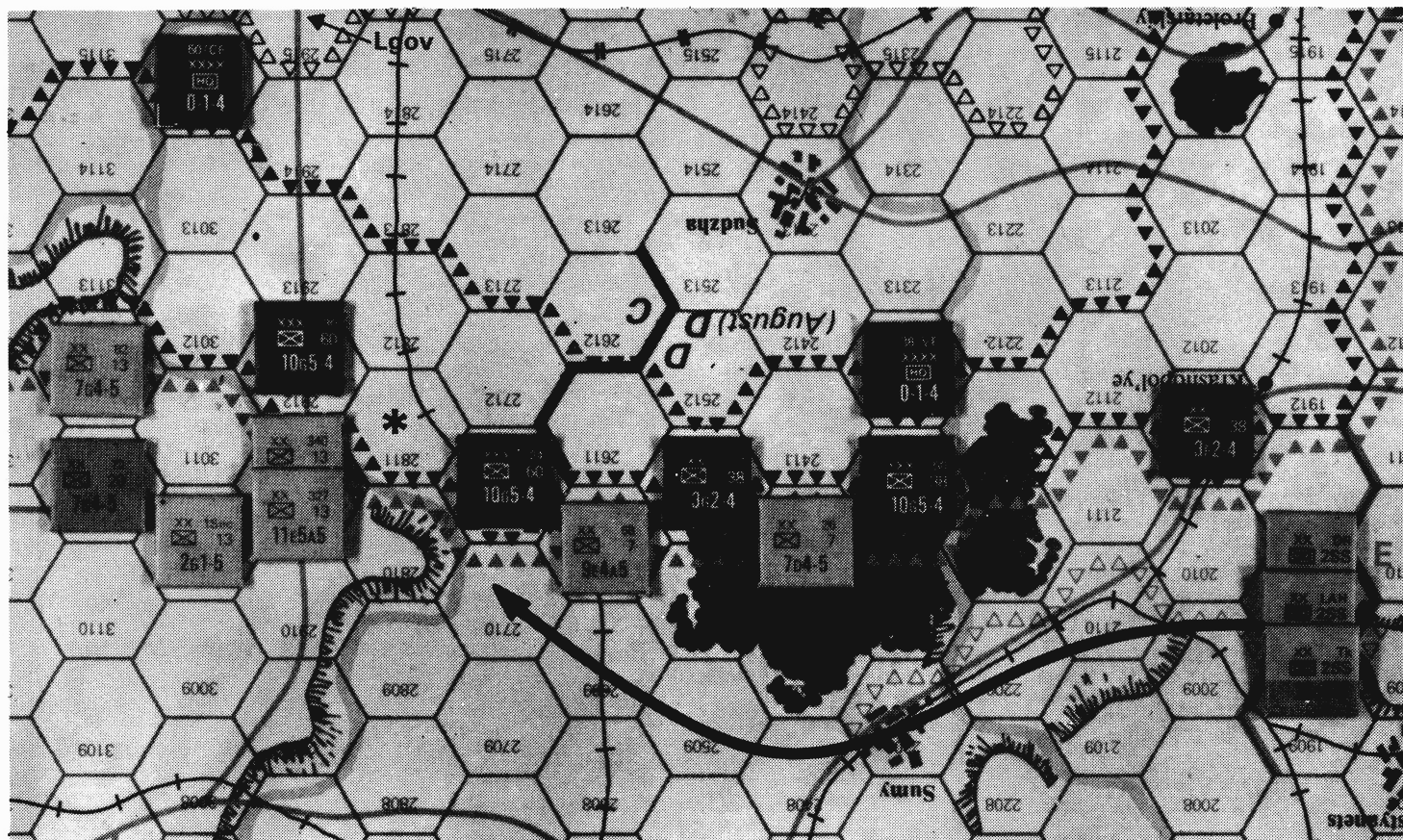
*Key hex (2811) to trap Soviet CF/60/24 out of supply and destroy it, creating a breakthrough via infiltration by overrun.

Figure 1: Infiltration by Overrun

The German player faces a typical defense of the west side of the Kursk salient. His goal is to surround and trap CF/60/24 (Central Front, 60th Army, 24th Corps), and to achieve a breakthrough towards Lgov. The best sequence of moves for the German player is as follows:

1. 2nd/13/327 and 2nd/13/340 (2nd Army, 13 Corps, 327th and 240th Divisions) overrun CF/60/30 in hex 2912. If the Soviet unit...

a) Stands, retreat one German unit (2nd/13/327) to hex 2811, thereby surrounding the CF/60/24 in hex 2711.

b) Retreats to either hex 3012 or 2913, a breakthrough three hexes wide will be achieved upon the destruction of CF/60/24 in hex 2711.

c) Retreats to hex 2812, a breakthrough occurs by an attack on CF/60/24 in 2711 and on VF/38/? (a Soviet untried unit) in 2511.

2. 2nd/13/1Sec moves to hex 3012 (if CF/60/30 retreats to hex 2913 or 2812) or to hex 2911 as needed to interdict Soviet units in the area.

3. 9th/20/72 (to be re-subordinated to the 13th or 2nd SS during the Organization Phase) moves to aid upcoming attacks, or to hex 2811 if Soviet unit retreats.

4. The 2ndSS (all three units) start in hex 1910 and move to hex 2710 for an attack on CF/60/24.

5. The German 7th Corps is in Assault Mode; therefore, the 2nd/7/68 attacks the Soviet division in hex 2511 first, and then CF/60/24 during the Second Combat Section, probably destroying it.

6. During the Mechanized Movement Phase, the 2ndSS moves out (overrunning CF/60/24 if it has survived previous attacks) and expands the breakthrough.

The main value of the potential of "infiltration by overrun" is that it will often force an enemy to retreat when he doesn't want to, because friendly units can retreat into otherwise impenetrable defensive terrain.

Figure 2: Multiple Attacks

An example of multiple attacks against one German stack is outlined below. In the interest of simplicity, artillery and anti-tank have been deleted. It should be noted that this attack is quite costly for both sides and should not be made unless the tactical situation demands it.

1. VF/35Gd Corps (Voronezh Front/35th Guards Corps) in hex 1819 overruns the German 3rd/168 and 3rd/213S divisions (3rd Panzer Corps/168 and 213S Divisions) in hex 1818. The result is on the "0 or less" column of the CRT and is probably 3 Soviet steps lost for 1 German step lost. The Soviet unit must retreat and moves into hex 1719 (an example of "infiltration by overrun," see Figure 1).

2. VF/2GT and VF/5GT tank units overrun the German units in 1818 (30 attack points vs. 6 steps equals 4 column shifts to the left and a +1 on the die roll). The probable result is on the "10-13" column of the CRT and is probably 2 Soviet steps lost for 1 German step lost. Again the Soviet player retreats, with the VF/2GT taking the step loss and moving into hex 1819 and the VF/5GT moving back to the overrun initiation hex of 1919.

3. The 6Gd/89Gd unit is moved to hex 1819 to support the upcoming attacks.

4. Figure 3 shows the positions at the end of the First Movement Phase. During the first Attack Segment, there are 61 Soviet attack points vs. 5 German steps, with a 2 column defensive shift to the left and a +1 modification to the die roll. The result from the "42-49" column probably indicates 2 Soviet steps lost for 2 German steps lost.

5. During the Second Attack Segment (the 6th Guards of the Voronezh Front are in Assault Mode), the 6Gd/22Gd and the 6Gd/23Gd units attack the German stack with 24 attack points vs. 3 steps, with a 2 column defensive shift to the left. The result from the "14-17" column is probably 2 Soviet steps lost for 1 German step lost.

6. During the Mechanized Movement Phase, the VF/5GT overruns the German position with 15 attack points vs. 2 steps and a 4 column shift to the left (to the "0 or less" column). With 2 steps the die modifier is −1. The probable result is 2 Soviet steps lost for 1 German step lost. The Soviet unit again retreats one hex.

7. The second overrun is conducted by the VF/2GT unit with 10 attack points. The column shifts against result in using the "0 or less" column, with a die roll modifier of

−2. The probable result is 2 Soviet steps lost for 1 German step lost. This time the Soviet unit cannot retreat; it must occupy the hex and take the step losses.

8. The final positions of the units are indicated in Figure 4. The net result of the attack would be two German units worth 7 steps destroyed at the cost of six Soviet infantry steps lost (which includes the 6Gd/89Gd division in hex 1819) and four mechanized unit step losses. This type of attack is usually successful, but the cost is high.

Figure 3: Position at the End of the First Movement Phase
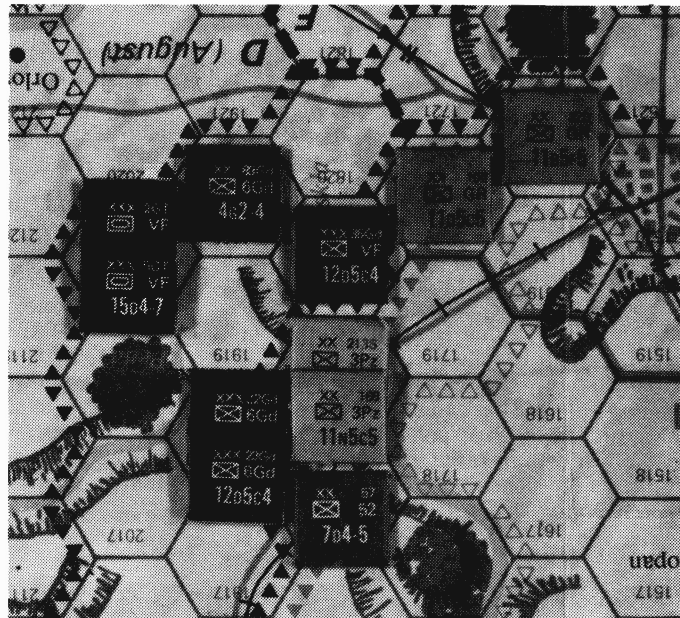
Figure 4: Positions at the End of the Soviet Player-Turn
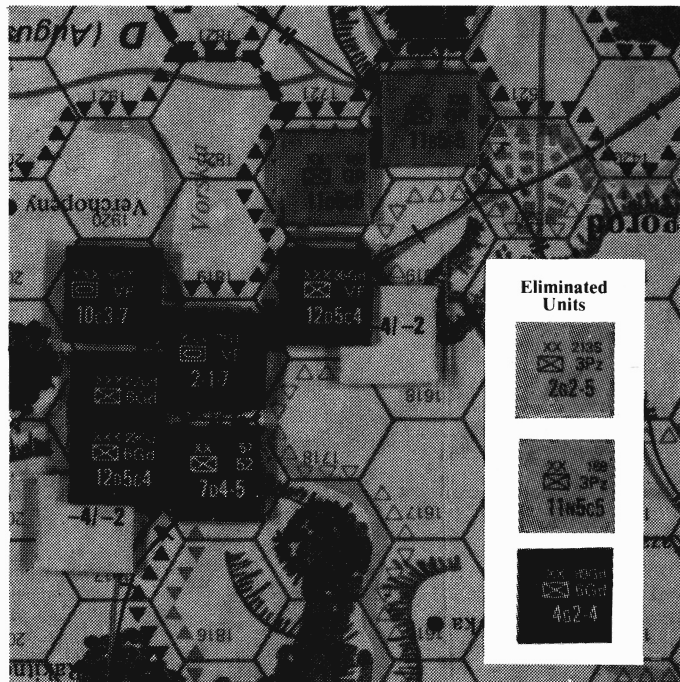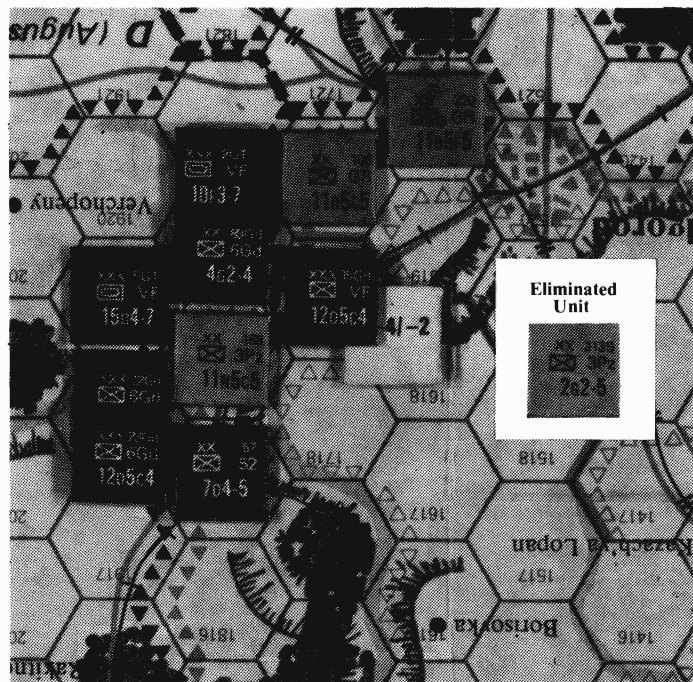
Choices like these are always good in a game — they make a player think. Of course, the burden of the attack is on the German player — he must fight through to a territorial objective without losing the majority of his army. In doing so, the number of Victory Points he will give up for dead units can be unbelievable. Taking Kursk and crushing the Soviet army wouldn't have done Hitler any good if his major fighting force was destroyed in the process. This means the German must (repeat: *must!*) take his objectives at a relatively low cost to his own forces. He can-

not win just by destroying the Soviet Army; the combat system will probably decimate his own army in the process; he must, as planned by the historical commanders, encircle a part (or, preferably all) of the units in the Kursk salient. This is in line with the overall strategic necessities of the war itself. I think the July scenario does in fact meet all three criteria for a good simulation. It is an excellent model of the real battle, not only in the expected outcome but in giving the players a good feel for the fight itself in the role of an overall front commander and for the real

restrictions the actual commanders had to operate under as well.

Is *Kursk* a good game? This is a difficult question to answer because it is very subjective. What comprises a good game? In general, I feel a good game should include the following:

1. It has to make me think. I enjoy a game like *Midway* or *Ogre* upon occasion, and the Napoleonic Quads are fun for a change of pace, but I like a game that requires my full concentration and skill.

2. Both sides must have a reasonable chance for a victory, preferably based on skill and enterprise. Although it is often difficult for the German player to win at *Kursk*, he does have quite a few options at his disposal which can be used to surprise the Soviet player. Further, as previously noted, the Soviet player *can* surprise the German, too. The July scenario does give the German a fighting chance, but the odds are against him. He must plan thoroughly and take advantage of every opportunity that brings him closer to his final goals. The short number of game-turns denies either player the time to really change his primary objectives once the fight starts (you can't start a major offensive to take Kursk from the south and then decide to shift to the west to crush the pocket and take Lgov instead). This game requires pre-planning on a strategic level, and then working out the necessary tactics to get the job done.

3. A good game requires action (translation: *blood!*). This game does have that! The loss rate for both sides is enormous, although it sometimes is not directly obvious except for the large number of step loss counters on the infantry units. This loss rate, by the way, reflects the basic parameters of the battle itself in that the German offensive was committed to fight through to their objectives in the hell-for-leather fashion while the Soviet Army was committed to fight to the last man.

4. As an adjunct to combat action, a good game should have a lot of movement. In this respect the July scenario does not measure up, primarily because of the nature of the battle itself. There is movement, of course, especially by the German armor when the Soviets are on the offensive, but in general, it is limited to a few hexes at a time to set up or block an attack. The only significant movement occurs during the first turn or two, and later if the Soviets achieve a breakthrough which the German armor has to stop. A German breakthrough usually doesn't go too far before it stops due to the lack of troops needed to support the break and protect the exploiting armor.

5. Ideally, the defender should start weak and get strong while the attacker suffers from the attrition of the fight. *Kursk* has these factors built into the game. The Soviet reserves are slow in showing up where they are needed (but they do arrive!) and the German reserves are few to begin with (a maximum of five divisions, and four of these only if he is winning!).

Kursk is a good game in that it meets 4 of the 5 criteria I personally set for a game.

Strategy and Tactics: Kursk in July

We played the July scenario a number of times to learn the game and establish play. The first few games were played with the historical axis of attack to see what happened. Unfortunately (I was usually the German player), the historical attack seemed doomed to failure, so I tried a variation. The west side of the Kursk salient is always very lightly defended by both sides. The 48th Panzer, the 3rd Panzer, and the 2nd SS Panzer Corps were sent to crush the southwest corner of the salient, and equally strong forces to attack the northwest corner. The object of this attack was to try to crush the pocket instead of cutting it off. I limited my immediate goals to the taking of Sudzha (hex 2413, for a gain of 3 German Victory Points plus a 12 point loss for the Soviets), Dmitriyev-L'gorskiy (hex 3415, for another 4 point swing) and Lgov (hex 2915, for an 18 VP swing and a supply of German reinforcements). If the fight went well I would push on towards Kursk.

In general, I was able to accomplish these objectives, although the fight around Lgov was usually a hard fought battle and a toss-up as to whether or not it would fall. I can report that once, by a great and daring ruse, I was able to take Kursk — my opponent was tricked by a masterfully planned attack and left the east-west road between Lgov and Kursk open, allowing the 13th Corps HQ to run like mad towards Kursk (he blew it on the last game-turn!). That one was fun! Usually though, unless I was able to destroy the Soviet line on the first few game-turns, I was not able to do much better than a draw.

It should be noted that the balance of power will shift with almost every Player-Turn. I would make an attack and then set up what I felt was a good defensive position. The Soviets would counterattack and either trap some of my units or threaten all kinds of things down the line. I would respond to these threats, blow a hole or two in the line, and perhaps advance, making it look like the game was almost won. He would then come back, causing me to suspect that the Eastern Front was not a very nice place to be in July 1943. The interesting part of the game was that neither player could foresee the significant shifts in the balance of power which took place every Player-Turn. Until we learned the value of the Soviet counterattack in the immediate area of the battle and elsewhere (more on this in a moment), I could occasionally "blow him away" or at least achieve a draw.

Curiously, the most effective strategy we found for the Soviet player is: attack! We noticed that whenever the German army was retreating, I would bounce my armor reserve corps around like tennis balls, attacking Soviet thrusts to counter them. The Soviet version of this type of "brush fire" counterattack in the area of a German attack is effective, too, but carrying the concept one step further is even more effective — the Soviet player can start battles in two or three other areas much earlier than expected.

In one game the Soviet player hit hex 1220 with massive artillery and infantry on the first Game-Turn, keeping some armor from the Southwest Front Reserve both in reserve and in the attack. Being in Assault Mode on the 72+ column (counting artillery), I decided my 5-step infantry division commander was basically sane because he ran like all hell was after him. Using the armor, the Soviet player expanded the bridgehead, and the next thing I knew, my attack had been redirected from Kursk to Kharkov. He eventually took Belgorod and was adjacent to Kharkov when the game ended.

He also set up an attack from the north toward Orel which kept my main armor reserves busy simply containing it. This meant I had to use all available strength to contain the Soviet assaults instead of forcing the fight towards my objectives. During the next game, I was prepared and stopped the assaults, but the cost was high and again my own attacks suffered. Overall, the best Soviet defense we found is several selected assaults to draw off German strength before the German can make deep inroads into the Soviet line.

For the German, the best bet still seems to be the southwest and northwest corners of the salient. One attack variant which has fairly good potential is to send the 48th Panzer and 3rd Panzer Corps to knock off the far southwest corner around the village of Krasnopol'ye (hex 1912) on the first attack, and then to use mech movement to send the armor toward Ryl'sk (hex 2911) for use during the next Game-Turn. The Soviet will have to activate one or two tank army reserves located in that area, meaning some of the infantry reserves located in the far southeast area will not get to the front in time to do much good.

This plan requires getting the German infantry to the center quickly, or the vaunted panzers will do little more than hold the front line! Therefore, the German *must* pay particular attention to the placement of his units, with an eye to clearing the road through the southwest corner and being in position to follow the armor to the center of the salient immediately. This attack plan does two things: first, it will bring a massive concentration of armor and infantry to bear on a thinly held line, allowing the Germans to be in a position to blow a major hole in the line, and second, it will force the Soviet to respond to the German instead of the other way around. As an additional benefit the German will be threatening a Victory Point hex (Sudzha, hex 2412) with forces to the south and the new attack from the west.

In the north I usually try to take some of the hexes around Mtsensk (hex 4330, for a swing of 5 VP's), set up a coherent defense with two or three reserve armor corps, and make a few attacks to see what happens. In general, I rarely have much luck coming in from the north. The most I ever accomplished was to take Dmitriyev-L'gorskiy (hex 3415) in the northwest corner of the salient. "Lucy" is very effective in the north — Zhukov is usually ready and waiting for Model!

One other area bears watching, especially during the August scenario. The 4th Army area is very weak (the far north edge of the German line) and is subject to attack. If the Soviets get one or two armored units into that area, the German will have to send two to four units to stop the Soviet attack. Although it is unlikely that a major threat will develop in this area due to Soviet movement problems, there is always the possibility of a breakthrough allowing the Soviets to flank Bryansk. The Soviet objective is primarily to tie down German troops, since it is relatively easy to prevent Bryansk from being overrun. The German needs to counter the attack as soon as possible to prevent too many troops from being needed.

