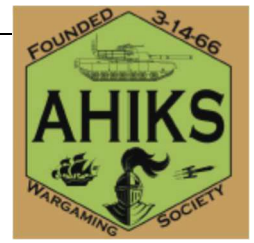


# The *Kommandeur*



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## AHKS President George Phillis

From your president!

Please read the report from our loyal Treasurer. He advises us that he will not be running for re-election in 2024 and therefore we are going to need a new Treasurer. The ideal treasurer is a long-term member, someone who has plenty of time to put into the club, someone who is solidly financially secure so that when he or she (yes, we have female members) appears at the bank to open a club account, the bank vice president looks at the balance in his or her normal account and is happy to be agreeable, lest this significant long-term depositor becomes annoyed.

Please do support our new editor, Bruce Geryk, by sending him articles. For many years we have published short reviews of many new games and other products, a project that can only continue if each of you writes some. No matter your taste in writing, please do keep Bruce's mailbox flooded with new news items, articles, and review notes for the **Kommandeur**.

We have had small bits of progress in distributing the **Kommandeur** to all members. On one hand, Gmail sent us instructions for modifying our DNS entries so that Gmail would recognize us as a legitimate mailer. This change has been made. Perhaps it even worked. In addition, I have written all of the members in the United States who use Yahoo as their ISP. The issue is that Yahoo has been blocking email from AHKS.com, no matter whether or not the email had an attachment. At this point, the only thing we were able to suggest is that if you use Yahoo and want to continue to hear from AHKS you should get a second email account with a different company. We have usually had good success with Gmail. So far as I have been able to tell, the members with protonmail have been satisfied. However, there are very large number of ISP suppliers out there, many of whom should be able to handle mail with attachments, especially if they understand what it is they are being sent from us, and why it should not be blocked.

We do have social media accounts on Facebook, MeWe, and Discord. There are plenty of other social media sites out there, such as Twitter, not to mention political sites like Mastodon and Gab and wargaming sites like Consimworld and Boardgamegeek, each of which would be somewhat useful for getting us publicity, spreading news of our activities, and the like, but each time the club adds a new social media site, there is a work burden that someone would have to take on. If you are very active user of some social media site, whether one of the ones I just listed or one of the many that I have never even heard of, and would be willing to use it for AHKS news and propaganda, please speak up.

I have heard from our Secretary, who vigorously urges everyone who has not already done so to get their vaccination against shingles. He reports that he is catching up on maintaining the membership list.

I would be happy to support new club activities from current or new members. We have a certain number of people who play in formal games or matches. I have the sense that competitive play for ratings scores is less an interest than it was once upon a time. The range of types of games has expanded. Avalon Hill did give us Management, Air Empire, Football Strategy, Baseball Strategy, Voyages of St.

Paul, Journeys of the Lord, and a few even more obscure games, while SPI did give us their version of Football, but under current conditions there are far more nonmilitary combat games, even before we get to such titles as Westinghouse's Logistics Command. So what would people perhaps like to do, if they had a club that organized the activity?

When last I inquired, the Africa Korps and Blue & Gray Quadrigrade tournaments are ongoing. While I seem to see regular references to people playing Titan, interest in playing Titan in a tournament doesn't seem to be there, so I will try launching another tournament in a different game. I note that we seem to have four people interested in playing Stellar Conquest. Would anyone care to try a tournament in Stellar Conquest?

Finally, my Empires in Arms game. Play has accelerated. In the last two months, we completed more than three months of play, and are therefore about to finish the year 1805. At this rate, we might even complete the game by 2030 or so.

Since my last report, Prussia surrendered unconditionally to France, taking various losses. One was the requirement that French armies be allowed to march through Prussia so that France could come to the aid of its ally Russia. Russia is currently at war with England and Turkey. The war with England is over Scandinavia, because England insisted that Russia stay out of Scandinavia, and Russia failed to do so. At this point, English fleets and corps have liberated Scandinavia, put Riga under an interminable siege in which the English continue to be unable to take the city, occupied several cities to the south, and are in the process of moving their fleets from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. Because the fleets are moving together, and are carrying infantry Corps, they don't move very fast. Indeed they are about to arrive in Corunna. They expect and need another several months to reach Turkey. Turkish armies are advancing north into Russia, an advance facilitated by the absence of garrison forces in Russian cities. I would be happy to explain why the Turks went to war with Russia and what they are planning on doing, but I actually have no idea.

At this point, Prussia surrendered. Prussia now has a forced peace with France so they cannot go to war with each other. Prussia declared war on Russia, so that there are now French and Prussian armies marching into Russia, not on the same side. When Prussia surrendered, I pointed out to the French Emperor, the greatest ruler in Europe of course, that there seem to be no rationale for us to be at war since I had gone to war only for the sake of Spanish honor and the defense of my Prussian ally, on whom I do not border. We had one naval engagement which I expected to end in a meaningless draw (it did not; I won) and I occupied a province (Tuscany) that the French could not possibly defend against the Austrians once their war starts up again. Meanwhile the decidedly not-invincible Spanish army has invaded and conquered Cyrenaica and is preparing to hole up for the winter. It appears to me that it will take me another six months to finish conquering North Africa, at which point my opportunities to invade and conquer places will end. However, I get to sit in my remote corner of the map board, far away from almost everyone else, and enjoy peace and prosperity, to the limited extent that the rules of the game give you prosperity.

## The Vice-President's Desk

Martin Svensson

My contribution towards this issue will be short, and perhaps not so sweet.

Over the years I have attended two conventions on numerous occasions-World Boardgaming Championships (WBC) and Prezcon. My first convention was in the late 1990s at Hunt Valley Maryland attending Avaloncon. After the closure of Avalon Hill, it was renamed the WBC.

This was an entirely new experience for me. The convention featured numerous board wargame tournaments and I was bedazzled. Eventually, I took the plunge and served as GM for the Origins of World War II tournament. It was fun sitting down with Richard Berg (The Pope) to shoot the breeze as he sat on his throne. In those days I entered the **Afrika Korps, War and Peace, Bobby Lee** and **Drive on Paris** tournaments. My fifteen minutes of fame was capturing "the wood" by winning the **Drive on Paris** event in 2004.

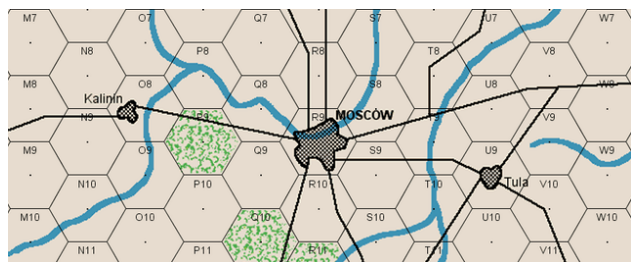
In the early 2000s I began attending Prezcon in Charlottesville, Virginia. In those days there were a fair number of wargame tournaments and wargamers were present to play.

About a decade ago I noticed the decline of board wargames at both the WBC and Prezcon. Both conventions were becoming more Eurogame centric. I have nothing against Eurogames. They are just not my cup of tea.

The answer seemed to be open gaming. Both cons began turning to this concept. The problem I found was if you didn't arrange something to play in advance with an individual who would be attending, the odds were high that you would become a con watcher and not a participant.

Over the course of time, gaming friends began to step back from the conventions, particularly Prezcon. The games were disappearing and socializing with people I had known for years. A friend wanted to go the Prezcon this year, so I agreed to go with him. It was more of the same. Very few tournaments and nearly a total void of wargaming in the open gaming area. When we departed on Saturday, I asked Bill what he thought. He said this was his final Prezcon.

I imagine the readership is saying to themselves, boy this is pessimistic. Am I becoming a curmudgeon? Thankfully, no. While my traditional venues for gaming are history, other opportunities exist. My future gaming convention will be either Compass Expo or GMT East in the future. Both are centered around playing board wargames. Perhaps one day, the Holy Grail, Consimworld Expo in Tempe!



## AHIKS RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN TOURNAMENT UPDATE

Randy Heller

Preparation for the AHIKS sponsored \$500 first place cash prize **Russian Campaign** Tournament is coming along as planned. I rented a post office box dedicated to the tournament, to include collecting proceeds for financing the event. Announcements have been made throughout social media and on numerous folders related to the game. Fliers will be produced for distribution at various gaming conventions, the first being Compass Games Expo in May. One of the plans is for yours truly to show up at some of this year's conventions to coordinate and to personally oversee some of the live playtesting.

