

DESPATCH

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Secretary's Soapbox *Chris Geggus*

I am writing this piece about a week before Wally Con (thank you to Murray for the name). I am very hopeful that it will be a success, particularly as booking numbers are up on previous years for our Southern venue. The only fly in the ointment is that the very friendly couple with whom I made all the arrangements and negotiated our pretty good rates, have rather suddenly moved on and obviously I do not yet know the new owners/landlords. They are keeping to our agreement and if all goes as expected we could well be looking at booking the same venue for next year. We do have one major problem in that I chose a weekend of rather important sporting endeavours i.e. the Turkey/England football match and the start of the Rugby World Cup. Sorry to those of you who are suffering some degree of conflict, but the rugby is on for a few weeks and who cares about the soccer prima donnas anyway? Elsewhere in this issue I hope we will have the dates listed for Swan Con. Never a disappointment there, although I notice that Premier Lodges have recently been sold off. I hope we remain unaffected.

A couple of interesting programmes on U.K. TV recently. For those of you who watched Time Commanders - my sympathy. However, I do like the big computer screens in the studio, perhaps a future con? Secondly it was interesting to see James Dunnigan appearing as a military expert on the BBC Secret History programme about the WWII illusionist and magician Jasper Maskelyne. That's obviously where ex-gamers and designers go when they leave the hobby.

As we enter the winter season I hope more games will be played and we can

get some ratings put forward to AHIKS. I will always play rated games if my opponent wants - it costs nothing other than a few extra seconds at the end of the games. One apology I have just noticed. I was very pleased the Flagship magazine gave Wally Con a plug, but unfortunately I gave them the wrong dates. I hope no-one turned up on the Wednesday or Thursday to join the con!

I am now writing this second part of my article a couple of days after returning from the Dukes Head in Wallington. The convention went very well I thought and the general consensus is to return next year. We did have one major disaster when we tried to sit down to dinner only minutes after the Turkey/England game and the bar was still heaving with tattooed, noisy and drunk English soccer fans. With limited space, a lot of noise, a new chef and 22 AHIKS members all in the same place at the same time, something was bound to suffer. Unfortunately it was our service and we all sympathise with those of you who waited over one and a half hours to be served. It happens occasionally and there is certainly no reason to dream that it will ever happen again. No-one got hurt, even the chef after a visit from Murray and hopefully we can take advantage of the moral high ground to book next year at the same prices. Watch this space. The other criticism was the location, but anywhere within the M25 at that price is a miracle. A messy drive for those of us to the north of the M25, but we all got there in the end. I hope there is a fuller review of what was a good weekend later in this issue.

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WHO ARE WE AND WHAT IS AHIKS

AHIKS was formed in 1965 by a group of people whose purpose was threefold:

To provide a forum within which an internationally useable play by mail war gaming system could be used.

To encourage the spread of war gaming outside of the United States of America.

To provide members with mature opponents who would complete games promptly and fairly.

AHIKS now has about 250 members around the world and is recognized for its dedication to the hobby of war gaming.

You can join AHIKS Europe by contacting our Secretary or any other officer of the club. Contact names and addresses are on page 2.

Subscriptions remain at £10 per year.

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SwanCon 2004 Provisional dates 5 to 7 March 2004

Back to the Swan hotel in Knutsford for our Spring convention. Knutsford is just off the M6 and is served by train to Altringham, about 5 miles distant. As before the cost of the games room will be met by the society. Room prices are still being negotiated (last year was £46.95 per night, regardless of occupancy, but max of 2) breakfast is extra. Book early to avoid disappointment!



**Bookings to
Keith Walton
29 Oxford Road
Waterloo, Liverpool L22 8QE
Telephone 0151 920 3971
Email kwalton@dak-waterloo.demon.co.uk**

For the comfort of fellow gamers the games room is strictly non smoking.

World Boardgames Championship

Andrew Cummins

What is there to say about the World Boardgames Championship or WBC's?

This was my sixth year of attendance and I still keep going back for more. Two reasons really - the friends that I've made and hope to meet again and the spectacular games that I'll play.

There are around a hundred events run as tournaments - the Century of Gaming - most people

will manage to compete in 5-10% of the total unless they are spreading themselves very thin. The range of games played is quite varied, from old wargame favourites like Russian Campaign or Victory in the Pacific, through modern favourites like POG to Euro-Games such as Ra & Puerto Rico and late night crowd pleasers like SlapShot, Gangsters and Circus Minimus.

I played in more tournaments than usual this year, Age of Renaissance, Breakout Normandy, Monty's Gamble, Merchant of Venus, Squad Leader & Attack Sub with a few pick-up games of Puerto Rico. The end result of this was a hectic schedule that saw me playing for four days in a row from 9:00 in the morning to 1:00 at night. This was exhausting and exhilarating at the same time. My two most memorable games were played through midnight - the final of Monty's Gamble and a truly epic Squad Leader Guards Counterattack.

Around a thousand gamers come along and take over a major US convention hotel for a long week - it's a pleasure to be in like-minded company for the week. People who understand the cruelty of the dice and the pleasure of a well executed strat-

egy coming together. After I come home for a couple of weeks I have to stifle an un-British tendency to talk to strangers, such is the general level of friendliness at the WBC's.

Murray Cowles missed coming this year and I had half-a-dozen

conversations with players wishing him well and hoping to see

him next year.

Perhaps the only European equivalent is Essen, but that is more focussed on manufacturers rather than players.

At the WBC you'll get the opportunity to meet and quiz games designers and companies. What were they smoking when they conceived that particular rule? Why hasn't Freedom in the Galaxy been reworked and released. Why such-an-such would make an excellent title. You'll also see games on the verge of production, newly released or maybe just home grown, looking for support and a publisher.

The quality of competition in tournaments is generally strong once you get past the first round or two - some of the players have been doing email games all year just to hone themselves to a fine pitch for the WBC's.

While 95% of the attendees are from the US, there are enough in the remaining 5% from Europe, Canada, Britain and the rest of the world to generate a very cosmopolitan mixture. After gaming discussion is a wild mix of comments and opinions posed from many

different backgrounds.

So, what to say about the WBC's, - its people and games, games and people, come along yourself and find out - I did and look what happened to me.



