

NEWSLETTER OF AHIKS



THE KOMMANDEUR

Chester E. Hendrix, Editor
1054 Lewis Oak Road
Gridley, CA 95948
(916) 846-2703

TREASURER'S REPORT

2nd Quarter 1986

"Have money and a good army; they ensure the glory and safety of a prince." Frederick Wilhelm I of Prussia

Starting balance:
\$4424.31

Income:	295.00	dues
	2.00	refund return
	48.05	interest

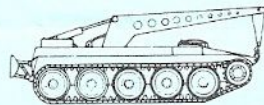
	\$345.05	



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	8.36	SE RD
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	18.82	Treasurer
	129.50	President
	274.46	MC
	1545.70	Editor

	\$2032.34	

	\$2737.02	FINAL BALANCE



Initial dues are \$12, prorated quarterly, plus \$8. Annual dues are \$12. Payments in US funds please. Canadian members, please indicate whether your check is payable in US or Canadian dollars - the bank gets sticky on this problem. We can accept Canadian dollars if necessary. Contact the Canadian RD, Mike Kaulbars, for details.

Overpayments will be credited unless a refund is requested. Make out checks and money orders to: "A.H.I.K.S.". Send payments c/o Sid Jolly, 731 G St. #E8, Chula Vista, CA 92010. Send changes of address to the Secretary, Bill Salvatore. Overpayment credits as of 8/17/86: 225, 598, 887, 1088, 1091, 1092 (each \$2).

SPECIAL NOTE! SPECIAL NOTE!

1987 dues will be \$10. Postmark your payment before 12/31/86 and save \$2 (that means you only pay \$8). Payments postmarked between 1/1/87 and 2/15/87 will be at the normal \$10. If you hold out till between 2/16/87 and 3/15/87 you will pay a \$2 penalty or \$12 total. If you pay after 15 March you will have to pay the initial \$8 again for a total of \$20.

Sid Jolly

THE SOAPBOX

By now all of you should have your new MEMBERSHIP GUIDES as well as the Membership Directory. Starting next year, this directory will be put together and distributed with the March/April issue of the K [GULP! SAY WHAT!? AAAUUGGHHH! ed]- a bit more emphasis on getting dues in on time. I'd also like to bring the questionnaire to your attention - please fill it out and return it. It may look daunting, but it's not - really. [I might also suggest that in addition to it's being just plain FUN to 'handle' all those games, after you get done you might have rediscovered a gen

or two or found a half dozen 'gems' that can be sold, thus turning your excersize into an actual PROFIT MAKING VENTURE! Who says we don't try to give you the best of everything?]] I especially want to hear about the mailing list question. Several game companies have expressed an interest in your response. Think about that one and, if you want, drop me a separate line on a postcard sometime soon. Speaking of the new MG package- I would like to extend a hearty vote of thaks to Chester (and especially to his wife Donna, who did a lot of the work) for the effort he put into this. I know it ruined many a weekend- I hope the steak dinner I bought for them when I passed through Gridley helped express that appreciation! Thanks Chester! [Blush. ed]

Origins- hectic as usual. It's hard to even consider sleeping when there are so many people you want to see/rap with. So, my impressions? Well run, but a bit expensive (\$.75 for a Coke, \$1 for an apple!). DTI did a superb job organizing it (way to go Alan!). Award wise, Keith's Wargamer beat out F&M for a second year as best magazine and Australian Design Group's WORLD IN FLAMES took just about everything it could. FAX BRITANNICA took pre-20th century. My only REAL disappointment was that TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES didn't win best role playing rules!

Game wise? My BATTLE CRY was put out by WWW, sold pretty well considering the rules didn't arrive until the afternoon of the crucial first day of sales. I thought the counters were a little weak without silhouettes on some of the equipment, but it looked pretty good. Sales were brisk all over. Avalon Hill had FLIGHT LEADER out (modern jet combat with emphasis on training, technology, formations, instead of trying to FLY the planes- looked good). A new ASL module, PARATROOPER, and some other stuff were also there from Baltimore.

GDW finally had BUNDESWEHR of their ASSAULT system out- adds West Germany and Combat engineers. I'll be reviewing this one for F&M- it looks good.

Probably the best up-and-coming company is still WEST END. Their games continue to improve and the manner in which they conduct themselves is outstanding- former Prez El Watkins did a good job reorganizing and shaping them up! Highlights? AIR & ARMOR - modern operational/tactical combat in Europe. Battalion - regimental level with a beautiful map. I'm on tap for this one for F&M, too. Also, a North African game based on the HOUSE DIVIDED point-to-point system. I was impressed.

Another good company was Omega Games. They had splashed the market with RANGER and MAIN BATTLE AREA. These guys know their topic and teach at the Army War College! They came out with AIRLAND BATTLE, corps/army level combat in Europe (I'll do this one for F&M). The graphics are definitely improved over MBA! And WAR TO THE DEATH- The Peninsular War, again a point-to-point system. I'll be doing this one for WWW.

The biggest splash was by Milton Bradley, who had a "remake" of SPI's old INVASION AMERICA. Upgraded with lasers, etc, FORTRESS AMERICA sold out super fast and was played nearly everywhere I went. Worth a look.

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Victory Games had a couple games near completion- 2nd FLEET (their outstanding 6th FLEET system in the North Atlantic) and some new James Bond stuff. As well as the best looking posters I've seen (who says sex won't sell wargames!).

