

# The Kommandeur



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## From Your President Bob Best

Today is August 4, 2017. I would like to start today by saying thank you to member Randy Heller. You may remember that Randy was awarded the Iron Man Trophy a few months back for all of the work he put into improving AHIKS and our gaming hobby. Randy asked the Executive Committee if he could continue the Iron Man Trophy program, which was agreed to, and Randy is now making great progress promoting AHIKS and arranging for a new venue to hold the event. The Executive Committee also approved a \$100 cash prize to help jump start this annual event. Randy, Thank You for all of your efforts with this.

I know that many of you are interested in collecting wargames. I'm not talking about just owning lots of different wargames to play but actually collecting different variations of a game over its production life. If the collecting of wargames is one of your interests or if you are just interested in seeing older pristine condition games, many of which have been signed by designers and other famous people in our wargame industry, then you ought to take a look at Brian Laskey's "Vintage Wargames" group on Facebook. The group is dedicated to wargames produced prior to 1990. The group has over 1200 members who share photos of wargame collections and other interesting stories and trivia from our wargaming past. "Vintage Wargames" is a closed group so you have to join the group to post. So, if you are on Facebook, just search for the group and then tell Brian you want to join. I have been in the hobby since 1960, and I can honestly say that I had no idea that there were so many different production covers and styles of the same game title. Some of those posting have fantastic collections and have a wealth of knowledge about how our hobby evolved. Brian also runs recruiting ads for AHIKS, and I know AHIKS has gained some members through his efforts. Thank You, Brian, for the Great Group and for your recruiting efforts!

I would also like to wish *happy birthday* to one of my favorite games. **The Traveller Roleplaying Game** turned 40 years old on July 22, 2017. I have been involved with **Traveller** since its beginning back in 1977. Over the 40 year history of **Traveller** its followers have created a rich history for the Third Imperium. Not only are there hundreds of printed RPG adventures, but there are strategic board games such as **5<sup>th</sup> Frontier War** and **Invasion Earth** as well as many tactical level map and counter based games such as **Ashanti High Lightning** and **Snapshot**, where you maneuver individual soldiers fighting to capture Starships deck by deck. Map and counter starship combat is also covered in **Battle Rider**, **Brilliant Lances**, and **Mayday**. If you are into miniatures, **Traveller** has **Striker**, **Rules for 15mm Miniatures** that allow a player to fight small unit ground battles. The **Traveller** game system also allows a player to play a solitaire game of character generation. You can design a character and then take them through a full military or civilian career that fleshes out the

character and when you are finished you have a character ready for roleplaying. **Traveller** is really quite a fun and versatile game system that has attracted a broad fan base. If you haven't tried it, you might look into it. For those of you on Facebook, look into the "**Traveller-RPG**." They have about 4200 members and you can find just about anything you are looking for regarding **Traveller** there. Also, there is currently a **Traveller** game in progress under the AHIKS Facebook page and our Match Coordinator, Duncan Rice, will be starting another new game in September. Contact Duncan Rice if you are interested.

### In Other News

The Consimworld Forum run by John Kranz reports they have encountered major outages that have forced them to close their forum. CSW is in the process of rebuilding their entire database and installing new hardware. CSW anticipates moving their forum on August 7<sup>th</sup> to a new server. From their Update #14, they expect to be back on line sometime after that. John Kranz has been posting updates on the "Solitaire Wargames" group on Facebook.

John Kranz also announced in Consim Press that he recently underwent a change at his place of employment as his job position was eliminated. John says he plans to dedicate all of his time to the hobby and do more with Consimworld now that he has more time.

On August 3rd, Compass Games, LLC announced that John Kranz has accepted a position at Compass. John's focus will be helping grow the product line by managing numerous projects and help drive future marketing efforts, including a new open gaming convention on the East Coast. John has experience publishing successful game titles, including **The Hunters** and **Silent Victory**, and will help bring many new games to market as he becomes committed to game publishing on a full-time basis.

John's first project is already available for preorder. **The African Campaign**, Designer Signature Edition, will be released October 2017. **Red Star/White Eagle** will be on preorder soon and is scheduled for a December 2017 release.

John's new job at Compass Games will affect some of his game designs being offered on GMT's P500 offerings, including **Storming the Heights** and **Hellfire Pass**. Contact GMT games if you have one of these two games on order.

### On the Home Front

Your Editor, Omar DeWitt, and I have moved on to our second game of **Trenches of Valor**. We are playing the Jacob's Well scenario that pits the Americans against the Germans. Omar won the first game as the Germans. After switching sides it appears the Germans are winning in the second game but the issue is still in doubt. Maybe the Germans have

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Vice President's Chair

Kenneth Oates

I was making an order earlier this morning from a WBC sale going on this week, and I had thought... how do I make a purchase decision, and how do others make theirs regarding wargames?

This will not be the definitive scientific study of this question, and there will undoubtedly be as many methods of making this decision as there are gamers. What follows is my list of criteria and what I think others use (conscious or not). These are presented in no certain rank order.

- The period – I have to feel some connection or interest to be enticed to shell out \$50 or more
- Battle or campaign – as above, this is a major driver (note I have 12 games on Gettysburg or aspects of it!)
- Particular leader(s) are involved
- The situation surrounding the battle or event is compelling and the game offers insight
- Personal connection – my family has been particularly bellicose, so lots of opportunity here!
- Complexity of the simulation or series – how well it recreates the history, creating a narrative (**The Hunters, Silent Victory**)
- Which brings up another point – I am more likely to purchase subsequent games if it is part of a series I am invested in (best example of this is the Great Campaigns of the American Civil War)
- The map style, how it portrays the field of battle (aesthetics count!)
- Counter art – and they can be simple or help the escape from reality, icons or NATO symbols
- Playing the game and making the realization I liked the play mechanics or some other facet not evident from the package.
- And finally, a well written replay, or video, can provide the stimulus to open my wallet



*(Continued from page 1)*

the edge in this scenario??? ☺ **ToV** is a fun, easy to play game by Victory Point Games. It plays quickly, and there are only four pages of rules plus an expansion game that adds more scenarios and different counter types. It's a good starter game to introduce kids to strategy gaming. Nice beer and pretzels game.

I am also playing SPIs **Modern Battles Quad Game – Wurzburg** with member Bill Klitzke. The Americans are driving on Wurzburg in the Advance to Contact scenario. Russian forces just lost a unit on the right flank as the American Helicopter unit performed a vertical envelopment and surrounded it. Now the Americans are about to meet some serious Soviet Armor troops. It looks to be another exciting down-to-the-wire game!

Well, I hope you are all enjoying the summer weather and have found some time for gaming amid all the outdoor summer activities.

So, until next time... Happy Gaming!



## WBC 2017 from Chris Hancock

My daughter and I attended WBC, as we generally do, at Seven Springs Ski Resort in Pennsylvania this year.

Certainly this is a far better facility than the Lancaster Host. However, we were blessed with a leaking roof on the first Saturday. Not another Host we feared. However, the staff handled the issue quickly and most people didn't even know.

Our room was in the tower block in the hotel, so a fair walk to the nearest gaming and the good amount of walking was a bonus. The Ski Lodge was a short walk beyond and ensured a few minutes outdoors.

The wargames were mostly in the Ski Lodge with other games in the main Hotel building. Although I ventured down to the Ski Lodge occasionally, I didn't encounter any AHIKS members, so no member sighting in this review.

I had a successful start to the week with two wins in **1830** heats. However, my run ended with a third in the semi finals.

The rest of the time was spent in open gaming with occasional non-wargame tournaments such as **Circus Maximus** and **Formula Motor Racing** (formerly **Speed Circuit**).

We are not likely to be there next year because of other commitments, but will certainly return when we can.



## Book Review

**1941, Fighting the Shadow War**, A Divided America in a World at War

by Marc Wortman

©2016 Atlantic Monthly Press \$27

409 pages. Photographs

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

Every once in a while I get the urge to read about something besides battling armies. If you get the same feeling, this might be a good book to read.

In 1941 I was only eight years old, so I was not aware of what was going on beyond the comic page in the newspaper. After living through the war and after reading all the books since then, it is rather breathtaking to look back through this book and realize what the United States was like before the war.

There were very strong anti-war groups giving speeches around the country, the most effective probably was the one that included Charles Lindberg as a speaker. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., Teddy's son, was anti-war initially, but withdrew from that and was later a general in the U.S. Army.

William L. Shirer was an effective speaker on the other side. He had been a (censored) correspondent in Berlin and had toured Poland after that war. He explained what Hitler's goals were.

FDR worked to give Great Britain as much help as he could without actually joining the war, an act that would have incurred the wrath of half of the U.S. Actually, he probably gave too much and had the navy and coast guard do too much, but Hitler chose to overlook these transgressions.

A very interesting and informative book.



## Multiplayer Coordinator

Jeff Miller

Hope everyone is having a great summer!!

I spent a fun-filled nine days at WBC, with the usual result of lots of games being played and a certain amount of lost sleep. ☺

Attendance seems to have been about the same as last year. Apparently WBC signed an agreement for the next 10 years at Seven Springs, so it will not be moving anytime soon.

No games ruined by roof leaks this year, although I did hear there were some leaks in locations that did not threaten any games. Apparently the resort is going to add refrigerators to all of the rooms next year instead of having to request them, which is a win. Aside from that not a lot in changes from last year.

Apparently the WiFi is still a work in progress, although I stuck to just running off AT&T and had no issues. The only thing that seems to have been a major issue for some was the shuttle service to and from the Pittsburgh airport, apparently similar to taking Moscow during the winter. I would suggest anyone flying in should have a backup plan in place, like renting a car.

Aside from those few points another great WBC—well worth the money and a great time!!!

On a personal level, I managed to end up with a 6th place plaque in **History of the World**—otherwise known as a “sand” plaque. One of the harder ones to end up with as you need to come in 6th in a tournament that has enough players to have a 6th place to give out. Not first, but I will take it!!

Had some interesting empires to work with that took me out of the running for 1st so we settle for what we can get. ☺

Attended the **Wooden Ships & Iron Men** fleet action on Saturday. The GM, Tim Hitchings, did his usual outstanding job running the event. Lots of cannon balls and musket balls flying back and forth!

Ended up buying a bunch of new/used games as well. Like I need more!!! My wife was kind enough to point out I brought back almost as many new games as she took to play. ☺

Not much change in the multiplayer request list this time. Although I have added in **World at War** for myself as I picked a copy of it up from GMT’s table. They have a reprint listed, but it’s going to be a while, and I landed this one for \$10 less than even the pre-order price for the reprint. Apparently the only change will be a few bits of errata in the new version, so figure it’s a win.

So to let me close with a phrase to encourage you to sign up for some multiplayer games!!

WINTER IS COMING!!!!



## Book Reviews from Tom Oleson

### **Armies Of the War Of the Pacific 1879-83,**

by Gabriele Esposito,  
Osprey, 2016

This book packs a great deal of information into just 48 pages:

Detailed recounting with useful maps of the naval and land campaigns.

Equally detailed information about the military of the 3 combatants: the victor, Chile, and the defeated, Peru and Bolivia.

The book also has many splendid illustrations of the very colorful uniforms worn. If only the military prowess of Peru and Bolivia had equaled the splendor of their uniforms, they would have had a better chance.

The book was particularly interesting to me. I lived in Lima, Peru, 1962-66, and went more than once to Chile. The Chilean military was clearly superior, expanding the border of Chile 200 miles North, encompassing very valuable sources of raw materials. Chile conquered Lima, and campaigned into the Peruvian Andes. Rancor about this war persists to this day, with Bolivia often demanding that its access to the Pacific be restored, if only a narrow corridor. Chile refuses.

Whenever I read a book like this I ask if there is a game on the subject. Usually the answer is yes. If not, this book would be a useful source to do one.

### **The Battle Of Barrosa 1811**

by John Grehan and Martin Mace  
Skyhorse Publishing, 2014

This is an argumentative book. After complaining that this battle is nearly ignored in encyclopedic histories of Napoleon in Spain, the authors contend that, to the contrary, it was very important. Their thesis is that the survival of the anti-Napoleonic government of Spain in the fortress port city of Cadiz was the turning point not only in Spain, but for the entire Napoleonic era. The rationale is that the attention Napoleon gave to Spain deprived him of a maximum effort in Russia.

I don't take sides in their argument that this battle was key in protecting Cadiz, but it seems to me that had Napoleon sent more troops to Moscow, more would have frozen in the snow in their disastrous retreat.

Charles Minard made a study of the Russian campaign.  
422,000 men in the Grande Armee crossed the Neiman River heading East  
22,000 sent North to garrison Wilna, Lithuania  
60,000 sent North to garrison Polotsk (in what today is Belarus)  
100,000 reach Moscow  
20,000 survivors 2/3 of the way back to Poland (cold, Russian attacks)  
30,000 survivors from Polotsk rejoin main group  
4,000 reach Polish border  
6,000 survivors from Wilna rejoin main group (archaeology magazine I get has article on mass French graves in Wilna)  
10,000 cross the Neiman River heading West

Looks to me as though the emperor was glad to have some living troops left in Spain!

There is a lot of content about France's struggle to dominate the Iberian peninsula, which I found quite interesting.

The book has several informative maps illustrating details of the battle.

