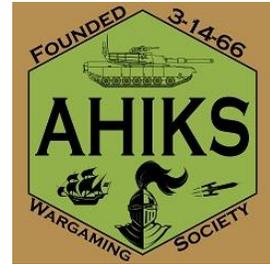


THE KOMMANDEUR



VOLUME 60, NO. 4

AUGUST, 2025

From the President

Starting with a competition note: I have previously mentioned the International Kriegspiel Society. They only play one game, the old Prussian Kriegspiel. They are closing on three thousand members. Surely we can do as well, with members most of whom are actively playing games?

First, I would like to thank Brian Stretcher for volunteering to be the guest editor for this issue. I was prepared to do it, but I can't say that I was looking forward to doing it, because there were a whole bunch of other things that have gone wrong. Our former editor, to whom we should all be profoundly grateful, had an extremely effective system for mailing the *Kommandeur* to all members. That was a system that he could use, but the rest of us couldn't. The old system I had been using decided to crash one more time. I have therefore hunted around for alternatives. By the time you read this I will have found some way to email issues to everyone. The solution I think I found, but only tonight, will be much cheaper and more reliable than the old one.

Our most important need is a new Editor. I can be Acting Editor until then, but I am also President of my other club and have a series of tasks there which I am trying to pass on to other members of that club. That will free up more time for me to support AHKS. I have sort of kept things going here, but I'm happy to agree with anyone who wants to say I have not been doing a stunningly good job as President.

Based on events, we really do need an understudy for the Match Coordinator, who in some sense is one of our most important officers. We also need, though not immediately, someone to take on being the Multiplayer Coordinator.

Mark Palmer has had a very clever idea, which he describes in his column. The notion is that we should have people who play particular games who are there to teach members how to play those games. For example, you could imagine me offering to teach members how to play **Stalingrad**. You could imagine Randy Heller offering to teach people how to play **The Russian Campaign**. We have several people who could teach people how to play **Titan**. I am clearly not one of them.

This would be an extremely useful service for the club, would not be too demanding, and would get you more opponents.

Russ Gifford and I discussed the post of Tournament Director. He politely pointed out what I should've realized, namely that any one person is probably familiar with only a limited number of games to be able to direct tournaments in them. There are nine or ten thousand board wargame titles out there, including games that are only available in foreign languages not accessible to many members, so no one person can plausibly direct tournaments in all of them.

I did my survey and reported on it for the last issue. It appears that the game most reported being played among members is **Advanced Squad Leader**. Surely some member here would like to propose a tournament, a series of **ASL** games that would qualify as choices for tournament play. **ASL** has an astonishing number of scenarios. Someone would need to decide which ones to include in the tournament. Perhaps the tournament would cover only a single scenario. Do I have a taker to become **ASL** tournament director?

I have regularly talked about my own games. The news on those this time is very dull. In **Empires in Arms**, we reached part way through 1809. At this point we agreed that the British player had clearly won the game. The Prussian player was forced to surrender unconditionally to the French and took severe losses. The Austrian player had taken catastrophic losses and had no choice other than surrender. The Austrians surrendered to the British, Prussians, and Turks. The Turkish player took advantage of the Austrian surrender to pick up three southern Austrian provinces. The Russian player had previously surrendered to the British, Prussian, Austrian, and Turkish forces, and would've had to surrender to the Spanish forces but I had been unsuccessful in getting any Spanish troops into Russia. The Spanish player had dutifully invaded France, several times, had failed to capture anything, and had taken catastrophic losses. At that point I withdrew my forces almost entirely into Spain. I received regular complaints and threats from my alleged allies that I was not invading France again. However, the invasion suffered from a minor challenge. I was essentially out of troops. I had two corps in column blocking the invasion route of the French into Spain. Each of those corps had in them a grand total of one infantry. They did nothing but serve as speed bumps if the French invaded, giving me a few more months to rearrange my feeble armies.

We therefore started a new **EIA** game. We have gotten as far as choosing sides. This time I am Russia, for which I paid a modest number of victory points. The former English player, who won the last game, is Turkey in this game. At this point some players went off on vacation, one player went off on a long trip, and therefore I expect no further action until late this month.

I finished several Stellar Conquest games under our variant rules. These are two-player games. There is no time limit. There are no counter limits. We experimented first with all ships and task forces visible, then with colony fleets invisible, then with all fleets and task forces invisible. We had to keep accurate track as to who had visited which star most recently, failing which we would not know that we were in the same solar system. First we tried starting players in diagonally opposite corners. Then we tried players on adjacent sides. Of the most recent two games, my opponent won one and I won one. For the most recent game, I could tell that my opponent was using a strategy completely different from mine. I suspect neither of us understood what the other guy was doing. I was perhaps more lucky, or perhaps predicted one or two of his task force moves

adequately so that my side would appear to be impressive. When nothing can be seen, bluff is an important part of the game. We may start a new game this Fall.

George Phillies

From the Ministry of Truth

Yes, I agreed to put this issue together to make sure one got out in a timely fashion and to unburden George. No, I do not know how to do fancy graphics; you are lucky this issue does not look like it was typed on a 1940's Underwood. Sorry, no hyperlinks, and I still double-space before starting a new sentence. I apologize in advance for the length of the Open Match Requests, as they came in tables and short of retyping them in lines it was the best I could do at this time, and tables come through email rather wonky. The match requests always take up several pages, so I guess it isn't too bad. As an attorney, I could put together a mean pleading or brief, but those weren't in columns and any graphics had to be attached as exhibits at the end, so further count yourself lucky that there aren't imbedded citations and an attached set of exhibits as well. Besides, even though columns look nice, they don't really work that well for scrolling on a computer or tablet unless you are reading microprint, and my guess is that very few of you print these out before reading. Therefore, the guiding force behind this issue is, "Keep it Simple, Stupid!" If you like this issue, let me know; you can email me at doctorlaw@juno.com. If you don't like this issue, volunteer to take over as editor so you can do it yourself. Simple! Turns out it isn't that hard and is sort of fun!

I can crop images and paste them into text, although I admit I had trouble getting the logo to line up the way I wanted it to with the text. I eventually figured it out. But I did look through some rather elderly editions of the K (1980's and '90's) to refresh my memory as to how they were laid out, and so remembered back to my earlier days in AHIKS when I eagerly looked forward to each issue of the K. These were typed (in columns! By someone's secretary!!) and photocopied back in the early '80's when I joined, later written on a primitive word-processors after that, and mailed out by regular post, so length was an issue; I have learned over the years that more than 5 sheets of paper coast the extra ounce stamp. Graphics were limited, and some of them were very short (e.g. 6 total pages, sometimes tiny print) but there were still insightful articles (usually from the officers, but sometimes from members), member information, and the always important list of match requests from the Match Coordinator. You will find the same in this issue. Plus, I got to throw some things in without worry that they will be arbitrarily rearranged or cut!

You will also find an enjoyable article from one of our Australian members (and a very noble and capable opponent, I might add), Graeme Dandy, who dared a trip to the United States earlier this year (*insert ICE or deportation joke here*). It is done in the spirit of Omar DeWitt's overseas travelogues, with lots of pictures if I could fit them in, so I think you will enjoy it.

Brian Stretcher, Guest Editor

VP's Corner

As stated in a previous edition, working through the ranks of playtester, developer, and ultimately game designer will gain one recognition in the hobby industry. It is not unusual to be called upon to assist in a project once one is known. I have been busy since the last issue of The K.

I was involved in moderating a Series Replay of **Bitter Woods**, which has been submitted to *Paper Wars* for publication. The outcome was a real nail biter, with two top-tiered competitors duking it out. I won't give anything away by revealing who won. I also just completed editing/proofing a 90 page **The Russian Campaign Gamer's Guide** for Art Lupinacci at L2DG. It was time consuming but well worth it, as it provides very helpful insights into TRC game play. There are numerous strategy tips, examples of play, and variants. All editions of the game are addressed. Once published, I highly recommend its acquisition.