Among the other products there: Task Force Games has a role playing game called DELTA FORCE (based on US counter-terrorist squads). Played wrong- without someone who has combat experience- this game will be RAMBO at its worst. But it has potential. The briefings on weapons and terrorists organizations is worth the price alone. Computers were much in evidence. Microprose's SILENT SERVICE has to be seen to be believed. Finally, a different type game that I felt was the best of show. It's called the QUEST FOR THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE. Part board game, part Trivial Pursuit. It comes packaged with components including a huge book of 2000 brain teasers (the TP part of the game). The company that makes it (QuestOne Marketing, 1502-9925 Jasper Ave. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 2X5) has 4000 brain teasers ready to print and additional cards, etc. to keep the game up and running for years to come. Watch for this one. It's AWESOME!

That's a quick look at the highlights as seen from my eyes. In general, the hobby looks pretty healthy, with a lot of good stuff to fool around with. And that, unfortunately, doesn't include the lovely ladies who manned the WWW booth. TOO BAD! I had the opportunity to interview Craig Taylor (FLAT TOP, WSIM, etc) for F&M while I was there. He felt the hobby was getting older and that something new would have to hit to capture the younger player's interest. I agree with him.

My most memorable impressions? How about the woman who doled out the money for my BATTLE CRY game for her husband, a dollar bill at a time, commenting between each dollar something like "I wanted to get rid of these ones, but not all in the same place." Or the guy who stood enraptured over a game, exulting in its beauty and potential- while his wife stared off into space, bored out of her gourd. Or maybe it was Lauri's smile or Jan's dancing...

jdb

OPPORTUNITY FIRE

I hope you have all sent in your survey. I don't know about you, but I can't wait to get back some of the numbers. I think there are going to be some major surprises for everybody. I would also hedge some bets that some of the more complex games have a very low play rate while the introductory to intermediate rated games will show the greatest play. I also feel that most games published in the last five years will have been played less than five times and that most will be solitaire only. The interesting parts will be how the REALISTIC games do overall compared to the PLAYABLE games. PLEASE send it in! I hope to start getting some preliminary reports from Don for the next issue.

I was a little disappointed to only get a couple of comments on the new MEMBER GUIDE. PLEASE be sure to read it cover to cover. It has been expanded even though it doesn't look like it. We've gone from 41 pages to 26, but there is actually MORE information IN it. We would like to suggest that you reread it about once a year to refresh your memory. ESPECIALLY the section from the MATCH COORDINATOR. The article in the MG is the same one that has been running in the K unchanged, for over two years now. And yet Les is still running into problems easily resolved by just reading it. I felt that running the same article every issue for 2+ years was a waste of space, but that the information presented was valuable. Therefore the article is now a permanent part of the MG. READ IT! Meantime, Les has some comments about this in HIS article on pg. 7. It is new and original and I feel everybody needs to read it.

You may have noticed that the TREASURERS REPORT is on pg.1. When we got started on this new MEMBER GUIDE project I originally estimated that (with everything that was going to go into it, plus postage, etc.) it would wind up running \$2000+. As it was, the price tag ran \$1545.70. We went from a booklet of 41 pages to a 26 page volume that actually contains MORE information. While it hadn't been touched for nearly

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KOMMANDEUR

NEWSLETTER OF

AHIKS

CENTRAL OFFICES

PRESIDENT
John D. Burt
1020 Lake #3
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
(208) 529-9143

VICE-PRESIDENT
Mark A. Palmer
P.O. Box 20603
Raleigh, NC 27619

TREASURER
Sid Jolly
731 G Street #E8
Chula Vista, CA 92010
(619) 425-1820

SECRETARY
Bill Salvatore
19985 Wild Cherry Lane
Water's Landing, MD 20874

MATCH & SERVICES OFFICER
Don Eisan
12115 Snow White Drive
Dallas, TX 75234
(214) 620-1030

NORTHEAST
Tom Hastings
P.O. Box 1706
New Rochelle, NY 10802
(718) 956-1613

WEST
Harry Welch
606 Eastcliff Drive
Euless, TX 76040
(817) 267-9453

NORTH CENTRAL
Kevin McCarthy
3866 Wallingford
South Euclid, OH 44121



EUROPEAN RD
Ian Daglish
7 The Spinney
Cheadle, Cheshire
ENGLAND SKB 1JA

SERVICES AVAILABLE

MULTIPLAYER COORDINATOR
Roy Henricks
128 Deerfield Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

ARCHIVIST
William A. Perry
2225 Thames Lane
Montgomery, AL 36106
(205) 277-4382

EDITOR
Chester E. Hendrix
1054 Lewis Oak Road
Gridley, CA 95948
(916) 846-2703

JUDGE
Bill Lindow
12038 Horn Silver Mtn Road
Littleton, CO 80127

MATCH COORDINATOR
Les Deck
RR#2 Worcester Rd Box 1300
Stowe, VT 05672
(802) 253-9535

EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVE
Allan White
77 Brackley Road
Hazlemere, High Wycombe
Bucks, ENGLAND HP15 7EY

EUROPEAN EDITOR
Dave Steed
6 Blacksmith Common
Chalton, Beds
ENGLAND LU4 9UN

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

PACIFIC
Charles Leath
574 N. Bayview
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 733-5484

SOUTHEAST
Arthur G. Dempsey
2319 Riverdale Drive
New Pt Richey, FL 3552

CANADA
Mike Kaulbars
Dept of Biology
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
CANADA K1S 5B6

THE BARRAGE

The activity level in our conference has picked up a bit since my last report to you. I received three inquiries requesting information on membership. Of the three, I received one positive reply.

Our new member is a Mr. Clifford Schmidt who presently resides in Tallahassee, Fl. Mr. Schmidt is 26 years old and a student who is setting his sights on a doctoral degree in Economics. Among some of his favorite games are; PANZERBLITZ, CROSS OF IRON and CRESCENDO OF DOOM. Mr. Schmidt read of AHKS in a recent issue of the AH GENERAL, was impressed with our solicitation of the "mature" gamer and decided to give us a try. He strikes me as a dedicated gamer and favors our faster mode of play in his games. I wish him well and hope his relationship with AHKS is both long and fruitful.

