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Passing the Torch

This issue marks the beginning of a new era for Banzai!! Mike Austin has taken over the reigns as Managing Editor, and I stand relieved. Mike is a technical writer by trade, so he brings to the table much more expertise about the production side of things than I ever could. After hearing some of his initial ideas, I am confident that our club newsletter is in good hands. Please support Mike in his new role, especially by submitting ideas and articles to the newsletter.

Don't think I will no longer be involved with Banzai!! My tell-tale fingerprints will be all over it if I have my way, just try to stop me! I am hopeful that with production duties gone I will have more time to write for the newsletter, so you will still see plenty of my articles that you guys like so much for wrapping fish and lining your bird cages.

The first issue of Banzai was released in December 1995. Since that time, 19 issues in all have passed through my hands. Although it started out pretty rough around the edges, I think it improved significantly over time. It's just a little club newsletter, for sure, but I think it has distinguished itself all along by having quality articles. Many authors, from both inside and outside our club, have submitted very good material, which I have been pleased to include. I'd like to thank everyone who has helped me over the years with this project. You know who you are, I couldn't have done it without you, and I appreciate it tremendously. Now I ask you to rally around Mike and give him the same kind of support.

Sincerely,
Matt Shostak, Editor in Chief

Q. Where and when was the first stand-up land fight between the U.S. and Japanese?

A. At Tenaru River on Guadalcanal. It revealed that the Marines were more than able to fight the Japanese on their chosen terrain and beat them.

Dropping the Torch

First, let me apologize for the delay in getting this issue out. It has been an interesting road which I hope I don't have to travel again. Buy me a beer sometime and I'll tell you about it. Perhaps you are wondering why I would even want to do something like trying to put out a free newsletter. That question I will answer here and now.

I have been playing board wargames since I was in elementary school (over three decades ago!). When I was eight or nine, my oldest brother bought the original Avalon Hill Gettysburg and taught me how to play. I still have that game. Later, I graduated to Blitzkrieg, Jutland, and many others. Finally, in 1988, my wife gave me the ASL Rule Book and Beyond Valor for my birthday, and life has not been the same since. Over the years, my biggest problem has been finding people to play face to face. Thanks to Matt and the Austin ASL Club, my biggest problem now is not who to play, but finding the *time* to play.

I have enjoyed Banzai!! since Matt started putting it out and I have often marveled at his dedication. Back around issue #9, I offered to help out by doing some copy editing, but when the going got tough, I failed my TC and pinned. A few weeks ago, over lunch at Pok-E-Jo's, I told Matt I wanted another chance, but that this time I was really serious about helping. He took advantage of my beef-induced stupor and dumped the whole thing in my lap! I guess I had it coming. Seriously, we all owe Matt a big debt of gratitude, not only for the newsletter, but for his unflagging efforts in building the ASL community here in Austin. Helping out with the newsletter is my way of saying thanks.

So, this is the new Banzai!! Several of you responded to my e-mail test with some great ideas, and I have a few new ideas of my own. Matt and I are working on being able to include mapboard illustrations for rules discussions, scenario analyses, and AARs. Matt will continue to contribute his insights and analyses. Mike Seningen has offered to attempt some Rules Clinic columns here and there. Matt and I both will continue hunting down and including articles from some of the prominent personalities in the ASL community. And I hope we continue to hear from our own inimitable Mr. Swantek. Throw in some player profiles for human interest, some WWII trivia for spice, and some favorite scenario lists for those times when we need fresh suggestions for a good fight, and *voila!* A newsletter even your parakeet can enjoy!

I hope you like what you see and read here, but like Matt says, I need your support. If you have any suggestions for improvement, any article ideas or, better yet, *articles*, send them in. If you have some information you would like to share with the rest of the club, e-mail it to me or give me a call. I can put this thing together and get it delivered, but you have to help with the meat and potatoes. Until next issue,

Banzai!!
Mike Austin, Managing Editor

Analysis: Preparing the Way ██████████

By Matt Shostak

Recent issues of Banzai!! have featured analyses of scenarios that are accessible to beginning players. The first three scenarios (The Commissar's House, Fighting Withdrawal, and Confusion Reigns) involved infantry only. This time we take a step forward into some new territory. *Preparing the Way (PtW)*, ASL Deluxe 9 from the *Streets of Fire* module, brings vehicles, guns, and OBA to the party. All of this seems like a logical next step for a beginner trying to learn the system. Sure, there's more stuff to keep track of, but there are also more tactical options and more fun. I hope this article serves as inspiration for others to play this and similar scenarios. I don't pretend that this is the definitive way to play this action. Rather, take it as a basis for consideration, discussion, and experimentation. Note that the Internet ASL Record shows 18 Russian wins to 11 German wins as of this writing.