Just about any edition of the game can be used, albeit the fourth edition L2DG or most recent GMT/Consim Press Edition would be the most appropriate. At this time, playtesting of the six game-turn tournament scenario is taking place. For VASSAL play, we are utilizing the module dedicated to the L2DG edition, until such time that someone steps forward and creates a module for the newer edition. Volunteers and myself are developing what we hope to be a well-balanced scenario. We are not entirely sure of exactly what optional rules and variants will be used. Nor are we certain of the victory conditions, but we're working on it. So far, the CEO of L2DG and a past WBC tournament winner have been involved in playtesting, which can take place either solitaire or against an opponent. If you would like to participate in playtesting, I encourage you to do so. Contact me and I will send you the details.

With the next issue of **The "K,"** I hope to be able to share with you exactly what optional rules and variants will be used and the reasons why they were chosen. By necessity, victory conditions will take longer to establish.

Randy Heller

AHIKS Judge

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**[Editor's note]:** Just to ensure maximum confusion, we have another [Russian Campaign tournament in progress](#), this one run by Art Dohrman. In my view, the more AHIKS tournaments there are, the better! Art has provided an update on the in-progress tournament:

## The Russian Campaign: Double Elimination Tournament in Progress

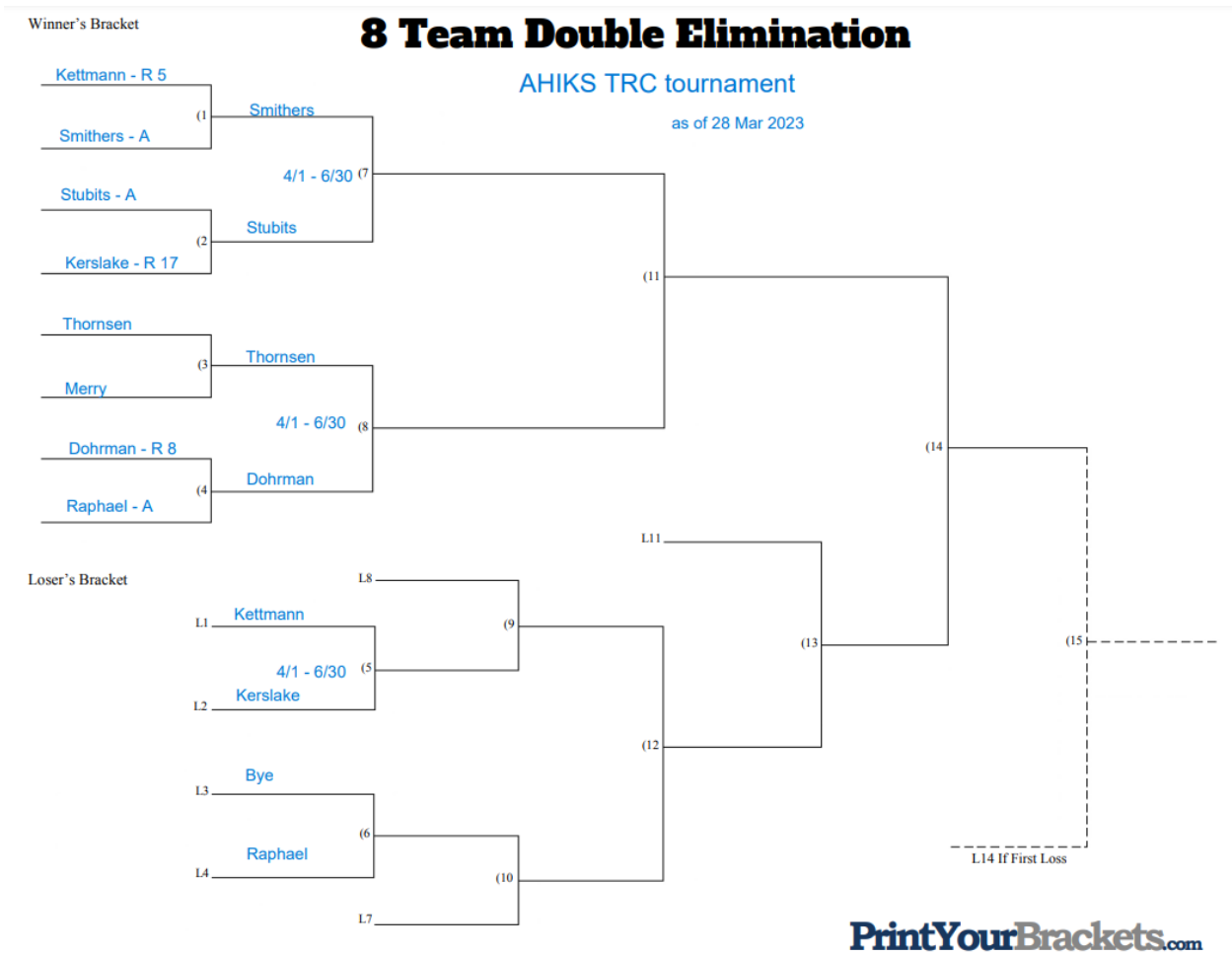
Art Dohrman

A new pbem tournament has been in progress since New Year's, administered by Art Dohrman as Gamemaster; eight players are contending for supremacy on the Eastern Front. We are using the 5-turn scenario as played at the World Boardgaming Championships each summer. This scenario starts in June 1941 and ends at the end of February 1942.

Victory is determined by a point system; a player can earn points by controlling cities on the “enemy” side of the green objective line, or by eliminating German Army Group Headquarters (for the Russians) or Stavka (for the Germans). Major cities are worth 2 points, minor cities and HQs 1 point, and the Germans win with a point total of -1 or greater. Players bid for side; bids are in the form of extra replacement points to be given to the Russian player. The short duration and ambitious objectives make for an exciting game: the Germans must race forward almost regardless of casualties to secure their objectives, while the Russians must decide what they must defend and what they can afford to give up (grudgingly) while husbanding their forces for a massive counterattack with the September and November reinforcements. Low odds attacks are the norm: I have won and lost this scenario from both sides of the board on 1:1 and 1:2 attacks. The tournament is set up as double elimination so that (a) each player is guaranteed two games, and (b) one fluke result does not knock someone out of the tournament. Round 1 featured four games: Hugh Smithers’ Germans defeated Mike Kettmann’s Russians with rapid panzer advances through Ukraine, capturing Kiev, Rostov, and Sevastopol on the second turn Mike Stubits’ Germans

defeated Martin Kerslake’s Russians, capturing Rostov, Leningrad, and Sevastopol while the Russians held on to Kharkov, Bryansk, and Kursk. Tom Thorsen vs. Clayton Merry, unfortunately Clayton had to drop out due to family commitments. Tom will advance to the second round in the winners’ bracket. Paul Raphael’s Germans vs. Art Dohrman’s Russians: the Germans plunged deep on both flanks, capturing Stalino and then Leningrad and Rostov with low odds attacks, but they ultimately were overextended. A Russian counterattack succeeded in recapturing Stalino, Rostov, and Dnepropetrovsk while holding on in the center at Kursk and Bryansk for the win. The second round is now set to begin immediately, with a goal of concluding the tournament and crowning a champion in early 2024. The second round matches are: Hugh Smithers vs. Mike Stubits, Tom Thorsen vs. Art Dohrman, and Mike Kettmann vs. Martin Kerslake. Paul Raphael will have a bye in the second round due to Clayton Merry dropping out.

The bracket is below.