I have read a lot of books on military history, but none with such detailed OOB data. As I often say about such books, worthwhile if the topic interests you.

### **The Byzantine Art Of War**

by Michael Decker  
Westholme Publishing, 2013

If you are at all interested, a wonderful book. The 1000 year history of the Byzantine empire has always fascinated me. It reached its high point in the 6th century, when it controlled Andalusia, and what had been the Eastern half of its predecessor, the Roman Empire, Italy included. It came to an end in 1453 when the Turks conquered Constantinople.

I had the good fortune 25 years ago to go there a dozen times on business. Now it is Istanbul of course. Roaming the city on both the European and Asiatic sides, I found its history palpable. I don't know how it is today, but back then, as an obvious foreigner strolling the back streets, I never felt unsafe. The great bazaar is a wonder.

The first part is a summary of the empire's history, although it is also referred to throughout the book, for context. The second part is a very detailed review of the Byzantine military, which would be most useful to anyone contemplating a game on any aspect of this long history. I am usually told there are games on the subject, as few escape the attention of our members!

Even when the subject is generally familiar, I always learn something. I knew that when it was independent, Catalonia controlled some Mediterranean islands, but I was unaware that Catalan mercenaries wrested Athens from the Byzantines from 1304 to 1388, by which time the Turks had squeezed the empire down to a remnant of what it had been. Our Spanish friends are indignant about an impending unauthorized independence referendum in Catalonia.

In a recent issue of *Archaeology* magazine, there are several articles on the magnificent ruins of what had been Byzantine cities in Turkey and Iraq.

### **Biological Espionage**

by Alexander Kouzminov  
Stackpole Books, 2005

Change is the only constant in the history of war. The last cavalry charge was in Poland, 1939, and we won't see another. I bought this book expecting to learn more about biological WMDs. The author was a KGB veteran who defected to the West.

The book does have a lot of information about these weapons, and how the Russians spied on their development in the West. They call them "the poor man's nuclear bomb." Scary the harm they would do to a tiny country like Israel.

But the book has more about a completely different topic. Have you seen the popular and critically acclaimed TV series "The Americans," about two Soviet agents passing for Yanks? More than anything else, the book details how the KGB trained such people, then placed them in the West, and how they communicated. Reality is far different from TV, where the spies chat with their embassy handlers in the latter's kitchen, or on a

park bench. In real life, such meetings were almost always held in another country, where the spies invented some reason to travel.

An informative book about an important subject.

**Countdown To Zero Day**—Stuxnet and the launch of the world's first digital weapon  
by Kim Zetter  
Crown Publishing, 2014

This is an important and very scary book. Stuxnet was the name for an American/Israeli computer virus which sabotaged Iran's nuclear program. The author shows how this was in effect the Hiroshima and Nagasaki of a new form not only of cyber warfare, but a threat to our entire computerized civilization.

In 2013 "the nation's chief cyber warrior, NSA's General Alexander, told the Senate 'It is only a question of time before these sophisticated tools make their way to groups and even individuals who do not care about the damage they inflict on critical infrastructure.'"

We live in a computerized world, and those computers are virtually all accessible from outside. Contaminate a pristine stream by forcing release of sewage—been done. Cancel the safety controls on a nuclear power station—ditto. As the general warns, it is not only governments which will use cyber weapons but disgruntled individuals.

A technical point I liked about this book was that the many footnotes were at the bottom of the page, not at the end, as is often the case.

Unanswered questions posed: Iran has money, North Korea the bomb, why not just buy it? Why have we not been able to cyber cripple the North Korean program? Maybe we have, as they have had so many failures.

A must-read if you want to know about the next war.

**Fifth Army In Italy 1943-45**  
by Ian Blackwell  
Pen & Sword, 2012

I tried to make the 7th edition of **Anzio** as faithful a representation of the Italian campaign in game form as possible, which we all know is—not very—but compared to what? I have no plans for an 8th edition but continue reading everything published on the campaign, hence this book.

The title is accurate but misleading. It ably narrates what the 5th Army did but also has a great deal of very interesting information on the organization and nature of the armies involved, pertinent to the entire war.

Particularly interesting were all the problems Britain had with Commonwealth troops. Some, like the strong New Zealand division, were not really under British command. They had to persuade, usually successfully. The British also had a variety of troubles with African allies, especially due to race. Some Boers had hidden sympathy for the other side, and tried to stay neutral, or impose restrictions on the deployment of South African troops. White South Africans did not want blacks armed. Most surprising was the well-documented assertion that the British crown discussed replacing Churchill with South African Field Marshal Jan Smuts should some ill befall Churchill. See pages 60-61. Although India made significant contribution to the war effort, it was not without rumblings of a desire for independence.

You do not have to be interested in the Italian campaign to learn from this book.



## Book Review

### Flyboys

by James Bradley

398 pages, photographs

\$26 Little, Brown & Co. ©2003

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

I had seen this book around but hadn't really thought about reading it until I came across it at our local library. I'm glad I picked it up. It is the best book I have read on the WWII Pacific War.

The primary object of the book is to explain the fates of several pilots who were captured by the Japanese on the island of Chichi Jima, which is a bit north of Iwo Jima. Chichi Jima was a communication post, and it received much bombing. U.S. planes were shot down and their pilots taken prisoner.

However, Bradley discusses the entire war against Japan, emphasizing the air war. He gives an excellent explanation of the Japanese behavior during the war, better than any other I have read. After Commodore Perry's visit to Japan in 1853, the Japanese strove to emulate the strength and power of the American ships. They reached the conclusion that might makes right.

Bradley concludes that the Japanese fought the entire war in a sort of delusional state. No Japanese thought Japan could defeat the U.S. in a protracted war, yet they attacked Pearl Harbor. Japan had never lost a war. Luck had protected them from two Mongol invasions in 1274 and 1281-- with a Kamikaze (god-wind). The Battle of Tsushima brought Japan into a world power. Japan was obviously protected from defeat. Japan abandoned thousands of soldiers in Indonesia because they had not thought through their plans.

Japanese cruelties and death-before-surrender are discussed and analyzed.

The atomic bomb did not persuade all Japanese that continuing the war was useless. The military would have fought to the death.

I found the book fascinating. You may, too.

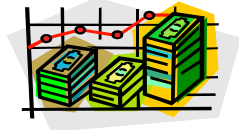
I have visited Japan four times, the first was a two-year visit with the Air Force. Sue and I went three times, the last trip a year ago. Current-day Japanese are not the same people that fought in the war. They have not been numbed by the media nor do they any more believe that their "emperor" is a god.

The countryside is attractive, the trains run on time, the beer is good, the population is well behaved, and many people speak English. It is hard to see how these people perpetrated so much evil in WWII. I have to conclude that it is not the people but the government that leads the people.



## Treasury Notes

Brian Stretcher



### Pregame Warmups for Absolute Victory

I previewed Compass Games' **Absolute Victory** a couple of issues ago with a discussion of the general game system. Since that time, Compass has released a Vassal module, and I have had a chance to read through the rest of the rules and re-read the system rules again. I am therefore just about ready to start my first solo game to see how the game actually plays.

For those of you who are intrigued by the title but wary about plunking down some \$185 without knowing much about the game, I thought I would use this column to examine some things to consider about the game before beginning play. No individual part of **AV** is particularly complex, but there are a lot of moving parts to consider before you even start to work on your opening setup. One needs to know how the parts work together before that first piece is moved, or your first outing might be a frustrating one and you might be disappointed with the game. No one wants \$185 worth of game to be sitting on the shelf, or offered on eBay for half that price. Here are my thoughts prior to starting Scenario 1, which is WW2 in the West only, starting in September, 1939.

**Get the latest errata and setup information.** With all of those moving parts, with an increasing number of owners and generated questions, an increasing amount of errata has been generated. It is not a tremendous amount, but you will want the latest, which can be found under the "Downloads" section on the **AV** product page; latest is from June. Similarly, there have been updates made to several of the scenario setups, including Scenario 1 (the Polish setup is now fixed so the entire army can't start in Warsaw, for example). The updated setups can be downloaded from the Boardgame Geek website. Yes, I had to register to get them.

**Recognize that the event system both constrains and opens the paths the game can take.** Recall that the game makes liberal use of "events" to push the game along various historical paths in (mostly) small increments, some 2500 of them. The system rules limit players to what they can do vis a vis a lot of other WW2 games, such as **Third Reich** and its various incarnations, **World in Flames**, and a host of other large strategic WW2 games. For example, the Italians start out **AV** in 1939 as a neutral power, as you might expect. In **Third Reich**, the Axis player has the ability to bring Italy into the war against the Allies at will, so long as he can pay for a DOW. Can't do that in **AV**, because Italian entry is controlled by events, as is Japanese entry. It is possible for both powers to sit out the game (although the Japanese start out at war against China), however, such an occurrence would be exceedingly rare. But the Axis player cannot rely on his "machine" to do the usual, i.e. stomp Poland, overrun the Low Countries, crush France, then decide on an anti-England or anti-USSR strategy in mid-1940, because event play will influence timetables and opportunities, like launch Sealion, secure Norway, have the *Bismarck* arrive, and so forth; one cannot launch an invasion of the USA in 1940 simply because one has built enough transports to carry troops across the Atlantic. For the Allies, your Soviet friends can do very little without event play, and there is no set timetable for the Soviets to enter the war. While the Germans can invade the USSR at any time, for the Soviets to make

a DOW against Germany, certain things have to happen, i.e. events, and they have to make an entry roll. Therefore, if you want perfect control over history, which in fact is not historical at all, **AV** may not be for you. The designer suggests that you do not read through the events before you play for the first time, so you get to discover them for yourself. Sound and fun advice, if you ask me, especially if you are playing solo.

**Your navy may not be able to do what you expect it to do.** Upon my second reading of the rules, I searched for the section on how to use your navy to transport troops from port to port. I discovered that you don't use your ships to do such transporting at all. Instead, you do a Sealift pulse from one port to another (the Warfare stage of a turn consists of an alternating sequence of "pulses;" in each pulse a player can do one thing, alternating back and forth until the Warfare stage is over, as in I move a stack, you move a stack). Enemy naval units can interdict such movement, however, if they are appropriately positioned to do so. Thus, your combat ships will need to clear the appropriate path if you don't want your sealift to be interdicted. Ships are properly used to interdict supply of ground forces, in various ways, and to a lesser extent, support amphibious assaults with shore bombardment. Amphibious assaults, however, are allowed by event only, and so in **AV** it is exceedingly unlikely that the Germans will be able to launch an amphibious assault against Morocco from Kiel and such, not an uncommon tactic in **Third Reich**.

The other thing your navy can do is interfere with the movement of your opponent's naval forces, by making transit attacks as the enemy attempts to pass. Of course, if you have carriers you have a greater ability to make transit attacks because you can sight enemy ships from two hexes away. Land based air (LBA), which are *extremely* important in this game, can also launch transit attacks against enemy fleets. Thus, the Royal Navy can be positioned at the start of the game in ports so as to restrain the Kriegsmarine from putting out into the North Atlantic en masse, wreaking havoc under the Strategic Warfare rules, even without army units to supply the bases for land-based air. But German ships could slip by anyway. And, be wary of the assumption that your naval units in port are safe from enemy attack. They are not. Ports offer no special protection, and an enemy fleet can sail into your port and attack your sleeping fleet at will. What stops them from doing so? Your land-based air, that's what.

Finally, it is wise to remember that your carrier-based air is *not* used like land-based air against enemy air units. Those CV airstrike ratings are used only against enemy ships, not to provide CAP against LBA. Your carriers might shoot the LBA down just like other ships, but not until the LBA make their attack against the ships. Planes can come back, sunken ships cannot. Take the hint and don't operate your carriers under the enemy's LBA when you don't have any of your own to counter them.

**Planes are powerful, but they need airbases to be used at "The Front."** This is a key concept that is different from most strategic WW2 games. None of your air units are deployed on the map itself. Instead, they are used at "The Front" when called for, either in a naval or land battle. The number of planes that can be sent to "The Front" (actually a player-aid card that represents the location where the battle is occurring) depends on the number of airbases you have. In a land combat, the number of your airbases is equal to the number of armies you have involved in combat; six armies, six airbases. Since tanks take up

less space at the front, an army with tank units can bring more air units to bear against the enemy, if they are available. At sea, it's the number of airbases (armies or garrisons) within air range, which is two hexes for everyone but the Japanese, who get three hexes. Air units conduct air-to-air combat if both players send planes to the front, but the player with air superiority (i.e. more planes) will be able to launch airstrikes against any armies or ships at the front. This is important, because if they hit, armies are sent to the shattered box and do not take place in the following ground combat. It is possible to clear a hex with planes alone. If your armies don't have to fight, then they don't have to worry about being "flipped" and therefore unusable for the rest of the turn; they can keep moving and fighting until they are flipped. Avoiding flipping is the key to maintaining offensive momentum.

