

The *Kommandeur*

Volume 42 Number 1

A Publication of AHIKS

February 2007

From the President

So... When Was The Last Time...

I've beaten the drum before about making plans to attend a gaming convention. You all know that the WBC is our Official Convention of Choice. If you can go, you should. But did you know there are alternatives that are a bit less expensive and decidedly less time intensive?

Chances are you have access to the Net. If so, you may be missing out on a face-to-face resource much closer to home than you realize. Google *meetup.com*. Look for gaming groups that are centered in large cities near you. We've had one a 45 minute drive from my house for 5 years, and we didn't even know it! They usually meet twice a month and you can have a blast.

Take the little woman out for an afternoon. Most all of the action is Euro games and the like, but the idea is to spend time *out of the house with your spouse*. Take the Scrabble. Sit back and relax. And be on the lookout...

Take a couple of your wargames. The interesting part is that you generally *won't* have time to play a good solid wargame and get some satisfying cardboard pushing in. That's OK. Take the game with you anyway. Chances are you'll be able to strike up a conversation with somebody who misses being able to push cardboard as well. He'll be the guy that touches the box reverently with a wistful look in his eye.

Catch that eye. And give him your e-mail address. Then share the AHIKS website with him. Oh, yeah... there's always a method to the madness. You not only get bonus points for spending time with the love of your life—you get the satisfaction of

doing something you love. Playing games. So what if there's no armored divisions? Get some perspective. Given the chance to roll dice with a babe, who would choose to play with themselves while leaving said babe to watch soap opera reruns by herself in the front room? Guys, once in a while you gotta remind yourself why you hooked up with that gorgeous creature.

Admit it. She likes going out; you like playing games. *Meetup* in the middle and both your lives will be better off. Is there a cardboard payoff at the end of the road? Oh yeah! As you get her used to the idea of going out, meeting new people who play games she can understand (and that she's even likely to enjoy!), the next step isn't too far away—go to a convention together! Almost all of them have Euro games and almost all of those now feature other ladies who have discovered it's fun to go out of the house for a weekend and play games. They'll be much more tolerant (and even supportive!) once they find a way to feel included in your hobby—especially a way that gets you both out of the house together (well, at least in the same hotel).

Trust me on this one. When you find a formula that improves both your love life and your gaming life—what's not to like?

Your Buddy, *Chester*



Pea Ridge

Post-Battle Report

by Tom Hanover

In issue 40/5 we had gotten through Turn 10.

Confederate Turn 11 (2:00 pm)

Van Dorn Wishing to avoid a frontal assault against the Union gun line astride Telegraph Rd, Van Dorn boldly swings half of Little's brigade through Cox's cornfield and around the Union left. This puts the rebels within just 400 yds of Curtis' headquarters at Pratt's Store, closer even than any Union unit!

** This move leaves two of Little's regiments far in front and isolated from the rest of the brigade, vulnerable to being cut off by an aggressive Union player. Van Dorn is possibly gambling that such a response is unlikely because the Union has too few units to accomplish this and still block the rest of the rebel army from driving straight down Telegraph Rd.*

Over on Van Dorn's right, Slack's brigade (supported by a regiment from Price) pushes down Clemens' Lane and attacks Bowen's dismounted cavalry defending a battery of four 12-pounder Napoleons. Union fire routs away half the attackers but 2 MSG fixes bayonets and drives the Union cavalry off, overrunning and capturing the guns as well.

**By threatening both Union flanks simultaneously, Van Dorn may quickly lever Curtis out of his solid defensive position and force him to fall back upon Pratt's Store.*

McCulloch Part of McIntosh's column (1,800 men) at last emerges from the woods into Cox's cornfield and moves immediately to support Little's brigade. 2 Ark C (still in column) is soon hit by Union rifle fire, loses 100 men, and routs back into the sheltering woods. An inauspicious debut for McIntosh.

(Continued on page 8)

Game News

This is a compilation of information gleaned chiefly from Consimworld (<http://www.consimworld.com>) and Web-Grognards (<http://www.grognard.com>).

The material was correct at time of writing: 26th January 2006.

Alan Poulter

(grognard@grognard.com)

NEW BOARD WARGAMES

Avalanche Press

Great War at Sea: Jutland is the latest in the **Great War at Sea** series, covering not only the battle, but the entire First World War in the North Sea and Baltic. **Great War at Sea: Mediterranean**, the first game in the **Great War at Sea Series** is being reprinted, as is **Third Reich, The Second World War in Europe, 1939-1945**. **Panzer Grenadier: South Africa's War** is the latest supplement in the **Panzer Grenadier Series** and covers battles of South African forces in Somaliland, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Libya between 1940 and 1942.

<http://www.avalanchepress.com/index.php>

Critical Hit

The latest **Advanced Tobruk System** module is **Oosterbeek Perimeter**, a stand-alone game which is also an expansion module for the earlier **Arnhem: Defiant Stand**.

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

Dan Verssen Games

A departure from their line of quick playing card games, **Down With The Empire**, designed by Charles Duke, is a large-scale, detailed board game covering interstellar warfare across the galaxy, incorporating military (both space and surface combat), political, and economic elements. Two or more players command either the Imperial or Rebel forces in their quest to control the Empire.

<http://www.dvg.com>

Days of Wonder

The long awaited **Battlelore** is

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finally out. Based on Richard Borg's series of quick-playing games that began with **Battlecry**, this game takes the system into fantasy medieval combat and adds a twist of magic.

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

Fiery Dragon

Marcher Lords is a simulation of the Norman conquest of Wales in the 11th century and is a reprint of an earlier game from MDG.

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

@games online

Action Front! Watchtower covers the efforts of 1st Marine Division to hold the area around Henderson Field and is the first game in the proposed **Action Front! Series** of tactical World War Two games.

<http://atgamesonline.com/>

GMT

Combat Commander: Vol. I: Europe, designed by Chad Jensen, is the first in a card-driven board game series covering tactical infantry combat in the European and North African Theaters of World War Two. It is getting plenty of good reports. **Onward Christian Soldiers**, designed by Richard H. Berg, is a strategic-level game covering the first three Crusades. The First Crusade can take up to seven players.

