



Warning Order

Gimmicks of the Luftwaffe

If you belong to the Yahoo Air Pirates Group that supports the Mustangs and Phantoms miniature rules (based off of the old Avalon Hill board game) there is an unusual scenario in the Files section by Paul Hannah. The scenario is called

Gimmicks of the Luftwaffe and is designed to let gamers use all of the exotic German jets and attack a formation of bombers near the end of World War Two.

Almost every air combat gamer or WW2 history buff finds the subject of German jets irresistible. The clever part of this scenario is the way it is designed. Rather than have everyone focus on the escort vs. German fighters, the bombers vs. the jets, or the formations and different fighter types the Germans used to attack the bombers, this scenario does it a little different.

Essentially, it's each gamer for themselves. The scenario assumes that bombers are going to be shot down and in large numbers, so the referee or gamemaster runs the bombers, which isn't a lot of fun!



Other players can fly the Allied fighter escort, but that's not much fun either as the German jets zip by ripping apart bombers, but you can usually get a few gamers to help out. The rest of the gamers can either bid points for certain jets or in our case we just let them

choose what we had available. Then, each player scores points for crippling bombers, shooting down bombers or Allied fighters, or knocking down a bomber on the first pass. This leads to absolutely no cooperation between the German fighters as some are trying to knock down someone else's crippled target and at the same

time hoping that the bombers or escorts knock out the points leader during the game!

There are a number of advantages to running a scenario like this as it is basically designed for everyone to have a lot of fun. We all know that there weren't all of these jets in the air at the same time and some didn't even get into combat! However, it is a fun "what if" exercise and in our case it produced a very memorable game.

You could also reverse this scenario and have the German jets trying to land at an airfield protected by



ME-109s and FW-190s as a pack of Allied fighters swarms around the airfield, trying to get the jets while they're low on fuel and ammo. (cont. on p.5)

Inside this issue:

This Very Ground playtest and battle report	2
Gimmicks of the Luftwaffe battle report	6
Blitzkrieg Commander Normandy 1944	8
Historical Miniatures Rules Editorial	10
Age of Eagles battle report	12
Boardgames or Miniatures?	15
Warmaster Ancients battle report	18

Special points of interest:

- Warmaster Ancients battle report.
- This Very Ground battle report.
- Age of Eagles Spring 1813 battle report.
- Blitzkrieg Commander battle report.
- Several board wargame reviews.

Woodland Encounter

This Very Ground Playtest

Every time I watch Last of the Mohicans or Northwest Passage, I continually think about getting into the French and Indian War. So one day I dug out my old Courier issues that had a FIW theme year, ordered some figs and got started. Fortunately, several other members had the same idea and in a few months we had enough for a group game.

At first we thought about using the Sword and the Flame variant, but after our success with playing Price of Glory and Disposable Heroes we decided to try out the FIW variant called This Very Ground.

The scenario was quite simple. A

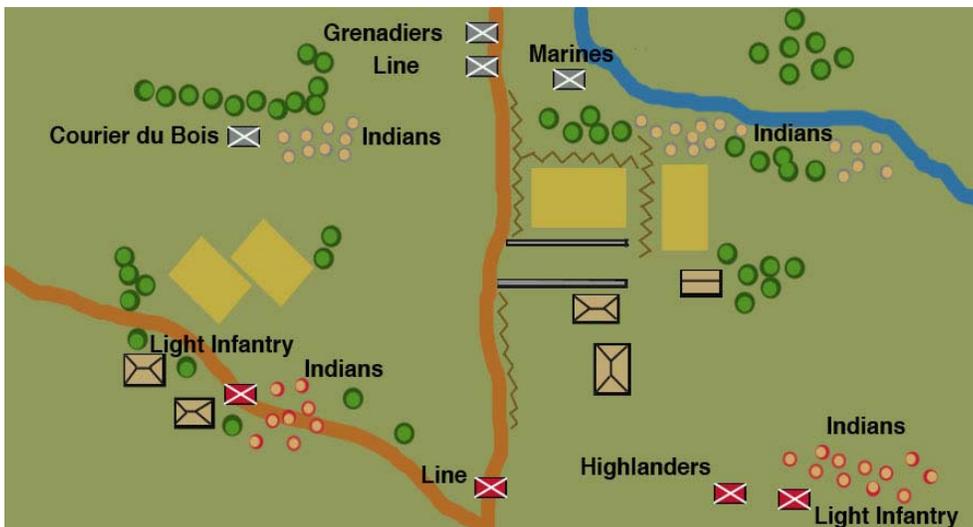


French and Indian war party are raiding the frontier settlements and the British must drive them off. The French and

their allies won if they killed all the civilians and burnt their farms.

The French force consisted of about 30 regulars and some grenadiers, 20 Courier du Bois, 20 marines, and around 20 Indians. The British had 40 regulars, 10 light infantry, and about 20 Indians that arrived randomly on one edge of the board.

Since we had up to eight players we used the full length of the board, which stretched our 25mm terrain to the limit. Still, we had a nice representation of several farms, a stream, some forested areas, a road down the center of the board, and plenty of fences and walls. After some brief strategy sessions, the game started.



The Battle Begins

The French formed units moved quickly up the road down the center of the board with the Courier du Bois and the Indians deployed as flank guards. The British were only able to get a few of their units on the board and they began to move towards the farms. By the third turn the Indians had already killed a few of the fleeing farmers and moved to engage the approaching British.

The French Indians met the British Indians in a melee in a small wooded area and the French Indians came out on top, only to be chased out by the approaching Highlanders. In the center of the board both sides' formed units were trying to deploy in the constrictive terrain while on the far British left the Courier du Bois were pressing their attack. Despite some minor setbacks the British were still confident that their forces would prevail.



Woodland Encounter

This Very Ground Playtest (cont.)

The British infantry in the center unleashed a series of volleys accompanied by some bad die rolls! The French infantry and grenadiers then moved up and a several turn long firefight began. Some British light infantry moved up to support the center and had some success holding back the French attack.

On the British right the Highlanders made several smart formation changes and ended up deployed on the flank of the French marines. The Highlanders fired a volley that caused several casualties, but soon they were under fire on three sides from the marines and two groups of Indians.

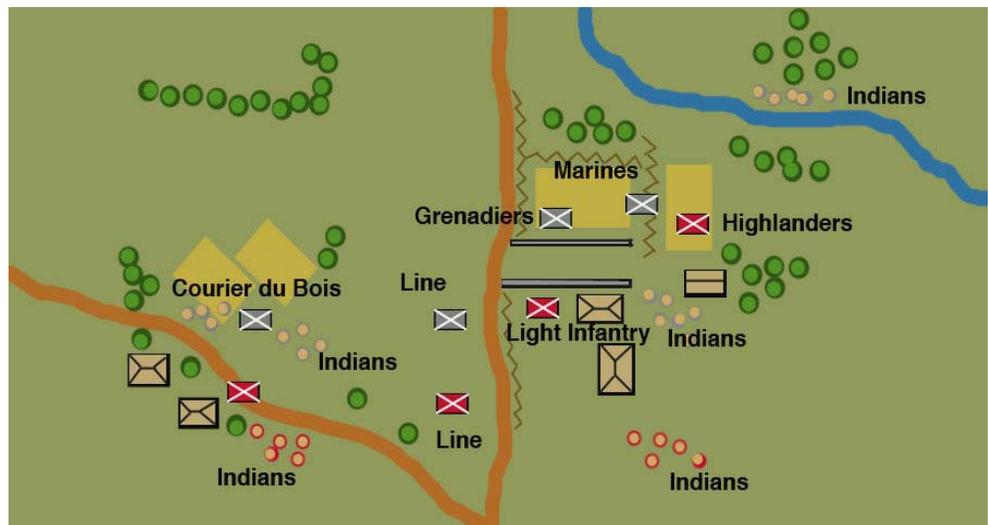
On the far British left the flank had

virtually collapsed. The British troops holding here had been hit hard by the Courier du Bois and were forced back, which turned into a rout. Several attempts were made to stem the tide, but in the end several farms were burning and there were no reserves to send to that side of the battle.

Meanwhile in the center, the British and French were still exchanging volleys, but now the British were getting worn down. The French attempted to charge, failed, then attacked again which resulted in a melee.

At this stage the center was in doubt, the left flank had collapsed,

and the right flank wasn't in great shape either. The British players, however, were determined to go one more turn to try to turn things around.



Finale & Summary

Unfortunately for the British, the melee in the center went against them, the Highlanders were under severe pressure, and the left flank was lost, so the game was called. Overall, the game worked out well for our first try and everyone had a lot of fun.

