



## THE KOMMANDEUR

# NEWSLETTER OF AHIKS



### THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

In a Society such as ours, where all those who administer it have to earn their living in other ways, the work has to be fitted in during their spare time. Sometimes spare time is at a premium and this leads to odd results. Nowhere is this more true than with the K. The last K was delayed due to the machinations of Postal authorities, and this one has to be ~~early~~ <sup>LATE</sup> due to Pete's personal affairs. As a result I am drafting this contribution before I see K 13/1. I only know what I wrote!!

I would like to welcome the continuance of Joe Horne and Pete Menconi in their offices and on the Exec. John Ratzenburger has merely changed his hat, and I am delighted to have his continued advice and support. The Western Region has been reorganized into a new Western and a Pacific Region. I welcome the two new RD's George Calage and Todd Roseman to the "hot seat and corridor of power"!! I would also like to thank the unsuccessful candidates for offering to serve; I am sure that your turn will come later.

One point to emerge from a preliminary study of the Survey, and from an RD, is a desire for more information on the activities of the Exec. Several of your suggestions cover areas on which the Exec is working already. This one is firmly in my court, since it is in this column and the Secretary's that such information is given. I had thought that we were doing reasonably well over keeping you "in the picture", but I apologize if this is not so. I do have a sneaking feeling that some may not have read their Ks fully. However we will try to improve matters. As a start I will give a resume of work in hand and decisions taken recently. Where there has been no change, I shall refer you to the previous item in the K.

**Reorganization:** See K13/1. We are now considering the composition of the new General Committee and have a preliminary draft of a new Constitution under consideration. I still hope to put it to you for approval in the Summer. Some of the following items will appear as part of this new Constitution, but have been considered separately.

**Vice President:** See K 13/1. You have confirmed this proposal and Omar De Witt is V.P.

**Financing Regional etc. Meetings:** See K 13/1.

**Payment of Subscriptions (Dues) by Officers:** It has been decided that all Officers will pay dues in future and will be reimbursed through the Budget for expenses.

**Logos:** A sample is with the Officers from which a short list will be selected and put to you for a vote.

**Honorary Membership:** We are not too happy about this and are reviewing the system.

**Ratings:** The European Region has criticized some aspects of this and a sub-Committee of the Exec. is reviewing the system.

**Split of Eastern Region:** This split has been agreed. We are deciding on the precise boundaries and looking for two RD's.

**OOB Sheets:** We are studying the feasibility of an all-purpose OOB sheet. There is one suggested layout under discussion.

**Game Monitoring:** In response to your suggestions a sub-Committee is examining ways of improving this service.

**Rules Summaries and PBM Aids:** The demand for Rules Summaries is so great that The Judge and his team are swamped. As a result, we shall have to employ an agency to type and reproduce them. The project under the auspices of Virgil Mugler for suggestions and ideas on PBM aids in the K is booming. One word of caution over the use of any of them. They remain suggestions and aids only. They have no status in the Society as do the Rules Summaries. If you use them that is alright, but in case of disagreement the Judge cannot give decisions. He can only act on the rules and our Society rulings. Should any of these ideas be adopted and approved by the Judge, then that is a different matter. So if you use them, be sure both you and your opponent understand fully what you are doing.

Henry Radice

March 1978



**THE CACTUS WARS: PHOENIX MINI-CON**  
-Pete Menconi-

Jim Pratt was kind enough to invite the desert rats over to his house on March 25 (a Saturday). We had six in attendance, which is pretty good for an area with five AHIKSers! Local members were Bill Garman, Jim, Dick Zalud, Pete Menconi; Mike Scott was on a business trip (he's from California) and managed to extend it over the weekend; the sixth attendee was a local friend, but non-member, Harvey Pentel.

We got things started about 9 in the morning with the usual, "what shall we play" business. Mike and I went into Cobra (he nailed me in two turns--ouch!). Mike also took a hand against Bill in PGG while Jim and Dick tried one of those sword and spear things whose name escapes my sieve-like memory. Harvey and I went through about five games of Sea Strike, which Henry Radice was kind enough to send to me for the occasion.

Dick Zalud brought his brain child, Custer, published by Battleline, and gave us the inside scoop on wargame design (you better have a real job, too, he sez). As is usual, everyone brought a few new games and we all got to crinkle the wrappings. I was glad no one actually suggested we try playing them: six hours reading the rules for each hour of play! I managed to give away my war "library" (about two dozen books): new baby got first call on the closet space!

A wave of us (three) had to depart about 5 in the afternoon, but Jim tells me that the firing didn't die down until about midnight. It was a great day and I know everyone had fun. This is the second year in a row that we tried a Phoenix-area gathering, and I guess we can start calling it an annual event. For those of you who have not tried holding a small (less than ten people) game-day, I would encourage you to give it a try. The small attendance means the arrangements are very simple to make and the facilities-supplier does not have to either engage extensive preparation or clean-up. It's a bring-your-own-~~666~~ drinks type of affair, so finances are no problem (everyone can chip in for lunch and dinner). We're all looking forward to next year.



Dick Zalud (left) and Jim Pratt try out Musket and Pike (I think). I'm not certain who won, but Jim had his kids let the air out of Dick's tires.



Harvey observes a moment of silence as one of my aircraft after another crashes on take-off in Sea Strike.



Mike Scott (left) and Bill Garman ponder PGG. I believe this one went down to the wire with Bill, as Germans, finally nailing the victory.