PtW has a lot of attractions. Strong OBs for both sides, including six(!) Panthers, go toe to toe on deluxe boards. Deluxe boards are an absolute treat to play on, and they are ideal for these high density Ost Front urban slugfests. This is smashmouth ASL at its best. Even for a brutal frontal attack, I think this action has strong replay value. So jump into the mosh pit and enjoy!

Russian advantages: Numbers, Morale, Defense, CCV

Russian disadvantages: Penetration vs. Panthers, TEM, Leadership, Lack of Initial Concealment

The Russian player has a lot of things going for him in this scenario. First of all, he actually outnumbers the Germans in squads. Moreover, nearly half of his squads have 8 morale, while only three German squads enjoy that lofty status. I use the nebulous term *defense* as an advantage, for lack of a better word, so let me try to describe what I mean. In many scenarios, particularly those where the attacker simply *has* to go somewhere, the defender has a mental edge because he knows where the attacker must go. This advantage is at its most extreme in bridge crossings, for example, but consider the situation here. The Germans must push down the length of the map. Although it is two boards wide, that's still only 10 hexes, the width of a single standard board. If you shrunk these boards to normal size to play the scenario, it would look like a neanderthal sledgehammer attack, without much wide sweeping maneuver. So you know pretty much where the attack is going. In addition, it seems that exit scenarios can be a mite tough on inexperienced attackers. It's simply tricky to get the pace of the attack right. Push too hard and you often lose your best assets, not hard enough and you often have to make a desperate dash at the end and hope for good dice. That can work to a defender's benefit, because he usually doesn't control the pace of a game. Sometimes you can just sit back and watch your opponent hang himself. Russian elite squads can be considered assault engineers for CCV purposes by SSR, giving them a small edge against any Panthers that find themselves too close to the Red infantry.

A big disadvantage, however, is the penetration of Russian anti-tank assets against the front armor of those Panthers. A wily German player can make these things very hard to kill, effectively giving him invulnerable direct fire support to help suppress Russian hard points. You have to be patient when dealing with these monsters. Lastly, an SSR makes all buildings wooden, which

means that German 9-2 will be very hard to stand up against, and many Russian players may be unaccustomed to defending against a strong force without the benefit of stone buildings. I'll talk about leadership a little more in the German advantages section, but suffice it to say here that once you start setting up, you'll feel the leader pinch, especially if you plan on using any of your leaders for fire direction. It might become very difficult to set up good rally havens for all of your troops. Because you get only six ? counters to begin with, it is much more difficult to set up an up front defense in the face of all the German firepower that can be unleashed in the first Prep Fire phase.

German advantages: Leadership, Panthers, OBA

German disadvantages: Tough VC, squad morale

As usual, the Germans have more and better leadership than the Russians. The 9-2 infantry leader can direct a powerful fire-group of machine guns, using his modifier to effectively negate any terrain on the board, due to all buildings being wooden. The Germans get a 9-2 armor leader as well, which drastically increases one tank's chances of securing hits against infantry. It doesn't take many 12+0 attacks to turn Russian units to pulp. Altogether, the Russians have four leaders with -2 total modifiers for 24 squads, while the Germans have six leaders with -5 total modifiers for 21 squads. But we've all seen this sort of thing before, right? The Panthers are almost invulnerable from the front, which simplifies their use somewhat. They can be great in the support role here, like having a battery of 75mm at your direct disposal. The OBA can be a big advantage if the Germans get to use it and use it effectively, but it's a rather dicey advantage.

The negatives for the Germans are that they have to attack a numerically superior foe with better morale through a very narrow front, break through his lines and exit quite a bit of their force. If that sounds tough, that's because it is.

