

Operations

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Bloody 110 Update

by Dean N. Essig

Through the great effort of a player in Germany, Dr. Hans van Deventer, the German OoB for Bloody 110 is slowly being redone in a better form. Using the same Gliederrung I used in the game's design, and a much better knowledge of German symbols and their meaning in late '44, he has graciously taken the time to redo the 2nd Panzer's Order of Battle. The full gamut of changes will be done in the reprint of Bloody 110 (and will be available separately at the time) which will be done sometime after 1993, but I wanted to give you the important changes now for those who wanted to apply them right away.

The German 75mm artillery batteries should be handled as 105's--all 75mm ammunition should be converted to 105mm for the game.

The November 30th Gliederrung was out of date by the offensive and a further 26(!) TsR V's were delivered to the 1st Bn/ 3rd Pz Rgt. In the process of moving from the 30th report to the offensive, 2 Mk IV's were, however, somehow lost.

The Recon Bn Staff recon vehicles were omitted. They consist of 10x Sdkfz 234/1 (20mm), 3x Sdkfz 234/2 Puma (50mm), and 4x Sdkfz 233 (75mm). While such "thin" vehicles will be of dubious use to the German player, they might come in handy.

An assortment of additional towed and SP infantry guns and AA units will also come into play.

If interest is shown, I will be happy to publish the complete revised OoB here. For the most part, the changes will affect units which show up on the night of the 16th or during the 2nd day when the preponderance of German strength is already incredible-- more will hardly be needed.

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A Desperate Fight Part 1

Barren Victory

by Dave Powell

Barren Victory has the advantage of a great historical setting. The Battle of Chickamauga presents two balanced armies each with their own defensive and offensive opportunities. In December of '91, I locked horns once again with my perpetual opponent, 'Sticky' Combs. This time we were in the confining forests of North Georgia.

As usual, we elected to play the campaign game. We decided to use all the troop options as well. This added 10 Rebel and 6 Union brigades to the contest. However, Bragg remained in charge. I took the Confederate forces, and once again Sticky set out to restore the Union in Federal Blue. For additional spice we used the defensive orders variant (by now de rigueur) and, for the first time, the Hidden movement option. (See OPS #2 and #3, respectively).

I confess that I entered the fight with no initial plan of action on the first day. Too many of the best Southern troops had not yet arrived. This prohibited any major attack. I elected to respond to my opponent's moves, and look for openings.

The action started predictably enough. The Federal 14th Corps moved against Forrest's Rebel Cavalry around Jay's Mill. At 8:30, the lead Yankee unit- I/14-- attacked and the battle was on. For more emphasis, he brought up the Union Reserve Corps (now swelled to seven brigades due to options) to aid the 14th.

As if to provide a graphic warning about the dangers of piecemeal attacks, Forrest's troopers showed some teeth. At 9:30, one of Forrest's Rebel brigades CC'd a Union unit, trashed it, and went on to CC a Federal gun unit in the flank. I promptly destroyed the cannons, greatly annoying Sticky. This action left 1/14 wrecked, and he used initiative to halt Thomas in place, electing to let the Union Reserve Corps carry on alone.

The resultant slugging match was mostly toe to toe stuff. By 10:30 a.m., Forrest was wounded and his Corps failed its defensive order. This forced an emergency retreat. The Union Reserve Corps had also lost heavily in the reciprocal frontal attacks, but continued to assault the Confederate Reserve Corps (who had filled in for the

departed cavalry) until about 1:00 p.m. before they rolled an attack stoppage.

By mid-morning, his forces were somewhat scattered. I decided that one of those previously mentioned opportunities had popped up. Crittenden's 21st Corps was still down south, defending Lee and Gordon's Mill and vicinity, leaving his center stretched pretty thin. The 14th Corps was deployed well east of the Lafayette Road, and were extending a connecting hand to the Union Reserve Corps. I decided to advance Buckner's Corps (augmented to three divisions by Stevenson's optional command) and Hood's First Corps. Buckner was to attack and capture the Lafayette Road along the Northwest corner of the Brock Field, where the Union 14th Corps was anchored to that primary communications route and the rest of his army. Hood was ordered to advance and capture the Lafayette Road near the Brotherton house, as well as interdicting the secondary routes just west of that spot. Ideally, this move would cut the battered 14th and Union Reserve Corps off from rapid reinforcement by the fresh 20th and 21st Corps, allowing me to have my way with them.

At about 11:00 a.m. the CSA First Corps, under Hood, and Buckner's Corps, swelled to three divisions by the attachment of Stevenson's optional command, began their advance. Hood marched due west to the Brotherton House, where Wilder's lone brigade disputed the ground. Wilder's is a big, well armed brigade ("+" weapons) supported by its own two cannon, so I pressed him cautiously. I wanted to wear him down without doing severe damage to my own units, which were all understrength and subject to wrecking quite easily. This action lasted about an hour before Wilder yielded and backed off, wrecked himself.

Meanwhile, Buckner's command marched northwest towards the Kelly House and the five-road junction in hex B21.3 1. Thomas's right flank rested along the road running due east from the junction. I aimed to turn it. However, fresh Yankees arrived to hold the Kelly Field just as Buckner became heavily involved in the woods around the crossroads. I took the hill at the east edge of the field for a turn, but fell back behind it once I discovered the bristling line of Union guns arrayed along the north and west edges.

By 1:00 p.m., the fighting ended. Hood had cut the Lafayette Road, fulfilling his objective. Buckner, now outnumbered by the Federals, was directed to halt and defend along the road between Kelly and Brock fields. The Union Reserve Corps had battered itself against the confederate Reserve Corps whom I reinforced with my other optional division- Loring. Forrest's Cav withdrew to the east side of the Chickamauga to recover stragglers and avoid more confrontation.

Still, the line was a long one. The Federal Reserve Corps was deployed in the woods north of Jay's mill, facing my Reserve Corps south of it. A sizable gap existed between Granger's Reserve and Thomas' left flank of the 14th Corps, which defended a line facing south, and extending back to the Lafayette Road. More troops under Thomas's command (1/21 and 1/20, attached to the 14th Corps) held a line south

from the Kelly House, angling east of the Lafayette Road, and back around the Dyer House. The rest of the 21st Corps remained in place along the Lafayette Road south from the Vinyard House to the open ground west of Hall's Ford. Sheridan's 3/20 division held Lee and Gordon's Mill.

Losses to Date:

Union

1/14 (8), 3/14 (14), 4/14 (7), 1/Res (10), 2/Res (1), Wldr (6)

CSA

W/Res (5), L/Res (7), S/B (9), P/B (1), A/FCav (5), P/FCav (8), St/- (attached to Buckner) (5), H/1 (4), JPD/1 (3)

Union Loss-5500 Rebel Loss--4500

Between 1 and 3 p.m., a lull developed. Sticky shifted the Union Reserve Corps back west to link up with the 14th, closing the gap. The Union Reserve now formed the northern flank of the army. Two more divisions, 2/20 and 2/21, were added to 1/20 and 1/21 facing Hood around the Brotherton House and Buckner's right flank. The 1, 3, & 4/14 faced south against Buckner's other flank. The 2/14, newly arrived, was not yet in line to attack. The two other corps commanders--McCook of the 20th and Crittenden of the 21st--were brought up to take charge of their forces.

An attack was obviously coming. Sticky was determined to regain the full extent of the Lafayette Road and drive back my line. At 3:30, the storm broke. Hood's six small brigades faced the six larger (and fresh) brigades of the two 21st Corps divisions in line, and fell back under pressure. The two 20th Corps divisions hit Buckner's line where it linked with Hood south of Kelly Field. The 14th Corps troops pressed due south against the other end of Buckner's line. The Reserve Corps of both sides sat out the fight, as did Forrest's heavily straggled Cavalry.

I would be negligent in omitting the activities of Polk's troops. I left Hindman's Division (H/P) to defend the Confederate side of Lee and Gordon's and brought up Cheatham's five brigades (C/P) to protect Hood's exposed southern flank. By holding a line north of Hall's Ford. By blocking both of the secondary roads running northeast behind Hood's line, Cheatham prevented any unfortunate turning movements. None of Polk's troops were engaged at all on September 19th.

By 4:00 p.m., I was growing nervous. Hood was hurting, and Buckner had given ground as well. In fact, both my HQ's were now in the front line. Any further withdrawal could only be done through ECR. A grim situation indeed. I formed my final line in the dirt down the middle of the Brock Field. Bragg scurried around,

issuing instructions that no-one was inclined to obey. I ordered the Confederate Reserve Corps to move southwest and replace Hood's damaged command. I also told Forrest's Cav to move southwest and replace C/P around Hall's Ford with the intent of moving the latter force further north to bolster the Brock position, since it was still unscathed. However, all of these moves required a lot of time given Bragg's rating and his wonderful relationship with his subordinates which precluded effective command via initiative.

Imagine my relief when Combs started to fail his Corps Attack Stoppage rolls. My final line was well supported by guns, and his 4:00 p.m. attacks cost him heavily. At 4:30, both the 20th and 21st Corps stopped, all four divisions wrecked. Catching the drift, Thomas quickly rolled initiative and halted his advance as well. Three of the four 14th Corps divisions were also wrecked. This event marked the end of the first day's fighting.

Final losses-September 19th:

Union

1/14 (14), 2/14 (3), 3/14 (18), 4/14 (14), 1/20 (7), 2/20 (4), 1/21 (11), 2/21 (5), 1/Res (11), 2/Res (10), Wldr (7)

CSA

W/Res (5), L/Res (8), S/B (11), P/B (11), St/- (attached to B Corps) (7), JPD/1 (10), 1-1/1 (8), A/FCav (5), P/FCav (8)

Union loss-10,400 Rebel loss-7300

In addition to the above, both the Union Reserve Corps and the 14th Corps had lots of stragglers.

A Plan

It was time for a plan. Longstreet would arrive soon. I needed to choose my wing structure and settle on an offensive maneuver. I wanted to take advantage of the Hidden Movement option as well. We both drew out of range to collect stragglers. As the lines settled for the night, I noticed that he was keeping the Union Reserve Corps in the front lines.

The 14th Corps had formed a final line between the Lafayette Road and about the 27. XX hexrow, facing due south. The Union Reserve Corps formed at right angles to that line, protecting Thomas's exposed flank. However, Granger's seven brigades were spread out quite widely along the north-south road from the intersection of A29.02 to the High ground around A29.09. I knew that both the 14th and Reserve

Corps had seen heavy fighting, with little chance to recover stragglers.

I decided that the blow must fall on these Yankees first. Next, I needed the troops.

I had D.H. Hill's fresh Corps, two crack divisions. I had previously directed them to move to Jay's Mill and defend, and they were now in perfect position for my northern swing. The Reserve Corps (CSA) had now replaced Hood's troops, who fell back to recover stragglers. Even though these six First Corps brigades were shot up, I could count on the fact that Longstreet was bringing five fresh units (optional) with him. This would restore much of the effectiveness to the command. Finally, I decided that H/P, down by Lee and Gordon's, should join the Left wing. Now Longstreet had six divisions, for a total of 21 brigades (all fresh except for Hood's original six) ready to strike.

Polk got the remaining seven divisions for the Right Wing. Buckner and the Rebel Reserve Corps had three each, and held the center of the line. C/P remained in its original position around Hall's Ford with a revised Divisional Goal to defend the flank and retire to the northeast if pressed. Cheatham had about ten hexes of running room before he would have to trigger an ECR.

Now for the plan. Polk's job was easy. He would defend in place until Longstreet attacked. I hoped Sticky would weaken his own center to aid Thomas and Granger at which point Polk would join in. I scheduled Longstreet to open the attack at dawn. At that time I would give Polk the attack order, counting on his inherent delay to give Sticky several turns to shift forces. I figured, once Polk didn't go in right away, he would decide that Polk wasn't a threat and shift focus to other areas.

Longstreet would use hidden movement. My original intent was for Hood's First Corps, using divisional goals and hidden movement, to go up the road past the McAfee House, take the road to A30.14, and turn due west to the Lafayette Road. Once there, the force would attack south toward the rear of the 14th and Union Reserve Corps. The rest of the Left Wing would drive the Reserve Corps due west, rolling up the 14th Corps flank in the process.

At dark, Sticky killed that plan, fortunately before my orders were issued. He moved his cavalry up towards A30.14, blocking the road and preventing my move. I settled for plan B.

To be continued in OPS A...

Will Sticky be able to pull out?

or Is he doomed to dead- stick into the ground?????

Send your sympathy cards to Stick via this magazine...

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Germans Across the Kali

Mission Impossible!

by Hans van Deventer

If the American tanks had such a hard time traversing the Kall Trail, how is it possible for German vehicles to do the same thing-at all? German vehicles, especially after the beginning of the Russian campaign, grew to very large dimensions and had quite large tracks compared to US tanks. I decided to examine both the width of the Kall Trail and determine what German vehicles would fit and, more importantly, which wouldn't.

In the game Objective: Schmidt, both the German and American players may use the Kall Trail in a roughly similar fashion. Both do so with difficulty, but it is possible for both to do so. I contend that most German vehicles, because of their greater width, will have an even harder time crossing than the Americans--and they could barely make it.

Let's look at the facts. The Kall Trail is a narrow path of anything between 4.00 to 2.75 meters wide, walled on one side with dirt and rock outcrops. The other side is a Very steep drop. In other words, it resembles a goat-path much more than a super-highway.

As vehicles attempt to negotiate this dubious route, a strong shearing force is applied to the 'up-hill' track as the 'down-hill' one attempts to slide into the valley below. The result is a terrain feature which literally pulls tracks off their drive wheels. This effect led to the loss of a number of the US tanks which tried to use the trail. Also, those tanks effectively blocked the route for others.

We all know that some of the M4s of A Company, 707th Tank Bn and some M10s of C Company, 893rd TD Bn made it. The width of these tanks is about 2.60 meters.

What of the German vehicles? The Panthers (Sdkfz 171, Mk V) were 3.27 meters wide without skirts, with them make that 3.42 meters. Panthers couldn't make it even with a German version of Sgt. Spooner! The Tiger Is (Sdkfz 181, Mk VI) without track-guards is 3.56 meters, with them 3.73 meters. Tiger Is can't make it. Mark IVs and Jgpz IVs without skirts are 2.88 m (with them 3.33 m) might make it with a hell of a tank jock, otherwise they can't. StuG Ills are 2.95 m wide without skirts, 3.41 m with them. I don't think they could make it. The German halftracks should be able to

make it.

Conclusion:

German halftracks, only, may use the Kall Trail like Americans. Mk IVs and Jgpz IVs can but would have the die roll in 2.1c changed to 1: pass, 2-6 broken down.

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Soviet Set-up Notes for Guderian's Blitzkrieg

WWII Simulation

by Owen Fuller

During the September weekend game retreat featured on the cover of the issue 3, 1 facetiously suggested that I write an article with the subtitle "What I Learned As An Abused Soviet Playtester."

Dean, always in need of copy, considered this to be a serious offer. So, while I devote one weekend a month to repulsing Generaloberst Essig and his bloodthirsty Aryan horde, I spend the rest in front of a word processor with my notes, maps, rules and tables. As a result, you have before you the first of two articles in which I hope to whet your appetite for Guderian's Blitzkrieg, the first OCS game, and to pass on to future Soviet players some of the painful lessons that I learned while playtesting.

So who am I, and why am I so abused? In real life, I am a mild mannered high school chemistry teacher from near Peoria, Illinois. I started gaming (Battle of the Bulge, about 1968) long ago when I had both spare time and live opponents. Since then, family and career have limited me to playing the occasional game (usually solitaire), collecting games I would like to play (over 100, plus years of S&T etc.), and reading military history.

So, when my youngest son went off to see the world with his Uncle Sam, I rediscovered that weekends were free time and decided to find some new face-to-face opponents. As an in-house playtester for The gamers, I was introduced to the OCS game system. Playtesting GB has been one of the most rewarding and yet frustrating experiences I have ever had. While it is exciting to interact directly with the game designer, membership in the Change of the Week Club is far less satisfying. Unlike most gamers, playtesters routinely start each game session faced with pages of design changes, many of which have a significant effect on the nature of play.

This article, an expanded nth revision of my own Soviet set-up notes, is based on material in hand as of early December 1991, which may or may not resemble the published product. In fact, after its first submission, this piece had to be rewritten when both the German and Soviet set-ups were revised (allegedly for historical accuracy, I suspect ulterior motives). Because of the fluid nature of the rules and the fact that the OCS is both subtle and complex, these are, at best, a set of suggestions

that will be improved with additional experience. As in real life, no plan in GB survives contact with the enemy, especially since The Enemy designed the game.

General Comments

The Soviet player sets up first, but before doing this, we must consider several points. The OCS and GB are not for the beer and pretzel crowd. You must be willing to invest time and space both to learn the game system and to play.

At the retreat, only the first three "game turns" (actually four weekly overphases and six player turns) were completed in seventeen tiring but enjoyable hours. Later turns will go faster, so a reasonable estimate for experienced players to complete the thirteen-week campaign game is at least forty hours. What has surprised both Dean and me is how quickly time seems to pass, since both players are frequently involved in the sequence of play. Still, a maximum of three game turns per day is probably the limit before brains overload and tempers flare. The game system requires careful study, planning and execution, but the reward is a game that feels correct.

