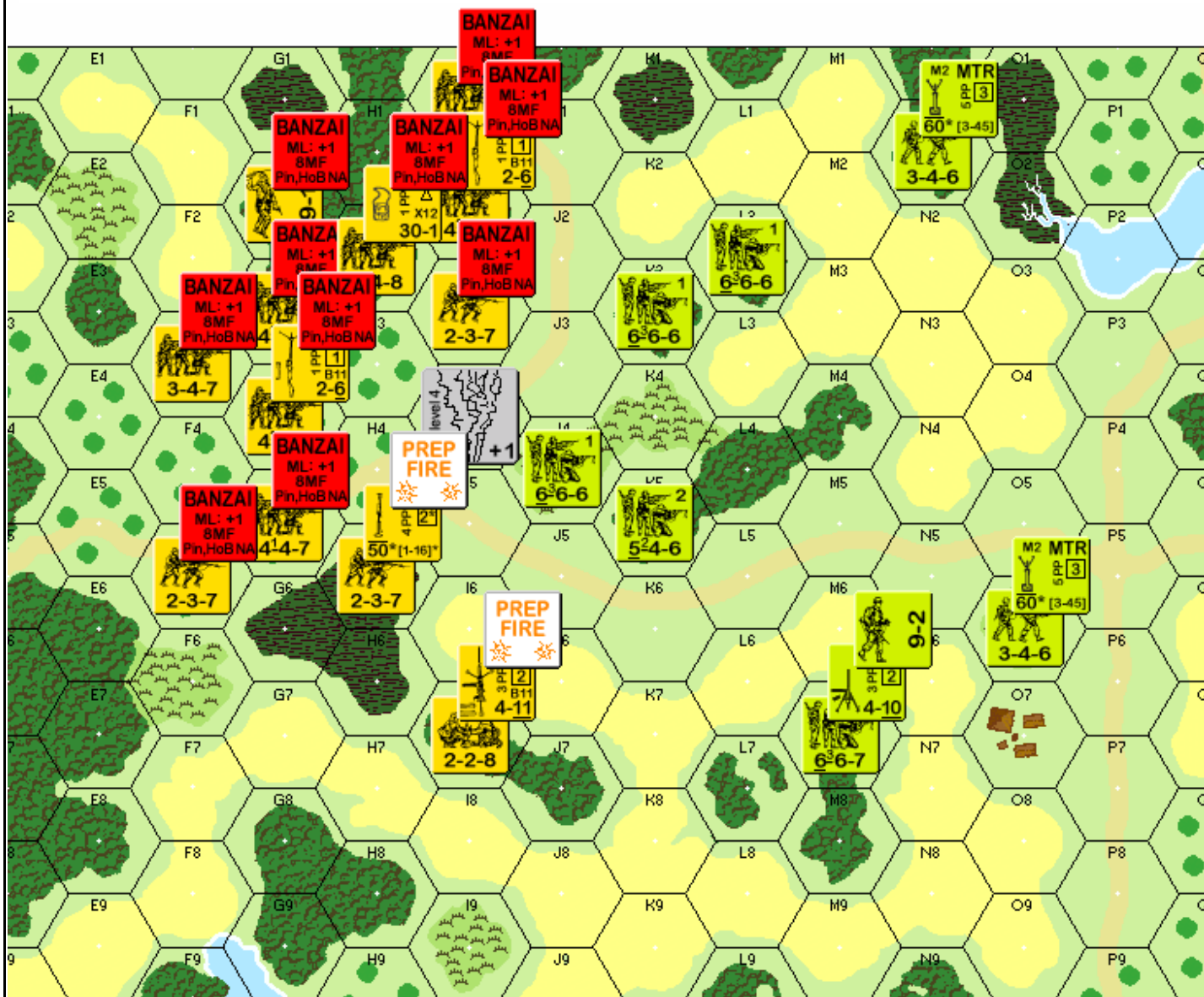


BANZAI!!!



The Newsletter of the Texas ASL Club

August, 2010 Volume 15, Number 2

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Editor's Foxhole

Matt Shostak



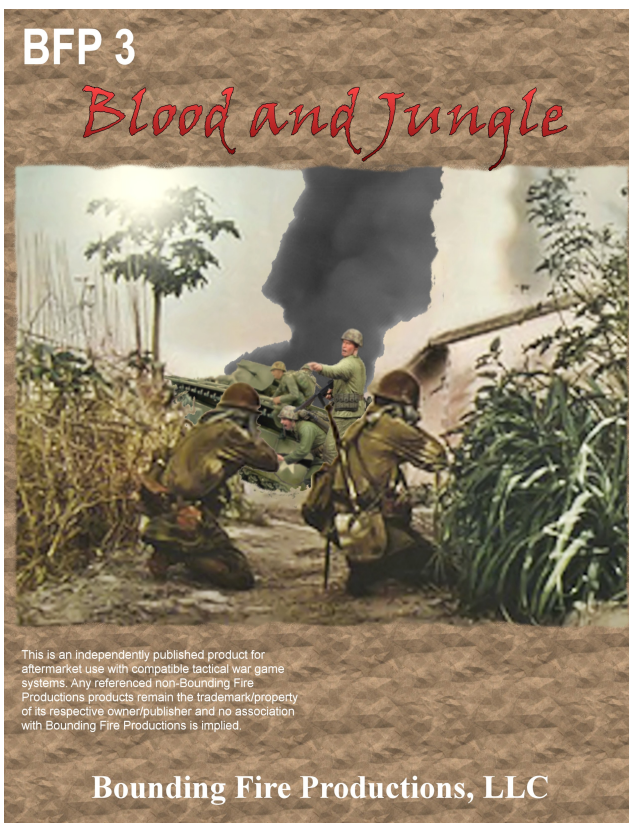
It's amazing how quickly one can fall behind. I haven't been able to play as much ASL lately as I would like, and it seems like in a very short period of time there are all sorts of new ASL products to try: Journal 8, the latest Action Pack, and of course Bounding Fire's Pacific magnum opus, *Blood and Jungle* to name just a few. Heck, I've barely tackled anything from *Operation Cobra* yet. And I caught a glimpse of some very nice looking *Le Franc Tireur* stuff on the door prize table. What more must be out there that I haven't seen yet? In this space last issue, Rick Reinesch surmised that we might be in the golden age of ASL right now. The number and quality of new products hitting the market strongly support his point. Factor in the record attendance at the 2010 Texas Team Tournament, and it's easy to get very excited about our favorite game. I hope this issue of our newsletter will add a little bit to that enjoyment as well.

First Impressions: Blood and Jungle

Matt Shostak



At the Austin tournament I finally got my hands on *Blood and Jungle*. Obviously I cannot give an unbiased review since Chas, Sam, and Rick are friends, and I've also done some proofreading and play testing for this product. But it's fun to talk and write about the new and exciting material available to us as players, so with that disclaimer out of the way, I'll get on with it.