Next, I studied the first printing of Compass Games' **Fortress Europa Designer Signature Edition** and submitted to them corrections for the next game's printing. This game is dear to my heart, as it was once my favorite game. At one time it was very popular at convention play, in particular Avaloncon and WBC. It deserves a resurgence. What I find exciting is that the next printing will include a mounted map. Last, but not least, I was asked by Lombardy Studios to provide an order of battle for the 1944 Ardennes Offensive. What source could be better than historian Danny Parker, himself? I consulted his OOB printed in Charles B. MacDonald's *A Time for Trumpets* and forwarded it to LS. Next on my plate is the development of a new edition of **Battle of the Bulge 1981** for GMT. However, that won't take place until later in the year.

Randy Heller

I still have a copy of "A Time for Trumpets." It is an extremely well written book, first published in 1984. My last game of BB '81 was an attempt to play by regular mail about 8 years ago. It was a bust because by regular mail, the game system is simply too much work compared to games played by email and Vassal. I have a copy of Bitter Woods sitting in my "new game" stack (acquired last year during Compass Games' annual holiday sale), awaiting a thorough rules read. Always room for a new Bulge game! – Ed.

Treasurer's Report

Supporters of AHIKS,

Thank you for entrusting me with the role of Treasurer and a special thanks to those who have sent in contributions. The following is a report from the opening of our AHIKS bank account through to the end of June, 2025.

Opening Treasury Balance (on transfer from previous treasurer dated 1/9/25): **\$8,558.67**

Credits: **\$95** in contributions, **\$1.40 in** earned interest.

Debits: **\$35.44** for postage.

Ending Treasury Balance (6/30/25): **\$8,614.63**

NOTICE! NOTICE! NOTICE! AHIKS is now a registered entity. As such, any check sent as a donation or payment for AHIKS purposes must be made out to AHIKS itself. Please send it to Nicholas Sarwark, 269 Orange Street, Manchester, NH 03104. Thank you for your donations!

MapBoard Mk.1

Do you have that “one game” you can’t play enough? Even if it’s not solitaire compatible, you make it so? For me, it’s **Merchant of Venus**. I’ve played that sucker with all six available cultures, and all optional rules so... many... times! It’s my “comfort game” and it’s been played so often and I am so familiar with the rules that I could teach it in my sleep.

Then there are titles that intrigue me, but I haven’t played before. In March 2024 I bought a game based upon its popularity within the membership. It might be. But when I opened the box, I was overwhelmed with the 24-page Rulebook (12 pages of rules, 12 pages of options and scenarios), the 24-page Player’s Handbook, and a half dozen OOB options! Not only did I give the contents a mere cursory glance, but I also immediately lost interest. Possibly forever. I will need someone to take me by the hand to appreciate the game, rather than find me in a situation where I am “learning while I’m burning” and getting my fanny handed to me from an opponent as familiar with that title as I am with **Merchant of Venus**. Yes, I know there are play-throughs on You-Tube and other sources, but I’ve found such options don’t work for me what with my short attention span and distraction by shiny objects.



Well, Brian Jarvis hit upon a solution to learning a game by utilizing the membership’s experience. Brian suggested offering another option when posting on the Open Match List; T for Teaching.

That is an awesome suggestion! My only negative observation is that another letter might get lost among all the others listed behind the titles. Such a change would need to be approved by the Officer Corps, but we could bypass the bureaucracy. If you have a game you would like to teach, or would like to learn, just send your intentions to me and I will be sure to include it as a separate “Want ad” so it will stand out.

Brian! Thank you for your suggestion! Now, let's put it to work.

Mark A. Palmer

This is a great idea. It is tough to get thrown into a game you barely know and eaten by the shark(s). I have been around a long time: since the before times, AHIKS has attempted to make use of the request for "Learning" games (L), which is sort of the same concept, but there was no open list of willing Teachers. The MC would simply list the game and wait to see who might be willing to take a game at that level. This now comes at the issue from the other side. It seems to me that a Teacher does not necessarily need to be an expert at the game being taught, i.e. know all of the best strategies and sneaky tricks, but rather competent with the rules and mechanics and willing to tell the student that "maybe you don't want to do that." A Teacher also needs to have the patience and time to deal with fits, starts, and do overs. – Ed.

Open Match Requests

To access the current Open Match List online:

Once you get to the AHIKS website, hover over "Want an Opponent?"

This reveals 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,..."

Merchant of Venus (AH)	Willing to Teach
Here I Stand (GMT)	Mark Palmer (1074)
	Brian Stretcher (885)

1813: Napoleon's Nemesis	Europa Simulazioni	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
1914 Twilight in the East	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
1944: Battle of the Bulge	Worthington	Bob Jones (1548)	VEXLS	
1985: Under an Iron Sky	TRL	Martin Hogan (1704)		
2nd Fleet	Victory Games	Thomas Ten Eyck (826)	E	
3rd Fleet	Victory Games	Thomas Ten Eyck (826)	E	
Aces High	Simulation Games	Bryan Jones (2416)	VE	
ACW Brigade Series	MMP	Aaron Kulkis (1983)		

ACW Brigade Series	MMP	Mike Kettman (1067)	VE	
Admiral's War	Canvas Temple	Jan Vanderveken (2286)	VE	
Advanced Squad Leader	AH	Frank Kelly (2405)	VE	Already gaming with Jeff
Advanced Squad Leader-Campaign	AH	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	Already gaming with Kevin
Advanced Third Reich	AH	Mike Scott (1555)	E	
Afrika Korps	AH	Omar Dewitt (44)	V	
Afrika Korps	AH	Randy Heller (1007)	FTF	NH area
Afrika Korps	AH	Enric Herrera (2422)		
Air Assault on Crete	AH	Peter Hansen (2129)	V	
Alexander	AH	Andew Cozzi (1998)	VE	
A Most Dangerous Time	MMP	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Antietam	SPI	Omar Dewitt (44)	V	
Arab Israeli War	AH	Dennis Sheppard (804)	VE	
Ardennes Offensive	SPI	Hugh Smithers (2313)	VE	
Arnhem	SPI	VHD	VHD	
Asia Engulfed	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Assault on Cyprus	AH	Chris Hyland (1234)	VHD	Sub-game to Air Assault on Crete
A Time for Trumpets	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Autumn for Barbarossa	MMP	John Trosky (1554)	VE	
A Victory Lost	MMP	Ed O'Connor (1243)	VE	
A World At War	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Axis and Allies (most versions)		Lee Kendter (2271)	FTF	Quakertown, PA
Bismarck	AH	James McCormack (2369)	VE FTF	Puget Sound area
Barbarossa AGN	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Barbarossa AGS	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Battle for Germany	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	