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On the Net

Alan Poulter

News

GMT production problems

The image of GMT is as the company currently leading the pack with a string of innovative games. However in recent months new games from them have not appeared (although the games drought is now over, see the information on new GMT games below) and customers started to get restless. What follows is the official 'Open Letter to GMT Customers' response from GMT. I give in full as it shows what a perilous operation publishing board wargames is today:

GMT is something of an oddity in the world of Corporate America. We are a "for profit" business that is nonetheless run primarily as a "non-profit" company for the benefit of wargamers; we use any "profits" generated to publish more games or re-prints. Because of the cash flow nature of the business, we would not be alive without the P500 system, and P500 only works because of your continuing trust. I have monitored the ongoing discussion on-line about whether or not GMT has been using P500 dollars to cover normal operating expenses.

The short answer is yes. Last year we did have to use P500 money just to stay alive. We made one very bad marketing decision when we produced the first two Flagship games. These games put us in a big hole on production costs, and sales never came close to anticipated levels. The recession caught us also, with individual and distributor orders plummeting far faster than we could cut costs. By the end of the year we were "down" four games (Corsairs & Hellcats, Attila, Blue vs Gray, and Medieval) with no revenues in sight to get them produced. The reason for the five month gap in

The latest news about wargaming, website updates, products in the pipeline from Alan Poulter

P500 charges was that those of us running GMT were searching for a viable way to save the company, and simply charging for more games on P500 was not acceptable. We ran the sales to boost cash flow, and to an extent, what they brought in helped keep us afloat. We used those five months to pay down back production costs, but the pace of repayment was such that it would have been mid-2003 before we might have gotten everything paid off. The catch to this process was that new orders were slowing, especially with distributors who are even worse than individual gamers about wanting "the next new



game". To keep cash flow at levels where we could keep paying the bills, we would need to put out new releases. So, we were between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

In January, my wife (a far better woman than I deserve) and I sat down and had a very difficult talk about what it would take to keep GMT alive, and whether we should take the risk to do it. Basically it came down to whether or not my desire to keep GMT running so I

could keep doing what I love to do was worth the possible loss of a large chunk of money we could not easily replace. My wife said OK, so we swallowed hard, drew our savings down to zero, took out a second mortgage on the house, and loaned GMT \$50,000.00. Part of that money went to pay enough of the remaining unpaid bills to get the printers to agree to do business with us again. The remainder went to fund the bulk of the production cost remaining for Corsairs & Hellcats and Attila so we could get product out the door.

Two of the other principles have made similar sacrifices. One is coming up with the funds to finish production on Blue vs Gray and Medieval. The other has consistently allowed his payments from GMT to run years in arrears. All have seen this letter, and told me to "go for it." We are all passionate about GMT and onboard for the long haul.

We did not go out on a limb financially so we could continue to operate as we always had. We have instituted some basic changes in the way we operate.

All P500 monies now go into a separate account. GMT now has a general account to pay the recurring business expenses, and a P500 account to pay the printer and production bills. When the cards were charged for Rise of Rome and Sweden Fights On, those monies were transferred from the general account to the Account #2 (as we call it). There the funds are further segmented into their respective



games. We have all agreed that we will never again charge for a P500 game where the monies received will not actually pay for the game to be printed. This may mean we do not charge until there are 700 or 800 orders, or until we can gang the components with other games to get the costs down to where the money covers. Medieval is the last game we will print that comes nowhere close to providing the P500 revenues needed to actually print the game. It should have been a \$45.00 retail game.

To that end, we will be removing WWI Down in Flames from the P500 list because there is no way in the world we can produce the components at the P500 price, even with the number of orders we have. In addition, the design for the game was never completed. Don't despair – we will put a WWI air combat game on P500 sometime this summer or early fall.

Unless the supporters of the Euro or Family style games are willing to support P500 entries in the manner wargamers support theirs, it will be a long time before GMT publishes more of these types of games. This is not a desire on our part to get out of this market – personally, I have been able to play and enjoy these games with our son and daughter-in-law where we never would have played one of our “wargames.” Cold, hard economic reality is that GMT is on a “pay-as-you-go” basis, and games that can't pay their own way will not be produced.

GMT is behaving like a small company, because we are a small company. We have reduced our participation in conventions where profit is marginal. We have cut our print advertising back to a bare minimum. We continue to cut payroll and office expense, not to generate more cash, but to help us pay on the expenses that keep increasing – insurance, utilities, shipping (both incoming and outgoing), packing boxes and material, etc.

We cannot afford to be all things to all people. We can only afford to be what our customers will pay for.

Some answers to questions I've seen on line:

Why did we place other newer games ahead of Blue vs Gray and Medieval? Money. My wife and I risked all we could, and the money available was just not enough to produce all four games we owed. We chose to fund the two oldest charges first and continue to hunt for funds to pay for the other two. Meanwhile, we had to get production up and running to rekindle interest in GMT that would translate into future revenues. Since then, we have come up with the monies for the other two to be printed over the next two to three months. FYI, we still would have held up on Medieval to see how the new printer (a significantly lower cost outfit) did on the Corsairs & Hellcats card quality before committing to a second project with them. We will know shortly.

Why should current production estimates be believed? First of all, I did not post for a very long time because we honestly did not know whether GMT was going to survive. I could not post estimates I had no way of knowing could be fulfilled. At this point, the estimates I've been posting are solid estimates because I know we have the money in account #2 to pay for the production. We have been paying our printer bills on time and in full. We still have snags – for example, the Corsairs & Hellcats plane cards did not ship when they were supposed to ship, but they have shipped. Still, when I put out an estimate now, I know we stand a good chance of getting the parts on schedule because we are paying for them on schedule.

Do those of you who have up to six games charged on your cards stand a greater chance of losing

your money than when only the four games from 2002 were the only games charged? Hopefully, after reading what has been written here, you'll understand you are in far less danger of losing your money at this point in 2003 than you were last year. GMT will never be a risk-free operation (as those of us who have loaned GMT money know all too well). You will have to be the judges of your own risk tolerance and act accordingly.

Will P500 money be diverted to non-P500 expenses? I can't promise we will never divert any money. The recession we went through last year was a severe trial financially. There is no guarantee we won't hit any other such financial rough spots. What I can promise is that we will never divert money actually needed to pay the printer bills. If we have excesses from time-to-time, our first priority would be to direct such money toward reprints, and then toward retiring remaining old bills.

What about the increased charge-to-ship times on the games? Again, for reasons enumerated above, we busted badly on four of last year's charges. We are on schedule to meet or beat the 12 week charge to ship time on the two latest charges. With the system we have in place now, we should continue to do well. One thing I will add right here – we will rewrite whatever is necessary to make the 12 week charge-to-ship time a “best efforts” estimate (which is all it ever can be) rather than a promised delivery time period. It doesn't mean we won't try to hit or beat the mark (we always will try), but if we hit snags, we may still go over.

