


PHOENIX

A BRITISH
BOARD WARGAMERS MAGAZINE
ISSUE 23
JANUARY / FEBRUARY 1980
PRICE 75p



D.I.A. MACK

THAT TWO HANDED ENGINE

The Neutron Bomb in 'Fulda Gap', plus some more palatable extras.

PHOENIX

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Published by Simpubs Ltd
Distributed by Simpubs Ltd
Printed by Douglas Printers, Wigan
Publisher: M. Watson
Editor: John Spence
Assistant Editor: Hamish Wilson
Art Director: Ray Bowden

Phoenix is a bi-monthly magazine aimed at providing UK gamers with a forum in which they may express their opinions of, suggest improvements to and provide new rules/scenarios for board wargames.

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Advertising Rates: Full Page £40.00 per issue
Half Page £25.00 per issue
Quarter Page £15.00 per issue
(Camera ready artwork required or charged as extra)
Subscription Rate: One Year (6 issues) £3.90

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EDITORIAL

JOHN SPENCE

From past feedbacks it would appear that only about 10% of the readership looks at more than three hobby magazines. I am not sure whether this is due to buying games in preference to reading about them or just because most gamers are unaware of the gamut of magazines now available. I suspect a mixture of the two reasons. I thought that I would spend this editorial mentioning what there is available with a subjective vignette of each and possible sources in the U.K. (as far as I am aware of them) — if you are already an avid reader you need read no further

In mid 1974 a list of 32 American publications were described in Moves 15 — a very healthy number apparently. However an examination of this list showed that many were mimeoed club/society magazines and others were primarily for the miniatures gamer; only 11 were "open circulation" publications mainly or totally dedicated to board wargames. Of these only 8 were printed and not mimeoed and very few were readily available in Britain. As far as British publications were concerned they could be counted on a couple of fingers — "Albion", Don Turnbull's labour of love was still running to a small circulation whilst "Games and Puzzles" only mentioned wargaming irregularly; not a healthy situation as far as we were concerned. The intervening years have seen some of this list fold but many more appear to take their places so that now there are at least 21 publications that I not only know of but have also seen and that fit into the above category. There are others that I have not seen or missed completely and I cannot try to itemise the whole rash of small publications that continue to be duplicated off to report club activities or describe multiplayer gamesmastered simulations. No doubt someone out there could list them for me (and hopefully will!) but for the time being I list only those I have some slight contact with so, on to the list:

Magazines or Publications with enclosed games:

1. **Ares** — SPI, New York. When it appears this bi-monthly publication will be available in the UK from Simpubs and, probably, main hobby shops.

This is SPI's answer to the growing number of SF/F magazines and reflects Jim Dunnigan's views of the present games market mentioned in the last editorial. With the promise of a folio sized game or more every issue and its subject I cannot see this going wrong; for further details see the advertisement in this issue. 40 pages plus enclosures. (Unless specifically mentioned all entries are A4 size).

2. **Combat** — Swedish Game Production, P.O.Box 18, S-590 40 Kisa, Sweden. A small bi-monthly in-house magazine (21 x 15 cm) covering the games produced by SGP but with mini-reviews of other producers games and a longer article or two — sometimes reprinted from other magazines.

From the issue that I have I suspect that "Combat" may be heavy on SF/near modern games. The game that came with the issue that I got — "Linebacker 2" — has 150 small unmounted counters, a 21 x 30 cm. map and 4 pages of simple rules. I personally consider this to be a lightweight, rather patchy magazine though other issues may well prove me wrong. 20 pages long.

3. **Strategy and Tactics** — SPI, New York. Available through Simpubs or larger hobby stores. Most of you take this bi-monthly magazine and, with a circulation of 36,500, must be one of the most widely read. From a magazine containing games related articles — e.g. reviews, replays etc., it has settled into the current format of a game, a lead article on the historical background to that game and one other historical article on some SPI game in the works. I often find the regular columns more interesting than the historical articles but then one cannot be interested in all history to the same extent! 40 pages plus enclosures.

4. **The Wargamer** — World Wide Wargames. Available from Eton Lodge (address as per advertisement elsewhere in this issue) and some major hobby shops. Now appearing 6 times a year, **The Wargamer** has taken the path S&T may have done by producing a game with every issue and also reviewing games, discussing them in depth, giving new scenarios etc. Whilst they went through a few issues mainly reporting WWW material and games

they now cover games from a wide range of companies. With 10 issues out and still expanding they continue to develop their own style, it will be interesting to follow their progress — worth looking at. 48 pages.

Magazines and publications without games:

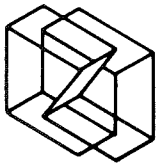
5. **The Apprentice** — D. Bernan, 24 Seguin St., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1J 6P3. This quarterly production is subtitled "the Canadian magazine of mediaeval fantasy gaming" and the sample issue I have sits well within this description: there is a fantasy fiction article, how to make dungeon walls, Chivalry and Sorcery plus D&D design features and much more. There is nothing of interest for the historical gamer. The magazine has only been going just over a year and is limited in production quality. Not available in the UK as far as I am aware. 26 pages.

6. **The Avalon Hill General** — Avalon Hill Co., Baltimore. Available through Avalon Hill UK Ltd., 650 High Road, N. Finchley, London N12 0NL and many hobby shops. One of the original magazines that has continued to confine itself to AH products. I envy the high quality of production — clear maps and diagrams, multicolour charts and MacGowan pictures backing up in-depth examination of their games, replays, new scenarios and updates and continuing rules clarifications; if you enjoy AH games then **General** is a must though one must accept the usual in-house problem of a less than jaundiced eye for their products! 36 pages, bimonthly.

7. **Campaign** — Don Lowry, P.O. Box 896, Fallbrook, CA 92028, USA. Available in the UK from Games Centre but not seen elsewhere, address 6 Hanway St., London W1A 2LS. Not nearly so well known as the **General**, **Campaign** has as long a pedigree, tracing its lineage back to **Panzerfaust** that was first edited by Don Greenwood. It has a mixture of historical articles — some taken from the defunct **Conflict** (the American one, not the present Swedish one), historical games reviews and analysis, articles bordering the line between miniatures and tactical board gaming, mini-reviews of SF/F and historical games, news and a lot more. I feel that this magazine is much underrated, being written by gamers for gamers (rather than military historians). 52 pages, bi-monthly.

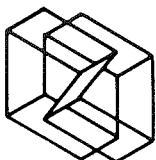
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● Role-playing Rules
● Miniature Rules
● Citadel & Ral Partha
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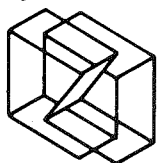
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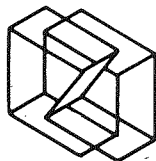
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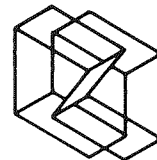


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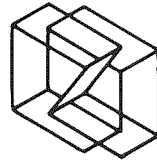
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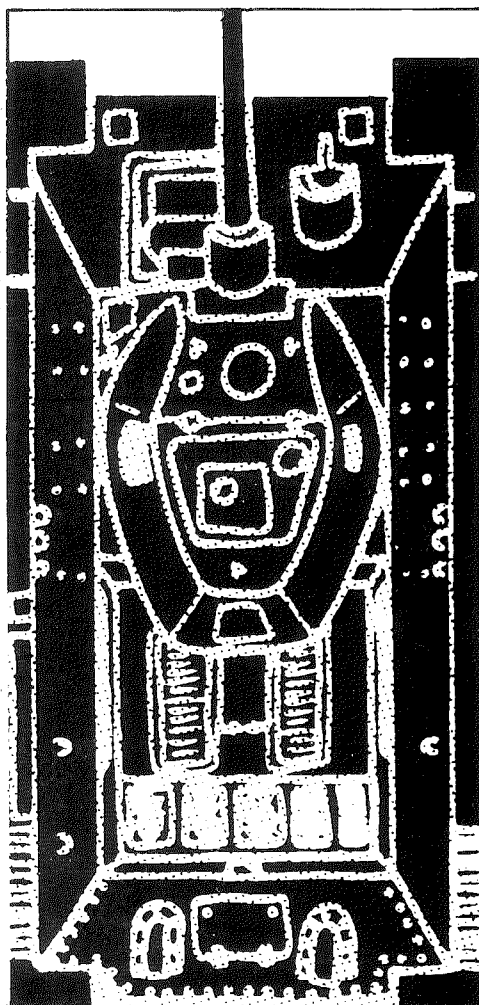
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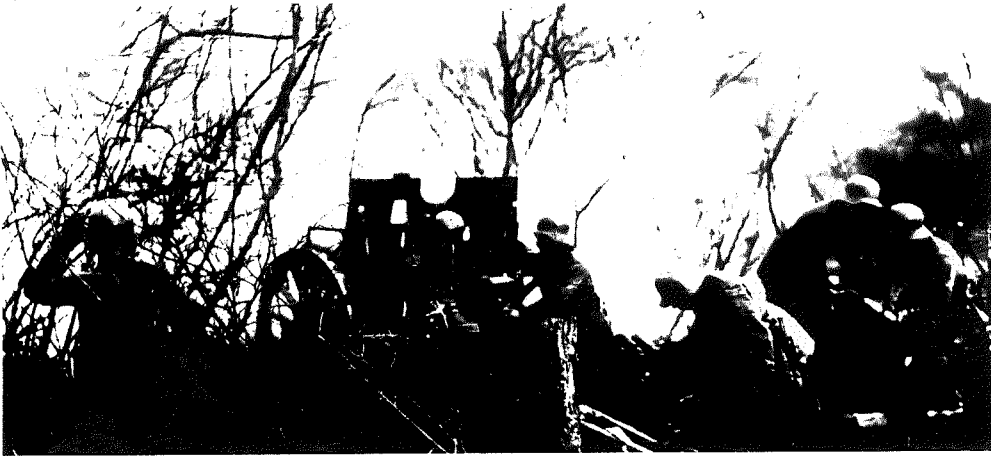
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GREAT WAR IN THE EAST

ANDREW McGEE



SPI seem suddenly to have discovered the First World War; in the last two plus years they have given us "Green Fields Beyond", "Tannenberg" and now **Great War in the East Quad**. The physical components may be dealt with briefly; 4 standard SPI folio maps, 200 counters per game, standard and exclusive rules and a 16-page historical article. All of these are of the usual SPI standard without being especially memorable.

The four games in the set are: **Serbia/Galicia**, **The Brusilov Offensive**, **Von Hindenburg in Poland** and **Caporetto**. The first deals with the two-front campaign of the Austrian Army in the first months of the war, the second with what might be regarded as Russia's last fling, the offensive against the Central Powers on the borders of Austro-Hungary in the summer of 1916. **Von Hindenburg in Poland** covers the Russian counter-offensive in front of Warsaw in October-November 1914, whilst **Caporetto** simulates the Central Powers' incursion into Italian territory in October-November 1917.

Game-System.

Readers who have played **Tannenberg** can safely skip this part, as the same game-system is used.

The system is simple Movement before Combat with just three added extras — Supply, Command Control and Cavalry Withdrawal Before Combat. As will become apparent, Command Control is easily the most important of these.

Movement.

This is very standard, and it is necessary only to comment on the influence of Supply and Command Control. Supply for movement purposes is traced at the beginning of the Movement Phase. There are three types of supply source; friendly map edges, friendly railroads and Supply Depots, although the second and third must trace ultimately to a friendly map edge. In order to be in supply, units must be within Supply Range of a Supply Source (Supply Range varies from game to game and nationality to nationality). Units out of supply at this stage have their Movement Allowances halved. Command Control is based on Headquarters. Every HQ has a Command Radius and a Command Capacity. The former is the radius within which it may give Command, and the latter is the number of stacking points within that radius which may benefit from the Command. Thus an area of the front in which the player wants to move many units may need more than one HQ, although it should be noted that this control applies only for the Movement Phase. Not all is lost for a unit which is not Commanded by an HQ; the general level of efficiency of each army is assessed by a Tactical Competence Rating from 1 (best) to 4, and units outside Command range may move on the throw of a number greater than the TCR. Units out of supply at the end of the Movement Phase face a 50% risk of 50% attrition.

Cavalry Withdrawal before Combat.

Immediately before the Combat Phase the non-phasing Player may attempt the withdrawal of any of his cavalry units which are adjacent to enemy units. The withdrawal, if effected, is exactly two hexes; each unit attempting the manoeuvre must throw a number higher than its Tactical Competence Rating. The reason for allowing this tactic is of course to simulate the use of cavalry as a screen; withdrawal allows enemy units to advance into the vacated hex, but no further. Thus cavalry may delay enemy units at little risk to themselves. Only units with TCR of 1 may withdraw into or through an enemy-controlled/occupied hex.

Combat.

Combat between adjacent opposing units is voluntary. Most of the Combat system is familiar: odds ratios with adjustments for terrain. But Combat Resolution is preceded by a Command Control Segment. The principle is similar to that used in the Movement Command Control Segment, except that there is no saving die-roll for units not commanded from HQ's; units out of Combat Command Control may not attack. It is important to realise that the same HQ unit may give command to one set of units for movement purposes and to quite another set for combat purposes.

The Combat Results Table is original only in the options provided by its various results. The most important point about the Option Table is that the attacker can never take his losses as retreats; thus attacking is always likely to be an expensive business. Further, since defending units can usually take at least some of their losses as retreats, the attacker is likely to find that the only product of his heavy losses is a few hexes of ground which do him little good and which he will find difficult to hold. There is but one exception to this. Units with TCR 2, 3 or 4 may not retreat into unoccupied enemy-controlled hexes. If forced to do so, they are eliminated. This produces the situation well-known to players of games from **Napoleon at War** to **Cobra** where the only sure way of destroying an enemy unit is to surround it. Of course in WW1 battles with solid lines of units this is by no means easy to achieve, and the Combat Results system does tend to produce the same kind of bloody combat over the same few acres of ground as happened historically. Indeed this is perhaps the strongest point of the system — players really do learn very rapidly that frontal assault comes extremely expensive; the second thing they learn is that there is really no other way to win most of the battles!

The relative brevity of this account of the game-system may rightly be taken to indicate that **GWIE** is a reasonably simple set of games. There are nevertheless a number of gaps and ambiguities in the rules — when it was **SPUKTESTED** by the

Oxford University Wargames Club a total of 37 points were raised; at time of writing the errata which is supposed to result has not appeared. Some of these points can be papered over with a little common sense, but others, such as the total failure to supply set-up hexes for certain supply units in **Von Hindenburg** cannot be resolved without second sight.

It remains only to look at each of the four games in turn.

The Brusilov Offensive.

"This last vital effort of the Russian army in the war had important consequences. It stopped the Austrian attack on Italy, already impaired by an Italian riposte. It compelled Falkenhayn to withdraw troops from the Western Front, and so abandon his plan for a counter stroke against the British offensive preparing on the Somme, as well as the hope of nourishing his Verdun attrition process. It led Rumania to take her fateful decision to enter the war on the Entente side, and caused the supersession of Falkenhayn in the Supreme Command, and his replacement by Hindenburg." (Liddell Hart's *History of the First World War*. Chapter 6.)

It can be seen from the above that strategically at least this offensive was not wholly unsuccessful. But we encounter here one of the major criticisms which I would direct at this set of games; the Victory Conditions are purely tactical; the game is about destroying enemy units and taking terrain, but this goes on, if at all, in a complete vacuum. Doubtless the average Russian soldier did not give a damn about Verdun, but for the player the problem is that there is no apparent reason to conduct this offensive — except of course that it gives Victory Points; in **Tannenberg** the problem was neatly handled by forcing the Russian Player to concentrate on triggering the West Front Reinforcements.

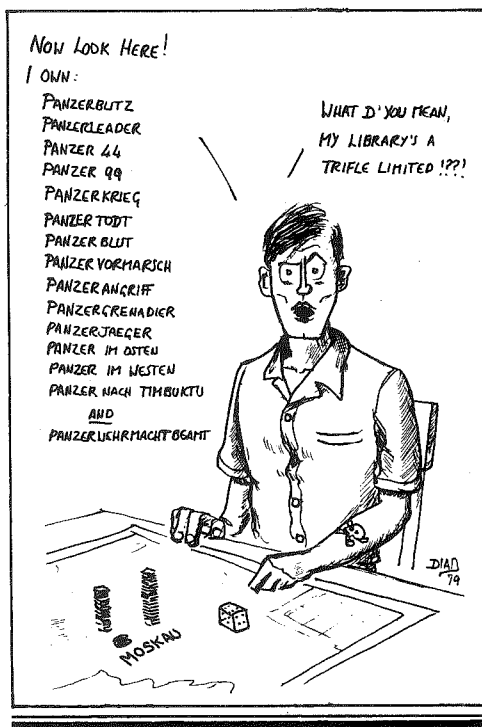
However, if you can accept the constraints of the limited purpose of the offensive, the game plays well. To people accustomed to think of the Russian army here as woefully incompetent, it is a pleasure to watch them throwing the sales Boches out of the trenches; trying to maintain the force of the offensive, which is prone to bog down once the benefit of first turn surprise has evaporated is less of a pleasure. The Russian armoured car unit is an appealing touch (though rather prone to breaking down!) This is an enjoyable game if you like killing units.

Caporetto.

The Italian counters are an unprepossessing shade of yellow, a fact which inevitably reinforces players' prejudices and affects their view of the game. In fact the Italians do rather well, if properly handled, though it is true that their enemies (the Austro-Hungarians, mainly) were by this stage nearly as exhausted and fed up with the war as were the Italians. Historically, however, this game appears not to work. The history of the Caporetto offensive seems to typify military thinking in the First World War. The only reason for involving Austro-Hungary in an offensive in the first place was to raise her morale; Caporetto was chosen as a soft touch, and the original plan for a limited morale-boosting exercise was expanded into something much grander without any increase in forces available. The attackers in the game have ambitious objectives, in fact they achieved them because of Italian inefficiency, but a competent Italian player (competent in game terms, that is) will not hesitate to trade ground for time, keeping his force intact whilst inflicting losses on German Stosstruppen, thereby scoring many Victory Points. Of course if the Italian follows historical strategy, he will be massacred, but he has no incentive to do so. This is the clearest of the four games from the rules point of view, but does little to explain why Caporetto happened as it did.

Serbia/Galicia.

Back now to the heady "Home before the leaves fall" days. This game is billed as Austria's two front war, but only in the most nominal sense was it so; facing the Russians and the Serbs at the same time can perhaps best be compared with the plight of a boxer taking on Muhammed Ali and two geriatric mice. The Serbs, though weak, did not



GREAT WAR CONTINUED

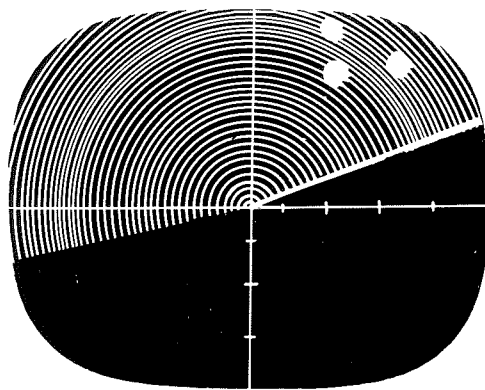
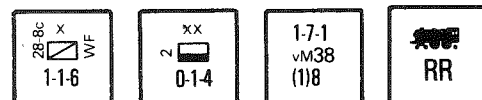
lack courage; one lesson rapidly learned from the game is that the worst thing the Serbs can do is attack. Their army is efficient, but not sufficient, and they can ill afford the losses inevitable in an attack. At the same time, the last thing the Austrians want is to be facing both opponents at once; consequently the Serbian front tends to be rather quiet. On the other front the Austrians and the Russians slug it out like two out-of-condition prize fighters warming up for a long bout. The early months of the war must have had an air of unreality even for the generals participating in them; certainly this game seems to reflect that no one had really sorted out what was going on; the objectives are limited, as are the capabilities of the armies. This is a very frustrating game, for players will naturally want to be more ambitious — a futile wish as they will discover.

Von Hindenburg in Poland.

Another game from the early days; after the early exchanges on the East Front the fighting fizzled out, but the Russians sought to launch another offensive in front of Warsaw. The Germans were beginning to feel the strain of their two-front war and the Grand Duke Nicholas was able to make a certain amount of progress before the Germans brought up reinforcements and counter-attacked, retaking much of the lost ground. Fortunately the official errata does provide the answer to the supply units conundrum, and this game is the most mobile of the four in the quad and thus perhaps the least typical of First World War warfare. The Russians do appear surprisingly efficient, but the game is strong on history, as well as maintaining interest right up to the end.

Evaluation.

There is no doubt that this set of games fills a gap in the coverage of the 20th Century. Further, the game system is, by contemporary standards at least, fairly simple; the time scale of three days per turn allows the coverage of extended campaigns without an excessive sacrifice of playability. For the pure games player this game is likely to be a winner, but from the simulation point of view there is something missing. Firstly, it is possible, on occasion, to indulge in non-historical strategies which satisfy the game Victory Conditions. Second, and more important, is the criticism voiced earlier that the games give no understanding of why things happened as they did. The system is a sound vessel, but the designers seem to have forgotten to fill it.



Contact!

Contact entries will appear twice and will then automatically lapse. Please ensure that you contact me in good time if you want to continue or change your entry. An * before an insert signifies the first appearance and as such will automatically appear in issue 25; all others will lapse after this issue.

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* **MAIDSTONE WARGAMES GROUP** meets on 3rd Sat. each month 2—8pm at the Methodist Church Hall, Lower Mount Rd, **MAIDSTONE**, Kent. Anyone interested would be made very welcome.

* **THE BRITISH MODERN WARFARE SOCIETY** is looking for new members. For a subscription of £3 we put out a quarterly magazine 'Deterent'. Enquiries and subs. to M.J. Higham, 26 Carleton Green Close, **PONTEFRAC**, W. Yorks WF8 3NN.

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Tim Stratton, Appledore, West Keal, **SPILSBY**, Lincs PE23 4BE — also opponents in Loughborough & Peterborough areas.

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FOR SALE: All in excell. cond. bxd.: Panzerblitz £5, Squad Leader 2nd Ed. £5, Next War inc. errata in 'Moves' 41 & 42 £10. Unbxd: La Bataille de la Moskowa £8. Prices inc UK P&P. Contact: S.W. Sinclair, 29 Campbell St, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, G84 8YG.

FOR SALE: mint cond. unless stated. Publisher and date stated. Bxd: SPI Air War 78 £6, Invasion America 76 £6, Patrol 74 £4. Unbxd: SPI Punic Wars 75 £2, Dark Ages 71 £3, Moscow Campaign 72 £3, Anzio Beachhead 70 £1, Tank 74 £2, Bastogne 70 £2, Road to Richmond 77 £2, Dixie 76 £2, Fred. the Great 75 £2, Vera Cruz 77 £2, Revolt in the East 76 £2, Oil War 75 £2, Kampfpanzer (30 pieces missing) 73 £1. Metagaming Ogre 78 £1, Melee 78 £1. SDC Rifle - Musket 74 £2, Alamo 74 50p. Contact: Lt J A Barry, Officers Mess, Ward Barracks, Bulford Camp, Salisbury, Wilts.

FOR SALE: (Boxed): Campaign for N. Africa - £16, Russian Civil War - £6. (Z-packs): Search & Destroy - £2.50, Outreach - £3.50, Wacht Am Rhein - £13.50. (Counters in grip lock bags): La Belle Alliance, Supercharge - £2 each, Normandy, Tannenberg, Crusades, Cassino, Armada - £2.50 each. I would be interested in exchanging any of the above for Torgau, 1776, NATO, Pearl Harbour, Invasion: America or Strategy I. Contact: Harry Curran, 1 Silverdale Court, Lanark, Scotland ML11 9HP.