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

Hexasim

From the new French company Hexasim comes **Marne 1918—Friedensturm**, an operational game on the last German offensive from May to August 1918. An English translation is on the way.

<http://www.hexasim.com>

Lost Battalion Games

Battle: The American Civil War is an updated version, improved with wooden pieces and configurable battlefield tiles, of the classic battle game originally published by Yaquinto in 1979.

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

Pacific Rim Publishing

48th Panzer Korps, Battles on the River Chir covers the German efforts to relieve the Stalingrad

Pocket in December 1942.

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

Riachuelo Games

Riachuelo Games are a new Brazilian company and their first game is **Riachuelo's Naval Battle** which covers a riverine naval battle on June 11, 1865 in the War of the Triple Alliance.

<http://www.riachuelogames.com.br>

NEW MAGAZINE WARGAMES

Strategy & Tactics #239 contains **Winged Horse: Campaigns in Vietnam, 1965-66**.

Strategy & Tactics #240 contains **1066: The Battle of Hastings**. It can take two to four players.

Strategy & Tactics #241 contains the Joseph Miranda design, **Twilight of the Ottomans: World War I in the Middle East**.

<http://www.decisiongames.com>

Against the Odds #18 contains **The Golden Horde: Kulikovo 1380**, designed by Richard Berg. <http://www.atomagazine.com/>

Vae Victis #72 contains **Korsun 1944**. <http://www.vaevictis.com/> Note that *Vae Victis* magazine and games are in French but rules translations are made available via: <http://grognard.com/vaevict.html>

NEW DTP WARGAMES

BSO and Canons en Carton

Blackshirt, The Italian Invasion of Egypt, 1940, is a BSO game covering Italy's invasion of Egypt, prior to Rommel's arrival, and uses the **Bitter Victory** game system.

http://perso.club-internet.fr/fredbey/CeC_US.htm

Firefight Games

For Bloody Honor!, Civil War Russkaya 1918-22, is an area movement game focusing on political influences, recruiting, and use of tanks and aircraft. Designer is Mark Woloshen who created the game as a educational tool.

<http://firefight-games.com/>

Mike Kreuzer

Pacific Crisis is about a hypothetical Australian invasion of Fiji.

<http://www.mikekreuzer.com/dtp.htm>

Oregon Consim Games

Battle for Galicia, 1914 covers the initial battles between Austria-Hungary and Imperial Russia in Word War One.

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

NEW WEB RESOURCES

Free games

Montebello (MMP) <http://www.gamersarchive.net/theGamers/archive/montebello.htm>

The Thing <http://www.outpost31.com/vistar/games/brdgame.html>

Official Rules

Last Days of the Grande Armee

(OSG) http://www.napoleongames.com/GameDownloads/LDGA/LDGA_1_1.pdf

Twilight Struggle (GMT) http://www.gmtgames.com/living_rules/TSRules2nd.pdf

Westfront II (Columbia Games) <http://www.columbiagames.com/resources/3406/3406WFRules.pdf>

Errata

A Las Barricadas! (War Storm)

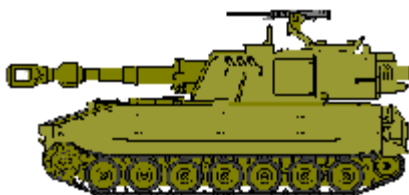
<http://grogard.com/errata1/alasbarr.doc>

Rules Translations

Mallorca 1936, *Alea* #24 (Ludopress)

<http://grogard.com/info1/mallorca.doc>

★★



UCP News

by Brian Laskey

First off, I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season, and for those of us in the applicable geographical areas, it's once again time for those annual winter doldrums to set in until spring arrives. However, at least for me anyway, that annual time frame usually seems to provide some good opportunities to catch up on one's gaming endeavors, be it starting that long, put off game with a friend, a solitaire try of that game you've been promising to play for the last 10 years, or maybe just simply organizing that "box of games in the closet." Admittedly though, my grandiose designs in this area usually fall far short of my New Year's Day goals when all is said and done with, but I do try...

Now to the UCP, which has a few updated items:

1) Correction: The UCP list printed in the last issue of *The K* had the year headers for the Gamers replacement counters incorrectly listed. 1994 and 1992 should be reversed. My fault entirely, and I do apologize for the mix-up.

2) Deletion: The Gamers **Ardenes** 1994 replacement counters are no longer available.

3) Additions: The following items are new additions to the UCP, thanks to the generous donation by Eric Seadale #1436. They are: **Across Five Aprils** (Victory Games-Union only), **Alesia** (GMT), **Operation Crusader** (FGA), and **Victory In The West** (GMT- Germans and Map B). Thanks Eric.

4) Web Link: Thanks to our website manager Tom Thornsen, the current UCP list is now available on the AHIKS web-site main page. Tom has used his computer skills to create direct links for both the UCP list and to e-mail me, so all you have to do is click on whichever link you need and go from there. And as always, please feel free to contact me anytime to receive the UCP list via e-mail in Word, a hard copy sent via snail mail, or with any questions you may have regarding the UCP.

Well, that's about the latest on the UCP front. Again, I'd like to remind

everyone that the UCP is there to help with any counter requests, so I do hope you will find good use for it. Happy Gaming!

Regards, Brian

The web version of this issue (in color) is available at our website (www.AHIKS.com).
User name = "AHIKS"
Password = "Dracula" (Both are case sensitive; do not include the quote marks. If you use the Caps Lock to write AHIKS, be sure to take it off for Dracula.)

If you are not successful with the above address, try:
www.angelfire.com/ny4/gmtom/ahiks.htm

If you still have trouble accessing the web version, contact Tom Thornsen at the address on page 11.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

Articles will be accepted at any time though submission of an article does not guarantee its publication. News items will be accepted if received in sufficient time to allow production schedules to be met. **Deadline for next issue: March 31, 2007.**

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Kommandeur (K) is the official newsletter of AHIKS, an international society of mature adults who play historical simulation games by mail. AHIKS is an organization of amateurs, staffed by volunteers, and is not affiliated with any game company or publisher. Society dues are yearly. Additional information about current rates is available from the Treasurer or the European Regional Director. Subscriptions to *The Kommandeur* are available to non-members at \$3 per issue. We do not accept advertising. We do accept "ad trades" on an issue-for-issue basis with other publications and organizations. Direct inquiries to the Editor or the European Regional Director.

