

# The Kommandeur



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## AHIKS President George Phillis

Greetings from your President.

I hope this finds you all well. We seem to have had this summer a period of relatively limited activity on the organizational side of things. I hope this will change soon.

In the last eight months, we have gained nearly 150 new members. The list of email addresses, now has 760 entries. When last I wrote, we had 100 bad email addresses. That count is now down to 60. Some additional work is needed to clear those up. Some old members may simply have faded into the woodwork and are now actually gone.

We get new members when people mention us on social groups: Boardgamegeek, Facebook, Consimworld, Mewe, and others. If you ever post on a social media group, on a wargaming related topic, please remember to mention AHIKS.

We have an occasional difficulty with an Internet Service Provider blocking our emails as spam, without forwarding the email to the addressee. This problem is not the same as our email dropping into a spam folder on your computer. If this happens, you will be sent a note telling you that your email is blocked. The most recent large offenders were BTinternet and ComCast.

Do we have a member who is actually as expert in dealing with ISPs, who can help with this? If so, please contact me.

We launched several new projects. We now have a Game Design Bureau, to support people in designing their own games. One member has volunteered to assist in helping local members to form local groups. Until the pandemic is actually over, this effort will be a bit slow.

Some time ago, I asked for support on creating a new Logo, preferably with color, for AHIKS. I received lots of good advice, for which the membership can be most thankful. The advice seemed to converge on a solution. Members are welcome to suggest totally different alternatives. However, the advice converged on:

The logo should be a square. Within the square, a large hexagon fills most of the square. The hexagon should be oriented with points at the top and bottom and two of the six sides of the hexagon being vertical, running top to bottom and touching the sides of the square. Inside the hexagon: "AHIKS," made as large as possible without distorting the font, so it can be read even when the logo is quite small.

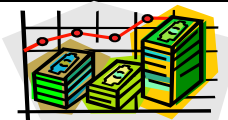
There are four triangular areas between the hexagon and the corners of the square. These usefully match four general historical periods. A plumed helmet with nose piece for ancients, a sailing ship for in between, a jet aircraft for modern, and a rocket ship for SF. The four symbols represent both land-sea-air-space and also ancients-Napoleonic-modern-the future. A faint unit counter filling the square, behind the bold hexagon, is possible. It could be a 3-14-66 to symbolize our founding date. More unit counters or hexagons would look good but would not be readable when the logo was small.

The actual file should be high resolution and vectorized, so that users can make it larger or smaller. The original should be large to avoid what I gather are called rastering problems on changing the size.



## Treasury Notes

Brian Stretcher



### Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer

I mentioned to Omar prior to sending this in that I have way too much to do and no time to do it in, so this column will have to be short. For those of you new to this column, I frequently have to take a one-issue hiatus about this time of year, because outdoor activities and travel make it difficult to sit down at the computer and compose tidbits of wisdom and wit. Still a week-long camping trip to come in September, then my wife and I should be able to coast into the holidays. I can only wish for lazy summers!

I mentioned last issue that I had just started a game of **Imperial Struggle**. We have made it through the War of Spanish Succession, about to start the second Peace turn. My French did better than I expected through the first war. My goal was to not lose the game at the end of the first turn, and I actually have a VP lead! I like this game quite a bit, and it is different, so I hope to let more of my thoughts coalesce into an article on this game in a future issue.

**Here I Stand:** Player Needed. I believe we are still looking for one player to join our merry band in 16<sup>th</sup> Century Europe. Experience helpful, but not necessary – most of us learned how to play in our first game. If you want to play, contact either me or Jeff Miller. Our contact information can be found elsewhere in this issue. We could use one or two stand-by players as well, as we had to replace two players in the first game.

About to fire up a new 6-player game of **Kingmaker**. It will be fun to have the additional players added back in. Our most recent game had only four players, and once one player got the edge in strength there was not much the rest of us could do. Hopefully with six players the game will be a little more dynamic and less of a slog in the late game.

### Treasurer's Report

Only passive activity this time. I received a donation a couple of days ago but it has not been deposited, so it is not included in this report.

<b>Total balance 5-30-21:</b>	<b>\$ 8,418.06</b>
<b>Dividend 5-31-21:</b>	<b>\$ 1.79</b>
<b>Dividend 6-30-21:</b>	<b>\$ 1.73</b>
<b>Total balance 7-30-21:</b>	<b>\$ 8,421.58</b>

Until next time!



Intercontinental Wargaming Society

## D-Day – the classic game that turned me into a wargamer

by Lou Jerkich

Avalon Hill's original **D-Day** game, first published in 1961, was the game that caused me to become passionately hooked on wargaming. When I first saw the game in 1963, I knew very well that World War II was a significant event in my father's life. In that era, D-Day was considered the most important American campaign in Europe; many of us guys had collections of World War II army men figures, and World War II movies were frequently seen in theaters or on TV. As someone already interested in the history of World War II, even at the age of 12 or 13, how could I not want to play this game and show my friends what a great general I could be?

The game box cover screamed "play me." The **D-Day** game box, as first published in 1961, was blazoned with the word 'D-Day' in large black letters against a red background stripe. On the left of the box top there were facsimiles of newspaper headlines blaring the news of the Allied invasion of France. Players were told "Now you change World War II history in this realistic invasion game by Avalon Hill."

When a neighborhood friend received Avalon Hill's **D-Day** game for his birthday in July of 1963, I eagerly played it with him. I thoroughly enjoyed that game, so much so, that I began creating home-made game boards modeled on the basic concepts of that **D-Day** game. (In those days, I could not afford to buy a published game, despite its cost of about \$5.00!) After making a couple of games set in imaginary locales that played like **D-Day** but had a square grid, I got the bright idea to take the hexagonal nut off my front bicycle wheel and, by drawing around it over and over again, I managed to make a hex-grid board for a home-made game. I made a few other home-made hex-grid wargames this way, and eventually I even made a passable replica of my friend's **D-Day** game. I typed the counters up on my typewriter and glued these homemade counter sheets to the cardboard of cereal boxes. Eventually the day came when I bought my own copy of Avalon Hill's **D-Day** game, but I have used my replica copy a few times to study over complex possible moves in a PBM or PBEM game before making my actual moves on the master gameboard and recording them. (I have an AHIKS-inspired wooden game cabinet in which to store up to 9 games that I could be playing or tinkering with at any one time. That was one of the best presents my dear wife ever gave me!)

Over the years, I have played **D-Day** many times and enjoyed reading articles on it in the Avalon Hill *General* magazine. **D-Day** is still one of my most favorite games, thanks to the 1977 rules version which both cleared up the ambiguities of the earlier versions (published in 1961 and 1965) and improved the game in a variety of ways. Although strategic movement and Allied tactical air power are great rule additions, of all the improved rules in Avalon Hill's **D-Day** 1977 version, the Isolation and Supply Capacity Rules plus the Allied Reinforcement Rules that are tied to them, are, to my mind, the most significant. Using the Allied Headquarter Units as the basis of the supply logistics for the Allies was a stroke of genius. Three headquarters stacked together allow the Allies to penetrate up to 24 hexes inland from their supply base, but it also makes the largest ports, such as Antwerp and Marseilles, very desirable for expediting long-range action by a sizable number of divisions. At the same time, South France also becomes a viable invasion target, which the Germans must successfully defend if they are not to lose the game on the Southern Rhine. The overall impact on the game is to cause the Germans to make a strong effort to deny ports to the Allies while the Allies in turn must direct some of their divisions to acquiring both larger

ports and ports closer to Germany. This reflects the historical concerns faced by the actual Allied command in 1944-1945, without denying the game's Allied commander the freedom of action to target those specific supply ports that work best for the campaign he is conducting.

Over the years there have been a variety of interesting and useful **D-Day** game articles on how to defend Germany and how to attack it. I have tried some of the more promising ones, but I found them flawed—some even significantly so. In some cases, the players who designed them were perhaps still wedded to outmoded strategies from earlier versions of **D-Day**.

In the context of the 1977 rules version, let us consider the game's victory conditions.

First, if the Germans defeat both the first and second invasions, and no Allies are left on the board after turn 9, the Germans win. Otherwise, they must merely prevent the Allies from winning. The Allies can win by eliminating all German units from the board, but against competent German play this is unlikely to happen. Therefore, the Allies usually aim for the goal of maintaining ten supplied combat divisions across the Rhine-Ijssel River for four consecutive turns. They have 50 turns in which to do this. Failure to achieve this means that the German player performed better than the historical German generals in 1944-1945.

Have you ever wondered why **D-Day** lasts 50 turns? Obviously, 6 June 1944 is turn one. (Assuming weekly turns, June 6th should be made the end of the first week and not the first day of the first week, for otherwise the first game turn would last through June 12th and reinforcing units that historically came ashore from June 7-12 would have to wait until the game's second week starting June 13th to arrive, which is historically inappropriate and would most likely have resulted in the end of the Allied beachhead.) So, with June 6th as the end of week one, adding 49 additional 7-day weeks brings you to 15 May 1945. As we know, Victory in Europe Day, the day the war ended for the Western Allies, was 8 May 1945, exactly one week earlier. Perhaps the game designer decided that ending the game on the 49th turn might seem weird, so he gave the game one more week. Adding a fiftieth week also allows for the fact that there might have been delays in getting the surrender details settled. (Incidentally, for the Russians, due to time zone differences with the western Allies, it was already May 9th when the war officially ended, so the Russians celebrate VE Day on May 9th.)

Historically, the Allies pushed well over ten divisions across the Rhine during the week of March 21-27, 1945, which would be game turn 43. If that counts as the first of four turns across the Rhine, then historically the Allies achieved the **D-Day** game's victory condition by the end of turn 46. Thus, Avalon Hill gave the Allies another four turns to achieve the conditions for winning the game. I have no idea whether they felt this was necessary for play balance under the original game rules. If the Allies can't win with an extra four turns beyond their historical counterparts, then the Germans have indeed done well and certainly deserve to claim a victory in the game. Of course, if the German player eliminates all Allied units from the board, then that player has performed exceedingly well and can claim a great victory. It is even more stellar the closer the German victory is to turn 9 of the game.

Incidentally, back in 2019 I did some research in online sources and in books in my own collection. My goal was to find out when each Allied division came ashore in Europe from D-Day onward. (I confess to not doing exhaustive re-

search using all possible sources.) In some cases, the specific arrival dates eluded me, but I had evidence for arrivals in a certain week or a portion of the month, or I learned when the unit first engaged the enemy or got to the front lines. I made a chart, showing each week and which British/Canadian/Polish units, which American units, and which French units would have likely come into play on that week. I included the head-quarter data as well. By the 40th week all the units appearing in the game had appeared in my chart. (In a PBM or PBEM game when there is more planning time between turns, I could conceivably entertain myself by landing Allied units in roughly historical sequence.)