Battle for Jerusalem	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Battle for North Africa	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Battle of Austerlitz, Dec. 2, 1805	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Battle of the Bulge	AH	Don Lazov (1981)	V	
Bitter Woods	Compass/L2	Hugh Smithers (2313)	VE	
Bitter Woods	Compass	Randy Heller (1007)	FTF	NH area
Blitz	Compass	Jim Lauffenburger (2191)	VXE	
Bloody 110	COA	Aaron Kulkis (1983)	FVL	
Blue Water Navy	Compass	James McCormack (2369)	VE FTF	Puget Sound area
Borodino	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Cedar Mountain	SPI	Peter Hansen (2129)	V	
Chickamauga	SPI	Omar Dewitt (44)	V	
Chickamauga	SPI	Gary Gossett (756)	VF	
Cobra	SPI	Randy Heller (1007)	FTF	NH area
Downfall of Empires	Do-It Games	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Downfall of the Third Reich	Do-It Games	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Downfall: Conquest of the Third Reich, 1942-1945	GMT	Steven Anderson (2139)	VE	
Empire in Arms	AH	Edson Ramos (1989)	P	
Empire of the Rising Sun	AH	Mike Scott (1555)		
Empire Under the Sun	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Enemy Action: Kharkov	Compass	Allyn Vannoy (2455)	FTF	Hillboro, OR
Euro Front	Columbia Games	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Europe Engulfed	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Falling Sky	GMT	Jim Lauffenburger (2191)	VXE	
Fifth Frontier War	GDW	Dane Patterson (2010)	VE	
Fire in the Lake: Sovereign of Discord expansion	GMT	Dan Carey (1716)	VE	
Fire in the Sky (1999)	Phalanx	William Marcy (1761)	VTE	Midway scenario pref'd

First to Fight	Games Res./Design	Lee Kendter (2271)	FTF	Quakertown, PA
Flat Top	AH	Paul Koenig (1577)	V	
Flat Top	AH	Douglas King (1961)	E	
Flying Colors	GMT	Thomas Ten Eyck (826)	E	
Forgotten Legions	Compass	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
For the People	GMT	John Vogel (2428)	VFL	
For the People	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE,FTF	Riverside, CA
Fury in the West	Battleline/AH	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Gallipoli	GMT	Ivan Kent (2133)	V	
Great War in Europe	GMT	Mike Kettman (1067)	VE	
Great War in Europe Deluxe	GMT	Mike Kettman (1067)	VE	
Great War in Europe Deluxe	GMT	Terry Gallion (2044)	V	
Grenadier	SPI	Charles Sutherland (1804)	VE	
Guns of August	AH	John Trosky (1554)	VC	
Hitler's War	AH	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Hitler's War	AH	Jan Vanderveken (2286)	VE	
Illusions of Glory	GMT	Pete Steele (2219)	VE	New to Vassal
Illusions of Glory	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Imperium: Empires in Conflict	GDW	James McCormack (2369)	VE	
Invasion of Malta, 1942	AH	Chris Hyland (1234)	VH	
Invasion of Russia, 1812	Europa Simulazioni	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Island War	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Jerusalem	SDC	Erica Snarski (1251)	EP	No Vassal module
Jutland	AH	Jeff Miller (1303)	V	
Kadesh Command		Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Kasserine	GMT	Rob Franz (2277)	VE	
Knights of the Air	AH	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Korea	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	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	
Little Round Top	AH	John Trosky (1554)	VC	
Lion of Ethiopia	Command/XTR	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Luftwaffe	AH	Sidney Bodine (2431)	VE	
Midway	AH	Bruce Warren (2293)	FTF	
Midway	AH	Mike Stubits (2311)	VE	
Main Battle Tank 2ed	GMT	Martin Hogan (1704)		
Monty's Gamble: Market Garden	MMP	Jerry Wong (1974)	FV	
Napoleon at War Quad	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Napoleon at War Quad - Quatres Bras	SPI	Don Lazov (1981)	V	
Normandy 44	GMT	Don Deacon (2241)	VE	
NATO: Cold War Goes Hot	Compass	Giovanni Faisca (2178)	VEL	
No Retreat: North Afrika	GMT	Jerry Wong (1974)	FV	
North Africa	MMP	John Trosky (1554)	VC	
Old School Tactical: Module 1 or 2	FPG	Philippe Hody (2453)	VE	
Pacific War	VG	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Pacific War	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
PanzerArme Afrika	SPI/AH	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
PanzerArme Afrika	SPI/AH	Allyn Vannoy (2455)	VE	
Panzer Battles	MMP	John Trosky (1554)	VCS	
Panzer Blitz	AH	Douglas King (1961)	VE	
Panzer Grenadier	AP	Carl Wolf (1992)	V	
PanzerGruppe Guderian	AH	Enric Herrera (2422)		
Panzer Leader	AH	Art Dohrman (1551)	VEF	

Paths of Glory	GMT	Pete Steele (2219)	VE	New to Vassal
Paths of Glory	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Phalanx	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Proud Monster	XTR	Edson Ramos (1989)	P	
Punic Wars	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Pursuit of Glory	GMT	Pete Steele (2219)	VE	New to Vassal
Rebel Sabres	TSR	Peter Dunn (2235)	V	
Red Typhoon	Revolution Games	Jay Unnerstall (1264)	VE	
Rise and Decline of the Third Reich	AH	Bruce Warren (2293)	FTF	Olympia, WA area
Russian Campaign	Jedko Games	Peter Dunn (2235)	V	
Russian Campaign	AH	Enric Herrera (2422)		
Russian Front	AH	Jan Vanderveken (2286)	V	
Sixth Fleet	SPI	James McCormack (2369)	VE FTF	Puget Sound area
Soldiers	SPI	Stephen Chin-Quee (1784)	VXESL	
South China Seas	Compass	Mike Ricotta (2004)	VXE	
SPQR	GMT	Justo Perez (2009)	FV	
Storm Over Jerusalem	MMP	Erica Snarski (1251)	V	
Tank on Tank	LnL	Duncan Rice (1394)	V	
Terrible Swift Sword	TSR	Peter Dunn (2235)	V	
The Barbarossa Campaign	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
The Longest Day	AH 2nd Ed. rules	Nacho Fernandez (1745)	VE	
The Longest Day	AH	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
The Napoleonic Wars	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
The Russian Campaign	4th L2 or 5th edition GMT	John Ohlin (2346)	V	
The Russian Campaign	GMT 5th Edition	Jack Dempsey (2454)	VE	
The Russian Campaign	GMT 5th Edition	Lee Kendter (2271)	VE, FTF, X L	
The Russian Campaign	AH	Bruce Warren (2293)	FTF	Olympia, WA area

The Tide At Sunrise	MMP	Nick Rusch (1913)	V-E-L-X	
The U.S. Civil War	GMT, 3rd Ed, 2nd Print, 2024	Jeff Carroll	VE	
The U.S. Civil War	GMT, 3rd Ed, 2nd Print, 2024	Dan Carey (1716)	VE	
The U.S. Civil War	GMT	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
This War Without An Enemy	Nuts! Publishing	Andrew Patience (1646)	V	
Thunder at Cassino	AH	Jerry Wong (1974)	FV	
Thunder on the Mississippi	MMP	Douglas King (1961)	VE	
Tobruk	AH	Dennis Sheppard (804)	VE	competitive game
To The Green Fields Beyond	SPI	John Trosky (1554)	VCS	
Traces of Hubris	VUCA Simulations	Al Vannoy (2455)	E-FTF	Portland, OR area
Traces of War	VUCA Simulations	Al Vannoy (2455)	E-FTF	Portland, OR area
Turning Point: Stalingrad	AH	Jan Vanderveken (2286)	VE	
Twilight Struggle	GMT	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Verdun 1916: Steel Inferno (2020)	FOS	William Marcy (1761)	VE	
Victory at Sea	Compass, 1992 Ed.	Lee Kendter (2271)	VE	
Wagram	SPI	Omar Dewitt (44)	V	
War and Peace		Mike Kettman (1067)	V	
War of the Suns	MMP	Jeff Miller (1303)	VE	
Waterloo	AH	Omar Dewitt (44)	VE	
West Front/East Front	Columbia Games	Trow Davis (2479)	VE, FTF	Riverside, CA
Winter War	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	
Wooden Ships and Iron Men	AH	Peter Dunn (2235)	VD	
WWII	SPI	Erica Snarski (1251)	VE	

FORMAT CODES: A: ADC2; C: Cyberboard; D: Discord; E: Email; F: Fast Play; FTF: Face-to-face; G: Will Gamemaster; H: Virtual Face-to-face; L : Learning Game; P: Postal Mail; S: Slow Play; T: A.C.T.S.; V: VASSAL; X: Non-rated Game; Z : Zuntzu

MULTIPLAYER INFO

Hi Gang! Hope everyone is having a great summer! As I write this, WBC is less than two weeks away so getting ready for nine days of non-stop gaming! Looking forwards to seeing the usual gang there. **History of the World** of course, **WS&IM** – although I have not played that much of it the last four years, **EIS**, **Naval Wars**, and assorted others. Going to take a stab at **Virgin Queen** for the first time, been reading the rules and planning on being cannon fodder. I might even fit in **B-17** this year from looking at the schedule – always more choices than can be played. Feel free to look me up if you are there!