To be the Soviet player and yet avoid panic and depression early in the game, you must be both patient and stoic. You will lose at least half of the territory on the map and many of your units before the Rasputitsa (mud season) arrives. The secret is to trade space and units for time, bloody the German *schwerpunkt*, force the German player to bum supply, draw him out to the end of a long, tenuous and overextended supply line, and hope for the weather to turn in your favor-which sounds like what really happened in 1941. Your turn will eventually come. Endure, survive and wait for it.

You will soon notice that many German units have huge movement allowances and that ZOC's are very fluid, which is to say nearly non-existent. These facts lead to what John Best (another abused playtester) christened as the "ooze effect," which describes the flow of a gray-green slime (the Wehrmacht) through any holes or weak spots along roads or rail lines or in clear terrain, followed by all sorts of unspeakable nastiness in Soviet rear areas. (OK, so I'm partisan.) The Soviet player will have to avoid such weak spots and to garrison supply dumps, air bases, rail and road junctions and cities wherever possible. One neat trick is to leave a unit at the bottom of an air base or supply dump stack.

The frustrated look on the face of the German player when he discovers that an easy capture now requires combat can help cheer up an otherwise somber Soviet player. However, the German player cannot afford the time or losses required for an opposed move through forests away from roads and rail lines. This does allow certain sections of the long front to be weakly defended.

Soviet players must also become familiar with modes, especially Reserve Mode. Artillery, Katyusha, armor, mech and cavalry units in Reserve Mode gain the

important ability to react to German moves and to attempt to blunt attacks. You may set up in any mode, so place mobile units and artillery in Reserve Mode because the German moves first. Hedgehogs are also essential to the Soviet player, for you must use every tool available to counter the massive attack strength the German player will bring to bear on unavoidable weak points in your lines.

Finally, a plan must be developed to rapidly push supply points into forward dumps using rail and air movement, as well as the few trucks available. Soviet armies will be pocketed by the highly mobile Wehrmacht, and can avoid mass surrender only so long as they have sufficient supply. On the other hand, dumps cannot be left to the German player as he advances.

Place your dumps in protected sites, then blow them up or move them when they are threatened. Soviet units should be kept in low supply, except when a counterattack is planned. Low supply does not affect defense strength; it does halve attack and artillery barrage values. The Soviet player must also be very familiar with the appropriate rules for rail line destruction (by both air and ground units) and repair, since both players rely heavily on rail capacity to move supply.

Ground Unit Set-up Notes

Brutal lessons are still being learned during playtesting, so I again want to emphasize that the following are only suggestions to be improved upon as skill and experience are gained.

Front Line-Northern Section

At the northern end of the Soviet front line is the city of Vyazma, which straddles the primary road and rail line running east from Smolensk to Moscow. Vyazma is important because it blocks the most direct route to Moscow, is a major communications junction, has one of the few air bases likely to survive the initial German assault, and is worth victory points. To defend this vital city, the Soviet player has the 30th, 16th and 32nd Armies, reinforced by elements of the 24th. In addition, these armies must avoid being trapped in a northern pocket as the German player tries to slice through Vyazma, or between Vyazma and the outer Moscow defense line, to the northern map edge. Any units scrounged from this area will be welcome in Moscow, Kaluga, Tula and Orel.

Farthest north of the Soviet formations is the 30th Army with three infantry divisions. Deployed in the southeast corner of their assigned area, these units form the northern flank of the 16th Army. The 30th will move east with the 16th, using an extra two-point truck unit to move supply points. The HQ and RR Repair units will move to the road or rail line, then east as quickly as possible to Moscow. The remaining units, attached to the 16th, are to prevent German movement along the northern map edge.

The 16th Army blocks the road and rail line between Smolensk and Vyazma. Faced by units from two German Infantry Corps, the seven infantry divisions of the 16th should form a shallow U as far east as possible, with the northern flank in the forest and the southern flank covered by elements of the 24th Army.

Infantry divisions in clear terrain should be doubled up and in hedgehogs. Deploy the tanks and artillery inside the U in Reserve Mode. Quickly, but carefully, move to a strong defensive position 20-25 miles (four or five hexes) west of Vyazma, using a "phased retrograde advance" (Uncle Joe says we can't retreat, you know). Set up a new supply dump behind this line, and send the RR Repair unit to Vyazma. Rapidly move both tank units back to Vyazma, then south and east as part of a mobile reserve. After absorbing units from the 24th, 30th, and 32nd Armies, the 16th must maintain a strong defensive position.

The 32nd Army has one infantry and five militia divisions near Vyazma. The militia will defend the city, air base and dump, and reinforce the 16th when it arrives. Move the infantry division about 5 hexes south on the rail line to establish a southern defense line, which will be reinforced by extra units from west of Vyazma. Use the HQ to upgrade the air base. Send the RR Repair unit east. All units of the 32nd should build hedgehogs as strong as time and supply will allow. The nearby truck unit can be used to move most of the supply dump into Vyazma.

Units of the 24th Army can be split between two areas. Attach a militia division and two weak infantry divisions to the southern flank of the 16th Army to anchor the initial defense line in the forest. They will remain attached to the 16th. The remainder of the 24th will be used in the defense of SpasDemansk.

Spas-Demansk, another victory point objective, lies approximately sixty miles south of Vyazma near the junction of roads and a rail line approaching from both northwest and southwest. These routes are likely avenues of approach for strong German forces, including Panzertruppen. German units will try to force a large gap in the Soviet front line and to pocket Soviet armies both north and south of the gap.

To defend this area, the Soviet player has the 33rd and 43rd Armies, along with major elements of the 24th. These units must delay or prevent the German breakthrough for as long as possible. If the breakthrough occurs, survivors must fall back into a strong position along the rail line to Vyazma, to prevent the Germans from moving north. Later, this location can be used as a base from which to recapture Spas-Demansk.

The 24th Army will block the road and rail lines that enter Spas-Demansk from the northwest. Since the German player moves first, deploy the five remaining infantry divisions across these routes in hedgehogs, backed up by reserve tank and artillery units. This position will be rather exposed, so immediately execute a phased withdrawal into more defensible lines in front of Spas-Demansk. Send the tank units

east and south as part of the mobile reserve, and attach the RR Repair unit to the HQ of the 33rd.

The 33rd Army deploys near Spas- Demansk with only four weak militia divisions. The militia must deploy forward to plug gaps that units of the 24th and 43rd are unable to cover, and to build hedgehogs for units that will pull back. The HQ of the 33rd will assume control of the Spas-Demansk defenses; the other two HQ's are very vulnerable in their forward positions. Be prepared to move the supply dump north along the rail line, or to blow it up after a new dump is created. The 33rd Army penal battalion, an otherwise questionable asset, can move to the nearby air base, and blow it up at the beginning of turn two. The RR Repair unit should be moved to the east.

The 43rd Army deploys east and south of Spas-Demansk. Two infantry divisions and the tank division (along with the RR Repair unit) should be attached to the southern flank of the 24th Army. Deploy the infantry along the road in hedgehogs, with the tanks in reserve. The RR Repair unit should be sent back to Moscow, Kaluga or Tula. The remainder of the division must block the southeast road using every means possible. Survivors of the 43rd will withdraw east with the 24th, where they will help defend SpasDemansk and the rail line north. Depending on the situation, the tank division can be used to help defend the immediate area, or as an important addition to the mobile reserve needed elsewhere.

In summary, the defense of this section of the front is based on four principles: A) pull back into defensible positions before you are overrun; B) stop the German advance wherever and however possible; C) move anything important (supplies, air units, trucks) before the German can capture it; and D) if it cannot be moved (air bases), blow it up so the German cannot use it.

Front Line-Center Section

Almost on the boundary of the two maps lies the victory point city of Bryansk, which sits astride the junction of roads and rail lines running in every direction. Bryansk is an important German objective because of its location and the fact that the Bryansk armored train becomes available to the German player when the city falls. This means that the defense of Bryansk is just as important to the Soviet player.

As long as the city is in Soviet hands, a German supply network in the central portion of the map will be hard to establish. The 50th and 3rd Armies must hold Bryansk, at least until the Rasputitsa arrives, while the Front Reserve defends the air base at Karachev. Since these units will undoubtedly be pocketed, supply by air is essential. No matter what happens, a good supply plan must be created.

The six infantry divisions, cavalry brigade and artillery brigade of the 50th Army deploy in and around Bryansk. Use these units to set up a strong defensive ring around the city, concentrating on the north and west, and making liberal use of

hedgehogs. The nearby truck unit should move part of the supply dump to the air base, then remain with the original dump to move it if necessary. Send the RR Repair unit back to Kaluga. As they arrive, incorporate 3rd Army units and the Katyusha brigade from Front Reserve into these positions.

Southwest of Bryansk are the four infantry divisions and artillery brigade of the 3rd Army. One infantry division, along with an extra two-point truck unit, will move the HQ and supplies east to the rail line, where the HQ can absorb the survivors of the 13th Army and build a second air base to help supply the eventual pocket. The rest of the 3rd will block the road and rail line entering Bryansk from the southwest, then pull back into the defense position set up by the 50th. The RR Repair unit moves to Bryansk or Kaluga.

The Front Reserve, a strong mobile force with a tank division, a cavalry brigade, three tank brigades and a Katyusha brigade, sets up some distance south of Bryansk. Choosing from several possible options, I intend to use these units to help defend that city. After shifting the Katyusha brigade to Bryansk, the Front Reserve will move east to form a strong position around the Karachev air base, building hedgehogs as quickly as possible. This decision is partially based on the fact that in 1941, Bryansk was captured by a panzer division sent back to the west following the fall of Orel. The fact that German forces will pocket the Soviets in and around Bryansk, whether they capture the city or not, must also be considered. After the pocket forms, the only new supply available to this area will be by air.

Because of recent changes in Soviet set-up locations, plans for the defense of Bryansk are not yet tested. I am looking forward to using this strategy in the next playtest game, and hope it works as well as the old deployment. Assuming I survive, the results will be reported at a later date.

Front Line-Southern Section

The southern third of the playing area is mostly open terrain, which 2nd Panzer Group will use to penetrate deep into Soviet lines. The large number of roads and rail lines here point like an arrow from Konotop in the Ukraine, through Orel and Tula, to Moscow. It is along this route, which forms a diagonal line across both maps, that the game could be won or lost.

The 13th Army is the only Soviet force in position to oppose this German thrust, but the front that must be covered is far too long. So, while most units of the 13th will be overrun, they must bloody the German spearhead and delay the lead elements. Making use of available terrain and hedgehogs, four infantry divisions will block the rail lines at Seredina-Buda. The road north from Sevsk, as well as the road and rail line to the northeast, should be blocked by the remaining three infantry divisions along the river, backed by artillery and HQ units. The penal battalion should deploy on the air base, blowing it up before it can be overrun. The cavalry brigades, backed

up by tank units, should block the German advance on roads further to the south. The RR Repair unit will move to Orel and beyond. Survivors of the 13th can link up with the 3rd Army HQ to defend their supply dump and the new air base.

On the south end of the map, beyond an undefended gap of about 50 miles, is the 40th Army, which should move east to defend Kursk as it did in 1941. Deploy the 40th, blocking the rail line, at the north end of its assigned area. The first line, from swamp to air base, should contain the infantry divisions, using hedgehogs where necessary. These units, which are very slow, will either die gloriously for the Rodina in a bloody rear guard action, or move by rail to join the rest of the army. Just be sure they blow up the air base before it is captured. In reserve behind the front line should be the two tank divisions, a tank brigade and an artillery brigade. These units will use a phased withdrawal to rapidly move back to a defensive position in and around Kursk, a victory point city, and its air base, to block any German drive toward Voronezh. However, you should not be surprised if the 40th disappears unit by unit before it reaches Kursk, as there will be German wolves snapping at your heels.

Behind The Lines Northern Section

Behind the front, the northern map contains territory that the Soviet player must defend to the death. In the northeast corner lies Moscow, one of two Soviet supply cities, along with three air bases. Worse yet, if Moscow is captured, the German player wins a Sudden Death Victory. No ground combat units are initially placed in Moscow, but a competent Soviet player can use units already on the map, or later reinforcements, to defend the city. However, you cannot leave the direct approaches through Vyazma, Kaluga or Tula open.

The 49th Army deploys near Kaluga, a victory point city in the outer Moscow defense line. It consists of two infantry divisions, a militia division, a tank brigade and two artillery brigades. The tank brigade and one artillery brigade should move toward Tula to cover for the departing 5th Cavalry Corps. Leave the remainder of the 49th to cover Kaluga, the supply dump and the airbase. Units of the 49th, along with the mobile reserve units pulled back from the front line, must cover the Kaluga area before the German breaks through at Spas-Demansk or Bryansk. Tula will also need to be reinforced. Split the present supply dump between Kaluga and the air base, then build a more protected dump three truck movement points north of Kaluga on the forest road, using the nearby trucks.

5th Cavalry Corps deploys around Tula, another victory point city. The mission of the 5th is simple in concept, but difficult to accomplish: move toward Orel and slow down the German advance. While Orel is a victory point city, it cannot realistically be held. It must be defended for as long as possible, and rendered useless to the German player. Deploy the two cavalry brigades as far southwest as possible, then send them to defend Orel, and to destroy both the air base and most of the supply dump. Use the three infantry divisions, backed by the HQ and Katyusha brigade, as a

screen in the forest in front of Tula. Any other scrounged units might try a Little Big Horn in the forests behind Orel.

After the fall of Orel, take a careful look at Tula. It will be difficult to hold both Tula and the air base, so move the air units before the Germans arrive, and be prepared to blow up the air base. Most of the dump should be moved by rail back to a safer location, within five truck movement points on the road to Moscow, for use until the city is surrounded. Leave four SP's on trucks in Tula to maintain the besieged defender. Make the German pay dearly for this city, because he will probably be overextended now.

Behind The Lines Southern Section

In the initial set up, no ground combat units are placed in Voronezh, a victory point city and the other Soviet supply source, which can fall to an aggressive German player in the first or second week. The real importance of Voronezh does not become obvious until the Soviet player begins to establish his counterattack forces, using reinforcements received starting about game turn four. Without Voronezh, attacks can only be supplied from Moscow, limiting the direction of Soviet counterattacks, and making the end of the game that much more difficult for the Soviet player. After you see the long, exposed and inviting German southern flank just begging to be attacked, you will understand why it is imperative to keep this city. To this end, reinforcements for weeks one and two must go to Voronezh to help establish a viable defense.

Another reason for holding Voronezh concerns the other geographic objective that has not yet been discussed. Yelets is worth victory points, but units to defend it are not readily available. You may eventually have to retake Yelets, which means you really must have Voronezh.

Air Unit Set-up Notes

Because of the complexity of the situation, there is no one correct air unit deployment. The best advice I have now is to set up air units where they are most capable of carrying out their missions and where they are least likely to be overrun by the German advance. The second article of this series will discuss the air campaign in some detail.

Conclusion

How does the beginning of Guderian's Blitzkrieg look from the perspective of the Soviet player? A comparison to an Illinois river flood near where I live seems appropriate. Periodically the river overflows its banks and tries to destroy nearby homes, forcing people to get together to build sandbag levees. As the people work, they all know that the river will eventually stop rising, but three questions are in the

back of their minds:

- A) Can we pile up sandbags faster than the river can rise?
- B) Will we have enough sandbags to finish the wall? and
- C) Will we drop from exhaustion before the job is done?

The first three or four weeks are like this for the Soviet player. You know that the Wehrmacht will eventually be stopped, but you have to ask yourself:

A) Can enough units be moved fast enough to the right places to slow the German player down?

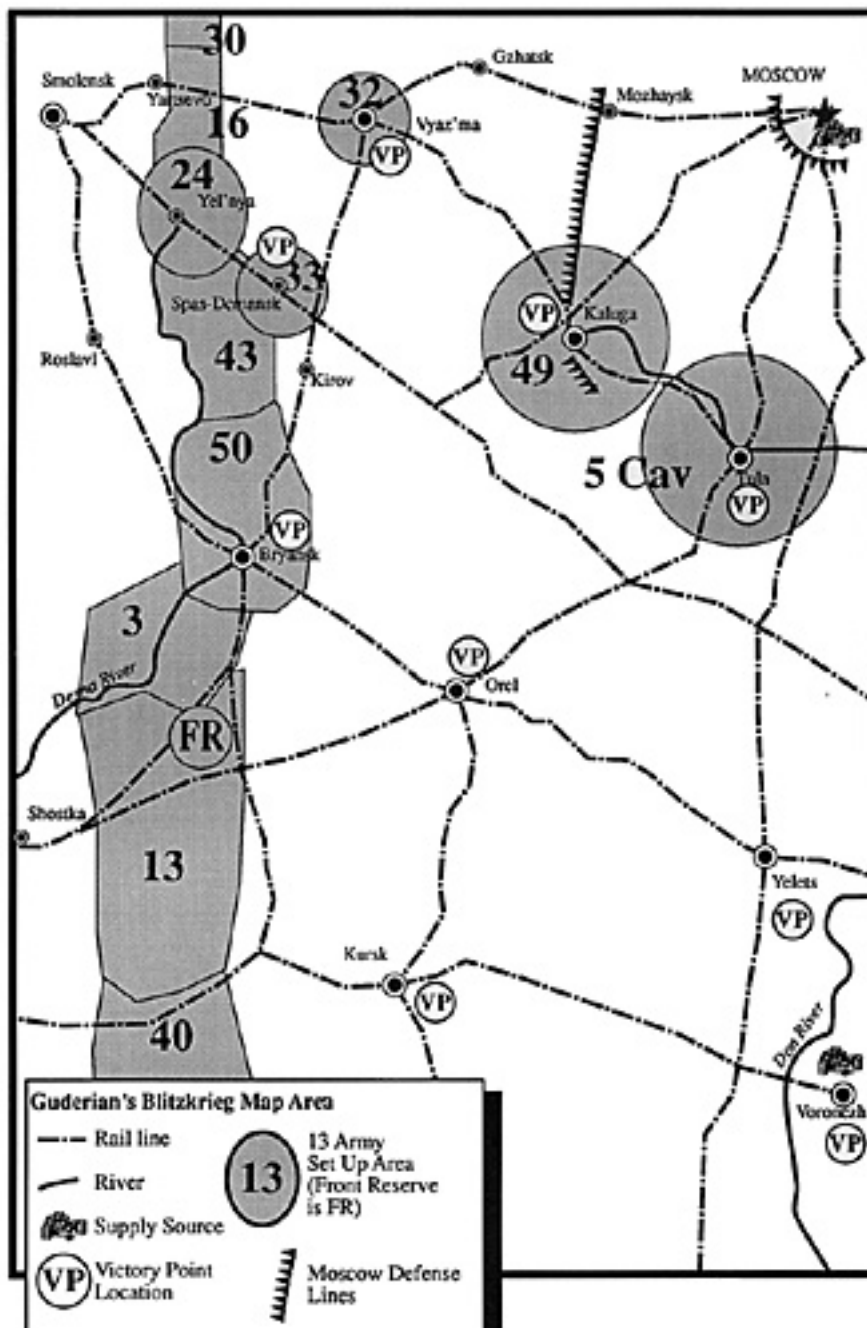
B) Are there really enough units in the Soviet force to finally stop the Wehrmacht? and

Will the Germans be stopped before your brain shuts down from cerebral overload?