Oddly, the British 15th and 59th Infantry divisions, which landed in Normandy on 14 June and 27 June, respectively, do not appear in the game. For some divisions, especially some British armored units, their component parts arrived over a period of weeks. One can therefore use the British 79th Armored for the 15th Infantry, since the “Hobart’s Funnies” in this division came ashore in small detachments from D-Day onward and were assigned as needed. For the 59th Infantry, you can use the British 6th Armored Division since this unit was never involved in France. These Armored units in relation to the two missing infantry units have an extra combat factor which can represent the miscellaneous armored battalions used by the British in the campaign. Finally, three of the French units that by the “special” game rules may possibly arrive on the 28th week were already in France before the 16th week, and another two appear to have been active on the 32nd week and the 38th week.

Now let’s look at the strategic considerations of the players.

For the Allies, the essential problem comprises successfully getting ashore, enlarging the beachhead, and breaking out to race for the Rhine. To make this possible, the risks of each invasion sector must be assessed, thought must be given to which port or ports will be needed to supply and reinforce the army on the continent, and the player must know and utilize the proper tactics to make the majority of Allied attacks successful.

The Germans must especially attempt to deter the Allies from making landings close to Germany, but ideally want to make it as difficult as possible to break out from any invasion area. Unfortunately, the Germans lack the necessary number of units to make every invasion area equally difficult, so in most German plans that have been published the areas closest to Germany tend to have the strongest defense. If the Allies play it safe and invade where they are not likely to be bottled up, it will likely be far from the Rhine. The Germans will therefore have more time to delay the Allies from reaching the Rhine, and will probably have more hope for eventual success, chiefly because the German replacements kick in on turn 16.

Over time, opinions have varied on who has the advantage in **D-Day**. The 2nd edition (1965) rules gave a distinct edge to the Allies due to the strategic air power (which was devastating against stacked German units). The Allies still had an edge despite South France being a rather useless site for the initial invasion due to supply line limitations of 17 hexes. In looking over **D-Day** game records that I have kept, I found that the Allies have won 60% of the time.

I mentioned earlier that various published German strategic plans were flawed. Back in 1978 I perused my collection of the Avalon Hill *General* magazines looking for articles on **D-Day**. By then I had the 1977 edition of the **D-Day** rules. Some German plans that I found pre-dated the 1977 rules, making them less useful. I did, however, find an interesting article by Tyrone Bomba in *The General*, vol. 7, no. 4, (Nov-Dec 1970). The article was titled “**D-Day**’44 Tourney Version,” but what it actually did was show on the **D-Day** game board where the

German units were historically located on 6 June 1944. I satisfied my curiosity by setting up the German units on the game board using Bomba’s coordinates.

I found that the historical German defense was quite different from the various German plans that I had encountered for the **D-Day** game, but a careful study of them made me understand that compared to the historical German positions, most published German plans for the **D-Day** game suffer from having too many units in some invasion areas and too few in others. I also compared Bomba’s unit locations to a map from “The Struggle for Europe” by Chester Wilmot (which is a source that Bomba had listed) that showed the Wehrmacht in the West on June 6, 1944. That map provided locations for a couple units that Bomba had left out. The seven German units that start the game behind the Rhine River on starred hexes were not included in Bomba’s setup, but that was not a problem for game play.

I decided to see what needed to be done to make a viable defensive plan with minimal adjustment of the historical German unit locations. First, I had to move some static units out of board locations (such as non-port inland hexes) that are forbidden to them by the game rules. I then continued adjusting the locations, moving units as few spaces as possible from their historical locations, which may have been fine in real life but not so much on the geography of the **D-Day** game board. Ultimately, I also moved some units from their historical locations where they were not truly needed to much more distant hexes to beef up weak areas. The result was what I call my “Historical Defense Plan,” in which as many units as possible have been kept in historically exact or nearby locations, plus were assigned to the same German armies as they historically had been. During the 43 years since I first developed my plan, I have found reasons to occasionally tweak it, despite its success against opponents both by mail and in person. The plan is now in its fifth iteration, due to some tweaking a few weeks ago of the locations within one invasion area. In the third iteration of my plan, I had found that 32% of the German units remained in their historical locations, 14% were only one hex away, and another 32% were within 2 to 5 hexes of their historical locations. You can see, therefore, why I call it my German Historical Defense Plan.

Since I first used this Historical Defense Plan, I have had astounding success with it. I have defeated several opponents on the beaches in both Allied invasions. Breakouts are possible but can still end in Allied defeat. The German is not assured of victory, but I find that my beach defense plan often tempts the Allies into trusting in luck and attacking very risky invasion areas. (So far, no opponent has been blessed with perfect luck!) I now give the edge to the Germans in **D-Day**, which I feel is what it should be. After all, the generals who oversaw the **D-Day** invasion had great concern that it might fail and that casualties would be too high. They also worried about getting ports for their buildup.

I wonder how many of you **D-Day** players have developed a good German plan of your own? I have seen some of my opponents use plans that were found in the Avalon Hill *General*, but by comparison with my own plan I know the weaknesses of those published plans and generally find it easy to exploit them. Other players appear to just set up their units with some general guidelines in mind and give it a go. An experienced Allied player can usually get ashore and do reasonably well in such a case.

My most recent playing of **D-Day** was in June of 2019. My friend Paul and I had been playing a game of **D-Day** ’77 when I found myself proposing a way of playing it with multiple commanders. I wrote up guidelines for making a multiplayer

(Continued on page 4)



game of **D-Day '77** work in such a way that the responsibilities of each of the players would be reasonably distributed. We soon managed to get five players together for a face-to-face multi-player game. Paul and I, the experienced **D-Day** players, respectively took the role of overall commanders of the Germans and Allies. Paul handled decisions on which German units would be freed up from rear areas and coastal defense for his subordinate general (who had some prior **D-Day** gaming experience) to employ in the front lines against the Allied main front. Paul also personally handled the German forces in South France when the Allied second invasion was made there. I had two subordinates who were novices at **D-Day** but did have some familiarity with other classic Avalon Hill war games. They took the roles of Montgomery and Bradley in the game's first invasion. My own role was to give overall strategic direction to them by naming objectives and setting timetables. I also doled out reinforcements and airborne units to them and kept track of Allied supply capacity and routes so that they would have sufficient resources to accomplish their missions. My two Allied subordinate commanders did all the troop movements, attacks, and die-rolling on the main front, while I eventually handled the second invasion forces in South France where Paul personally opposed me. The Germans surrendered after turn ten when it became obvious to them that the Allies would eventually be able to get enough troops across the southern Rhine to win the game.

After this experience, I feel that if all the players were very familiar with **D-Day '77**, the multi-player **D-Day** game would work even better than our initial experiment. Seven players would be ideal. They would command OBWest and Army Groups B and G for the Germans; SHAEF and Army Groups 21, 12, and 6 for the Allies. Because not all the Allied army groups would be active in the game's early stages, players could begin as Army commanders and then step up into their Army Group roles as needed. Army commands could also be redistributed to keep the subordinate commanders busy during the early phases of the game and then expand their roles as the game evolved. For example, the Allied Army Group 6 commander might have the role of an active army commander in the early part of the game until his own armies and army groups came into play later. The OBWest player would have final say on the German initial set-up and specify the army group boundaries. The SHAEF player would have final say on where the initial and second invasions would take place, who would command each army and army group and when. Moreover, SHAEF would assign reinforcements, set army goals and objectives, and keep track of the supply logistics for each army or army group. Subordinates would do all the moving, set up combats, and make die rolls, plus could suggest new goals, request forces and airdrops, etc., which the SHAEF player would need to approve. With experienced players, Allied Army Group commanders might even manage their own command's supply logistics.

I'm not sure how well this multi-player version of **D-Day '77** would work in a PBEM game, and I don't feel it would work at the slow speed of PBM, but I'm willing to share my **D-Day** multi-player guidelines with anyone who is interested. My contact name is *gamecorner* and I use earthlink.net.

This brings me to the present. As I write this, June 6th is a few days away and I'm itching once again to commemorate history with a game of **D-Day '77**. I have provided in this article a few clues as to how I formulated my own Historical Defense Plan and what I saw wrong with other plans. I am open to the challenge of seeing how I fare against the optimal German plan of a **D-Day** game opponent. Then, for comparison, I could try my own German Historical Defense Plan against that same player. Even more interesting (although I suppose it is unlikely

to happen) would be playing someone who also had designed a plan that was based on Bomba's historical German unit locations, and then see how our two plans compared.

Previously, I have played **D-Day** against players in AHKS using PBM and also PBEM using *Cyberboard*. I have not used *Vassal* yet, but I am open to learning that method for **D-Day** and other games. I am putting in a match request for **D-Day '77** and, one way or another, I hope that someone will soon take on my challenge to "change World War II history in this realistic invasion game by Avalon Hill."



## Upcoming Events

It is good to see some life here! Thanks to Tom Hanover for his input.

**August 28 – Sept. 4, 2021** Tempe, Arizona  
 ConsimWorld Expo 2021  
 Featuring MonsterGame.CON XX  
<http://expo.consimworld.com/>

**Sept. 3-6, 2021** San Mateo, CA  
 Pacificon  
<http://www.pacificongameexpo.com/>

**Sept. 16-19, 2021** Indianapolis, IN  
 GenCon  
<https://www.gencon.com/>

**Sept. 30-Oct. 3, 2021** Columbus, OH.  
 Origins Game Fair  
<https://www.originsgamefair.com/>

**Oct. 22-24, 2021** Rockford, IL  
 Rock Con 2021  
<http://rock-con.com>

**Oct. 21-24, 2021** Madison, WI  
 Gamehole 2021  
<https://gameholecon.com>

**Nov. 2021**, King Prussia, PA  
 Historicon  
<https://www.hmgs.org/mpage/HconHome>

**Nov. 17-21, 2021** Dallas, TX (Pending)  
 Board Game Geek (BGG) Fall  
<https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/1429885/announcing-bggcon-spring-sold-out>

**Dec. 10-12, 2021** Philadelphia, PA  
 PAX Unplugged 2021  
<https://unplugged.paxsite.com/>

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

## Vice President's Chair

Martin Svensson

### Origins Of World War II

In the past two issues of *The Kommandeur*, I wrote of virtual gaming. First, I set the stage by proposing an **Origins of World War II** virtual event. In the last issue, I included the rules for Bruce Reiff's 4-player variant that would be used for the event.

The time has come for signing up. I have been contacted by Jeffrey Gaul and Ron Haas expressing interest in playing. Assuming both are still interested, I need a minimum of two more players. The event would be played live on Vassal with communications between participants via the AHIKS Discord.

If you would like to be included, contact me as soon as possible at [spqrfan@aol.com](mailto:spqrfan@aol.com). There will further communications with details from me once it has been determined that there is enough interest to proceed. The goal is to play in September.