Now, let's try to put some of these thoughts to the test by actually coming up with some setup ideas for the Russians and some attack ideas for the Germans.

Defender Setup

When we start to put counters on the board, we see how the lack of concealment and leadership hurts. If you try to set up an "in your face" defense by putting a lot of units on the firing line in the cH2 building (the square one with the space in the middle) and the huge aJ2 building, you run out of concealment fast. A maximum of six locations can be concealed, meaning anyone else on the firing line has to be very brave indeed, and the reserve troops all have to set up out of LOS of the Germans if they want to gain concealment and avoid getting shredded on the first turn. The Germans can put together a 30FP stack with the 9-2, giving them a 12+0 on any concealed unit with the possibility of a strong follow-up attack with ROF. Three other firegroups of decent size can be made with -1 leaders. It takes more guts than I have to put a lot on the front line in the face of such firepower, especially when the German can set up where he likes and conduct his first-turn attacks with precision.

Let's look at the Russian leadership. If you use the 9-1 to direct some HMG fire, that leaves only three leaders to rally the rest of the troops. Think of the front in terms of three sectors: board c, the aJ2 building area, and the narrow strip at the board

edge across from the aO3-aH5 road. You only have one leader per sector for rallying. Yikes!

These considerations call for a reverse slope defense. In general, I like to set up a few picket squads on the front line to force the Germans to expend some energy on turn 1. Then I put the majority of the Russian forces in positions that can't be seen from the initial German setup positions but can still bring fire to bear on key approach areas or allow the Russian units to easily move into firing positions once they have gained concealment. The T-34s, especially, need to avoid any possible confrontations with Panthers, opting instead to back up the Russian infantry and attack the German infantry with HE and machine guns. For this reason, I like to set them up in buildings, with the VCA facing toward a quick escape route and the TCA facing likely spots for German infantry to enter.

The ideal situation for the Russian infantry is to continually shuffle concealed units to the front line while rallying broken guys in safe rally havens out of German LOS. This is much easier said than done, but building aJ2 absolutely cries out for this tactic. Moreover, it must be defended. Giving it away to the Germans without much of a fight cedes too much initiative to the fascist legions. You must keep the interior locations of this building out of German LOS for some time, so it is the perfect place for the ole' shuffle ploy.

However, the same cannot be said for the square cH2 building. I'm not sure whether you should defend this building in strength or not, so I opt for discretion being the better part of valor and leave only a token force here. I set up the majority of the board c sector defenders in the cK3 area, where they can gain concealment and yet still cover some of the open terrain that the Germans must eventually cross. Perhaps a more knowledgeable or confident player could suggest a setup for defending the cH2 building in strength? I'd love to see it, just to get a glimpse at how a gutsy player would do it. As I said, I just don't have the stomach for it. The antitank guns should be placed generally to the rear of the infantry, with LOS to likely spots within six hexes for the Panthers to enter, with the hope of scoring deliberate immobilization on them. All four ATGs have 3 ROF, so any Panthers parked nearby have a pretty good chance of being immobilized eventually. This fact should cause the German player to be conservative with them, and to probe with the infantry before bringing the Panthers forward. And that is why I would not set up the ATGs too close to the front line; I want to avoid their discovery for as long as possible and to reveal them on my terms, not his.

Okay, with all that said, let's look at the example setup. Again, standard disclaimers apply, your mileage may vary, etc. All units are assumed to be at level 0 unless otherwise specified.

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- cG3: ?, 4-4-7 (This is the token sacrifice squad.)
 - cJ0: 6-2-8 w/LMG (Should gain ?. Covers cH0 and can advance for better field of fire.)
 - cK3: 4-4-7
 - cL1: 6-2-8 w/DC
 - cL2: T-34/85 VCA 2 TCA 5, 4-4-7, 6-2-8 w/MMG
 - cL3 I1: 4-4-7
 - cL3 I0: 7-0, 6-2-8 w/DC
 - aI1: ?, 4-4-7
 - aI2 I0: ?, 4-4-7
 - aI2 I1: ?, 4-4-7
 - aI3: ?, 4-4-7
 - aJ1: 4-4-7