Book HAMISH WILSON Review

Every year the International Institute for Strategic Studies publishes a book called **The Military Balance**. The latest edition is out now and, in light of some of the content of this issue, it seems appropriate that I should take a look at it for you. It is very far from being a piece of popular reading on this subject and contains the latest in accepted and published, intelligence about the military power of countries throughout the world. With a preface of notes and a glossary, reading of both of which is essential to the understanding of the rest of the work, the book shows in listings by country the population, total armed forces, estimated GNP and the defence expenditure for 1979 of over 30 countries. The first two in the book are the big two, the USSR and the USA. Thereafter the listings are broken down into Warsaw Pact and NATO, other European, African, Middle East, Far East and so on. Each segment is preceded by a brief narrative giving comments on the quality of the figures in the segment and the probable quality of the forces listed. After the world has been surveyed there follows a chilling set of tables comparing conventional and nuclear forces along the Warsaw Pact — NATO front line and the effectiveness of the various missile systems which both parties deploy. From such stuff as this are nightmares made but if we are going to play **Next War**, **Fulda Gap** and the various **Modern Battles Quads** then it may well behave us to keep pace with the latest developments in men and materiel in those areas. If that is your desire or if you are a student of modern military affairs this book is absolutely essential reading. In publishing the book in a hard back edition, **Arms and Armour Press** have done us the favour of adding some photographs including a very fine one of the latest aircraft carrier HMS *Invincible* and for the book which is as full of meat as an egg they ask only **£5.95** the price of an ordinary novel.

Speaking of 'men' I must mention **The Soldiers** by Henry Stanhope. Mr Stanhope is the defence correspondent for *The Times* and he has spent his enforced time off putting together a most excellent book about the British Army. The subtitle of the work is 'An Anatomy of the British Army' and in the process of his anatomising the author has informed his work with humour and anecdote which renders the vast amount of information in the book not only palatable but positively delightful to read. Starting with the Army as it was in 1945 we follow the developments and the amalgamations up to the present day. This is followed by an examination of the current deployment of those in receipt of the Queen's shilling and then, perhaps the most interesting for those of us who enjoy the subtle esoterics of the business of regimental precedence and traditions, a study of the individual regiments. Nor is this book confined to the ways of working or the training and education of the individual soldier or his officers alone. The last two sections of the book deal with the welfare services within the army and the very serious business of leaving the service. In earlier columns I have mentioned books dealing informatively with the armies of other countries but none of these has combined information and enjoyment in the same way as this book does. Seven appendices covering everything from pay scales to weapon systems in current use, twenty eight photographs and a Foreword by HRH The Duke of Kent complete a splendid book which Messrs. **Hamish Hamilton** ask **£9.95**.

It is a curious but nonetheless indisputable fact about the history of the services in Britain that more books tend to be written about the disasters than about the great victories. To be sure there are always the Official Histories although they are more objective than they used to be, and there are the memoirs of the Generals and their aides, but when it comes to writing about a battle it is odd how many writers choose to write about the times when it all went wrong. In fairness many of those writers intend to seek out the reason for failure rather than to glorify the courage which was demonstrated in the last stand. Nevertheless while Churchill said, "Wars are not won by evacuations", how many books have you seen on the bookstalls

written about Dunkirk? The inspiration of this digression is a book from **Leo Cooper & Seeley Service**. Called **My God, Maiwand!** and written by Colonel Leigh Maxwell, it concerns "The Operations of the South Afghanistan Field Force from 1878-80" and deals with one of those incredible defeats of a well provided body of men under British Colours who were defeated by a numerically superior force against whom they had no real business fighting anyway. The catalogue of political and military circumstances leading up to this, "the most crushing defeat ever suffered by the British Army in India", is dealt with in considerable clarity and the description of the battle is first rate. To me the most telling chapter is the final one where Col. Maxwell describes his visit to the battlefield at Maiwand. Knowing that the author has used some of the artillery pieces that were used in the action and that he had spent a lot of time reading the reports of the action that were required of every officer who survived the disaster, the restraint of his description of the landscape, as he saw it on that visit, brings home the conditions under which the battle was fought with terrible clarity. Six photographs and seven maps complete the book which is well worth a read, very topical, and deals with a small but important battle in an earlier round of "the Great Game" which was continually played in those days between the Tsarist agents and the British in an attempt to ensure Russian influence was the greater (or the lesser) in Afghanistan. **£8.50** is the price and well worth it.

In 1977 in this column I raved about a **Subject Bibliography** of the Second World War compiled by A.G.S. Enser. This year I want to repeat the tone of the review for a similar exercise that Mr Enser has carried out on books written about the First World War. The price of this volume is higher than the earlier although probably not as high as the rate of inflation might lead one to expect. **Andre Deutsch** are the publishers and the price is **£16.50**. As with the earlier work this volume is indispensable for the student of the period. It also ought to have a place on bookshelves of anybody interested in the military history of the current century. The reason that the book is so valuable is that it is a list of all the books in the English language written between 1914-1978 and that includes the works written about, for and by all the participant English speaking nations. Entries are indexed under Subject, Author and Title thus ensuring that the required book may be found if only one of the three items of information is known. Even the effusions of the politicians are indexed, indeed they are first in the book (by hook or crook is not noted) and from there we go on to Afghanistan — yes, there was fighting there — and then through all the letters of the alphabet down to Zeppelins and Zimmerman, this last being Barbara Tuchman's book on that infamous missive. I find it difficult to convey the totality of the value of this book and it's companion to those who carry their reading in to further study of the periods in question but I can say that in the two years that the book dealing with the Second World War has been on my shelves it has proved enormously useful ... besides which they make a handsome pair on the shelf.

Another volume that is vital for the shelves which make up the reference section of your library is a new one from **Arms and Armour Press**.

Written by the astonishingly busy David Chandler, it is **A Dictionary of the Napoleonic Wars**. Starting with a chronology of the period from 1769 - 1840, David Chandler then creates an ordered list of the men, weapons, battles, treaties, strategies and other events that marked the vast upheavals which occurred in Europe between Napoleon's birth and the final placing of his body in the grand tomb in Les Invalides. There are maps aplenty and, while I haven't counted them all, the publishers tell us there are 1,200 entries in the book. I have no reason to doubt their word but the more important thing about the entries is that each one is cross referenced with any other entry that is relevant, with important names which are noted in the book being asterisks to denote their presence. As he remarks in his foreword, Mr Chandler's problem has been deciding what to leave out. Indeed he stipulates that the coverage is far from complete but an attempt has been made to ensure that a useful cross section of the principal characters is included. After the entries are concluded there is a list of Napoleon's military movements running to a further 69 pages and this is followed in turn by a bibliography of 13 closely printed pages. In short, as

with all good reference works, the worth of the book lies not just in the immediate content but in the directions which are offered to further research in the supporting texts in the work. As well as the brief entries in the Dictionary there are nine entries of much greater length. These essays cover such key items as Napoleon himself, The Duke of Wellington, the details of the coalitions and so on. Arms and Armour Press ask **£12.95** for the work — a price which only partially indicates the value of the book.

Jargon has always been a feature of writing about battles. Indeed, the flavour of a time may be very easily and quickly conveyed by the correct usage of jargon. In recent times this use of jargon has added to the spice of the story as well. Anyone writing about a "red Albatross pulling out of an Immelman turn ..." is as clearly identifiable as the writer who talks about "he tore a 190 apart with a quick burst from his six .5-calibre machine guns." But compare the immediacy of those with the sesquipedalian services language of the following: "An American Air Force Captain guided his OV-10 Bronco through the layers of overcast, concentrating on his flight instruments but alert for those glimpses of terrain that would permit transition to visual reference." Now that quote was picked almost at random from a book called **Air War — Vietnam** which is by a collection of USAF officers and costs **£5.95**. I would like to say that I enjoyed reading the work but I'm afraid that I can't. There is a vast amount of information scattered throughout the text but finding these items is only slightly less difficult than emptying Loch Ness with a bucket. For reasons that I shall never be able to fathom the book is written in the style which I quoted above. Every so often you get an actual quote from the people involved and discover — in my case with great relief — that they do talk like human beings and not, as the book seems to imply, like a badly written after action report. I must confess that I was put in mind of one of Redmond Simonsen's splendid excesses in an early edition of *Moves*. Rejoicing in his new found editorial power he wrote something to the effect of "the more syllables a word has the more accurate it is". He thinks the authors of vast chunks of 'Air War' have been taking him to heart. When you do get to them the descriptions of tactics and the use of new munitions, the work is interesting and useful. The numbers of different kinds of aeroplanes involved in a typical "Linebacker" strike/support mission is astonishing. Out of 52 aircraft only twenty are involved in the strike while the rest are dropping chaff, acting as escort to the chaff 'planes or the strike craft and so on. But the effect of this section of the book is spoiled by a persistent reference to "ingress tracks" and "egress tracks" as opposed to flight paths to and from targets. Maybe the USAF should take a look at the books which were written during WWII about the 8th Air Force. I don't know if they were officers but they could write! Arms and Armour Press are the publishers.

It would be reasonable, at first thought, to suggest that any book dealing with cavalry in the Second World War would be a fairly insubstantial volume. While the horse did play a major part in the mobile armies of the Third Reich the massed movements of troops was not a feature of the war which has attracted a great deal of notice. To adjust this balance comes a book from **Orbis** called **The Cavalry of World War II**. Written by Janusz Piekalkiewicz, who spent some time in Warsaw when the Nazis were setting about its destruction and then spent some time in Hungary when the Soviet Union were repeating the dose, seems to be more qualified to write about urban guerrilla warfare than about cavalry. Nevertheless this book is most interesting and is far more substantial than expected when first seeing the title but it is worth noting that at least one third of the book's 256 pages are photograph pages and there are also some fairly extensive maps. The book still has some significance and offers a marvellous insight into a little known aspect of the last war. French, Polish, Japanese, German, Russian and — yes, British, — Cavalry are shown here. There are a number of strange pictures of cavalry galloping past armoured vehicles or heavy artillery which is obviously WWII vintage and there are some very sad tales of cavalry against everything from machine guns to tanks. The only feature of the book that marred it at all was the price. Even allowing for the information and the vast number of photographs I think that **£10.00** is a little on the expensive side for this book. For that I would like to see a little more text, although that

Continued on page 23

Fear God & Dreadnought

A REVIEW BY DOUG DAVIES

There can be little doubt that the 'state of art' in boardgaming design has advanced considerably over the last decade in the area of 'simulation', but that the 'playability' aspect of most games has in contrast deteriorated. This is one reason in my estimation why recent games have such a short life span; they are no sooner produced, (often with labyrinthine rules to try and simulate every detail of a situation), than a barrage of criticism descends revealing the impossibility of adequately play-testing such a creation. Those few games designed more for playability are, in such a situation, often cast contemptuously aside by the advocates of historical accuracy who now tend to dominate the critical horizons of the hobby. This can be great loss to those simply seeking a good, exciting, and balanced struggle of wits and to hell with history.

Such a game is **Dreadnought** produced by SPI in 1975. If you want to sit on the edge of your chair for a couple of hours, nerves tense, your brain whirring with plans, schemes and doubts, the excitement growing by the minute, but above all enjoying yourself, then give this, the final design of the late John Young, a try. If on the other hand the facts that the Invincible had 6" armour tapering to 4" on the bow, that the director firing mechanism was designed by Vickers, and that the Captain's coxswain was called Campbell are more important to you, then stay well away from **Dreadnought**, it would drive you crazy.

The subject of **Dreadnought**, as the name suggests, are those huge leviathans which for a brief span of years controlled the seas and then passed on in the space of a generation, leaving behind the same type of romantic image often associated with the steam locomotive. The game is on a tactical level and includes counters for every one of those mighty battleships, plus all the various refits made to some of them (yes, Gladys, they were plagued with errata even then) and allows you to fight all the battles which these creations of Jacky Fisher were involved in. As actual battles were in fact rare (Admirals were notoriously inconsiderate about losing ships to provide scenarios for boardgamers) there exists a simple procedure for making your own, — so that you can find out if the Austro-Hungarian-Italian-Spanish Navy could have beaten the Brazilian-Argentinian-American Navy in 1917.

The action takes place on one of those chopped up game maps which come in six separate pieces so that you can move bits of it around should any of your ships threaten to sail off the edge of the board. The rules are simple to master, making it a good game for introducing a new recruit to the hobby into the pleasures of boardgaming, with a sequence of play which is basically fire, move and repair. Firing and movement are simultaneous with plotting taking place secretly, which is where the tension comes in as is usual with sl-move games. With no terrain to worry about movement is fairly straight forward in that ships may move up to the limit of their movement allowance, with certain restrictions on acceleration and deceleration, and the number and placement of turns which can be made in the course of a move. Battle-

ship counters representing single ships are allowed to stack four high, but screen units which represent groups of cruisers and destroyers are limited to one counter per hex.

Being able to fire depends on the visibility, which can fluctuate from turn to turn, and the range of your guns, and combat is resolved using two 2 - 12 tables, the Damage Point Table (DPT) and the Combat Result Table (CRT). The attack strength of a firing ship, which may be modified by the range and other considerations, is calculated then two dice are rolled with the result being cross-referenced with the modified attack strength on the DPT. This yields the number of damage points obtained which are then compared with the target ship's defense strength to produce the combat ratio used on the CRT. The dice are then rolled again and the results list the actual damage inflicted on the target. Firing strength is affected by such considerations as facing, previously accrued damage, other ships firing at the same target, and if the firing ship is itself under attack.

Damage comes in the usual SPI fashion for naval games — one can suffer 'G' (gun) damage which either halves or eliminates your ability to fire, or 'S' (speed) damage which has similar effects on your movement capabilities. In the damage control phase ships have a 50% chance of repairing 'G' damage, and a 33 1/3% chance of removing 'S' damage. This ability is limited however to the defense strength of the ship, e.g. a ship with a defense strength of 5 could remove five separate increments of damage, but if at any time the damage is allowed to accumulate to a state of 2G2S the ship is deemed to be a wreck with the damage control parties overwhelmed. It is also possible for a ship to explode, but this is a rare event reflecting the designer's view that in general dreadnoughts could sustain tremendous amounts of damage and still stay afloat.

Other rules cover such things as torpedo attacks, secondary battery fire, smoke screens, radar, the position of the sun, and other assorted esoteria which might affect a naval battle. As previously mentioned a considerable portion of the rules deal with the creation of campaign games as well as listing some seven historical scenarios.

Victory is based mainly on a point system in which you obtain points each time you inflict damage on the enemy, the rewards rising steeply once a ship's damage control level is reached. A couple of scenarios differ in that they are concerned with moving, or preventing a force escaping off a designated map edge. Generally it is a good system which accurately gauges each players performance. However the game system can be wildly dependant on luck (as big gun naval battles often were), and it is therefore better suited to large fleet actions than to individual ship to ship duels, for the luck element will then, in all probability, even itself out. The drawback to such things as the Jutland scenario, with over 80 units in play, will be the amount of book keeping required, and this is probably best played by mail where more time is

available, or as a multi-player game, which can be great fun if only for the confusion it produces. For normal face to face encounters a force of between six to ten battleships per side gives a better game.

What are the tactics to remember as you sail into battle? Well of course each scenario presents its own problems but certain guidelines can be recommended. First think long and hard before splitting your fleet into separate squadrons however tempting it might appear. It is rare that the tactical considerations of separate squadrons will coincide allowing them to act in conjunction, and one will invariably find itself confronted by the whole enemy force. This concentration usually takes the form of closing to minimum range on one of the detached squadrons so that the attack factor of each firing ship is either doubled or trebled with a corresponding increase in the possibility of inflicting heavy damage. Of course this effects both sides equally, but a player who has all his ships attack strengths so enhanced will naturally gain a distinct advantage over an opponent who divided his fleet as only half his ships are at close range.

If you outnumber the enemy make sure you engage every one of his vessels, for a ship under fire suffers adverse adjustments on the DPT, and concentrate your best ships and the extra ones against his weaker units. These are easier and quicker to get rid of and it allows you to bring larger concentrations of fire against his better armoured ships later on with more chance of hurting them. A useful tactic to use in conjunction with this is the 'soak off' attack in which you employ ships which are suffering '1G' damage, and whose attack factor is therefore halved, or your least powerfully gunned ships, (such as the older German battleships at Jutland) to fire against the strongest enemy units. The idea being not particularly to hit them, although of course you might be lucky, but rather to allow you to fire two, three, or even more, of your most powerful units against a single target, hoping to overwhelm it in the space of a single fire phase, giving the enemy no chance of carrying out any damage control.

If on the other hand you are outnumbered try to use your destroyers to shield your battleships from part of the enemy strength by employing a smoke screen, thus reversing the situation for a while, and let the exposed portion of his fleet suffer the disadvantages of the inferior side, if only for a turn. Clever use of such smoke screens will frequently split the enemy into two — in effect making them into separate squadrons with it's opportunity to close for a killing. Also a player who finds he is outnumbered will usually discover a compensating advantage — he may be fortunate enough to out-range the enemy in which case he should endeavour to keep the action at long distance, hoping on the odd turn to be able to hit without any chance of reply. Alternatively he might hold a distinct speed advantage over his opponent, which, with careful

Attack Strength

Defense Strength

Nationality

Name

61

20

GE

741

Bismarck

Range Allowance

Movement Allowance

ID Code

Attack Strength

Defense Strength

Heavy Cruisers

16

12

6

8

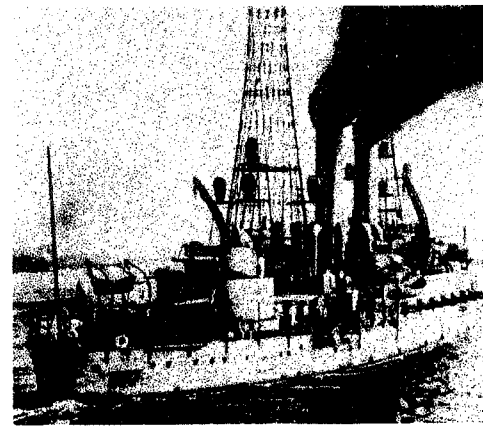
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C33

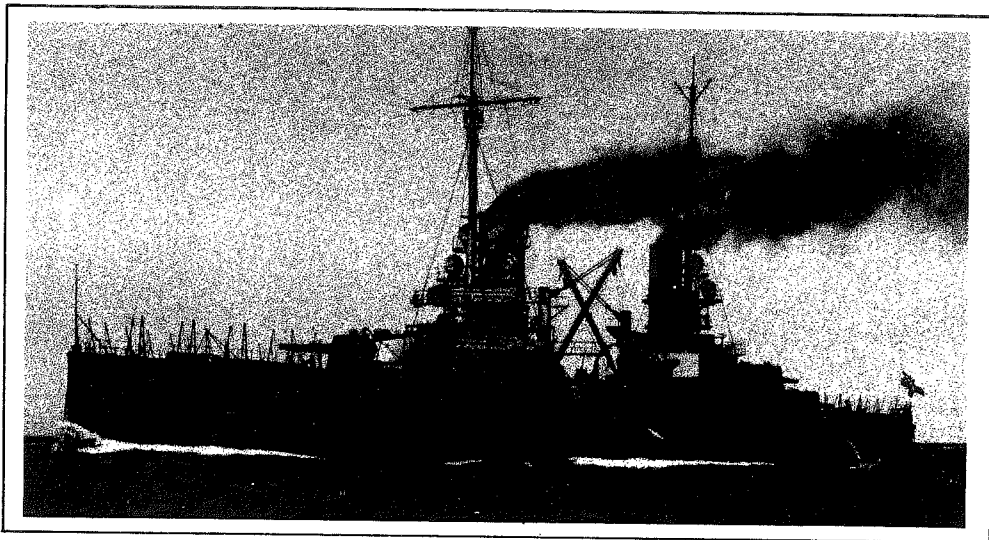
Range Allowance

Movement Allowance

ID Code



<div><div>1/2 Attk</div><div>GS</div><div>1/2 Speed</div></div>	<div><div>Attack & Movement</div><div>Halved</div></div>	<div><div>Attack</div><div>Halved</div><div>No Movement</div></div>	<div><div>1/2 Attk</div><div>G2S</div><div>No Speed</div></div>
<div><div>No Attk</div><div>2G2S</div><div>No Speed</div></div>	<div><div>No Attack</div><div>No Movement</div><div>— "Wrecked"</div></div>	<div><div>No Attack</div><div>Movement</div><div>Halved</div></div>	<div><div>No Attk</div><div>S2G</div><div>1/2 Speed</div></div>
<div><div>No Attk</div><div>2G</div></div>	<div><div>No Attack</div></div>	<div><div>No Movement</div></div>	<div><div>2S</div><div>No Speed</div></div>



manoeuvring, can result in a concentration being made against part of the enemy battle fleet.

When you succeed in hitting an enemy ship continue to fire at it in preference to fresh targets, endeavouring to push its damage level up to 2G2S before damage control can remove the hit. This particularly applies to vessels with speed damage, which is harder to remove, and which will tend to become detached from the main body of the enemy fleet giving your opponent all kinds of nasty problems. Naturally keep a check on targets which are approaching the limit of their damage control capability because once this is exceeded, and damage starts mounting, so too, do the victory points you gain with each hit.

Protect your own damaged ships by turning them away from the enemy line, blanketing them behind a smoke screen while you attempt to carry out repairs. Try to keep your own fleet between your cripples and the enemy in order to prevent him from closing with them. Should you have the choice between removing gun or speed damage always roll for the latter first for if you are successful the damaged ship can attempt to flee the scene, but if instead you remove the 'G' damage the chances are that you will eventually be caught by the enemy and pounded into submission. Ships nearing the limit of their damage control level should clear off out of the battle. Far better to lose a small portion of your offensive power than the loss of large numbers of victory points should the vessel remain.

Remember that screen units are highly vulnerable, and that they can also provide a good harvest of victory points if caught without capital ships to protect them, so keep them out of harm's way. In a fleet action destroyers are better employed putting smoke screens round your damaged heavy units, or in trying to divide the enemy fleet into two as described above, rather than in desperate torpedo attacks against the enemy battle line which will rarely succeed in the face of massed secondary battery fire. Torpedo attacks are difficult to execute in this game system and virtually the only time they are profitable is when your opponent is behind on points and is desperately trying to close so that you can predict his course with some chance of accuracy. Cruisers can be used as 'soak off' units if absolutely necessary but this can lead to trouble for their defense strengths are naturally weak and the enemy may well knock them out. Unless their presence is vital it is best to run them out of danger at the very beginning of the battle rather than risk losing the victory points on their demise.

Of course, when you actually get embroiled in action, you soon discover that many of the tactics and considerations discussed above are diametrically opposed to each other, and that you are continually having to make compromises between them. It is this constant battle between conflicting interests which provides the game with its entertainment factor, and as every playing of each scenario can be different, even a constantly played situation will often provide a different set of problems to be solved.

All this might seem sufficient to whet the appetite of any simulation orientated gamer — so why the warning at the start? Well to begin with many of the values assigned to the various battleships are, to say the least, a little controversial. Naval buffs, who spend hours arguing about the relative merits of each ship as it is, will shake their heads in amazement when comparing the factors of some of the vessels depicted in *Dreadnought*. The French battlecruisers "Dunkerque" and "Strasbourg", for example have bigger attack factors than the battleships "Richelieu" and "Jean Bart", which were of the same era and carried larger calibre guns and consequently fired a much heavier broadside. Slightly more difficult to detect, but more serious is the undoubted undervaluing of the whole British World War 1 Fleet. This could have been done to balance the game's main historical scenario — but it has been carried to such lengths that the odds are firmly on a German victory — try telling that to Reinhard Scheer! That German dreadnoughts were better protected than the British is of course widely acknowledged but surely not by the factor of 100% which the designer would have you believe. Also the generally larger British guns are rated below the inferior German calibres (and I know all about the disadvantages of lyddite charges). Further the range factors of many American and Japanese ships of first world war vintage are grossly overstated, and were American ships always so superior to their contemporaries? No I fear we must accept the fact that the designer did not make a good job of trying to sort out an admittedly tangled web of conflicting factors in producing his ship values. Those particularly incensed by this can of course try making up their own counters — they probably would have done so anyway.

Then we should examine the vexing question of arcs of fire. In the game you can fire over any intervening ships at targets which in all probability would have been masked. Now this subject of maintaining clear arcs of fire was one of the main tactical considerations in favour of the battleline against other sailing formations and as such it was an Admiral's prime concern. One of the advantages of crossing the 'T' was that the rear ships of the enemy line would have great difficulty in seeing their assailants, and, of course, only their bow guns would bear in any case. Yet all this is virtually ignored in *Dreadnought* apart from a slight adjustment to the die roll on the DPT to reflect bow or stern fire. This makes the optimum formation not the battleline but the battleblob, a grouping of ships round a central hex. A simple rule change can rectify this situation, but I know many people do not like tinkering with rules.