### Biting Off Too Much To Chew?

I would describe myself as being in semi-retirement. I have had two distinct careers. For many years I was an accountant in the hospitality field working in luxury hotel properties. Related to that, I also worked on the food and beverage side of the industry as a caterer and restaurant owner until 2018. Since then, I have served as a substitute teacher in the public school system. As a substitute teacher, I work nearly full-time, so describing myself as semi-retired may be an exaggeration. However, this position allows ten weeks of free time in the summer.

Never one to hold back, I have launched into a gaming frenzy. Currently, I am playing several games live and on Vassal.

I am just starting to play Avalon Hill's **Anzio** using the 4<sup>th</sup> edition rules on Vassal. I played this game once a few years ago and the victory was determined on the final die roll. As far as I'm concerned, this title may be the best of the Avalon Hill "classics." Many of them are dated, but this one holds up.

As far as my AHIKS opponents go, I'm playing the Compass Games edition of **Red Star White Eagle** and **Blitz: A World in Conflict**. I can recommend both games. **RSWE** was originally released by GDW in 1979. This "Designer Signature Edition" is a vast improvement artistically. It retains the original rules with errata included. **Blitz** is an area movement game based upon **World in Flames**, except it is far simpler and plays much faster.

A gaming friend and I play every Sunday under normal circumstances. On the table now is **NATO: The Cold War Goes Hot** from Compass Games. The game has garnered a lot of attention since its recent release and for good reason. The game is excellent. Designer Bruce Maxwell went back to his Victory Games **NATO** game and updated it, based upon new archival information. It's a gem.

Lastly, I am involved sporadically with two gaming groups. One is playing GMT's **The U.S. Civil War** and the other is tackling Compass Games **Balance of Powers**. **BoP** is a favorite topic, strategic World War I. After owning the game for a number of years, I finally get to play it. It came with a certain amount of hype that turns out to be real, not hyperbole. Many of you are familiar with **TUSCW**. While some do not like the rules covering the appearance and disappearance of generals, it still is one of the better games on the topic. I find that I can live with the scripting.

While my hands are full, I'm not complaining. We all know about idle hands and the devil's playthings...



## Book Reviews

### Waterloo, Rout & Retreat—The French Perspective

by Andrew Field

348 pages, maps Pen & Sword

\$27--\$31 on Amazon

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

This is the fourth book in Field's discussion of the battle of Waterloo from the French side. It discusses the aspect of the battle that I knew almost nothing about. Throughout the book he quotes passages from written French sources, mostly officers since the enlisted men did very little in the writing department.

At the end of the battle, the French army simply dissolved. Men left the battlefield on their own, some throwing their muskets away as they tromped toward Charleroi. Some officers, also, just disappeared. There were problems crossing the rivers at Genappe and Quatre Bras because artillery had been abandoned on the bridges. Food and water, of course, were in very short supply.

The Prussian cavalry was the main cause of concern. The Prussian infantry moved no faster than the retreating French; the British were in no hurry—they had heavy losses to look after.

Grouchy's men, who had been successful against the Prussians, withdrew though Sombreffe, fighting off the Prussian cavalry. They were about the only French with any discipline. The other retreating French who were in ranks had very little morale; officers were continually afraid they would disintegrate at the slightest provocation.

There were short stops at various walled towns on the way to Paris. Some towns had militia that was suspect.

The Prussians were primarily moving on the west bank of the Oise River, wanting to get between the retreating French and Paris. Blücher did not like the French at all, and wanted blood, especially Napoleon's.

There was fighting at Paris. The northern side of the city was well defended, but not so the south and east. The Prussians moved west and south around the city; the British held the north. In the past, the Allies had said they were fighting Napoleon, not the French. But when Napoleon abdicated, the Allies did not slow down. Fouché is credited with surrendering to the Allies and reinstating the monarchy, not popular with many French.

Lots and lots of details here.



### Basil's War

by Stephen Hunter

270 pages The Mysterious Press

\$12 to \$20 on Amazon

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

I bought this book because I have enjoyed Hunter's previous Swagger novels. Earl Swagger (a state policeman) was the father of Bob Lee Swagger (a former army sniper). They had some interesting adventures.

In this book, Basil St. Florian is a different character. Hunter tries to bring some humor into the book. Basil is a WWII British spy who is parachuted into France. His success in his adventures seem more luck than cunning. The Germans are smarter than most novel Germans.

Back in Britain, Alan Turing figures things out and Basil solves another puzzle.

Not much here.



## So, You Want To Be A Playtester

by Bob Best

Just what does it take to be a wargame playtester, you ask? Well, from the perspective of a game designer and developer, here is my take on what makes a good playtester.

First though, you might want to know what my qualifications are to write this article. I've been gaming since 1960. Over the years I have designed and developed a number of game modules for existing games. Some of them have been published here in *The K* and some elsewhere. I have worked as a developer on several wargame projects, and I have partnered with Steve Dixon on two solo wargames published by Legion Wargames: **Target For Today** and **Target for Tonight**. We utilized playtesters on both projects. I have also been a playtester for other designers on a number of game projects over the years. Steve Dixon and I recently completed a new solo wargame titled **Rolling Thunder: Skyhawk**. We had the opportunity to ask for volunteers for playtesting our new design. So, I have seen playtesting from both sides.

Playtesters should be fairly logical thinkers. This helps you follow complex processes to their conclusions and helps you find problem areas in the game design.

If you decide you want to try playtesting, volunteer for a game that uses a game play system that you are familiar with. For example, if your main interest is two-player board wargames with Strategic or Tactical unit counters and densities, then you may not want to try playtesting a card-driven Man to Man combat game like DVG's **WarFighter** until you become more familiar with the intricacies of the card-driven game system.

### What Do Playtesters Do?

A playtester takes the designer's rules and game concept and puts them through their paces, just as if it was a new purchase. A playtester should review the rules, tables, and components in the game looking for areas that are not well explained or not explained at all. You should be able to identify these problem areas and report them. You should keep specific notes about the locations and issues you discover and report them to the designer/developer. Not only should you review the rules for their consistency and clarity, but you should also test the rules for extreme cases. In other words, you should test the rules and tables for not just the middle of the road values but for the cases that may only come up occasionally. Your goal is to find any holes in the game design.

Stick with what the designer/developer is asking you to do. Don't try to add your own ideas into the game design. It's ok to bring up your ideas to the designer/developer but if they consider your ideas and decide not to use them, then, as a good playtester, you should be able to continue playtesting without allowing their decision to affect your playtesting objectivity.

Designers/developers should tell you at the beginning of the project just what the scope of the game is and answer any questions you have.

The designer/developer should tell you:

1. What the expected response time is for reviews of the system. If you cannot meet that expected review schedule, then you should not volunteer for this game.

2. When reports are due and how problem areas will be handled in respect to updated material being returned to the playtesters.

3. Who is in the playtest group and how the group will communicate. (We generally use email with everyone being copied on all emails).

### IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, ASK!

You need to know the direction the designer has in mind for the game, and you should do your utmost to playtest the game to those standards.

A playtester should report problem areas in a timely fashion. The designer/developer may ask you to continue playing with the current version of the rules while they work on solutions to the problems you have reported. It is not necessary to re-report problem areas that you already reported unless the designer/developer asks you to do so.

There will be people in the playtest group who do not participate. On average for the games where I have worked with playtesters, usually about 30% of the group "disappear" and never make any reports. There will always be other designers looking for playtesters, so pick one that fits your skills and schedule... Remember game designers rate playtesters too!



### 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.

2137 Olivier Poulin, Canada  
 2138 Neil Morgan, UK  
 2139 Steven Anderson, Canada  
 2140 Roddy Davey, Canada  
 2141 Kevin Keenan, PA  
 2142 Erica Snarski, PA  
 2143 Kevin Postlewaite, CA  
 2144 Daniel Pezan, IL  
 2145 Dan Williams, Canada  
 2146 Austin Mardon, Canada  
 2147 Clinton Ray, SC  
 2148 Frank Aker, AZ  
 2149 Michael Wandishin, PA  
 2150 Eric Martin, MD  
 2151 Chris Kilander, IN  
 2152 James Bert, OK





## In-Bound Bandits! Game Intro by Nick Rusch

Last summer while languishing at home due to pandemic restrictions I came across Dan Verssen Games' (DVG) **Zero Leader** Kickstarter campaign. For some time, I'd been curious about DVG's Leader solitaire series of aviation combat games. With my interest in WWII and aviation, it didn't take much virtual arm twisting for this Kickstarter campaign to capture my attention, followed closely by excavations of my pocketbook. The campaign was to finish during February 2021, which for a Kickstart campaign is right about average. As should have been anticipated, there were delays because of the pandemic impact on the economy. My copy of **Zero Leader** landed in April – not too bad, all things considered.

With seven titles published to date, DVG has quite a following for the solitaire aviation Leader series. The **Zero Leader** Kickstarter campaign funded within the first 24 hours and offered some great expansions and options. The base game includes mounted tactical display and dogfight sheet, 15 individual campaign sheets, each recounting either a historic engagement such as Pearl Harbor or Midway, or a campaign such as the Coral Sea. The base game also includes a number of heavy-stock, color player aids; three card decks for individual pilots, targets, and events; and 11 countersheets containing various Allied and Japanese aircraft, anti-aircraft artillery, and indicator chits.

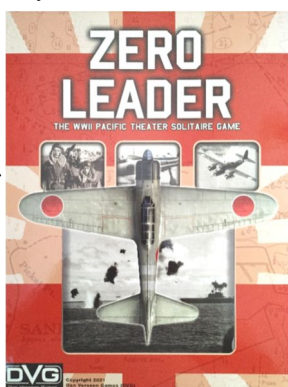
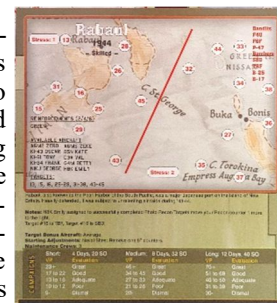
DVG has always done a superior job with their game components and **Zero Leader** is no exception. All the components, including the box, are high quality. I especially appreciate the thick cardboard stock counters which pop out of their trees free of any spurs or nubs that need to be trimmed. As a bonus for those of you, like me, who appreciate rounded corners, these counters are pre-rounded.

The 15 campaigns included in the base game are comprised of six with introductory settings – Pearl Harbor, Battle of Santa Cruz, Midway, Coral Sea, Wake Island, and the Philippines. There are four campaigns with a standard complexity setting – New Georgia, Port Moresby/Lae, Guadalcanal, and New Britain; two campaigns rated as skilled – Leyte Gulf and Rabaul. The final three campaigns are identified as expert and include Home Island Defense, Okinawa, and Luzon. Each of the campaigns can be played with varying durations - short, medium, or long. Short-duration campaigns run between three and six days, while the long-duration campaigns can last up to 30 days. As a strike leader, you will assemble a composite squadron of pilots and aircraft and lead these men and machines on missions of mixed aircraft types over a period of days, dependent upon the campaign duration you choose to play. The longer the campaign the more difficulty you will face as a strike leader, having to manage your pilots' stress and exhaustion levels versus your need of their particular skills and aircraft to successfully complete an assigned mission. You may even be called upon to decide who will fly on the divine wind as a kamikaze pilot to achieve success against the enemy.