CENTRAL OFFICES

- |  |  |
|--|--|
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REGIONAL DIRECTORS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
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| EAST . . . . . BOB McLAUGHLIN<br>c/o Hickory Farms<br>#3 Parole Plaza<br>Annapolis, MD 21401<br>(301) 224-3412 |  |

SERVICES AVAILABLE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| MONITORED GAMES<br>PACIFIC DIPLODEUR/ORIGINS WEST<br>Larry Fong, Publisher<br>P.O. Box 11090<br>Oakland, CA 94611<br>(see Match Coordinator column) | ARCHIVIST . . . JIM WALLACE<br>924 Dover Road<br>Westville, NJ 08093 |
|   | PBM IDEAS . . . VIRGIL MUGLER<br>1460 Ladd<br>Edwardsville, IL 62025 |

GENERAL INFORMATION

The KOMMANDEUR is the official newsletter of AHIKS, an international society of mature individuals who play historical simulation games by mail. Established in 1966 by adults who were tired of easy, immature, sporadic, and/or disappearing opponents, AHIKS exists to minimize encounters with such opponents and to facilitate playing by mail.

Society dues are \$8.00 per year, prorated quarterly, with a one-time initiation fee of \$5.00. Additional information is available from the Secretary or (in Europe) the European Regional Director.

Subscriptions to the KOMMANDEUR are not available to non-members, nor do we accept advertising. However, we do accept "ad trades" on an issue-for-issue basis with other publications and organizations. Inquire with the Editor or European Regional Director



# editorial

# TREASURER

Personal note: on April 6 (right on time) we added a third boy to the Menconi menagerie. Mother & child doing fine, poppa wondering if the crib will ever be moved so he can get to his game cabinet. In that I have also taken a new job (expect to start May 8), I predict a busy year ahead!

Speaking of busy, someone mentioned some time back that it was really a shame that the central officers were so busy because it became difficult to write individual replies to members' letters. This prompts me to thank the many of you who write with comments, criticism and compliments; I really do wish I had the time to sit down and write to each of you. However, realize that the contents of your letters are valued input; most of the improvements in AHKS have come from some such comments. One suggestion I have for members who need a reply on a question: write your RD. The thrust of many reorganization changes in the past several years has been to free the RD from other duties so that he may remain a vital, two-way, communication link in our system. "Big Brother" isn't quite watching you, but he's glad to write you!

Computerizing the address list: I toted up the costs of our current/emerging system of maintaining the membership address list. (Aside: AHKS has to be the most mobile bunch of people I've ever seen; about 30% of us change address each year; coupled with our 10-15-20% growth rates, keeping the address list current is a major pain in the kazoo!) Since the job has grown too large for either Joe Horne or I to type up this list, we are now hiring the chore out. Each time we have a complete list done, the typing cost is \$25. I no longer can get the copying for free, so copying will cost us another \$15. I have to run off a copy of the list on stickers for each K. The bottom line, if we print a master list four times a year, is just about \$210. The projected cost for a computerized system is about \$200 per year, which would provide us with quarterly up-dates for officers (composite list for central officers, regional lists for RDs) and semi-annual listings for the members and bi-monthly stickems for the K. We could also be able to store and retrieve a variety of additional information for each member (overpayment of dues credited to the next year, listings of members who invite others to stop in if passing thru town, lists by state or zip code, year joined AHKS, etc.). Most importantly, we wouldn't have to continually re-check each new hand-typed listing for typing errors. Finally, it would save about 50 hours per year in officer-time. The lists are going to the computer system after this K is printed. Additional instructions/options for members will be printed in future Ks as we develop new procedures.

The typing service used for the K is working out very well, witness the appearance of this issue at all! I'd like to thank all of you for paying for it, and special thanks to those who sent comments supporting even (horrors!) a dues increase to pay for it. A quick glance at Joe Horne's financial report will show that we are in no bind.

## MARKET(ER) SEGMENTATION IN WARGAMING

In the course of taking many consumer products to market, the manufacturers use a technique known as market segmentation. For example, instead of just advertising "toothpaste", they directly appeal to the sizeable portion (segment) of toothpaste buyers who buy primarily to prevent tooth decay. (The result is that the firm sells 90% of the segment, which may be 40% of the total market, versus just getting 10% of the total market with a "me too" approach).

In wargaming, I am not so sure segmentation is valid; for one thing, 200 million toothpaste users leaves room for sizeable sub-groups; 200,000 (?-perhaps) wargamers are not so easily segmented: a piece of not much is very little! I also suspect that the individual wargamer buys from different segments (i.e., the same guy buys Diplomacy, miniatures and board games) which tends to confuse the issue. Finally--and most important--I think very few wargame designers would design to please the consumer even if the designer had the information system to determine what the consumer wanted.

About once a month someone mentions to me that he thinks some company's games are (pick one: trash, junk, rip-offs, etc.). I think that as wargame consumers we will have to keep in mind that most designers were hobbyists first and marketers last: they will tend to produce what pleases them over what pleases us. With toothpaste, you will find the mountain has come to you. With wargames, we have to go to the mountain: we have to discern the design philosophies operating in game publishers or with specific designers. We have to pick the ones who have track records of producing games that we enjoy. It is a sort of marketer segmentation. Otherwise, you will waste a lot of money and I will have to listen to a lot of complaints.