Next comes the problem caused by the complete absence of any form of command control in the scenarios which would make the combatants obey strategic common sense. Instead a player can order his fleet to its doom in an orgy of self destruction without even a nod in the direction of reality. Surely something like the preservation level system as used in *Frigate* could have been included? This problem is admittedly tackled in the campaign game, but the thought of Jellicoe and Scheer watching their vessels disappear beneath the waves

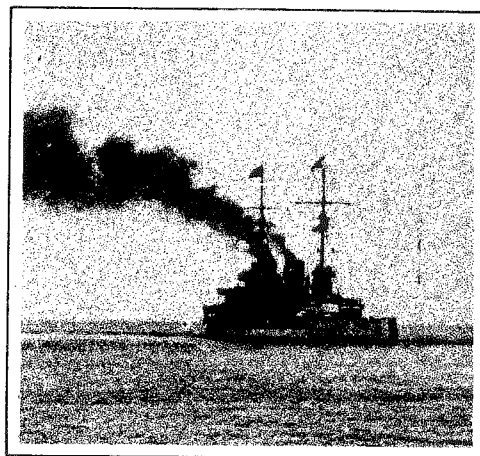
without any apparent concern detracts from the game's major historical scenario.

Finally, mention must be made of the difficulty of actually sinking a ship. It is virtually impossible, as the rules stand, to have more than a minimal chance of sending a dreadnought to the bottom — which reflects, as I've mentioned before, the designer's contention that they were capable of sustaining tremendous degrees of damage. This is all very well, but I've seen so called wrecked ships stand several turns of fire, at minimum range, from eight to ten battleships without sinking. I suggest that once a ship reaches a state of "2G2S" its defensive factor is halved and any 'E' result on the CRT be treated as a sinking, — normally one rolls again with an over 75% chance that the target won't explode.

The above are all design problems and, to it's credit, the game has few rules problems and none of these is of great import. Nowhere does it state what happens to secondary batteries when a ship sustains 'G' damage. The actual order in which one removes damage from a ship can have an effect, yet it does not state in the rules if 'G' damage must be removed before 'S' damage, or vice versa, or indeed if the player has a choice (this being the method I prefer).

Following such a catalogue of simulation type faults why do I enjoy the game so much that I urge you to find a copy and give it a try? Partly it's so you can experience the sensation of feeling that wonderful air of calm assurance you had, as you planned the utter destruction of the enemy fleet, slowly evaporating to absolute horror as you realise that fool of an opponent hasn't sailed north, as all logic said he must, but instead, has gone south, and is in fact about to cap your 'T'. It's the nervous waiting between completing your plot, which frequently becomes so intense that you can scarcely bear to wait any longer, to see where he's gone and how you can clobber him. Then the nightmare realisation that your biggest battleship has failed to obtain a hit at point blank range. Don't despair however, just as you are about to hurl the dice into the fire and take up Ludo or Ochi one of your destroyers, against all the odds, succeeds in torpedoing a whole column of the enemy's battleships. It's that marvellous feeling of elation when your longer ranged guns give the enemy a couple of broadsides without reply and your frantic opponent is forced to come charging onto your waiting guns. Above everything else it's because the game is so bloody exciting even when your ships are blowing up and you can't see the enemy for smoke.

Yes, in spite of its limitations, it does show you how Jellicoe could have lost the war in an afternoon, and it does so in a highly entertaining manner, so never mind what its critics say — Fear God and *Dreadnought*!



The following sources are acknowledged:
 From The *Dreadnought To Scapa Flow* (five vols) by Arthur J Marder
 The *Battleship Era* by Peter Padfield
Naval Battles Of The First World War by Geoffrey Bennett
Dreadnought by Richard Hough
 The *Strategy Of Sea Power* by S W Roskill
 Moves No23 and No26 by SPI

DREADNOUGHT scenarios:

GRAHAM WHEATLEY

Almost all of the real-life campaigns and battles have been beaten to death. And so, in a fit of insanity, I have cooked up the following what-if scenarios to grace your hex sheets:

Background: Dreadnought is a tactical level game of sea combat in the first half of the 20th century, in the Dreadnought era. Each counter represents one Dreadnought, two cruisers or five destroyers. Each game-turn represents 15 minutes of real-time.

Abbreviations: C= heavy cruiser; L= light cruiser; D= destroyer.

WALLGAMING

C. MACLACHAN

For those of us without a spare room, board games would be easier to play and keep on playing, if we could hang them on the wall. The board itself, of course, presents no problems; you can suspend an S.P.I. map-sheet using plastic poster hangers. The trouble is to stick the counters to a vertical surface. I have heard of people who use Blu-tack, which ruins both counters and board eventually, and S.P.I. have been advertising magnetic strip, although not the sheet metal to put behind the map-sheet nor advice on how to fix such a sheet to your wall. Neither of these methods seems to suit back-printed counters. What is wanted is something which does not alter the appearance of either board or counters, and the cheaper and lighter the better.

With pleasure, then, and pride, I have to announce that this problem has been solved. Yes, solved! Now you can hang your games up, and leave them up, out of reach of children, small dogs, house-cleaners, rats and other vermin. First, you need a sheet of clear plastic to cover your board (Furnham Trading, of 3 Church Lane, Market Square, Wantage, Oxon., sell it by the yard — send them a S.A.E.). Second, to make the counters adhere to this smooth surface, wrap them in freezer film (also known as cling film and available at most supermarkets).

Wrapping the counters is a tedious and fiddly job, best done by cutting a quantity of film from the roll, smoothing it out on a chopping board and then, with a sharp knife, cutting out a piece about 1½ inches square for each counter. Lay the counter in the centre of this piece of film, fold in two opposite sides and smooth them together, then fold in the remaining ends. The smoother the folded surface, the better the adhesion on that side. You may have to rewrap a few counters which just will not stick at first, but once these teething troubles are over all the counters will fix themselves to the plastic overlay if pressed firmly, which means you need to hang the board against a flat, unyielding surface. Like a wall.

You can stack counters, because they will stick to each other, and because the film is transparent you can see both sides of a back-printed counter. I have had games hanging up literally for months, without mishap, and a friend of mine has also tried the idea with success. I verily believe that it will prove a boon to boardgamers everywhere, especially those who play solo or by mail. All I ask in return is that commercial organisations, when they recommend this method, acknowledge its inventor, and that gamers when they cast dice or pick chits invoke my name with honour as a friend to mankind?!

14.0 ADDITIONAL SCENARIOS

14.1 Falkland Islands 8th December 1914 ORDERS OF BATTLE & DEPLOYMENT

British Player:	hex/facing/speed
Invincible (191)	D0709/NE/6
Inflexible (192)	D0609/NE/6
C11	D0410/NE/5
L21	D0906/NE/6
German Player:	
C51	D1608/NE/5
L61	D1708/NE/5
L51	D1807/NE/5

GAME LENGTH: 16 game turns

SPECIAL RULES: The British C11 cruiser unit has a top speed of '5'.

BASE VISIBILITY: 12 hexes

VICTORY CONDITIONS: At least 2 German units must break sighting with no irreparable damage by game-turn 16. British must sink or wreck all German ships. If neither condition is met, the game is a draw.

14.2 Dogger Bank 24th January 1906 ORDERS OF BATTLE & DEPLOYMENT

British Player:	hex/facing/speed
Dreadnought (011)	D1602/N/5
L11	D1601/N/5
German Player:	
Hessen (701)	A1608/SE/4
C51	A1709/SE/4
D51	A1809/SE/4

GAME LENGTH: 20 game turns

BASE VISIBILITY: 8 hexes

VICTORY CONDITIONS: German player must exit the south or east sides of map F with the Hessen by the end of the scenario. The British player must wreck the Hessen (or sink it). If neither condition is met the game is a draw.

HISTORICAL NOTES: After the First World War broke out in late 1905 two small squadrons of ships met off Dogger Bank. The Germans, believing that their new pre-Dreadnought Hessen was unsinkable, sent it out into the North Sea for trials. But they had not reckoned with the Dreadnought, which was cruising in the area (I know, but I have to think of something!!)

14.3 Trafalgar 12th November 1914 ORDERS OF BATTLE & DEPLOYMENT

French Player:	hex/facing/speed
France (504)	E0812/NW/5
Paris (504)	E0913/NW/5
C11	E0713/NW/5
C12	E0811/NW/5
L11	E0712/NW/5
D11	E1013/NW/5
Spanish Player:	
Espana (951)	D1306/NE/5
Jaime I (952)	D1206/NE/5
Alfonso (953)	D1107/NE/5
C51	D1405/NE/5
L51	D1307/NE/5
D51	D1007/NE/5

BASE VISIBILITY: 10 hexes

GAME LENGTH: 12 game-turns

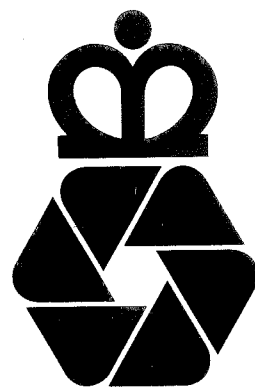
VICTORY CONDITIONS: Victory is based on point count, with the Spanish Player getting 10 extra victory points for each French dreadnought wrecked or sunk at the end of the scenario.

HISTORICAL NOTES (I): Let me see ... Oh, yes. Soon after Austria-Hungary's declaration of war, Spain entered the war, on the Central Powers' side. Because of the lack of troops any major conflict between Spain and France was likely to take place at sea. And so it happened.

14.4 The Falkland Campaign October-November 1914

Campaign Game

British Player:	
Force 1:	Force 2:
Australia (202)	C11
C11	L21
L11	L22
Force 3:	Force 4:
C11*	C11*
	C12
	L11



SIMPUBS BRIEFING

MALCOLM WATSON

WRITTEN JANUARY 4th 1980

Welcome to 1980, the start of a new decade and 'The Year Of The Chip! or so we are led to believe. In our own case I hope most sincerely that it becomes just that with the lovable 'Superchip' swinging into action at last. As predicted the last issues of Moves, Phoenix and S&T were the first to go into the post courtesy of our various working programmes. An explanation of the codes and indicators to be found on your labels was sent out with these issues and we are now waiting for details of any corrections to be made on individuals' subscriptions and or names/addresses. The main mail order programmes have been put through their initial tests and the errors that were detected have been corrected. We are now moving into the 'fine tuning' stage where we hope to adjust the programmes to enable them to deal with all of the strange things that can happen during the course of a mail order transaction.

It behoves me to bring two points to your attention, both of which are a declaration of procedure to be adopted when we go on stream. First, for all purposes including subscriber discounts, a subscription will be deemed to have expired at the point in time that the label for the last issue in that sub is created. From that point on, 'Bigbadchip' will discontinue giving subscriber discounts to the lapsed subscriber. With this in mind it will be evident that subscribers who wish to continue their subs must get their renewals to us on or before the date indicated on their expiry note. The second change affects orders that are underpaid. In the past it has been our practice to issue an invoice for the balance of an underpaid order, in future we will send as much of the order as is covered by the remittance received. The balance of your payment, if any, will be put into credit against your account. It is quite possible that this procedure will affect the subscriber discount given on an underpaid order since discounts will be worked out on the final invoice value. In all cases where we are obliged to implement this procedure we will use our discretion to ensure that the maximum number of items will be sent out with the minimum adverse effect on subscriber discounts. Of course if sufficient payment is made then none of this need concern you. As a postscript to this section, when we get the mail order off the ground we will no longer issue credit notes per se, rather we will maintain a credit balance (assuming there is one of course) against individual accounts. The current state of your balance will be shown on the delivery note that comes to you with each order.

The briefing feature in issue 22 contained a certain amount of gloom with regard to the situation at SPI, happily it looks like they are getting themselves back together at last. There has been a marked improvement in the service and co-operation that we are now getting from their shipping department. The last shipment received was almost

Continued on page 26

Continued on page 26

D.I.A. MACK

THAT TWO HANDED ENGINE

The Neutron Bomb in 'Fulda Gap', plus some more palatable extras.

"But that two-handed engine at the door,
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more"
— Milton, 'Lycidas'

Foreword

This article makes extensive use of material from two pieces which appeared in recent numbers of 'Moves', namely a Variant on 'Fulda Gap' by Charles T. Kamps, Jr, ('Moves' 36) and 'Airburst; Tactical Nuclear Weapons in "Fulda Gap" ' by Matthew Foster ('Moves' 40). As 'Moves' has a small circulation in Britain (about 750) and as both articles contained valuable data for rounding-out 'Fulda Gap', I asked Redmond Simonsen — editor of 'Moves' — for permission to use this material in an article of my own in order to bring it to the notice of a wider British readership. This permission was granted speedily and unreservedly and I would like to express my indebtedness to Redmond Simonsen and to the two authors.

What's New?

In this article (or rather, paraphrase) I intend to discuss Charles Kamps' suggestions for altering Untried Unit (UTU) ratings, especially as they relate to variations in the Warsaw Pact forces, and Matthew Foster's sensible amendments to the nuclear rules, followed by his suggested rules for simulation of the Enhanced Radiation Weapon (ERW) — "neutron bomb" in popular speech. There will also be a brief description of an actual game of "Fulda Gap" played using Kamps' UTU table and Foster's ERW rules, exactly as suggested by the authors. I also intend to discuss a variable air supremacy table that I have produced to reflect a more likely air war balance.

The UTU table

Charles Kamps is an officer of the United States Army, with recent experience of service in Germany to his credit. The table suggested by him is, he says, based on his own observations and my guess is that he has been an intelligence officer at a divisional or corps HQ. No, these duties do not usually include visits to the opposition in the guise of a small oaktree; rather do they involve sitting in an office studying information from a variety of sources and then distilling it for the benefit of one's own formation commander. Nor is this a cynical assessment; I have been an intelligence officer myself, during the Borneo war, and very interesting it was too.

Enough digressing — what of the table?

Rating	NATO	Warsaw Pact
B	British (D)	
C	W German regulars (E)	
D		Soviet forces (less 50th Div) (G)
E	US (F)	
F	French 1st Div (G)	
G		Poles (G)
H		E German (G)
J	Belgians (H)	
K	W German HSK (E) (Home Guard)	
L	Remaining French forces (G)	Soviet 50th Div (G)

'Standard' UTU ratings shown in brackets



This gives the British brigade and the Bundeswehr a marked lift and a lesser one to the US forces and the French 1st Division. The Belgians and the rest of the French go down, the latter quite considerably, and the German HSK are now rated well below the regular forces (regular in the sense of being full-time, that is). Soviet units not only go up three levels but also top the Americans: the Poles remain unchanged and the East Germans drop one, but both now come well behind the Soviet forces.

From using this table in play my own opinion is that it tilts the balance markedly in favour of the Warsaw Pact (WP). Although the British and Bundeswehr, reliable enough on the 'standard' table, become tougher than ever, this affects only one brigade and three divisions, less than a third of the total NATO force. The Soviet forces on the other hand total ten divisions, increasing to twelve (not counting the weaker airborne division) in the basic order of battle and twelve increasing to fourteen if the Soviet Main Effort reinforcements are added, even consigning the deplorable 50th Division to the discard pile — they form over two-thirds of the WP force. A 'D' rating gives a slightly better than 20% chance of doubled CF and slightly better than 40% of achieving normal level, i.e. no step-loss; there is now only a 35% chance of step-loss, compared with a 51% chance on the Soviets' original 'G' rating. As a result the Soviet divisions become very reliable, a division at full strength being the 'norm' and a good proportion of those divisions having the added bonus of at least one doubled regiment. This combination of numerical superiority and reliability lends considerable extra clout to the steamroller, especially that part of it consisting of motor rifle divisions, hitherto of dubious value as assault formations. And when this clout is applied to that part of the front held by US or French units there is a very good chance of a WP walkover, particularly in the Tripwire scenario. The Commentary in the game rules says, "If the Soviets really are as good as NATO, then NATO will lose," and Kamps, taken undiluted, comes near to this.

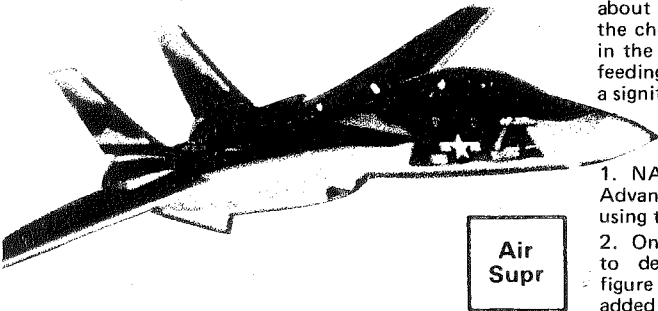
Nevertheless the Kamps revised UTU table provides not only food for thought but also a yardstick for a less drastic reappraisal. To rate the Poles and East Germans below the Soviet forces is very realistic; while both Poles and Germans have proved themselves to be valiant and hardy in war for a national cause their enthusiasm for going into battle on the tail of Ivan's greatcoat is likely to be less than 100% — and the Poles will be invited to fight old allies, the Germans their own countrymen. A lower rating, even a distinctly lower rating, is not to be taken to reflect low military worth but rather lack of reliability as Russia's allies. The upshot is to make the WP player chary of using the WP allies in crucial attacks and to prefer to employ them in a defensive or follow-up role; in addition he will take good care to ensure that the Polish and East German divisions are spread amongst Soviet ones and not grouped as national forces — which is what Soviet doctrine is likely to be.

It is realistic too that the West German HSK should not be at the same level as the active Bundeswehr — the quality of the men as individuals will be much the same but unit cohesion and standards of training will not, especially at the outset of hostil-

ities. In assigning HSK units to guard key points or to block isolated Soviet thrusts along east-west routes the NATO player will be taking something of a gamble, which is as it should be.

The French? Perhaps Charles Kamps is rather hard on them but the fact remains that many French officers (who are a pretty professional body of men) say openly — and that to a visiting Brit — that their army is of variable quality. "The Legion, the Paras and some of the Coloniales, yes — but the Metropolitans" has been said, almost word for word, to me more than once. All the same, while the French Army of 1940 proved to be a shadow of that of 1914 yet I think that the French Army of 1979 is not that of 1940; I consider that 4, 7 and 8 Divs should be pulled up to somewhere nearer 1st — say H as opposed to F.

My own advice on modifying the UTU is to keep NATO much as they are while pulling the Soviets up a little and letting the Poles and East Germans drop: there is no reason why adjustment for NATO need not be made on a different sliding scale from that of WP forces. Try pulling the Soviet divisions up to F, level with the Americans on the 'Standard' table, while dropping the Poles to H and the East Germans to J. The HSK should drop too — say to H or, if you consider that too great a differential from the regular army, to G. As for the French, try raising the 1st Division to F and either keeping the remainder at G or dropping them to H. The effect of all these shifts will be to make the WP allies a less-reliable element of the Soviet-controlled force and to put a question-mark against the HSK long-stops and the French hastening to shore up the NATO line; factors which will give both players cause to think about whom they allocate to what tasks and where. The WP player is likely to find the shoe pinch that bit more as he needs every division he can lay hands on as either a spearhead or a reliable reserve, and the presence of doubtful units is a luxury he could do without.



A Variable Air Supremacy Table

The Air Supremacy Table in 'Fulda Gap' is an abstract rendering of the struggle for the air above the battlefields, he who gains a sufficient degree of air supremacy being able to penetrate to the battle and bring on air units to support the ground forces or to make nuclear strikes. Each side can secretly allocate up to six Air Supremacy Points (ASP) per turn, at a cost in Victory Points (VP), the player who exceeds the other being able to throw the dice in the hope of then being able to move a counter along the Air Supremacy track until at last he reaches the point where he can place air units on the map.

Unfortunately, as I remarked in my review of the game in 'Phoenix' 13, the system advocated in the game is rather simplistic; the basic system allows both sides an infinite number of ASP, allowing each player to allocate six per turn as long as he reckons that he can stand the loss of VPs and therefore tending to stalemate. The rules do give an alternative whereby both sides have a finite number of ASP but suggests that this is done by giving the Soviet player X points and the NATO player 2X; quite apart from the fact that there may be some difficulty in deciding on just what X will be, the Soviet player may feel that this scheme is just a little weighted in favour of his opponent! Having since played 'The Next War', in which a separate game-phase features the struggle for the air, using actual air units and giving one a much better insight into SPI's thinking and rationale, I offer a variable air table for 'Fulda Gap' which is simple to apply, reflects the balance between Soviet quantity and NATO quality, and still brings some element of chance into the air battle.



As you can see, the table is very simple, each side rolling at the start of Turn 1 to determine how much airpower the ground commanders can expect to be allocated to that sector of the front. The higher the roll the more squadrons are deemed to be assigned; at each level NATO have the edge, reflecting better pilot training, better avionics and a higher sortie-rate per squadron. Before someone says "Well, what about the 6-roll then?", remember that only the Soviet player may allocate ASP on Turn 1 and must therefore spread his butter on a bigger slice of bread. The effect is to make both sides think more about allocation of ASP and about second-guessing the enemy and also offers the choice of trying to seize supremacy by flinging in the points or of denying it to one's opponent by feeding in just enough to prevent him from having a significant excess on any turn.

Suggested variants are:-

1. NATO add 1 to the die-roll when using the Advance Warning scenario; the Warsaw Pact when using the Main Effort option.
2. On Turn 5 both sides throw two Average dice to determine air reinforcements available; the figure obtained is the number of extra ASP to be added to the original figure. However no more than 6 ASP may be used per turn even if this means that there will be some left over at the game's end. (To use normal dice tends to yield ridiculously lavish figures when two are used, peanuts when one is used).
3. Instead of rolling dice each player picks a numbered chit (1-6 series) from a cup, keeps his draw secret and retains the chit. The air battle goes on as normal and in Turn 3 or 4 both sides reveal their draw — pilots' reports and Intelligence having yielded an indication of what is on the other side of the hill. Use two sets of chits; most of you should have two or three sets kicking around as several games include them in the counter-mix as an alternative to the die.

There, then, is my suggested ASP table. It's use, combined with Variant 1 helps to reflect the balance of NATO quality against Soviet quantity and introduces those factors of uncertainty and "what's he up to?" which spice a wargame. It is not the last word — I am no air warrior and, as anyone who has played against me can testify, I am no mathematician either — and if any reader can improve on my efforts I, for one, will be most grateful.

'FULDA GAP' VARIABLE AIR TABLE

Die-Roll	ASP ALLOCATION	
	NATO	Soviet
1	24	18
2	27	21
3	30	24
4	33	27
5	33	30
6	36	36
7	42	40

Use of Nuclear Weapons

The present nuclear rules not only place no restrictions or penalties on the use of nuclear weapons but they also seem to assume that when the rules are invoked both sides will start blasting away at each other; this is the interpretation I put on the remarks about pre-plotting in Rules 24.5 and 25.3, both of which refer to the use of nuclears on Turn 1 and the necessary planning for this. A more realistic postulation is, in my opinion, that both sides would hold this card in reserve and would be unwilling to play it except in case of absolute necessity. The Soviet attitude is not easy to assess, one school of NATO thought holding that if they are prepared to use gas they are prepared to use tactical nuclear weapons as a matter of course, while another believes that the Soviets have confidence in the battle-winning power of their massed armoured formations. NATO is very likely to avoid the early use of nuclears but would be prepared to use them, after giving due warning to Russia, if the Soviet advance was succeeding and likely to continue to succeed.

I will come back to this aspect soon enough; now for Matthew Foster's views. He makes the very sensible point that there should be a factor which deters a trigger-happy player from using all the warheads he can on every turn he can. This factor is the simple real-life fact that even a low-yield tactical nuclear weapon is destructive, its chief agents being searing heat and a Pentecostal blast to produce concentric devastation, destruction and then severe damage within the radius of effect of its warhead. Thus a nuclear-prone attacker captures rubble, a nuclear-prone defender holds rubble: if that rubble was formerly Frankfurt or Wurzburg or some other industrial or communications centre the winner will have sawn off his own toes. The simulation; he who uses nuclear weapons loses Victory Points (i.e. his opponent gains them) on the scale of X per warhead used. Matthew Foster's suggested X is:

2 VP per warhead used in an Urban hex
1 " " " " " a City hex
½ " " " " " any other hex (drop fractions after totalling losses)

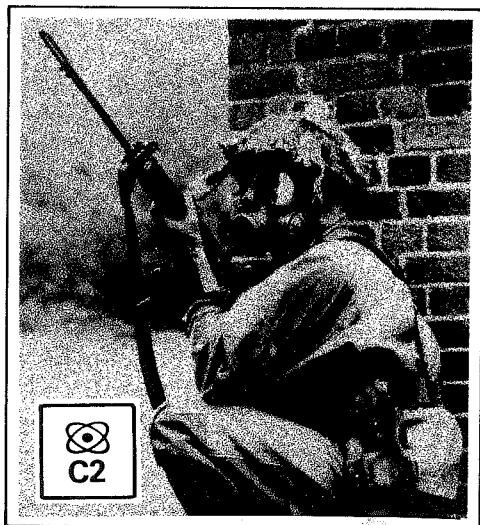
My view is this is a first-rate idea but that it could be taken further: I suggest that cost in VP is *trebled* to 6, 3 and 1½. Consider. On Foster's scale one nukes a unit in a city hex, using four warheads to make fairly sure of a damaging hit. The cost in VP is 4. *but* if the target unit is destroyed the attacker is likely to pick up between 10 and 16 VP, even if the unit's value is not doubled due to its being destroyed without a line of communications: net gain, 6 to 12 VP. The Foster scale is too low in comparison to the VP scale of the game; make the user pay much more for his fireworks — if he destroys Wurzburg in order to save it he should be made to realise something of the consequences of such an attitude. This should deter even the player who carries on in a way which makes one thankful he isn't a real-life commander or the type who plays the game-system for all it's worth and **** military reality. Another suggestion of mine, borrowed from 'Next War' is a one-time additional loss of VP levied on the player who first resorts to nuclear weapons — say 30 VP.

