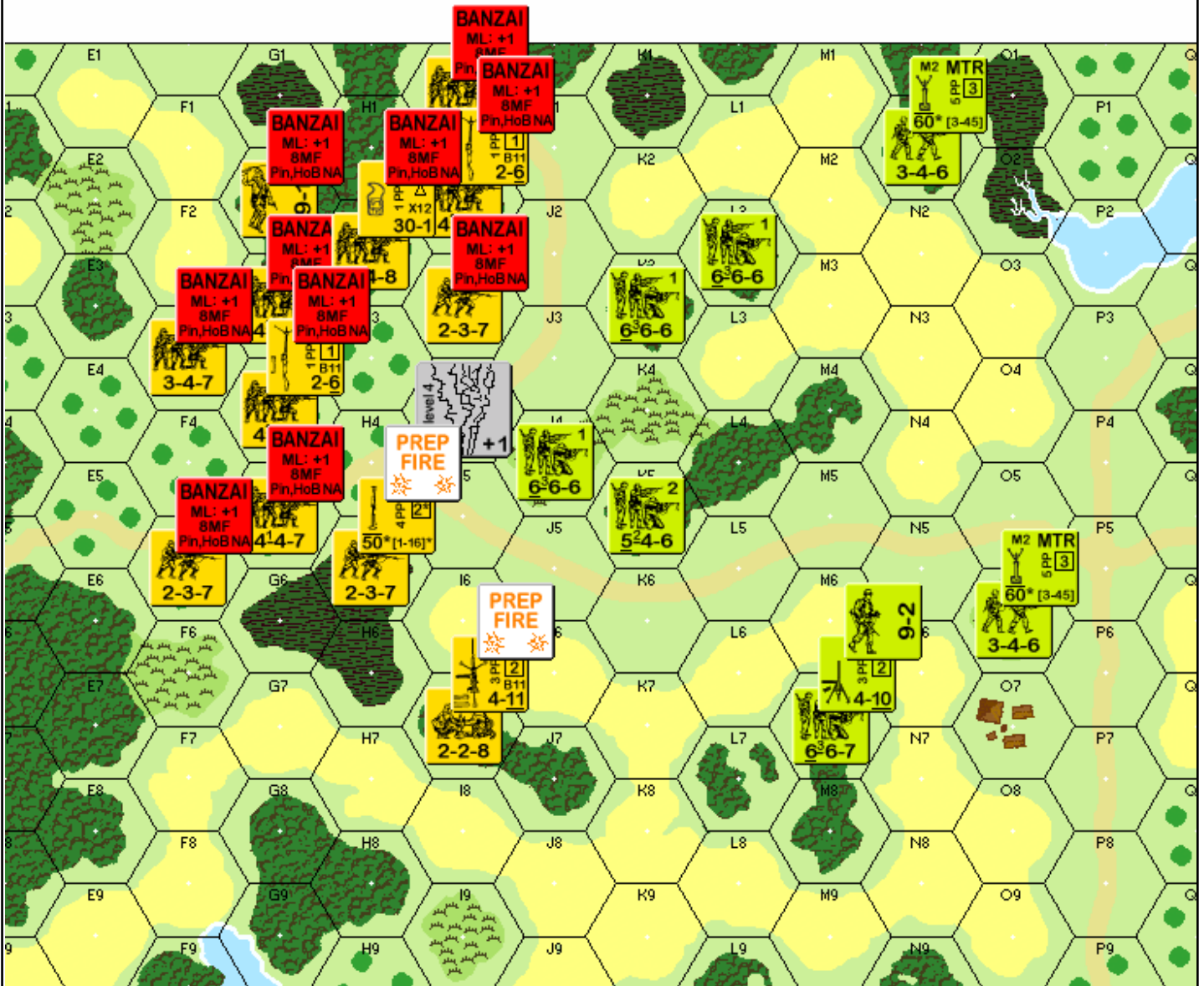


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The Newsletter of the Texas ASL Club

October, 2009 Volume 14, Number 3

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October, 2009 Volume 14, Number 3

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Editor's Foxhole

Matt Shostak



I am so grateful to the various authors who contribute their efforts to this newsletter. In this issue we have a very comprehensive, exciting AAR from the prolific and loquacious Nick Drinkwater, more than ably aided by Rick's graphical wizardry, and Dan Preston strings us along with another of his clever efforts. We also have an interesting interview with the Two Half Squads guys of ASL podcast fame, and Rick provides a full tournament report. We simply couldn't publish this newsletter with any degree of regularity at all without a host of authors willing to send us material. If you've been thinking about writing an AAR or scenario analysis, or an article on any ASL topic, please consider doing so and sending it to us.

String Theory

Dan Preston



Everyone has a preference for checking line of sight (LOS). Some use rubber bands and some use sewing thread. Sometimes a sheet of paper or the edge of a chart will suffice. But most of the experienced ASL players that I know simply include a small spool of sewing thread in their storage bins, usually in the miscellaneous section that stores the Prep Fires and Turn counters. Incidentally, the sewing thread method is also recommended in the rulebook.

Thread has certain advantages over the other media. Rubber bands tend to snap back and cause massive destruction if one is not careful. Charts are cumbersome and nearby units need to be pushed aside, and sometimes end up in a different hex if not put back in place carefully. I am sure that there are more exotic laser devices out there that can

check LOS with a beam of light, but I personally prefer thread.

Excessive LOS checks back in SL got to be a drag on play. But the rules were far simpler back then, and most of us had more playing time to begin with. In ASL, constantly rifling your opponent's units could turn a game day into slow death. If you obviously have a LOS to an opposing stack, ask him what is in there and move on. I think that procedure has become standard ASL etiquette. Also, as a rule of thumb, before you touch the other guy's counters, **ask first**. There may be a concealed unit at the bottom of the pile, or it may be out of your LOS. But again, I digress.

Actually stringing the LOS between hexes on the board can be broken down into four individual cases: defender setting up, stripping/preventing concealment, denying rout, and actual firing. Out of all these situations, only the last, firing at enemy units is restricted.

1. Defender Setting Up (A6.11). According to the rulebook, any time a defender gets ready to set up on the board, he may string line of sight checks as much as he wants. However, these actions must be accomplished before setup. This simply means that the defender can check the LOS from certain hexes that seem like good defensive positions before he decides for sure whether or not he wants to set up there. This also has the added bonus of finding out the LOS from certain hexes that the attacker will eventually occupy.

The defender may also check LOS freely if he has Pre-registered Fire (C1.73) or Bore Sighted weapons (C6.41-42). This combination of free thread makes for a powerful advantage in a prepared defensive position. Unfortunately, stringing all possible LOS combinations for a defensive setup is very time-consuming. Unless you want to prepare your defense days or weeks in advance, checking the most critical positions and those for the other two cases listed previously will have to do.

2. Stripping/Preventing Concealment (A12.14). Eventually, most units will have to fire, move, or make other actions that are Concealment Loss activities. Some of these actions will only result in Concealment Loss if there are Known Enemy Units in LOS. There is a chart designed for examples of these actions, and I will not list or describe them here. Suffice it to say, the opposing player is always keen to increase his edge if the enemy force attempts these actions in his LOS.

"Stringing to strip" is the phrase I use to describe this action. Most of the time, this procedure is used against opposing units using non-assault movement, moving in the open, or both. As long as the player doing the stripping is not firing, he may string as much as he wants to remove concealment from the moving/firing player. On the defense, this can be a terrific edge, if the opposing force is far

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superior to your own. You can set up a half squad at the edge of the playing area, and hordes of concealed enemy units come tearing across the landscape, hurrying up to the action. The half squad may not be able to accomplish much with firepower or CC action, and will probably get cleaned out at the end of the turn. However, that same half squad can strip concealment on that thundering horde of the enemy just by being able to see them. In addition, it can string just as much as it wants.

The same theory also holds true if your opponent wants to grow concealment at the end of his turn. If that humble half squad survives, it can prevent concealment growth normally. All that is required to prevent concealment growth is that the unit with LOS be unbroken. See the concealment chart.

3. Preventing Rout. (A10.51). A broken unit may not rout towards a Known Enemy Unit. Do you have broken unit in a scrape that must rout towards an enemy unit nearby? Maybe that edge of building or woods just barely blocks that LOS. Feel free to string away. If it cannot see that Known Enemy Unit, then it can legally rout towards it. And in so doing, the routing player gets insight into whether or not that hex is safe to move or advance other units into.

4. Fire Attacks (A6.11). Ok, this is where the thread gets tangled. If you are going to shoot at an enemy unit with one of yours, you must make the attack first, and check the LOS afterwards. Some opposing units can obviously see each other, and those are easy. Sometimes the other unit shot at you first, and you shoot back. On the other hand, sometimes that woods or wall looks like it just blocks the line, and you have a decision to make. If all else fails, stoop down and eyeball the board from low level. Sometimes you get lucky, and sometimes not.

If you make a crappy little low-FP shot at the other unit and the LOS is clear, the attack will probably have no effect. If you go whole hog and fire the entire stack and it is blocked, not only did you waste all that firepower, but risked weapons breakdown and possible sniper activation for essentially no purpose.

There are a few tricks to get around the “attack first” conundrum. The first of these is firing an infantry unit at an armored target. According to A7.307, small arms and non-ordnance attacks have no effect on armored targets. However, such units may still fire normally in order to check the LOS, because the rule does not specifically state that they can't. (A “Perry Sez” ruling a while back also confirmed this rules interpretation.) In other words, if you have an infantry unit underneath an AFV or gun, feel free to fire that infantry unit or BMG at that opposing armored target just to check the LOS. If it happens to be blocked, that ordnance can fire at some other target.

Consider what you risk, and what you might gain from that attack. Ponder whether you are under Ammunition Shortage, what your breakdowns are, and what your opponent's SAN is. During Defensive Fire, if all of his units have finished moving, you might just want to take those shots even if the odds are low. But mentally note which shots are blocked and which shots are open when the string comes out. The information may be important later on.

Occasionally, we need to check an LOS after firing to see if the attack had any effect. If the battle is taking place in the “wide open spaces”, then the two players can merely move the units out of the pertinent hexes and string normally. Sometimes the battlefield is so crowded that this procedure gets to be a drag on play. In this case, one player can use the “shadow” method. A lamp with an incandescent bulb works well. One of the players holds the thread above the board and the shadow of it shows a somewhat indistinct line that shows whether or not further checking is justified. Only then do we actually move the other units out of the way to check for real.

In conclusion, the string is an informational tool, but its use is restricted sometimes. Occasionally, a player will make a foolish attack that the string later confirms, and a good player always learns from his mistakes. On the other hand, sometimes the string is our friend, and that low odds shot that was taken against that squad moving in the open turns out to be a game winner. Understanding how and when the string is used can be a tool in our arsenal of game tricks. And by the way, hold onto your spool of thread. Someone always borrows it and forgets to give it back.

Tactical Tip

Dan Preston



Never fire for acquisition at an empty hex unless it is absolutely necessary. If there is a possibility that there is a HIP or real concealed unit in the hex, there is always a slight chance that the shot may hit the target. Sometimes the presence of an acquisition counter will discourage enemy units from entering that hex. But if the To Hit is more likely to break the gun or cause a sniper activation, then the risk has far outweighed the benefit.

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Campaign Game AAR: KGP II: Bridge at Cheneux



Nick Drinkwater

Pre-Game Thoughts and Analysis

Stephane Graciet and I decided to hook up for a short Campaign Game (CG) which we believed we would be able to complete over 8-10 evenings' playing time – probably about a month and a half of real time as we can only really get together on weekday evenings and we're both keen to extend game playing no later than 11pm-11:30pm at the latest.

Looking through the library of material available in the ASL world, we decided to select this old classic from the early *Avalon Hill* days. It fulfilled all our criteria – short (a maximum of four Campaign Game Scenarios (CGS)), moderate numbers in terms of units (with probably 10-20 units at most for the Germans and 20-40 units for the Americans on any one date), infantry-dominated which will keep play times faster, a strong playing history (which at time of writing ROAR has with an American edge (roughly 2:1)), and yet with some fun and quirky rules additions (mist, German gas shortage, barbed wire fences, slopes). The other key thing was that being a single-map game, keeping it set up at home for some weeks was not going to pose a problem for space requirements as it could easily be kept locked away in my game room, away from annoying feline incursions, an ever-present problem in my house.

