

The Kommandeur



Volume 47 Number 1

A Publication of AHIKS

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From the President Charles Marshall

Happy 2012, AHIKS members! I hope the new year is treating you well and that you've had time for some quality wargaming.

There are some important announcements this issue, and I'd like to start with the situation concerning our online forum. The hosting service for the forum, MessageForums.net, has decided to get out of the forum business. By the time you read this, our existing forum may be down, but we will be working to build our own and host it directly via Bluehost, the server for www.ahiks.com. What does this mean? It means that although our forum will be under construction for a while, we'll end up with an improved product, one that can be more effectively administered, and one that will provide added features. It is unfortunate that MessageForums is doing this with so little advance warning, but we'll use this situation to our advantage. Because of the upcoming discontinuation of service, MessageForums will now allow us to transfer our data from our current forum to a new one. This is something we had been unable to do in the past and was one of the stumbling blocks to moving our forum onto AHIKS' Bluehost server earlier. Once the new forum is built, we will transfer all the data from the old one to the new. We will also have much more control over things like attachment quotas, forum page appearance, and log-on methods.

In the meantime I ask you to bear with us as we move to our own forum. Until February 10, you will still be able to view all posts as a guest (i.e. without logging in). You can still post as well, but you must access your topic via the "Jump to:"

drop-down menu at the bottom of the page. For instance, after logging in, you will see a "discontinuation of service" message. Simply click on your browser's back button. Then click on any link other than "Board Index" (i.e. "Members," FAQ, Search, etc.) and scroll down to the bottom of the page where you'll find the "Jump to:" drop-down menu. From there you can select your topic and post as usual.

I apologize for this unexpected inconvenience, but I believe we'll be much better off once we've weathered the storm!

I'd also like to announce the posting of the Volume 38 back-issues of *The Kommandeur* to our Library. Thanks go to our Editor, Omar DeWitt, for sending me his copies of these issues in order for me to scan them and post them to the Library. Some of them are fairly large in file size, but this is necessary due to the fact that they are scanned images, not simply text files.

I'd also like to thank Paul Heiser and Secretary Bob Best for their contributions to the OOB Library. Paul sent in OOBs for **Gettysburg '88** and **Waterloo** and Bob has submitted an OOB for SPI's **Saipan**, part of the Island War Quad. If any of you have any OOBs you'd like to submit send them to me at wm@ahiks.com and I'll post them.

Finally, it's time to start thinking about AHIKS Officer elections. If you would like to run for an Officer Corps position, now's the time to get involved! Our secretary, Bob Best, has included all the details from the bylaws in his article so look for it on page 8.

That's all for now. Until next time, Happy Wargaming!

From the Editor

Rarely am I surprised at our membership. Yet I have been taken aback since the last issue of *The K*. The last issue contained a questionnaire pertaining to the newsletter. Out of our 300-odd membership, I received three (3) replies (none were from officers). I do thank those three members for taking the time to reply. How to evaluate their replies is another question. One thing from the replies that does remain in my mind is that a gaming newsletter should have reviews of games. If you have opened a newish game recently, send me a brief (or long) impression of the game. You can forget about the survey.

As you all know this issue will be the last one printed professionally. The six members who do not have internet access will be accommodated.

I found Joe Angiolillo's article on **Axis and Allies** quite interesting. The illustrations did not come through well, although each was in the megapixel range. Some words can be read, but mostly you will have to just get a feeling for the illustration.

As Charles has written, election time is coming up and will take place in the December issue. If you are interested in running, let us know.

This paragraph is certainly not intended to dissuade anyone from running for an office. If you are interested, please let us know. I would like to say, however, that the current officers are among the best I've worked with. I have been around for some time and was even President back in the early 70s. *All* of the current officers are doing their jobs very well. Bob Best even reads the bylaws (!) and keeps us legal. Brian Stretcher is always prompt and accurate. Duncan Rice, Dave Bergmann, and Kenneth Oates are well on top of things. Bert Schneider is always active and coming up with valuable ideas. Charles Marshall is essentially responsible for the AHIKS web, which by itself puts us years ahead of where we were when he took office. Mike Kettman, Brian Laskey, and Bill Perry are also doing an excellent job. Whether you appreciate it or not, the AHIKS membership is indeed blessed.

Game News

This is a compilation of information gleaned chiefly from Consimworld (<http://www.consimworld.com>), Web-Grognards (<http://www.grognard.com>) and Boardgamegeek (<http://www.boardgamegeek.com>). Material correct at time of writing: 29 January 2012.

Alan Poulter
grognard@grognard.com

NEWS

Decision Games is launching a third bi-monthly magazine with a game, *Modern War*. To quote their press release:

"*Modern War* will cover military history from the beginning of the Cold War to current events as well as potential conflicts of the future. Each issue will include 3-5 feature articles plus several shorter, more-focused pieces. Some of the regular topics/columns include Weapons of War and Systems of War (where we'll examine a weapon or system in detail or compare items), New Arenas (where we look at Cyber, Space, and Information warfare), and Spotlight On (where we will examine a specific situation or a relevant, but perhaps not obvious, factor in a conflict).

"Readers of *Strategy & Tactics* and *World at War* will feel right at home as the same editorial and layout team is involved. However *Modern War* magazine will be a larger page count (84 pages versus 64 for the other two magazines) and include even more images, maps, and illustrations.

"Of course, we will also provide a game with each issue. Game topics will rotate between Cold War (1948-1989), Modern (1990 to present), and Future, with a Special Edition after every two rounds (i.e. every 7th issue). The issue games for the first eight issues are:

- #1 Red Dragon/Green Crescent (Special Edition)
- #2 Oil War
- #3 Somali Pirates
- #4 Six Day War
- #5 Drive on P'yongyang
- #6 Decision: Iraq
- #7 Vietnam Battles: Snoopy's Nose and Iron Triangle
- #8 Holy Land (Special Edition)

"We'll be setting up topics for all the games shortly, so hold your questions about specific games until we get those topics set up.

"Subscriptions to both the magazine edition and the magazine plus game edition are available at the same rates as *S&T* and *World at War*. There will be discounts for subscribing to multiple titles, and there will be a special bonus for subscribing to *Modern War* Game Edition for two years before the first issue is printed."

For more information see: <http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/searchresults.asp?cat=35>

NEW BOARD WARGAMES

Avalanche Press

New reprints are **Dreadnoughts**, a supplement and scenario book in the **Great War at Sea** series, **Elsenborn Ridge**, a

Bulge game in the **Panzer Grenadier** series, and **Strike South**, on the early Japanese campaigns, in the **Second World War at Sea** series.

New are **Imperial & Royal Navy** and **Spice Islands** in the **Second World War at Sea** series. The former posits the existence of an Austro-Hungarian fleet and requires **Bomb Alley**, **Arctic Convoy**, **Eastern Fleet**, and **Bismarck** to play all its scenarios, while the latter posits the existence of a stronger Dutch Navy and requires **Strike South**, **Midway**, and **Eastern Fleet** to play all of its scenarios.

Hopeless, But Not Serious is a supplement for the **Panzer Grenadier** series on the involvement of the Austrian Army. It requires ownership of **Eastern Front**, **Road to Berlin**, **Battle of the Bulge**, **Elsenborn Ridge**, and **Cassino '44** games and the **Edelweiss** and **Sinister Forces** supplements to play all of the scenarios. <http://www.avalancheppress.com/index.php>

Bellica

Punic Island is the third game in the **Campaign Commander** series and covers the campaign for Sicily and North Africa during the First Punic War. <http://www.bellica3g.com/>

Columbia Games

Shenandoah: Jackson's Valley Campaign is a block game covering the Valley Campaign of May/June 1862. <http://www.columbiagames.com>

Critical Hit

ASL Bulge Pack I is an update of Euro Pak II and covers fighting around St. Vith while **ASL Comp: Darkest December** is a new collection of scenarios featuring the 3rd US Armored Division in the Battle of the Bulge. **ASL Condor Legions** is an update of **Guerra Civil**, the Spanish Civil War module. **ASL Comp: Genesis II** offers scenarios of fighting in Israel in 1948 and **ASL Comp: Chosin Few** covers Korean War scenarios. <http://www.criticalhit.com/>

Dan Verssen Games

Field Commander: Rommel Deluxe is a reprint of this solitaire game on Rommel's campaigns. <http://www.dvg.com>

Decision Games

Patton's First Victory covers the Tunisian campaign in 1943. <http://www.decisiongames.com>

GMT

Combat Commander: Resistance is an expansion for **Combat Commander**, and needs that game to be playable. **Expansion #6: The Spartan Army** is for **Commands & Colors Ancients** and offers over 20 scenarios, from 669 BC to 338 BC. **Expansion #1: The Spanish Army** for **Commands & Colors** features battles from the Peninsular War. **Fast Action Battles: Sicily** covers the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943. <http://www.gmtgames.com>

Grognard Simulations

Death Ride Salerno: 16th Panzer is the latest in the Death Ride series and covers the Allied invasion at Salerno in September 1943. <http://www.grognardsims.com>

Lock 'n Load Publishing

Lock 'n Load: Forgotten Heroes (2nd Edition) covers squad-level combat in Vietnam. www.locknloadgame.com/

Legion Wargames

Tonkin covers the First Indochina War fought between the Viet Minh and France from 1946-1954. **Slouch Hats & Eggshells** covers the 1941 campaign in French-held Syria and Lebanon. **Hell Over Korea** is an expansion module for **B-29 Superfortress** covering missions in the Korean War.
<http://www.legionwargames.com>

MMP

ASL Winter Offensive 2012 Bonus Pack #3 is a three-scenario pack for **Advanced Squad Leader**.
<http://www.multimanpublishing.com>

Nuts Publishing

Phantom Fury is a tactical-level, solitaire game on US forces securing the city of Fallujah in 2004.
<http://www.nutspublishing.com/index.php>

OSG

The Last Success is a quad-game covering the four major battles of 1809, where the French Army encountered a modernized Austrian Army under the capable Archduke Charles.
<http://www.napoleongames.com>

Pratzen Editions

Le Retour de l'Empereur is a quadrigame covering the campaign of Belgium in 1815, using the regimental **Vive l'Empereur** system.
http://www.pratzen.com/index_en.php

Victory Point Games

Malta Besieged: 1940-1942 is a new **States of Siege** solitaire series game covering the pivotal Battle for the Mediterranean. **Paul Koenig's Market Garden: Eindhoven** is the sec-

ond game in the **Market Garden** series, covering the battle for another vital bridge.