**Production is not a function of counting resource points of some sort.** In most strategic WW2 games, in order to produce units you count up your resource points, be they BRPs, ERPs, RPs or what have you, then spend a certain amount of for a certain type of unit (infantry, tanks, planes) in your force pool to put them on the map or a production spiral to enter a few turns away. *Not* in **AV**. There is no point counting or tracking. Instead, each major power gets a fixed number of infantry each turn, representing manpower limits. For example, the British get but one infantry unit a turn, the Germans only two until they are at Total War, and then they get four. The Soviets can get as many as nine, but none until they enter the war except by event. Each power has factories which can be used to produce (or replace) tanks, planes, and ships, one unit of each type per turn per factory committed to produce that type of unit. Rebuilding shattered units can be done at 1/3 the price of building a new unit from the force pool. That's it on production. Strategic Warfare can be used to delay the arrival of enemy units. That's all it does, but that's quite important, since no power except maybe the Soviets will be producing hordes of units each turn. Slowing down the arrival of reinforcements will erode the ability of your enemy to wage war.

**Considerations in Europe for September, 1939.** There are always loads of special rules for the beginning of any WW2 game, and **AV** is no exception. Importantly, the Nazi-Soviet pact is in force at the beginning of the game, meaning that the first Allied (actually UN, in the game) action must be the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland, or the Soviets sacrifice those hexes to the Germans. They do not have to enter those hexes, but if they do, the two Polish units in Eastern Poland are removed. Note that the Pact does *not* include the Baltic States or parts of Romania in this game. I presume their absorption into the USSR is controlled by events, but I don't know; I haven't cheated and read ahead!

As I mentioned above, Polish setup is fixed, so there is nothing the UN player can do about it. The Italians set up next, and don't forget that they have forces in Italian East Africa, which will be in play in this game. Graziani is supposed to start in Italy, but was left off even in the revised setup instructions. The Italians should be set up with care, recognizing they don't get any reinforcements except by event until they enter the war. However, the rules make it a bad idea for the UN to attack a neutral Italy. I won't go into detail, and it is allowed, but it will reduce US production and slow US entry in the World Conflict scenarios, plus make the Italians harder to defeat. Italy cannot go romping into Yugoslavia or Greece in the opening turns on its own accord, nor can they attack the UN. A defensive setup is probably warranted.

The Soviets set up next, and have little to fear from an immediate attack from Germany, especially as there is no guarantee that the weather anywhere will be clear, even in Poland, on the first turn; there is no freebie on the first turn. And, the Polish army can leave Poland and potentially attack Berlin if the Germans attempt to ignore them. Since Soviets can't go running amok invading adjacent minors like they can in some other games, a conservative setup is probably the best choice. The Winter War against Finland, if it occurs, is handled as an event.

France sets up next. Remember that they have a "surrender" city in Algeria, and that the creation of Vichy France is not a foregone conclusion in this game. Likely, but not guaranteed, and the Germans may decline the formation of Vichy France. The French have a decent army and air force, especially when added to the British, but of course they cannot cooperate with each other except in a coastal hex in France (although at this scale, 7 of the 12 hexes of France are coastal hexes) for many turns. Even so, armies cannot call the air units of different countries to the front, with a few exceptions. Just like attacking Italy, attacking into Germany early is a bad idea in this game. If the UN player enters a hex of Germany, it automatically puts Germany on a Total War footing, doubling infantry recruitment. As the rules suggest, if the UN is going to attack Germany in 1939, better make sure it works, or there will be hordes of Germans available for Barbarossa.

The British of course have an ample navy and very few ground units to start. They get a tank in Egypt and a couple of HQs, but most of the armies start in England. Note the unusual Gibraltar rules: it is *not* the impenetrable fortress that most games make it, but it does require an overland attack through Spain in order to take it. It cannot be amphibiously assaulted, and its map location in the scale provided is a bit unusual. Ships are easily placed to cork the Med and the North Sea. Kiel is within range of potential LBA naval strikes if there are airbases in range, so keep that in mind. There is a significant army in India which will become available as the game progresses (yes, the "European" map extends east as far as India, and includes all of Africa as well).

The Americans are locked into an off-map box in Scenario 1, but will deploy on the map in a World Conflict game. Entry is fixed for the Americans in Scenario 1, in Jan/Feb 1942. Their reinforcements will arrive only by event until at war.

Germany gets to set up last. Of concern in setup is a potential UN attack in the West, plus the potential for a Polish attack towards Berlin if things go badly. Total War bonus or not, you don't want to give the French an open road to Berlin. As I mentioned, there is no guarantee that the weather will be good on the first turn, and so if the Germans plan for the easy walkover and the weather turns out to be mud or snow(!) in September/October, there may be problems. The important thing to realize is that if the Poles are out of supply, they cannot move across the border. The second thing to remember is that there is a factory in Danzig that can provide supply, and if it isn't taken as well as Warsaw, then a stack of three Polish armies in Western Poland will actually have a choice as to what to do, including trying to take Berlin in addition to reinforcing or trying to retake Warsaw. So German deployment should probably be designed to overwhelm Poland, taking both Danzig and Warsaw. Doing that will isolate the Western Polish forces, which can then only attack if there is a mathematical chance of winning the battle. The Germans have a lot of planes to start the game, the Poles have none available and cannot call on French or Brit-

(Continued on page 24)

# The Solitaire Game

by Bob Best

Welcome Solitaire Gamers! Today we are going to talk about Legion Wargames' newest release **Target For Today!** Legion Wargames has shipped all pre-orders for the game, and it should be in gamers' hands by now. The game has gotten a pretty good response from players who own the game and who have posted their thoughts and reviews on the Consimworld forum, on Boardgamegeek, and on the Solitaire Wargames group on Facebook. If you haven't purchased a copy yet and you think you might be interested in the game's subject matter, you can read reviews of **TFT** at those three locations.

Here is a short introduction of what **Target For Today!** is about.

**Target For Today!** is a solitaire game that recreates American's Daylight Strategic Bombing Campaign against Nazi Occupied Europe during the Second World War. The player can fly either as a member of the 8th Air Force flying out of England or the 15th Air Force flying out of Italy. There are six different bombing campaigns that cover the entire war from the American perspective.

The player is in command of an individual bomber on an individual mission over Hitler's Third Reich—flying either the B-17F or G Model Flying Fortress, or the B-24D, or J Model Liberator bomber. The YB-40 Escort Bomber has also been included and can be flown by the player.

**TFT** is designed so that each individual mission is fast and easy to play. A series of individual missions are strung together in the campaign game to form the player's tour of duty. Just as it was in real life, the objective of the game for the player is to survive his tour of duty so he can rotate home. The campaign game that comprises his tour of duty offers the player a game that is rich in detail, making the game as realistic as possible, while still remaining playable. There are a number of optional rules included in the game to allow the player to expand the complexity and the realism of flying a bomber deep into the 3rd Reich. These rules include; lead crews, radar bombing, optional start dates for German jet interceptors, Jg-26 the Abbeville Kids, early and late bombing formations, and much more. There is even a Squadron Game where you can fly your mission and determine the fate of the rest of the bombers in your squadron accompanying you to the target. A detailed target listing covers all six campaigns in **TFT**. There are a number of German aircraft types including jets that appear in the game.

The solitaire play of **Target For Today!** lets the player enjoy a single mission or campaign game when alone or gives the added option to join one of the groups of players running their own Bomb Wings that are being run on the internet and in various other game forums. The 509<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing is one such group. The group is structured like a real bomber wing. They have a HQ that issues the next target and mission information for the bomb wing. Each player then runs his own bomber game for that target and posts the mission results with the bomb wing at the conclusion of the mission. This gives a real feeling of actually belonging to a bomb wing and participating in a real bombing mission.

With so many people playing **TFT**, there has been some interesting discussions at both Boardgamegeek's forum and CSW's forum about the game and about real life bomber operations during the Strategic Bombing Campaign. I recommend

prospective game buyers and anyone who owns the game already to check out both forums. As is expected, errata for the game is also being posted there. Co-Designer Steve Dixon also is posting errata and extras that could not be published with the game on his website. Errata for **TFT** can be found at:

[http://www.stevenkdixon.com/TFT\\_errata.htm](http://www.stevenkdixon.com/TFT_errata.htm)

For those of you who do not own the game, here is an idea of how a mission would unfold taken from The **Target For Today!** rules booklet. Specific game mechanics are not shown, but this gives you an idea of what the game is about.

## (Designer Notes:) The Anatomy Of A Bombing Mission

Here is the background within which the player will be flying their bombing missions in **Target For Today!**

You, as the pilot of your bomber, have just left the briefing hut. You meet your crew, jump into a jeep, and drive to the flight line where your crew chief has your bomber ready to go. You make the customary walk-around, but you know you will find nothing wrong, as your ground crew is top-notch. Boarding your bomber, you go through the start-up check list. When the engines are purring smoothly and all the crew members check in on the intercom saying that everything is A-OK, you give the thumbs up to the Crew Chief who pulls the wheel chocks. You taxi out and join the other bombers on the taxiway waiting to take off. That comes quickly as bombers take off at 30 second intervals. You retract the landing gear and start climbing to rendezvous with the multi-colored "formation bomber" that flies lazy circles over the British country side while the bomb group sorts itself out into the defensive combat boxes for the mission. (This occurs in zone 1 on the Strategic Mission Track).

Later in the war, the bombing missions could number upwards of 1000 bombers. Early war missions numbered from 100 to 300 bombers. Depending on the number of bombers the bombing formation may cover several miles in length as it moves toward its target.

German radar and ground observer stations report the buildup of bombers assembling over England. It takes time to assemble large bombing missions. The German fighter direction stations have time to alert the defending German fighter groups. Pilots move to their planes and await word on the direction and possible target of the bombing strike. The Germans wait to order the fighters into the air until they can determine where the main effort will come. Some fighter units stage to outlying airfields closer to the projected path of the bombing mission.

With larger raids, the Americans will send smaller groups of bombers to attack lesser targets to create a diversion to distract and confuse the German Fighter Direction Centers, but today your bomber is assigned to the main strike, a target deep in Germany. Your Bomb Group has assembled with bombers from other wings and air divisions in the 8th Air Force and today's bombing mission now turns toward Germany. You enter what has become known as the "Bomber Autobahn" that leads from England across the channel to the Dutch coast and then into the heart of Germany. (This occurs in zones 2 to 15 on the Strategic Mission Track).

While your bombers are forming up so are your fighter escorts. They will be assembling and will meet your bombers along the "Bomber Autobahn" providing you an escort. The



fighter groups are assigned to escort the bombers in certain areas and are then relieved by fresh escort units for the next leg of the mission.

As you approach the Dutch coast line your bomb group makes its first turn. The bombing formations make several turns during the mission to avoid known anti-aircraft artillery (Flak) concentrations and also to try to confuse the Germans as to the true target of the mission.

The German strategy is to watch the raid form and when it starts toward the continent, they will order their fighters into the air with the idea of assembling a large group of attacking fighters in the path of the oncoming bombers. The attacking fighters will form two groups, an attack group for the bombers, and a high group that will attempt to intercept the American fighter escorts. The Germans might field between 200 and 400 fighters.

When the German fighters engage the bomber formations, combat may run for 50 to 100 miles before the fighters disengage to land, refuel, and rearm at staging airfields positioned along the "Bomber Autobahn." The fighters will take off and again intercept the bomber formations, continuing their attacks. There may be lulls in the fighting as the German fighters cannot engage all of the bombers. It might be a "milk-run" for your group but sheer terror for another bomb group just ahead or behind your combat box.

German fighters will attack right up until the bombers begin receiving heavy anti-aircraft fire at the target. (This is the target zone on the Strategic Mission Track). This is when you will turn your bomber onto the bomb run and fly straight and level for up to a minute to allow your bombardier to line up on the target and drop the bombs. This is probably the longest minute of your life, as heavy flak bursts around your plane and many bombers are lost on the bomb run.

Surviving the bomb run, you turn your bomber back toward your base. The German fighters have landed, refueled and re-armed at staging bases along the bomber's flight path. They are now forming to attack you on your return flight.

Allied fighter escorts are also flying toward you to provide escort against the attackers. More running gun fights ensue as your formation makes its way home.

Thankfully, your bomber received little damage and you did not have to leave the protection of the formation to become a straggler and easy prey for the patrolling German fighters. You finally cross the English coast and you can see your airbase ahead. The landing goes well, and you are met by your crew chief and driven back to the debriefing hut.

Many missions lasted 6-8 hours, and the strain on the crew was monumental. You survived this mission and tomorrow you will be doing it all over again!

You can find the "Solitaire Wargames" group on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/298935643609045/?ref=bookmarks>

If you are not a member of Facebook and the AHIKS Facebook page, I heartily recommend that you join. There is a lot of really great gaming information available there.

Until Next Time, Happy Gaming!



## From the Editor

Many thanks to Chris Hancock and Jeff Miller for giving us some insight into the WBC. I received nothing else (yet) about the convention, so I assume they were the only AHIKS members present. Too bad. It is always good to hear another viewpoint.

The Charles Roberts game contest is no longer active, I assume. I don't know why; there are certainly enough games to choose from. Anyone have any insight?

Your Editor has another brief review of yet another military museum. I imagine I could almost pronounce myself an expert on military museums. I could go on late-night programs and wow an international audience, mentioning little bits of information that would yank them out of their chairs. Well...maybe not.

As you will notice on page 12 (where the addresses of all the officers are printed) that the deadline for the next issue is September 30. All contributions are welcome. Wouldn't you like to see your name in print?