Now for another topic – I am reaching the end of my run with doing the multi-player stuff for AHKS. Feeling a bit burned out and it seems like new blood might be a good thing. Most likely because I tend to jump into games to get them off the ground and picked up perhaps a few more than I should have. 😊 Anyone who has an interest please reach out to myself and George.

Okay, now to the current games!

Ancient Civilizations of the Inner Sea – Troy – Epoch I Turn 2: We ended up having to do a full reset, but it is paying off. I now have Egypt and so far, the constant waves of Barbarians overwhelming my nation [or any nation] have not appeared. Everyone seems to be trying to avoid starting feuds with other nations and we have almost reached the start of Turn 2.



Circus Maximus – Blue – 1st lap: Working on a reset for this one, two many additions of new players etc.

Conquistador Spain – Turn 13: Drawing closer to the end. Britain continues to rule – not sure how we let them get so far ahead – their war chest contains double the amount of the nearest competitor [Spain] and 450% more than Portugal who is broke, and 400% more than France. At some point I will have to spin through the logfiles and see where we lost control! In a desperate attempt to impact the British Empire [picturing Darth Vader sitting on the throne at the moment 😊] we have landed an expedition in the Hudson Bay area.

Empire in Arms Prussia - June of 1809: Well, this was the period of massive changes on the map of Europe. On the bright side Austria surrendered to Britain, Turkey, and Prussia. We hold out hope that in the future Austria will join the forces of good against the evil of France. On the downside Prussia ended up facing the entire French army and was forced to surrender, for the moment. Half of the Prussian army emerged intact and we can rebuild the rest before the next outbreak of war. At this point Prussia's goal is only to ensure that France does not win. It also of note that part of France's stated reason for the barbaric invasion was to return a liberated part of Russia back to the cruel hands of the Czar.

Fire in the Lake – ARVN – Coup 4: On a bit of a pause at as I believe we somehow ended up with the wrong email in the chain for one of the players. Caught it yesterday, so hopefully we will be back on track soon.

Gunslinger [Non-AHIKS] – OK Corral – Dead: A very quick scenario – first turn I took a critical hit and died. A very unlucky draw, however my allies have already returned the favor so my ghost can rest in peace now. 😊

Here I Stand France – 1544 to 1547: With my armies holding down the Hapsburgs forces I have little impact left. It appears that the Ottomans will take the game!! England made a final push and came close but looks to have second. The final card plays and then we shall see how it all turns out. *See a view of the game from the Papacy's view following. -Ed.*

Kingmaker Portcullis – V – Turn 14: Sadly, the wars have returned to merry old England as the Suns, led by the vicious Duke of Suffolk Pole, and using French troops to attack innocent Englishmen, women, and children. Ravaging the village of Wakefield and laying siege to my castle at Conisborough. Anyone who uses French troops to attack English villagers should be drawn and quarter in the village square! *But, a couple turns later and Portcullis is allied with the alleged "vicious" Duke of Suffolk! -Ed.*

Merchant of Venus Humans: This one has ended. Sadly, the humans came up short. Interesting game, fun and I'm glad I finally got to play this with a group – since I have had it since the Avalon Hill version came out.

Stellar Conquest Blue – Turn 28: From deep space came a message:

Fellow Space Brothers,

The United Star Systems of the Red Menace (USSR-M) honor the fallen crews of our two Scouts to the greedy (and certainly Capitalistic) Yellow Horde which has hoarded (pun intended) a preponderance of planets for most of our time in this part of the Galaxy. We have no ill-will towards our yellow, or our green or blue brothers but we have simply decided to make things more “equitable” through the occupation of Ross, Alphard, and Luytens and thus balance the cosmic scales. Peace might be possible but we shall see based on Yellow’s next move.

James (the Voice of the People)

Red Menace (USSR-M)

Meanwhile my peaceful citizens become concerned about these rumors of wars breaking out! *Unfortunately, this game came to a sudden end after Jeff’s writing as a player had to withdraw for health reasons. - Ed.*

Non-Multiplayer Games in Progress



ASL – Drop Zone: Sainte-Mere-Eglise CG III American – June 6th Afternoon – Turn 4: The defenses to the far west have collapsed and the few survivors are falling back rapidly. But at least the Germans still have a lot of ground to cover to reach the town. To the east the things are much better with the attempt to punch past the American defenses having been stopped. Tanks have arrived behind the Germans

and are aiding in breaking it up completely. The infantry reinforcements are mopping up pockets of German stragglers. Meanwhile we keep an eye to the sky for the arrival of the gliders with more troops!

ASL – Kampfgruppe Peiper CG I Clash at Stoumont American – December 19, 1944 Night – Turn 2: The American reinforcements have arrived, charging down the road. And suddenly it seems the German forces are withdrawing into the night!

ASL – Red Barricades CG III Russian – October 22, 1942 – Turn 2: For the first time the Russian defenses seem to be holding [although we have malfunctioned out yet another ATG and MMG]. Apparently, the NKVD dealing with the mechanics has not had the desired effect...yet. It takes awhile to build up the Russian forces and defenses, so hopefully this day will prove the costliest one so far to the German invaders.

Combat Commander German – Bridge Hunt – Nisava River Yugoslavia April 7, 1941 . Turn 3: Our AFV has done an amazing job laying down no less than five smoke rounds to help cover our advance. The pillbox on the bridge has been seized and our lads managed to seize the other end as well, despite a minefield that appeared on the bridge. [The system is easy, but still struggling

that on a paved bridge a pillbox and mines are invisible!] With the blaze sealing off the bridge from the Yugoslav troops on the other side of the river we have paused to regroup for a final push on the remainder of the defenders on this side. Or perhaps not as we now have a 13-point lead!

Pacific War USN – Philippines Campaign Scenario – January 13th 1942: Both of our surviving surface fleets are locked in combat inside the port of Manila. Air forces have been reduced on both sides. The Japanese ground forces only have one last chance at taking the city. It is going to be a close-run thing!

The Grand Campaign from SPW Allies – October 1914 – Turn Special Phase: We have finally reached the end of September and are working on production for the first time! To the east the Russian lines have held, and reinforcements have flooded into place. Serbia has managed to hang on – barely. France has held firm. Parts of Belgium are still under French or British control. But Germany is working on smashing the remainder of the Belgium forts and taking out the last of their troops trapped defending the city. Interesting game – but I need a spreadsheet to help keep track of things!

Rebel Yell – The Battle of Fredericksburg – CSA – Turn 1: On hold at the moment as my opponent is dealing with real life issues. 😞

Trireme Romans – Economus – 256 BC: The main battle seems to have broken now into several smaller actions. Although it does seem that the Carthaginians are afraid to fight man to man anymore. Chaos does seem to reign in this game [and I do wish the rules were a bit/lot cleaner]

Up Front Germans – Russians – City Fight – Deck 1: The brave Russian troops continue to stem the flow of the invaders, who have now cleared the stream that was holding them back. However, with 50% of the A group dead from a really bad run of cards early on.....