Although we played the May scenario, we did not explore it in as much detail as either July or August. Basically, the results seemed to be similar to those of July in a scaled-down version.

Kursk in August

The August scenario is the real sleeper! By my criteria, it is a good simulation and a very good game, especially with those units of the 3rd Panzer arriving in the nick of time.

As usual we set up the initial assaults along the historical axis of attack. In the north, the German tried to hold Orel, almost lost the entire 9th Army, and finally stopped the Soviet assault a few hexes from Bryansk, which is close to what actually happened. In the south, the main battle occurred around Kharkov because the Victory Point swing for its loss is too big for the German to lose or the Soviet to pass up. In general, the Soviet took Kharkov, the German pushed him back out, and then the final attacks by both sides determined the outcome of the game. Here, the Soviet player did not advance as far west as the Soviet Army did historically because there was no reason for him to do so in the game. This is a minor fault and not worth the addition of a special Victory Point hex in the west to lure the Soviet player into a truly historical solution. Besides, Kharkov was an extremely important Soviet objective — they just couldn't take it, given the initial strength of their attack. Therefore, given the historical Soviet axis of attack, the game again models history well.

Why is this scenario a better game than the others? The reasons lie in the special rules for this scenario, which simulate the low German morale and the damage done to the German Army in July — the army had been beaten in a "fair" fight, something that had never happened before. All previous defeats had a "valid" reason: Stalingrad was a trap caused by the failure of the Axis allies to hold their line and the bad weather, while the North Africa defeat was caused by supply problems and the unreliability of the Italians.

After the assault on Kursk, however, the German army at the end of July 1943 was in a state of shock and badly damaged. This is reflected in the first turn attack rules, allowing the Soviet player to blast the Germans almost everywhere with extra column shifts and forcing the Germans to either stand and take very high losses or to retreat and lose the fortified line of defense and become disrupted. The retreat/disrupted result means the German player will lose the use of those units for both the first turn (the German player doesn't have a first turn) and the second turn. Since this amounts to 25% of the game the choice is difficult indeed!

The second rule reflects the shock of the defeat by limiting the number of attacks the German can make without penalty. The third rule that is important is Case 21.46: "For the duration of the scenario subtract *one* from every combat result affecting a Soviet stack in supply..." The reason this rule is so important is that Soviet units are very brittle. They cannot take much damage without being destroyed. For the other two scenarios this brittleness is correct; in the May and July scenarios, the Soviet player is on the defensive except for specific counterattacks and being brittle is not a problem beyond preventing him from going on an all-out offensive before he should. In August, though, he has to take the offensive and the Combat Results Table does not allow even high odds attacks

to be made without the attacker taking significant losses. The result of this rule is that the Soviets can smash the German lines in the north, probably trapping a number of German units. The German player must then extricate himself and form a line which slowly falls or is pushed back towards Bryansk. In the south, however, it is a very different story!

As previously noted, both forces are very weak on the west side of the salient. However, the Soviet player does have tank armies in the southwest corner of the salient which can be used to blow through the German 7th Corps, resulting in its destruction by the end of the game, and then be employed to roll up the southwest part of the German line in the area of Trostyanets (hex 1808). After breaching the river line, the Soviet tanks and what few infantry units that can keep up will be cleaning up the area and forming a defensive line to stop the German reinforcements which will be coming from the north. The Soviet should try for the German reinforcement hexes (0907 and 1107) and Krasnograd (hex 0506, worth 25 Victory Points). Since reinforcements must enter on a given hex during their turn of entry, the Soviet player can prevent German reinforcements from entering play by occupying the eight hexes around the entry hexes. Granted, it is unlikely that he will be able to hold all of these hexes, but he can still scare his German opponent and perhaps channel the German path of entry. This is why I previously mentioned the Terrain Effects Chart. It can interfere with play. The German player can use it as an anchor to hold off the Russian attack or to block Soviet movement.

The usual result of a Soviet attack in this area is a tank melee over a wide front, usually with a dangling flank and *never* with enough infantry to fill the line. This battle can last for three or four turns — almost half of the game — before being resolved. This fight will also determine the winner of the game for the losses alone are very heavy for both sides. If the German player reacts fast enough, he can toss a few units into the fray to slow the Russian tank assault for a precious turn, gaining time to activate his own off-board reserves on Game-Turn Three. As usual, it is costly: the Russian player will get 5 Victory Points. Both German off-board reserve units in the area of the fight will hold the Soviet for another turn, until 3rd Panzer Corps shows up on Game-Turn Four. By this time, the Soviet forces should have broken through around Kharkov, and the German player must now decide how to split his forces to deal with two very real threats. This is a difficult decision and, from the standpoint of good gaming, a good one for the player to have to make.

Needless to say, the northern front is also active. Since the Germans will have had to redeploy troops, including the GvE Armored Corps, to hold the north flank of the attack described above, the German defense is weaker in the north around Orel and can be exploited by the Soviet player.

Although this attack has produced the most interesting games for us, it is by no means a "free walk" for the Soviet player. He will have to work for his victory and the end result will hinge on the German player's ability to foresee the actual axis of attack and

to react to it. The German must defeat the Soviet player in the "hand-to-hand" combat which will result. This, by the way, is a graphic lesson in what happens when tanks go hunting by themselves. Tank vs tank will always be a wild fight, but tank vs tank *plus* infantry is disaster for the player missing the infantry. Again, the game reflects reality.

The basic Soviet strategy in all scenarios, and in August in particular, should be to launch a number of attacks to overwhelm the German player's ability to defend and thereby force him to commit his armored reserves to the front. Once committed they are very difficult to move elsewhere, and the Soviet, especially in August, can then implement his main line of attack to obtain his primary goals of Bryansk, Kharkov and so on.

In the May and July scenarios, the German player should pick his goals and go straight for them. In August, however, his goal is to simply survive and wait for a Soviet mistake. Given a bit of luck and a lot of skill, the German player can then launch an attack of his own to take a Soviet-held Victory Point hex, one of the German victory conditions, and perhaps to cut off an extended attack and crush it.

The Curses of Kursk: Problems

Most of the problems of *Kursk* can be summarized in one sentence: This is definitely a game for the simulation faction in wargaming, and secondarily for gamers in general. For example, the strong point of the game is its excellent ability to simulate the battle that was the turning point of the war. Kursk was a battle that is difficult to put into game terms, but the game's unsurpassed Order of Battle and its ability to show the problems of controlling an entire front at the corps level proves that it could be done. As a simulation, it is one of the best games around. As a game, it is just better than most.

By definition, nothing is perfect and *Kursk* is not perfect. Some of the problems are the long set-up time, the long playing time (about 1 to 2 hours per turn), the complexity and the sometimes tedious combat resolutions: the many types of terrain that affects the combat resolution with column shifts, and the intermediate steps like anti-tank gun fire, artillery support, etc.

The set-up time is greatly helped by the use of the Deployment Displays; however, these could have been improved by the addition of blocks for all combat counters and their step reductions. In the May and June scenarios, this could be very important.

One of the major problems can be trying to determine which units begin at what strength in each scenario. The system devised by Mr. Goldberg, using the 21-letter designations (with the location of the letter on the counter to show strength reduction) that indicate whether a unit is in play or might show up as a reinforcement, is comprehensive but it is a lot of trouble to have to look at 360 units (720 if you have to look at both sides) to see which units are on station and which ones are to be used in any given scenario. If all of this information was included in a tabulated listing (the Deployment Displays would have been an excellent place for the lists) of units and strength vs scenario, the players would have a much easier set-up effort (see page 20).

KURSK ADDENDA

Rules

[6.13] *(correction)* Delete the phrase "...before it expends any Movement Points."

[6.16] *(correction)* The second sentence should read: "The Zones of Control of Enemy units being overrun are *ignored* by the overrunning units until that overrun is resolved."

[11.16] *(clarification)* The last sentence should read: "Thus, *most* supply and communication restrictions do not apply to anti-tank and artillery units (see 11.59)."

[11.51] *(correction)* Delete the phrase "— for the entire Game-Turn."

[11.59] *(clarification)* An out-of-supply German headquarters unit is restricted in its use of Anti-tank and Artillery Points exactly as out-of-supply Soviet anti-tank and artillery units are.

[13.22] *(change)* Terrain does *not* affect anti-tank combat. The Phasing player's units do *not* get the benefit of terrain in their current hex.

[18.18] *(clarification)* The Unit Manifest/Order of Battle has *nothing whatsoever* to do with the play of the game. It is useful only to those who are interested in historical research. If you are still confused, simply delete Section 22.0 from the rules.

[18.27] *(addition)* Any reinforcing unit may be in Independent Command when it enters the map, provided the limits in 11.15 are not exceeded.

[18.48] *(addition)* Either player may choose to extend a scenario by an extra Game-Turn if he grants the opposing player *five* Victory Points. Immediately upon the conclusion of the Organization Phase of the Soviet Player-Turn of the last regularly scheduled Game-Turn, the German player must declare whether or not he wishes to exercise this option. If he declines, the Soviet player may choose to do so.

At the end of the first extra Game-Turn, the player who did *not* extend the game may choose to add yet another Game-Turn by granting his opponent *ten* Victory Points. The game may never go beyond a second extra Game-Turn.

Victory is calculated in the usual fashion at the conclusion of the last extra Game-Turn.

[22.0] *(clarification)* Key to German Codes, 10th line should read: "Y: Other theater of the war *or* not yet formed."

Tables

[9.93] COMBAT MODIFIERS TABLE *(omission)* 6.0: During an overrun, *shift 2 to the left.*

[18.5] MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION TABLE *(correction)* 7.11–7.14 *Unit Stacking Point Values* should read "*Any* Soviet Corps: 3" not "Soviet Rifle Corps: 3."

Counters

1. *Front,* 95th Infantry Division, 2nd Panzer Army, Germany: Delete stripe across lower portion of counter.

2. *Back,* 56th Infantry Division, 35th Corps, 2nd Panzer Army, Germany: Delete stripe across lower portion of counter.

3. *Back,* 707th Static Infantry Division, 46th Panzer Corps, 9th Army, Germany: The Step Value should be **1.**

4. *Front,* 332nd Infantry Division, 52nd Corps, 4th Panzer Army, Germany: The Movement Allowance should be **5.**

5. *Front,* 2nd counter, Totenkopf Division, 2nd SS Panzer Corps, Germany: The values, which are slightly obscured, should read **22K6-8.**

6. *Fronts,* 1st and 2nd counters, 6th and 31st Tank Corps, Voronezh Front, Soviet Union: The unit type for all should be armor.

7. *Front and back,* 1st counter, 10th Tank Corps, Steppe Front, Soviet Union: The Indicator Letter on the front face should be **J**; on the back, **P.**

Front, 1st counter, 1st Guards Mechanized Corps, Steppe Front, Soviet Union: The Indicator Letter should be **V.**

8. *Back,* 28th Guards Rifle Corps, 8th Guards Combined Arms Army, Soviet Union: The unit designation should, of course, be **28Gd.**

Map

1. The city of Belgorod (1520) is a Victory Point hex worth **2/10.**

2. The major cities of Kursk (2821) and Lgov (2916) and the minor cities of Belev (4827), Korocha (1624), Kupyansk (0424), Livny (3333), Oboyan (2320) and Sukhinichi (5423) should all be marked as trigger hexes for conditional reinforcements (see 19.52, 19.62, 20.52 and 20.62).

3. Delete the forest terrain from hexes 4022, 4023, 4123 and 4124. These hexes contain steppe (i.e., clear) hexes.

4. The Central Front headquarters should be deployed at hex 3023 (the village of Vorobevka; not printed on the map) during the May and July scenarios. Similarly, the Voronezh Front headquarters should be deployed at hex 2322 (the village of Bovrischevo) during the May and July scenarios. **Note:** The Soviet player may deploy units subordinate to these two headquarters (only) out of communication and supply range to fill gaps in the front line. (Obviously, the deployment given in the rules could not take the above errors into account.)

Displays

1. *1st image,* 21st Guards Rifle Corps, 4th Guards Combined Arms Army, Soviet Union: This image should be replaced by that of the **8th NKVD Motorized Division.**

2. *1st image,* 29th Guards Rifle Corps, 8th Guards Combined Arms Army, Soviet Union: This image should be replaced by that of the **28th Guards Rifle Division.** □ □

ADDITIONAL MARKERS AND COUNTERS FOR *KURSK* (see next page)

[11.12] Alternate Subordination Markers

German

4th Army Alt Sub	2 Pz Army Alt Sub	9th Army Alt Sub	2nd Army Alt Sub	4 Pz Army Alt Sub
ADK Alt Sub	1 Pz Army Alt Sub	2 SS Cps ALt Sub	3 Pz Cps Alt Sub	GvE Alt Sub

Soviet

West Ft Alt Sub	Bryansk Ft Alt Sub	Central Ft Alt Sub	Voronzh Ft Alt Sub	Souwest Ft Alt Sub
Steppe Ft Alt Sub	4Gd CAA Alt Sub	21 CAA ALt Sub	47 CAA Alt Sub	8Gd CAA Alt Sub

[16.4] Additional Units

German Front

II 503 Alt	II 505 Alt	II 51 Alt	II 52 Alt	II III/GD Alt
II SSPan Alt	II 216S Alt			

Soviet Front

3 PartDiv X P 0-2-6	Chapeyev X P 0-2-6	Dantsenko X P 0-2-6	Duka X P 0-2-6	Bytosh X P 0-2-6
Orlov X P 0-2-6	Panasenko X P 0-2-6	Romaschin X P 0-2-6		

German Back

II 503 Alt 7-1-7	II 505 Alt 7-1-7	II 51 Alt 8-1-8	II 52 Alt	II III/GD Alt 7-1-8
II SSPan Alt	II 216S Alt			

Soviet Back

3 PartDiv X P 0-1-6	Chapeyev X P 0-1-6	Dantsenko X P 0-1-6	Duka X P 0-1-6	Bytosh X P 0-1-6
Orlov X P 0-1-6	Panasenko X P 0-1-6	Romaschin X P 0-1-6		

ADDITIONAL RULES TO *KURSK*

[11.12] *(optional change)* When a unit is placed in alternate subordination, it becomes subordinate to an *entire* German Army or Soviet Front. Such a unit can draw supply and so forth from *any* headquarters in the army or front. Thus, a unit in alternate subordination to the German 9th Army could be commanded by 41st Panzer Corps, 46th Panzer Corps, 47th Panzer Corps, 20th Corps, 23rd Corps or 9th Army headquarters. Players should create counters modeled on those indicated on page 19 when using this option.

Designer's Note: Several players have complained that the current alternate subordination rule requires some "messy" bookkeeping (and, after becoming confused as to the current headquarters of a unit in alternate subordination during a recent play of *Kursk*, I must agree with them). This optional rule, which allows all independent units to be treated as army or front-assets, diverges slightly from 1943 doctrinal practices.

[16.4] ADDITIONAL UNITS *(new rule)*

One decision believed to weigh heavily on the outcome of the Kursk offensive was the choice of timing. A May attack would have allowed the Germans better campaigning weather and, more importantly, would have faced a considerably less prepared Soviet defense. Adolf Hitler's justification for delaying the attack seems to have been a fascination with the technologically-advanced AFV's Germany had just begun to produce. This fascination is apparently shared by a few amateur historians, who expressed disappointment that these "wonder weapons" were not fully represented in the countermix. I believe the evidence of history shows the units originally not included to have had little or no effect on the course of the battle (as evidenced by the title of this rule). However, there is no reason not to take this opportunity to make *Kursk* all things to all people.

If this rule is used, the players must make facsimilies of those counters depicted at the bottom of page 19.

[16.41] The German player (*only*) has the option to bring the new units into play. He may exercise this option at any time until he moves a unit during the Movement Phase of his second Player-Turn.

[16.42] The German player receives *no* Replacement Steps. Instead, he chooses one of the new German units for each Replacement Step he was due to receive during that Game-Turn. He also has the option to grant the Soviet player *three* Victory Points for each additional unit he brings into play. The German player can bring all of his new units into play during a turn if he does not mind the expense.

[16.43] The German player places his new units on the map during his Movement Phase. Each unit must be placed in a hex with an *army* headquarters unit, and then is free to move.

[16.44] The Soviet player receives, without penalty, as many new units (Partisans) as the German player did during the preceding Player-Turn. These are placed on the map during the Soviet Movement Phase. A new Soviet unit must be placed on the Soviet side of the current front line and at least *three* hexes away from the nearest German unit.

[16.45] A new German unit is considered to be in alternate subordination (per the new Case 11.12) to its army headquarters. A new German unit may *never* change its subordination.

[16.46] A new Soviet unit is always considered to be in communication. Such a unit is considered to be in supply *unless* all hexes adjacent to it contain German units or ZOC's (a Soviet unit, as usual, negates a German ZOC in its hex). A new Soviet unit has a "weight" of **1** Stacking Point.

[16.47] The **51, 52, III/GD, SSPan** and **216S** units may not be used during the May scenario.

[16.38] The **653rd** and **654th** Heavy Tank Destroyer Battalions (of the 2nd Panzer Army) may not move across a major or minor river except through a road hexside. **Note:** As these units are in the original countermix, this rule may be adopted without the rest of this section.

[16.49] The extra new Soviet unit is not used in play, and is included for historical purposes only.

[18.16] *(clarification)* Several players have asked for an alternative to the Indicator Letter system, and some have been unsure whether off-board units can enter play during a particular scenario. The Initial Attack Strength and Step Display (18.6), provided with this section, can either complement or supplant the Indicator Letter system. It answers all questions about the appearance of units.

[18.6] INITIAL ATTACK STRENGTH AND STEP DISPLAY

The unit designations are organized exactly as they appear on the deployment displays. The first number is the *Attack Strength* and the second the *Step Value* at which the unit is initially deployed during a particular scenario. Values are indicated by reading across for the May scenario (19.0), the July scenario (20.0), and the August scenario (21.0). For headquarters, the letters in parentheses indicates the status of that unit in order of scenario and should be read across as May, July and August respectively.

If values are in **bold italic** type, then it is necessary to place a $-2/-1$ marker on the unit. Some values and headquarters designations are followed by a code. The codes indicate the following information:

c: The unit can enter play as a conditional reinforcement.

i: The *headquarters* begins the game in play.

n: The unit never enters play.

r: The unit enters play as a reinforcement.

NA: The unit was not present at this time or not yet formed.

?: Soviet units are set up in the scenario though the player does not know the values on the reverse counter face.

Units without codes begin the scenario in play.