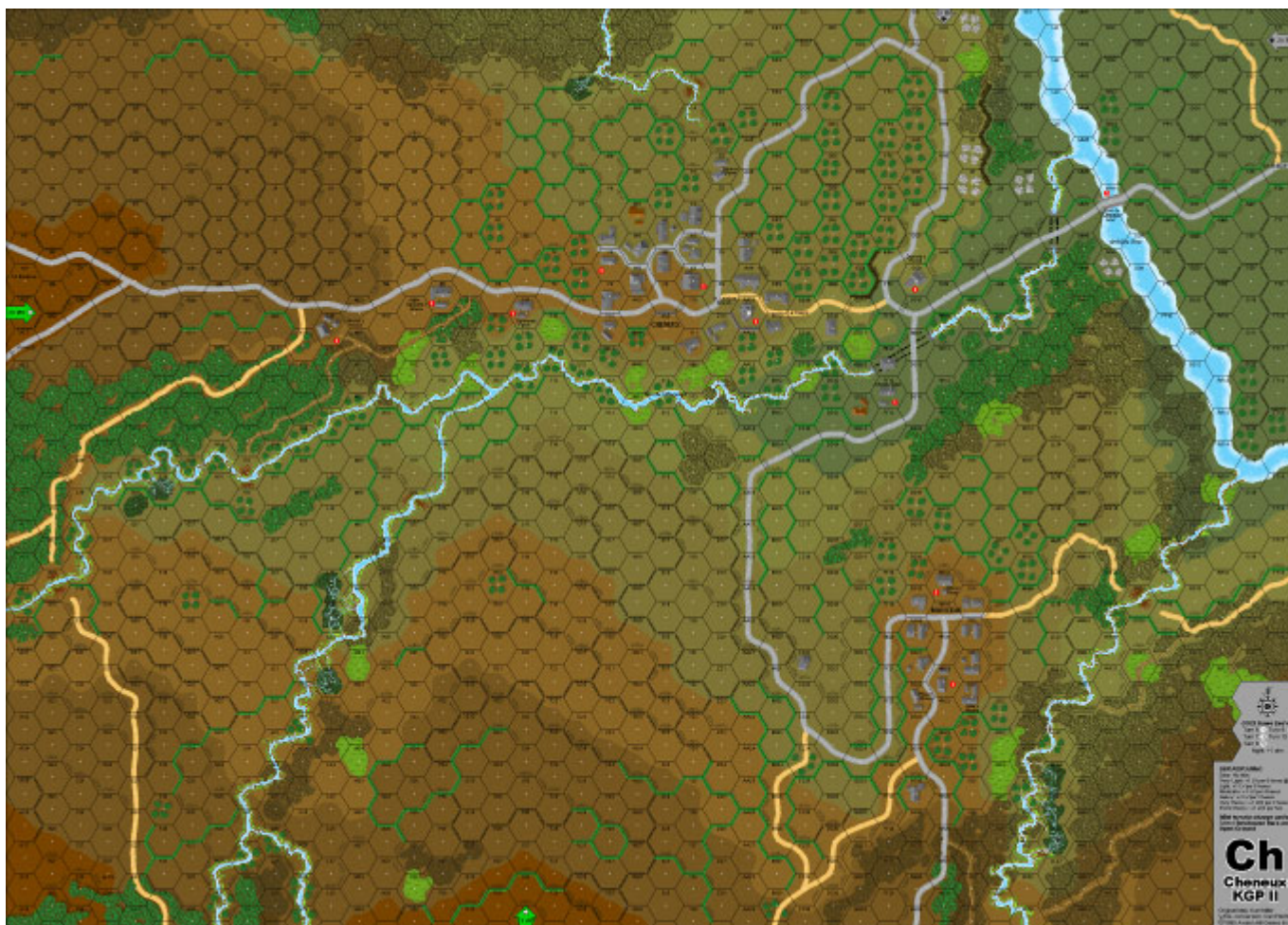


Figure 1: The site of the struggle to come, the Cheneux map. US CGS1 and 2 entry area is a four-hex-wide strip either side of the green arrow on the west center side of the map. For CGS3, the southern entry area is open to them as well.

Having decided on the CG, we rolled for sides – I pulled the defending SS which I was happy to take on, despite the ROAR balance; Stephane had the challenge of inching

those US Paras across the barbed wire fences. To make sure we were both fresh for the challenge, we opted to play a quick warm-up scenario (KGP4 *Chapelle St. Anne*) on the

Stoumont map to achieve some familiarity with slopes, pine woods, gas shortages and the impact of the mist. One thing I took away from this experience was the difficulty of trying to get decent fire attacks against defending units in stone buildings due to a +1 or +2 mist DRM. Some hefty firepower and fire groups were the order of the day to counter this, but these may be difficult to assemble with US seven-morale troops in the less advantageous TEM. This was another reason why I was happy to play the SS as with their eight morale, they are the ideal defenders for this task, as even their DM self-rally in woods would most likely be a healthy six and with an 8-0 leader, they would be coming back on a mighty seven. Tasty. On the flip side, it would soon become clear that Stephane had also learnt from this warm-up lesson - shots at less than 20FP were not likely to dent the SS so **big** paratroop fire groups were the order of the day and he was prepared to take some stacking risks, too.

Pre-Game Comments: Victory Conditions and Terrain

The Cheneux map is a fantastic piece of map art and a joy to play on (Figure 1). The main feature of this map is the small Ambleve River which runs north to southeast across the northeastern quarter of the map. The all-important bridge of Cheneux connects the eastern German entry areas with the stone-building-dominated village of Cheneux which runs east-west through the center of the map. For the first two scenarios, the US entry area is on the westernmost part of the map, partly into a small pine wood forest that runs east-west into the western edge of the village and partly over a bare, open field covered in barbed wire fences to the northwest of the village. For scenario 3 (21AM), a southern board edge entry area is open to the US which allows them easier access to the southern satellite village of Monceau which, perched on another hillside, has good lines of sight to the core of the Cheneux Village and the all-important bridge.

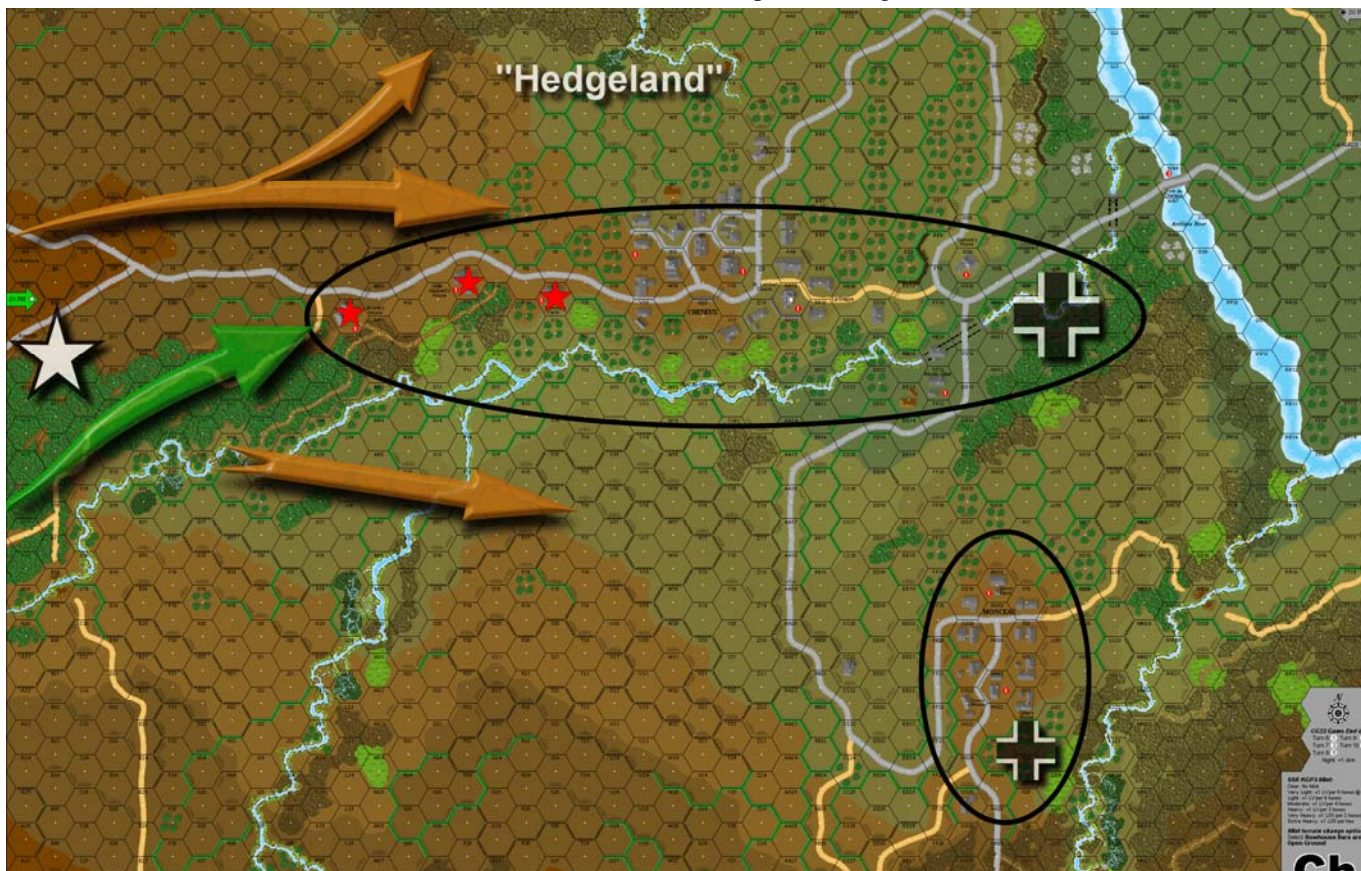


Figure 2: The northwest approaches to Cheneux. The primary pine woods attack route is marked with a green arrow, secondary attack routes toward Monceau and “hedge land” are marked with orange arrows. Red dots mark Victory Locations in Cheneux. German MG points to cover the fenced hill approach routes have been marked with red stars.

To win the Campaign Game, the US must have achieved control of ten Location Victory Points (LVP) out of a possible fourteen onboard. The majority of LVP can be achieved by controlling individually named buildings in the

two hamlets, but a mighty five LVP are available for control of the bridge. Simply put, the US can win by controlling all of the village LVP but not the bridge, or the bridge and five more village LVP. The US can also achieve

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an instant win if the SS destroy the bridge in any way – very unlikely to happen but you never know.

The east-west layout of the village of Cheneux aligned to the location of the US entry area for the first two dates, means that the US Paras will probably progressively nibble away at the outlying stone cottages and villas of Cheneux one by one as they advance eastwards. However, there are certainly some options for them to make a flanking maneuver through the barbed wire fields to the northwest of the village, or duplicate this to the south with a similar probe across the southern large hill mass, to attack the village at the point where Cheneux meets Monceau (Figure 2).

An eastward punch will almost certainly opt to utilize the cover of the large pine woods that feeds directly to the outermost of the Cheneux villas near Brutet's House and Gaspard's House. This is a very obvious approach route into Cheneux and would almost definitely be used at some point by Stephane, but I suspected that he may also try to send a flanking force through the barbed wire fields to the north, or even try the long flank march into Monceau over the bigger southern hill mass. He'd certainly have enough infantry to attempt one of these maneuvers.

As this was our first playing on this map, the other steep learning curve for us would be the effect of the numerous slopes that dramatically modify lines of sight all over the board, but especially from the big northwest corner hill mass. Once Stephane could get units on there, there are so many upslope locations that from a good 75% of the hill hexes there are views over crest lines and hedges all the way into Cheneux proper, impacting rout directions and concealment loss/gain for the defenders. This wouldn't be such an issue for very heavy mist where the +6 LOS hindrance limit is reached after just 12 hexes, but for heavy or even moderate mist, the LOS ranges would be significantly enhanced. Also to factor into that equation would be the presence on the hills of the plethora of US 60mm mortars, annoying buggers at the best of times, and possibly quite an irritating thorn in the side of the defense.

Pre-Game Comments: German Defense.

If this were being played on a clear summer's day then the defense would be so simple: block off the woods approach strongly and then slaughter anything that has the temerity to try to cross the rows of barbed wire fences under the itchy trigger fingers of gleeful SS machine-gunners. But it isn't summer. It's a dank, foggy December day and it's all going to be played in very heavy mist and the modifiers will be large, even if the mist does relent as the game goes on (-1 for the mist modifier for the PM status of the first scenario). The machine-gun defense would still be valid, of course, as fire lanes don't care about no stinking mist, but the first and best shot may be problematic as it would probably be at flat

or +1 minimum. The really good thing about the mist though is that it would help me on my stone building defense to push up the mods on some of Stephane's 12 FP and 16 FP fire group attacks and he would maybe need to do some big stacking and amoeba blob formation to hurt me and eject me from the houses.

The other great thing about the barbed wire is that CX units cannot cross them, so it's a slow, slow crawl across those fields for the Americans for the first few turns. That would help my personal objective for this scenario of trying to limit the Germans to the loss of the outer two houses only, through a slow backwards fighting withdrawal onto the core of the Cheneux stone building cluster. I needed to be cognizant of the threat that if the scenario went to turn seven or eight then Stephane may be able to eventually get through the barbed wire and push into the hedges ('hedge land') adjacent to the northwest corner of Cheneux; a couple of well-placed outlying squads out there could crimp his style. Likewise, I needed to be aware in case Stephane opted to go "stage right" and send a platoon or two running over the southern slopes to try to create good onboard entry positions for his CGS 3 21AM reinforcements, or try to make a dash into the southwest of Cheneux across the small southern stream. Fire brigade units (either reserve or frontline) needed to be well placed in Cheneux to check either of these two potential attack directions.