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

NEW MAGAZINE WARGAMES

Strategy & Tactics #272 contains **Lepanto**, on the Christian/Ottoman battle, for two or more players.

World at War #22 contains **Minsk '44**, the second game in Joseph Miranda's new **East Front Battles** series, covering the crucial Soviet summer offensive against the Germans' Army Group Center, in June of 1944. <http://www.decisiongames.com>

Against the Odds #34 contains **Right Fierce and Terrible** on the naval battle of Sluys, which opened the Hundred Years War in 1340. <http://www.atomagazine.com/>

Vae Victis #102 contains **Les Marechaux : Portugal 1808 & 1809**, covering battles between Junot and Soult and Wellesley in Portugal. <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>

Alea Magazine #34 contains **Reconquista**, covering four battles. An English edition is available.
http://www.simtacludopress.net/ingles/Alea_magazine_ing.htm

NEW DTP WARGAMES**High Flying Dice Games**

Fox's Gambit: The Gazala Campaign covers Auchinleck's campaign against Rommel. <http://www.hfdgames.com/>

(Continued on page 17)

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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, 2012.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Kommandeur (K) is the official newsletter of AHIKS, an international society of mature adults who play historical simulation games by email and 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. 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.

The VP's Corner by Bert Schneider

“And now for something completely different” Monty Python

I hope most of you had some opportunities to enjoy your hobby over the holidays. I was not so fortunate, as right around the 28th of December both my wife and I came down with some serious upper respiratory and other ailments that lasted for a couple of weeks. I won't go into the gory details, but let's just say I didn't even have the energy to push counters around, nor to click on a virtual counter. Since I didn't have much of a chance to enjoy my hobby over the last month or so (in fact I just got back into my **1776** game with Jeff Miller and **Alexander the Great** with Charles Marshall), I thought I would write a review on an exciting game from Worthington Games called **Boots on the Ground**.

Therefore, the best warfare strategy is to attack the enemy's plans, next is to attack alliances, next is to attack the army, and the worst is to attack a walled city.

Sun Tzu

Sun Tzu lived around 2500 years ago – yet his wisdom still applies to warfare in the times we live (and several of our lawmakers and generals should have listened to him, as we could have avoided a couple of wars). Some game developers focus on a theme, a game mechanic, an era, or even technology. In my opinion, Worthington Games focused on the “feel” of urban warfare when they developed **Boots on the Ground**. I cannot attest to what it must be like to actually fight in combat (let alone urban combat), but I can only image the stress, horror, and challenges of fighting in an environment that goes from complete boredom on one end of the spectrum to an extreme “adrenaline rush” on the other. I can only relate to what soldiers experience from what I have read from sources like *Small Wars Journal* (<http://smallwarsjournal.com/>), talking with warfighters who have recently been in combat, or from watching movies, like “Black Hawk Down.”

Game Summary

Name:	Boots on the Ground
Publisher:	Worthington Games
Designer:	Sean Cooke
Year Published:	2010
Era:	Modern Urban Warfare
Level:	Individual Soldier (Squad Formations)
# Players:	Solitaire up to three players
Mechanism:	Card driven
Complexity:	Low
Price:	\$45.00 (\$31.99 via Amazon.com)

Components

This game is made with quality components—the box, cards, counters, rules, mapsheets, and scenario cards are colorful and easy to follow. The counters are two-sided, and the flip side of most of the insurgents and unknown counters (vehicles, civilians, etc.) are used to determine the nature of “the enemy”—which adds an element of surprise. Some civilians end up being insurgents while others are just plain old civilians.



Figure 1 Section of the game mapsheet

The game board is printed on two folded sheets (each 11” x 22 ½” card stock), for a total gaming area of 22” x 22 ½”. A square grid is laid out on an urban area of what might be found in a Middle East town or city. No specific names are given to keep the game “Country-Agnostic.” While the mapsheet has a flavor of an overhead satellite image rendering, the blurry depiction of the buildings is not very helpful. This feature of the mapsheet can be a distraction, to some people. The counters are colorful and straight forward, and it is easy to discern the various abilities or capabilities of the units.



Figure 2 Front side of enemy and unknown objectives



Figure 3 Front side of alpha squad and bravo squad counters



Figure 4 Front side of vehicle and civilian counters



Figure 5 Back side of vehicle and civilian counters

I did have one major issue with Worthington Games about the quality of their counters. One of the key features of this game is its element of surprise. Not knowing if a vehicle is really booby trapped with an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) or if a civilian is really an insurgent. Worthington's printing contractor did not do a good job of making sure the counters were printed clean. Some of the orange color from the special "marker" counters bled over to some of the vehicle and civilian counters (see Figure 6) but not all, which means players can tell which counters are in fact "bad guys." This is sort of like having marked cards, in a poker game. I contacted Worthington Games about this issue immediately after my game arrived. Worthington Games informed me that I would get a new set of counters after the next printing took place. The new counters never came. So I made my own—by scanning and making the "corrections" on my computer and then printing out the new counters and mounting them on some blank counters I had bought years ago.



Figure 6 Flawed counters with orange "stripe"

The cards included in the game are top notch quality. They give players the feeling they are using Predator Intelligence video feeds, and the cards' instructions are straight forward. The game even includes a nice box to keep the cards organized.

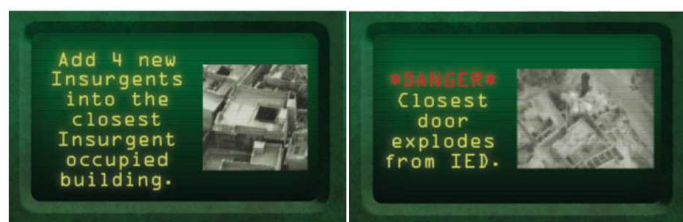


Figure 7 Two examples of 60 Intelligence Cards

The rules are only eight pages long. They are easy to follow, are laid out in an organized manner, and even include the same two pages from a separate double-sided reference card. So the rules are really only six pages in length! The game comes with eleven scenarios. Each scenario gives players the current situation, along with the setup and objectives for a solitaire game, a cooperative engagement (squads work together), and a competitive engagement (squads compete with each other). So in reality you have five different configurations in which to play this game (Solitaire, One or Two players, Cooperative or Competitive). Additional scenarios have been created and either posted on the Worthington Games web site or other gaming web sites.

Game Play

What can I say? This game is fast paced and furious! To give you an idea of how quickly you can pick up the rules of this game and start playing, I took **Boots on the Ground** to the **ConsimWorld Expo 2011** in Tempe, Arizona. I was able to teach several fellow gamers how to play this game in a very short order. Why, I was even able to teach Cory Wells how to play! If I could teach him how to play, anyone can play!

Your soldiers can either operate individually or as a group. The basic military organization is the squad, made up of several soldiers. Two or more soldiers within a squad that act together, form a team. Each soldier has a special ability (Medic, Demolition, Scout, Heavy Weapons, or Sniper). Enemy Insurgents either are prepositioned or pop up (driven by the most recent card drawn or if a civilian is found out to be an Insurgent by moving next to a civilian counter). The only thing an Insurgent counter can do is shoot you. Movement on the mapsheet as well as line of sight determination is similar to the game **Cowboys**. The mapsheet includes colored overlays to indicate doors, windows, and walls.

The sequence of play is very similar if you are playing solitaire, two players, or three players. One player "activates" a team or individual soldier. "Activate" in this case means to either move, fire, or use a special ability. After completing the activity of the activated units, an Intelligence Card is drawn for Insurgent activation, and those actions are completed. The only difference between solitaire, two-player, or three-player games is who draws the Intelligence Cards. For a three-player game, one player controls the Insurgents. Combat results are determined using the differential between the firing unit and the defending unit and rolling dice. Insurgents cannot be wounded, they either survive or are killed (binary result). Counters are double sided, which are used to reduce their effectiveness (units that are "wounded" flip their counter to their wounded side). If your squad member gets additional hits, a Critical Hit marker is added to your soldier to indicate more wounds. Medics or special Health Kits can "heal" your soldier, but conducting this activity means you cannot move or fire, that turn. In addition to soldiers, civilians, and vehicles the game also comes with Grenades, Booby Traps, Bomb Disposal Kits, and even a counter for WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction). The game moves fast and a scenario can be completed in 30 minutes to less than an hour.

Conclusion

If you are looking for something completely different in the gaming market and are not afraid to try something new, then I would strongly suggest getting a copy of **Boots on the Ground**. You will find this game refreshing. While some hardcore wargamers might scoff at the idea of playing such a simple, tactical-level engagement which is very light on rules, most will find this game interesting. It has action, tactics, and does require some strategy to complete. But watch out, as Sun Tzu knew, once you go into a walled city you may never get out alive.

★★

AHIKS Experts Fraternity

Dave Bergmann, Judge

I currently hold the position of AHIKS Judge. Although I have been gaming since 1969, at times it has been a bit difficult dealing with the many game titles out there and the comparatively limited number I have experience with. Recently, two players involved in a PBEM **VITP** game contacted me about a rules disagreement that had arisen. Having no experience with the game I attempted to analyze the rules to make a decision. This is not a quick process, and it must be frustrating to some players that want to move ahead with the game in which they are involved. Especially these, and most other players are more than patient, for which I am grateful. In spite of this I do feel the pressure to expeditiously make a decision. But then the decision must be right. Hence more pressure. I made the finding in this case after much study. The player that the finding did not support then contacted me with additional questions. I put a stay on my decision and began a search on the Internet for experts in the game. I made contact with Glenn Petroski, and he was very helpful but deferred a final decision to John Pack because the game was not FTF. I did not hear back from John (I did a couple of weeks later as my email was overlooked in the numerous emails he receives regarding **VITP**). In the meantime our top dog Charles Marshall wrote in his *K* article that I was in need of some assistance with a rules question in **VITP**. Immediately, Kenneth Nied contacted me with his “credentials,” and I brought him up to date with the question. He very quickly evaluated the issue, which helped me with the review of my previous decision. Fortunately my decision was confirmed. Had I known of Kenneth, the decision-making would have gone much more smoothly and quickly. By the way, many thanks to Kenneth for his help; it was greatly appreciated.

