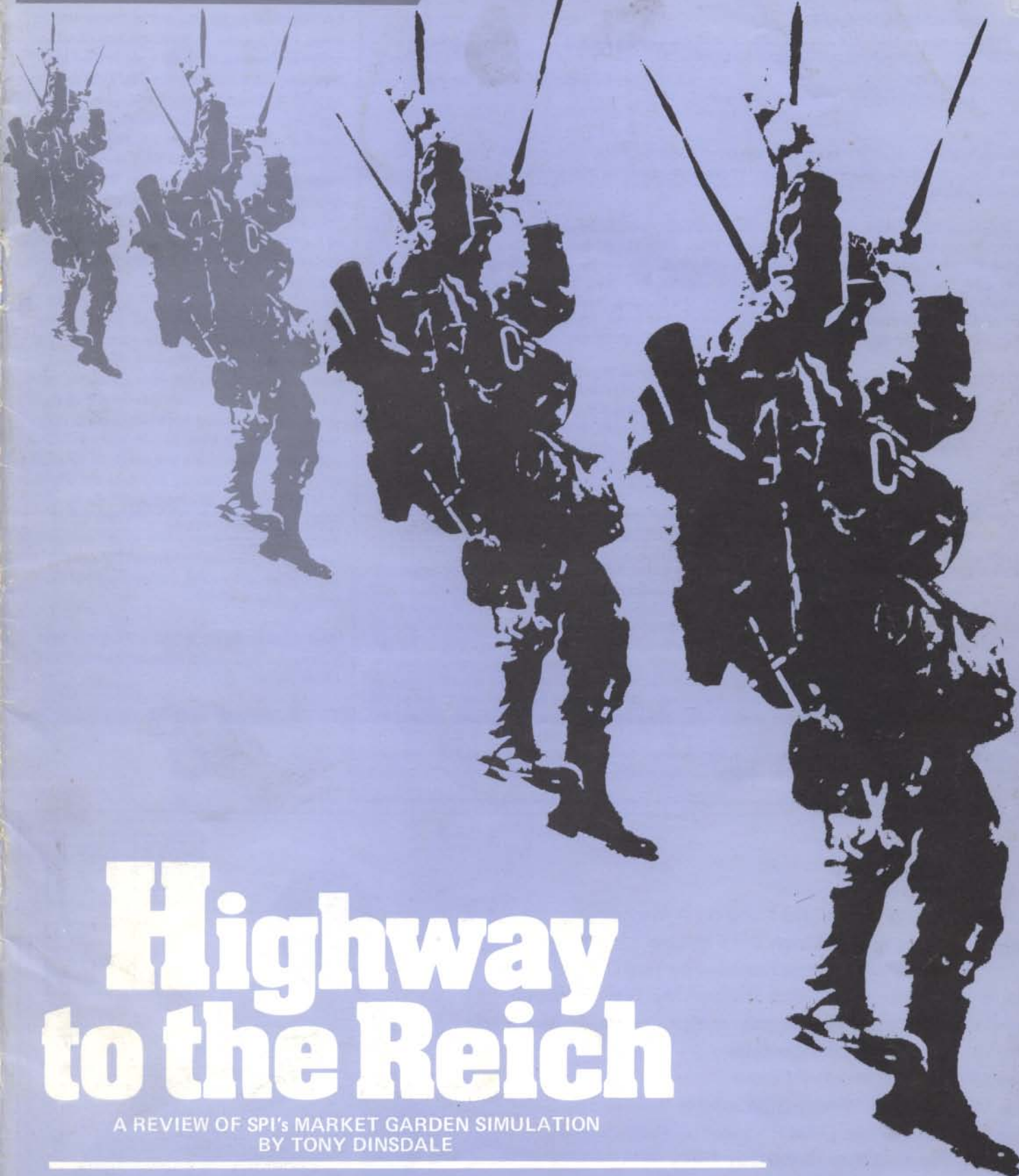


THE PHOENIX

THE BRITISH
BOARD WARGAMERS MAGAZINE
ISSUE No. 9
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1977
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Highway to the Reich