However, I expected the main thrust to come along the pine woods access corridor and I needed to plan accordingly to delay and stymie that push as much as I could. The CG special rules were not on my side for doing this as the Germans can only set up single units per hex row west of row V, done to try to enforce the historical strung-out nature of the SS recce platoon on their first contact with the US Paras. In light of this, it was quite tempting to forego all defense of the outer two houses and just shove some dummies in there, but I was loath to give up two LVP so quickly, and also, having never played this CG before, I couldn't really judge what kind of progress the US needs to make to call the opening scenario a success for the Germans. As a result, I thought I would try to delay them as much as I could, but conscious of my inferiority in CC vs. the US Paras (6:7 and hence 1:2 vs. a return 1:1), I would self-break and run as much as I was able to and rely on my superior broken-side morale for rallying to get me out of trouble.

So on to purchases. First up, I needed to see if the Germans were under ammo shortage from the get-go, but refreshingly, no they were not. A relief indeed. Next up, reviewing the units I'd been provided with in the CG initial scenario pre-defined setup, I had two SS infantry platoons, an SS heavy weapons (HW) platoon, and fleets of unarmored or partially armored flak tracks ranging from the wimpy (4 IFE) to the quite nice (8 IFE) versions, but which

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sadly may not form into combined infantry-truck fire groups as they are not 'armored' – big shame! I had, however, been given a roadblock to play with and a useful additional 35 CPP to spend.

Now German setup limitations require that only those units received in the original OOB set up in open status – all other German units must be set up in reserve unless paying the 3CPP extra cost to have them set up directly in forward positions. Reserve status is defined in CG7 a and b, but basically defines that they need to set up >9 hexes from US setup areas – all the map outside of the German setup area is considered a US setup area for this rule. Thus this is a challenge, compounded by the fact that there is a low but possible risk that my infantry platoons may be depleted, so the reserves would need to be placed as far forward as possible to 'view' (at six hexes or less) likely US attack routes as early as possible so that they could be swiftly brought to the fight.

First up though were the depletion rolls – luckily all my at-start forces were undepleted, but my leadership rolls were extremely average: an 8-0 and 8-1 for these forces. Looking at the area I had to defend and the tons of Americans that I knew would be coming (US CGS1 purchases are really limited and it's a no-brainer for Stephane to purchase three more platoons to double his three already in place), I opted to maximize on infantry and buy two more platoons, again full, but again with only OK leadership (8-1 x 2). My at-start HW platoon was full – the best result of all and I got a healthy two HMGs and MMGs as a result. These guys would be the absolute linchpin of my defense as they would be tasked to make any US assault over the northern barbed wire, shall we say, troubling.

So that's the infantry. What about some more vehicles? I had no illusions that my flak trucks were not going to last long in this fight as the US inherent firepower is so devastating, so I needed some more 'oomph' for the defense. This is an interesting choice for the SS as it's a one-time-only purchase – a platoon of either MkIVs (H or J versions), Panthers or King Tigers at steeply variable CPP costs. I quickly ruled out the KT's – just not worth the cost; as this would primarily be an infantry fight, having a bump up to a 16FP IFT attack on the main armament versus a 12FP IFT attack for the other two tank types is just not worth the extra CPP expense, especially as MG firepower on all the tanks is about the same.

The choice between Panthers and MkIVs was harder, but in this case I'd really just be paying extra for having improved frontal Panther armor. I think with the expected hordes of Americans running around, some of them being very likely to be half-squads with a bazooka, the Panther is still a bit of a luxury as the side armor on both tanks is still poor and easily succumbs to a well-aimed bazooka round. I opted for the MkIVJs over the H variant, as I like the idea of having

the sN for both smoke and its improved kill potential in CC: it could get lucky and snag a 7-4-7 that way, but I hoped it wouldn't come to that. The key thing for the tanks is that they need come in full, and they did. More relief.

OBA would have been nice here as I was really worried about the potential size of Stephane's fire groups and I would have liked to keep him dispersed a little. However, the mist is the kicker here – at very heavy mist levels, LOS for observers is very limited and I would need to place him in a very forward position to be effective. Getting the OBA to correct is always really tough in these conditions and though I'd probably get it on target eventually, it may just take too long to be effective. Also, having an 8 black / 4 red scarce ammo deck is not optimal, so, big decision, I chose to forego OBA on this scenario and instead trust to my fire lanes, SS morale and good dice to win the day.

I decided to buy 2 points of SAN to push it to four – this is because during refit I'd have a better chance of retaining it (no positive modifiers on the SAN readjustment) and also, I would need to try and pick off some of the abundant US leaders or maybe their mortar crews. Also, it is more likely to be retained into scenario 2 when it will get the natural night bump to a healthy SAN of 6, something Stephane would definitely have to be cautious about. Finally, it would give Stephane some cause for concern when it comes to firing those 60mm mortars on low odds to-hit rate speers against SS in buildings in the mist...I hoped anyway!



Figure 3: The western villas defense. Mines block the woods approach in G12-14, the squad under the Japanese “?” is HIP at start, and the approaches to Cheneux are covered by MGs in Brutet’s (L10), Gaspard’s (P9) and D’Elvenne’s (S10) houses. The unit in H10 covers both the barbed wire fences and the minefields.

Finally, I spent heavily on fortifications. As the defensive plan was about delaying the US as much as possible, I wanted to try and make the more obvious western

pinewoods approach difficult so I put 6FP AP mines in all three wood hexes of hex row G (I2-14; Figure 3), and then back that with a HIP squad and LMG in hex I14 to cover both the mines and also threaten any US Paras trying to get clever and run across the open ground and ford immediately south of the woods. The mines were also covered by a squad and MG in hex H10 whose primary role was to keep any approach over the barbed wire hill honest.

Looking ahead in the game, as well as a possible big infiltration attack in the night scenario, scenario 3 (21AM) really had me worried. As well as starting at a whopping 65 CPP base, it is most likely that in many games the US will buy a bombardment then (in addition to perhaps two OBA modules). Clearly I didn't want to have infantry stuck in potentially rubble buildings when that comes down, as with some unlucky rolls, I could find my defenders decimated. Therefore, I started to buy some foxholes in advance for some of the key village defensive positions, keeping one large weather eye on this "death by OBA" possibility in the future.

CGS1 German Purchase Summary:

35 CPP available in addition to SSR provided OOB:

<i>Provided by SSR:</i>	<i>Purchased:</i>
2 x SS Infantry Platoon (I2)	2 x SS Infantry Platoon (I2) [18 CPP]
1 x SS MG Platoon (HW1)	1 x MkIV Section (V1) [8 CPP]
2 x AAht I (V10)	2 x Sniper (M2) – SAN to 4 [4 CPP]
1 x AAht II (V11)	3 x Fortifications (M1) [3 CPP = 45 FPP]
1 x AAttr (V14)	
Roadblock	
<i>Fortifications:</i>	
3 x 6FP Minefields [27FPP]	
1 squad HIP equivalency [3FPP]	
11 x 1S Foxhole equivalency [11 FPP]	
4 x ? for Dummies [4 FPP]	

33 CPP spent, 2 CPP carried into scenario 2, 20N.

My initial setup is shown in figures 3 and 4 with hidden units and reserves marked – I tried to keep a small token force in Monceau for the future, but the dispersed aspect to the western approaches defense is clear. Reserves were in positions where if they became activated they could quickly move and close down any infiltrators both on the northwest and southeast sides of Cheneux, if required. Most of the

flak trucks were kept out of harm's way for the time being – they could always drive in and try to assist a sore spot of the defense if required, but due to their vulnerability they were very much a last resort. Objective hexes were selected to help link up the Cheneux and Monceau villages into one super-big setup area – I'd move a half-squad or two onto these if necessary to help that process as required.

"OK, Stephane. Let's see what you've got!"

Scenario 1: 20 December PM

Post-Scenario Analysis

Plenty it would seem. What a disaster.

American Losses: 2 squads, SPW 251/9 recalled

German Losses: 5 SS squads KIA, 1 SS squad prisoner, 8-1 killed, 1 HMG captured, 1 HMG X'ed, 1 MMG captured, 3 LMG captured (2 malfunctioned), 1 20L AA truck destroyed, 1 20L AA truck immobilized but still fighting.

Four LVP were taken by the US Paras for an extremely impressive opening gambit – I was lucky this ended after 6.5 turns: one more US movement turn and over a third of Cheneux would have been captured. This was six and a half turns of a continuous nightmare for the SS.

In the whole scenario, I had only a single effective attack by an SS MMC on the US and that came in US turn seven! My first LMG shot of the game to lay a fire lane was a twelve. My second MG shot of the game (an HMG this time), was another twelve, followed by a six on the second repair roll. Another LMG rolled another twelve on a point blank first fire shot. I did not receive a single rate on any weapon during the entire game. My first CC defense in the game was a twelve. I blew every single one of my ambush attempts in CC, most when optimally placed, and in all CCs, I destroyed only 1.5 squads compared to the loss of 4.5 squads for myself. The SS failed over 70% of their morale checks and these were mainly from +1 or NMCs. My sniper only had two shots all game – one was my only success of the scenario when it recalled the SPW, the other was a pin on an entrenching squad: all that despite probably having over fifteen sniper roll attempts. It was a complete and unmitigated disaster from start to finish.

Stephane played a good solid opening punch – I knew the US had a lot of squads but I didn't quite appreciate they had *that* many units: eighteen full 7-4-7 plus six half-squads. WOW! That is some punch. As well as pushing solidly through the trees (where he found every one of my minefields – sole end result? One dead half-squad only), a monster green 'amoeba blob' started to work its way over the hills and come into Cheneux just to the north of the first two LVP villas, Brutet's House (figure 5). At the same time



Figure 4: The core of the Cheneux defense – foxholes are in place in preparation for expected future bombardments, reserves are covered in Axis Minor “?” (the MkIV is in T8), and MG posts have been set up to aid a fallback defense from the western villas. Japanese “?” represent objective hexes.

a couple of platoons pushed on hard to the north of them to try and approach Cheneux through “hedge land” and find a sneaky way in to the core of the village through the back door.

Of course, my strung-out defense was at breaking point instantly and this, allied to the calamitous dice-rolling meant I was in desperate trouble for the whole scenario from the start. The big opening, covering twelve with the LMG just opened the door to the US, who proceed to charge through it ruthlessly: all plans of a fast “self-break and re-rally further back” strategy were swamped in a sea of infiltrating half-squads, so I was forced to stand and fight and thus went down horribly. The second HMG breaking on its first shot was an absolute killer as it immediately opened up the whole barbed wire hill flank and there was little in place to stop it – unfortunately my reserves were just not in the right positions to get activated early and thus help out.

Things got worse when the mist dropped to merely heavy on US turn 3 – this meant that things got a little tougher for Stephane in terms of movement-related modifiers coming from LOS to LV, but also meant that all those upslope US mortars and machine guns sitting expectantly on the big hill had some quite attractive sightlines open up for them into Cheneux itself. Two fire-brigade squads I had sent out from



Figure 5: Position after US turn 2 in the outer western defenses. My Brutet’s house defenders are already prisoners and the L10 defenders have routed back to N11. The US is able to form stacks with impunity. Stephane has also dispatched some platoons through the fences.

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Figure 6: Position after US turn three. The US Paras are able to stack high and wide to form some killer fire groups – my solitary defender in Gaspard’s house is locked in melee. Stephane’s push to the woods and into “hedge land” is starting to gather pace.

Cheneux into “hedge land” in the late game both got caught by two snakes on stupid 2+2 shots from long-range mortars and MGs and went running back to mama.

The other big issue I had was I had absolutely no way to counter the monstrous amoeba fire groups that Stephane was able to put together (figure 6) – my option to not buy the OBA was now looking even less inspired than King Harold’s decision to lift his visor and take a quick breather at Hastings: this all just left me like a deer in the headlights. I was expecting to take 20+4 and 20+5 shots and largely shrug them off as I was the SS, and we are, like, hard! But in reality, the 20+ shot was merely the exuberant end-zone celebration to a couple of devastating 30+4 and 30+5 shots where I just folded, squad by squad. Though as tempting a target an 8-1, three 7-4-7s plus three MMGs stack is, I had to actually roll low enough to hurt them in the first place: when you repeatedly squiff the 8+1 or 12-flat first fire shot with a nine, or cowering ten, or higher, you are doomed by the return wall of lead coming straight back at you. It was grisly.



Figure 7: The position at game end (after US turn seven). The US has a good foothold in the northwest corner of Cheneux and one more turn would have been disastrous with the US 9-1 stack running due east with little to stop it. The MkIV in T8 has stopped the US attack south of the road for the time, but all three outer villas have fallen.

The long-range freak loss of my two “hedge land” defenders was the main feature that dominated the action for the last couple of turns. For turns 1-5 the US had successfully crushed and captured all defenders in the three outlying villas (Brudet’s, Gaspard’s and D’Elvenne’s houses) but then I’d managed to stop them cold with the help of a newly activated MkIVJ.