Vietnam NFL – Full campaign – 1966 Summer: A bit slow at the moment as my opponent has a new house etc. He is struggling to clear the coastal road which seems to have a fair amount of brave VC troops holding it in several places. He is apparently trying to reach the city of Song Cau which is currently under control of the kind VC troops.

Jeff Miller

Open Mutiplayer Match Requests

A Distant Plain	GMT	Duncan Rice
A Distant Plain	GMT	John Hern
Advanced Civilization	AH	Eric Aune
Advanced Civilization	AH	Mike Kettman
Advanced Civilization	AH	Erica Snarski
Advanced Civilization	AH	Dave Blizzard

Advanced Civilization	AH	Jeff Miller
Age of Renaissance	AH	Jeff Miller
Age of Renaissance	AH	Robert Robles
Air Force	AH	Mark Palmer
All Bridges Burning	GMT	Jeff Miller
Amoeba Wars	AH	Jeff Miller
Ancient Civilizations of the Inner Sea	AH	Erica Snarski
Andean Abyss	MMP	Jeff Miller
Angola	MMP	Jeff Miller
Angola	MMP	Nick Rush
Angola	MMP	Tom Liakos
Axis and Allies 1914	Hasbro	Scott Mcaninch
Axis and Allies 1914	Hasbro	Lee Kendter
Battle for Germany	SPI	Mark Palmer
Battle for Germany	SPI	Chris Hyland
Blackbeard	AH	Jeff Miller
Blitz	Compass	Jim Lauffenburger
Clash of Cultures	Z-Man	Jeff Miller
Colonial Twilight	MMP	Jeff Miller
Conquest of Paradise	GMT	Jeff Miller
Conquistador	AH	Jeff Miller
Cuba Libre	GMT	Jeff Miller
Divine Right	TSR	Delwayne Arakaki
Dominant Species	GMT	Jeff Miller
Dominant Species	GMT	Nacho Fernandez
Dune	AH	Jeff Miller
Dune	AH	Brian Nickel
Dune	AH	Chris Hyland
Falling Sky	GMT	Jeff Miller
Falling Sky	GMT	Jim Lauffenburger
Flat Top	AH	Chris Hyland
Flat Top	AH	Douglas King
Fortress America	MB	Jeff Miller
Gandhi	GMT	Jeff Miller
Gangsters	AH	Jeff Miller
Gunslinger	AH	Jeff Miller
Gunslinger	AH	Graeme Dandy
Gunslinger	AH	Ed K. Becker
Liberty or Death	GMT	Jeff Miller
Machiavelli	AH	Jeff Miller
Machiavelli	AH	Graeme Dandy
Machiavelli	AH	Robert Robles
Machiavelli	AH	Nacho Fernandez

Magic Realm	AH	Jeff Miller
Napoleonic Wars	GMT	Mike Kettman
Pendragon	GMT	Jeff Miller
Plains Indian War	GMT	Jeff Miller
Republic of Rome	AH	Jeff Miller
Samurai	AH	Delwayne Arakaki
Source of the Nile	AH	Jeff Miller
Source of the Nile	AH	Steve Duboyce
Spies!	SPI	Erica Snarski
Submarine	AH	Bryan Jones
Successors	AH	Jeff Miller
Successors	AH	Philippe Hody
Time of Crisis	GMT	Jeff Miller
Time of Crisis	GMT	Derek Lenard
Titan	AH	Jeff Miller
Versailles 1919	GMT	Aaron Martin
Versailles 1919	GMT	Mike Kettman
Versailles 1919	GMT	Derek Lenard
Virgin Queen	GMT	Jeff Miller
War and Peace	OSS	David Turansky
War of the Suns	MMP	Jeff Miller
Wooden Ships & Iron Men	AH	Jeff Miller
Wooden Ships & Iron Men	AH	Dave Bergmann

“Marathon, Military and Music”: April/May 2025

by Graeme Dandy

Introduction

My wife and I recently spent 3 weeks in the USA motivated by our son’s running in the Boston Marathon. We have been to the USA many times since I was a student at MIT in the early 1970s. There are two main factors that tend to discourage these trips, namely: (1) the time and cost of air travel (23 hours from Melbourne to Boston including a 3 hour stopover in San Francisco); and (b) the low exchange rate of the Australian dollar (A\$1 = US\$0.64). However, despite having spent a week in Boston and a few days in New York in October 2024, we were excited by the prospect of seeing our son run in the oldest annual marathon in the world. This was the 129th running of the event and it coincided with the 250th Anniversary of the start of the American War of Independence.

In order to make the most of the trip we decided to also visit some cities in the South with a music focus (Nashville, Memphis and New Orleans). In this article I will concentrate on the aspects of our trip related to military history for the benefit of members of AHIKS.

Boston, Lexington and Concord



April 19th, 2025, was the 250th Anniversary of the “shot heard around the world”. As it turns out, we were in Boston for the 200th Anniversary in 1975. We had friends living in Lexington and, on that occasion spent the night with them and arrived early for the re-enactment of the skirmish between the British regulars and the Minutemen on Lexington Green. This year, we were not so fortunate but watched a replay of the re-enactment on TV that evening. In the intervening 50 years, it appears that the number of British redcoats has swollen considerably. In reality, 77 Lexington militiamen under the command of Captain John Parker faced an advance party of 100 British regulars out of a total British force of 700 troops. For the re-enactments, the minutemen wear replica outfits and the men representing the British regulars wear authentic replica uniforms of the regiments present at the actual battle. In addition, the British re-enactors have links with the corresponding regiments in England.

No one knows who fired the first shot at Lexington, but eight minutemen were killed and 10 were wounded with two British soldiers being injured. The British marched on to Concord where a battle broke out at the North Bridge. At around midday the British withdrew and marched back to Boston under fire from around 4000 colonial militiamen from the surrounding towns. Overall, there were 273 British casualties (73 killed) and the colonials had 95 casualties (including 49 killed).

The Boston Marathon is always run on the Monday following Patriots’ Day. We watched our son (along with 28,000 others) run on Monday April 21. He finished in 8033rd place in the creditable time of 3 hours 13 minutes. This was 12 minutes slower than his PB, but, given that he had flown halfway around the world and had only 2 days to get over jet lag it was a pretty good effort.



On April 22 and 23 we visited Lexington and Concord. Of particular interest were the Visitors Centre at Lexington and the Concord Museum. The latter has an interesting video presentation of the battles of April 19, 1775. It shows the route taken by the British forces and where the battles occurred and is accompanied by a narration describing the events of April 18 and 19. There are also a number of interesting artifacts at the Museum including: (a) some nineteenth century muskets; (b) one of the original lanterns that were hung from Old North Church in Boston to alert Paul Revere and Samuel Prescott (“two if by sea”); (c) a number of musket balls that have been recovered from the various battlefields and (d) a diorama with model soldiers illustrating the battle at the North Bridge.

The Museum also contains displays of clothing, furniture, clocks and crockery that were typical of Concord in the eighteenth century.

During our first visit to the North Bridge at Concord in 1975 I spotted the AH game **1776** on sale at the Visitor Centre. I was very tempted to buy it, but as a poor student at the time I resisted the temptation. I have since acquired a used copy of the game and have spent many happy hours playing just about every scenario by email with fellow AHIKS member John Trosky.



Nashville, Memphis

After a week in Boston we flew to Nashville (Country Music Hall of Fame, Ryman Auditorium and the Grand Ol Opry) and drove to Memphis (Graceland and a tour around the city). A flight to New Orleans via Atlanta followed. We had never been to any of these cities before and did enjoy the musical highlights. I was particularly looking forward to visiting New Orleans which seems to have recovered well from the ravages of Hurricane Katrina (2005).