Back issues available on CD

Back issues of *The Kommandeur* edited by the current editor are available on one CD in PDF format. That includes Vol. 37 No. 2 through the current issue. These are available at cost: \$2 to US addresses, \$3 to other addresses. Send money and requests to me at the address on page 11. Make checks out to Omar DeWitt.

The VP's Corner

I hope all the members had a joyous and eventful holiday season. I personally wish you all the best for the New Year. Christmas is a special time for our family because it provides us with the opportunity to come together in both body and spirit. My wife and I have no immediate relatives up here in New England, so we look forward to seeing and to catching up with loved ones.

As I sit here and reflect back over the past year, I ask myself what topics I addressed in this column were successful in generating a reply from the membership. The only one that immediately comes to mind was my suggestion to financially assist in sending the President, as an AHIKS advocate, to WBC to promote our organization. To put it mildly, the reply was "mixed." A few of you were very passionate in your feelings about this proposal. For the time being, I decided it best to give it a rest. Perhaps I will re-address the proposal in the future, recognizing the need to strap on my six-guns before I do <grin>.

However, the altruistic purpose of that proposal was an attempt to address the urgent need to give our organization the publicity it needs to survive in this day and age of electronic communication. In the past, I suggested the establishment of a Publicity Officer who would be assigned an annual budget. Some of the functions of such a position would be to facilitate industry advertisements in professional publications, distribute flyers, visit local sites to educate potential gamers, and otherwise act as a recruiter for AHIKS. Alas, like so many well intentioned ideas, this one has so far remained idle.

That leads me to another idea, which I think may have a better chance at success. I am absolutely thrilled to see Brian Laskey take over the reigns of the Unit Counter Pool with such a high degree of enthusiasm. I maintain the UCP is our greatest ace up our sleeves for recruiting new members. I encourage all of you to give it attention within our hobby so that others will give serious consideration to joining our ranks. Now,

for my next proposal—a club library! That's correct; you heard it here first, a club library. The success, of which, will depend on your generous donations. Once established, the club library would be available for members only to access journal articles. Copying could, note that I said "could," because this is just in the planning stage, be financed by the treasury. What amounts to a "reasonable copy request" would have to be established. So, how do we get started? Here's what your

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benevolent VP is willing to do. I will donate a complete collection of *The Boardgamer* magazine to the AHIKS library. That amounts to over 35 issues. This publication won the 1999 and 2000 Charles S. Roberts Award for best amateur wargame magazine. It is "dedicated to the competitive play of Avalon Hill/Victory Games and the board and card games of the World Boardgame Championships." I think to claim it as amateur is a misnomer. The publication is bound, well illustrated, and contains many well-written articles on game strategy, to include numerous variants. My suggestion would be for the AHIKS Archivist to maintain the library. If that is unacceptable, then a library officer position would need to be established.

What's the catch to this generous offer? My donation would only occur should another AHIKS member come forward and match it with a comparable donation of another publication. Fair enough? I wait for what I hope to be an enthusiastic reception for the new AHIKS library.

Until next time...best wishes for a good gaming year to all.

Randy Heller

AHIKS TOP 40 Active Players

With a Rating Qualifier "C" or greater in all categories. Players with the same Rating are then ranked by Qualifier (number of Games Played; number of Different Opponents; number of Different Titles). All Match Completions received as of December 31, 2006.

	#		Name	Rating
1	496	K	McCarthy	1885
2	885	B	Stretcher	1870
3	1007	R	Heller	1770
4	746	D	Tierney	1720
5	377	D	Grant	1645
6	1101	H	Lowood	1635
7	444	F	Kraus	1625
8	470	T	Thorsen	1610
9	305	W	Klitzke	1585
10	1263	C	Xanthos	1585
11	1345	T	Scarborough	1575
12	243	P	Martin	1565
13	914	R	Shurdut	1565
14	341	L	Deck Sr	1560
15	1264	J	Unnerstall	1560
16	36	M	Yarwood	1555
17	988	B	Lindow	1550
18	364	T	Holtz	1535
19	1243	E	O'Connor	1525
20	299	A	Bowie	1520
21	951	N	Markevich	1520
22	1013	R	Cottrell	1515
23	1455	S	Andriakos	1515
24	916	G	Dandy	1475
25	1217	J	Harkins	1470
26	711	C	Leonard	1455
27	854	D	Bergmann	1450
28	1427	T	Walsh	1420
29	1075	A	Morley	1385
30	225	R	Segarra	1375
31	451	J	Mueller	1375
32	1051	P	Heiser	1325
33	1398	K	Rutkowski	1325
34	1001	D	Boyes	1290
35	12	S	Jolly	1285
36	1116	C	Johns	1270
37	747	C	Rebesco	1255
38	1252	R	Brooker	1240
39	1210	M	Fassio	1240
40	552	R	Best Jr	1240

Some of the interesting bits from AHIKSOL

Card-Driven and Block Games

Hidden units and “block” games create fog of war by creating some uncertainty in the distribution of forces. Card-driven games allow you to know where the enemy forces are, but you don't know what your opponent can do with them. It requires the play of a card to do something, so even in a game where the forces are not balanced, the fact that each card play allows you to use only a limited number of units restricts the player with the most units. In the long run, the attritional nature of battle means the guy with the most units will eventually gain a position where he has more units available and can eventually wear out his opponent.

The traditional CDG originated with **We the People**, which is still a popular game. I do not own it and have never played it, although I have seen the game played. GMT games is the leading seller of this type of game. Multiman Publishing recently released **Shifting Sands**, which is a CDG for the North Africa Campaign. It is on my list of games to acquire, but I don't have it yet.

Here is my experience with them.