Playtesting has taught me that a major German force will spearhead Orel toward Tula, a hole will probably be punched through Spas- Demansk threatening to pocket the entire front line, another hole will probably appear at Bryansk, Soviet Armies will be destroyed at an alarming rate, and both Moscow and Voronezh must be defended at all costs. Playtesting has also shown that the next time the game begins, there will be a new trick (or seven!) up the sleeve of the German player. Surviving until the heavy rains finally arrive is a challenge that will require every ounce of skill the Soviet player can muster.

I really enjoy playing GB because of the mental challenge involved. It will be a long time before anyone learns both the system and the game well enough to optimize the play for either side. Each game played will teach more and more, both in terms of planning skills and of the tools of the game system. If you like a challenging game, this is one which you will pull out of the closet year after year because it always leaves the players, German and Soviet, with the feeling that there is a better way. I am positive that a competent Soviet player can survive the early German blitzkrieg with enough strength and territory intact so that the eventual counterattacks can result in a final victory.

On the other hand, Dean is equally convinced that a competent German player, by forming pockets and destroying the Soviet front line armies, can take and hold enough of the geographic objectives on the map to prevail, and still limit losses to an acceptable level. Which one of us is correct? Only time will tell.



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American Civil War Infantry Tactics

Tactics and Abstractions

by Dave Powell

Civil War tactical proficiency is mostly a lost art. After all, it is a skill with little use in the 1990's. Still, there are those of us who do pursue it, if only to gain a greater understanding of what our simulation games are actually recreating.

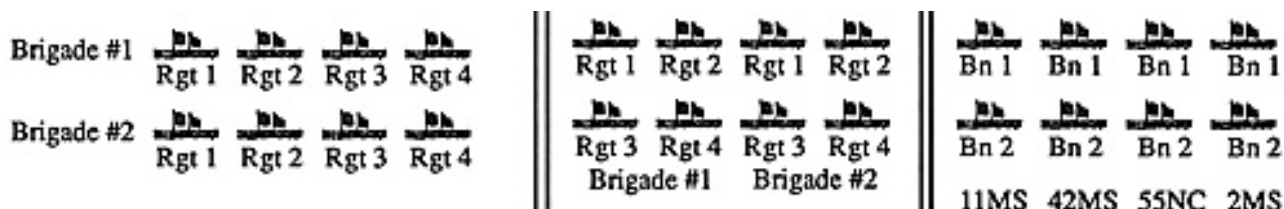
Because it is at brigade level, the CWB obscures most of the tactical finesse required. Formations are abstracted, and regimental handling, etc., is resolved at a level beneath the player's control. You don't need to be proficient with the complexities of columns, lines and skirmishers, since your brigadiers do that for you.

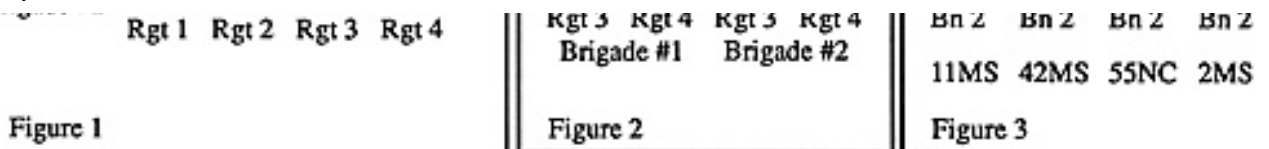
But what is happening at that level just below the surface? Discussion by gamers within these pages and on GENie, as well as via direct correspondence, leads me to believe that many people aren't at all sure. This article is meant to clarify tactical operations at the sub-brigade level, and explain some of our justifications for abstraction.

The infantry in the CWB has only two choices: Road Column or Line. As mentioned before, these formations are abstractions for a more complex series of tactical deployments. Road Column is actually pretty straightforward, and simply represents the four files wide formation all units adopted on the march. Line is better defined as Combat formation, since it represents more than just the two rank line that was the starting point for all Civil War combat activity. Tactical columns, skirmishers, and tactical innovation (such as wave assaults or single line deployments) are all absorbed into the standard game formation. Within a 30 minute time span, a brigade would actually adopt a variety of tactical formations, as well as mix them by regiment.

Line of Battle

So why did we call it line? Because, by the middle 19th century, U.S. army tactics recognized the combat supremacy of the two rank line. The line became the building block of all other formations, and the standard technique in either attack or defense. It was the standard battle formation of the war on both sides.





Offensively, the primary tactic is an attack delivered by a succession of lines. Usually, a brigade would advance in line, supported by a second brigade, also in line, anywhere from 100 to 300 yards behind it (Fig 1). Variations occurred such as both brigades side by side, but on a compact enough frontage so that each brigade would form it's own second line (Fig 2). Davis' Mississippi Brigade at Pickett's Charge provides further illustration of variety. Each regiment advanced abreast, but they were split into battalions and formed their own second support line (Fig 3). A number of other variations were seen as well, but the basic concept remained the same: an initial battleline supported by one or more follow-up lines.

By the time of the war, the line had proven to be the best resolution of conflicting tactical stresses pulling in different directions. The rifled musket as the standard weapon encouraged dispersal, since longer range meant attackers endured a much greater degree of punishment in their approach. Dispersal was good since less losses were incurred. It was also bad, as it meant decreased firepower. These weapons were single shot muzzle loaders, and anything less than an absolute minimum density of about 1 man per yard couldn't deliver a sufficient volume of fire to stop a determined close order assault. Advancing infantry sometimes took as many as 25-30% (occasionally even 50%) losses in a single charge without breaking, and it still took concentrated firepower to disrupt a determined attacker.

Further argument against dispersal was loss of tactical control. A regimental commander was expected to command his unit by voice alone, and had little help. Drum and bugle calls were aids, but limited ones since they could only convey pre-determined ideas. Given this problem, dispersal spelled loss of control. Most attacks were actually halted by increasing confusion and disorganization, finally forcing advancing formations to halt and regroup.

Stepping up to the brigade level exacerbated the situation, since the brigade commander's primary communications method was his own voice as well. Most brigadiers had a couple of aides available to run simple messages, but never enough of them. In fact, the brigadier had none of the modern trappings of a command unit, such as a staff, etc.

A classic example of this tactical degradation was Jackson's famous flank attack against the Union 11th Corps at Chancellorsville. Jackson's leading formations were almost as disrupted by their success as the Federals were by defeat, and Jackson himself was wounded trying to restore control and press home the attack. Tactical control remained a problem throughout the war.

The Elusive Column

One of the most confusing aspects of Civil War tactics is interpreting the word *column*.

Period accounts are full of references to "assault columns", advancing or retreating

"columns of enemy infantry", etc. In virtually all instances, what these writers are referring to are actually troops in line. For instance, Upton's famous attack at Spottsylvania is referred to, throughout his and his subordinates' accounts, as an assault column. In a larger sense, that's what it was. In detail, however, it was a formation of 12 regiments, all deployed in battleline, in four separate lines of three regiments each. Upton utilized a traditional attack formation with three supporting lines instead of just one. The real innovations of this assault were that Upton chose his point of attack carefully, rehearsed it with the subordinate commanders, and crafted a detailed plan of execution after the initial defenses were stormed. Pickett's Charge was not a column assault either. Pickett, Pettigrew and Trimble's men all advanced in battleline. One, and in some spots, two, supporting lines followed the first, an organization that broke down upon reaching the Union positions. The latter stages of the attack saw the rebels deployed only in a milling mob, (in some places 15 or 20 men deep!) with commanders arbitrarily assuming control of local groups.

Even when not using column in a generic sense, the term is still a slippery one. Aside from road column, tactical columns consisted of columns of platoons, companies, divisions, and battalions. In each case, the regiment formed a battle line, and then split into the indicated width, (one platoon, one company, two companies, or half the regiment) and formed one behind the other. For instance, a column of companies would be a series of battlelines one company wide by ten companies deep. Each company was split into two platoons, and the term "division" used here refers to a two-company sub-organization within the regiment, not the larger, multi-brigade formation we're all used to. Additionally, all columns could be either "closed" or "open" order. A closed column left no space between the battlelines, in effect creating a solid block of men. An open column left room enough to deploy between the lines, providing more tactical flexibility.

The most common use of column is deployment in column of divisions, (again, the two company version) usually by a regiment or brigade not yet posted in a defensive position. The column of divisions was preferred for units in this reserve status because it massed troops in a small area and yet still provided maximum flexibility to move in almost any direction quickly. As an example, the 11th Corps at Gettysburg was initially deployed by regiment in column of division, as they awaited developments on July 1st.

Actual use of columns in combat is a much rarer phenomenon. Defensively, of course, line was the formation of choice, since it delivered maximum firepower. Offensively, columns were occasionally used, mostly later in the war as commanders experimented in order to overcome increasing defensive advantages.

In 1864, at Kennesaw Mountain, Sherman launched a series of simultaneous attacks at the Confederate defensive works. Each assault was a true column, spearheaded by a brigade formed in regiments in column of division. With a two company frontage (probably 50 men) and a depth extending back for the entire brigade, followed by other supporting brigades in a more traditional line deployment, the concept was that of a spear-point that would penetrate the enemy line much more easily than a linear approach. Unfortunately, the simple laws of physics don't account for morale, fear, and other non-quantifiable conditions, and each of these attacks was a bloody failure. They were

preceded by heavy artillery preparation, which had little effect on the Rebel earthworks, and the approaches were over good fields of fire. In most cases, the head of the attack faltered once it reached some relatively sheltered spot, and the troops went to ground and couldn't be urged forward anymore. Largest Column Attack

The largest column attack of the war occurred at Spottsylvania. Grant, observing the relative success of Upton's initial attack, chose to duplicate the feat with an entire corps. At dawn on May 12th, 1864, the Union 2nd Corps advanced in a huge block of troops. Each regiment was deployed in a closed column of divisions, and the whole force massed. Birney's 3rd Division was deployed in line on the flanks, to provide protection of the main column. The mass overwhelmed the first line of Rebel defenses, and was finally stopped by determined CSA counterattacks. The Union troops were in turn flung back to the initial CSA defenses, and one of the most grueling struggles of the war ensued. For a full day, Union and Confederate troops held opposite sides of the same defensive line, and fought viciously.

Grant's initial success was due to several outside factors. First, the bulk of rebel artillery had been withdrawn the night before because Lee thought his opponent was maneuvering again and wanted to be able to leave quickly. Most of these cannon were only returned to the line in time to get captured without firing hardly a shot. Second, the Federals advanced under the cover of a dense fog that protected them from Rebel sight until the last 50 yards or so, ensuring surprise. Third, many CSA regiments' ammunition was rain-soaked, greatly reducing their fire. The Federals faced only sporadic enemy fire, and suffered comparatively few losses on the initial advance.

Disorganization was one of the problems Grant hoped to solve by the use of the massive column formation yet it was disorganization that ultimately stopped the Union advance. The Rebel counterattacks were delivered by a severely inferior force, but one that retained its tactical organization. The Union formations were so tightly packed together that sub-units couldn't maneuver or deploy. In effect, Grant's column could only be handled as one huge unit.

A massed series of lines of this strength would have probably moved much slower than normal, given the vast density of the formation. An advantage of the close proximity was a increase in the ability of the officers to control their regiments and thus maintain the quiet needed to keep the element of surprise. The main drawback lay in the fact that such a block was virtually incapable of changing formation or direction without lots of time and plenty of room.

From a simulation sense, while this attack did use a column formation, it still possessed the frontage and firepower of several brigades (at least) in line, and the net effect on volume of fire was not very significant. In the CWB this formation would be better simulated by stacking and massing as many units as possible together in adjoining hexes, rather than using a column formation. Note that Grant did not repeat this particular experiment again, signifying, I think, the ultimate failure of the tactic.

Antietam and Burnside's Bridge

One other famous column attack bears examination, especially since this one was delivered in road column. At Antietam, two regiments of Federal infantry stormed the Lower (Bumside's) Bridge in road column, the widest formation that could move across the bridge. This example has been used at least once to call for a revision of the CWB to make column attacks more favorable for the attacker. A closer look, however, fails to justify the change.

In effect, 350 Georgian infantrymen (only half of Toombs' Brigade was there, for you owners of *In Their Quiet Fields*) held off no less than 3 Union brigades - some 4500 to 5000 men - for three hours. Serious attacks commenced about 10:00 a.m., and finally about 1:00 p.m. the two Federal regiments rushed the bridge. It took no less than four separate charges to gain just the east end of the bridge from which the assault across could be made. The Union assault column was greatly aided by the suppressive fire of some 2000 other troops in their final charge, by the fact that the Rebels were running out of bullets, and by a Union flanking column that crossed the creek into the Georgians' rear about the same time. In the action overall, the two Federal regiments--the 51st New York and 51st Pennsylvania--lost 207 of the 670 men engaged, most of them on the rush across the bridge itself. The two Georgia regiments--the 2nd and 20th--lost about 80 of their 350 engaged. This loss was spread out over the full three hours of action. The facts speak for themselves.

For a final dose of confusion, the larger tactical formations also used column formations. For example, in the Wilderness, May 5th 1864, Hancock intended to attack with his Union 2nd Corps with divisions abreast in column of brigades (Fig 1). More simply put, each division was to attack side by side, on a one brigade frontage, three brigades deep. The regiments, however, would all be in line. Given the tangled condition of the Wilderness, this would have been the best assault formation for tactical control, but circumstances and command confusion prevented Hancock from fully deploying his men before he had to advance. Instead he moved most of his divisions on at least a two brigade frontage, and suffered accordingly in terms of loss of control.

Our Friends, the Skirmishers

The other major formation for infantry was the skirmish line. Some gamers misunderstand skirmishers' purpose because of the inherent limitations of the games themselves. Most of the historical works I've read miss the point of skirmishers entirely, regarding them as a combat formation. The primary purpose of skirmishers was tactical battlefield reconnaissance, a completely unnecessary function in a game without hidden movement.

Skirmishers were deployed to provide defenders early warning of an attack, or to find the enemy's main defensive positions when advancing. Once contact was established, the skirmishers were reabsorbed into the main line. On occasions, skirmishers would be detached to screen a flank, something both sides did in the fight for Little Round Top. The reason for their lack of battlefield decisiveness is simple: firepower. Doctrine called for a skirmisher density of about 1 man per 5 yards, meaning that a battleline advancing

on a skirmish line would have a 15 or 20 to 1 advantage. John K. Mahon quoted a telling statistic, claiming that lines held their ground even after suffering 40% losses, while skirmishers retreated after losing 2%. Of course they did. They completed their task of finding the enemy and promptly reformed into the main formation.

Skirmish fights were common in between the armies' main lines, as both sides probed for information. Sometimes, fights erupted over buildings, clearings, etc., which would give a side an advantage in their intelligence mission. Most skirmish actions involved at most 100-200 men, and are insignificant in the larger scope of a game at brigade level. In games where 100% intelligence prevails, skirmishers are a formation without a purpose and tend to detract, rather than add to, an effective simulation.

The First Modern War

Much has been written about how the Civil War presaged the tactical deadlock of WWI, and how some Civil War era commanders began to search for alternatives to the traditional battleline. For instance, as early as February of 1862, a Union command at Fort Donelson advanced on the enemy fortifications using short rushes. Dividing his forces into two wings, the Union commander bounded the men forward in a series of strengthened skirmish lines. They captured the Rebel initial defensive line, convincing the Rebels that their tactical situation was hopeless. Of course, the Rebel defenders held the line only with skirmishers as well, since the bulk of the Confederate troops were sent to the other flank to aid in a breakout attempt. Hence the resistance to the Union advance was very weak.

A more intriguing glimpse of tactical innovation appears in the Wilderness, May of 1864. On the morning of the 6th, Longstreet's Corps arrived just in time to counterattack Hancock's Union assault and repulse it. Longstreet claimed in his memoirs that the Union forces, once thrown into retreat, were pursued and held at bay by six Rebel brigades using "reinforced skirmish lines" as their main combat formation. Longstreet said that these lines were greatly strengthened, and then continuously reinforced by the remainder of the brigades' men, held some distance to the rear in reserve.