Guns from the National Military Museum in Bucharest

## Open Match Requests from Duncan Rice

<b>Adv Squad Leader MMP</b> Afrika Korps AH	<b>Jim Reimer 1877</b> Alexander Martin 939
<b>Armageddon S&amp;T 34</b> Battle of the Bulge '65 AH	<b>Mike Dyer 1874 EV</b> Roger Greezicki 1865 P
<b>Battle of the Bulge AH</b>	<b>Tom Yoder 1813 V</b>
<b>Battle for Germany SPI</b> Bitter Woods CG	<b>Stephen Arthur 1876 ELV</b> Joe Ryan 1854 E
<b>Blackbeard</b>	<b>Jim Reimer 1877</b>
<b>Bloody Buna #W</b>	<b>Mike Dyer 1874 EV</b>
<b>Blue and Gray II SPI</b>	<b>Mark Willmorth 1885</b>
<b>DDay 77 AH</b> Flat Top AH	<b>Roger Greezicki 1865 P</b> Chris Hyland 1862 EGV
<b>Flight of the Goeben S&amp;T 21</b>	<b>Mike Dyer 1874 EV</b>
<b>Flight Leader</b>	<b>Scott McAninch 1718 P</b>
<b>Gettysburg 64 AH</b>	<b>Roger Greezicki 1865 P</b>
<b>Grenadier SPI</b> To Green Fields Beyond SPI	<b>Mike Dyer 1874 EV</b> John Troskey 1554 CV
<b>Napoleon's Last Battles TSR</b>	<b>Mark Willmorth 1885</b>
<b>Operation Typhoon SPI</b>	<b>Thomas Ten Eyck 826 EP</b>
<b>Renaissance of Infantry S&amp;T 22</b>	<b>Mike Dyer 1874 EV</b>
<b>Rise/Decline of Third Reich AH</b>	<b>Tom Yoder 1813 V</b> Scott Saunders 1664
<b>Richthofen's War AH</b>	<b>Scott McAninch 1718 P</b>
<b>Rhchthofen's War AH</b>	<b>Michael Paul 1586 P</b>
<b>Russia Besieged L2</b>	<b>Roger Eastep 291 V</b>
<b>Seelowe SPI</b>	<b>Roger Greezicki 1865 P</b>
<b>Stalingrad 2ed AH</b>	<b>Andrew Patience 1646 V</b>
<b>Storm Over Dien Bien Phu MMP</b>	<b>Martin Sabais 1711 EVSL</b>
<b>Tac Air AH</b>	<b>Mike Dyer 1874 EV</b>
<b>Tactical Game 3 PP</b>	<b>Martin Sabais 1711 EVSL</b>
<b>Turning Point Stalingrad AH</b>	

### 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: [DUNCANR@TELUS.NET](mailto:DUNCANR@TELUS.NET)

## 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.

1878 Alex McPerson, Surrey, Canada  
 1879 John Mott, Auburn, AL  
 1880 William Hay, Dallas, TX  
 1881 Jeff Benedict, Rochester, NY  
 1882 Cary Belger, Calgary, Canada  
 1883 George Bott, Tulsa, OK  
 1884 Bert Schoose, Delray Beach, FL  
 1885 Mark Wilmoth, Porter Ranch, CA  
 1886 Ronald Plunk, San Bernardino, CA

## Multiplayer Games

If you are interested in playing any of the following games, contact Jeff Miller (address on page 12).

Advanced Third Reich – Tom Thorsen (470) V – learning/backup  
 Crown of Roses GMT – Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 Diplomacy – Jim Williams [1276]  
 Dune – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Empires of the Middle Ages – Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 En Garde – Jeff Miller [1303] EG  
 Flat Top – Bob Dowrey (1507) V  
 Gunslinger AH - Matt Scheffrahn 1844 VMG  
 Kremlin – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 The Longest Day – Alex Martin [939]  
 World at War GMT – Jeff Miller [1303] Warplanner

## The Cabinet War Rooms

(A.K.A. The Match Coordinator's Office)  
 by Duncan Rice

Take a good look at the match request list. It's much smaller than usual. That's because anything over a year old has been removed. If you have any requests that you would like to have put back on you must contact me with a new request. This especially goes for postal players, such as Mel Yarwood, who keep requests active for quite some time with limited ability to communicate with me. There are also quite a few postal games looking for opponents and a lot of new requests, printed in red. Lastly, I have an often repeated reminder. When you make a match request give me information. Who is the publisher? What format do you want to play by? And whatever else you can think of. Get on it!

The **Breakout Normandy** tournament is under way. The first round has another couple of months to completion. This will likely be a long tournament, and I hope to have some updates for the next issue of this newsletter.

An odd thing has happened within AHKS. We have a Classic **Traveller** campaign going on Facebook. It's a bit slow to start as we get the hang of things, but I plan on 'locking things down' (that's for you Steve) in September. If it goes well I may tie in to a face-to-face game because two of the players are local. If you're in the campaign, please remember that the focus is on roleplaying. Have fun and pretend like you're 15 years old again and making pretend. Dice rolling is secondary to shared story telling.

Check the list! Communicate! Play a game!



## After-Action Report—**Silent Victory Game**

### USS Seadog's Fourth Patrol Report

by Bob Best

#### USS Seadog's Fourth Patrol Report

Here is USS Seadog's (SS-401) fourth and final war patrol report for the last game turn of the **Silent Victory** campaign game on the AHKS Forum at [www.ahiks.com/forum](http://www.ahiks.com/forum).

#### The Patrol Report:

USS Seadog put to sea on the 28 June 1945 from Pearl Harbor. LCDR "Rusty" Gates, Seadog's Captain, stood at the bridge rail looking aft. The coastline of Oahu, Hawaii Territory, was slowly "sinking" into the ocean about 12 miles behind them. It was a warm afternoon and Seadog was heading west toward the Japanese Empire for another war patrol.

Seadog's mission was to perform Life Guard duty off the coast of the Japan for Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet that was heading north from Leyte to conduct bombing raids on the Japanese home islands. Naval aviators would be bombing targets in a series of raids that stretched from Tokyo to the island of Hokkaido during the next month.

Seadog made good time as she transited to Empire waters. There were no contacts in route. Seadog arrived on station on July 9 in time for Halsey's first raid on Tokyo on July 10. Seadog diligently surfaced at her designated station in daylight off the coast where she could pick up any flyers that received damage during the raids and were forced to ditch. Seadog had no "customers" during any of the scheduled raids. Between strikes, Seadog patrolled the coast line looking for shipping. The ocean was empty of Japanese shipping. After being released from Life Guard duty, Seadog moved south to her assigned patrol area for the remainder of her patrol time.

Seadog was running on the surface just after daylight. Captain Gates had positioned Seadog so the rising sun was to her back and it would make her hard to spot as they watched the coast line for signs of shipping.

"Radar contact - Surface, Captain" said the talker. "Bearing 030 degrees at 8 miles." Gates swung his glasses to starboard. Gates could make out a plume of smoke. Looking more closely, he could see a second plume and then a third.

"It looked like a destroyer leading several merchantmen," said Gates. "Plot an intercept course!" The talker relayed the message to the conning tower crew below deck. Seadog turned to intercept.

The convoy was making about 8 knots and zig-zagging. After carefully plotting the zig-zags Gates had positioned Seadog in the convoy's path for the attack.

He was watching the convoy now through the periscope. Seadog had closed to medium range and Gates was preparing to fire. They had two large fat freighters and a smaller freighter in line astern with a 935 ton Momi class destroyer coming up between the Marus and Seadog, a perfect setup. Gates decided to fire five forward tubes with the Mk-27 "Cutie" being held in reserve for the escort if needed.

"The leader is beginning his turn to port now," said the navigation officer as he continued to plot the convoy's course at the plotting table. Gates was doing the "dance" at the periscope with his Exec as he began calling out target bearings.

Then came "Fire One! Fire Two!" as Gates sent a Mk-14 and a Mk-18 at each of the large freighters and a single Mk-18 at the small freighter.

"Down Scope. Take her to 300 feet!" said Gates as he snapped up the handles on the periscope. The scope tube hissed as it descended into the deck.

The Torpedo Officer had the stop watches looped around his neck. The time came and went for all five torpedoes. NOTHING!

"I'll be Damned... ALL DUDS!" exclaimed Gates.

Sonar reported the speed of the screws did not change on any of the ships. The escort must have failed to spot the wakes of the two Mark 14s.

On the 6th of August Seadog took up station off of the Bungo Channel leading into the Sea of Japan

They decided to roll the dice and follow the convoy they had spotted. After surfacing and getting off a contact report, Gates turned up flank speed and ran an "end around" to get ahead of the convoy. Just before dark, Gates repositioned Seadog in front of the convoy. This time, Seadog found three small freighters in line astern being guarded by a 1,390 ton Minakaze Class Destroyer. Gates fired two Mk-14s at the escort and three Mk-18s at the largest of the freighters, the 2,700 ton Shinkyu Maru. Both ships were sunk and Seadog evaded the escorts.

Gates decided to roll the dice again and continue to follow the convoy. In a night surface attack at medium range, Gates fired the remaining Mk-18s from the forward tubes and then turned to fire the rear tubes at a large freighter and the escort. There was no dice roll penalty, as Gates has a Navy Cross. All torpedoes hit and Seadog was credited with a 1390 ton Minakaze Class destroyer and the 6400 ton Passenger liner Ural Maru.

The convoy made good its escape as Seadog was able to avoid the convoy escorts.

On the morning of August 6th Seadog was tasked with another Lifeguard assignment. She was surfaced and standing at her assigned position several miles south east of the Bungo Channel. Seadog's crew was at battle stations and Gates was on the bridge. At 0815 hours local time a brilliant white flash lit up the daytime sky. It was followed by a muffled Booooo! All eyes turned toward the light. In the far distance, over what the navigator later estimated was Hiroshima, a large mushroom shaped cloud rose into the upper stratosphere.

Seadog was over 60 miles away, and her crew could see the mushroom cloud from the first atomic bomb that detonated over Hiroshima. There was stunned silence among the crew at the raw power of the atomic explosion that was unleashed.

Seadog continued patrolling her area. Through radio messages, Seadog learned that a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on the 9th of August and still the Japanese failed to surrender. In the evening hours of August 14, Seadog picked up a small freighter with an escort moving north up the coast toward Tokyo.

Running on the surface, Gates was able to identify the freighter as the 1900 ton Kotoku Maru and a 935 ton Momi Class Destroyer. Gates still had 2 Mk-18 and one Mk-14 torpedo aft along with two Mk-27 and two mk-27s forward so he increased speed and maneuvered to cut off the two ships. At 0010 hours on 15 August, the Momi class destroyer passed to

the far side of the freighter. Gates gave the order to turn Seadog into the target and stand by to fire.

Gates was looking through the TBT and lining up the freighter to fire the remaining torpedoes aft.

"Captain!...Flash message from ComSubPac," said the talker.

Gates looked up from the TBT at the talker. "What does it say?"

**From Admiral Nimitz/CincPac**

**To: All naval units:**

**CEASE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS AGAINST JAPANESE FORCES. CONTINUE SEARCH AND PATROLS. MAINTAIN DEFENSIVE AND INTERNAL SECURITY MEASURES AT HIGHEST LEVEL AND BEWARE OF TREACHERY OR LAST MOMENT ATTACKS BY ENEMY FORCES OR INDIVIDUALS.**

**Signed Lockwood/ ComSubPac.**

So ends the war for the USS Seadog. She returned from her 4th and final war patrol with a freighter and a passenger ship and two destroyers sunk for total of 11,425 tons of shipping to her credit!

The Life Guarding mission was unsuccessful but Seadog survived the war.

Captain Gates received the Bronze Star for sinking four ships.

Seadog will be returned to CONUS in October 1945.



Romanians, from the National Military Museum in Bucharest.

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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: September 30, 2017.**

### **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.

## Game News

### Avalanche Press

**Alamein**, History's Turning Point, 1942. The game system is the most involved we've published, the same as that in **Island of Death** and in some of our earlier games that are now out of print like **Red Steel and Red Parachutes**. Each day is divided into four game turns. At the beginning of each day, players receive reinforcements and artillery ammunition. Players then alternate turns conducting movement, bombardments and attacks. Units that achieved breakthroughs during combat have the chance to attack again if their formation leader successfully activates them.

Units are grouped in formations — divisions and some brigades. Players make most of their decisions based on what they want these formations to do, and then move the battalions that make up the formation to execute it. Formation identification is important for assigning artillery support, executing breakthroughs, and many other game functions. Each unit's formation affiliation is indicated by the historically-accurate symbol in the upper left corner of the playing piece (several Italian divisions have their provincial flag instead, as Italian infantry division badges were very plain).

Ground units are rated for attack and defense strength and morale. Combat is resolved via a tried-and-true odds-based table; a differential in morale is a serious advantage (for example, if a unit with an attack strength of 2 and morale of 6 attacked a unit with a defense strength of 2 and morale of 4, the odds of the attack would be raised from 1:1 to 3:1 for the +2 morale differential).

Tank units are rated for all of the above, plus armor quality. Armored vehicles battle one another in a separate armored combat step, and also have to face anti-tank guns. Differential in values is again the key, and both sides have some very capable tanks (the German PzKw IV "Special" or British Sherman) and some poor ones (the Italian M13/40). Warfare in the desert will be decided by tanks, and though the Axis has at this point highly-skilled formations like the two Afrika Korps panzer divisions or the Italian Ariete division, the Allies have many more tanks.