Pete Menconi

April 12, 1978



## AHKS 3Q77 FINANCIAL REPORT

Effective balance at beginning of quarter \$3,811.05

INCOME	3Q77	YTD 77
Dues	\$ 112.00	\$ 2,559.02
Initiation Fees	130.00	590.00
European Region	00	24.00
Miscellaneous	74.39	172.35
	\$ 316.39	\$ 3,345.37

## EXPENSES

President	\$ 2.96	\$ 86.49
RD East	17.26	58.22
RD Northeast	00	44.43
RD West	00	30.50
Secretary	51.98	102.51
Editor	193.64	798.67
ICRKMeister	47.01	126.61
Match Coordinator	00	9.03
Treasurer	14.83	68.52
Judge	13.27	30.74
Archivist	00	2.10
Stationary	00	59.80
OOB's	13.50	72.21
Miscellaneous	00	69.00
	\$ 354.45	\$ 1,558.83

Effective balance at end of quarter \$3,772.99

Total Postage Costs	173.64
Total Printing Costs	137.61

Another solid quarter financially as expenses fell and income remained fairly steady. Hopefully, all expenses for the year 1977 will be in shortly so that I can submit the annual report for publication in the next K.

The raffle winners this year were Joseph Angiolillo, William Garman, James Strobeck, Todd Roseman, and Morris Eckhardt. I hope to have informed all the winners of their choices by the time the K goes to press. I have one reply already; Bill Garman has chosen Squad Leader as his prize.

Harold Horne

March 10, 1978



# THE WESTERN FRONT

By the time this article reaches the press I will have been the effective RD of the West for a couple of months. Things got off the ground a little slow, but are well under control at this point. I want to ask for and welcome any and all comments or suggestions any of you all may have on any pertinent matter which may help me better serve you.

I understand that there is somewhat of a problem with some members not sending in their dues as of this point. Those of you who have not responded please do so soon. The delays obviously cause organizational problems which in turn affect every member of our society. There is only one confirmed member who has dropped from the ranks, Alejandro Esquivel, Jr., and it will also have to be assumed that Ron Scott has as well. I have prided myself at points in my time of being elusive, but Ron Scott beats all of this. He has effectively dropped from the face of the earth. To all of his opponents I apologize, to Ron Scott I would like to congratulate you on a job well done!

On a brighter point our new members are: Roger Hoffman, Williams AFB, AZ., Warren Decker, Paonia, CO., and William Barr from Chicago, IL. I think we all could extend a big welcome to these new members!

Last Friday (March 3) I started a campaign game of WV. Thought I knew the rules before I got in to the game--was I ever surprised. Just a down right complicated game, but it seems as though it should be a pretty good game even if I do have the French and expect to get the stuffings beat out of me. Sent off for Marshall Enterprises new game (see back cover F&M), L'Bataille d'Austerlitz. Sure hope it's as good a game as their game on the Battle of Moscow.

George Calage

March 8, 1978



## INTRO and OUTRO

## LAW AND ORDER

Thanks to the good response from the Specialists the following rulings summaries are available:

Anzio (Oct. 77)	Island War Quad (Jan. 78)
Afrika Korps (Sep. 77)	Luftwaffe (Aug. 77)
Battlefleet Mars (Dec. 77)	Panzerblitz (Dec. 77)
Blue and Gray Quad Series (Mar. 78)	
Bulge (Oct. 77)	Panzer Leader (Feb. 78)
Burma (April 77)	Patrol (Dec. 77)
Invasion American (Oct. 77)	Waterloo (Mar. 78)
	1815 (Mar. 78)

I hope the list will grow to eventually encompass all pbm-playable games of interest to AHKS members. Specialists who would like the files of their game to write rulings summaries please notify me. I still am waiting to hear from quite a few of you. In my opinion (biased, I'm sure), these summaries represent an advance in AHKS service because you can request them when you begin a match, thus helping to head off rules problems before they start.

One problem we are experiencing is the misunderstanding concerning what constitutes "official" AHKS rules and rulings. Recently, many useful ideas have appeared in the "K" with regard to pbm play of many games. It should be noted that any rules changes or modifications listed in those articles are merely suggestions for play. Unless opponents specifically agree on these rules before the match begins, they are not considered to be in force. When writing in for rulings wherein these rules have been agreed to, please specify exactly what has been agreed to. It is difficult to provide reasonable rulings when we don't have all the facts.

So far I have not been aware of problems regarding delays in getting rulings back to the membership, although it is possible under the current system that a problem could develop. After checking the files for pertinent information, I send out the question to the Specialist (when there is one) usually within 24 hours of receiving your letter. I send a separate letter back to you at the same time indicating I have done so. If there are problems with time delays, please let me know.

I am currently putting together a rulings summary for Squad Leader. For those of you who haven't experienced SL yet, it is one of the most pbm playable of the "high level complexity" tactical games. A second edition is in process (rules available now from AH) and it appears destined for Panzer Blitz type fame. The difference between SL and Tobruk is striking as it shows how one can approach making a complicated subject into an exciting game (SL) as opposed to a torture of die rolls and multiple chart references (Tobruk). The scenarios also appear to be well thought out if the first three are any example (since I haven't got to them all yet).

Bill Farone March 17, 1978



## THE PACIFIC THEATRE

RD business has been good lately. Three new members and a goodly number of applications out. The new members: Glenn Lasker; Reseda, CA

Dean Lay; Fresno, CA

Joe Dulaney; Hollywood, CA

Also, I am always interested in con, ftt and large-scale PBM (monster) games in the region. Right now, I would especially appreciate information on GLASE III, the Los Angeles Con for this summer. The dates would be nice. Nuff for now. Till next issue.