However, when the two “hedge land” squads went reeling back it created an opening through which Stephane was able to punch a couple of squads and a MG through the “hedge land” slope-confined valley (hexes U5, V5 and V6) and into the first of the main Cheneux houses where they swiftly captured house V8 for their fourth LVP. One solitary SS squad at last stood firm and pushed one of the Para squads back with a timely snakes (my only one of the game) and then Stephane rolled a two to end the game. Thank heavens for that as this was the only unit I had in this portion of Cheneux and one more US turn would easily have seen the Paras push on hard to capture locations such

as X8 and Y8 which would have left me extremely troubled in the forthcoming night scenario (figure 7).

Anyway, lines and perimeters were drawn up and it was clearly a shocking loss for the SS. We were just, and only just, holding on in the village (figure 8), but I was really concerned that I may have lost this CG already due to the huge US gains they made. We both had a couple of units in no-man’s land, including my MkIV, but they all easily escaped back to fight again. Luckily, both of my captured big MGs were lost by the US in his refit phase so I wouldn’t have to take any punishment from them in the future – nothing worse than having to suck up your own bullets. At the end of scenario 1 though, and before scenario 2 purchases, I was facing eighteen full US Para squads with a mere eight remaining SS squads, but worse, only one of my four initial big MGs were left, too - it’s the loss of the two heavies which I was really going to feel the most I thought.

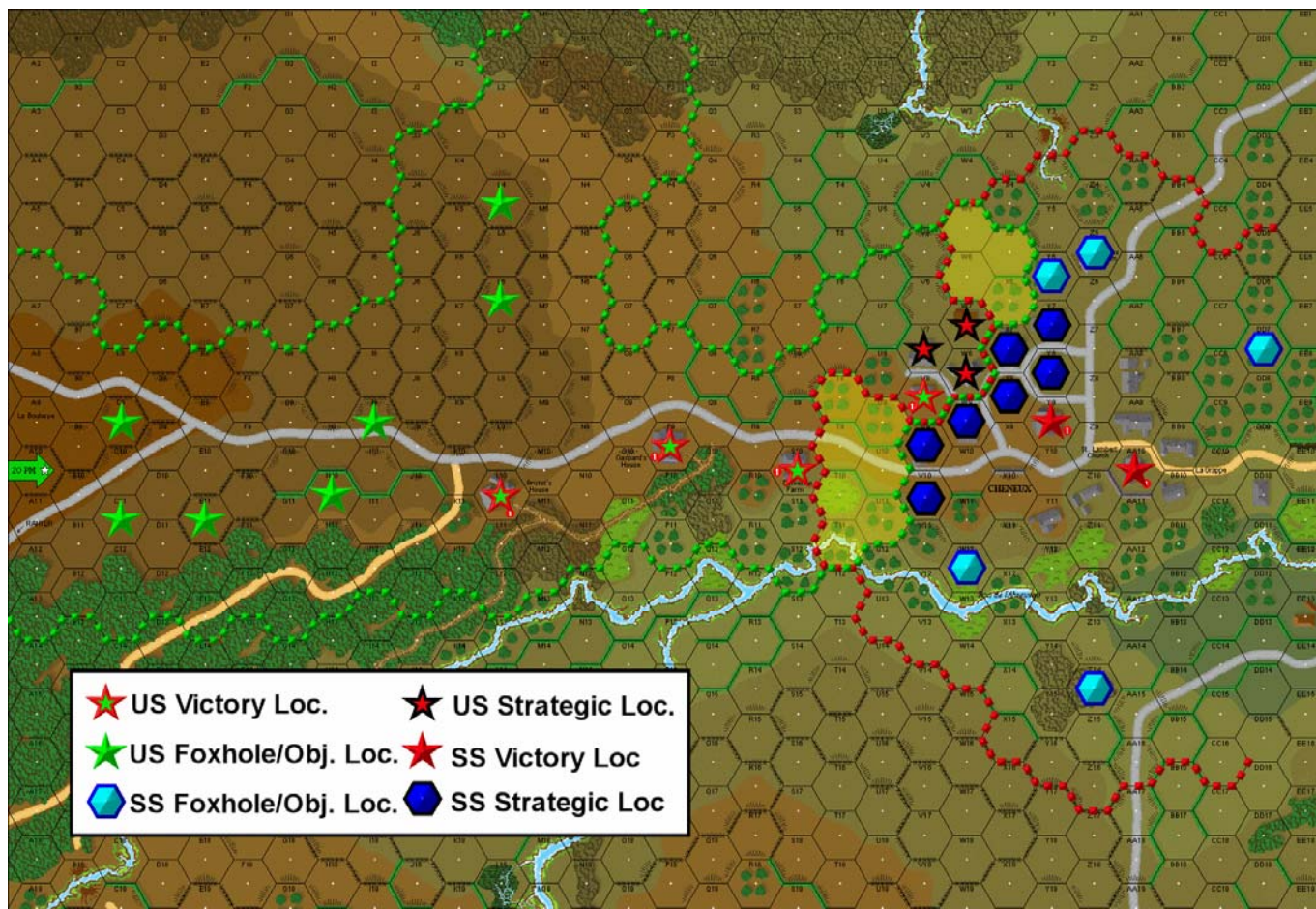


Figure 8: Map of the perimeters at the end of scenario 1, 21PM. The huge gains due to the rapid collapse of the German defense are clear. Four LVP are already in American hands. US perimeter is marked by the dashed green line, German perimeter is marked by the dashed red line. No man’s land is marked in the semi-transparent yellow.

Lessons Learned:

If I were to do this CG again, I would definitely do the whole setup very differently – the biggest threat from the US is their massive numerical advantage and the ability to form those brutal fire groups. The SS are good but there are just not enough units in the strung out western defense to really even scratch a concentrated US force, and if you start by rolling twelves and breaking your machine guns, you are doomed to be swamped. I would almost certainly abandon the outermost two, maybe all three villas and just mine and dummy them. Then I would probably make the edge of the village much tougher to take with more closely supported multiple squads and machine guns.

I would also definitely opt for the OBA and put a frontline observer close in and then keep an SR dancing around the

front slopes of the big barbed-wire hill for a while – the threat of 120mm OBA as harassing fire on US Para squads in open ground or pine woods is real and tangible and this would break up the US super stacks and amoeba-blobs. The other lesson I have taken from this is that even if the US opts to head south and feint towards Monceau, they will take a long time to get there and you can always redirect units, if necessary. As a result most of my reserves would in future be in very forward positions in the front of Cheneux so they would be activated as soon as possible to help with the very stiff defense that's going to be required: dispersed single 7-4-7s suffering under harassing fire barrages hung up on barbed-wire fences are much less scary than the monster stacks Stephane was so easily able to put together.



Figure 9: Pre-start setup for both sides. Stephane has lined up some cloaked units (British cloaks) to push along the E-W road from the vicinity of Delvenne's House. The cloaks in hex rows X and V are no doubt concealing stacks of Paras. The area I am planning to cede through use of dummies and mines (M) is shaded in blue – cloaked Germans are under Japanese concealment counters, reserves are under Axis Minors. The cloaks in hexes X7, X8 and Y7 are all empty.

Scenario 2: 20th December Night

Scenario Purchases:

After the debacle of the first scenario, my only hope was to buy infantry in bulk to replace the losses and try to replace some of the machine-guns that disappeared so catastrophically. I would be facing eighteen of Stephane's game 1 squads allied to probably another 2-3 full platoons from new purchases, with only eight at-start squads of my own and a single MG. Luckily both MkIV tanks were up for full use and I could use the flak trucks in a pinch for a

bit of extra firepower and also the chance to throw up extra star shells. All purchases for this scenario would again be set up in reserve. Luck was with me on the most important roll – the secret DR to determine how many CPP I would not receive. If this were ten or more, then this CG would probably have been over, but I lucked out and rolled a three. Having kept 2 CPP from CGS1, I was fortunate to receive 34 of 37 possible CPP. As I lost the initial scenario (and then some!), I was unable to battle harden any infantry, but I did get to boost the surviving 8-0 to a more useful 8-1.



Figure 10: Situation in turn 5. Basic pillow fighting has gone on to this point with few casualties on either side. However, a small hole has just appeared in my defenses as the 8-1 in AA8 has been killed and the squad with him has routed to the foxholes in BB8. Stephane is readying himself to push across the street.

My overwhelming need for infantry dominated my choices and there was just no room for toys, so, sigh, no OBA again, but also none of those cute little 75* infantry guns which I really like. Instead, I again received two more full SS Panzergrenadier platoons, and most importantly, a full

MG platoon. Best of all, I struck lucky on the leadership die rolls and pulled a 10-2 and a 9-1. Unless Stephane made huge progress, these would be unlikely to be brought to action in this CGS as there would be a ton of hedges and the dark obscuring their view, but these would both be big

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in CGS3. I spent a couple of points on more forts, on more mines, and left a couple of CPP spare for CGS3. I would really need them!

My plan was to abandon all the buildings immediately west of the main north-south road of the village (BB6 – AA6 – Z6 – Z9) and form a “stop line” immediately behind it (Figure 9). This was a really tough decision as I’d be ceding about 60% of the remaining stone building locations and one more LVP, but I felt I just didn’t have the troop numbers or leadership to go toe-to-toe with Stephane’s death stacks from the start. So a tactical retreat was called for and I put the plan into operation.

As I was also a declared scenario attacker for this scenario (and hence not stuck with No Move penalties), there was no need to buy dummies as I was able to form three empty ‘cloaks’ from unit stacking in hexes Y7, X7 and X8. As we didn’t know who moves first until after setup, I would do nothing with these except to hope they soak up a couple of Stephane’s initial 16+4 shots – hopefully, this would also allow me to put up the first star shells from gun flashes, even though the NVR of one meant I wouldn’t initially see any of Stephane’s cloaked units with real ones of my own. The two critical buildings in hexes Y8 and Y9 would be mined with 8FP and 6FP AP mines, hopefully to cause casualties and secondly to prevent Stephane forming a wall of 20+ FP stacks in the houses Z5-Y6-Y9.

I would also have loved to mine house V10 as this was another useful firebase location for Stephane but that was in a frontline hex, so instead I stuck a MkIV in house Y11 and mined the hex immediately in front of it, X10. The other MkIV headed south to BB5 and pinned the other end of the line in the hedges and I kept a single squad on the west side of the road in Z5 to help the immobilized flak truck in Y5 which I expected to go up in flames in no time at all. Finally, I set up a reserve MG stack in hex Z13 – this would probably be activated pretty quickly and could prove annoying to Stephane’s attack along the main east-west road through the village.

My biggest fear here was the NVR of one, combined with the Paras’ 7FP against my 6FP in close combat. At 1 hex, it’s difficult enough, but with the “stop line” of the street, the Paras would be facing a bunch of 12- and 16+2 shots and that is tough even for them. If it were to drop to zero, then it would be in Stephane’s interest to not use star shells and just toss smoke grenades, assault move, and advance in for some lethal CC. I would be hoping to find and place star shells in exactly the right place, starting with Method 1 placement on myself (E1.922), but you can always guarantee you’ll fail one crucial star shell attempt, just at the wrong place and just at the wrong time. The other kicker was the mist – hopefully this would go down, but the issues listed above would be equally valid if the mist were to become extra heavy at any point. It would be hard to lay

any kind of fire lane if due to mist, rain, and smoke, you can’t see anyone to shoot at in the first place.

The other point I gambled on was an assumption that Stephane had no plans to attack Monceau with some huge right-wing hook to snag two more easy VP. Monceau was left empty by the defense in this game – if he were really gambling, he could buy onboard setup and send them chasing across the stream into the wide-open wastes of the southern half of the map, but Stephane tends to be more cautious than this and is really into force preservation. It can take time for Stephane to build up attack momentum, but when it comes, it can be overwhelming.

Scenario 2: German Purchase Summary

Secret DR was a very fortunate 3 – total of 34 CPP available (35-3+2):

<i>Purchased:</i>
2 x SS Infantry Platoon (I2) [18 CPP]
1 x SS MG Platoon (HW1) [12 CPP]
2 x Fortifications (M1) [2 CPP = 30 FPP]
<i>Fortifications:</i>
2 x 6FP, 1 x 8FP Minefields [26FPP]
4 x 1S Foxhole equivalency [4 FPP]

32 CPP spent, 2 CPP carried into scenario 3, 21 AM.

Post-Scenario Analysis

This played out almost exactly as I had hoped it would until the very last turn (German turn 8). As I expected, Stephane had purchased a couple more platoons to build up the unstoppable force some more, but opted to bring them on the slow way from the back, western edge hexes. In the meantime, he was content to slowly push through my sham defense to the “stop line” where he found both sets of mines the hard way. Even though he refused to shoot my dummy cloaks, the gun flash from the casualties from the mines were enough to set my star shells flying and we were off to the races. This inability to get optimum stacks in the best houses caused by the mines delayed the creation of Stephane’s “wall of death” for a turn or two, and forced Stephane to refocus his axis of attack to the south by a couple of hexes, which all ate up time. In the meantime, his reinforcements slowly worked their way forward over the western hills. A couple of cloaks on the far left in “hedge land” looked a bit dummy-like to me (and so it was proved) and it soon became clear that Stephane was taking the direct, blunt force, “in yer face” attack method.