GERMANY

4th ARMY

56th Panzer Corps

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
321/56	4-2	9-4	9-4
31/56	7-4	7-4	3-2

2nd PANZER ARMY

2PG/2Pz	10-4r	10-4	6-2
95/2Pz	*7-3n*	9-4	9-4
653/2Pz	NA	11-2	6-1
654/2Pz	NA	10-2	5-1

35th Corps

56/35	7-4	7-4	3-2
262/35	7-4	7-4	3-2
299/35	9-4	9-4	*7-3*

53rd Corps

25PG/53	8-3	14-5	6-2
5Pz/53	12-4	16-6	8-3
211/53	9-4	9-4	4-2
293/53	*7-3*	9-4	4-2
112/53	7-4	7-4	3-2
208/53	9-4	9-4	4-2
34/53	7-4	7-4	7-4

55th Corps

339/55	7-4	7-4	7-4
110/55	7-4	7-4	7-4
296/55	7-4	7-4	7-4
134/55	9-4	9-4	*7-3*

9th ARMY

129/9	7-4n	7-4n	7-4
183/9	3-2n	7-4n	7-4
253/9	3-2n	7-4n	7-4
103Lt/9	2-2	2-2	2-2
Mil/9	3-1	3-1	3-1n

41st Panzer Corps

292/41Pz	*7-3*	9-4	4-2
86/41Pz	9-4	9-4	4-2
18Pz/41Pz	8-3	16-6	8-3

46th Panzer Corps

102/46Pz	7-4	7-4	7-4
258/46Pz	7-4	7-4	7-4
7/46Pz	7-4	7-4	3-2
707S/46Pz	6-2	6-2	3-1[1]

47th Panzer Corps

20Pz/47Pz	12-4	16-6	8-3
9Pz/47Pz	12-4	16-6	8-3
2Pz/47Pz	16-6	16-6	8-3
6/47Pz	NA	7-4	7-4

20th Corps

251/20	7-4	7-4	7-4
137/20	7-4	7-4	7-4
45/20	7-4	7-4	7-4
72/20	7-4	7-4	7-4

23rd Corps

78Sm/23	*10-4*	12-5	*10-4*
216/23	7-4	7-4	7-4
383/23	*9-4*	11-5	4-2
36/23	7-4r	7-4	3-2
102LT/23	2-2	2-2	2-2n

2nd ARMY

7th Corps

75/7	7-4	7-4	7-4
88/7	3-2	3-2	3-2
26/7	7-4	7-4	3-2
68/7	*7-3*	9-4	9-4
323/7	3-2	3-2	3-2

13th Corps

340/13	3-2	3-2	3-2
327/13	*9-4*	11-5	11-5
1Sec/13	2-1	2-1	2-1
82/13	7-4	7-4	7-4

4th PANZER ARMY

16PG/4Pz	8-3c	14-5c	8-3c

52nd Corps

332/52	11-5	11-5	*2-1*
57/52	7-4	7-4	3-2
255/52	7-4	7-4	7-4

48th Panzer Corps

167/48Pz	11-5	11-5	4-2
GD/48Pz	26-8	26-8	22-6

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
3Pz/48Pz	16-6r	16-6	12-4n
11Pz/48Pz	12-4	16-6	12-4

ARMY DETACHMENT KEMPF

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
23Pz/ADK	8-3c	12-4c	8-3c

Group Raus

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
106/GR	11-5	11-5	*9-4*
320/GR	*9-4*	11-5	*9-4*

42nd Corps

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
161/42	11-5	11-5	*9-4*
39/42	7-4	7-4	7-4
282/42	11-5	11-5	*9-4*

1st PANZER ARMY

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
355/1Pz	7-4n	7-4n	7-4

57th Panzer Corps

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
15/57Pz	9-4	9-4	9-4
198/57Pz	11-5n	11-5	11-5n
328/57Pz	NA	9-4	9-4
17Pz/57Pz	12-4	12-4c	12-4c
GvM/57Pz	1-1	1-1	1-1

ARMY GROUPS CENTER AND SOUTH RESERVES

2nd SS Panzer Corps

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
DR/2SS	26-8	26-8	22-6r
Tk/2SS	26-8	26-8	22-6r
LAH/2SS	26-8	26-8	NA

3rd Panzer Corps (i,i,r)

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
213S/3Pz	2-2	2-2	2-2
168/3Pz	11-5n	11-5	*9-4*
19Pz/3Pz	16-6c	16-6r	12-4
7Pz/3Pz	12-4	16-6	12-4
6Pz/3Pz	16-6	16-6	12-4

Group von Esebeck

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
4Pz/GvE	8-3	16-6	12-4
8Pz/GvE	8-3	12-4	12-4
12Pz/GvE	12-4	16-6	12-4
10PG/GvE	10-4	6-2	6-2

Independent Command

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
SS Wiking	12-4c	16-6c	12-4

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
WEST FRONT

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
25Tk/WF	9-3	13-4	9-3

10th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
385/10(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
371/10(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
330/10(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
247/10(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
139/10(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

50th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
38/50	10-5	10-5	*8-4*
1Gd/50	4-2	4-2	4-2
325/50(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
324/50(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
212/50(?)	NA	3-2	3-2
49/50(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

11th Guards Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
8Gd/11G	12-5	12-5	*10-4*
16Gd/11G	*10-4*	12-5	4-2
36Gd/11G	12-5	12-5	5-2
108/11G(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
217/11G(?)	3-2	3-2	NA

BRYANSK FRONT

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
153F/BF	NA	2-3n	2-3
25/BF	10-5	10-5	4-2
1Tk/BF	13-4n	13-4n	5-2
1GTk/BF	15-4	15-4	6-2
20Tk/BF	13-4	13-4	9-3

61st Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
89/61	10-5	10-5	4-2
9Gd/61	12-5	12-5	4-2

3rd Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
41/3	10-5	10-5	4-2
415/3(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
356/3(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
110/3(?)	NA	3-2	NA

63rd Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
40/63	10-5	10-5	*8-4*
397/63(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
348/63(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
271/63(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
41/63(?)	3-2	3-2	NA

11th Combined Arms Army (c,c,i)

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
53/11	10-5c	10-5c	5-2
369/11(?)	NA	3-2c	3-2
96/11(?)	NA	3-2c	3-2

3rd Guards Tank Army (c,c,i)

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
12Tk/3GT	9-3c	13-4c	9-3
15Tk/3GT	9-3c	13-4c	9-3
2Mc/3GT	10-3c	16-4c	10-3

4th Tank Army (c,c,i)

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
11Tk/4Tk	9-3c	13-4c	9-3
30Tk/4Tk	9-3c	13-4c	9-3
6GM/4Tk	11-3c	18-4c	11-3

CENTRAL FRONT

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
119F/CF	2-3	2-3	2-3
154F/CF	NA	2-3n	2-3
160F/CF	2-3	2-3	2-3
19Tk/CF	13-4	13-4	9-3
161F/CF	2-3	2-3	2-3

48th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
399/48(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
170/48(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
143/48(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
137/48(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
73/48(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
16Lit/48(?)	3-2	3-2	NA

13th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
15/13	10-5	10-5	4-2
29/13	10-5	10-5	*8-4*
17Gd/13	12-5	12-5	4-2
18Gd/13	12-5	12-5	*10-4*

70th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
28/70	10-5	10-5	4-2
250/70(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
181/70(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
162/70(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
140/70(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
106/70(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
102/70(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
280/70(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

2nd Tank Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
3Tk/2Tk	13-4	13-4	9-3
16Tk/2Tk	13-4	13-4	9-3

60th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
24/60	10-5	10-5	10-5
30/60	10-5	10-5	10-5

65th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
77/65	10-5	10-5	10-5
354/65(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
246/65(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
194/65(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
69/65(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
60/65(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

VORONEZH FRONT

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
35Gd/VF	12-5	12-5	*10-4*
2GT/VF	10-3	15-4	10-3
4GT/VF	10-3n	15-4n	10-3
5GT/VF	15-4	15-4	10-3

6th Guards Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
22Gd/6Gd	12-5	12-5	5-2
23Gd/6Gd	12-5	12-5	*10-4*
89Gd/6Gd	4-2	4-2	4-2

40th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
47/40	10-5	10-5	10-5
48/40	10-5	10-5	*8-4*
309/40(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

1st Tank Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
6Tk/1Tk	13-4	13-4	13-4
31Tk/1Tk	13-4	13-4	13-4
3Mc/1Tk	16-4	16-4	16-4

69th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
305/69(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
270/69(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
183/69(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
111/69(?)	3-2	3-2	NA
107/69(?)	3-2	3-2	NA

38th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
50/38	10-5	10-5	10-5
240/38(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
204/38(?)	NA	3-2	3-2
167/38(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

5th Guards Tank Army (c,r,i)

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
18Tk/5GT	13-4c	13-4r	13-4
29Tk/5GT	13-4c	13-4r	13-4
5GM/5GT	18-4c	18-4r	18-4

7th Guards Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
24Gd/7Gd	12-5	12-5	5-2
25Gd/7Gd	12-5	12-5	*10-4*
213/7Gd(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

SOUTHWEST FRONT

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
2Tk/SoF	13-4	13-4	9-3
23Tk/SoF	13-4	13-4	9-3n

57th Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
68/57	10-5	10-5	10-5
64/57	10-5	10-5	10-5
303/57(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

6th Combined Arms Army[2]

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
26/6	10-5	10-5	4-2n

1st Guards Combined Arms Army

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
4Gd/1Gd	12-5	12-5	12-5

UNIT	MAY	JULY	AUGUST
6Gd/1Gd	12-5	12-5	12-5
172/1Gd(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

STEPPE FRONT

10Tk/StF	9-3r[3]	13-4r[3]	9-3
1GM/StF	18-4r[3]	18-4r[3]	18-4

5th Guards Combined Arms Army

32Gd/5Gd	*10-4*	12-5	*10-4*
33Gd/5Gd	*10-4*	12-5	*10-4*
97Gd/5Gd	4-2	4-2	4-2

27th Combined Arms Army

26Gd/27	5-2	12-5	*10-4*
241/27(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
166/27(?)	NA	3-2	3-2
155/27(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
71/27(?)	NA	3-2	3-2

53rd Combined Arms Army

49/53	*8-4*	10-5	10-5
75/53	*8-4*	10-5	10-5
252/53(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
84/53(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2
256/53(?)	3-2	3-2	3-2

MISCELLANEOUS

21st Combined Arms Army (c,c,c)

61/21	*8-4c*	10-5c	10-5c
69/21	*8-4c*	10-5c	10-5c
174/21(?)	NA	3-2c	3-2c
95/21(?)	NA	3-2c	3-2c

8th Guards Combined Arms Army (c,c,n)

28Gd/8Gd	*10-4c*	12-5c	4-2n
29Gd/8Gd[4]	*10-4c*	12-5c	4-2n

4th Guards Combined Arms Army (c,c,c)

8NK/4GD[5]	4-2c	4-2c	4-2c
21Gd/4Gd	12-5c	12-5c	12-5c
20GA/4Gd	14-6c	14-6c	14-6c

47th Combined Arms Army

23/47	*8-4c*	10-5c	10-5c
52/47	*8-4c*	10-5c	10-5c
227/47(?)	NA	3-2c	3-2n

NOTES:

1. See addenda correction for *counters*, note 3.

2. The 6th Combined Arms Army headquarters is placed in play during the August scenario, *despite* not having any units to command.

3. See addenda correction for *counters*, note 7.

4. See addenda correction for *displays*, note 2.

5. See addenda correction for *displays*, note 1.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following questions are all answered in the rules, but might require some interpretation. My thanks to Neil K. Hall for compiling this section.

Case 5.55: German Infiltration Movement

Q. If two German units are stacked at the start of movement, could first one unit infiltrate, and since both units are still in supply and adjacent, could the second unit now infiltrate?

A. No, only the first unit may infiltrate; however, the second unit is now free to move per normal rules of movement.

Case 7.12: Stacking Point Values

Q. Is a German Kampfgruppen worth one or two Stacking Points? Case 7.12 says two, but the counter designation is that of a regiment which has a Stacking Point Value of one.

A. A Kg has a Stacking Point Value of two as per Case 7.12. The designation **Kg** means an ad hoc unit which could contain as few as 2,000 men and still be an effective fighting division. The key is that the unit remained structured as a division even when split off from the parent organization. The counters are noted as regiments (in accordance with the official designation) because of the lower manpower and attack strength represented by a Kg.

Case 8.12: When Zones of Control are Exerted

Q. Case 8.12 states that Zones of Control do not extend into city hexes. Does this include both major cities and minor cities?

A. Yes.

Q. Do Zones of Control extend out of all cities?

A. Yes.

Cases 9.33 and 13.3: Restrictions on Combat Resolution and German Anti-tank & Artillery

Q. If two Soviet mech units attack, one from a clear hex and one from across a river, and the German anti-tank fire eliminates the unit attacking from the clear terrain, does the German unit now receive the defensive shift for the river?

A. Yes.

Q. If the German artillery fire suppresses the unit attacking from the clear hex, does the German player receive the defensive shift?

A. No, because the artillery fire is assumed to strike all attacking units and suppression is not the same as elimination.

Case 9.45: Explanation of Combat Results

Q. If a disrupted unit is in a stack, is the entire stack considered disrupted if attacked, including the requirement to retreat?

A. Yes, although the attacker determines what mode the defending units are considered to be in.

Cases 9.82 and 9.83: Advance after Combat

Q. If a unit is in a friendly entrenchment hex and is then eliminated as a result of combat, can the attacker pass the entrenchment hex per Case 9.83?

A. No, the limit of advance is still the entrenchment hex itself.

Case 14.31: Soviet Unit Breakdown and Recombination

Q. Why are three Soviet divisions worth one Soviet corps? Three divisions have a total Step Value of 6, while a corps has a Value of 5.

A. The Soviets were just starting to operate on the corps level at this time in the war and were not efficient in organization as when operating at the division level. *Kursk* stresses command control and this is reflected in both the Step Values and the Combat Strengths for both players.

Case 19.43: Special Units

Q. The SS Wiking unit starts in Independent Command; must it remain in Independent Command?

A. No.

Cases 19.62, 20.62, and 21.62: Soviet Conditional Reinforcements

Q. Can the Soviet player activate some on-board reserves if the German player reaches a trigger hex?

A. No, only off-map formations may be activated by the trigger hexes.

Case 20.43: Special Rules

Q. Is there any limit on the number of resurrected Soviet artillery and anti-tank units which may be assigned to any one reserve formation?

A. Yes, Case 20.62 states that the resurrected units must be placed in the headquarters' hex; therefore, only one unit of each type could be attached to each of the reserve formations. ■ ■

Kursk *[continued from page 18]*

The long play time reflects the numerous decisions both players have to make, not only during move planning, but also during real-time while play progresses. There are basically three ways to speed play of this game:

1. Close your eyes and charge! Actually, this is not as bad as it sounds because if the attacker can concentrate sufficient force at the right place, he can achieve a breakthrough. It is unlikely that he will succeed, however, especially against a good player. The attacker who plans ahead will keep the defender off balance and is the one who has the best chance of winning.

2. Use the Optional Command System, Case 11.6. This deletes the need to keep track of all units and their respective HQ's for supply, communications, and German artillery/anti-tank fire. It allows any HQ in a formation to substitute for another HQ. The disadvantage of this is that you will lose most of one of the best facets of the game, the Command Control system. For the gamer who is in a hurry or more interested in just playing a game, this rule will be of value. The gamer who is interested in the full simulation aspects of the game should not use this rule.

3. "No Peekee," optional rule 16.1 (Limited Intelligence). Although this rule helps the Soviet player more (he has more units to stack in any given hex), it will speed play by cutting down the extremely detailed planning before every attack that is required by some players. Players can still plan attacks carefully, but they will be operating without complete knowledge of the enemy dispositions. Actually, this isn't too bad. The CRT doesn't hurt the attacker too much unless he runs into a stack with a high step count. The attacker should pay enough attention to detail to know where the large defending units are located, at least in a general way.

Two rules are most confusing. First, the overrun attack/movement is a significant exception to the basic attack and movement sequence. In particular the ability of an overrunning unit to retreat into an enemy ZOC leads to some unusual and unreal tactics. In general, it makes a line impossible to hold unless very weak units such as Soviet divisions and German KG's are set up in every hex with a strong back-up line to contain the inevitable breakthrough. Since it is not possible to cover every frontline hex, both players have to play for and expect an overrun/infiltration break in their front line. On the plus side, this feature adds to the "fog of war" aspect of the game by making it impossible for either player to know exactly what will be the net result of the attacks in any given sector.

Second, the numerous column shifts required by terrain, supply, communications, etc., can be confusing. Generally, though, a player will learn to count the shifts fairly quickly. We usually ignore column shifts for anti-tank fire since the anti-tank units tend to "go away" fairly quickly. If terrain were a factor, even a 10-3-4 anti-tank unit would be firing on the "0 or less" column most of the time.

The only other draw back to the game is the large number of die rolls per turn. These
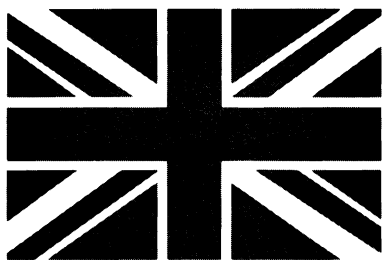
MOVES IN ENGLISH *edited by Charles Vasey*

KURSK
by Bob Malin

The Eastern Front seems to exercise a very great effect upon the boardgaming hobby. I have never seen the attraction of two of the nastiest political systems in the world hacking at each other. Maybe it is the overtones of Gotterdammerung that appeals. Whatever, and however, Kursk as a battle seems to have attracted great interest as a clash of titans. It has been the subject of several games over the years but Eric Goldberg's swansong game is perhaps the oddest (or is that original?) of them all, and it's for this reason that I prevailed upon Bob Malin who actually enjoys this subject to test and review the game. I can only marvel at his stamina!
— *CHV*

With the possible exception of Stalingrad, the battle of Kursk must be the most talked about episode of the war on the Eastern Front. Stalingrad showed that the Germans were not invincible; Kursk ripped the heart out of the military machine that came close to dominating Europe.

The preface to Kursk was the brilliant recovery by the German forces after the hammer blow of "Operation Star" — the Soviet offensive in February, Kursk and Belgorod being captured on the 9th, and Kharkov on the 17th of that month. Manstein had managed to overcome Hitler's "stand-fast" mania and succeeded in keeping the mobile forces more or less intact. By the middle of March these mobile forces had recaptured Kharkov. Then the most influential general of the war intervened — General Mud — thus effectively ending any decisive actions for both sides. The Germans were re-established on the Mius-Donet line and the Soviets controlled the Kursk-Lgov salient.

As early as the 12th of February, Hitler had been issuing orders in preparation for his summer offensive. If the Germans were going to truly regain the initiative on the Eastern Front, then the Kursk salient had to be eliminated as soon as possible, before the Soviets had a fully coordinated defensive network. During the weeks that followed, the build-up of both sides (or lack of it in the case of Germans) caused the jump off date to be put back further and further as the Germans got into the "Catch-22" situation of needing tanks to break through the Russian defenses, only to see the defense strengthen so that they needed yet more tanks — until the scale was tilted irrevocably against the German assaulting forces.

With hindsight it is easy to see that Kursk was a battle that should never have happened as it was one of the most one-sided contests in history: indeed, it might never have occurred had not one very powerful man become obsessed with an impossible dream.

In terms of game design Kursk would seem to be an impossible dream, yet Eric Goldberg accepted the task. Indeed, he goes to great lengths to tell us about the large amount of blood and sweat put into the "most ambitious undertaking of my professional career." All I can say is — I tried, Eric, I really did try. In fact I spent more time on this game than any other I have played in the past three years. In eight playings occupying nearly one hundred hours of playing time, I am left with very mixed feelings.

In issue 14 of *The Wargamer* John Hill stated the following: "Reviewers and critics tend to apply the same yardsticks to all games, despite their potential dissimilarity. To my knowledge there has been almost no attempt to look at games as to what their intended purpose is. As an example let the designer clearly state what his pre-design intent was, and then either applaud or crucify him on the judgement of how well he obtained that goal." What follows is a review of *Kursk* following precisely those guidelines.

Six times on the game box the claim is made that it contains a simulation of "Kursk — History's Greatest Tank Battle." Only once is mention made that it really contains a game. If Mr. Goldberg wants me to review his effort as a simulation he can expect a fair amount of criticism; as a game I can give him praise for creating a situation that opens up many options for players and creating a quite high level of excitement.

For a simulation to be successful, it must teach players the lessons of history regardless of the variation of the strategy applied by the players. Historically, the Germans learned that it was difficult, to say the least, to achieve a decisive breakthrough when you have to fight through a network of fortifications 110 miles deep in places. How do you simulate the cool calculating manner in which the Russians blunted the Blitzkrieg that was unleashed on the 5th of July 1943? The answer is...with extreme difficulty.

The average wargamer does not have the resources to read extensively into the details of any particular battle, but even the average amount of research will show that the Germans were unable to use their superior morale, weapons and training in the way that had given them so much success in the past. The most important factor in reducing their effectiveness was lack of mobility — I now quote an extract from *War Monthly No. 1* in which they quote a German officer:

"For all our bitter struggling in the North we moved virtually nowhere — we stood still. It was like Verdun in 1916....Each

time the smoke cleared away we saw Teptoye again, but it was like a mirage, we never got any nearer."

Another quote, this time by Stalin to the Supreme Soviet:

"We were an immovable mass against which the fascists tried to pitch an irresistible force. A scientific impossibility....They never had a chance."

It is clear that any attempt at simulating the German assault on the Kursk salient must emphasize the grinding down of the erstwhile invincible mobile forces. In theory the rules are very tight in allowing forward movement through modes and advance after combat; in practice this is insufficient (allowing the Germans to move their full movement allowance during the mechanised movement phase seems too generous).

Other elements which need to be brought out through the game to make it a simulation include the lack of imagination which the Germans showed in both the planning and execution of their operations and the cloudburst of the 5th of July that broke the banks of the River Pena, slowing the advance of 48 Panzer Korps, as well as stranding tanks which were picked off by the Red Air Force. The bombing of the German railhead at Poltava is another feature which seems to be lacking in this effort to confront the players with a simulation of Kursk.

In my eight playings the results were as follows: *German* Strategic Victory 2, Tactical Victory 4, Draw 2; *Russian* Victory 0. It seemed difficult for the Germans *not* to make an early and decisive breakthrough. For example, while playing the May scenario, Lgov was captured on Game-Turn *One!* Kursk was regularly being captured by Game-Turn Six. At first I thought I was playing the game using the wrong set of rules — my set is now in shreds, having been checked time and time again to insure that we were interpreting the rules correctly. The above results were achieved by the obvious strategy of not attacking north/south, but rather by making the *schwerpunkt* of the main attacks three or four hexes west of the original. The aim being to unite the armored thrusts in the Lgov area to create a major drive on Kursk.

Other historical lessons which seem to be incorrectly portrayed by the "simulation" concern the ubiquitous dragonsteeth. First, let me quote an extract from SPI's study *The Russian Front*: "The actual defense was based on a system of strongpoints, coupled with minefields. Each strongpoint had three to five guns, some anti-tank rifles, mortars, some sappers and a machine-gun section.

Those strongpoints in the vulnerable positions had up to twelve anti-tank guns...To augment these strongpoints, minefields were deployed with a density of 2400 mines per mile of front and 2700 anti-personnel mines in the same area."

Marshal Rokossovski, joint commander on the Kursk front, was to say that these minefields were so dense "you could not have put one of Goering's medals between them." Yet this complex fortified system is represented on the map by dragonsteeth — giving the impression that the Germans were being delayed by rows of pyramidal concrete blocks. Admittedly these were used, but the understanding of the situation confronting the protagonists would have been more accurate if a better impression of the defensive network had been given.