Todd J. Roseman March 12, 1978



After last issue's mammoth Intro I would hope to keep this one to a minimum, a reflection of this whole issue of the Newsletter I am sorry to say! I am sorry for the delay in sending out the Christmas issue of the Newsletter - as you may imagine this was due to a fond hope on my part that Pete Menconi's usual efficiency would beat the combined might of the U.S. and British G.P.O. and deliver the 'K' before my deadline of the 17th of December. As you will have seen from the 'K', this was a forlorn hope. I was mighty pleased to see the last of the Newsletter, it seemed to lie around the house for ages just ready to tray the unwary foot!

The survey and voting slips that went out with the 'K' were greeted with the usual restrained enthusiasm - just 23 replies (and a late one) had come in when I sent them off to the States! You may be interested in a few snippets from the Survey before they become amalgamated with the U.S. replies:

Did you know that the average age of the respondents was 29.7 years (standard deviation 7.4!), or that 10 of them were married, or that they averaged 7.2 years in the hobby with 166 years of gaming between them and that they averaged 3.5 years with the Society, 81½ years between them - makes us look old! You didn't know all that - well now you do (and what a topic for after dinner conversation!). In a more serious tone I found it interesting that there were as many games quoted as favorites as there were people - the only games that got more than one vote in the FTF section were Squad Leader (4), Panzerblitz (3), PGG (3), Sniper (3), Kingmaker (3), Panzerleader (3), and Stalingrad, Winter War, TSS, Soldiers, D&D, HTRR, Hue, Jerusalem, Anzio and Third Reich all with two. In the PBM section one could quote the following: Panzerleader (4), Bulge (5), Russ. Campaign (4), Anzio '74 (4), Panzerblitz (3), Borodino (3), Battle for Germany (3), Blue and Grey Quads (3), and then WWII, Waterloo, AK, Sinai, Midway, D-Day, Minuteman and Richtoffen's War all with two.

A further snippet of news that may or may not interest you is that from May Phoenix is getting a new editor - somehow or other I have been maneuvered into this position by a man not too far from Hale! I took this step after much consideration as to my post of RD but in the end decided that nothing but good for AHKS (and Phoenix I hope!) could come out of it. With our erstwhile President and committee breathing down my neck there is little chance that AHKS will take second place - all parties are aware of this!

Only a slight response to my suggestion of a mini-convention in Edinburgh at the end of April - 2 to be exact. Unless I hear of further members who would be interested I will have to skip the idea!! Any other members having similar ideas? Talking of mini-conventions, I notice what can only be called an AHKS mini-con. In the latest issue of 'White Dwarf' - Don Turnbull, Tony Ball, Bill Howard and Bob Thomasson all together at a recent 'Games Day' in London!

I hear from Bill Howard that inquiries after memberships continue to come in at a very reasonable rate - satisfactory to feel that we will continue to expand over the coming year. This year's address list gives 84 members, 11 up on that of last year. I ask you all to check your entry and inform me of any errors that may have crept in.

Chester is shaping into a smallish but interesting meeting. At last count John Poole had about 20 on the books though the list I have to hand gives 19 names. I hope that we see any of you that are in the area that weekend. It is bound to be a good weekend (when aren't they?) since we have the threatened visit of Thomas Haas and his wife (though I don't see her name on the list).

A remarkably sound balance sheet has been submitted by Peter Charlton - let us hope that we continue to maintain this sort of balance in spite of inflation and all the insults that the Post Office intend to throw at us! Lastly, I seem to have caused some consternation about the rule summaries mentioned in the last newsletter - Dave Grantham does not have these to hand out at the present! I will try to sort things out before this Newsletter goes to press but the telephone seems to be a particularly useless instrument in these snow laden times so no promises.

John Spence

February 27, 1978



# AHIKS CONSTITUTION

- i. The name of this organization shall be the Avalon Hill Inter-continental Kriegspiel Society (AHIKS). The "Avalon Hill" is in recognition of the pioneering efforts of the Avalon Hill Co. in the field of wargaming.
- ii. The purpose of AHIKS shall be to facilitate the playing of war-games between mature individuals, primarily by mail.
- I. The Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall comprise the President (chairman), the Treasurer, the Judge, the Regional Directors, the Editor of the "Kommandeur", the Match Coordinator, the Secretary, one additional, at-large representative from the European Region, and the ICRKMeister (this does not include Regional sub-officers of the same name).
  - A. The functions of the Executive committee shall be:
    1. Define the functions of each office. These definitions shall be printed in the "Kommandeur" and the Introductory Booklet.
    2. Create new offices (the officers would then be on the Executive Committee), subject to year-end vote by the membership.
    3. Remove incumbant officers.
    4. Appoint interim officers, subject to year-end vote by the membership.
    5. Recommend dissolution of existing offices for year-end vote by the membership.
    6. Cancel memberships, in accordance with II-B, below.
    7. Set guidelines for membership in AHIKS.
    8. Recommend yearly dues and initiation fee, subject to year-end vote by membership.
    9. The above functions will be determined by 2/3 vote.
    10. General operating guidelines and detailed instructions for officers and members shall be published by the Executive Committee. These shall continue in force until modified by the same or future Executive Committee.
  - B. Officers are elected by a simple plurality of voting members.
  - C. The term of office shall be two years.
  - D. There is no limit to the number of terms an officer may serve.
  - E. Elected officers pay no dues for the time they serve in that office.
  - F. A former President shall be appointed by the current President, and confirmed by the Committee, to serve as Vice President. He shall succeed the President if he cannot perform his duties."