Included as a part of the Kickstarter containing five additional campaign mainland China, Burma, the Indian countersheet with additional Allied decks with additional pilots, targets, additional **Zero Leader** pilot card advantage of purchasing a copy of a Kickstarter participation award of a box slipcover of **Zero Leader** writ-

An aspect of the game I am looking the **Zero Leader x Corsair Leader** designed to sit over the existing **Zero** One player takes on the side of Japanese while the other player takes on the **Leader**. Instead of having the to the solitaire player's actions, these rules allow one player to decide for and act as the adversary for the other. An interesting mechanic to turn a solitaire game into a two-player aerial combat game.

In the next issue of *The K*, I will provide an AAR with examples of play for **Zero Leader**. Wish my squadron leader and pilots luck! In the meantime, watch your six and stay out of the sun!



campaign was an expansion pack sheets incorporating campaigns for Ocean, and Malaysia, an additional and Japanese aircraft, and card and events. I also picked up two decks for aces and trainees and took **Corsair Leader**. Finally, there was DVG **Corsair Leader** t-shirt and a ten in Japanese.

forward to investigating further is crossover rules. This set of rules is **Leader** and **Corsair Leader** rules. nese forces using **Zero Leader** side of Allied forces using **Corsair** game's "AI" mechanics responding



## Book Reviews from Art Dohrman

### **Command in War** by Martin Van Creveld **The Defense of Hill 781** by James McDonough

Both of these books have been out for some time (mid to late 1980s), but they share a common theme – the lot of a commander, or how does a commander succeed or fail in seeing the battlefield and directing his forces?

Martin Van Creveld is an Israeli professor and military historian. He's published several other books examining various aspects of military operations. "Command in War," published in 1985, examines the topic of command at a very high level.

James McDonough is a former US Army infantry officer. His earlier book, "Platoon Leader," describes his experience as a young lieutenant in Vietnam. "The Defense of Hill 781," published in 1988, focuses on battalion level operations at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA.

Van Creveld explores the theme of how a commander effectively directs his forces. In each chapter, he chooses a particular battle or campaign to illustrate the characteristics of command in a particular era. In the "Stone Age of Command," prior to about 1800, a commander could influence only what he could see. Once the troops were deployed and the signal given, battle was joined, and there was little the commander could do to influence the action, outside of his moral influence (think Caesar's red cloak). By the time of Napoleon, forces became more spread out and the staff as we know it began to develop. It was necessary to keep track of subordinate units, get reports back of what they were experiencing, and give directions. In the 1806 Jena campaign, Napoleon fired off letters to his subordinate commanders daily or more often. Even so, the execution could be hit or miss depending on the state of mind of the individual subordinate. Napoleon thought he was fighting the main action of the campaign, only to find out later that Davout had confronted and defeated the main Prussian army. Jumping forward 60 years to 1866: when Prussia fought a war against Austria, railroads, rifles, and telegraphs had been developed. Von Moltke utilized railroads to deploy the Prussian forces and sent them marching towards the Austrians, but again communications with subordinates were deficient. The telegraph was essential for managing the necessary rail movements but was not able to follow the field armies forward. Although Von Moltke was largely in the dark regarding where his forces were and what they were doing, his subordinates benefited from the flexibility of the initial Prussian deployment. The culminating battle of Königgratz was a Prussian victory because of this flexibility. Von Moltke's contribution during the fighting itself consisted largely of managing von Bismarck and the Prussian King. Van Creveld introduces the concept of the "directed telescope" – trusted staff officers who could be sent forward to see the situation for themselves and bring firsthand reports back to their commanders. Van Creveld asserts that at that point, the Prussian General Staff was still small enough and informal enough that these officers all knew each other personally and could have the kind of frank discussions necessary to form an accurate impression of the situation.

The next example comes from World War I, and specifically the 1916 Battle of the Somme, where the British commander Haig attempted to dictate every aspect of the battle from on high. Brigade and battalion commanders were forbidden to leave their own command posts so that higher could always talk to them on the telephone. This meant that the headquarters at all levels had no idea of what was going on. Nor were they allowed to react to changing circumstances, to the extent that they recognized what these were. The end result is well

known; the British suffered staggering losses for very minimal gains of territory.

Next, Van Creveld discusses the Israeli Sinai Campaigns of 1956, 1967, and 1973. In the first two of these, the theater commanders (Dayan in 1956 and Gavish in 1967) laid out general objectives for their brigade commanders and tailored their task organizations for their missions, but otherwise let them run their own battles. In 1967, General Gavish, the commanding general of Southern Command, spent a lot of his time visiting subordinate units. As Gavish remarked, "There is no alternative to looking into a subordinate's eyes, listening to his tone of voice." Even so, the instances where he intervened in divisional and brigade operations were few and far between. In 1973, however, some of the same flaws that marked Haig's conduct of the Battle of the Somme recurred in the Sinai. General Gonen, commanding Southern Command, did not enjoy the confidence of General Headquarters in Tel Aviv, which restricted his authority and insisted on making all major decisions. Perhaps worse, Gonen's subordinate divisional commanders sensed this lack of confidence and authority and went their own way. Without the benefit of having an overall scheme of maneuver, each divisional commander fought his own battle. Again, brigade and divisional commanders were constrained to be in constant communication with higher headquarters, which meant they could not go forward and get a firsthand appreciation of the situation in their sectors. The result was a confused melee between the Israelis and the Egyptians who had crossed to the east bank of the Suez Canal. Order was not restored to the battle until General Gonen was relieved of command and a new commanding general (Bar Lev) was installed who was able to impose control over his divisional commanders and resist interference from Tel Aviv.

Lastly, Van Creveld examines the effect of helicopters and computers on the US war in Vietnam. Again, many decisions were made in Washington, far from the scene of the action in Southeast Asia. Computers and systems analysis, while useful in managing financial and logistical aspects, proved less than useful in making tactical or strategic decisions. The quest for data points to analyze drove metrics (such as the body count) which in turn drove actions at the tactical level. The helicopter, for its part, facilitated the movement of commanders about the battlefield. The nature of guerrilla war, consisting largely of small-unit (company sized) actions, led in many cases to a company commander in contact having his battalion commander above him in a Huey, with the brigade commander orbiting above him in his own Huey, and possibly even the division commander above that, each wanting to be kept apprised of what was happening on the ground and offering "helpful" suggestions while the overburdened company commander, with bullets whizzing past, tried to direct his platoons and bring in artillery and air support.

In his conclusion, van Creveld muses about "The Quest for Certainty." In every age, commanders have been tempted to try to be absolutely certain about the enemy and about one's own forces. This leads to paralysis and a stifling of initiative. The most successful commanders in each era have been those who struck a balance and structured their forces to be capable of functioning more or less independently, while at the same time using a "directed telescope" to find out what's really going on in order to assess reports from subordinate units, which, like all human perceptions, are liable to be either too optimistic or too pessimistic.

McDonough's book is subtitled "An Allegory of Modern Mechanized Combat" (modern in this context being 1988.) It's probably been a while since high school English for most of us,



so let me define an allegory: a story wherein each character represents symbolically (and is named after) some aspect of human behavior or life in general. In this case, the chief character is the battalion commander, LTC A. Tack Always. LTC Always has died (from eating too many MREs at one sitting) and has been sent to Purgatory (the NTC) to atone for his sins. A brief description of the National Training Center (NTC) may be in order. Established in 1980 at Fort Irwin California in the Mojave Desert, it is the US Army's premier location for realistic combat operations against a live opponent. A dedicated force (the "OPFOR", currently drawn from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment) in the 1980s was organized as a Soviet motorized rifle regiment outfitted with Soviet-style uniforms and armored vehicles visually modified to resemble Soviet types. Training at that time focused on high intensity mechanized combat, and it utilized laser emitters and sensors in place of actual live ammunition. Since September 11th, 2001, training has transitioned to counterinsurgency operations. Since the OPFOR live there, know the ground intimately, and train their "mission" constantly, they are formidable opponents. Units are sent to the NTC for short-term training rotations. Observer-controllers are embedded with the training units and help facilitate lessons learned after each mission.

Once in Purgatory, LTC Always must take command of a mechanized task force and lead it in a series of missions against the enemy while being tormented by demons (the NTC observer-controllers who point out his every mistake.) LTC Always' initial mission, a tactical approach march followed by a dawn attack to secure an objective, does not go well. Despite LTC Always' attempt to control every detail, much is left uncertain. Although the objective is secured, the task force suffers excessive casualties doing so.

The second mission is worse. Although the planning goes better and the company commanders have a clearer understanding of their mission, the initial mission to attack is shifted in mid-execution to a hasty defense, which fails to stop the enemy. Communication difficulties, partly due to jamming by the enemy but partly due to failed coordination among the task force elements, complicate LTC Always' efforts to establish the hasty defense, and the enemy passes through his sector to fall upon the brigade rear areas.

The third mission, defense in sector, likewise fails, due to chemical attack, smoke, and more enemy jamming of the radio network that combine to hamper the task force's reaction to a shift in the direction of the enemy's main effort.

The fourth mission, deliberate attack, is another expensive success; a key leader is replaced at the last moment and his successor is not up to the task.

The fifth mission, night attack, is a success, thanks to better coordination and more efficient execution by all the task force's elements. But the troops, including LTC Always, exhausted by their efforts over the preceding days, fall asleep once the objective is reached and so are unprepared for the enemy counterattack.

Gradually, after each mission and "assisted" by the NTC demons, the situation improves. LTC Always involves his subordinates in planning, takes their suggestions, simplifies the plan, and learns to trust and delegate (getting more sleep in the process!).

The final mission, battle position defense, is a success. LTC Always takes a suggestion from one of his young staff captains to turn the tables on the enemy and sucker them into a kill zone to be destroyed. LTC Always and his troops "graduate" from Purgatory.

In recent years, the US military has advanced the concept of "Network Centric Warfare," an attempt to resolve Van Creveld's "Quest for Certainty." When every unit and even indi-

vidual vehicles are connected via network, it's theoretically possible to know where every friendly unit is at all times. Intel reports can be uploaded and shared near-instantly. The question then becomes making sense of all this data. Are the reports coming in accurate? Even if they are, is it merely part of the enemy's deception plan? If they contradict each other, which one or ones do you believe? Van Creveld and McDonough, each in his own way, point out that war is a human activity and technology cannot replace judgment, or training, developing, and ultimately trusting your subordinates to do their jobs.