New Orleans



When I was growing up in Australia there was a hit song in 1959 entitled “The Battle of New Orleans” recorded by Johnny Horton. I used to sing it often and the words stuck in my brain* It referred to the last battle of the War of 1812 (fought on January 8th,1815). The battle occurred 15 days after the Treaty of Ghent that formally ended the War of 1812, although this wasn’t ratified by the USA until February 1815. It was also just 12 years after the sale of the Louisiana Territory to the USA by Napoleon in 1803.

The battle took place about 5 miles (8 km) Southeast of the French Quarter of New Orleans. The US forces of around 6000 men were commanded by Brevet Major General Andrew Jackson, while the British force of 8000 troops was commanded by Major General Sir Edward Pakenham. The US forces included regular army units and marines, militia from Tennessee, Kentucky and Louisiana as well as Choctaw Indians and “free men of colour”. We were told by a guide on a tour that we took around the city that there were also gunners from the pirate Jean Lafitte’s privateer crews supporting the Americans. The British attempted a frontal assault on the US earthworks which was repulsed in a matter of 30 minutes. The British suffered 2037 casualties (including Sir Edward Pakenham) and the US only 71. Historians assert that the US artillery won the day as they had bigger guns and more of them. The battle is described in an article entitled “Battles of Andrew Jackson” in Strategy and Tactics magazine #346 (May-June 2024). There is also a game entitled **Andrew Jackson’s Battles** by S & T Press. Needless to say, the song is not an accurate description of the battle except to assert that it was a resounding American victory.

Unfortunately, we weren’t able to visit the site of the battle, but there is a statue of a mounted Andrew Jackson in Jackson Square adjacent to the French Quarter of the city. This is significant as his horse is supported only on its hind legs which would have been difficult to produce in bronze. Andrew Jackson went on to become the seventh President of the USA.

The Louisiana State Museum is adjacent to Jackson Square. I didn’t have time to visit this museum, but I did see a Spanish cannon outside. This was originally mounted at Fort St. John and was used in the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 and then again in the US Civil War against Captain Farragut’s Union fleet in 1862.

Among other things, we took a dinner and jazz cruise on the riverboat *Natchez* which is powered by two steam engines that are more than 100 years old. It is actually propelled by the stern paddle wheel unlike many river boats on the Mississippi that are driven by diesel engines and propellers with a paddle wheel that is just for show. On the cruise we passed the monument to the 1815 Battle of New Orleans.

National WWII Museum (New Orleans)

No visit to the Big Easy is complete without a visit to the National World War 2 Museum. This started out as the D-Day Museum but has been expanded considerably due to many generous

donors. In fact, it consists of 6 pavilions covering the full range of US activities in WW2. I only had a couple of hours to spend there, so I headed for Building Number 3 that had a series of galleries entitled “Road to Berlin” that covered the history of the war in Western Europe. There were a series of maps and short documentary movies covering various aspects of the war. There were also displays of uniforms and weaponry from the war. On Level 2 of Building 3, there was a similar series of galleries entitled “Road to Tokyo” covering the war in the Pacific from Pearl Harbor to the Japanese surrender.

After that I headed to Building 5, the US Freedom Pavilion: The Boeing Center. This was of particular interest as it contains a number of WW2 aircraft including a B17, B24, Dauntless, Corsair and Mustang. There were viewing catwalks on levels 3 and 4 that enabled visitors to see the aircraft up close from several angles. This was the first time I have seen these aircraft in the flesh and I was surprised at how small the single engine aircraft were. On the ground floor there are military vehicles including a Sherman Tank, an Amphibious Truck and a Jeep.



I also visited a gallery that honoured the merchant mariners whose contribution to the war effort is often overlooked. The transport of supplies and troops to the Allied forces (including Russia) was essential for the eventual victory over the Axis. Due to the attacks by German submarines, surface ships, aircraft and mines (and extreme weather), 1 in 26 merchant mariners died during the war. This was a greater rate of fatalities than all other US services.

One disappointment was the absence of any wargames at the Museum. The only games I saw were a WW2 Monopoly and a WW2 version of Clue where the main characters were spies and the

rooms were replaced by European countries. I was tempted to buy the WW2 Clue but we didn't have space in our bags as we had bought quite a few books and souvenirs on the trip.



San Francisco

We flew out of New Orleans to San Francisco and spent a day there to break the long journey home. Since our flight to Melbourne didn't leave until 11.40 pm, we had a day for some sightseeing. We caught an Uber to Pier 39 and looked at the souvenir shops as well as the colony of sealions that have taken up residence there.

The *SS Jeremiah O'Brien* was moored nearby at Pier 35. She is a Liberty Ship (transport) from WW2 with a displacement of 15,928 tons. I couldn't resist the chance to see over the ship, so I left my wife having a coffee and a snack at a nearby café while I went for a visit. The *O'Brien* is one of only two surviving Liberty ships out of the 2710 that were built during the war. Despite her age, the *O'Brien* is in great shape due to extensive renovations. In fact, the *O'Brien* regularly takes visitors on short cruises on San Francisco Bay and under the Golden Gate Bridge.

Jeremiah O'Brien was built in Portland, Maine in 1943. She made seven war-time voyages: four transatlantic crossings, one to South America and two in the Pacific. During the D Day invasion, the *O'Brien* carried out 11 missions across the English Channel between June and September 1944

delivering supplies to the Allied forces in France. Liberty ships carried some armament consisting of a 3” gun at the bow and a 4” or 5” gun at the stern as well as 8 anti-aircraft guns (usually 20 mm or 37 mm). The guns were manned by Navy personnel. The guns are still in place on the ship.

At the end of the war, the *O’Brien* was in Australia. Her final assignment was to transport nine Australian war brides and three children to San Francisco to unite with their partners in the USA. On June 6, 1994, the *O’Brien* moored off the coast of Pointe du Hoc, France, to join in the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of D-Day.



On a personal note, I am an Emeritus Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Adelaide in Australia. One of my predecessors as Professor of Civil Engineering was Frank Bull, an Englishman who served in this role from 1952 to 1972. During WW2, Frank Bull, who was a structural engineer, carried out research on the Liberty ships. They were built of welded steel construction and there was a problem with cracking of the ships due to the cold temperatures and rough seas of the North Atlantic. In fact, 1500 of the ships suffered brittle fracture of the hull and several broke in half and sank. Frank Bull led a team in England who solved the problem by using better steel in the hulls, improving welding practice and reducing stress concentrations due to the sharp corners of hatches.

**All together, now, from memory! “In 1814 we took a little trip, along with Gen’l Jackson down the mighty Missisip. We took a little ammo and we took a little beans, down the Mississippi to the town of New Orleans.... We fired our guns but the British kept a comin’, wasn’t nigh as many as*

there was a while ago. We fired once more and they commenced a runnin', down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico." I guess that last word will have to be changed now, but it won't rhyme as well.
- Ed.

In the trenches

Consistent with my former Treasury Notes, and since almost all my games involve one Jeff Miller who likes to report on things from his point of view (several with both Jeff AND Graeme Dandy), you get to endure my take on games I currently or recently have in progress. Sometimes things move a little slowly, because most of us are retired and like to travel. It can stall a multi-player game significantly when more than one player is away in sequence! – Ed.

Kingmaker V: We started a fifth **Kingmaker** game (AH version) a few months ago, after the last game ended with a shady deal that stole a victory from my Sun faction. Currently in Round 14, just finishing a mandatory (and premature) calling of parliament by event card. Currently a Triple-Alliance exists between myself (Sun), Boarshead (Dave Bergemann), and Portcullis (Jeff Miller), who was complaining in his report on this game of my taking of one of his castles by siege. I tried to make a deal to trade castles, but alas, nobles have to be in the same square to trade castles and all of his were away on the Continent. No, I did not need French mercenaries to take Conisboro and their use was propaganda, but the castle was necessary for me to secure the Road from London to York. Sun and Portcullis' forces are now sitting happily together in Dartmouth along the southern coast of Devon and Cornwall.