- aJ2 I1: 8-1, 4-4-7 w/LMG (Should gain ?. These guys have the important job of covering aH5.)
- aJ2 I0: 4-4-7
- aK2: 6-2-8
- aK3: 6-2-8 w/DC
- aL5: 4-4-7
- aM5: 4-4-7
- aN2: 45LL CA 5, 2-2-8 (HIP. This farthest forward ATG is there to keep the Germans honest. Can deliberately immobilize a Panther out to aH5.)
- dB3: 8-0, 6-2-8 w/LMG (I just felt that a leader should be in this area. Perhaps the 8-0 would be better placed in the bO2 area for rally.)
- dC4 I2:?, 6-2-8 w/MMG (This is such an obvious spot that I would hesitate putting my best stuff here, because the Germans could target it. An MMG up here should be enough to keep the enemy on their toes. Maybe the German will think this is the .50cal.)
- dI5: 57LL CA 5, 2-2-8 (HIP)
- bN1: T-34/85 VCA 5 TCA 2
- bN3: 9-1, 6-2-8 w/.50HMG, 6-2-8 w/HMG (HIP. What a nasty surprise for any Germans that hit the bO4 choke point, or bO2 for that matter.)
- bM2: 4-4-7
- bM4: T-34/85 VCA 5 TCA 2 (Note how this tank backs up the HIP 9-1 stack.)
- bM5: 45LL CA 2, 2-2-8 (HIP. This is an unexpected placement, whereas the other ATGs are in pretty obvious spots. Note this ATG's flanks are well protected by the 9-1 stack, the T-34/85, and the squads in the dB3 building.)
- bJ1: 57LL CA 3, 2-2-8 (HIP)

What is my Russian doctrine in a nutshell? The tanks target German infantry, the antitank guns go for deliberate immobilization on the Panthers, and the infantry fights a stubborn, skulking defense, but falls back when necessary. The general philosophy is to avoid a carefully choreographed German turn 1 Prep Fire, forcing the opponent to bring his forces forward to engage. As they penetrate deeper, they become more disorganized and susceptible to counterpunches. Note how weak the Russian left flank is, the one at the board edge on the other side of the aO3-aH5 road. There is no leader here! If the Germans gain this flank in force they might very well be able to clean up the area and allow their Panthers to use the road for quick exit. That is why the 9-1 stack is in the area. In fact, it might even warrant an MMG in aN2 with the ATG. This machine gun would make it difficult for the Germans to get through aH5, and if they drive up a Panther to suppress it, the ATG can try to immobilize it. This Russian flank may very well need a leader, but where do you take him from? I might consider putting the 8-0 over there somewhere instead of in dB3. Remember that in deluxe ASL, hand-to-hand CC is allowed. I think this favors the Russians, as they can afford to trade squads. My general rule of thumb for hand-to-hand CC is to declare it when I have low attack odds in CC, but to avoid it when I have a large superiority in CC.

Attacker Setup

The victory conditions require the Germans to exit 50 VP off the east edge of boards d and b, with half value for units exited off road hex dH0. The Panthers and armor leader together total 51 points, so they can win the game by themselves if they all manage to exit. The infantry totals 53 points. Given the odds of the Panthers' main armament malfunctioning or having them deliberately immobilized or destroyed, it is probably not reasonable to expect to exit all six, but it's a goal to shoot for. More realistically, you may exit three or four, with the remainder of the points coming from infantry. Given the importance of the Panthers, they should not stray ahead of the infantry until and unless the infantry has cleared the area of antitank guns and other threats (such as HIP 6-2-8s with DCs). They should provide fire support for overcoming stubborn Russian points of resistance and bide their time, looking for opportunities to break through. Taking their cue from the scenario title, the tankers should allow the infantry to prepare the way. They should remain buttoned up for the entire scenario. With 11 turns to move forward 25 hexes from their front line

positions, the Germans have plenty of time to be deliberate with the attack. Here's a sample setup for the Germans to use against the proposed Russian setup.