So, how does this apply to wargaming? In conventional hex and counter wargames such as **Russian Campaign**, **Panzerblitz**, or **Afrika Korps**, the players have achieved that certainty that Van Creveld describes. You always know where your units are and what they're capable of. They always go exactly where they're directed, when they're directed. Every tank platoon and every rifle platoon is exactly like every other similar platoon; they are always at 100% equipment, maintenance, training, and morale. They never get lost or break down. They never panic and run away or hide (exception: **Squad Leader** and similar games where morale checks become issues). You always know the locations and capabilities of your opponent's units. The only places uncertainty or "fog of war" comes in are the die rolls or, in card driven games like the COIN series, which card is coming up next. I'm familiar with a very few exceptions, where some deployments are hidden initially, or the unit capabilities are determined randomly upon first contact (**Panzergruppe Guderian**). There is no human element. We would do well to remember that the games we play are just that – games – and at best imperfect representations of reality.

Acknowledgment: I wish to thank Jim Sander for his helpful review of an early draft of this article.



*(Continued from page 17)*

strength of 16 just like the 105mm howitzer). The Book of Armaments includes Artillery Display Cards for each player, and you'll put your off-board batteries right there on the chart and change their status as you fire them. While it helps keep track of which ones have fired, more important is the coolness factor of playing with artillery batteries on the game board instead of numbers that you write down on paper.

The book also includes some new artillery-centric optional rules to let you do more stuff with the big guns. And of course, there's historical background about the guns and their users. \$40 <http://www.avalancheppress.com/gameArmaments.php>

#### *Gun Fight*

Ironclad Press (CSS Chicora)

A quick and easy version of a wild, wild west shoot-out. The Hit Matix is added for advance players. This is a great way to introduce kids to wargaming. \$3.50/\$5

<http://www.nobleknight.com/P/2147373962/Gun-Fight>

*The editor apologizes for the awkward arrangement here.*

## Multiplayer Info

From Jeff Miller

Hopefully everyone is having a great summer with the pandemic slowly losing its grip on the world – although it does seem to be causing more issues in different parts, sadly enough.

I made it out to Sedona, AZ, for the first real vacation since Prezcon right before the pandemic shut everything down. It felt great to actually be able to interact with people and do things again.

Squeezing this in before heading down to my daughters for a week of gaming with family/friends – our own WBC more or less since it was cancelled again this year. So, a bit shorter than usual.

We have some new games added into the list below, as well as some that are only 1 player away from kicking off, so take a look. **Angola, EIA, Here I Stand** and **Titan** [it can handle 6 but it plays best with 4 according to BGG].

While we are still in the heat of summer and lots of outdoor stuff to do, bear in mind fall/winter will arrive sooner than you think, so getting a game setup now will pay off later. 😊

I am also starting to see a small trend where a number of players are getting multiplayer games running without having to even go to the list. Truly an encouraging sign for those of us who like the challenge of trying to win against 3+ opponents at the same time. 😊

Hope everyone has a great summer!

Regards, Jeff

### \*\*\*\*\* All the News Fit to Print \*\*\*\*\*

[Feel free to send me any press you want included from a AHIKS multiplayer game you are in.]

**Britannia:** The Rome invasion has been driven back with the remaining legions fleeing to the south. The Briganti fought well and only a few legions made it up to the outskirts of Pict territory. The Welsh cowered on the sidelines as the blood of their brother Englishmen stained the soil of England. Now we shall see the plundering of Rome's outposts.

**Conquistador:** With a needed restart, the situation has changed. England has the entire South America area to themselves! Portugal has jumped into an early lead beating both Spain and France to the riches of North America. On a more civilized and humane level, French troops fought off a raiding party of Portuguese attempting to pillage the peaceful villages of native tribes. 😊 [I can hear the Portuguese muttering something about propaganda from here. 😊 ]

**Kremlin:** The struggle for political control continues. The Red Army shakes its head over the lack of concern for the people of our great state as the other factions vie for who can control the most power and wealth.

**Fire in the Lake:** While ARVN and the US have driven back the wave of VC and NVA in the south, the north continues to be a struggle.

**Kingmaker:** Game 3 starting up with 6 of us, stay tuned!

**Here I Stand:** Suleiman has retired to his palaces to plot revenge, letting the evil Protestants complete their brainwashing of Europe's masses. 😊

\*\*\*\*\*

If you see a game you want to get in, drop me a note. It's first come, first served, and once a game kicks off, it most likely will be a while before another one launches.

As usual, if anyone is on the list that does not want to be, please drop me an Email so that we have an accurate gauge of where we are at in any particular game.

A Distant Plain GMT – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 A Distant Plain GMT – Duncan Rice [1394] V  
 Advanced Civilization AH – Jeff Gaul [2003] V  
 Advanced Civilization AH – Eric Aune [2122] V  
 Advanced Civilization AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Angola MMP – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Angola MMP – Nick Rush [1913] V  
 Angola MMP – Tom Liakos [2047] V  
 Amoeba Wars AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Blackbeard GMT - Nate Forte V + Discord live play  
 Colonial Twilight GMT – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Crown of Roses GMT – Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 Divine Right TSR - Delwayne Arakaki [1991] V  
 Dominant Species – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Dominant Species – Nacho Fernandez V [8028]  
 Dune AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Dune AH – Brian Nickel [1797] V  
 Empire in Arms AH – Kevin Conway [1930] V  
 Empire in Arms AH – Andrew Patience [274] V  
 Empire in Arms AH – Thomas Scarborough [1345] V  
 Empire in Arms AH – Mike Kettman [1067] V  
 Empire in Arms AH - Angelo Valeri [2030] CEFL  
 Empires of the Middle Ages SPI – Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 Falling Sky GMT – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Fortress America MB – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Gangsters AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Gunslinger AH - Matt Scheffrahn [1844] VMG  
 Gunslinger AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Gunslinger AH – Ed Becker [2097]  
 Here I Stand GMT - Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 Here I Stand GMT – Dave Bergmann [854] V  
 Here I Stand GMT - Robert Robles [1788] V  
 Here I Stand GMT – Brian Stretcher [885] V  
 Here I Stand GMT – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Magic Realm AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Machiavelli AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Machiavelli AH - Nacho Fernandez V [8028]  
 Merchant of Venus – Mark Palmer V [1074]  
 Merchant of Venus – Jeff Miller V [1303]  
 Napoleonic Wars GMT - Aaron Martin [2107] V  
 Republic of Rome AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Sails of Glory Ares - Nate Forte TTS + Discord live play  
 Samurai AH – Delwayne Arakaki [1991] V  
 Strategic Command WWII World at War – Steve Blake [1806]  
 Matrix Games PBEM System  
 Tank Duel GMT - Nate Forte V + Discord live play  
 The Kaiser's Pirates GMT – Nate Forte V + Discord live play  
 Titan AH – Jeff Gaul [2003] V  
 Titan AH – Eric Aune [2122] V  
 Titan AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Stellar Conquest – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Stellar Conquest – Mark Palmer [1074] V  
 Time of Crisis GMT – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Unterseeboot [PC AH Submarine] - Nate Forte Discord live play  
 Versailles 1919 GMT – Aaron Martin [2107] V  
 War and Peace AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 War of the Suns MMP – Jeff Miller [1303] V

## Open Match Requests from Chuck Tewksbury

1985: Under Iron Sky TRL  
Across Five Aprils VG

ACW Brigade Series MMP  
Adv Third Reich AH  
Adv Third Reich (1992) AH  
Afrika Korps AH  
Air Assault on Crete AH  
Battle for Germany SPI  
Battle of the Bulge '81 AH  
Bitter Woods Designer Ed Compass  
Blitz: A world in conflict Compass  
Blitz: A world in conflict (Martin has played once and hopes to again!)  
Blitzkrieg AH  
Bloody 110 COA  
Bloody April GMT  
Bloody Kasserine GDW  
Breakout to Paris 1918 HFD  
Bull Run AH  
Caesar at Alesia AH  
Caesar's Legions AH  
Cedar Mountain SPI  
Chickamauga SPI  
Chickamauga SPI  
Clash of Giants Tannenburg GMT  
Combat Commander GMT  
D-Day '77 AH  
D-Day '77 AH

Empire in Arms AH  
Empire of the Rising Sun AH  
Empire of the Rising Sun AH  
Fifth Frontier War GDW  
Flat Top AH

Flying Colors GMT  
Fortress Europa AH/Compass  
Fortress Europa AH  
Fox's Gambit HFD  
France 1940 AH  
Frederick the Great SPI  
Fury in the West AH  
Gallipoli GMT  
Grenadier SPI  
Guns of August AH  
Hells Highway (1984) VG  
Holland '44 GMT  
La Grande Armee SPI  
Leipzig SPI  
VELMain Battle Tank 2ed GMT  
Midway AH  
Monty's Gamble: Market Garden MMP  
Napoleon's Last Battles (DG 4th ed. rules) DG

No Retreat: North Afrika GMT  
No Retreat: Russian Front GMT  
Panzer Battles MMP  
Panzer Blitz AH  
Panzer Grenadier AP  
Panzer Leader AH  
Proud Monster XTR  
Richthofen's War AH

Martin Hogan (1704)  
Mark Palmer (1074) V  
ville scenario preferred

Aaron Kulkis (1983)  
Rick Cholett (2015) EFV  
Geoffrey Moores (1993) V  
Ray Clinton (9999) VE  
Peter Hansen (9999) V  
Chris Hyland (1862) V  
Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
Martin Kerslake (2011) V  
Martin Svensson (1466)

Compass Mike Ricotta (2004) VXE  
Martin Kerslake (2011) V  
Aaron Kulkis (1983) FVL  
Mark Palmer (1074) VL  
Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
Jeremy Rowley (1942) ETV  
Jeff Miller (1303) VE  
Jeff Miller (1303) VE  
Peter Hansen (9999) V  
Joseph Grills (748) VTE  
Peter Bertram (790)

Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
Allen Evenson (1553) E  
Lou Jerkich (544) VCEP  
Tom Walsh (1427) Postal, email considered/combo postal mail  
Edson Ramos (1989) P  
Rick Cholett (2015) ES  
Mike Scott (1555)  
Dane Patterson (2010) EV  
Paul Koenig (1577) V  
Midway scenario preferred, but not required

Rick Cholett (2015) EV  
Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
William Goranson (2008) AE  
Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
Martin Kerslake (2011) V  
Peter Hansen (9999) V  
Jay Unnerstall (1264) EP  
Ivan Kent (9999) V  
Charles Sutherland (1804) LVE  
John Troskey (1554) CV  
Geoffrey Moores V  
Dane Patterson (2010) EV  
Charles Sutherland (1804) VEL  
Charles Sutherland (1804)

Martin Hogan (1704)  
Scott Saunders (1664) E  
Jerry Wong (1974) FV  
Tom Thornsen (470) V

Jerry Wong (1974) FV  
Bert Schneider (1569)  
John Troskey (1554) CVS  
Ray Clinton (9999) VE  
Carl Wolf (1992) V  
Jeff Gaul (2003)  
Edson Ramos (1989) P  
Scott Saunders (1664) E