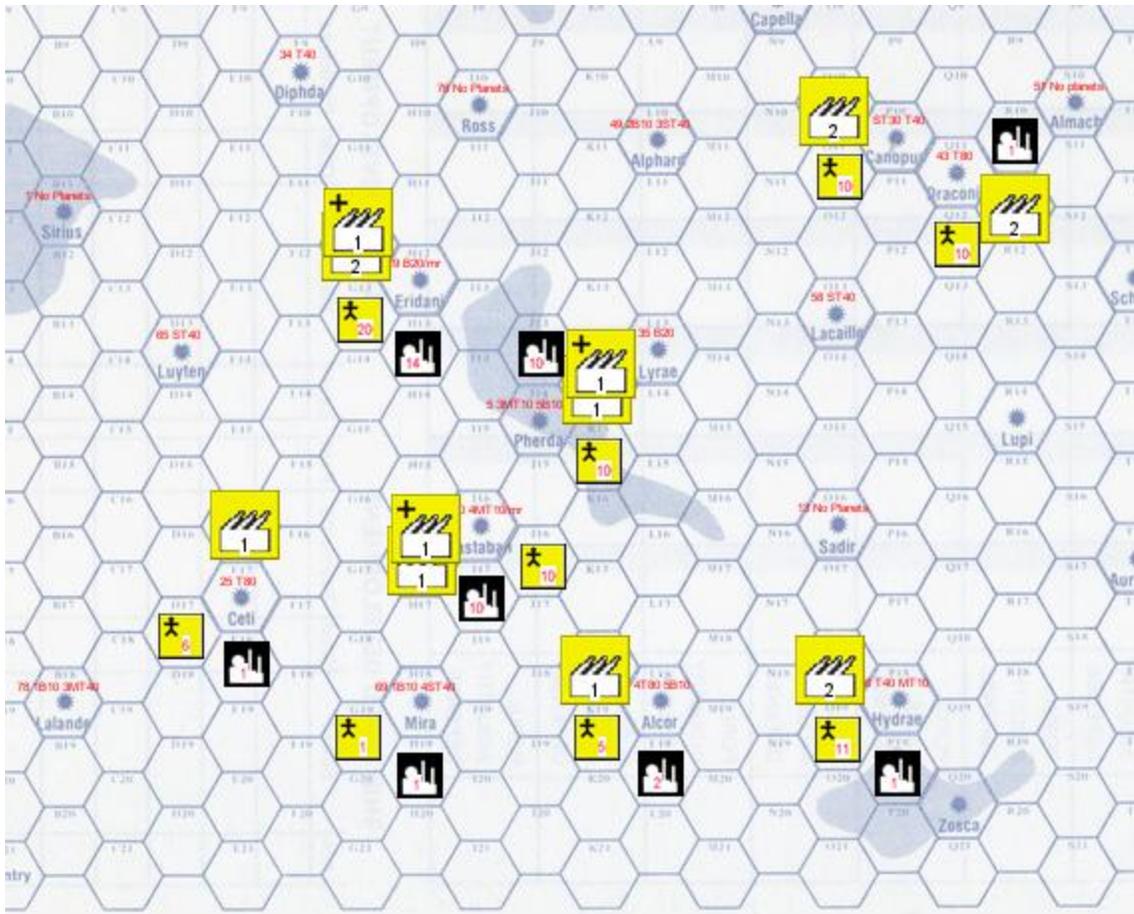


Here I Stand: This is a 5-player standard game started at the very end of 2022. We have reached turn 7, and my Papacy has been stepped on repeatedly by the French to pursue their perpetual vendetta against the Hapsburgs. As a result, the Ottomans are on the brink of victory. England is a close second. But wait, what's this? The Hapsburgs have transported troops to Athens in an attempt to take an Ottoman fortification! Perhaps this game is not quite over!



Ancient Civilizations of the Inner Sea: We started over with five players after the first game ended following a second player dropping out during turn two. Now at the end of turn 1 of the first Epoch, Jeff is correct that most Civilizations are avoiding openly hostile conduct against others. The end of turn draw phase was going well until Carthage drew the Breath of God event, meaning that all had to discard their hands (my Rome had six cards, and some good ones at that!) and redraw a maximum of four. Done with the redraw and starting turn 2 of the Epoch.

Stellar Conquest: This game ended on turn 32 when one player had to drop out due to health reasons. Our game had seen minimal other than accidental conflict until the Red Menace invaded Yellow Horde space, in violation of a treaty establishing a neutral zone. So no real war was had, just the gearing up. Since everything was hidden in this game except when ships came into contact, no one really knew who might have been leading. I thought I (Yellow) was in reasonable shape with 5 Terran systems (3 points each) and a handful of Subterranean systems (1 point each) with 12 turns left to go but had no information relative to the others to know for sure. Red thought I had too many systems and yet found a bunch of empty systems (and a couple of Yellow Horde fleets that promptly dispatched his scouts) when he intruded, a couple with no useful planets. I was gearing up to reclaim Horde space when the game was called. Below you will see the Yellow Horde colonies, with population numbers, factories, and missile base defenses.



War of 1812: Graeme Dandy and I finished one game of **War of 1812** (Columbia Games), a block game of the action encompassing the Great Lakes area between Detroit and Montreal. The game ended in a draw with a slight British advantage in points. We concluded a few things about this game: 1) it is very easy to play by Vassal even with hidden units; 2) the game can move along fairly quickly as there are a very limited number of options to take during a turn; 3) land combat is relatively rare because unit strengths are unknown and so combat between like numbers of blocks is scary; 4) land combat is rarely decisive because it is easy to withdraw before taking a beating; 5) naval combat and the control of the individual lakes is almost entirely dependent on luck between game-prescribed evenly matched forces; and 6) the British have some advantages that make an American win quite difficult, in that British reinforcements arrive concentrated at Montreal whereas Americans come in scattered across New York and Pennsylvania. But, in the end the forces are possibly too well matched and the victory conditions such that an actual win between competent players is unlikely; a 10-point advantage is needed to win. We used a modified set of rules, published by someone who knows the game well, allowing for replacements within friendly territory and reducing pursuit fire, which was supposed to reduce the probability of both sides being unit depleted towards the end of the game. This worked, but too well, as both sides were instead at nearly full strength at the end of the game. We therefore passed on a second game in the match. This is probably a decent game for quick FTF play, where one can try weird things

and, if they don't work, try something different in the same afternoon. But it is not terribly rewarding for months of play by email.

Panzerblitz: Graeme and I have agreed to play **Panzerblitz** as our next game. We have chosen the classic Situation 6, and I will have the Germans in our first game. We are just now in the process of setting up, but it should be good. I note that the Vassal module for this game (it includes Panzer Leader as well) is quite comprehensive. All published scenarios, including the 1940 scenarios published in *The General*, and you can make your own or play the ones from the *Gamer's Guide* as well.