Unfortunately, no contemporary battle reports from the Wilderness either corroborate this statement or explain it in more detail. I hope that some other source (Confederate Veteran Magazine, the Southern Historical Society Papers, or some regimental histories) can elaborate on this event, and will continue to look for such.

If Longstreet's recollections are correct, this would be a significant and large scale effort to convert the skirmish line into a primary combat formation. However, certain important factors, unique to the situation, aided Longstreet's efforts at innovation.

Longstreet's initial counterblow was delivered across relatively clear ground, and id traditional battleline. The Federals, already disorganized by their own advance, were thrown into major confusion by the timely Rebel attack. Once in retreat, it proved impossible to rally the disorganized Union regiments and form an effective line short of their own breastworks (which were erected immediately by the Union troops, before they

began their attack).

Hence, a relatively weaker Rebel line could maintain enough pressure on the retiring skirmish line to hold the Federals in check while he prepared a flanking attack which struck in the late morning. The skirmishers were called upon only to hold for about two hours before a stronger, more powerful blow was delivered by other Confederate troops, who were deployed in a traditional two-rank line. As with Grant's massed column above, Longstreet's skirmish techniques were not repeated at the same multi-division scale he described.

This did not mean tactical innovation was dead. The most significant strides forward came from, of all places, the Federal mounted arm. In 1864 and especially in 1865, Sheridan's Union troopers began to take an increasingly aggressive role on the tactical battlefield. Cavalry began to deliver dismounted assaults in dense skirmish lines, sometimes coupled with mounted charges to further disrupt defense. At Nashville, Thomas relied on his veteran Yankee cavalymen to attack Hood in the rear, utilizing their superior tactical mobility to outflank the Rebels. In the Appomattox campaign, there are several instances of dismounted cavalry driving back regular battle lines of formed infantry. Firepower Density

All of these above examples share certain significant tactical similarities, namely in firepower density. Instead of the above noted 1 man per 5 yards' density, these later experiments developed a much greater mass of roughly one man per yard. Now, a regular battleline's advantage was reduced to 3 or 4 to 1. Of even greater significance was the fact that, for the Union cavalry at least, greatly increased firepower was achieved by widespread use of 7-shot Spencers, or better yet, 16-shot Henry rifles.

The reinforced infantry skirmish lines tended to only succeed against weak or disorganized resistance because a solid defensive line still maintained firepower superiority. The cavalry lines, with their better weapons, managed to best formed infantry due to their actual advantage in volume of fire.

The defense developed an innovation of its own more rapidly and far more universally than the offense - trenches. No one figured out how to defeat an adequately manned full defensive line once entrenchment became the order of the day. Grant's ultimate tactic was to simply stretch his opponent's lines until there weren't enough defenders to go around. This solution could only work when the attacker possessed the massive manpower advantage the Federals held by the spring of 1865.

These tactical experiments were brought to an end by the collapse of the South before any sweeping offensive trends emerged, and so they achieved relatively little notice at home or abroad. Later European wars took center stage, and much of the innovation displayed in 1865 never got the examination it should have.

The CWB overtly ignores these trends for several reasons. First, the system is designed to portray only the combat of the first part of the war, before the advent of full trench warfare. Second, the main tactical weapon remains the muzzle-loading single shot rifle,

against which skirmish lines remained inferior in terms of firepower. Third, some tactical adjustment is assumed within the brigade counter itself, as described above in discussing battlelines. The real tactical innovation would have placed multi-shot breach-loading weapons into the hands of infantry units on a massive scale, something only the Union could have achieved. Unquestionably, this would have drastically impacted on the fighting and the war as a whole, but is not a speculation the CWB is designed to address.

The Density Question

Much debate has centered around the need for a density adjustment modifier to fire combat, a concept with which I vehemently disagree. Fire combat is not some random distribution of projectiles over a given specific area, but rather a controlled, aimed and directed action against the enemy.

Suppressive and area fire concepts belong in the modern age, companion to the "empty battlefield" phenomenon. Civil War combat occurred between formed units who could see each other, or at least knew each others' approximate locations. As I previously pointed out in my article on woods effects (OPS #1), units who couldn't see each other tended to close in until visibility was possible, and hence so many actions in trees occurring at ranges of 10 yards or less. Finally, units in combat are not assumed to automatically spread out to fill all available area, but instead maintain unit and battleline integrity. They are not random molecules, but rather combat soldiers who understand the importance of tactical control.

The most common mistake gamers make about the CWB is to assume that all of the men a brigade represents are automatically deployed in a single line, no matter how strong the unit. In reality, the maximum number of men in line that can fit into a standard CWB hex is from 700-800, the lower end of an A fire level. Within the counter, the excess troops are considered to be deployed in supporting lines, or in adjacent hexes if using extended lines. If an "AA" fire level unit extends line and occupies an adjacent hex, it hasn't reduced its front line density at all, but instead now occupies double the distance with the same density, and having twice as many men in the front line. Excess manpower (assumed to be in regiments forming the supporting line) is far less likely to suffer fire losses.

When the front line loses men, these supporting troops step in to fill the gap. Effective commanders even tried to rotate frontline duties between regiments wherever possible. Men of the Union 12th Corps at Gettysburg, defending Culps' Hill on the night of July 2nd- 3rd, did just that.

Conversely, units with less than 800 men (a "B" or "C" fire level, for instance) do not automatically spread out so that there is a uniform man per yard density across the length of the hex. Instead, the units remain in close order formations, since this is the only formation that can hold or take ground against other formed infantry. Some spacing between formed regiments may well occur, as a brigade commander struggles to hold the ground assigned him, but each element of the unit would still present a formed, close order target.

Squares

What better note to end on for infantry formations than in discussing the ubiquitous square. A holdover from the age of Napoleonic Glory, it soon fell into disuse in the Civil War. (Sir Arthur Lyons Freemantle, of Her Majesty's Coldstream Guards, was greatly put out that American infantry regarded the square as an archaic formation.) The Union Regular Battalion employed it at First Bull Run while covering the collapse and retreat of the volunteers, but it soon fell into disuse, mostly because mounted cavalry had little battlefield role. Mounted men proved too vulnerable to long range fire from rifled weapons, and charges rarely occurred. Still, there are occasional examples of its employment throughout the war.

Digging In

It was not that the theorists weren't aware of the tactical implications of the rifled musket, or the increased advantage it gave defenders, especially entrenched ones. Foreign observers from the Crimea noted both, most significantly George B. McClellan. The problem was that they failed to find a tactical combination to restore offensive action to primacy.

It was still assumed by everyone that a spirited bayonet charge could capture entrenchments quickly, before the attackers suffered too heavy a loss. (This theory was the primary motivation behind both Upton's and the 2nd Corps' Spottsylvania attacks, for instance.) A great degree of blame can be found in the Mexican war, where, time and again, U.S. troops overwhelmed entrenched Mexican defenders. Ultimately, these successes had more to do with better U.S. morale and training than anything else, and when more equal troops met in battle, such tactics usually failed to carry the day.

Of course, the bayonet charge did have successes, but this more often depended on mitigating circumstances than on the spirit of the attack. Both of the Union assaults mentioned above, for instance, achieved initial success because they came as complete surprises to the Rebs. Upton had less than 100 yards of approach to cross, and 2nd Corps closed to within 50 yards before being discovered.

Entrenchment was an ongoing learning process as well. As the war progressed, more elaborate defensive works became the norm rather than the exception, until the trench arrived in all its dismal glory. See OPS #2 for a more detailed look at defensive works.

We Have Our Sources

Civil War tactics have received much less notice by historians than other aspects of the war. Still, some excellent works have examined the topic, and in far more detail than I have laid out here. The following are among the more readily available. John Kisner, in *Operations* #3, discusses an article by John K. Mahon entitled "Civil War Infantry Assault Tactics", from *Military Affairs* magazine. Mahon's article is a quite useful

analysis, though limited. The best recent book that addresses the subject is *The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare*, by Edward Hagerman, published in 1988 by Indiana University Press. Hagerman discusses a variety of aspects about the war, not just tactical applications, and reaches well supported conclusions.

McWhiney and Jamieson's *Attack and Die* is more bizarre, but still useful. Their tactical analysis is quite good, and they're correct, I think, in pointing out that the South attacked too much, but I have trouble buying into the Celtic bit. Both sides failed to grasp the fundamental shift in war, and launched foolish attacks, but it had more to do with West Point than genetic memory. Read the first half, throw out the second.

George R. Stewart's *Pickett's Charge*, widely available, does a fine job of examining a specific attack in detail. There are some other efforts out there, but I found them too general to be very useful. The period tactical manuals, while dull to extremity, are the only way to thoroughly understand the doctrine. The most comprehensive is Casey, *Infantry Tactics*, published in 1863, and covering everything from the school of the soldier up to brigade maneuvers. Some turn of the century works exist, but they are rare and hard to find. For instance, *Organization and Tactics*, by A.L. Wagner, published in 1895. In all honesty I have only read excerpts from it and cannot comment on the full content.

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Maneuver Warfare and The Wargamer

Part 1: Introduction

by Dean N Essig

This is the first in a series of articles designed to expose the wargame player to the concepts of "maneuver warfare" which form the basis of the US Army's AirLand Battle doctrine first articulated in 1982 with that year's edition of FM 100-5 Operations. While the concepts are as old as warfare itself, recently, they have been expressed more clearly than ever before. Most I have to say in these articles is founded on the work of William S. Lind and his book *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* (Westview: 1985) and a handful of other works I was able to run across in the last eight years or so.

Maneuver Warfare (MW), in its modern conception, received a bad name from day one. While it tends to describe the process of battle in a way better than any previous effort, its advocates approached it in a rigid and dogmatic fashion which left a bad taste in many a mouth. Like any other theory of warfare, when MW is used in a rigid manner it fails to work correctly. Also, MW manages to go against the grain of centuries of western thought.

MW stresses hitting your opponent when he's down and kicking hardest at the weak and helpless- hardly chivalrous behavior! As late as the 1991 Gulf War, a few American commanders desired a good "clean" fight to all this flanking nonsense. Old ideas take the longest to die.

So what is this MW stuff and how does it relate to the games I play? In this article I'll give a brief overview of the whole subject. Follow-on articles will address each point and give examples of how they might be applied to game play. Certain concepts (such as the intent of the commander) will have little meaning in most wargames- since typically in games the overall commander and the subordinate commanders are one in the same person. Most of these ideas can help game play and also give the gamer (who I can assume is also a student of military history) some things to think about when analyzing campaigns of the past.

The basis of MW theory is the work of Colonel John Boyd. For the Air Force, he examined the 10: 1 kill ratio of air to air combats in Korea to come up with a reason why. His research hit upon what is now called the Boyd Theory, decision loop, or cycle. In many of the traditional measurements of aircraft performance-turning

ability, rate or climb, etc.-North Korean aircraft were on par or better with US types. No good case could be made that their pilots were inept.

The key, Boyd discovered, was in the mundane function of flight controls in conjunction with the F86's excellent bubble canopy. US aircraft had highly robust and responsive hydraulic controls. Korean aircraft had slow push rod types. The result? Whenever a US pilot made some maneuver, the Korean would attempt a response. Because of his slower controls, the Korean would fall behind the American and, as the US pilot switched from maneuver to maneuver, his actions would eventually cause him to either panic and do something stupid which would give the US pilot an opportunity to exploit. This, Col. Boyd refers to as an "OODA Cycle."

This cycle consists of Observation-Oriented-Decision-Action. The pilot observes his surroundings, orients himself to them, makes a decision on what to do, and acts on that decision. This follows with an observation of the effect of his action and a determination of the changed circumstances-which generates another loop of the cycle. This Boyd Cycle can also be applied to ground warfare, where a force through executing one or more cycles can eliminate the other side's will to act due to the helpless state of confusion inflicted on it. Since this is a dynamic process with both sides executing Boyd cycles as quickly as they can, a side with a superior "cyclic rate" will have a decided edge. As Dr. Lind states:

If one side in a conflict can consistently go through the Boyd Cycle faster than the other, it gains a tremendous advantage. By the time the slower side acts, the faster side is doing something different from what he observed, and his action is inappropriate. With each cycle, the slower party's action is inappropriate by a larger time margin. Even though he desperately strives to do something that will work, each action is less useful than its predecessor; he falls further and further behind. Ultimately he ceases to be effective.

Many examples through history can show the effects of unmatched OODA processes. For instance, the French in 1940 could never quite react to the German onslaught that unfolded on them--from the time they first believed the thrust would be from the north until they finally realized that the Ardennes was the main attack, only to be caught completely by surprise by Guderian's drive to the sea. Eventually, even with superior numbers and many better tanks, the Allies ceased to be a factor in their own defense.

Certainly, any attack that has the backing of surprise starts out way ahead when it comes to Boyd Cycles. Surprise itself is a manifestation of how offguard a side was for the eventuality that hit it. Offguard meaning ill-prepared or ill-equipped to deal with the problem and a measure of the degree of change in posture required to meet the unexpected thrust. An example would be the act of identifying the German main effort in 1940, then having to turn around all the columns driving north into Belgium so they could deal with it-no small logistical feat. This effect is much akin to the over-

used phrase applied to Judo of using your opponent's weight against him.

Much of the rest of Dr. Lind's book is devoted to how a modern military can obtain faster Boyd Cycle rates in order to use them to win. For our purposes, a few of his ideas are most helpful: the concept of a Schwerpunkt, Surfaces and Gaps, the use of firepower (and especially his definition of combined arms), counterattacks, and the use of reserves. Also of use to us wargamers are the concepts of a culmination point and "center of gravity" which are given a fuller use and description in FM100-5.

I will dispense with the detailed discussion of the structure of the infantry squad, the reconstruction of the five-paragraph field order so as to obtain "mission-type" orders and the examinations of how MW can and should be applied to the United States Marine Corps. These have a proper place in his book given the purpose it served but will be of little use to us here.

In later articles I will address each of the topics listed above. In the case of this particular article I wish to more fully develop the concept of the OODA loop as applied to wargames. In most games, Boyd Cycles do not matter. Each player follows the turn sequence, takes as long as he wants to decide what to do, it happens right away, and so on. Any discrepancy between forces might be handled as a differing movement or combat value between units of either side and is rigidly determined before play. In the early development of the OCS system I looked long and hard at this issue-wanting to come up with something better. I gave units ratings based on their "speed" which allowed them to move/ fight in differing phases. A good unit might move/ fight three times in a turn and a poor one once. This path was abandoned long ago since the slow side was boring to play and the turns took far too long. What remains of that in the OCS system is the action rating which still allows better units more frequent access to the "Exploitation Phase" as well as better chances at surprise and combat in general.

In the TCS system, OODA's were added directly and in the form they take in real life. In this case, the side's Command Rating is an OODA speed. Both sides can see the current situation but the side with the faster rating will be able to do something about it earlier. Then when the slower side's plan kicks in, it will be inappropriate. Better yet, the game system allows some players to be paralyzed while playing catch-up--they constantly are found ditching old plans because they are not relevant in order to start working up new ones which will suffer the same fate, all the while their units are languishing inactive.

The CWB inflicts the same delay system but does so in a leader by leader fashion which is more accurate for the times.

Without umpires and games with built-in allowances for OODA's there is little a player can do to out-loop his opponent. An elaborate deception plan might lure your opponent into throwing his best units into part of the map from which they will be a

long time in getting to the real action-but such events are hard to pull off and once your master plan is unveiled, it won't be long before those units are in the thick of it.

In the OCS, even without the complex sequencing of earlier versions, the logistical system makes it difficult to divert large forces rapidly enough to meet any unexpected assault. In the TCS, and to a lesser extent CWB, reaction times are slow enough that a duped opponent will not be able to re-face his army to meet your attack if it comes from an unexpected direction.

MW, as said earlier, is not new in application-only in description. The methods of the German Blitzkrieg make good sense when examined in the light of MW. Extremely strong attacks on limited frontage, deep exploitation, countless recon probes in directions away from the current line of advance which allow the main effort to follow a line of least resistance, and the constant changing of direction of the main effort as it exploits these lines of least resistance. The combination of effects here is something that armies unused to such fighting simply cannot deal with. By the time the slower force identifies the attack at village A, the enemy main effort is switching direction to hit road junction B. The slower force sends troops to village A and then later redirects them to road junction B. Having exploited these two weak points already, the fast force is already on its way to C. And so on...

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Un-Command:

The Un-Command System and its Applications

by Dean N Essig

Heretofore our games have been characterized by one thing: a command system which forces the player to operate his units as if by remote control. The command systems in the CWB and TCS- games add what might be called "realism" (whatever that might be ...) to the game by utilizing a command system that mimics the methods used at the time portrayed in history. As a side benefit, they add the element of "limited foretell" which inflicts a degree of fog of war painlessly on the game as players grapple with the uncertainty of what will happen--a struggle which automatically reduces the utility of the gamer's allknowing eye of what is happening. One of the best things about this automatic uncertainty is that it affects solitaire play almost as well as multi-player play.

These things being true, players used to our games will undoubtedly raise an eyebrow when confronted with the OCS system in Guderian's Blitzkrieg. At first glance, there is no command system. A more accurate statement would be that there is no command system in the form of the earlier games. It has what might be loosely termed an "un- command" system.