Why don't games that hit 500 orders get charged and produced right away? Production costs. Every printer we have used for the last three to four years now charges 25 to 50% higher prices than when we started using them. Regardless of the Producer Price

Index, our costs have gone up sharply. P500 was set up about five years ago at production price levels then being charged (and we tended to underestimate those costs in the early days). Unless we have priced a game on the high side of what gamers will bear to pay, we cannot afford to print at the 500 order level. Still, P500 is such a recognizable term; we do not want to jettison it. The reality is that we will probably adopt a policy of committing to print a game if it reaches 500 orders, but actually printing it when it reaches a higher level – 600, 700, 800 – depending on whether we print it by itself, or with other games. In essence, what is now P500 will probably become P500/700, or something close.

What about the P250 program? Most of the problems have been covered on line. We woefully underestimated production costs to re-print a game when we came up with the 250 game threshold for reprints. The thinking was that the film would already cover art and film costs on hand from the first printing. Not so. We found that if the original game had errata or errors, gamers wanted these corrected on a second edition. We also discovered that most of our film library was lost to us when the pre-press firm we used in Los Angeles went under. Additionally, most printers now utilize our graphics files in Direct To Plate print processes. Finally, P250 games are not immune to the printing price increases we have to deal with in our P500 games. We will have to reorganize the entire P250 concept, but I can't tell you what we will do because we have not yet decided what we will do. Your input will be appreciated.

In closing, I want to thank all of you faithful, long-suffering gamers who have kept us going. I hope you will continue to trust us to produce the games you want. Enjoy the games!

Tony Curtis

Columbia Games new retail strategy

In the same vein as the GMT situation, Columbia Games have decided to withdraw from retail sales all together. In their Newsletter they say that:

The wargame hobby is very specialized. It was once possible to sell 20,000 to 30,000 copies of a wargame. Today, a good selling game, like our top-ranked Hammer of the Scots, can only sell 2,000 to 3,000 copies. Meanwhile, production and development costs have not decreased. Wargames survive only because of mail order. As we plan production of our new game Liberty, it becomes clear that only by converting entirely to mail order can we continue to bring you the wargames you love to play.

See below for details about Liberty.

International Gamers Awards

The International Gamers Awards (formerly the Gamer's Choice Awards) has announced the award winners for outstanding strategy board games of 2002. The two categories are:

1) Historical Simulations: Hammer of the Scots (Columbia Games). Designed by Jerry Taylor and Tom Daghliash.

2) General Strategy, Multi-Player: Puerto Rico (Alea/Rio Grande Games). Designed by Andreas Seyfarth.

See:

<http://www.internationalgamersawards.net/>

Charles S. Roberts Awards

The 2002 Charles S. Roberts Awards are listed in alphabetical order for each category below. The winners for each category were announced at the World Boardgaming Championships 2003, and are given in italics below.

Best Pre-World War II Boardgame

Guilford Courthouse/Eutaw Springs (GMT Games)
Hammer of the Scots (Columbia Games)
Napoleonic Wars (GMT Games)
Prussia's Glory (GMT Games)
Reds! (GMT Games)
This Accursed Civil War (GMT Games)

Best World War II Boardgame

Advanced Tobruk (Critical Hit)
Barbarossa to Berlin (GMT Games)
Streets of Stalingrad (L2 Design Group)
The Killing Ground (New England Simulations)
Von Manstein's Backhand Blow (GMT Games)

Best Modern Era Boardgame

Back to Iraq 3 (Strategy & Tactics #208)
Cuban Missile Crisis (Microgame Design Group)
First Indochina War (Strategy & Tactics #209)
Khe Sanh 1968 (Against The Odds #2)
NB the above two games tied

Best Wargame Graphics

1777: Year of the Hangman (Clash of Arms)
Brandywine/Germantown (Clash of Arms)
Hammer of the Scots (Columbia Games)
Streets of Stalingrad (L2 Design Group)
The Killing Ground (New England Simulations)
This Accursed Civil War (GMT Games)

Best DTP-Produced Boardgame

A Mere Matter of Marching (Microgame Design Group)
Charles Year (Red Sash Games)
Greek Tragedy (BSO Games)
Innocence Lost (TCS/Roberto Chiavini)
Togoland 1914 (Khyber Pass Games)
NB the above two games tied

Best Magazine-Published Boardgame

Back to Iraq 3 (Strategy & Tactics #208)
 Belisarius (Strategy & Tactics #210)
 First Indochina War (Strategy & Tactics #209)
 Hegemon (Against The Odds #1)
 Rough and Ready (Strategy & Tactics #212)

Best Game Review or Game Analysis

"Battles for Philadelphia", Paper Wars, #45, Richard Lechowich
 "Enjoying a Slice of Sicilian", Paper Wars, #48, Adam Starkweather
 "Hobby Japan's Pacific Fleet", Paper Wars, #46, Adam Starkweather
 "Kasserine", Paper Wars, #46, Alan Murphy
 "Setup and Strategy in Hube's Pocket", Operations #41-42, Tony Zbaraschuk

Best Historical or Scenario Article

"La loi du plus fort: Castiglione", C3i, #14, Alexander Ashton & Frederic Bey
 "OCS Sicily as a History Lesson", Operations 43, Roger Hyman
 "Overshadowed by a Phrase: Pyrrhus", C3i, #14, David W. Tschanz
 "The British Wars in Afghanistan", S&T, #208, Andrew Preziosi
 "Vietnam Climax: The Siege of Khe Sanh", ATO, Vol. 1 #2, John Prados

Best Professional Wargame Magazine

Against The Odds
 C3i (GMT Games/RBM Studio)
 Paper Wars (Omega Games)
 Strategy & Tactics (Decision Games)
 Vae Victis

Best Amateur Wargame Magazine

Die Manöverkritik (Der Musketier), Germany
The Boardgamer, Bruce Monnin
 Panzerschreck, Minden Games
 Simulacrum, John Kula

James F. Dunnigan Award

Ben Hull, This Accursed Civil War
 Joe Youst, Graphic Artist
 Mark Hinkle, The Killing Ground
 Mark Simonitch, Graphic Artist
 Streets of Stalingrad, Dana Lombardy & Art Lupinacci

Clausewitz Award Hall Of Fame

Mark Simonitch

Alexander Award

Another award whose winners were announced at the World Boardgaming Championships is the Alexander Award, sponsored by Richard Berg, for creativity in historical boardgame design. The designers for the following games were the nominees:

Hjalmar Gerber for his design, Across the Piave (MDG)
 Jerry Taylor for his design, Hammer of the Scots (Columbia)
 Javier Romero for his design, Iberos (Ludopress Alea)
 Joseph Miranda for his design, Indochina (S&T No. 209)
 Ted Raicer for his design, Reds! (GMT)
 Robert Markham for his design, Soldier Kings (AP)
 Mark McLaughlin for his design, The Napoleonic Wars (GMT)

The Award announcement follows:

Third Place (and \$50), to TED RAICER, for his mechanics for the Chaos of the Russian Civil War, in REDS.

