

THE KOMMANDEUR

NEWSLETTER OF AHIKS



THE SOAPBOX

This column's going to be a potpourri of tidbits and other information I want to pass along. Unfortunately the first item I have to relate is a hard one. Our beloved Prez, Bill Watkins, suffered a heart attack two months ago and is staring triple bypass surgery in the face as a result. Vague rumors have it that the trauma occurred during a particularly vicious game of OGRE with his young son, but this is ONLY A RUMOR (one wonders sometimes how these stories get started.) Anyway, I know I speak for all of us when I wish him luck and skill (his non-OGRE luck and the Dr's skill) for his surgery. We should all send him a lucky die to help him along! BEST WISHES, BILL!

One of the mainstay miniatures magazines, WARGAMERS DIGEST (soon to be the MILITARY DIGEST), was the focus of a warning sent to me by Arthur Balliet (Princeton NJ). He told me that he had used their SPEEDLINE SERVICE to order some books. His check was cashed, but no books and no contact with the WG personnel. From personal experience, I had ordered some binders in FEB 84 and just got an out-of-stock message from them (AUG), which is ridiculously slow. Arthur is contacting his Post Master about his problem. I wouldn't go so far as to say the McCoys' are ripping people off, but be warned that service is probably slow if the item you want isn't in stock.

Ah, I love starting a "controversy". My column about reviews elicited a response from David Pellow (Syracuse, NY). He very correctly pointed out that another sort of "review" is needed and useful. This review would be on the order of Consumer Report, particularly their used car annual report. This is probably more the type of review that Mike Kaulbars was leading up to. Identify the characteristics of games, canvass those who have played it, compile the responses and publish the results. This would be very subjective, as what is "complex" for one gamer may not be "complex" to another. His final statement was that such a review source would help him spend his limited gaming bucks wisely and make his gaming more pleasurable. I concur wholeheartedly. My only real concern is the a brief numbers (1=bad, 5=good) review or something like it doesn't give the flavor of the game enough for a gamers decision. Take, for example, all the Bull Run games now available. All have a different flavor (the old style map of ICE's MANASSAS, the "classic" CRT of AH's BULL RUN), all have good and bad points, each really has to be discussed to gain a good perspective. How about it troops, anyone else want to step in and add a word or two??

Finally a couple juicy rumors to pass along, compliments of Keith and Wallace Poulter of

Worldwide Wargamers (WWW). I had the pleasure of visiting them in their new abode in Cambria, CA, home of Jack Greene, some really vicious hills (for you fellow joggers out there), and the Grey Fox Restaurant. Take these tidbits however you'd like. First, Steve Jackson is trying to sell Fire and Movement and until it is sold, the magazine will be going quarterly. I certainly hope that F&M sells and can keep to a bi-monthly schedule - not only because they are a good paying customer for my reviews, but because they are one of the final magazines being published that spans the whole spectrum of game publishers, so we can get "good" reviews of the games coming out. Finally, SOMETHING is happening at AH and Victory, probably due to their parent company, Monarch (??). Several magazines have quit publishing AH/VG ads due to non-payment of advertising bills. Add this to the recent publishing record of the General and one begins to wonder about this solid bastion of wargaming. If anyone out there knows anything else about the situation, drop me a line.

Let me add a final personal note concerning my trip. I have watched and been a part of WWW for three years, writing for the Wargamer, and interacting with Keith and the rest of the crew. I really like their attitude and their products are becoming very polished and professional. If you aren't familiar with WWW, they deserve a look.

-JDB-

A VOLUNTEER IS
NEEDED FOR RD
PACIFIC...
CONTACT JIM
FREDIANI ASAP

NORTHEAST PASSAGE

Well, I just received an updated membership list from Joe Horne and it seems that Northeast membership has dropped to 95. Membership always seems to dip after dues have been collected (or NOT collected!), but this is a good size decline. Hopefully in the months ahead we can add some new members to replace the losses.

I can welcome three new members already. Kevin Raznoff, an electrician from Elmira NY, joins us with a few years of gaming experience and many PBM completions. His favorite game is PANZER LEADER and he prefers AREA opponents if possible. James McDonald from Natick, MA has 12 years experience. He's a busy computer programmer and enjoys WWII era games. Finally Michael Marcoccio is a police officer from Providence RI. He's been gaming for 10 years and is looking for reliable PBM opponents.