Far and away, the simplest of them is **Wilderness War**, dealing with the French and Indian War, 1755-1759. The rules are almost air tight. Each card play allows you to either activate a single leader or unit (s), or play the event. There are some “campaign” events that allow you to activate two leaders. The victory conditions are very clear cut.

The other “Single Deck” game I own is **For the People**. It's my personal favorite, but I am a Civil War fan first, so I made the effort to learn it. It has a *lot* of rules. In fact, most of them have a *lot* of rules. It takes many playings to get the hang of them. After two years of playing **Empire of the Sun**, I am only beginning to get comfortable with the rules.

I also own **Barbarosa to Berlin** (WWII ETO from June 1941 to end) and **Paths of Glory** (WWI). These games have separate decks of cards for each player. They too have a lot of rules, but the added complication is that some events need to be played to enable other events. These games

provide a player aid to show how the events are linked, but it does add a level of complexity in that you have to really understand what the important events are and how they relate. To simulate how the wars progressed, you start the game with a limited deck of cards. As the game progresses, more cards are added to your hand. In **Paths of Glory**, some of the events increase your “War Status.” At increased levels of War Status you add additional, often move powerful cards, to your deck.

I stopped playing **Barbarosa to Berlin** because the event tree was too much for me to bear. While it is fun, there is a host of post publication rules changes that were implemented to give the Russian a fighting chance against the German attacks in the early game. Perhaps the game was just a “Bridge Too Far” for me. I still play **Paths of Glory**, as I find the event tree more manageable and not as critical to the outcome of the game. Still, you better get your reinforcement armies in play and move to Total War if you want to be in the game.

Columbia games has an interesting spin on this with their block games. **Hammer of the Scots**, **Liberty**, and **Crusader Rex** to name a few of them, all combine blocks with cards. The truth is that you usually know what the strength of the blocks are, as there are usually only a dozen or so in the areas of interest at any given time. The cards are very simple, in that they are single purpose. They are either an event or an operation card that allow you to activate some number of forces.

Tom Thomson

Paths of Glory is one of my favorite games. It has a nice strategic feel to it, more so than any other WWI strategic level game I've played. The card play gives you a lot of tough decisions to make, since each card can be used in several ways (events, operations, or reinforcements). You never seem to be able to get everything done that needs to be done.

Ed O'Connor

I own and have played **We the People** which deals with the American Revolution. **We the People** is outstanding. I have had great enjoyment playing the game. Although card driven, one still has plenty of room to plan both strategies and tactics. The game is challenging for both sides and has seemed to me to be balanced between experienced players. It has a nice historical feel without constraining the players to the same strategies used in the actual campaigns. Fortunes can turn around quickly, as they did in the real war. I can recall one occasion in which my opponent conceded defeat and I, fool that I was, told him I didn't think his position was hopeless. We played on, and he won! Thus I learned the hard way to never refuse an opponent who offers to surrender.

Lou Jerkich

The AK Crusader tournament is finally over.

And the winner is...

Doug Turnbull with a 3-1 record. Joe Hawkins came in second at 2-2, but only because he defeated Paul Pawlak twice, so Paul Pawlak is third, also at 2-2. Jeff Blachorn came in fourth.

I think the four participants might report on the tourney. How did it go? Did they enjoy it? Does this **Crusader** variant work well?

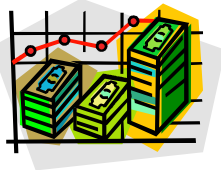
There is a **WAS** tourney going on as far as I know. Not sure how that is working out.

Personally, running a tourney is not a difficult thing to do. The success depends on the game I would say. It has to be a game that people enjoy playing, and there must be enough people who have the game. The short variant does not seem to enjoy that much success. I think my biggest surprise was that a PBEM tourney took just about as long as a PBM tourney to complete.

Congratulations to all four players who completed four games each.

Bob Johnson

Treasury Notes



The Fickle Finger of Fate

Luck plays an important role in almost every wargame ever designed. That is certainly appropriate, as many military successes and disasters were as much a result of the twist of fate as they were the strategy and tactics of the respective commanders, or the skill and courage of the combatants. Sometimes, luck will turn the tide in favor of the unfavored, and the mighty will stumble and snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

How a game models the luck factor is an important design choice. Most games still use the traditional combat results table (CRT), where a force with a certain numerical superiority can expect a certain range of outcomes for any given attack. There are more modern trends away from the use of CRTs, with designers opting instead for a "hit" system of combat, with hits that occur on a certain die roll registering a step loss of sorts. This allows for the possibility of more open-ended results, eliminating the certainty provided by the high-odds columns of some CRTs, and leaving open the possibility of a tiny force prevailing against a much larger one. Sure, it may be 100 to 1 odds against, but once in a great while that miracle will occur.

Let's look at some examples of how different games handle fate. The original AH classics offered a guaranteed "win" by an attacker at 3-1 odds or better. The only thing to be determined at such odds were casualties. Battles at odds of 1-1 or 2-1 were quite possibly catastrophic for both sides, particularly on those fateful rolls of 1 or 6. The key to managing fate in these games was getting the 3-1 as the attacker and preventing the 3-1 as the defender, under the assumption that no sane attacker would risk a lower odds attack when significant forces were involved. Although not particularly historical, these were largely successful games, in that they were reasonably balanced, fluid, and provided opportunities for both sides to win. Because of

the typical number of attacks per turn, luck for both sides would tend to even out over a game. Perhaps the exception to that was the sometimes unfortunate situation in **Afrika Korps**, when the games might boil down to no choice but to risk some sort of 2-1 attack against Tobruk. Succeed and win; lose and die. Dramatic perhaps, but if with good play every game eventually boils down to such an attempt, then it's not much of a strategy game. Might as well roll a die to see who wins at the beginning of the game and skip all the stuff in the middle.

The next generation of games introduced the concept of the step loss, whereby instead of wholesale slaughter, units were slowly degraded in strength over time. Neither **Gua-dalcanal** nor **1914** really survived the test of time, but thanks largely to the efforts of Tom Oleson, **Anzio** is still around and is still being played. In these games, the attacker seeks to wear down the defender before he himself is exhausted, as well as push the enemy back. Most attacks result in a few step losses for both sides per combat, plus maybe a retreat result for one side. One can certainly imagine that in such a system the luck factor is reduced over the AH classics. Maybe. Let's come back to that a bit later.