To bring this to a conclusion, I would like to build an AHIKS Experts Fraternity (AEF). All members that consider themselves well experienced and knowledgeable in any particular game are encouraged to contact me with their “game resume” for each game. I could therefore call on them for assistance in future rules issues. The title expert might cause some members to shy away, feeling that they are not “experts.” I am looking for experienced players, which in my mind I would define as players that have a lengthy history with a game and are well versed in its mechanics. The benefit of an AEF would be long lasting as members would remain on the list indefinitely (as they wish) and could possibly add to their list of games as they gained experience and expertise in additional games. Future judges would immediately have this great resource to access. I feel the membership deserve this Society “amenity” so that they are not unnecessarily delayed while involved in a game. So please step up and contact me via email (opusone1945@sonic.net) with the title of your game and your experience level. I would very much appreciate your assistance, as would all members of AHIKS.

All members are encouraged to send copies of rulebooks to me of games so that they may be included in the library that AHIKS maintains of rule evaluations and decisions of players rules disagreements.

★★

From the Match Coordinator

Duncan Rice

New business models have created a wonderful re-birth of the wargaming hobby in the last few years, and there are a lot of ways to play now. Computer interfaces such as VASSAL allow people to play by email easily, and the internet is connecting people through websites like Boardgame Geek and Consim World. Many people have even forsaken board wargames for computer games such as **TOAWIII** and **Panzer Corps**. Some folks might wonder if AHIKS is still relevant, given all the goodness that’s going on in the hobby.

The match coordinator’s office has made over 80 matches from April to December 2011, after I became match coordinator. The number isn’t absolute. Players cancel games when life intervenes. Members set up a large number of matches privately. They sometimes report their conclusion for rating or might not report them at all. I know these exist because players have been contacting me and telling me it’s going on. I also receive requests for ICRK sheets and for postal games. I’m surprised. But, if ICRK and postal service is needed, then I am happy to provide it, and I count that as another positive sign.

Another sign that AHIKS is alive and well is the beginning of our **PanzerBlitz** tournament. I actually had to turn two people away to keep the tournament to a manageable eight participants. My apologies to those two gents. We’ll parachute you in if anyone drops out.

It’s a great time to be wargaming. There are a huge number of games available. The subjects are broad. And the game styles vary widely. There are more ways than ever to find opponents. And, yes, looking at the amount of work in the MC office and the responses to our **PanzerBlitz** tournament, AHIKS is participating and still relevant.

★★



AHIKS Meet-the-Member Raffle

Hurry! Last chance to be a winner! AHIKS will be conducting the Meet-the-Member drawing for a new, shrink-wrapped copy of the **Bitter Woods** game donated by Randy Heller. The drawing will be held prior to the publication of issue 47x2 of *The K*. Everyone who sends in a Meet-the-Member profile for publication in *The K* that is received by me by March 25, 2012, will have their name entered into the drawing. If you want to be entered in the drawing for **Bitter Woods** send in your profile to the Secretary either by email or snail mail at the address on page 3 in *The K*. All entries must be received by March 25 to be entered in the drawing!

Open Match Requests from Duncan Rice

1776 AH	Dave Wallace (1643) EL	Russian Campaign AH	Greg Dilbeck (1363) P
1914 AH	Mike Kettman (1067)	Russian Campaign AH	Paul Heiser (1051) P
Adv. Squad Leader MMP	Dennis Sheppard (804) E	Russian Front AH	Melvin Yarwood (36) P
Afrika Korps AH	Brian Britton (1603) Z	Russian Front AH	Michael Mitchell (1086) ETV
Afrika Korps AH	Sid Driver (1567) AV	SPQR GMT	Justo Perez (1656) V
Afrika Korps AH	Paul Heiser (1051) P	Squad Leader AH	Julie Buse (1665) VE
Afrika Korps AH	Omar DeWitt (44) V	Squad Leader AH	Chris Kenney (1667) FVEG
American Civil War VG	Shannon McNamara (1639)	Squad Leader AH	Melvin Yarwood (36) P
Anzio (6th ed, revised map)	AH Tom Oleson (111)	Stalingrad AH	Brian Britton (1603) Z
Anzio AH	Melvin Yarwood (36) P	Stalingrad AH	Joseph Angiolillo (412)
Anzio AH	Greg Dilbeck (1363) P	Stalingrad AH	Omar DeWitt (44)
Arnhem SPI	Thomas Ten Eyck (826) EP	Stalingrad AH	Sid Driver (1567) AV
Arab Israeli Wars AH	Dennis Sheppard (804) E	Stones River Decision Games	Mel Yarwood (36) P
Battles for Ardennes SPI	Thomas Ten Eyck (0826) EP	Stonewall's Last Battle AH	Paul Warnick (1430) VE
Bismark '79 AH	Chris Kenney (1667) FVEG	Tactics II AH	Julie Buse (1665) VGEP
Bitter Woods AH	Greg Dilbeck (1363) P	Twilight Struggle GMT	Ron Gregory (1366) E
Bitter Woods AH	Ron Gregory (1366) EFLV	Victory in the Pacific AH	Chris Kenney (1667) FVEG
Bitter Woods AH	Melvin Yarwood (36) P	A Victory Lost MMP	Ed O'Connor (1243) V
Blue and Grey I, II	Melvin Yarwood (36) P	Wacht Am Rhein SPI	Daniel Davis (1635) CAS
Borodino SPI	Melvin Yarwood (36) P	War and Peace AH	Stewart Nairn (1618) ESV
Bull Run AH	Paul Heiser (1051) P	Warriors of God MMP	Chris Hancock (565) CV
Caucasus GMT	Chris Hancock (565) V	Washington's War GMT	Chris Hancock (565) CV
Chickamauga WEG	Joseph Angiolillo (412) E	Waterloo AH	Joe Angiolillo (412)
D Day 61, 65, or 77 AH	Brian Britton (1603) ZL	Waterloo AH	Paul Heiser (1051) P
D Day 77 AH	Sid Driver (1567) AV	Waterloo AH	James Antalek (1098) P
Drive on Paris Gamers	Bill Scanlan (275) E	Waterloo AH	Brian Britton (1603) Z
Eurofront 2 Columbia	Pete Menconi (146) V	We The People AH	Clyde Longest (1413)
Fire in the East/ Scorched Earth GDW	Daniel Davis (1635) CAS		
Flight Leader AH	Julie Buse (1665) VE		
Flight Leader '86 AH	Paul Pearson (1638) EPV		
Flight Leader AH	Pat Williams (1669) EV		
Fortress Stalingrad S&T	Chris Harding (1591) E		
Frayser's Farm Decision Games	Mel Yarwood (36) P		
GCACW AH	Clyde Longest (1413)		
Gettysburg 77 AH	Jeff Miller (1303) V		
Gettysburg 64, 77, 88 AH	Paul Heiser (1051) P		
Grand Fleet L2	Daniel Davis (1635) CAS		
Golden Horde: Kulikovo ATO	Albert Bowie (299) E		
Leipzig Decision Games	Mel Yarwood (36) P		
Ici c'est la France Legion Wargames	Martin Svensson (1466) Z		
Kriegspiel AH	Dave Wallace (1643) EL		
Midway GDW	Bill Scanlan (275) E		
Midway GDW	Melvin Yarwood (36) P		
Napoleon at War SPI	Melvin Yarwood (36) P		
Napoleon's Last Battles SPI	Melvin Yarwood (36) P		
Napoleon's Last Battles SPI	Bill King (1626)		
Panzer Blitz AH	Dennis Sheppard (804) E		
Panzer Leader AH	Dennis Sheppard (804) E		
Pacific War AH	Chris Kenney (1667) FVEG		
Ran GMT	Justo Perez (1656) V		
Richtofen's War '72 AH	Scott Saunders (1664) EF		
Russia Besieged L2	Michael Paul (1578) P		

Match Codes

A: ADC2	P: Postal Mail
C: Cyberboard	S: Slow Play
E: Email	T: A.C.T.S..
F: Fast Play	V: V.A.S.S.A.L.
G: Will Gamemaster	X: Non-rated Game
L: Learning Game	Z: Zuntzu

Match Coordinator

To accept one of the listed matches or have a new match listed, email to: MC@AHIKS.COM

12.4 REINFORCEMENTS

Reinforcements may enter at any friendly North, South, East, or West mapboard edge. New units may arrive by ground, rail, sealift, or airlift and count against stacking limits. Reinforcements are fully combat-capable on Turn of entrance.

1669	Patrick Williams	New Castle, DE
1670	Ralph A. Ferrari	Canonsburg, PA
1671	Ralph W. MacInnis	Bedminster, NJ
1672	Scott E. Goehring	Albuquerque, NM
1673	Gianpietro Ferro	Pedavena, Italy
1674	Michael P. Torrance	Pikeville, TN
1675	Michael D. Uhrich	Lebanon, PA
1676	Todd Fowler	Westerville, OH

Secretary's Notes Bob Best

Today is January 28, 2012. We are into a stormy period here in California, as we should expect with it being winter. We have been lucky so far (or unlucky depending upon your point of view) as this is the first storm to reach the San Francisco Bay Area since late fall 2011. We have gotten about ½ inch of rain so far, and the weather is a chilly 50 degrees—cold for California! ☺ The bad part is we only have 16% of the normal rainfall, and, if it continues, it will make for a summer of drought and high fire danger. But the rain and cold are here now and it is keeping me inside making game moves on seven games I have running currently. Two of those games you can visit and view for yourself on the AHIKS forum.

Richthofen's War is still being played out on the forum. For those of you who have not visited the game yet, **RW** is being run as a quasi-roleplaying game. The scenario for the game is set in June of 1916 just a few days before the Battle of the Somme. The fighters of No. 24 Squadron and JASTA 2 are meeting over the trenches in the area near Albert, France. The game is trying to present a real life pilot's eye view of what might be happening if you were flying a real life combat mission. Come by and visit.

Brian Stretcher's **Wooden Ships & Iron Men—"El Diablo Rojo"** is also running on the forum. It is set in March 1808 off the coast of Spain and features the French and Spanish pitted against the British with some pirate action thrown in for good measure. This is also a quasi-roleplaying game, and there is a bit of hesitation from the "fog-of-war" as ship captains are trying to determine the exact situation. Combat appears imminent though, so stop by and check out the action and post some comments if you like. ☺

This is the first issue for 2012 so I would like to take a moment and report on the "State of AHIKS" from the Secretary's position. A quick check of the AHIKS master roster shows we had 58 new and former members join AHIKS between 1/25/2011 and today. We had 46 new members over the same period a year ago. That is about a 24% increase over the same period in 2010. So, it appears that AHIKS' membership rate is on the upswing and people are finding AHIKS to be a good place to come to game and enjoy camaraderie with their fellow gamers! AHIKS has 300 registered members as of today.