Artillery units are rated for offensive and defensive support. Each artillery unit has a corresponding support marker that's placed on its target hex. These can be used twice before the unit's ammunition supply must be replenished. The Allies over time have a much greater supply of artillery ammunition, allowing them to use their artillery much more freely than the Axis.

New to this system is a game-within-a-game for air combat. Every air squadron that participated in the campaign is present, rated for air-to-air combat (attack and defense) and bombing strength. Players assign squadrons to missions, and if they obtain air superiority can do great damage to the other side's supply infrastructure — a key concern of the Axis player, who is badly outnumbered in the air.

Scenarios include the Australian and South African spoiling attack in mid-July, the late June battle for the Mersa Matruh position where slow response almost cost the Commonwealth the bulk of the New Zealand Division, the first Axis attack on the Alamein line in early July, the last Axis attack to break the Allied line at Alam el Halfa at the end of August, Operation

Lightfoot: the Eighth Army's attack against the Axis line in late October and the massive campaign from the end of June to the beginning of November 1942. \$150

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

### Compass Games

**Revolution Road** contains two separate games encompassing the two Massachusetts flashpoints that ignited the American Revolutionary War in 1775; the running battle between the Colonists and British regulars in the trek to and from Concord and the epic Battle of Bunker Hill that followed. Not only does this title provide two separate engagements but several scenarios for each as well as high solitaire capability multiple solitaire scenarios. The games provide a simple approach to gaming concepts while providing a goodly dose of historical background—eminently usable as a teaching tool.

**Revolution Road** is played in a series of turns. The actions players perform in each turn follow a specific sequence: reinforcements are placed, the number of actions available for each player is set, players alternate performing actions, and finally the board is prepped for the next turn. The cards contain information for both the Patriot player and the British player. This helps to simulate the ebb and flow of battle; some cards provide more actions for the Colonists during a turn while others provide more actions for the British. Actions vary from game to game. Some cards indicate random search results.

**Revolution Road** offers a number of unique mechanics. Nightriders stand out the most. These units represent the brave men like Paul Revere and others who warned the countryside of the advancing regulars. Their action brings about alerting and mustering of troops, minutemen and militia. Minutemen are relatively weak but stable and more mobile. Militia strength varies and sometimes hesitates in battle. As the American player organizes resistance the British Player searches for hidden arms and is sometimes rewarded for his effort. In **Bunker Hill** we offer players the option of alternate landing zones, shore bombardment, the torching of Charlestown, and the dangerous trek across Charlestown Neck.

These two battles present two entirely different tactical conflicts. In **Boston to Concord** players range far and wide performing a variety of actions while engaging in minor skirmishes and only occasionally pitched battle. **Bunker Hill** is nothing but one long and bloody pitched battle with American reinforcements trickling in every turn as the English juggernaut bears down on their objectives. The actions that are available to players are varied by game which allow for the tactical differences of the two conflicts while maintaining a central game structure for both games. \$55 <https://www.compassgames.com/preorders/revolution-road.html>



**Commands & Colors Tricorne - The American Revolution** is not overly complex. The game is based on the highly successful Commands & Colors game system, where the Command cards drive movement while creating a “fog of war” and the battle dice resolve combat quickly and efficiently. **Commands & Colors Tricorne - The American Revolution**, however, introduces many new game concepts, which will add historical depth and provide even the most veteran Commands & Colors player many new play experiences and challenges.

The scale of the game fluctuates, which allows players to effectively portray some of the larger American Revolution battles, as well as smaller size skirmish actions. In some scenarios, an infantry unit may represent an entire brigade, while in others a unit may only represent a few companies of soldiers. Still the linear tactics of the period, that you will need to execute to gain victory, conform remarkably well to the advantages and limitations inherent to the various American Revolution Armies of the day, and the battlefield terrain features on which they fought. To further emphasize the differences in battlefield doctrine between the British and Continental forces, each army has its own unique deck of Combat cards.

Players, that are familiar with other Commands & Colors games, will soon note that unit combat losses in a **Tricorne** game are typically not as great as other games covered in the Commands & Colors series. This is a direct result of the linear tactic fighting style of the armies that fought during the American Revolution. Unit morale is the main thematic focus in a **Tricorne** battle as it was historically. Knowing that an entire unit, that has only taken minimal losses when forced to retreat, may actually break and rout from the battlefield, will definitely keep players on the edge of their command chairs during an entire battle.

The 12 battles, showcased in the scenario section of this booklet, feature a stylized battlefield map that emphasize the important terrain features and highlight the historical deployment of forces in scale with the game system. These scenarios are a smattering of some of the better-known engagements of the American Revolution. \$100  
<https://www.compassgames.com/preorders/commands-colors-tricorne-the-american-revolution.html>

**Sovereign Of the Seas** is an uncomplicated war game centered on the naval aspects of the series of wars between England and the various European powers between 1756 and 1805 for dominance of the world’s oceans.

The game depicts this conflict at a strategic level, with most operational and tactical details represented by fast and easy-to-play systems, rather than intricate mechanisms. The intent of the game is to provide a broad overview of the historical events while being fun to play. **Sovereign Of the Seas** owes its original inspiration to the game concepts of **War At Sea** published by The Avalon Hill Game Company, a game which covered the war in the Atlantic in World War Two. **Sovereign Of the Seas** borrows a number of these concepts from this earlier game as a starting point, such as area movement, individual capital ships, individual leaders, battle line resolutions, and rolling sixes to hit, and then diverges significantly to reflect the sailing warship era situation.

The object of the game for the English player is to destroy the naval forces of the European Powers player and prevent them from obtaining control of vital sea areas around the world. The object of the game for the European Powers player is to escape the forces of the English player and obtain temporary sea control of vital areas to support the continental and colonial objectives of various European nations. The game uses over 650 counters, one full size map, and numerous organization cards and play aid sheets. Designer: Stephen Newberg. \$110 <https://www.compassgames.com/preorders/sovereign-of-the-seas.html>



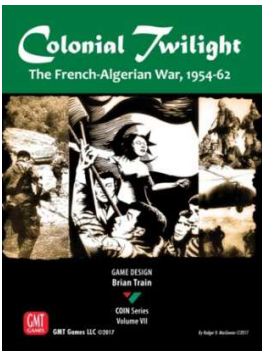
## GMT Games

**Colonial Twilight: The French-Algerian War, 1954-62.** November 1, 1954: On the eve of All Saint’s Day, armed members of the *Front de Liberation Nationale* (FLN) arose in revolt across Algeria against the French colonial government. The authorities suppressed these first incidents quickly, but this date marked the beginning of an eight-year war that saw hundreds of thousands of casualties, widespread atrocities and reprisals, political and social turmoil, and the effective end of the French Empire.

**Colonial Twilight** takes 1 to 2 players into the tangled web of military and political actions comprising this anti-colonialist struggle. The Insurgent, starting from modest beginnings, must build massive and enduring popular support for his cause and organize to assume power when Algeria finally gains its independence. The Government, representing both the colonial authorities and France’s military leadership, must engage the nationalist insurgency decisively while striving to preserve the support of the civilian government and society.

Players will enter the “heart of darkness” as they use military, political, and economic actions and exploit events to build and maneuver forces to influence or control the population or otherwise achieve their aims along the twisting route to independence. Subversion, torture, factionalism, *coups d’etat*, forced resettlement, foreign sanctuaries, ambushes, “neutralization”... the whole grim catalog of a pitiless war is there, with a political and moral legacy that French society is only now beginning to confront.





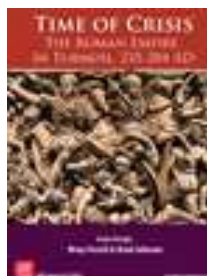
This latest installment in GMT's popular COIN Series system is the first to be designed for two players. You must consider carefully just what you want to do, and how much of it, before the initiative will slip from your fingers. Also, a full solitaire system enables solo players to test their skill against a devious game-run enemy. \$75 <https://www.gmtgames.com/p-548-colonial-twilight-the-french-algerian-war-1954-62.aspx>

**Time of Crisis** During the Crisis of the Third Century, the Roman Empire nearly collapsed in the face of calamitous internal and external strife, including continuous civil war and barbarian invasions from all directions. Beginning with the assassination of Emperor Alexander Severus, a period of 50 years saw nearly as many different men seize imperial power over all or part of the Empire, until the reforms of Diocletian in 284 AD ushered in an era of peace.

In **Time of Crisis**, 2-4 players take the reins of Roman dynasties, gathering and wielding influence among the senate, military, and people of Rome to ensure that their legacies are remembered by history instead of being lost to the mists of time. Starting from control of one province and a few low-value cards, you are challenged to establish your base of power during this fragile period of Roman history. You must build your armies, take control of valuable provinces, develop your support, and defend yourself against barbarian incursions, inopportune events, and the machinations of your political opponents.

**Time of Crisis** is easy to learn and playable in about 2-3 hours. It incorporates popular game mechanisms such as deck-building and hand management, but also delivers a true light wargame experience. The historical flavor is strong, with many meaningful decisions and opportunities presented to players on the board. This game finally fully closes the loop between deck-building card games and board games. Your cards dictate what actions are available to you on the board, and in turn, your position on the board directly determines how you can add or remove cards from your deck to make yourself stronger for future turns. Will you specialize in manipulating the Senate, wielding the power of the Legions, or being a man of the People? Or will you master a blend of all three? In a twist unlike most deck-building games, you have the privilege of selecting the cards that compose your hand each turn! However, you still need to eventually work through your entire deck before you can use your cards again, so deck management and timing is critical.

All of the key elements of the era are present in **Time of Crisis**: civil wars between competing generals and governors, Roman legions defending the frontiers against barbarian tribes, Senate favoritism, barracks emperors, even angry mobs, inflation, the Praetorian Guard, and the ability to carve off your own piece of the Roman Empire. Can your dynasty arise as the new leaders of the Roman Empire before Diocletian emerges and brings peace once again? \$65 <http://www.gmtgames.com/p-513-time-of-crisis.aspx>



**Grigglng Games**

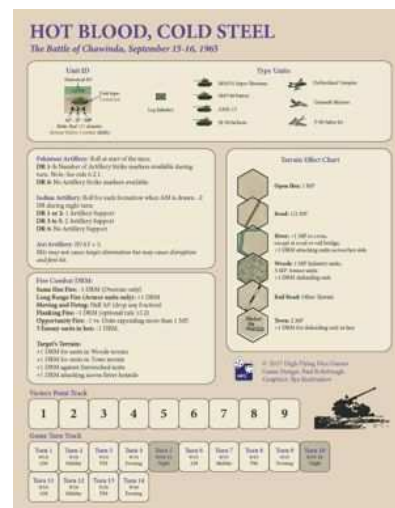
**1914** is the next title in the critically acclaimed Quartermaster General series by Ian Brody. The game plays between two and 5 players, and takes about an hour and a half to play. If you don't know the Quartermaster General series, these games are light, card-driven wargames, but with an emphasis on teamwork. The games play like Euro strategy games, and are enjoyed by wargamers and non-wargamers alike.

Based on the innovative card driven mechanics to be found in the original Quartermaster General game, Ian has cleverly adapted and modified the core engine to reflect the flavour and the First World War to give another brilliantly exciting, easy to learn, fun game with a lot of replayability. Each game in the Quartermaster General system differs to reflect the conflict being represented. \$50 <http://www.grigglngames.com/shop/euro/quartermaster-general-1914/>



**High Flying Dice Games**

**Hot Blood, Cold Steel**, The Battle of Chawinda, September 15-16, 1965, is a wargame simulation of the climatic battle fought near Chawinda, India. On September 1, 1965, Pakistani forces launched Operation Grand Slam, an offensive intended to secure approaches to Jammu and Kashmir provinces from India. Outnumbered Indian frontier forces fought desperate holding actions that successfully held the Pakistanis to limited gains that brought them to the outskirts of their objective, the town of Phillora. On September 15, Indian forces launched their counter-attack, Operation Riddle, that sought to throw back the Pakistanis and take back the crucial crossroads town of Chawinda. What ensued was the largest tank battle of the post-WWII era to that date, one that would only be eclipsed by the 1973 Yom Kippur War. \$8 <http://www.hfdgames.com/hbcs.html>



**Breaking Teeth, Battle of Teruel, December 15, 1937.**

The Republican cause was in serious jeopardy after a year-and-a-half of bloody fighting. Many felt it would take a miracle to rejuvenate an army that was barely hanging on in Madrid, and reeling from repeated Nationalist blows elsewhere in Spain. As winter settled in, the need for some sort of victory in the field was increasingly necessary as France and the Soviet Union began wavering in their support, and Great Britain stepped up its "blockade" that in reality only helped the Nationalists.