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- cE1: 4-6-7, PSK, 4-6-7, DC, 2-4-8 (Should gain ?)
 - cE2: Panther VCA 2, 8-1, 4-6-7 w/LMG, 4-6-7, 4-6-7
 - cE4: 9-2 AL, Panther VCA 2, 9-2, 4-6-7 w/MMG, 4-6-8 w/HMG, 4-6-8 w/HMG
 - cE5: 2-4-7, 4-6-7 w/PSK
 - cD3: 2-4-7
 - cD5: Panther VCA 2
 - aA1: Panther VCA 2
 - aD2: 9-1, 4-6-7 w/LMG, 4-6-7 w/MMG, 4-6-7 w/MMG, 7-0 w/radio (Should gain ?)
 - aD3: 2-4-8 w/DC (Should gain ?)
 - aE2: Panther VCA 2, 2-4-7, 2-4-7
 - aE3: 8-1, 4-6-7 w/LMG, 4-6-7 w/LMG, 4-6-7 w/LMG (Should gain ?)
 - aE5: Panther VCA 2, 8-0, 4-6-7 w/PSK, 4-6-7, 4-6-7
-



First Turn

If the German player wants OBA early, then set up the 7-0 with the radio in aE2 instead. Bringing down OBA on building aJ2 would be great, but it is just too difficult to do so without endangering friendly troops in the aG2 building. So, instead, the 7-0 is poised to bring down OBA on the cK4 area or to wait to use it at a more opportune moment later on. Whether you use the OBA early or not depends on your style of play.

The 9-2 stack should start off the Prep Fire phase by shooting at the concealed Russian unit in aI2 ground level. Breaking this unit breaks up the potential multi-hex firegroup in that building. The shot is a 12+0 with a good chance at follow-up shots with ROF. The 8-1 group in cE2 could then fire a 6+1 at cG3, which has a reasonable chance of forcing loss of concealment. Whether or not these initial attacks are successful, the Panthers then fire on their respective targets. Note that all three front hexes of building aJ2 can be hit by Panthers, as can the Russians at level 2 in dC4 and the token guys in cG3. In general, the Panthers should fire 4+2 shots with their machine guns at concealed targets first. If

these shots reveal the targets, then they should follow up with MA shots. The units in cE1 should be able to assault move forward to start pressuring the flank of the cH2 building while maintaining concealment. Depending on how well the initial attacks go, the 2-4-7s in cD3 and cE5 are poised to enter building cH2 on both sides of the cG3 Russian squad, if it is broken, making it difficult for that squad to rout and therefore sealing its fate.

The PSK squad in cE5 assault moves to the cF5 woods, where it can threaten the front of the aJ2 building with the PSK. At three hexes, unconcealed infantry would be hit on a 5 in Prep Fire or Defensive Fire, suffering a 12+0 if hit. Would I really waste a PSK in such an attack instead of using it on the Russian tanks? I don't know. It might depend on how well or poorly my initial attack is going, but, in either case, it's good to have the threat there for the Russian to think about.

The two half squads in aE2 secure the aG2 building by moving through the potential Russian setup locations and winding up CX on the ground floor. If the Russian front line defenders fire at and break these guys, big deal. The two big stacks in aE3 and aD2 can



get to the ground and first levels of aF2 concealed, unless the Russian has a HIP unit in the cH2 building that he is willing to reveal to strip concealment. They then advance concealed to the four locations of aG2–aG3, setting up a hefty multi-hex firegroup for the Russians in the aJ2 building to deal with. The scouting CX half squads advance into the street in aH1–aH3. Sure, they are vulnerable there, but I'd rather have the Russians shooting at measly half squads than my big stacks. Moreover, if the Russian skulks away these half squads can claim wall advantage. Lastly, these half squads attempt to find and fire panzerfausts at adjacent Russians in the aJ2 building if the opportunity arises. Indeed, the odds of success are low, but it's probably more worthwhile than using their inherent firepower, and the Russian player will begin to respect these guys more. In all, the Germans can fire 31 panzerfausts in this scenario. This is a great use for your half squads, giving them a chance to inflict 16+0 shots on the Russians. The aE5 Germans should strive to get the PSK squad safely into aG4 in the advance phase, where he also can threaten to shoot the PSK at infantry. Meanwhile, the other two squads gain the aG5 building, threatening the aJ2 building with yet more firepower, while also threatening a board edge flanking maneuver. All of this turn 1 action is preparation for the attack over the next few turns.