Our trip to Gettysberg unfortunately didn't happen, a victim of my inability to organize such an event on short notice. However, next year I intend to leave for Origins a day early to drop in at the battle site and spend some time. Contact me ASAP if you are interested (time does fly quickly). Another little idea of mine is a get together in late May-early June in Cooperstown. I would be interested in 5 or 6 gamers who enjoy multiplayer games and fishing. Of course there's ALWAYS the Baseball Hall of Fame for you fans! Again, let me know if interested.

Kinderfest II is on for October 19-20. Flyers are out for the NE members but if anyone else is interested, let me know and I'll send the info to you. This year's location will have better lighting than last year's and (hopefully) better weather as well.

-Kevin Murray-

INTERIOR LINES

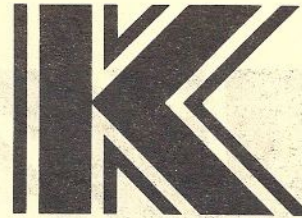
I would like to thank Jim Mueller for giving me the opportunity to be the North Central RD. We were able to meet FTF in June to discuss the changeover. It turns out we both enjoy the old Classics and had some good stories to tell about them. I highly recommend the Classics to anyone who is thinking about trying them. They're basically simple, play easily and are exceptional PBM games. My thanks to Jim for all his help.

By way of introduction, I'm 33 and have just started to work for the Navy Finance Center in Cleveland. I've been gaming some 21 years continuously, with most of my experience with Avalon Hill and the old SPI games. In case anyone is interested, I think that Avalon Hill is the premiere game company in the industry. (Just what I like: an RD who doesn't hedge and isn't afraid of controversy! Ed.) I joined AHIKS in 1976 and have played over 20 PBM games. During that time, I've made several new friends through the play - one of the better aspects of AHIKS. Gaming is much more enjoyable when you like the person you are playing against.

I have a few ideas for some changes that hopefully will improve our organization. You only have to be involved with a small number of PBM games to see that we have some problems. I hope to get some feedback from you after I present these ideas in a future issue of the K.

Applications for membership are starting to come in on a regular basis now. We can expect several new members by the next issue of the K.

-Kevin McCarthy-



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GENERAL INFORMATION

The KOMMANDEUR is the official newsletter of AHIKS, an international society of mature adults who play historical simulation games by mail. Society dues are \$12 per year, prorated quarterly, with a one time initiation fee of \$8. Additional information is available from the Secretary or the European Regional Director (addresses above).

Subscriptions to the KOMMANDEUR are not available to non-members nor do we accept advertising. However, we do accept "ad trades" on an issue-for-issue basis with other publications and organizations. Inquire with the Editor or the European Regional Director for details.

REVIEWS



I read with interest the recent comments (K19-3) by Kevin Murray concerning the AH release PANZERKRIG. From the very brief statement made about the placement of Soviet forces, I thought I had misread the rules and had overlooked one. As it turned out, the rules does exist, but not as part of the standard rules. It's found in a special rule governing Soviet initial placement in the KIEV POCKET scenario and when applied to that scenario it is really quite clear and unambiguous. The scenario map shows that PZRGP Guderian entering from the north map edge. The two towns named in the rule (Chernigov and Novgorod Seversky) both lie to the south or southeast of Guderian's entry point. Thus they do lie "opposite" to PZRGP Guderian. It is also quite clear that the two towns can only be occupied by Soviet Infantry.

Kevin might have done better to complain about the rule governing the initial placement of two bridgeheads by each player. On one hand the rules for initial placement indicate NO unit may be set up across the deployment line shown. But this is negated by the Bridgehead rule which would allow both players, where appropriate, to place units on the opponents side of the line.

I agree with Kevin's dislike for the mismatched pieces and hex sizes and add a dislike for the mapboard, one of the newer "El Cheapo" editions.

I also found some disagreement in the counters required for the initial deployment and replacement units. There are three 6-11 PZ GDR counters shown in the Axis deployment and a fourth is shown as a turn 3 reinforcement. The problem is there are only three such counters in the mix.