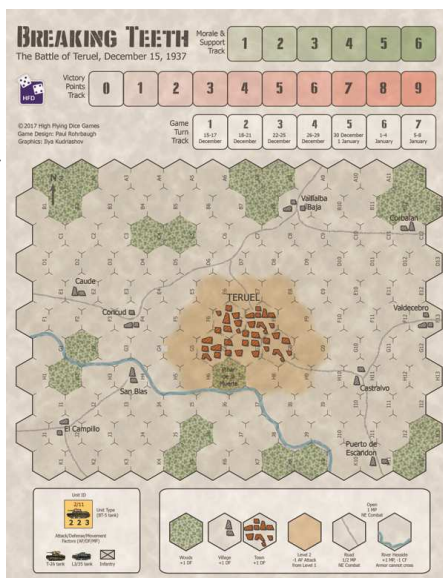
One of the most direct threats to Republican survival was the salient to the south of Madrid. Any further Nationalist gains in that sector could cut-off the capital's link to the rest of Republican-controlled Spain. With little to lose and much to win, General Enrique Lister's 11<sup>th</sup> Division was placed in the vanguard of the Republican counter-attack. Their goal was to take the key defensive position of La Muela de Teruel—Teruel's Tooth.

The game has 7 Turns, each with many Rounds. Both players reveal top cards from their decks at the start of each round of play. The side with the highest Card Draw (CD) wins the Round. If the winning player's CD is odd, that side can do 3 Activations (ACTs) or pass. If the winning CD is even, that side can do up to 2 ACTs or pass. On ties, the side that did not get to perform any ACT(s) in the previous round can perform 1 ACT.

The side drawing the first joker gets no ACTS that Round and instead that player rolls a die to determine if a Random Event is in effect (see the Random Effects Chart). When the second joker is drawn, the turn ends immediately (with no ACTs performed). If this is not the last turn of the game move the Turn Record marker up 1 Space on the Game Record Track. Both players then reshuffle their decks. \$6  
<http://www.hfdgames.com/bt.html>

**Hollandspiele**

**House of Normandy** is centered on the dynastic struggles of William the Conqueror's extended family. The earliest of the four battles collected herein saw two of William's sons duking it out. The other three battles are all drawn from the reign of Stephen of Blois, the Conqueror's grandson, and the long period of instability and intermittent civil war that has come to be called The Anarchy. During the twelfth century, armies tended to avoid giving battle to one another, and when it did come to blows, neither side exhibited much endurance; there's none of that "they fought from sunrise to sunset" stuff here. Nor was anyone involved particularly renown for any special military genius. As a result, the battles here are short, small, and uncomplicated affairs, ideal both for solitaire study, and for a quick game with a friend. That's not to say the battles are lacking in flavor, however, as each brings something unique to your table.



THE BATTLE OF TINCHEBRAY (1106) gives each player Wings composed of both cavalry and foot soldiers, and arrayed in echelons. S & S vets know that horse and non-horse units don't support the other's attacks, which makes things tricky. The battle turns on the timely (or not) arrival of a hidden English Wing.

THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD (1138) is a matter of English quality versus Scots quantity. The English have a good defensive position, and are mostly arrayed into a single Wing (with all the pluses and minuses that come with it). Successive waves of Scots will usually be forced to attack the English piecemeal. The English have the advantage in the early game, but the longer the game runs, the more Scottish numerical superiority will rule the day. To recreate the spectacularly lopsided victory that the English enjoyed historically, the English player will have to seal the deal in the early going.

THE BATTLE OF LINCOLN (1141) might be described as a game of "press your luck" for poor King Stephen. He has some good units, but as soon as one Wing defects, the others might follow, turning an even contest into a slaughter. His Angevin opponent must make good use of not only his horse, but also his Welsh infantry, which is fearsome but brittle.

THE BATTLE OF WILTON (1143) commences at dusk, and ends at nightfall. This means the battle has a time pressure element, quite unusual for the S&S system. Neither player knows exactly when the battle is going to end. \$30

<https://hollandspiele.com/products/house-of-normandy>



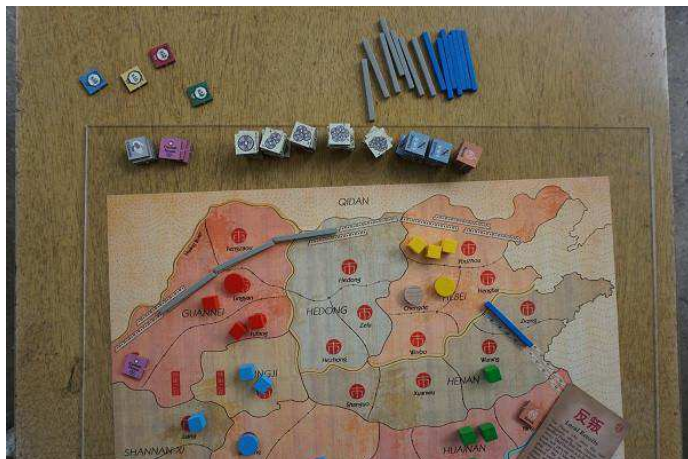
**Dynasty: The Era of the Five Dynasties** is a multi-player game that recreates the power politics and military struggles of tenth century China. One player begins the game as the Emperor, defending the realm from Khitan raiders, providing flood relief, and collecting taxes, so as to maintain the Mandate of Heaven and continue to rule. The other players are provincial governors seeking to weaken the Emperor's grasp on power and take it for themselves.

What's unique about this game is that the Emperor has a completely different set of actions and a completely different turn structure than his opponents. When one of the governors is able to overthrow the Emperor, he assumes that role, while the disgraced Emperor now finds himself a governor, and must scheme to retake the throne—alongside the other players. Actions taken by the players include military expansion, army building, the collection of taxes, and the purchase or play of event cards.



"May you live in interesting times" is sometimes inaccurately attributed to an ancient Chinese curse, but regardless of where the phrase comes from, these are interesting times indeed. Petty warlords, rebellions, and natural disasters enter play via event cards, and create the chaotic tapestry upon which your struggles for power are woven. Not only must you deal with one darn thing after another, but you must work to turn them to your advantage. Every action you take has its cost, and creates opportunities for the other players.

Throughout the game and at the end, players will score Victory Points for their accomplishments. Players earning a VP every turn is the Emperor, because staying in power for any length of time in the Five Dynasties era is an accomplishment! \$50 <https://hollandspiele.com/products/dynasty-the-era-of-the-five-dynasties>



### Lock 'n Load Publishing

**No Honor in Surrender** is a squad-level tactical game simulating skirmishes in several critical battles fought between the US Marines and the Japanese army in the South Pacific in WWII. Players control squads of Japanese and American forces that fought in these battles. The counters represent single characters (Leaders), Squads of men, Weapon Teams, Support Weapons, and planes as well as machine guns, flamethrowers, tanks, and planes. We have newly designed maps, counters, players aids, and manual.

**Note:** If you have purchased **Island War** from the current LnLP Store, we will provide you a **free** Print and Play edition that can be downloaded from your order history from the LnLP Store.

**Print On Demand Edition:** The Print On Demand Edition includes full color printed, manual, player aid cards, large maps, counter sheets printed on sticker paper and chipboard sheets for easy mounting and cutting. The Print and Play edition is included for free with our Print On Demand Edition.

**Print and Play Edition:** The Print and Play Edition is available as downloadable Print and Play files that can be printed in both US Letter and A4 paper sizes. Our Print and Play Edition includes individual files for the manual, player aid cards, counters and smaller multi-part maps for home printers and larger map files that can be printed at a local print shop. You may select to purchase only **Print and Play Edition** and reduce the price of the game under the Available Options on the product page.



**Requirements:** Three six-sided dice are required to play this game. This game contains some previously released material from **Island War** and **Line of Fire**. No other product is required to play this game. \$25 [https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product\\_id=322](https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=322)

**Lee At Gettysburg** July 1, 1863, [Print On Demand Edition] is a quick-playing simulation of the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg. The four included scenarios covering the struggle for control of the historic locations such as McPherson's Ridge, Gettysburg, and Cemetery Hill. This third edition comes with a new map, counters and updated rules and four scenarios. **Lee at Gettysburg** is considered an introductory wargame with rules for morale checks when retreating, facing, and Melee combat. Players can control either the Confederate or Union forces that fought in the battle and offers players a quick game with a lot of strategies.

**Note:** If you have purchased **Lee At Gettysburg** Gold Edition from the current LnLP Store, we will provide you a **free** Print and Play edition that can be downloaded from your order history from the LnLP Store. \$25 [https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product\\_id=319](https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=319)



**The Devil's Beach - The Omaha Landings** depicts the fighting at Omaha Beach and the Normandy countryside on D-Day, June 6, 1944. This newly updated edition has a new map, counters, player aid cards, and manual. The map covers a two-kilometer section of beach and the land behind it, including Charlie, Dog Green, Dog White, and Dog Red beaches. The counters represent infantry platoons (40-60 men), machine gun sections (4-7 men 2 machine guns), tank platoons (4 tanks), and gun batteries (4-6 guns). Each turn represents about fifteen minutes to one hour. Players can play either as the American or German forces.

**Note:** If you have purchased **Omaha - Battle for the Beach** from the current LnLP Store, we will provide you a **free** Print and Play edition that can be downloaded from your order history from the LnLP Store. [https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product\\_id=122](https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=122)



**Against the Odds: 7th Brigade Stands Defiant** is a simulation of the Syrian attack on the Golan Heights during October of 1973. The map covers an approximately four-kilometer section of the Golan Heights between Tel Hermonit and Booster. Each counter represents infantry platoons, Sagger Teams, and vehicle platoons. Each turn is about fifteen minutes to one hour.

**Note:** If you have purchased **Valley of Tears** from the current LnLP Store, we will provide you a **free** Print and Play edition that can be downloaded from your order history from the LnLP Store. \$25 [https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product\\_id=136](https://store.lnlpublishing.com/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=136)



**Nuts Publishing**

**Urban Operations.** The web site has lots of pictures but not much description of game play. 75€ <http://www.nutspublishing.com/Urban-Operations>

**... Supplement "Urban Operations" ...**

**Game system: simple but efficient**

From the very beginning the development of Urban Operations, all the complexities that occur in urban warfare have been taken into account. On a classical game board, terrain symbols on the map and specially designed rules help to represent weapons effects, which are one of the main sources of casualties during urban fightings.

In the same way, the map system allows the management of distant fire, even from building to building, or when a shell hits its target, collateral effects of the explosion are taken into account. It was also critical to integrate one of the major players of today's conflicts, which is the civilian population. The presence of non-combatants often complicates the way forces can use their weapons, especially against irregular opponents.

In addition, the presence of tactical leaders is a real asset for assault squads. And combat service support teams can deliver logistical support on the frontline, in order to enhance the operational status of any element.

Sébastien de Peyret (designer) is an infantry officer, who has worked for many years to develop a practical system which takes into account all the effects which result in the urban environment. His thoughts have been fed by his various assignments, as an instructor in the French military academy of Saint-Cyr, on operations, and as the operational training chief of CENZUB, the French national centre for urban operations training.

In CENZUB French armed forces are prepared for urban warfare, thanks to highly realistic training and learning process, perfectly applied by a dedicated team of experts, whose competence is famous throughout NATO.

**Bad Kissingen, West Germany, 1985.** Warsaw Pact forces conduct a surprise attack. Three mechanised rifle infantry platoons, equipped with BMP2 infantry fighting vehicles and reinforced with engineer and recon teams, are tasked to control the downtown area before the deployment of a T-84 main battle tank platoon. Combat team Bravo is to hold the ground for some additional minutes. M1 Abrams tanks are coming!

**The Society of Ancients**

**Gladius.** This game of classical single combat is for two players who each have either a gladiator or a wild animal. Play is challenging and entirely without dice, relying upon a player's ability to outmanoeuvre and bluff his opponent. Games are fast, with a typical combat taking 10-15 minutes and an entire multi-combat tournament can be conducted in an evening.

In our hearts, who is not, in some way, Spartacus?

This luxury remake of the Society's most successful board game includes sturdy, pre-cut counters and no fewer than 140 ready-to-go cards. No cutting and pasting required. £30 <http://www.soa.org.uk/joomla/games>

**Victory Point Games**

**Napoleonic 20 Expansion Kit** features several new game system modules to enhance every **Napoleonic 20** game and includes the bonus game **Hanau 20**.

**Hanau 20** is a smaller, more "introductory" in size, game of the **Napoleonic 20** series, which sees the curtain fall on the campaigns of 1813 as Napoleon was withdrawing from his defeat at the great Battle of Leipzig a fortnight earlier. Although it was not a large battle, it was a vital one, as Napoleon suddenly found his retreat route back to France blocked by an unexpected, newly raised Allied force.