Taking the aJ2 building will be difficult. It can be very disheartening to see a well executed skulking defense by a good player. Concentrated firepower, however, can break more Russians than he can rally easily. In some cases, it may be worthwhile to shoot at broken Russians rather than try to break Good Order troops, because double breaking whittles away the Russian strength. Soon, there should be acquisition markers on each front hex of the big building, with scouts in the street backed up by superior firepower, and eventually the breaking starts to occur. Because there is little room for maneuver and the Germans possess weapons that can control the board, firepower may be the name of the game for the Germans. From this point on the German attack has to be methodical but opportunistic. When the infantry has cleared the way, move up the Panthers to new and better firing positions that are safe. If you want to be bold with a Panther, wait until one of them breaks its main armament. Then use that tank for your bold tactics. Its machine guns, mobility, and armor should still be effective in accomplishing many goals. I wish I had a handle on the Russian sniper, but I don't. About the only thing I can think to do is put the German sniper nearby in the hopes of absorbing hits or getting a lucky kill on the Russian sniper, reducing his SAN to a more comfortable number.

I hope these thoughts whet your appetite for this scenario. I don't think I have outlined a perfect (or even a very good) defense or attack, so I am interested in hearing other opinions. If you play this one, write up an AAR for Banzai!!

Player Profile: Matt Shostak

[This is the first installment of what I plan to be a continuing feature in Banzai!! First, particularly because of the number of new players in recent months, I hope these profiles help our members, new and old alike, to get to know each other better. Second, knowing each other better can only help to strengthen the club and to encourage us all to bring in more new members. And who better to profile first than the dice whiner we all know and love, Matt!—MA]

I like Mike's idea of having player profiles in the newsletter, perhaps accompanied by discussions of their favorite scenarios, so when he asked me to be the first profile, I agreed right away. Mike was looking for a "get to know Matt" piece, and I think I can do that, although you have probably gotten a good clue about me through the newsletter over the last two years. Anyway, here goes.

I have always loved gaming and have played various board games since I was a kid, such as chess, Risk, and so on. My first exposure to wargames probably came when I bought Metagaming's Ogre through an ad I saw in my older brother's science fiction magazine. I loved it, and before long had a collection of those wonderful microgames. I sure wish I had saved them. I received Squad Leader as a gift for my 18th birthday, and played it a whole bunch the summer before college, mostly solitaire. It was simply too difficult to find willing opponents. Finally, in late 1991 or early 1992, I picked up ASL. I don't know why, because I still didn't have any opponents. After having played solitaire again for a few months, I lucked out and found Mike Seningen through the Internet. He taught me some of my first, most important lessons about ASL tactics. Over time, we met more and more players, usually through the Internet.

Since then I have completed about 230 scenarios, not counting a couple of attempts at some of the larger campaign games. I have been to all of our local tournaments except one, and have been to all three Wild West Fests. Probably the most significant thing I have done in ASL is building the local ASL scene. Once I realized how much I liked ASL, I also realized how important it was to build a sizeable group of quality opponents. With that in mind, I pushed quasi-monthly club meetings for the guys to meet and play, and later started Banzai!! hoping to build local enthusiasm for the game. Along with Banzai!! came the club ladder, which I started so I would have something to print in Banzai!! if I ever ran out of article submissions. It has proven to be a useful tool in keeping local interest high.

Those who have played me fairly often would probably say I am cautious but opportunistic. I try to push just hard enough, taking what my opponent gives me, and looking for opportunities created by luck or blunders to give me an edge. I figure if I can play a solid, mistake free game, it will get me to the last two turns with an even chance to win every time. If I play a perfect game, I figure I can win 50% of my games, but if my opponents don't play perfectly, that percentage should increase. That's the theory anyway... I am a dice whiner, for sure, but I play a pretty friendly game. No woofing from me.

I don't think I have a favorite type of scenario, but you might say that I have some favorite elements that I like to see in a scenario. I like a good board layout. If I'm going to be staring at it for the next six hours I want it to be something pleasant or interesting

Q. Who was the youngest serviceman to become a General in the U.S. Army during WWII?

A. Contrary to popular belief, it was not James B. Mc Gavin of the 82nd Airborne Division. Thirty-four-year-old Gerald J. Higgins became a brigadier general in the 101st Airborne.

to look at. I like interesting units and tactical situations, and I especially enjoy scenarios where both sides have something interesting to do. I dislike one-dimensional scenarios, such as the few that involve nothing but vehicles for one or both sides. Yawn. I think ASL does a great job "at the fringes," that is, outside standard ETO combined arms slugfests. The night and PTO are handled very well and I enjoy those genres. Combine them and you've got guaranteed fun.