# Multiplayer Info

from Jeff Miller

Game	Publisher	Name	AHIK S #	Method
A Distant Plain	GMT	Duncan Rice	1934	V
A Distant Plain	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
A Distant Plain	GMT	Art Dohrman	1551	V
Advanced Civilization	AH	Jeff Gual	2003	V
Advanced Civilization	AH	Eric Aune	2122	V
Advanced Civilization	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Age of Reininsanne	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Air Force	AH	Sam Thornton	1538	E, P
All Bridges Burning	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Amoeba Wars	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Ancient Civilizations of the Inner Sea	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Andean Abyss	MMP	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Angola	MMP	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Angola	MMP	Nick Rush	1913	V
Angola	MMP	Tom Liakos	2047	V
Battle for Germany	SPI	Mark Palmer	1074	V
Battle for Germany	SPI	Chris Hyland	1862	V
Blackbeard	GMT	Nate Forte	2016	V + Discord live play
Blackbeard	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Blitz	Compass	Jim Lauffenburger	2191	V
Circus Maximus	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Clash of Cultures	Z-Man	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Colonial Twilight	MMP	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Conquest of Paradise	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Conquistador	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Crown of Roses	GMT	Mike Kettman	1067	V
Cuba Libre	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Divine Right	TSR	Delwayne Arakaki	1991	V
Dominant Species	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Dominant Species	GMT	Nacho Fernandez	1745	V
Dune	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Dune	AH	Brian Nickel	1797	V
Empires of the Middle Ages	SPI	Mike Kettman	1067	V
Falling Sky	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Falling Sky	GMT	Jim Lauffenburger	2191	V
Fire in the Lake	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V

Fortress America	MB	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Gangsters	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Gandhi	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Gunslinger	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Gunslinger	AH	Matt Scheffrahn	1844	V M G
Liberty or Death	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Machiavelli	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Machiavelli	AH	Nacho Fernandez	1745	V
Magic Realm	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Merchant of Venus	AH	Mark Palmer	1074	V
Merchant of Venus	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Merchant of Venus	AH	Derek Lenard	251	V
Napoleonic Wars	GMT	Aaron Martin	2107	V
Napoleonic Wars	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Pendragon	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Plains Indian War	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Republic of Rome	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Sails of Glory	Ares	Nate Forte	2016	TTS - Discord live play
Samurai	AH	Delwayne Arakaki	1991	V
Source of the Nile	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Stellar Conquest	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Stellar Conquest	AH	Mark Palmer	1074	V
Stellar Conquest	AH	Brian Stretcher	885	V
Stellar Conquest	AH	Terry Gallion	2044	V - Discord live play
Successors	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Tank Duel	GMT	Nate Forte	2016	V - Discord live play
The Kaiser's Pirates	GMT	Nate Forte	2016	V - Discord live play
Time of Crisis	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Time of Crisis	GMT	Derek Lenard	251	V
Titan	AH	Jeff Gaul	2003	V
Titan	AH	Eric Aune	2122	V
Titan	AH	Jeff Miller	1303	V
Unterseeboot	PC AH Submarine	Nate Forte	2016	Discord live play
Versailles 1919	GMT	Aaron Martin	2107	V
Versailles 1919	GMT	Derek Lenard	251	V
Virgin Queen	GMT	Jeff Miller	1303	V
War of the Suns	MMP	Jeff Miller	1303	V



Hi Gang,

A few new additions above. Some are really, really close to taking off, so take a look. And as always feel free to shoot me other requests as well.

The information is now also up on the website under opponents wanted and the multiplayer tab. More frequent updates there at times so always worth checking in between issues of the K.

Coming out from the winter so looking forward to getting out more, although I do have a few games to keep rolling as well.

Speaking of which, **Kingmaker**, well parliament was summoned and for a bit I thought we might be able to balance the field. However, that hope was dashed when another player sold out the anti-tyrant faction and gave the tyrant enough votes to gain even more power in return for breadcrumbs. Still, we can hope that somehow, we can still oust the bloody handed Acorn and his lackey. Of course, that is most likely the wine talking.

**Here I Stand**, France has committed to alliances and agreements that will hopefully continue to slow the strides of the Hapsburgs. As a side note the Pope is now asking for an alliance to form vs the Protestants. Somehow, I do not see that happening as many of us have a different agenda.

**Britannia** is wrapping up and I still have no idea of who is going to win it. It has been a blast however. I even have my first nation still alive, and the Roman-Brits are also still holding on.

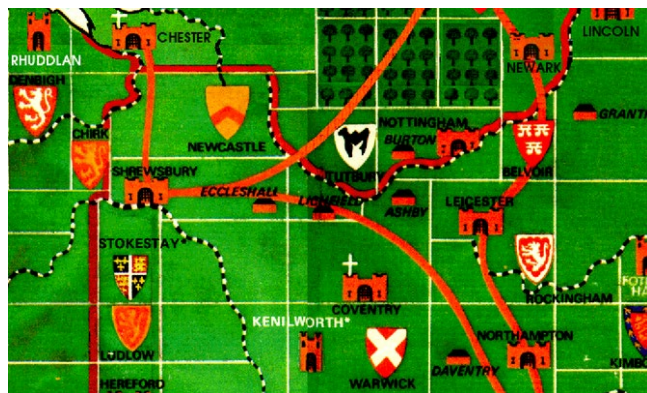
**Empire in Arms** is moving along. France with their unprovoked attack forced a surrender from Prussia to save the women and children from the sword of the French devils. It seems that the attack was driven by France and Russia planning to bring French troops to Russia in order to save Russia from the British and Turkey. As a result Prussia immediately declared war on Russia for its part in the devious plan. No honors of war will be granted to such an evil rabble. My first time playing EIA and it seems to be a very alternative history type of game, not quite science fiction but leaning a bit in that direction.

On my single games I have made it through four turns of VGs **Civil War** and haven't been crushed yet, seems like a win of sorts. I have three campaign games of ASL going at the moment – *Red Barricades*, *Hatten* and *KGP* – could still fit one or perhaps two in yet. It is the one ruleset I am pretty well grounded in – not that I don't miss things still.

If interested drop a note.

Have a great spring everyone!

Jeff Miller



## Emergent Behavior from a Simple Abstract Rules Set for Military Chess

by Joe Joyce

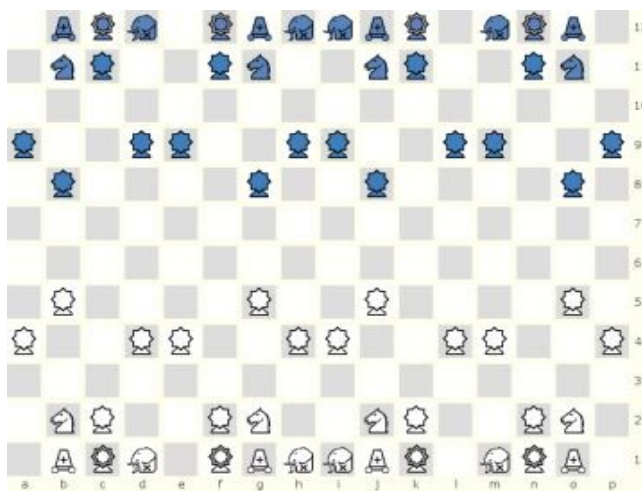
*"Suppose you knew everything there was to know about a water molecule — the chemical formula, the bond angle, etc. ... You might know everything about the molecule, but still not know there are waves on the ocean, much less how to surf them, ... That's because when you put a bunch of molecules together, they behave in a way you probably cannot anticipate."*

– Professor Joseph Thywissen, Department of Physics,  
[University of Toronto](#)

### Introduction

It was a beautiful sunny weekend when I went to Jim's house where he and John were playing a board game. They were pushing bits of blue and gray cardboard around a map, playing an American civil war game. I watched for a while to learn the rules, and then got full control of a Union corps, which I promptly marched behind the lines past the Union right flank, went wide and then swung back against the Confederate left flank. I was 12. The year was 1960. The game was Charles S. Roberts' original Battle of Gettysburg. Jim, who'd given me the corps command, got a big grin and said to John "We're going to roll you up like a rug!" I was hooked!

By high school, I was a better than average chess player, and the ads in Avalon Hill games about "military chess" fascinated me. I'd bought Tactics II looking for that military chess game, and was disappointed enough to decide to make my own. Over time, I tried and failed 4 or 5 times to design that game. I could not see how to reconcile the absolute clarity of chess with the necessity for some fog of war-generating mechanism, like a combat results table. I could push wargames that far toward chess, but could never get past the random vs. deterministic point. Many years later I found chessvariants.com, enjoyed playing the games, wound up designing a few dozen and eventually became editor, a years-long introduction to design and development.



One of my odder designs, Chieftain Chess [1], used 4 "mini-kings" per side to \*activate\* (to order/allow to move) their chesspieces, the beginning of my first real foray into "military chess". And unlike my previous attempts that foundered on trying to put randomness into a deterministic game, approached from the

aspect of a highly multimove chesslike game, there was no hint of a problem. Once the number of moving pieces per player-turn grows beyond a very few, something very like mathematical chaos provides a more than adequate substitute for the semi-randomness that a combat results table uses to represent the fog of war. An insuperable problem one way never even appeared when approached from the opposite direction. I could *feel* a “real” wargame hiding in the background.