## II. Membership

- A. Accepting members into the Society is the responsibility of the Regional Director, who will use guidelines set down by the Executive Committee.
- B. Membership will be terminated because of:
  - 1. Nonpayment of dues.
  - 2. Extreme discourtesy.
- C. There is no restriction because of race, sex, religion, or political convictions.
- D. Honorary Memberships.
  - 1. Honorary Memberships may be awarded by the membership at large for meritorious service to the Society.
  - 2. The Honorary Membership comprises free services (ie, no dues) and shall last for five years.
  - 3. No more than one such Membership can be awarded in any one year. It is awarded by a 75% vote of eligible voters.

## III. Games

- A. Games arranged through the officers of AHIKS will normally be played in sets of two games - each member taking both sides.
  - B. If an ICRK is used, its contents are confidential and shall not be shared with anyone except the designated opponent.
  - C. Any game may be played through the services of AHIKS.
  - D. Members may have games with nonmembers, but AHIKS' services may not be used for such games.
  - E. In case of disagreement between members, the Judge will settle the disagreement.
  - F. The President shall arbitrate in any games involving the Judge.
- IV. This Constitution may be rewritten or altered by a simple majority of the voting members.

JANUARY, 1976

(Members note: keep this page for inclusion in the AHIKS membership booklet, to be published later this year.)

## NORTHEAST REGION

What with the present deliberations on the new constitution by the Executive Committee and others and with the burgeoning growth of AHIKS, I have been giving some thought to the future of AHIKS. At this point I'm not too concerned with the composition of the new Executive Board or specific duties involved under the new constitution. What I am concerned with is the present growth of AHIKS and what the ramifications of this growth are for the future of our society. At the present time it appears that this year the Northeast Region will be losing both Pennsylvania and Ontario to the North Central Region (which was split off from the Eastern Region). The present procedures that we now have for splitting regions are slow and cumbersome. With the present duties of an RD I feel that he should be able to handle a region of 100 members (assuming the RD is fairly well organized). George Young, Jr. made a well thought out suggestion to Bob McLaughlin for the establishment of Districts within regions that would contain about 10-20 members. This of course would require more volunteers, another level of administration, etc. In reading George's recommendations my mind boggled at the problems this proposal would engender, what with the increased need for volunteers, the difficulty and slowness in effecting change in AHIKS, and the need for an additional administrative level. I started thinking of alternatives to this problem. One alternative is to limit the size of the membership. This would of course preclude the necessity for regional splits. It would also mean that a waiting list for membership would have to be established. It would also probably mean that, after a time, the inconsiderate members and non-responding members would be weeded out and you would have a society of more dependable (not necessarily better game players) PBMers. Of course, with a restriction on new members, the income would not go up unless dues were raised, which would have to happen because of inflation and increased costs of administration such as printing the "K", stamps, letterheads, etc.

I guess I've rambled on enough about the topic of regional splits. I think it behooves each of you to seriously consider where you want AHIKS to go and what form you want it to take. I would also urge you to let your officers know of your feelings as AHIKS is not that rigid that it can't be changed to suit the members' and desires.

John Heydt

March 11, 1978

(K)

## IDEAS

### MAGNETIC GAMES: A Review -Forrest Jerome-

Living, as I do, in a New York City apartment and being inundated, as I am, by small children and pets, I am necessarily alert for the development of new playing aids, especially those involving games storage. I was most intrigued over Avalon Hill's announcement (The General Vol. 14 No. 4) of the availability of magnetic strips for counters and unmounted maps. Intrigue led to negotiations with my wife for wall space and success there led to an order and, thus, to this analysis.

The magnetic strips are offered in one foot lengths at 90¢ each or discounted at ten feet for \$7.50. One strip will mount 24 standard size ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch x  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch) A-H counters. Unmounted maps are \$6.00 each. My local hardware store sells galvanized sheet metal in 3 ft x 8 ft sections and does not cut to order. The sheet cost \$8.00. Cutting is easily accomplished with a jig saw and a thin gauge metal cutting blade (Rockwell 32502). If you do cut yourself be prepared to be deafened for about 30 minutes (an advantage in my home). Care should be taken to obtain a ferrous base metal; the buyer of a sheet of aluminum will experience severe problems. Most material of the type I purchased is covered with a coating of oil which can be washed off with Lestoil.

To be most effective the metal should be installed in some sort of permanent or mobile mounting to provide stability and support. To get the most out of what I had bought I built frames of 1 x 2's and sandwiched

the metal between them. This gave me two surfaces, each with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch buffer between the metal and the wall (as any user of lumber knows, 1 x 2 is really  $3\frac{1}{8}$  x  $1\frac{5}{8}$  or  $1\frac{3}{4}$ ). The key thing to remember during design and assembly of any mounting is to leave enough effective metal surface exposed to hold the map(s) of the game(s) you want to play. I built two units. One unit was 36 inches square on each side and will handle most A-H and SPI games. The other unit is 45 x 36 inches (for Afrika Korps) on one side and subdivided into two 21 by 36 inch sections on the other (ideal for SPI Quad games). This gives me a capacity of five games, which is about as many as I can handle under ideal conditions.

The building of the frames and subsequent mounting of the sheet metal was by far the major part of the labor involved. It took me less than 30 minutes to mount the counters for Afrika Korps. Once mounted the counters performed superbly. The increased thickness (to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch) makes them easy to handle. The magnetic attraction is strong and secure; when picking up a stacked unit only the units picked up leave the board, the others remain in place. Stacks nine units high are possible but the most effective limit is about five. A-H suggests precutting the strips into  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch sections for individual mounting. I preferred to peel the entire protective covering away and mount and cut each unit one at a time. This insured that the mag strip and counter would be exactly the same size and made it easy to maintain the magnetic alignment necessary for unit stacking.