A REVIEW OF SPI's MARKET GARDEN SIMULATION
BY TONY DINSDALE

THE SCENARIO FOR Arnhem

A FIRST ATTEMPT BY SAM MARKS

THE PHOENIX

BRITISH BOARD WARGAMERS MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL RAY BOWDEN

I never cease to be amazed at the variety of views that are put forward on any given subject. Reading through your letters and the comments on your feedback cards is enough to make the strongest of us wilt in confusion. For every reader who requests more of something there's always one who wants less. For each one who says we're getting better there's one who thinks we're getting nowhere. When one wants more reviews and less modifications the other requests less reviews and more modifications. And the list of what we ought to be including is quite amazing.

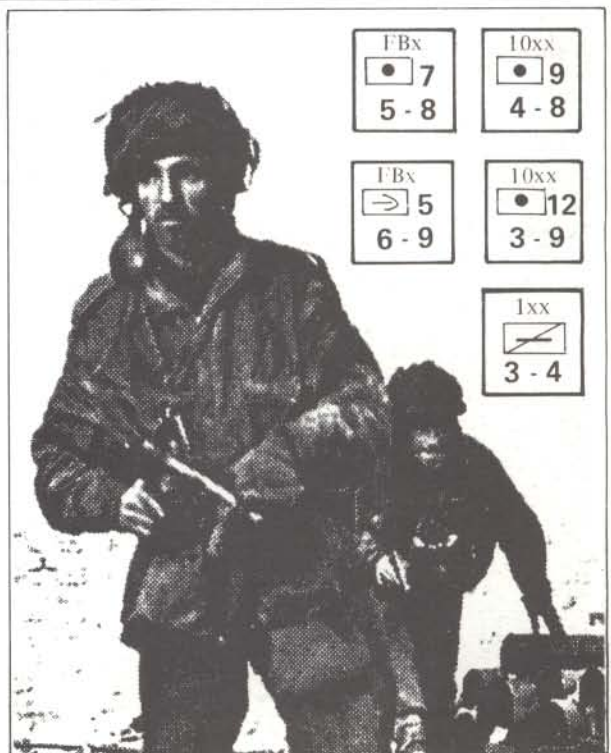
The one factor that many of you, but fortunately not all, seem to forget is that Phoenix is what you make it. We cannot include what we do not have. Phoenix feeds on what YOU the subscriber feed it with. Contrary to popular belief Phoenix is not produced by a cast of thousands — nothing could be further from the truth. It takes all our resources to simply produce the physical item; we cannot, as I have said before, write material to order. So by all means let us know what you would like to see in Phoenix but don't knock us too hard if it doesn't materialise. Someone, somewhere has to supply it to us first!

And if you read an article in Phoenix that you know you could have written better don't say it — DO IT!



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METAGAMING CONCEPTS



The Principle of the Thing

THE PRINCIPLES OF WAR
AND THEIR APPLICATION TO WARGAMING
BY D I A MACK



As a regular soldier who is also a keen wargamer I am frequently asked if I find my military knowledge of help to me in my gaming. My answer is that while no wargame can faithfully reproduce the details of tactical combat — the mechanics of a battalion attack, the calling-together of order groups, the timing and handling of resupply, the actual effects of smoke, darkness and fatigue — nor can it effectually reproduce the fog of war without resort to three-map, umpired games, it is certainly my experience that adherence to the principles of war, to well-tryed tactical gambits and to certain tactical principles, can and does help a player to play a much more coherent and successful game, provided that he bears in mind the limitations and peculiarities of the game system.

Opinion having been recently expressed in 'Phoenix' that more should be done in the way of articles intended to help the novice play a better game, this article on the Principles of War and their application to wargaming has been written in the hope that it may help the beginner to assess the situation, make his plan and then carry it through to a successful conclusion; or, as victory can go to one side only, at least to give his opponent a hard time in a 'damned close run thing'!