The rule governing employment of RESERVES doesn't sit well with me. Reserves can be sent to strengthen a defensive position before the Axis player rolls to resolve combat. These reserve units can move a total of 5 hexes to reach the defensive position, disregarding normal terrain costs. BUT they must begin their movement from a city hex. My immediate question was "WHY?" Were cities the only places where military units were bivouacked and held ready for action? I don't think so.

Finally, there is the CRT result of EXCHANGE, which it really isn't. All ground units and leaders of the weaker side are eliminated and the opponent must match the losses with units whose face value strength is at least equal to the total eliminated or reduced to battlegroups. And there's the rub. A unit which is reduced to a battlegroup is not actually eliminated - just reduced in strength. But the opponent who must match the loss must use the FACE VALUE of the unit - not the difference between the face and battlegroup value. This oddity sets up some very unequal situations and can result in bogging down the game due to the players concentrating on the numbers, rather than the action. The fact that the weaker side does not have to retreat battlegrouped units created in an EX also seems advantageous to the weaker side. An exchange is a very undesirable result.

In summary, I would say that the game is not worth the money I paid for it - \$20+ - and because of my experience with it I have decided NOT to purchase AH's PANZERGRUPPE GUDERIAN.

-Bob Burge-

**NEXT K DEADLINE:
20 October 84**

What's happened to all the singers I used to listen to, like James Taylor, Chicago, Carly Simon. I drove down to Baltimore on Thursday night and had to listen to a lot of strange music. The names I associate with S'grad, Waterloo, AK and D-day have been lost in a new wave of singers just as the old titles have lost a good deal of their popularity in the flood of new games. While 31 seems a bit too young to wallow in nostalgia, I don't think I'm alone. To those of us who got into the hobby early when it was easy to own every title out and the GENERAL was THE wargamer's magazine, it is sad to realize that the demands of work and family no longer allow us to stay on the cutting edge of the hobby. (all this IS leading to something...I think...) I have retreated from the digest size rule books and the wargaming lawyers as evidenced by the tournaments I entered at Atlanticon. Try these for size: RISK (probably not the one I used to play as I grew up - the pamphlet said it was a game of "strategy and skill", ACQUIRE and RAIL BARON. In my spare time I played CIVILIZATION and NAVAL WAR. Not to belittle these games - I enjoy them all, especially since I don't have to study the rulebook between moves. And so to the facts of Atlanticon:

Towson State proved to be an excellent location in terms of physical location - although the hillside setting proved somewhat "breath-taking" to those of us aged veterans. More importantly, the food service was excellent! I heard no major gripes about the Dorms, so I'll assume they were acceptable. The open gaming area closed at 12:00 and wasn't very large. A midnight closing was not acceptable for open gaming, but the size didn't matter as it was never crowded.

Crowds? There weren't any. That's probably the reason registration took all of 30 seconds. All my events went off on schedule AND where they were supposed to, so credit the organizers with a great job. I was, however, left with the feeling that there weren't as many attending this con as the planners had anticipated. I guesstimated about 2500 was the tops there, but it was probably a lot less.

The game auction featured reasonable prices compared to the other auctions in the past, again probably due to attendance. I saw a mint copy of War in Europe go for \$54 and an excellent TSS for \$28. Up at the dealers' booths, Lou Zocchi didn't have a mask on, but he was asking top dollar for an impressive array of old and out-of-print games, magazines, etc. In general the exhibitor's area was excellent with room to mill around, just upstairs from the cafeteria and open gaming areas. Some of the exhibitors were forced to set up in two smaller rooms, but I doubt too many people missed them.

The notable absence of a RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN tourney was rectified by a bold group of innovative gamers who organized their own. Unfortunately, I was unaware of this clandestine operation although the high caliber of players (Bill Salvatore, Bruce Maston) would have scared me off anyway. My non-AHIKS cronies Jack Armstrong and Dennis Blazey and I had our hands full with those CIVILIZATION games. On Saturday we had to have a legal contract (both these guys are lawyers, God help me!) drawn up to get Blazey into another CIV game, the key point being that we guaranteed Blazey 9 hours of uninterrupted sleep. To my way of thinking, the best thing about these conventions is just getting together with friends.