I would also like to welcome our erstwhile ARCHIVIST, William A. Perry. Mr. Perry has relocated to our conference from the Northeast Region (check Officer listing for the new address. edl).

I received my new Membership Guide and I think it is nicely done. I especially like the "I have a problem who do I contact" section. The most popular games section is another excellent idea. But, my favorite is that work-up on our history. It is outstanding (take a bow, Omar! edl) Congratulations Mr. Editor and everyone else who had a hand in its production.

Now, while I am on the subject of guides, how about one for the Officer Corps? I am thinking along the lines of a definitive manual (an EXCELLENT idea! This would be the most appropriate place to spell out procedures for what SPECIFIC conditions ratings points would or would not be awarded, etc. edl).

I would like to discuss some thoughts I've had regarding a pet project of mine; Computers in Gaming. Some of the most chronic problems with our games are- space, voluminous rules and the time necessary to play them. The computer has the capability to solve all of these.

The computer-game companies are designing their games to be played on a 48-64K machine, and you should see what THESE games can do! All they have to do now is design a program which would add a PBM option and PRESTO! In the meantime, if anyone has any ideas on this subject, I would be happy to hear from you.

In closing, I would like to make a few comments regarding my last column. Yea, yea, Mr. Editor, it's a controversy-- anything you say! Now, will you give me my head back? [Only if you promise to do the next crossword puzzle! edl]

That's what I think, how about you?

Art Dempsey

INTERIOR LINES

I recently recieved our 1986 membership list from Don Eisan. It is interesting to note that our region had a 22% decline in membership. In my opinion this can be attributed to two different factors. First, the excessive dues that we charge per year. It seems to me that eight dollars is more than enough for one year (check the TREASURER'S REPORT on pg.1. edl). Perhaps we could explore a reduction of dues to five dollars a year. How about it Sid, what do you think? Our next problem and one that I have addressed before, is our procedure for handling complaints. Most of the complaints that I receive are from people who are fed up with delays and have decided to cancel the match.

After months of waiting for a reply you can't blame a person for deciding to end a match. At this time I am unaware of any specific response time that we must meet during our sets. It seems to me that it is time for us to establish some realistic standards. This will allow us to place the blame on the person who deserves it. We can not continue to let this problem go unchecked. A twenty-one day response time between moves should be sufficient. We also need to decide on the number of times we will allow a person to violate

these limits. I favor a system of three delays per game or six per set. A person who exceeds these limits forfeits the match. The important thing is that we establish a procedure for this problem. So now I will throw this situation into the President's lap. How about it John, what do you think we should do?

Kevin McCarthy

PACIFIC THEATER

All is quiet on the Pacific Front. I missed the most exciting gaming event of the year- ORIGINS- which took place in L.A. this year. John Burt attended and he promised to give us a synopsis in the K [he delivered too! edl]

There have been a couple of topics discussed in recent issues of the K that have piqued my interest. One is the PBM BURNOUT issue and the other is the STATE OF THE HOBBY. Since I don't have any new members to talk about, or any interesting events to report, I thought I might add my ten cents worth (inflation) on these topics. I generally take the passive support (nodding head in agreement) role on most issues if the right things are said, and I am tired of nodding. I thought I might discuss this PBM Burnout issue from the perspective of another type of burnout- work burnout.

All of you have heard about Silicon Valley which is really the Santa Clara Valley just south of San Francisco, CA. Well, that is where I live. It also happens to be one of the prime areas in the country where work burnout frequently takes place. Our local papers have been filled with articles on this phenomenon. Essentially, what has happened is that some people have become very tired, disillusioned and sick of their work. Many had gotten into the vicious cycle of living to work instead of working to live. The social psychologists and therapists have had a field day with all their quick cures and seminars. The results of all this have ranged from disastrous to interesting.

The disastrous results, although more exciting to talk about, are not worth dwelling upon. They won't improve anything. One of the interesting results is that people have taken the time to step back and analyze their lives. This has been good for many. People have been forced to step back and look at why they are doing what they do. In some cases this has resulted in career changes and in other cases people continue their careers, but with a different approach.

What people did was to reevaluate why they got into the professions they were in, particularly if they used to enjoy or find some value in what they did for a living. This was quite relevant for engineers who had become managers. Engineering is a demanding academic discipline and many engineers had chosen the profession because they enjoyed math, science and other technical matters. After a few years as practicing engineers, they found themselves as managers. In high tech, engineering management can be very demanding and stressful. Many engineers experienced burnout, and found happiness in returning to being regular engineers again.

What I am trying to say is that those avid wargamers who may find themselves experiencing all the classical symptoms of burnout need to stop and reassess the value of the hobby to themselves. Obviously, at some point in time it was fun. Well...why was it fun? Removing all the other factors of age responsibilities, etc., the same reasons that got a gamer into the hobby in the first place must still be buried under that stack of unplayed games.

I got into the hobby because I am a history buff, and one of the things I used to enjoy was to play 'what if' scenarios. I did not even know about AH or game clubs at the time. What I found in Historical Conflict Simulations (wargames) was an organized approach to my 'what if' fantasies. Whenever I get tired of shoving around little pieces of cardboard on a hexagonal grid map and reading nebulous rules, I go back to the history books for rejuvenation.

This is my first ten cents worth. I'll save my comments on the state of the hobby for another issue.

Chuck Leath

First Impressions

All of the built-up excitement was forgotten, but when the package was delivered to me at my desk at work, all that excitement was renewed. Why would an AHIKS package be delivered to me at work? It's coming through the mail and I have a P.O. Box down there on base... but never mind that, get it open! And there it was, the Member's List, with my name in print! But what's this other...oh, the European listing. Advertising!? I like it, especially the 3W stuff. Too bad it's a month late to take advantage of the savings. The new MEMBER GUIDE, and the K. What's this envelope for then? And these sheets? I guess I'll have to read.