The ten Principles of War used in British Army doctrine are, it is stressed, principles, not a selection of gambits: they apply in all ages and in all games from 'Chariot' to 'Starship Trooper' and are as follows:

1. Selection and Maintenance of the Aim
2. Surprise
3. Offensive Action
4. Concentration of Force
5. Economy of Effort
6. Mobility
7. Flexibility
8. Co-operation
9. Administration
10. Maintenance of Morale.

Of these ten, the first seven are as relevant to board wargaming as in real war: the remainder are less applicable to the movement of cardboard counters at the behest of a single mind but still underline certain factors applicable to certain types of game. Some of the principles modify others, as will be seen: for example, No 4 is modified by No 5 while 7 modifies 1. No one principle is supreme nor should one be allowed to exclude another: rather they should be thought of as a package which will be a very useful guide, eventually becoming second nature.

Selection and Maintenance of the Aim

Quite simply, decide what must be achieved, make and execute your plan accordingly and don't let yourself be diverted by irrelevant openings, however attractive they may seem. Your overall aim will be dictated by the game's Victory Conditions and these must be understood before you set up, let alone before you make your first move. There may be variable degrees of victory and you may, for example, decide that Moderate Victory is a more realistic aim than Decisive and make your plan in this light.

Overall aim apart, there will be intermediate objectives along the way, some dictated by the nature of the game and others by the course of play. In 'Mukden', for instance, the Soviet player's initial objective must be to clear and secure a supply route through Mukden by Turn 5 at the latest in order that he can launch his drive south to attain the overall objective; the player who becomes obsessed by the need to clear virtually every hex of the city or every guerilla unit has forgotten Maintenance of the Aim. The Israeli player in 'Chinese Farm' must have as an initial aim the gaining, bridging and crossing of the Canal in order to get his armour off-board into the Egyptian heartland. To fight and win an armoured Armageddon on the East Bank will not in itself bring victory however satisfying the elimination of Egyptian units may be.

An example of the intermediate aim dictated by the course of events is that in some game you may decide that you are losing this particular phase of the battle: the answer appears to be to break off the action and fall back to a strong defensive position along, say, a river-line. Having decided this, go ahead and do it: if your opponent's follow-up results in one or two of his units becoming exposed don't let yourself be tempted into a dog-fight which will delay the operation and possibly prevent you from gaining your new position.

Surprise

As said earlier, the fog of war is absent from most board wargames: one's position in the heavens makes secret concentrations, covered flank marches and concealed withdrawals impossible and with them many opportunities for achieving Surprise which are available to the real-life commander. Nonetheless there remain numerous opportunities to mislead your opponent as to your intentions to catch him on the hop once his forces are committed and to keep him in doubt about the true strengths and dispositions of your forces.

First, try to adopt a course of action which he doesn't expect you will take: in games where he sets up first study his dispositions to see what he seems to be expecting you to do — or, possibly, what he seems to be inviting you to do. Then try something else: remember how the Germans invaded France through the "impossible" terrain of the Ardennes in 1940. If it is you who must set up first try to set a trap or to make it seem that you have overlooked one approach: but whether it is you or he who has the initiative remember that what is obvious to you is likely to be obvious to him.

Secondly, once battle is joined and your opponent's reserves are committed a sudden change of thrust, possibly intended from the start, can be tried: an example is the move to envelope one flank which is suddenly changed to a thrust at the centre as his line stretches to counter you. Where you can bring on reinforcements with some freedom as to their point of entry it offers a good opportunity to arrive from the direction he thought you wouldn't try or where he would least like to see you: the Gaulish reinforcements in "Caesar" ("Alesia" to the classicists) are a particularly good example.