**Important:** This is our *last* in-house manufactured, print-on-demand game, and our time remaining to manufacture this product is *extremely limited*. If you ever wanted it, you must order it right away to ensure you have an expansion kit that matches your VPG "red box" **Napoleonic 20** games! \$30 <https://www.victorypointgames.com/nappy-20-exp-kit.html>



**MAGAZINES**

**Line of Departure #80** [http://www.jimwerbaneth.com/online\\_features/index.html](http://www.jimwerbaneth.com/online_features/index.html)

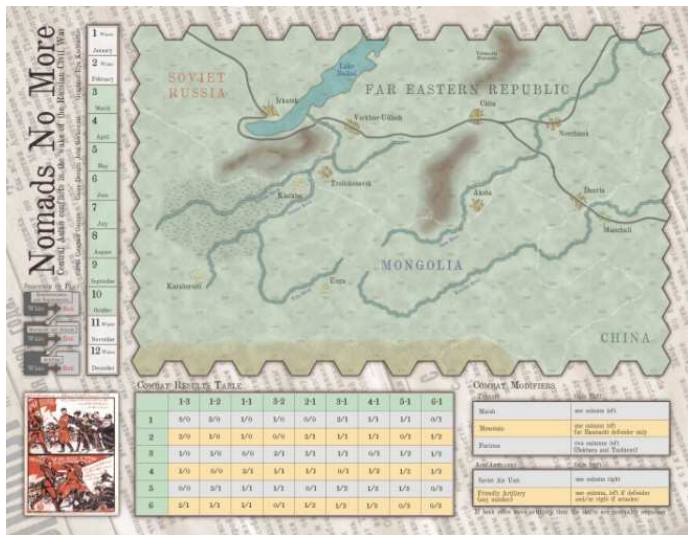
**Modern War #31 Combat Veteran** is a simple two-player tactical combat system that simulates the dynamics of infantry combat at the individual (man-to-man) level. This game features two particular historic scenarios as the introduction to the wider system: **Firefight at the Rice Paddy Angle** (Vietnam in Mekong region, 1967), and **Firefight at Combat Outpost Keating** (Afghanistan in the Nuristan Province, 2009). Both firefights involved about a platoon of US infantry against a numerically superior enemy force. The US and Viet Cong game



soldier pieces represent specific, individual men of their respective units, whereas Taliban soldier game pieces represent three to six men. Each hex represents about 40 meters of actual terrain (almost half a football field from hex corner to hex corner), and the entire map area is roughly the same acreage as Hyde Park in London. Each weapon game piece represents one

specific type of named weapon and its standard loadout. For example, the M60 weapon game piece represents one M60 machinegun, at least a 150 rounds of ammunition, and presumably a spare barrel (and even an asbestos glove). \$35 <http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=MW31>

*Paper Wars* #86 **Nomads No More** – Central Asian Conflicts in the Wake of the Russian Civil War, by John Gorkowski. The **Nomads No More** (NNM) game system includes two different games: Ungern-Sternberg’s **Mongolia** and Enver Pasha’s **Bokhara**. Both games use the same core rules but separate maps and pieces to cover concurrent conflicts that erupted on the eastern perimeter of Soviet Russia soon after the Russian Civil War – the early 1920s. Ungern-Sternberg’s **Mongolia** simulates the invasion of Mongolia by fleeing Whites, their clash with the Chinese and subsequent pursuit by Reds. Enver Pasha’s **Bokhara** covers the Basmachi Revolt against Soviet rule around Bokhara - present day Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. \$47 <http://www.compassgames.com/paperwars/issue-86-magazine-game-nomads-no-more.html>



Each player has a set of Strategem markers. Players use these markers to recruit new units, move their forces on the map, and take special actions. Whenever opposing forces are in the same hex, a battle will ensue. Various Strategem markers can also be used to enhance operations. \$35 <http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=ST306>



*World at War* #55 contains **Commandos: Europe**, which puts you in charge of a team of commandos operating in Europe (and North Africa) during WWII. Your duty is to lead your men on a variety of randomly generated missions (representing orders direct from high command), choose weapons and equipment that are best suited for the mission, decide on how to posture your team, plan your approach, and a method of extraction. However, it is not quite that simple; you must choose weapons and equipment that will be the most efficient utilization of very limited resources; your goal is to disrupt the enemy’s freedom of action in your area of operations with a minimal “footprint” and minimal cost. \$35 <http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=WW55>



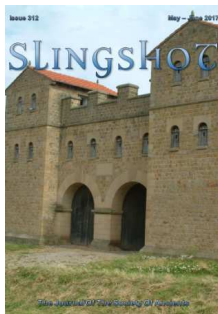
*Yaah! Magazine* #9 is another thick issue stuffed full of things like words, pictures we stole off the Internet, die-cut counters, and game maps. How thick? 84-pages thick. Thick enough to discipline your dog, so just sit down and listen.

We’ll lead off with the game, because our surveys say that despite the riveting articles, the pulse-pounding pizzazz of their pretty pictures, and the immersive scenarios, people buy these magazines for the game. This issue’s game is Ryan Kirk’s **Donetsk**, a squad-level tactical game that simulates the battles for the Donetsk Airport in the Ukraine 2014-2015. You, or someone like you, will control squads, RPG and machine gun teams, BTRs, T-64 tanks, snipers and more, as you attempt to gain control of the airport. The game comes with four scenarios, 88 sharp-looking die-cut counters, and a beautifully illustrated game map. Ryan writes an excellent lead in article that will educate those who were unaware of the Russian-backed separatist’s little war with the Ukraine.

Articles? We’ve got your articles right here. There’s a great piece of prose on GMT’s **Comancheria** by Deborah Malmud, another on Twilight Struggle’s little brudder, **13 Days**, written by Nick O’Neill, an insightful piece on one of the most creative slices of gaming released in 2016, Cool Mini or Not’s **The Others**, by Matt “The Man” Foster, as well as words on Paper Wars’ **Finish Civil War**, Col Smitty’s thoughts on **The Great War**, Eddie Carlson’s take on Monolith’s **Conan**, and Roger Leroux’s opinion on the amazing deck-building game, **Hands in the Sea**.



*Slingshot* #312, May/June 2017  
 Contains articles on  
 The Second Sui Invasion of Koguryo, by Nicholas Spratt  
 Guardroom, by John Hastings  
 The Battle of Amnias 89 BC, by Richard Andrews  
 Reconstructing Hadrian’s Wall, by John Hastings  
 Belosphendone, by Richard Tylor  
 Philippi at the Society Conference, by Paul Innes et al.  
 Age of the Wolf, by Gordon Lawrence  
<http://www.soa.org.uk/joomla/>



*Strategy & Tactics* #306 contains **Agricola**, a wargame of the campaign fought by Gnaeus Julius Agricola, the Roman governor of Britain (AD 77-85) to conquer northern Britannia (modern Britain). There are two players, the Roman and the Caledonian (the latter actually representing various northern British tribes). Each player has units that represent military formations or tribal warbands.

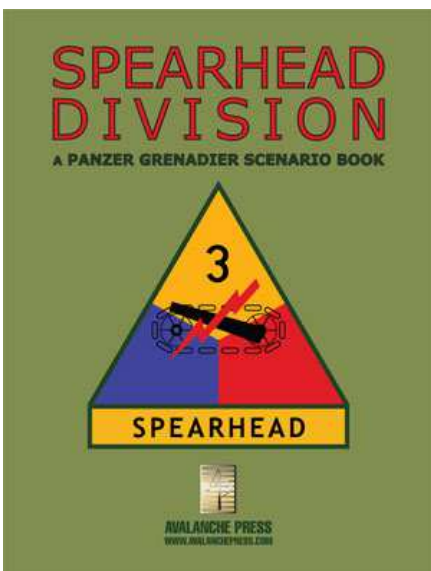
Last, but not least in terms of what we are super excited about, we have solitaire scenarios/RPG/story for **Night of Man**, scenarios for '65, **Old School Tactical**, **Dead Reckoning**, Herm Luttmann's **Stonewall's Sword**, and a King Arthur Variant for **Command and Colors: Ancients**. \$40 <https://flyingpiggames.com/products/yaah-magazine-9>

### BOOKS

*Spearhead Division* is a supplement for our **Panzer Grenadier: Elsenborn Ridge** game, featuring 88 new die-cut, mounted pieces displaying the division's units in their own special color scheme. There are also 25 scenarios, and with four "battle games" that link them together.



*Spearhead Division* is not a complete game; everything you need to play all 25 scenarios (and the battle games) are included in the book and the boxed game **Elsenborn Ridge**. No other books or games are required to play any of the scenarios. \$30 <http://www.avalanche-press.com/gameSpearhead.php>



## Ploesti and Transylvania

From Omar DeWitt

Romania 6/23/2017

We were on a bus traveling from Bucharest to Transylvania (one of the three provinces/states/parts of Romania), when someone said "Ploesti." Being fairly familiar with WWII and the bombing of the oilfields at Ploesti, I slapped myself awake. In the 70+ years since the air attacks, the Romanians had managed to clean up the area fairly well. I saw no A/A sites, no bomber remains. The oil refinery was off to the left of the road, and the city was ahead on the right. All were in good shape. Wow, I was on the site of an important bombing target of WWII (with nothing much to see). I decided that was probably a good reason why we were in Romania. Sue thought we were there to take a river cruise.

In Bucharest, I found that the city had a military museum. Another reason we had come on this trip! We had a map. The museum was not far from the hotel, so we decided to walk. We had heard stories about the Bucharest taxi drivers overcharging passengers, so walking was really cheaper...but more difficult. We "arrived" at the museum and walked around the block, which was rather small. We didn't know how large the museum was, but there was no museum of any size on the block. Well!

A local woman walking her dog turned into a driveway ahead of us. I called out to ask her if she spoke English. She did and very fluently. She said the map was wrong (!!?) and that the museum was off the map and a couple of blocks further on. We thanked her profusely.

A few blocks further on we needed more certainty and went into a veterinary's office, hoping to find someone who spoke English. The two people we found spoke perfect English, and the museum was only a block away.

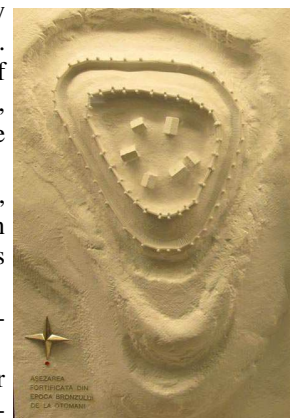
It was easy to spot the museum, since there were gun barrels poking out of the shrubbery. There was only one man around the front, and I wondered if they were open. While I was photographing the artillery pieces in front, the man went in the museum (it was open!) and came back out (?). Inside, we saw no one, but there was a desk that appeared to be official. We went over to the desk and a woman came up the stairs to help us. The entrance fee was 75 cents each. The fee to use a camera was \$12.50. I also bought two guide books.

The museum was a true military one, starting with pre-ancient stone points. The early part of the museum had plenty of stone weapons. It also had many town/forts depicted in white plaster. These were also depicted on a map of Romania, and there were many, many such towns. Early times were rough.

The Romans entered the picture, and there were displays of Roman soldiers as well. Models of castles and ruins of castles were present.

The museum was not air conditioned, but it was not uncomfortable.

We moved into the gunpowder age. Ancient guns and unusual small-canon were on display. I am continually impressed by the ingenuity of ancient gun makers and their ability to create special guns, such as multi-fire guns. Life-sized





figures in the dress of the time were here and there in the museum. To the museum's credit, the faces of the figures were unique; they were not merely manikins.

Since I had paid so much to use a camera, I was shooting photos left and right.



In the late 1800s and early 1900s, there were several life-sized dioramas. There was no light on them, but they showed

up on the camera with a flash. WWII was a rather small section. Some labels had some English on them, but not much.

Outside the museum in the rear was an artillery park covering 2,000 square meters. Actually to me it looked like an artillery junk yard. There were all kinds of artillery pieces, from those with wooden wheels to a long-range missile. A few tanks ranged from a WWI Renault to modern Romanian tanks. Although the artillery was separate from the tanks, I saw no other



organization. Brass ID tags were present in Romanian.

Here and there throughout the museum were some chairs. As in Russia, there was usually a woman sitting in the chair. Her purse rested on the floor next to the chair. A few times I saw a woman disappear or reappear through a small curtain between two displays. Using my camera, I was checked at least once to see if I had the proper authorization hanging from my neck.

The building containing the aircraft was behind the artillery park. As I approached, a woman held the door for me. I, of course, thanked her. I had seen only two other patrons in the main building, and the woman and I were the only ones in the aircraft building. The first plane to catch my attention was a jet like a MIG, only twice as long. The skin had been removed, exposing the ribs. Two of Romania's very first airplanes were hanging from the ceiling. I had to wonder how they got into the air. A Romanian jet engine from 1910 (!) looked like a very long tube. Other planes were of mild interest. I left the woman sitting in her chair and exited the building.



Another building included uniforms, of little interest to me, and a very large rifle/pistol display. I've come to the conclusion that one can see too many weapons. Rifles, axes, pistols, machine guns eventually lose their appeal. This display was well presented, and the weapons were attractively kept. All behind glass, of course. And there were a lot of them.

Another military museum on my list!

We were able to find the hotel on the walk back. It was in the correct position on the map.