Later at home. You've got to be kidding!? I hope this guy knows what he is doing! Not that I have the most games in the world, but with a Society this big he is going to have millions of inputs! Those ratings definitions are pretty obscure too. Oh well...

Wow, I didn't realize I had that game. How long has it been? And how many times for this one? Well, even if it doesn't benefit him, it sure was a revelation to me!



Yes, dear Editor, that is roughly how it was. Or at least how it started. And oddly enough it took the "monster mailing" to prompt me to write. Not that I hadn't been stirred by the PBM Burnout issue, just not enough. Anyway, I'll take that up a little later.

The very first thing I was concerned with was you (the Editor) making only masculine references in your column. Now, I don't know if there are any women in the Society or not, but if I were one, I would be quite upset at being called a "gentleman". Wouldn't a simple disclaimer have done the trick[1]?

And speaking of disclaimers, one that I read recently went something like this: This publication has something for everybody—some people look for facts, some for humor, and some for mistakes. The first two may be a little harder to come up with, but since we didn't want to disappoint the folks looking for mistakes, we left them in.

Anyway, back to you. You have surprised, and sometimes appalled me with your opinions and verbology, but I think, all for the better. In fact, with Mr. Kaulbars at your side, you could probably take it to anyone you like, verbally. Or does that only work when you put it on paper? Not that I'm complaining, these are actually compliments! However, I fervently dislike the way in which you cut up a persons letter/article/writing with your sometimes inappropriate remarks. Can't you just save them for the end[2]?

And when hasn't AHIKS been doing wonderful things for us? Oh sure, we were pretty conservative until you came along with some of your ideas[3]. And then there is Mr. Kaulbars...are you sure there is no relation? Maybe what I object to is your idea of influencing the game makers. Unless I am mistaken, we are a self-proclaimed PBM Society promoting the fair play of wargames through the postal medium. So how in the world do we influence the game makers[4]? Do we put together sub-committees for research on each new game release and force the company to recall all of the games if it doesn't fit certain standards? Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't this playing something called God[5]? This sounds like it might lead to situations you read about in books like *Fahrenheit 451* and *1984*.

Maybe we should suggest to game companies that, based on polls of the society membership, certain games sell better than others and that certain game styles sell better than others. Maybe through a mention of game reviews and the impact they potentially have on the membership (don't forget to say how many we are) the game companies will start making the games we like to see. But aren't the games we like to see already owned by us?! So how can they possibly give us what we already have[6]!? Unless we simply stress to them the importance of the errata-less system.

One thing that does concern me, as it should every member of this Society, is the cancellation-of-games business. While I agree that in certain situations where a match is cancelled points should be assessed, there arose one situation I was personally involved in that should not have resulted in any points being assessed. Suppose I asked for a match for a game called "Operation Grenade" but received a match in "Operation Grenada"!? Maybe I blurred my letters, maybe the MC misread it, but in any case I DON'T have the game that I am now matched in. The way I read your proposals, any cancellation costs points for someone, but I think this should only be the case if the match is already underway. In the above example, no one is actually hurt by the cancellation. Oh, my matched opponent may not be too pleased, but I'm sure he would rather play someone who at least has a copy of the game in question. Maybe if I were to include a short note to the MC, my would-be opponent's open match request can be reopened and he may yet get a valid match[7].

I think Mr. Dempsey had a good point about the crossword puzzle, although an extreme one. I quite enjoyed it because it was completely military history/wargame oriented. If the next one were entirely made up of counted-crossstitch terms, I would be fully on Mr. Dempsey's bandwagon. But as long as we only get one per year or so and it is fully military history/wargames, I'm for it[8].

Wait a second. Did I say before that you're doing a good job? Did I mention that I enjoy the K more now than ever before? Did I say I enjoy Mr. Kaulbar's articles more than any others? OK. As long as I didn't forget.

I notice you really screamed for responses on the thing in Mr. Owen's article. The only occasion I have had to buy 2nd edition rule books for is the Squad Leader system. But in this, my sole experience, I almost had to buy the Fourth Edition rules because my Second Edition booklet had almost disintegrated after all the use (abuse) I had put it through. I can't honestly believe that any game publisher deliberately lets bad stuff get out on the market in anticipation of making more money with the errata. I'm no businessman, but it makes sense to have a blockbuster sell millions of copies without having to make changes to it later. In fact, it would probably be one of its bigger selling points[9]!

Which brings me to PBM burnout. Mr. Owen phrased his views quite nicely. Mr. Leonard had some good input a few issues earlier. But the worst thing the Society could do is start a probationary membership. In my opinion, burnout is something that a mature, dedicated gamer overcomes. A mature, non-dedicated gamer may not overcome it, but usually succumbs. You won't find PBM burnout in any medical tomes, so you can be sure this is only one man's opinion. I've been faced with what we call PBM burnout many times. For me it is just a period when I have other things to do that are more important and/or good excuses to keep me away. More and more, I find myself immune to it, though. All I have to do is look at the shelves full of games and game support materials and start figuring out how much all of this stuff costs and I realize I can't just throw it all away. It's like an investment. Plus I have this unfulfilled dream of winning a wargame tournament someday. And after that, winning another and another—thus legitimizing the cost of those wargames (and all the time spent with them) to my wife.

I don't think any one method of keeping one's current PBM games straight is better than any other. I personally use the \$.15 document protectors to separate them and keep each game in it's own file with responses and such. But if another way is better for someone else, then so be it. That's not what keeps the burnout away in the first place. It's the dedication. The dedication to competition, to fair play, to the Society and to friends.