The Executive Committee continues to work to upgrade the forum and our "Members Only" section of the AHIKS website. For 2011 the Exec Committee is looking into upgrades for the Dice Roller that will include the ability for players to remove dice roll game files that are no longer being used from the dice roller. We are also investigating if we can consolidate some passwords to cut down on the number of times a member must enter his password when he moves from one location to another within the website.

This will be an election year for AHIKS. All of the officer positions will be up for election in December. Each volunteer officer position serves a 4-year term. I have included the section of our bylaws covering the election process. If you are interested in running for one of the officer positions, please review the requirements and follow the steps outlined below to submit your notice of candidacy.

IX. ELECTIONS:

A. Elections for all elected officer positions are held in every calendar year during which a U.S. presidential election is held

(every 4 years on the even year). All members in good standing are eligible to run for office and/or cast a vote in the election of officers.

(Exceptions: a member may not run for Treasurer unless he has been a member for five (5) or more consecutive uninterrupted years. Members running for any other office of the exec must have been a member for two (2) or more consecutive uninterrupted years.

1. During the first quarter of the calendar year of the election, the President shall issue a call for elections and an invitation of candidates to run for office through publication in the Society newsletter.

2. Candidates for election shall indicate a desire to run for office by forwarding a notice of their candidacy to the President and to the Editor for publication in *The K*. The President shall promptly report such notification to the Officer Corps.

3. Candidates are encouraged to submit a formal statement of their candidacy to the Editor for publication in a pre-election issue of *The K*. Follow-up statements are permitted, space and time allowing, prior to the vote.

4. In the second half of the calendar year of the election, the Editor shall prepare and distribute an election ballot to all members in good standing, to be published in *The Kommandeur*, and to be mailed to the secretary. Those members receiving the *e-K* must print out and mail a physical ballot to the secretary.

a. The ballot shall list the names of all candidates for office. Exception: a position for which there is only one candidate may be left off the ballot unless the Executive Committee directs otherwise.

b. The ballot shall list a deadline for receipt of ballots by the Secretary. The deadline must be a minimum of thirty days after posting of ballots.

c. Proper control procedures shall be implemented to insure that no member will cast more than one ballot.

d. The ballot shall instruct members to return their ballots to the Secretary for counting.

B. If no member challenges an incumbent by the deadline for receipt of candidate's announcements, the incumbent office holder shall remain in office by default until the next scheduled election.

C. In the event of a tie vote for an elected officer position, a majority vote of the Exec shall break the tie. Any member of the Exec Committee who is involved in such a tie may not cast a ballot in the tie breaking vote.

If you wish to run for an officer's position, now is the time for you to begin preparing your notice of candidacy.

The Meet the Member program continues to show promise, as I am receiving more member profiles for publication. The drawing for a new shrink-wrapped copy of Randy Heller's **Bitter Woods** game will be held just before the April issue of *The K* is published. If you wish to be entered into the drawing for the game, all you have to do is send me a member profile to be published here in *The K*, and I will include your name in the drawing. The deadline will be March 25, 2012.

We have three "Meet the Member" articles for this issue.

Name: Eric Seadale AHIKS #1436

Age: 49

Address: 95 Fairway Drive, Meriden, CT 06450

Background: Work for the Municipal Water Department for the last 24 years in the engineering section. I have been interested in military history for as long as I can remember. I am an avid reader of WW II (mostly) history.

Year Started Gaming: Approx. 1974

Favorite Game and Reason: **Bitter Woods** for its blending in just the right proportions of complexity, graphic presentation, chrome, historicity, and re-playability.

Least Favorite Game and Reason: Can't think of one, but generally I don't like monster games or overly complex games.

Pet Peeve: Strength chits.

Hobbies: Wargaming, reading, shooting, "militaria" collecting, films of the 30s, 40s, & 50s.

Most Memorable Gaming Experience: Watching a friend soak his copy of **Russian Campaign** in gasoline then set it on fire after losing a particularly bad series of combats.

General Comments: I love wargaming because it brings history to life like nothing else can.

Thank you Eric for sharing your profile with us! ☺

Name: Paul Koenig AHIKS #1577

Age: 44

Address: 8400 Edinger Ave, Apt T-103, Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Background: BA History, CA teaching credential, 10+ years retail management, freelance game designer/developer.

Year Started Gaming: 1977 (first game AH's **D-Day '77**)

Favorite Game and Reason: **Fortress Europa**, it covers my favorite WWII campaign, Normandy.

Least Favorite Game and Reason: I can't say that I have a least favorite game. However, I am not generally a fan of games that offer a choice between "move-fight" or "fight-move." This system is often found in Ty Bomba's designs, such as **Land Without End**. I prefer the more traditional IGo-UGo.

Pet Peeve: The current trend to increase both the size of map hexes and the counters. It does no good to increase from 16mm hexes if counters also jump to 5/8". The counters should fit inside the hexes rather than overlapping the adjacent hexes.

Hobbies: Game designing and baseball.

Most Memorable Gaming Experience: Winning the 1998 **Fortress Europa** tournament at Avaloncon vs. John Grant.

General Comments: Personally, I think the necessity of AHIKS has long passed. With the advent of social media, finding opponents has never been easier. And with the advent of PBEM systems like Vassal, playing the games "by mail" has never been easier. AHIKS, in my opinion, is no longer relevant.

I'm not sure I share your sentiments about the relevancy of AHIKS, but everyone is entitled to their opinion. Thank you, Paul, for sharing your profile with us.

Our third Meet the Member profile is from Ron Booker.

Name: Ron Booker

AHIKS ID#: 1252

Born: 1953

Address: 25 Oakdale Circle, Wallingford, CT 06492

Year Started Gaming: 1981

Games Owned: 25-30.

I have four copies of **Bull Run**, 3 copies of **The Russian Campaign**, 2 copies each of **Panzer Blitz, 1776**, and Victory Games' **Civil War**, along with a number of other titles mainly by Avalon Hill.

I started gaming in my early teens playing Strat-O-Matic Baseball and Football. My first teams were the 1965 Chicago Cubs and 1967 Washington Redskins. To this day I am a big fan of both teams. It was because of Strat-O-Matic that I found wargames. Reading an article that compared playing Strat-O-Matic and wargames got me interested in wargaming. The article mentioned a game called **Bull Run**. I purchased it, and I began a twenty plus game run with my brother-in-law. I found AHIKS in 1981 and became a member. I have been enjoying great gaming and meeting fellow members through the mail ever since.

Favorite Games: **Bull Run** and **The Russian Campaign**.

Most Memorable Gaming Experience: Finding out I was playing a game with Cory Wells.

I have met some great people in AHIKS including Paul Heiser, who has created a nice spin on our **Bull Run** games, Sam Thornton, playing **TRC**, and Jay Unnerstall playing **Afrika Korps**. I want to thank them all for continuing to play by postal mail with me. I am one of the six who does not have a computer. Let's keep our Postmen working! ☺

One question: is that you Mark Bayliss AHIKS #1666? We played **Bull Run** 15 or 20 years ago? If so, drop me a line at the address above.

I still play Strat-O-Matic although not FTF or PBM anymore (damn computers). I do season replays. I've done 3 so far and I will complete my fourth soon. The replays include 1934NL, 1966NL, 1964AL, and 1964NL. Next up is either 1924 or 1948, I'm not sure yet. It takes about 2 years to complete a season. I'm always looking for another game of **Bull Run**.

Thank you Ron for sharing your profile with us.

Now let us introduce and welcome a number of new and a returning former member that have joined AHIKS since the last issue of *The K*.

Patrick Williams	# 1669	New Castle, DE
Ralph A. Ferrari	# 1670	Canonsburg, PA
Ralph W. MacInnis	# 1671	Bedminster, NJ
Scott E. Goehring	# 1672	Albuquerque, NM
Gianpietro Ferro	# 1673	Pedavena, Italy
Michael P. Torrance	# 1674	Pikeville, TN
Michael D. Uhrich	# 1675	Lebanon, PA
Todd Fowler	# 1676	Westerville, OH

And returning member:

Roger D. Pittiglio # 0557 Columbia, MD

Gentlemen, *welcome* to AHIKS!

And now my bi-monthly reminder. If you have a change of address or get a new email address please contact me at the address listed on page 3 of *The K* so that we can update the membership roster. As the Secretary, I will update the roster and forward your new information to the Editor and the Match Coordinator to make sure your subscription to AHIKS is uninterrupted.

Until next time, Happy Gaming to you all ☺

Treasury Notes

Brian Stretcher



Error...? ERROR...? Faulty! Faaaaauulllllty!

When the damaged 20th-Century deep space probe NOMAD was repaired by sentient machines, it became sentient itself and believed itself perfect and infallible. That is, until Captain James Kirk pointed out that it both mistook him for its “creator,” and then failed to recognize its error. Two mistakes were too much for NOMAD to accept, and it had to be beamed off the *Enterprise* before it blew itself up, taking *Enterprise* with it. We can apply this analogy to the play of our games. Like NOMAD, people generally don’t like to admit they make mistakes. But since we are not infallible, mistakes are inevitable, especially when play involves typing moves into a computer of some sort. Although technology has generally increased the speed of our play, and game-assistance programs might reduce the possibility of error, some still inevitably creep in. When they do, sometimes they can lead to misunderstandings and arguments that ruin the game. There is no need, however, to blow up and take the game with you.

Your AHIKS Gamer’s Guide, dated though it may be, has a list of correction procedures that players can opt to use before play in order to make resolution easier, or at least less likely to argue over. Problem is that these procedures are rather strict. For example, if unit A is ordered to move to hex B, but can’t reach hex B, then it doesn’t move at all. Miscalculate attack odds? Too bad, the attack goes in at reduced odds. Such procedures used to be referred to as the “hardcore” option, since error resolution was strict and could determine the victor. One has to be a hardcore player to be willing to play under all those provisions, although some of them are useful, like the default ICRK pick (first unused) when the selected ICRK cannot otherwise be used.

Of course, these methods were designed when everyone played by postal mail. It certainly sped up play, and encouraged players to check and re-check their moves. But even when snailmail was the only way to play, I never played a game hardcore, preferring instead to employ a hybrid of the AHIKS resolution procedures and discussion, returning moves for a redo if necessary. It is really easy when you use email or other means of near-instant communication. So, here are some tips for resolving certain types of errors during play, in hopes of keeping things moving along smoothly without hard feelings.