Recent Retirement, the Game: A benefit of 30 years of financial planning was that my wife and



I were able to retire a little earlier than we originally planned. I spent the last month or so of 2024 taking advantage of holiday and preorder sales ahead of price increases from tariffs, plus I wanted to expand my solitaire game library, as I am the opponent who is always there! I hit the sales hard and picked up copies of **Bitter Woods**, **Festung Europa**, **Maori** and **Golden Age of Piracy** from Compass Games, plus **Holland '44**, **Virgin Queen**, **Empire of the Sun**, **In the**

Shadows, and **A World at War** from GMT (at only \$96 preorder for the most recent printing, it had to be done; it now retails for nearly twice that). Jeff says he'll play me in **A World at War** if we can use the two companion pre-war games, but those together cost more than twice than I paid for **AWAW** itself, so we'll have to wait and see if we ever undertake a life-long project. I wanted to get **Carrier War: Philippines Sea** from Compass as well, as I have heard good things about this solitaire game, but it wasn't available when I was looking. Perhaps next year. I also picked up a new printing of the well-reputed **Twilight Struggle** this past spring, as I've heard many good things about the game, and I like its sister game **Imperial Struggle**. There are others in the preorder pipeline still, including **Space Empires**, shipping this month, along with **I, Napoleon**, **The Plumb Island Horror**, and **Unconditional Surrender**, also from GMT (I like what they do). **Unconditional Surrender** is a reprint of a one-map strategic ETO game that should compliment **AWAW** greatly. Most of these games are in a strung-out pipeline that will carry well into 2026, so I won't likely be making as many purchases this upcoming holiday season.

I did get back into a hobby of mine that predates my wargaming hobby, that of model building



(about age 7 for modelling, 12 for my first wargame). I used to mostly dabble, but with the time to invest I have started taking it a bit more seriously, even though I model purely for my own pleasure. I find it a relaxing hobby, and there is a puzzle aspect to each kit as each presents its own unique challenges despite the instructions. The planes in this article are my latest, von Richtofen's Fokker Dr.1, and a Sopwith Camel. I purchased these kits well over ten years ago on Amazon, and both are 1/72

scale models from Revell Germany. The Dr.1 was a pleasure to build, the Sopwith Camel not so

much. Although a simpler kit, it had a lot of flash and other molding problems. It turned out ok but not as good as the Dr.1. I am not nimble enough to rig the cables on tiny airplanes, but I have improved my skills, updated my model toolkit, and watched a couple of videos on YouTube to learn better ways to do things. I particularly like Sprues and Brews. Like any other hobby, some people take things too seriously and believe there are right and wrong ways to do things rather than just have fun. My advice is simply to do what you enjoy doing and improve at your own pace; I don't think it necessary to spend \$700 on equipment to build a \$15 model. No matter how much work you do, weathering, washes, etc., in the end it still looks like a model, not the real thing.



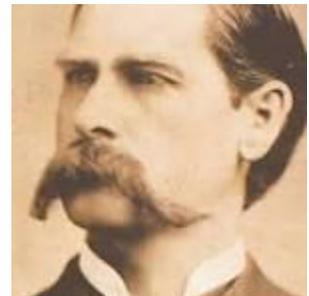
My first finished model this year was a 1/35 Sherman Tank, that I also thought turned out nicely (pictured left). Prior to retirement, it sat on my desk with little progress for almost two years. My next project is a 1/72 Lee/Grant tank (courtesy of Omar DeWitt), to be followed by a ship or two, probably a 1/700 model of the *USS Cushing*, a *Fletcher* class destroyer. I have a smallish *HMS Victory* (Admiral Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar) to try, but I am wary of the rigging work that will need to be done. But I need to try at least one during my lifetime. My grail ship would be a 1/350 scale *IJN Yamato*. They aren't really that expensive, but I have no

idea where I would put such a creation. I still think of Omar every time I pull a kit out of the box of models he sent to me several years ago. I've built several but there are quite a few still in there, many of significant vintage for model kits. But just like games, you always need at least one more! Then one more. And, well, if I'm going to build that destroyer, I'm going to need a CA to go with it. But then I might as well get a carrier too! And if I get an American CV, I need to get a Japanese one to compare (*USS Indianapolis*, *USS Yorktown*, *IJN Akagi*).

About a month ago, I received an email from Gary Graber of Minden Games. It was not a personal email, but an ad, really, announcing the publication of the new solitaire book game **Richthofen**, a new release in their **Eindekker** series. I had seen pictures of some of these book games online, but did not know what they were about and had mostly dismissed them, but I decided to head to the website to look. To my surprise, there are a lot of these little games, and most are playable solitaire. They are very inexpensive print-and-play games, although some of them you can play with a pencil and photocopies of certain pages in from the book without printing pieces. The books run from about \$12 to \$20, so are pretty good deals. To see how these game work, I picked up a copy of **Richthofen** and **Gunfight at the OK Corral**, a gunfighting game. **Richthofen** works a lot like many narrative-driven solitaire games: you start with a mission, move from area-to-area to where you need to go to pick up VP, face randomly generated enemy aircraft and other calamities, and try to make it home by the end of the day so you can do it again. Each turn represents one day of ten turns, and the object is to accumulate enough VP to win at the end of 7 days. As with most solitaire games, much is randomly driven. A player's decisions are basically where do I move if at

all, what altitude do I need to be at to accomplish my mission, do I pass on a combat opportunity or not, and do I try to break contact (flee a dogfight) before things go bad. If your plane is destroyed, you lose. If you crash land and break up your plane, you lose. If you don't get enough VP, you lose. The standard game is relatively simple, as there are no differences between plane types other than their combat rating and firepower in the standard game. Advanced rules allow for differences in aircraft (maneuverability and fragility, etc.). As the player, your pilot might benefit from being an Ace, Initiative, and Gunnery skills; von Richthofen has all of those. But you can come across enemy pilots with similar skills. I have only tried the standard game so far, with a couple of optional rules. Despite the randomness and limited decision making, it is somewhat addictive as you see what will happen to your plane and pilot. I have played 4 days of the Summer 1917 standard scenario. So far so good, as I have managed to shoot down a couple enemy planes and force a couple others to crash land. One turn had a very long dogfight with one recon plane during a trench support mission. I eventually shot it down but it managed to inflict structural damage on my plane. A turn later a random event caused a fuel leak (engine hit), as I had been in a dogfight earlier that day. If you get two engine hits you are forced to crash land. I pushed my luck for a couple of turns over the trench lines at low altitude so I could earn a few more VP, but one is disadvantaged at low altitude if attacked by enemy planes. I made it back to base and my mechanic was able to get my Albatross repaired and ready for the next day. So far I have been enjoying the game quite a bit. Very effective email marketing there, Mr. Graber!

I have read the rules to **Gunfight at the OK Corral** but have yet to play it. The game represents that famous gunfight and others of your own creation if you wish, with each counter representing one gunfighter. They have various ratings, including things like experience, gun speed and morale (i.e. how likely they are to run away when the bullets fly). There is no movement, as it is factored into the system. You simply line up your fighters and blast away, with the game system handling the opponents. Decisions are limited to which opponent to shoot at (there is short and medium range), perhaps switch, or reload a weapon. There are three turns to a standard game, so they are short and furious. The game is supposed to represent "30 shots in 30 seconds," so there is no movement of the counters. The designer mentions the influence of **Gunfighter** in his designer's notes, but mentioned this game is a lot simpler: no women or children, no knives, no fist-fighting. There are some townspeople and gunfighters that are best categorized as henchmen. There is a wide array of lawmen and cowboys to choose from, including characters from 1960's TV shows, like Hoss and Little Joe, James West and Artemus Gordon, Matt Dillon, and so forth. You can use the "maps" in the book, which are really arrays of lines representing ranges in the street, in a bar, or on a ranch, or make up your own. You can also do a one-on-one gunfight if you wish (*Let's settle this like men, Sheriff. I'll see you in front of the Bloody Bucket Saloon at high noon!*). I will give it a try after I finish my game of **Richthofen**. I have my eye on a couple other of their solitaire



This is NOT Jeff Daniels, nor is it me. Wyatt Earp this man be.

games, including a corps-level strategic WWI game called **Weltkrieg, 1914** (two fronts, solitaire, with three-day turns!) and **Viking Fury**, which sounds like an exploration and colonization game.

Until next time!

Brian Stretcher

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Wheelhouse of the Jeremiah O'Brien