The maps are supplied in the same number of sections visible in the boxed games (ie two for Bulge). Unfortunately, the meeting edges do not always align well. There frequently is a gap (map gap?) of as much as  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. This is aesthetically displeasing but not disfunctional. Most other manufacturers do not mount their maps and all that must be dealt with is the fold marks.

Most stationary or office supply stores carry magnetic display pieces in various shapes and colors that could be used to "dress up" a game in progress. One of the more interesting of these are arrows to indicate troop movements. There are other makes of self-adhesive magnetic strips (Maggie Magnetic Flexible Strip by Selfix) but the material is not of good enough quality to allow unit stacking. At \$1.29 for 36 inches the material is good enough for such tasks as map holding or for the mounting of special markers or items.

I am well satisfied with my investment. The arrangement is functioning well and look great! I anticipate a reduction in response time in my PBM games because the games can be played "on the wall" (although my play has sometimes been described as "off the wall") in the small amounts of time that I have available these days. This should come as welcome news to those of my opponents who may be wondering if they should report me to the Missing Persons Bureau. (Charlie, I have the Germans mounted and will soon have my Russians mounted, an easy task since there are so few of them now... patience) All in all I highly recommend the process, especially for those with limited floor space, child induced turbulence, or both!

(K)

## REVIEWS

### TROY

-Louis Jerkich-

Troy is quite an enjoyable game based on both Homer's tales of the Trojan War as well as sound archaeological evidence bearing on Late Bronze Age warfare. The overall result is a challenging simulation which conveys a realistic feeling for both the historical period and the mythological event.

The game is played on a 23" x 35" glossy paper board depicting the topography of the area around Troy in Northwest Turkey, with each hex representing about 300 meters side to side. At this scale Troy accurately occupies one hex.

There are 252 counters representing light, medium, and heavy infantry, chariots, cavalry, fleets, and 48 heroes. The regular combat units represent 200-1200 men each, depending on type, while fleets represent 50 to 100 ships. There are also supply/booty counters

# FROM THE MATCH COORDINATOR

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY - EXPLANATION OF RATINGS, MATCH REQUESTS AND SEVERAL IMPORTANT CHANGES !!!!!

Greetings and HELP!!! Here I am, waiting to go to work and my request files are darn near empty. Let's start those cards and letters rolling in!!! Please note my new address and phone number. I will be moving again in July, so watch for another change.

My first column will be a long one as there are a lot of things to be put out to the members. I would appreciate it if you-all would retain this page in a handy place. The things I want to discuss:

1. The Rating System
2. Procedural Changes (PLEASE NOTE !!)
3. Hints, Tips and Rules for Match Requests
4. Gamemasters/Monitors
5. The Future

1. THE AHIKS RATING SYSTEM is based on the AREA system in so far as computations go. It is an informal system for member information only, since AHIKS has no contests, prizes, etc., for top banana. (We play for FUN, not blood!) Matches are not made by rating; I'll only match by roughly equal rating if the choice is there - usually it is not due to the low volume. The system is strictly voluntary - indicate desire to join on your match request form, if not already a member. Specific details:

- a. New members to the rating system start with an arbitrary rating of 1200.
- b. AHIKS members, not a member of the rating system, have a fixed rating of 1400 for purposes of computation.
- c. Only play-by-mail games between (among) AHIKS members are rated. Ratings are posted from the closed-out ICRK's only.
- d. All games played by a rated member are rated, unless I receive a letter signed by all players of a match, requesting that the match not be counted. Note this option is not available in a match where any of the other players are non-rated.
- e. Only completed matches are fully rated. Since the AHIKS playing system is designed around switching sides (2 games = a match), only half credit/debit will be given if only one game of a match is completed. This is not a blood and guts system and no credit will be given for "forfeit victories" regardless of who quit/dropped out.
- f. Points computation:

Difference in Rating Points	If match is won by----		
	Hi-Rated Hi gains & Lo loses	Lo Rated Hi loses & Lo gains	Draw Hi loses & Lo gains
0 - 50	70	70	0
51 - 100	65	75	5
101 - 150	60	80	10

..... for each step of 50, rating change is 5 points..

701+            0                    140                    70

(Note: ratings rounded to nearest 5)

- g. All players with a 1300 or above rating will usually be listed in each issue of the "K" (except this one). A complete list of all rated players will be published in one issue of the year.
- h. Multi-player game ratings are somewhat different:
  1. The gamemaster/monitor will query each participant at the start of the match to see if any are rated and want the match to be rated. The GM must sort out differences of opinion. If any one player wants it rated, all must follow suit. GM then sends me the name of the game, his name and name of all players

(rated or not).

2. I will take the rating of all players, add them up and divide by the number of players to achieve an "average rating". Each player will then "contribute" to a points pool, a number of points equal to what we would give up if he had lost a game against that "average". Each player must contribute at least 20 points.
3. When a match is over, the GM must tell me who won/lost/drew. The pool will be divided as such:
  - a. If game was a draw, all players will receive an equal portion of the pool points.
  - b. If there were one or more winners, they will receive an equal portion of the points in the pool.
  - c. Losers do not lose rating points, and no winner may gain more than 300 rating points.

2. PROCEDURAL CHANGES: I intend to compile and study some data in an attempt to improve services and provide more info to the members. To do this, the ICRKMeister and I have made some major procedural changes. Your compliance will be appreciated.