Foster also points out that the use of nuclears will be a 'political' decision and offers a suggestion for the simulation of the willingness or otherwise of the politicals. Quite simple: prior to Turn 1 roll *one* die — this roll affects both players. On a roll of 1, nuclears are available from Turn 1, on 2-3 from Turn 2, on 3-5 from Turn 3, on 6 from Turn 4. Foster assumes that both sides will then start nuking away, but I cannot agree; the weapons are *available*, yes, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they have to be used.

Which brings me back to what I said at the beginning of this section. The basic nuclear rules appear to assume an immediate and bipartisan resort to nuclear weapons on Turn 1, both players being allowed to pre-plot allocation of warheads. But how can this pre-plotting be tailored to fit a situation wherein one or both players are determined to avoid the use of the horrid things save *in extremis* or in retaliation to a strike by the other side: bear in mind that, under Rule 19.0 — Procedure, "warheads not used during plotted game-turns are automatically expended." The solution adopted by me seems to be both simple and justifi-

liable — scrap the necessity to pre-plot while keeping to the restriction on quantity and types of warheads laid down in the appropriate scenario rules. After all, why should plotting the use of X quantity of warheads for a turn mean that X is automatically expended? If a company commander on active service says in his orders for a particular operation that the scale of ammunition will be X belts per GPMG, Y magazines of 20 rounds per SLR, Z magazines of 30 rounds per SMG and ZZ grenades per section, that does not entail the expenditure of these munitions; if the company returns from the operation not having fired a shot (A very frequent occurrence in internal security and counter-insurgency operations, I assure you) then X, Y, Z and ZZ are returned to the ammunition compound. The same for the bigger bangs, surely?

As a matter of interest 'Next War' does not require expenditure of nuclears plotted and not used, although it does have a pre-plotting rule. However in 'Moves' 42, page 14, Stephen Donaldson writing on NW — which he did much to develop — admits that pre-plotting is a 'dead letter' as both sides will, once the game goes nuclear, allocate the maximum warheads available to them as they are able to keep those not used. The extension of this to Fulda Gap seems sensible.



Enhanced Radiation Weapons

A nuclear warhead is a destructive weapon, its characteristics being heat, blast and radiation; there can also be fall-out. The searing heat produced by the fire-ball will set buildings on fire, explode exposed ammunition and inflict fatal burns on exposed human beings: the tremendous blast follows seconds after the heat, a great, thrusting wind that races first outwards and then back as air pours into the vacuum created by the explosion — it is often this second blast that pushes tottering structures into collapse: the radiation, over in a split second, consists chiefly of gamma rays which are fatal to exposed human beings if absorbed in sufficient quantity. Fall-out is produced when the fire-ball touches the ground and sucks dust and debris up into itself; this dust and debris, now radio-active, drifts downwind for miles, settling as it goes. The bigger the warhead and the lower the point of burst above Ground Zero (GZ) the more likely the fireball is to touch.

And of all these effects the two most potent and immediate are heat and blast: the least potent is radiation, dug-in troops and troops in armoured vehicles being unlikely to receive serious, let alone fatal, doses even at surprisingly close ranges to GZ. This means that to achieve a knock-out blow in a given area your warhead has to have marked heat and blast effects, effects which will destroy or seriously damage *everything* within their radius of effect, not merely military targets.

As a result much thought has gone into low yield warheads, certainly as low as 1 kiloton (KT) — the Hiroshima bomb was 20 KT — and possibly lower still; these low-yield weapons are still very destructive within their effective radius, even though that radius is much less. In addition just as much thought has gone into low yield weapons designed for a particular task, which brings us to the Enhanced Radiation Weapon, better known as the Neutron Bomb. The target: formations of armoured

fighting vehicles massed for the breakthrough or for the follow-up after that breakthrough. The problem: find a warhead which will knock out these formations without devastating thousands upon thousands of square yards of territory, certainly on one's own side of the Iron Curtain, probably that of West Germany. A 20 KT weapon will probably knock out a massed tank division but it will also obliterate much else besides and, if exploded at a height suitable for mass destruction of the division, produce fall-out. A 5 KT weapon will be much less destructive but may well not deliver a knock-out blow, especially as an armoured vehicle gives considerable protection from its radiation. A cluster of exactly-placed 1 KT weapons might be the best choice, but is simply not feasible.

The ERW is a warhead which, in proportion to its size, produces little heat and blast (about 17% of that of 'conventional' nuclear weapons of the same KT value, according to Matthew) but *intense* neutron-radiation over a well-defined area; it is this last that is the killer. The neutron flux lasts an infinitesimally small fraction of a second and is quickly stopped by nitrogen nuclei in the air: that of a 1KT ERW will start to decline steeply at one mile from GZ and will be ineffective at 1½ miles. But effective neutron radiation is *not* stopped by armour — 70% passes through and the 30% held in the armour turns it radio-active, causing it to emit gamma rays. Armoured vehicles exposed to the neutron-flux become contaminated and stay contaminated for a considerable time. Physical destruction, on the other hand, is much less and is confined within a limited area: a diagram in 'The United States War Machine' indicates severe damage up to 400 yards, some damage up to 800 and thereafter nothing.

This makes the ERW a potent weapon against, say, a tank division deployed for a breakthrough and Matthew Foster has devised an ingenious set of rules to simulate its use. He stated that "these changes are strongly based on fact and doctrine" and let us take him at his word: presumably, like Charles Kamps, he has inside knowledge of his subject. Certainly the ERW rules he offers seem to be soundly enough based on the ERW's supposed characteristics. As a matter of interest the ERW rules incorporated in 'Mech War 2' indicate radii of damage and of radiation similar to those which I have outlined above.

What I have done is to take Foster's rather 'chatty' and discursive presentation of his rules and rephrase them in SPI style. He fails to state whether resolution of attacks and contamination (which affects *units*) is by individual units or by the hex; taking Rule 19.2 as a precedent I have deemed that each unit in the target hex is rolled for separately. The restriction on use of ERW is Foster's: the optional rule whereby the NATO player rolls for authorisation to use ERW, the die roll being affected by the level of Warsaw Pact success, is my own. It was devised to make the ERW a chancier option for the NATO player, having regard to its effects on play. In addition (the fault is mine) I should have made it clear that the penalty of loss of VP per warhead used does not apply to the use of ERW and that the rules for authorisation are quite independent of the 'political' die-roll for other nuclear weapons. Now read on!

Clear the Track: Let the Bulgine Run

A game was played using Charles Kamps' UTU table and Matthew Foster's ERW rules; the scenario used was the Tripwire and the Soviet player was allocated no extra units. It went as follows:-

Turn 1. Nothing unusual in this turn; apart from the attacks on the brigade of 2 (GER) Division near Göttingen and on the 11th (US) Armoured Cavalry at Fulda (both of which were successful) there was no contact between the opposing forces.

Turn 2. Despite some delay caused by the 11th Armoured Cavalry the Warsaw Pact advance was progressing famously. Contact had been made with NATO forces east of Giessen, in the central area and at Würzburg, and the improved Soviet UTU table had proved to be just what the (Soviet) doctor had ordered; most units were at normal CF, with several Doubled results — one entire tank division had double CF. The NATO line was holding well at Giessen, where no major offensive

had yet developed, but in the central area it was a very different story. Here the Americans had shown up badly, the 3rd Armoured and (incomplete) 8th Mechanised Divisions having been hit hard and bounced out of their positions, leaving the crossroads at Hex 3222 — about 30 miles east of Frankfurt — in Soviet control. Worse, the two divisions were in no shape to withstand a further assault, judged on their showing, and a Soviet breakthrough to Frankfurt by Day 3 of the war seemed likely. As one of the objects of this game was to test the ERW rules in action it was agreed that the use of ERW would be brought forward to Turn 3: it was feared that otherwise there might be few or no US units left to use them!

Turn 3. Maintaining a holding operation on the Würzburg front, the Warsaw Pact forces closed with the NATO defence along the line Giessen-Aschaffenburg, the main thrust being aimed at Frankfurt. Then came the ERW strike.

KAPOW!!! Oh, my.

3rd and 8th Divisions, backed by the 10th Artillery Group, launched attacks on five Soviet-occupied hexes, their targets the tank divisions. Two strikes had little immediate effect but elsewhere a tank regiment was eliminated and several others lost steps and fell back in disorder. Heavy contamination of most units, even those which had suffered no initial loss, boded ill for the maintenance of the momentum of the assault. Nonetheless the Soviets pressed home their attacks as best they could: in the north the Germans were pushed back to Giessen itself and were pinned all along the front while in the central area those Soviet units still effective were able to drive a salient to Offenbach But the contamination proved to be deadly: at the turn's end five tank regiments were gone, mostly as a result of Contamination results on top of step-losses caused by the strike itself; and four tank divisions had lost divisional integrity — four out of six, including an unreliable East German one.

Turns 4 and 5. The Warsaw Pact did its best in the north but the Germans were tough and hard to shift: in the centre there was no question of continuing the assault for the time being — indeed, some of the advanced Soviet units were cut off; at Würzburg a second, lesser series of ERW strikes nullified the threat to the city. At the end of Turn 5 a NATO counter-offensive in the centre had broken the WP front beyond repair, the Polish reinforcements displaying little stomach for a war always unpopular and now a ghastly fiasco for the Pact — the VP score stood at 291, a decisive victory for NATO. On the evening of D+4 the Soviet commander on the Central Front asked for the armistice, well knowing his position to be hopeless. The rest is still a nine days' wonder the popular uprisings in Eastern Europe the restorations of the ancient kingdoms of Poland and Bohemia the reunification of Germany under the Hohenzollern crown and, a fitting climax, that moment a few months after the armistice when the pealing of the bells of St. Basil's Cathedral and the thunder of the guns from the Kremlin told the waiting multitudes in Restoration Square — and the world — that, after sixty-three years, a Romanoff sat once more on the ancient throne of his fathers.....

OK, OK, I'm awake now. Shame really, I was having the most *marvellous* dream.

Summing Up

A revision of the UTU table certainly gives spice to 'Fulda Gap' though, as I have shown, to adopt Charles Kamps' alternative neat gives the Soviet forces too much of an advantage over the Americans, so much so that, given no *deus ex machina* in the form of ERW, the Tripwire Scenario is all too likely to be a Warsaw Pact romp, the more so as the French reinforcements are mostly poor-quality. However the Kamps table is certainly a basis: there is no need to integrate the relative values of NATO and WP forces but each can be put on a sliding scale of their own, with the Soviet units the equal of the US for a more balanced game. Polish and East German units should then be two to three columns lower than Russian in order to restrict their usefulness to the WP player. On the NATO side the HSK really should come behind the regular forces and some thought can be given to lowering some of the French divisions by one notch.



(27.0) Enhanced Radiation Weapon Rules

GENERAL RULE

Enhanced Radiation Weapons (ERW) are available to the NATO player only and are used by US units only. They are available in two forms, namely Divisional Sticks, supposedly fired by divisional artillery's 155mm guns, and Artillery Sticks, fired by Corps and Army Lance missile batteries deemed to be included in the artillery units. Each US division has one stick and each US artillery unit has two. A stick may be fired into one (or more) enemy-occupied hex(es), attacking each unit in the target hex(es); effects are possible step-loss and also possible contamination of the unit(s), not the hex, results being rolled for on the standard Nuclear CRT (19.24) and Contamination Table (19.33). ERW have no effect on units, whether enemy or friendly, in hexes adjacent to the target hex. There are certain restrictions on the use of ERW sticks.

CASES

(27.1) TYPES OF STICKS AND THEIR USE

There are two types of ERW stick, reflecting the provision of warheads at divisional artillery and corps artillery level. Corps artillery sticks have greater range and effects.

(27.11) *US Divisional Sticks.* Div. artillery is deployed in general support of brigades and thus all US brigades have ERW capacity. At the instant of use of a divisional stick all brigades of that division may each make an ERW attack on one adjacent enemy hex. Divisional sticks are completely expended at the moment of use, whether fired by one brigade or all three. Each attack is resolved on column 3 of Table (19.24); contamination is resolved on column 4 of Table (19.33).

(27.12) *US Corps Artillery Sticks.* Each US artillery unit may attack one enemy-occupied hex which is within its 4-hex range and which is adjacent to any US unit. Artillery have two sticks, to be used in separate game-turns: when an artillery stick is fired that artillery unit may not fire FPF in the same game-turn. Attacks are resolved on column 4 of Table (19.24), contamination on column 5 of Table (19.33).

(27.13) *Use of Sticks.* Divisional sticks are used *defensively* only, i.e. they are fired during the Soviet player-turn, *after* Soviet initial movement but *before* Soviet combat. Artillery units' first sticks are also fired *defensively*, i.e. in the same manner as Divisional sticks; however second sticks may be fired either *defensively* or in the Nuclear phase of a subsequent turn.

(27.2) ATTACK PROCEDURE

(27.21) The NATO player rolls one die for each unit in the target hex, using the appropriate column of Table (19.24). Any step-losses inflicted are applied immediately.

(27.22) Any unit which suffers a step-loss must also be retreated one hex and disrupted. Effects of disruption are as laid down in Case (5.4) except that they continue until the end of the *game-turn*. This rule reflects the chaos caused by an immediately-effective ERW strike.

(27.23) ERW strikes have no effect on units in hexes adjacent to the target hex.

(27.24) As ERW strikes can be made only against enemy units adjacent to friendly (US) units, Electronic Warfare has no effect on their results.

(27.3) CONTAMINATION

(27.31) *Resolution.* Whether or not units have suffered step-losses as a result of ERW attack the NATO player rolls one die for each unit in the target hex, using the appropriate column of Table (19.33). This is done immediately after resolution of the ERW attack on that hex and before retreats are implemented. Contamination affects the *units*, not the hex.

(27.32) *Effects of Contamination.* Units in the target hex may suffer contamination levels of 1, 2 or 3. Place the appropriate marker on top of the unit; this marker remains on the unit, even when it moves out of the hex. ERW contamination attacks are resolved at the *end* of the game-turn, during the standard Contamination Removal phase — see Case (17.0) D. Each contaminated unit is rolled for as though attacked by a number of warheads equivalent to the level of contamination and any step-losses are implemented immediately. Contamination has no effect on a unit's ability to move or have combat.

(27.33) *Contamination Removal.* Once contamination attacks have been resolved the level of contamination of a unit automatically goes down 1. Units with a level of 1 have their contamination markers removed.

(27.4) RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF ERW

The use of ERW would require special authority, probably that of the President of the United States. They may not be used before Game-Turn 4.

(27.41) *First Strike Rule.* On the first use of ERW *every* US unit which is in a position to make an ERW attack *must* do so; this means every brigade adjacent to enemy units and every artillery unit within range of an enemy-occupied hex adjacent to a US unit. This reflects "shock" doctrine for initial use of the weapon.

(27.42) Units Not Qualified To Make Attacks.

The 11th Armoured Cavalry, the helicopter unit and the supply units are not divisional units and thus may not make ERW attacks; they may, however, 'spot' for artillery sticks.

(27.5) OPTIONAL AUTHORISATION RULE

The prohibition on use of ERW before Turn 4 is a simplification. Players who wish to use a more flexible response, based on the likely assumption that ERW would be authorised only in a deteriorating situation, may prefer to use the following alternative. This alternative makes use of the numbered FEBA Zones stretching across the map from north to south, normally use only in the D+7 scenario.

(27.51) If units of two or more Soviet divisions have penetrated into FEBA Zone 6 (i.e. the easternmost one) the NATO player may, at the beginning of the next game-turn, roll one die to determine whether or not the use of ERW has been authorised; a die-roll of 6 signifies authorisation. If authorisation is not granted he may roll again at the beginning of each subsequent game-turn; if the die-roll is equal to or greater than the number of the westernmost FEBA Zone penetrated by units of two or more Soviet divisions then the use of ERW is authorised, e.g. if elements of two Soviet divisions have penetrated into FEBA Zone 4 then a die-roll of 4, 5 or 6 triggers authorisation.

(27.52) The NATO player adds 1 to the die-roll for each US combat brigade or artillery unit which has been eliminated.

(27.53) Once authorisation to use ERW is granted it does not have to be rolled for again. The NATO player does not have to use ERW in the turn in which authorisation is obtained, but may make his first strike at his discretion, subject to the provisions in Case (27.41)

The normal nuclear rules become much more realistic if the penalty-for-use-of-warheads is added — and I really recommend trebling Matthew Foster's scale. Moreover the rolling of a die to determine availability brings another element of chance to each scenario — and, after all, war is the province of chance.

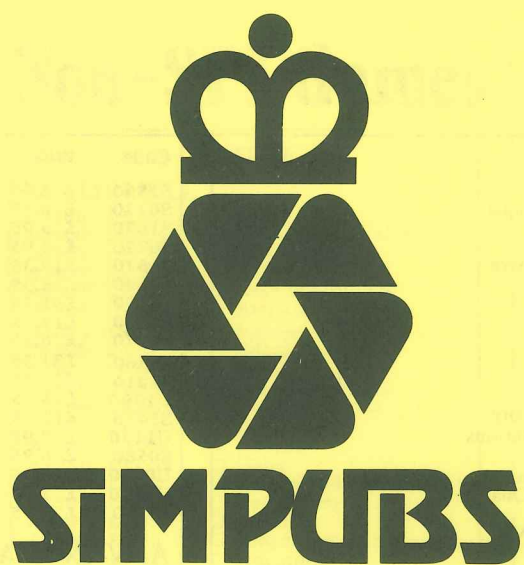
ERW. Foster says, "(Use) may tip play balance: slightly in NATO's favour." Well, yes. Runaway WP victory into NATO decisive victory *could* be construed as a slight alteration of balance: I myself would rate it a bit more strongly but, not being entirely Anglo-Saxon, I lack phlegm. Seriously, ERWs seem to be a NATO battle-winner unless the NATO player rolls some very bad dice, and their introduction turns a 'Fulda Gap' session into a simulation to the exclusion of any more game. But it is very well worth trying! I recommend, however, that the Soviet Main Effort forces are added because the WP player is going to need every division he can get, and I recommend too that my own invention, the optional rule for authorisation to use ERW, is used as well to bring in that element of chance. After all, the President might get cold feet and delay until it is too late or nearly too late.

Charles Kamps and Matthew Foster have suggested some interesting spices to enhance an already proven dish and I hope that my little extra stirring has helped too. My thanks to 'Moves' and to RAS for letting me hold the spoon.



Footnote: Since starting to write this article I have read Peter Hatton's letter on (inter alia) the ERW in 'Phoenix' 20 and have noted with interest his remark about 'berserk Russians' with several days' fight in them before the Reaper comes. As he does not give his source for this I am unable to check it; however I do not think that bouts of vomiting and diarrhoea — part of the effects of radiation sickness — would be conducive to berserker activities. Moreover, to fight on the European battlefield in a tank or motor rifle division one must use one's vehicles and I cannot imagine anyone being willing to continue to use a radio-active steel box which will worsen his condition still more or which will turn a nasty dose of rads into a fatal one: moreover the electromagnetic pulse of the explosion would have knocked out the electronic equipment in vehicles within the effective neutron-flux and possibly beyond. Replacement vehicles then? No, Soviet logistics do not cater for re-equipping smashed-up units; these are simply leap-frogged by fresh ones.

Parting Shot: Despite my gamer's evaluation of ERW as a game-mechanic and my little flight of royalist fancy I am only too well aware of what an unpleasant toy the ERW is and I hope that we never have occasion to use it, although I am also aware that its use would be in lieu, not of conventional anti-tank defences, but of much more destructive nuclear weapons. Soldiers, especially if they have studied the enemy, actual or potential, tend to see the man — and fellow-soldier — inside the alien uniform rather more clearly than many a philanthropist, even though travel and experience have given them cause enough to detest the system for which he bears his shield.



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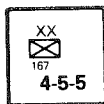
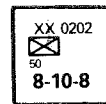
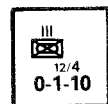
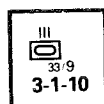
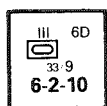
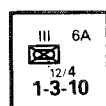
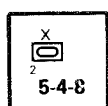
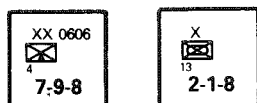
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A REVIEW BY PAUL KING



ARMY GROUP SOUTH QUAD



In this article I would like not only to review this quad, but also give some guides to play so as to explain and exploit the exclusive rules found in each game.

As with all SPI Quadrigames, a complete set consists of four small games all linked by a common game system. The **Army Group South Quad** covers four campaigns in the Ukraine during W.W.II and uses the **Panzergruppe Guderian (P.G.G.)** game system. Each game has 200 counters, a 17"x22" map, short rules and the complete set includes an historical article giving a background on each battle. I am sure that all but the novice will have heard of **P.G.G.** and the games that have followed it, such as **Kharkov** and **Drive on Stalingrad**, so for SPI to produce a quad based on it seems a natural progression. However, the game system has been used so often, are we to be faced with nothing but a rehash of old ideas? In other words, is this quad the dying gasps of a rather tired game system?

For those of you not familiar with the design, each player moves his units, attacks and then moves any mechanised units a second time. However, during the two movement phases units can conduct overrun—a "mobile combat", which displaces units leaving them disorganised until the following game turn. Combat losses are taken as retreats or strength (step) losses. Soviet units are initially untried, i.e. their strengths are unknown. The standard rules are concerned with the above, plus supply. For the Soviet player there are headquarter units, each with a supply radius within which units must lie if they are to function properly in attacks and defense. German supply is much simpler, being traced to a map edge by road, rail or by country hexagons alone.

The exclusive rules folders build on the above or alter them radically to suit a particular scenario. I will look at each, not in historical order, but rather in order of convenience, for two games have air rules and will be left till last.

KIEV 1941

Kiev deals with the German encirclement of a large Russian force which gave them the entire Ukraine on a plate. The Russian begins on a river

line in a huge curve; it is up to the German player to turn this curve into a closed circle! From the north comes Guderian, fresh from the battle of Smolensk, whilst another Panzergruppe led by Kleist heads in from the south. Players who know the game system will rub their hands with glee; Panzers will cut through any defensive line, and you can then laugh all the way to Moscow, right? wrong.

Panzer divisions are given divisional integrity — if stacked together the regiments of a division double their attack and defense strengths. However, the panzers are not at full strength, attrition has taken place (especially with Guderian) and the regiments are brittle — a step loss on the armour regiment reduces attack strength greatly, whilst a loss on the panzer grenadiers will lower defense strength. The panzers of Kleist are much stronger, but do not appear until half way through the game as reinforcements. Immediately one can see that the German player has problems. Added to this is the fact that units pushed back as a result of overrun are not disrupted; since the combat Results Table will only give, on average, a pushback of one hex, no generous advantage is procured by trying overrun.

Fortunately the Soviet has no mechanised movement phase which is a small compensation. Also, the personalities of Guderian and Kleist are present as units, strong on attack, and can be used to overstack. They are very useful in making "super panzers" which can move with relative impunity.

Kiev has many other features specific to it which help to give the feel of the old style Russian Army. Some Soviet units are marked with an asterisk and in a combat they must retreat instead of taking step losses. This "battle panic" includes units stacked with them so they all retreat or, if encircled, are all eliminated even if step losses could normally have preserved some units.