Thirdly, and on a lower level, a measure of uncertainty and consequent surprise can be achieved through judicious stacking: a weak unit can conceal a strong one or conversely a strong one on top of a bag of nails can lend seeming impregnability to a defensive position. In any case stacking can keep your opponent in doubt about what is "on the other side of the hill" and induce horrible imaginings which inhibit bold attacks. (While on this subject, I understand that some players think it permissible to examine enemy stacks to which their own units are not adjacent; my advice is to disallow this practice as it is as unrealistic as it is unfair. Can you imagine Robert E. Lee riding on to Cemetery Hill and courteously enquiring as to Union orders of battle, troop strengths and ammunition states prior to committing his own forces to the assault? No, the seeker after intelligence must be told "Suck it and see".)

The opportunities to achieve Surprise in games which include inverted counters, dummies, hidden units and concealed movement (e.g. "Lee Moves North", "Caesar's Legions") are too obvious to descant on. To end this section, von Moltke is said to have remarked to a group of officers, "Gentlemen, when you consider a military problem you will usually find that

your opponent has some three courses open to him. Of these he will generally adopt the fourth". Go for that "fourth course" whenever you can — and guard against it in your turn.

Offensive Action

This section can be kept short. Be ready to go for your opponent whenever a suitable opportunity offers and do not be content to fight an inert campaign, responding only to his movements. Defence in particular should be conducted aggressively, with a mobile force ready to snap off the heads of careless probes or to hit and run whenever a chink in the armour appears. Attacks should be flexible and full of movement or potential movement, again with a reserve ready to exploit openings. Be a player whom your opponent rates as one with whom no risks are to be taken, whether in attack or defence and regardless of which side is in the ascendant. But don't confuse Offensive Action with Plain Foolhardiness.

Concentration of Force

Perhaps the principle most easily applied on the wargame board and so often not practiced by the novice. At its most basic you attack with sufficient odds to ensure the enemy unit's elimination, retreat or disruption, dependent on the CRT used in the game: usually this means 3-1 or +5 differential. Secondly, where you can surround the unit in question then do so to ensure its destruction. As an extension of this precept, when you make a series of attacks in the same area start with those which will leave other enemy units surrounded prior to being attacked in their turn. Finally, launch your main attacks in areas where retreat or destruction of units is going to imperil the enemy's position and throw his plan out of gear. Go for the vital road-junction, seize the commanding high ground, cut off the over-extended flank. A good analogy is that of David and Goliath: David took the right sort of stone, used his sling to give it impetus and aimed for Goliath's unprotected forehead — and that was that! While Concentration of Force cannot always guarantee such instantaneously satisfying results it will always be found more effectual than simply rushing pell-mell upon the enemy with whatever units are to hand.

Needless to say (I hope) nothing said in this section precludes soak-off attacks at low odds: however those should be made only to divert one's opponent or to achieve the desired odds elsewhere.

Economy of Effort

In your use of the previous principle don't carry it too far and throw a half brick when a pebble will do. In each attack apply the necessary force but no more, thus conserving units which can be used to mount other attacks, stand by to exploit the breakthrough or cover against the counterattack. There is no point using 6-1 odds when 3-1 will do the job.

Mobility

Mobility, properly exploited, is a potent weapon: when applying it you must consider the overall mobility of your force as well as the correct use of your most mobile units. A force in which the best use is made of the mobility of all types of unit will be all the

more ready to exploit openings, to reinforce success, to close gaps in its ranks and to react swiftly to unexpected enemy moves. Units which combine high mobility with strong combat potential (e.g. the units of 15th and 21st Panzer Divisions in "Afrika Korps", the heavy cavalry and Swedish cavalry in "Musket & Pike") are powerful indeed and should be held for such roles as outflanking manoeuvres and as a strong mobile reserve. Conversely they should not be wasted in defensive or holding roles: your slower units, provided that they are strong enough, should be the secure pivot on which your army manoeuvres.

In order that mobility can be used to very best effect remember to make maximum use of road networks and open ground to enhance movement and avoid, whenever possible, committing your main force to areas which will restrict its mobility — don't send Panzer gruppe into the Pripet Marshes!