I saw quite a few AHIKS members there. Bob Hahn, Omar DeWitt, Bill Perry, Pete Landry (who won a miniatures painting contest - I saw the work and it was really something. He'll have to start wearing glasses the size of coke bottles if he continues

painting that kind of detail.) and a host of others. Seeing them was a real treat and I'm already looking forward to Origins next year. Overall my impression of this convention was favorable. Hopefully every convention I attend from now on will be this well organized.

-Kevin Murray-

BOOKS

SIX ARMIES IN NORMANDY by John Keegan (Viking, 1982) is another book on the Normandy invasion in 1944. What sets this book apart is that Keegan takes six phases of the invasion-breakout that particularly involved each of the five invading allies. He gives some background of each army, its historical roots, then describes the battle in France. Although there are no new insights into the battle, Keegan writes well and emphasizes some of the lesser known phases of the fight. If you haven't read a Normandy book recently, try this one.

PS. The title of the Keegan's book reviewed in the last K is THE FACE OF BATTLE, not combat as written. (Sigh...I was just seeing if you were awake, Omar...Ed.)

FREE BOOKS

In order to make room for newer and more expensive books, I'm clearing some room on my shelves. Here's the deal. Write me and tell me what book you want - SEND NO MONEY. I will send the book to you. When you get them, send me the postage. I don't want to write everyone, so if you want to know if I'm sending any of the books you want, enclose an SASE. Otherwise you'll just have to wait and see!

All are paperbacks. Those marked with a * have no cover, but all the good stuff is there.

THE GREATEST RAID OF ALL (St. Nazaire) - Phillips
ZERO! - Okumiya
IWO JIMA - Newcomb
THREE CORVETTES - Monsarrat
COMPANY COMMANDER - MacDonald
THUNDERBOLT*, and FULL CIRCLE - Johnson (air war)
PANZER LEADER - Guderian
THE DONKEYS (WWI) - Clark
THE LONGEST DAY - Ryan
STUKA PILOT - Rudel
GREATEST FIGHTER MISSIONS* - Sims
BATTLE FOR THE RHINE - Thompson
BATTLES OF THE '45 (Culloden) - Tomasson and Buist
THE GUNS OF AUGUST - Tuchman
CLIMAX AT MIDWAY - Tuleja
BATTLE: GREAT TRUE STORIES OF COMBAT ON WWII.
DANDO ON DELPHI RIDGE - Clive
THE RETURN OF GUNNER ASCH - Kirst

-Omar DeWitt-

THE BARRAGE

We have five new members this time, most of whom came to us after the recent ad in the General. They are: Timothy Lombardo, Pensacola, FL, a naval ensign and former member of the Annapolis wargaming club; Rod Marchese, Hollywood, FL, a service manager; Roger Pittiglio, Columbia MD, a former member returning; Robert Williams, Brandon, MS, a personnel officer; and David Zapinski, Redstone Arsenal, AL, a civil servant and strongly interested in the Squad Leader series. Welcome to all and a BIG welcome back to Roger!

I managed to break away from moving in and starting work here at Carlisle long enough to get down to Atlanticon in August. It was a well run, if sparsely attended convention, in excellent facilities at the U of Maryland at Towson. The program was weighted heavily in favor of FRP, but I was kept busy (unfortunately without much success)

in 2 WS&IM tourneys and a pickup game of the same thing Sunday morning. In all a pleasant couple days. Saw several AHIKS members there, including Bruce Maston, duly freed from his secretarial duties, Jim Pyle, Chris Hancock, plus some whose names I didn't catch. Next year Origins or Bust!

I would like to remind everyone that I am in my last four months as RD Southeast. The countdown is on, so let me hear from all you eager volunteers. The duties aren't onerous and it is an opportunity to contribute to keeping AHIKS the kind of organization we all enjoy so much.

-Graham Cosmas-

FROM THE MATCH COORDINATOR

Welcome to all recently joined new members. Good to have you aboard. Good luck and good gaming!

Every once in awhile there are those who fail to get the message and by doing so are frustrated due to the delays in receiving requested information. I have presented in this column items which will assist our membership and avoid those problems. I urge each to take some time to read this column for basic helpful hints.

A. There have been a few requests from members to be issued ICRKs and OOBs for themselves and NON MEMBERS. This can't be done. AHIKS services are for members in good standing, who have been accepted within the Society after compliance with our by-laws. Please don't request such matches.