Club Notes

Biweekly Lunch Gathering!

Mike Austin

I want to remind you that several of us have been meeting at Pok-E-Jo's Smokehouse on 5th Street for lunch every other Friday since September 12. This is a club function and everyone is invited. The whole thing started with Mutt and Jeff (Shostak and Toreki) meeting at different places for lunch on Fridays. Mutt...uh, Matt kept putting out the invitation to the rest of the club through e-mail, and it finally paid off. On the 12th, five ASLers showed up at Pok-E-Joe's. I personally had a great time (even if I did get stuck with the newsletter) talking about ASL, sleazy third-party ASL outlets, WWII, computers, computer companies, and all kinds of other stuff with Matt, Jeff, Mike Seningen, and Jack O'Quinn over some great brisket, chicken and sausage.

We decided right then and there that Pok-E-Jo's was the perfect spot, with its central location, concrete floors and picnic tables, to host future gatherings. And to make it easier on everyone's schedule and wallet, we agreed to meet there every other week. So come on down for a great time talking ASL trash! We meet at 1 PM, and Matt usually sends out a reminder by e-mail. If you are e-mail challenged, call Matt, Mike, or Mike.

September Club Meeting

Matt Shostak

The Austin ASL Club had a club meeting on Saturday, September 27th, at Kirk Woller's place. It was a small group this time, perhaps because we didn't push it enough. Those of you who didn't come missed out on donuts, cookies, and various other snacks, not to mention the best game in the world, ASL.

Mike Austin and Matt Shostak paired up in *The Roadblock* (ASL 18 from the *Paratroopers* module), where Mike's Americans gave Matt's Germans a very tough time. They didn't have time to complete the game. At the halfway mark, the Germans had eliminated the first U.S. defense line but the American reinforcements had entered and established a second line. It will be interesting to see how this one ultimately turns out. *[I lost.-MA]*

Andy Milder took some ladder points from Kirk by defeating him in *Franzen's Roadblock*. Andy took out the Tiger with an Advancing Fire critical hit from his Stuart, and Kirk just couldn't recover. Eric Gerstenberg showed up a bit late and provided comic relief for the rest of us with his running commentary. Aaron Schwoebel stopped by to deliver some more playtest scenarios.

I will add wrap ups of the missing meetings in the next issue. [MA]

Club Ladder as of 2-12-98

The following tables list the ladder standings for active and inactive players and the results from recent Ladder games. Please report your ladder results to Matt Shostak.

Players who have not completed a Ladder game in the last six months are moved to the Inactive list. Matt keeps their records and scores, and they can return to active status at any time by completing and reporting a Ladder game.

Club Ladder for Active Players

Player	Points	Record
Chas Smith	1593	46-11
Matt Shostak	1365	48-17
Mike Seningen	1355	29-13
Tom Lavan	1133	5-3
Jeff Toreki	1091	9-15
David Hailey	1089	14-12
Carl Kusch	1059	3-3
Bob Purnell	1049	11-8
Aaron Schwoebel	1019	2-2
Eric Gerstenberg	1013	14-25
Todd Hively	993	9-22
Kirk Woller	979	24-34
Sam Tyson	970	0-3
Eric Barry	985	2-4
Greg Swantek	981	6-8
Dave Morganthaler	962	0-2
Jack O'Quin	959	7-11
Chuck Lemons	952	0-2
Matt Schwoebel	949	1-3
Andy Milder	917	6-20
Mike Austin	846	0-5

Club Ladder for Inactive Players

Player	Points	Record
John Phelps	1038	1-0
Tom Woller	1037	1-0
John Poole	985	0-1
Robert Esparza	982	3-3
Gary Dillard	980	1-3
Joel Bonham	966	0-1
George Fritz	963	2-3
Jim Knatcher	887	0-5
Rodney Lester	879	0-5