Next subject: the Hard Core Option (shouldn't that be corps?). I tend to be the stick-it-out-to-the-end type of player. It hasn't helped me any, though. I can remember only one victory in all my years of wargaming. But I have had some very close games because I have stuck them out to the end. And this in every game I have PBMed. But if an opponent

absolutely cannot stand to play on just because he didn't move one of his tank units to a certain hex on a certain turn and feels he has no chance at victory because of it, then yes, I will accept the easy and unearned victory! Like I said before, I remember only one victory on my record. So chances are, if you're playing me, just wait it out and sooner or later I'll do something really dumb like force all of your units to occupy the boards necessary for victory. Or perhaps I'll leave a huge hole in my lines in plain sight (even to me) and think nothing of it.

And now, Beloved Editor, I come down from my place in the spotlight and go back to being one of the membership, just like you!

Tim Gist

[1: During my collegiate tenure I was not only exposed to, but participated in a number of Feminist oriented classes. I have tried in the past at different projects to consciously make an effort to use the non-masculine gender, but after getting into enough occurrences of grotesque syntax situations, I figured out why most English students ignore the 'problem'.]

[2: Read my regular article OPPORTUNITY FIRE, where I have some specific comments on the subject of how my Editorial comments would best be presented.]

[3: This statement caught me by surprise. A: I have never considered the K to be even CLOSE to conservative and B; while I consider myself more towards the center of the 'political' aspect of the hobby, I am DEFINITELY anti-liberal. Less than 10% of all the opinions I express are original. I merely try to expand and clarify viewpoints I have heard other gamers express that I think would be of interest to the rest of the Society. Certainly any ideas I expound should not be considered gospel and I am always more than ready to print dissenting views. I have been wrong in the past and expect to be the same in the future on occasion. However, I will not relinquish my right to call other people on the carpet until I meet someone who doesn't make any mistakes. My view of an editor is not just someone who spouts the company line, but someone who tries to stimulate thought and response from the readers. An editor should express his personal as well as professional opinion so the readership knows where he is coming from. If this means I take flak and/or lumps, I accept that as being part of the job. I consider my bottom line to be this- I am your EDITOR, not your CENSOR. I think it is also my privilege not to BE censored. This is not to say that I do not understand and endorse the concepts of compromise and the democratic process as understood by the term 'majority rule'.]

[4: My basic thought is this- the manufacturers in the hobby are essentially in the dark when it comes to knowing what the gaming public thinks. Why? Because feedback is a VERY rare bird. When you have to base decisions on 100 responses out of 9,000 people questioned you begin to understand their problem. If we as a group can hand PEOPLE'S WARGAMES a letter that contains the opinion of over 300 gamers WHO HAVE PURCHASED HIS GAMES that he (Mr. Radey) is doing the hobby a grave disservice because he isn't bothering to put hex numbers on his maps for ease of postal play, he is more likely to start the practise in the future than if he gets a few postcards. This is just one specific example of how we can influence the manufacturers. And if you think ANY of the manufacturers wouldn't like to get their hands on the results of a WRITTEN poll representing more than 300 gamers who have BOUGHT their products, I suggest you write one and ask them if that kind of market research 'influences' them at all.]

[5: Not at all. I wouldn't even begin to advocate a 'recall' system. This sounds assinine. But I do recall a day when, if you bought a game and a 2nd edition later came out, if you returned the cover off the 1st edition, the 2nd edition rules would be sent to you. Since this practise has stopped I personally know several gamers who WILL NOT BUY A GAME until it has been on the market a year or two and the 2nd edition rules are included inside. If you have not experienced this yourself, I'm sure you know others who have. But when I have mentioned this to a few individuals on the supply side of the hobby, they have expressed surprise. "I've never heard that!" they say. Of course not! And if nobody tells them they NEVER WILL HEAR IT. This isn't to say it will make

any difference in the end, but don't you think you owe it to yourself to at least make your voice heard? Isn't there ANYTHING you wish were different?]

[6: Do we really already 'have' them? If you have EVER had to write to a company, or read an article in a hobby zine, for errata, then you did not really 'have' the game did you? How did you feel when you had played the game for the third time only to discover a major flaw, then later found that all that time invested could have been saved if you had only had access to that one vital Q&A in an obscure issue of the GENERAL? One way they could 'give' us what we already 'have' would be to allow us to register for errata updates published yearly. WE could even send them SASEs. This is just one suggestion. I'm sure if you thought about it, you could come up with more.]

[7: Obviously, a match must be ACCEPTED and first turn paperwork exchanged to be considered a match. But I have played games where my opponent has trashed himself beyond hope on the first turn before I have even had a chance to move (I won't admit it publicly, but I've even done it myself on occasion).]

[8: As a point of interest, I forgot to mention that ALL the answers were game titles. Everybody I've asked about it has enjoyed it a bunch. Except Art. And I have a sneaking feeling that he did too!]

[9: I agree totally. Unfortunately there are numerous examples of games which have been deliberately released purely to make a deadline (read:buck), even though it was known to be flawed. I must guess that you are either a new comer to the hobby or just don't subscribe to many of the zines or you would have had more experience with this phenomenon. Ask any grognard who had more than a one-year subscription to the old S&T.]

THE MAP BOARD

Our industrious Vice-President has moved to the East Coast. Please note his new address in the officer listing. The Map Board will be back next issue.

EUROPEAN BRIEFING

[At last! Word from across the water! I received a letter from our brethren in Europe and points East and thought you might enjoy seeing it. ed]

Dear Chester,

Thanks for the K's and your welcomed letter. Yes, we are alive and kicking over here though our failure to keep in contact is something we really must put right.

All the hard work that has gone into all the new material is certainly paying off. The membership guide is certainly impressive as well as the cards, etc. Well done to all!