Aside from coining another potentially useless phrase, what is "un-command"? Basically, a relationship between the delay effects generated by command systems become insignificant at certain time and space scales. A point is reached where the amount of time needed by units, staffs and commanders to prepare for combat becomes meaningless beside such issues as force movement, logistical build-up, and the limitations imposed on the two of these by the amount of transportation and other assets available. As the scale in ground, units and time increase, the delay inflicted in the traditional command systems we have used tends to approach zero.

For example, in a CWB game, the time taken to issue battlefield orders and to execute those commands is very significant orders might take several hours to be put into action. As one moves outward into operational and strategic realms, the amount of time taken in the issue and preparation of battlefield commands becomes almost meaningless-especially when viewed in the context that a turn might be a couple of weeks long or longer. The same effect holds true in the scale change from the TCS to the OCS.

So if the preparation, issue, and implementation of battlefield commands is not a limiting factor in operational level simulations, what is? I contend that it is logistical preparation and the use of finite transportation assets. An operational simulation should not allow players to instantly change the axis of the main effort as the logistical pre-positioning was done to support one direction and cannot be easily moved to another location.

Likewise, to develop a good base of operations for a massive command should take at least a few turns of forethought and buildup. While a player might be able, with the assets on hand, to suddenly shift his axis of advance or to go on some sort of local foray into a sudden opportunity, he should be hindered by his abilities to make any shifts he might want to make. In effect, players must decide before hand what they want to accomplish, pre-position the required assets to do it, and live with the consequences of poor choices.

In the OCS players must prepare for and support their operations-*neither of which can be counted on "just happening."* The player must plan ahead to be sure the "stuff" is on-hand to do the job when he wants to do it. Since no player will ever have unlimited assets in transportation or even in raw supply available, players will not be able to take operational planning for granted. OK, they might attempt to do so, but they will be setting themselves up for a major catastrophe! Given the assets on hand, a player might be able to react to the enemy, but such a reaction will take time. If too much is required--a shift all the way across the map for instance--the player may find himself completely unable to fix what started as a mistake in his thinking.

An extreme example of this effect occurred before the large World War I offensives. Over a course of months, the rail feeder lines--some of which were built as part of the preparation for the offensive--would dump millions of tons of supply at the railheads. Once on the ground, the stuff was almost impossible to move if the GHQ decided to shift the offensive to another part of the line. Nor could the incredible effort at buildup be hidden very well from the enemy. In the OCS, players will not be forced to contend with this degree of immobility--they have smaller amounts of supply and better transportation assets--but still choices must be made and priorities established.

So, how does a player use the un-command system to make his opponent dance to his tune? Basically, both players will have to establish priorities based on the assessment of the situation at the time. What does a player want to do and where? What is the enemy expected to do and where? The players will have to balance these questions to the best of their abilities--there will not be enough resources to cover everything well. This is when one player (or the other) will find that he has committed a strong concentration of assets against an enemy weakness.

The other player will be forced into the position of having to scramble to rearrange his incorrect priorities to control the damage caused by his mistake. The daring player will devote a high percentage of his assets to his main effort leaving the rest of his

troops to eke out a living while the main effort wins the war. Of course, he may also find his head in a noose should it turn out that the main effort is in the wrong place and the enemy is tearing up his poorly supported units. As always (more than ever?) the correct appraisal of the situation, proper economy of force, weight of main effort, and maintenance of objective will be richly rewarded.

As in most games, the concentration of units is also critical. A player's "good" units can't be in two places at once. What is somewhat different here is that while the raw units might be able to quickly transfer from one area to another, moving their logistical network won't be so easy. A player who attempts a rapid shift of units without giving some thought to their support might find his best units hung out to dry with a "no supply" status-little ammunition and less fuel-subject to destruction by enemy counterattack.

The wrong way to approach this "un-command" system would be to attempt to cover all the bases equally and to use the limited transport you have to shift logistical bases about as the enemy makes his moves. In the end, you will have defended nothing strongly and have used your limited transportation assets to dance to his tune and they will have done nothing to further your own cause. A player has only so much-transportation, supply, units-to do the job.

He might be able to keep his line undercontrol and avoid "too much" damage, but in the end he will be liable to find an irresistible force of enemy strength pouring through a small hole, a force which will go deep disrupting his logistical networks. Without priorities, he will waste much of his assets in willy-nilly efforts to bring the chaos under control. One turn he might decide to hold at a given city. He'll reinforce that city with troops and supplies only to find that he really wanted to defend somewhere else.

This cycle will repeat faster and faster as the indecisive player falls further and further behind what the decisive one is doing. As this process speeds up, the player "at the rear of the power curve" will tend more and more toward panic. This "panic" will take the form of distorted thought, mistakes, and frustrated decisions--all of which will contribute to the increasing avalanche about his head. An extreme case? Maybe, but it is certainly possible, even probable, given players of uneven skill and experience in the OCS. My friends, that is a blitzkrieg.

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Fighting Your War and Winning It Too

Wargame Design Scope

by David Demko

I remember my first game of Terrible Swift Sword. This game offered something new: forces that marched, deployed, shot at each other, took casualties, and either stood or fled. I had leader counters and command rules that kept me from sending units every which way regardless of historical subordination. I even had different types of cannon and small arms. Later refinements of the Great Battles of the American Civil War series added more human factors simulation through brigade combat effectiveness rules, the "Seeing the Elephant" Table for troops of untested mettle, and most recently, the Turn Continuation Table.

The change in the counter graphics—from branch of service symbols to silhouettes of soldiers, troopers and guns reflected the difference between this game and those based on Napoleon at Waterloo. Designer Richard Berg had cut away a layer or two of abstraction. In a Blue & Gray system game, units attack, retreat, and advance like bumper cars, occasionally blowing each other clean off the map. In TSS the map gradually becomes messier as units pileup casualties and take to their heels.

Sure, my brother and I spent a few real days fighting through part of the first game day, but we felt we were playing a game chock full of realism. What we had really discovered was the toy-like appeal of literalism.

Maybe we, like many gamers, fell into the detail-equals realism trap, but the truth is that TSS (and, to be fair, La Bataille de Moscowa) really did make substantial advances in realistic simulation. On the other hand, plenty of detailed atmosphere and feel is no guarantee of realism. A simulation should be capable of simulating the events it is based on, right? to give historically valid results, a game has to stay grounded in what was or what might have been. A properly designed game can get valid results, in this sense, out of a system as simple as Blue and Gray.

This distinction between games that yield realistic results and games that realistically simulate a process is at least as old as an article about "Realism" and "Naturalism" by Redmond Simonsen in an early issue of MOVES. Often this, difference is regarded as a trade-off. In his InBrief in Operations 2, Dean pointed out how a fascination with process can work against realistic results. The point I want to make is that a realistic

feel, usually through nifty nuts-and-bolts detail, need not come at the expense of a game's ability to produce historically plausible results and clarify the big picture. We do not, or should not, have to choose between intoxicating atmospherics and abstract enlightenment. In fact, any decent game should express its historicity in both the what and how departments. The particular mixture of these two sorts of realism that each of us prefers in a game depends on-and says a lot about-the masons we enjoy wargames.

They Also Serve Who Only Stand and Wait?

Games of similar scope can simulate a given effect in dramatically different ways. Players of, say, both *First Blood* and *August Fury* find themselves dealing with similar game mechanics to march, change formation, shoot, and so on. The greatest contrast between the GBACW games and the CWB series lies in their approaches to command and control. Clearly a good Civil War battle game has to show the importance of getting there first with the most. How many times have we read about (let's mention no names) General X's inexplicable sluggishness or General Y's brilliant seizure of an opportunity?

The Turn continuation rules in the latest GBACW games operate so as to let the units commanded by the superior (cardboard) leaders take the initiative while the poorly led formations have to stand around waiting for their turn to act--or be acted against. Likewise, in a CWB game a good army commander with good subordinates can give more orders and have them carried out faster than, well, Braxton Bragg. Also, highly rated division and corps commanders have a better chance of rolling initiative to grab that fleeting opportunity or avert disaster.

Both systems emphasize the importance of leadership quality and deny the player ahistorically perfect control over his army, but here the similarities end. Rolls on the Turn Continuation Table determine whether a player will have the chance to use some of his units before play passes to his opponent. The activities that, in the older GBACW games, made up a player-turn are divided into actions, and through most of the game-turn it is uncertain which group of units, from either side, will have the next opportunity to move or fight.

The CWB, of course, uses separate player-turns which, incidentally, follow a sequence similar to that in games from *TSS* to *Rebel Sabers*. Using the Second Edition rules, CWB players have to roll each game turn to see whether their troops with delayed orders shoulder their arms or sit on their hands; once the action starts, a Corps Attack Stoppage roll can yank it to a halt again. The Turn Continuation rules work entirely within a single game-turn and so tend to regulate the player's ability to react to the immediate situation, while the CWB rules place the greatest importance on planning over several turns.

This difference reflects the designers' choices of simulation emphasis and affects

your style of play; if you want to win a game of First Blood (or any wargame), you had better have a plan in mind, but by forcing you to formalize and then live with your plans, the CWB system stresses battlefield time lag over immediate fog of war.

Dean's approach shows a good deal more of what I call literalism, mechanics that avoid abstraction enough so that the real-life events they simulate are self-evident. In the process of writing, sending, and accepting an order from, say, Bragg to Polk, a player imagines a staff officer writing (AW) or Bragg bellowing (IPV, force 2), a courier's getting lost on the battlefield (delivery roll of 12 [*Ed Note: this roll was eliminated in the 2nd Ed CWBJ*]), garbled words (Dt), and Polk's lack of skin or fighting spirit of both (Delay 1 or 2). In Berg's designs all such details, except for officer quality, are invisible behind the Turn Continuation dice roll. To factor the details that Dean models into a single dice roll might not sacrifice any realism; it might cost you some fun, depending on your tastes.

The two systems differ also in which abstractions they make obvious to the player. The Turn Continuation rules do away with the artificial predictability that arises from a set sequence of play. With these rules, neither player knows just which units will get to move or fight next, and this uncertainty goes a long way toward giving the players some sense of the confusion and drama of the battlefield. On the other hand, the simple Turn Continuation Table requires some very gamey rules to determine when a player does or does not have to roll for an action. Because these rules have no clear relationship to any events on the actual battlefield, they tend to reduce and distract from the games' Civil War flavor.

CWB games allow the unrealistic predictability of a fixed sequence of play but gain back the sense of uncertainty on a macroscopic scale. The two systems show different choices of trade-offs, but not, I think, some overall trade-off between abstraction and literalism. Overall, the contrast between the ways these game systems feel is even greater than their differences as simulations.

Shoot Me and I'll Shoot You Back

An illustration from the Tactical Combat Series might make my point even clearer. A popular way to simulate command and control in 20th-century tactical games is through some point system. In Assault or City Fight for example, players spend points each turn to control their forces. One way to use command points to limit a player's control and keep the sequence of play fluid is through randomly picked chits (Fireright, TSR's Sniper, Fire Team). One of the most innovative approaches (prior to 1989) is the card system in Tank Leader. Players fight for initiative within the game-turn by playing cards that reflect command, control, and communications quality of companysized units and their higher HQs. High rated cards allow a player either to seize the initiative or to react quickly to a new development (if he still has a good card in his hand). Most of these systems give a fluid and interactive feel to play, and all have the realistic effect of making the units' effectiveness depend on leadership as

well as raw firepower.

Then along comes Dean, who achieves the same overall effects with a Suppressive Fire sequence right out of Fireright and nota chit or a card or (until Omaha) a leader to be found. TCS units shoot and move when the player wants them to, limited only by overwatch rolls and a simple roll-off to see who gets the first shot or the first Action Phase. Microscopically the Suppressive Fire Phase is quite unrealistic, as players choose firers and targets according to their perfect knowledge of which units (friendly and enemy) have not yet fired or received fire.

The alternate-target rule does give a good simulation of fire discipline; small unit leaders cannot always insure the most economical distribution of firepower among targets, and if a particular target is important, a player has to risk overkill in order to hit it ("I'm shooting at the Tiger II with these ten Shermans..."). And the overall effect is a dirt-free approximation of simultaneous combat. Still, the polite, let's-take-turns feel of Suppressive Fire is always there, and obvious abstraction.

What I find striking about the TCS rules is the choice of where to located that obvious abstraction. This system emphasizes operational planning, not platoon-level leadership. Rather than make command and control into a casino game complete with cards, dice, and chits, this system has players mark up a map and issue orders. General Omar Bradley explained how he would sit down with a big map of Normandy "and with my colored crayons, outline various operations." (D'Este, *Decision in Normandy*, 1983.)

By allowing the player to do the same, the TCS rules avoid a major abstraction in the form of game-like command mechanisms. Rather than include squad leaders or rules to determine who squeezes his trigger first, Dean chose to put players in the shoes of regimental and divisional commanders. A good deal of both simulation value and game-playing fun lies in what goes on before anyone moves a counter, in the preparation of those initial Op sheets. The difference is not so much one of realism per se as of focus and feel. Marking up an Op sheet feels like pretend generalship; a system that focuses on small-unit command can give mathematical modes but (fortunately!) not much feel for the difficulties of leading men through the noise, weariness, pain, confusion, and terror of combat.

There's No Arguing Taste, But...

Different games move along different axes toward the objective of realistic simulation. So what else is new?

Bo Eldridge, designer of XTR's *Desert Storm*, chose the term "effect-over-process" to describe the use of abstractions to save players unnecessary work. He did not, and we should not, think of entire games as either effect-oriented or process-oriented. A designer always has to choose some mixture of the two approaches, and that choice

determines the game's focus and flavor. The TCS Point Fire Table is more effect-oriented than the tank fire systems of many other games, but the artillery system is more literal than most. Berg's Turn Continuation Table cuts straight to effect, while the CWB rules give a luxurious treatment of the command process.

On the other hand, the CWB rules factor horse-holders into cavalry units' strength point/fire level relationship and allow shots at gun crews and the cannons themselves through the same fire procedure. So it's difficult to say one system is more detailed than another without risking oversimplification.

Any serious wargamer wants a game that gives historically plausible simulations of a given conflict. The question of whether a game does so with the right mixture of process and effect is a matter of taste. One player enjoys making a few dice rolls to see whether his panzergrenadier platoon can stand up to (and maybe knock out) some overrunning Links, while another player wants to see if Feldwebel Schultz can blow the left track off that Sherman before he gets cut down by the Americans' coaxial MG. If these two players argue over which tactical WW2 game is more realistic, they miss the point that they are shopping for different kinds of realism. Another not-to-be-missed point is that added detail and complexity do not necessarily give a proportional increase in realistic feel. Sure, Dean's Point Fire Table (either version) makes facing, turret traverse, running gear damage, etc. all invisible, but by resolving each attack with a single dice-roll giving all-or-nothing results, it makes for quick, sharp tank battles.

The game versus simulation question is never far away. Are we studying history (through the abstract game) or playing with toy soldiers (the literalist game)? Both. Insight and entertainment, like realism and playability, are not mutually exclusive. For me, the historical foundation makes the game more fun. And some out-and-out fun features, like the CWB command rules, correspond with what historians write about the battles. Gaming is a good way to study history, and wargames' toy-like appeal is legitimate too. Why worry over a false dichotomy of process and effect? My not seek a good balance?

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A Wargame Widow

by Annette McKenzie

For more than four years now I have been living with a partner who plays wargames. 'Play' is such an innocent, even kind word. Closer to the truth would be "a partner who lives wargames! "

When a friend gave him an old copy of Afrika Korps to look at, I didn't think it was anything serious. Lets face it, it was just an old box filled with paper and cardboard. He hadn't been offered a voucher to a Call-Girl service, or a million dollars to leave me. It was just a box containing another way he could amuse his interest in the Second World War for a few hours. How wrong I was! Those few hours have extended into years. Our dining room table turned into a battlefield; our holidays have become tours of battlefields. Our conversation became an endless explanation of why one tank can go two hexes and another can go (sorry, 'move') three...

Our whole vocabulary has changed. He's the General, I--because of my being a New Zealander--am an Ally, and as we now live in Germany, we divide those we know into Ally and Enemy camps. We refer to our home as Camp van Deventer-McKenzie and even our fourteen-year- old daughter gets called a Pacifist because she believes her father's hobby (obsession!) is "sick."

Our books have been stacked on top of each other to make room on the bookshelf for games. Gaming magazines litter our living room and make the offense of vacuuming near his side of the bed punishable by firing squad. Almost any discussion that is begun in our home can be aligned to some aspect of some battle so quickly that our visiting Allied friends don't know its happened until they find themselves failing asleep with boredom.

I do have to agree with Mr. Essig's comments in "OutBrief" (Operations #4) about wargames being historical. That for me is a redeeming feature. Without the history, I would have run out of patience a long time ago. Because they are 'real' there is always the chance to learn something and not just be amused.

I've learned that I think about a hundred and one things while a Movement Phase is being explained to me--and I still am able to make a reasonable comment. I've learned that I must be the best possible partner for my General-believe me, no other fool would put up with him! I've also learned that I should have listened to my Grandad's endless First and Second World War stories when I was a kid--at least it

would be easier Terrain to pass through now!