This Very Ground has a very good firing system which makes players think about what kind of volley they want to

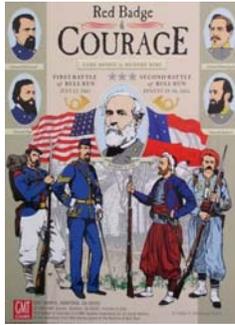
deliver. A full volley means that you can't fire for a few turns, so you need to choose wisely. The rules covering movement, firing, and morale are simple to grasp and the flexible unit sizes means that any figures that you have laying around can be used. I'm not crazy about the melee system and I have several questions about it, but the rest of the rules work well for a FIW skirmish and are recommended.



GMT's Red Badge of Courage

Game Review

The Great Battles of the American Civil War series from designer Richard Berg and GMT has been one of my favorite series. I played several of the forerunners to this system back in the old SPI days in the form of Pea Ridge, Wilson's Creek, and others. I also own Three Days of Gettysburg and Gringo!, which belong to this same series, so getting into this game was pretty easy.



system goes along pretty smoothly and you only need to refer back to the rules for special situations. In fact, once you get the hang of it, all you need are the tables and charts to effectively run the game.

The single scenario from First Bull Run which depicts the opening Union attack is ideal to learn the system. It is played on only one of the two maps, uses only a few brigades, and the order system is pretty streamlined since it is only a few turns long. The scenario works well, plays fast, and whets your appetite to play the game again.

Red Badge of Courage uses the GBACW system to portray the First and Second Battles of Manassas or Bull Run as it is commonly referred to. Using counters to represent each regiment or artillery battery with each strength point representing 100 men or one gun, the GBACW system is a level above tactical combat, but below the brigade level as in some other game series. There are leaders from brigade level on up to army commanders which can influence orders and how many times units in different formations can activate each hour.

I used the latest version of the rules (4.5) which details movement, combat, leaders, morale, the terrain, which can be crucial in this type of game. The rules are not for beginners and may seem daunting at first, but after a few turns the

The only other option for First Bull Run is the entire battle, which again, since it is the start of the war, is pretty small and can be played in several hours. Each side has some peculiar special rules, most notably being the amount of green troops on both sides and the unusual units that can be attached to various commands.

The Second Battle of Bull Run has multiple scenarios, ranging from the initial Union onslaught to the flanking attack by the entire corps of Longstreet. There is also the entire battle



that would take quite a few gaming sessions to complete. The interesting thing is that you can readily see how the armies of both sides changed in just a year. Instead of 30 or 40 counters per side for First Bull Run now there are well over a 100 per side and plenty of leaders plus numerous artillery batteries.

I think that the GBACW system is about the closest that you can get to playing ACW miniatures with counters at this point. The system does a good job of letting players try out some of the bigger battles of the war without having to invest in large miniature armies. Units can be given different kinds of orders, can change formations, and there is attention paid to the terrain of the battlefield more than in most board games.

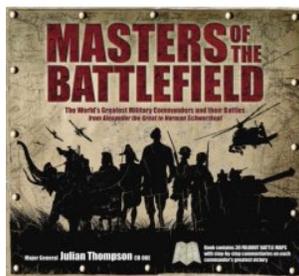
The only negative is that the big battles in the series can take some time to play. The full Second Bull Run battle would easily take 24 or more hours of gaming time where the full Three Days of Gettysburg battle is listed as 75+.

However, the smaller scenarios, especially the battles in Gringo! can be played in a few hours and are great for getting introduced to the system. All of these games except River of Death are still readily available at reasonable prices.

Masters of the Battlefield

Book Review

I usually go into several of the local Barnes & Noble stores after Christmas to see what they have on clearance and this year I found a real gem. The book was listed for \$24.98, but was on the 50% clearance table and for that price it is a great deal.



Masters of the Battlefield is a hard bound book that comes in a slip case. The book chronicles some of the

greatest leaders and their most famous battles throughout history, including Frederick, Rommel, Sharon, and many more. Each leader is profiled along with the battle, including many tidbits of information on weapons, armies, careers, etc..., that are pretty interesting. But what is really great about this book is that each battle comes with a fold out map in

a pocket built on each page. I've seen this before with several books, but these maps are actually well done and look good.

There is nothing here in the way of new information if you are a serious student of specific periods or leaders, but the book is good for an overview on battles that you knew little about or have never heard of. I think that it would be great for people just getting into military history and every gaming club should have one on hand for new gamers.

Gimmicks of the Luftwaffe (cont.)

(cont. from p. 1) In fact, there are a number of scenarios that can feature the German jets, so they are definitely not just for an “anti-bomber” game. Here’s a brief look at some of the German jets that we used:



Me-262

This is probably the most popular of all of the German jets. It has the distinction of being the world’s first operational jet fighter and began seeing action in late summer 1944. Fast and heavily armed, the Me-262 came as quite a shock to Allied war planners and new tactics had to be developed to counter the faster speed of the jets by the Allied escorts. The Me-262 is credited with over 500 Allied kills while losing around 100 of its own number.



Me-163

One of the more interesting jets was the Me-163 Komet, which first saw action in late 1944. The Komet was a danger to Allied aircraft and German pilots alike as takeoffs and landings were dangerous affairs. The Komet was extremely fast and would zoom climb to attack enemy bomber formations with its 30mm cannon. However, the short flight time and poor handling characteristics meant that after its fuel ran out it was easy prey for Allied fighters. Komets accounted for around 16 enemy bombers before the squadrons were disbanded.



He-162

Designed and put into operation in an astounding period of a few short months, the Salamander as it was called first saw combat in April of 1945. The Salamander was the fastest German jet, but had very limited ammunition for its cannon and had several problems due to manufacturing. Most of the bases were overrun by the Allies in the Spring of 1945 and the jets were captured. If it had been put into operation earlier the Salamander would have been one of the deadliest opponents in the skies.



Go-229

The Gotha 229 Flying Wing was another interesting jet design. Only one prototype actually flew, but several others were under construction, including trainers and two seat all-weather fighters. Similar to the other jets it was cannon armed and extremely fast, but the factory was overrun before any aircraft could be tested in combat.

That the Germans were able to get jets into combat by 1944 is an astounding technical achievement. The jets, particularly the Me-262 and He-162 were fast, heavily armed, and posed a serious threat to the Allied bomber raids. However, the jets had numerous problems such as limited ammunition, shortage of metal, fuel issues, handling problems, and more.

These things would not have been a problem if the Germans had time to work out the problems and fix them in later models, but time was a luxury that they did not have.

Under increasing pressure from the advancing Allied land forces, massive bombing raids, and roving packs of Allied fighters waiting for the jets to come back down, the German jets could only hope to do limited damage before being overwhelmed.

Still, it is an interesting “what if” part of WW2 and even more interesting since these jets did actually get into combat. For the gamer this era of WW2 air combat opens up a realm of possibilities. From various jets darting through Allied bomber formations to Allied fighters trying to knock out known jet airfields, a large number of scenarios can be created.

Perhaps an even better option would be a campaign involving German jets. Players could represent a squadron of German jets and have to deal with a number of issues such as limited jet fuel, maintenance, lack of spare parts, and never knowing when the campaign would end due to Allied ground forces overrunning the base! Players could plan out daily air operations including how to cover the airfield for when the jets return and are out of fuel and ammunition.

There are several manufacturers that make 1/300th German jets and they are pretty good models all the way around. If you go outside of 1/300th you may have some difficulty getting everything that you need, but in this scale there are a wide variety including many “1946” type aircraft for hypothetical scenarios.

For our group the chance to use these incredible machines was just too good an opportunity to pass up. For many gamers the biggest obstacle is the bombers, but I found an easy solution to that. Corgi has a line of B-24s and B-17s in its Nose Art collection that are around 1/275th scale. They are pre-painted and look great next to the 1/300th fighters. Best of all, they can be found on Ebay for \$5-10 each, which is a steal. Go to the next page for a battle report on a recent game our group did that involved the German jets.

Gimmicks of the Luftwaffe

Everyone loves the German jets from WW2 and since we were recently inspired by an episode of Dogfights on the History Channel we decided to try our hand at using them in a game. We based the scenario off of Paul Hannah's Gimmicks of the Luftwaffe scenario from the Yahoo Air Pirates group. Basically, there are a lot of bombers heading home from a bombing run in Germany escorted by a few fighters and they are jumped by some German jets.