As mentioned earlier, I felt that I was not playing the game as it should be played, but this feeling is compounded by the Player's Notes, from which I quote: "The German player will often be faced with a solid Soviet line which, almost as often, he can break."

Historically, the Germans proved themselves incapable of penetrating the Soviet lines to the degree in which James Smolen takes joy in telling the Soviet player will happen and how this event is to be countered.

Time and time again, we see rules that fall short of giving a true reflection of the real effects of the historical systems. One shining example is the use of anti-tank units. In his designer's notes Eric Goldberg states that "The Soviet anti-tank guns blunted many a German offensive throughout the two weeks of battle"; in the game, however, the anti-tank units are lucky to knock the odd step or two out of a German stack before disappearing into thin air, despite a contrived rule reducing their losses. This leads me on to the Combat Results Table itself.

On careful examination of the possible outcomes, I failed to see any logic to it at all — all it forces the attacker to do is make purely mathematical attacks, as any attacks within the 23–42 bracket are less cost effective than using fewer attack factors.

When one sees these inaccuracies within a game, one gets the feeling that there must be a good reason as the designer is obviously trying to give the correct "feel" rather than the correct effect, but I can see little if any justification.

For example, historically the Germans only achieved anything like a major breakthrough after 8 days (4 turns) of intensive fighting. In playing the game using historical lines of advance, the Germans can advance at least double this rate of advance despite the tight-fisted advance after combat rules.

The game system just does not strip away the mobility of the German armored forces which was the foundation stone of their success throughout the war. The Soviets succeeded in forcing the Germans into an attritional set piece battle. The simulation of Kursk fails in this respect.

Kursk: The Game

As a game Kursk achieves its aim to a much greater degree! Many innovations are brought into the game which enliven the interest of those fans of the *Panzergruppe Gu-*derian system. Kursk is obviously not suited to the basic *PGG* system and is in need of a unique game system to reflect the uniqueness of the situation. As shown above, the game's system as such fails to simulate the Battle of Kursk, but it does succeed in giving the players plenty to think, panic and sweat about, albeit in a historical situations.

Much is done to aid the players in setting up the game — the use of OB charts and the paraphrasing of salient points of the rules on the tables and charts are particularly useful. The piece de resistance is the color-coding of the counters for army organisation. I can only hope we see use made of this in future games.

Considering that three different set-ups are required and there is a limit to the amount of information that can be put on a half-inch square counter, the system of indicator codes used is a good idea. However, the initial deployment lists could have been laid out in a less eye straining manner.
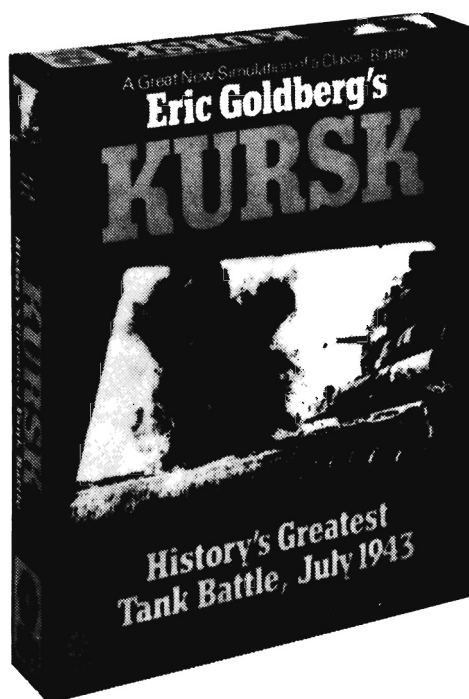
When discussing the playthroughs of the game, I did not include the three false starts caused by inaccurate reading of the rules. This has always been a moot point as to who creates these problems. I am prepared to give ground on this point, but **some important** points were buried deep within the generally well laid out rules.

We all know about the intense effort put into creating "The most complete Order of Battle ever seen in a game," and Eric Goldberg should be applauded for his very worthy efforts, but as many readers in the computer industry will know, you can have the best software in the world but it can be rendered useless if the hardware is faulty.

The hardware of Kursk is its game system. There are some very nice original ideas and interesting variations on themes gleaned from previous productions. At first sight it looked like being a great system, one to dislodge even the *PGG* system. In practice it was a struggle to make all those nice ideas coalesce into the unique whole needed to give it that spark of true originality.

Air Warfare. There was nothing too original here. The system abstracts the historical use of aircraft in their wide-scale use as tank busters.

Artillery and Anti-Tank. This too at first sight looked like a very good idea for simulating the different doctrines of the opponents, yet this could not be easily fitted into the Combat Results Table except through the contrived rule of halving anti-tank losses. Artillery comes nearer to the mark in its effects, especially in creating the prodigious Soviet barrages crucial to their success.

Modes. This must be considered the game's crowning glory. This system simply must be used in future games as this concept does more than any previous game in showing the doctrinal differences of the two military machines. It is clear, concise and has the desired effect. If only the other subsystems had been developed to the same degree.

Steps. The idea of the use of steps to show the staying power of units was another idea which looked excellent in theory, yet in practice did not bring about historical results. I was not able to glean any accurate figures for Soviet losses from my reading, but the Soviet deadpile in all our games seemed too large. The inability of the Soviets to add replacement steps to front line units seems hard, as the opportunity to pull out units for allocation of these replacements were very few and far between; often 5 or 6 much-needed replacement points were unused. I feel sure that the Soviets did have more staying power in their infantry divisions than portrayed in the game. Without the two or three column shift benefit of the entrenchments they are easy meat for attacking forces.

The cogs of the combat system may not mesh smoothly but it does integrate more elements into a CRT than a number of games I could mention. As mentioned earlier I have never considered myself as a "mathematical" wargamer — calculating the exact number of points required to obtain an objective — but after discovering the quirks of the CRT I found myself forced into that frame of mind (with good reason for when conducting attacks outside the 14–22 point bracket, the equivalent of 3–4 divisions were saved on earlier games in which losses had been equivalent to 9–11 panzer divisions!). Attacks in the 23–42 bracket did result in horrific attrition for both sides but more in favour of the defenders. The attacker only has advantages in the 36–42 or higher columns, with average shift changes thus requiring all attacks to consist of 50+ points — i.e., three panzer divisions plus artillery support and infantry cannon fodder. (I can only assume this was the designer's intention).

The final proof that the system is not one suitable for that which it was designed to portray is when one sees the number of contrived "special" rules required to simulate the Soviet counteroffensive. Was the German staying power so much better in their own defenses than the Soviet's tremendous efforts that the Soviets needed so many pluses to achieve the desired effect? After one solo attempt at the August scenario I thought better of trying it face to face.

From everything I have said up to now, most readers will probably think that I hated

the game. This couldn't be farther from the truth. I didn't like the simulation of the battle but I thought the "game" was great. I must have to have played it eight times. I have never had so many last turn cliffhangers in a game.

The game relied so much on the occupancy of Kursk and Orel. As the Soviet player all my efforts were aimed at capturing Orel once my reinforcements were triggered by the German capture of Lgov. But the Germans had normally offset the balance so far in their favor that they could reinforce against a threat on Orel and still have sufficient strength to capture and hold Kursk against the offensive potential available to the Soviets at that stage of the game — in the two strategic victories outcomes Kursk was being held by four very battered steps of the once glorious 2nd SS Panzer Korps!

As the German player one does well to follow most of James Smolen's advice, except that the main aim should be to link both thrusts — regardless of losses — to stand any chance of having sufficient force to capture Kursk. Also, never waste forces in reducing Soviet units if they can be cut off (thanks to good old infiltration movement — you should have listened to your playtesters, Eric).

The Soviet player seems to lack the mobility in crucial areas — particularly in his vital defense weapons, the anti-tank guns, which, as Class II units, struggle through friendly entrenchments trying to join stacks sufficiently strong to deter enemy assault. More often than not, they were overrun for their trouble after falling behind their accompanying forces.

Soviet mobility is further impeded by the less than helpful rail net and the strict rules applied to their use. If the German player is careful in the timing of his attacks that will trigger the reinforcements, he can be sure

that these forces will not interfere too much with his offensive designs. These ahistorical restraints thus force the Soviet player to keep a large proportion of his anti-tank forces in reserve, awaiting the inevitable German breakthrough.

The German player can find a great deal of success for very little effort. His efforts should be based on careful planning of attacks designed to rip holes in the Soviet front regardless of the state of the defense prepared by his opponent. Despite warnings to the contrary, he is able to shift forces from the line if they cannot make any headway to points more likely to achieve a breakthrough. Once Lgov succumbs to the inevitable the only tenable Soviet-defense line is four vital hexes nearer to Kursk. The German player will then have at least one turn to organise his hammer blow assault and keep his supply lanes free of interference from partisans and the like. Psychological warfare is another weapon in the Werhmacht's arsenal, especially if the armored forces achieve the large penetrations early in the game. The Soviet player is likely to be distracted from his attacks on Orel and Belgorod if an early threat is likely to capture Kursk.

As a game, *Kursk* is certainly a strain on the grey matter for both players and can be fun in a morbid way. Success does not depend on the whims of the die but rather on the differing abilities of the players to organise and coordinate their forces to gain most benefit from the rules. Unfortunately this puts less, rather than more, pressure on the German player, thus throwing simulation out of the window; the Germans should have been made to sweat and strain for every hex gained — just as they did historically.

In summary, I hope that I have stayed within my brief by reviewing the game as the designer demanded — i.e., as a simulation of

the climactic episode in the history of the War in the East. I feel too much effort was expended on the OB to the detriment of development of systems truly capable of reflecting the problems faced by the two sides. I wouldn't have lost any sleep had the OB been slightly inaccurate if in return I had played a game which had taught me the problems faced by a commander trying to crack a toughened walnut with a small hammer. Instead I was shown how this hammer could first shatter the shell and then batter the nut into submission.

The game is held together by a number of good ideas which only succeed in creating a rather shallow and gimmicky feel. In spite of everything going against it, the game manages to provide an extremely tight and tense situation for the opponents to surmount. Unfortunately this was not the designer's *stated* intention and in consequence he cannot accept the praise that this achievement would ordinarily warrant.

The history of the world contains many "what-if's." Games too follow the same trends; what would *Kursk* the game have been like if the designer had had more time, more money for more counters, a bigger map and so forth? Historically the Germans were lacking in critical areas; the game reflects many of the problems encountered.

Kursk is an enigma, both the battle and the game. Historically it should never have happened, yet did; the game looks as if it should work, yet does not come off. It is not for me to recommend a cure, but it does seem such a shame that so much effort should be wasted for the amount of fine tuning required to achieve the designer's aims. *Kursk* held so much promise but was too far beyond the reach of the man who decided to grab the nettle. Perhaps history has been repeated after all. ■ ■

Kursk [continued from page 22]

are necessary since the attack sequence allows for many attacks, especially anti-tank fire. I don't consider this a major drawback as it will help average out the luck factor in a game, especially one with only 7 to 9 turns.

It would be worthwhile to mention two more points of possible confusion, although both are minor. First, the Indicator letter on the counters does not correspond to the Unit Manifest/Order of Battle. The letters used in the two systems refer to different subjects. Second, the term "Line of Communication" as employed in the game is different from the usual usage (did I mention something about a "Warning to Experienced Gamers"?) and, for once, actually means what it says: it refers to the approximate radio communication range between a unit and its commanding HQ. This is why the Line of Communication can cross an enemy unit or its ZOC; this is the first instance where I have seen a realistic definition of the term in a game.

Opinion Time

My opinion of *Kursk* is obvious: I think it is one of the best simulations of a massive land battle in WWII I've ever seen. It is a good, albeit somewhat long, game. I can find very little to complain about in the rules which, to my way of thinking, make or break

a game. They are clean and well organized. The rules in particular were carefully scrutinized for discrepancies and inconsistencies and very few were found. The only major complaint I have is the lack of a unit tabulation (as compared to the HQ listing given), which makes the set-up unnecessarily long (see addenda). For its size this game includes an amazing amount of information for so small a package. It will teach gamers something they may not have had to face before: the problems of controlling a front at the corps level and how to cope with real-time decision-making during the course of an attack. I will definitely recommend the game to serious gamers and especially to the gamers who want a simulation that is also a good game. I would not recommend it to those players who want an *Ogre* or *NAW* level game, unless you are interested in expanding your gaming ability. □ □

Editor's Note: The *Kursk* addenda and optional rules were compiled by Eric Goldberg, who wishes to express his thanks to Neil K. Hall, Michael Flagiello, and Doug Hensley for their assistance in this task. ■ ■

Empires for Two [continued from page 9]

Empire better than the above procedure allows. In most cases, the Independent Empires will cycle through good times and bad, depending on the luck of the draw and geography (it's tough to be in the Western Mediterranean when the Saracens are active), but they will rarely expand much. Under the more flexible management that a player can provide, however, it is quite possible that these smaller Empires can bloom rather nicely. Of course, it is in your opponent's interest to see that your ventures with your allies fail, and fail miserably.

The procedure is by no means perfect, and may not even be complete (hence 33.21), but it is the best compromise between efficiency and simplicity that could be had,

It should be fairly obvious that gaining alliances is not easy. A lot of ties are required, since the Court Areas tend to be the more prosperous, heavily populated ones. It is for this reason that "C" results give the whole ball of wax. Also, note that when a non-player Empire draws a Leader Dies Heirless card, then anyone with *any* ties has a chance at getting an alliance. It thus may pay to establish at least one tie with each possible Court.

I'd like to thank Mr. Jamie Adams for his assistance with this project. ■ ■

GUNS OF AUGUST

BY Ian Chadwick

It will be a national war which will not be settled by a decisive battle but by a long wearisome struggle with a country that will not be overcome until its whole national force is broken, and a war which will utterly exhaust our own people even if we are victorious.

—Chief of Staff Moltke to Kaiser Wilhelm, 1906

These remarkably perceptive and prophetic words, with some substitution of terms, might just as easily describe Avalon Hill's new campaign game of the First World War, *Guns of August*.

World War I has never been in the mainstream of popularity as far as wargamers are concerned. Any company which produces a game of this period must either be brave or blind — and in either case must have a game which can stand up to the intense scrutiny of a skeptical public. Unfortunately for the minority of gamers who actually appreciate this particular conflict, *Guns of August* will not live up to expectations. For that matter, all but the most indiscriminating of gamers will find this an unsatisfactory entry into the market.

Guns of August suffers from what has almost become a hallmark of Avalon Hill's in-house productions: over-simplification. In the effort to produce the absolute in playability, history has been sacrificed along with any realism which might hamper the actual play or complicate the system. Terrain has been so severely limited to a few basic types that the Ardennes Forest, the Swiss Alps, and the Pinsk Marshes all have identical movement and combat effects. And most combat units have been reduced to a featureless conformity of numerical quantification (Section 3.1 of the rules admits that the unit designations are "not always historical").

By an astute and subtle manipulation of the rules, the game is forced along avenues which must represent the designer Robert Beyma's preferred history of the war: static lines of undifferentiated units, little advance or change, and few battles due to the very high cost to both sides. Perhaps to those who have not read of it, the Great War may seem such a boring confrontation; but to aficionadoes it is as complex and as exciting as any modern conflict. Many lessons were learned on such battlefields as Ypres, the Somme, and the Marne. The effect of the wholesale slaughter of men was felt, venerated command structures underwent radical changes, new weapons systems and their accompanying tactics arose, and the entire political and social face of Europe was indelibly altered. *Guns of August* shows none of this.

Perhaps what *Guns of August* shows best is the mistake of designing a game to conform to an expected end result that history has already provided. The rules have been so written as to provide an almost guaranteed "historical" result without giving the players the feeling of enjoying even the simulation of historical action.

Ten scenarios cover the fighting on the east and west fronts for each year of the war. There is no east front scenario for 1918, but there is a campaign game. Fronts may be combined to offer another four scenarios which cover the entire European theatre (at least as much as can be reached on the map). The number of corps which must be set up on any front is rigidly defined, allowing players no real flexibility of command. While this may represent the historical situation, it allows for little or no change in the historical outcome. Yet as late as August 1, 1914, the Kaiser tried to change the plans and route the bulk of his troops to the east to deal with the "Russian steamroller," hoping with some reason that the French would not attack unless they were themselves attacked. The players are given no such leeway in the set-ups. Then too, the scenarios, except for the 1914 and the campaign, all begin with the January turn of the year, never with any particular historical campaign, push, or other event. This arbitrary choice of starting dates prevents players from re-enacting the few campaigns which gave the war any mobility.

Combat is a simple but deadly affair in the game. The CRT is so designed as to make attacking an expensive proposition even at the highest odds ratio of 6-to-1 (an optional rule provides for an automatic victory result for 8-to-1 odds). Units either retreat or are destroyed completely; there is no attrition of forces. Other rules have been inserted to prevent the game from leaving the framework of its expected end result: units may not attack from entrenchments or forts — a rule most remarkable in its complete deviation from reality; and to further enforce the static line, a player leaving entrenchments is penalized by having them reduced or even eliminated from the map. With the scars of trenches still marking the French countryside today, nearly sixty years later, I find it hard to understand why trenches should evaporate from the map in the space of one turn (one month)! Then too, zones of control are not negated by friendly units even for supply purposes. This makes advances after combat dangerous since units cut off from supply may be eliminated the next turn. This is another "fudge" rule, aimed at preventing ahistorical movement of units from their lines. Finally, support units (tanks, artillery) cannot advance after combat with combat (infantry, cavalry) units; while an argument for artillery may be cooked up (although, remember the turn is a month long), tanks did advance with the troops (else what value have they?).

Interestingly, units in a hex may be selectively attacked so long as all units in a hex are attacked. Units suffering a demoralized result have the option of retreating one or two hexes, or the stack may lose its largest combat unit. Support units, for some reason, may not retreat and are eliminated instead.

The combat counters represent infantry corps, cavalry divisions and corps, artillery and engineer regiments, and tank brigades. Infantry units have a higher defense strength than attack, which forces players to use mass attacks simply to get enough strength points for a decent odds column on the CRT. Movement points are low: five for some cavalry, four for other cavalry and infantry, three for most infantry and some artillery, and two for much of the artillery. Advances are agonizingly slow; I suspect this was deliberately done to conform with the other design structures which create pseudo-historical play.

The units suffer from being reduced to a limited selection of look-alike counters. Not only does this make a nation's armies a bland collection of numbers, but it obviously relieves the designer from having to justify historical research in any detail. In the entire 800 counter set, only a half-dozen are recognizable as having historical counterparts. And with the armies of Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia contained in the counter set, it is a small disappointment that not even one counter was distinguished as Canadian. It must be said that the sameness of the counters makes calculation of combat odds somewhat easier. Using the optional front markers to hide the contents of a hex doesn't really reduce the available intelligence since there are few enough counter types which can fill a hex.

Most rules seem to reflect either the designer's intent or a lack of careful thought (and playtesting, I suspect): reinforcements and replacements enter at the end of a turn after both sides have had movement and combat, making them ineligible for use that turn (why not simply enter them at the beginning of the next turn, or if they actually appeared that month, why can't they move?). Also, reinforcements may not be delayed; either they enter the turn marked or are lost. Replacement points may be accumulated. *Stosstruppen* — the elite German infantry especially trained to infiltrate through enemy

lines — have no infiltration powers at all (actually, all units may move through enemy ZOC's if they have the extra movement points it costs, but the danger of elimination by isolation is great enough to deter all but the most foolhardy). *Stosstruppen* affect combat by a benefit of a mere one spot on the combat die roll. Air units (only two become available in July 1918 to the Allies) can only be based at cities, yet air units were based in the countryside. Stacking allows three corps per hex, but only one artillery and one tank regiment each hex. Finally, artillery may not attack (barrage) separately, but only in conjunction with combat units.

Other rules cover a pale abstraction of naval transport and combat (the German player may, for example, declare submarine warfare against Allied shipping, but the effect is minimal), fairly standard weather rules, an optional entry table for a number of the nations (one of the better touches in the game), and a morale table which attempts to simulate the effects of deteriorating morale on a country's armies. The latter, instead of increasing realism, actually obfuscates it by giving the impression that a country's morale depends on the capture of home cities and that political issues, supply, or the success of a campaign have nothing to do with it.

What happens in *Guns of August* is a close approximation of what happened in history: a logjam of combat units on the western front, some small fluctuations on the Balkan and Italian fronts where there are few units spared for use, and most mobile action occurring in the east between the Russian and German armies (with support from the Austrians). This makes a singularly unexciting game. The armies of Belgium and Russia do not fall as easily as they did historically, and even single hex advances on either front are costly and few as a result. The many cut-and-dry historical assumptions which appear as rules restrictions channel the game into both a predictable and boring game situation.

Victory in the game depends on the capture of certain key cities: Konigsberg, Brest-Litovsk, Trieste, Frankfurt, Paris, Verdun to name a few. Some seem arbitrarily chosen: Essen instead of Strasbourg, Budapest instead of Vienna. No rules cover situations outside of Europe and their effect on either morale or victory conditions; East Africa and Palestine are ignored. It is possible to invade Turkey at Gallipoli, but there is no naval segment to simulate the entire invasion.