Military chess as an idea has been around for centuries that we know of. [2] The games from a couple of centuries ago [3] often emphasized “realism” by measuring everything as well as they could, then giving detailed information on how everything interacted. This included road and open field movement, ranges of guns, effectiveness of units, and so on. They could be deterministic, because every action in the game had a predetermined outcome which could be printed in the rules. Casualties could be calculated in percents of a whole unit so there was no need for random combat results. This results in extremely rules-intrusive and/or calculation intensive games, not at all what I wanted: a rules-light game that gave good play value. And unlike almost every other game I’ve designed, this one greatly exceeded expectations.

The rules package, Command and Maneuver (CaM), is a simulated wargame construction kit that allows one to create early to mid-gunpowder era combat scenarios of varying size and complexity. The rules are deliberately highly abstract to allow players to concentrate entirely on the larger tactics and strategies of the games. The pieces are all very short range (1-3 squares) chesspieces. Terrain is minimalist. The glue that holds the game together is activation. Pieces need to be within activation range (1-2 squares) of a leader before being able to move in each turn. “Command and Maneuver” in a very real sense is a highly condensed description of all the actions in the game.

Following is a slightly condensed version of the generic rules.  
To skip this, go straight to **Basic Concepts** on page 7.

## RULES

### Game Pieces

There are 6 different combat units, 5 different terrain squares, and one marker in the current Vassal version. The combat units have their movement footprint printed in the lower left corner of the counter.

### Movement and Combat

Units are moved 1 at a time and only after activation in each turn. Stacking is illegal. Cavalry, cannon, skirmishers, and horse leaders have leap moves and may leap directly over any combat units, friendly and enemy. Infantry and foot leaders may not move directly over any combat units but must go around them. Each move is a simple short-range chess move, and must be legal when made.

A friendly unit captures by legally making its normal move and finishing on a square containing an enemy unit. The enemy unit is removed from the game and is replaced by the capturing friendly unit.

## Combat Units



Infantry: must be activated by a friendly leader to move in each turn; slides 1 square in any direction; may get a quick march option and move 2 squares like the foot leader.



Cavalry: must be activated by a friendly leader to move in each turn; leaps 1 to 3 squares orthogonally; leaps over both friendly and enemy combat units without affecting them. May not leap over any terrain square; exception: building terrain squares designated as friendly by scenario rules are treated as clear terrain for friendly movement.



Cannon: must be activated by a friendly leader to move in each turn; leaps 1 to 3 squares diagonally; leaps over both friendly and enemy combat units without affecting them. May not leap over any terrain square; exception: building terrain squares designated as friendly by scenario rules are treated as clear terrain for friendly movement.



Skirmishers: are self-activating, but cannot activate any other unit; they move like chess knights, leaping 1 square orthogonally and then 1 square diagonally outward, ending 2 squares away from the starting point.



Foot Leader: slides 2 squares in any direction or combination of directions; activates all units in the 8 squares it starts in, moves, or ends its move adjacent to, and all foot (ie: infantry) units within 2 squares.



Horse Leader: leaps 3 squares in any orthogonal or diagonal direction; activates all units in the 8 squares it starts in, moves into, or ends its move adjacent to, and all horse (ie: cavalry and cannon) units within 2 squares.

## Terrain

All terrain slows or blocks movement. Some units may not be able to enter some terrain, and some terrain may not be able to be entered by any units. Terrain rules may be modified by scenario-specific rules.

Moving into an allowed terrain square requires the unit’s \*entire\* movement allowance. So to move into a terrain square, a unit must start the turn adjacent to the terrain square being entered, move that 1 square and stop in that terrain square. Exception: Skirmishers always move 2 squares, 1 square orthogonally and 1 diagonally outward, even into and through terrain.

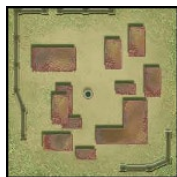
Terrain squares only affect units moving into them. There is no movement penalty for leaving a terrain square.



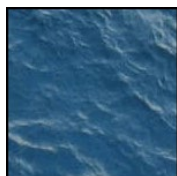
Trees: cannon may not enter.



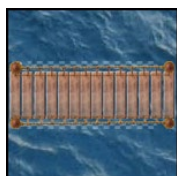
Hills: cavalry may not enter.



Buildings: friendly building squares, designated as such in the scenario special rules, are treated as clear terrain for friendly movement, otherwise units must stop adjacent to the building square then on the next turn, move one square into the building terrain.



Water: no units may enter; for exceptions, see scenario special rules.



Bridge: all units may enter; for movement costs, see scenario special rules.

### Activation

There are 3 kinds of units, those that need another unit to activate them, units which self-activate, and units which activate themselves and other nearby units.

Cavalry, cannon, and infantry need to be activated by friendly leaders. Before they can move/capture in each and every turn, a friendly leader unit must be within each cavalry, cannon, or infantry unit's activation/command control range, each and every turn.

Foot leaders activate themselves and all adjacent friendly units and activate infantry 1 or 2 squares away.

Horse leaders activate themselves and all adjacent friendly units and activate cavalry and cannon 1 or 2 squares away.

Skirmishers activate themselves only. They never need to be near a leader to activate in a turn.

That's essentially it, no more game rules, only specific rules for each scenario. A few pages of generic game rules and a few pages of scenario-specific rules. Maybe 6-7 pages tops, with pictures. It's not a lot as wargame rules go, but it has a vast flexibility in some ways because it is so simple and so deliberately abstract.

### BASIC CONCEPTS

Command and Maneuver is a series of games exploring the possibilities of a very simple "military chess" rules-set over a

range of different combat situations. To me, a very simple military chess game means that the game plays as both chess and as a decent wargame. All the game pieces are simple, short range chess pieces, moving like kings, knights, bishops, rooks, and queens. And capturing, like chess pieces, by replacement, with various kinds of chaos creating a surprisingly good fog of war. Add vulnerable mini-kings/leaders, with a very short command-control range, on gameboards from about 200 to 1000 squares, well into wargame territory. What you get is a decent abstract that emphasizes command structures and maneuvering to gain advantage, and which shows a varied range of emergent behaviors.

The purpose of leaders is to take some control away from the players and put it onto the board. The player only directly controls the leaders. The leaders control the combat troops. Players are still "all-seeing" but they are no longer "all-commanding". And on a very large board with very slow pieces, that makes a noticeable difference. The average movement rate of game pieces is about 2 squares/turn, the max is 3, and fewer than half the pieces in a typical game can move that fast. So shifting reserves is not an easy thing. Players have to plan ahead if there is more than one area of conflict. There is still a quality of fluidity to the front lines, with units dancing in and out as the armies meet, seeking advantage. Once significant combat is joined in an area, however, the armies tend to get locked into place. The only real maneuvering is moving the reserves up into the gaps, as charges and countercharges shatter units all up and down the lines.

The purpose for eliminating combat completely as anything other than the effect of normal chess movement is to eliminate all the little fiddly bits that turn combat into a numbers game that absorbs more of the attention and thinking than the sequence of events that brought the combatants together at that point. This does not eliminate tactics; instead they are just both very simple and very abstract. The 4 types of combat units have the property that each one type can attack, that is, threaten to capture next turn, the other 3 types without itself being attacked in return. This gives very easy to see tactical maneuvering, unlike counting piles of units' combat values over and over to manipulate numbers for the best attacks. It allows players to concentrate on different things, like how this situation occurred and how one might properly use it or escape from it.

A game, as played between 2 players/teams, is a series of interactions among the rules, board, pieces, and players. Change any one thing, you change the game, and that can show very strongly in an abstract.

In the original playtest version of Macysburg, there's a tree terrain square all by itself in a large open area. The rather randomly chosen order of arrival for the players brings about half the Blue cannon on board northeast of that tree. The fastest and generally easiest way to the developing front lines is southwest, right through that tree. You either lose a turn maneuvering around the tree or leave 1 cannon behind. After about the 3rd-4th playtest, I hated that tree.

And that got me thinking about how the game would change if that tree just moved a couple squares NW...