The early SPI games were largely variations on the above. The CRTs in the **Blue and Grey** and **Napoleon at War** system also had a break-point at 3-1 odds, with minor variations. An attacker retreat was still a 17% possibility at 3-1 in the Napoleonic games, but there was no possibility of any direct elimination of units anywhere from 1-2 through 3-1. The Civil War CRT was a bit bloodier, but still no catastrophic outcomes were possible at 1-1 or 2-1. Later games, many born from the lineage of **Panzergruppe Guderian**, offered step-reductions and retreats again. By and large, the CRTs in these games reduce the possibility of extreme results in the middle odds range, but large swings of fortune are still possible: a 1-1 may be a 50% affair.

Tactical games present challenges of a different sort. Whether it be **Panzerblitz**, **Squad Leader**, or any of a number of descendants of those

games, for the most part results were still determined by odds determination, or in some cases by measuring firepower against the defense of a given hex (see the early SPI game **Soldiers** for one of the first games to use that approach). As a rule, there are three possible results of combat in such games: miss, suppress, or kill.

Finally, there are the naval games. There are some interesting extremes among naval games. At the high end of complexity, games such as **Flattop** and its progeny minimized the luck factor almost to the extreme. Searches were nearly automatic, and hits were mostly dependent only on the amount of firepower delivered, the die producing a very limited range of hits on a target. Then there is **War at Sea** and its companion **Victory in the Pacific**, where the dice roll liberally, and ships sink in a flurry of sixes but are impervious to anything less. Great, dramatic fun!

Managing fate. Winning a wargame is in large part managing fate, or probability. If you can do that successfully, you should win most of your games. By definition, however, you cannot win all of your games all of the time, no matter how good you might be. Sooner or later, the dice will catch up to you, and your brilliant plans will be laid waste by either poor die rolling by you, or brilliant rolling by your opponent. Murphy's law also seems to apply in those games, so that often when you are rolling poorly, your opponent is rolling well.

There are a few ways to manage fate. One way, of course, is to never attack at odds which don't guarantee a win of sorts. Of course, if you do that, you most likely will find your offensives bogged down, or your defenders being able to do nothing but withdraw. Conversely, you might spread out your efforts, making a bunch of low odds attacks each turn, with the expectation that somewhere you have to get lucky. Such an approach will also most likely see your offensives bogging down, because if you rely on Fate to carry the day, most likely she will desert you when you need her most.

Of course, there are times when you should be bold. But, there is often only a small difference between

being bold and being reckless. If there are only a small number of units and attacks per turn, then risking substantial losses in several low odds attacks is probably not a good idea, even if one of those has a potential for a decent payoff. Over a few turns, your army will be exhausted and unable to continue, unless you are absurdly lucky. Most of the time you will lose. This is especially true in the games in the **Blue and Grey** series if you are using the Attack Effectiveness rule, in which attacking units that retreat may not attack again until they recover. If your big 1-2 manages to break the enemy line on the first turn, you may very well win the game. But, most of the time you will lose the game, because you will have the early disadvantage of an army that cannot attack.

Generally speaking, the more combats per turn there are in a game, the less likely it is for luck to play a decisive role in the outcome. If you make 10 attacks per turn, losing one or two of them, while possibly important, probably will not make or break the game. All those dice thrown in **Victory in the Pacific**, for example, tend to even out over 8 turns. Even many of the smaller folio-sized SPI games may see several attacks each turn, and so luck has a good chance of evening out. In contrast, some of you may remember that old freebie game **Strike Force One**. With only 10 units, six Soviet and four Allied, the outcome of the game between competent players was totally based on luck. A few too many Ar's, and the Soviets would lose.

Now let's further examine an old classic just a bit. While of course not anywhere near as luck dependent as **Strike Force One**, the 1974 edition of **Anzio** is a game in which luck may play a greater role than many players might think. The basic game, which is probably the most played version, has relatively few units per side, a step reduction system, and presents the side on the strategic offensive (Allies) with very strong defenders in rugged terrain. Discounting the luck/strategy necessary for the Allies to get ashore and stay ashore (which has been the subject of many articles), during the heart of the game the Allies will frequently be faced

with the task of trying to make progress against an unflankable line of mostly doubled defenders. Because of the lack of units, the Allies may only be able to make one or two attacks along the line per turn, and because of the stacking restrictions those will necessarily be at low odds. Given that a 1-1 in **Anzio** only gives the attacker a 1/6 chance of forcing a retreat, compared to a 3/6 chance of an attacker retreat, Allied progress during midgame is quite luck dependent. The chances of success don't improve much at 2-1, if the Allies can manage such an attack. A few bad turns, and the Allies can do little except look forward to the second invasion, which comes with its own problems.

Recognizing the potential impact that luck can have on this game, means have been devised to try and temper the luck factor. A revised CRT that "softens the edges" has been published. In addition, a multiple die roll system has been used by some players to drive individual die rolls towards the mid-range, i.e. 3 or 4. This does allow both sides to minimize the potential for disaster in step losses. However, it does not alleviate the luck factor significantly for retreats at low odds, and indeed, if the Allies want to try to minimize casualties they must also diminish the chances of forcing the Germans back. The Allies will still face a 50% chance of a retreat in attacking at 1-1. This difficulty, coupled with some other odd quirks of the game as originally published, can render the game an exercise in frustration for the Allied player. To Mr. Oleson's credit, his continued devotion to the game has addressed many of these quirks, such as the end-of-the-earth syndrome in Southern Italy and the ability of extremely weak German units to prohibit Allied beach landings. But, the luck issue remains. There is no doubt that the game is nicely balanced and victory may be close quite often. But, between players of roughly equal skill, the outcome may hinge too much on luck for some players.