1. Movement recording errors. Everyone makes these sorts of mistakes, such as writing down hex AA10 instead of AA11 for a unit location. If your opponent orders a unit to a location it cannot reach, let him know, and ask where he wants it. If it is ordered to participate in an attack, it may be obvious where it is supposed to go, and so it may not be necessary to return the move or even ask for a correction. Merely note that the location was written incorrectly but obvious nonetheless. Double-check your unit locations before asking about such an error, however, as it might be your units that are out of place, not your opponent’s. That’s because recording errors that are legal are more difficult to recognize, and while you might have intended to send that infantry into the town, your opponent

might not recognize placement in the adjacent woods as an error. Instead, he may see it as a tactical choice made by you (maybe you wanted him to attack there instead of elsewhere). Legal recording errors can prove fatal, because they may not be caught by anyone right away, and the game may move on to a point where correction is impossible. Once the dice start to fall, it is generally too late to fix things, so I advise checking your opponent’s movement, or allowing your opponent to check your move, before you consult the almighty dice gods, be they ICRKS or a die server. I suggest a standing agreement that NO dice are good until the move is good. It remains very worthwhile to check both your raw unit listings and the typed listings if you keep both. A typo can cause just as much consternation as can misreading a hex number.

In the face of a serious recording error, the situation must determine whether to allow your opponent to redo the whole move or just part of the move. I favor allowing my opponents to fix whatever they wish, so long as it does not undo something that was already done, like a resolved combat. Usually there is a quick and easy solution, and your opponent should be gracious in accepting the opportunity to fix things, and do so with a minimum shifting of units. Be gracious yourself, as there will come a time when you make a similar mistake yourself.

2. Combat errors. Typically, this would involve the miscalculation of attack odds, a missed modifier, or something similar. I generally consider it unfair to hold an opponent to, say, a 2-1 in a game like **Afrika Korps** when my opponent thought it was a 4-1. So, these sorts of errors will generally require an inquiry, although there are some exceptions. For one, if there is only a slight odds shift, and the result of the combat is the same at either odds, then there is little point in correcting the error. For example, in a game of **Blue and Grey**, a roll of 2 at either 1-1 or 2-1 odds is going to be the same **Dr** result, so there is little reason to require a correction. Similarly, if your opponent thinks the odds are 5-1 and it’s really 6-1, why bother to ask for a fix? No reason to let him take advantage of such an error and commit the extra forces elsewhere. Now, there might be an occasion where you want to talk your opponent out of making what is now a 1-1 when he thought it was a 2-1, just as you would if he made the error in a FTF game. No reason you can’t employ a little psychology and talk your opponent out of something you would rather he not do (are you sure you want to make that 1-1? Might come up an AE...). And just like moves, you probably should check all of the combats and calculations before you start resolving them, so that neither of you gain any advantage from a knowledge of the potential result prior to a correction.

3. Rules errors. It is a player’s responsibility to know the rules of the game he is playing. Unless you are the forgiving type, or playing a teaching game, then moves that involve a rules error have to be redone, unless they are very minor. We all forget rules, however, or confuse them with another game, and even learn something new from new situations each time we play. That’s all fine, as long as you are willing to accept the occasional need for a fix. Repeating the same rules mistake, however, is close to unforgivable. If you’ve already gone over it once or twice, then you have earned the right to grumble a bit, or even hold an opponent to a bad move.

Note the difference here between a rules error and a difference in rule interpretation. There are some games where it is possible to interpret the same rule in more than one way. Fourth Edition **Third Reich** is a classic example. Despite all the Q&A from TAHGC, the *Gamer’s Guide*, and a lot of internet chatter,

there are still rules that can legitimately be interpreted differently by different players (especially where the "errata" raises more questions than it answers). For those sorts of games, it is important to have the discussion about known vague rules before the game, if at all possible, because those differences can lead to some heated discussions if not addressed prior to play. But, if you simply cannot agree, that's why we have a Judge!

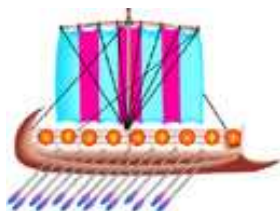
Summary: Most of us in AHIKS are fairly casual players, and so will have little problem addressing the little or even big errors that come up during a game. The important thing to do is to communicate with your opponents; let them know your feelings about errors and how you like to resolve them before you actually start your first match with a new opponent. Take the little bit of additional time and check your move before mailing it out or clicking "send." Then things should go fairly smoothly. If not, AHIKS is here to help!

Treasurer's Report

Starting Checking Balance 12-1-11:	\$ 913.48
Income:	
Dues:	\$ 0.00
Expenses:	
K Nov/Dec Printing	\$ 65.99
Bank Paper Statement Fee (Nov and Dec)	\$ 4.00
Match Coordinator Expenses 2011	\$ 17.22
Checking Balance as of 2-1-12:	\$ 826.27
Perpetual Fund Balance, 12-1-11:	\$ 3,316.61
Interest Income through 12-31-11:	\$ 0.76
Contributions:	\$ 0.00
Perpetual Fund Balance 2-1-12:	\$ 3,317.37
Operating funds in Savings, 12-1-11:	\$ 5,676.41
Interest Income through 12-31-11:	\$ 1.31
Operating funds in Savings, 2-1-12:	\$ 5,677.72
Total balance in Savings, 2-1-12:	\$ 8,995.09
Total Treasury, 2-1-12:	\$ 9,821.36

The issue with the paper statement fee remains, although I am working on it. I was told that I could not make this account accessible online, but that it would have to be closed and reopened as a different type of account, with new checks. This is not satisfactory, and I am exploring alternative solutions. I am not going to trade the paper statement fee for the purchase of new checks. I'll close the account and move the funds elsewhere before that happens.

Until next time!



Upcoming Events

Feb. 10-12, Iowa City, IA

GAMICON

<http://www.gamicon.org/>

Feb. 11-12, Fredericton, NB

COMUNICON

<http://wallscrawls.com/comunicon/>

Feb. 17-20, Los Angeles, CA

STRATEGICON: ORCCON

<http://www.strategicon.net>

Feb. 17-19, Saint Paul, MN

CON OF THE NORTH

<http://www.conofthenorth.org/>

Feb. 18-20, Ottawa, Ontario

GAME SUMMIT 2012

<http://www.gamesummit.ca/>

Feb. 18, Valparaiso, IN

ARCTICON

<http://www.arcticon.webs.com/>

Feb. 22-26, Charlottesville, VA

PREZCON

www.prezcon.com

Feb. 23-26, Mansfield, MA

TOTAL CONFUSION

<http://totalcon.com/>

Feb. 23-26, Morristown, NJ

DREAMATION 2012

<http://www.dexposure.com/d2012.html>

Feb. 24-26, Toronto, Ontario

SPELLSTORM

<http://www.warhorn.net/spellstorm-2012/>

Feb. 25-26, Phoenix, AZ

PHOENIX VUL-CON

<http://www.advancedgrafixonline.com/vulconsite/index.html>

March 3-4, Kenosha, WI

MIDWEST OPEN

AREA1@ATT.net Glenn Petroski

March 2-4, Indianapolis, IN

WHO'S YER CON

<http://www.whosyergamers.org/wygms/>

March 8-11, Lancaster, PA

COLD WARS

<http://www.coldwars.org>

March 9-11, New Albany, IN (near Louisville, KY)

NATIONAL BLOCK PARTY

<http://www.ohiovalleygamers.org/nationalblockparty.html>

(Continued on page 18)

Developing Axis and Allies

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Development of **Axis and Allies** can be linked to one person, and that is not me, the Developer. It is Al Leonardi, creator of **Ace of Aces**. Ironically, he did not suggest any rules to develop Axis and Allies. He just suggested what needed to be changed, then turned the project over to me.

When I started Nova Game Designs out of my house, I got suggestions from two sources. A gamer who graduated from my alma mater, Trinity College, phoned me and asked to form a company to design, develop, produce, and sell war games. He said his friend had produced a war game already. The same day, while playing our weekly adult **D & D** game at State of Connecticut Insurance Commissioner Joseph Mike's house, Joe Mike said he was in the Reserves with a friend who designed a unique war game. That designer was Al Leonardi and Al designed **Ace of Aces**. Joe Mike arranged for a phone call so Al and I could talk about forming a war game company.

This is how Gameshop and then Nova were formed in my house at 46 Dougherty Street in Manchester, Connecticut.

Al knew Pat Flory, owner of the Citadel game store in Groton, Connecticut. Once **Ace of Aces** sold 80,000 copies in the first year, Pat contacted Al and told Al about a game designer who had a unique game that used an area movement system; miniature vehicles, ships, cannon, and soldiers; money to buy additional units; set-up cards; a weapon development table; and a victory system that involved control of enough production areas to win. Pat said he helped the designer play the World War II game and suggested the game be called **Axis and Allies**. So Al arranged for the four Nova owners to meet Larry Harris at Larry's home in New London, Connecticut.

Al was the first Nova owner to play Larry's version of **Axis and Allies**. After he played the game he wanted a meeting with all the Nova owners. Al was very frustrated and predicted the game would be a flop. In the meeting at Al's house, Al said, "When I think of a Marshal, I think of getting troops to the right place at the right time to win battles. Larry's combat system is tactical and in a strategic game, does not do that. The combat system has to go. I can't do anything with it." OK, I thought, why not give it a try. "So give the project to me," I said. It was immediately turned over to me. From that moment on, I became the Developer of **Axis and Allies**.

After reading the rules and looking over the combat system, I dumped the combat system without even playing the game. I felt if I tried the system, I could be prejudiced in some way. As the game developed, it became apparent that I was right from the start.

But how did I come up with the new combat system. The answer is found in the following true story:

The first war game I ever played was **Gettysburg** in 1958. I was nine years old and a friend of mine, also in fourth grade, had gotten the game for his birthday. I was hooked and got my own copy soon after and began designing a game on the Revolutionary War Battle of Cowpens in late 1959.

Even though I eventually became a math and physics major, division proved difficult. Even when Avalon Hill came out with their first odds divider slide rule in 1962, it was a challenge. This slide rule was included in the first "big box" editions of their **Stalingrad** and **Waterloo** games. The first Avalon Hill games that required dividing large numbers did not

have the standard CRT with cross referencing of attack and defense factors to determine odds.