- a. ALL match requests, to include pre-arranged matches, will be sent to the Match Coordinator. Only write the ICRKMeister for replacement ICRK.
- b. All match completions (ie, the closed out top half of the ICRK) will be sent to the Match Coordinator, not the ICRKMeister. Ratings will not be posted for a member until I receive his copy of the ICRK. Please do not withhold ICRK for games you lose - we can tell when close-outs are very late!

(The intent of the above changes is to allow me to build a file of current matches. Along with data collection, it will also enable me to improve rating accuracy and hopefully keep me from matching the same players repeatedly.)

3. HINTS, TIPS AND RULES:

- a. Each "K" lists several categories of matches. These are requests that I have been unable to fill:
  1. Open Matches: these are unfilled 2-player match requests.
  2. New Member Matches: this shows match requests submitted by new members on their ICRKMeister Data Sheet only. The object is to keep this space empty, so if you see a match request here, please volunteer - it means a new member is waiting. (Note this is a change from previous way this space was used.)
  3. 3-way/Multi-Matches: these are unfilled requests for 3-way or multi-player games. A number in ( ) shows how many requests there are.

(Note: you may see the same game listed more than once in a category or between categories. This is due to rigid requests like AREA only, or if I have already matched the same guys in some other game.)

- b. I don't think I need to explain multi-player games and anyway these are normally set-up or advertised for separately. I will be glad to assist in helping set these up. If you have an interest in one (or more), either to set one up or to be a player, let me know and I'll see what I can do to help.
- c. 3-way games: These are normally 2-player games that are best played with a gamemaster or monitor. Examples are Si-move, hidden movement or games with complex admin functions. There are many games best played in this manner to preserve the flavor and



MATCH COORDINATOR (cont)

intent of the game. The idea behind a 3-way game is that one person monitors for the other two, and then everybody rotates sides and functions. It looks something like this:

	Game 1	Game 2	Game 3
Player A	US	GER	GM
Player B	GER	GM	US
Player C	GM	US	GER

d. Requesting matches:

1. Be specific with game title as there are many similiar titles out. Please specify the entire title and it would not hurt to name the company either.
2. Quads: I would prefer that you request the Quad only (again, watch out for #I or #II, in some cases), but if you only want a specific game from a quad, request it. Please include the name of the quad in your request, as my only choice may be to match a specific game request with a general quad request.
3. Scenarios: Do not request matches by specific scenario within a game - that is something you and your opponent will have to work out.
4. If you do not want to be matched with specific members (ie, already playing them) please say so.
5. Make sure your name is on the request form.
6. I'll be glad to accept laundry lists - ie "how about finding me some matches from this list?". But, please, specify how many matches you want (ie, 4 of 10) and put your list in priority so I can try to get the most desired ones first.
7. I'll assume all requests are for one match each, unless you tell me you want several matches in the same game.
8. I'm trying to set up a memory system so I can keep some of your desires on permanent file, but I'm not sure that will work out, so please repeat your special requests each time you write.
9. If you want to place a time limit on your request, please specify how long.
10. The "K" provides a match request form with each issue. If you want to just send a letter/card instead, please use the same basic format and codes.
11. If you want to play a match with a European member, please write the European Match Coordinator directly.
12. In requesting a pre-arranged match (ie, you have a turkey lined up - or he has you) one player should write me citing game name and players. I will forward this to the ICRK-Meister and he will send out ICRK's.
13. Please notify me immediately if you want your open match requests pulled from the list.
14. Your notice of the match is the ICRK; I do not send out separate notices. If you don't see your match in the "K" and you don't get a match ICRK, it may have gotten lost so write me for confirmation.

15. I will attempt to match by AREA if you so indicate (or demand) but your ICRK may not indicate if a match is AREA or not. It is up to you to check with your opponent at the start of the match.

4. **GAMEMASTERS/MONITORS:** As stated, I cannot provide a matching service for games requiring gamemasters/monitors (ie, I can't "task" somebody to be a GM), but I will be more than glad to act as a central information point. Each issue of the "K" will list gamemasters/monitors available. One of the major projects I would like to do is to be able to compile a large list of available GM's. With the rise of many large/complex games, this is an important service to our members. Having done it once in a while, I know that it is hard and generally unrewarding work. Many a good game has been ruined/halted by a GM that lost interest in a multi-year project. I request that people volunteering to be a GM please stick it out. I encourage all members to get involved in this activity and in requesting multi-player games as they are an important and significant aspect of our hobby today.
5. **THE FUTURE** holds a couple significant events:
  - a. Carl Benton and I are already working on the hardware and software necessary to automate this position into history. Carl is building his own mini-computer and has done a lot of the software work already - I am working on some of the software. This is another reason for some of the procedural changes - manual test of the designs. More on this at a later date.
  - b. Improving services: This is a member project and I gladly solicit suggestions from all members on the rating system, gamemasters, procedures or any other topic relative to this office. Please send me your bitches, suggestions and recommendations - I promise they will receive due consideration.

AGAIN, PLEASE NOTE: All match requests to me, includ-prearranged matches. All close-out ICRK's to me. Thanks.

OPEN MATCHES: Chickamaugua, D-Day 77, PanzerGruppe Guderian, Vera Cruz, Waterloo.

NEW MEMBER MATCHES: PanzerBlitz, PanzerLeader, Tobruck (AH)

3-WAY/MULTI MATCHES: Conquistador

The above matches are current as of 13 March 1978.