How you manage probability is probably a large part of your gaming persona. If you like to gamble, you probably like games that require a bit

more boldness to achieve victory. If you prefer certainty, you probably prefer games in which victory is more dependent on proper management of resources, and getting the right forces to the right place at the right time. No question that luck is involved in that process too, but control over probability is as important to you as control over your units.

Regardless of your preferred style of play, there will often come a time when the logical thing to do is to be illogical and do something desperate. If things look bleak, you can no longer assume that you will have average luck, because if you do, you will have convinced yourself that the game is over. That is guaranteed defeat. Great comebacks can occur, even if good luck is required. It happens in sports, and it happens in wargames. It can happen to you if you don't quit too soon.

Success most often comes with a balanced approach. There are times to gamble, and times to play conservatively. If you do either too often, your opponent will figure that out and use it against you. If you are predictable, you will most certainly lose. *"Fate [was] not a god, but a mysterious, tremendous power, stronger even than the gods. To scorn Fate was to bring Nemesis, the certain consequences of defying Fate."* Edith Hamilton, "Mythology," p.489, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1942.

War at Sea PBEM tournament underway!

Speaking of luck, not to mention lots of die rolling, the first **AHKS War at Sea PBEM** tournament is officially underway. Eight of your hardy colleagues are in the midst of a titanic struggle to control the Atlantic and Mediterranean in WW II, with me overseeing it all. Some initial glitches in getting the tournament launched until December, and with the holidays to slow things down as well, most of the games for the first round have just begun. However, there has been one completed game, with an early concession by the Axis after a severe pounding in the Barents Sea on turn 2.

The tournament will run a total of four rounds of three months each. To avoid what particularly annoys me about a lot of e-mail tournaments,

there are no turn deadlines, and no funky tournament specific rules like bidding for sides, just the regular rules. There are two brackets with four players each, each player to play all others in their bracket. The winner of each bracket is determined by points, three for a win, one for a draw, zero for a loss, with tiebreakers, if needed. The winner of each bracket will face off in the final. The winner will get something, I am sure, but just what I don't yet know. If the tournament runs reasonably smoothly, I hope to offer more in the future. If you would like a copy of the tournament rules for future reference, just send me a note and I'll be happy to e-mail you a copy.

Third Reich battle report

Yes, a new game has been started, but it's still in the early stages, so other than to tantalize you with notice that the Axis opted for a rather unusual opening turn, I'll save the report for next time. As an aside, our non-AHIKS participant did permanently disappear, despite the fact that he was in a superior position in the game. Go figure. Take it as a lesson that when you play outside of AHIKS, you have absolutely no protection against disappearing opponents.

Treasurer's Report

Before going through the new numbers, a reminder that with this issue, if you have not paid your dues they are now overdue. Regular dues are \$10.00 to receive the eK, and \$16.00 if you want the printed version. If you have not paid already but intend to renew, I suggest that you get out your checkbook right now and take care of it. Otherwise, there is a good chance you will forget and not remember until you realize you haven't gotten your K for some months. **PLEASE GET YOUR DUES IN TO ME BEFORE YOU ARE CUT FROM THE ROSTER!!**

Dues overpayment, underpayment policy: Several of you who have sent your renewals in this year have requested multi-year renewals and have paid in a multiple of the years requested. While I can keep track of extra balances paid and apply

those balances to future years, AHIKS does not, strictly speaking, offer multi-year memberships. That is primarily because there is no guarantee that your annual dues will remain the same. They may go up, they may go down. If you have asked for a multi-year membership, what I have done is deduct this years dues from what you paid, and recorded the balance. I will apply any surplus to future years, until it runs out. That means you may come up short at some point in the future. If that happens, I, or your future Treasurer, will let you know.

Similarly, some of you have renewed at the old \$6.00/\$12.00 rate. This rate has not been in effect now since 2005. I have recorded such payments and their shortfall. If you asked for a multi-year membership at the old rate, and the amount paid doesn't fully cover those years, then AHIKS cannot fully honor your request.

Later this year, I will cull through the record and determine who has overpaid and who has underpaid. We will then notify you by postcard or e-mail regarding your over- or underpayment. For those of you with a shortfall, we hope you will make up the difference when you renew in 2008!

Checking Balance (11-30-06):

\$3,939.59

Income:

Dues and contributions \$1,155.00

Expenses:

K Printing \$171.62

Checking Balance (1-31-07):

\$4,922.97

Perpetual Fund Balance: \$ 1,954.99

Contributions transferred from checking: \$ 0.00

Perpetual Fund Balance 1-31-07

\$1,954.99

Total Balance in Perpetual Fund

CD 1-31-07: \$4,930.99

Contributions to the Perpetual Fund since the CD was renewed will be carried over in the checking account until the CD matures again in March, 2007. There have once again been many generous contributions from those of you who have renewed. But, the amount in the Fund is not the same as the amount in the CD at this time; they are really only equivalent

for a brief time each year when the funds are transferred from checking. Although the Fund CD earns interest each month, the interest is reported only at the end of the year. Interest will be posted in the first K after it is available.

Until next time, [Brian Stretcher](#)

(Continued from page 1)

Over on Leetown Rd, Hebert's brigade deploys into line and cautiously picks its way through the woods fronting Oberson's cornfield. McCulloch too is attempting a double-envelopment in an effort to dislodge Greusel's men. But 4 Ark runs into mounted Union cavalry at the base of Round Top and is pinned down while 3 La, appearing suddenly along the Oberson tree line, succeeds only in telegraphing Confederate intentions.

** This should give Greusel ample time to react and escape from the half-sprung rebel trap.*

After a great deal of confusion, a replacement for Gen. Pike finally takes command of the brigade.

Union Turn 11 (2:00 pm)

Curtis Carr's Division withdraws from Ruddick's Field to within a few hundred yards of Curtis' headquarters at Pratt's Store. A section of 6-pounder rifles from Jones' battery however fails to receive orders and remains in position to contest any rebel advance across Ruddick's Field.

Davis' brigade arrives in column at Pratt's Store, bringing 800 infantrymen, a battery of guns, and the vital ammo wagons.