Rather than use the bid system as I only had so many German jets, I just let the players pick what was available. There were two pairs of ME-262s, a pair of ME-163s, a pair of HE-162s, and one pair of GO-229 Flying Wings. The Allies had 12 late model B-17s along with a pair

of P-51s and a pair of P-38s for escort. The German players are strictly in it for themselves because of the scoring system. You want to knock down or cripple as many bombers as you can and hope

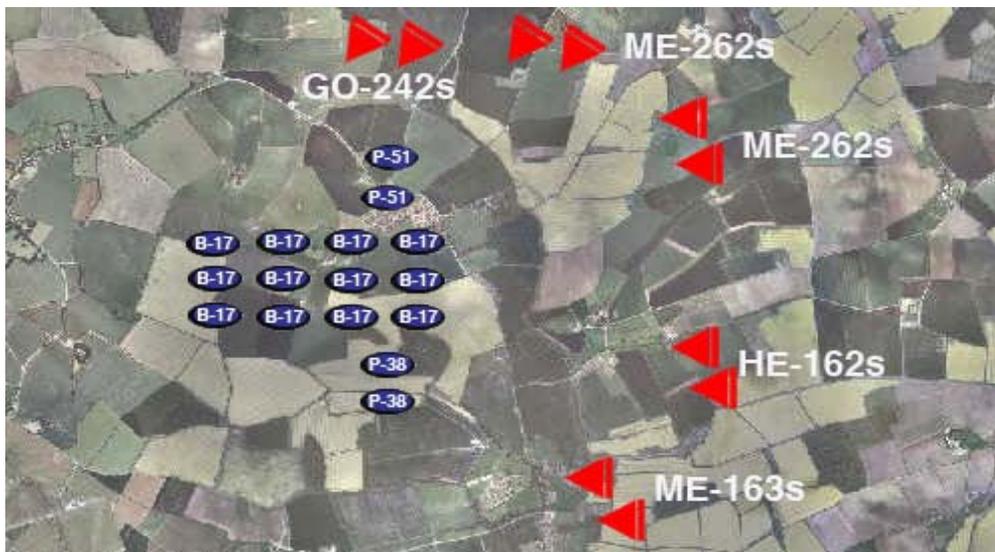


Battle Report

that the other jets either don't do well or get shot down so that you end up the winner!

Each of the German player was allowed to choose their starting altitude and speed, plus they had a choice of starting positions. The Allied fighters also had their choices and they chose to start on opposite sides of the bomber formation. This proved to be a mistake as the German jets were much faster and they got caught out of position

With some explanations of the rules for attacking bombers and the peculiarities of the German jets (some had limited ammo, cannons, sucking up debris, going into a flat spin, etc.) everyone placed their markers and the game began.



Errata: The GO-242s should be listed as GO-229s!



First Attacks

The Allied fighters roared out in front of the bombers to engage the incoming German jets. A P-38 did get a shot at an ME-262, but then they found themselves trying to turn and chase the jets, which left them badly out of position to defend the bombers.



A P-51 turned in front of a Flying Wing and was met with a hail of cannon fire, knocking it down quickly. The German jets maneuvered to get into prime attacking position

with the ME-163s swinging around the formation to attack it from the rear.

The HE-162s were first into the formation, knocking down a bomber on one pass and crippling two others. With only two shots each they flew through the B-17s and survived the return fire, emerging out the other side, sliding past the Allied escorts, and then on home! They had made their mark quickly and survived!

Not wanting to be outdone, the remaining German jets pressed the attack. The Flying Wings lined up a bomber and knocked it down, then crippled another. They went into the bomber formation and a lucky shot by the B-17s destroyed a Flying Wing. The B-17s also nailed a ME-262 as it dove in and out of the formation.

The second group of ME-262s came in low under the B-17s then climbed to engage them, knocking down a bomber and crippling another. The ME-163s were still taking a wide swing around the rear of the formation and were getting ready to make their run.

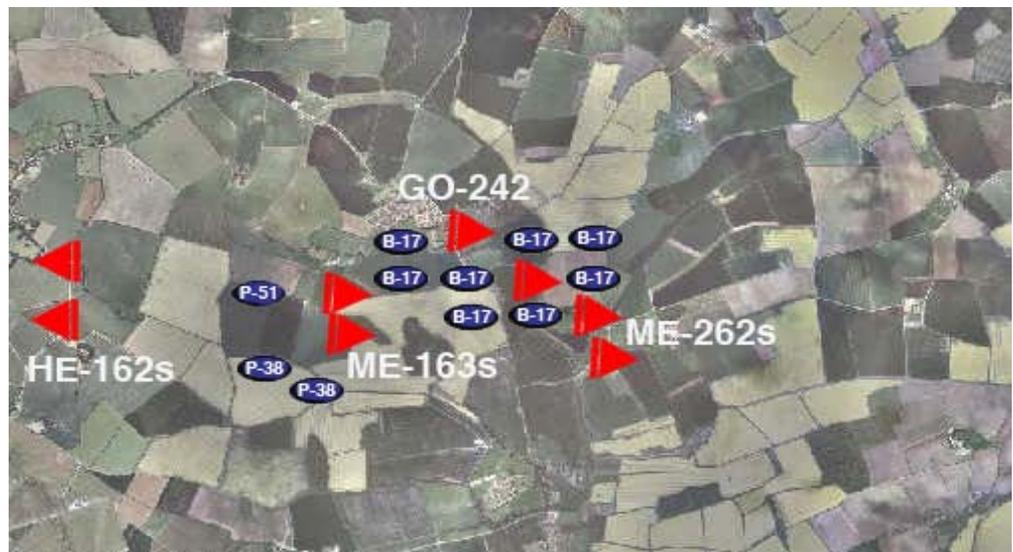
By this time there were three bombers falling from the sky in flames with three others trailing smoke from various engine

and fuel hits. One Allied fighter had been shot down and two German attackers were also shot down.

The remaining Germans now pressed their attack and with no Allied fighters in sight it was a fighter pilot's dream come true! The ME-163s got into the act, knocking down one bomber and crippling another. The three remaining ME-262s all took turns gunning down bombers while the lone remaining Flying Wing downed one more. Players earned 5 points for crippling a bomber, 10 points for each Allied fighter shot down, 15 points for each downed bomber, and 25 points for destroying a bomber on one pass.

The first pair of ME-262s won the

game with 70 points, followed closely by the second pair of ME-262s with 60, then 50, 45, and 40, so the German players had all scored and were only one or two die rolls from winning the game.



Errata: The GO-242s should be listed as GO-229s!

Finale & Summary

The German players definitely had fun and the players who flew the Allied escorts are to be thanked for helping out the referee in a thankless task! This is definitely a "Let's Have Fun Shooting Down The B-17s" game! If you're looking for a game to find the best defensive strategy for a B-17 formation, how to stop the German jets as an Allied fighter, etc., then you need to look somewhere else.

The game looked visually impressive and played much faster than we thought, but then it helps that the German jets usually only have enough ammo for a few shots each and the bombers fly straight ahead.



I would suggest that anyone interested in air combat gaming should try this type of scenario at least once to experience the power of German jet aircraft in WW2. They were truly impressive machines.

Breakthrough!

Blitzkrieg Commander Scenario Replay

One of the things that baffles me time and time again is why we don't play Blitzkrieg Commander more often. Every game has been a lot of fun, sees some wild swings of fortune, and it does a great job of representing WW2 operational level combat. Case in point being this game that we played over the Christmas Holidays.

The scenario is that a Canadian infantry battalion with an accompanying armor company has broken through the German lines and seized a small village in the Caen area. The Germans responded quickly, cutting the Canadians off and preventing any exploitation of this break in their lines. A strong British force of mechanized infantry and armor is going to try to breakthrough along with ten



Bren carriers which have food, ammunition, and medical supplies. The objective was quite simple in that the British/Canadians had to hold onto the village and get at least half of the carriers to the

village to win the game.

The German defenders had 3 Panthers, 1 Tiger, 1 88mm AT gun, 3 Hetzers, 6 PZ IVH, 3 Stug IIIs, an infantry battalion, a panzergrenadier company, 2 batteries of nebelwerfers, and various flak, engineer, and assault guns. In other words, a hastily put together battlegroup of assorted odds and ends, but still a very powerful force.

The British relieving force consisted of a company of Shermans and Fireflys, a mech infantry battalion, various recon elements, the Bren carriers, and they were supported by three batteries of Sextons.

After some brief discussion of plans, the forces were deployed and the first turn began.



The Battle Begins

The British offensive got off to a sluggish start as most of the commands failed to move. The Germans and Canadians conducted some long range sniping, but the first few turns were relatively quiet.

Then on Turn 3 the Sherman Steamroller of Death got rolling. Not going anywhere on the British left flank, the three Sherman companies converged on

the center of the German defenses. With a succession of command rolls and some great firing dice, the Shermans rolled through the center of the board with relative ease, defeating all attempts by the Germans to stop them.

By the end of Turn 5 there were few German defenders in the area and the others were having a difficult time moving. It looked like an easy British win.



Breakthrough! Blitzkrieg Commander Scenario Replay (cont.)