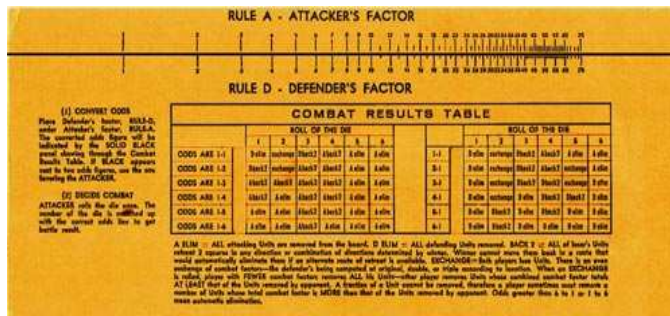


Figure 1 AH slide rule

So I thought of rolling a die and if the roll were less than or equal to a number, it would score a hit. My first system was tactical and needed to include both range and terrain. The British battery of cannon at Cowpens had the greatest range (5), the Revolutionary riflemen had the next highest range (3), and muskets and hand-to-hand combat could occur from one square away. Hills and rivers and woods would also need to modify the die roll.

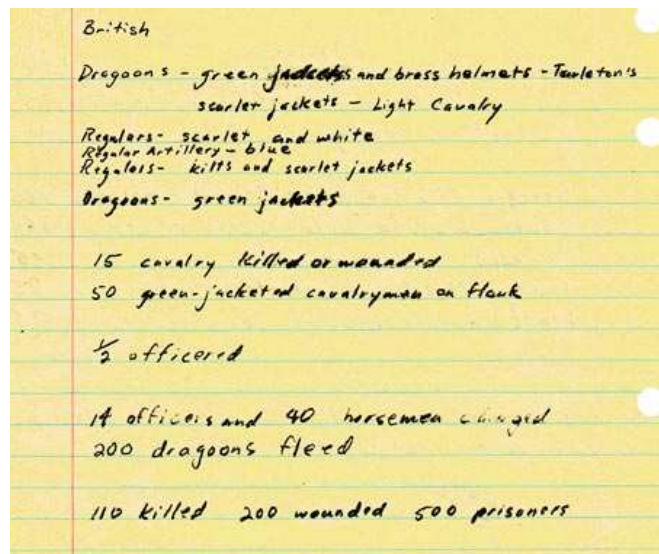


Figure 2 British losses determined December 1958

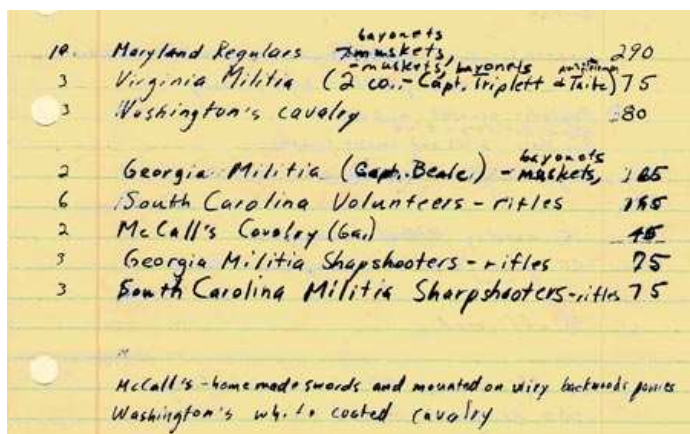


Figure 3 Morgan's OOB determined December 1958

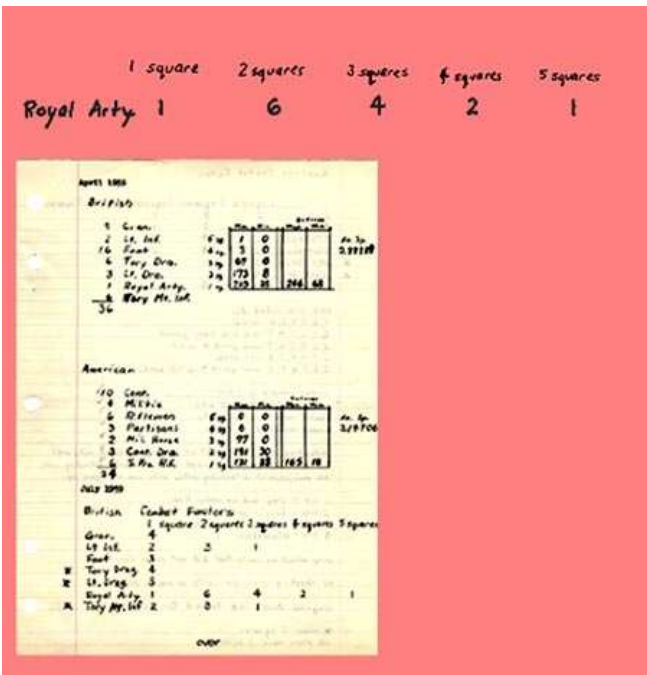


Figure 4a Cowpens revision 4 April 1959
Roll under the indicated number needed to hit (by range)

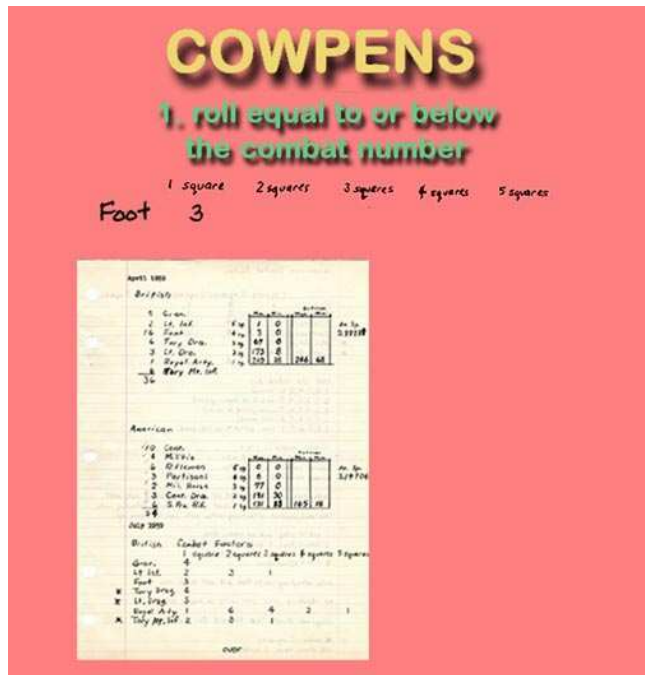


Figure 4c Cowpens revision 4 April 1959
Roll under the number needed to hit at point blank range (or adjacent as in Axis and Allies)

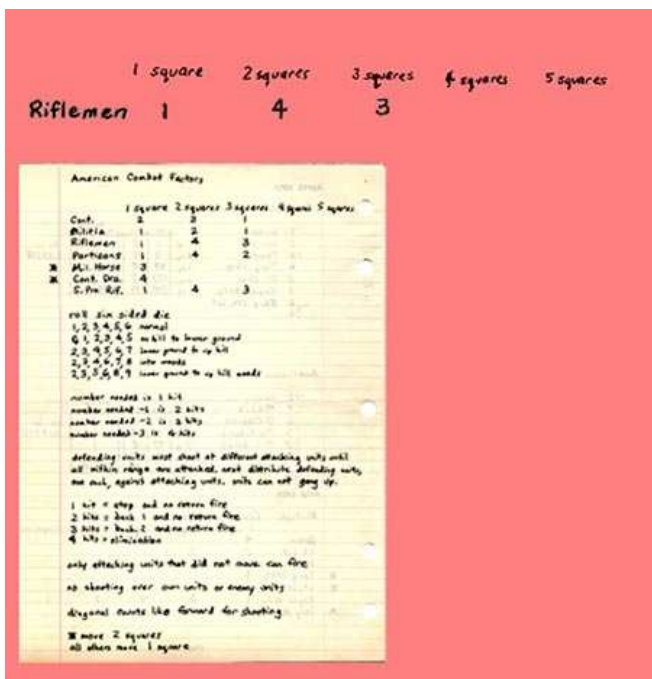


Figure 4b Cowpens revision 4 April 1959
Roll under the indicated number needed to hit (by terrain)

Consequently, that system became the combat system in **Axis and Allies**. It was even simpler as combat was strategic, not tactical. So there would be no need for multiple numbers due to varying ranges and no need to modify the die roll because of different terrain. You just had to roll a die and see if the number were equal to or less than the combat factor for the unit.

Larry's prototype was gorgeous and that beauty needed to be retained. Larry had painstakingly carved out battleships, tanks, carriers, fighters, bombers, anti-aircraft, and soldiers. He also had cards where matching units and sometimes groups of units

were listed attacking each other. Each card had, if I remember correctly, six results so the combat system involved matching attack units against defense units, finding the correct card, and then rolling the die. Since I was changing the combat system, there was no longer a need for the combat cards, saving money in producing the game.

But the beauty of carved figures demanded something similar. I immediately thought of plastic playing pieces. About a mile down the street from my house, across from the Cheney Regional Vocational Technical School where I taught, was a small mold making shop, run by one very old man. He made molds for plastics. Furthermore, I knew he would provide the best price and do a great job. After visiting him, I left his shop downtrodden. He said the mold would cost between \$5,000 and \$8,000. I had bought my house in 1977 for \$67,000. Nova did not have the resources to make plastic playing pieces.

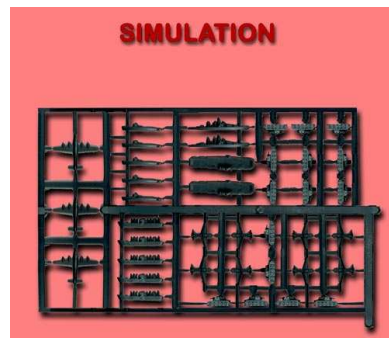


Figure 5 Proposed plastic pieces

So I had to come up with plan B. I figured that die cutting counters that looked like figures was the next best thing. When I learned of the difficulty of bending the blades to look exactly like the silhouette of a tank, a battleship, a soldier, etc., I had to come up with a plan C.

(Continued on page 14)

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So the counters would be different shaped for different units and the silhouette would be printed on the counter. I rationalized the system was a good idea because the combat factors could also be printed on the counters.