As I grew up with these stories, Anzac Day Parades, and a mindful respect of war, I was only too happy, in the beginning, to encourage my partner's pursuit of wargaming perfection. As there are few others with which to share his interest, I listened, watched, learned, and even tried to play. Sadly, like so many real widows who watched their men go off to war, I soon found out that my General wouldn't be coming back. He was lost in the field of human conflict. He was totally engrossed in one or another of this century's greatest and/or saddest battles. His already superior intelligence rose to new heights due to the demands of each game to understand, plan, and control the use of each little piece of cardboard. His strategic wisdom and clever movements would earn the respect of the highest five-star General and lowest Private alike. He's a brilliant soldier and I have every right to be proud. I would even polish his medals, should he be awarded any. But alas, like so many other fine soldiers, he is shell shocked and I can't reach him on a realistic level any more.

So to all the other partners of wargamers, you have my admiration and sympathy. Just remember on the darkest, loneliest, and most boring of nights, you are not alone. There are others, out there, suffering too!

To all you wargamers, please try and raise your heads from the gaming table once in a while and give your partner a smile. Maybe even try to say something audible that contains more than two syllables, and don't ever forget who now "keeps the home fires burning" in your absences.

By the way, the friend who started all of this hasn't been forgiven and is still not reinstated on the Ally Christmas Card list. His partner got him safely back from the battle and he's only 'allowed' on maneuvers once or twice a year. Poetic justice, maybe?

Cheers, Chaps!

[Ed Note: The good doctor's article on Tank Repair in WW2 will make it next time. Gee, I wonder if I could get my wife to call me General? Naw, I don't think so...]

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Cons, Clubs, and Things...

1992

999 Games Convention92

7-8 June, 1992. Eindhoven, The Neatherlands Site was selected because of equal distance bewteen Amsterdam, Antwerp, Brussels, and the Rhine-Ruhr area. The entire range of gaining activities is to be provided and the con will be a truly international affair. \$7 entrance fee (actually DFL 12.50.) If interested in staying at a youth hostel (cheaper) be sure to inquire. To get more info: Contact Michael Bruinsma, 999 Games. Phone and FAX at +3120 644 5794.

Michicon Gamefest 92

19- 21 June, 1992. Southfield, MI This is the MD-G's 33rd con and the 20th anniversary of Michicon. To get more info: Contact Metro Detroit gamers, 39827 Cather Drive, Canton, MI 48187

Organized Kahn- Fusion IV92

20-21 June, 1992. Carlisle, PA This general gaming convention will be held at the Embers in Carlisle. Features FRP's, a railroad tirmy, 50+ gaming activities, dealers and a miniature painting contest. Fees vary from \$6 to \$10. To get more info: Contact M.Foner's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (717) 7746676

Atlanticon92

192 3-5 July, 1992. UMD, College Park, MD The East Coast's largest gaming convention returns to the college campus this summer. ADF, Inc. is pleased to present Atlanticon at the University of Maryland, College Park. As always, role playing will run the gamut, but this year's convention will also include live action role playing, medieval recreations, and an expanded program of miniatures and board gaming events. Preregistration is \$16, weekend registration is \$22 at the doorand one-daypasses at the door are \$10. To get more info: Contact ADF, Inc. PO Box 91, Beltsville, MD 20704 (301) 3451858

Operation Green Flag 12-13 September, 1992. Carlisle, PA This Batdetch only convention will be held at the Embers in Carlisle. Features Single and lance

competition, 6 other games using the system, design your own mech, dealers, and a miniature painting contest. Fees vary from \$8 to \$10. Prizes and support from FASA Corp. To get more info: Contact M.Foner's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (717) 774-6676

The Calgary Gaming Convention, 5th Edition⁹²

16-19 October, 1992. Calgary, Alberta, Canada An open invitation to all boardgamers and miniaturists especially those in western Canada and the northwestern states to come and join us The Canadian Wargamers Group as we host our 5th annual gaming convention. This year's activities have been moved to the Calgary Marlborough Community Hall; giving us more room for over 35 events which include World in Flames, Civilization, ASL, Axis and Allies, Battletech, DBA, Tactics, to name a few. Also included is the Beginner's Series, Open Gaming and Demo Area, and the CGC Auction. Those interested in a true gaming convention, please write: The Calgary Gaming Convention, 207 Bernard Drive, NW Calgary, AB Canada, T3K 2B6 or call (403) 275-9811

COWS '92

31 Oct-1 Nov, 1992. Carlisle, PA Thiscon features activities for horror, mystery and "Off the Wall" game enthusiasts and will be held at the Embers in Carlisle. Features 30+ gaming activities, dealers, videos and a miniature painting contest. Fees vary from \$6 to \$10 (discount for costumes.) To get more info: Contact M. Forier's Games Only Emporium, 2001bird Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (717) 774-6676

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In Brief

Editorial

by Dean N. Essig

The number of gamers and groups of gamers out there who are planning to start manufacturing companies right now is amazing. I hesitate to speculate how many there might be, but I've talked personally to several of them. Of course, no one can tell how many of these proto-companies will actually undertake operations, nor how many of that group will last more than a year. Many will be sorely disappointed when they start. Most who start such companies will be self-assured that they know what is right and will be able to do it far better than them (the companies now functioning). Naturally, this vision of the future is severely colored by the fledgling entrepreneur's lack of experience. If you are going to make the attempt, I wish you luck and I'll give you a little advice; you will not set the world on fire, and you must be patient.

Many have expressed an interest in the 29th Division expansion of Omaha. Most of that support has been in the form of questions--will it be coming out? To tell you the truth, we will put the thing out--but it's going to be a while. Our experience with Omaha was luke warm. While it sold in numbers comparable to our other titles, the amount of capital absorbed into it was painful. While that capital is not gone (my favorite analogy is that our printers are elves which hammer money into games), it is tied up in inventory which cannot be expected to turn around quickly. The result slowed our growth. As most of you realize, we ride on a tight profit margin as it is. This all being digested as a lesson learned, we cannot help but conclude that while we can afford to put out monsters--those games must never come out closer than two or three years of each other. Reality has again dictated what we can and cannot do...

On another front (literally), the OstFront project has met a competitor. Wig Graves has undertaken to work on a TCS sub-series of games which would follow the Gross Deutschland during WW2. This sub-series would consist of several games which would show the GD in France and in various operations of the war in the east--the GD acting as a theme. If he proceeds with this project and presents a good series of games, OstFront would be cancelled as redundant.

As a last point concerning projects, a number of readers are still intimidated by the long list of "projects without dates" and the status of those games. Those games are being worked on by someone. They have yet to be submitted, and until they are, no production date will be assigned to them. They are listed for your information and

cannot be considered a backlog of games which will be "in front of" anything else we decide to do or which gets submitted to us.

As the water built up in back of the dam, something had to give. UPS and our beloved USPS have raised their rates two-even three-times since we inaugurated our shipping rates as seen in our catalog. In order to accommodate both the increased "getting it there" costs and to make our retail friends happy with respect to our preferred policy, I'll be incorporating the following changes. These changes will take full effect as of December 31, 1992.

First, a little background. Well over 80% of our customer list is preferred, so I feel that extending its benefits to all our customer base is not out of line. The savings in record keeping and time spent managing those records will be most helpful.

The difference between what we should be charging for shipping and what we will charge now will be the "discount" and will be applied to all direct orders. There will be no discount applied directly to our game sales--the savings will be exclusively in the form of shipping costs which are being reduced behind the scenes. The new shipping rates will be 3% US and Canada, 10% Overseas Surface, and 20% Overseas Air (or US 2nd Day Air, for that matter). The existing preferred customer discounts will be dropped.

How will this compare to existing discounts? On a \$32.00 game, the US purchaser will pay an additional \$0.96 in shipping for a total of \$32.96. Using the old system, he would have paid \$28.80 for the game and \$3.60 for shipping, a total of \$32.40, provided he was a preferred customer. While, it is obvious that the new system makes the game cost \$0.56 more over all, remember, we were at the point of needing to raise shipping rates anyway. Naturally, the 20% of folks out there who are "non-preferred" got nothing the old way, a bit of a break in the new-so they definitely come out ahead.

We will continue to honor the existing shipping and discount system for the rest of the year, and will honor the new system from this point on (please don't calculate an order using both methods ...) All mailings and what-not will be based on the new system.

I want to thank you in advance for your understanding in this matter. Given the pitiless concerns of cash and our desire not to compete (or appear to compete) with our retailers, this is the best solution to the concerns involved.

If you, or someone you know, has not received a replacement for a "scored" Bloody Roads South countersheet, be sure to check with the store it was purchased from. They should have a replacement for you. If this is not possible, contact me and I'll replace it myself. There are enough replacements for all the bad ones, so be sure to obtain one for each copy you might have.

PS. Mr. Simpson, the TCS article I promised is on the way. I haven't had time to get it into this issue.

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OutBrief

History, the Wargame, and the Wargamer

by Dean N. Essig

When we started to wargame ("we" in the hard-core, historical board-wargame player sense), we did so for two basic reasons: games were fun, and we wanted to learn more about our interests. The interests in question were a love of military history. Games are and always have provided the fun-given that a person is playing the right game for his interests and ability- but what of the greater issue. Did wargames assist in sustaining and broadening our knowledge of and interest in military history?

I believe the answer is a qualified yes. The qualifications come from the vast difference found in the "learnable lessons" from game to game. The designer's knowledge and ability is at a premium as one attempts to derive lessons from a wargame. A game designed by a designer without either the skill or predilection to give an accurate model of reality will give incredibly inaccurate results. Games designed by those who are well-meaning, but who fall for the innumerable myths and inaccurate popular conceptions of either a given historical event or the conditions of combat at a time in history, are just as dangerous. Maybe even more so, because these games support previously held misconceptions-thereby 'verifying" them and perpetuating them for another design generation. These things all fall under the basic heading of distorted historical fact, and may quickly leave the player with a truly warped view of reality.

The worst case is when the designer *deliberately* designs a game to *support* inaccurate concepts so as to play to gamer's stereotypes or to perpetuate a myth. Luckily, cases of this are very few and, generally, pretty obvious.

Now that I've gotten the qualifications out of the way, let me finish the answer to the question of "did wargames add to our historical knowledge." First, gamers tend to have an excellently developed sense of geography. Just try to compare a Fire in the East veteran's grasp of Russian geography with that of the average man on the street. I know, that's unfair. Especially since the guy on the street (in the good ole' US of A, anyway) might be lucky to locate the former Soviet Republic in anything but general terms.

That might be stretching it (haven't done any interviews) but not nearly as much as one might suppose. The gamer's knowledge of geographical detail is not only limited

to place names and rough locations either. Given a good game, he will also have an intuitive feel for distances between locations and a good idea of what the ground is like between them. Trivia, you say?

Perhaps, yet I contend that this very gamer will get much more out of his reading about the Campaign in the East than one who has not developed the same sense of geography. Score one for wargames.

Next comes the details of the campaign or battle at hand. Once again, this presupposes a "good" game on whatever topic-when that is both accurate in the details and proper in its modeling of the interaction of them. That true, the gamer will walk away from a game with a decent feel for the action and the relative strengths and weaknesses of the tools the commander of his side had at the time. Total accuracy?

Of course not, but he will be able to more accurately discern between potential courses of action and flights of armchair fancy when confronted in historical discussions. Like the geography issue, his familiarity will assist him greatly in envisioning the action when he reads about it later-that so and so was a dud, or a unit was particularly good or bad will pop out as additional depth when he reads. The units and commanders, their concerns, abilities, and relative merit will come to life in a better manner with the gaming intuitive experience behind him.

A skill which can add to the gamer's tool box in reading and understanding military history, is the use of the game as a "moving map." The gamer follows his reading with the game set up and moving the units about as he reads. This technique is very helpful in envisioning what all is going on when the historian gives only a few cryptic details. The living map is a skill which deserves a more detailed look than I can give here. It is a useful tool which all serious gamers can use to enliven their reading. It can also bring games out of the closet for use which involves no rules at all-set up and you are ready to roll.

In the end, given a decent game on a topic, a intuitive "grain of salt" acceptance of the game's "reality," and decent real historical works, games do add to the player's knowledge and appreciation of military history.

Certain dangers exist: the trivialization of the suffering of humanity ("its only cardboard..."), the substitution of game "history" for the real stuff, blind acceptance of inaccurate models of reality, the perpetuation of historical myth at the expense of fact and genuine analysis, but fortunately gamers tend to be bright enough (and cynical enough) to see through the smoke and mirrors to examine "game based reality" in the sort of uncompromising manner required.

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Up&Coming

News Update

by Dean N. Essig

Projects at this Time...

Stalingrad Pocket

SCS #1. June 1992. Designer: Masahiro Yamazaki. \$22.00 By the time you read this, this game should be within a few weeks of shipping. It should be in your hands by the 15th of June. Many have been concerned regarding the relationship of this game to Masahiro's release from 3W. The game and game system have been completely revised here and I feel safe in saying that this game bares no relation to Masahiro's other title.

Guderian's Blitzkrieg

OCS #1. Origins 1992. Designer: Dean Essig. \$39.00 I've been trudging through the historical set ups (all 10 turns of them) checking for efforts and laying out scenario positions. Not much fun, but very important. Time to make the donuts...

Perryville

CWB #6. Oct 1992. Designer: Dave Powell. \$22.00 Dave delivered this to me in final form in March. The artwork will be done in the summer.

Embrace an Angry Wind

CWB #7. Oct 1992. Designer: Dean Essig. \$22.00 We decided to change the name of Blood of Generals to that of the recent (and outstanding) book on the same subject. We played the historical Franklin scenario twice on our trip to the battlefield itself. Great bloodbath, best done solitaire.

Thunder at the Crossroads, 2nd Ed.

CWB #2. April 1993. Designer: Dave Powell. \$32.00 Dave has designed a variable entry system to keep the enemy guessing as to where the reinforcements come in

which will allow players to plan their "own" Gettysburg and not be stuck with actual mistakes when they can make their own. He has added a corps of North Carolinian troops under D.H. Hill-in other words, he added everything but the kitchen sink. Yes, the maps and counters will be re-done in the BRS style.

Austerlitz

NBS #1. Origins 1993. Designer: Dave Powell. \$34.00 I've had the draft NBS rules for some time now and have been hammering on them with the in-house playtest "cast of thousands." Dave has also supplied us with the draft Austerlitz game itself and we will begin serious work on it as soon as I make up decent playtest maps and counters.

Matinikau

TCS. #4 Oct 1993 Designer: Sam Simons. \$34.00 Attacks of the Marines in November 1942 around the Matinikau River, Guadalcanal. All the parts are in place for this one. Owen and I will begin heavy playtesting later this summer. Look for this one to include the 3rd Edition TCS rules-if you have comments or suggestions, I'll need them soon if they are to have an impact.

The Back Burner.. (None have a date yet)

The games below are "in the works" any of them may be potential releases in the next few years. It is only provided as information for your use. As these games are finished, they will be assigned publication dates in the year after acceptance-if a date is available. Given our 3 per year schedule, it may be a while before any particular one of these see's the light of day.

A Frozen Hell

TCS. Designer: Al Wambold. A battle in the RussoFinnish War, 1939. Specifically, the Battle of Tolvaj5rvi, December, 1939.

The Seven Days

CWB. Designer: Dave Powell. This one will begin to show up (it comes in three linkable games) in 1994.

Yom Kippur

SCS. Designer: Al Sandrik. The Battle for the Sinai, 1973

April's Harvest

CWB. Designer: Al Wambold. Shiloh..

KG Hecker

TCS. Designer: Dean Essig. A projected Axis amphibious operation during the Gazalla Battles.

Bakka Valley

TCS: Modern Expansion. Designer: Al Sandrik. Syrians vs. Israelis, 1982.

Arracourt

TCS. Designer: James Meldrum. Jim has submitted the game and it will begin its final development sometime in 93.

Atlanta

CWB. Designer: John Gilmer, Jr.

OstFront

TCS. Designer: Dean Essig. This would be a set of three games (when finished) covering the war in the East with representative actions. The game may be cancelled.

Hunters from the Sky

TCS. Designer: Wig Graves. The Battle for the Malene Airfield, Crete.

Krasni Bor

TCS. Designer: David Freidrichs. The defense of the Spanish Blue Division against the usual Soviet onslaught.

North Africa

OCS. Designer: Dean N. Essig. This game would cover the entire campaign in North Africa on five maps, 1940 until early 1943. This one will be done in the manner as a pet project during my (cough) free time. I've got the map references right now and will do the playtest maps as soon as I can find some free time... If you are interested in helping with the research on this one, let me know, all areas are open. Richard Berg's CNA game cannot be used as a source, though.

The Gross Deutschland at War

TCS. Designer. Wig Graves. This would be a short subseries of games covering the GD from France, 1940 until the end of the war. It would show the development of the unit and the types of actions it fought during the years it spent on the Eastern Front and the Battle to protect the Sedan bridgehead in France. If successful, these games would cancel the OstFront project.

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Letters

Back into the Woods...

Refereed by Dean N. Essig

What follows is a set of two letters forwarded to me which are pro and con the CWB's handling of forest effects and Dave Powell's response to the con argument. Both letters were developed by players in response to [Dave's article](#) which appeared in OPS #1. I have endeavoured to reprint the letters faithfully, with editing limited to spelling and punctuation, to preserve the tone and structure of the originals. I will be happy to follow up the debate here with letters and articles submitted by others. However, I will be very quick to listen to the readership. The debate will only be useful if the readership wants to see it. If not, I cannot allow further space to be dedicated to its pursuit.

Those ground rules laid, let the mud-slinging begin.