Before the Shermans finished off the German defenders on the ridge overlooking the village, the accompanying mech infantry had dismounted to advance and clear the infantry and AT guns. Unfortunately, a nebelwerfer barrage deviated right on top of them, leaving a devastated infantry battalion and burning halftracks everywhere. Couple that with some failed command rolls and things weren't looking so easy anymore.

The Germans had been busy around the village, trying to launch an offensive to retake the Canadian held village, but a well timed artillery barrage and fierce defense from the Cromwells in the area kept the Germans at bay. The remaining German forces on the German right flank turned around and tried to counterattack

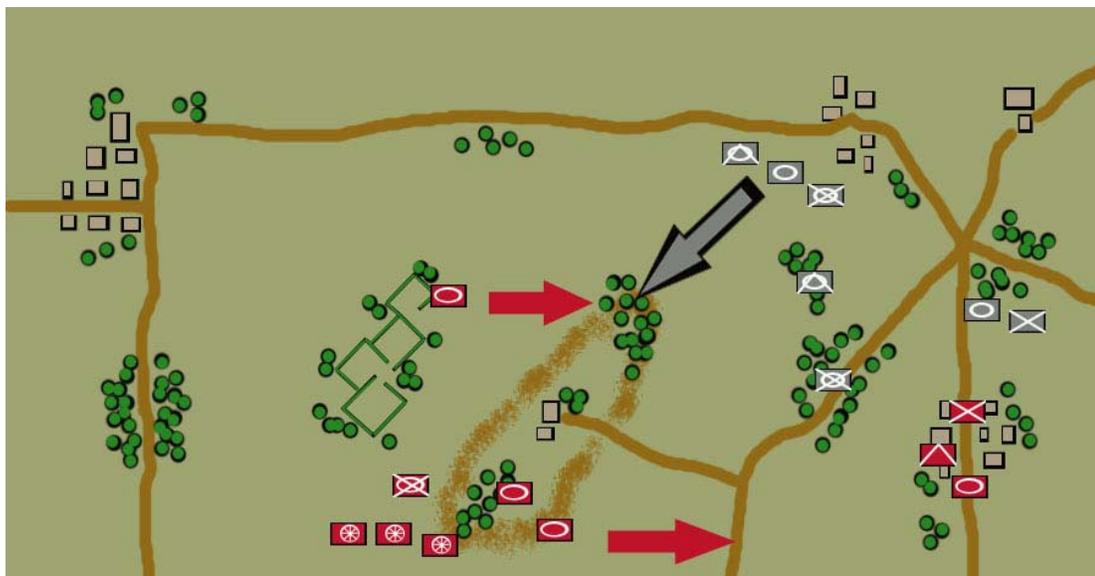
into the flank of the Shermans, meeting some success before the Shermans moved to defend their flank.

By this time the Germans were in a



bad position and if the British command rolls would just get going again they could roll into the village with a victory. The Canadians were well entrenched in the village and despite suffering some casualties, they were in good shape. The secondary German attack on the village had failed and the German counterstroke across the middle of the board was running into serious opposition.

Finally, the British luck with their command rolls came back just in time. With a series of three successive rolls the Shermans moved into position to block any German counterattack and the Bren carriers ran around the flank and into the village to secure the victory.



Realizing that the German left flank has been overrun, the German mech forces on the right attempt a counterattack. Led by a company of PZ IVHs and some Stugs, the Germans initially enjoy some success, knocking out some recon elements and several Shermans. They become bogged down in long range firefights and with bad command rolls are unable to prevent the Bren carrier convoy from successfully reaching the Canadians in the village.

Summary

The Germans got off to a bad start and the Panthers paid the price for it. Defending well forward they were overrun by the Sherman steamroller without much opposition. Then, the German command rolls failed at the worst pos-



sible times, preventing them from launching a coordinated counterattack that could have stopped the Shermans in the center.

The British had a good plan and it was well executed,

no doubt helped by some very good rolling from Turns 3-5.

Overall, it was a good game and closer than it appeared. The BKC command system gives you those highs and lows each game and you must be prepared to ride through those rough stretches when your command rolls fail. Again, I fail to understand why we don't play this more as it really produces some good games.

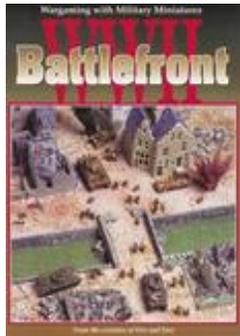
I often wonder if other gamers are seeing the same trend I am regarding historical miniature gaming rules. If my club is any sample representation (we play about 20 periods and have thousands of unpainted figs-like most groups!) we seem to be buying more figs and far less rules over the last few years. After thinking about it for a few moments I've come to the conclusion that maybe it's because there are no original ideas left and we've reached the end of the line.

Now I can hear some of you crying out there, "But there's two new sets of rules advertised on The Miniatures Page every day". Yes, but are they any different than what has come before? Is there anything so novel in them that I want to try them? Why should I rebase existing figs, buy new figs, or care about a new set of rules when I already own a dozen on the same period? To begin this discussion, let's go over the progression of rules in the hobby.

Before the 70's most sets of rules were homegrown and a few appeared in newsletters. By the mid 70's you started to see some of the first commercial sets of rules. I can recall looking in the back pages of Wargamer's Digest or the early Courier and wonder in amazement at the various sets of rules for different periods. There were few if any reviews other than word of mouth, so you naturally had to order a set to see if they were what you wanted. Even if they didn't excite you, they were lovingly added to the pile of rules where you could pull out some ideas for home rules, campaigns, or scenarios.

Fast forward to the 80's where some of the first commercial sets of rules with high production values began appearing. Rules such as Johnny Reb, Empire, and more became prevalent throughout the hobby. Because they were newer, had some good ideas, and high quality, they attracted a wide audience that still continues with them to this day.

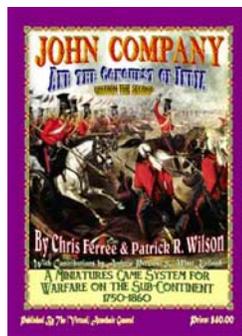
By the 90's you saw more rules trying to be different than the most successful



sets of rules. This included unit activation concepts, different base sizes and scales, and pretty much anything to set themselves apart from what came before. Over the last few years we have seen some innovation from rules such as Warmaster Ancients for command & control, Disposable Heroes for WW2 skirmish, and Flames of War for making WW2 simple for many gamers who had never considered trying it.

I believe it is now at this point over the last year or so where historical miniatures rules have reached the end of the line. Most sets coming out now are either a rehash of what has come before, variations on a theme, or just dumbing down more complex systems. In other words, there's not much I can think of that would make me want to spend my money on.

Let's take WW2 for example. What scale do you want to play? 2mm, 6mm (1/285), 10mm, 15mm, 20mm, 28mm, and 1/35 all have rules written for them. What kind of activation system do you want? Cards per side, cards per unit, command rules, order chits, writing orders, IGOUGO, alternating initiative, etc..., are all available. Scale? We have 1:1, fire team, squad, platoon, company, and even battalion/regiment available in some rules.



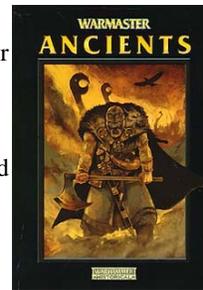
Same goes for WW2 combat systems. There's direct fire, opportunity fire, indirect fire, bounding over-watch, suppressive fire, harassing fire, recon by fire, and all with their own charts and tables.

My point is that if you cannot find a set of rules for a scale, command, combat, or movement system that you like for WW2, then you are someone who will never be pleased with anything. There are so many rules already out there it would be impossible not to find something that you would enjoy playing.

The same goes for ancients, ACW,

Napoleonics, WW2 naval, and more. The only periods where there aren't a ton of rules are those that have very small followings such as ancient naval warfare and even then, I can probably find a dozen or so sets that would suit my needs.

Ancients is much the same way with so many rules available for so many scales that how could a new set of rules break into the period? The new Osprey rules will come out and people may buy a few thousand, but will they become a true force in the hobby? Probably not. After all, what could possibly be in that set of rules that we haven't seen before?



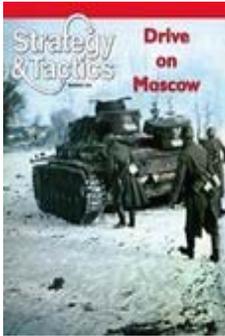
I think that you reach a point where original rules ideas are far and few between. I simply cannot see anything on the horizon that would make me say, "Wow, I'm going to shelve my Fire & Fury and Johnny Reb 3

rules, rebase my figs and start playing this new game! What could possibly be in a new set of ACW rules that hasn't been presented before?

Now this won't stop gamers from putting out more rules nor should it. Maybe someone will come up with some entirely new concept in rules design that could warm the heart of the most hardened grognard. However, I think that there's only so much that you can do with paper, pencil, dice, figurines, bases, etc..., and coming up with something visionary is going to be tough.