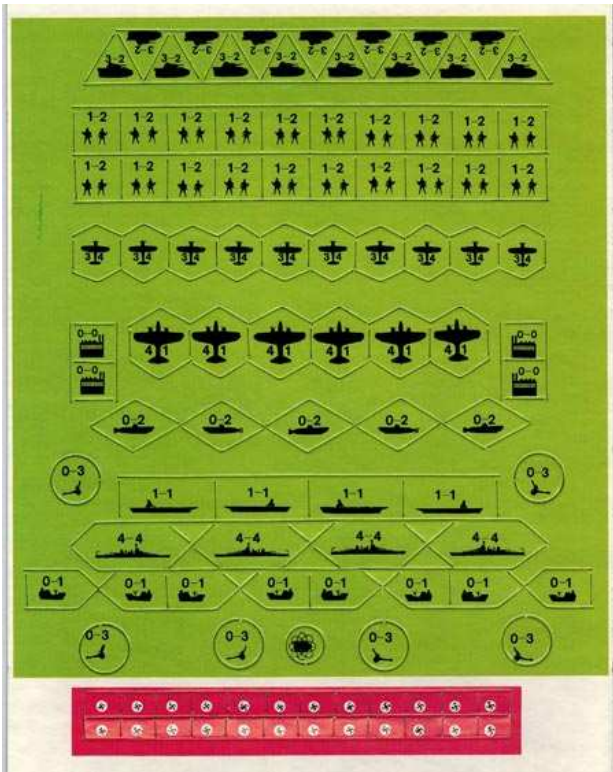


Figure 6 Plan C unit counters

Next, I had to create a play-test version of the game and work on the rules, play the game solitaire and have my friends play the game at Joe Mike's house to balance it. After having made notes on Larry's rules for his prototype and drawing a copy of the Larry's prototype game board, I returned the prototype to Al and started making the unit counters, set-up cards and "money." Knowing that the set-up included the greatest expansion of the Germans during the war and the Japanese preparation for Pearl Harbor, I kept the same areas as part of Germany, Japan, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union. I also kept the same names for the areas. I don't know where he came up with some of these names but they all sounded great.

The value on infantry and tanks and the corresponding cost to build them were obvious. World War I proved that, with widespread use of machine guns for defense, dug in infantry could always defeat attacking infantry. The defense value had to be bigger than the attack value. The beginning of World War II proved that, with mobility in offense, that tanks should be able to outflank and pocket dug in infantry and were better on offense than defense. Hence, tanks had a combat value of 3-2 and cost 500 IPCs; infantry had a combat value of 1-2 and cost 300 IPCs. The values and costs for fighters, bombers, anti-aircraft, battleships, submarines, and carriers and the cost for industrial complexes was chosen based on what I thought they should be in comparison to infantry and tanks. The values changed only slightly as the game was tested.

The nice thing about **Axis and Allies** is: it is really a two-player game, so does not involve diplomacy, so play testing would take one-fourth the time of a multi-player game.

Very few articles have described the difference between game creator, designer, developer, project leader, lead play-tester, and play-tester. In the mid-1970s, we at SPI, created informal round table discussions to determine the differences. Furthermore, at Coleco in 1984 the parameters for these positions, along with other aspects of game publication were analyzed. In effect, a great game developer must be an ethical politician, ethical lawyer, ethical game tournament champion, and ethical game play-test supervisor.

So I had to be an "ethical politician," meaning I needed to do two things. I had to convince the Nova executives that my play-test version was the best option and that Larry Harris should go along with my two changes to his game: the combat system and the starting set-up.

All three of my Nova partners looked on patiently as I showed how the game played. Just looking at Al's face, I knew there would be no problem. He went from smiling to happy to jubilation. At the end of the presentation, Al interjected, "It's just like **Risk!** That's exactly what I wanted." To make sure my other two partners agreed, I remarked, "I wanted it to sound like the 1812 Overture." I had rolled the dice in a large abalone, a conch shell that made the dice reverberate.

Next I went to see Larry Harris. During my drive to his home in New London, I recalled my first published game design. For many designers their first design could be described as feeling the same as a grandmother seeing her first grandchild for the first time. She just loves to talk about the grandchild, show pictures, describe every detail, and you better just listen and smile. I was going to need a lot of tact.

My plan was obvious. First I would go over every detail in his original design and show praise and amazement at the great quality of the work. Near the end of the presentation, I would introduce the new combat system, politely listening to all of Larry's reservations. Finally, I would show where his original set-up needed to be changed ever so slightly to balance the game. If Larry objected to the new set-up I proposed, I would ask him what he would do to balance the game. I knew Larry was a great designer but not the best player in the world. Furthermore, I could work with anything he came up with by slightly modifying the victory conditions. More important, Larry would feel empowered and the development process could continue. I had seen many a game not published because the designer and the publisher came to an impasse.

Just as I expected, the first phase went well. When I went over the new combat system, I never mentioned that Al wanted the game to play like **Risk**. That would be the ultimate insult. Instead, I said, "Al wanted there to be an exchange of losses." Larry's back stiffened and he tried to point out the problems with the new system. I just listened and agreed as he talked and thought. Every once in a while I said, "You're right. How would you change the system?" When Larry started commenting on the combat factors on the units, I knew he was starting to accept and like the system. After a couple of hours of talking and getting his input, I reviewed changes in the set-up and just listened as he talked about the changes. I then said, "I will do whatever you want." That empowerment was enough for him to agree with the new combat system and change in set-up. All the rest of the game was his original proto-type.

Two years ago I taped an interview with Larry about the development of **Axis and Allies**. I wanted to make sure I was correct about the timeline, meetings, and results. I needed that

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information to give an accurate seminar on the Development of **Axis and Allies** for the August, 2011 Lancaster, Pennsylvania WBC convention. I made a DVD of the development of **Axis and Allies** using Larry's interview, an interview with Al Leonardi, and archives I had kept from the original development of the game. That DVD was played as I educated the attendees at the seminar.

During the interview, Larry described our meeting exactly as I remembered. His most important comments were: 1) "Developers like to put their own spin on things." 2) "I resisted it [the new combat system] for a long time." 3) "I think of it [the development] as more of a collaboration." 4) "I remember feeling comfortable [by helping to] assign(ing) combat values, 1-2 for infantry ..." Actually, the infantry initially had a value of 1-2 but who came up with it is not important. The game was Larry's game. I was there to get it published.

Fortunately, the combat system and the rest of the game worked so well it sold out the first print run and a second print run was finished.

Larry deserves all the credit for making **Axis and Allies** the best selling war game of all time. If he did not show it to Milton Bradley in such a passionate, spectacular presentation, the game may just have become another well-designed and well-developed war game. Larry Harris and Milton Bradley developed, published, and marketed the game in the most professional way possible.

My other development roles were easy. As an "ethical lawyer," I had to write the rules in an unbiased fashion that was easy to understand and had no loopholes. Writing rules was easy for me because I examined every rule in every game to try to find an advantage. Now I had to write the rules so there would be no loopholes.

Next I had to balance the game until it needed no more play testing. Luckily, I was a good war game player as shown by my AREA rating ranking of number 6 in Avalon Hill games in one of the Avalon Hill *Generals*. Being an "ethical game tournament champion" was easy.

The last development criteria was part of my personality. As a teacher I was a well-respected leader and graded fairly. In addition, as a developer for a number of SPI games, I was experience. So I was an "ethical game play-test supervisor." Joe Mike's group was ready, willing, and more than able to play-test the game to completion.

For final production, I made two other changes: optional rules and the atomic bomb.

The developer always can provide "optional rules" as they do not affect the designer. I feel optional rules should create a major change to play-balance. They should just add historical flavor. Otherwise play-testing a game for balance would take "forever." Almost no one plays with optional rules anyway. So I added optional rules for one type of unit for each country: panzer tanks for Germany, kamikaze fighters for Japan, home guard infantry for Britain, marines for the United States, and mobile industrial complexes for the Soviet Union.

I also modified Larry's weapons development chart to include the atomic bomb. When Milton Bradley republished the game, they took out the atomic bomb. I guess it was too controversial even through it knocked Japan out of the war.

Living/Leisure



AT THE DRAWING BOARDS — James Rosinus, left, of Hamden, and Joseph Angiolillo of Manchester work on the layout of a new game. PHOTO BY JOSEPH CARNATA JR.

Figure 7 Preparing a camera-ready game board

After developing **Axis and Allies** I helped create camera-ready artwork. Then the game was published and quickly sold out its first print run. Soon after, Nova changed its most important policy. My three partners wanted to make the company "big."

For the first two years the games were sold out of my basement with me and my family doing all the work: all the invoices, all the mailings, all the shipping of games. Of the four of us, I was the only one familiar with the workload and the only one with business experience. When my partners suggested putting our homes up as collateral for capital injection though bank loans, I voted no and left Nova to form a new company, Game Theory and Design, Inc. Soon after, in 1984, Coleco offered me a job to design and develop video games for \$35,000 a year, a great salary back then. Eventually, Nova went bankrupt and the loans were called in.

In retrospect, I should have formed the company with myself and Al. We would have four war games in the line: **Ace of Aces**, **The Hammer of Thor**, Al's "Roman game," and the trilogy of Napoleonic games for Game Theory and Design, Inc. **Axis and Allies** would have become part of the line soon after and "Nova" would still be around today.

But the story of **Axis and Allies** development does not end here. When the unit counters for the original game were printed and die-cut, I paid for unit counters for China and France. I also designed the undeveloped play-test copy of the 1939 version of **Axis and Allies** in 1984. Here is what it looks like.

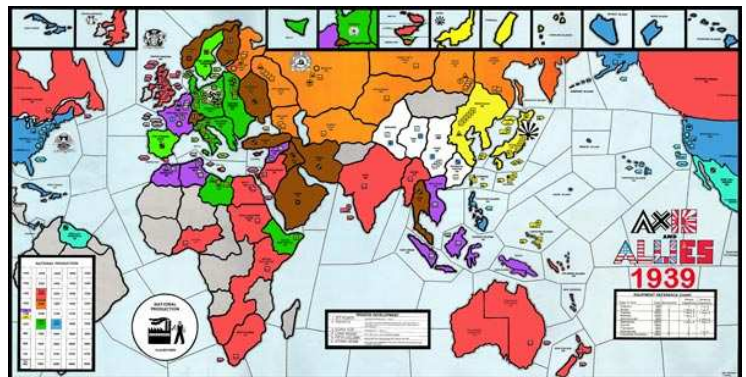


Figure 8 1939 **Axis and Allies** game board

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Minden Games

There is a whole host of games! Solitaire games are **Swordfish at Taranto** on the British raid on the Italian port in November, 1940, **Great War Salvo!** on World War One naval combat, **Eindecker** on World War One air combat, **Poor Bloody Infantry** on World War One land combat, and finally **The Fall of Rohm, Nuremberg: The Trial of the Century**, and **Occupation of the Rhineland, 1936**, three political games.