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Letters

Con: The CWB's Forest Treatment

(from a letter to Mr. Blankenship) by Lewis Pond

Our telephone conversation prompted me to get out my copy of Operations #1 and read this article. My aim was to discover why The Gamers did not include a woods terrain effects modifier (TEM) in their CWB games. I could hardly believe what I read. If this article is The Gamers idea of either logic or historical research, then they have no understanding of the meaning of either of those terms. After finishing the article, I get the image of the B.C. Fat Lady blindly swinging in all directions and hitting everything but the snake. If The Gamers desire an accession of their nascent series to The Brigade Series, then they will have to overcome their pertinacity.

In my analysis that follows, I point out many errors made by the author and then go on to show why the historical situations led him to error. I then point to the correct solution to the problems he raises (I claim no credit for these solutions, Richard Berg long ago faced the same problems that the author discusses and came up with answers that make far more common sense and logic than the authors ridiculous optional rule. Mr. Berg's solutions are found in one of the most popular Civil War game systems and should have been easily discovered.)

Mr. Powell's first error is in his opening paragraph. He says "After all, the argument ran, the other games had such effects. Ergo, the CWB needed them too." This is called setting up a straw man. You state the opposing argument in such weak terms that you can easily refute it. This is a very old trick, and beneath anyone who intends to win an argument by logic and sound reasoning. You should always be fair enough to state the opposing argument in the strongest possible terms. Of course, it is possible Mr. Powell either is not smart enough to understand the opposing argument or intentionally insults our intelligence. But you can see I give him the benefit of the doubt. His opening set the tone for the speciousness that followed.

Mr. Powell goes on to say that "The Gamers' rationale in first designing the CWB was to provide a vehicle for portraying Civil War combat at the brigade level without drowning the system in complicated clutter, while providing sufficient detail to hold one's interest." I suspect that this is the most honest part of his essay. However, he does not take this to its logical conclusion. It follows from the above that the woods rule was at first considered "complicated clutter." It does not surprise me that wargamers quickly pointed out The Gamers' error. TEM is a basic design

consideration, and understanding terrain is fundamental to understanding the art of war. I think if you read the opening of Mr. Powell's essay you will see that it was only after wargamers pointed this out that Mr. Powell developed his rationale. Why not just admit your mistake and make the change?

The answer is found in Mr. Essig's basic philosophy. Mr. Essig believes that if he can publish a system without modifications, then he can publish several games using the same system and wargamers will buy them knowing that they don't have to learn a new system each time. His philosophy I at first applauded. It is not a new idea. Others have tried the system approach before but usually botched it by too many design changes as the system developed. I now see that Mr. Essig took a good idea too far. When the system obviously needs ameliorating you should give in and make the change. Not rationalize the error. The Gamers' believe that they have wrought the perfect design from the start. The virgin birth in the quiet fields of Homer. After seeing the display of their reasoning in this article, maybe the system was an Immaculate Conception. How else could they have done it?

Mr. Powell claims that he omitted the woods effects in the final design because the benefit was not borne out by examining historical losses. He then presents three or four examples to support his claim. In presenting his cases he contradicts his own conclusion several times.

First he says "Combat at 10 to 30 yards was common in the woods, a range which was all but suicidal (and almost unheard of) in the open." He forgets to ask the obvious question of why it would be unheard of in the open. I am not going to insult your intelligence by pretending that it takes much thinking to reach a conclusion. The woods obviously provide enough protection to allow the troops to close. Surely you are not going to agree with The Gamers that this is due to line of sight alone.

In the first example he admits the Confederate losses are guesswork and not easily determined. In the second example he admits "it is unclear which units fought in the woods and which were in the clear..." His description of the 20th Maine counterattack is very poor. The 20th Maine low on ammunition. Then they launched a bayonet charge. To characterize this as fire combat is ludicrous!

Note that he ignores the case where one unit is in the trees and the enemy is in the open. He later claims that he has so far "been unable to (sic) find such an action" of when this occurred. This is doubtful. It is more likely that he could not find a case where this occurred and supported his conclusion.

A much more damning point is that his sample is too small. He flipped a coin one time and concluded that it always comes up heads. His sample is simply too small. **NO STATISTICALLY VALID OR LOGICAL CONCLUSION CAN BE DRAWN FROM IT WHATSOEVER.**

But let us suppose that Mr. Powell finds more cases and that he can remove the "guesswork." What if these cases disclosed similar results? Would this be convincing? Absolutely not. We can discover Mr. Powell's errors from the examples he has given without more cases. Consider his own account of the actions he cites. In his second example he says that "the Federals clearly launched a close combat." In his third example involved "both one hex combat and close combat as well." He is compelled to admit the close combat on Little Round Top because it is so well documented and commonly known. He says "over in the woods the distance closed to 10 yards, with perhaps some hand to hand fighting." This contradicts his definition of fire combat on page one. There he defines "close combat" as combat at about " 15 yards." These accounts make it clear that what he has found is that close combat (not fire combat) amplifies losses.

I must point out that Richard Berg realized this at least 15 years ago and included fire modifiers for close combat. Mr. Berg realized that the woods provide some cover from fire and therefore decrease losses. At the same time, close combat increases firepower and increases losses. Shouldn't previous games on a similar subject be within the research on new games? If Mr. Powell were more familiar with his own hobby he would have known that this problem had long ago been considered and solved by game designers.

I hope this letter will let some light into the Forest and I hope Mr. Powell will find the TEM for the woods. Do you think this letter is good enough to send to The Gamers? I would like to disabuse Mr. Powell of his notions without sounding peevish.

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Letters

Pro: The CWB's Forest Treatment

(from the response letter to Mr. Pond) by Rick Blankenship

I too got out my copy of Operations #1 as soon as I hung up the telephone. I also remembered [an article in issue number 2](#) and I got it also. You can find it on page 6. My intent was as yours: to find out why The Gamers did not include a terrain modifier for woods in fire combat. Before I continue, let me first say that I found your letter very compelling, a very hard thing to accomplish with words alone. You are very articulate in your writing and should be proud of yourself.

Although your letter is sure to convince some that something is awry, it did not completely convince me. Let's begin with Richard Berg. His designs are without a doubt some of the best, and I will not dispute his theory of game design. However, it is unfair to compare his games with those of The Gamers. Berg's games are on a totally different scale, and this is what most critics of the CWB system, for some reason, fail to grasp. For instance, there have been several reviews in which the absence of opportunity fire has been criticized. [*Ed. Note: If memory serves, there was only one.*] I can recall no one blasting TSS for the lack of opportunity fire, which on the regimental scale makes far greater sense. My point is that we must look at the CWB as a series on the brigade scale, not the regimental scale! In other words, how did woods affect entire brigades.

What were the tactics of the time? From everything I've read on the American Civil War, the woods were not the terrain of choice for most commanders at the time. The woods compounded the problem of command control-one of the most important, if not the most important aspects of battlefield theory. One of the first things you said, of which I disagree, was that Mr. Powell waited until after wargamers complained before he "developed his rationale." In fact, he said that a TEM was considered while the game was under development.. There is also a small and somewhat weak explanation in the designer's notes of Thunder at the Crossroads.

"Combat at 10 to 30 yards was common in the woods, a range which was all but suicidal (and almost unheard of) in the open." Your conclusion is correct, the trees probably did give enough protection for the troops to close. And yes, I do think that line of sight is, at the least, a much larger factor than you do. I challenge you to go out to your nearest undisturbed woods, mark several trees, and step off 90 feet-you may be surprised. But let us take this one step further, once this range was acquired,

what, if anything, was different? Did the troops seek out their own individual tree, or did they maintain their ranks as much as physically possible? What comes to mind is the scene in the movie *Glory* (which was overseen by Civil War re-enactors) in which the troops on both sides stood shoulder to shoulder and fired on one another for several rounds before engaging in hand to hand. We are talking about some of the bravest men in recorded history. It is, therefore, not totally absurd to think this to be the case. More on this in my conclusion...

It is indeed ludicrous to characterize the 20th Maine counterattack as fire combat, if indeed that was what Mr. Powell was doing, I think that if you were to read that again you would see that what he was doing was merely describing the end of the particular battle. You and I both know that the 20th Maine was involved in two or three separate assaults by the boys from Alabama, and only after these firefights took place did Chamberlain see no other recourse but to charge with the bayonet. I'm sure you're also aware that the 20th did not "seek their own personal tree", but rather took up position along a small rock wall.

You say he ignores the case where one unit is in the trees and the enemy is in the open. I see no reason to doubt whether he could find an instance where this occurred. I myself can recall no instance in my own reading of the period where this occurred although my reading is somewhat limited to the major battles.

However, I wholeheartedly agree with your assessment that his sample was pathetically to small, and would make any qualified statistician burst into hysterical laughter. On the other hand, his observation, that in the battles of Chickamauga and the Wilderness the casualties seemed not much different (percentage wise, I assume) than those of other battles, certainly does merit further thought.

As for your last paragraph, you will have to read the rules, which I know you have already realized as per our phone conversation, The Gamers do indeed give a modifier for combat at ranges closer than 15 yards, and it is deadly!!! [*Ed. Note: 100 yards or less is more precise*] In effect when units conduct close combat their fire strengths are doubled.

To summarize, let's start with tactics. The most devastating shooting tactic of the time was, in my opinion, the volley shot. The commanders certainly realized this. In order to deliver this type of fire you had to maintain some kind of formation. With this in mind, if an infantry unit took position on the edge of the woods with a clearing to their front (so as to deliver their best shot) they themselves would be exposed to the same fire as the enemy. Conversely, if the same infantry unit deployed deep enough into the woods to gain some benefit, and still maintain their best shooting formation, they would either lose sight of the clearing or any enemy unit they could still see would gain the same benefit from the intervening trees.

Again we are talking about brigades here and I will not deny that some regiments

would not physically be able to deploy in this type of formation in every woods ever fought in, but certainly the commanders in these locations would try to find an area where they could deploy. It appears to me that most instances where troops were deployed in the woods, they were so that the flank anchored and to deny the area's screening of enemy troop movements-not because they offered some sort of defensive benefit.

I do think that Mr. Powell failed miserably in his attempt to try to explain the rationale behind his theory. I myself found it hard to put my thoughts into a logical sequence in order for others to see how I view this problem-and I'm not sure I did any better than he did. One last thing, deploying in the woods was not foreseen as a defensive advantage. Of this I am certain, so I totally agree with Mr. Essig when he states "If the advantage of woods was perceived as less than the problem of managing troops in them, why should we corrupt the game system by giving players encouragement- a reward-for behaving in a way that is incorrect, ahistorical, and the opposite of the way their "on map" commanders would have handled their troops?"

I've enjoyed this debate immensely Lewis, as always you have challenged me to look deeper into something that interests me. I only hope that someday, I will be able to express my thoughts as well as you express yours.

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Letters

In Self Defense: Reply

A Reply to Mr. Pond's Comments by Dave Powell

These days, it seems, every time you bite into a Big Mac you're attacking someone's sacred cow. I've just finished reading Lewis Pond's response to my "Forest for the Trees..." article published in Operations 1. Wow. I must have touched a nerve somewhere. Thankfully, he's apparently not really "peeved" at me. I shudder to think of what might follow if he were. Fortunately, Dean gets all the mail at the company address, and so will run the risk of letter bombs, drive-by shootings, etc., incurred by a "peeved" response. Good luck, partner.

Mr. Pond brought up the "Fat Lady" metaphor, but it seems to me it might be more accurately applied to his response rather than my initial effort. My article attacked no one, and discussed only one topic: the combat effects of trees. I presented four examples, all focused on the loss rates for units in both wooded and clear terrain. Where did I wander off the topic?

By contrast, Mr. Pond has attacked my respect for my fellow gamer, my honesty, my intelligence, my writing technique (the straw man gambit), and my ability to read and understand history. About the only thing he didn't accuse me of was date-rape. *[Ed. Note: Dave exaggerates here intentionally. There are other things he has not been accused of.. but, indeed, most of them are felonies.]*

So far the only reason offered to us for including a woods modifier is because "other games had one..." This fact still stands; stripped of its rhetoric, the central theme of Mr. Pond's letter merely restates that case, this time drawing on the GBACW system. Nowhere does he offer historical evidence of his own. If this is a straw man, it is not of my making.

Next, Mr. Pond scoffs at my examples. Not statistically significant, he sneers. Berg 'proved' that the woods effect modifier is valid and needed years ago, he says, and ridicules my lack of gaming knowledge as well. (There's yet another personal jab.)

Actually, I have all of the GBACW games, and have played them for years. That doesn't mean that I accept everything written there as knowledge divinely inspired. In fact, I know Richard Berg reasonably well from repeated contact at conventions and have discussed game design and history with him a number of times. Richard himself

will freely admit to 'winging it' on occasion. If it sounds reasonable, he's not adverse to throwing it in, so to speak. The preceding statement is not in any way intended to attack Richard Berg, in fact, it shows his deep intellectual honesty. I like Richard, I like his games, and I have never discussed the 'woods controversy' as such with him specifically. My point is that Richard does not have some absolutist death-grip on "THE TRUTH", as he would be the first to admit.

The above notwithstanding, this 'fact' has already been 'proved' beyond a shadow of a doubt, contends Mr. Pond. Since he rejects my four examples as statistically ludicrous, how many separate examples *would* be considered statistically significant? I assume, after all, that there must be several hundred clear-cut supporting incidents which he can draw upon--ones where "proof" is involved. By all means bring them forth.

Next up is my veracity. At first I thought Mr. Pond was calling me a liar, but then I realized he was accusing me of a far worse crime: of being a sleazy lawyer who hides evidence detrimental to his case--hitting below the belt, indeed!

The truth is simpler, if less juicy for conspiracy theorists: I have yet to find an example of an action where a unit actively sought the shelter of a treeline for defensive purposes and the intention of reducing losses. I have found some cases where units concealed themselves in trees for surprise purposes, but when the action commenced, they advanced into less restrictive terrain. In short, they abandoned their "defensive advantage" almost immediately. Additionally, I have found units which entrenched just inside treelines. This was done for two reasons: concealment and easy access to building materials.

However, I contend that any reduced casualty rate was impacted far more by the resultant trenches than by the trees. Perhaps more significantly, none of the several woods effects partisans out there have yet produced a supporting example of their claim--not one. My request still stands. If anyone can discover such an instance, send it in.

One final statistical note: my four examples were meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. I can and have found more examples of woods combat which support my theory. Turchin's brigade at Chickamauga leaps to mind, as do at least five or six other actions in that battle. The Wilderness is a fertile harvestground for more. However, I'm not willing to spend yet more hours of research and writing flogging this insignificant horse. Especially, if proponents are unable to provide even one example of their contention in action. Even if I wrote a 200,000 word magnum opus, Dean would throttle me if I asked him to publish it.

[Ed. Note: Try me, Bucko, especially after leaving me holding the mail bag above ...]

The article in question was meant to be a form of extended designer's notes, not a

frustrated graduate student's obscure thesis topic.

Besides, there is a larger problem here. History is not math, and there are no definitive "Proofs". Nor is warfare akin to baseball which generates hundreds of statistics with every swing of a bat. The historical method develops theories from significant but *incomplete* data--simply because all the needed information just doesn't exist. Game design compounds this problem by demanding hard numbers for every aspect of combat. It is the rare battle indeed where it can be proven how many men were actually present, much less how many were killed or how they were hit. History is not hard science, nor will it ever be. Anyone who pretends otherwise is not a student of the subject.

Mr. Pond also takes me to task for my incomplete description of the 20th Maine's advance, and indeed for missclassifying forms of combat generally. I standby that description as a clear and concise outline (it was never intended to be the last word on the subject) of the course of events on Little Round Top. I assumed most of those interested would have a familiarity with at least some of the untold thousands of words expended on the subject, or know where to go in order to find such. As for calling close combat fire combat, that is what it is. There can be no question the 20th Maine engaged in an extended firefight at close range, which produced virtually all their losses. If this is not the case, how did they manage to run out of ammo? Finally, our CRT factors in losses from all causes, including captures, not just gunshot wounds. Again, we opted for simplicity and ease of play here.

In at least one respect I must plead guilt. In the article, I failed to present my conclusion in as unambiguous a manner as possible which resulted in some confusion. Certainly, Mr. Pond missed it. He claims that one need look no further than my existing examples to prove I'm an ignoramus: my own words indicate that trees do affect fire combat.

I never tried to claim that trees don't inhibit lead bullets. I quite firmly believe the reverse is true. Instead, my conclusion is that compensating factors were at work here--specifically range--which cancels out any defensive benefit. Allow me now to present my thoughts in a clear a manner as possible:

1. Trees do provide some measure of protection in fire combat, as opposed to the firefight in the clear, assuming that both firefights occur at a constant equal range.
2. Due to the dual factors of LOS (the need to get closer to engage the enemy) and fewer casualties compared to units in the open at the same range, formed units in the woods advance to ranges which would have been suicidal in the open.
3. At these much closer ranges, the proximity of the battlelines generated

higher losses even for units in the woods.

4. The result is a conflicting feedback situation in which losses are being driven downward by the woods themselves, but upward by the deadly ranges.

In effect, these conflicting modifiers on the loss rate cancel each other out. One person even suggested that we use two modifiers, one positive and one negative, to more graphically represent the effects of the woods. The net effect, of course, would be a modifier of zero.

5. The important constant here is range. If two separate friendly units engage the enemy in close combat--one in the open, the other in the woods- they will suffer reasonably comparable losses. The only significant difference is that the friendly unit in the woods will engage much closer to the enemy line.

6. The overall effect of these differing pressures is to produce generally equivalent loss rates in units over Nine. These loss rates will be similar regardless of whether or not the specific terrain is wooded. Furthermore, I contend that this was a common effect and not a fluke. Hence, no woods specific modifier is needed.