In the middle game the Soviet is restricted by a Stalin Directive by which the units can only advance into the salient or stand and fight — Hitler wasn't the only one for crazy orders apparently. Towards the end of the game this ruling is a variable, but it can still damage any plans the Soviet player may have.

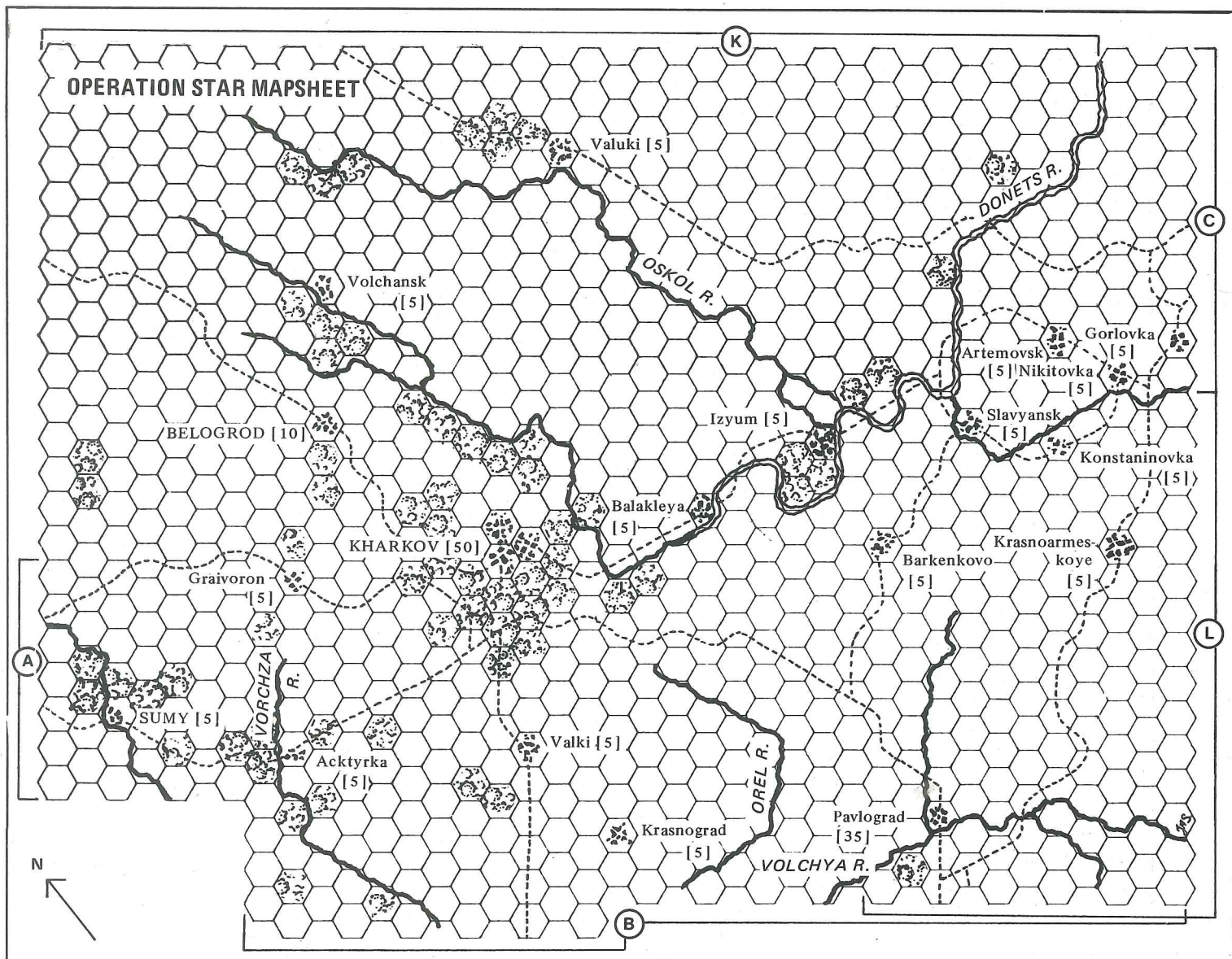
One advantage for the Soviet is that in a retreat the opponent always retreats units, so the Soviet should always unstack panzer divisions into separate hexes. This means no overruns for them next turn for all units in an overrun must start from the same hex. Another useful feature is that the major river along which most units lie prevent locking zones of control and this means units can move on their own side of the river at will. Thus withdrawals to new defensive lines can be made and units can concentrate for the occasional counterattack.

German Tactics.

First of all the city of Kiev cannot be taken immediately so most of the action should take place in the north where Guderian's units come on. However, a steady pressure should be applied all along the line. When Kleist does arrive he should be moved north to close the ring. Panzer forces should always be concentrated; if they are spread thinly the Soviet can easily soak up their attacks. Towns are important, so any attack should include one of these as a bonus.

Soviet Tactics.

The Russian player has a hard job here, especially when the Stalin Directive begins to mess things up. Kiev will be lost eventually, and sending reinforcements there is a waste of time. Reserves should be built up on a minor river which cuts across the map and, while being defensible, also allows units to fall back on it. The biggest bonus is the fact that overrun units are not disrupted, and any German unit pushing into the line should be surrounded and destroyed.



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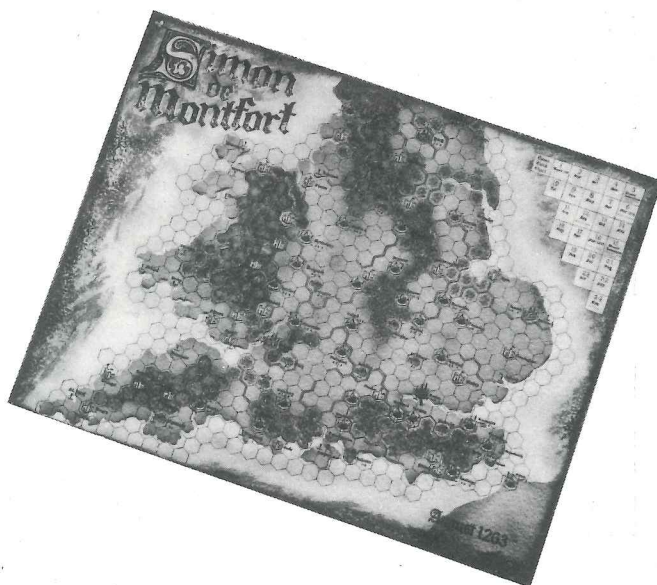
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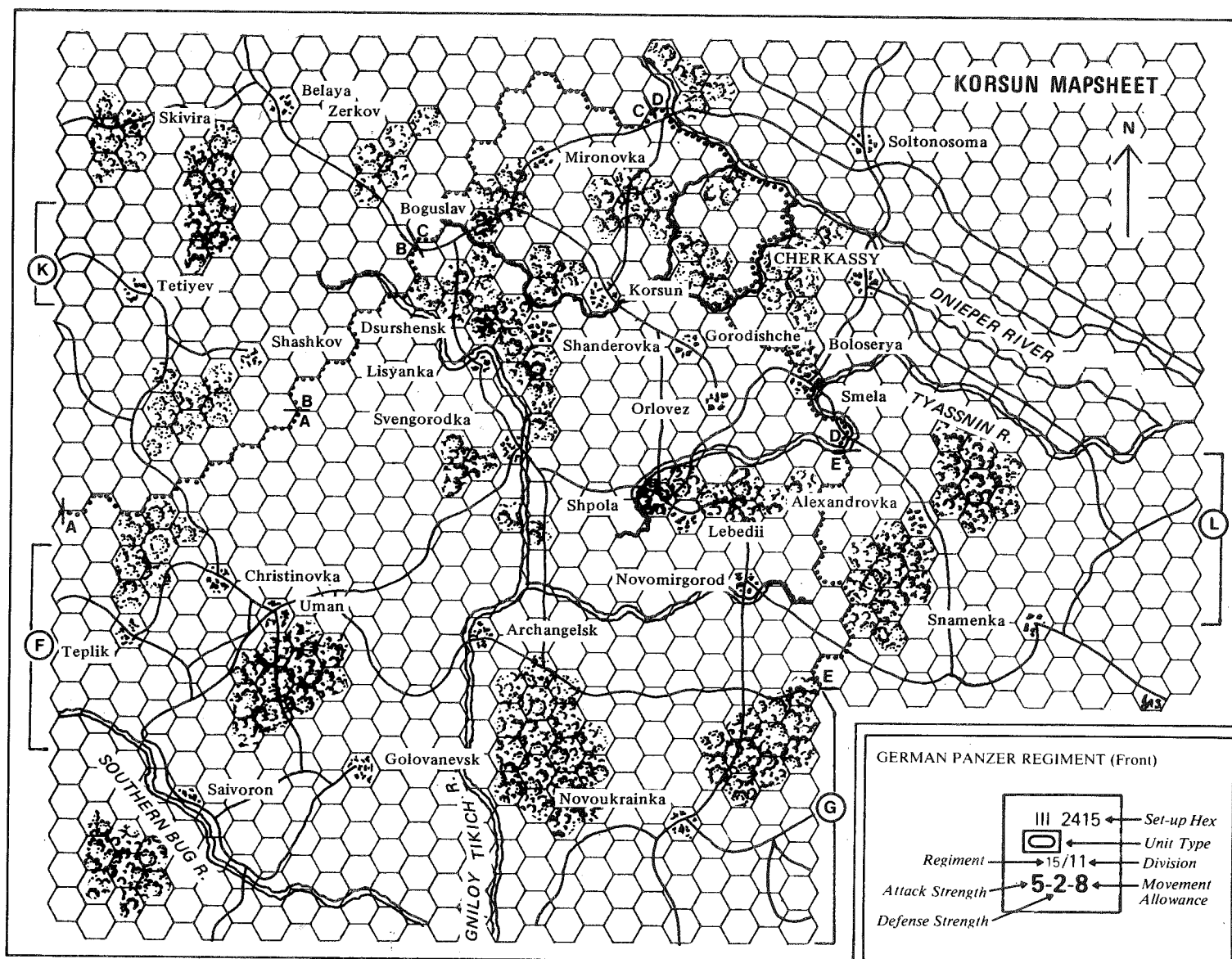
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All in all, *Kiev* is a pleasant game, and is a good introduction to the game system. One added bonus is a play by mail module: whilst you may have no desire for this, it does give the historical reinforcement schedule, so a purely historical game can be played for an added bit of variety. Perhaps the only criticism of *Kiev* is the map — everything is a shade of blue and concentrating on it for a long time is the best way to a headache. Apart from rivers being blue, marshes are the same shade — and there are a lot of marshes! — cities are a dark blue and roads a grey-blue; all very off putting when you realise that the 18th Panzer Division has been sailing down a river at double speed for the last two moves! The other three maps do not suffer so badly, but it is a problem easily overcome if the roads had been black, brown or even red.

game the Germans are dotted everywhere with a massive tide of Russian units running towards them.

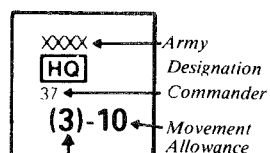
Since it is winter, all minor rivers are frozen. There is little to stop the Soviet advance — or is there?

The German player in this game has a number of devices to help him out. First, all the units of a panzer division need not be stacked for integrity so they can be spread thinly to hold the line. Second, defensive terrain is supplied by the Donets River (a major river) over half the map; the other half, especially around Kharkov, is heavily wooded. Thirdly, in the last three game turns the thaw sets in and all units move at half speed — this can aid the German player for the Soviet must get to the south-west side of the board to stand a good chance of winning. Perhaps the greatest advantage is the ability to disengage from Soviet zones of control at a cost of two movement points: this allows a moving defence line to be set up, dotting from defensive terrain to defensive terrain.

Russian Guards units and corps size units have step losses which can be useful, but beware of the offensive mode rules. Because corps are so large, brigades are the only units able to stack with them; this can be very useful when step losses are required as a brigade unit in a stack provides a 'soak off' for the larger units.

The rules, however, make one big error. In the Victory Conditions the Soviet gets an automatic victory if he gets 30 strength points off map area A in the north west. This is a German reinforcement area, and surely to cut off Army Group Don, units must be sent south and south west. A glance at the map gives an area L in the south which is not mentioned in the rules. It is here that units should be sent, not to area A. Added to this, most of the towns containing victory points are in the south, and Von Manstein's daring armoured thrust came from the south, ready to cut off the Soviet over-extended front. Seen in this light, the game makes sense.

SOVIET HQ UNIT (Front only)



OPERATION STAR 1943.

Operation Star covers a Soviet offensive to retake Kharkov and send units south to cut off Army Group Don in the Ukraine. At the beginning of the

From the Russian point of view, the biggest change comes in the form of supply alterations. H.Q. units can be in one of two conditions, offensive or defensive. All start on the offensive, but can change to a defensive stance — once this is done they cannot revert to the offensive. Units tracing supply to an offensive mode H.Q. are at full strength, but must take step losses in combat. Also such units can only move west, south or south-west. Obviously the Soviet player must think ahead here, or units may be unable to assist in a combat, being too far forward. In the defensive mode a H.Q. can only supply half attack strength to units, they cannot move in the mechanised movement phase, nor can they overrun, but they can move in any direction. If command control is your speciality then I recommend this game as your personal headache!

German Tactics.

Initially the German must retreat to defensive terrain, giving up half of the map. The armoured units, so desperately needed, trickle on from the south, but here they can be conserved and provide a constant thorn in the Soviet flank. By the middle to end game, units can be sent to the relief of Kharkov. By the same token, greater aggression in the south where the victory points lie means more Russian reinforcements are sent there, thus relieving pressure on Kharkov.

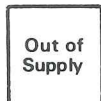
Soviet Tactics.

The Soviet player has an either/or problem; either he goes for an automatic victory by getting 30 in supply strength points off in area L, or he takes Kharkov and as many towns as possible.

If the automatic victory is chosen, the last four or five moves are vital for the mud slows things down. The biggest problem is trying to contain the German panzer thrust in the south.

The second option is often the hardest for not only must the panzers be contained but Kharkov must be cracked open in a heavily wooded area. The trick is to send a few units in defensive mode round the flanks to cut supply by occupying the railroads. Once the German units are out of supply, Kharkov will fall. Particularly if the second option is taken, two competent gamers can have great fun, for it is all so finely balanced.

Weather is handled in a simple but effective way and the Soviet H.Q. business gives the feeling of "drive" which we hear so much about in Soviet doctrine. Perhaps one of the best points of the game is that it is important to differentiate between units of different sizes such as brigades and corps, for each is styled to a particular function. This is not an idle game of "pushing around counters," the pieces of card you move have some meaning to them and care and attention must be given in any attack.



ROSTOV, 1941.

This game has a strategic feel to it; the map covers the entire Donets Basin with Kharkov in the north and Rostov in the south. If this does not convey anything to you, then consider that the map for SPI's Kharkov game could fit in the top left hand quarter of the Rostov map! The game covers the dash to take the communication centre of Rostov in late 1941. The push was stopped by Timoshenko's army in the south, with weather and supply problems helping out.

The Russian has no supply problems, the German does! He must trace supply through seven supply dumps to the western map edge. Each supply dump has a radius of six hexes and a branching tree system of supply soon builds up centred on the few roads. However, as the weather worsens, the supply radius is cut in half, which effectively strangles the German advance.

The weather can be one of three types, clear, moderate or severe. The game map is cut into a northern and southern weather sector, with severe conditions setting in in the north very quickly. Not only does weather affect supply, it interrupts movement by doubling terrain costs.

As if this wasn't bad enough for the German, the Soviet player has the disengagement ruling on his side. This is a great advantage for crumbling defensive lines can be reshaped. Actual disengagement is dependent upon a dice throw with plus and minus modifiers for such features as being faced by armour or only attacked through a river. However, the German cannot follow up; it is annoying to see infantry trip away whilst a panzer division sits cleaning its gun barrels. Without a doubt this could be expanded upon. Admittedly, step losses are often necessary but incongruent events often take place.

Air units are now included and this is where the German can find help. Air units can disrupt rail movement, etc., as in PGG, and they can also air supply units or even protect supply dumps from attack. By the same token, the Soviet air marker can only be used to raise combat odds or disrupt supply dumps — if the German player is careful, the latter is impossible.

If the picture for the German player looks gloomy, the Victory Conditions make it even worse. Points are awarded for the capture of towns and cities only, destroyed Soviet units are used as replacements for step losses or are put in the reserves pool for re-use. Without a doubt, this game is a tough nut to crack.

German Tactics.

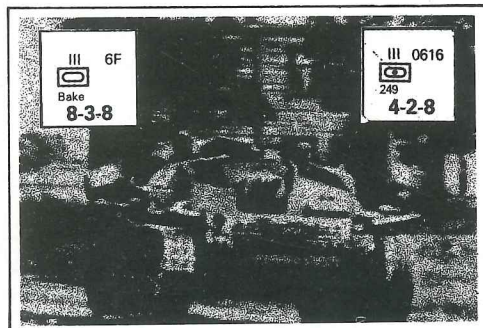
By the end of the game the German must take Kharkov, Stalino and Taganrog, plus having a few units on the far bank of the Donets, thus securing a Soviet tactical victory. I prefer to call this a draw. Weather is a serious problem, so most of the armour

should be sent south where the weather stays better for longer. Also, most of the supply dumps should be here in the south so as to help the over-extended line when the bad weather does arrive. A continuous front is needed to prevent Soviet attacks in the tender rear supply areas.

Soviet Tactics.

The disengagement rules can be used to good advantage for whilst the German tries to attack the equivalent of a slippery eel, a new defensive line can be built up on the Kalmius River, hinged on Stalino. In the north there are plenty of units to defend Kharkov in the heavily wooded terrain. Also, as the weather deteriorates, the German may leave tiny supply 'chinks' in his line — these should be exploited to the full.

Without a doubt this is an historical game, the German supply and the weather rules provide this. An optional weather table is given, but you can get severe weather on game turn two in the south. Obviously it is better to stick to history with this one. However, the Victory Conditions should be taken with a pinch of salt and modified as required; any player should be satisfied with a draw in this one.



KORSUN, 1944.

Next to Kiev this is my favourite in the quad for it deals with a pocket forming in reverse, the Germans are on the inside this time! At the beginning of the game the Germans have a tiny foothold across the Dnieper, with long flanks running south (see map). Hitler wanted the foothold for a future offensive, so when the Soviets attacked the flanks in force a pocket was bound to form.

To reflect Hitler's "hold" orders, the units in the front line are fairly restricted in their movements, thus the pocket will form. Added to this, some Soviet units are "supported" for the first two game turns; this ruling doubles attack strength so once again things look grim for the German.

Fortunately the German player is assisted by integrity, which allows mechanised units to un-stack but double on defense. There is even integrity for infantry divisions if stacked in one hex — combat odds are reduced on being attacked. Over-stacking is permissible for special units such as the Baek Heavy Tank regiment and numerous Assault Gun (Sturmgeschütz) regiments.

Perhaps the biggest disadvantage for the German lies in the weather rules. Whilst half the game is spent in snow conditions, which allow normal movement, etc., the other half is spent in mud. As usual this means restrictions — half movement rate and no mechanised movement phase. Although this upsets the Russians as well, the German tank reinforcements come on in the mud and it's a slow haul to relieve that shrinking pocket.

Disengagement can be used by the German, but units cannot re-enter an enemy zone of control that turn. An alternative, called delay, is also available — one unit of a stack is left behind to allow the others to attack, or plug a gap, elsewhere. This latter is very useful and can often help in a desperate situation.

The air rules are quite interesting for the German player can use air markers to supply the pocketed units. However, on first doing so the German units are given "Heavy Equipment" markers — effectively digging in. These markers double defense strength but if a unit moves twice it loses this advantage and is termed out of supply permanently, nor can it attack. Air units can also be used for combat odds changes.

The Soviet player is no longer troubled by untried unit status, all units are of a proven, standardised strength, and Corps units have four step losses. H.Q. units are either active or inactive, and in any game turn only a few H.Q.'s can be active. Being inactive means that units tracing supply to such an HQ cannot attack, only defend. Active status naturally allows attacks. Since some H.Q.'s have a supply radius of six hexes there is no real problem except for the middle game when only one H.Q. can be active — a problem just when the German reinforcements arrive!

German Tactics.

On setting up, units should be stacked within one hex of the start line. By a careful bit of juggling everything can get integrity bonuses. For the first few turns step losses should be taken rather than ground lost, it can be an advantage later on. Perhaps one of the biggest temptations is to send mechanised units into the bulge to relieve pressure; this is fatal for once inside they are stuck and moving them in a Heavy Equipment status will burn them up very quickly. Armour, assault guns, etc., should be kept in reserve to crack open the pocket as soon as it forms, pulling the Soviets off balance at a delicate time. Naturally withdrawing, delaying and disengaging to make use of terrain goes without saying.

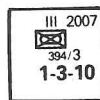
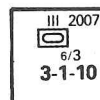
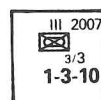
Soviet Tactics.

By careful concentration of tank corps a pocket will form; there is no need to spread units along the line, for the German can hardly move anyway. Both the players have three air counters; however, the German must use one for supply in the pocket — he is a fool if he does not. So, during the mud turns when air power is used, judicious use of the third Soviet air unit is needed to get a good combat results shift. To prevent the Germans relieving the pocket, use should be made of the Gniloy Tikich, a major river, to hold the German up.

The game does favour the Soviets slightly but such rules as delay, integrity and supply to pocketed units help the German a great deal. To get a draw the German cannot sit in a defensive posture all the time, he must show his teeth occasionally so as to obtain a few victory points for Soviet step losses. Meanwhile, the Soviet has the problem of H.Q. status and whether to reduce the pocket or stop the reinforcements getting through — all very tricky.

At the beginning of this review I posed the question of whether the game system was worn out or not. Without a doubt it is not. Each game has its own subtleties; Kiev with a modified overrun system, Operation Star with Offensive/Defensive modes for Soviet H.Q.'s, Rostov with a good system for Soviet disengagement and German supply, Korsun with integrity for infantry divisions, no Soviet untried units and a superb air supply situation. Weather is dealt with in a simple way in the games, often providing the make or break of the scenario.

What I would like to see is a bigger game using some of the better points of this quad. As an example, why not have active/inactive status with offensive/defensive modes for Soviet H.Q.'s? The disengagement idea could be expanded on from Rostov and greatly improved as could the air rules in general. This quad has certainly churned up some new ideas, let's hope they can be improved upon, the result would be well worth it.



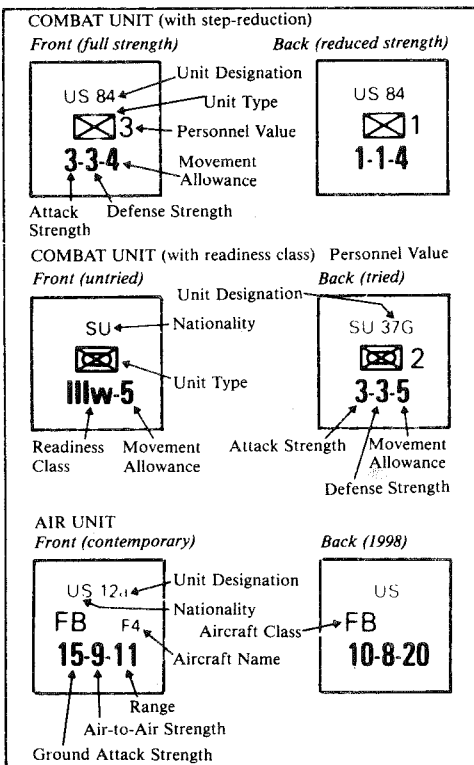
OBJECTIVE: MOSCOW

A.J. SARKER

Objective: Moscow is a divisional-level simulation dealing with a hypothetical invasion of the Soviet Union either in the contemporary period or twenty years hence. There are two campaign games to choose from — the contemporary game and the 1998 game — and three one-map present-day scenarios.

The Map and Counters:

The four 22" x 35" map sheets join up to portray the whole of the Soviet Union and much of China. The area covered extends from Belgium in the West to Alaska in the East. Due to the map projection used, each hex is equal in size and represents sixty kilometres. Unlike many other SPI games, all the charts and tables used in the game are printed in both the rules booklet and on the map; this helps play considerably. My only complaint with the maps is that the North-East map section only has units deployed on it in the 1998 game, and even then the number in use on the map rarely exceeds thirty. I believe that the designers might have made this section slightly more important or omitted it and reduced the cost of the game.