### Findings

In those same early Macysburg tests, it became obvious just how important move and capture order is, and just how much difference it makes to the direction of the game. In one playtest, the front lines were about 20 squares long, with a right-angled turn in the middle. I started my attack with the end of my left flank, moved along the line making captures, turned the corner in the middle and continued to the end of my right and my opponent's

left flanks. Then I saw a much better way to make the last few attacks. I reloaded the vsav file, and started combat from the other end of my line. This resulted in more captures at that end of the lines. Working back along the line to the turn, I made all the other captures I'd made the first time on that half of the front. But turning the corner the opposite way changed all the captures on that entire half of the front, resulting in fewer captures on that flank. That is one form of chaos operating in the games. Call it instantaneous choice chaos: the order of actions changes the outcome.

During this time, the training scenario, Tale: Intro, got a lot more play. Online games were played over and over with only a couple different boards, so patterns emerged after a while. There were a few spots of terrain that were strategically and/or tactically important. When unit "world lines" were tracked, a relatively large number of combat unit world lines in many games ended there. These particular bits of terrain could be seen as attractors similar to the strange attractors of chaos theory. They exhibit the simple behavior of attracting many units to their doom.

The cities prove more complex. At start, each player has 4 cities, each containing a leader and each surrounded by 8 combat units. Friendly cities start by repelling friendly units. After some turns of that, both player's units have drifted out far enough to become attracted to enemy cities. As enemy units approach, friendly cities switch from repelling to attracting friendly units. Having enough friendly units to repel or eliminate approaching enemy units causes the friendly city to stop attracting friendly units but not switch back to repelling friendly units until the threat is eliminated.

There is also one square, a certain tree square in the Macysburg playtests, which acts as an inhibitor, in this case blocking movement and costing Blue either 1 cannon unit left behind or 1 turn lost to get that cannon around the tree. Interestingly, that only happens when a large number of cannon come on board at the 3 (o'clock) entry area, not with any other kind of unit. How many contingencies did it take for that to happen?

**Scalability:** Each game size plays differently. In general, the larger the boards and army sizes, the more organization the armies must have to operate effectively, and the more strategic ability the players must have to play well.

**Tunability:** Games are tunable in a number of ways other than changing the size of the board and/or army. The key to how the game plays is the number of activations per number of friendly units each player-turn, and how they are allocated. Leaders have evolved with the progression of scenarios from Tale: Intro to both Tale: Campaign and Macysburg, and may evolve again to streamline leaders in Tale: Campaign.

### Scenarios

Four scenarios [4, 5, 6, 7] are presented which indicate the range of games possible with this basic rules set. Each scenario was a key step in developing the rules-set. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> games represent tipping points where the way the game played changed.

They are, in order of design, "Border War", the first design that was fully a war game and did not feel at all like a chess game; the training scenario: "A Tale of Two Countries: Introductory Scenario", a 'simple' training game; the first "full activation" game: "The Battle of Macysburg", the first design which used a large (32x32) board, about 100 pieces/side, full activation of all pieces every turn, and exhibited a spontaneous change in organization of units while giving your army a strong feeling of fragility; and "A Tale of Two Countries: Campaign Game".

They range in size from Tale: Intro at 12 x 16 squares up to Tale: Campaign at 48 x 64 squares. Each scenario has its own special rules which include victory conditions, initial unit setups, any reinforcements or replacements, special rules for some units or terrain, all to create an abstract simulation of a specific combat or a generic battle situation of early to mid-gunpowder era warfare.

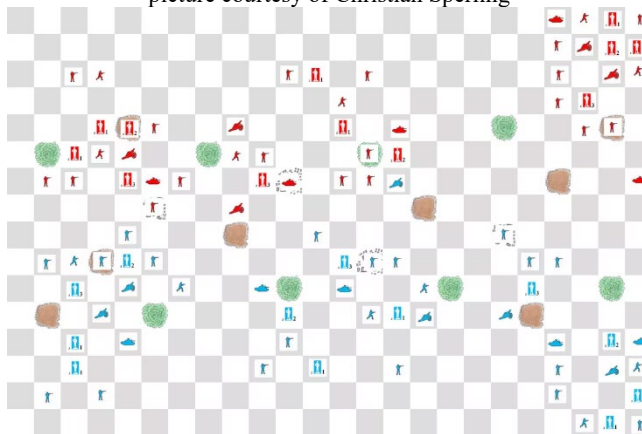
With the exception of Tale: Campaign, where only the opening was played repeatedly, all the games were played through often enough to see patterns developing. Campaign was never played through, but the opening was played enough to see new (and appropriate) behaviors developing, specifically supply lines and the formation of reserve armies.

*Border War* was the breakthrough. It uses 12 activations/player-turn for 48 total units/side. It has 21 total activation points theoretically available with the command control values of the 12 leaders in the game ranging from 1 to 3. There are no replacements or reinforcements. This game introduced terrain in the form of hills, trees, and buildings, and that was apparently the tipping point. It's the first game in the series that breaks from chess "completely" and acts like a wargame with unusual pieces rather than still having something of a chesslike feel. Losing leaders is not instantly fatal, you have a cushion of activation points. And victory is determined by possession of 3 of 4 geographic positions in the middle of the board at the beginning of any player turn. It's an interesting change of pace from the introductory scenario, but the design is more 'primitive' than Tale: Intro.

One notable bit of player behavior in this game is that when one player feels secure enough for a turn so that player starts bringing so far unactivated units from their starting positions along the edge of the board, the other player generally follows suit. This often enough leads the first player to do this again on the next turn because the situation at the front hasn't yet changed by moving fresh troops up toward the front. If that happens, it's almost inevitable the second player will also again bring more troops into the front. This is a slight nod toward logistics but the leaders are acting strictly as leaders here, moving from point to point to activate different (groups of) units. True supply lines don't develop until Tale: Campaign.

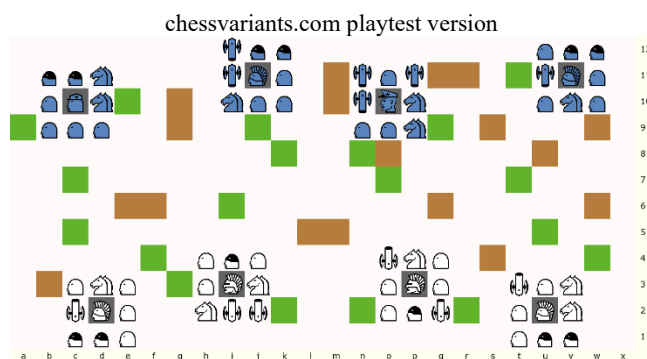
What does show in this game, however, is the effectiveness of combined arms when attacking a defended point.

Border War  
first physical playtest version  
picture courtesy of Christian Sperling





## A Tale of Two Countries: Introductory Scenario



*Border War* was an interesting and fun little game, but 12 activations/player turn, 48 pieces/side, and the rather large for a chess variant board of 16x24 squares, was a bit much for new players. *Tale: Intro* starts with 36 units/side which include 4 leaders/side rated for the maximum number of units they can activate in a player-turn. For Intro, it's 16, divided among 4 leaders. But players are only allowed to activate 8 units per player-turn. That's only 22 percent of the starting armies, and half of what the leaders could activate in a player-turn. This results from some combination of inadequate leadership and inadequate wealth in the real world, a not uncommon occurrence. And it's easier for people to play, but it still provides an interesting and not easy challenge.

A lot showed up in this game that was unexpected. One noticeable thing is that cannon can "psychologically control" an open area better than any other piece. One peculiar thing in this game, and pretty strange overall, is the relatively high rate of "just in the nick of time" saving of a city by a newly-arriving reinforcement or replacement.

The games are meant to be geomorphic, and in the physical game, terrain is placed on the board in individual squares, so is different every time unless players make special efforts to reproduce the same board every game. Online, it's the opposite: you make 1 board, and it generally takes special effort to change it. So the patterns of chaos appear online first, way before they would with always-changing boards. And that something very like mathematical chaos appears in these games sheds, I think, a glimmer of light on the chaos of war. But the nick of time saves are a totally different phenomenon. They act to make the game more fun, not necessarily to make the game more 'accurate'.

Again, a game is the interaction among the board, pieces, rules, and players. And apparently also designers. Because the game itself said "use these specific spacings and timings. You will get some extra "nick of time" saves. Replacements or reinforcements will tend to come in a turn or so before a friendly city is overrun." And so it proved.