The European Region newsletter *DESPATCH* has been having a lean time of late mainly due to problems I have had at home which have resulted in only one issue this year. With my wife having to go into the hospital for some time, I finally had to admit there was something more important than wargaming [gasp! ed] and getting out the magazine. However, all should be ok and I'll make sure you get a regular copy. I've enclosed a few older ones for you to get the feel of what it should look like. The main problem I have is that there usually isn't enough input on a regular basis to publish 6 times a year. We haven't got any other regions to make regular reports and so I usually do a little "persuading" to get someone to put pen to paper.

Now there's a thought. How about you giving me a profile for my next "Meet the Members" page? Something on one of our American members would certainly be great.

We pay the normal rate for articles. You buy us Limeys a drink if you're over this way!!!

I look forward to keeping in contact in future.

Best wishes,
David Steed

Cont'd from pg. 2

5 years and was definitely beyond the need for update, this kind of expenditure was only made possible by the efforts of our Treasurers who have fought tooth and nail to manage the funds. I want to make sure they get some credit here! Also please note the changes in the dues structure noted at the bottom of Sid's report. Dues are going down, but the due date is no longer flexible! In fact, the next issue will be the dues issue! Please take note!

I have gotten a couple of letters relating to my editorial style of cutting in. Please note the three different styles I have used this issue. In perusing past issues, I find that 'cutting in' is the traditional K method, which I have been using. Saving it all up for the end (like on the last page) is another option. An interesting method used in the TRC article in an early F&M was to number your responses throughout the article and place the actual response at the end as in the FIRST IMPRESSIONS article. Let me know which way you like it. I will consider a lack of response as a vote of confidence on present practise.

As for BALLEES, what was gained in 1920 can be had again!

Chester

THE TRUE NORTH

William Durocher is interested in FTF gaming with anyone within reasonable driving distance. He lives about 60 miles south of Quebec City in East Broughton (ph# [418] 427-2100). Give him a call.

Next topic: lack of recruitment of new gamers. One problem here in Ottawa is that games are not widely available. Ten years ago as many as a dozen stores had a few wargames, last year two stores had a reasonable selection and there was one store with a very comprehensive stock. We are now down to one gaming store. While this is fine for the gamers, it means far fewer people will casually buy a game on impulse. I have contributed to this by always shopping where there was the best selection, but I see now that it is hurting the hobby. The problem is what to do about it? Ideas?

Seventeen years ago I bumped into a wargame in a book store. After much deliberation and counting of pennies I bought the sucker and brought it home. It seemed awfully complex, but after a couple of hours I had mastered the 6 page rule book and was merrily playing with my sister's boyfriend. Since then I have spent an estimated \$4500 on the hobby. I recently ran into someone who bought his first game last fall, on a similar impulse. The title that he bought is an excellent game, one that I own and love, but when he named it I knew what had happened. A 50 page rulebook is a real novice killer, and I could not even persuade him to let me try to teach him the game, much less try a different one. He had spent his \$30 and that was all the gaming industry was ever going to get out of him.

I think that this is a real problem that the gaming industry has to address seriously. Some games come with varying levels of complexity, but even then a lot of the "basic" games are pretty wicked for the novice trying to teach himself. As well many games are marked "Intermediate" or "Complex" on the box, but there are two problems with this. The rating is usually on the side or concealed in a plethora of information designed to sell the game. Experienced gamers look for the complexity ratings, and more importantly, they know how to interpret them. For the novice, what does "complex" mean? Harder than RISK? As tough to learn as Bridge? Surely nothing the average high school graduate couldn't master in a few hours, right?

One suggestion that I would make is that the complexity rating appear boldly on the front of the box, and that the buyer be directed to the fine print on the side which explains that complexity relative to certain widely known games, and which further emphasizes that the 50 page rules are really 50 pages of complex rules! The box cover of intermediate and complex games might even bear a large notice "Not for the Novice". Does that seem like marketing suicide? Not necessarily. Said notice could contain a list of other games by the same company that might be more suitable for the novice [This seems like a great idea!

It could even be taken a step further by putting said notice on the outside of the shrink wrap - a sticker - thus not marring the box art. This could be a very important advertising tool by way of promoting a list of titles for a "suggested first purchase". A successful first purchase will establish a repeat customer. A failure will not only lose all hope further dollars from the unfortunate, but also very probably a number of his FRIENDS! ed]. This may seem a bit extreme, but then each converted wargamer is worth thousands of dollars. Being intellectually defeated by some damn game can be very humiliating, and it is unlikely that once the experience occurs the person will be likely to try again.

Elsewhere in the news... For the tenth time CAN CON has come and gone. I ran an AHKS table, which was very quiet but may have generated a couple of new members. This year there were even fewer Board War Gamers (BWG) than last time, probably because the con is largely an FRP event. The miniatures people had a good turnout, but they seem more tightly knit than BWG. The dearth of BWGs had a couple of consequences; by and large it was pretty dull for those of us who were there, but it did make the war game auction prices low.

We now turn to our roving reporter Bill Bean with a report on the MIGS CON in Cambridge Ontario. I hope Bill will forgive me if I condense his report. MIGS is primarily a miniatures event and didn't have many BWG events. Nonetheless Bill had a good time and had no trouble finding people to game with. It would seem the con was well attended by BWGs, but due to space limitations and lack of BWG organizers there were few formal events. From Bill's descriptions there were some impressive miniatures displays, sorry I missed it. As well there were movies and liquid refreshments readily available. Brownie points go to Bill for setting up a poster with AHKS information sheets. I should also thank Bryce Allen for the spiffy poster he made for my AHKS table.