RATINGS: Next month

GAMEMASTERS/MONITORS: If your name is on the list below, you volunteered to be a GM/monitor in the last couple years. I would like to bring this list up-to-date before publishing it again. Please send me a card/letter confirming that you will still be available and for what games, or take yourself off the list. Anybody not on this list may add their name (and games) to the file.

Eric Abbott, Earl Anderson, James R Brown, Steve Curley, Larry Fong, Dave Grant, Stephen Haas, Sean Hayes, Greg Hastings, Bill Heim, Robin Hood, Sid Jolly, Henry Kelley, Richard Locke, Dan McClure, Bob McLaughlin, James Mueller, Virgil Mugler, Paul Person, Bill Scanlan, Jim Wallace.

SET REQUEST FORM

USE THE FOLLOWING LETTER CODE. INSERT ANY ORDER, AS MANY LETTERS AS APPLY IN PARENTHESES FOLLOWING EACH GAME REQUEST.

- N WILL PLAY NEW MEMBER (LIST NUMBER OF MONTHS THIS IS TO APPLY)     M MULTIPLAYER GAME REQUEST  
E WILL PLAY EUROPEAN OPPONENT (IF AVAILABLE)     G WILLING TO GAMEMASTER     F DESIRE FAST GAME ONLY ( FOUR DAY REPLY )  
A WILL PLAY AREA OPPONENT (IF AVAILABLE)     (IF AVAILABLE)

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

I DESIRE TO BE CARRIED ON PUBLISHED AHKS RATING LISTS (CHECK IF APPLICABLE)

SEND THIS FORM TO THE MATCH COORDINATOR IF YOU NEED AN OPPONENT. ALREADY GOT A TURKEY LINED UP? SEND IT TO THE MC, TOO.

representing treasure and supplies, plus a number of special counters with various properties, such as the armor of Achilles, the bow of Apollo, Helen, Battering Rams, and even the Wooden Horse. A few counters also represent the Achaean wall in the Trojan War scenario.

The rules are introduced as needed in the five scenarios which deal successively with the different archaeological levels of the city, known as Troy I (2600 B.C.), Troy II (2300 B.C.), Troy V (1900 B.C. - equated with the founding of the mythological Troy), Troy VI (1300 B.C. - equated with a mythological raid on the city by Hercules) and Troy VII (about 1250 B.C. - Homer's Troy, the site of the Trojan War). In each succeeding scenario, additional rules are added to those of the previous scenarios. As complexity increases, so does playing time. But whether a quick or long game is desired, each scenario is an interesting challenge of its own. (The game is, however, not very suitable for PBM.)

Regular combat units use a differential CRT with retreats, exchanges, and full or partial elimination possible. Heroes add a morale bonus of one to the combat units with which they are stacked, but only if they survive the individual hero combat which occurs first. This also has a differential CRT with retreats, woundings or killings as results. In the final scenario, the special counters may aid a unit or hero in combat or movement while a deck of 28 deity cards allows for the Homeric interventions by the gods and goddesses who aid in hero combats or in curing their wounds. Three of these cards represent the Fates, compelling a die roll on the chance table with both favorable and unpleasant results possible. The hero combat system, the deity cards, and the sacred arms and objects are what really give this game the "flavor" of Homer's Iliad.

Victory in most scenarios is based on a point system, with supply/booty points and eliminated combat factors providing the major points, although captured heroes, special arms and objects, and destroyed ships play a part as well.

The 44-page rulebook is half devoted to an introduction to the archaeological evidence as well as the relevant mythological background. The artwork on the counters is based on archaeological evidence, including representations of warriors on painted vases of the Late Bronze Age.

Troy has a variety of challenges ranging from the strategic decision of which beach to invade to the tactical decisions of how to match your troops and heroes against your opponent. The game is available in a zip-lock package from the designer for \$10.00. Send check or money order, payable to Donald A. Dupont, to Troy, P.O. Box 6274, Albany, CA 94706.



Mike Scott, 729 S. Lupin Lane, West Covina, CA 91791, is looking for an opponent in a 2-player version of Wacht am Rhein. He suggests that only other players in the western regions inquire since to finish the game will require quick mailings. Format will probably be a roll-your-own battles.//////Congratulations to D. Lynn Moore in Wichita. Says he finally made it through school and is working as a civil engineer. Always glad to see another civil in business.//////Ralph Vickers, wargamer of note, or at least, one of several articles in various publications, is moving from Spain to Portland, OR, here in the States. He is interested in contacting some gamers in the Portland area for advance information. He has a new address: Edificio Jupiter, Apto. 10-8, Avda. Santos Rein, Los Boliches, Malaga, Spain. One bit of advice, Ralph: take a raincoat. I'm glad you're moving to the US: I don't think the computer will digest that address!//////Unless I have a change of heart (i.e, some unfilled space), Swappe Shoppe will be delayed until next issue. It comes down to a choice of typing or changing diapers....

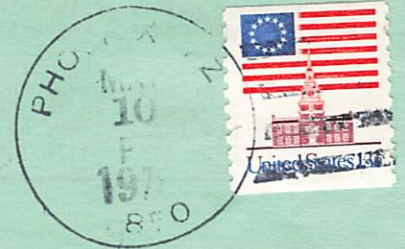


NEXT ISSUE

The Feb issue was put out in March and the April issue just barely made it into April, so trend analysis dictates the June issue will be ready by the first week in June. Hah! Anyone played AHS new Crete game? What do you think of it? (Translation: Ed needs more Reviews, gang!)



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