2nd Place (and \$100) to JERRY TAYLOR, for his creative combining of the old block systems with many systems seen in non-block games to create a sort of hybrid - and popular- new "style", in HAMMER OF THE SCOTS.

And the winner, the recipient of the 2003 ALEXANDER (and \$250), is MARK MCLAUGHLIN, for taking the tired, old DIPLOMACY ideas and grafting them

onto a clever (if confusing) but always enjoyable amalgamation of battle and personality power politics with his NAPOLEONIC WARS.

The Alexander panel of Design Experts included (this year), Mark Herman, Dave Powell, Dave Fox and Uli Blennemann. And Richard Berg (whose games are the only designs not eligible for the award), to be sure.

The Hamilton/Blomgren Memorial Award for Lifetime Achievement

John Kranz, who runs the Consimworld discussion board, has initiated a new award:

Ed Blomgren is universally recognized by all colleagues graced by his presence for his ability to introduce newcomers to the hobby, and his tremendous passion for the hobby. He was a regular at the Southern California game conventions and could always be found enjoying a game and introducing others to a pick-up game. Ed left us several years ago, but his passion and impact in promoting the hobby to others will always be remembered.

Winston Hamilton established GR/D Games which stands today as the longest-running historical simulation publishing company (resulting from the Hasbro acquisition of TAHGC). Winston passed away in 2001 and is remembered for his unrelenting commitment and passion to the industry, including involvement with GAMA

ConsimWorld.COM is pleased to induct Richard H. Berg as the second recipient of the ConsimWorld.COM sponsored Lifetime Achievement Award, officially named The Blomgren/Hamilton Memorial Award. The official announcement took place on May 28, 2003 during the opening ceremony at ConsimWorld Expo 2003.

Richard H. Berg is recognized for

his numerous contributions to the industry, from game design, to industry pundit, book author, publisher, and event organizer. The list goes on and on.

See:

http://www.consimworld.com/newsroom/story/0603/061403_berg.html

Avalanche

The latest in the **Panzer Grenadier** series is **Semper Fi: Guadacanal**, featuring World War Two tactical combat in the Solomon Islands between U.S. Marines (including Raiders and Marine Paratroopers) and the Japanese Army and marines.

The second game in the War of the States game series is Dave Powell's **Chickamauga & Chattanooga**, on these two famous 1863 battles in the American Civil War. The battles can be played separately or combined in a campaign game.

Distant Oceans is a supplement for the popular naval game series, **Second World War at Sea**, containing 24 new scenarios for **SOPAC**, **Bomb Alley**, **Midway** and **Eastern Fleet**, as well as variant rules.

Finally **Granada: The Fall of Muslim Spain** is a non-series game on the 'Reconquista', on the conflict between Spanish Christians and the Arab kingdoms of southern Spain. This game is not a standard wargame but borrows heavily from German style games in its style of play. See:

<http://www.avalancheprpress.com>

Clash of Arms

Mighty Midgets - Coastal Forces at War 1939-1945 is the fifth book in the **Command at Sea** series. It contains 31 historical scenarios featuring small craft (American PT, German S boats, etc.), including a campaign and rules extensions to the **Command**

at Sea system. See:

<http://www.clashofarms.com>

Columbia Games

Following on from their success with **Hammer of the Scots**, **Liberty** is another 'blocks' game on a strategic conflict, this time the American Revolution from 1775-1783. A simple system tries to show the unique problems faced by each in this playable game. See:

<http://www.columbiagames.com>

Critical Hit

Three new **Advanced Tactical System** games are now available, **D-Day Rangers**, **Arnhem: Defiant Stand**, and **Scottish Corridor**, extending the range of small-unit actions in World War Two that the series covers.

The **Advanced Tobruk** series gets its second game with the release of **Against All Odds** featuring the 82nd Airborne on D-Day and beyond. Distinct from the **Advanced Tactical System**, this highly-detailed World War Two tactical system takes realism to deeper levels. See:

<http://www.criticalhit.com>

Decision Games

Rebels & Redcoats, Vol. III covers four battles of the American Revolutionary War, The New York Campaign, Harlem Heights, White Plains, The New Jersey Campaign, and Princeton. Two 'bonus battles' are also included, Stony Point and King's Mountain. This game uses the simple system used in previous volumes, with special rules for each battle.

The **Italian Front** is the latest game in the Der Weltkrieg series, covering campaigns in the First War. It contains five separate scenarios, and can be linked with other games of the **Der Weltkrieg** series. See:

<http://www.decisiongames.com>

Eagle Games

Attack! is the first game in an expandable system. Set in the World War Two era, this is designed for 2-6 players and features easy to learn fast-play rules using miniatures on a gameboard map.

The first addition, **Attack! Expansion**, provides more miniatures (naval units: Aircraft Carriers, Battleships, Destroyers, and Submarines), a gameboard expansion that can be added to the original to create a complete the map of the world, and more detailed rules. See:

<http://www.eaglegames.net/>



GMT

Attila is the latest game in the **Great Battles of History** (GBoH) series and contains two of the few major battles the armies of the Hunnic Confederation under King Attila fought against Rome: The Utus and Catalaunian Fields. **Simple GBoH** versions of both battles are also included. Note that **Cataphract** is required for play of **Attila**.

Corsairs and Hellcats is the latest in the **Down in Flames** series. A sequel to **Zero!**, this game covers air combat action in the Pacific after the Battle of Midway to the end of the war.

Sweden Fights On is the second game in the **Musket & Pike Battles** series. The series rules have been updated and expanded in this game, which covers four battles of the Thirty Years War (Nördlingen 1634, Wittstock 1636, 2nd Breitenfeld 1642, and Jankau 1645).

Blue vs Gray: Deluxe Edition, is a re-release of the card-based strategic American Civil War game. Extras are a play mat, fully re-

written rules and a newly designed box.