Two things are immediately apparent when leafing through the components. First, the production quality is excellent throughout. The included magazine is large (58 pages) and printed on glossy paper. The counters and maps are attractive and of good quality, and one of the maps is a 'double wide'. The scenarios are on card stock and make good use of color for the orders of battle and the map orientation, something we've come to expect from BFP. Second, it's quite a massive undertaking. It's not just that there are 47 scenarios, but that so many different nationalities and styles of action are depicted. By making an effort to include Axis Minors of the PTO (Indian National Army, Indonesian Republican Army, Thai Army, Burma Independence Army and Burma National Army), the Bounding Fire team brings us into some previously uncharted territory for ASL. Moreover, several new counters are included for various vehicles, guns, weapons and aircraft not previously seen in the system, or not available in certain colors. Of course there are accompanying vehicle and ordnance notes. There are even some rules for Japanese paratroopers, which appear to be similar to early-war German airborne troops in that they dropped separately from their weapons canisters. This new material opens up lots of possibilities in scenario design, evident in the wide variety among the scenario set. There should be something here for just about every ASL player's taste, from massive urban smackdowns like the pair of Fuchin scenarios featuring

Soviets vs. Japanese, to post-war light infantry actions depicting Dutch vs. Indonesians. There's French vs. Thai, Japanese air drop, and of course several actions featuring the British Commonwealth forces or the Americans. There's a beach landing on Tinian and a scenario on the Tarawa map. Overall there's a good variety of size and complexity. Most of the scenarios are designed by Chas Smith, but a few other designers make contributions to the pack: Steve Swann, David Roth, Derek Ward, and David Longworth.

So is there anything not to like? Well, the magazine is mostly comprised of historical articles and a bit light on ASL tactical articles. Normally I'd give a product lower marks for this, but in this case I think it's warranted, given the mission of the pack to include so many new forces. I am getting to the point, however, where new sheets of counters don't really thrill me like they used to. That's not because I don't like the idea of having new units to play with, but rather I know that first I'll have to put them through my battle hardening routine of spray coating them and clipping the corners, a necessary chore that I don't relish. I do question whether we really need so many different aircraft capabilities in so many different nationalities. I think such a level of detail is probably more chrome than necessary for a tactical game at this scale, but that's a minor quibble, and the counters do look pretty cool.

Bottom line, *Blood and Jungle* looks excellent, and is likely to provide plenty of entertainment for me at the gaming table for some time to come.

Rules Reference

This one came up at the tournament: a unit becomes berserk in the act of placing a DC. Assuming it is not otherwise eliminated due to other fire based on the movement to place it, the DC is operably placed. Moreover, the now-berserk unit will have to charge the closest Known Enemy Unit (very likely the one it just placed the DC on) with whatever movement factors it has remaining (8 minus how many it has already spent). Even if it winds up in the same location with the DC it placed, the detonation of the DC will not affect it. See rules A15.4x and A7.4.

Favorite Scenarios

Dave Kleinschmidt



Where does one begin when asked for their 10 favorite scenarios? I have decided to try flipping through my files of

scenarios (in 3 ring binders of course) and picking them as I come across them. It looks like I have grabbed my binder entitled *Deluxe, Historical, Annual, General, Alphabet*. As I am flipping through these marvelous old scenarios my mind is flooded with fond memories of the very good old days (current days are good also, by the way), and I decided that I have to include a scenario or two from one of these deluxe products. I am drawn to

D3 Storming The Factory

Why does this seem like a good one? Right away I notice it has 20 SS squads for the Germans with 3 DCs and four Pz IVF2s. Well, it is always fun to manage those guys. But what if I get stuck with the Russians? I'll gladly take them because they have ten 6-2-8s, and ten 5-2-7s. And SSR 1 gives them MOL. That is a lot of fun too! The VC have a built-in automatic loss for the Germans if they take too many casualties. The Germans can extend the number of turns by solely occupying the factory early in the game, giving them more time to hunt down the Russians.

ROAR - German 37 - Russian 23. Maybe you want to give the Russian the balance. I won this one with the Germans against a relatively new player, Gary Beams, and lost with the Germans vs. the guy that taught me the game, Wally Reinhardt.

Let's flip on shall we? More big fun battles, I could put more in this article from *Streets of Fire* but maybe I should leave room for a selection from *Hedgerow Hell*. This one here stands out

D14 Buying The Farm

It takes place in the hedgerows. I'd have to guess that I liked the idea of the 2nd line Germans holding out against better U.S. troops. The Germans have 48 mine factors and a PAK 43 88LL, a PAK 38 50L, and an GrW 34 81 MTR.....that is a lot of cool stuff. Gotta love the mines. Ohhhh...look at SSR 4. Air Support. I always like that. And the Americans get sixteen 1st line squads with some bazookas and three Shermans. Looks like I only played this one once and won with the Americans against Jim McDermott.

ROAR - German 3 - American 9 Give the Germans the balance? Sure, why not?

Looking further I see all the deluxe scenarios that came from the Annuals. There were thirteen of them (AD1- AD13). Look at those partisan guys in that picture.....

AD1 L'Ecole Normale

Not sure why I like this one. It is only 7 turns and has low counter density. Ten Maquisard squads against five 2nd line Germans and the Maquisards win by clearing a building of German MMC or setting it on fire. Maybe I liked the fire part in this one. These partisans have ammo shortage but that is offset with a smoke exponent of 2 and MOL. Setup is simultaneous. That is kind of unique.

ROAR – German 15 – Partisan 23 Not too bad. I won with the partisans twice, once against my sister (yes, I said my sister) and once against Louie (not Tokarz).

As I come across the historical scenarios I find that I played *Bread Factory #2* twice. I also discover that I haven't played any of the VotG scenarios yet. Shame on me for that, and also because I seem to think more fondly of the other scenarios we have perused, than these great historical ones. There must be something wrong with me. Maybe I wasn't ready for a lot of new rules then. I will select...

RB3 Bread Factory #2

I thought it was fun and that it played tightly. Just a good old infantry battle in Stalingrad. I think I remember fighting from the cellars in this one and the HMG doing well.

ROAR - German 136 – Russian 114. I won twice with the Russians beating my old roommate Gary Beams and someone at the ASL Open.

Those *Valor of the Guards* scenarios look good and I will get to them sometime, but I still haven't played the scenarios from *Operation Watchtower*, *Operation Veritable* (well I did play a few of those), *Armies of Oblivion*, and *ASL Journal #7* (I have only a few left of those). Looking at KGP I remember being really angry about how few scenarios were included. I think I struggle with the slope rules. Anyway let's choose...

KGP2 Festung St. Edouard

That one has fond memories for me because of all the smoke rounds going off from the two modules of OBA the Americans have. They also have to control a sanatorium and I like that idea even though it means nothing in game terms. Add in some minefields for the loco Germans in the sanatorium, the pregame bombardment, some mist and you have quite a fun mess and a rather unique scenario.

ROAR – German 32 – American 19. Not too bad but consider giving the Americans another squad or two as I hate the balance for them which removes the German FlakPz IV/20

and its marvelous 20 IFE. My Germans defeated Chris Walters, who was a relative new player at that time.