My hope is that gamers and game companies start putting out supplements and guides. What is really needed in the hobby are well produced painting guides, scenario books, campaigns, and retrofits to existing rules to bring them up to today's standards. The hobby industry is really hurting in this area and it needs to be addressed. I would rather see a painting guide and campaign maps for a German panzer division on the late Eastern Front than have to wade through another set of WW2 armor rules where the only new concept is the use of D8s instead of D6s!

I think that I've mentioned before in a previous review that Drive on Stalingrad (DOS) is one of my favorite games. You get two maps, several hundred counters, pretty basic rules, and who can resist stacks of panzers running wild on the Russian Front?



It's a game that comes down to the last few turns every time and is fun to play. It won't win any awards for graphics, but I'll take it over many of the overproduced games that are coming out today.

So I was pleasantly surprised when Decision/S&T decided to make the game as part of a trilogy, with the second game being a double sized issue of S&T called Drive on Moscow. The third game which is due out in 2008 will focus on Kursk. After shelling out my \$40 for the game I took it home and eagerly began setting it up.

First, there are a lot of similarities between it and Drive on Stalingrad. You get two maps with the similar graphics, two counter sheets with the forces involved, and a set of rules that are pretty easy to get through the first try. Having played DOS several times I just checked the major changes for this game and I was ready to go.

The big change and the one that has caused the most controversy are the counters. Gone are the NATO style 70's-80's versions and they've been replaced with icons of infantry and armor. Although someone has created a set of NATO style counters on Consimworld, you don't get that option with the game. Personally, I have no problem with the icon counters, but I could just have easily used the NATO style as well. As with DOS, almost all of the Russian units are in an untried state, so you have no idea about

what their combat value actually is. There are several counters representing Guards divisions that replace other units in the Russian army where their combat values are known.

Again, similar to DOS you set up the forces as the German player think, "Wow, this is going to be easy". Several stacks of panzers waiting to break through a thin line of Russian defenses that stretch in one high stacks along the length of both maps. The game uses a unique system where each player must chose a Move-Fight or Fight-Move option, which can cause some important decision making later in the game. There are no zones of control for the Russian units, so creating a solid defensive line is a challenge.

The first turn begins and the Germans blow huge holes in the Russian defenses, then the panzers and mech forces are unleashed. The Germans need to take several victory objectives (again, very similar to DOS) with a few that are close and several, most notably Moscow, far, far away. Again, after the first turn as the German player you are already making room reservations at the Kremlin for a few turns down the road!

But then the Russians fall back and reform a second line and more reinforcements arrive. The Germans now have to decide which units will thrust towards the objectives and which will guard the supply lines. There's no time to second guess yourself as the main

thrusts are going to leave many of the infantry units far behind.

Turns 3 and 4 see the panzers pocketing huge sections of the Russian lines as the remaining defenders make a run for the next defensive line. As the German player you begin to notice that your infantry is fal-

ling further and further behind. Then the weather hits, which means that your mech forces don't move as fast as they used to. Offensives with the panzers must now be planned carefully to inflict maximum damage. Despite the massive dead pile of Russian counters they keep getting more.

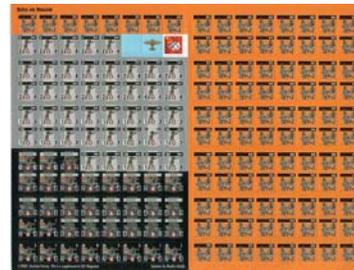
By the mid game point the Germans need to decide if they want to cease operations for a turn to prepare for one final massive fling or continue on. I usually choose to call a halt to get my lines straightened out, get the replacements, and then get the bonuses for a renewed offensive. Naturally the big downside to this is that more Russians take up defensive positions!

So the second big offensive gets underway and the mech movement allowances continue to shrink, meaning that get-

ting anywhere in a hurry is going to be impossible. If you wasted time in the previous turns, got distracted by killing off Russian pockets, or had no clear plan, it's too late as you'll never get near the objectives. As the German player when

the snow hits you need to be near the outskirts of your objectives or you have no chance at all. A few more final do or die attacks then end the game.

As with DOS what looks easy on turn 1 can look impossible by turn 7 or 8. Both games do a great job of showing the power of the panzer formations, the unlimited Russian reserves, and the vastness of the theater. For the Germans everything seems too far, you have too few panzers, and the Russians just keep coming. This is a very good game system and works well for the subject chosen. Highly recommended for panzer enthusiasts or those who love a defensive challenge.



If you've been reading this magazine for awhile now, you know that Age of Eagles is one of our favorite sets of rules. We always seem to have good gaming events with these rules and to top it all off the games look good! After a few months in between games we decided to try another Spring 1813 slugfest on a 6 x 10 board.

It is the Spring of 1813 and the French are on the move. The Allies are trying to concentrate their forces to meet this threat, but have become strung out along the line of march. A serious gap has opened between the various Allied commands and Napoleon sees his chance. Gathering what forces are available, he orders Victor to take command and drive a wedge in between the Allies to cut off a large segment of the Russians and Prussians. The main body of the French army will be up shortly thereafter to finish the job.

Order of Battle

French-Victor

1st Corps

2 Infantry Divisions (2 brigades each)

2nd Corps

2 Infantry Divisions (2 brigades each)

3rd Corps

1 Saxon Infantry Division (2 brigades)

1 French Infantry Division (2 brigades)

1 Light Cavalry Division

Cavalry Corps

1 Division of Dragoons (2 brigades)

1 Division of Cuirassier (2 brigades)

Artillery

11 batteries

Russian/Prussians

1st Infantry Corps

2 Infantry Divisions (3 brigades each)

2nd Infantry Corps

2 Infantry divisions (3 brigades each)

1st Cavalry Corps

1 Division Cuirassier (2 brigades)

1 Division Dragoons (2 brigades)

2nd Cavalry Corps

3 Light Cavalry brigades

1st Prussian Corps

2 Infantry Divisions w/Light Cavalry brigade

Artillery

17 batteries

The French and Saxons were allowed to deploy anywhere along the opposite board edge after the Russians deployed, giving them an advantage in where to plan their attack. The Prussians were



able to enter on the road behind the village beginning on Turn 2. The French had to exit at least a division off of either board to win the game, simulating enemy forces moving into the rear areas of the Allies. After some serious discussions and planning, both sides deployed and the battle began.

Opening Moves

The initial French plan was to drive down the center and right, with the Saxons and cavalry guarding the left flank. The Russians were having none of this and immediately moved their cavalry on the Allied right to attack the French and Saxons before they deployed. The French right experienced bad die rolls for movement and this would continue throughout the game.

On the second turn the Russian cav-

The Russians deploy almost all of their cavalry to their right flank, hoping to deal the French a mortal blow at the opening of the battle. The French plan to launch an all out assault on the village and tear apart the Russian center before the Prussians can arrive and fully deploy. Initially the French and Saxon cavalry are thrown back with heavy casualties, but are able to rally and with the assistance of more cavalry arriving from the French center, are able to launch a counterattack.





Although the Russian cavalry had come out the loser in the overall battle, it had delayed the French and Saxons on that flank for several crucial turns. This meant that the French in the center would have to assault the town by themselves, faced with a Russian corps that had already deployed, a grand battery on the opposite side of the river, and Prussian reinforcements that were moving up.

ally attacked, destroying a Saxon cavalry brigade deployed as a screen on that flank. The Russians then drove into some French dragoons, driving them back as well. However, the Russians had overextended themselves and the reserve units had failed to move up, which would have certainly sealed the French cavalry's fate. The situation was indeed dire and the French and Saxon infantry had to deploy into line with their artillery to defend against a possible breakthrough.

More French cavalry from the center was swung over to the far flank to help out and the French cuirassier got into the act, slamming into the blown Russian heavy cavalry and forcing it back on their supports. The cavalry battle went back and forth for several turns as attack was met with counterattack until both sides were severely damaged.

On the French right the infantry corps was finally moving. The French artillery got into a counterbattery duel with the Russian artillery on that flank while the French deployed. There were still some bad die rolls on movement, which prevented the French attack from going in just when its weight could have been decisive.

In the center the French infantry began to deploy for an attack with the artillery brought forward to begin to shell the Russian defenders in the town. The Russian grand battery on the opposite side of the river opened up and began tearing holes in the French lines. The Prussians also began to move to close in the gaps between the Russians in the town and the Russians on the far edge of the board.