Flexibility

Despite the need to select and maintain one's aim there is no point in following a set plan rigidly especially when circumstances have changed. As the game proceeds be ever-ready to alter your plans to exploit your opponent's mistakes, provided that you are still moving towards the main aim: for example, you may have started with the intention of turning your opponent's flank and, lo and behold, in reacting to your moves he over-stretches his line thus presenting you with a marvellous opportunity to break through his centre and cut off half his force. In that case change your attack accordingly: your immediate object is the crippling of his force and an unexpected opportunity to speed the process has presented itself.

At other times, it may become apparent that a particular approach is going to come to nothing: if so, admit it to yourself without delay and try a new or an alternative plan — there is no point in reinforcing failure.

A final word — to attain Flexibility you must bear in mind the internal Mobility of your force and you will find a strong, well-placed reserve a near-essential.

Co-operation

We now come to the first of the three Principles of War which have less direct application to board wargames but which still have a role. In most games a single player controls the forces of one side thus doing away with any danger of the sort of failure in co-operation which can bedevil live operations. However what can be forgotten is the need to co-ordinate the moves and attacks of different groups of units so that the success of one can aid another. On a lower level the combination of different types of unit to get the best out of the combat factors available comes under Co-operation; a unit with a poor combat factor but high mobility is ideal for moving round to an enemy unit's rear, cutting off its retreat while slower but more powerful units attack 3-1 frontally. In "Panzergruppe Guderian" the Divisional Integrity rule invokes the principle of Co-operation as does the Combined Arms Attack rule in "Napoleon's Last Battles". "Mech War '77" with its multiplicity of different types of units and weapons makes 'Co-operation' (in the sense of best use of combined forces) a must.

Administration

Non-existent in many games and an abstraction in others in the form of Supply rules: these rules may require no more than the maintenance of a supply route or they may make use of expendable supply counters to support attacks. If you are playing a game in which supply routes apply then always remember that the attainment and security of these lines must form part of your operational plan and that your opponent's plan may well include a move against your supply lines rather than directly against your forces.

When you have the problem of expendable supply counters to deal with ("Afrika Korps"; "Panzer Armee Afrika"; "Seelowe") then their correct deployment and economic use becomes essential to maintaining Offensive Action: always time and position your attacks so that one supply unit can support the maximum number and, if possible, support every attack taking place in one turn. And keep your supplies moving up and to the right places: if you find your carefully planned offensive inoperable simply because you didn't have your supplies where you wanted them you certainly won't be the first gamer to find himself in that fix but that will be no consolation.

Maintenance of Morale

Cardboard counters have no cardboard wives or children, never read letters and don't care whether their supplies are hot or cold!

In some games, though, units may suffer loss of morale or disruption which necessitates their being revived in some way. In these cases always bear in mind the likelihood of demoralisation or disruption and be ready to counter it. If leader counters play a part in restoring morale then ensure that they spread across your front so that no unit is ever too far from succour. If units have to be withdrawn from enemy zones of control in order to recover, then don't omit to do this whenever possible: in particular have reserve units standing by to relieve demoralized ones. In short, ensure that the best conditions for the restoration of lost morale or for undistruption are ever present.

There, then, are the ten Principles of War: if you find them of help in pursuing future games to a more successful conclusion then this article will have succeeded in its object of helping the less-experienced gamer to marshal his thoughts. To sum up:

1. Decide on your objective and go for it.
2. Keep your opponent uncertain as to your likely future moves and over your exact stacking.
3. Play an aggressive game.
4. Hit him hard where it hurts and do maximum damage.
5. But don't use a sledge hammer to crack a nut.
6. Use mobility as sword and shield and use it to best advantage.
7. Be flexible in your plans and in your dispositions; maintain a reserve.
8. Co-ordinate operations and get the best out of your different units' various characteristics.
9. Guard supply lines and get maximum effect out of your supply counters.
10. Be poised to revive disrupted/demoralised units as quickly as possible.

Designing for Schools

DREW MACKIE

In Issue 7 Walter Oppenheim described the use he had made of SPI and other manufacturers' games for teaching history in secondary schools. Particularly he mentioned the problem of using games the complexity of which make them good simulations but which the average history pupil finds hard to grasp. It is this problem which I wish to consider here.