On the left, my MkIV in house Y11 was enough of a threat that Stephane didn’t really push it – his only attempt to get to it with a bazooka with a half-squad was swiftly shredded by the supporting SS infantry and by the reserve MG nest

which had woken up from hex Z13. On my side of the stop line, I was content to recycle and skulk continually to try to avoid the worst of Stephane's fire groups by retaining concealment as long as possible and not waste bullets on the Paras in stone buildings in heavy mist, the dark, and the rain. Stephane steadfastly refused to step into the street with as much as a half-squad until he was good and ready. One of his plans did fail however – he'd bought the big 81 mm

mortars to pour death and destruction on me from the far western slopes, but the mist DRM positively refused to drop to allow him to see that far into Cheneux, so they did nothing all game. He also bought the M36 platoon but they saw no action in this scenario either. I expected this would change in scenario 3 (21 AM).

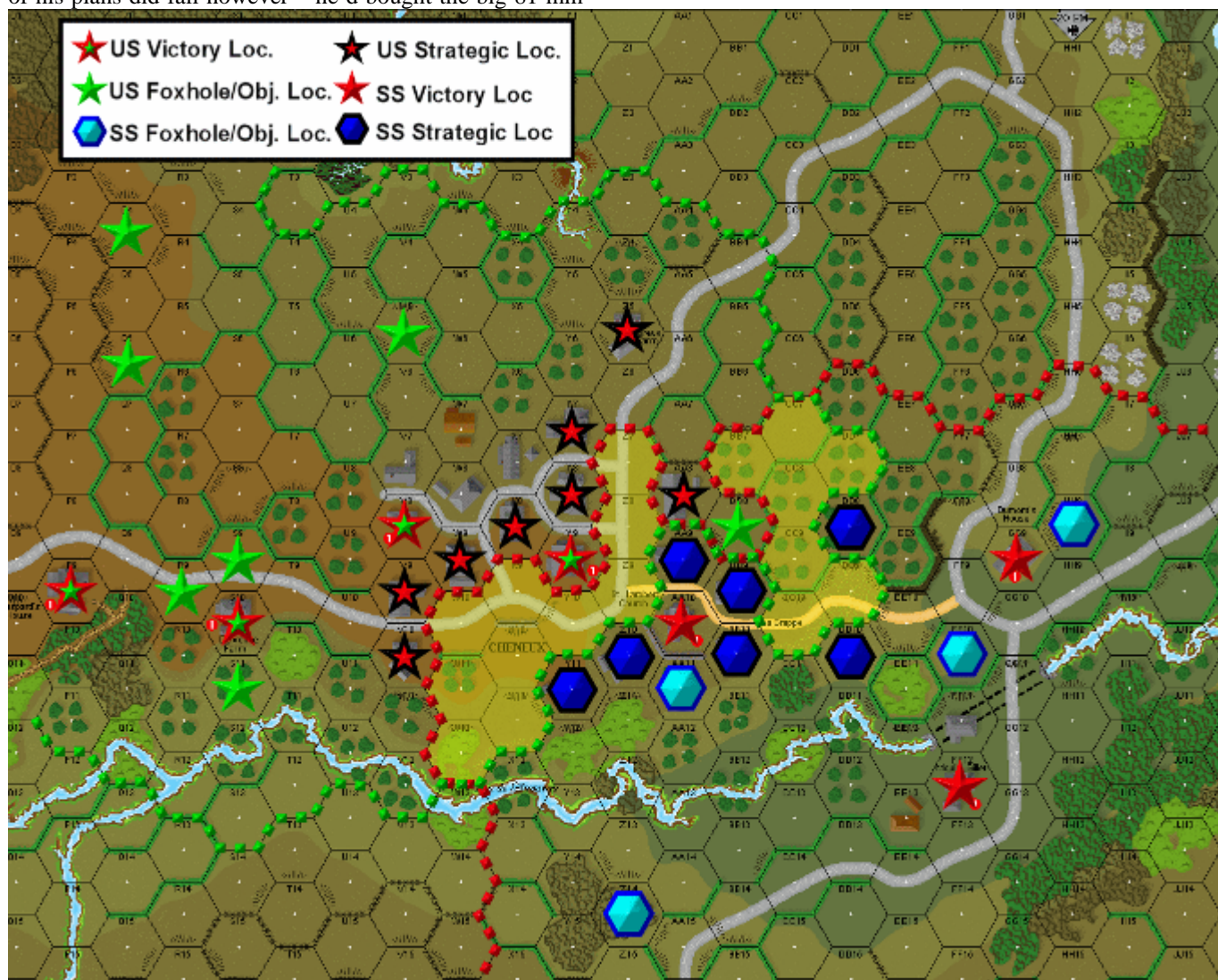


Figure 11: Perimeters at the end of scenario 2: Everything was going swimmingly until turn 7 when the mist thickened to extra heavy. At this point Stephane was able to launch a small force across the road into the middle of my stop line. Until that point, this scenario had gone much as planned for the Germans.

Anyway, all this slapping with handbags had to come to an end at some point, and the NVR dropping to zero was the instigator in turn 5, allied to the rain starting. Now it was critical to get the star shells up and over the stop line every turn, and for turns 5 and 6, Stephane was happy to play ball on this, too. However, I had an unfortunate moment when an 8-1 failed an NMC on a 16FP attack with a 12 (wound 6)

and the squad with him broke too. This created a small hole in the defense (figure 10), which in turn 7 became a huge breach when the mist went up to extra heavy. God was definitely an American in this game as this was perfect timing for the Paras. The reinforcements were all up on the front line by now, and with two smoke grenades in place, the LOS was +7 for my MG fire-lane team in Z10 and they

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couldn't see anything of the assaulting Paras in hex Z6. Stephane was able to cross the road into the space my brokies had just vacated and I fluffed a couple of subsequent important MCs. A small chink had been carved in the stop line and Stephane had exploited the conditions perfectly to push three Para squads into the middle of the village in hexes AA8 and BB8. I had one opportunity to break the point US squad in my foxhole with an 18+3 shot, but I fluffed this with a very poorly timed 10 and failed a 1MC on the return blast from the Paras.

In hindsight, I've just realized this was a massive mistake – it was raining so there should have been no smoke grenades and the fire lane could have gone down from Z10 after all. It may have done nothing of course, but it least it would have been a threat and something to give Stephane cause to think about; a huge error and a costly one as it turned out that the US would ultimately not be staring at a daylight street crossing across my stop line under mere heavy mist in CGS3. Instead, they would now be able to set up massive fire groups in the middle of my defenses for the beginning of CGS3 and he would get to fire first as the attacker (figure 11). I was pretty gutted by this error as it compromised my defenses a lot. *C'est la guerre* I guess, but annoying all the same.

Luckily, I rolled a timely one to end the game at the end of my turn and this was massive as this stroke of weather-induced fortune for Stephane could have just as quickly gotten worse and worse for me. In the end, most of the territory I gave up (including a single LVP unnamed building in Y9) was planned for, but the fact that Stephane was able to breach the stop line only with the aid of a play error was just damned annoying. Tomorrow's CG date promised to be really hard as a result of this.

German CVP:

A single 8-1 and a single 6-5-8. The immobilized flak truck was lost in turn 4.

US CVP:

A 7-0 from a sniper shot when Stephane used one of my MGs (☺); a squad to combat casualties and another squad from failure to escape from mines. I was hoping for several more casualties, but the mist, rain, and dark, plus the stone buildings, meant the modifiers were never really on my side in this one.

Lessons Learned:

Don't rely on the weather! And relearn the smoke rules for the thousandth time – NO SMOKE IN THE DARNED RAIN! How many times do I need to keep making this mistake? I'm still happy that I made the right decision over the tactical retreat – as it was, I only lost a single squad and a leader, where if I'd tried to defend up front, I could have

lost 2-3 squads with no easy place to retreat to due to nighttime low crawl requirements. Again, my biggest problem was causing any kind of casualties of significance to Stephane – getting the odd unit to break was just not enough after the fiasco of the first scenario. I needed to kill Americans, and lots of them, as they had a ton of leaders and would soon be rallied and back in the fray. The issue I had was the modifiers and the smaller size of my IFT attacks which meant that killing Americans was really unlikely unless Stephane rolled a few twelves, and I hadn't seen much sign of that happening yet! Anyway, next up was 65 possible CPP of American reinforcements and a probable bombardment, compared to my 35 CPP. Sounded like fun.

Scenario 3: 21st December AM

Scenario Purchases:

No choices here. Infantry. As many as I could get my hands on. There were no more MG platoons available, but I was able to retain all of the MGs from the last scenario, and I did receive two more full platoons, and fantastically a 9-2 and an 8-1 to go with my now-awake 10-2 (figure 12). These were some tough hombres and the number of SS squads was starting to look tasty, but unfortunately I was running out of good terrain to put them in. I bought some more foxholes for the strongly expected bombardment (why wouldn't the US player buy this?), and a HIP spot for my spotter that would go with my last-chance saloon game-saver, the 120mm OBA (with scarce ammo for an 8/4 deck).

As Stephane could now come in from the south edge, I put a squad and a half plus MGs in Monceau with a stack of reserve-created dummies and two of the surviving flak tracks. I was still expecting him to focus on crushing me ruthlessly in Cheneux itself, so Monceau was acceptably under-garrisoned as I needed to really make it tough for him in the main village – I guessed he'd send maybe half a company in from the south edge, and though light, I hoped my guys could hold him for a few turns anyway. I still expected to be kicked out of Monceau and lose the two LVP, but hoped that would happen at game end and not halfway through it.

Overall, if I could still hold the bridge and the last two Cheneux village LVP at scenario end, then I would consider that a victory of sorts, with a small but tangible chance of holding on in scenario 4. Anything less than that and we'd probably be done with this CG as I was most likely to be strongly outnumbered by squads with superior firepower and I couldn't see many situations where I could really cause massive casualties – apart from my OBA that is, which was expecting to rain death and destruction on the US in Cheneux! Or so I hoped.



Figure 12: My setup in Cheneux before concealment counters have been placed – any German concealment counters on the board are dummies. Expecting fire from US monster stacks, dummies in BB9 and AA9 are there to soak up some shots. The new stop line is formed by the road and ‘plateau’ edge from EE9-DD8-CC9-CC10-BB10, backed up by the 10-2 and 75*mm field gun.

Scenario 3: German Purchase Summary

Secret DR was again a fortunate 5 – total of 32 CPP available (35-5+2=32):

<i>Purchased:</i>
2 x SS Infantry Platoon (I2) [18 CPP]
1 x INF Field Gun Platoon (G1) [6 CPP]
1 x Btln Mortar – 120mm OBA Module (O1) [7 CPP]
1 x Fortifications (M1) [1 CPP = 15 FPP]
<i>Fortifications:</i>
1 x SMC HIP capacity – artillery observer [1 FPP]
14 x 1S Foxhole equivalency [14 FPP]

32 CPP spent, 0 CPP carried into scenario 4, 21 PM.

Post- Scenario Analysis

Much as expected Stephane plumped for the bombardment, but in the last place I expected it to come. Instead of taking a risk with the drift possibly landing on his forward elements (but more importantly forcing some nasty morale checks on my battle-hardened Cheneux defenders), he opted to go left and plastered the trusty souls tasked with the defense of Monceau. When he announced this, I wasn't too unhappy about it, thinking that this would only be of limited effect, but then the full extent of the 7-hex bombardment radius became apparent – that is one hell of a big area and one hell of a lot of shell hole creation dice rolling. Mostly this went well for me – only one flak truck

immobilized and my half-squad in the village broke but soon rallied, but with the last roll of the barrage, Stephane snagged and broke two of my reserve squads who were stuck in woods without foxhole protection as I'd run out of FPP! Completely typical!

The full extent of his evil genius plan soon became apparent when he lined up an entire company to come in over the southern entry point and clean out Monceau, led by a 9-2 and with OBA support if necessary: approximately 15 squads, an M36 and possible OBA to take out 1.5 squads, an 8-1 and two crappy flak trucks (figure 13). No contest!

In the main village thrust, Stephane started brilliantly as his mortar teams went on huge rate sprees and two crits later (and a crit from an M36), I was already three KIA SS squads down at the end of turn 1. Ouch! Stephane started to pick up some more momentum and pushed hard against the final German-held section of Cheneux south of the FF9-Z9 road, but found the first of my 75*mm field guns (in CC11) the hard way, backed up by 30-2 shots from the 10-2 and friends in DD10. Three times Stephane tried to batter his way in through here, but in one of the few high points of the CG for the Germans, he was sent packing each time at the overall cost of a couple of squads. North of the road, he eventually pushed my squads out of their foxholes in DD6, DD8 and EE7 on the plateau with a squad and a half of SS plus leader going down to death or into the prisoner cage, but I was able to kill the odd Para squad or two in return.