The French cavalry by this time had reformed after its first attack and moved to threaten the flank of the Russian held town. They were intercepted by a division of Russian dragoons and another fierce series of melees occurred on the flank, with the Russians having

some initial success. The French continued to counterattack and after a few more turns had cleared the flank of Russian cavalry. An entire Russian cavalry corps had been defeated and driven off with heavy casualties, but the French casualties were almost as high, leaving a greatly reduced French cavalry corps. Still, however, the remnants moved to get around the town into the Russian rear area, but were intercepted by the Prussians who had changed direction from supporting the center to shoring up the flank of the town.

On the far French right the Russians, presumably bored, moved out from behind the river to engage the French infantry which was still having problems get-

ting their attack rolling forward. They picked a bad time to do this as just then the French movement rolls improved and the French attack finally went in. The Russian brigades were repulsed, but not before doing some damage. Again, however, just as things were looking up a series of '1s' were rolled on the movement charts and the attack ground to a halt.

Finally, it was time for the center to literally take center stage! The French infantry corps, supported by artillery, made a concerted attack against the Russian held town. The Russians fought back desperately and casualties were heavy on both sides. After several turns of firefights the French launched their first charge to secure the outskirts of the town. The first few attacks were repulsed, but then finally there was a break-





turn.

Again, bad movement rolls meant that the French and Saxon attacks were disjointed. No headway could be maintained and the French only received more casualties for their efforts. At that point it was deemed that the French effort had run out of steam and night had fallen.

The game had taken a dozen turns over approximately seven hours with 6-7

through and French infantry moved into the town.

Now things were getting desperate for the Allies. There were French units in the town and preparing to flank the remaining defenders. The French cavalry had checked the Prussian cavalry and were getting ready to swing around the town from behind, and the remaining French and Saxon infantry had finally moved up to support the central attack.

The Russians, however, counterattacked fiercely, driving the French back through the town and out the other side, retaking the town and causing more casualties on the French infantry. By this time it was almost nightfall in the battle and the French were down to their last

gamers, which is not too bad. Although the Allies had won a victory it was a close run thing. The French came close to breaking the center twice and the French cavalry almost cleared the entire flank of Russians. The Russians had fought desperately, and although their cavalry had been decimated, it had held up long enough to prevent the French corps with the Saxons from linking up to attack the center. If the second French corps had been able to deploy quicker it would have sealed the fate of the Russian defenders in the town.

The other thing that really hurt the French, particularly on the right flank was the continuous bad movement rolls. As in reality this sometimes

happens and there's not much you can do about it except to keep trying to coordinate an attack. The Russian use of a grand battery across the river was a good idea in that it secured that part of the center as anything that moved in that area was subject to heavy casualties.

We've found that the Spring 1813 campaign is one of the best periods for the Napoleonic era. Both sides have an interesting array of infantry and cavalry with plenty of options for French allies and in this case it was the Saxons. Both sides are pretty evenly matched and there are many options for fictional and historical scenarios.

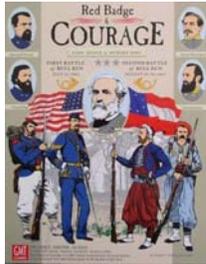
By now we've definitely settled on Age of Eagles as our definitive rules set for the period. The brigade level units, the fast play, and the movement charts which creates some chaos has given us several excellent games for the era. Not only that, the brigade sized units look great on the tabletop!



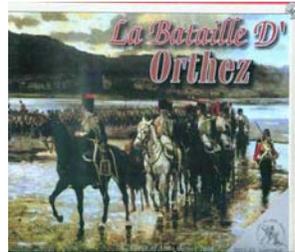
At this stage there is not much left of the Russian cavalry force. The French cavalry has taken heavy casualties, but they have now flanked the Russian held town and only Prussian reinforcements have prevented them from sweeping into the Russian flank. The battle for the town has turned into a maelstrom with more and more forces from both sides being thrown into the battle. Attack and counterattack go on for hours as both sides try to seize this vital position. The French attack on their right moves forward inconsistently, unable to make serious headway.

Horse & Musket Period: Boardgames or Miniatures?

I've recently been trying to play a few more tactical level boardgames in the Horse & Musket era, especially since I now have three of the four excellent volumes in GMT's Great Battles of the American Civil War series. After playing a good scenario of Red Badge of Courage depicting the opening attack at First Bull Run, I started thinking about the differences between tactical level boardgames and miniatures games for the same level.



The huge advantage that miniatures has is that it is a visual representation of the battlefield. Rules for line of sight and terrain are usually half as long for miniatures as you can clearly see the terrain on the board. There are no rules or counters for extended lines, larger than average formations, columns, etc..., because you can see it on the tabletop. This is a huge advantage over boardgames that cannot be emphasized enough. A miniatures game of say for example, The Peach Orchard at Gettysburg will look similar to the real thing as the units of figures fight over it.



and miniature rules that we are discussing here do a great job of simulating fire combat, shock action, and melee, so there are very few differences here to talk about. Likewise

goes for command and control where both miniatures rules and board game systems place a heavy emphasis on its application to the battlefield.

Naturally, the first thing that you notice is that one is down with miniatures and terrain and the other with paper and cardboard! With miniatures you have a huge choice of what scale to do the game in and you need to pick out a set of rules. Since we're mainly doing tactical level rules we'll settle on Johnny Reb 3 and Empire for miniatures along with GMT's GBACW system for ACW and Clash of Arms' La Bataille system for Napoleonic.



However, here's the advantage that a game like GMT's Three Days of Gettysburg or La Bataille d'Orthez has over miniatures. For around \$50 you get maps of the entire battlefield, counters of all the units, and rules to recreate the battles. There's no spending hundred and possibly thousands of dollars on miniatures, painting guides, terrain, and more, plus not to mention possibly up to a year to get enough forces for Bull Run painted! This, in the minds of many board gamers, is why they don't get involved in miniatures. If they want to fight a particular battle, say Talavera, at the tactical level, they simply get online and order a copy in. If you've played the system before you can set up and begin play almost immediately.



So what you have are four excellent approaches to simulating Horse & Musket period battles. Also, if you're under the mistaken impression that board gamers don't know their history or tactics for these eras simply go to Consimworld and get ready for a nasty shock. Just because they don't want to paint figures doesn't mean that they can't

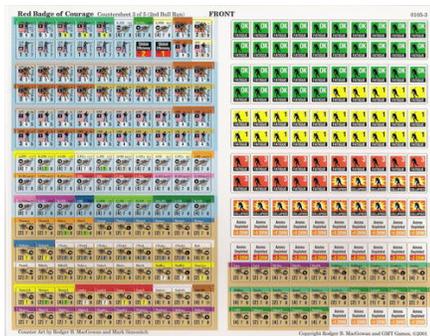
argue 1807 regulations for forming into square with the most knowledgeable miniatures gamer.

After all is said and done, I think the best way to look at it is to determine what you are trying to accomplish. If you are going to replay Wilson's Creek then I would recommend miniatures using Johnny Reb 3 rules. If you're going to play the entire three days of Gettysburg, then GMT's Three Days of Gettysburg might be a better option. For unless you belong to a gaming club with a huge collection, this would be a massive undertaking.

All of the above sets of rules are definitely not for beginners. Tactical level combat in this period is tough to simplify and all of the above sets of rules do a good job of addressing fire combat, leadership, formations, terrain, and more. With all of these rules there will definitely be some trial and error as you learn to play them.

Since I am one of those strange gamer hybrids that does both miniatures and board games, I can see the appeal of both. On one hand, determining if an artillery battery can fire at an approaching column on a ridge with miniatures takes a few seconds. With the GBACW or La Bataille series it can take some time to decipher the line of sight rules for certain situations! On the other hand with board games you didn't have to paint up the artillery battery, the approaching column, or the terrain that they are both on.

Most of all, I would encourage miniatures gamers to check out the GBACW or La Bataille systems and board gamers should try a miniatures game or two of the same battles that they play with board games. I think that the time spent will give both a new understanding of gaming in the Horse & Musket era.



All of the board game systems

Memoirs of a Miniatures & Board Wargamer Pt. 7

Campaigns Part Two

In the previous article I mentioned that I've participated in quite a few campaigns with varying results. I thought I would go over a few of them that stuck out in my mind and that might be of interest to the average gamer.

One of the better campaigns was a 15mm WW2 Command Decision 2 campaign that took place in Holland in late 1944. I had just read a book on the post Market Garden battles in that area and came across something very interesting.

The Germans had launched a small offensive that caught the Allies by surprise and had some significant success. In reality, it was a dress rehearsal for the Battle of the Bulge offensive. This would form the basis for a miniatures campaign.

After drawing up the map and the rules we got the campaign set up. It helped that we had a sizeable collection of U.S. forces in 15mm as the actual offensive had been against American troops, so that only made the campaign easier to sell on a historical basis. I told no one about the book, only that the U.S. forces near the Holland/Germany border were going to try to get things going in their sector again after a lull. Units had been brought up to full strength and they had plenty of airpower. I had designed a sub-system where the Allied team had flights of aircraft that they could allocate each turn to air superiority, close support, interdiction, etc...