The next time something like that happened, it was the Battle of Macysburg screaming for a leader that could keep up with cavalry and artillery. Thus the "horse leader". Further, Macysburg forced the "streamlining" of leaders. Originally, each leader could activate any kind of friendly unit within 2 squares, but was limited in the total number of units each could activate. The current version can activate all units within its activation range regardless of numbers, but that range changes for different piece types.

*Macysburg*: This is the first game where total on-board army activation every turn is possible. Clearly another tipping point was passed in going to the size and scale of this game. All the games above, including *Tale: Campaign*, are organized around their leaders like corps' in an army, with combined arms of some sort commanded by most if not all leaders. That doesn't work in *Macysburg*. I know, I tried. It's maddening to try to get your units where they need to go when some can't go one way, some can't go the other way, and the rest are too slow. It rapidly became clear that players needed to go to standard single unit-type formations. They were necessary to be able to move formations around the game board efficiently and to bring enough of a particular unit-type to use its specific advantages effectively in the game. On a 32" x 32" board, front lines will often extend 15 – 20 squares or more between the armies.

Once you get up to the level of *Macysburg*, a decent working knowledge of gunpowder-era tactics and strategy is quite useful. One playtester happily drew a diagram of how he used the tactic oblique approach, which Frederick the Great used successfully to win one of his victories, to win our game. These games are all games of attrition, which is perfectly appropriate to the era, and one lesson from them is that mass is important in combat. In particular, the depth of a formation is a key to its chances of winning a battle. Front lines are constantly being worn away in combat. Very often, the side with more men in reserve right behind the front lines, able to replace a decimated front line over and over again, will be the side standing alone at the end. Both sides can see staggering losses in a battle lasting 3 - 4 turns.

### Battle of Macysburg original art by Gary Simpson

Final Vassal playtest version - vmod by Łukasz Grabun



Along with a near-by mid-day small infantry formation reinforcement, the Blue cavalry and skirmishers outnumbered Red's cavalry formation, and chased it back to just north of town. There the cavalry turned and anchored Red's left flank on the side of the 'mountain'. The pursuing Blue units became the Blue right flank and began pushing on Red's left. At this point Red had advanced up to the eastern edge of town and was skirmishing with Blue along a line running from the woods south of Macysburg to the edge of the mountainous area northwest. The first day's casualties amounted to about 15 units per side, with rallying of troops cutting those losses to about 12 units per side.

Day 2 started with Blue having 1 more unit on board than Red. And while Day 1 had half of each army coming in from the east and west, Day 2 brought the other half on in 2 groups, this time from the north and south map edges. Red units coming up from the south drove into and captured the southern half of Macysburg,

then continued on into the northern half while the surviving Day 1 Red units attacked the town from the west, pushing Blue almost out of the town by the second, and final, night and rally phase. Blue had poor dispositions in the town and adjacent areas, and paid heavily.

Day 3 started with Red in command and with 49 units left to Blue's 43. Last 11 turns, no more reinforcements coming, no night and rally turn remaining, and this is a game of attrition. Blue, his forces north and east of Macysburg, decided to literally run for the hills and hope he could beat up the Red army as it was coming after him. So Blue took off, moving WNW, heading for the mountain. Red pursued, leaving a strong force in and around the town to maintain his hold on it, and pushed the rest of his army north just west of town. And this is where another form of random chance occurred.

The game was played online on the Vassal website, in 3 'one game day' sessions. Before the 3<sup>rd</sup> session, Blue read a thread on BoardGameGeek in the wargame section: <https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/2977615/napoleonic-era-force-space-and-battle-length> that discussed depth of formations in relation to survivability and victory. Red was pursuing Blue with only about half his army. So, even though Red had 7 units for each 6 Blue had, where it counted, Red only had 3 - 4 units for each 6 Blue had. But Red was too far away for Blue to bring all his forces to bear. In particular, a mass of infantry was not only 2 moves too far away, but it was blocking some faster units acting as rear guard. Blue's troops were well-positioned to flee with minimal losses, but too far away to be able to pivot 90 degrees left, launch an attack, and defeat the pursuing Red forces before the other half of the Red army arrived at the battle.

However, Red intended to demoralize or destroy Blue's army. So Red attacked with a couple of cannon and advanced closer to Blue, trying to keep Blue from escaping to the mountain, preserving his army, and maintaining a significant onboard force. This allowed Blue to close that 2 move gap the rearmost infantry had in 1 turn by moving that infantry directly toward Red's advancing force. Blue, realizing he could now attack Red's force, which was advancing in a rough wedge formation, with Blue's full weight in a pincer-type attack, then pivot left again and hit the town from the west, with the very rearmost forces hitting Macysburg from the north at the same time, launched an all-out attack.

After 3-4 player-turns, the front lines were so entangled that both sides had to continue fighting because to try to run would just have resulted in several units being run down from behind with little or no compensation. About midday, a lull in the battle occurred (ie: the carnage was so great up to that point there were no surviving units within range of any enemy units on either side.) Blue, in possession of the northern half of town, debated running, but decided his best hope was to press on instead of trying to hang on, so charged again. When Day 3, and the game with it, ended, Blue had 5 units left of the 43 at the start of Day 3, and Red had 2 left of 49, with both sides still in the town of Macysburg.

Seeing that the number of pieces lost can swing back and forth a lot in a game indicates the game is more flexible than chess and even in a strange way more forgiving, or at least that there are ways to reverse the effects of a lost battle. Macysburg shows gunpowder-era tactics like an oblique approach work, and general tactics of the era – like having adequate depth to formations – are apparently necessary to success, as are strategies like maintaining reserves, because armies are fragile. They can break in a few rounds of fighting, especially if they get entangled, which they can do. If a leader gets killed in that sort of situation, it can be disastrous, and occasionally has been.

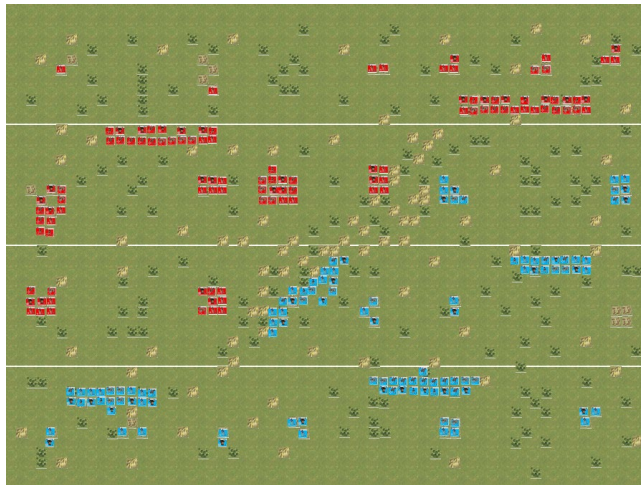
*Tale: Campaign:* This 48x64 squares game was designed after Macysburg was designed but before Macysburg was developed. Tale: Campaign has only had its setup playtested a bit, but it did show some interesting behavior. The first thing was that a mobilization phase was quickly dropped because calling up troops from all over the country was insanely difficult to manage. After a while, I went with 2 – 4 armies/side already formed and at least partially deployed toward a front, a few half-size 'reserve' armies and 1 – 3 unit groups scattered here and there. That allowed several starts at a game to be run through.

This was the first game that required "supply lines" – chains of activators/leaders – from all 12 friendly cities to assembly areas, the border, and any areas of fighting. It was something I didn't expect; I figured we'd see leaders collecting small groups of units and then coalescing into larger armies. It didn't work that way at all. All of the leaders had full activation potential each turn. There weren't enough leaders to get to all the units and shepherd them into armies. What happened over the first few turns, starting with the setup above, was that supply lines started to develop, as very low-level leaders were stationed 4-6 squares apart to funnel units from all the cities toward the fronts.

Campaign features 12 cities/side, 6 1-square cities producing infantry, 2 2-square cities producing cavalry, 2 3-square cities producing cannon, and 2 4-square cities producing (and promoting) skirmishers and low-level leaders.

### A Tale of Two Countries: Campaign Game

Vassal playtest version - at start - vmod by Bill Betts



Macysburg (1000 squares) showed there is a line or more likely a region that is an intersection of total pieces/side, ratio of leaders (activators) to total pieces/side, strength levels of leaders, size of board, number of objectives... where the organization of the pieces themselves changes from army/corps level to divisional and smaller sizes. But in the above "A Tale of Two Countries: Campaign" game set-up, the 3000 squares game, the organization of the forces, even the largest, is entirely on the army/corps level and so should have to play differently than the current Macysburg has proved to play.