The problems of *Guns of August* suggest a lack of intense playtesting — this despite the appearance in the design and playtest credits of several well known and accomplished individuals in the field: Frank Davis, Roger MacGowan, Joe Balkoski, Kevin Zucker. The map, although handsomely done, uses the questionable technique of running rivers through hexes, not along hexsides, and the terrain rules ignore rivers for movement purposes. The set-up is not clear as to which units of the total forces are available for allocation to a particular front if the players choose to play only a one-front scenario. Do zones of control extend across borders? Why are replacements reduced by half for three months on morale result of **RR** (it seems too arbitrary)? Are all na-

Playback
READER REVIEWS

Playback ratings are reader evaluations of games that are acquired through *S&T, MOVES,* and *Ares* Feedback responses. Readers have been asked to rate each aspect of the games on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 9 (Excellent). For the actual text of the questions, see Section B of Feedback on page 38.

	Fifth Corps	Arena of Death	Kursk	Empires of the Middle Ages	Baseball	Football	Typical Rating Range
Publisher	SPI	SPI	SPI	SPI	SPI	SPI	
Publication Date	9/80	9/80	6/80	4/80	5/80	5/80	
Price	na	8.00	20.00	20.00	6.00	6.00	
Nr. of Players Reviewing	141	50	49	51	24	21	
Date Reviewed	5/81	5/81	5/81	5/81	5/81	5/81	
A. Map, Physical Quality	7.58	4.76	7.28	7.10	na	na	6.1-6.8
B. Rules, Physical Quality	6.53	6.13	6.80	7.12	5.33	5.00	6.4-7.1
C. Counters, Physical	6.88	5.41	7.56	6.58	na	na	6.5-7.2
D. Ease of Play	6.07	5.50	5.58	7.13	5.70	5.48	6.3-7.0
E. Rules Completeness	6.59	5.90	6.51	6.79	5.75	5.57	6.3-6.9
F. Play Balance	6.43	6.68	6.21	7.08	7.48	6.33	6.1-6.7
G. Game Length Suitability	6.07	5.98	5.92	6.33	5.96	5.43	6.2-6.8
H. Set-Up Time Suitability	6.33	6.85	4.47	6.31	7.48	6.70	6.2-6.8
J. Complexity Suitability	6.88	5.64	6.39	6.94	6.13	5.05	6.2-6.9
K. Realism	6.84	5.57	6.96	6.73	5.67	4.57	5.9-6.5
L. Overall Rating	6.79	5.56	6.78	7.42	5.63	5.05	6.1-6.8
M. % Who'd still buy	80%	58%	82%	90%	58%	43%	77%
N. % Rec'd money's worth	91%	63%	90%	84%	61%	57%	82%
S&T SURVEY DATA							
% Who've played game	53%	19%	18%	19%	9%	8%	
Acceptability Rating	6.8	6.0	7.4	7.2	na	na	
Complexity Rating	7.1	6.0	6.8	5.8	5.5	5.6	
Game Length (hours)	5	1	7	6	2	2	
Solitaire Playability	3.0	6.0	6.2	6.0	6.5	6.3	

FIFTH CORPS
Design: James F. Dunnigan
Art: Redmond A. Simonsen
Development: John H. Butterfield
Comments: First in Central Front series concerning contemporary warfare in West Germany. Three scenarios, and rules for friction and operation points, Soviet doctrine, engineers and West German territorials.

ARENA OF DEATH
Design and Development:
David James Ritchie
Art: Redmond A. Simonsen
Comments: Tactical hand-to-hand gladitorial combat using *DragonQuest* combat system. Character generation, the arena and the crowd, maneuver and martial actions, strike procedure, inflicting damage and grievous injury, weapons, unarmed combat.

KURSK
Design and Development:
Eric Goldberg
Art: Redmond A. Simonsen
Comments: Operational simulation of world's greatest tank battle in WWII which ended the German drive eastward. Three scenarios, and rules that cover overruns, unit modes, headquarters as supply source and communications centers and Soviet partisans.

EMPIRES OF THE MIDDLE AGES
Design: James F. Dunnigan
Art: Redmond A. Simonsen
Development:
Anthony B. Buccini, Redmond A. Simonsen
Comments: Players act as dynasts and attempt to build historical kingdoms into vast empires. Multiple scenarios from solitaire to six players, and rules that cover conquest, trade, pillage and raids, magnates and raiders, schism, plagues, and heresy.

SPI BASEBALL
Design and Development:
Richard H. Berg
Art: Redmond A. Simonsen
Comments: Table-top professional baseball simulation for one or two players. Rules cover picking teams, pitching and strikes, hits and rounding bases, stealing bases, unusual occurrences.
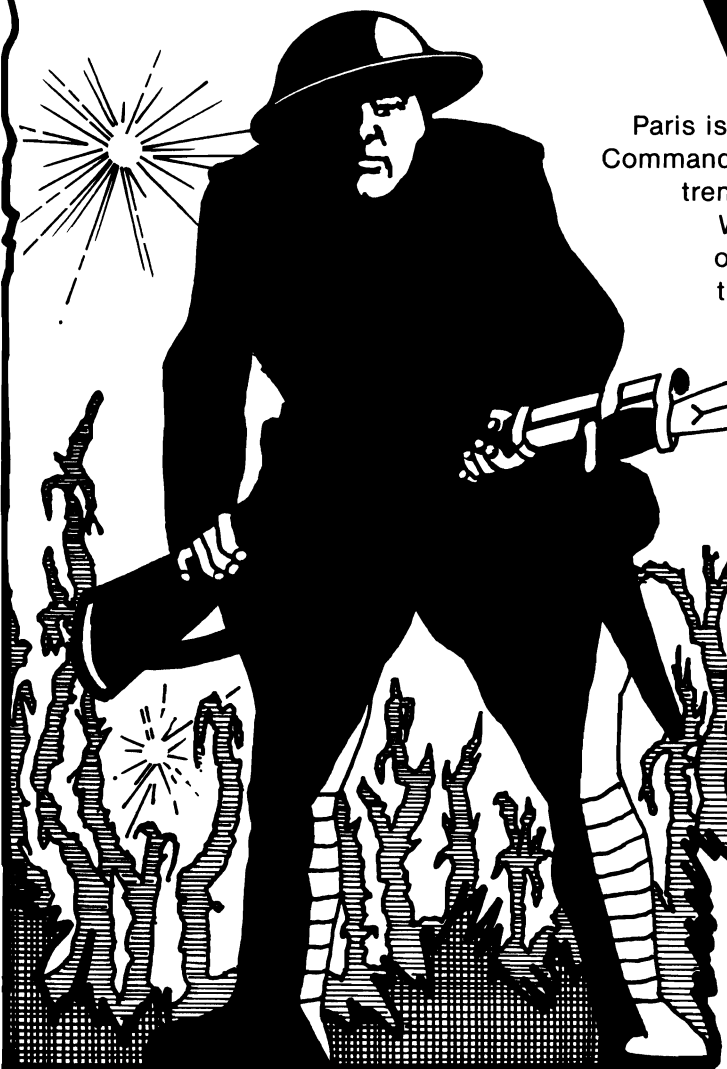
SPI FOOTBALL
Design and Development:
Richard H. Berg
Art: Redmond A. Simonsen
Comments: Table-top simulation of professional football for one or two players. Rules cover picking teams, kick-offs, passing and running, punts, blitzs, fumbles, scoring.

TECHNOLOGY & REVIEWS

SpiBus

Screen display from ABM

Reviews of Olympic Decathlon, Phantoms Five, ABM, The Prisoner, Global War and Tuesday Morning Quarterback

by Ian Chadwick

Recent columns of *SpiBus* have emphasized software for the Radio Shack TRS-80™. This should not be considered the only microcomputer available which will benefit from reviews. There are two other micros which have widespread popularity amongst the gaming public: the Apple™ and the Atari™ The latter is a relative newcomer on the market and as such does not have the enormous base of software and hardware available that both the TRS-80 and the Apple have. Still, it promises much as a personal computer and in a later column it will be looked at in depth. It is the former, the Apple computer, with which this particular column shall deal.

The Apple is a remarkable machine; designed more for professional computing purposes than the TRS-80, it offers enormous flexibility and power for a micro. The hardware was designed to facilitate service, upgrades, and the addition of peripherals, allowing the user to easily customize his system to suit his individual needs. It has colour, a significantly higher graphic resolution than the TRS-80, built-in sound, supports joysticks, printer, disk drives, and other add-ons via the interface slots in the machine. Use of such firmware as the language card allows the machine to support PASCAL, FORTRAN, APL, and other languages without wasting large amounts of RAM space necessary if the language must be entered as software as in the TRS-80. Use of the Z80 card gives the power and commands of the same chip the Radio Shack machine has, but at a faster clock time.

There are differences in the BASIC used in the TRS-80 and the Apple, both offering significant software manipulation. However, with few exceptions (notably the graphics commands and the machine-language subroutine formats) it is fairly easy to translate one programme for use in the other machine if written in BASIC. Machine language is another matter entirely. The command set of the Apple's 6502 chip is not compatible with the command set of the Z80 and translation between the two requires an intimate and extensive knowledge of both.

Surprisingly enough, there are major differences in the software available for the two machines. Taking advantage of the finer graphics of the Apple, designers have tended to aim more for the arcade-style game: reflex and hand-eye coordination games. With the

obvious restraints set by the TRS-80's poor graphics, fewer software designers have produced similar games for the Radio Shack machine, and there are more simulations, adventures, and player-interactive games for the TRS-80. This is a disappointment to both serious gamers and programmer; an arcade-style game can neither hold one's attention for very long nor does it make more than moderate use of the machine's vast potential. Also, the limitations of a computer keyboard prevent a faithful replication of arcade game controls, and most substitutes (arrow keys, paddles, or joysticks) are only mediocre compromises.

Unlike the TRS-80, the gamer who purchases an Apple must also purchase a disk system. The vast majority of the software is only available on disk (none of the excellent utilities such as word processors and VISICALC are on tape) including the best of the games. Many games require either paddles or joysticks for operation, so they too are "necessary" purchases. This makes the base price of the minimal operating system considerably higher than that of the TRS-80. One small advantage of the TRS-80 is the enormous amount of software available for either tape or disk. A printer capable of handling dot matrix graphics is required if one hopes to be able to dump the screen contents to hard copy. Happily, in the recent past a number of lower-priced prints with such capabilities have come onto the market (such as the MX-70 from Epsom).

Apple users have less variation in the amount of software available partly because fewer programmers are operating outside of the machine standards as are doing so for the TRS-80. For example, I know of only two DOS (disk-operating systems) for the Apple while there are at least seven for the TRS-80. I tend to think that there are more ingenious solutions to TRS-80 use available because the users have had to overcome more limitations, while Apple users have been comfortable in a computer already designed and developed as an efficient operative system. TRS-80 users have been anything but lazy in their attempts to improve and modify their machines (almost every TRS-80 user I know has made some hardware modification to their equipment on their own, not to mention numerous modifications to the software; no Apple user I know of has done the same — they are content with the package as is). However, the Apple may well be the best microcomputer system on the market today and likely (thanks to continuing upgrades from the manufacturer and peripheral designers) will

remain so for a long time to come. And I say that as an inconvertible TRS-80 owner.

Software Reviews

The following reviews are of games for the Apple. Games are noted as to solitaire or multi-player, and if the latter how well the players interact in the game. Games are rated from **A** (best) to **E** (worst) in the categories of: (1) playability; (2) simulation accuracy; and (3) overall enjoyment. Unless otherwise noted, all games make use of the Apple's hi-res graphics and all are on disk.

OLYMPIC DECATHLON
Microsoft

1 to 8 players (excellent interaction)
A/A/A

The TRS-80 version of this game was reviewed in *MOVES* 56. I consider it one of the best games available for both machines. It is one of the most challenging and entertaining programmes on the market. While not significantly different in intent from the TRS-80 system, this version makes excellent use of the Apple graphic capabilities.

Decathlon is a simulation of the 2-day Olympic event in which competitors match their skills in ten events from the 100-metre dash through the discus throw to the pole-vault. Although only two players can be active at the keyboard at any one time, up to eight may participate in trying for the gold medal. Players use keyboard or paddles, sometimes both, to manipulate their screen characters in performing the events. Prior to final competition, practice is allowed (and recommended). The use of the controls is often difficult and complex, each event requiring a different manipulation of the keys or paddles.

Two examples show the game best: in the shot-put, paddles control the player's arm movements, one paddle to move out from the shoulder and the other to move up. Too much up and the shot goes up without distance, too much out and the shot falls too quickly. It is even possible to drop the shot behind you! And the controls are very touchy — it is no easy matter to score a sizeable figure in this event. In the pole vault you must first decide how far to run, then where to hold the pole. You run using two arrow keys (the faster you hit the keys, the faster your character runs), you use another key to lower the pole (too early you hit the ground, too late you overshoot the box), another to go into your handstand (too early you fall back, too late you hit the pole) and a final to
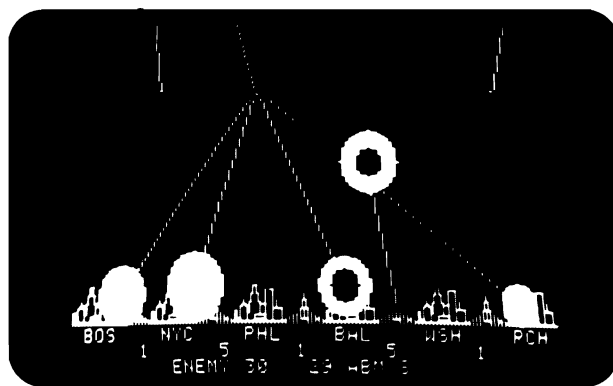
push away and — hopefully — clear the pole. In all events, you get three trials except for the hurdles, which is one try only (and a real challenge to master!).

Decathlon is the one game I would choose over all others if stranded on a desert island. It has sound, colour, superb graphics, and offers more entertainment for the dollar than almost all of the other programmes combined. Highly recommended for all types and ages.

PHANTOMS FIVE
Sirius Software

Solitaire/arcade type game

B/D/B

Phantoms is a simple game in which a player tries to fly a Phantom jet over enemy installations and bomb them, gaining various points depending on what was hit. The landscape (a town of sorts) scrolls by from top to bottom of the screen while the plane is limited to only left-right movement (although it appears to be flying over the town) as controlled by a paddle. Pressing the paddle button releases a bomb, pressing the space bar changes the display from a jet to a bombsight (somewhat easier to use). Just to liven things up, flak crackles about the screen from the ground at random locations, destroying the plane if it hits, and enemy jets appear to try to shoot down your plane every now and then (for which the screen changes to the appropriate view through your windscreen). You also get points for shooting down the enemy jets. You have five planes to start with, and the game ends when all are used up. I have never managed to score high enough to see if you receive an extra plane at a given score, but I assume you do. You lose points for bombing the hospital or the POW camps.

Phantoms is colourful, has sound, and is a mildly amusing way to spend an hour or two. The plane is not easy to control well and tends to "over-respond" to the controls, deliberately to offer some challenge. To bomb a moving target requires some skill, but it's not something to keep anyone seriously involved for any length of time. Fun and well-executed.

ABM
Muse Software

Solitaire/arcade type game

B/C/B

ABM is similar to the arcade game *Missile Command*. The player tries to stop waves of missiles from descending from the top of the screen onto his cities and missile silos at the bottom. Two paddles are required: one controls vertical and the other horizontal movement of a cursor on the screen. When a button on the paddles is pushed, a missile is launched from one of the three silos to the position indicated by the cursor when the button was pushed. A fast and dextrous player can move the cursor and push the button quickly enough to lay a row of explosions before the oncoming onslaught of enemy missiles raining down.

Each missile site has a limited number of shots to fire per wave of descending missiles. Some of the deadly downfall split into multi-

missiles around halfway down the screen, so the player is hurried to try and destroy the wave early in the game. This isn't easy since the missiles come down fast and furious, and in great numbers. The graphics are very well done and the explosions are quite brilliant. The limitations of the computer keyboard/paddles prevent this from being a great game. Paddles in two hands aren't as responsive as the arcade "rolling ball" control, and while there are three firing missile sites, two are controlled by one button, reducing effective player control by that much.

Muse has a good product here and they have overcome the limitations as best as anyone might. They are a good software house from what I've seen, and their products are always well executed (however, see the review of *Global War* below).

THE PRISONER
Edu-Ware

Solitaire

C/D/C

This is a very difficult game to review. In a sense, it's not really a game, but a series of micro-adventures, each one with a clue towards the solution of the player's ultimate goal: to escape from the "island." It is akin to a game called *What Are the Rules of This Game?* in that there are no set rules offered in the documentation; every step of the route must be painstakingly mapped (and there are no guarantees that what was learned once will prove valid again...).

The Prisoner is loosely based on the TV series of a few years back (starring Patrick McGoohan...remember?). The player is a "number" in a hierarchy of faceless, nameless numbers. The Island consists of twenty structures, each of which represents a puzzle to be solved — for which no rules are to be found, but must be learned. Essentially, this means experimenting with various forms of keyboard input until some logic is perceived in accordance with the results (movement, sound, text response, for example).

This is by no means an easy game. Without hints or rules, each mini-adventure must be deciphered by trial and error methods. Luckily, a game in progress may be saved to disk, since the process can be very long...and frustrating! There is sound, but no colour, and the graphics I have seen so far are low-res. This should not deter anyone from the game: the meat of it is not the display but the solution to a damn trying puzzle. I have not yet solved it, nor do I expect to do so in the near future. It's an intriguing piece of software and recommended for anyone who likes puzzles and adventures (and who has the time). I do not recommend it to arcade fanatics, impatient finger-flexers or anyone with a tendency to violence in the face of frustration. If this review leaves you with more questions than answers about the game, then fine: that's exactly what the game does too.

GLOBAL WAR
Muse Software

2 to 6 players (excellent interaction)

B/na/B

Global War, another Muse product, suffers from what I see as the biggest fault in software manufacture: plagiarism. Not simply ideas and concepts, but whole games are being lifted from the boards into software and re-appearing with only their names changed to protect the guilty. Apparently, nothing is being or can be done to prevent this piracy. If feel it quite inappropriate and hypocritical for software designers and manufacturers to bemoan piracy of their products by the user when they condone or participate in the outright piracy as witnessed in this and other games (see my review of *Warp Factor* and *Computer Ambush*, both by SST in *MOVES* 57). Software authors take note: to not attempt to bring to ground this form of piracy, along with all other forms, will reduce other arguments to mere background noise.

Now, why these comments? *Global War* is simply a computer version of Parker Brothers' famous game, *Risk*. It uses the same countries, combat system, movement, card draw, and control of continents as the original. Since you don't actually draw cards, you don't get to control what you turn in for extra armies (the computer does it for you automatically) and the attacker can lose a few more armies when rolling dice than in the original, but those are the only changes visible from the board game — and they aren't significant enough to mask the copy.

I don't have any particular love of Parker Brothers, but I didn't see any recognition of their game in the rules, nor in the game itself, and they should be given both acknowledgement and royalties. After all, they created, marketed, and promoted the game and they are due something for their efforts. Caveat emptor: if you buy this game after reading these comments, you condone the piracy. I suggest you stick to the board version for now...too bad, because this is otherwise a well written, well produced and executed game.

Editor's Note: The following review is from the owner of the Apple whom I have plagued by endless phone calls to confirm my data, by sleepless nights when I have sat up in his den playing these games into the wee hours and by general nagging to review some of the software himself. He promises to do more if I stop nagging.

TUESDAY MORNING QUARTERBACK
Automated Simulations

1 or 2 players (good interaction)

B/B/B

First a personal note: I am not a football buff. In fact, I am not even a sports buff. However, I like this game very much.

Quarterback comes in an attractive hard box with a 46-page rulesbook. It begins with a brief description of football and then follows with the rules of the game. There is a description of the plays you may choose from, plus a short note on each of the 28 teams plus the two All-Star teams in the game. It ends with a glossary of terms used in the game and booklet.

The game itself comes on a disk requiring 48K memory plus Applesoft, and for
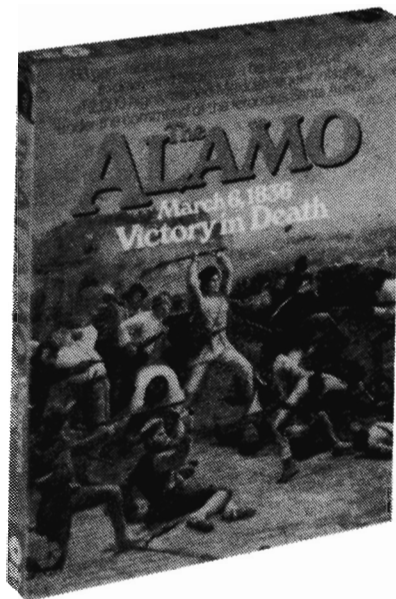
The Alamo recreates the heroic stand by a small force of Texan defenders inside the famous Alamo mission against a Mexican army over ten times its size. The Mexican player chooses from among six entry areas to bring on his four main columns and, later, his reserve column. The Mexican forces must withstand the withering Texan fire until a weak spot along the walls can be found and the Alamo finally breached. Once inside, desperate hand-to-hand fighting takes place. Special rules cover fire and melee combat, artillery batteries, leadership and leader losses, and ferocious Texan counterattacks.