Rise of the Roman Republic is the first game in a new series, **Battles of the Ancient World** that will cover virtually every war and campaign in ancient history. **Rise of the Roman Republic** itself covers on the Samnite Wars, the invasion of Pyrrhus and Hannibal's early campaigns, all on a single map of Italy. Designer is Richard Berg. See:

<http://www.gmtgames.com/>

Lost Battalion Games

Lost Battalion Games are a new company producing a series of card games in their **Battlelines** series, on operational level combat in World War Two. One game, **Stalingrad**, is out and is getting good press. See:

<http://www.lostbattalion.com/>

MMP

Korea: The Forgotten War is the latest addition to the **Operational Combat** series (OCS), originated by The Gamers. Using the latest OCS rules (version 3.0), the game uses 13 scenarios to cover the first year of the Korean War. Designer is Rod Miller. See:

<http://www.multimanpublishing.com>

OSG

Sun of Austerlitz is the latest game in the **Campaigns of Napoleon** series.

Focusing on the battle of Austerlitz, it has scenarios that break the campaign up into its component parts and two campaign games. See:

<http://www.napoleongames.com/>

OSS

The **Millennium Wars** series is a set of game modules that utilize a standard rules set with special rules for each game module. Modules exist for conflicts in America,

the Ukraine, Korea, Iraq, and Kashmir. There is also a generic air war module that amplifies the air warfare section in the core rules, but is not playable on its own. These games are reminiscent of old 'micro-games' style. Designer is Joe Miranda. See:

<http://www.ossgames.com>

Shrapnel Games

Shrapnel Games typically releases computer games but their first board wargame is **Lock 'N Load: Forgotten Heroes Vietnam**, a tactical level game of small unit actions in the Vietnam War. Although the rules are short, they are to form the basis for a series of small-unit tactical games. A demo of Lock'n Load is available for download, as is a short multimedia presentation explaining the game. See:

<http://www.locknloadgame.com/>

Magazines

Strategy and Tactics issue #215 contains **Ignorant Armies: The Iran-Iraq War** an operational level game on the recent conflict between the two countries. Designer is Ty Bomba.

Strategy and Tactics issue #216 contains **Asia Crossroads: The Great Game**, a strategic game on the "Great Game," the conflict between the British and Russian Empires in the 19th Century for control of Central Asia. Designer is Joe Miranda. See:

<http://www.decisiongames.com/>

Vae Victis issue #51 contains **En Pointe Toujours III: Kursk**, a tactical level game on the famous Second World War battle. Earlier games using the En Pointe Toujours system have been published in Vae Victis. See:

<http://www.vaevictis.com/>

Against The Odds issue #4 contains **Napoleon At The Berezina**, a solitaire game on the 1812 campaign in Russia. Designer is Rob Markham. See:

<http://www.atomagazine.com/>

Panzerschreck issue #10 contains two games: **Operation Typhoon** is an operational game covering the German drive on Moscow in late 1941, while **Sniper Attack** is a solitaire card game of individual sniper action during World War Two. See:

http://www.homestead.com/minden_games/

Desk Top Published Games

The Microgame Design Group has re-published **Clash of Empires**, a game which first appeared in The Wargamer. Designer Kerry Anderson has revised and updated this game on the opening months of the First World War on the Western Front. It now includes 20 random events cards.

Web sites

Eric Harvey, the designer of **Advanced European Theatre of Operations** (AETO) from Decision Games has released his official AETO Kit for Advanced ETO. See:

<http://hometown.aol.com/erharvey/myhomepage/index.html>

A good new web site is Jonathan Arnold's The Wargamer site at:

<http://www.thewargamer.com/>

It has two excellent resources: the database of wargames that John Kula created for his Simulacrum magazine, and a growing collection of scans of countersheets, for the sole purpose of replacing miss-



ing counters.

Whistling Death (Clash of Arms) is a complete mini game on World War One air combat. See:

<ftp://www.grognard.com/pub/games/board/wdmini.pdf>

Alan Poulter

Editorial

Kevin Croskery

Well, I've just got back from WallyCon, you will read more of it in Chris's report. I finally met up with Lesley King again after not seeing each other since ooh, I think, 1986. Not that we have not been active—we've played Bulge 81, Wacht am Rhein, Invasion Norway by mail and email over the years.

Lesley and I played a game of Monty's Gamble: Market Garden; it was for both of us the first time to play the game face to face. Enjoyable, the allies have a tight timetable to capture Nijmegen while holding off the SS reinforcements in Arnhem. As an aside, a good book on the topic is "It never snows in September" by Robert Kershaw. This details the German view of Market Garden drawing on first hand accounts. Good maps and pictures.

We also tried Barbarossa to Berlin but as Lesley was learning the game and I missed some critical things to tell him the game petered out. A good learning experience, Lesley informed me afterwards.

I then played Murray at MG:MG and for the sake of your pride, Murray, I will say no more on that topic....

(Continued on page 15)

Don Turnbull

Ian Daghish

Don died on 4 August this year.

1971. In hindsight, the beginning of a golden age of boardgaming. My second year in Cambridge and it was a sign of the times when I learned that there was now a *second* person there subscribing to Strategy & Tactics (Andy Davidson, who soon created Cambridge University Board Wargame Club, giving us an alternative to Chess and Orietal GO). And also in Cambridge, Don Turnbull.

Don was then the essential link to America. Just as AHIKS's own Henry Radice ordered and distributed The General, Don did likewise for Strategy & Tactics and S&T games. And what games. S&T 14 - my first - contained not only the excitement of 16th Century Landsknechts ("Renaissance of Infantry") but the tantalizing preview of what came to be *Panzerblitz!* The first tactical wargame with ranged fire, and with its distinctive name and box destined to become the biggest-selling single board wargame ever.

A tentative approach led to an invitation to Don's modern townhouse on the south side of Cambridge. I forget which boardgame he brought out for the occasion, I recall simply that he was as ever a charming host. Soon after, Don moved to Altrincham, Cheshire, where he showed his powers of persuasion as his neighbour Malcolm Watson not only took over the S&T delivery role, but eventually Malc became their UK distributor, creating that remarkable institution (though inelegant acronym) "SPUK". Meanwhile, Don soldiered on with the legendary magazine "Albion": famously likened to the Albion dustcart, a tired old vehicle which would periodi-

cally trundle up the road loaded with rubbish; and for many wargamers like me the first place we saw our writings in print (with a circulation mercifully small in size, if somewhat merciless in their comments).

I kept in touch with Don when I joined AHIKS in 1974. Historical wargames were always my preference over fantasy, and I believe I can say that while I enjoyed many a game of Dungeons and Dragons, I *never* played with any Dungeonmaster other than Don himself. He could not be bettered. Everyone will have their own reminiscences: mine is of Don languidly taking the cigarette from his lips to inform the erstwhile Dungeoneers that the cavern they had entered was suddenly bathed in light to reveal a massive nude statue of Bob Stuart. Horror beyond horrors...