But as I said, I have an 80x80 canvas on which to paint, 64% of the way to that 10,000 squares board. What I will do is essentially recreate the current Tale: Campaign game on an 80x80 scale which allows me to cut the board up into 9 25x25 squares with a little slosh left over, and set up a double-sized and playable as a multi-player (2 teams) version of the army/corps version of

organization. I can also cut another into 4 40x40 boards, place a Red 100 piece army in each of the NE, NW, and SW quadrants, and a Blue 100 piece army in each of the NW, NE, and SE quadrants. Bump up the number of cities to bump up the production of reinforcements and replacements. Allow the skirmisher unit to act as a "supply depot" to move units along supply lines without having to use leader units the entire way. By this point, I fully expect the army/corps version to provide an excellent grand tactical game for an entire war, and the divisional & lower level version will give the same excellent grand tactical level for a major campaign in that war. If I use the whole board for

### Emergent Behaviors

The first, and probably most important thing, to show was the highly effective substitute for the vitally necessary fog of war, appeared in the very first game, Chieftain Chess. Even there, with only 4 pieces moving per player-turn, people cannot use chess knowledge to successfully predict what will happen in the next turn with any great hope of success. There are so many equivalent moves and similar attacks available on most turns, and always the possibility of a unit in a neighboring area intervening in the area you are trying to analyze, that a good guess is worth more than a lot of analysis. Chaos rules.

Armies are fragile! They can be broken in a few rounds of combat. That feeling of fragility is something quite rare in most of the wargames I've played. As is the loss of leaders from being in the front lines, or right behind them. Depth of formations is forced in individual battles, and reserves, both tactical and strategic, are vital in both individual battles and larger scale games. This fits the era being simulated.

The extreme simplicity of pieces and combat helps uncover the larger tactics and strategy of early to mid-gunpowder era warfare. These manifest remarkably well considering the rules of play are 2 pages long, and the game is played with a handful of different chesspieces.

The spontaneous changing of organizational scales in Macysburg that makes it play as a battle rather than a campaign was totally unexpected, and very welcome. Clearly it's a function of the particular special rules set for the game, within which one or more lines were crossed. But teasing out how much various rules contributed is time consuming at best, and inconclusive at worst, as I suspect it has to be a combination of things.

The leader rules impose a fairly strong structure on piece dispositions during a game. In a sense, the players start with 12 independent skirmishers, and 12 compound pieces of about 6 units each, usually varying from 4 to 8 units. The larger formations have a tendency to get 'internal' traffic jams when going through tight places, and even a few 'compound pieces' (aka: formations) trying to get through areas with moderately dense terrain at the same time can jam up for a few turns. All this relates to the front of a unit vs. its depth.

Command control requirements tend to limit the front of a formation of 5 – 8 infantry units plus leader to holding a maximum of 5 squares across but 3 squares across is easier for maneuver and to maintain command control. The game structure and game play force a certain amount of compactness and depth of formations. Infantry commanders, by only running back and forth, can maintain fairly effective control over a 7-unit long line, in a quiet area. In a serious battle, the technical term for a line of infantry 7 units long and 1 unit wide with only 1 commander is "speed bump".

For combat, the game does attrition extremely well, so players are forced to maneuver when starting attacks to avoid being badly pounded during the approach. Major battles can be very fluid, with radical changes on the board after each player-turn. Poor troop dispositions can be very costly – note the swings of 7 and 9 extra units lost mentioned above. They occurred primarily over the course of 2-3 turns, not over the course of the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> 'day'. This might be a 30% higher loss rate, deadly in a game of attrition if continued. But also inflictible on the other side with some good maneuvering or good luck.

Interesting things that show up in combat include loss of leaders from cannon "sniping" from 3 squares away. One doesn't usually think of artillery as sniper material and providing an important period effect, or that cannon can "psychologically control" an area better than any other piece. Yet both prove to be the case for these rules. Attacking and defending both go better with combined arms. Attacking goes better with mass, too. The depth of a formation is directly proportional to the survivability of that formation, but not the survival of the front lines of the formation, because they don't, as intact units. And while reserves are vital, zones of control are not. If a piece moves next to an opponent piece, that piece either moves away or captures the adjacent piece. Not strictly historically accurate, but simple and quick, and the overall results of combats are satisfactory, and appear reasonable for the period.

### References5

- [1] <https://www.chessvariants.com/rules/chieftain-chess>
- [2] <https://www.hmgs.org/page/WargamingHistory>
- [3] <https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/1195045/old-wargameskriegsspiels/page/1>
- [4] <https://www.chessvariants.com/rules/command-and-maneuver-a-tale-of-two-countries>
- [5] <https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/850601/chess-wargame-fusion-ii-success>  
- please scroll to Christian Sperling's Sept 6 comment for game map and commentary
- [6a] <http://chessvariants.wikidot.com/cam:the-battle-of-macysburg>
- [6b] <https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/1178742/some-impressions-after-playing-battle-macysburg-sc>
- [7] A Tale of Two Countries: Campaign has a 48 x 64 gameboard and has not been fully playtested. It is in early development and will stay there unless and until it is wanted. All the other games here have been extensively playtested and posted online.



<b>OPEN MATCH LIST</b>			
<b>Game</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Player</b>	<b>Format</b>
1985: Under an Iron Sky	TRL	Martin Hogan (1704)	
ACW Brigade Series	MMP	Aaron Kulkis (1983)	
Advanced Squad Leader-Campaign	AH	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
Afrika Korps	AH	Thomas Walsh (1427)	PE
Afrika Korps	AH	Mike Stubits (2311)	V
Air Assault on Crete	AH	Peter Hansen (2129)	V
Air Assault on Crete	AH	Jay Unnerstall (1264)	VE
A Most Dangerous Time	MMP	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
Arab Israeli War	AH	Dennis Sheppard (804)	VE
Ardennes Offensive	SPI	Hugh Smithers (2313)	VE
A Time for Trumpets	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
A Victory Lost	MMP	Ed O'Connor (1243)	VE
A World At War	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
Battles for the Ardennes	SPI	Thomas Ten Eyck (826)	EP
Battle for Germany	SPI	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Battle's Shadow	HFD	Jay Unnerstall (1264)	VE
Bitter Woods	Compass/L2	Hugh Smithers (2313)	VE
Blitz	Compass	Jim Lauffenburger (2191)	VXE
Bloody 110	COA	Aaron Kulkis (1983)	FVL
Blue and Gray Quads 1 and 2	SPI	Joseph Grills (748)	VE
Borodino	SPI	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Breakout: Normandy	L2 (pref.) or AH	Art Dohrman (1557)	VEF

Caesar Alesia	AH	Damon Norko (1736)	VE
Caesar's Legions	AH	Stephen Genoff (2194)	VE
Cedar Mountain	SPI	Peter Hansen (2129)	V
Empire in Arms	AH	Edson Ramos (1989)	P
Empire of the Rising Sun	AH	Mike Scott (1555)	
Falling Sky	GMT	Jim Lauffenburger (2191)	VXE
Fifth Frontier War	GDW	Dane Patterson (2010)	EV
Fire in the Sky (1999)	Phalanx	William Marcy (1761)	VTE
Flat Top	AH	Paul Koenig (1577)	V
Flying Colors	GMT	Thomas Ten Eyck (826)	EP
Forgotten Legions	Compass	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Fox's Gambit	HFD	Jay Unnerstall (1264)	VE
Fury in the West	Battleline/AH	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Gallipoli	GMT	Ivan Kent (2133)	V
Gettysburg '65	AH	Stephen Genoff (2194)	V
Great War In Europe	GMT	Donald Deacon (2241)	V
Great War in Europe Deluxe	GMT	Terry Gallion (2044)	V
Grenadier	SPI	Charles Sutherland (1804)	VE
Guns of August	AH	John Troskey (1554)	CV
Hitler's War	AH	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Invasion of Malta, 1942	AH	Chris Hyland (1862)	VX
Knights of the Air	AH	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
Korean War	Compass	Paul Koenig (1577)	V
La Grande Arme	SPI	Charles Sutherland (1804)	VE