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Figure 13: Trouble brewing on the horizon. Stephane lines up a full Para company to come and sweep all before them in Monceau. There's not very much in Monceau to stop them, (1.5 squads, a MMG and two flak trucks and lots of dummies) and they are about to be blasted by the bombardment. Ouch.

On the Monceau front, Stephane's slow push had gone really well, aided by a timely increase of mist density for one turn just when he needed it to help him get most of his force swiftly across some tricky open ground hexes at no cost just when they were at a useful range for my few trusty defenders to actually hurt them – normal service on the environmental luck front as usual. He smashed his way into Monceau with ease and was soon setting up the usual three-squad 20FP stacks ready for the overwhelming rush of the hugely outnumbered defenders.

I was forced to slowly give ground back on the southern edge of the village, causing the odd break here and there and by turn 6 was left holding the last of the Monceau LVP only. Stephane piled the bodies on for a devastating 22 vs. 7 CC (both at -1) but in my only really big break of the game, he rolled a twelve and I was able to withdraw. This only meant the pain came one turn later when he managed to break my one surviving squad on a measly NMC (needed a ten, rolled an eleven). Both Monceau-based flak trucks were now dead, but in Stephane's casualty-averse way, he had actually advanced a squad and a half away from a CC with one of the trucks when between them, the Paras were poised to make it a bonfire.

By turn 3 in Cheneux and after the disasters of the first turn, things were looking very grim for the few SS left, though Stephane would have to expose himself to some withering firepower to get across the Z9-FF9 road from the plateau. However, at this point my OBA came into play – after a first-off red card pull, I successfully dropped three fire

missions onto the US assault teams in the village and this mashed up a lot of squads – this proverbially saved my bacon for the mid-game and it also made Stephane very wary of his approaches in there, too (figure 14). Overall, this killed approximately two squads but broke probably 7-8 more and I couldn't really have asked more of it, apart from one thing. Needing to correct and then convert an SR four hexes, I threw the one drift direction roll that could possibly hurt me (needed a four on direction and four or more on distance, and rolled a 4,4). The OBA duly fell on a single SS squad who was being a very big thorn in Stephane's side, hiding from the mortars in the woods in Z14. They of course broke, even with CGSR Fanatic Bonus.

Ultimately though all good things come to an end, and I pulled the inevitable second red card. This ultimately initiated the denouement of the CGS. In US turn 6, Stephane broke the last of the Monceau defenders, who had to surrender, though the 8-1 with them continued to be a nuisance firing a solo MMG. He also pushed an M36 into a position where it was able to enforce an FTR on my now-broken squad in the woods in Y15, and most damaging of all, pushed a squad into the woods between Monceau and Cheneux in GG14 where they were poised to isolate my final Monceau defenders in hex HH15 (a 9-2 and two squads). Even worse, I missed the fact that Stephane's M36 was on an upslope hex to one of my surviving MkIVs in EE11, and Stephane duly acquired the tank.

In the Cheneux area, Stephane had tried to threaten my other MkIV on the GG8-FF9 road, but after some squeaks, I managed to extricate him, but with his last shot, he gacked his main armament – infuriating! Stephane had also managed to clean out my other 75*mm field gun in EE9 at no cost when it missed point blank moving infantry with two shots. Hmmm. On the plus side, Stephane had no answer to my mega-strongpoint of the 10-2 in DD10, but then again he didn't really need to have one either.

Sadly for me, the scenario didn't end at the end of US 6, so we moved into German 6. I did what I could to limit damage but few things remained alive now. I caused a couple of breaks here and there, and Stephane's return fire was largely innocuous apart from one critical shot. I needed to get my MkIV out of trouble, but as you've already guessed, on the startup movement point, needing a five or less, Stephane rolled a 4 and the tank was atomized. That was a huge, huge loss for me and a crushing blow for any final scenario plans I had for it. The rest of the turn was played out safely enough but I really needed to roll a '1' to finish the game there and then, and I rolled a 2.



Figure 14: Position at end of turn 4. The first US assault on the plateau area (CC8-FF6) has been stuffed by artillery which has also caused some devastation on the attack through the AA10 region. The 75*mm field gun and 10-2 stack in DD10 adjacent to the plateau edge in CC10 were the only two positions that Stephane was never able to crack. My poor unfortunates sheltering from a mortar barrage in the woods in Z14 are about to become victims of my own correcting 120mm OBA.

So on to turn 7 which proved to be the last one of the scenario. I missed doing any damage to Stephane with a 20FP HMG shot from my other key strongpoint in building GG9 at a nasty stack across the road on the edge of the plateau in FF7. The return shot was not so forgiving however, and the 24+2 shot at my doughty GG9 stone building defenders was a catastrophic one: the 9-1 pinned, the next squad went berserk (typical) and the last squad, the all-important one manning the HMG, went and broke when it too rolled a ten with a base morale of nine. Brutal. Stephane sacrificed a couple of squads to defensive and subsequent first fire from the 'zerkies, but at the end of it, he still had a pinned half-squad adjacent to the brokies who

were now going to surrender due to the presence of the inconvenient infiltrators in hex GG14 to the south (figure 15).

At this point I conceded the overall campaign game to Stephane – that sounds curious, as I still held the critical GG9 house and my other strong point (10-2 in DD10) was still in good order and I had a 9-2 still in the game too, though possibly about to be isolated. However, at this point I had just watched two and a half more SS squads surrender in the last couple of turns and I was by now way past the tipping point where I would be able to mount any reasonable kind of final scenario defense.



Figure 15: End-game in Cheneux. The hero in HH7 is now alone, the squad just visible in II7 having just surrendered. My MkIV in EE11 is burning from a long shot from the M36 under Prep Fire in Z15. The other is suffering from MA malfunction. From a 20+2 shot from the units under Prep Fire in FF7, my all-important strongpoint in GG9 has just been pinned (8-1), berserked (6-5-8 under PSK) and broken (6-5-8 under HMG in FF8) and I have conceded the CG. My 10-2 stack in DD10 and the 75*mm field gun are still going strong, and I still have three squads left in FF11, FF12 and EE13, but the barrel has effectively been scraped dry at this point. My MkIV in II9 may or may not return in the Refit phase and my 9-2 stack in HH15 is at risk of isolation. Hordes of broken and unbroken Paras can be seen in the western areas of Cheneux.

German CVP:

5 SS squads KIA and 3.5 as prisoners. 75mm field gun and crew. 2 flak trucks and a MK IVJ destroyed. 8-1 killed and 8-1 as POW. 2 MMG and 2 Panzerschrecks captured.

US CVP:

2-2-8 crew and 5.5 US paratroop squads KIA. 8-1 leader KIA.

US wins the KGP II Bridge at Cheneux Campaign Game in US turn 7 of scenario 3.

Post-Scenario and Campaign Game Comments:

My whole plan for the last scenario had required that I hold onto the two strongpoints in the village (buildings DD10 and GG9) and have a reasonable enough force left at CGS3 end to realistically expect to hold on through to turn 3 or 4 at least of the final scenario. At this point however, the best I was going to be able to achieve in terms of force balance was to have a scenario 4 starting force of twelve complete SS squads only (assuming a single, non-depleted mechanized SS platoon arriving as reinforcements at a cost of 12 CPP), and yet I would still have to try to defend two fairly separate defensive

positions (the bridge and the two remaining LVP in Cheneux). I had one field gun remaining, two HMGs and three MMGs, but probably no armor left (one destroyed and one with a malfunctioned MA, that may or may not

have come back in the refit phase), and even though I still had two flak trucks, they had shown themselves to be effectively worthless.



Figure 16: The end in Monceau. The pinned 8-1 and MMG in GG18 has just watched a 6-5-8 surrender and the only thing now holding this side together is the stack under the hero in HH15 (including a 9-2). Stephane's infiltrators in GG14 have caused surrender of two more 6-5-8s in Cheneux to the north (off bottom of picture) and have effectively unlocked this flank.

With the need to defend both of the victory objectives (bridge and village), and with the US setting up second and being able to respond to my force dispositions, I would have been left in the unenviable position of needing to split my surviving force down the middle: six squads each with support weapons divided accordingly and only a probable fickle reinforcement of an OBA module to assist. In reply, Stephane would only need to shield whichever of these two groups he would choose *not* to be attacking with about ten of his own well-equipped squads to stop them being uppity. He could then concentrate the other twenty or so of his remaining squads with their twelve MMGs, teams of light and heavy mortars, bazookas, unused OBA mission and both M36s to quickly obliterate whatever tried to hold out in the village *or* the bridge. Yes, I might survive an odd turn or two, but with multiple 24 and 36 FP attacks on the back of repeated 100*mm OBA and multiple ROF streaks from

the mortars, I would just be delaying the very, very inevitable.

Wrap-up

So that was the end. A well planned, well executed assault by Stephane and the Americans to which ultimately I had no real answer, particularly after the jump start Stephane received in scenario 1 from my horrendous opening game plan and dice rolling. In all the scenarios, I received exactly three hot sniper attacks – the killing of the crew of the captured SPW half-track in the first scenario and then the death of a mortar crew and a squad break in this last game – almost unbelievable when you consider my SAN was 4, 6 and 4 in the three scenarios! In addition, I didn't receive a single HMG ROF in any of the scenarios and only a couple of MMG rate runs too – my effects dice rolls were generally average to really bad and a couple of key breaks were critical (the loss of the first HMG in scenario 1 and the

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tank MA in the final scenario particularly stand out). However, in many other aspects I rolled pretty well – my OBA performed very well in scenario 3, and my reinforcement rolls were generally good to really good with not a single depleted unit at all, as were my leadership and secret rolls to modify CPP (a three and a five), so it wasn't all bad news.

The CG took us approximately six weeks to complete with an average 1.5 sessions per week to get through the whole thing. Scenario 1 was played out in two game sessions as was scenario 2, each session being approximately four hours long. With the huge influx of units and the spread of the action over more of the map, scenario 3 took three sessions to complete and I would project that any final scenario 4 would have taken another couple of sessions if we had gone the distance. If you're playing this on weekends, then I would predict that the entire CG could be played out in three or four single 1-day-long sessions, something that is hopefully easily achievable for many players. I think this is an excellent CG for new players to try out once they have tested the more programmed approach demonstrated in something like *Pegasus Bridge*. The choices are simpler, it is largely infantry-dominated and it can be played out relatively quickly, though I would recommend that the more experienced player take on the challenge of the SS as they are much less forgiving to any mistakes made in setup or during play.

In an ASL experience of this nature, there are obviously mistakes that were made, or more typically things that were forgotten. Our biggest error was clearly forgetting the smoke and rain issue in the night scenario, discussed at length above, but with hindsight, we also forgot to use some of the special rules. These were all insignificant – we remembered to use the soft ground rule for vehicular movement (KGP5) only sporadically, and I twice forgot to roll for German fuel shortage (KGP13). We also forgot to apply civilian interrogation (KGP18) and we never utilized US panzerfaust options (KGP15) both of which are much more US-friendly than they are for the SS – neither of these omissions mattered at all in the end as Stephane won with plenty to spare.

Final Analysis

For both sides, the CG purchases were actually fairly straightforward and there was not a huge number of decisions to be made (scenario 1 options are particularly straightforward for the US especially), but the question on whether to utilize German OBA in scenario 1 is interesting. I'm sure others will have opinions on what German armor to buy contrary to mine, but that's what makes this game such fun! I think there is probably less choice for the Americans in terms of absolute purchases – OOB limitations mean they will inevitably be buying and maxing out on tons of infantry - but Stephane raised the really

interesting idea of paying the 50% surcharge and sending infantry over the southern hills into Monceau in scenario 2 (the night scenario), entering from the southern entry zone one scenario early. I had not planned for that kind of move at all and that would have been a really interesting way to go as I would definitely have been playing catch up in that situation with no initial nighttime defense in Monceau at all!

Vehicular support in this CG is actually a wash for both sides – King Tigers aside, both sides' AFVs can easily destroy their opponents with a single shot and both sides receive plenty of anti-AFV assets in their light antitank weapons (though the US are again helped here by an inherent Faust capability). With probably only two tanks per side to deal with, the armor in this CG is very much a sideshow, though it can definitely help the Germans to make some tough strongpoints. Equally, both sides can invoke crushing OBA if required, with a slight disadvantage to the Germans through the provision of scarce ammunition, and both sides can request some useful field guns and mortars too that can help both the defense and the attack to a roughly equal degree.