**AHIKS TOP 40 RATED PLAYERS AS OF AUGUST 5, 2017. A RATING QUALIFIER OF "C" OR GREATER IS REQUIRED IN ALL CATEGORIES IN ORDER TO BE LISTED.**

RANKING	NAME	AHIKS #	RATING	GAMES	QUALIFIERS	OP-PONENTS	QUALIFIERS	TITLES	QUALIFIERS	DATE OF LAST RATED GAME
1	CREEGER, J	?	1925	20	G	9	G	4	D	8/7/1987
2	STRETCHER, B	885	1895	78	N	24	L	31	P	7/29/2012
3	MCCARTHY, K	496	1885	19	G	8	F	4	D	12/31/1988
4	UNNERSTALL, J	496	1790	14	E	7	F	8	G	12/5/2013
5	LANDRY, P	707	1780	32	I	11	H	6	F	10/21/1989
6	FICKBOHM, A	901	1775	10	D	5	E	3	C	2/25/2006
7	CROSS, R	336	1770	103	Q	41	P	40	R	2/21/1994
8	TRUESDELL, P	334	1755	15	F	8	F	4	D	7/14/1992
9	HELLER, R	1007	1700	76	N	23	K	18	L	10/16/2014
10	SCARBOROUGH, T	1345	1680	155	T	39	O	15	K	7/1/2017
11	PASSOW, R	1453	1665	19	G	5	E	8	G	1/2/2014
12	MINSHEW, C	1222	1645	36	I	15	I	9	H	11/4/1997
13	LEONARD, C	711	1645	67	M	22	K	7	G	12/28/2014
14	GRANT, D	377	1645	22	G	9	G	11	I	5/18/1988
15	DEWITT, O	44	1645	103	Q	33	N	32	P	11/20/2015
16	SHURDET, R	914	1635	15	F	6	E	5	E	2/6/2012
17	MILLER, JEFF	1303	1630	53	L	15	I	24	N	4/11/2017
18	KRAUS, F	444	1605	30	H	16	I	8	G	2/2/1995
19	HEISER, P	1051	1605	69	M	29	M	13	J	5/12/2012
20	JERKICH, L	544	1600	14	E	6	E	6	F	7/10/2007
21	ARENA, T	1652	1600	16	F	7	F	8	G	6/15/2014
22	DANDY, G	916	1595	15	F	7	F	7	G	2/27/2013
23	DRIVER, S	1567	1590	24	G	7	F	4	D	1/25/2014
24	WALSH, T	1427	1585	60	L	15	I	6	F	8/28/2014
25	O'CONNOR, E	1243	1585	32	I	13	H	8	G	1/31/2014
26	XANTHOS, C	1263	1565	9	D	5	E	4	D	4/6/1994
27	MARTIN, P	243	1560	39	J	18	J	7	G	10/1/1994
28	FASSIO, M	1210	1555	41	J	9	G	14	J	5/22/2015
29	DECK, L	341	1550	38	J	23	K	14	J	10/9/1993
30	LINDOW, B	988	1545	43	J	21	K	12	I	9/29/2004
30	LONGEST, C	1413	1540	29	H	13	H	9	H	8/16/1993
32	HOLTZ, T	364	1520	45	K	20	K	13	J	2/28/2009
33	BERGMANN, D	854	1520	19	G	6	E	4	D	10/15/1994
34	MARKEVICH, N	951	1515	18	F	9	G	7	G	8/23/1994
35	WATSON, C	1137	1515	17	F	9	G	11	I	1/3/2012
36	COTTRELL, R	1013	1515	14	E	5	E	8	G	3/9/1992
37	ANDRIAKOS, S	1455	1505	5	C	3	C	3	C	4/10/1997
38	TIERNEY, D	746	1505	47	K	18	J	16	K	5/22/2006
39	BOWIE, A	299	1490	75	N	23	K	23	M	9/3/2015
40	GRILLS, J	748	1490	131	S	43	P	37	R	11/24/2013
41	GOSSETT, G	756	1485	112	Q	16	I	28	O	10/29/1997

# Upcoming Events

Aug. 11-13, Bloomington, Minnesota  
2D CON  
<https://www.2dcon.net/>

Aug. 11-13, Addison, TX  
INFINICON  
<http://infinicon.net/>

Aug. 17-19, Indianapolis, Indiana  
MUNCHKIN TAVERN  
<http://www.worldofmunchkin.com/tavern/>

Aug. 17-20, Indianapolis, Indiana  
GENCON  
<http://www.gencon.com/>

Aug. 19, Columbus, MS  
GOLDEN TRIANGLE COMIC CON  
<https://gtcomiccon.com/>

Aug. 25-27, Bellevue, Washington  
DRAGONFLIGHT  
<http://dragonflight.org/>

Aug. 25-27, La Crosse, WI  
COULEE CON  
<http://couleecon.com/>

Aug. 31-Sept. 3, Toronto, ON  
FAN EXPO CANADA  
<http://fanexpocanada.com/>

Sept. 1-4, South Sioux City, IA  
TRI-CON FALL  
<http://tristategamers.org/>

Sept. 1-4, Sterling, VA  
TCEP 24:- CRAIG AND TAD IN THE 24½TH CENTURY  
<https://barkingmad.org/>

Sept. 4-8, Port Canaveral, FL  
BEER AND BOARD GAMES CRUISE  
<http://www.goseatravel.com/rw/view/7987>

Sept. 8-10, Hattiesburg, MS  
HUBCON  
<https://www.facebook.com/HubCon/>

Sept. 8-10, Fort Wayne, Indiana  
ALLIANCE OPEN HOUSE  
<http://openhouse.alliance-games.com/Home/11/1/83/1200>

Sept. 9-10, Topeka, Kansas  
TOPCON GEEK EXPO  
<http://topcon.us/>

Sept. 23-24, Oshawa, Ontario  
FIELD MARSHAL GAMING CONVENTION  
<http://fmgcon.com/>

Sept. 23, London, Ontario  
FOREST CITY COMICON  
<http://forestcitycomicon.ca/>

Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Tucson, Arizona  
RINCON17  
<http://rincongames.com/>

Oct. 6-8, Cincinnati, Ohio  
CINCITYCON  
<http://cincitycon.com/>

Oct. 6-7, Noble, IL  
NobleCon  
<http://noblecon.weebly.com/>

Oct. 7-8, Orono, Maine  
NOR'EASTER GAMING EXPO  
<https://www.facebook.com/Noreastergaming/>

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

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. Especially since there are no dues this year.

Brian Stretcher  
117 Camellia Trail  
Brevard, NC 28712

(Continued from page 7)

ish to help them. Plan accordingly. They are also blessed with three good HQ units: Guderian, von Rundstedt, and Reichenau. *Important note:* HQ units have the ability to “fly” to any friendly-controlled hex *anywhere on the map* and then make their normal move in the same pulse. Since HQ units can pick up friendly armies during their move, this is likely an important way to stage surprise attacks in places your opponent thought safe. In theory, then, you could pluck your Rommel counter out of Africa in late 1941 and fly him into Smolensk to lead the attack against Moscow.

The temptation to overreach early as the Germans is still there. Denmark appears ripe for the plucking in September, with but one weak army; the capture of Denmark will seal off the Baltic Sea from potential UN incursions. The Netherlands similarly has but one defending weak army. Fortunately, the Germans can deploy a couple of armies in Berlin, along with an HQ unit, and if Poland goes easily these units can be used either to shore up defenses against the Maginot Line, or attack either or both Denmark and the Netherlands. Belgium is a bit dicey, because there is an event that allows a coup attempt against Hitler if the Germans attack Belgium in 1939 (mentioned in the rules, which is how I know about it). The coup only has a one-in-six chance of success, but the event has a 50/50 chance of negating the invasion attempt altogether for the turn. I do not know the long term repercussions of having Hitler replaced as the German leader in the first couple turns of the game. But it is enough to give one pause.

**Recognize that there are *no* objective-specific victory conditions in this game.** I have read an interesting thread of posts on Boardgame Geek regarding the lack of any specific victory conditions for any scenario in the game. No counting of objectives, cities, resources, surrenders of major powers, etc. The players are supposed to gauge their progress against history and the ultimate objective of absolute victory, and argue over the results if necessary. There was one guy on the website who found this appalling and was hesitant to buy the game as a result. Shortsighted. In my experience, one of the biggest problems with strategic games of either WW1 or WW2 is the imposition of arbitrary measurements of victory. This forces players into sometimes dubious strategies in order to “win” the game, rather than defeat the enemy. Nobody told Hitler that in order to win a decisive victory in WW2 that all he had to do was hold eight objectives at the end of June, 1945, or survive until 1946. Silly. The “victory conditions” in **AV** are much more realistic, even if they don’t particularly lend themselves to tournament play or the calculation of ratings. When you play a large, complex game, you do so for the experience, not the win. If you have to be able to eke out a clear cut victory based on points or objectives, this is all about the game for you, not an understanding of history or an appreciation of what the game models. If that’s the only thing important to you, try something besides wargaming.

It is important to have an understanding of the interaction between the various rules’ subsystems before you move your first stack in this game. I hope I have given you some insight into the most important considerations, and perhaps persuade a few of you to make the purchase. I have yet to look at the Pacific front and the implications there in either 1939 or 1941, and I’m sure those are considerably different than those in Europe. But the game looks really fun. With the Vassal module, email and solo play is feasible, even if there will need to be some ad-

justments for those “secret” decisions that have to be made by the players. Those are easy to do solo and not too difficult to manage by email.

I am going to start my game any day now. I have included an illustration of the setup there around Poland. I may very well include an after-action report in these pages next issue and soon look for an opponent. Stay tuned!

### Book Review: *Lost to the West*

*Lost to the West: The Forgotten Byzantine Empire that Rescued Western Civilization*, by Lars Brownworth, Random House, 2009, is another e-book I found in the under \$2.99 section at Barnes & Noble. This book is probably best described as a survey history of the Byzantine Empire, starting with the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west in the fourth and fifth centuries to the final death of the empire upon the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

The book is well written and readable, without the excessively erudite language and overwritten wordiness that many works on ancient and medieval history seem to suffer. The chapters are short, despite covering large swathes of history, focusing on relevant emperors, both good and bad. Minor emperors who rose and fell, usually to a tragic end over very short periods of time, are not covered in depth if at all, although there is a complete list of emperors at the end of the book.

The trials and tribulations of Westeros as depicted in **Game of Thrones** has little over the Byzantines, other than maybe the magic used in the series. Byzantine history is replete with battles, slaughters, evil queens, barbarian invasions, squabbles between noble families, treachery, mutilations and murder, including patricide, matricide and every other sort of -cide you can possibly think of by just about any means. Eunuchs, slaves, mercenaries, more barbarians, defections, impenetrable walls, the clash of religions both old and new, heroism, exemplary leadership and extremely poor leadership, plague, and famine; all that and more during the ebb and flow of the 1000-year Eastern Roman Empire, as the Byzantines thought of themselves. Just no pithy dwarves or dragons.

Through all that cyclic turmoil, the Byzantines still did not suffer through the same Dark Ages as did the West. For the most part, the Byzantines were well educated. Most men *and* women could read and write, since education was not limited to the male clergy as it was in the West, and so during times of relative stability the empire prospered. As a result of that prosperity and enough good leadership to make a difference, the Byzantines were able to hold in check various and assorted threats from the east and elsewhere while the West plodded through darkness and the squabbles of numerous petty kingdoms. Those threats included the Persians, Huns, Mongols, Bulgarians and ultimately more than one Islamic sultan that sought to spread Islam into Western Europe. They had to go through the Byzantines first. Although Constantine XI lost the empire forever when he plunged into a breach in the walls of Constantinople that final time, the Ottomans essentially exhausted themselves in the effort. By the time Constantinople fell, Europe was entering the Renaissance, and the Western kingdoms had reached the point where they could hold their own against the blunted effort of Islam that came a short time later.

There are a number of lessons to be learned from such imperial histories. First, squabbling and infighting weakens the central authority and leaves the empire subject to dismember-



ment or outright conquest by external forces. Large immigrations of peoples, at the time, were typically in the form of a *really* large army, and if the government is weak or corrupt, what imperial forces can be scraped together and sent against invaders cannot stem the tide, and walls will not keep them out for long. If the rich manage to avoid taxation and expand their wealth through deregulation at the expense of the poor and the merchant class, the central authority cannot afford to effectively deal with external threats. Private mercenary armies are universally a bad idea, as although their loyalty can be bought (to a point), typically there is no amount of money worth dying for, and besides, someone always has more money. Finally, in the end it never turns out well if a ruler attempts to impose his (or her) will on his own people by force. It is far better to lead by example, be fair and just, decisive but not impulsive, and to keep your people happy to earn their loyalty, rather than keeping them distracted or in fear. They are not so dumb as to be distracted or scared forever.

I know of precious few games that cover anything related to Byzantium. There is the old SPI game **Siege of Constantinople**, of course, which deals with the efforts of Constantine XI to hold the city in 1453. An interesting game if I recall, and a very well written article on the siege in the accompanying *S&T*. There may be another *S&T* game out there called **Belisarius**, named after a very effective Byzantine general and emperor, but I know nothing about the game. There are a few scenarios

in **Imperium Romanum II** that cover periods following the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West, including the campaigns of Constantine I and Justinian, plus a hypothetical scenario with Belisarius. Those campaigns took place at a time when the empire is still referred to by most historians as the Eastern Roman Empire, rather than the Byzantine Empire. However, the term “Byzantine” is a historical construction. Even when Constantinople fell in 1453, the people of the empire knew themselves only as “Roman.” You would think there would be a few more titles out there, considering that a lot of military and political action took place over the 1000-year life of the empire. I suppose for those of us from a culture derived mostly from the viewpoint of immigrants from Western Europe, the history of the great eastern empire is lost indeed.

### Treasurer's Report

Just a little activity this time.

<b>Total balance 5-31-17:</b>	<b>\$ 8,976.71</b>
<b>Dividend 5-31-17:</b>	<b>1.15</b>
<b>Dividend 6-30-17:</b>	<b>1.11</b>
<b>Dues and contributions:</b>	<b>15.00</b>
<b>Total balance 7-30-17:</b>	<b>\$ 8,993.97</b>

Until next time!



Absolute Victory setup.