Note that both of the above cons had little to offer for the BWG, does this mean you should avoid these cons? It depends on what you want. To a large extent BWGing has been displaced by FRPing. With fewer BWG events we stay away, pining for a BWG con. Well, ain't gonna happen! Organizing a con is a lot of work, and you can count me OUT! The existing cons have people willing to handle all of the logistics for anyone wishing to run a BWG event, but we don't do it. If you don't really give a damn about cons, fine. This situation does not concern you. If you are sitting around waiting for a good BWG con, then it is time to get off your butt and start attending these 'other' cons. If possible, offer to run a BWG event. If not, then simply attend the cons and get in what gaming you can. In time BWG will reestablish itself and you will have a con worth attending.

Now, Bill Bean has anticipated me and wishes to try something for the next MIGS CON. He asks that anyone else wishing to get involved contact him at (519) 742-8908, and maybe you can coordinate something. As well Bill brings the following two events to our collective attention:

BEDLAM: a games auction sponsored by THE GENERAL STAFF. Saturday, Oct 4, at St. Anne's Parish Hall, 651 Dufferin St., Toronto. Item registration- 9-11:30 AM. Auction 12-7:30. Admission \$1.

PANDEMONIUM IV: largely FRP but with some BWG. Saturday, Jan 17, 87, in Toronto. For details contact THE GENERAL STAFF, P.O. BOX 425 Station A, Downsview, ONTARIO M3M 3A8

So much for cons. For those of you who do not trust our beloved Editor with .08, much less \$8, there is an alternative! I refer of course to his Wholiness' offer to procure tweezers for all and sundry seen in the K21-3. Pop down to your local stamp shop and have a look at the spatulate tweezers that philatilists use, I find they do the trick.

A final note, history has taught us that armed revolt will not work unless some degree of military parity possible. Under the circumstances that is not likely. If BALLEES is to succeed, we must use a strategy of gradual disengagement politically and economically. Please note that the current situation in Berlin seriously threatens the operations of BALLEES-remember 1956!

Mike Kaulbars

THE MATCH COORDINATOR

I. OPEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP

I have been advised by the Editor of the 'K' that no longer will be able to maintain the lengthy and informative column that has been presented to the membership in each issue because this has now become a part of the new MEMBER'S GUIDE. Further, the space it takes up would be available to him for other items that are now being presented. I am sorry, but I have no other alternative but to surrender to him on this matter unless you, the membership, require otherwise. If you desire to have the column maintain its present informative structure, then you will need to inform the Editor of your wishes. [Postcards are always acceptable, regardless of which way you vote. ed]

B. In future issues I will only be able to show the OPEN MATCH REQUEST section, the New Member Code Numbers issued, and any comments on specific areas of importance which are deemed to be proficient and render improved services. [Les forgot to mention that I promised to reprint any one paragraph from his column (hopefully the one he is having the most problems with since the last issue) plus ANY original material (such as what you are reading now) on any subject he might care to write about. ed]

C. One of two reasons that I have been informed of which require the reduction of this column was: a) the membership no longer would be interested in the information presented if the column were to continually render the same information in each issue; b) the space taken up by the long winded column could be used on other matters which are deemed to be more important to the membership (though I'm not sure what that could be).

D. I do not take exception to the Editor's reasoning and/or needs, in fact, on occasion the questions asked by the members would have been answered had the column been read, so the argument by the Editor that repetition of the column is not only uninteresting but

will be overlooked as well, is valid. My only rebuttal is that the information is at hand and available to everyone at all times, whereas the new Member's Guide is not available to all at any one time and updating would not be practical. Further, there are many members who have not been issued their copy or have misplaced and/or worn out their old ones.

E. I have taken this opportunity to state my position and welcome any comments on this matter to the Editor and or me as to the wishes of the membership on the format of this column and the information desired from me under the heading "THE MATCH COORDINATOR". Remember it is your zine and your opportunity to have put into it what you want.

II. OPEN REQUEST MATCH:

1815 (336), A House Divided (336), Afrika Korps (746) (3), Air Assault On Crete (1011), Anzio (1107), Arab-Israeli Wars (1108), Armor (1190), Battles For the Ardennes (8616), Ble & Gray I (44), Blue & Gray II (44), Bomber (988), Brietenfeld (511), Bulge 65 (136), Bull Run (1067), D-Day 77 (136), France 40 (1051), Fury In the west (1051), Great Redoubt (1116)*, Guadalcanal (1051), Imperium Romanum II (1116), Longest Day (1011), Luftwaffe (988), Lutzen (511), Midway (1117), Nordlingen (511) (967), Panzer Armees Afrika (1051), PanzerBlitz (719), Panzer Leader (719), Prestags (817), Road To Vicksburg (816), Rocroi (511), Russian Front (519)(A), Seelowe (746), VG Sixth Fleet (1049), South Mountain (WEG)(336), Struggle of Nations (1107), Kaiser's Battle (413), Thirty Years War (511), Tiram (817), VG Vietnam (988), War & Peace (336)(2), War At Sea (1028), Wooden Ships & Iron Men (817).

III. NEW MEMBER CODE #:

M. Campbell	1130
C. Schmidt	1131
R. Olson	1132



In the event you do not know your code number, contact me.

Les Deck, MC 9/1/86

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MATCH REQUEST FORM

NAME _____ CODE# _____ PHONE# _____ DATE _____
 ADDRESS _____

TO REQUEST MATCHES: USE THIS FORMAT —
 INSERT ON THE NUMBERED LINES THE GAME TITLE(S).
 INCLUDE THE LETTER CODES (IN PARENTHESIS) LISTED
 BELOW THAT APPLY. IF YOU PLACE MORE THAN ONE GAME A
 LINE, YOU WILL BE MATCHED WITH THE FIRST OPPONENT
 AVAILABLE WITH ONE OF THOSE GAMES AND ANY OTHERS
 ON THAT LINE WILL BE IGNORED.