Others knew Don much better than I, and I heard of him only occasionally in those years after he went to America. I am happy to say that all my memories of Don are happy ones, and I am grateful to have known him as long as I did.

Ian Daghish

I never knew Don, living in Ireland being somewhat isolated from the main stream of wargaming.

Clearly, Don was one of the giants of the hobby.

I did a quick search of Don on the internet and located an after action report of the first postal game of Diplomacy in the UK. This was GMed by Don and the link to it is:

http://www.diplomacy-archive.com/resources/postal/albion_69-1.htm

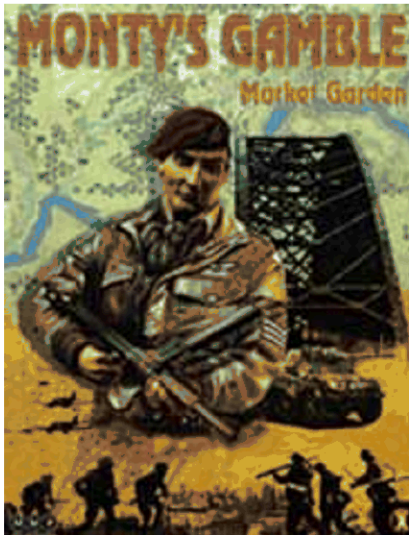
A great read, even for non Diplomacy players.

Kevin

Monty's Gamble : Market Garden - WBC Final

Andrew Cummins

As a long standing player of all the area movement games from Storm over Arnhem to Breakout Normandy I had been keeping my eye on the saga of the production of Mike Rinella's Arnhem campaign game for some time. Patience is a virtue but in this case was somewhat stretched as it has been five-six years in the gestation.



So with a days gap in my schedule at the WBC between BKN & Squad Leader, trying out MG:MG was an easy decision. The payoff was one of the most sparkling conclusions to any game that I've played recently.

For the BKN player, MG2 can be played almost straight out of the box. For those without experience of BKN, the rules are clear, well written and straight-forward. However for the newcomer there is a significant learning curve in putting the pieces of the rules together to form a coherent whole.

I played a pair of games, each taking about four hours, to get to the final with a win each as Allies and Germans.

Facing Walt German, an old BKN friend, who took the Germans, the game became exceptional from the start. In Arnhem, the 1st Para landings took heavy flak and only one unit managed to get to the Arnhem bridge, while the air drop supply centres remained in German hands. In the south 30th corps, can make four / five attacks to clear the road to Eindhoven and beyond, my first was weak while my second failed (at +6). Not wanting to lose momentum I traded that advantage and re-rolled the attack...the dice went snake eyes for the defence and boxcars for the attack for an overall +16 result. The German defence in front of Eindhoven was destroyed, 30th corps attacking units advanced and seized the Eindhoven bridge. Follow-up waves captured Eindhoven, linked with the 101st and motored north towards the 82nd at Grave and Nijmegen.

Starting the second day, the position was critical for both sides. Arnhem was weak but 30th corps was dangerously well advanced, perhaps a day ahead of its normal timeline. 30th Corps seized the Maas crossing at Grave and pressed on to clear the approaches to Nijmegen with the Guards Recce Battalion. This was thrown back from Hatert with heavy casualties. The Germans reacted with a series of low odds (-1) attacks on the corridor, which were all repelled. Arnhem was reinforced with a pair of infantry battalions and 30th corps reinforcements (43-Div etc) were activated.

Walt recognising the game was turning against him reacted strongly,

taking all the German forces east of Arnhem and counter attacking into Arnhem at +3 getting a +7 result. This against 3 spent paras left a single roughly handled para in Arnhem and a large German battlegroup waiting to finish it the next day. The second day completed with 30th corps linking fully with the 82nd and setting up for the assault on Nijmegen on the morning of the 19th. While the 43rd deployed between Nijmegen and Grave to screen the supply corridor.

The 19th started overcast, so no supply to Arnhem and a loss of initiative to the Allies. At dawn with the Germans poised at Arnhem and the 30th corps & 82nd airborne at Nijmegen the Germans struck first. They attacked and crushed Arnhem, overrunning on to reinforce the defenders of Nijmegen. The allied attack there now became more measured and successive Allied bombardments and assaults reduced the defenders. However not before the Nijmegen bridge to Oosterhout had been blown delaying an assault across the river to the fourth day. German reinforcements poured into Oosterhout while the Allies completed their reduction of Nijmegen. Cru-



cially, for fear of additional casualties, the allies failed to take advantage of a spell of clear weather to use the Poles in an air-assault drop south of the Arnhem bridge. This would have significantly reduced the strength of the Oosterhout defence and changed the course of the game.

At the start of the fourth and final day, the allies have nine VP's while needing ten for victory. They must either take Oosterhout in a cross bridge assault or Wyler, an area east of the 82nd drop zone. Having 'bottled it' with the Poles, Oosterhout had become unassailable and I decided that the battle would need to be for Wyler, an area that I already contested, though with six German reinforcements arriving in the adjacent zone.

30th Corps artillery was out of position for this attack and the bulk of the combat units of 30th deployed out of Nijmegen towards Wyler - this proved a serious mistake as the Germans revealed at regroup, a large artillery park set-up in Oosterhout.

The fourth and final day was clear, I started with air bombardments of the Wyler position while Walt bombarded the fresh 30th corps attackers, flipping three of the six in his first attack, another fresh one in his second and third and spending another two units of 82nd waiting to assault in Nijmegen. Of the seven combat units available of the 30th at the start of the day only two actually attacked into Wyler. In the meantime I took reinforcements from the 82nd and set up my own artillery park in Groosbeck...30th corps had faltered so the 82nd would have to clear Wyler themselves!

Successive assaults at +4,+5 and +6 took place as single battalions of the 82nd went in with strong artillery support and the remaining fresh German units melted away under the fire.

Finally, at impulse seven, with two possible US assaults left and six steps of German left, the US dice came up six ending the day, the advantage was given, the dice rolled, the day ended again, leaving Wyler in German hands and Walt the well deserved victor of the first Monty's Gamble:Market Garden final at the WBC.

I'll end this with a forceful plug for MG2, the game play is fast and exciting, with plenty of play opportunities for both sides. Go out and buy the game and justify MMP's faith in area-based games. Andrew Cummins 9th August 2003

There is a three page player aid "card" available for free download from MMP.