BUYER'S GUIDE FOR *THE ALAMO*
Age Range: 12 years to adult
Number of Players: 2 (Suitable for solitaire play)
Average Playing Time: 2 hours
Complexity: Moderate (5.8)
For purposes of comparison, *Monopoly* is considered to have a complexity rating of 2.34.

The ALAMO

SAMPLE COMBAT UNIT (Front)

Designation
Jimenez
Column
Symbol
Fire Strength → **83** Line ← Type
Melee Strength
Morale Rating

SAMPLE COMBAT UNIT (Back)

Jimenez
73 Line

Reduced Strengths and Rating
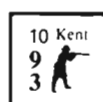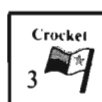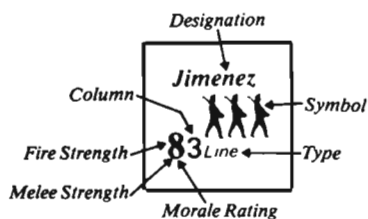
SEQUENCE OF PLAY
Mexican Replacement Phase
Mexican Reserve Unit Placement Phase
TEXAS PLAYER-TURN
Movement Phase
Combat Phase
Rally Phase
MEXICAN PLAYER-TURN
Mexican Reserve Commitment Phase
Movement Phase
Combat Phase
Rally Phase
Mexican Withdrawal Check Phase
Game-Turn Indication Phase
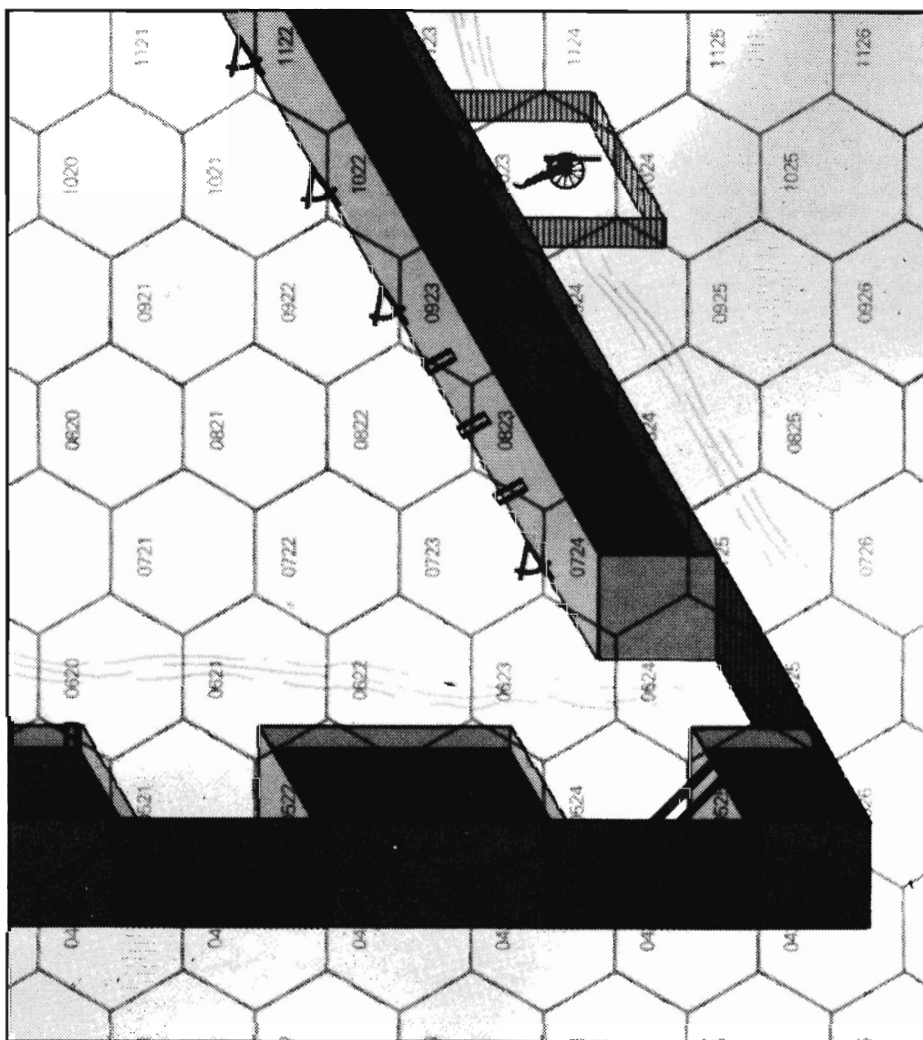
THE ALAMO: $12
Now available in stores nationwide

F.O.

by David J. Ritchie

New Beginnings

If you haven't yet heard that "Adventure Gaming," as it has come to be called, is in the midst of a revolution, you are either new to the hobby (likely) or have been asleep for the past two years (dubious, at best). Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear...say about 1978. At that time Avalon Hill and SPI were the number one and two purveyors of what were then called wargames. GDW was a somewhat distant third. The most exciting releases that year were (if memory serves) *Atlantic Wall, War in the Pacific* and *Operation Typhoon*. All were multi-map, many splendored *simulations* which could take days to play (when playable at all). The monster was king and SPI was its prophet.

Meanwhile, down in Texas, a small company was beginning to realize fantastic sales from a teenie-tiny game called *Ogre* which had come out the year before. And away off in a place called Lake Geneva, Wisc., TSR was beginning to sell more copies of a non-game called *Dungeons & Dragons* than any sane person would have thought possible.

Today, both the mini-game and the role-playing game are firmly ensconced in the marketplace and what was once "wargaming" has become "adventure gaming." This summer's round of conventions witnessed the launching of no less than four new *lines* of mini-games and at least five major role-playing games intended to be the "leading edge" of an entire series of products. Almost unnoticed in the ballyhoo accompanying said releases, a second revolution has materialized.

It started with efforts to simplify rules and language. SPI replaced its original case system with a paragraph-case system. Other companies started returning to simple paragraphs of text divided by boldface headings. Rules soon got leaner and more terse. However, while "dejargonized" rules were, themselves, a blessing, they were most assuredly *not* the answer to attracting all of those bedazzled (and bemonied) thirteen year olds away from their Saturday afternoon *D&D* sessions and into the fold of orthodox wargamers. Nor, as became clear after several false starts, were *smaller* games necessarily more attractive to this elusive audience. What did eventually emerge in the collective preconscious which serves as the mind of management was a conviction that a simpler *game* was what was needed.

Thus, many months ago, the orders began filtering down from on high to those responsible for creating product: "make it simpler, make it cleaner and make it fast." The emphasis was on fewer operations, higher payoff and more excitement. Bingo! Enter the era of the abstract simulation and the programmed nongame, the first examples of which are hitting the market at this moment.

Most interesting of the new wave is GDW's *A House Divided*, and it is to that

game that we now turn. The subject matter here is the American Civil War. The scale is strategic. There have been several previous games covering this ground and I know of at least two more which are currently in the works. It is my belief that *A House Divided* is the best *game* currently available or likely to become available in the next couple of years. Further, with the exception of the monumental *War Between the States,* it is undoubtedly the best *simulation* of the strategic problems facing both sides which is either available or likely to become available anytime soon.

Physically, the package is unimpressive. However, in the topsy-turvy world of audience targeting, the lack of substance is a definite *plus*. After all, you don't want people being intimidated by a lot of paper when they open the box. So...what you get is a 17″ × 22″ full-color painted map of the eastern half of the United States in 1861 (including the vital trans-Mississippi theatre which is so often ignored). The painted map features are purely chrome. They have nothing whatsoever to do with play. This is regulated by about six score square boxes containing various colors and symbols and connected to each other by various flavors of lines denoting roads, railroads and rivers. Simple and elegant.

There are 160 three-quarter inch playing pieces in the game (marketing obviously indicated that a larger size counter with bigger type and recognizable symbology was highly desireable for an "entry level" audience). Active pieces are of two types: infantry and cavalry. Each type may have one of three levels of competence attached to it: Militia, Veteran or Crack. Thus, there are six flavors of counters overall. In addition, there are double-sided fortification markers (Union on one side and Confederate on the other), "Stripped" Markers (used only with an advanced "foraging" rule) which contain broken rail lines on their reverse side (for use with another advanced rule) and double-sided control markers (Union flag on one side and Confederate flag on the other) which serve to remind players as to who controls what boxes after the armies have moved on.

Two tracks are included. One is a numbered (1 to 36) track printed on the map and used to record the maxium number of active pieces (size of army) each player may have in play, based on the supply capacity of the squares they each control. The second is a Turn Record Chart consisting of a separate sheet of cardstock which, in the old Avalon Hill style, contains about thirty small boxes opposite each turn which are meant to be checked off with a pencil as they are completed (I guess they figure nobody is going to play the game more than thirty times).

Finally, there are four (count 'em) pages of rules in a comfortably large type face and a single 8″ × 11″ sheet (only a small part of the second side containing type) of optional and advanced rules. Oh, yes, and, of course, there is a large die. Retailers prefer the larger dice because they think the rattle factor increases sales to all us folks with the minds of subnormal three year olds.

A House Divided comes packaged in a 2″ box (similar to SPI's) sans tray. The cover features a somewhat primitive and washed-out painting of a score of boys in gray charg-

ing at the viewer (and a trio of boys in blue) through a cornfield. It is both dramatic and cartoonish. Price tag: $10.

It takes about 10 minutes to read the rules (more if you're dyslexic) and you can be playing two minutes after that. Playing time varies between forty-five minutes to a couple of hours. Sequence of play is short and sweet: Union Player-Turn and the Confederate Player-Turn. Each first moves, then fights, then grants promotions to units which have participated in successful battles and, finally, recruits new units. By my count, each player executes about 15 operations an average per turn, counting all movement, combat resolution dice-rolling, promotions and placement of new pieces. For purposes of comparison, *Napoleon at Waterloo*, SPI's introductory game, requires about 25 such operations per player per turn.

If the foregoing seems to indicate a game which is far too simple for the tastes of the average wargamer, guess again. Given the scale of 1 month per turn and 10,000 to 15,000 men per unit, the game is highly strategic in nature and benefits greatly from this simplicity. The problems facing the players appear in broad outline, uncluttered by historical trivia which is often better netted out. In fact, some strategic elements only exhibit their *real* nature when they appear on such a broad canvas. The crucial importance of such places as Staunton, Fredericksburg, and Manassas Junction which lay on the *only* feasible march routes between other strategic objectives is, for example, muddied in most hex grid maps. In this game, it is immediately apparent.

Getting into the specifics, movement is executed by "marches," between 2 and 5 (determined by a die roll) being available to each player each turn. There is a lot of uncertainty here (and, perhaps, too much luck), but this is a *simulation* element in the game. If you doubt that, think for a moment of the number of strategic operations of both sides which were ruined by a general simply sitting and doing nothing. Having determined the number of marches available, the player proceeds to move his pieces at a cost of one march per stack (and stacks may split up during movement) along communication lines to their destination box which will be one or two boxes distant, depending upon the capabilities of the unit and the type of communication line over which it is travelling. No expenditure of Movement Point. No Terrain Effects Chart. Simple and straightforward. *But...* crack units march better (and farther) than militia and, even, veterans. Cavalry can infiltrate through the enemy lines, the Union can use its naval capacity to land units along the rebel coast and both sides may move along rivers, though only the Union player may bypass enemy pieces while doing so (and only when moving downriver). Simple? Yes. Unrealistic? Definitely not.

Combat is mandatory between pieces which occupy the same box. The pieces which last entered the box attack. The other pieces get the benefit, if any, of the terrain. Terrain includes permanent entrenchments (present in Washington, Richmond, Fort Monroe and Vicksburg), temporary entrenchments and river lines (which only affect pieces entering the square from along a

side containing a blue river band). Resolution involves the players removing their pieces from the map and setting up an actual firing line opposite each other. Pieces fire individually at other pieces, scoring "hits" whenever their player rolls less then or equal to their combat strength (which varies by unit type and equality). Terrain and defending unit quality modify the die roll. The defender fires first, then the attacker. Since fire is sequential, rather than simultaneous, some pieces can get wiped out before they ever get a chance to attack. A nice abstraction of the advantages of defender firepower which made this war so different from what had gone before.

After each side has fired and losses have been removed by flipping over or eliminating pieces, both sides may reinforce the battle by moving pieces from adjacent boxes into the box in which the battle is being resolved. They then execute another round of fire, unless one side decides to retreat. The battle ends when one side is in control of the box. That side is the winner and the winning player may then "promote" one piece which survived the battle, removing that piece and replacing it with a higher quality piece (militia become veterans and veterans become crack troops).

Having conducted promotions, the player whose turn is in progress recruits new militia from those which have been eliminated or promoted. The number recruited is, once again, determined by a die roll. Recruitment having been conducted, the turn is over.

The Advanced and Optional Rules add the tracing of supply lines, foraging, breaking rail lines, coastal defenses, containment of naval invasions, naval evacuations and special (less stringent) rules for the effects of a Confederate capture of Washington. All very interesting. None adding greatly to the level of complexity.

The sum total of the various rules and systems employed by the designer, Frank Chadwick, is a game which functions well as an historical model. It has its faults. The Union does not seem quite as inept in the game as it was historically, for example. But, overall, there are very few elements of the war not accurately portrayed in the game in a simple and elegant fashion. In short, this is a serious simulation, despite its game-like style and packaging.

More important, *A House Divided* is a fun game. Two of the three times I have played, the resolution has been in doubt right up until the last turn when a series of Hail Mary die-rolls in tough-fought battles determined victory. I have seen other designers similarly enthralled by the game...with similar results. I highly recommend it.

Up and Coming

Aside from a new style of product currently in evolution, the summer showed yet another trend in the indusry: the entry of more and more serious foreign contenders in the Adventure Gaming Market. For years, the USA has dominated the field and few foreign attempts at getting a share of their own domestic market (let alone a piece of the action in this country) have borne any but the scantiest fruit. In recent months, though, at least one foreign publisher has emerged as a

serious contender from a quality standpoint. To wit: *WWW,* publisher of *The Wargamer.*

The Wargamer is, of course, the British version of *Strategy & Tactics,* though it emphasizes game-related material rather than history and analysis. It has been around for several years now, but has never before attracted more than grudging recognition from the American wargaming community. Recently, editor Keith Poulter took steps to change all that by recruiting popular American designers to do some of the upcoming games. Recent catches include Rich Berg (whose game on the Battle of Saratoga ought to be a big hit across the seas). If the quality of future games is even close to that of Vance Von Borries' *Drive on Damascus,* Poulter won't have to worry about attracting attention.

The first thing you notice about this game (after the awful cover) is the fact that there are no hexes. The next thing you notice is that there are no area boundaries either. What regulates movement and positioning is a field of "dots" occupying what would be the center of each hex if the map used a hex grid.

Movement in the game is identical to that in any other 20th Century hex-grid game...same rules, same conventions. *But* the dots are less obtrusive then a hex-grid and the overall look is vastly superior. In the case of *DoD,* this "look" is especially impressive. You see, the game deals with Operation Exporter, the British invasion of Vichy Syria in the summer of 1941. The full color map painted in tans, browns and yellows shows up the terrain to great advantage and imparts a feel for distance and space which no hex-grid map could ever impart. That long eastern flank of lava beds and desert which plagued the British in operations in this area in both world wars shows up quite clearly, as does the Mediterranean on the western flank.

Clearly visible in the center are the three great axes of operations separated by mountain ranges which have historically canalized all battles fought over Syria.

The other components are hardly memorable in contrast. About 250 two-color counters (where the multi-national Commonwealth Army with its Palmach, Jordanian, Australian and Indian units cried out for a rainbow) are high quality and functional, if boring. The rules are carelessly imposed in places, indicating some need for better boardpersons at WWW, but are not so badly laid out as to be in any way confusing. Their 16 pages (with notes, displays and advertisements) are more than adequate.

The centerpiece is the system which brings this game alive. As in his previous game, Vance has adopted a treatment which any fan of the early Avalon Hill games will find reassuring and comfortable. There are two Player-Turns per Game-Turn and only three Phases (Reinforcement, Movement and Combat) per Player-Turn. Movement offers no surprises (imagine it's a hex-grid and move through it by expending MP's just as you would in, say, *Afrika Corps*). ZOC's are active. Stacking is by points (based on unit size — 2 points per battalion, 1 per company). Combat is mandatory between adjacent units. Results are elims, exchanges, retreats. Supply is traced to roads and thence to friendly supply source. There are many

twists and variations in all this, but they are easily mastered. The only point at which the game becomes unwieldy (and, in fact, downright dirty with low payoff for additional complexity) is in the handling of naval and air transit between Greece, Turkey and Syria, all of which is affected by a variety of factors, including Turkey's diplomatic posture. There are, however, nice simple rules for forts, commandoes and transport (trucks) and a plethora of special unique little units like Moshe Dyan's Palmach unit, the Transjordanian Frontier Force and the private army of Amir Abdulla. Scale is one day per turn and 3.2 miles between dots.

What is most likeable about this game is that it is a standard, familiar wargame which accurately simulates its subject, but which is painless to play for the most part and which provides a lot of slam-bang action for the time invested. In short, it is what the copyrighters down at Avalon Hill would like us to believe their "old classics" are. The only caveats I have in all this is that the use of organization charts is a bore since it requires that counters be deployed twice, once on the chart and then again on the map. This, and a few similar old technology graphic devices, should have been made to go bye-bye along with the hex grid. Also, a residual references to hexes and similar lapses in terminology make for occasional bouts of confusion. These are, however, minor considerations. They do not make the game materially harder to play, nor do they interfere with the action.

And there is lots of action. The three main invasion routes are separated one from another by impassable mountains and neither side has enough troops to either defend or advance along all three axes at once. Vichy can only cover two out of three adequately. The British can best advance along a single route with one subsidiary advance and a covering force to guard vulnerable communications from a Vichy advance out of the third defile. As if this does not make the strategic problem knotty enough, there is always the possibility of German intervention (historically vetoed by Hitler since he was more interested in the upcoming Barbarossa operation and did not want to divert forces into the Med), and the British eventually can bring Habforce in from Iraq across the Syrian Desert where it will appear in the rear of the Vichy left flank. There are admittedly periods of stagnation on each front, but these are punctuated by furious action and fluid maneuver in the best tradition of that other Mediterranean land campaign in North Africa. The contest is accordingly tense for both sides and a good gambler may win as easily as a good rifle counter. A lovely game. ■ ■

Designer's Notes

Hot Spots

Hot Spots is once again in my hands and I look forward to completing that which I started. The game system is complete, with several months to go before the manuscript is to be turned in to editorial. One thing this game will not lack is playtesting. To date, the Iran '80 scenario has been played 18 times with the score Iraq 10 wins to Iran's 8.

The Iran '80 scenario pits an Iranian armor battalion with Chieftain tanks, BTR-60 APC's, plus associated air defense and artillery assets against an Iraqi armor battalion with T-55 tanks and BM-21 multiple rocket launchers in a classic meeting engagement. The Iraqi commander is better than the Iranian commander (a B vs. a D effectiveness rating), but the Iranians move first, allowing them the opportunity to gain good positions for their Scorpion reconnaissance unit and thus increase the effective level of their commander's rating, due to superior initial intelligence.

The last playthrough of this scenario followed these lines: The Iranian reconnaissance unit moved down the Bitmyah road and encountered Iraqi PT76 tanks near the village of Tall-Abi-Az-Zaytun and drove them off with light casualties to both sides. Approximately 30 minutes later, the recon platoon commander spotted a column of Iraqi T-55 tanks and associated support in battalion strength approaching the village. The recon commander radioed battalion headquarters with the information, prompting the Iranian battalion commander to change from a Movement and Contact formation to a Hasty Assault posture. During this formation change one of the Chieftain companies swung off the main axis of advance, while the mechanized infantry company set up blocking positions just east of the village in an area of cultivation that afforded good defensive positions. The other Iranian Chieftain company overwatched the situation from a reserve status.

The Iraqi commander, upon receiving the information of the skirmish near the village, decided that it was not a major Iranian formation and ordered that speed was to be maintained. Consequently no formation change occurred. The Iraqis soon ran into the Iranian blocking positions and the units became embroiled in a massive traffic jam which disrupted the mobility of their formation. Shortly thereafter, the Iranian Chieftain company attacked on the Iraqi left flank; this successful ambush caused the Iraqi units to reach a catastrophic morale status, resulting in a massive retreat with the Iranians in hot pursuit.

Hot Spots allows players to gain tempo and development of their pieces like in chess, often the decisive factor in the play of the game. Playtesting of this and the other five scenarios continues...more next time.
Mark Herman

BAOR

Due to Bruce Maxwell's sojourn to the west, I will be escorting the final version of *British Army of the Rhine (BAOR)* through the production cycle. Currently, the last blindtest reports are being incorporated into the rules manuscript while the final balancing of the scenarios draws to a close.