B. Every new member will receive from the secretary a NEW MEMBER GUIDE. (Incidentally, a big welcome to Bill Lindow who now holds that post!) This will explain many of the questions that might arise.

C. An initial match will be assigned upon receipt of one's initial DATA SHEET. Every effort will be made to match one in the order of preference, but there may be times when the requested match is not available. One requested match will be assigned in order that the new member begin his/her PBM experience without delay.

D. All members are assigned an initial rating of 1200 and each member is rated on a match completion. The AHIKS rating system has nothing to do with the Avalon Hill AREA rating system and AHIKS has NO obligation to report any results to AH - that is the member's responsibility. Members can request an AREA rated match.

E. Although each member is rated within the AHIKS system, each person has the right NOT to have his rating published in the K. A request for NON publication should be sent to me.

F. Each AHIKS member is assigned a CODE NUMBER for administrative purposes (similar names, etc...) When corresponding with me, PLEASE use your number. The code number also acts as information for the members in the OPEN MATCH REQUEST to let them know their requests have been received.

G. The SET REQUEST FORM is a vital link between the MC and the members. Please fill out the form completely to avoid confusion.

H. Whenever a match is completed (two games or less), the ICRK MUST be returned to the MC. Fill out the top of the form completely and return it YOURSELF to the MC.

I. Upon receipt of a match assignment, you should contact your opponent and agree on the rules of play, sides, and any other information necessary to make the match go smoothly (vital if the game's PBM system is being felt out as you go. Ed). Each player should make certain they are playing with the same rules and errata, local changes and clarifications, and finally, who/what will be the authority for disagreements.

J. If you have an opponent all ready and need only OOB and ICRK, then write to me requesting them. Please include your opponent's name, address and code number to insure fast action.

K. It is the responsibility of the members to inform the MC of any changes, cancellations, or modifications to match requests. All requests NOT filled after one year are returned, unless cancelled previously.

L. As of this publication, I have preprinted OoB's. Listed below are some of the ones that have been prepared. Anyone who has prepared (or wants to prepare) an OoB sheet for a game on our standard 8x10 or 8x14 form, keeping the sheets to a minimum, can send them to me. The ones on hand: #3 TRC; #4 AK; #5 D-Day; #6 BB-81; #6a BB-65; #7 Stalingrad; #8 Waterloo; #9 Fortress Europa; #10 WIEu; #11 Anzio; #12 Longest Day (Scenario 1); #13 Cobra; #14 Blitzkrieg; #15 Chick/Shiloh; #16 Cemetary Hill - Antietam. Others are being prepared by the printer.

M. Any member who desires to GameMaster a game can submit his name to the MC stating the game and how many members he is willing to handle for the game.

N. There is a great need for members to come forward and request to play new members. Please remember when you were initially joined in order to find good, reliable PBM opponents. Let's help our new members get involved the right way!

O. Now, a sore point: complaints. Any member who has a complaint for any reason should contact his regional director. Your RD will take the necessary action to satisfy your complaint and get back to you as soon as possible. NOTE: The MC is not the one to contact!!

P. A most important point: response. If for any reason you are going to be late with a move, or something's come up forcing a temporary halt to your gaming - LET YOUR OPPONENT(S) KNOW! It will remove the frustration of waiting. Most members have been in similar situations themselves and will understand.

P. If and when you change your address, let me know as soon as possible.

OPEN MATCH REQUESTS

1776 (610); 1809 (1005); Afrika Korp (326); Across Suez (748); African Campaign (927); Antietam (253); Assault on Leningrad (233); Battle of Britain (988); Battle over Britain (544); Battle of Moscow (216); Bulge One Page (749); Bulge '65 (933); Clash of Steel (413); Close Assault (449); Cross of Iron (9321); D-Day (794); Decision at Kasserine (720); Dresden (804); Federation Space (804); Fifth Corps (804); Flattop (805); Flying Circus (819); Gazala, 1942 (449); Gettysburg 77 (adv, 991); Global War (804); Invasion America (276); Isandhlwana (748); Kirovograd (1024); Kriegspiel (863); Luftwaffe (1009); Lam Son (804); NATO (1003); Napoleon at Waterloo (748); Napoleon's Last Battles (470); PanzerBlitz (1027); Prestag (817); Red Sun Rising (804); Rifle & Saber (511); South Africa (804); Streets of Grap (804); Stalingrad (522); Shiloh (253); Third Reich (996); Victory in the Pacific (413); War and Peace (236); Western Desert (993); Winter War' (804); WW-III (804);