Recent Results

Winner	Versus	Scenario
O'Quin (Russ)	Seningen (Germ)	Directive Number 3
Smith (Germ)	Toreki (Russ)	The Commissar's House
Smith (Fren)	Toreki (Germ)	Sudden Death
Gerstenberg (Germ)	K Woller (Russ)	No Farther
Shostak (Russ)	Gerstenberg (Germ)	Storm of Steel
Milder (Brit)	K Woller (Germ)	Franzen's Roadblock
K Woller (Germ)	Gerstenberg (Russ)	Back to School
Smith (Germ)	Hively (Brit)	Parry and Riposte
Smith (Russ)	Barry (Germ)	Shklov's Labors Lost

Shostak (Germ)	Austin (Amer)	The Roadblock
A Schwoebel (Fren)	M Schwoebel (Germ)	Last Defense Line
M Schwoebel (Germ)	A Schwoebel (Russ)	Red Packets
A Schwoebel (Germ)	Gerstenberg (Part)	To Clear a Roadblock
K Woller (Germ)	M Schwoebel (Brit)	Tiger Route
Kusch (Rum)	Milder (Russ)	They Fired on Odessa
Smith (Russ)	Shostak (Germ)	Wotanstellung
Seningen (Germ)	Milder (Fren)	Le Herisson
Smith (Pol)	Hively (Germ)	Sochachew
Smith (Amer)	Hively (Jap)	The Waterhole
Toreki (Germ)	M Schwoebel (Amer)	Under the Noel Trees
Shostak (Germ)	K Woller (Amer)	Scouts Out
Lavan (Germ)	Hailey (Brit)	Pegasus Bridge
Shostak (Chin)	Gerstenberg (Jap)	Shanghai in Flames
Kusch (Amer)	O'Quin (Germ)	L'Abbaye Blanche
Seningen (Germ)	Toreki (Amer)	A Breezeless Day
K Woller (Amer)	Gerstenberg (Germ)	Winter Wonderland
Shostak (Germ)	Seningen (Amer)	Auld Lang Syne
Shostak (Amer)	Seningen (Germ)	Auld Lang Syne
Gerstenberg (Pol)	Seningen (Germ)	Bloody Harvest
Shostak (Germ)	Milder (Fren)	Counterstroke at Stonne
Milder (Brit)	Gerstenberg (Germ)	North Bank
Seningen (Fren)	Morgenthaler (Germ)	In Front of the Storm
Shostak (Amer)	Tyson (Germ)	Stopped Cold
Gerstenberg (Amer)	K Woller (Germ)	Operation Nordwind
Gerstenberg (Amer)	O'Quin (Jap)	Cibik's Ridge
Smith (Russ)	Toreki (Germ)	To the Last Man
Toreki (Germ)	Shostak (Russ)	The Awakening of Spring
Smith (Brit)	Hively (Hung/Germ)	Last Stand at Westen
Hailey (Germ)	Shostak (Amer)	Auld Lang Syne
Seningen (Germ)	Kusch (Amer)	L'Abbaye Blanche
Smith (Amer)	Tyson (Germ)	The Gingerbread Men
Smith (Germ)	Tyson (Amer)	The Gingerbread Men
Kusch (Amer)	Toreki (Germ)	L'Abbaye Blanche
Seningen (Germ)	Gerstenberg (Brit)	Setting the Woods on Fire
Shostak (Brit)	Toreki (Germ)	Aces Over Eights
Gerstenberg (Erit)	Milder (Ethi)	Keber Zabania
Seningen (Germ)	Kusch (Fren)	Chance d'une Affaire
Smith (Germ)	Milder (Amer)	Auld Lang Syne
Shostak (Russ)	K Woller (Germ)	Rattenkrieg
Milder (Russ)	K Woller (Germ)	The Tractor Works

Next Issue...

So far, next issue should include...

- A scenario analysis of ASL 8 *The Fugitives* by John Slotwinski, a physicist with the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Maryland
- A player profile of one of our top players and author of the Rules Clinic column, Mike Seningen
- Matt's favorite scenarios
- The first two pages of my enlarged and reformatted ASOP
- Club Meeting recaps

And much more!

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Fact: Much is made of the harsh winter the Germans faced in their Russian campaign in 1941. "General Winter" was considered the Soviet reserve secret weapon. It was the coldest winter in 140 years.