Flipping on, I see the *Pegasus Bridge* scenarios and select...

PB4 Killean's Red

Why? Because it has a cool picture of a church on it. It is named after a good brew. The church has a steeple (sanctuary!), SSR 3 reduces the German sniper if the steeple is occupied, there are only 5.5 squads for the Germans and the same for the British and it is only 4.5 turns. It looks so convenient to play that maybe I will play it right now. No, I'd better finish this article first.

ROAR – German 24 – British 45. Go ahead and give the Germans the extra 4-3-6 squad.

I won once with the Brits and lost once with the Brits against Matt Ramsey.

I have come upon the *A Bridge too Far* scenarios. Arnhem....cool. Looks like I never played ABTF8 the monster scenario entitled *God Save the King*, will have to get to it after *The Last Bid* and *The First Bid*. I did play all of the rest of them and all of the original HOB *God Save the King* scenarios.

ABTF9 Please Hurry

I like it because the 15 British squads have to hold out against thirteen German SS squads, DC, FT and two Tigers. The Germans have to wipe out all of the British in 5.5 turns.

ROAR – German 1 – British 8. Gotta give the Germans the fanaticism recommended in the balance. My Germans lost vs. Dave Timonen.

Next up I see the *Blood Reef: Tarawa* stuff.

BRT6 A Legend Is Born

That was a great one to play. It has everything, LVTs, DCs, FTs, 30 plus squads per side. Tons of MMGs for both sides. It is a big push for the Marines to control a bunch of hexes and clear a bunch of pillboxes after breaching the seawall. Pacific madness indeed. If I remember correctly there are the large land-based naval guns that the Japanese have too. There is also NOBA, SFCP, tetrahedrons and the Japanese purchase a bunch of defensive fortifications. It is played on half of the Tarawa map and if you don't do campaign games this one will give you a taste of what they might be like. I played this over 3 sessions.

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ROAR – American 3 – Japanese 6. That might indicate that the Marines need a little help. I won with the Japanese against Dave Timonen.

Oh look, here are the *Gavutu- Tanambogo* scenarios. I will include the first two of these. I remember really enjoying them although the board was congested.

AH3 Grabbing Gavutu and AH4 Tanambogo Nightmare

Both of these were great and I am glad to hear they will be included in the new Japanese core module. These will make you brush up on your cave and landing craft rules. They use these really interesting island boards that fit over ocean overlays. Fantastic stuff!

ROAR for Tanambogo - Japanese 4 - American 0. I lost with the Japanese against Chris Walters.

ROAR for Gavutu - Japanese 5 - American 7. Fairly balanced. I won with the Japanese against Jim McDermott.

I am going to have to stop here. There are many more scenario sets to peruse. Maybe I can do a part 2 sometime. I had just stated to play someone recently, and while he and I were marveling over the amount of articles produced in *Banzai*, the Journals and other publications, he asked when I would contribute something. I replied “never”. Now it looks like I’ve been tricked into it by the *Banzai* staff and I have actually enjoyed it. I will have to improve my writing skills.

Roll low and rally well.

The Finer Points of Pillboxes

Zeb Doyle

It will come as no surprise to learn that the word pillbox dates back to the Great War, and that the fortification the word refers to evolved out of the static trench warfare of that period. Primarily used by the Germans, the concrete strongpoints were nicknamed pillboxes by the British since the general shape of the fortification was similar to the boxes used to hold pills. Pillboxes proved to be excellent protection, especially for the machine guns that dominated much of the fighting, and impressed the French so much that they expanded the concept to an almost inconceivable scale during the interwar period with the Maginot Line. As history revealed, the vastly more mobile battles of WWII caused these fixed strongpoints to lose much of their power, but battles along the Atlantic Wall, in the Pacific, and many other

places showed that pillboxes still had a role to play. As one American soldier disgustedly remarked while fighting old men conscripted as Volksgrenadiers along the Siegfried Line, "I don't care if the guy behind that gun is a hundred years old- he's still sitting behind eight feet of concrete and he's still got enough fingers to press triggers and shoot bullets." When using pillboxes in ASL, it's a good idea to learn from the mistakes of the French in 1940 and realize that your concrete strongpoints are powerful, but static and prone to being flanked. This is represented in the game by two key concepts: pillboxes have a fixed CA and they create a separate location in their hex.

The static nature of the pillbox becomes apparent in the first few lines of B30.1, where we find that pillboxes have a standard CA (C3.2) but unlike a gun or vehicle can never change it during play. This is a serious limitation for a defender, as LOS from inside the pillbox can only be traced within its CA (B30.2). Interestingly, this is a rare case where LOS is non-reciprocal, as LOS to the pillbox can be traced from almost anywhere. In fact, once the pillbox occupants have made an attack or placed smoke, any unit in the pillbox is considered Known to all other units within 16 hexes that have or gain LOS to the pillbox at any point during the game (B30.7). This situation, where the pillbox unit has a very limited LOS, but everyone else on the map can see the pillbox, is obviously an unhealthy one for the defender.

It is not a fatal problem, though, as pillboxes are quite tough and actually have two separate TEM values. The first value is the CA TEM, ranges from +3 to +5, and is applied to all non-Aerial Direct Fire attacks against the pillbox that are fired from within the CA (B30.112). So, a defender taking fire from an attacker within the CA gets protection equal to that of a stone building or better, with the added benefit that Canister attacks only use half FP. That is pretty good, but what about all the fire coming from those flanking attackers the pillbox units cannot even see?

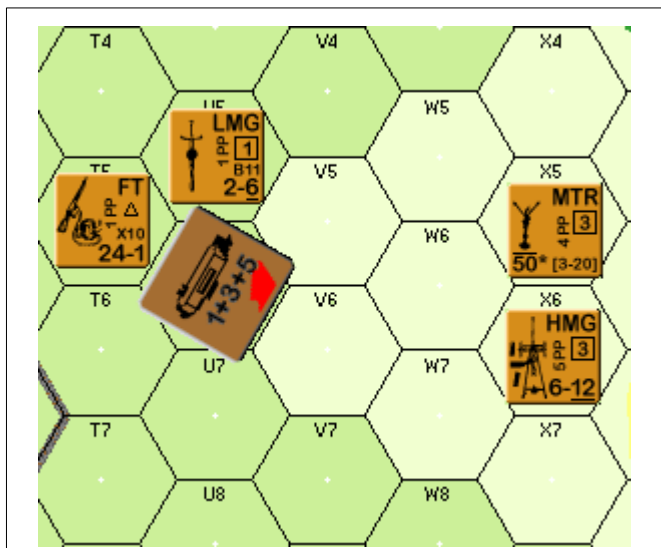
These Non-Covered Arc attacks, along with Indirect and Aerial Fire use the NCA TEM, which can range from +5 to +7 (B30.113). Obviously, any attacks from outside the CA encounter a lot of concrete, and to fully reflect that fact, IFE, Small Arms fire, WP NMC, MG, and Canister automatically have no effect against the NCA, while FT have to add the NCA TEM to their attacks. In fact, the NCA defenses of a pillbox are so formidable that the occupants can never be Encircled (B30.32). Combine that with the fact that any CH attack against the NCA is resolved with a zero TEM and suddenly the 240 degree blind arc a pillbox defender suffers does not seem so bad.