The counters come in three sheets with four hundred counters each. Among the units represented are headquarters, air units, armoured, mechanised infantry and leg infantry (the backbone of the Chinese Army) divisions, marines and airborne and airmobile units. Many of the countries and units (e.g. Japan and Israel, cruise missile brigades and hovercraft) are, however, used only in the 1998 scenario, and thus many countries have other countries' units on their "flip" side; e.g. many Pan-Scandinavian units are on the back of South Korean units. Other examples of economy are the Soviet and Chinese 1998 air units printed on the rear of their headquarters' counters, and this can make it very difficult to find many units.

In this game SPI has run amok with their latest invention; untried units. Except for headquarters and air units, the entire contemporary Soviet and Chinese armies are untried, while NATO has units printed with reduced strengths on their "flip" sides. This is one of NATO's many advantages in the game. The Soviet land units come in four states of readiness; class I units are always at full wartime strength, class II units are at 70% strength, class III are cadres at 30% strength and class IV (1998 only) are mid-war reinforcements. Classes II and III may be mobilised to wartime strength, but this has its disadvantages (e.g. vulnerability to attack).

The Rules and Game Mechanics:

Though the rules booklet is 24 pages long, the actual rules only take up nine pages and are composed of eighteen sections (including the introduction etc.). The rest of the "rules booklet" is made up by the scenarios, a play-by-mail module, developer's and designer's notes, historical rationale and the game tables. I found the "historical" rationale and notes very useful in explaining some of the stranger rules, e.g. no nuclear weapons in 1998.

There are two types of movement in OM: strategic and land. The former encompasses rail, sea and air transport and air ferry, and in the strategic movement phase the U.S. player may conduct off-map movement. Land movement and supply may be influenced by communication zones; these represent regions densely filled with roads and railroads, and hence movement in such an area ignores other terrain. After all land units have moved, air units can then move to attack hexes containing enemy units.

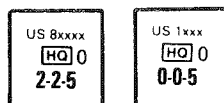
In the interception phase the non-phasing player may attack any enemy air units in hexes containing friendly units. An air unit can only be attacked at odds of at least one to one, so it is unlikely that the whole stack will be intercepted at once. Instead, the topmost unit of the stack must be attacked first, followed by the second etc., in sequence. Thus fighters should be placed above fighter-bombers above bombers. An attack at 1 to 1 can be suicidal, as there is only a one in six chance of the defending unit retreating (returning to its air base) and this equals the probability of an attacker-eliminated result. Any phasing-player air units that survive may then attack the land units in the hex. One omission that I particularly disliked was the lack of any rules concerning flak as this makes air supremacy far too important, and in my opinion air combat is one of OM's weak points.

As already mentioned, combat is by an odds ratio and the possible results are a retreat or elimination of either the attacker or defender, or an exchange. In the case of an exchange result, it is not attack or defense points that are exchanged but personnel points; these represent the manpower and "staying-power" of a unit. Since Soviet units have fewer personnel points than NATO or the Chinese, the CRT is slightly biased against them. In addition, as many NATO units can "flip-over" to their reverse sides to absorb personnel losses less NATO units need be lost in an exchange than otherwise.

After the combat phase comes the reaction phase. All headquarters units at army level have a reaction rating which determines how many mechanised units it may move in a certain area around it during this phase. This phase is particularly important as it allows the non-phasing player to block any gaps in his front line created by adverse combat results before the enemy can exploit them in his mechanised movement phase. Only the non-phasing player can move during the reaction phase.

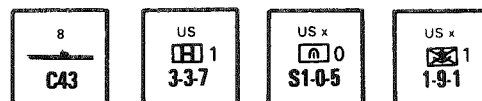
The structure of the game-turn in OM necessitates a great deal of planning to exploit gaps that it is hoped will be created; thus, although the rules are fairly simple, it is not an easy game to play.

Special Unit Types:



Headquarters (contemporary game only: no HQs in 1998).

The most important uses for HQs are for tracing supply and for movement in the reaction phase. In addition, U.S. and West German headquarters may carry infantry divisions, and a Soviet unit must be adjacent to a Soviet HQ to launch a nuclear attack. All HQ units increase the stacking limit from three to four units in its hex. These abilities make headquarters one of the most important unit types.



Naval Units.

The naval side of this game is the weakest point of the entire simulation: it would have been preferable if this sub-section had been left out completely. Their only use is as floating air bases and only the U.S. player has them.

Hovercraft (1998).

These are the fastest land units in the game, having a movement allowance of seven. Their movement is also unaffected by terrain except that they may not enter certain hexes. However, they have no zone of control.

Cruise Missile Brigades (1998).

Despite their powerful sounding name, the only effect of these units is to shift an attack one column to the right.

U.S. Space Marines (1998).

These units are the anti-climax to OM, for if the U.S. player opts to use them he is almost certain to lose the game. The reasons for this are: he receives no air replacements between game-turns two and six and this gives the Soviet player almost complete air superiority; secondly, he only receives two 1-9-1 units and they may not be used until after the half-way point of the game.

Miscellaneous Rules:

Supply

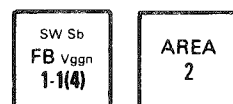
In Europe it is difficult to be out of supply because of the communication zone, and even in China there are so many HQs that it is rare for such a situation to occur. Being out of supply has the usual SPI effects (halve Attack and Defense Strengths and movement allowance).

Nuclear Combat

The damage done as a result of a nuclear strike depends upon the personnel points of the target units. The disadvantage of using this attack form is that there is a one in six chance of provoking a strategic nuclear war, and the player who initiated it automatically loses.

Camouflage

To prevent a player from examining the enemy's stacks, certain terrain types provide camouflage from spy satellite reconnaissance and hence prevent this from happening. This rule is, in my experience, one of the most frequently broken, whether by accident or design.



Weather

The weather rules are one of OM's strongpoints, for by a simple system of modifications to the weather table dice rolls the probability of certain weather occurring alters as the game proceeds. However, due to the Soviet's greater use of limited weather aircraft they are more vulnerable to adverse weather conditions, and so suffer in this section too.

Summary:

Objective: Moscow is not a game for the inexperienced wargamer as it is the ability to plan one's moves ahead that will win the game. Thus, despite NATO's advantages in this simulation it is not too difficult for the Soviet player to win if he is a better tactician. Its rules are fairly simple but lacking in places; if better naval and air rules are wanted, SPI's **The Next War** is probably a better buy. Nevertheless, OM is worth buying for those who collect big games and can afford its price. For those who prefer small games, the one-map scenarios are almost as enjoyable to play as the campaign games.

History and the Horse Bowman

R.M.W. MUSSON

When one finds that a particular wargame consistently refuses to produce a historical result, to the extent that the historical victor always loses, then usually one of two things is to blame. The first possibility is that the situation, be it war or battle, was one which was originally decided by some feature that cannot be re-created in game terms. Often it is history itself that prevents the game from reflecting this decisive feature. A friend of mine stoutly maintains that given a tolerably accurate simulation of Waterloo, and a reasonably competent French player, then theoretically the French cannot lose, no matter how good the Allied player is, for the simple reason that the wargamer, unlike Napoleon, knows exactly when and where the Prussians are going to hit his flank. Therefore he can dispose his forces to take this into account, something Napoleon could not have done. Of course, there is still many a slip twixt the brandy balloon and the lip, but it serves as an example. It is very difficult to factor surprise into a wargame, and if the outcome of a battle depended on surprise reinforcements turning up, or trickery of the Trojan Horse variety, or treachery, then unless a simulation includes rules to force one player to do stupid things when the opportunity arises, then it may be difficult for the "right side" to win the wargame.

The other possibility, alas, is that there is a sizeable design flaw in the game, which, by distorting the conditions present in the original engagement, makes it impossible to recreate the historical engagement simply because the game-system actively prevents this. Miscalculations do occur in wargame design, often very simple ones. I believe someone has demonstrated that the solitaire scenario in SPI's *Outreach* is actually mathematically impossible to win — in which case, by taking simple remedial action (in this case doubling the number of game turns permitted) the matter can be set to rights. Now in *Outreach*, historicity is of course not an issue; it is a question of possibility and impossibility. But in some games, flaws in the original design not only make it impossible for one

side to win, they make it impossible for the historical winners to win, which is clearly undesirable in anything that purports to be a simulation.

Such is the position I believe, in *Viking*, the fourth game in SPI's Pre-Seventeenth Century Tactical Games Series (Prestags for short). This is a game which has consistently annoyed me; the period is one which particularly interests me, and one which has for long been ignored by game designers (though matters are looking up). Yet the game itself, in a large number of the scenarios, transparently doesn't work. Of course, to some extent the whole Prestags system is a polite fiction since it attempts to scale down large battles to the size of mere skirmishes; cavalry have movement allowances which allow them to scoot from one side of a battle line to the other, and then some, in one turn, and the whole thing uneasily tries to straddle the gap between operational and tactical scales with very little conviction. But in the case of *Viking* the matter is much worse because of the one sidedness (and wrongsidedness to boot) of many of the scenarios.

The problem boils down to the matter of all those little Horse Bowmen units, with "HB" stencilled on them. HB or not, if you will excuse a graphic pun, these units are very soft indeed. And in many scenarios, one side is given a force mostly comprised of these units, and in the case of Qadisiya, only these. Historically, such a force could and did win battles, by "skirmishing the enemy to death" as Thomas (S&T no. 55) puts it. This consisted (very approximately) of running rings non-stop round the enemy, firing arrows all the while. Of course, in a wargame units have to stop at the end of each game turn, and in this case, when they stop, they get belted in a very unhistorical fashion. Admittedly, there is an optional retreat-before-combat rule, but it is insufficient.

Look at it this way. Assume you are in command of the non-HB force. If you do not move any of your troops, the HBs are almost incapable of hurting you. They will only be able to fire at you in

their initial fire phase, and any disruption inflicted will be removed before they can fire again. The only way they can do any damage if there are no melee troops accompanying them, is to fire at 3-1 odds and hope for ½E on a 5 or 6. To fire at 3-1 odds in clear terrain will take a grand total of nine HB units within two hexes. On the other hand, all you have to do to mop up is to stack a couple of heavy cavalry units with a leader (thus rendering them impervious to all disruption results from fire combat) which can then charge around getting odds of about 5-1 on each combat. As long as you don't run into defensive fire from nine HBs at once (easily avoided), you will be safe as houses. The advantage of heavy cavalry is that the horse bowmen cannot retreat before combat from other cavalry, though if you haven't got heavy, medium will do. How strictly one can adhere to this sort of plan depends on how much melee strength is accompanying the HBs, but usually this is not a great deal.

Now, if one had no cavalry at all with which to pursue the pesky bowmen, the position would be a lot less rosy. The Arab/Moslem would be able to withdraw his mobile horsemen before the infantry got a crack at them, and the position would much more accurately reflect the historical problems posed to the Crusaders and others faced with such elusive foes. This, I think, suggests an improvement to the game system as follows:

Additional rule:

(17.6) Horse Bowmen and Light Cavalry may always retreat before combat, whatever the Movement Allowance of attacking units. They are, however, still subject to the effects of (17.1) and (17.3). If Horse Bowmen or Light Cavalry exercise this option when being attacked by Light Cavalry units, they may still be attacked if the Light Cavalry advances into the vacated hex (an exception to rule 17.4).

As you see, I have expanded things to include Light Cavalry, and am in two minds about widening it still further to include Oriental Cavalry — I would welcome the opinions of better military historians than myself. It seems only fair that like should not escape like; I prefer the above idea of light troops catching up, to rule 17.0, in which defending units must stay behind if attacked by a combination of fast and slow (though there are arguments on both sides). With this new rule in force, cavalry still remains the best arm for dealing with HB forces, but it is now necessary to use such units to cut off retreats rather than piling in, thus making things a little more interesting. Also it gives the Arab player something to work for. In a scenario like Hattin, the Moslems can ring the Crusaders in with single HBs on alternate hexes to stop him going anywhere, while massing every now and again for a quick sortie, while the Crusader will have to use his own fire attacks to try and disrupt the Moslem horsemen before they can be picked off, and at the same time try to force the Moslem ring to give so much ground in one sector that it breaks, and lets the Crusader horse out and round the back to stop the tactical retreats.

In something like Qadisiya or Tours, where there are no melee troops at all to back up the HBs, there are still problems, since unless disruptions can be inflicted by defensive fire in such circumstances that there are still other troops around to fire at the same hex with offensive fire next player turn, it's back to trying to get 3-1 odds and a 5 or 6. But at least while you are doing this, your HBs won't be dropping like flies to the enemy cavalry.



GAMES DAY 5

J. LAMBSHEAD

Games Day, for the benefit of the uninitiated, is the annual games convention in London organised by Games Workshop. So many people turned up last year that this time the event was moved to the Royal Horticultural Hall; a wise decision as four thousand gamers passed through the turnstiles. This makes Games Day the biggest single-day event of its kind in the world and it must now be considered second only to Origins in the boardgamers diary! I should make it clear that boardgames are only part of Games Day, modellers, figure wargamers and role-playing gamers are all catered for. Stands and demonstrations show off everything from frisbees to computers: the computers used being Commodore PETs. I wonder whose bright idea it was to hang their slogan by the ladies loo — 'Play with a PET'! There were just too many stands and participation events to describe them all but I shall try to mention those of main interest to boardgamers.

"Games Workshop" and "Dungeons and Starships" had trade stands open for business. Philmar were the only games publisher present, they were mainly pushing their new offering, *Imperial Governor*; designer Ken Broadhurst was employed taking on all comers. Noticeable mainly by their absence were Simpubs, an Avalon Hill representative and WWW; Wakey wakey lads, this is now an important convention. A couple of mail order firms ("Manhattan Wargames" and "Esdevium Games"), the former is a new organisation which runs a service not unlike a book club. "Blodwyn Enterprises" (well that's what they call themselves) had an amateur magazine on display, *Gamesworld*, which contains up to four new games an issue. This organisation, which hails from the North-East, is new to me but I understand they intend to 'turn professional' so perhaps we will be seeing more of them down South. Games Workshop also are considering publishing games so, with the new wave of American companies, it looks as if there is going to be some hot competition. Boardgame clubs were represented, as usual, by the Ealing Games Group. This year we had two stands, the first was a series of demonstrations, of which *Swords and Sorcery* was markedly the most popular, the second was for our new National Register. For any poor soul who is not yet familiar with this scheme I should, perhaps, explain that it is a free contact service. To be put on the register write to Eggcentral, 32, Windmill Lane, Southall, Middlesex UB2 4ND, enclose a SSAE for a list of other gamers and clubs in your area. We were kindly assisted on this stand by your very own John Spence, editor of Phoenix, who lent us a copy of *John Carter of Mars*. Judging by the number of people who tried to buy it SPI have a winner with this one, assuming they pull their finger out and sort out the copyright problems. Another well known personality with a literary bent — Charles Vasey 'Hammer of the Warg.' and editor of the excellent *Perfidious Albion* — could be observed chatting to the peasants. Charles' co-editor, Geoff Barnard, had on display his 'Play by

mail' sheets. Anyone interested in these should write to Geoff at 39a Mill St., Guisborough, Cleveland. The now traditional Bring and Buy stall and auction were as popular as ever, as were the young ladies looking after it.

For those interested in such things, here are the relevant Games Day Awards for 1979. (Phoenix readers were represented in this poll, the organisers thanking those of you who replied. Editor).

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Best games — any type | 2 Best wargame |
| 1st — D & D | 1st — Squad Leader |
| 2nd — Diplomacy | 2nd — Third Reich |
| 3rd — Squad Leader | 3rd — Next War |
| 3 Best SF/F game | 7 Best boardgame |
| 1st — D & D | 1st — Kingmaker |
| 2nd — Traveller | 2nd — Squad Leader |
| 3rd — War of the Ring | 3rd — Diplomacy |
| 8 Best role playing game | 11 Best mag. |
| 1st — D & D | 1st — White Dwarf |
| 2nd — Traveller | 2nd — S & T |
| 3rd — Chivalry & Sorcery | 3rd — Fire & Movement |
| 12 Best games publisher | 14 Best games inventor |
| 1st — Avalon Hill | 1st — Gary Gygax |
| 2nd — SPI | 2nd — John Hill |
| 3rd — TSR | 3rd — Jim Dunnigan |
| 15 Best games personality | 16 Best new game |
| 1st — Charles Vasey | 1st — Freedom in the Galaxy |
| 2nd — Gary Gygax | 2nd — The Next War |
| 3rd — Don Turnbull & Richard Berg | 3rd — Divine Right |

Personally I am doubtful of the value of this sort of award, and not just because I am never likely to win one. They seem to have a tendency to degenerate into an orgy of local backslapping; remember when Keith Poulter and a hundred supporters got together to vote WWW 'international' awards. Admittedly Games Workshop tried to get votes via PA and Phoenix but it was perhaps inevitable that *White Dwarf* should be voted best mag., D & D best game and Gary Gygax best designer etc.

Another problem with votes cast across the hobby is people voting awards in areas where they have little idea of what's even available. How many boardgamers voted for *Kingmaker* as best boardgame, I wonder? Also, as usual, the latest big game did well out of all proportion to its worth. If any meaningful conclusion can be drawn from these results it is probably that Avalon Hill are going from strength to strength. It is nice to see a British wargamer winning the personality award (lets be chauvanistic); with PA winning an Origins award as well, it seems to be Charles Vasey's year. There are now two English personalities of the year. I wonder if South East England is big enough for both of them!

Finally I think Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson are to be heartily congratulated for their initiative in creating such an interesting event.

A REVIEW OF NEWS,
GOSSIP AND RUMOUR
COMPILED BY
DOUG DAVIES



Grapevine

OK KID — MAKE YOUR PLAY

Yep pardners them thar SPI critters is going into Westerns. Courtesy of that ole JFD you will soon be able to star in the epic *Six Guns From Texas*, a game based on the exploits of the Magnificent Seven (67), and should you manage to survive this ordeal better than Yul Brenner you may wish to carry on into *Gunslinger*, a game in which you're almost certain to end up on Boot Hill full of lead. Other new items from the SPI corral include *Brandy Station* on the Civil War cavalry action which will use the TSS system, and a mini, *The Battle of Austerlitz*, on Napoleon's most famous victory which will have more complex rules than usual for that size of game — see below for more plans of this type. Medieval has been discarded as a game title in favour of *Empires*, which to me at least seems a more evocative and promising name. *Orbital*, a game featuring the possible uses of earth orbiting satellites for future warfare may become an S&T issue game, which brings me nicely to the subject of the latest plans for SPI's magazines.

S&T UPDATE (AGAIN)

The latest batch of games to be placed on the S&T schedule are *Cedar Mountain*, a TSS - Stonewall type game on the ACW battle with 200 counters and a full size map which will go out in issue 80, *Tito*, (previously *The Balkans*), on the entire war in Yugoslavia including the initial invasion, partisans warfare, and the link up with the Russians, to be issued in 81, and *Kaiserschlaecht*, an update of the excellent 1918 which will come out in issue 82. This last will be designed by Jim Dunnigan, his first game I believe since *Panzergruppe Guderian*, and so it must be worth looking forward to.

FOR SF ADDICTS ONLY

The first issue of SPI's new science fiction gaming magazine, *Ares*, will hit the streets in February/March and will contain the mini game *World Killer*, a friendly little offering from Redmond Simonsen about a monster from outer space which threatens to finish off the whole world (including *World Wide Whatsits I'm afraid Keith*). It contains a novel 3D movement system which I'm told is real 'weird'. Following issues will contain the *Timetripper* and *Wreck of the Pandora* games previously mentioned in this column.

WHAT'S NEW ON BROADWAY?

OSG have several new products in the planning stages including *Twentieth Maine*, a game on the climatic action at the Little Round Top during Gettysburg which is due for release fairly soon. *Killer Angels* are not the latest punk rock band but instead is the title of another game on Gettysburg, (it's the name of a book in case you're wondering), this time on the strategic level which has just entered the schedule. Other titles being looked at include *Israel 48* covering the initial struggle to create the modern Jewish state which is being designed by Bob Herman. Also being considered is a Mini-Quad, a set of four games on the Second World War which although in the mini format will have fairly complex rules, the small size being meant to help the player handle the situation. Some ten possible suggestions are being studied to see which

Continued on Page 25





I fully agree with Major Mack's statement in Phoenix 20 that "Armada" is a good game; if you can hack your way through the jungle of the rules, it turns out to be surprisingly good (though still with some faults — for instance, the French civil war usually ends far more quickly than the War of the Three Henries did historically). However, there are a few errors in the Major's article, and a few important points he seems to have missed.

Using the numbering of the article:

5.d. An answer from SPUK to one of my queries is that Dutch SD units must be victualled by the English if necessary, thereby somewhat offsetting their other advantages.

6. An inspection of the map will reveal that none of the Irish cities have any activation point value. Therefore Spanish units cannot winter in Ireland by deactivating there, unfortunately.

13.d. First of all, I believe that rule 10.32 has been misread. I took this as meaning that only the besieged troops have their combat value halved, and not the relieving troops — this, I would say, is much more reasonable.

Secondly, consider what happens when an inferior relieving force (say outnumbered 1-3) attempts to relieve a siege. It moves on to the siege hex and during the combat phase a 1 or 2 is thrown — i.e. no effect. Result? The relieving units remain in the hex, and despite the facts that (1) they are considerably outnumbered; and (2) they have inflicted no loss upon the besiegers; according to the present rules, the siege is successfully raised. Slightly unrealistic, I would think. Instead, I have substituted the following rule:

"Delete 10.31, 10.41 and 10.42. A Player may attempt to relieve Friendly besieged units by attacking the besiegers from an adjacent hex, as normal combat. If, during the combat, the besiegers suffer at least 1 step loss, AND at least as much loss as the relievers, then they must retreat and the siege is raised. The relievers may then advance into the previously besieged hex, OR the previously besieged troops may evacuate their position and move on the hex of the relievers."

Shallow coast hexes:

A very reasonable suggestion, that DD units may not enter shallow hexes. It's even backed up by the Terrain Effects Chart (6.9), as well (Terrain Type: Shallow Coast Hex; Movement Effect (Naval Units): Shallow Draft).

Lastly, a (minor) historical point: Ireland seems to be rather strangely divided, religiously — my Penguin Atlas of World History suggests that the Protestant areas should be The Pale and the Eastern half of Ulster (hexes 1309, 1310, 1408, 1409, 1410), with the rest of Ireland Catholic.

Duncan Brack

I am sorry to note that my review of 'Green Fields Beyond' caused such distress to J.C. (Buffy) Frobisher of, or late of, the Royal Regiment of Artillery (although I am unable to trace him in any Army List since 1947 — *eh Charles?*); however I have very good reason to believe that this distress is not shared by David Isby, as I hope to demonstrate in a moment. Nonetheless I did indeed make a silly error over the business of artillery SOS and Rule 9.75 quite escaped my scrutiny, even over three playings (it is a two-liner tucked in the bottom corner of a page); I can only plead that this is an instance of Homer nodding and I much regret it. Interestingly, David Isby could not recall it at first either, and it was in his second letter to me that he broke the news. *Pace* Buffy's anguish, I do consider, nonetheless, that to quote one undoubted mistake and to use this to support an implication that other errors 'lurk' in my review, making it of dubious worth, is to display a lack of logical thought, if nothing more; fact A does not mean that B, C, D and E must also be true.

In Bob Campbell's case I must gently refute his implication that I tried to dissuade him from playing 'Green Fields' and then, on hearing of his playing a scenario in four hours, told him that he wasn't playing it properly. I certainly said that he would find it heavy going, based on my experience, and when he later told me of his success I expressed surprise but not scepticism. I probably said, "Crikey, are you sure you got it right?" or words to that effect, but certainly nothing as blunt and discourteous as the reader of his letter might infer.