For some time now I have been designing teaching games in planning and architecture and it is only recently that I became interested in wargaming through playing both Avalon Hill and SPI games. Last year this interest blossomed into the formation of a company to design and sell historical simulations — thus was born Warthog Games. The first game we have put on the market is "Bonnie Prince Charlie" — a military and political simulation of the '45 rebellion — and in the first month of its commercial life we have already encountered the problem posed by Walter Oppenheim — how do you design a game which will be complex enough to please the wargaming market and yet which can be used with varying ages of schoolchildren to teach history? Our answer to this has been to produce a "teaching pack" for "Bonnie Prince Charlie" which allows the game to be played in a simple form by a class of about 30 pupils. Although the overall simulation is simplified the new rules allow

the simulation of aspects not present in the commercial wargame.

For example, in the "straight" wargame version of "Bonnie Prince Charlie", battles are resolved using a tactical matrix system which emphasises "outguessing" and does not use a die roll. In the classroom game battles are considerably simplified so that a die roll largely determines the outcome.

On the other hand the simulation of problems of communication and command is *more* sophisticated in the classroom game as messages take "days" to travel from commander to commander.

In our opinion, the solution to Walter Oppenheim's problem is not merely to simplify but to change the game so that it is more appropriate as a teaching vehicle in the classroom situation.

How successful this may be we don't know yet but we are currently playtesting this approach with schoolchildren at Torry Academy in Aberdeen.

An example of the opposite approach is a game which we have in the final development stage at this moment. This is a simulation of the process of a military coup in the fictitious country of Calagrande. Although designed as a political game for

five players, it is about to be used as a demonstration of "agency role analysis" — i.e. the study of the structure of political and informational relationships within units of society — in this case the armed forces of a small country.

The "clip-on" pack we are designing for this allows considerable sophistication of the basic game along with an increase in complexity. The expanded game will play with around 25 players at the ISAGA conference later this year and can thereafter be used as a teaching tool for sixth form students or in universities.

Thus we hope that we can produce "packs" which allow a teacher to adapt a game either "upwards" towards greater detail and complexity for the senior years or to adapt "downwards" for younger or less able pupils.

The basic message, however, is clear. To be successful in this you are better to start with a good simulation which can be adapted rather than an overly simple one which can't. In this way (particularly if packs are geared to the school curriculum, reading lists etc.) the designer can provide a flexible tool for use at several stages of educational development.

("I.S.A.G.A." stands for the International Simulation and Gaming Association.)

Salamanca

MAPLAY GAMES LIMITED's SIMULATION

REVIEWED BY ROB GIBSON

This is the first Napoleonic battle simulation produced in Britain, as far as I am aware (no doubt someone, somewhere will prove me wrong!) and as such deserves special attention. Starting at the outside: the game comes in a stout cardboard box, with unimaginative labelling. The physical components are good quality: bright, clear map — small, neatly printed rule folders — pre-cut counters. So far, so good.

The map has a unique hex identification system, using a letter coding system for the horizontal rows and a diagonal (top left to bottom right) vertical numbering system. It sounds complex, but it works as well as the SPI 4-digit hex numbering system in practice.

The rules, however, are less satisfactory: a very concious effort has been made to avoid the use of standard SPI terminology, making the result very stilted and difficult to understand. No clear guide is given as to how to set up the game or how to read the map codes given. No examples are given (a la SPI) of movement or combat effects of terrain although a barely comprehensible example of combat is given.

The counters are brightly coloured but poorly cut and not at all the same square shape. They include "value counters" num-

bered from 1-9, placed under the unit counter to give the Combat Strength, which is concealed from one's opponent and reduced by a step-reduction combat resolution system. Ingenious though it is, it does not work well in practice because of stacking problems and irregular counter sizes: however, the reviewer successfully used a table derived from the Order of Battle with values 1 to 9 against each unit, covered by clear plastic sheet, on which the current combat value was marked in chinagraph pencil.