Mr. Pond's two contentions (once I waded through all the character assassinations) are that: A) Berg had a modifier, and B) my own writing proved trees affected loss rates. As I stated above, I never disputed B, but instead tried to state (and apparently failed) that there were mitigating circumstances involved. All this leaves Mr. Pond to defend his point with is A. My, that's original. We aren't lemmings at The Gamers, and we do not design games based on the "follow the leader" principle. The way to prove a point is to present solid historical examples, and the good historian returns to primary sources as much as possible for these. Other games are at best tertiary sources, since they are designer's interpretations of historian's interpretations of events filtered through the mind-set of the participants.

I'm all in favor of good, rousing historical debate, But I do ask that future contenders bring something new to the issue. If all you can offer as evidence is the same old "other game" theory, you'll not convince me I'm wrong, no matter what name you call me.

Letters

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Game Errata and Q&A

Civil War, Brigade Series

by Dean N. Essig

Errata

Civil War, Brigade Series

1-01 In their Quiet Fields, 2nd Edition

1. M/DM/2 should be M/DH/2 on the counter.
2. 1/3/2 and 2/3/2 are overstacked in the initial set up. Place I/ 3/2 in any adjacent hex.
3. A number of Loss Charts were shipped which were improperly printed. If you do not have both Union and Confederate Loss Charts (printed on one big sheet in the 2nd Ed), let us know and we will replace your sheet with a correct one.

1-02 Thunder at the Crossroads

1. There are no Corps-level anti-initiative ratings for either side.
2. There is no Entry Hex 1. In all cases, the Union player gets points for Controlling Entry Hex H, instead.
3. The Confederate player gets 10 VP for entry Hex E (not F) and 5 VP for Entry Hex F (not G).
4. Each wrecked Union Cavalry Brigade is worth three (3) VP's, not one.
5. Current Strength Chart:
 - S/J/2-strength on 3rd and 4th days is 14, not 10.
 - StwI/J/2-strength on 3rd & 4th days is 10, not 14.
 - B/Heth/3-strength on 2nd, 3rd, & 4th days is 8, not 9.
 - A/Heth/3--strength on 2nd & 3rd days is 9, on 4th day is 5.

6. Loss Chart corrections:

The Iron Brigade (1/1/1) is missing five strength circles. (Note: this error is on the original, two-color loss charts only. Later loss charts, all in black, have corrected the error.)

The 2/1/3 should have an original strength of 22, not 12.

7. Union Arrival Schedule:

At 12 noon July 2, Gregg and 1/2/Cav arrive with 1xCb, not 3xCb.

8. Confederate Arrival Schedules:

In order to correct a game imbalance, allow the Rebel army supply train to arrive at 4:00 p.m. July 1, with Anderson's Division. This holds for both the Jackson Lives and historical orders of arrival.

9. Jackson Lives Scenario: Two new divisions are created in this scenario, Ew/2 and LD/2. Their wrecked levels are as follows: Ew/2 0/0 LD/2 00000/0

1-03 August Fury

1. If for any reason a newly arriving unit finds its entry area blocked by enemy forces, it may appear, one turn later, at the closest unblocked map edge hex, in any formation desired.

2. The CSA RW Supply arrives at 9:00 a.m., the 29th, at area A.

3. Remove the 3v Supply wagon from both Scenario 2 and 6 setups. The wagon enters at 5:00 a.m. on the 29th with McDowell which is the first turn of both scenarios and does not begin on the map.

4. H/Cav should be listed as part of the option which includes Hill's Provisional Corps.

5. Hatch is allowed to stack with the artillery with his division as if it were one of his brigades in the set up. He must move to one of his brigades when play begins.

1-04 Barren Victory

1. There are two Entry Area F's on the map. The one on the North map edge should be a G. There are supposed to be two Entry Area G's.

2. The Amino and Casualty tracks for both sides were set up from 1 to 10 instead of 0 to 9. Please use the 10 as the 0.

3. The use of Kershaw and McLaws is not explained. McLaws is an optional unit for use when the "rest of M/1" variant is used. Kershaw is the normal commander of M/1. When the regular reinforcements of M/I come on the map he is their commander. When the option is used, ignore Kershaw and bring on McLaws instead.

4. The example of forest in the terrain key was omitted. What the forest symbol looks like should be obvious. The use of the words forest and woods in the Terrain notes of the exclusive rules was unfortunate—please read woods as open.

5. The dice rolls given as examples in the rules for Lee and Johnston to bypass Wing Structure are incorrect. Johnston needs 11+, Lee needs 9+. The number listed for Bragg (12) is correct.

6. The two optional Reserve Corps Batteries—Rb(5), Rb(2) should be omitted when setting up the game. Where the set up calls for "Reserve Corps, all" it is too easy to forget that these two batteries are optional and should not be set up. Be sure to keep them with the optionals.

7. The reference to "5" in 4.2f should be to 4.2e.

8. When the Union Army panics, the center of the "zone of rout" is measured from Rosencrans himself, not his HQ.

1-05 Bloody Roads South

1. The following rules should be added to those already marked Optional: 1.2c and 3.1d. As a further option, if 3.1d is used, do not apply it to those Union leaders listed in 3.1g which are capable of issuing themselves attack orders.

2. The Off-Map mvt hex for the Rebs should be A2.01, not A1.01

3. The Divisional Goal listed for 3/5 in Scenario 3 also applies in Scenarios 4 and 5.

4.3.1 a & 3.1b are not meant to imply that Grant cannot issue orders to division commanders. He can if he wants to, and this would be done with the same column shift on the Acceptance Table as if the receiver was a corps commander.

5. 3.1c: A sentence is incorrect as written. The sentence beginning: "Union corps no longer need to check for acceptance themselves..." should read "Union corps no longer need to check for Corps Attack Stoppage themselves..."

6. In Strategic Victory determination, The Brock Crossing should be worth 2 VP's to either side, not just the Confederates, and the it should be 20 Tac VP's give 1 Strategic VP, not the 5 to I as listed.

7. Add to 1.2f. "Wilderness hexes are negated for straggler recovery purposes if they contain or are adjacent to trails, roads, railroads, or open terrain features."

Q&A

An army commander has an Anti-Initiative. He, however, is not yet on the map. Do I still use the modifier?

Yes. Anti- initiatives reflect the attitude of the subordinates to independent decisions. They will refrain from doing anything on their own because they know that if they do anything wrong, old so-and-so will string them up after the battle.

A reinforcement arrives with orders to go defend something. The other side has occupied the feature to be defended. Does the reinforcement automatically attack the feature to be held or what?

No. To attack to regain the feature will require either new orders or initiative. The units must move in the direction of their original objective to a point where the player can assume they know the enemy occupies their intended position, stop, and await new instructions.

If limbered artillery gets assaulted and must retreat, does it roll on the Gun Loss Table?

No. Only guns that must limber in a ZOC (or in the same hex as the enemy unit in the case of close combat) roll on the Gun Loss Table. Once hitched, the batteries can run. During the hitching they are prime targets, and that is the time the Gun Loss Table comes into play.

A unit is hit with a greater number of casualties than it can handle. The brigade is destroyed, to be sure, but are the extra losses applied to other units? Are they recorded on the casualty track anyway?

Excess losses are applied to another unit in the stack, if any. If no other unit exists, the loss is ignored. Only actual casualties are recorded on the Casualty Record Tracks. If a battery is in the same hex as an infantry unit which is overkilled, excess losses may be applied as gun point losses on the artillery unit.

A unit which has been destroyed attempts to reform by straggler recovery. Where does it sprout up?

Place the straggler recovery marker in any empty hex which fills the other straggler recovery conditions. If the unit recovers any straggler points, place the brigade's counter there.

A unit outside command radii is forced to move toward radii "using all available movement." Does this mean a brigade 8 MP's from its divisional commander moves using its entire movement to get within range? Or, can it move until it is within range and then use any remaining MP's to do something else?

As soon as the unit is within range, it is free from the 'movement toward" rule. So, the above unit would move until it is at or within four MP's of the divisional commander. Any remaining MP's may be used as desired.

I have a cavalry division with a brigade out on a divisional goal somewhere. Back with the rest of the division (assume there is but one other brigade) the division commander is killed. Where does his repl show up and what happens to the units vis a vis divisional goals, etc.?

If you have but the one brigade where the commander is when he gets killed, the repl must appear on the brigade off on the divisional goal. Immediately the roles of the two brigades are switched-the one with the goal is now within radius and functions that way; the other must assume a divisional goal which is identical to the orders it was following while the commander was still there.

When an unlimbered artillery unit limbers, does it now have 7 MP's available or did it expend 3 to limber?

The unit expends 3 of its limbered MA to become limbered, leaving the unit with 4 remaining MP's.

Is a Morale Check performed in Close Combat step 2 (Odds Table, Charts and Tables) if losses are suffered by either side? If no, does this mean the defender never checks morale if the attacker fails in 3?

Regular Morale Checks are ignored in the close combat sequence, so no check is done in 2 for either side. If the attacker fails in 3, the defender does get off easy. That is intended, as it is assumed the sight of the attacker turning tail will hearten the defender to stick around.

Must all attackers be firing at a defender's flank to get the "flankfire" column shift?

No, only one firer must actually be firing on the flank of the unit to create that effect.

Must Corps artillery stack with the corps commander to receive divisional goals?

Yes, they must. We rarely resort to issuing divisional goals to artillery units, but if we were to do so, the commander must stack with the unit to give it.

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Game Errata and Q&A

Tactical Combat Series

by Dean N. Essig

Errata

2-01 Bloody 110th

1. Add the 38thPzJg Bn (all) to the Historical Order of Arrival to the other units arriving at 0200,17 Dec 44. The 273 Flak did not enter the map is correct and it should not be on the Order of Arrival.
2. Only one German Bridge may be built during the game. If a bridge allows the use of Areas 3 and 4, the player need not wait to reduce Hosingen before using Area 3 when the bridge is up. Hosingen only makes units wait which are trying to enter Areas 4 or 5.
3. 2 PG Regimental troops, 2x Gw38(t), enter with 2/2 PG in the Historical Order of Arrival.
4. One 38th Pioneer Platoon was printed without a morale. It has the same morale as the others in its company (5.)

2-02 Objective: Schmidt

1. Teaching Scenario #4, Forward Observer, ignore the Pori tion of the U.S. Victory Condition that calls for occupation of all o Vossenack.
2. Scenario 3: Ignore the German 150mm Artillery ammo supply. It is not needed.
3. Scenario 5: Under German Artillery Batteries Available, I/ 843 should instead be the 1/4/89.
4. The German Fus/275 th should have morale boxes for each company, I through 4, instead ofjust one box for the battalion.

3-01 Force Eagle's War

1. Two of 2/E's ITV's were printed with the same info on the front and back. The backs of these units should read P B 15, like the others.
2. Modern Expansion rule 3.3c is in error. The T-80 may fire an AT-8 or its main gun during a single fire-never both-and this dual system does not free it from the standard "one shot per unit rule." Thanks to D. Demko for bringing this to our attention.

2-03 Omaha

Counters:

1. The Panzer Lehr Mk V's should have a defense of 4 and movement of 18.
2. One Mortar platoon in each of 4/1/915 and M/3/116 is incorrect on the back--they should read A A 4.
3. An MG section in H/2/18 is incorrect on the back--should read A A 5.
4. The M3 in D/745 with A A 6 on the back should read the same as the other M3's.
5. One of the Recon platoons in the 1st ID Recon Company is listed as A B on the back, should be A A.

Rules

1. Scenario 9 lists Panzer Lehr's artillery as 105mm, it should be 150mm and the ammo for the Germans should also be this type.
2. Add the following to the German Variable Reinforcement Table in scenario 1:

The dice roll result of 5-6 on the Reinforcement Table should read 1/352 PJ or 2/352 P.J. The German player has his choice of one of these units-if one is already in play, he gets the other on a later roll of 5 or 6.

3. PHI Boxes are never considered dug in for terrain effects. All the Pill Boxes on maps A and B are used when determining the survival Toll modifier. Pill Boxes do not get the benefit of "being stacked with infantry" on the AT Roll Table-unless an actual infantry unit is present in the pill box's hex.
4. Fortified Zone effects and other terrain effects are cumulative. The net modifier for terrain on a pill box in the open should be 0. Note that PB's are not considered AT Guns for terrain effects-they act like immobile tanks.
5. Artillery vs. Rocket Pits on the Artillery vs. Point Target Table: Rocket pits are

assumed to have a defense rating of more than 2 and no modifier is applied for the reason of "weak defense."

6. LCT(R) fires whose center hex drifts off-map or into the sea are lost and of no effect. There is no effect for the "edge" of a rocket fire which a player might argue is still on the beach. If it goes out to sea, it is all lost. Let's keep it simple.

7. PI3 squads are considered dug in-in the hex their Pill Box was located-if they are in fire mode. If they move from that hex, they lose that status.

8. The Shingle modifier (-2) is in addition to the normal terrain effects of the hex the target is in-i.e. open.

9. AT Rolls against Pill Boxes at ranges one or less are allowed. Range two is not.

10. Leaders land with any of their own units: CO, 1/16 lands with any unit of 1/16, CO 16 RCT would land with any unit of the 16 RCT, etc. Note the restrictions on which leaders are allowed to make up the pool on page 7. In the one map scenarios, divide the number of leaders to be selected by 2, round up.

11. Change the headings of the Pill Boxes Remaining Modifier when playing one map landing scenarios, use the following: Existing Headings: 0-5 6-13 14-20 21 or more Scenario 3 0-2 3-5 6-8 9 or more Scenario 4 0-3 4-8 9-12 13 or more

12. The Variable Reinforcement Table for Scenario 2 has two places where a roll of 9 would end up. The dice rolls for each table position should be 2-9, 10, 11-12.

13. The "1st Flak Corps" mentioned in the German Order of Battle should be read as the 1st Flak Regiment, 3rd Flak Corps. Tactical Combat Series

When does one designate the direction of FPF's? Similarly, what about linear concentrations which are not FPF's?

The direction of FPF's should be set when they are created-which is shown on the op sheet according to the way it is drawn. Generally linear concentrations have their direction determined at the moment of firing- however, a good house rule to use (which doesn't occur often enough to bother cluttering the rules with it) is that: when linear concentrations are called for on TRP's in an unobserved fashion, those fires must have a direction specified in the firing order-which cannot be changed. This house rule avoids excessively effective H & I fires!

City hexes defended by dug-in infantry seem almost impossible to capture, is this right?

Yes. The minimum odds suggested by the US Army to take a defended urban area is 6:1 with odds more like 10: 1 or more being preferred. This is well over double the 3:1 deemed comfortable in open terrain. I have been in infantry companies which have tried to clear small urban areas defended by a few stout souls-and have seen the company devastated by 80% in a matter of minutes. To take a dug-in city hex in the TCS you need to take your time, be careful, and pound it like there was no tomorrow. The only way to take such a hex is to dump 8 battery fire point concentrations, and massed direct fires, on it until the defender's company morale starts to move up. Then to assault with infantry supported by tanks, etc. Expect high losses. I'll stand by the game's simulation as accurate. Clearing city areas is tough work!

If more than one on-map artillery unit fires direct fire at a hex, do I place the appropriate amount of smoke?

No, the smoke generation only occurs during regular fire missions. The reason is that the direct fires cannot be assumed to occur in quick succession (like a fire mission) but may be spread out during the 20 minute turn. The result is that while the fire mission kicks up a great deal of smoke and dust all at once, the direct fires are making a little here and a little there.

8.11 calls for one Artillery and Mortar vs. Point Target Table roll for each round against each target. Is a single round allowed to kill more than one target?

Yes. Given the rather immense jump in probability, the odd round may destroy more than one vehicle (etc.) by some freak manner. With trucks such a hit is not too hard to rationalize--the two trucks were parked close together, etc. Hitting more than two vehicles with a single round requires astronomical levels of luck and can be discounted in reasonable terms. I'd hate to attempt to conjecture on what may happen that would allow one artillery round to take out two tanks anything may have happened: the driver of vehicle number 2 did something stupid when number 1 blew up (drove off a cliff, threw a track, etc.), a tree was hit by the round and landed atop both vehicles, the gunner of vehicle 2 had his sights inadvertently set on number one when the concussion accidentally caused him to pull the trigger. So on, and so on ... If you feel that these weird events don't happen, ask my thumbs.

Is the designator round subject to scatter rotation?

Yes, at the same times as any other round.

Are mortar units fired like artillery (designator round, FFE, etc.)? If so, how does it work?

No, mortar units fire like any other area weapon, except they are allowed to have spotters and allowed to fire indirect fires. They may be added to other area weapons in a single fire attack, may be used in overwatch and in the Suppressive Fire Phase.

They may not be fired in conjunction with artillery fires.

What is the arrow symbol on some of the counters and are these units capable of indirect fires?

Thanks to J. Kisner for bringing this up. The units with the arrow symbol are MG sections. They are weapon units with one step. With the exception of some experiments in WWI (Canadians come to mind for some reason) they are incapable of indirect fire and are never to be confused with mortars.

A point fires may engage an area target up to maximum range, 2x nominal, right?

Yes.

When a stack of vehicles is confronted with an infantry unit (assault or overrun), the infantry is still limited to one AT roll per target vehicle per round, right?

Yes. The equivalent of one attempt per vehicle is made. This attempt may be considered to be several smaller chance attacks--as is any AT roll.

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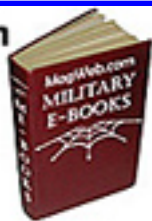


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