It is located at:

http://www.multimanpublishing.com/news_text.php?nw_id=56

Or go to the MMP home page and follows the links to MG:MG.

Kevin

A joke by Ian DGLISH

Julius Caesar was addressing the crowd in the Coliseum. "Friends, Romans Countrymen, lend me your ears. Tomorrow I take our glorious army to conquer Northern Europe and I shall start with France. We shall kill many Gauls and return victorious." The crowd are up on their feet "Yeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeees, hail mighty Caesar".

In the background, Brutus turns to his mate and says "Caesar doesn't half talk some s***e eh? He couldn't fight his way out of a wet parchment bag." Six months later, Caesar comes back having conquered France and addresses the crowd in the Coliseum. "Friends, Romans and Countrymen, I have returned from our campaign in France and as I promised, we killed 50,000 Gauls". The crowd is up on their feet again. "Yeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeees, hail mighty Caesar".

Brutus once again turns to his mate "I'm sick of his bulls**t. I'm off to France to check this out." So

Brutus sets off for France. Three weeks later he comes back to Rome, just as Caesar is addressing the public in the Coliseum again. Caesar is giving his usual patter to the assembled throng, "Friends, Romans Countrymen, tomorrow we set off for Britain and we are going to sort those b*stards out!" The crowd is up on their feet "Yeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeees, hail mighty Caesar".

Brutus jumps up and shouts, "Caesar, you are exposed as a liar. You told us that you had killed 50,000 Gauls in France but I've been there to check it out and you only killed 25,000!"

The crowd is stunned and all sit down in silence. Caesar gets up and looks slowly round the Coliseum then across at Brutus and says..... "Brutus, you are forgetting one thing..... Away Gauls count double in Europe."

Les Deck AHIKS Match Coordinator
 80 Worcester Road,
 Stowe, Vt. 05672
 Domerider2@cs.com
 WEB SITE: [HTTP://OURWORLD.CS.COM/DOMERIDER2](http://OURWORLD.CS.COM/DOMERIDER2)

Members should report to MC any corrections, additions and or deletions to the matches they have requested to insure that duplications of matches are not made as well as to increase the efficiency of service expected. Further request that only one member agree to request ICRKS when one has opponents available PLEASE **USE THE MATCH REQUEST FORM PROVIDED WHEN REQUESTING MATCHES AND PLEASE PREPARE IT PROPERLY USING THE KEY AS A GUILD**. When using EMAIL, please provide information as though it were the open match request form. **Those of you having email please send your email address to Domerider2@cs.com BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR LAST NAME AND CODE NUMBER.**

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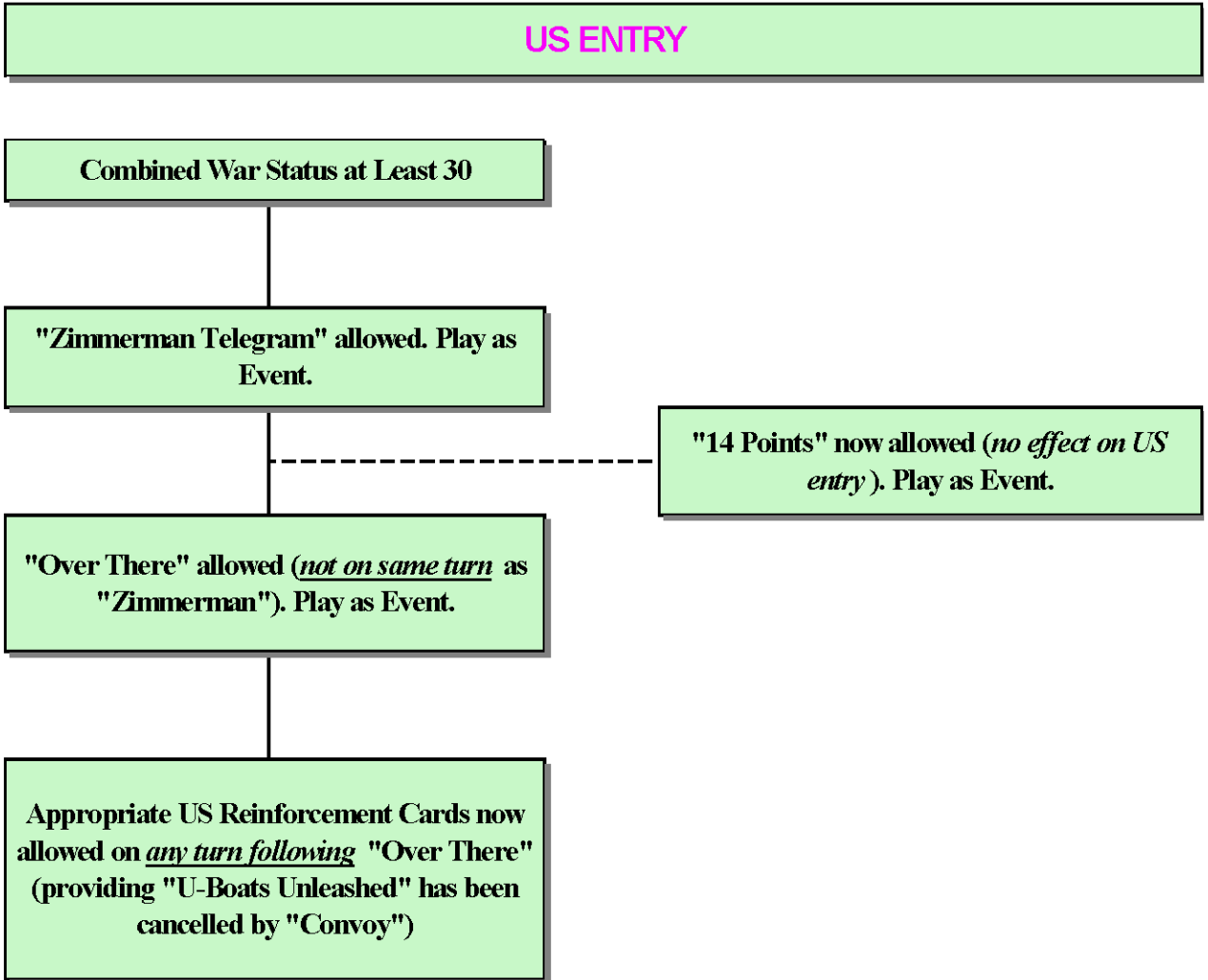
GAME	COMPANY	CODE	OPPONENT	MODE	DATE
RCD					
1776	(AH)	(1561)	McCabe	PBEM	09/01/03
Anzio	(AH)	(0111)	Oleson		Indef
Avalanche	(AH)	(0225)	Segarra	PBEM	01/04/03
Bomber	(Yaquinto)	(1312)	Wells	PBEM	01/06/03
Breakout Normandy	(AH))	(1382)	Massey	PBM	10/22/02
Dave Powell's					
Chickamauga & Chattanooga		(1466)	Svevsson	PBEM	07/23/03
Civil War	(VG)	(1561)	McCabe	PBEM	09/01/03*
Combat Mission: Beyond Overlord		(1560)	Vanspengen	PBEM (F) only	06/07/03
East Front	(Columbia)	(0044)	DeWitt	PBEM	09/15/02
Flattop	(AH)	(1430)	Warnick	PBEM	4/28/03
GM & MPLAY					
Hannibal	(AH)	(0216)	Schoenberger	PBEM/PBM	03/03/03
Invasion Sicily	(GMT)	(0225)	Segarra	PBEM	01/04/03
Kasserine	(GMT)	(0225)	Segarra	PBEM	01/04/03
Mainsteins Backhand Blow		(1530)	Franz	PBEM only'	08/04/03
Russian Front	(AH)	(0036)	Yarwood	PBM	04/27/03
Squad Leader Advanced	(AH)	(1293)	Wood	PBEM&PBM	Indef
Squad Leader Basic	(AH)	(1557)	Williams	PBEM	01/15/03
Victory in the Pacific	(AH)	(1561)	McCabe	PBEM	09-01-03