Russian Front AH  
Siege of Constantinople SPI  
South China Seas CMP  
SPQR GMT  
Storm Over Stalingrad MMP  
Tank on Tank LnL  
The Civil War VG  
Great War in Europe/Near East  
The Korean War Compass  
The Russian Campaign AH

Martin Kerslake (2011) V  
Chris Hyland (1862) EVW  
Mike Ricotta (2004) VXE  
Justo Perez (2009) FV  
Duncan Rice (1394) V  
Duncan Rice (1394) V  
Jeremy Rowley (1942) EWTW  
GMT Terry Gallion (2044)  
Paul Koenig (1577) V  
Terry Gallion (2044) competitive game  
Paul Raphael (1496)  
Nick Rusch (1913) V-E-L-X  
Raymond Starsman (2005) ELV  
Jerry Wong (1974) FV  
John Troskey (1554) CVS  
Graeme Dandy (916) V  
Ray Clinton (9999) VE

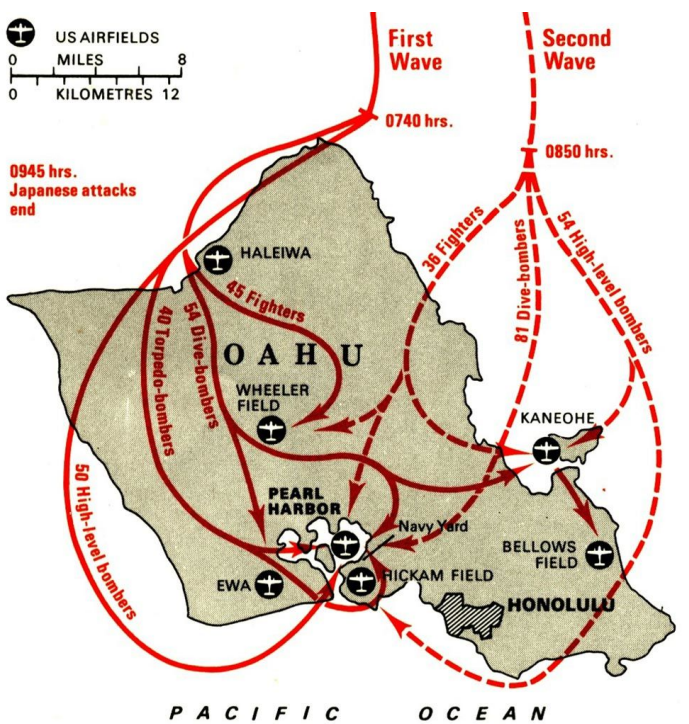
The Russian Campaign AH  
The Tide At Sunrise MMP  
Third Reich or Advanced AH  
Thunder at Cassino AH  
To Green Fields Beyond SPI  
War Galley GMT  
Wilson's Creek SPI

**Match Coordinator**

To accept one of the listed matches or have a new match listed, email to: [chuck.tewksbury@gmail.com](mailto:chuck.tewksbury@gmail.com)

**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





**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, 2021.**

**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.



*As AHIKS 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 AHIKS 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

**From the Editor**

There are some interesting articles in this issue. And Lou Jerkich, who has an article in this issue, has presented an article for the next issue on 60 years of wargaming. I found both good reading.

Conventions are coming back...slowly.

The influx of new games seems unending. Good and bad, because who can keep up with them all?

New members keep coming into AHIKS. I hope they find what they are looking for. I've been a member for over 50 years; although we have had unreliable members, there are enough solid members to always find a good opponent. With the giant list of games we now have, it isn't as easy to find someone who has a copy of the game you want to play. One has to be flexible.

I'm now reading "The Bomber Mafia" by Malcolm Gladwell. Sue has read it and liked it. She is a Gladwell fan, but she enjoyed the subject as well. It is well written, but it is not like any other "war" book I've read. He kind of chats about the bombing campaign in WWII. The title of the book is named after a group of airmen who discussed the expected upcoming entry of the US into WWII. I have discovered a flaw in the book: on the front cover, the right wing of the B-29 is 3 or 4 centimeters longer than the left!

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## Game News

### Avalanche Press

**Plan Z** During the late 1930s, the German Kriegsmarine came up with a plan for a powerful new fleet, built around several aircraft carriers and a half-dozen huge battleships, with flotillas of supporting cruisers and destroyers. Admiral Erich Raeder called this ambitious program Plan Z and looked to complete it sometime in 1948. When war actually broke out in 1939, none of these ships had been completed or even started.

**Plan Z** is a massive expansion set for Second World War at Sea, kicking off a new alternative history setting we're calling The Long War. It features the ships and planes of Plan Z, pitting them against the Royal Navy and the additional ships and planes of its own building plans.

There are 510 brand-new die-cut (and silky-smooth) pieces. The huge H-class battleships are here, M-class cruisers, P-class battle cruisers and much more.

There are also thirty new scenarios based on the battles that might have been waged in the North Atlantic in this alternate world. This module is not playable by itself, but requires ownership of **Bismarck**, **Arctic Convoy** and **Sea of Iron** to enjoy all of the scenarios. \$50

<http://www.avalancheexpress.com/gamePlanZ.php>

**Midway** (Deluxe Edition) In the summer of 1942, the Japanese Combined Fleet sought a decisive battle with the U.S. Pacific Fleet to put the Americans out of action. Admiral Yamamoto chose Midway Island, at the far eastern end of the Hawaiian chain, as a target for which the Americans would fight. The Americans indeed came to fight, sinking all four of Yamamoto's fleet carriers for the loss of one of their own.

**Midway** Deluxe Edition features not only the climactic Battle of Midway but also the attempted relief of Wake Island, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and battles that might have followed the clash of carriers.

**Midway** Deluxe Edition includes 560 playing pieces: 280 "long" ship pieces and 280 square ones representing aircraft, smaller ships, and markers needed for play. There are two operational maps forming a 42x28-inch playing area covering the Hawaiian islands, Midway and surrounding waters.

Like its sister game **South Pacific**, **Midway** Deluxe Edition includes not only the standard, generic Tactical Map but also a special Tactical Map, this time showing Pearl Harbor with all of the locations of American warships on the fateful morning of December 7th, 1941.

There are 36 scenarios, organized in our popular "story arc" format that weaves the narrative of the campaign into the scenarios, allowing them to tell the story of these pivotal battles. \$100 <http://www.avalancheexpress.com/gameMidwayDeluxe.php>

### BelloLudi

**World War I** BelloLudi Strategy games are designed for multiplayer battles using a large amount of miniatures. They are designed to be fast and fun and easy to learn for non-wargamers. BelloLudi designed these rules especially for team-building purposes. The rules have a core of around a dozen pages, no more than the game of **RISK**. From page thirteen on, we include some extra rules. You will not be needing them at first, but we can imagine that you would like some variations as your experience grows. Start with that page when you have some battles under your belt. off course, an experienced gamer will dive right in.

Suitable for two to twenty players!

This ruleset simulated battles in the period of 1914 to 1918, the years in which the world's nations fought one of the greatest conflicts in human history, the Great War or First World War. The rules will work for the skirmishes in this era, but also in

Balkan Wars and the various conflicts of the Interbellum were largely fought with the same material and tactics. The first World War was a period of tremendous changes in equipment and tactics. These rules will give you the options of playing the first skirmishes of 1914, the trench warfare that dominated the middle of the war, and the combined arms tactics that were developed at the end of the war.

The aim is not to annihilate the enemy unit to the last man, but to inflict so much damage that morale is brought down and the unit will become shaken or will run away in panic and be removed from the table top. By a clever combination of movement and shooting, dashing cavalry charges and carefully positioned artillery pieces, this can be achieved. The tactics are based on teamwork. \$24/\$28

<https://www.nobleknight.com/P/2147917528/BelloLudi-World-War-I-English-Edition>

### American Civil War

\$24/\$28

<https://www.nobleknight.com/P/2147917526/BelloLudi-American-Civil-War-English-Edition>

**BelloLudi WW2** This ruleset simulates battles in the period of 1939 to roughly 1945, Also known as World War Two. They will also work for conflicts slightly before that period and after such as the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the Korean War (1950-1953), As well as the various wars of de-colonisation.

Designed for the beginner with a minimum of miniatures, it also allows you to field large armies on the table top and play to a conclusion in two to three hours.

**BelloLudi Rifles 1865-1914** The first of the skirmish games is set in the period 1865-1914. Chosen because of the introduction of the bolt-action rifle which gave soldiers a greater range and accuracy. You can start off with only 25 miniatures per side, so any box of plastic soldiers will give you more than enough to start playing.

<https://www.belloludi.nl/winkel/BelloLudi-Big-Battle-games-c80769005>

### Compass Games

**Defending America: Intercepting the Amerika Bombers, 1947-48** is a solitaire, tactical level game which places you in command of an actual or experimental interceptor aircraft during a frightening look at what might have been in World War II. This game is highly accessible to those familiar with the **B17: Queen of the Skies** system. The game system lends itself very well to capturing the tense feelings of being on an interception mission, and gives a frightening look on "what might have been" had the Allies fared poorly in the war. While **Defending Amerika** is designed as a solitaire gaming experience, additional options for play are provided for both multiplayer cooperative and competitive gaming sessions, and an option to link the game with **Amerika Bomber: Evil Queen of the Skies**. \$69/\$55 <https://www.compassgames.com/product/defending-america-intercepting-the-amerika-bombers-1947-48/>

**Cradle of Civilization** is a pair of games, **Sumeria to Persia** and **Alexander vs Darius**, in one premium package (mounted mapboard and "thick" counters) that allows two to six players determine the fate of the Ancient Near East. In one game civilizations rise, while in the second game two players battle over whether the great Persian Empire will survive or perish. Both games use simple mechanics to make them quick-playing and to portray a period feel to the players. \$89

<https://www.compassgames.com/product/cradle-of-civilization/>



## Critical Hit

Combine **Devil's Domain II** with **Gates Of Hell** and play on the largest Kursk battlefield ever published at this scale. The battle just got escalated to include two new linking mapsheets that create one massive Eastern Front conflagration ... on your gaming table. The maps link 'long-ways' and that means you will deploy your forces across a rollicking six-foot long by four-foot deep spread when you combine the two games. You will not need to own **Devil's Domain** to play **GOH**.

**DD2** includes the original set of 16 scenarios, as many as any stand-alone module. You also receive a new color die-cut counter collection in Eastern Front camo and colors for both sides. All the combat counters you need to play, just bring your own markers! \$90

[http://www.criticalhit.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Product\\_Code=ASLDD2](http://www.criticalhit.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Product_Code=ASLDD2)

**Infantry Attacks 1 - Wurttemberg Mountain Battalion**  
The seminal study of infantry warfare, "Infantry Attacks" is still a staple at war colleges around the world and there is a reason why: it's on point analysis has stood the test of time.

Now you can experience the Great War battles from within its pages. Includes 8 new GWASL scenarios, 4 new GWASL Geo maps and a bonus sheet of German Infantry counters.