At the end of the day, the main difference between the two sides however, simply comes down to a comparison of infantry numbers, their ability to project firepower, and the way the two forces react under fire. Being super-elite, neither side suffers ELR replacement and hence force degradation is not really such a big issue in this game, but as noted above, the SS options to rout, retreat and rally soon become very limited in this CG. Unless the Germans are physically killing the US Paras at every possible opportunity, then merely breaking them makes little to no ultimate difference as they will quickly rout back out of sight a couple of hexes and then rally, especially with the gazillions of low-level leaders the US receive. Rallied Paras will soon be back in the game to start causing death and destruction to the SS through sheer FP. However, actually killing the Paras is extremely difficult as most German defensive fire shots will be flat or +1 *at best* due to the mist, so this is really tough for them to do against a thoughtful, methodical attack, and the US will also be aided by a game-provided half-squad screen. I do like the concept of the swirling mist however, as it does add great flavor to the CG and it is richer for it – it is also easy to handle and should pose no real problems for any player to deal with.

Ultimately however, the balance between the two sides then comes down to a question of absolute numbers and firepower even more than may be usual in other campaign games.

In terms of firepower, the US, as you would expect as the attacker, has a significant edge. Based on the maxim that it is bodies, lots of bodies, that wins ASL campaign games, with guaranteed full reinforcement platoons, the US will

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probably receive the full fifty-two 7-4-7 paratroop squad equivalents (15 possible platoons) vs. a probable maximum of twenty-eight SS 6-5-8 squads in total (eight possible infantry platoons + three HW platoons). This equates to a probable 367 inherent American firepower vs. 168 of the SS, a healthy 2:1 and 2.5:1 in squads and firepower respectively.

Including the potential additional 48 firepower from accompanying platoon-inherent MMGs, then we see that the Paratroopers are significantly favored more here, especially with their ROF2 on their MMGs and their assault fire bonus which really helps them a lot. The US also receive their array of twelve maximum 60mm mortars, that with their ROF of 3, will eventually, somewhere, sometime land a nasty critical hit on an SS squad in a stone building. With the numbers imbalance, those kinds of losses hurt.

Of course there is also the obvious CC disadvantage they face, too – close combat rolls with the Paras of a minimum four vs. seven is a no-win scenario for the Germans and they need to avoid that as much as possible. However, the German player swiftly reaches a limit of exactly how much self-breaking and rallying the SS can conduct in the game as there are only so many favorable terrain and building locations to give up and of course this ultimately plays into the US' hands with the loss of so many critical defensive positions, not to mention LVP locations.

Summary

Overall therefore, I personally think this CG is ever so slightly harder on the Germans than the US, something reflected in the ROAR statistics (29 US wins vs. 13 German at time of writing). I appreciate that others will have differing views on that and I may well change my opinion if I were to turn it around and use the hindsight that this first exposure to the CG has provided – the luxury of being the writer I guess! The official balance is to halve the secret DR for whichever side needs assistance, a useful measure indeed, but still open to swings of fortune towards the US, and not necessarily enough to smooth this back toward the Germans for a more equal setting. However, as an alternative I would offer a suggestion of giving the SS player a little more help by examining the numbers and firepower balance between the two sides.

In my opinion, I think one of the biggest American swings is the extra half-squad boost per platoon that the Americans receive with their reinforcements, compared to the Germans. This is even more important than we see in any existing ASL scenario as the US have instantly been given a huge, ready-made team of “fire-soaks” to eat up a lot of the early defensive and subsequent first fire shots from the Germans who only have limited return fire opportunities. Once the half-squads have done their sacrificial job, the US commander will be able to waltz the plethora of full-squads

in to a follow-up supporting position and assemble the mega-stacks and fire groups with impunity.

By being given this ready-deployable force, the US commander doesn't even have to make the tough decisions worrying about the loss of squad integrity from making multiple deployments, as the reinforcement schedule has already provided him a half-squad screen to use and abuse as he sees fit. That's a little bit *too* obvious in my mind and gives the US a significant edge. If I were to offer one balancing measure to this CG, it would be to have the US receive only 3 squads per infantry reinforcing platoon, not 3.5. That puts some tradeoff decisions back upon the US player that he will need to think about hard. At present, it seems that all the US needs to do is to be happy to play for the long game in this CG and be prepared to grind out by attrition and go the distance to win. They will almost inevitably win this kind of battle with their firepower, numbers, support weapons and CC advantages.

Anyway, play this campaign game and have fun! It's played on one of the best maps in the ASL canon and you get the chance to experience great carnage with two of the game's best unit types going head-to-head in the swirling mists of damp, dank western Belgium. You won't be disappointed!

Player Profile: The Two Half Squads (Jeffery Hallett and Dave Kleinschmidt)

Banzai: Tell us a little bit about your gaming background. How long have you been gaming? What was your first game? Are there any particular games that stood out over the years?

Jeff Hallett: I'm very new to gaming, coming into it just 4 years ago, soon after my 48th birthday. I did play one strategy game as a kid. Star Force, from SPI, was the one game I picked up to satisfy my thirst for anything sci-fi. A pal of mine and I played it a couple of times, but after he went away to college, I put it away and didn't really give gaming a thought for 30 years. Maybe it's part of my mid-life crises. I couldn't afford a convertible sports car, and ASL is not quite as costly. The first games I bought were from eBay. I had stumbled across battered copies of Panzer Blitz and Panzer Leader and, vaguely remembering seeing them in bookstores as a teenager, decided to grab them to see what it was all about. As soon as I opened them up and laid out the maps I knew I was hooking into something big. I was so enamored with the whole idea.

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Dave Kleinschmidt: My friend Wally was in my D&D campaigns back in 1984. He said "hey, you are an art major and you love history, you would like miniature wargames". He got me started in that rewarding hobby. I enjoy D&D 3.5, Desperado, The Sword and the Flame, Mini versions of Gladiator and Circus Maximus, Washingtons Wars, Might of Arms and many more miniature games. Used to do some B-17.

Banzai: When and how did you discover ASL?

JH: I found someone to play Panzer Leader with through the internet. We met at a local game store and he was kind enough to help me stumble through a couple of games. As we played and he sort of filled me in on what gaming was all about, he would often mention ASL in sort of a reverent voice. I've always been fascinated by the lunatic fringe groups that orbit on the edge of just about every organization, hobby or interest. (I wasn't aware at that time that there a LOTS of fanatic groups in gaming. I LOVE it!) Anyway, I figured, why not start at the top?

DK: Same friend Wally said "we should play this new game ASL, it's about WWII and is supposed to be great". From that point on I was hooked. The great thing about starting so early is that I have all official ASL products and many others also.

Banzai: Let's talk about the podcast you've been producing. How did you get the idea? How often do you do it? What's the reception been like in the ASL community? Do you have any idea how many people are listening?

JH: I think the idea was nearly simultaneous. Dave and I both had been listening to various gaming podcasts for a year or more. We also were enjoying hanging out together after gaming laughing and having a beer. When Dave actually formulated the thought into the words, "how about we do an ASL podcast", I thought, "Of course." We were delighted to be the first to do it. And as far as we know, it's still the best ASL podcast on the web.

DK: I think we got the idea simultaneously. I listen to a few D&D podcasts and told Jeff we should do an ASL one, and he said he was thinking the same thing. We try to get a show done every three weeks. I figured we'd get between 500 and 1,000 listeners. It's hard to gauge the listenership because some people share CDs of the show, or carpool and listen together. Others may "hit" on an episode multiple times. We don't know for sure but would guess at least 1,000.

Banzai: Each medium has its own strengths and weaknesses. What things are better suited to a podcast than a more traditional form of communication like a newsletter, and vice-versa?

JH: Podcasts have the ability to be casual and conversational. For better or worse. It's a different feel than a newsletter, which needs to be compact, focused and structured. In my view, a podcast should be entertaining and informative, whereas a newsletter needs to be informative and entertaining.

DK: We treat our show as an informal talk show about ASL. You have to be able to think on your feet and interact with the other people on the show.

Banzai: Does your podcast have any regular features?

JH: Oh yes. Many listeners depend on hearing our regular installments of "What's in the Box?", "Quiz Show", "Box Art", "Listener Mail" and "Scenario Report". Some even look forward to the comedy (yes, it's supposed to be "comedy") skits we do to open each episode.

Banzai: What is the typical length of your podcasts?

JH: Regardless of our intent, most of the shows have a sort of natural flow that ends up lasting for 75 minutes or so. We do very little editing of actual content; most of the editing is to remove lags in conversation or "tsk" sounds. One listener wishes the shows would be 70 minutes and thus fit on an audio CD, which is a great idea. Then we could sell box sets of all the episodes. What a great gift that would make for some lucky ASLer!

DK: I think an episode can't be too long. People can listen in parts. Often the episodes take on a life of their own.

Banzai: What's your favorite part of the podcast? What seem to be the favorite segments among your listeners?

JH: Hands down "Box Art" is my favorite segment just because I love to give Dave a hard time about it. But seriously, I like any part where the banter is good and we're talking ASL. Listeners are split pretty evenly. We get lots of good feedback about Quiz Show, the history segment, "What's in the Box", all of it.

DK: Mine of course is "Box Art Review". The quiz shows are fun too!

Banzai: Now let's get to some of the more traditional questions we typically ask the players that we interview. What nationality do you enjoy playing the most?

JH: I like playing the Dutch. They brew a fine beer and the wooden combat boots make a fine clatter as they run across the cobblestone streets.

DK: The Finns are great. Got that self-rally ability. That historic stand against the Soviets. The playing of the Germans against the Russians. The REINDEER! Those animals are almost as cool as having fountains. I love all the nationalities though. Japanese are worth a mention.

Banzai: Describe your favorite kind of scenario. What kind of scenario do you find less enjoyable?

JH: As a relative newbie I have to say I like them all. I haven't played a scenario I didn't like. I suppose I will some day be drawn to the scenarios I WIN.

DK: The chrome is always great but I play them all.

Banzai: What would you say are your ASL strengths and weaknesses?

JH: My strength lies in my ability to take a thorough beating and keep coming back for more. I'm like the Rocky Balboa of ASL. Dave's like Apollo Creed. I'm sure I must have the worst record in ASL history, but after crying myself to sleep I arise the next morning with renewed optimism. Dave's younger than I, and he's got the experience, but someday he'll get tired of thrashing me and drop his guard. Then I'll get a chance to shine.

DK: I have been told that I play a better defense than offense but I am improving on offense. In episode #27 we state that Jeff won his first game against me. After we recorded I went back and checked my record, it was his 3rd win against me. You know...he has a short term memory problem.

Banzai: What is the best part of ASL, and what is the worst?

JH: Wow. Tough question. Let's see...I think I'd have to say the best part is organizing the counters. I like to be neat.

DK: The best part is the variety of options in ASL. Also the comprehensiveness of the game system. You gotta love the vagaries of the die. The worst part is the complexity (legalese style) of the rules.

Banzai: What are you most looking forward to with regard to ASL?

JH: Winning a game. And Dave getting his name on a counter some day. Then maybe he'll stop talking about it on the show!

DK: Hakkaa Paalle!

Banzai: What's your favorite game piece in ASL and why?

JH: I like the dice tower. It's bulky, over-engineered, expensive and totally superfluous.

DK: It's either a German 88 (due to it's rate of fire and punching power) or a 1-2-7 Partisan half-squad (I admire their humble tenacity and I know Jeff likes their berets.

Banzai: You're playing the Russians in a 1941 scenario, facing a German combined arms attack featuring several AFVs. Would you rather have a KV-2 or a platoon of two BT-7 M37s and two BT-7As?

JH: I'd definitely go with the KV-2 because I know the AAR party includes vodka and caviar.

DK: Al right, I admit I can only remember that the KV is big and strong, but I would go with the platoon and the fun of trying to maneuver them for rear shots. Those BT things don't have radios though do they? In the true spirit of our podcast I am too lazy to go look it up.

Banzai: You get to choose your side in a scenario set in the battle for France in 1940. Both sides have combined arms and a decent allotment of tanks. Would you rather command the French side to use their Char B1-bis, Somuas, and Renault tanks, or the Germans, with their PzIs and PzIIs, and a few PzIVs and Pz38ts?

JH: The French may get clobbered, but it gives me an excuse to say "sacre bleu!"

DK: The French. I don't get to play their tanks very often.

Banzai: How do you like PTO scenarios?

JH: Our pal, Joe, is a PTO fanatic so I get lots of chances to play PTO and I like them just fine. There's definitely a different feel and I've always enjoyed variety in gaming. And since I have no historical preference, I'll play either theater and any nationality.

DK: I love them. The variety of terrain adds to the fun of ASL. Lot's of jungle and of course the Japanese. Like the Marines too.

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Banzai: What was your most enjoyable ASL moment? How about your worst, funniest, coolest, and/or craziest?

DK: Enjoyable: Laying back for a moment and engaging in personal conversation with my friend across the table.

Worst: When my friend Poffenberger was beating me and I ceased to have fun playing. It is not worth it unless you can have fun losing.

Coolest: Was getting back my flamethrower by KIA'ing my opponent after he had KIA'd me and stolen it.

Banzai: What area of your play would you like to improve on most over the next year?

JH: I'd like to improve the FREQUENCY of play. Having only played for a couple of years, I've got lots of catching up to do.

DK: Remembering the small rules. Special ammo, etc.

Banzai: Is there an area you think is under-represented in ASL?

JH: Yes. The role of women in the war effort.