Lee vs. Grant	VG	Jeremy Rowley (1942)	V
Leipzig	SPI	Charles Sutherland (1804)	VE
Lion of Ethiopia	Command/XTR	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Midway	AH	Bruce Warren (2293)	FTF
Midway	AH	Mike Stubits (2311)	VE
Main Battle Tank 2ed	GMT	Martin Hogan (1704)	
Modern Battles Quad 1 and 2	SPI	Joseph Grills (748)	VE
Monty's Gamble: Market Garden	MMP	Jerry Wong (1974)	FV
Napoleon at Waterloo	SPI	Paul Purman (2159)	V
Napoleon at War Quad	SPI	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Napoleon's Last Battles Quad	SPI	Joseph Grills (748)	VE
No Retreat: North Afrika	GMT	Jerry Wong (1974)	FV
NATO: Cold War Goes Hot	Compass	Giovanni Faisca (2178)	VEL
Pacific War	VG	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
PanzerArmee Afrika	SPI/AH	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Panzer Battles	MMP	John Troskey (1554)	CVS
Panzer Grenadier	AP	Carl Wolf (1992)	V
Panzer Krieg	AH	Jay Unnerstall (1264)	VE
Panzer Leader	AH	Stephen Genoff (2194)	V
Proud Monster	XTR	Edson Ramos (1989)	P
Punic Wars	SPI	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Rebel Sabres	TSR	Peter Dunn (2235)	V
Rise and Decline of the Third Reich	AH	Bruce Warren (2293)	FTF

Russian Campaign	Jedko Games	Peter Dunn (2235)	V
Russian Front	AH	Martin Kerslake (2011)	V
South China Seas	CMP	Mike Ricotta (2004)	VXE
SPQR	GMT	Justo Perez (2009)	FV
Tank on Tank	LnL	Duncan Rice (1394)	V
Terrible Swift Sword	TSR	Peter Dunn (2235)	V
The Russian Campaign	4th L2 or 5th edition GMT	John Ohlin (2346)	V
The Russian Campaign	AH	Bruce Warren (2293)	FTF
The Tide At Sunrise	MMP	Nick Rusch (1913)	V-E-L-X
Thirty Years War Quad	SPI	Joseph Grills (748)	VE
Thunder at Cassino	AH	Jerry Wong (1974)	FV
Tobruk	AH	Dennis Sheppard (804)	VE
To The Green Fields Beyond	SPI	John Troskey (1554)	CVS
Twilight Struggle	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
Verdun 1916: Steel Inferno (2020)	FOS	William Marcy (1761)	VE
Vietnam	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
War and Peace		Mike Kettman (1067)	V
War at Sea	AH		VE
War Galley	GMT	Graeme Dandy (916)	V
War of the Suns	MMP	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE
Westwall Quad	SPI	Joseph Grills (748)	VE
Winter War	SPI	Erica Snarski (2142)	VE
Wooden Ships and Iron Men	AH	Peter Dunn (2235)	VD
WWII	SPI	Erica Snarski (2142)	V
WWII: Commander: Battle of the Bulge	Compass	Bob Jones (1548)	V

# MapBoard Mk.1

By Mark A. Palmer

To access the current Open Match List online:

Once you get to the AHIKS website,

Hover over “Want an Opponent?”

Which will then reveal the “People Wanting a Game” option.

Click on the option which will open the **People Wanting a Game** page.

Open the hyperlink located within the first sentence that is highlighted in blue.

“This [Google Spreadsheet](#) lists, by game title,...”

“Time” is fickle. It drags when you are anticipating something, and flies by when something is required of you. And it works both ways for game turns. We can’t wait to receive our opponent’s response, and yet it’s already been *that* long since it was put in our lap!?!

“Life” gets in the way of our gaming, as well it should. We should enjoy our hobby after everything more important has been addressed and we have time for quality gaming. But often we miss something, and our opponents wait and wait and wait. Most of us are like the two Looney Tunes gophers who are so polite towards each other that nothing gets done while their harvested “vej-getables” are trucked away to the cannery. [Trivia: What were their names?]

I have been the cause of weeks and *months* of delayed turns because I missed seeing an email. Usually, it might be from checking email on my phone and missing the attached turn, and it then becomes marked as “Read”. My opponent(s) and myself are too polite to send a reminder, so the turn languishes.

I would encourage those of you who have patiently waited too long to extend a gentle reminder.

[Trivia answer: Mack and Tosh]

## Editorial Bruce Geryk

Another two months, another “**K.**” Thanks to longtime wargamer and new member Joe Joyce, we have a great article about that never-ending quest to make games give us what we need from a representational standpoint. Some gamers require historicity above all else. Other want play balance for competition purposes. Some just want a “good game,” whatever that means. In my experience, the tension between randomness and determinism in wargaming is eternal. Joe does a great job of expressing the possibilities inherent in the latter.

Since we have an editor, we can have “letters to the editor!” Here is one our president, George Phillies, passed along to me:

George, et. al.

After reading your column in the latest issue of the **K**, I'd like to take few minutes to respond with some answers to the questions you proposed.

Yes, I'm still an active gamer and have several games going, quite a few with members on the top 25 list over a long period of time. We may have gotten together years ago through match requests to the Match Coordinator but once the initial matches were completed, in many cases, we just continued on to other scenarios of the same game or chose a different title. We seldom made additional match requests. With that said, are we competitive, sure but playing in a rated game isn't necessarily a need. I've had my share of one-offs with players, mostly good and very rarely bad thank goodness. However, when you find good players that you enjoy gaming with, you tend to keep going. Depending on the number of them, that decreases the times that one might request a match or get an opponent from a match that you may have requested since, if you're like me, you can only handle so many games at once. I know it's been a while since I have submitted a rated game but that doesn't mean that I'm not a very active player.

I continue to belong to AHIKS because it's like being in a club of likeminded people who all enjoy the camaraderie of board wargaming. AHIKS is some of the glue that holds the hobby together. Sure, there are other venues like Consimworld, etc. but AHIKS really started it all. I've been doing this a very long time starting in 1960 with a copy of **U-Boat** and I've always enjoyed it from pushing cardboard in the old days to working a VASSAL or Cyberboard screen today. You may not hear from us much but I'm sure there are members out there just like me who appreciate everything that AHIKS does.

Since not everyone plays rated games, I see where AHIKS might get an inaccurate picture of what is going on in the hobby. Maybe AHIKS could just survey the members from time to time and ask "what are you playing these days" or how many games have you played in the last three or six months and then list the top titles a la the top-rated players.

I hope that these thoughts from my corner of the hobby gives you some insight into what's going on with members out there. Thank you all for everything that you do to support the hobby!

John A. Trosky  
Member # 1554

Thank you, John! I don't think I've played a rated game in many years, either. If I had, my rating would be even worse than it is now.

Please drop us a line if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions.

Bruce Geryk  
AHIKS #875

### REVIEW:

## War Diary (magazine)

George Phillis

There are not many board wargaming magazines any more. Many of those that remain are really military history magazines with a board wargame inserted. A pleasant exception to that generalization is **War Diary**, which recently released its 22nd issue. The current issue has articles on The Russia Campaign, Russia Besieged, Invasion: Malta, Corvette Command, Across the Bug River, and short reviews of a game and two storage systems for counters and magazine games. War Diary is now moving into game publishing, the new game being 1914 Deluxe, a very slight reworking of Avalon Hill's 1914. The one historical article treats the Italian Army in Africa and Russia.

Subscriptions are **\$32** (North America) for three issues of this attractively produced, 60-page magazine.

Their mailing address is War Diary Magazine, 403 North Race Street, Glasgow KY 42141 .

(A PDF subscription for \$16 also exists -- [wardiarymagazine.com](http://wardiarymagazine.com) for more details.)



**CURRENT ISSUE: Number 22**

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN vs. RUSSIA BESIEGED *by Art Lupinacci*  
 DESIGNING INVASION MALTA: Challenges and Solutions *by Vance von Borries*  
 CORVETTE COMMAND: The Battle of the Atlantic Solitaire *by Ray Garbee*  
 MEETING TRIUMPH AND DISASTER: The Italian Campaigns in North  
 Africa and Russia *by Paul Comben*  
 ACROSS THE BUG RIVER *by Arrigo Velicogna*  
 MALTA BESIEGED: A Game Review *by John D. Burt*  
 1914 DELUXE, HELL UNLEASHED: Designer's Notes *by Mike Nagel*  
 PASS IN REVIEW: Capsule Reviews *by Michael Stultz, Hans Korting, Roy Matheson*

**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**

#### **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: May 31, 2023.**

#### **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.

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