Over by Oberson's cornfield, Greusel's brigade falls back towards Leetown to avoid Hebert's outflanking move. Pattison's 800-man brigade is already moving up in support, backed by a 6-gun battery of artillery.

Losses after Turn 11 (2:00 pm)

Confederates have 1,800 killed or wounded and one lost leader.

Union has 500 killed or wounded with 200 captured. They have lost 4 guns and one leader.

Confederate Turn 12 (2:30 pm)

Van Dorn Price's men secure the southwest tree line along Ruddick's Field by outflanking and overrunning a four-gun section of Jones' battery.

(Continued on page 9)

Upcoming Events

Feb 16-19, Bellevue, WA
CONQUEST NW
evenstar@drizzle.com

Feb 16-19, San Ramon, CA
DUNDRACON 31
andreww@arczip.com

Feb 16-18, Sheboygan, WI
FIRE & ICE
fireandiceconvention.com

Feb 16-19, Los Angeles, CA
ORCCON 2007
ravageist@aol.com

Feb 16-18, Providence, RI
TEMPLECON
ximon@templecon.org

Feb. 21-25, Charlottesville, VA
PREZCON
PrezCon.com

Feb 22-25, Mansfield, MA
TOTAL CONFUSION
steve@totalcon.com

Feb 23-25, Iowa City, IA
GAMICON Pi
jeff@gamicon.org
criticalhitz@yahoo.com

Feb 23-25, Roanoke, VA
SHEVA CON 15
kintail@ntelos.net

March 3-4, Kenosha, WI
MIDWEST OPEN
E-mail: GELP@Core.com

Mar 9-11, San Antonio, TX
CHIMAERA CON
al_kenobi@sbcglobal.net

Mar 23-24, Stamford, CT
CONNCON 2007
jonmac007@trip.net

April 13-15, Hoffman Estates, IL
2007 ASL OPEN
frango1000@sbcglobal.net

Apr 13-15, South Burlington, VT
LORE CON 3
blinovitch@yahoo.com

Apr 13-15, Columbia, SC
ROUND CON 2007
alisha@roundcon.com

Apr 20-22, Troy, MI
PENGUICON 5.0
gaming@penguicon.org

July 31-Aug 5, Lancaster, PA
WORLD BOARDGAMING CHAMPIONSHIPS
Don Greenwood: doncon99@toad.net
or <http://www.boardgamers.org>

A good source for information on all kinds of conventions is the Steve Jackson game site:
<http://sjgames.com/con>

(Continued from page 8)

Meantime Van Dorn has Little's brigade execute a wide right hook that takes it within 125 yds of Curtis' headquarters at Pratt's Store.

Gates' regiment emerges from the woods and surprises White's column of Union infantry and artillery as it marches up Telegraph Rd. But the rebels' aim is off and the Union infantry quickly deploys into line to block this latest threat.

Several hundred yards northeast of this action, Col. Little himself leads 1 Mo in a charge against Vandever's brigade, but the rebels lose 100 men captured and Little too is taken prisoner as 1 Mo stumbles back in retreat.

McCulloch Near Leetown, Hebert brings virtually his entire brigade forward to the edge of Oberson's cornfield, only to have two regiments routed by Union fire.

McIntosh's brigade, now attached to Van Dorn, swarms across Cox's cornfield to support Van Dorn's drive on Curtis' headquarters. McIntosh receives orders from Van Dorn to "...fill the gap between Little and Price," which may have the unintended effect of diverting him away from his stated objective of Pratt's Store.

**McIntosh's brigade is moving forward in a very loose and scattered formation anyway and it will take at least two more turns for him to bring any significant strength to bear on the retreating Federals.*

Union Turn 12 (2:30 pm)

Curtis Successfully withdraws

part of Vandever's brigade and repositions it against Little's men. White's recently-arrived brigade also swings into action against Little, driving Gates' regiment out of the woods near Pratt's Store and routing it away.

Over near Leetown, Pattison's brigade deploys along Oberson's cornfield in support of Greusel's men. With 18 artillery pieces now sited, the Union has created a formidable barrier to Hebert's advancing brigade.

To complicate things even further for the rebels, Provence's limbered artillery is pinned by fire from Greusel's brigade, thus temporarily denying Hebert the only battery he has available to support his attack.

Confederate Turn 13 (3:00 pm)

Van Dorn Price's brigade crosses Ruddick's Field and pushes into the woods northeast of Pratt's Store. Two regiments immediately begin sparring with 400 mounted cavalry troopers of Dodge's brigade. Both sides suffer an equal number of casualties but both stubbornly hold their ground.

Little's brigade shifts back towards Telegraph Road to make way for McIntosh's brigade advancing across Cox's cornfield.

McCulloch Hebert cautiously leads 16 Ark and 14 Ark southward down Leetown Road where they run up against Greusel's and Pattison's men blocking the way. Federal artillery opens fire on the hapless rebels, routing three of Hebert's regiments and one of Pike's back into the woods behind them.

Two regiments from McIntosh's brigade also advance along the east side of Leetown Rd, covering Hebert's left, but they are quickly pinned down by fire from more of Greusel's men and a few mounted troopers of Bussey's brigade.

Hebert's assault is soundly repulsed.

** With McIntosh's brigade already close to being wrecked, McCulloch ought to refrain from further engaging the two regiments he kept with Hebert and Pike. Any further casualties incurred near Leetown will leave the bulk of the brigade almost useless in the fight for Curtis' headquarters at Pratt's Store.*

WE WILL CONTINUE WITH UNION TURN 13.

Open Match Requests from Roger Eastep

In requesting matches, it's helpful if you use the Match Request Form available in each issue of *The Kommandeur* or on the AHIKS website <http://ahiks.com/>. Mail the request to me at the above or at 16456 Tomahawk Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20878, or e-mail the equivalent information (including your e-mail address) to me at: ahiks291@verizon.net. When a match is set up, only one of the players should request ICRKs for all players.

If you plan to change or have changed your address, phone number, or e-mail address, please let Secretary Bill Watkins know as soon as possible to avoid delay in the receipt of your *Kommandeur*, ICRKs, and other valuable AHIKS information.

Please send top portion of completed ICRKs to Match Rating Officer Andy Johnson.