The German side as in real life, chose to strip one side of the map of almost all units, leaving only a thin defensive screen, then shifting everything to the opposite side for a massive thrust into the Allied rear areas. This was a fairly involved set of campaign rules and it was to everyone's credit that the campaign went so smoothly as it involved unit modes, recon, air, and limited supply.

The campaign got off to a good start and the Allied team from the start played

right into the German team's hands by making a huge offensive right towards the defensive screen. This was good and bad for the Germans as it would allow the Germans to launch their attack with some surprise, but if the Allied forces punched through there was nothing else in front of them and they could drive straight through to Berlin!

The first battle was at the tip of the spear of the Allied offensive.

With massive air, artillery, and air support the American CCA command steamrolled the German defenses and the Germans fell back. A second battle along the same route was a little tougher, but the Germans still fell back. By this time the Allied team thought that the main German

defense line was probably two thirds of the way to the end of the campaign map, so they began making plans to broaden out the recon forces and spread out for a large attack.

The main German forces were still maneuvering to get to the other side of the map undetected and the German recon forces did a good job of keeping the enemy recon away from the main routes of advance. One of the American forces that was holding a crossroads as a flank guard came under attack and fell back. This was the first inkling of trouble.

Now was where the German side began to get nervous. The main American force reached a vital river crossing and every last German was defending it. If the Allied team crossed here the campaign was over as there wasn't a German within 50 miles after the river line! The Allies launched a half-hearted attack and the German line held. The Allies, waiting for more armor to come up the road, decided to wait for a second battle to force the river. They never got the chance.

On the opposite side of the map the American force that fell back from the first German attack decided to hold their position and offer battle. To their surprise the same German force attacked,

but with more friends. A huge German armor offensive crashed through the position and started racing towards the Allied rear area. The two lone German air squadrons took to the air and a Stuka squadron bombed a supply column as the Allied team had put all of their air into close air support, leaving nothing for air superiority! The howls of derision about being bombed by Stukas in late 1944 are still remembered to this day!

Some of the Allied commanders now started to have mixed feelings about what was going on here, but the senior Allied commander was determined to smash through the river line. Unfortunately for the Allies, the few reinforcements that the Germans did have reached the river defenses in time for the next Allied attack and it was easily repulsed.

Meanwhile the Germans attacked a third American position on the opposite side of the map and sent the Americans streaming back in disarray. I can still remember the words of the Allied commander on that side who was the only one who understood what was happening, "We're not attacking. THEY ARE! We need to get turned around." The rest of the commanders were slowly beginning to see the German plan, but were slow to realize the scope of it, thinking it was merely a ploy to get some better defensive ground, a spoiling attack, or to buy some time.

By the time that the Allied team figured out what was really going on, the Germans had secured the major objectives and cut off the Allied forces. With

this development the Allied players had enough and either lost interest or decided to move on to new games.

So it was a great campaign that produced some unusual battles and some great insights into decision making during campaigns. It did highlight, however, the real reason that many campaigns fail in that once one side starts losing the interest fades quickly.



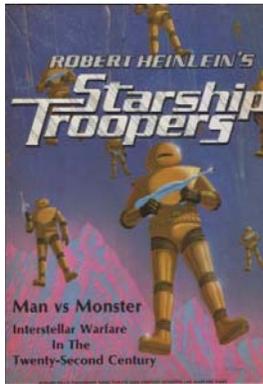
Blast From The Past Pt. 6

Although the first board wargames I ever owned were from SPI and a few other companies that are now long gone, some of my favorites were the old Avalon Hill games. With their mounted mapboards, sturdy boxes, and supporting articles in their in house magazine The General, Avalon Hill games just seemed to ooze with quality.

Now this is not saying that they were all great games, but when you bought an Avalon Hill game you knew that there was a better chance of it being a game you would play more than once than say the latest issue of S&T. The other positive thing about the Avalon Hill games was that they generally had multiple scenarios and a lot of counters, so there was a good chance that you would stay with the game for awhile.

As a teenager in the 70's it was almost a rite of passage to have read Heinlein's Starship Troopers. When I got the game for my 16th birthday it was definitely one of the highlights of the year! This was to my knowledge the first time that Avalon Hill used programmed learning, meaning that the first scenarios taught you the basics, then more units and features were added as you went along so that by the last scenario you were using all of the rules.

The game had a funky board in strange colors that was supposed to give it the feel of an alien landscape and there were several units that I had not read about in the book, but these were small issues. The big problem was that most of the scenarios were impossible to play solitaire and I had a hard time finding



someone in the local gaming group that was interested in sci-fi games.

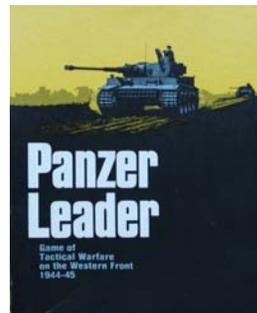
Overall, though, it was a good game and I have enjoyed the times when I've had the chance to play against someone using the bigger scenarios. The game is far more faithful to the book than the horrific movie that came out.

There were some additional scenarios posted later including one where you could use Ogres from the Steve Jackson game (give yourself a point if you still remember that!).

The next Avalon Hill game I got was Panzer Leader. I had read several books about the D-Day landings and skipped straight past Panzer Blitz as I knew nothing about the Eastern Front at that time (later it would become my favorite WW2 theater). As with most Avalon Hill games at that time you got a hefty box loaded with goodies. There were several geomorphic mounted mapboards, several hundred counters, rules and scenario cards.

After starting out with Sixth Fleet from SPI most games after that presented little challenge to learning the rules. I was quickly into setting up scenarios solitaire and was lucky enough to have a friend who enjoyed playing this game as well. At the time that was one of the leading tactical warfare games of its day. Although when you look at it today you can clearly see that there are probably better alternatives, at the time it was fondly thought of.

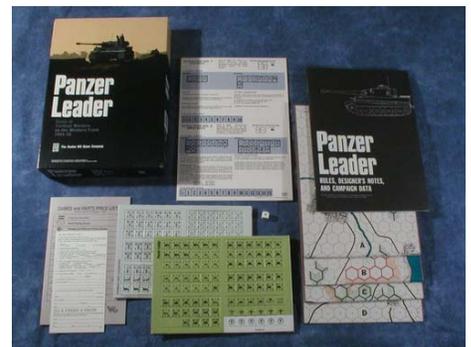
Game play was pretty straightforward and getting your units to survive long enough to get into firing range was always the trick, giving the system the nickname "Ambush Leader or Ambush Blitz". Still, it was fun and the number of scenarios that were available meant that the game had good replay value. We even did a campaign once and set up several giant slugfests using just about every counter in the game.



The system proved popular and a third game in the series covering the Arab-Israeli Wars came out. The game had several boards (including a Suez Canal type board) and had scenarios ranging from the 1948 War to future engagements in Lebanon (which proved to be prophetic!). Although I owned this variant and played it a lot, I never thought it was as good as the WW2 games.

There were many other earlier games that I enjoyed in the late 70s and early 80s that came from Avalon Hill. Games like War at Sea, Victory in the Pacific, Russian Campaign, Air Assault on Crete, and the original Squad Leader. There was something about those games that made you want to play them and from time to time I still take them out and give them a try. Some games such as The Longest Day still garner huge prices on Ebay. I still have some of the old Avalon Hill game catalogs and it's hard to imagine that games such as these use to go for \$8-10 each where if it was coming out today they would be in the \$50-75 range.

Most importantly these games have stood the test of time. Despite being over 30 years old each, they still play well and are good value for the money with quality components. True, there may be better options, but they are still good games and the designers should be applauded for creating games that carry on to this day. They are still so well thought of that new versions of each are coming out soon. MMP will release Hill 112 which will be part of the new Panzer Leader system and L2 Designs is working on a new version of Starship Troopers called On The Bounce. Long may these games live!



WMA: Assyrians vs. Egyptians

Battle Report

We had a lot of fun playing Warmaster Ancients back in the early fall, so we thought we would try it again as a team game. There was around 1600 points per side, which with Biblical armies translated into 30 units for the Egyptians and 21 for the Assyrians, so there was plenty for everyone!

The Assyrians had three units of heavy chariots, two units of cavalry, several units of skirmishers, the three units of the Guard, and assorted units of both unarmored/armored archers and spearmen. Although a smaller force than the Egyptians, they were more heavily armored and should have additional staying power in melee.

The Egyptians went with six units of chariots, two units of chariot runners,

four units of mercenaries, and a ton of infantry, archers, and skirmishers. Although they outnumbered the Assyrians 3:2, they were mostly unarmored troops.