Three scenarios are included: The Race for the Weser, Thin Red Line, and a scenario which joins *BAOR* with *Fifth Corps*. The Race for the Weser was balanced too much in the favor of NATO, so a south-edge entry for Soviet units was re-instituted which perceptually makes the scenario balanced; the last blindtest reports will, hopefully, substantiate this claim.

The Thin Red Line scenario was thought to be unbalanced, but further playtesting has revealed that the use of a first turn airborne drop (*a la* Operation Market-Garden) seems to give the Soviets a technique short of nuclear release which allows them to pierce the Weser line and win a conventional victory. All in all, this effort by Maxwell and Charles T. Kamps should be a welcome addition to the Central Front series. *Mark Herman*

Ghostship

I've been working on *Ghostship* for some three weeks now, and I'm pleased with its progress. Most of the game's basic systems have been designed. Now I'm working on perfecting these systems as well as writing out the necessary paragraphs. As it stands, the game will be centered around its exploration procedure.

We have decided to combine the *Citadel of Blood* chit picking method with the *Voyage of the Pandora* paragraphs. As the party (a group of four or five characters) moves about the ship, the player will have the opportunity to place chits on the map. These chits will contain various pieces of information, some indicating passageways which the party may traverse. They may serve to link up halls printed on the map or block them off completely.

Other chits will identify alien objects found in the chambers of the ship. Once these objects are discovered, their effects must be determined by cross-referencing them with the Alien Items Effects Chart and choosing one of the many paragraphs. Still other chits may lead directly to a paragraph which may explain some unpleasant hazard or beneficial gain. The interconnection of over one hundred of these chits will allow for a new experience every time the game is played.

The second element of the *Ghostship* exploration system is the paragraphs. As mentioned, the player will often be led to a paragraph either as a result of discovering an item or as directed by a chit. To add diversity to the game, each paragraph will have conditions which will lead the player to other paragraphs. Where he is sent depends on where he is on the map, who is present in the party, what items the party is carrying, and several other minor considerations.

Since the party and map configuration will differ with each game, the interrelationship of the paragraphs will also change with each game. The main purpose of the entire system will therefore be to incorporate as much diversity as possible and not to let the game stagnate. So far, this is being accomplished very smoothly. *Thomas Pecorini*

American Civil War II

My main Summer Intern Project is the design and development of a second edition of *American Civil War (ACW I)*, originally published in *S&T 43*. My mandate is to provide a game that is fun, playable in one evening, more colorful than the original, and as accurate a historical simulation as possible. This is a tall order for an earn-while-you-learn program.

I really don't have much time for new research, so I will draw heavily on the original game and the much more detailed *War Between the States (WBS)* for an agenda of relevant historical factors. Al Nofi, historian extraordinaire, has made available to me his data from the original game, as well as his personal comments and suggestions.

The design is still in its infancy, but some features have been decided on for the first prototype. The core of the game and the foundation system upon which the other systems will be built is the leader system. Drawing from *WBS*, leaders will be rated for organization ability and military skill. Ratings will determine varying abilities for combat, command, and movement. The leader counters themselves will also represent most of the fighting strength of the two armies by serving as Strength Point markers on their front and back. Victory will depend mostly on the economic ability of the Confederacy to continue the war, but may include a measure of the wills of the two sides to fight to the finish.

The game size is to remain the same: a full 22" × 34" map, 200 backprinted counters, and 12-16 pages of rules. The map will be made more interesting, drawing on *WBS* and a *National Geographic* Civil War map for additional terrain analysis. Prototype testing should begin soon. *Bruce C. Shelley*

Antietam and a Defense of Alamo

In last issue I wrote both a progress report on *Antietam* and an article on *Cedar Mountain*. In Redmond's introductory blurb to my article, he accuses me of designing a game on the Alamo in which the Texans cannot win. To make it worse he accuses me of being a fellow traveller in Yankeedom. It's not true! The Texans can win RAS (rhymes with Jazz). All they need do is destroy several hundred Mexican troops in the first twenty-five minutes of the battle and the assault is over. They can win the *war* by rolling successfully on the Continued Siege Table. Admittedly it is a rare occurrence, but it is possible. As for a Texan like me plotting how to win with the Union Army, hey, the Yanks need all the help they can get in *Cedar Mountain* (and in most other battles of the war too). Hope I haven't caused you any trouble, Redmond!

We are very far into the testing of the campaign game version of *Antietam*. We are testing two games simultaneously — one on Friday night and the other during week nights. The entire mechanics of the game is now set and testing is aimed towards covering loopholes (always a difficult task) and testing the Union Commitment System. I

have redesigned Richard's original commitment system completely. Now instead of Union corps commitment being based on a die roll it is based on a chit pick. Each Union corps commander is given a rating from 1 to 6. These ratings are the number of Commitment Chits the Union player puts in a cup for that corps. He then adds a number of chits to the cup to bring the chit total to 10. Thus, Hooker's cup contains 6 Commitment Chits and 4 "blanks." McClellan is represented in the game by three McClellan Chits in each of three corps cups (there are seven in all). He then reduces the number of "blanks" in each cup in which he placed a McClellan Chit by the number listed on the Chit. If he then picks a Commitment Chit *or* the McClellan Chit, the corps is committed. Chits are not put back in a cup once drawn.

Joe Reiser and Justin Leites are far into a campaign game of *Antietam* which they are playing almost nightly. Their game is going very well and is very tense at this writng. Justin is the Union and it was his strategy to attempt to activate Hooker, Sumner and Burnside with his three McClellan Chits. He put the "0" in Hooker's cup, the "1" in Sumner's and the "2" in Burnside's. On Game-Turn One he picked a Commitment Chit from Hooker's cup thus activating his corps. His other two draws were blanks leaving Burnside and Sumner uncommitted. Justin decided to pull Hooker back since he was not attempting to commit Mansfield. Hooker is very far forward and his flanks are unsupported without Mansfield. On Game-Turn Two Justin picked the "1" Chit from Sumner's cup indicating that the corps was activated but that there was a one Game-

Turn delay (leave it to McClellan...). His other two picks ended in blanks. Hooker continued to fall back but Joe saw that no other Union corps were moving so he struck Hooker with Jackson's entire corps. On Game-Turn Three Sumner was committed and began to move up the center across the middle bridge.

The Union picks only once per hour after the first two turns. By Game-Turn Four Hooker was hotly engaged with Hood, D.H. Hill, J.R. Jones and half the other divisions of the Confederate army. Sumner is not located such that he can help Hooker. On Game-Turn Five Justin placed the "1" chit in Mansfield's cup and then drew it right out, thus commiting the corps. What luck! However, by the time Mansfield managed to arrive on Hooker's left flank it was too late. Hooker had been withdrawn because of too many casualties. One positve note for Hooker was that he wiped out Hood's entire division in a single Game-Turn with massed artillery fire at a range of one hex. Joe had gotten a little too rash in his pursuit of Hooker.

A lull came over the game. Both Justin and Joe waited for the other to make the next move. A massive artillery duel broke out between the Union V Corps artillery reserve and the batteries of Longstreets's Corps. Finally on Game-Turn Nine Burnside was committed.

Justin began a push with Mansfield on the Union right, Sumner in the center and Burnside on the left. In the center he did well, badly smashing Rode's brigade and Manning's brigade. Joe was taken aback by the early arrival of Burnside and sent Fitz Lee's cavalry *across* Antietam Creek to slow down

Burnside. Smoothbore Napoleons and rifled muskets at point blank range slaughtered the cavalry and two regiments surrendered. Burnside was slowed just long enough for McLaw's and Anderson's divisions, reinforcements from Harper's Ferry, to arrive on the scene to stop Burnside. Thus, the battle stands. The Confederates have dealt out more punishment than they have received but now hold a long, thin line. The Union has lost Hooker, both Sumner and Burnside each have at least one division which is damaged, and Mansfield is in serious trouble unless he can link up with Sumner.

Antietam is turning out to be the best grand tactical game I've ever seen, much less worked on. This is because the game has a lot of operational strategy. It does not merely depend on closing with the enemy and firing away until one side drops. This game calls for planning and is very tense and balanced. The Union has the manpower but the Confederates have the terrain and leadership. In *Terrible Swift Sword* the reinforcement schedule determined the strategy of the game, in *Antietam* it's the players. *Eric Smith*

SPIBUS [continued from page 30]

those of you with colour monitors, comes to you in "living colour." It can be played either solitaire or against an opponent. On boot up, you can choose from playing, updating a team roster, or kicking practice. The rosters each have 26 players which can be changed to keep up with trades, etc. With kicking practice you may try either field goals or punting, both of which use either the "K" key or the spacebar. Simple as it looks, it does require some skill and you can easily blow it during a game, much to your dismay.

The game plays quite well: the defense chooses a play while his opponent looks away and then the offence makes his choice. Players have 30 seconds to make their choice or suffer a five yard delay-of-game penalty. The screen display is a football field with the teams represented by X's and O's, much like a coach's playbook. Ball possession is obvious since the player on the screen with the ball flashes. This gives rise to my only real complaint: instead of movement just during the snap, I would have liked to have seen it throughout the play.

After the ball is snapped there is a play-by-play description under the display of the field, which lets you know who has the ball and what is being done with it. After each play, you start again...hopefully closer to your opponent's goal posts. Among the play options are game statistics and injuries. Yes, it is possible to be injured, and needless to

say, it can cripple your chance of success (pun not intended). There are also penalties which you may decline or accept depending on circumstance. Interceptions and fumbles can be recovered by the player with the fastest fingers, and momentum — a very real factor in football — has been quantified. When you have momentum, you have a better chance of success and go further in your plays. Throughout the game there are sound effects and at halftime there is a show with an interesting graphics routine and "music."

I would like to say again how much I enjoyed this game. It has been played a lot and will continue to be played a lot. I don't know what else one can say about a game.
Tom Blood
Readers are welcome to send submissions for **SpiBus** *and reviews for considerations to* **SpiBus**, *c/o* **MOVES** *magazine, or directly to Ian Chadwick, 15 Bideford Ave. #303, Toronto, Ont., M5M 4C2, Canada. Software authors are welcome to send their products for review and playtesting to me as above also.*
Software for review has been received from the following companies:
Hayden Software
Edu-Ware
Microsoft
Big Five
Computer Simulations Canada
Acorn Software

Synergistic Software
While a review cannot be guaranteed, acknowledgement of received software will be made in this column. ■ ■

MOVES Canada [continued from page 27]
tionalities able to engage in a "Big Push" attack? Why no German sea power (what if they had won at Jutland?) There seem as many questions arise as the rules have answers. I recommend players use the entire optional rule package in order to improve the game.

Despite a highly playable game system, *Guns of August* is unplayable by virtue of its rigid adherence to a pre-designed outcome. What might have been an excellent entrance into a generally ignored gaming area becomes another dust-collector on so many shelves. In 1981, it comes across as a product designed for 1971 standards. Lessons which should have been learned from AH's classic *1914* about static fronts have been ignored and repeated here as mistakes. So many tactical and operational games about WWI recently released (*The Great War in the East* series, *To the Green Fields Beyond*, *The Kaiser's Battle*, *Gallipoli*, to name some of the better entries) have increased our hopes that there would be more to come — especially a campaign game of equal quality. *Guns of August* is not to be the game for which we waited. ■ ■

STATREP

CITYFIGHT
A Statistical Report of Game Characteristics
by Claude Bloodgood

This Charles Robert award winner (Best Modern Game—1980) certainly merits acclaim. It is an exceptionally well designed game that actually retains all the realism of battle and is quite playable. Gamers at the Virginia State Penitentiary have named it one of their favorite games in an annual poll; *Cityfight* and *Narvik* each received 21 votes (accounting for 42 of a possible 79) in the *VAPEN Favorite Game Poll*. Since players tend to develop a love for their favorite game, it's tough for a new game to win the hearts of players firmly convinced their favorite is the best in the world.

Cityfight did captivate players' imagination and turned former *PanzerBlitz* and *Squad Leader* fanatics into *Cityfight* addicts. A favorite game is something special, but even veteran *Chaco*, *Crimea* and *Narvik* diehards wavered, while *Raid!* specialists rushed into the new *Cityfight*. The final tally was *Cityfight* and *Narvik* (21 each), *Chaco* (10), *Crimea* (6), *Empires of the Middle Ages* (5), *Traveller* (4), *Their Finest Hour* (3), *Coral Sea* (2), and nine other games with one vote each.

The *Cityfight* support was a surprise, for GDW's *Narvik* had won this poll easily in 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, and 1980. The earlier winners were *PanzerBlitz* (1974) and *Chaco* (1975).

Statistical Analysis: Basic Game

Participating Players: 41
51.8% of active players selected the game from an inventory of more than 100 titles available during ten months ending 15 May 1981, and played the basic game training scenario, "Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee."

Repeat Players: 23
90.2% of 41 participants played the "Breakout!" and "Nicosia" scenarios after completing one set of the basic game training scenario.

Total Games Played: 106
"Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" was played 46 times, "Breakout!" 38 times, and "Nicosia" 22 times.

Average Playing Time: Varied with the scenarios
"Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" total playing time was 90½ hours for 46 games, an average of 1.97 hours. "Breakout!" total playing time was 105 hours for 38 games, an average of 2.76 hours. "Nicosia" total playing time was 86½ hours for 22 games, an average of 3.93 hours. These averages reflect an understanding of the basic game rules before attempting to play.

Shortest Recorded Game: 0.13 hour
Conceded after 2 turns between one experienced player and one new to *Cityfight* in the "Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" scenario.

Shortest Complete Game: 0.83 hour
Played between experienced *Cityfight* players in the "Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" scenario.

Longest Recorded Game: 15.33 hours
Played between relatively inexperienced players (who spent quite a bit of time referring to the rules) in the "Nicosia" scenario.

Best Side Results: Varied with scenario
"Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" scenario produced a 23-23 result. "Breakout!" scenario produced a Soviet margin of 26-12; American units are spread too thinly to function effectively against concentrated Soviet effort. "Nicosia" scenario produced a Turkish margin of 14-8, but better balance is probable if the Greek player selects good concealment and simply defends when spotted and attacked.

Game Imbalance: Varied with scenario
"Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" scenario produced a perfect 0.0% imbalance. "Breakout!" scenario imbalance level is 36.8%. "Nicosia" scenario imbalance level is 27.3%. The formula is wins minus losses divided by number of games played. Average play-balance is in the 12-14% range.

Game Balance Analysis

The basic game scenarios "Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" and "Nicosia" are real tests of skill for both sides. Because of the large number of progressively advanced scenarios which can be created, hard statistics on these are difficult to compile, but a sampling of results taken from the intermediate and advanced games indicates most scenarios are well balanced. The "Take the Money and Run" scenario is definitely not balanced; the police win here, too!

Subjective Analysis by the Players

Play Balance: Varied with scenario
"Encounter on the Stauffenbergallee" rated 8.90 on 41 responses with 40 rating it 9. "Breakout!" rated a predictably poor 4.97 on 36 reponses. "Nicosia" rated 7.82 on 22 responses. "Tank Battle at Metalwaren" rated 7.54 on 22 responses. "Take the Money and Run" rated 5.41 on 22 responses. "Beirut" (advanced game training scenario) rated 8.64 on 14 responses. 9 is perfectly balanced, 1 is totally unbalanced.

Playability: 7.98
Average of 41 responses; 9 is supremely playable, 1 is unplayable.

Length of Game: 7.95
Average of 41 responses; 9 is exactly correct length of scenario that may be selected; 1 is impossible to judge length of scenario.

Pace of Play: 8.07*
Average of 41 responses; 9 is smooth and fast pace game. 1 is awkward and slow paced game. *Based on play with gamesmaster controlling play.

Game Challenge: 8.51
Average of 41 responses; 9 is extremely challenging, 1 is no challenge.

Rules Dispute: 8.26*
Average of 41 responses; 9 is none of consequence, 1 is constant disputes. *Based on play with gamesmaster controlling play.

Comments on the Game System

Cityfight is really three games with an infinite number of scenarios possible in each. The basic game is easily learned by reading the rules with the basic game training scenario set up; players can apply the rules to a map situation and obtain a good understanding of the basic system with little effort. The game mechanics increase in complexity as the intermediate and advanced levels are reached, but each level has an excellent training scenario which should be played before attempting the more expansive scenarios at the same level.

Simultaneous movement is represented by a series of alternating actions. A player must choose the action (movement, sighting or fire) desired for one unit, followed by an action from the opposing player, with each alternating on every unit involved. This can be a slow process unless a time limit is enforced, but with a gamesmaster and a time limit, play will flow quite rapidly.

Perhaps the most easily overlooked aspect of the game system is the map. The highly detailed terrain and elevation features are critical to play; study the map until every feature is recognized at a glance. Examine areas that are unusual; a street or bridge *above* a building in an adjacent hex could be important, and so could many other ingenious lines of fire. Know the area you will fight in as thoroughly as possible; this will bring about much better results.

The game appears extremely complex initially, but learning it a step at a time is not really difficult. Once it is learned, the effort is rewarded with many hours of pleasure (and torment!) playing one of the best games in print. *Cityfight* will not disappoint anyone interested in urban conflicts. ■ ■

Feedback

MOVES 58, August/September 1981

How to use the Feedback Response Card:
After you've finished reading this issue of *MOVES*, please read the Feedback questions below, and give us your answers by writing the answer-numbers on the card in the response boxes which correspond to each question number. See centerfold for card. Please be sure to answer all questions (but do not write anything in the box for question-numbers labelled "no question"). Incompletely filled out cards cannot be processed.

What the Numbers Mean:
When answering questions, zero always indicates *no opinion* or *not applicable.* When a Question is a yes or no question, 1 means *yes* and 2 means *no.* When a question is a rating question, 1 is the *worst* rating, 9 is the *best* rating, 5 is an *average* rating, and all numbers between express various shades of approval or disapproval.

SECTION A

1-3. No question (leave blank).

Questions 4 through 24 ask you to rate the articles in this issue on a scale of 1 (poor) to 9 (excellent). Zero indicates no opinion.

4. Doctrine for Desert Fox
5. Empires for Two
6. Spies Everywhere
7. Kursk
8. *MOVES* in English
9. *MOVES* Canada
10. SPIBUS
11. Stat Rep: Cityfight
12. Forward Observer
13. Designer's Notes
14. Opening *MOVES*
15. This issue overall
16. Was this issue better than the last one?
17.-24. No question

25. Assume that you don't subscribe to *MOVES* Would the quality of this issue alone motivate you to subscribe?

26. For how many issues have you had a continuous subscription to *MOVES*? 0 = I do not subscribe, 1 = This is my first issue, 2 = This is my second or third issue, 3 = This is my fourth or fifth issue; 4 = This is my sixth issue, 5 = This is my seventh through eleventh issue, 6 = This is my twelfth issue; 7 = This is my thirteenth through eighteenth issue, 8 = This is my nineteenth or subsequent issue, 9 = I am a *MOVES* Lifetime Subscriber (regardless of the number of issues received)

27. What level of complexity do you prefer in games? Rate your preference on a 1-9 scale, with higher numbers indicating greater complexity Use these games as guidelines 4-5 = *Chickamauga*, 7 = *Cityfight*; 9 = *Air War.*

28. Your age 1 = 13 years old or younger, 2 = 14-17, 3 = 18-21, 4 = 22-27; 5 = 28-35, 6 = 36 or older

29. Your sex 1 = Male, 2 = Female

30. Education 1 = 11 years or less, 2 = 12 years, 3 = 13-15 years, 4 = 13-15 years and still in school, 5 = 16 years, 6 = 17 years or more

31. How long have you been playing conflict simulation games? 0 = less than a year, 1 = 1 year, 2 = 2 years   8 = 8 years, 9 = 9 or more years

32. What is the average number of hours you spend playing simulation games each month? 0 = none, 1 = 1 hour or less, 2 = 2-5 hours, 3 = 6-9, 4 = 10-15, 5 = 16-20, 6 = 21-25, 7 = 26-30, 8 = 31-40, 9 = 41 or more hours

33. How many simulation games (of all publishers) do you possess? 1 = 1-10; 2 = 11-20, 3 = 21-30, 4 = 31-40, 5 = 41-50, 6 = 51-60, 7 = 61-70, 8 = 71-80, 9 = 81 or more

34. Did you send in the feedback card for your last issue of *MOVES?* 1 = yes; 2 = no.

35. Pick the *one* area about which you would like to see games and articles done 1 = Ancient (Roman, Greek, Biblical, 3000BC-600AD); 2 = Dark Ages and Renaissance

(600AD-1600AD); 3 = 30 Years War and pre-Napoleonic (1600-1790); 4 = Napoleonic (1790-1830); 5 = Civil War and 19th Century (1830-1900); 6 = World War One (1900-1930); 7 = World War II (1930-1945); 8 = Post-World War II (1945-present); 9 = Science Fiction and Fantasy.

36. How did you purchase this copy of *MOVES* 1 = by subscription; 2 = by mail, as a single copy; 3 = in a store; 4 = it was passed along to me by a friend; 5 = other means (please describe).

37. How many people (including yourself) will read this copy of *MOVES*? 1 = 1 (yourself only); 2 = 2; 3 = 3; 9 = 9 or more.