Ownership of GWASL modules through the Romanians is also required. \$55/\$70

<https://www.nobleknight.com/P/2147909566/Infantry-Attacks-1---Wurttemberg-Mountain-Battalion>

## Decision Games

**Meuse Argonne: The Final Offensive** After successful offensives in August 1918, Marshal Foch ordered an all-new offensive into the Meuse-Argonne with no less an objective than the encirclement of the entire German Army. The US First Army commenced the new offensive on 26 September, but formidable German defenses stalled the operation within four days. The drive resumed after a few days of reorganization, this time supported by over 300 tanks and 500 aircraft. Steady progress was made until the attackers encountered the depth of the Argonne, one of the densest forests in France. It would be a tough slog until the Americans broke into the open. \$25  
<http://shop.decisiongames.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=1628>

## Europa Simulazioni

**Gorizia 1916** The Sixth Battle of the Isonzo, August 1916 had been planned for a long time by the Italian High Command. They had learned from the bitter experiences of former fruitless and bloody offensives aimed at forcing a crossing of the Isonzo, and this time were able to achieve complete surprise.

The start of the battle was delayed by the Austro-Hungarian Spring Offensive (the Strafexpedition), which took place during May – June 1916. This had necessitated the diversion of Italian divisions from the Isonzo to the Province of Trentino. Ironically, this interruption to their plans worked to the Italians' advantage. The Austro-Hungarian High Command underestimated the speed with which the Italians were able to re-deploy their troops and guns to the Isonzo theatre and so were unprepared for the carefully planned attack on Gorizia.

This is a low-medium complexity tactical game on the campaign conducted by the Italian forces against Austria, during August 1916.

This is a mini-monster, very playable game with many hundreds of die-cut counters, one 22"x34" map with large hexes representing the theater of the Isonzo River, at a scale of 900m per hex, 1 day per game-turn.



Each unit counter represents a battalion, or an artillery battery. The game system is the same as its predecessor, **Strafexpedition, 1916**. €54

[https://italianwars.net/NewSite/gorizia\\_1916.html](https://italianwars.net/NewSite/gorizia_1916.html)

**Custoza, Fields of Doom** recreates two of the most essential battles (and defeats) of the wars of the Italian Risorgimento, the two battles of Custoza, respectively in the First (1848) and Third (1866) Wars of Italian Independence. The game system, which is focused on fog of war and maneuver, tries to recreate these peculiar battles in a most innovative way.

Custoza is a small town at the edge of low hills between Verona and the Mincio river, an area that always saw the passage, and the fighting, of armies struggling for the domain of Veneto. And the same hills were the theater of two fierce battles between the rising Italian Kingdom and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

**Custoza, Fields of Doom** is the name of the first game of a series, using the same rules system, named "Risorgimento". The Operational Game System "Risorgimento" simulates the battles and campaigns of the Wars of the Italian Independence (1848 – 1866) at regimental and battalion level. The system does not deal with the tactical formations of the period, instead it highlights the command systems and capacities, the fog of war, and the consequent operational and strategic decisions, keeping the game complexity at a moderate level.

The new design of the game offered us the chance to adopt different and better approaches. The ideas behind the design remained the same, but the way we implemented them is totally changed.

Game complexity is a bit higher now, though the game works better overall. €49

[https://italianwars.net/NewSite/custoza\\_fields\\_of\\_doom.html](https://italianwars.net/NewSite/custoza_fields_of_doom.html)

## Excalibre Games

**Ironclads, The** (2nd Edition) is a detailed war game of the first armored naval engagements of the American Civil War 1862-1865. It features simultaneous plotted movement, which makes for possible ship collisions. \$50/\$55

<https://www.nobleknight.com/P/-1099722593/Ironclads-The-2nd-Edition>

*Excalibre Games acquired the 3W product line and many of its titles.*

## High Flying Dice Games

*Now includes a Solitaire Game section.*

<http://www.hfdgames.com/solo.html>

**Sad Days of Battle: The Battle of Jarama**, February 6-27, 1937. After failing to take Madrid in November, Francisco Franco ordered his forces to cut off the former capital city and now symbol of Republican resistance by taking the roads south of the city linking it to the Republican government in Valencia. The attack over the Jarama River was to be coordinated with the Italian's offensive to the north and east of the city along the Guadalajara River. However, the Italians were taking longer than anticipated to get their forces into positions, hindered by poor weather and abysmal planning. With growing impatience General Franco ordered his forces to attack, supported by the German Condor Legion as well as masses of new German tanks, artillery pieces, and ample supplies of ordinance. \$16  
<http://www.hfdgames.com/Jarama.html>

## Hollandspiele

**District Commander: ZNO** centers on insurgent and counter-insurgent operations and tactics during the Algerian War of Independence. The game deals unflinchingly with the weapons with which this war was fought – terror cells, double agents, the forced resettlement of ethnic and religious groups – prompting



uneasy questions about how governments obtain, hold, and use power.

Brian Train's District Commander is a series of operational games on counterinsurgency situations. The players alternate activation of groups of units (stacks) to perform discrete operations (missions) through the expenditure of Task Points (TP). Some missions are Tactical Missions - straightforward military tasks such as performing patrols, ambushing or attacking enemy forces, or moving from one place to another - and these may be performed multiple times by a stack during a turn. Other missions emphasize the "non-tactical" end of the campaign, establishing friendly influence, control, and infrastructure in an area, reducing the enemy's claim to the same, and recruiting or training troops. These missions take more time to perform and so unlike the tactical missions may be the only mission performed by the stack during the turn.

Missions are resolved by play of secretly-held Chance Chits, each with ratings that are better or worse for certain types of operations. Chits are played simultaneously and the ratings compared, modified by units, assets, and the current board state to determine the outcome. Using the right chit at the right time - knowing when to save a good chit for later and when to use it and trying to determine if your opponent is going all-in or holding back - will require steely judgment in an atmosphere of doubt and deception.

All this is done in pursuit of objectives handed down to you by your superiors (i.e., chosen randomly) and kept secret from your opponent - objectives that may even change over the course of the game. Within this framework, the two sides - Government and Insurgent - play very differently, with the Insurgent player, in particular, depending on bluff and deception to achieve their goals. A large number of variant rules allow you to turn the game into a sandbox for exploring counterinsurgency doctrine and practice. \$50

<https://hollandspiele.com/products/district-commander-zno>



## Legion Wargames

### Chivalry at Bay: Tactical Battles of the Hundred Years War 1337 – 1452

The Hundred Years War (1337 to 1453) was a dynastic struggle between the English house of Plantagenet and the French house of Valois for control of the French throne. Armies from across Europe would ally with these families, spreading combat as far from Gascony as Scotland and Portugal. Chivalry rose and fell on the backs of personalities like the Black Prince, Charles the Bad, and Pedro the Cruel, fought over battlefields at Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. By the end of this period, the military code of chivalry would be in ashes and from those would be born the nations of England and France.

**Chivalry At Bay** is a low to medium complexity game depicting many of the individual battles that made up the Hundred Years War. Players control armies involved in each conflict that attempt to drive their opponent from the field of battle. Each battle can be completed in roughly two hours, allowing several battles to be played in a single sitting. The game takes several novel approaches toward simulating these eighteen individual battles. \$70

[https://www.legionwargames.com/legion\\_CAB.html](https://www.legionwargames.com/legion_CAB.html)

## Lost Battalion Games

**Red Devils** is a totally innovative but proven system, with the game's engine run by impulse cards managing four broad, basic functions—and randomizing the order—while each player man-

ages a hand of cards constructed by the talents and foibles of the troops under his or her command.

Unlike many "miniatures" games where you buy the rules and then have to start shopping and painting, **Red Devils** is a complete game out of the box. You'll find 20mm, pre-painted miniatures, plenty of thick, two-sided, colorful mapboard tiles which can be assembled in various ways, easy rules, scenarios, player aids... everything you need to get started on your missions. <https://www.lostbattaliongames.com/p-613-smg-red-devils.aspx>nd having fun fast. \$70

## Matrix Games

**Gary Grigsby's War in the East 2** is a complete overhaul and improvement of the original **War in the East**, with no stone left unturned to provide a more realistic, more historically rich, and more challenging strategy experience. **War in the East 2** comes with a wide array of scenarios ranging from the short tutorial on the Battle for Velikie Luki, to the four-month Destruction of Southwest Front, up to the immense full 1941 – 1945 Grand Campaign of the entire Eastern front from Operation Barbarossa to the fall of Berlin. A total of seven Operational Scenarios and three Full Map Campaigns await you with hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of historical gameplay.

Years of new development have resulted in the best AI opponent ever made by 2by3 for any of their games. Also included are a much more accurate map including a full single and double rail network as well as the historical road network, a detailed and expanded Order of Battle, new realistic movement and combat models, an advanced Logistics system, a vastly improved and easy to manage Air system and many other improvements in the interface and game management, as well as a built-in encyclopedia of the weapons and units of the Eastern Front. This is just scratching the surface of the many new features and improvements, all of which are explained in a fully comprehensive manual, also available as a physical copy.

*The Manual:* If you order the additional Physical copy, you will receive the largest and most comprehensive manual ever printed for our games. In the works for years alongside the development of **War in the East 2**, this 520-page hardbound full-color manual leaves no stone unturned in fully documenting every aspect of the game system, from getting you started with the mechanics to advanced systems and strategies as well as designer notes and useful appendices. Every copy will include a PDF digital form of this manual, but only the physical version will include the hardbound printed manual, while supplies last. \$80

<https://www.matrixgames.com/game/gary-grigsbys-war-in-the-east-2>

## Minden Games

Minden is selling a large number of games and magazines in PDF format. Check out the titles at: [http://minden\\_games.homestead.com/pdf.html](http://minden_games.homestead.com/pdf.html)

## Multi-Man Publishing

**The Third Winter (TTW)** covers the critical campaigns in the Ukraine during the period September 1943 - April 1944. This massive series of battles involved 75% of the Soviet and 85% of the German armored and mechanized forces, nearly 60 mobile divisions. The campaign proved to be the bloodiest in the war to date and **The Third Winter** covers the major engagements: the battle for Kiev, the winter counterstroke of Manstein's 'fire brigades', the tank battles at Kirovograd, the Korsun-Cherkassy pocket, the 1st Panzer Army's "moving pocket" battle (Hube's Pocket), the fortress battles around Tarnopol in the spring of 1944, the baptism of fire for II SS Panzer

Corps and the slugfest in Romania. The spring mud season brought the campaign to an end, by which time both armies were exhausted. The Red Army would quickly recover, the Wehrmacht could not.

The game area covers parts of Southern Russia, much of the Ukraine, southeastern Poland, and eastern Romania. The game begins with the Germans in full retreat to the Dnepr in late September 1943. By the campaign's end in late April 1944, four Axis armies will have faced four Soviet fronts in a titanic struggle. Several scenarios supplement the main campaign, as the German army fights its "Third Winter" in Russia.