There is, however, an additional blind spot in the pillbox defense: the very hex it sets up in. This is because, unlike most other fortifications, a pillbox creates a separate same-



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level location in its hex (B30.1). The concept of a separate location may sound simple enough: the location is at the Base Level of the hex, does not create an obstacle or hindrance, and units in the pillbox and the pillbox hex are considered ADJACENT. However, since the pillbox hex is not in the CA of the pillbox, the hex is considered out of LOS for most purposes to units inside the strongpoint even though LOS exists from the hex to the pillbox. This situation, unique in ASL, is caused by the combining the two key pillbox concepts of fixed CA and separate location, and creates a number of special exceptions explored below.



Here, every hex on the map has LOS to the pillbox location, while the pillbox occupant can only see locations in the CA (B30.2). The U5 LMG is facing the NCA, but could not attack the pillbox at all since Small Arms and MG are NA unless in the CA (B30.113). From T5 the FT could attack, but the NCA TEM would apply, making it a 24+5 attack. The HMG is in the CA and could fire a 6+3 shot, although it and the FT could not Encircle the pillbox (B30.2). Finally, the X5 MTR, since it uses Indirect Fire, would always apply the NCA TEM. Even a CH from the MTR would only be an 8+0 attack, since the NCA pillbox TEM is always considered to be zero against a CH

These two concepts of fixed CA and separate location have a large and immediate effect on movement in and around the strongpoint. Even though the pillbox has no LOS to its own hex, that is generally the only hex considered ADJACENT to a pillbox location for purposes of movement. Although there are two exceptions explained later on, a unit leaving a pillbox must normally move into the pillbox hex at a cost of one MF as if exiting an entrenchment (B30.4). The only other MP option a unit in a pillbox location usually has is to place

SMOKE into the pillbox hex at a cost of 2 MF. With these restrictions, the occupants cannot even skulk and may end up feeling a bit claustrophobic. That feeling only gets worse when you realize that enemy units can freely enter the pillbox hex. This makes sense since the pillbox is a separate location, but it means that if there is an armed, non-Disrupted enemy unit in the pillbox hex, the plucky pillbox defender cannot move, rout, or Withdraw out of the pillbox (B30.6) and truly is trapped. On the bright side, those enemy units cannot enter the pillbox as long as a single defender remains within. Unlike a fortified building, the defender does not have to be Good Order and can even be an SMC. In fact, pillboxes are so hard to get into that Infantry Overruns are not allowed and even Berserkers are forced to wait politely outside (B30.44). Still, the thought of huddling passively inside while the enemy roams freely outside is not a good one. So, let's look at the rules for pillbox combat.

Here again, the fixed CA and separate location complicate matters somewhat, but a firm grip on those concepts will keep things clear. First, since the pillbox is a separate location, any attack against the pillbox hex (barring ATT, Bombardments, Residual FP, Aerial Bombs, and OBA) can affect the pillbox only if it is pre-designated as the target location (B30.34). In addition, pillbox occupants cannot be Overrun and will never have SMOKE in their location, unless hit by a non-Indirect Fire WP CH from a unit ADJACENT to or within the CA of the pillbox. These benefits combine with the high TEM and the immunity to Small Arms Fires outside the CA to make the pillbox a powerful defensive position, although the lack of LOS from the pillbox to the pillbox hex means that units in and out of the pillbox can never Fire Group (B30.6).

Turning to the offense, most attacks to and from pillboxes use the standard ASL rules. There are a few extra things to consider, however, when the attacks involve units that are in the pillbox hex or that are in the two hexes adjacent to the pillbox and in the CA. The rule of thumb to use in these situations is that for most purposes you can think of the pillbox hex as being ADJACENT to the pillbox for purposes of movement but not of fire, while the two adjacent same-level CA locations are generally treated as ADJACENT to the pillbox for fire but not movement. This may sound perplexing, but is understandable when recalling the two key concepts. Remember that a unit in a pillbox has LOS to the two adjacent hexes in the CA but could not advance directly to either hex. Thus, those same-level locations are not ADJACENT for movement, but are considered so for PBF, PPF, DM, rout, and for DC placement vs. the pillbox (B30.2).

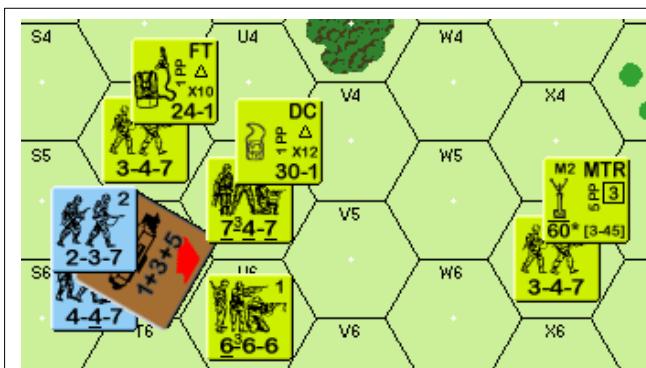
Likewise, since no LOS exists from the pillbox to the pillbox hex, it's much easier to think of the two locations as non-ADJACENT for combat purposes. The rules follow this line

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of thought nicely, as pillbox occupants can only attack the pillbox hex using CC, WP grenades, a Thrown DC, or against vertices of the CA, or with PBF versus units crossing a CA hexside into the pillbox hex (B30.31). Obviously the reverse situation does not apply, and enemy units in the pillbox hex do have LOS to the pillbox and are free to attack it in any way they can, although they will be facing the NCA, severely limiting their options. Additionally, the separate location means that when units in a pillbox battle with units in the pillbox hex, TPBF attacks will not occur, Target Selection Limits (A7.211-.212; A8.312) will not apply, and both sides will find themselves engaging in non-HtH CC attacks and are never held in Melee (B30.44 and B30.6). As you can see, the idea that the pillbox is a separate location creates a fair amount of complexity, but can be recapped with the rule of thumb that a unit in the pillbox is generally ADJACENT to the pillbox hex for movement but not for fire. The opposite principle applies to the two adjacent same-level locations in the CA of the pillbox.



Japanese pillbox assault with a flamethrower. WWII Pacific Island Assault Reenactment in Fredericksburg, Texas.



In this example, a German 2-3-7 in the pillbox hex and a 4-4-7 in the pillbox find themselves facing some Americans. All the American units have LOS to both German units and all but the X5 HS are ADJACENT to the 2-3-7. The 7-4-7 and the 6-6-6 cannot advance directly into the pillbox location, but are still considered ADJACENT to the 4-4-7 for PBF, FPF, DM, rout purposes, and for DC placement vs. the pillbox (B30.2). The T4 HS is not considered ADJACENT for any reason.