Bob also considers that I must have made very heavy weather of the game, that my use of paper and pencil was unnecessary and that, while sincere, my view is probably a minority one. That may be. I can only repeat that I did find that planning of artillery fire tasks and of expenditure of supply points requires preplanning and thus note-taking if one is not to forget one's calculations before the combat phase is half over, and that a major offensive is likely to require a player-turn of well in excess of an hour to plan, note and carry out (in two segments, remember). Other players to whom I have spoken have agreed with me in most instances, though not in all. Now let me quote from a letter which came to me, quite out of the blue from David Isby, the game's designer:

"As for the game as a whole, your comparison to a Mark IV tank is fair and generous. I achieved what I set out to do. The game is for those really and seriously interested in the battle. I also wanted to show the degree of planning (pen and paper are an absolute necessity) required in 1917. Fred Helfferich of F&M told me that he spent *four* evenings planning out his British opening attack before unleashing it on an opponent, whereupon, even with many bad die-rolls, the tanks had secured Cambrai by the third turn. Even I think four days of planning is a little extreme. The question I have not answered to my own satisfaction is whether or not I could have achieved my objectives in a simpler fashion. I personally do not mind complicated games and I am very interested in the First World War. These 'threads', to borrow John Terraine's term, lead to 'Green Fields' being the interesting monster that you found it the review was much more perceptive and thorough than any other."

These remarks give me reason to believe that my interpretation of the game and its play is much nearer to the designer's intention of how 'Green Fields Beyond' should be played than that of Bob Campbell, judged on his comments in his letter. I hope also that they allay Buffy Frobisher's anguish as I should hate to upset another pongo (a piece of naval slang meaning *any* soldier; it should not be used to describe a soldier of one arm of the Service as opposed to another).

To discuss two separate subjects in one letter is poor staff duties; however I must point out that when I wrote my letter in response to that of Michael Harris I had no idea that this person was one and the same as the jolly, extrovert Meic Harries who loves nothing better than to send a thousand Americans to Davy Jones or to blow myriads of Japanese out of the sky in fiery ruin, and with whom I can claim some acquaintance; the name 'Meic Harries' was not in my typescript. Meic, I still disagree with your 110% over your "modern" views, but no hard feelings outside the Forum.

D.I.A.Mack

I have finally found the energy to write to the Phoenix and here is my effort. My comments are directed to issue No. 20 which I have just read, a little late due to holidaying.

Firstly, although I do not possess Firefight I did find the new scenario by Michael Stoner which was written in a manner, and of a content that made it interesting to non-owners of the game. This was partly because the article was more than just a string of meaningless counter abbreviations, but also included some rationale for the scenario.

The article "What's New?" by 'Rifleman Dodds' was a waste of space, if I want 'humour' I can buy Mad magazine, an article solely devoted to 'humour' in a gaming magazine is a waste of space. However I did agree with his comments concerning personal computers and S.P.I. in that how many British wargamers can afford one of these extremely useful, certainly not essential, pieces of equipment? I for one am a poor impoverished student spending every spare penny on game orientated material. What is more, the vast majority of gamers I meet at the local club are of my age group (18 years) or younger, certainly unable to afford this luxury.

Thirdly the article on 'Highway to the Reich' was excellent and expressed my own view that HTTR is already greatly neglected, although possibly one of the greatest games produced by S.P.I. I shall certainly be trying out some of the suggested rules changes and I have experimented along these lines already. One thing I was surprised by was the statement that the Glider Pilot Regiment did not have supporting anti-tank gun units because I have the vague recollection of reading that they had their own AT units. Perhaps however I am just imagining it, certainly the pilot infantry serials are in error (and probably are over the Royal Marines Armoured Support Regiments in Atlantic Wall).

This issue's Book Review was very interesting, although possibly because the books were all of modern subject, which isn't everybody's cup of tea. I find that the reviews tell me what I want to know about the book, although perhaps some indication of the availability of the book, (the bookshops of Northampton aren't that well stocked).

Notes from the Underworld is, in my view, getting a little out of place, because after starting as a series of introductory articles on D&D, it has become an advice column for the involved enthusiast instead of for those who have never seen the game or for those making their first tentative steps.

Those already deep into D&D, such as myself, can find this information in magazines solely devoted to D&D, such as The Beholder. However the Phoenix is a general magazine and I expect a more general range of articles. Don Turnbull in this issue's article states that the average intelligence score (10%), is equal to an I.Q. of 100. However the Players Handbook states that the characters in D&D are above average anyway, perhaps the characters average should be greater. Unfortunately, this would mess up the intelligence ranges for non-player characters and monsters. However it ain't much fun being a character with Int 4 in a party which decides to go to a foreign country where they speak a language you ain't allowed to learn. The best solution I believe is to give a modifier to low intelligence scores.

To finish I must praise the overall quality of this issue.

S.J.Cornelius

(Humour is one of the great dividers in Phoenix; some think it totally out of place, others enjoy it. My own humble opinion is that we shouldn't treat ourselves too seriously all the time, there is room to laugh at and with our hobby! Editor)

I read the article on "Armada" (Phoenix 20) with great interest as I too consider this to be a game of some merit that proved most playable, albeit after some "in-house" tinkering with the rules. May I submit the following comments?

To my mind it is only possible to virtual SD units at sea by expenditure of Victualling Points, and I therefore provision them under normal fleet rules. I still fail to see why they do not require munitions.

I must take issue with the quoted House Rules concerning the Treasure Fleet. It is illogical that the English Treasury should receive the Ducat bonus for the capture of the Spanish Treasure

Fleet unless the English can return home with the loot — in my first game, the booty-laden Englishmen (and Drake!) were intercepted and sunk by Spaniards — no financial benefit to either side. Secondly, the safe arrival of the Treasure Fleet should benefit the Spanish Treasury no later than the following month (they would not leave it in a ship's hold for several months) — therefore the 800 Ducat deduction to Spanish wealth accruing for the second year start turn should always be made. I believe the Treasure Fleet must always remain on the board, activated or otherwise, with attendant maintenance costs, until it sails again for the Americas (in October?) for the 1588 bonanza (but how about provisioning?). I see financial advantages arising from the 1588 Fleet as I have described for 1587.

I also consider that the Papal benevolence for a Spanish landing in England should surely not be granted immediately — a realistic delay would be, say, three months; news took a little longer to filter through in the 16th Century.

Finally sieges: careful reading of rule 10.32 indicates, to my mind, that relieving forces attack at full Combat Strength (assisted by besieged units at half strength).

I agree that there remain too many debatable points of issue. Hopefully, these will be cleared by SPI soon. Nevertheless, I echo D.I.A. Mack's overall recommendation. A final word, in the three games I have played so far, shortage of money imposes severe constraints but to date only the Spanish have gone bankrupt — once.

R. Woodley

I read Stephen Hackett's article on **Operation Condor** with interest, and found it a very fair commentary on the game. Two bones of contention only: first, we have been spreading our rules over 8 pages of the Wargamer now for nine months, so it's a bit hard to be taken to task for packing rules into 4 pages (I know, you've had the article in the 'bank' for quite some time.... but this remark is dated). Second, Stephen perpetuates the myth that in "Condor" the "Pyrenees are very hard to get across". I think the article in Wargamer 7 demonstrates that in fact the Spanish player cannot prevent the Germans from crossing on turn 1... Keith Poulter

I read in 'Mail Call' (Phoenix 21 — page 10) of Ken Newall's scepticism of the validity of Phoenix publishing D&D articles apropos its remit. I wish to state that I for one consider D&D and its genre, such as A.D&D and Traveller, to be board war-games.

I have thoroughly enjoyed Don Turnbull's series of D&D articles and I hope that Phoenix will continue to publish articles of a similar high standard in role-playing games.

I would hope that writers to 'Mail Call' can resist the temptation to take 'cheap shots': that against chess and D&D is most unsavoury (again Phoenix 21, page 10) and I resent being told to go forth regardless of whether I am interested in military developments or not.

May I add some fuel to the FYEO debate: I wonder how many S&T subscribers would continue their subscription if both the free game and discount service were transferred to Moves magazine with commensurate changes in subscription rates to both magazines?

I have found that several recent submissions to 'Mail Call' have degenerated into personal fermentations. Should space be at the premium which Mr Newall suggests, perhaps 'Mail Call' should be discontinued or reduced in scope to no more than 2 feature letters.

John Evans

[As noted at the head of the last Mail Call, that issue was the last round of that particular face-to-face simulation! We are still open for 'constructive criticism'!]

I was intrigued by Richard Jordan's letter (Phoenix 21). To prevent your maps from tearing along creases, stick a small piece of sticky plastic at each junction of the creases and where a crease reaches the map edge. (Sticky plastic is better than Sellotape, as the latter tends to deteriorate). Both sides of the map need to be treated in this way — this also stops the map from tearing if you stick it down during play.

In fact, I give my maps more general treatment by completely covering them with sticky plastic — playing side only. This protects them from accidental spillage and more general wear and tear, and costs about 50p per map. To prevent creases, I store all my maps flat in one pile.

With some games I wrap sticky plastic round each of the counters. Although rather time consuming, this does prevent them from tearing, and it is a must if you want to play a game on the wall, with blu-tac to hold the counters on. (The map must be covered too, of course). Blu-tac can also be used to stick the counters to a sheet of plastic or plastic-covered cardboard when not in use; this is very useful when you need to find one counter out of hundreds, e.g. step-loss counters of a particular division in **Fulda Gap**.

I also use sticky plastic to protect the "spines" of my magazines, and an inch square piece to protect the corners of the covers. A final word of warning — don't cover anything if you may need to change it (e.g. a map alteration from an errata sheet) you can't unstick sticky plastic.

Dave Berry

Although I was not really expecting it, I could not hide my disappointment at not finding the Briefcase Counter, jokingly referred to in S&T 57, in the **Plot to Assassinate Hitler** countermix.

I therefore decided to have one anyway and I devised the following rules to facilitate this:

RANDOMISER CHITS
Front Back



Briefcase Chit
(containing bomb)

3.3 Sample Units (addition)

6.1 (addition) The Briefcase chit is included in the randomiser at the start.

18.58 (new rule). If the Abwehr Player holds the Briefcase Chit during the Coup Harrassment and Movement Phase (It may only be used during **Coup** turns) and is attacking Hitler from any hex **inside** the Fuhrer or Rastenburg HQ he may reveal the chit.

The effect of the Briefcase chit is to add 4 points to the effectiveness rating of the attacking unit.

Note: The counter can only be used against Hitler during Coup turns from inside his HQ's, for one Harrassment only, **before** the die is rolled.

Ken Newall

Target of Opportunity

RIFLEMAN DODDS

He who snipes will himself be shot at this at least is the moral I must derive from the selection of letters that my esteemed editor saw fit to publish in the last but one issue of 'Phoenix'. The fusillade did not cause offence. Indeed the fact that the letters were split fifty-fifty indicates that I do not stand alone on the matter of FYEO. However here I must make a confession. My gentle comments about that column were more in the nature of criticism rather than vituperation and, further to that, there was something of the spirit of the stirrer involved. Unfortunately, while I would like to leave the subject lie there I feel that I ought to say something about the article by Colonel Dupuy in S&T 74.

Now I'm not about to enter the lists with Col. Dupuy who is a considerable man in the business of modern military thinking but I am concerned about the presence of the article in S&T. It signifies, to me, a considerable change in attitudes within Simulations Publications Inc. since the days when the idea of publishing a game dealing with atomic warfare sparked off a fairly big debate within the

firm and when the possibility of co-operating with the Pentagon over **Firefight** caused a major upheaval. In short, while I am delighted to read Colonel D's most interesting essay, I am not sure that it deserves a place of such prominence within S&T. As far as I am able to tell it does not relate directly to a recent, or even important, S&T game. Not that these circumstances bar it from S&T but is such an article appropriate for a magazine of 'Conflict Simulation' for that, whatever other changes **have** taken place at SPI, is their own description of what the magazine is meant to be about.

To be plain I read that SPI are about to start a magazine dealing with F & SF games. That is grand and will please the aficionados of such games enormously. It would please me enormously if SPI would also consider starting a magazine for those of us who like to read material such as 'The Credibility of Deterrence' and leave the space in S&T to be devoted to the marvellous games related articles which gave excellent background to the games that we buy and play. Would I subscribe to such a magazine? Oh, yes, but I would prefer to have the separate magazine than to have S&T cluttered up with the material, and anything similar to it, which is offered by Col. Dupuy and his colleagues.

The sad thing is it seems, despite the great debate about closeness of relationships with the Pentagon, that SPI are moving more and more towards a close friendship with that building and its inhabitants. There is nothing immoral in that and since the collaboration, about which we were told, over **Firefight** this closeness was almost inevitable. However it may be that some observers will now find the objectivity of the magazine less than totally credible and, since S&T is the leading magazine of the hobby, that is a very great pity.

Corinthians One, verse 27

BOOK REVIEW CONTINUED

which is there is of good quality. Perhaps the most interesting comment on the different nations is the way in which each ended their respective cavalry organisations. Mostly there were solemn parades of farewell. Not for the British who, after a successful campaign in the Middle East, disbanded their last mounted unit by holding a four mile cross country race which finished by swimming across the River Jordan which was "Very much enjoyed by all."

In Phoenix 21 I mentioned the new book about the Chinese Armed Forces which is the published version of the Pentagon's 1976 appreciation of the status of these forces. (Arms and Armour at £6.95). Now comes a volume which is, while a little further from the horse's mouth, much more recent. From **Salamander Books** comes **The Chinese War Machine** at £7.95. In uniform with their earlier works about the Russian and American forces, this is an impressive assemblage of essays and the usual high quality illustration that we have come to expect from Salamander. Amongst other 'wee! kent' names are Bill Gunston, Hugh Lyon and Bill Sweetman as contributors of essays while Brigadier Kenneth Hunt provides an interesting foreword. There are two interesting things arising from this book. The first is the amount of speculation in the book, all of which is informed, but guessing nevertheless; and the second arises directly from this the book clearly shows how much we don't know about China. It seems to me that this book is valuable on its own but as a complement to the earlier work it is, in combination with that book, absolutely invaluable.

ARNHEM

a magnetic game

DAVID CUIN

I suppose SPI's *Arnhem* must be one of the most widely praised of the smaller board wargames. It certainly seemed so to me coming freshly from years of sporadic activity in miniatures wargaming. To me board wargames were a heaven sent opportunity to resume the hobby when family demands on time and space squeezed out table-top battles and I can't think why I didn't take them up much sooner.

The smaller games like *Arnhem* allow economy of time since they can be put away between moves in any out of the way place. Accidents can still happen however with units displaced by the slightest jolt or disappearing up the Hoover (it's surprising what a vacuum cleaner can do to a 5-5-10 Panzergrenadier unit). Lying flat the Board also accumulates dust, as those who've looked on top of their wardrobes recently will know. Magnetising the board so that the counters stay where they're put is not a new idea but there are one or two short cuts and extras which I found in adapting my game which may be of interest to others. It's easier than you think but even so there are some pitfalls to be avoided.

First the objectives. I wanted a compact board displaying relevant information and capable of standing on edge without shedding it's counters — even when stacked. I also wanted to use various markers to indicate bridge demolitions, range limits and the like, and somewhere off map to park reinforcements or eliminated units.

Taking the above into account I arrived at a board size of 635 x 610 mm or, to the die-hards, 25 x 24 inches. Others may want more or less of the information I put on in addition to the map itself. Plan the board size and content carefully, even to the extent of drawing it out because once you've made it you're stuck with it — literally. My additional information includes victory points tracks for German and Allied forces, a CRT, reinforcement schedules for both scenarios

(absolutely invaluable), and information on weather, lines of communication and levels of victory. All this saves a lot of flipping through the rule book. Around the map itself I allowed a 10 mm (3/8 inch) margin but wish I had made this 25 mm (1 inch) to allow easier parking of units entering the map next move and which must be borne in mind this move!

I decided to use a 1.5 mm (16 standard wire gauge) steel sheet for the board obtained from a friendly metal fabricator for £2. The thickness is not important but flatness is — no buckles or bends. Use a backing board to increase rigidity. I bonded on a free offcut of 4.5 mm (3/16 inch) plywood using Evostik impact adhesive and trimmed it just larger than the steel sheet. The plywood is kinder to furniture! Chipboard should also be satisfactory, the thickness required depending on the rigidity you want and your weight limit. For the board you could use a redundant side panel from an old cooker, 'fridge or washing machine which may be obtained for next to nothing, and which will already be rust protected. Some kind of anti-rust treatment is certainly needed. Such panels will be lighter but need a more rigid backboard.

Make sure the surface on which you stick the map and other items is dirt and grease free by cleaning with methylated spirit or lighter fuel. Don't forget the right safety precautions when doing this or using adhesives. Don't do as I did and use a water based adhesive; the map paper absorbs water and expands causing severe wrinkling. Most of this disappears when it dries but not all and it can affect adhesion of the magnetised counters. Such drying shrinkage will also cause less rigid backings to bend. Use something like Cow Gum, a rubber based adhesive available from bookbinders, art shops or good stationers. This is easy to remove by rubbing, where excess oozes out at the edges, and can be spread on with a stiff piece of card to a uniform thin layer. You could use Pritt or UHU sticks, very effective but a bit labour intensive. I don't recommend double sided sticky tape because normal moisture movement in the map paper causes wrinkling between the strips when the atmosphere becomes damper.

Make sure the map is correctly positioned and apply it carefully because with the above adhesives you don't get any slide and if it goes on with a wrinkle or out of square you won't get it off without tearing it.

Now for the extra information. If you know someone who works in an office they may have access to a copying machine, if not, most towns have copying services (check Yellow Pages) or sometimes slot machines can be found to do this. Copy the rule pages containing the information you want

and cut out the relevant paragraphs. I stuck these into position with a Pritt stick. Draw or trace victory points tracks for both sides and stick these on too. Make sure you have left a 'parking' area on the board for out-of-use units and event markers. I found it useful to mark the available air strike points on the Turn Record Track as a memory jogger — I always forget them.

The board can be embellished as much or as little as you like. I just filed the edges and corners of mine smooth but you could even put a picture frame around it if you wished.

Having described the construction of the board the counters now need attention. If the game involves double sided counters or stacks more than three high then forget it if you want a simple life and the ability to store vertical. *Arnhem* doesn't involve either and is therefore ideal for magnetisation. Using my method I am able to produce a three stack which holds to each other and to the board even when vertical. 2 stacks are quite robust and will stand quite a bit of jolting.

There is a company called Sasco Ltd. who produce a range of bits and pieces — some of them magnetic — for use in offices to create control charts, displays, programmes etc. There are other equally good firms but I used Sasco products simply because their products were available at my local office supplies shop. They produce 12.7 x 12.7 mm (½ x ½ inch) self adhesive magnetic squares called Magna Tags which just fit SPI counters. These are quite expensive at 90p for 36 but well worth it for a game *Arnhem*'s size. It is so simple to tear off the backing paper, stick the tag on the counter, then trim off with a sharp knife if required.

It is a good idea to watch out for the magnetic polarity of the squares so that you get them all the same way when they're stuck on the units. If you don't they won't always stick to each other properly as a stack. This can easily be achieved by stacking the tags before peeling off the backing and always putting them on the counters the same way up.

Sasco also produce a range of coloured prepunched dots, arrows etc. on magnetic strip which, depending on the depth of your pocket, you can use. To economise I bought a red and a blue coil of strip (designated MT 5 at £1.15 per 2 m length) and cut dots, arrows and rectangles out of this using a modelling knife.

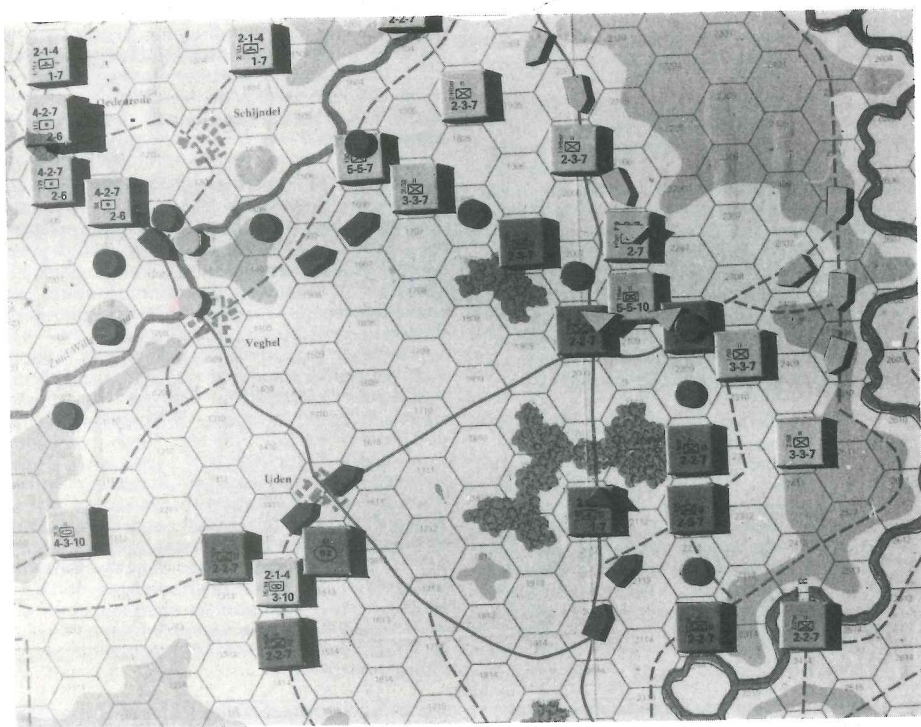
So away you go on your first game of magnetic *Arnhem*. The counters are chunky and more than twice as heavy giving a pleasant feel to movement. Keep the score with coloured magnetic dots on the points tracks, and 'park up' reinforcements by game turn for easy use. Log eliminated units in another area. Use the various kinds and colours of event markers to display bridges intact or demolished, units attacking or supporting or artillery unable to fire. Keep track of your opponents main thrusts with arrowed signals.

This concept can easily be extended to most other games where limited stacking or single sided counters are used. Even where units have two steps it is possible to manufacture step reduction markers and use the magnetic technique without counter inversion. If 3+ stacks occur the magnetism will make the stack more stable although they may not hold on a vertical board.

Using a magnetic board it doesn't matter where you wargame. Put it in the car boot when you go for a picnic or to refer to during a break at work. You can wargame on your knee whilst watching TV or even in the bath if you like, the possibilities are endless.

If you really want to be one up, hang it on the wall like a picture (if the spouse will permit). It creates a tremendous talking point with friends who will be keen to see what stage you've reached in a postal game next time they visit. You may even draw them into the hobby and create opponents for yourself. So recline in the luxury of your most comfortable arm-chair, prop the board up in front of you and enjoy being a magnetic wargamer. I do.

Panzergrenadier units lead an assault on the American 82nd Airborne Division around Oss. Allied units move to support (Move 5).



EDITORIAL CONTINUED

8. **The Dragon** — TSR Periodicals. Available from the Games Workshop and many hobby shops. This lavishly produced magazine is firmly based in the role-playing genre, especially TSR's D&D, but over the last few issues, with the incorporation of **Little Wars**, has spread its net wider and whilst remaining fantasy biased does have a few articles or reviews on historical games i.e. the latest issue to reach these shores has new scenarios for Air War and flow diagrams for Source of the Nile. It is a must for the D&D addict. 54 pages, bimonthly.

9. **Fire and Movement** — Baron Publishing Co., California. Available from Simpubs and many other sources in the UK. The top magazine in many peoples eyes, one of the best in my own. Working from a "neutral base" F&M uses to the full the idea of reviewing and discussing games alongside to an answer from the designer himself. It also analyses game mechanics, discusses various more general aspects of the hobby, and has a good crop of short reviews of the new games. It is almost totally historical simulation orientated, many of the articles coming with a neat sketch of the game maps. Highly recommended. 52 pages, bimonthly.

10. **Games and Puzzles** — Willow Press, London. Available in most large book stores. Since 1974 G&P has increased its cover of the boardgaming scene but continues to be primarily a general games magazine covering everything from Skirrid through to Monopoly. It does have a review section of boardgames written by Nicky Palmer that can be very useful with its scoring system of rating games. I understand that this cover may be expanded. 52 pages, quarterly.

11. **The Grenadier** — GDW. Available from Games Workshop, London. This small (14 x 22 cm.) quarterly publication tends to have a few long articles on historical simulations with the emphasis on their own products but does not limit itself to them. Historical articles and game design discussion rub shoulders with in depth game reviews/analysis. I think that it has a more personal approach with some good discussion generated within its pages — worth looking at. 34 pages.

12. **Military Modelling** — Model and Allied Publications Ltd., Herts. Available in most large newsagents. A magazine mainly for the modeller, it has a column by Charles Vasey reviewing a number of recent games, often the less well known ones. This magazine introduces quite a number of people to the hobby so this could be considered quite an important column. MM also has a column on Military Book reviews. About 100 pages, monthly.