The Order of Battle given with the game will throw most Napoleonic fans: the British foot regiments of Pakenham's (3rd), Leith's (5th), Clinton's (6th) and von Alten's (Light) Divisions are wrongly brigaded, not to mention the much-maligned Chasseurs Britannique. The 60th Foot are listed as a Line regiment, when in fact six independent companies of the 6th battalion only were present as skirmishers for four separate brigades in four different divisions, as befitted their role as Riflemen. The French suffer from an excess of value points and too much artillery in Brennier's Division.

This can be amended as follows:

Foy's Division — all infantry units value '4'.
Clausel's Division — 59th Line ('51L' counter) value '6'.

Ferey's Division — 31st Leger, 26th Line, value '4'.
Sarrut's Division — 2nd Leger, 36th Line, value '6'; 4th Leger (473 men), value '1'.
Maucune's Division — 1st Line value '5'.
Bonnet's Division — '8 Company Cannon' (incidentally the only real one-company divisional artillery unit on the French side!) value '1'.

The problem on the British/Portuguese side is not so easily resolved: the fanatics will produce a fresh set of counters (Shire Publications' "Discovering Famous Battles: The Peninsular War" has a first-class Order of Battle for Salamanca which will help here). In fact, the existing counters are quite adequate from the game point of view, given the above modifications to the French unit values.

The CRT in the rules is one of the better features of the game: particularly good is the automatic retreat resulting from a loss of two points in excess of those lost by your opponent in any particular combat.

To sum up then: an average game in its present form — if it wasn't produced here, it probably wouldn't be imported. With better rules and counters and more attention to historical details, this game *could* be a winner.



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Highway to the Reich

A REVIEW OF SPI's MARKET-GARDEN SIMULATION
BY TONY DINSDALE

Operation Market-Garden was certainly one of, if not the, most daring large scale undertaking during wartime. The details can be found in S&T 61, though the concept was quite simple; to take and hold fourteen bridges and a long section of roadway. This would outflank the West-Wall and at the same time gain a crossing over the formidable rivers which blocked the Allied advance toward the fatherland. The Market part was the paratroops to capture the objectives, whilst the Garden part was the push by the British 30th Corps to consolidate the position. Unfortunately, one reason for the disaster, was that it was too simple. The drop-zones and geography of the area showed only too well to the Germans in which direction the enemy was coming. SPI's simulation is a just tribute to the magnificent struggle that spanned half the Netherlands.

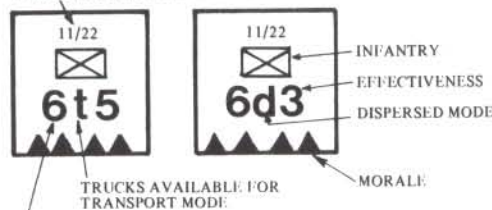
One thing that would not have occurred to Montgomery, was that the plan is also tailor-made to fit the "monster game" series, an increasing number of which are being published nowadays. The scale of 600 metres per hex gives a good tactical feel to the game, though with a map eight feet long there is still reasonable scope for strategy too. A total of well over 1,000 counters allows for the units to be given in terms of companies, tank and anti-tank units usually represent four vehicles, guns or whatever. The counters are quite adequate and packed with information, though it is the map which takes the prize for artistic merit. Rivers look the part for once, frequently being over 2 cms. in width.

The twenty-four terrain types give an accurate picture of the battlefields and differentiate between woods/forest and town/city. The only problem here is that the green (coloured) American paratroops tend to be too well-camouflaged and tend to disappear in the woods! The red British 1st looks good though, as does the inevitable black for the SS.

There are two copies of the charts and tables, which greatly aids play. There are also two unit manifests on which all the units in the game can be arranged at the start of the game, plus an "off-map movement display" for the Germans. The rule booklet is twenty pages long and the components require two game boxes.

Though the equipment is impressive and just about justifies the cost, the real appeal of the game to me is the actual system. The counters, one of which is shown below are a wealth of information, so much so, in fact, that this has led to problems with production and the die-cutting is not always as it should be.