The X5 MTR decides to prep fire, and since it is ATT would hit the entire hex, resulting in a 4+0 vs. the HS and a 4+5 vs. the squad. However, the MTR misses. The only other possible American attack that could affect both German units at once would be Spraying Fire from the 7-4-7, which would result in a 6+0 against the 2-3-7 and a 6+3 against the 4-4-7. The 7-4-7 decides not to attack, and instead the T4 HS uses the FT. He must choose whether to attack the 2-3-7 or the 4-4-7. Since the FT is not in the CA, there is a non-reciprocal LOS (B30.2). The 4-4-7 cannot see the FT, but can be attacked by it with a 24+5. Instead, the FT decides to hit the 2-3-7 with a 24+0 and breaks the HS.

The Americans now go to movement, and start with the 6-6-6 in U6 placing WP into T5 for two MF. The WP attempt is successful, and the broken 2-3-7 fails his MC and dies, leaving the pillbox hex empty. The 4-4-7 in the pillbox is immune to the WP MC since the SMOKE is not in his location, and thus will suffer only a +1 hindrance from it (B30.34). The 6-6-6 now decides to move into the empty T5 pillbox hex for two more MF. Since he is crossing a CA hexside into the pillbox hex, the 4-4-7 can fire using PBF and does so. The 8+0 attack does nothing, the 4-4-7 decides not to SFF, and the 6-6-6 moves to the pillbox hex. Now, the 4-4-7 cannot move, rout, or Withdraw out of the pillbox, and with no LOS out of the pillbox location, the 4-4-7 cannot hurt the intruder with anything but SMOKE placement, thrown DCs, and CC (B30.2).

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Next, the 7-4-7 attempts to Assault Move and place his DC on the pillbox. Since the 7-4-7 is expending MF in an adjacent CA hex, the 4-4-7 is considered ADJACENT and can SFF for 4+1 due to the WP. This shot breaks the 7-4-7.

In the AFPh, the 6-6-6 cannot attack since he is facing the NCA and only has Small Arms (B30.113).

During the RtPh, the 7-4-7 is considered ADJACENT to the pillbox and would have to rout even if he were not in open ground (B30.2). Had the T4 3-4-7 broken for some reason, the 4-4-7 would not have forced him to rout.

In the APh, the 3-4-7 does nothing. The 6-6-6 would like to enter the pillbox location but cannot, as there is an enemy unit within (B30.44).

However, the 4-4-7 and 6-6-6 can still engage in CC, although HtH would not be allowed even if it was otherwise an option. In the CCPh, both the 4-4-7 and the 6-6-6 fail to harm each other, but no Melee results, as the units are in separate locations (B30.6). During the German turn, both units can freely fire out of their location. However, the 4-4-7 is unable to move, except for smoke placement attempts, and has only the X5 MTR in LOS. His options are very limited.

Now that we have waded through the complications brought up by the key concepts of a fixed CA and a separate location in the hex, let's examine using these fortifications on the defense. Starting with the pregame setup, you will have lots of options on where to place your pillboxes. They can go in Open Ground, shell holes, roads (but not bridges), brush, orchards, and grain (B30.1), but only one pillbox can go in any given hex. Barring an SSR, pillboxes set up HIP like any other Fortification (A12.33) and will allow their contents to set up HIP as well (B30.7). This is a nice way to get some free fog of war, especially since a pillbox is considered concealment terrain and the contents will not lose HIP when the pillbox does. Even better, for the Japanese, any pillbox in Concealment Terrain is revealed as if it were in jungle (G1.632). Regardless of nationality, even after a pillbox is revealed, the contents can never be inspected by an opposing player except to verify an attack or smoke placement. It must be pretty hard trying to stare into those tiny vision slits. Don't get too complacent about your HIP or concealed status, though; it neither halves nor adds a TH DRM to any attacks against the pillbox (B30.7).

So, once your pillbox is revealed, the attacker may not know what he is shooting at, but he'll be able to hit it with full strength and you'll have to count on the high TEM to survive. If your units are unfortunate enough to break under these attacks, you will have the consolation of knowing that a

pillbox is treated as a building for rout and rally purposes (B30.5). An even bigger advantage is that a broken unit in a pillbox is never forced to rout (B30.5), and if you're routing towards a pillbox, entering it during the Rout Phase is treated exactly as if it were an entrenchment (B30.41). Be wary of packing too many broken units into the strongpoint, though, because overstacking in a pillbox is not allowed (B30.111).

The last important thing to know about pillboxes is that they can be converted to Bunkers (B30.8). This is a simple process, and is accomplished by placing an Accessible trench in or adjacent to the pillbox hex. Units can then move, rout, and advance between the Bunker and the Trench as if the Bunker were also a Trench. This is the first exception to normal pillbox movement mentioned above and is a huge advantage since you can now exit the pillbox without being forced to enter the pillbox hex. This gives pillbox occupants many more options in the Movement Phase, including the possibility of skulking. Be aware, though, that if an enemy unit gets into the pillbox hex, your Bunker will be effectively surrounded and you will not be able to move, rout, or advance into or out of the Bunker (B30.6). The second exception to standard pillbox exit procedures is through a Tunnel (B8.6). Although tunnels are seldom seen in ASL, Japanese pillboxes are always allocated one (G1.632), which can be a nasty surprise for unwary attackers.



The Y7 pillbox is a Bunker due to the Z6 trench. A unit in the pillbox location could freely move, rout, or advance directly to the Z6 trench and vice versa. An enemy unit in the pillbox hex would prevent this movement. The X7 trench is not Accessible due to the Cliff and is therefore not part of the Bunker system.

Troops attacking pillboxes are not completely helpless, though, and even get a few tricks of their own. Ordnance can be very useful against pillboxes, and can use Area Target Type or Infantry Target Type with no size modifiers applying (B30.32). Given the high TEM of a pillbox, this may not seem like an exciting option, but when firing AP/APCR/APDS at a pillbox with a basic TK greater than twice the TEM that would apply, the TEM is resolved as zero

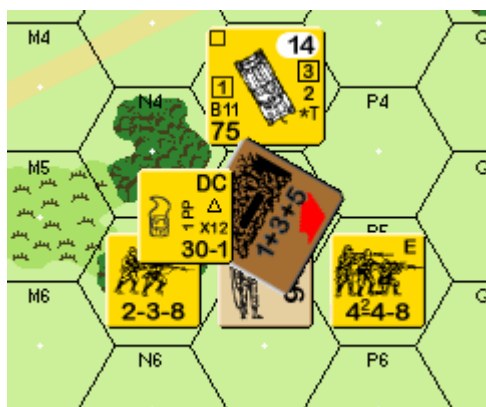
(B30.35). It is true that the AP equivalency is at best a 2FP attack, but consider that a CE tank with a double acquisition firing at point-blank range will score a CH on a roll of seven or less. Those 4+0 attacks will add up, and even better it will automatically destroy any gun in the pillbox just like any other CH (C11.4). Since no 5/8th-inch counter can enter or exit a pillbox during play unless it's a dm SW (B30.45), any gun in the pillbox should just be a helpless target. Given all that, it's almost a shame for the attacker that a pillbox can never contain more than one gun (B30.111).