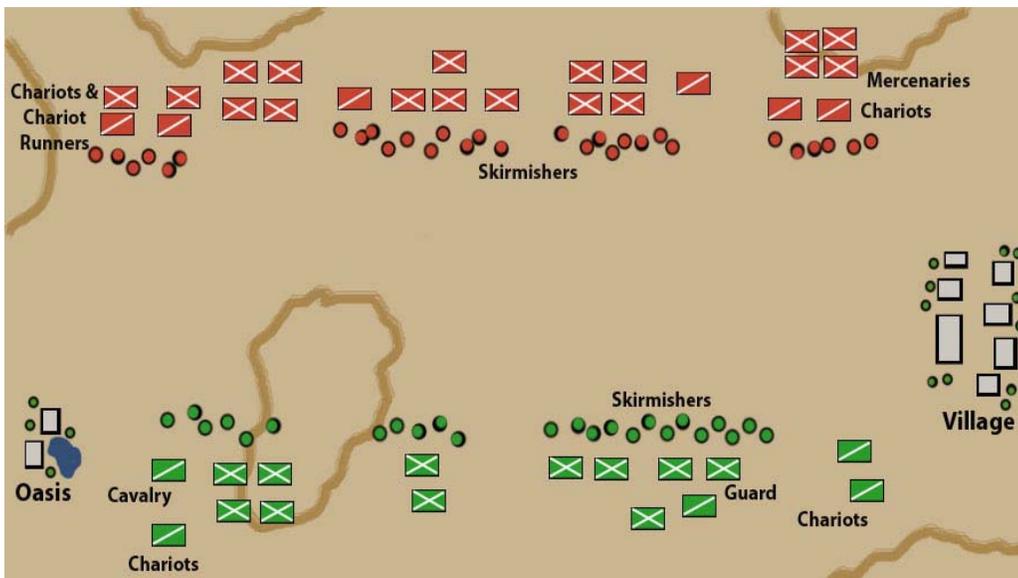
Both sides set up, with the Assyrians placing most of the chariots on the right flank and the heavier infantry plus the Guard in the center. The Egyptians were split up more evenly, with the archers and chariots spread out along the deployment area.



In the last two games of WMA both sides had problems making their command rolls on the first few turns. This was not to be in this game as both sides had uncommonly good command rolls and by turn two the battle lines had advanced into archery range and

were more or less intact.

It was obvious that the Egyptians were going to try to apply pressure all along the front while the Assyrians were going for the center and try to smash the Egyptian left flank with the chariots.



The Battle Begins

Now both sides started to have problems and the battle lines came apart. The Egyptians began showering the Assyrian skirmishers with arrows, driving them back on the Assyrian main force. This was followed by the Egyptian chariots



knocking out the Assyrian cavalry on the left flank as the Assyrians had command rolls left many units exposed and without support.

In the center another attack by

Egyptian chariots wiped out an Assyrian infantry unit and disrupted the Assyrian advance. The Assyrians launched a chariot attack that had some initial success, but was beaten back by the Egyptian archers brigade. All along the front the Egyptians were advancing and things were not looking good for the Assyrians as after turn 4 they were over halfway to their break point and the bad command rolls continued unabated.

WMA: Assyrians vs. Egyptians

Battle Report (cont.)

By this time there were five complete units of Assyrians that were destroyed with four others down to one stand each. The Egyptians had been doing well and all that was needed was several advances and the battle would be over. The Egyptians moved up the mercenary brigade and crashed into the Assyrian center, running into the Guard and doing everything possible to end the game.

But the Assyrians excel in infantry combat and this was no exception. The Guard units held the line and pushed back, quickly joined by another two armored spear units that slowly and surely ground down the Egyptian infantry. The combination of saves and steady advances were creating a hole in the Egyptian center that could not be quickly

filled.

On the Assyrian right the chariots regrouped and attacked again, this time overrunning an Egyptian chariot unit and smashing into two units of archers, which were cut down. The Assyrians moved all of their single stand units into the center to save them from being completely destroyed and to serve as a last ditch battle line in case things went really bad.

On the Assyrian left the command rolls finally improved and the infantry brigades began to move and attack the Egyptian forces in that area, preventing them from reinforcing the center.

At the start of Turn 7 the Assyrians were one unit short of withdraw-

ing and the Egyptians were two units short. The flanks of both sides had virtually destroyed each other, so the final battles would be in the center. Whichever side got the best command rolls would get their units in the right position to end the game.



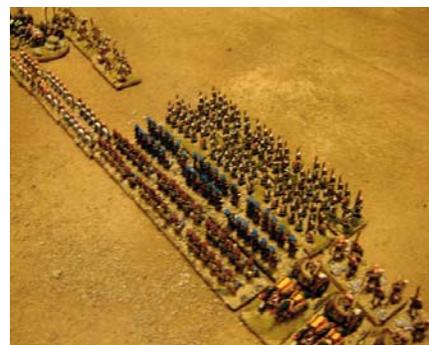
Finale & Summary

The Assyrians were first in the turn and that is all that was needed. The Assyrian infantry in the center continued to advance and charged into two Egyptian units, mowing them down and ending the game.

In the end it was the steady Assyrian armored infantry and archers that held the line. The Egyptians had several chances to deliver a knock out blow and the game

certainly went down to the wire as the Assyrians had suffered well over 40% casualties themselves.

Again, it was an interesting contrast in styles with the heavily armored Assyrians going up against an



Egyptian horde. The WMA system does a great job of simulating command and control, which is probably why we like this system so much. We now have several other armies being built and on order to expand our options.



WASATCH FRONT HISTORICAL GAMING SOCIETY

Meets every other Friday night in the SLC, Utah area. We play the following rules: Age of Reason, Age of Eagles, Blitzkrieg Commander, Flames of War, This Very Ground, Sword and Flame, Warmaster Ancients, Battles For Empire, Price of Glory, Age of Discovery, Fire and Fury, Mustangs, Phantoms, and all kinds of board wargames.

Comments and suggestions can be sent to the editor at: mirsik1@juno.com

The best in historical miniatures gaming.

Visit our web site:
www.wfhgs.com

Well, it looks like this year's theme will be 25mm hard plastic boxed sets. Several firms, including The Perrys, are going to be producing boxed sets of hard plastic, well designed 25mm figures for several periods. Certainly from the images I've seen and the prices that they are quoting it looks to be a great deal. You could easily buy several boxes for the core troops of your army, then get lead figs for the officers, skirmishers, sergeants, etc..., which is what the companies are hoping that you do and where they will make their money. I'm actually surprised that its taken this long to get to this point in the hobby, but it's good news for historical gamers everywhere.

On the other hand it is only adding to a huge problem in the hobby and this was reflected in several threads on TMP about the hard plastic boxed sets. The problem is that many gamers keep adding figures upon figures to their mountain of figs and not much is getting painted. I can already see that many gamers are envisioning dozens of projects for these new figures, then they will buy a dozen boxed sets each and watch them sit on a shelf while they dream about the next project after that. Basically, the hobby continues to go in the direction of acquiring more stuff and painting less. I'm just guessing here, but I would be shocked if one out of every twenty of the new plastic boxed sets ever gets painted. This is a great opportunity to build huge armies for a decent price, but we'll have to wait and see if it increases the amount of painted figs that get on to the table.

Corps Command: Totensonntag

Game Review



This is the first game in a new series from Lock "N Load dealing with corps sized battles, hence the name Corps Command. The first game in the series deals with the First battle of Sid Rezech in November of 1941.

I paid around \$25 for this boxed game and you do get some nice components, especially in this day and age where most new board wargames are in the \$50-70 range. There is a 17 x 22 hard cardboard map, 88 large counters, and a rules booklet with a small player's aid card. The map is nicely done and functional with several of the play charts printed on the map, plus the turn and impulse record track is easily readable. The counters, while a bit thin, are well done and the numbers are fairly easy to read, although

the unit designations are extremely small.

The rules are easy to grasp with the exception on combat, where the author's prose does not reinforce the fact that every unit fires individually. This definitely needs to be cleared up in future volumes of the series. You can have the counters punched and read through the rules in under 15 minutes, then set up and start playing.

The game portrays the Allied surprise attack by British armor, South African infantry, and New Zealand units against an Italian division, 15th Panzer, 21st Panzer, and the Africa Division. The British try to punch through the gap to the victory point locations while the Germans try to move to

block them. The game relies on a series of initiative rolls which determines which of your forces can move and fight that impulse, with four impulses plus a night impulse per turn and six turns in the game.

The game plays well although the large number of die rolls for initiative, combat, artillery ranging, and recovery means that luck will play a huge factor in the outcome. This isn't critical as the game only takes 1-2 hours, so you can quickly set up and play again.

Overall, a good first effort and I'm looking forward to future games in this series.