GRAPEVINE CONTINUED

would best suit this treatment including one on Army Group North at the start of Barbarossa, another on the Crimea, and one on the battles around Budapest 1944/45.

BUYING AND SELLING

Heritage Models who entered the boardgaming scene a few months ago by taking over Battline Games have now sold the entire range to Avalon Hill who outbid several other interested parties. AH have thus acquired some fourteen game titles, most of which were designed by the Craig Taylor-Steve Peek team — who incidentally will not get a bean out of it all — but that's another story. For the gaming public it must be good news that this highly rated series of games will be getting the benefit of the wider coverage offered by Avalon Hill. Among the games obtained are two new releases **Samurai** and **Trireme**, neither by the old Battline people, the latter of which I believe is of British origin.

WHAT ABOUT THE WORKERS

The two leading characters from the above saga now reside in Texas at the home of Yaquinto whose range of games are now becoming readily available in Britain, although contrary to some reports no agency arrangement has been agreed. New projects that Steve and Craig are working on include games on the Arab/Israeli naval conflict in the 1973 confrontation, a Warsaw Pact invasion game set in 1980, and a game on the island hopping campaign in the Pacific conducted by the Americans between 1942-45. The Three Musketeers have also attracted Yaquinto, in spite of the same subject recently de-

13. **Moves** — SPI, New York. Available through Simpubs and a few hobby shops. This is the other half of SPI's conflict simulation coverage concentrating on the "Theory and Technique". With a circulation of 9,100 it is well read and needs fewer notes. In the main it presents modifications, analyses and a few games replays of mainly SPI games (though not all). That fellow Vasey appears again under the guise of "Moves in English" — gets good ratings I see! 36 pages, bimonthly.

14. **Perfidious Albion** — C. Vasey (again!). Subscriptions only to 5, Albion Terrace, Guisborough, Cleveland TS14 6HJ. Billed in the last issue as "The World's Finest Amateur Magazine" one must admit that it was the winner of the Charles Roberts award in that category this year! It has recently gone litho and very well it looks in it too. It specialises in up to the minute game reviews (relatively short but incisive), hobby gossip and sharp criticism of the hobby and its inhabitants. I don't always agree with his interpretation of the news but it is interesting reading and 'keeps your finger on the hobby's pulse'. You either will love it or hate it — it causes that sort of polarisation. 21 x 15 cm. size, it appears either monthly or, as at the moment, bimonthly, 20 pages.

15. **Phoenix** — you are reading it, nuff said!

16. **Pursue and Destroy** — First Echelon Publications Ltd., 7331C Normandie Court, Hazelwood, Missouri 63042. Unavailable in this country at the moment. Whilst I don't have a very recent issue to comment on, this has been a more general military magazine covering a lot of military hardware, miniature war-games and a few reviews and scenarios for board wargames. I understand from the editor that he is now placing more emphasis on board wargames and will report further once I see a recent issue. 13 x 21 cm, bi-monthly, 40 pages.

17. **Signal** — John Mansfield, 46 Charleton St., Oromocto, N.B., Canada E2V 2C8. Appearing every two weeks to a month this long running magazine describes itself as "a newszine aimed at the military hobby". This describes it exactly, being a duplicated 8-10 pages of straight hobby news from newest games through what is in the works to who is doing what to whom, magazine reviews and convention reports. Even films of potential interest are covered occasionally. Very well worth while.

feating another design team, so never fear perhaps we will soon all be swashing our buckles, or buckling our swashes which ever takes your fancy.

ODDS AND ENDS

As I write, with Christmas fast approaching, interesting news from the rest of the boardgaming scene seems a little scarce, hopefully it will pick up again in the new year. GDW for instance are still working on games reported on in previous issues with just two sets of the System Seven miniatures sets entering the planning stages. They are of course heavily involved in updating some of the older Europa games.

Metagaming, the people who invented the mini format have recently announced the release of two new games, both on SF/Fantasy subjects — **Hotspot**, about living in a molten hell on crystal platforms (?), and **Annihilator** — **OneWorld**, a pair of games, one on a planet killing, computer-controlled spaceship and the other in which the players take the part of Greek style gods.

The next of the old SPI games to be updated by Simpubs with new artwork and cleaned up rules will be Seelowe. I feel this updating project to be worthwhile for many of the old games are superior to more recent ones and it was only deficiencies in production which lead to their premature demise.

WHY DAVIES GETS IT WRONG

Many companies when putting a new game into the production schedule will assign it a working title for internal use during development which in all probability will be altered before release. This explains why some of the titles I list are not in fact those which eventually see the light of day. An

18. **Swabbers** — Mike Collieran, Box 44, Tiffin, IA 52340, USA. This bi-monthly duplicated offering is not directly available in the UK — you will have to write to Mike. As with PA, Mike goes for the up to the minute review though possibly allows longer articles than PA. Whilst news items and general articles do appear they do not take up the same space as PA and are less incisive. This is an enjoyable magazine and profits, as do all the duplicated magazines, from the ability to inject immediacy into their short production time. 16-20 pages.

19. **The Space Gamer** — Metagaming, Austin, Texas. Bi-monthly production available intermittently in hobby shops though probably more regularly from Games Workshop. Totally dedicated to science fiction and fantasy gaming with the emphasis on the former and the Metagaming microgames. Since I have little contact with the microgames I have not read much of this magazine but it is probably a boon for the owner of these games and to the general SF gamer. 32 pages.

20. **Wargame Design** — OSG, New York. Appears irregularly with a few articles on OSG games but has contained errata to their games and is thus of some interest. Will have to see whether the production regularises itself before commenting further. 12 pages.

21. **White Dwarf** — Games Workshop, London and many hobby shops. A well produced magazine appearing bi-monthly and concentrating almost solely on science fiction and fantasy role playing games and miniatures suitable for such gaming. As well as such esoteric items as a new hour class character for D&D it does have reviews of SF/F fantasy board games, expansions for Traveller, readymade dungeons, etc — a must for the role player, and home grown too !! 32 pages.

That brings me to the end of my list — I repeat that I may well have missed a few due to not seeing them and hope that I can update the list sometime in the future to include them.

And to end, another subject altogether feedback results. I am not declaring any results from issue 21 this time, the mailing of Phoenix and the writing of the editorial have slipped their usual smooth tie-up and I am still waiting on a number of Feedback cards. Rather than go for a very small group I want to wait and give a more useful feedback; I would hope that by the next time we will have the timing back on course.

example is 'Tito' which started out as '1941 The Balkans,' then went to simply 'The Balkans', before hopefully arriving at it's release title. Obviously a good title is a good selling point and a lot of thought frequently goes into the choice of name.

AN APPEAL TO THE GODS

This column is glad of any information it can get on the boardgaming scene. I will mention any new games by any company if I can get advance news of it's release, so anybody caring to benefit from this free publicity should just write to me care of Simpubs with any relevant details.

STOP PRESS

The TSS game system is being exploited to the full by SPI for in addition to those titles I've already indicated at least eight others are under consideration. A game I've not reported on before is **The Glory That Was Greece** a Richard Berg design on the Peloponnesian War.

The Italian game company International Team are looking for wider British outlets. I understand their games have been available in limited quantities for sometime and include such titles as **Okinawa**, **Yorktown**, **Medici**, **Kroll And Prumci** (a galactic empire game), and **Zarco's Lords** your standard fantasy and magic extravaganza. The rules are in five languages including poor English and appear to be relatively simple. Graphically the maps are stunningly beautiful and the rest of the artwork good — how they play however I've no idea.

flawless although it was late which can be put down to a hangover from the pre-shakeup days. The S&T 77 shipment got out on time which is particularly encouraging when one bears in mind the fact that it was put together just prior to Xmas, SPI's busiest time. In the past we have found that the Xmas order always falls behind schedule. Could this be the start of a new era, I certainly hope so, another year like 1979 and I'll be a candidate for ulcers. Not only will S&T be on schedule but wait for it there will be five new games in there. **Commando**, **Medieval Quads**, **City Fight**, **Demons** and **Deathmaze** are shown on the packing list. The following shipment should contain **Air War 80**, **Air War Expansion Kit**, **Bulge**, **Leningrad** and **John Carter Of Mars**. Yes I did say **John Carter**, the copyright problems have been cleared up at long last much to the relief and delight of yours truly. Having been starved of new titles for so long the sudden influx is a most delightful experience.

The good news does not finish there, stocks of Yaquinto Games are also en route to us after a considerable delay and it looks like we will be able to offer subscriber discounts on these games as well as setting prices considerably lower than those currently being asked. If you can hold off your desire for these games for a few weeks then do so, I am sure we can save you a bob or two.

It would be very pleasant to continue this feature in the above ebullient manner however there are two sobering facts hovering over our heads at present, both of which are the price increases mentioned in issue 22. S&T is definitely going up in price to us, or rather has now gone up in price. The same is true of the boxwraps. The effects of the former will not be felt by subscribers immediately, we are absorbing the increase temporarily while we look into the feasibility of producing S&T over here, if it proves to be a viable proposition you may never feel the pinch, if however we cannot get this off the ground then you can expect to be hit by a price increase of about 50 pence per issue. Not a pleasant thought.

You will note on the current price list that we have now dropped the unboxed versions of SPI games. Fewer and fewer people have been going for this style over the past 12 months, combine this with the problems of stock control caused by operating the dual format and you have yourself every justification for taking this measure.

Finally we have an Irish problem. Since the recent monetary developments with the EEC, Irish cheques and postal orders have been treated by British banks as foreign. This means that bank charges of £1.00 to £1.50 have been levied on each transaction, obviously we cannot absorb this shortfall therefore we have been obliged to hold up and invoice most Irish orders. Anyone ordering from Eire is advised to go along to their bank to ascertain the best way to get payments to us. Yet another case of governments messing with mans recreational activities.

Since sending off this column for inclusion in Phoenix 23 I am delighted to report that our mail order system is now ready to go on steam. Until we take delivery of regular stationary we will be creating temporary invoices with each order, these will carry an explanation of the comments to be found under the 'Action' heading but do not contain all the information to be included on the regular invoices which should be to hand in 3 months. If you are not sure about any part of your order please contact us giving details of your query along with your new A/C Code, the date and the invoice number, all of which will be found at the bottom right of your invoice. It is possible that we will still come up against some problems during this initial period, any alterations you might find on the printed invoice will be there as a result of the manual checks that we intend to carry out.

FEEDBACK

How to use the Feedback Response Card: After you've finished reading this issue of Phoenix, please read the Feedback questions below and give us your answer/numbers on the card in the response boxes which correspond to each number. See centre spread for reply card. Please be sure to answer all the questions (but not write anything in the box for question-numbers labelled "no question"). Incompletely filled out cards cannot be processed. **What the numbers mean:** When answering questions "0" always means NO OPINION or NO QUESTION, "1" means YES and "2" means NO. When the question is a rating question, "1" is the WORST rating, "9" is the BEST rating; "5" is an average rating and all numbers in-between express various shades of approval or disapproval. Please do not use decimals or halves.

The deadline for the return of this card is 3 weeks from the receipt of this issue.

- (1) How long have you been playing board war-games? 0= less than 1 year, 1= 1 year, 2= 2 years ... 9= 9 or more years.
- (2) How many board wargames do you have? (Quad games count as 4 games). 1= 1-10, 2= 11-20,9= 81 or more.
- (3) Did you send in the Feedback card from issue 22?
- (4) Did you send in the Feedback card from issue 21?

The following set of questions will, hopefully, give me some idea as to how you, the reader, view board wargaming (or whatever you will call it) — acknowledgements to MOVES for the format of the question:

- (5) Pick the *one* name from the following list that best suits our hobby and enter its number in the answer box: 1= Wargaming, 2= Conflict simulation gaming, 3= Adventure gaming, 4= History gaming, 5= Simulation gaming, 6= Military gaming, 7= Board wargaming, 8= Some other title not listed — enter comments below.

The next set of questions ask you to indicate which types of games you think belong in our hobby. For each game type write 1 (Yes) if you think it forms part of the hobby or 2 (No) if you think it shouldn't be considered part of the hobby. Many of the questions only differ by a word or two so please consider them carefully.

- (6) Historical, military board games
- (7) Historical/political/economic/sociological board games
- (8) Historical personal combat or strategy board games (e.g. gunfighting, questing, duelling).
- (9) Science fiction military board games
- (10) Science fiction political/economic/sociological board games
- (11) Science fiction personal combat board games.
- (12) Fantasy Military Board games (e.g. War of the Ring)
- (13) Any board game that simulates a real-world experience or event that involves struggle or conflict on a military or para-military basis.
- (14) Any board game that simulates a real-world experience or event that involves struggle or conflict of any type
- (15) Any board game that simulates a real-world experience or event of any type (not necessarily involving struggle or conflict)
- (16) Non-board games, using miniatures, that simulate historical military events
- (17) Non-board games, using miniatures, that simulate science-fictional military or para-military conflict
- (18) Non-board games, using miniatures, that simulate science fictional personal combat or struggle
- (19) Non-board games, using miniatures, that simulate fantasy military or para-military conflict
- (20) Non-board games, using miniatures, that simulate fantasy personal combat or struggle

- (21) Non-board games, using miniatures, that simulate conflict or struggle of any kind.
- (22) Role-playing games that simulate personal combat and adventure in a military or para-military setting.
- (23) Role-playing games that simulate personal adventure not involving personal combat or violence.
- (24) Role-playing games that simulate personal combat adventure in a non-military setting.
- (25) Role-playing games that simulate personal struggle in a political, social, economic or psychological context.
- (26) Games which do use boards, miniatures or role playing techniques but which simulate real or imaginary conflict in a military or para-military setting.
- (27) Games which don't use board, miniatures or role playing techniques but which simulate real or imaginary personal combat or struggle
- (28) Any game, using any type of equipment or techniques, that simulates an historical military or para-military-conflict
- (29) Any game, using any type of equipment or techniques, that simulates an historic economic, political or sociological conflict or struggle
- (30) Any game, using any type of equipment or technique, that simulates personal combat or adventure
- (31) Any game, using any type of equipment or technique, that simulates any real world process (not necessarily involving conflict or struggle)
- (32) Any game, using any type of equipment or technique, that simulates any imaginary (sf/fantasy) conflict or struggle
- (33) Any game, using any type of equipment or technique that simulates any process or event, real or imaginary
- (34) Any game, using any type of equipment or technique that give the appearance of simulating or modelling any process or event, real or imaginary
- (35) Rate this issue of Phoenix on a scale of 1-9 9 being excellent and 1 being poor. I would appreciate a few constructive comments and reasons below if you rate it 4 or less

Rate the following articles/reports in this issue on a scale of 1-9, 9 being excellent and 1 being poor. Please insert zero if you did not read the article.

- (36) Fulda Gap — D.Mack
- (37) Army Group South — P.King
- (38) Fear God & Dreadnought — D.Davies
- (39) Games Day 5 — J.Lambhead
- (40) History and the Horse Bowman — R.Musson
- (41) Great War in the East — A.McGee
- (42) Wallgaming — C.Maclachlan
- (43) Arnhem — D. Cuin
- (44) Dreadnought scenarios— G.Wheatley
- (45) Objective Moscow Review — A.Sarker
- (46) Simpubs Briefing
- (47) Grapevine
- (48) Book Review
- (49) Mail Call
- (50) The idea of a Contact Column
- (51) The idea of incorporating occasional cartoons
- (52) The published cartoon

DREADNOUGHT SCENARIOS: CONT

Force 5:	German Player:
Invincible (191)	C51
Inflexible (192)	L61
C11	L51
L21	

At the beginning of each scenario the British Player rolls a die (secretly) to show him which force he uses (a roll of 1= use Force 1 etc). If he rolls a '6' or number already rolled, he rolls again.

* = take 2 from speed of unit and add one to attack and defence (represents pre-dreadnoughts Triumph and Canopus).

BASE VISIBILITY: in all scenarios is 10 hexes.

VICTORY POINTS: German Player: 20 victory points if German force (all of it) breaks sighting. Normal points for inflicting damage.

British Player: double points for inflicting damage.

Note: the German force is represented in each scenario, so in each scenario there is C51, L61 and L51.

From The Workshop

Operation Crusader A giant-sized, realistic boxed game combining tactical operations with strategic activity for a truly impressive game of North Africa, Rommel and the desert. **£22.50**

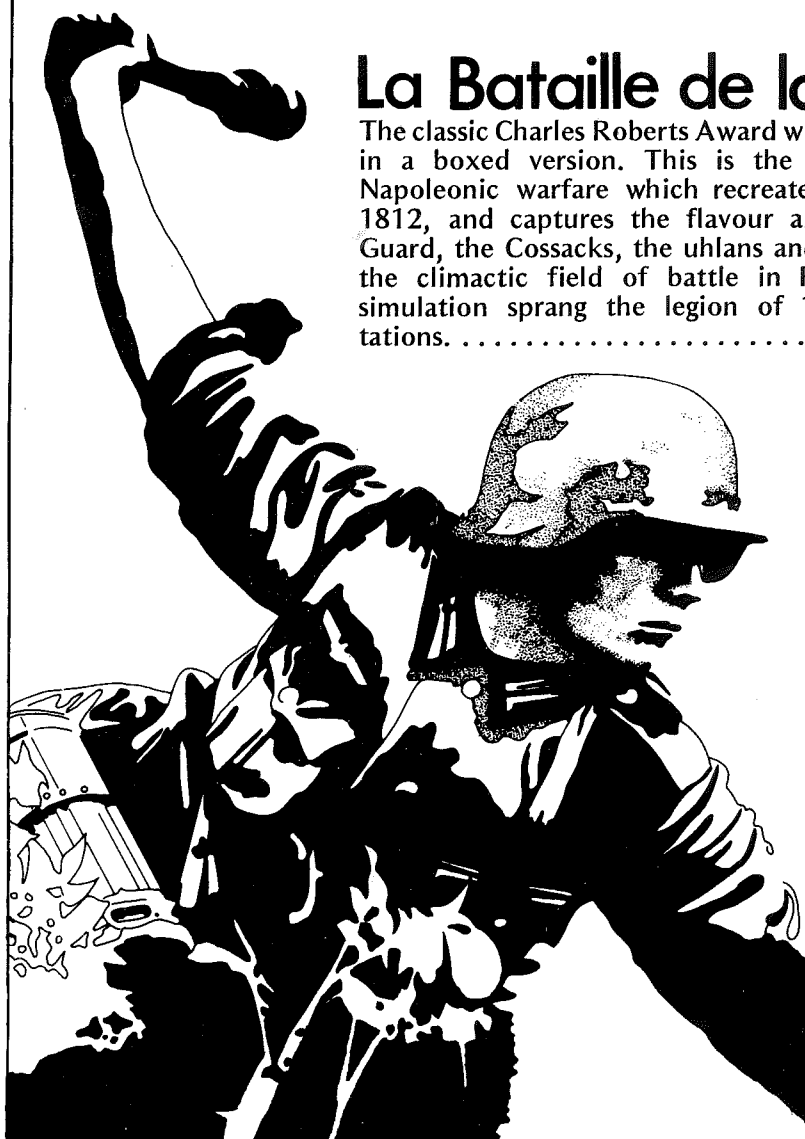
Case White Part of the Europa Series, but playable separately, this boxed game covers the Wehrmacht's initial, overpowering blitzkrieg against Poland in 1939. Victory or defeat is measured by the rate of German progress. **£8.95**

Road to the Rhine Montgomery. . . Arnhem. . . Remagen. . . the West Wall. . . the Bulge. . . and the final offensives against the Reich. This boxed game simulates the Allied drive against the Reich of 1944. **£8.95**

Marita-Merkur Playable separately, or as part of the Europa Series, this boxed game recreates the Balkan campaigns of World War II. Beginning with the Italo-Greek War, the game continues through to the air-invasion of Crete. **£11.95**

La Bataille de la Moskowa

The classic Charles Roberts Award winner, now newly packaged in a boxed version. This is the original game of tactical Napoleonic warfare which recreates the Battle of Borodino, 1812, and captures the flavour and history of the French Guard, the Cossacks, the uhlans and all the other warriors on the climactic field of battle in Russia. From this seminal simulation sprang the legion of 19th century tactical imitations. **£16.50**



GDW

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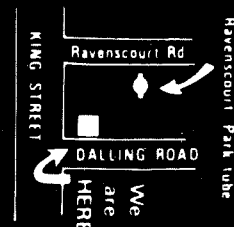
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For our seventh SPUKORGY we make a return visit to Owens Park which was used by us for the first time last year to hold our Autumn Meeting. Those of you who attended will be aware that there were a few problems which can be truthfully put down to teething troubles. These points have been brought to the attention of the management at Owens Park who assure us that there will not be a repetition.

Despite these problems the worst of which seems to be the shortage of liquid refreshments, I have been told by a number of gamers who attended the Orgy that Owens Park was a good venue and well worth going back to, so be it.

Situated about 3 miles from the centre of Manchester Owens Park is easily accessible by rail, road and air. Manchester's main stations Piccadilly, Oxford Road and Victoria - are 3, 2½ and 3 miles respectively from the venue. This distance can be readily traversed by taxi (approx £1.30p) or by bus using one of the many bus services that go past the complex (cost about 25p). Those of you coming by car will find the route particularly uncomplicated whether your approach be from the North, South, East or West.

So much for accessibility, what does Owens Park have to offer in the way of facilities? Judge for yourself: ● **Accommodation:** single rooms are the order of the day (these can be turned into twin or double rooms for couples on request). For £8.50 per head you will get a room with a wash-basin, bed (obviously) and storage for cloths, games and bottles of whisky. You will also get a fully traditional English breakfast and pantry rations for that early morning/late night brew. Showers and/or baths can be found on every floor in the residential area. The rooms are heated by hot water radiator central heating, individual keys are issued to resident participants. ● **Catering:** self-service meals will be laid on at the following times - Friday: Dinner (choice of menu) 8.00pm - 9.00pm; Saturday: Lunch (buffet) 1.00pm - 2.00pm, Dinner (choice of menu) 7.30pm - 8.30pm; Sunday: Lunch (buffet) 1.00pm - 2.00pm. The cost of meals is very reasonable, £2.25 for the buffet and £3.45 for the dinner. Special diets can be catered for, details should be given on your booking form. ● **Alcohol Intake:** bar facilities close to the playing area will be made available Friday 6.00pm - Midnight; Saturday 11.30am - 2.30pm, 6.00pm - Midnight; Sunday 11.30am - 2.30pm. These bars will be amply stocked with wines, spirits, beers and soft drinks. ● **Games Playing Area:** we will have the use of a hall that will easily accommodate 300 to 400 bodies. Playing tables (obviously built with us in mind) have a 2'x3' surface and are a perfect height for gaming on. These tables are of regulation dimensions, no more trouble getting a large playing surface for those giant games. 24 hour service at Owens Park means that you can game on a 24-hour basis if you have the stamina, obviously no restriction on this score. ● **Miscellaneous Items of Interest:** Owens Park has parking facilities for up to 350 cars, there are 8 coin box public telephones on site, a switchboard to accept incoming calls, and 3

cigarette machines. For the war weary there are such joyous diversions as TV rooms, dart boards, table tennis equipment and the indispensable bar soccer tables. We have even been given permission to set up our trade stand on site so you need not loose sleep over the possibility that you will not be allowed to contribute towards the 'Save the Simpubs Fund'.

It is standard practice at Owens Park for the promoter to handle all of the monetary arrangements therefore we will be issuing invoices ahead of the event. Due to the cancellation procedure adopted by the University officials we will be obliged to set a deadline for payment of these invoices after which time, non payment will be considered an automatic termination of your reservation. We must do this to avoid heavy cancellation charges which would otherwise be incurred by us.

To attend our SPUKORGY SPRING '80 fill in the booking form which can be found in this issue of Phoenix and send along with a booking fee of £2.50 per attending gamer to:

**SPUK
ORGY**

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This booking fee entitles you to attend the full meeting from 10.00am Friday April 25th - 5.00pm Sunday April 27th. Light refreshments will be served 10.30am, 3.30pm Saturday and 10.30am Sunday to all gamers and custom-made name badges will be issued at the check-in point. Bookings for attendance only can be taken up to Friday April 11th, bookings for those of you who want accommodation and/or meals MUST be with us no later than THURSDAY APRIL 3rd.

A full list of charges applicable for the weekend is given below, these include service charges and VAT.

Attendance Charge	£2.50
B & B for one (per night)	£8.50
Lunch (buffet)	£2.25
Dinner	£3.45