Another useful tool when facing pillboxes is the DC (B30.31). The high FP of the DC can go a long way towards offsetting the pillbox TEM. If the unit placing or throwing the DC is in the pillbox hex or an adjacent CA hex, the attack uses the CA TEM, while from any other adjacent hex, the NCA TEM applies. For those ambitious enough to try a Set DC, the setting unit will have to be in the pillbox hex or inside the pillbox itself. Interestingly, if an attacker manages to get into the pillbox and place or throw the DC so that it actually detonates inside, it is resolved as a Set DC. Apparently, pillboxes are built to withstand lots of punishment from the outside only, and this can be a valuable rule when dealing with a captured pillbox and a threatening counterattack. If a unit in the pillbox wants to use its DC outside, the options are far less exciting: a DC cannot be placed from within a pillbox, and can be thrown only into the pillbox hex. At least the throwing unit gets to add the NCA TEM to the standard +3 thrown DC modifier.

If the attacker does not have access to the DC or ordnance, tackling pillboxes becomes more difficult. In this situation, the lowly hand grenade becomes extremely useful. Pillboxes are quite vulnerable to CC for several reasons. The defender's LOS is very limited, making it easy to approach. To further reflect this limited LOS, pillboxes suffer a +2 Ambush modifier (A11.4), so if the pillbox is in Ambush terrain or concealed units are involved, it can be very easy to surprise the defenders. The attacker gets the added bonus that since his units are not held in Melee and there is no TBPF situation, they are free to fire elsewhere during the turn. Even better, since Melee never results, it is possible to repeatedly Ambush a pillbox by advancing more units in later turns if they are concealed or the pillbox is in woods. Just keep in mind that if there is a unit in the pillbox hex friendly to the pillbox occupants, you cannot attack the pillbox with CC until the pillbox hex unit is dealt with (B30.6).

Now that we have explored the many ways in which to eliminate the occupants of a pillbox, let's get even more ambitious and examine how to destroy or capture the actual pillbox itself. Since this is a common victory condition, it is important to know the possibilities. As you might imagine, Controlling a pillbox is accomplished simply by entering the

pillbox location. It's a bit more complicated to Control a pillbox hex, as you have to capture both locations in the hex (B30.91). This can be a time-consuming process, and quite often the attacker will find himself trying to destroy the pillbox altogether, which has the benefit of eliminating the occupants and any tunnel exit that the pillbox may have contained (B30.92). Indirect Fire only has a small chance of pillbox destruction, requiring a CH from a Gun or OBA of 70mm or more, or 100mm or more if it is a 'grey' pillbox with a CA TEM of +5 and an NCA of +7. Direct Fire attacks can knock out a pillbox if the Original IFT roll is a KIA number greater than or equal to the pillbox TEM that applied to the attack. When using a DC, the same KIA formula is used, except that a set DC uses the Final IFT DR and if the DC is placed or set the KIA number is increased by two for pillbox destruction purposes only. If the DC detonates inside the pillbox, the CA TEM applies. Finally, pillboxes can be eliminated in a few other ways that will rarely occur. Falling Rubble (B24.21) automatically destroys any pillbox in the hex it hits, while a Bombardment (C1.822) can knock out a pillbox if the fortification fails its MC of 10 or 11. Lastly, Bulldozers (G15.21), although extremely rare, are a pillbox's worst nightmare. Although the rules are too lengthy to easily summarize here, when the situation arises, both sides will find it well worth their time to read up on just how easily a bulldozer can erase even the strongest pillbox.



The Japanese find themselves in the last Player Turn of the game, trying to capture or destroy the O5 pillbox to win. A lone British 9-2 stands between them and their goal. PTO terrain is in effect.

The Japanese begin with the PFPh. The HO-NI Type 1 Gun Tank in O4 would like to fire on the pillbox and destroy it. However, the 12FP HE attack from a 75mm gun can generate only a 1KIA, not the 5KIA that would be required to destroy the pillbox through the NCA (B30.92). Instead, the Gun Tank fires AP. Since the the TK of a 75mm AP shot is over twice the NCA TEM, the ITT attack is a base 8 To Hit, and the roll

will be modified by -2 for Case L Point Blank Range, and +0 for Case Q TEM (B30.35). The shot hits, but the 2+0 HE Equivalency attack (C8.31) has no effect. The 4-4-8 then fires an 8+3 through the CA and breaks the British leader.

The Japanese then proceed to the MPh. The 2-3-8 could place his DC from N5 to O5, but the attack would then be resolved with the NCA TEM (B30.31). Instead, the 2-3-8 moves to O5 and places the DC on the pillbox from the pillbox hex itself.

In the AFPh, the DC is resolved as a 30+3 attack, but first the Original IFT roll is used to determine pillbox destruction. As placed and set DCs increase their KIA number by two for destruction determination only, a roll of 5 or less would destroy the pillbox since an Original 5 is a base 1KIA, plus two for the placed or set DC bonus, matched against the CA TEM of three (B30.92). Instead, the Original roll is a 6 and the Final result is a 9 for a 2MC, which wounds the broken 9-2.

In the rout phase, even though there are ADJACENT Japanese units, the 9-2 is not forced to rout (B30.5), and due to the presence of the 2-3-8 could not leave the pillbox even if he wanted to (B30.6).

Next, the 4-4-8 advances into O6 to join the 2-3-8. This brings us to the CCPh. Since the pillbox is in Ambush terrain and an infantry unit advanced into the location, an Ambush roll must be made. The wounded 9-2 has modifiers of +2 for pillbox and +1 broken, while the Japanese have -1 for Stealthy and +1 for Attacker in Jungle. The 9-2 rolls a 1, for a net 4, and the Japanese roll a 3, for a net 3. No Ambush results. The CC cannot be HtH (B30.6), but the Japanese are a 6:1, -2 for attacking a broken unit. They roll a 3, easily killing the 9-2, and the game ends. However, no Japanese unit was ever able to enter the pillbox location, both the pillbox and the pillbox hex remain Controlled by the British, and the Japanese lose the game despite having eliminated every enemy unit.

Even if you never find yourself staring down a bulldozer, however, pillboxes are common enough that it pays to learn their tricks. Hopefully, this article has reminded you of some of the finer points of pillboxes, and no matter what else, always remember what Maginot forgot: any position, no matter how strong, can be flanked!