Advanced Salvo! 1939-1941, **The Mighty Hood** and **Battle of the River Plate** are World War Two naval games. 'Nam '68 is on tactical combat in Vietnam and **The Evacuation of Konigsberg** is a World War Two game with a solitaire option. Finally, **Jousting: Field of Honour** is a medieval game for 2-8 players. http://minden_games.homestead.com/

White Dog Games

All Is Lost To Me: Pavia 1525 covers the 1525 battle between Spain and France at the town of Pavia. <http://www.whitedoggames.com/>

NEW WEB RESOURCES

Free Games

La Bataille de Raszyn 1809 (in the **La Bataille** series) http://www.labataille.me/Recession_Series_Games.html

Battle of Marignano (Alex Kramer) <http://boardgamegeek.com/filepage/11801/marignano-zip>

Official Rules

Band of Brothers: Screaming Eagles (Worthington) http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/849ftyo4lb/BoB_Rules.pdf

Official Rules Change

A Few Acres of Snow (Treefrog) <http://grognard.com/errata1/afaos.txt>

Errata

American Revolution, S&T#270 (DG) <http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/82xn6yrcet/ST-270-AmRev-Errata-QA-v5.doc>

Bradley's D-Day (ATO) http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/8potc5dz0w/Campaign_Study_%2033_Combined_Addenda__as_of_Nov_11_2011.rtf

Dai Senso! Axis Empires (DG) http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/87bs8tzxtv/DS_Errata_January_2012.pdf

Fuentes de Onoro 1811 (VV) <http://grognard.com/errata1/fuentes.pdf>

Incredible Courage at Austerlitz (Grognard) <http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/87ez30670l/QUESTIONS-ICAT.doc>

Totaler Krieg : Axis Empires (DG) http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/87bwghq9hn/TK_Errata_January_2012.pdf

War with a Vengeance! - The V-1 Campaign June and July 1944 (ATO) http://boardgamegeek.com/file/download/8pop3emjze/Campaign_Study_%2033_Combined_Addenda__as_of_Nov_11_2011.rtf



Book Review

Two Soldiers, Two Lost Fronts German War Diaries of the Stalingrad and North Africa Campaigns by Don A Gregory and Wilhelm R. Gehlen Casemate Publishers 262 pages, photos cheap from Hamilton

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

Although this book sounded interesting, it really is a series of short statements. I did not finish it.

An example from the Stalingrad section:

"2 September 1942: Our regiment is now attached to the 40th Panzer Corps, 111th Infantry Division, and we will support the infantry in extending a bridgehead south of Mosdok. Under difficult circumstances, we cross the Terek on a cable ferry. 5th Co. manages to get across but the engineers stop further crossings because of darkness and heavy rain."

From the north Africa section:

"31 August 1942: At daybreak we get through the first mine belt but at the second and third belt a traffic jam occurs. We draw heavy gunfire from enemy armored cars but we get through and pull 4 of our Panzer IVs with 75mm guns forward. The enemy retreats to the east. We stop in a wadi for the night. Eight hours of bombing during the night by 4-engined American bombers. About 2,000 bombs fall in our vicinity. We have 3 men KIA, several wounded and we lose 3 guns from a battery of 4."

It was hard for me to keep interested in these short statements. Some days were simply one sentence.



Roleplaying Games and the AHIKS Forum

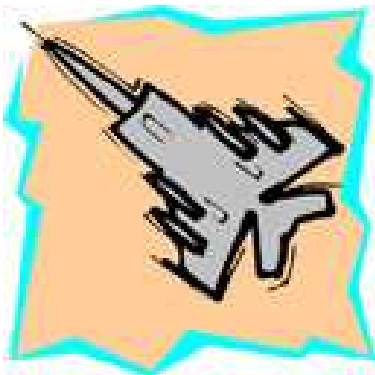
by Bob Best

In reading this, keep in mind Charles Marshall's article on page 1.

I know that we now have 300 members in AHIKS, and we must have a few roleplaying gamers in the group. I know I have seen requests for matches of GDW's **Fifth Frontier War**, a board game for GDW's famous **Traveler** roleplaying game, so we must have a few folks who have at least a passing interest in the subject. In the past it has been really hard to run a roleplaying game by snail mail. Our computers have opened up the field a little bit along with the world-wide-web. With them a roleplaying game can be run solely with email (not the best experience either), but by using a venue like the AHIKS forum possibilities for a great interactive roleplaying game experience abound.

As an example we have two quasi-roleplaying games being run on the forum right now. Both are using a board game as a platform for the roleplaying side of things. The first game is **Richthofen's War** and the second is **Wooden Ships and Iron Men**. Of the two, **Richthofen's War** is being run closest to a roleplaying game. With the AHIKS forum venue roleplayers can set the stage for the game by posting their narratives right on the forum, using it in much the same way you would with a face-to-face roleplaying game session and much like what is being done with **Richthofen's War**. If you haven't seen **Richthofen's War** on the forum it is worth a look.

Game Masters can post the game scenario and set the scene for their players by posting on the forum. The Game Master can then give instructions to individual players by using either the forum's personal message system or through regular email. AHIKS also has the dice roller handy so you can roll just about any type of dice needed in your game and have the results instantaneously sent to the player(s) involved.



Another reason to use the AHIKS forum for your roleplaying game is that the Game Master can continuously keep the game updated at whatever pace he chooses. Players are able to check into the game at anytime of the day or night and get updates and they can leave their own responses for the Game Master or other player characters just like a face-to-face RPG session. This helps the Game Master keep the game moving and by posting on the forum you can also let other non-playing members follow the game... maybe you might attract a new player or two in the process!

So, give it a try. The forum and dice roller are easy to use, and I think you will be pleasantly surprised at how well your roleplaying game will run! ☺

I am considering starting a **Traveler** roleplaying game sometime later this year on the AHIKS forum. I would like to talk with other interested roleplayers and Game Masters to see if there is enough interest to warrant such a game. I am a dedicated **Traveler** fan and I have played in a number of **Traveler** roleplaying games as well as game mastering several others. I have most all of the original material printed for Classic **Traveler** up through the collapse of the empire and the formation of the Vampire Fleets. For those of you who may have an interest in this please let me know at b52bob@prodigy.net or post a message to me on the forum. I plan on posting there about starting up roleplaying games.

Hope to see you there! ☺

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March 22-25, Portland, OR
GAMESTORM

<http://gamestorm.org>

March 31-Apr. 1, Rochester, NY

SIMCON XXXIV: THE CON AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

<http://www.simcon.org/>

Mar 30-Apr 1, Vancouver, BC Canada

TRUMPETER SALUTE

<http://www.trumpetersalute.com>

Mar. 30-Apr. 1, Green Bay, WI

LETS PLAY GREEN BAY

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

Apr. 20-22, Savannah, GA

GNOMECON

<http://gnomecon.org/>

Apr. 21, Crystal River, FL

CGA SHOW NATURE COAST

<http://naturecoast.cgashows.com/home.php>

April 27-29, St. Charles, IL

LITTLE WARS

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

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



Book Review

The Third Reich

by Roberto Bolano

Farrar, Strauss

Updated review by Tom Oleson

The Chilean writer Roberto Bolano died 8 years ago at the age of 50. He is considered perhaps the finest contemporary novelist writing in Spanish. All of his novels have been translated into English.

Among his papers was recently found a 277 page novel entitled "The Third Reich" (Farrar, Strauss, \$25). Udo, the German protagonist, vacations on the Spanish coast "formulating a radical tactic to achieve Axis victory in his favorite game, **Third Reich**." He is "a national champion at war-strategy board games." The climax of the novel is a "rather dull match of **Third Reich** that Udo plays against El Quemado"—"the burned man," suspected of murdering another German tourist.

I have just finished the Roberto Bolano novel, which was a real page turner, very suspenseful. However, Bolano ignored Chekhov's dictum that if in act one there is a pistol on the wall, it must be fired in act two, because none of the cliffhangers mentioned below ever drop, except for the German defeat in the game.

Will Udo Berger, champion wargamer of Germany, beat novice player "El Quemado" at the latter's first game of 3R?

The game is described in lavish detail, often with hex coordinates defining the front. It has been so long since I played 3R, nor do I have a copy handy, that I could not verify the accuracy of the references. Udo starts out invading Russia, France, Britain, Spain, and Africa simultaneously (not something you could do in **EuroFront**), but Berlin falls in 1944.

Did Quemado kill Charlie or was it an accident?

Will Udo finally get together with Else, and is her dying husband the mysterious mentor guiding Quemado's moves in late night meetings on the beach?

Is the husband's warning that Quemado will kill Udo believable?

What are the Wolf and the Lamb up to?

Nick Palmer is mentioned more than once. Udo was flattered to receive a letter from him. Our gamer here—Beyma—is also frequently mentioned positively.

Don Greenwood, did you know that Udo often wrote for *The General*, one of the issues is cited.

Even Anzio is there! His favorite counter in the game is 1P!

For a wargamer, a fun read. Just as a novel, in the end, disappointing.

I lived in Madrid at this time, but do not recall the national championships referred to. I will ask my Spanish friends in the hobby if they do. Next, the movie?

★★

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 _____

Almost a Game Review

by Omar DeWitt

Only in *The Kommandeur* will you find the following: part of a game review. I bought this game a few months ago and started to look at it. I had one of the three maps taped to a plywood sheet, I had cut out the counters for that map, and I started to read the rules. Then, I got sidetracked. I hope that by starting this review, I will be encouraged to continue with

Field Commander: Rommel

Dan Verssen Games

(C) 2008

\$32 from Funagain.com

Components: three maps 11 x17 inches divided into areas.

175 5/8-inch counters

one die

one 16-page rule book

This is one game you never have to lose. It is solitaire game.

The three games included are **North Africa 1941**, **D-Day 1944**, and **1940 France Ghost Division**. I started with the latter.

Supply is needed if a unit moves more than one area. It is needed to refit (repair) units. It is needed to get additional Battle Plans.

There is no combat results table. Each unit has a number printed on it; if the die roll is that number or smaller, there is a hit. One hit flips a unit on its back; a second hit on that counter removes it from play. Upgrades are available after combat; these increase the range of hits printed on the counter.

Victory is determined by occupying certain areas on the map.

Well, that's almost a start. I will try to improve on the review in the near future.

★★



As AHKS strives to keep costs and dues down, there is something you can do to help. Our Perpetual Fund, started by Bruce Monnin and Frederick Kraus, can always use more donations. The interest from the Fund helps the Society. A few dollars from you could help AHKS become totally self sustaining. Give it some thought. Send Brian Stretcher a couple of dollars.

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