The Soviet command and supply structure is modeled through Front HQ markers. Fronts are either in "Offensive" or "Regrouping" status, allowing for shifting axes of attack and the on/off nature of Soviet operational warfare during this time. Each Front has an assigned Air Force. Tank and Mechanized Corps rebuilding takes place off-map, allowing for rapid strategic force shifts. The Axis player has operational flexibility but must battle multiple challenging situations.

**The Third Winter** is a large OCS game, with over 1,700 combat units and a 44 x 66-inch map layout at a scale of 5-mile hex/3.5 day turn. The full Campaign game is 63 turns long, and there are three campaign scenarios so players can start at different points in the action. Also included are several one-map scenarios, including an 8-turn Korsun Pocket game played on a special map (otherwise parts of all four maps would be needed). \$200

<https://mmpgamers.com/preorders-c-1/the-third-winter-p-188>

## Red Raven Games

**Near and Far** Explore different maps in a search for the Last Ruin, recruiting adventurers, hunting for treasure, and competing to be the most storied traveler.

Collect food and equipment in town for long journeys to mysterious locales, making sure not to forget enough weapons to fight bandits, living statues, and rusty robots!

Sometimes in your travels, you'll run into something unique and one of your friends will read what happens to you from a book of stories, giving you a choice of how to react, creating a new and memorable tale each time you play. Each chapter is played on a completely new map with unique art and adventures. \$70/\$80

<https://www.redravengames.com/near-and-far/>

## Stronghold Games

**Profiteers** It's 1861. The US is wracked by Civil War. Great issues are at stake. Slavery, States Rights, the preservation of the Union... but you don't care. As a British Profiteer your aim is supply troops on each side and make as much money as possible. \$23/\$25

<https://www.nobleknight.com/P/2147917226/Profiteers>

## Taktyka I Strategia

**Lodz 1914** was the biggest battle fought by the tsarist army against the forces of the German emperor. Huge armies gathered on the west bank of the Vistula in November, seeking resolution in a decisive battle. The scales of victory tilted from side to side but finally the German side emerged as victor. The best divisions of the Russian army suffered heavy losses. \$40/\$50 <https://www.nobleknight.com/P/2147917247/Lodz-1914>

**Fallschirm 1939-45** During World War II, German airborne troops carried out several spectacular attacks on the Allied forces. The game allows you to play the biggest battles with their participation. They are: Crete, Kos, Leros and Corinth. It is also possible to play a hypothetical German-Italian attack on Malta. PLN 85

<https://taktykaistrategia.pl/blog/fallschirm-1939-45/>

**Waterloo 2025** is a strategic war game showing a hypothetical conflict between Russia and Western countries. The energy and social problems caused divisions in the NATO army. The French and the British stood against each other. Meanwhile, the Russian army and the contingent of the reconstituted German People's Army that supported it attacked from the Ardennes towards Brussels and Ghent. At the end of the fighting, three American divisions supported by helicopters and attack aviation entered the fighting. The player will see the currently functioning military equipment, including modern tanks, aviation, and artillery. PLN 85

<https://taktykaistrategia.pl/blog/waterloo-2025/>

## VUCA Simulations

**Across the Bug River: Volodymyr-Volynskiy 1941** is an operational level simulation about the fighting during the first days of Operation Barbarossa in the Volodymyr-Volynskiy region. The goal for the German player is to break through the Soviet defence lines and open the main road to the East. €65

<https://vucasims.com/collections/available-games/products/across-the-bug-river-volodymyr-volynskiy-1941>

## White Dog Games

This company has an impressive list of games and a special section on Solitaire Games. <https://www.whitedoggames.com/>

## MAGAZINES

*Modern War* #54 **The Nagorno-**

**Karabakh War: 1992-1994** is a two-player wargame of the war between Azerbaijan and the breakaway province (Oblast) of Nagorno-Karabakh, inhabited by an Armenian majority. After the first ethnic clashes between Armenians and Azeri, during the death throes of the Soviet Union, Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence from Azerbaijan. The Azeri launched an ethnic cleansing campaign. Faced with annihilation, the Armenians resisted and fought back. The Armenian player must fight a numerically superior foe, but he has the advantage of interior lines and a unified command. The AZ player has a greater supply of former Red Army weapons and ammunition but must fight not only the Armenians but also political infighting and low morale. Each hexagon encompasses about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles). Units of maneuver are battalions. There are nine game turns each representing three months. \$40 <http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=MW54>



*Paper Wars* #97 contains **Battle for Galicia, 1914**. It models the opening campaign of World War One fought between Imperial Russia and Austria-Hungary on the plains of Galicia and southern Poland. Simulated are the concurrent offensives launched by the two belligerents. This is an easy to learn game system combines simple mechanics (although not simplistic) with a historically accurate map and order of battle; the synthesis of the maneuver, effectiveness recovery and combat resolution sub-systems highlight the important aspects of the campaign. The game system is not only fun and exciting to play but offers the gamer a true insight into this fascinating little-known campaign.

**Battle for Galicia, 1914** covers the critical time period from August 23 to September 15 in twelve game-turns each representing two days of real time. The combat units represent division and brigade-sized infantry formations and corps and division-sized cavalry formations. The map depicts only the relevant terrain where the primary battles were fought at a scale of

12 kilometers per hex. During the campaign the Vistula River and the Carpathian Mountains proved to be effective geographic barriers. All available forces were pulled into the primary battlefield where, as gamers will learn, every formation was needed. \$47

<https://www.compassgames.com/product/issue-97-magazine-game-battle-for-galicia/>

*Paper Wars* #98 contains **First Blood in the Crimea: The Battle of the Alma, 20 September 1854**. This game uses the alternating-actions system introduced here in **Wagram**. That system places the emphasis on players' mastery of overall operations rather than on the minutiae of tactics. In effect, players role-play each side's supreme commander, making the decisions those two men would make rather than the whole command chain, as is often the case many complex tactical-level games.

The battle was the first clash of the Crimean War, fought only a few days after the French, British and Turks had landed on the peninsula and began marching on Sevastopol. Both sides threw in everything they had, hoping for a quick and decisive victory. That made for a day of fierce back and forth combat, which was characterized by both soldier-level heroism and high-command incompetence. In the end the Russians retreated, but it was a near-run thing that could've gone either way. \$42/\$47

<https://www.compassgames.com/product/issue-98-magazine-game-first-blood-in-the-crimea-alma/>

*Slingshot* #337

The Rise and Fall of Nomad Military Power, part 1 c. 1000 BC

- 1200 AD - by Michael Fredholm von Essen

Solo Wargaming - by John Hastings

The Philistines are upon you - by Richard Andrews

Game Mechanics and Realism - by Anthony Clipsom

The Murder of Evesham - by John Graham-Leigh

Assyrian 'Kallapani' - by Daniel McLaughlin

<https://www.soa.org.uk/joomla/>

### **BattleDay update**

*With Covid Restrictions due to be lifted in late June 2021, Battleday 2021 (Bosworth) has now been rescheduled to take place on Sunday 15th August 2021 in Newbury. The venue is Shaw House, Church Road, Newbury RG14 2DR. The venue, which has a café, will be open at 9am and the event will run until 4pm. The attendance fee will be £10.*

*Those wishing to attend should now register with Richard Lockwood [battleday@soa.org.uk](mailto:battleday@soa.org.uk). Since the number of tables is limited, probably 8-10, boards will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. So get your request for a table in quickly. Those without a game will have the opportunity of participating in one of the games being run.*

*Strategy & Tactics* #330 **Mediterranean Empires: The Struggle for the Middle Sea, 1281-1350 AD** is a low to intermediate complexity, two-player, strategic-level wargame simulating the fight for the Western and Central Mediterranean during the turn of the 13th-14th centuries. Players control either the French/Anjou forces and their allies, or Aragon and their allies. The map shows the Western and Central Mediterranean as it was during the 13th-14th centuries and is divided into its geo-political regions or areas with units moving across the map from area to area. There are seven game turns. Each game turn represents a decade. Units represent from 500 to 2000 men. \$40 <http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=ST330>

*World at War* #79 **Rising Sun Over China: Japan vs China 1931 – 1937** is an operational-strategic level two player war-

game covering the campaigns in northern China, 1931 to 1937. These campaigns revolved around the regions of Manchukuo (Manchuria) and Menjiang (Inner Mongolia), and culminated in the Japanese invasion of China proper, taking the capital at Peiping (Peking). There was also the possibility of Soviet intervention. The game has two players: the Japanese Empire and the Republic of China. The Japanese objective is to gain control of northern China to provide a strategic advantage for the ensuing Sino-Japanese War which commenced in July 1937. The Chinese objective is to retain control of strategic regions of northern China, thereby forestalling a larger Japanese invasion. Each hex on the map represents 75 kilometers across. Each turn of play represents one year of operations. Japanese ground units are divisions and brigades. Allied Japanese, as well as most Chinese units, are at the army and corps level, representing shifting arrays of forces. Air units represent various numbers of sorties needed to accomplish missions. \$40



<http://shop.strategyandtacticspress.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=WW79>

## BOOKS

*Elsenborn Ridge: Britain's Battle of the Bulge, A Campaign Study*

Soon after the 16 December 1944 German attack in the Ardennes, British troops began moving into position for a counter-attack. By late December the British XXX Corps was heavily involved in helping push back the German Sixth Panzer Army, advancing alongside the Americans to erase all German gains by early January.

The Battle of the Bulge is rightly celebrated as an American victory; most troops involved were Americans, and most casualties likewise were Americans. But the British Army fought as well, and we celebrate their victories over fascism as well.

In this short book, Philippe Léonard presents eleven scenarios from the epic British struggle to stop and turn back the Nazi tide. Plus, we tell you the story of this little-known yet crucial battle. You'll need **Elsenborn Ridge** and **Liberation 1944** to play the scenarios. \$20

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

*The Book of Armaments, Eastern Front Artillery*

On the combined-arms battlefield, it's the armor that slashes through and the infantry that takes and holds ground. But it's the artillery that destroys, that creates the breakthroughs and crushes attacks before they even begin.

The Book of Armaments is all about artillery in Panzer Grenadier, focused on the Eastern Front games (Fire in the Steppe, South Flank, Burning Tigers, Broken Axis, Gates of Leningrad, The Deluge, Slovakia's War, Armata Romana) and thus on the Soviet, German and Romanian armies (including related forces like Soviet Guards or German Waffen SS).

It comes with 88 new die-cut and silky-smooth pieces: additional artillery units, plus new units for the heavy and medium batteries of corps- and army-level battalions. There are German 170mm and 210mm guns, Soviet 152mm and 203mm batteries, Romanian 155mm guns and so on. And there are more of the artillery batteries already present in some (though not all) of those games, like the German 105mm howitzer.

In Panzer Grenadier, each off-board artillery increment corresponds to an artillery battery and has the same strength as the battery's indirect fire rating (so most German increments have a

(Continued on page 9)