38. Do you own or plan to buy one of the following microcomputer systems? 0 = I have no interest in microcomputers or microcomputer gaming; 1 = I own an Apple II; 2 = plan to buy an Apple II; 3 = own a Radio Shack TRS-80; 4 = plan to buy a TRS-80; 5 = own an Atari 800; 6 = plan to buy an Atari 800; 7 = own some other microcomputer; 8 = plan to buy some other microcomputer; 9 = have no plans to buy a microcomputer because I already have access to a microcomputer

39. Overall, which of the following features in the past few issues of *MOVES* is most in need of change (to make it better through changes in quality, quantity, format, etc.)? 0 = don't change anything; 1 = Designer's Notes; 2 = MOVES Canada; 3 = MOVES in English; 4 = SpiBus; 5 = Game scenario and variant articles; 6 = Game operational analysis articles; 7 = Forward Observer; 8 = Game theory and technique articles; 9 = Survey review articles (e.g., "A Survey of Arab-Israeli War Games" in *MOVES* 55).

40. Please select the statement that describes your status as an SPI subscriber 1 = I subscribe to *S&T* only; 2 = I subscribe to *Ares* only; 3 = I subscribe to *MOVES* only; 4 = I subscribe to *S&T* and *Ares;* 5 = I subscribe to *S&T* and *MOVES;* 6 = I subscribe to *Ares* and *MOVES;* 7 = I subscribe to *S&T, Ares* and *MOVES.*

41. Do you currently have a subscription to *FYEO* Newsletter? 1 = yes; 2 = no

42. How many times do you pick up, re-read, or use a typical issue of *MOVES?* 1 = once, 2 = twice; 3 = 3-4 times, 4 = 5-6 times, 5 = 7-8 times, 6 = 9-10 times, 7 = 11 times or more

43. *MOVES* Magazine is now being dedicated strictly to material relating to military, political and historical games (all sf and fantasy material will appear in *Ares*) Rate your opinion of this editorial direction on a scale of "1" to "9," with 1 indicating you greatly *disagree* with this policy up to 9 indicating you wholeheartedly *agree* with this change

44. Do you have some form of cable or pay television in your home? 1 = yes, 2 = no

Questions 45 through 63 ask how much of your leisure time you spend in various activities. Pick one of the following statements to describe your time spent on these activities. 0 = I never do this activity; 1 = I spend very little time on this activity; 2 = I spend some time on this activity; 3 = I spend a good deal of time on this activity; 4 = I spend most of my time doing this activity.

45. Playing board military games
46. Playing board sf/f games
47. Playing role-playing fantasy games
48. Playing role-playing science fiction games
49. Playing general interest board games
50. Playing TV video games
51. Playing home computer games
52. Doing crosswords and other puzzles
53. Running or jogging
54. Playing tennis or racketball
55. Playing other sports
56. Collecting coins, stamps, etc
57. Fixing things around the house
58. Listening to stereo/music
59. Reading fiction
60. Reading non-fiction
61. Attending movies
62. Attending live theater
63. Playing card games

Please rate the solitaire playability of the following games on a scale from "1" to "9," with 1 indicating the game is almost impossible to play solitaire to 9 indicating the game is extremely playable solitaire. All games are published by SPI unless otherwise indicated.

64. Fifth Corps
65. Hof Gap
66. NATO Division Commander
67. Air War
68. The Next War
69. Battle for Stalingrad
70. Squad Leader (AH)
71. Kursk (1980 edition)
72. DNO/Unentschieden (GDW)
73. Battle for the Ardennes
74. Patton's Third Army
75. Terrible Swift Sword
76. Pea Ridge
77. The Kaiser's Battle
78. War and Peace (AH)
79. Empires of the Middle Ages
80. Operation Grenade

Rate the following game proposals on a scale of "1" to "9," with 1 indicating very little inclination to buy the game if published and 9 indicating a definite intention to purchase if it is published.

81. Greek Fire and Persian Oars. A tactical simulation of naval combat in the days of Greece and Rome, this game will emphasize the combat which took place when opposing ships grappled and were boarded. A highly detailed melee system will be designed to illustrate the effects of such fighting Many different types of infantry (marines) units from the many ancient nations will be portrayed, as well as the commanders, slaves and auxilliary personnel The main emphasis will be on playability though accuracy will also be stressed Special rules will cover the use of Greek fire, ramming, the effects of weather, and command control; numerous scenarios will cover many of the major battles and several hypothetical confrontations The game will include a 22" × 34" map, 50 double-sized and 100 single-sized counters, and 16 pages of rules A possible *S&T* game to sell for $12

82. The Conquest of Parthia. It was a clash of Empires: the Parthian (now Iran and Iraq) and the Roman It was also a classic confrontation between power and mobility The solid power of the Roman legions vs the maneuverable firepower of the Parthian mounted bowmen Rome had conquered the Mediterranean world with her legions, but the all-cavalry army of the Parthians would be the prototype for armies of the future There would be six scenarios in this game, five of them based on the actual Parthian Wars, reflecting the martial efforts of such Roman greats as Mark Antony and the Emperor Trajan The sixth scenario is a fantasy based on what might have happened if Julius Caesar had lived to carry out his planned invasion of Parthia Players would have their strategic and tactical abilities tested by a variety of terrains and military problems Revolt, the plague, poor strategic planning and unreliable allies would be some of these problems The game would include one 22" × 34" game map and 200 counters To sell for $15

83. The Battle of Blenheim. The final engagement in the War of Spanish Succession, this battle demonstrated both the superiority of the English military organization and the brilliant leadership of the Duke of Marlborough Here in 1704, his British troops, aided by Prince Eugene's Imperials, defeated a superior force of Franco-Prussians led by Marshall Tallard The game will utilize a modification of the *Ney vs. Wellington* game system, it will contain two 22" × 34" maps depicting the Bavarian countryside on which the battle was fought, 400 backprinted counters and 24 pages of rules. To sell for $20.

84. Albuera. On 16 May 1811, Marshal Soult with 23,000 French and allied troops attacked British General Beresford near the Spanish town of Albuera. Soult marched up to relieve Beresford's siege of the citadel of Badajoz, which helped guard the mountain pass into Portugal Soult maneuvered Beresford away from Badajoz and then forced him into a battle Wellington had ordered be avoided Soult routed most of Beresford's Spanish troops and pierced his center, but British tenacity and steady volleys of infantry fire saved the day. The game would be a highly tactical simulation adapting the *Ney vs. Wellington* system, colorful counters would represent the various nationalities present, and special rules would cover such features as the British armed skirmishers *Albuera* would include a 22" × 34" map, 400 counters, and 16 to 24 pages of rules. To sell for $18.

85. Monitor and Merrimac. Ship-to-ship combat in the American Civil War. On 8 March 1862, a new age dawned

in the history of naval warfare On that day a single heavily armed ironclad, the *CSA Virginia (Merrimac)*, sank two Union battleships and ran another aground The wooden vessels were helpless The next day the *Virginia* faced off against the Union ironclad *Monitor* For four hours the ironclads pounded each other unsuccessfully Finally, the *Virginia* withdrew and the Union retained control of Hampton Roads The game would use a movement and command assignment system based on the *Fighting Sail* game system The combat system would be completely different and would follow the action shot-by-shot Each ship in the game will have its own one-inch counter The statistics and armaments of all ships will be given in great detail which will allow for all the interesting variabilities the ships had historically Scenarios will include gunboat attacks on the fortresses of Vicksburg and Fort Henry and Fort Donaldson, as well as the major ship-to-ship battles of the war All major engagements of the war will be included The game would include two 22″ × 34″ maps, 400 one-inch counters, 24 pages of rules and scenarios To sell for $20

86. Flashman! Based on the book of the same name by George MacDonald Fraser, this game would be a solitaire simulation of the major actions during the First British-Afghan War (1839–42) Mohammed Akbar Khan successfully destroyed numerous British troops at the Khoord Kabul pass and during the disastrous retreat from Kabul For over a year he besieged the British garrison at Jellalabad The garrison was finally relieved by a force under General Pollock, who managed to avenge the British losses at Kabul The main thrust of the game will be to put down the rebellion successfully and at the same time effect the escape of that lovable rogue, Harry Flashman The game would use a story-paragraph system similar to that used in *Voyage of the Pandora*, as the British player moves his forces around the map of Afghanistan, he checks the paragraphs to see if there are any Afghan troops prepared for an ambush Rules would cover the effects of leadership (initially very poor for the British), retreats leading into mass panics, atrocities against the natives and soldiers, and special siege rules Flashman, in the mean time, goes his merry way, escaping certain death, showing his yellow streak at the least pressure, seducing ladies, betraying his countrymen, and in short, doing anything in the world to save his neck The game would come with a 22″ × 34″ map, 200 backprinted counters, rules booklet with extensive story-paragraphs, to sell for $15 Availability subject to agreement with the author

87. Inkerman: The Soldier's Battle. A tactical recreation of the Crimean War battle on 5 November 1854, when 35,000 Russians tried to overwhelm 3,000 British plus Allied reinforcements and break the siege of Sevastopol This was the Russians best chance to end the stalemate in their favor, but the skill and tenacity of the outnumbered British units saved the day The game would use the *TSS* system which will allow more detail and tactical flavor than the *Crimean War* game on the same subject The game would be regimental/company level and would focus on the relative morale, leadership, and tactical doctrines of the respective sides and how these factors influenced the outcome The game would include a 22″ × 34″ map of the immediate battlefield showing the river approaches the Russians used and the defensive positions of the British on the ridges above The game would include 200-400 counters, and 16 to 32 pages of rules and support material to sell for $15

88. War in the Trenches. A tactical level game encompassing a wide variety of small unit engagements in World War I Extensive rules covering trench warfare and the infant tank forces of all sides would be presented in a new game system highlighting action and effect Numerous static front and mobile battle scenarios would be included Cambrai, the first tank to tank battle, Hooge, the first major use of the flamethrower, Verdun, Villers-Bretonneux, another early tank battle, Bolimov, the first use of poison gas, and many other representative engagements Company, platoon and squad level counters would be used on a selection of small geomorphic maps, enabling many types of battle terrain to be shown *War in the Trenches* would include 400 counters, eight 8″ × 11″ interchangeable maps and 24 to 32 pages of rules in a 2″ box To sell for $20

89. The Russian Front. A one-map simulation of the most titanic and decisive campaign of World War II The entire eastern theatre, from Barbarossa until the final Soviet drive on Germany would be re-created in this simple and playable game Emphasis would be on strategic planning, rather than on intricate systems and mastering "tricks" Axis forces would be represented on a corps-

level, Soviets on an army level. Turns would be monthly. Special rules would include winter weather, partisans, and free production of reinforcements The different strategies and organization of the German and Soviet armies would be highlighted in a strategic-level command system In addition, a system allowing for changing troops quality during the course of the campaign would be featured A variety of situations would be presented, including a number of short scenarios and a campaign game simulating the entire war in the east *The Russian Front* would have one 22″ × 34″ map, 400 counters, and 12 to 16 pages of rules To sell for $15

90. Underground. The silent figures crouched in the shadows beside the gleaming stripes that were the Dusseldorf railroad A slow rumbling grew as the German locomotive approached, loaded with ammunition for the troops fighting desperately in the west As the engine passed the men, their black-faced leader rapidly lifted and depressed a plunger Instantly, a shattering explosion rocked the air The glare of secondary explosions lit their way as the men fled into the nearby trees, the sounds of pursuing dogs and men filling their ears *Underground* is a game of spying and sabotage in World War II Germany One player would take the role of the leader of a band of Allied partisans, working deep in enemy territory to interfere with the German war effort and secure crucial information for the boys back home The other player is a German Gestapo colonel, charged with maintaining security on the homefront Play would take the form of distinct operations, in which a detailed random events paragraph describes a situation (e g , the arrival of an arms convoy) The Gestapo player deploys and the Underground player strikes *Underground* would have a 22″ × 34″ map of the German countryside, 200 counters representing German security forces, underground operatives, targets such as convoys, important prisoners, etc , and 16 pages of rules To sell for $15

91. The Battle for France. Following their successful landing on the French coast in Normandy, the Allies sought to break out from the Bocage country and drive deep into France The Germans, seeking to contain the Allies within their lodgment, tried to concentrate reinforcements to hold the line and win the battle for western Europe *Battle For France* will basically be an expansion kit to *Atlantic Wall*, covering the period from July 2 to July 25 The maps from *Atlantic Wall* will be used (but not included in this kit), the players being given a rules booklet and some 600 extra counters Rules will include carpet bombing, tank replacement and other special features The expansion kit will include four scenarios, including the battle for St Lo and Operation Goodwood To sell for $15

92. Gulf Strike! By the mid-1980's, Soviet-Iranian tensions peak Soviet armies mass in Afghanistan and Trans-Caucasia, then sweep south into Iran The United States decides that it must intervene to protect its vital interests in the Gulf area The US 18th Airborne Corps (82nd Airborne and 101st Airborne Divisions), 24th Infantry Division, and 7th Maritime Amphibious Brigade (MAB), newly commissioned as the long-awaited Rapid Deployment Force (RDF), are called into action from their standby positions on the continental US (CONUS), Diego Garcia, and other US Indian Ocean bases Just as the Soviet pincer reaches Teheran, a massive airlift drops US troops between the advancing Soviets and the Iranian oilfields A huge US amphibious flotilla arrives in the waters of Iran and the B-52's of the Strategic Projection Force (SPF) begin to interdict the Soviet advance *Gulf Strike!* would simulate on a regimental/battalion level a major confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union in the rugged terrain of Iran Logistics and air power would be emphasized Special rules would cover spy satellite reconnaissance, carrier and land-based air forces, organizational effects of the Military Airlift Command (MAC) and Military Sealift Command (MSC), Iranian partisan activity (against both US and Soviet forces), unit breakdown, and chemical warfare *Gulf Strike!* would have two 22″ × 34″ maps, 800 counters, and 24 pages of rules To sell for $25

93. Swords & Sorcery II. A substantially new game with all new components designed both as an independent game for two or more players in an evening, and as a source of *DragonQuest* adventures At certain points during play of *S&S II*, the players would have the option of resolving a dispute among game characters using *Dragon-Quest.* The new map would encompass less area than the *Frontiers of Alusia* map, but would provide greater detail *S&S II* would stress multi-player scenarios where individual game characters can have major effects on the outcome of play The game would be complete of itself, and would be playable with or without the *DragonQuest* tie-in

material. The scenarios would follow in a logical order and will be drawn from a new story line that will be produced to provide the history which the game will simulate. The game will remain approximately the same size and will sell for $20.

94. AXE (Ace Exploration Enterprises). Starved for critical resources during an interstellar conflagration, the Federation licenses fly-by-night outfits like Ace Exploration Enterprises (AXE) to obtain crucial minerals from stellar sectors only cursory examined in the past. *AXE* would be a multi-player game representing several procurement teams spreading out from the mother ship to locate and accumulate the minerals. Players act as competing "mineral mercenaries" drawing on their team's own individual skills and equipment, plus the limited additional reserve resources of the mother ship. Victory is determined by the relative value of finds loaded, minus extra expense and losses incurred by the corporate mother ship. Players have to search, move the material to the ship, possibly fight the natives, and may even attempt to sabotage other teams. *AXE* would include a 22″ × 34″ map of planet terrain, 200 counters, 12 pages of rules, and would sell boxed for $12.

95–96. No questions

SECTION B

The results of the following survey are used in our Playback system. This system reviews games by showing the response of the people who play the games. Questions 104–192 are part of Playback. After each game title there are fourteen questions, lettered A through O. Questions A through M are answered with a 1 (poor) through 9 (excellent) rating. Questions N and O are answered 1 (yes) or 2 (no).

A. What did you think of the physical quality and layout of the mapsheet?

B. What did you think of the physical quality and layout of the rules folder?

C. What did you think of the physical quality and layout of the unit counters?

D. What did you think of the game's ease of play (how well the game moved along)?

E. What did you think of the completeness of the rules (was everything thoroughly explained)?

F. What did you think of the game's play balance (was the game interesting for both sides)?

G. What did you think about the appropriateness of the length of the average game?

H. What did you think of the amount of time required to set up the game before beginning to play?

J. What did you think of the appropriateness of the game's complexity?

K. What did you think of the game's realism?

L. What did you think of the game overall?

M. What did you think of the game's solitaire playability?

N. Would you have bought this game if you knew then what you know now about it (1 = Yes, 2 = No)

O. Do you think you received your money's worth with this game? (1 = Yes, 2 = No)

We will ask you to rate six games. If you have not played these games, or have not played them enough to be able to evaluate them, then write a zero in the boxes.

CEDAR MOUNTAIN

104. A (mapsheet)	**111.** H (set-up time)
105. B (rules)	**112.** J (complexity)
106. C (counters)	**113.** K (realism)
107. D (ease of play)	**114.** L (overall)
108. E (rules completeness)	**115.** M (solitaire)
109. F (balance)	**116.** N (then and now)
110. G (length)	**117.** O (money's worth)
	118. No question

RAGNAROK

119. A (map sheet)	**126.** H (set-up time)
120. B (rules)	**127.** J (complexity)
121. C (counters)	**128.** K (realism)
122. D (ease of play)	**129.** L (overall)
123. E (rules completeness)	**130.** M (solitaire)
124. F (balance)	**131.** N (then and now)
125. G (length)	**132.** O (money's worth)
	133. No question

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Feedback *[continued from page 38]*

THE FALL OF FRANCE (GDW)

134. A (mapsheet)	**141.** H (set-up time)
135. B (rules)	**142.** J (complexity)
136. C (counters)	**143.** K (realism)
137. D (ease of play)	**144.** L (overall)
138. E (rules completeness)	**145.** M (solitaire)
139. F (balance)	**146.** N (then and now)
140. G (length)	**147.** O (money's worth)
	148. No question.

SUEZ '73 (GDW)

149. A (mapsheet)	**156.** H (set-up time)
150. B (rules)	**157.** J (complexity)
151. C (counters)	**158.** K (realism)
152. D (ease of play)	**159.** L (overall)
153. E (rules completeness)	**160.** M (solitaire)
154. F (balance)	**161.** N (then and now)
155. G (length)	**162.** O (money's worth)
	163. No question

THE GUNS OF AUGUST (AH)

164. A (mapsheet)	**171.** H (set-up time)
165. B (rules)	**172.** J (complexity)
166. C (counters)	**173.** K (realism)
167. D (ease of play)	**174.** L (overall)
168. E (rules completeness)	**175.** M (solitaire)
169. F (balance)	**176.** N (then and now)
170. G (length)	**177.** O (money's worth)
	178. No question

AMOEBA WARS (AH)

179. A (mapsheet)	**186.** H (set-up time)
180. B (rules)	**187.** J (complexity)
181. C (counters)	**188.** K (realism)
182. D (ease of play)	**189.** L (overall)
183. E (rules completeness)	**190.** M (solitaire)
184. F (balance)	**191.** N (then and now)
185. G (length)	**192.** O (money's worth)
	193.-196. No question

CONVENTIONS
Up and Coming

This following is a list of conventions scheduled to be held in the upcoming months, including place, name of convention, and whom to contact for further information. Much of the material in this feature is derived from the *Midwest Gaming Association Boardletter.*

September 11-13
DRAGONFLIGHT, Seattle, Washington. *Contact:* Brass Dragon Soc., PO Box 33872, Seattle, WA 98133.

COPPER CON, Phoenix, Arizona. *Contact:* Copper Con, PO Box 11743, Phoenix, AZ 85061.

October 9-11
FALL CON, Cincinnati, Ohio. *Contact:* Fall Con, 5923 Hamilton, Cincinnati, OH 45224.

October 24-25
ROCK CON VII, Rock Valley College Student Center, Rockford, Illinois. *Contact:* Royal Hobby Shop, 3806 E. State St., Rockford, IL 61108.

November 6-8
ARMAGEDDON 81, University of Houston Central Campus, Houston, Texas. *Contact:* Armageddon 81, Program Council, University of Houston Central Campus, University Center n-23, Houston, TX 77004.

November 27-29
AGUACON 81, San Mateo, California. *Contact:* AguaCon, PO Box 485, Campbell, CA 95008.

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS
FOR *MOVES* MAGAZINE

Most of the articles in *MOVES* are written by its readers. We'd like you to give it a try — if your article is well-written and on a subject of interest to our readers, there's a good chance that it will see publication in *MOVES*.

Manuscript Requirements: Typewritten and double-spaced; 25 lines per page. Number and tag pages with the author's last name. Cover sheet should contain full name, address, suggested title, honorarium preference and social security number.

Honorariums: For all published articles, *MOVES* pays an honorarium at the rate of $10 per 10" of edited text, calculated to the nearest half column. Authors may elect to take their honorarium in SPI products at the rate of $18 per 10" rendered against the list price of the items. Payment will be rendered 30 days after publication.

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Please include a self-addressed, stamped postcard which will be used to inform you of the status of your article. Articles and illustrations cannot be returned. Address submissions to *MOVES*, SPI, 257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010.

British authors send submissions and correspondence to Charles Vasey, 14 Osprey Gardens, Selsdonvale, South Croyden, Surrey CR2 8TB. **Canadian** authors send submissions to Ian Chadwick, 303-15 Bideford Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5M 4C2.