USE THESE LETTER CODES TO ASSIST MC

- (A) DESIRE A.R.E.A. OPPONENT (IF AVAILABLE)
- (F) DESIRE FAST OPPONENT (7 DAY REPLY) (IF AVAILABLE)
- (G) WILL GAME MASTER THIS GAME WITH # _____ PLAYERS.
- (M) DESIRE MULTI-PLAYER MATCH: # _____ PLAYERS DESIRED.
- (N) WILL PLAY NEW MEMBER.
- (O) WILL PLAY OPPONENTS OUTSIDE USA/CAN.
- (X) ICRKS (CHECK ONE) NEED: 1-6 1-10 2-12 OTHER (SPECIFY _____)
- (Y) NEED PREPRINTED OOB #'s _____ (INSERT OOB # OR GAME TITLE)
- (Z) NEED CONTINUATION ICRK FOR PRESENT TITLE _____ & ICRK # _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

*() MY ADDRESS/PHONE HAS CHANGED. ATTACH NEW INFORMATION AND SEND TO MC, SECTY. AND TREAS.

A CALL TO ARMS

To the membership:

I will be brief. I want to squash an ugly rumor, that I am alive and living in Argentina. I felt my pulse yesterday and there wasn't any pulse and I never have been in Argentina.

Viva Evita,
Harry J. Welch

The preceding was received from an individual who purported to be the here-to-fore unheard-from RD WEST. I am semi-sceptical that this is actually the case. Having conferred with Editors past I have found that whoever the REAL RD WEST is, he or she does NOT write a regular column like most of the other RD's and, indeed, has not been heard from in these pages to my knowledge. I have suspicions that other members from the Western Region have grown tired of not being represented and are going to be sending in columns under the Harry Welch pen name. Until such time as it can be determined if there really is a Harry Welch or just who the real Harry Welch is, all such submissions will be cheerfully accepted. Will the REAL Harry Welch please stand up?



FOR SALE: Victory Game's PACIFIC WAR. Mint condition, unpunched, no dings or dents and an extra mapsheet! \$32.75 postpaid. Send SASE with order to Randy Heller 8404 Adams St., Lemon Grove, CA 92045

FOR SALE: Unpunched FURY IN THE WEST (Battleline). \$5 US or \$6 CAN, buyer pays postage. Bill Bean, 182 Coach Hill Dr, Kitchener, ONT CANADA N2E 1P4

GAME CLEARANCE SALE: all games are boxed and in mint to excellent condition. All games are \$3 each. I pay the postage. Historical Alternatives/BELLEAU WOOD WWI, 3M/ BLUE LINE HOCKEY, 3M/PRO FOOTBALL, Mayfair/DEMO DERBY, Sports Illustrated/PRO FOOTBALL, Negamco/PRO BASKETBALL, Superstar/PRO WRESTLING, Milton Bradley/PRO SOCCER '68, Games Research, Inc./Convention '60. Bill Retoff, RR 2 Box 6, Minonk, IL 61760

FOR SALE: Prices include postage! All items in excellent condition unless noted. NAPOLEON AT BAY \$10.00; CIVIL WAR \$12.; PAX BRITANNICA \$10.; STREETS OF STALINGRAD \$28.; VIETNAM \$12.; THIRD WORLD WAR \$8.; STRATEGY AND TACTICS # 35**, 42**, 44**, 61*, 64, 65, 66, 67*, 68, 69**, 71, 72, 73, 75**, 76, 77, 78, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85**, 104. (Issues marked with a * have counters punched; issues marked with a ** lack game; all others complete with unpunched game; sold only as a complete set \$50.) Gary Charbonneau, 4309 Sheffield Drive, Bloomington, IN 47401

Wanted: I would like to buy either a copy/original set of Rulesbook, Scenario Book and Charts and Tables for the first edition of Imperium Romanum published by West End Games. Also would like to hear from any one who has developed a superior system for handling Morale in T.A.H.G.C. Guns of August, this is the only weak point in an other wise excellent game. Would also like the addresses of any Canadian Mail Order dealers in second hand and new historical Simulations. Allan John Scutt, Box 1282, Moosomin SK, CANADA SOG 3N0

LET'S MAKE A DEAL! I have some games I am really not any more and I will send you mine. Items vary from SPI's THE MOSCOW CAMPAIGN to S&T 38 and 98. I am interested in operational and tactical games from Napoleonic to WWII, especially PWG, VG and SPI games based on the PGG system. Arthur G. Balliet 4227B 8th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98105

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AHIKS KOMMANDEUR

AHIKS SECRETARY

BILL SALVATORE

19985 WILD CHERRY LANE

WATER'S LANDING, MD 20874



Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
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FORWARDING AND ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

I like the little figures you scatter around the K. If you had asked me before I ever saw them if I thought it would make any impression on me I would have said no. But they do. I also like to read stuff like the NOT THE DESIGNER REPLIES in 21-4. I also do not own, nor ever intend to purchase AGOB, but I got a lot out of the article. The game in progress reports are very interesting.

Art #1024

[I would really like to get some interest generated on the concept of the GAME IN PROGRESS REPORT. What I would like to get is an encapsulated present situation report of 50 words or less on a postcard, perhaps from the commanding General's point of view, on just exactly how the campaign is doing. Propoganda is not only encouraged but preferred! Do yourself a favor- psych out your opponent! ed]

RICHARD G COTTRELL
6131 N. DEARING ROAD
PARMA, MI 49269

NC1013

LETTERS

I write this letter for two reasons. The first is to let you know that I enjoy the K and look forward to reading it when it comes. I agree with Mike Kaulbars that there should be more articles on basic simple tactics in varying Historical Simulations (personally I abhor the term War Games). I feel both proud and honored that I am a member of A.H.I.K.S. I thought that the crossword was an excellent idea and really enjoyed it. Fellow members should remember variety is the spice of life. I would have no objection to more crossword puzzles, book reviews and Historical Simulation Reviews.

Allan Scutt