Note: this list is updated periodically between issues of *The Kommandeur* at <http://ahiks.com/>.

1776 (AH)	(1442) Herbst
1904-5 (Avalanche)	(0916) Dandy E
1914 (AH)	(1554) Trosky M
Adv. Squad Leader (AH)	(1382) Massey E
Afrika Korps (AH)	(1427) Walsh M
Agincourt (GDW)	(0200) Bowie M
Anzio (AH)	(1269) Schneider E
Anzio (AH)	(0111) Oleson
Austerlitz (2nd Ed)	(0036) Yarwood
Battle of Bulge '65 (AH)	(1269) Schneider E
Bitter Woods	(0036) Yarwood
Blitzkrieg '75 (AH)	(1269) Schneider E
Blue & Gray II (SPI)	(0036) Yarwood
Breakout Normandy (AH)	(1413) Longest
Breitenfeld (SPI)	(0200) Bowie M
Bull Run (AH)	(1442) Herbst
Caesar's Legions	(1269) Schneider E
Civil War (VG)	(1315) Reid E
Cruiser Warfare (Avalanche)	(0916) Dandy E
Diplomacy (AH)	(1210) Fasio M
Diplomacy (AH)	(1252) Brooker M
Diplomacy (AH)	(1442) Herbst
EastFront (Columbia)	(0044) DeWitt E
Fifth Frontier War (GDW)	(1315) Reid
Flattop (AH)	(1430) Warnick E
Fortress Europa (AH)	(1051) Heiser M
Gettysburg '88 (AH)	(0711) Leonard E
Gettysburg '88 (AH)	(1527) Brooks M
Grant Takes Command (AH)	(1075) Morley E
Great War at Sea (Avalanche)	(0916) Dandy E
Guadalcanal (AH)	(1555) Scott E/M
Guadalcanal (AH)	(1051) Heiser M
Invasion Sicily (GMT)	(0225) Segarra E
Jutland (AH)	(1554) Trosky
Luftwaffe (AH)	(1269) Schneider E
Midway: Turning Point (Aval)	(0036) Yarwood M
Monty's Gamble (MMP)	(1382) Massey E

Musket & Pike (SPI)	(0200) Bowie M
Napoleon at War	(0036) Yarwood M
NATO (VG)	(1315) Reid
On to Richmond (AH)	(1075) Morley E
PanzerBlitz (AH)	(1269) Schneider E
Panzer Leader (AH)	(0711) Leonard E
Panzergruppe Guderian (SPI)	(0275) Scanlon M/E
Pre-Stags (SPI)	(0817) Riley E
Raphia (GDW)	(0200) Bowie M
Richthofen's War (AH)	(1554) Trosky
Road to Gettysburg (AH)	(1075) Morley E
Rocroi (SPI)	(0200) Bowie M
Russian Campaign (L2)	(1566) Leonard E
Russian Campaign (L2)	(1466) Svensson
Russian Campaign (AH or L2)	(1243) O'Connor
Russian Campaign (AH)	(1345) Scarborough M
Russian Campaign (AH)	(1252) Brooker
Russian Front (AH)	(0036) Yarwood M
Stalingrad (AH)	(0011) Betros EM
Stalingrad Pocket II (Gamers)	(1553) Evenson E
Submarine (AH)	(1468) Thomas M
Thirty Years Quad (SPI)	(0044) DeWitt E
Twilight Struggle (GMT)	(1382) Massey Cyberbrd
Vietnam	(1315) Reid E
War and Peace (AH)	(1554) Trosky
War at Sea (AH)	(1382) Massey E
Waterloo (AH)	(1382) Massey E

E (member requests e-mail only) **M** (member requests mail only) **E/M** (either OK)

Members willing to volunteer as GM

Achtung! Spitfire—William Lindow 0988

History of World—Jeff Miller 1303

Napoléon (Columbia)—Omar DeWitt 0044

Red Parachutes, Red Star/White Star—Sid Jolly 0012

Standby opponents for new members only

Ron Brooker	1252	Bull Run
Paul Heiser	1051	Afrika Korps, Gettysburg 88, Waterloo
Robert Johnson	0073	Russian Campaign, Stalingrad, Stalingrad (Holcombe variant), Bulge-65, -81
Rick Roksiewicz	1108	Victory in the Pacific
Thomas Oleson	0111	Anzio

(Anyone who desires to be listed as standby for new members please inform the MC.)

AHIKS MATCH REQUEST FORM

Complete this form (please print clearly) and send to the **AHIKS Match Coordinator via postal mail or e-mail.**

Name: _____ Member # _____ Date _____.

Address: _____.

Phone: _____ E-Mail _____ @ _____.

PLEASE USE **ALL APPLICABLE** CODES FOR EACH GAME LISTED

[AR]	Will play AREA rated match, only	[FA]	Will play FAST opponent, only
[G#]	Will game-master this game with # of players	[M#]	Desire multi-player match with this # of players
[NM]	Will play new member	[NR]	Request non-AHIKS rated match
[VE]	Will play by e-mail only	[VB]	Will play by either e-mail or postal mail
[VP]	Will play by postal mail only	[OT]	Will play opponents outside US/Canada
[IE]	Send my match assignment/ICRK by e-mail	[AD]	Desire e-mail match using ADC2
[CY]	Desire e-mail match using Cyberboard	[YP]	Need preprinted OOB (if available) for postal play
[IC]	Need continuation ICRK for this match number	[I#]	ICRKs needed with this #-sided die rolls (6, 10, 12, or other)
[YE]	Need Excel OOB (if available) for e-mail play or game title		

Game titles (please list in order of preference, **and be sure to include publisher's name and any dates, e.g. Anzio '69 (AH)**)

#1 _____ Codes _____.

#2 _____ Codes _____.

#3 _____ Codes _____.

#4 _____ Codes _____.

Maximum number of these requested matches that you are willing to start at one time _____

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International Wargaming Society

42/1

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USA

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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Brian Stretcher, Treasurer
5282 Deer Path
Milford, OH 45150-9418

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E-mail _____@_____

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