18th Annual Texas Team Tournament Results



Here are the results and rankings from the 18th 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
Jim Ferrell	5	5	0
Gary Fortenberry	4	5	1
Matt Shostak	4	4	0
Hondo Nelson	4	5	1
Mike Rose	3	4	1
Paul Chamberland	3	4	1
Jeff Toreki	2	2	0
Paul Messina	2	2	0
Roy Cassagrande	2	2	0
Zeb Doyle	2	2	0
Ed Beekman	2	3	1
Roy Connelly	2	3	1
Sam Tyson	2	3	1
David Hailey	2	4	2
Matt Schwoebel	1	2	1
Bill Stoppel	1	3	2
Jerry Simmons	1	3	2
Pete Shelling	1	3	2
Will DeMorris	1	3	2
David Longstreet	1	4	3
Clark Lovrien	0	2	2
Jack O'Quin	0	1	1
Keith Tyson	0	1	1
Mike Denson	0	3	3
Mike Seningen	0	1	1
Paul Hornbeck	0	2	2
Rick Reinesch	0	1	1
Scott Bell	0	1	1
Dan Best	0	0	0
Glenn Schools	0	0	0
Jay Harms	0	0	0
John Farris	0	0	0

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Rob Burton	0	0	0
Thomas Godfrey	0	0	0
John Hyler	-1	3	4
Dan Preston	-1	2	3
Eric Gerstenberg	-1	2	3
Brian Roundhill	-1	1	2
Chris Buehler	-1	1	2
Randy Garlington	-1	1	2
Walter Eardley	-1	1	2
Forest Atterberry	-1	0	1
Johnny Johnson	-1	0	1
Race Carter	-1	0	1
Tom Gillis	-1	0	1
Tim Kelly	-2	2	4
Arlen Vanek	-2	1	3
Bill Dorre	-2	1	3
Jeff Taylor	-2	1	3
Mark Carter	-2	1	3
Mike Cadieux	-2	1	3
Patrick Ireland	-2	1	3
Kevin Kenneally	-2	0	2
Robert Esparza	-2	0	2
Matthew Zajac	-3	1	4
Doyle Motes	-4	1	5
Chris Kubick	-4	0	4
Bud Garding	-5	0	5

Roy Connelly	10565.7
Matthew Zajac	10454.7
Mike Rose	10431
Hondo Nelson	10204.5
Sam Tyson	9926.25
Doyle Motes	9726
Dan Preston	9516.25
Mike Denson	9494.1
Walter Eardley	9116.2
Mike Cadieux	8440
Paul Chamberland	8394
Matt Schwoebel	8270.4
Jerry Simmons	8074
Pete Shelling	7920
Paul Hornbeck	7776.25
Jeff Taylor	7409.9
Arlen Vanek	7040
Matt Shostak	6389.05
Tim Kelly	6148
Clark Lovrien	5190
Mark Carter	5130
Scott Bell	4779
Eric Gerstenberg	4586.75
Jack O'Quin	3948
Robert Esparza	3568
Keith Tyson	3169
Patrick Ireland	2920
Roy Cassagranda	2892.3
Bill Dorre	2105
Randy Garlington	1918.5
Kevin Kenneally	1741
Rick Reinesch	1329
Chris Buehler	1271.25
Zeb Doyle	1156.1
Mike Seningen	949.5
Paul Messina	770
Rob Burton	633.6
Jeff Toreki	627
Forest Atterberry	432.25
Race Carter	185.5
Tom Gillis	182
Johnny Johnson	120

Here's how the Major Johnson tally wound up:

Player	MJ Total
John Hyler	31988.88
Gary Fortenberry	25068.8
Jim Ferrell	14814
David Hailey	14347.2
Bud Garding	13428.45
David Longstreet	12799.8
Brian Roundhill	12322.44
Bill Stoppel	11540.7
Chris Kubick	11088.15
Ed Beekman	10870.25
Will DeMorris	10707.9

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Finally the team results:

Team	Score	Wins	Losses
Bill Dorre, Jim Ferrell, Paul Chamberland,	6	10	4
David Longstreet, Mike Rose, Roy Connelly,	6	11	5
Gary Fortenberry, Kevin Kenneally, Pete Shelling,	3	8	5
Bill Stoppel, Clark Lovrien, Roy Cassagrande,	3	7	4
Dan Preston, Ed Beekman, Jerry Simmons,	2	8	6
David Hailey, Scott Bell, Walter Eardley,	1	6	5
Paul Hornbeck, Rob Burton, Will DeMorris,	1	5	4
Chris Buehler, Matt Shostak, Matthew Zajac,	0	6	6
Chris Kubick, Jack O'Quin, Jeff Toreki,	-2	3	5
Arlen Vanek, Mike Cadieux, Zeb Doyle,	-2	4	6
John Hyler, Mike Seningen, Patrick Ireland,	-3	5	8
Eric Gerstenberg, Keith Tyson, Tim Kelly,	-3	5	8
Jeff Taylor, Mike Denson, Randy Garlington,	-3	5	8
Doyle Motes, Mark Carter, Sam Tyson,	-4	5	9
Brian Roundhill, Bud Garding, Matt Schwoebel,	-4	4	8
CTASL	13	34	21
FOREIGNERS	3	29	26
NORTH TEXAS	0	16	16
HOUSTON	-16	10	26

the team less of an issue than it did with the old pairings. In the end it was one of the closest finishes for the Team Tournament trophy in many years with the winning team of Bill Dorre, Jim Ferrell, and Paul Chamberland finishing with the same score as the team of David Longstreet, Mike Rose, and Roy Connelly (6 points). So we had to go to the next level of tie breaker with the best winning percentage determining the winner. The three-man team format worked well and we will be using it again next year.

We held two minis on Thursday this year. One featured the next release of *Critical Hit's* Berlin-based slugfest *Berlin: Tyrant's Lair*. We had four players (two per side) duking it out all day in the dense urban environment and rubble around the Reichstag and Fueherbunker circa 1945. Matt Zajac and Paul Hornbeck took up the task of the attacking Russians battling against Mike Cadieux's and Bill Stoppel's German units dug into fortress Berlin and making it through turn 6 of the 11.5 turns of *Breaking Berlin*. At the end of the day, Paul Hornbeck walked away the winner of the drawing for the *Tyrant's Lair* pack provided by *Critical Hit*. The other mini featured that

Houston institution, Ferocity Fest. This is always a brutal and deadly mini as evidenced by its name, and this year the scenario being highlighted was a big, gnarly PTO struggle, *BFP58 San Manuel Melee* from *Bounding Fire Production's BFP3: Blood and Jungle*. When the dust had settled, Brian Roundhill and Gary Fortenberry took home the great dioramas built by Rob Burton for this mini.

On Saturday we featured a *Starter Kit* mini-tournament for those folks new to the game or getting back into it, and offered them a chance to take home a great prize. This year it was Paul Messina besting the other contenders and claiming the SK crown.

The John Van Marter Sportsmanship Award this year went to Oklahoma's own Mike Cadieux. 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. Mike is certainly well deserving of the award.

John Hyler won the Audie Murphy Award for the most snakes (36) over the course of the tourney, and Gary Fortenberry was on a veritable tear again this year exceeding his winning total from last year by racking up 56 boxcars over the course of the weekend to take back to Virginia the Col. Klink award.