THE FOLLOWING LIST OF GAMES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE EUROPEAN REGION. CONTACT.

JEFF HAWARDEN
9 Laburnum Road,
Helmshore, Rossendale, Lancashire,
United Kingdom, BB4 4LF
Email: JeffandSue@mudroad.fsnet.co.uk
Phone: 01706 210 194

GAME	OPPONENT	MODE
We The People AH	Alan Poulter	CYBERBOARD AND ACTS

Paths of Glory play aid—*Mike Brian*



US Neutral	<i>At Start</i>
Zimmerman Telegram Allowed	<i>Combined War status of 30</i>
Zimmerman Telegram	<i>Combined War Status of 30 plus Event</i>
Over There	<i>Event (Any turn after "Zimmerman Telegram")</i>
Reinforcement Cards	<i>Event (Any turn after "Over There")</i>

Editorial

(Continued from page 10)

On Sunday Barrington persuaded me to play Paths of Glory and proceeded to hand me my head in short order. My excuse is that I haven't played the game for ages and am very rusty. Hence the mistake with the Serbs. That's my story anyway, but what I really really wanted to play was Robo Rally but I never got the chance. Sob... Maybe next time.

Anyway, all in all a great Con, despite the football and the dinner delay and it looks like we will be returning again next year.

Has any one been watching Time Commanders on BBC2 over the last few weeks? My advice: don't.

Kevin Croskery



Web Grogards

<http://grogard.com/index.html>

Web Grogards is the premier (imo) source of errata, reviews, variants and other information on a host of board and computer wargames. Here is the list of the latest updates to the site:

A list of new links and files on Web-Grogards follows.

LINKS

- Allenby's Blitzkrieg (Schutze Games) - official web site
- La Bataille de Corunna (COA) - archived link to web site for PBEM game
- Blitzkrieg Checked: Gembloux (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Blitzkrieg Stalled: Arras (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Blitzkrieg Unleashed: Sedan (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Brute Force (Clash of Arms) - review
- Eylau 1807 (Avalanche) - updated link to official web site
- Fall of France (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Fox's Gambit: Gazala (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Granada (Avalanche) - web site
- Guilford (GMT) - review
- Hamel 1918 (Schutze Games) - official web site
- March on Rome (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Redguard (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Squad Assault: Westfront (Matrix Games, computer game) - official web site
- Tupamaro (Schutze Games) - official web site
- Twin City Gamer (club)
- Victory in Vietnam II (Schutze Games) - official web site
- War of 1812 (Gamma Two Games/Columbia Games) - updated link to official rules (PDF file)

FILES

- Advanced Squad Leader (AH/MMP) - more Q&A
- Albion, Ares#11 (SPI) - variant linking to Dragonquest
- Campaign to Stalingrad (Rhino Games) - errata
- Campaigns in the Valley, S&T#123 (3W) - errata
- Hannibal (AH) - another variant (Word file)
- Montebello 1800 - Q&A
- Pacific War (VG) - updated consolidated Q&A (text file/PDF file)
- Tactics II (AH) - review
- Warplan Dropshot (Schutze Games) - missing Moscow marker

Zulu (BSO) - replay

Submission deadlines for 2003

Just one more issue to go for 2003!

I need to time the issue to give enough advance notice of Swan-Con 04 to the troops. So lets get submissions to me by the end of November and we'll print in early January.

The quarterly newsletter for gamers of pbm and pbem games

We're on the web! [Http://www.ahiks.co.uk](http://www.ahiks.co.uk)



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Marketplace

Origins of WWII (Boxed)	£16
Othello (Boxed)	£10
Storm Over Arnhem (Boxed)	£16
Royalists & Roundheads (Boxed, unused)	£12
Panzerkreig (Boxed)	£15
Spitfire (Boxed, unused)	£15
Wizard's Quest (Boxed, unused)	£20

All prices include postage and packing.

Contact:

Chris Geggus., 10 Talbrook, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4PY U.K.
Tel: 01277 261099 email: chris@geggus99.freemove.co.uk

Assault	GDW	unused	£15
Kanev	Peoples	punched	£7
Clash of Giants	GMT	mint	£35
Stalingrad Pocket 1	Gamers	punched	£15
MBT	AH	punched	£15
Forward to Richmond	AH	unused	£15
Tac Air	AH	unused	£15
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Third Reich	AH	punched	£15
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A Winter War	GRW	punched	£20
Carrier	Victory	punched	£15
Tigers in the Mist	GMT	punched	£15
Lost Victory	GMT	unused	£20

All prices include post and packaging

I also have a collection of SPI games for sale—drop me a line for the full list and prices.

Contact:

Kevin Croskery, 4 Beechey Way, Copthorne, West Sussex RH10 3LT
Tel: 01342 713675
Email: kcroskery@clara.net

100+ board wargames for sale A vast variety of mainly OOP SPI, AH, GDW, OSG and other classic board wargames. Also, spare parts and magazines. Email for list and details.

Contact Paul Sheppard

paulsheppard@msn.com