NEW MEMBER REQUESTS

J. McDonald - Fortress Europa
 Calage - Antietam, Chickamauga, Shiloh
 Raznoff - Cross of Iron, Panzer Leader, Squad Leader

SET REQUEST FORM

NAME _____ MEMBER CODE _____ TELEPHONE () _____ DATE _____

Use the letter codes below: After each game requested, insert (in parentheses) all letter codes that apply, in any order

- N: will play New Member (list the number of months you will hold this open before being matched with an old member)
- M: Multi-Player game request (# Of players)
- G: willing to Game-Master or monitor a game
- E: will play European opponent if available
- A: prefer AREA rated opponent
- F: prefer "FAST" game (four day replies) if available

Are you AREA rated? () YES () NO

To request matches: Insert the game title(s) on the following lines, including all letter codes that apply. If you place more than one game on a line, you will be matched with the first opponent available for one and the other entries will be ignored. List the games in order of preference.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

() My address has changed from the mailing label on the back (write the new address near the label)



A graphic header for the bulletin board. It features the words "bulletin board" in a bold, sans-serif font. The text is set against a background of various military-related illustrations, including a soldier in a trench, a tank, a helmet, a map, and other war-related symbols.

FOR SALE: All new, no box, postage included:
 \$5: Kharkov, Desert Fox, Trail of the Fox, Soldiers of the Queen
 \$4: Nordkapp, RDF, October War, Vera Cruz, Tannenberg, 5th Corps, China War, BAOR, Sicily, Grenade, Patton's 3rd Army, Kaisers Battle, Berlin '85, Cassino.
 \$3: Brusilov's Offensive, WWI, Crusader (NA Quad)
 \$2.50: Plot to Assassinate Hitler, Constantinople, Panzer Battles
 Special deals! BAOR/5th Corps - \$7; Grenade, Sicily, and Patton's 3rd Army - \$10; Kaisers Battles, Brusilov Offensive, Tannenberg, and WWI - \$11; Berlin '85, Nordkapp, and RDF - \$10.
 Will trade for: Midway, VITP, WAS, Ironclads, General Quatres, Task Force, Dauntless, Flattop, CV, Norway 1940, Kriegsmarine, Torpedo, IJN, La Regia Marina, or any Civil War title I don't have. State your terms. CONTACT: David Grant, 3526 100th PL, NE, Marysville, WA, 98270.

FOR SALE: mint condition GUADALCANAL, counters unpunched, \$39; Breyer's Battleships and Battle Cruisers, 1909-1970, hardbound English 1st edition, vinylized cover, good miniatures reference, \$20. Time-life book, Battle of the Bulge, \$6. Wenn alle Bruder Schweigen, a mammoth pictorial history of teh Waffen SS, 600 pages, \$40. Please make a contribution towards postage and include an SAE with all orders. Randy Heller, 2175 N. heritage Way, Oak Harbor, WA 98277.

FOR TRADE: Trade Highway to the Reich (mint), Descent on Crete (punched, unplayed), and Army Group South Quad (mint) for War in the Pacific. Contact: Bob McCrea, 1230 Pentland Cres., Quesnel, B.C. Canada V2J 1N2

WANTED: SPI's North Africa Quad and West Wall Quad. I am also looking for a game, publisher and exact title unknown, like Battle for Dien Bien Phu. Contact: Virgil A. Thompson, Jr. 753 Stanley, Pontiac, MI 48055

TO TRADE: (2 FOR 1) Any combination, my War & Peace, Third Reich '81, Bulge '81, Waterloo, D-Day '77, Battle for Italy, or Bull Run for your Alexander, Caesar-Alesia, or Caesar's Legions. Contact: Richard Tucker, 1712 Francis Ave. Metairie, LA, 70003 (504) 455-2935.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Military History Books. I will also search for old or antique out-of-print titles, non-fiction only. Send title and SAS postcard to: Don Graham, P.O. Box 1752, Spokane, WA 99210.

X
 AT least
 not midway
 apparently Bull Run not what what



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