DK: Maybe the French. Certainly the Chinese.

Banzai: Now that *Armies of Oblivion* has been out for a while, have you had a chance to generate some impressions about playing the Axis Minors?

JH: Haven't had a chance to play it.

DK: Have played a lot of Hungarians and have enjoyed it. I still need to play the Oblivion scenarios. I think Holmstrom has said he would do them with me next year. I still need to play Watchtower and Veritable. Not to mention the new APs.

Banzai: Do you have a local ASL club? What are some of the highlights of your club's activities?

DK: The PAASL (Palatine Area Advanced Squad Leaders) club. We meet once a month on a Thursday. We don't do anything else.

Banzai: What advice would you give to players who are just starting out, and what advice would you give to ASL clubs in trying to attract and retain new players?

JH: For new players: PLAY. Stop reading the rules and PLAY. Don't worry about getting everything right, just PLAY. Oh, and listen to "The Two Half-Squads".

DK: Always ask your friends to join your club. You never know when they might say yes. I am currently having problems getting my members to attend regularly. Maybe the fact that we meet on a weeknight is difficult.

Banzai: Who are your favorite opponents to play and why?

JH: Dave and Joe are my faves. They are also my mentors. Hey wait, if I have such a lousy record maybe I should switch mentors!

DK: Dave Timonen and Rick Hollander as they are my long-time friends (Dave and I are playtesting Hakkaa Paalle). It's nice to play Spilky and Holmstrom as they can teach me stuff and make me a better player.

Banzai: What were your worst and best runs of luck?

DK: I have had several runs of maybe 7, 8 and 9 rates of fire Whee – Hee .

Banzai: We'll get to your favorite ASL scenarios in another issue, so how about telling us what your other favorite games are?

JH: I've recently concluded there are WAY too many games to play, so I'm currently limiting myself to ASL and Dungeons and Dragons. With a little World of Warcraft now and then on the computer.

DK: D&D, when you have a creative and humorous group of players the opportunities for fun and laughs are much greater than in ASL (sorry to say it guys).

Banzai: What are your other interests outside of gaming?

JH: I love computers so I'm always tinkering on them. I like reading just about anything.

DK: I used to do a lot of acting, but my kids have taken that time in my life (and they are more rewarding). I read a bit. I do run a Bible study and enjoy creative endeavors.

Banzai: Any final comments to wrap up?

DK: Keep up the great work on this Banzai thing guys. Thanks for the interview.

JH: I'll agree with Dave on this one. You contribute so much to the hobby. You guys are an inspiration and are much admired. Well done.

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17th Annual Texas Team Tournament Wrap-up



Rick Reinesch

It was a record-breaking year for the Texas Team Tournament. We had 52 pre-registrants and walk-ons from all over the southern part of the US and from locations as far away as the Northeast attending this year. We had the welcome presence of several new faces: Paul Chamberland, Tim Kelly, Will DeMorris, Jeff DeBaal, Alan "Hondo" Nelson, Walter Newton, and Mark Carter, and some old faces returned in the guise of David Hailey and Gary Fortenberry (you have been absent far too long, gents).

We had the pleasure of hosting Paul Chamberland and Tim Kelly from the Northeast and Gary Fortenberry from Virginia. Gary was the overall winner of the very first Team Tournament so many years ago. And he did get a chance to partake in some great Texas BBQ while he was here.

In the title match for the individual crown of the Texas Team Tournament, Mike Seningen took the title in a closely fought match of *Swatting a Hornet* (BtB14) with Jim Ferrell to take home the coveted 10-3 Award. Jim was awarded the 9-2 Runner-up trophy cup.

It was the Rob Roy show for the team winners with Rob Burton (Beaumont) and Roy Connelly (Wichita) taking home the award as the top team in the tournament with a combined 6-1 record.

In mini-tournament play, we held two minis on Thursday this year. One featured the huge *First Wave at Omaha* from *Critical Hit*. We had six players (three per side) assaulting the beaches of Normandy all day, making it through turn 5 of the main scenario. And at the end of the day, Jim Ferrell walked away with the pack. The other mini featured a couple of bocage scenarios from *MMP* and *Bounding Fire Productions*. This one went into the next day to determine the final points. When the dust had settled, Paul Chamberland (Latham, NY) and John Farris (Oklahoma City) took home some great dioramas built by Rob Burton.

The John Van Marter Sportsmanship Award this year went to Austin's own Zeb Doyle. This is a recognition award that is based on nominations from the greater community and presented at the tournament to the individual who, win or lose, is the type of person whose attitude is such that you just want to play ASL with them again and again. Zeb is certainly well deserving of the award.

Zeb Doyle also took home the Audie Murphy Award for the most snakes (28) over the course of the tourney, and Gary Fortenberry was on a veritable tear racking up 52 boxcars

over the course of the weekend to take back to Virginia the Col. Klink award. Perhaps as something of an auspicious turnaround, Gary's first dice roll in his justly earned Klink dice cup was a snakes.

The Major Johnson went "old school" this year, with Chris Buehler (Houston) dragging out *Destroy All Monsters* (ESG35) and riding that huge scenario to the title. The Major Johnson can be won in many ways, and over the past few years it has been the balanced approach of a large number of moderate-sized scenarios that has prevailed. In the past it was the big scenarios that would do it. So it is good to see that it is still possible to play the monsters and win it all.

We had a great list of sponsors for this year, without whose assistance we could not offer such a fantastic drawing of prizes. I would especially like to recognize *Bounding Fire Productions*, *EastSide Gamers*, *Stackpole Books*, *Osprey Publishing*, and *Le Franc Tireur* as major sponsors for this year. Here is the full list:

- Armchair General Magazine
- Bounding Fire Productions
- Break Contact
- Critical Hit
- Dispatches from the Bunker
- EastSide Gamers
- Fanatic Enterprises
- Friendly Fire
- The Gamers Armory
- Half-Price Books
- Le Franc Tireur
- Lone Canuck Publishing
- Multi-Man Publishing
- Osprey Publishing
- SoCal ASL Club
- Stackpole Books
- Wargame Depot

Please make sure to frequent these folks with your product orders and let them know that you appreciate their support of the Texas Team Tournament.

I would also like to recognize a number of folks that really stepped up to the plate to make this year's tournament an enjoyable experience for all. They all did a fantastic job and I can't thank them enough.

David Longstreet for pulling together the line of sight reel
 Rob Burton for producing those great dioramas for the Thursday mini
 Glenn Schools for coordinating the trophies
 John Hyler for setting up the tournament room

As soon as I get this article out of the way, I'll start the planning for next year. For all of the old and new faces, I hope to see you again next year. For those that have never

been to our tournament, you don't know what you're missing. So with that, please make sure to mark your calendars, the 18th Annual Texas Team Tournament will be held June 24th-27th, 2010 again at the La Quinta Inn in Round Rock, Texas. The website has already been updated and we've even got a couple of folks to pre-register already. Don't be left out!

17th Annual Texas Team Tournament Results

Here are the results and rankings from the 17th Annual Texas Team Tournament. Where players had the same score, I ranked based off of W/L percentage first, and then the W/L percentage of their opponents. So players with the same score who competed against stronger opponents would be ranked higher.

Here's where folks ended in the individual standings:

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Mike Seningen	5	5	0
Jim Ferrell **Runner Up**	3	4	1
Rob Burton	4	4	0
Zeb Doyle	4	5	1
Matt Shostak	3	4	1
Pete Shelling	3	4	1
Jeff Toreki	2	2	0
Jack O'Quin	2	2	0
Rick Reinesch	2	2	0
Paul Hornbeck	2	3	1
Mike Densen	2	3	1
John Hyler	2	3	1
Chris Kubick	2	3	1
Doyle Motes	2	3	1
Hondo Nelson	2	3	1
Gregg Parker	2	3	1
Gary Fortenberry	2	4	2
Chris Buehler	2	4	2
Brian Roundhill	2	4	2
Roy Cassagranda	1	1	0
Steven Miller	1	1	0
Sam Tyson	1	2	1

Player	Score	Wins	Losses
Eric Gerstenberg	1	2	1
Dan Preston	1	2	1
Roy Connelly	1	2	1
Glen Gray	0	2	2
Ed Beekman	0	3	3
David Longstreet	0	2	2
Bryan Register	0	0	0
Tom Gillis	0	0	0
David Hailey	-1	2	3
John Farris	-1	2	3
Will DeMorris	-1	2	3
Walter Newton	-1	0	1
Kevin Klausmeyer	-1	0	1
Jerry Simmons	-2	1	3
Bill Dorre	-2	1	3
Mike Rose	-2	1	3
Bud Garding	-2	1	3
Mark Carter	-2	1	3
Kevin Kenneally	-2	0	2
Walter Eardley	-2	0	2
Paul Chamberland	-3	1	4
Scott Bell	-3	0	3
Patrick Ireland	-3	0	3
Russell Mueller	-3	0	3
Glenn Schools	-4	0	4
Mike Cadieux	-4	0	4
Jeff DeBraal	-5	1	6
Arlen Vanek	-5	0	5
Tim Kelly	-5	0	5

Here's how the Major Johnson tally wound up:

Player	MJ Total
Chris Buehler	21944
Gary Fortenberry	19966
Jeff DeBraal	18366.5
Brian Roundhill	15457.5
Paul Chamberland	14651
Bill Dorre	14361

Player	MJ Total
Will DeMorris	14290
Ed Beekman	13455.75
Jim Ferrell	11782.75
Matt Shostak	11483.2
David Hailey	10801.8
Arlen Vanek	10101
John Farris	9360
Paul Hornbeck	9300
Mike Rose	9139.5
Zeb Doyle	8697
Chris Kubick	8670
David Longstreet	8668.5
Gregg Parker	8412
Tim Kelly	8397
Pete Shelling	7930
Mike Cadieux	7234.5
Sam Tyson	6855
Roy Connelly	6752.5
Jerry Simmons	6733.5
John Hyler	6226.25
Mike Densen	5850
Doyle Motes	5655
Mark Carter	5501.25
Glenn Schools	4961.5
Jeff Toreki	4621
Rob Burton	4449
Mike Seningen	4419
Bud Garding	4391.25
Eric Gerstenberg	4011
Glen Gray	3090
Russell Mueller	2533.5
Patrick Ireland	1815
Hondo Nelson	1749
Scott Bell	1529.25
Rick Reinesch	1101
Walter Eardley	1061
Kevin Kenneally	1006
Dan Preston	992.25
Walter Newton	378

Player	MJ Total
Kevin Klausmeyer	331.5
Bryan Register	317
Jack O'Quin	237
Roy Casagranda	52
Steven Miller	0
Tom Gillis	0

Finally the team results:

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Rob Burton,Roy Connelly	5	6	1
Kevin Klausmeyer, Mike Seningen	4	5	1
Gregg Parker, Jeff Toreki	4	5	1
CENTRAL TEXAS	2.125	34	17
Bryan Register, Paul Hornbeck	2	3	1
Ed Beekman, John Hyler	2	6	4
Gary Fortenberry, Walter Newton	1	4	3
Pete Shelling, Walter Eardley	1	4	3
Bill Dorre, Jim Ferrell	1	5	4
Mark Carter, Matt Shostak	1	5	4
Chris Kubick, David Hailey	1	5	4
Patrick Ireland, Zeb Doyle	1	5	4
Doyle Motes, Will DeMorris	1	5	4
Brian Roundhill, John Farris	1	6	5
HOUSTON	0.25	13	12
Chris Buehler, Paul Chamberland	-1	5	6
Bud Garding, David Longstreet	-2	3	5
FOREIGNERS	-2.33	22	36
NORTH TEXAS	-2.67	13	25
Glenn Schools, Sam Tyson	-3	2	5
Jack O'Quin, Tim Kelly	-3	2	5
Dan Preston, Jeff DeBaal	-4	3	7
Arlen Vanek, Eric Gerstenberg	-4	2	6
Mike Rose, Scott Bell	-5	1	6
Jerry Simmons, Mike Cadieux	-6	1	7

Banzai!!

Club Notes

Biweekly Lunch Gathering

Don't forget to join us every other Friday at 1300 hours down at Schlotsky's on South Lamar and Toomey (just south of Riverside Drive). The club sends out email reminders, or you can call Matt or Sam for information on the next get-together.

Game Days

The Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas/Ft. Worth groups have remained active, hosting various gatherings for club members to get together and knock cardboard heads. If

you missed any of these you missed a lot of fun. It's like a tournament atmosphere for a day. The Austin group meets on the first Saturday of every month. The DFW group has been meeting on the second, the San Antonio guys on the third Saturday of every month, and the Houston group on the fourth Saturday of every month. To stay informed of upcoming club events, stop by our club website, www.texas-asl.com or better yet join our email group. You can post a message at central-texas-asl@yahoogroups.com or you can point your favorite browser to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central-texas-asl> and take a look. For those still not connected, give Matt, Rick, or Sam a call for club information.

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Next Issue

- More articles about ASL
- Player Profile
- Favorite Scenarios
- Club Meeting Recaps

And much more!