18th Annual Texas Team Tournament Wrap-up



Rick Reinesch

It was another record-breaking year for the Texas Team Tournament. We had 56 pre-registrants and walk-ons from all over the southern part of the US and from locations as far away as the East Coast attending this year. We were able to welcome several new faces that were getting back into the game, which is always a healthy and welcome sign. We also had a number of folks returning from points well outside the Southwest, which as Tournament Director, I always enjoy seeing.

Getting down to the details, in the title match for the individual crown of the Texas Team Tournament, Jim Ferrell found himself in a hard-fought match of 3rd *RTR In The Rain* (J43) with Gary Fortenberry to take home the coveted 10-3 Award. Gary's dice left him at the wrong time and in the end he went home with the 9-2 Runner-up cup.

This year the Team Tourney went back to its roots forming up into three-man teams. This made the loss of one person on

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The Major Johnson was hard-fought this year, but John Hyler was a man on a mission and in the process of pulling out all of the monster scenarios he could get his hands on and playing continuously over the course of the weekend was able to lay claim 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 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*, *Wargame Depot*, *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
Friendly Fire
The Gamers Armory
Key Hobbies
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 people 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 super-cool personalized etched dice glasses
Rob Burton for producing those great dioramas for Ferocity Fest on Thursday
Glenn Schools for coordinating the trophies
John Hyler for setting up the tournament room
Jay Harms for providing the 10-3 perpetual trophy

The perpetual trophy that Jay supplied is a very cool 105mm brass shell casing likely either from the WW2 western desert campaigns or from one of the Arab-Israeli wars. Most likely it was the latter, but it would be really cool to dream that it was a part of Monty's El Aleimen battle. Jay picked it up at

the Khan El Khalili bazaar in Cairo after haggling for a while with a crafty Egyptian salesman who I am sure raked him over the coals, but I understand that at least he got a free cup of tea with the deal. I'll be mounting names of all of the previous 10-3 winners on the casing, and my intention is set the trophy next to the previous year's 10-3 winner during next year's tournament during each of his games, thereby identifying him as the man to beat.



Jim Ferrell, Texas Team Tournament 2010 Individual Champion (holding the new 10-3 perpetual trophy)

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 said, please make sure to mark your calendars. The 19th Annual Texas Team Tournament will be held June 23rd-26th, 2011 again at the La Quinta Inn in Round Rock, Texas. The website has already been updated with all of the information for next year and we've even got our first person to pre-register already, so it is never too early. Don't be left out of the fun!

Tactical Tip

Rick Reinesch



If you have an anti-tank Gun that has little chance of harming your opponent's AFV, don't forget that you have Specific Collateral Attack available. This can win the game for you if your opponent decides to brazenly go around CE the whole time. While your 75* AP TK number may not have much chance of killing the tank, the HE IFT shot of 12+2 against the CE crew can cause some serious problems for them.

Germans from gaining a lot of ground. Without much firepower available, however, and being rather spread out, the defenders of the Rodina were relying on light residual fires to slow the Wehrmacht infantry. There were many 1-FP and 2-FP residual markers around in debris and open ground, but that didn't scare Hondo. He sent squad after squad through the residual fire, unconcerned by the odd break or pin here and there. Finally, at the last he moved an entire platoon of three rifle squads and an 8-morale leader as a stack through 1FP in open ground. The 1-down-2 shot came up snakes for a 1 KIA, and the random selection was a full yahtzee to scupper the entire platoon. That's certainly the best result I've ever gotten out of a 1 residual. – *Matt Shostak*

This Happened To Me

I was playing Zeb Doyle in a desert scenario, *AK22 Fruelingswind*. Zeb's German 10-2 with 2x4-6-7 squads, each toting a MMG, gets hit by 4+1 OBA harassing fire. He proceeds to roll snake eyes on the resulting NMC for the 10-2, who then decides to go Berserk and of course bring the two squads with him. They drop their pesky MMGs and charge across 22 hexes of open ground. "Nevermind the fact they are 1000 meters away and we are raking the entire area in machinegun fire, let's engage those Americans like real Germans. Yes, trust me, they are out there. Are you men or are you lederhosen? Charge!" Needless to say, they didn't reach their objective. – *Matt Schwoebel*

I was playing Chris Buehler in *J100 A Few Rounds More*. I was the defending Germans and had as part of my force pool two Sturmrigers, with their 380mm rocket rounds. These tanks can only fire once every other player turn. They have a TK of 10 for a near miss, or 28 for a direct hit (subsequent dr 1-2). On turn 1, Chris entered the board. From its position atop one of the board 3 hills, one of the Sturmrigers fired a round at one of his two Sherman Jumbos: Critical Hit! The final TK number was "only" 38 (28x2=56-18). The dice clattered down the tower: dud!? WTF?! The next turn, I fired a side shot on one of his two regular Shermans: direct hull hit! The final TK number was 24. The dice clattered down the tower: dud!? WTF!?

I eventually killed the Jumbo Sherman with a panzerfaust shot, but was unable to kill any more of his AFVs. All else being equal, the second shot, had it been successful, would have given me the victory since at game end I had 38 VP, with 40 being necessary for the win. – *John Hyler*

Thunderbird ASL Tournament

For those who enjoyed the Oklahoma Thunderbird Tournament the past few years, you may be wondering why you haven't heard anything about it lately. That is because the tournament is moving south to Fort Worth where they will be putting a little local spin on it. The format will be essentially the same, open gaming Friday to qualify for the Saturday bracketed tournament, beautiful first and second place trophies, trophies for Starter Kit play, a chance to win a first or second place trophy for those that do not qualify for the main weekend tournament, and a Master Sergeant competition. Of course there will still be the Texas Hold 'Em Poker best hand/worst hand and a Saturday night raffle.

The scenario list for the tournament will be posted about a month before the start of the tournament.

So on to the specifics. The Fourth Annual Thunderbird ASL Tournament is scheduled for Friday to Sunday, 12-14 November, 2010 in Fort Worth, Texas in the Holiday Inn Express at I-35W and Western Center Blvd. Registration fees for Friday through Sunday play will be \$35, with Saturday and Sunday registration costing you \$30. Room rates for the hotel are \$89.99 a night, excluding taxes, and this rate is good through October 30. You will need to contact the hotel directly to make reservations (Tel. 817-234-9033) and be sure to mention that you are with the Thunderbird Tournament to ensure you get the special rate.

For specific questions about the tournament you can contact the Tournament Director, Ed Beekman, at 817-372-7057, or write him at 9072 Stillwater Trail, Fort Worth, TX, 76118.

During the first action of the big *Valor of the Guards* campaign, my Russian defenders were trying to stop Hondo's

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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 Rick 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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Thanks to Rodney Kinney for VASL, Carl Fung for his VASL counter images, and the VASL Map Cabals for their VASL map images. We use a combination of VASL counter and map images for scenario layouts with permission of use for that purpose.

Next Issue

- More articles about ASL
- Player Profile
- Favorite Scenarios
- Club Meeting Recaps
- And much more!