11 BATTALION/22nd REGIMENT




STRENGTH

FRONT

BACK

Typical unit: German SS



To take the numbers in turn then. The strength factor is simply what it appears to be, a qualitative assessment, including the unit's defensive and offensive capabilities. For example, a thousand men armed with pea-shooters would have a strength of 40 but an effectiveness of 0. A single Tiger tank would have a strength of 1 but would still retain an effectiveness of 9. The morale rating speaks for itself and adjusts with casualties. The range is given in terms of hexes, most units being able to fire only into adjacent hexes. Artillery may be capable of firing nine hexes. There is a tremendous diversity of unit types, armoured car recce, tank destroyers and anti-tank guns to name but a few. Subordination does in fact affect play to quite a large extent and is handled very well.

A whole command structure exists, going through corps supply, to corps H.Q., to regimental/brigade level, then battalion level which may consist of several companies. Not only is a player concerned with this line of command/supply, he also has to make sure that his forward observers are of the same subordination to and in communications with the H.Q. controlling direct fire. All this causes the commander (the feel is very realistic), to have his units fight together *as* units. The good thing about this system is that the act is purely voluntary, making it more profitable to do this. Some games like Third Reich cheat by saying that one must do certain things, which is bad. Here, it is possible to split units up at any level when circumstances dictate.

There are two basic forms of combat and, whilst lobbing missiles at one another is a good way to pick off a few enemy troops, a determined attacker will use close action as the most efficient form of gaining ground and flattening the enemy. In the combat rules however, certain deficiencies do become apparent. The game system is not too simple to begin with and SPI argue that in order to keep down complexity, they have limited the rules regarding the effectiveness of units against varying opposition. As the rules stand, it is impossible to close action artillery with infantry and there are no benefits for stacking tanks with infantry, which is a bit poor. Fortunately all these points in the effectiveness ratings can be sorted out with a few simple rules such as "tanks halved in effectiveness when alone and attacked by infantry", which seems reasonable. Just a pity that it was allowed to happen.

Possibly the most important feature of the system though is the ability of units to assume a variety of modes — travel, dispersed, concentrated and disrupted. The latter is only assumed as a result of a close action. Dispersed mode is what concentrated units do when they come under fire. The men run for cover and so the effectiveness is reduced, see diagram. The strength of course does not alter, except for the Netherlands SS units which miraculously are halved when dispersed. I think that is something of a misprint though. All units have a movement allowance of four but the mode affects movement costs dramatically, so that travel mode on roads can move you 64 hexes onwards in one game-turn. Modes

HIGHWAY TO THE REICH CONTINUED



do not affect stacking restrictions which depend on terrain.

Every game system has its foundations in its sequence of play though and this is certainly a good example of that. Through a highly commendable effort to establish some form of semi-simultaneous play, without having to write down orders all the time, the only serious fault (perhaps just in my view) has occurred. A fifteen phase turn sequence takes a very long time to plough through, especially when up to seven factors have to be taken into account for a single close action attack. Besides making postal play impossible, experienced players will find that each turn takes an hour at the very least. One must therefore allow five hours bare minimum for a turn in the campaign game. With 104 turns, at five hours each.....Mmmmm.

The scenarios seem a less daunting prospect and one could always link two or more together if something large was required but not quite that long. The opportunities for multi-player games are excellent and with six scenarios there is plenty of scope. One could easily set up typical battles as the units are quite versatile.

All in all, Highway to the Reich appears to have been rushed in some respects. The high standards of care and attention provided by SPI have been allowed to relax in places. The scenarios are horribly biased though they generally produce the correct results — it just means that instead of calling what actually happened, a draw, they say that the player who achieves this wins. And it is so realistic (accurate) that he does. Minor points regarding historical timetables are also slightly invalid. There are numerous small mistakes in the charts which also need rectifying.

Even in view of these facts, I consider HWTR to be an excellent simulation, especially for the more experienced wargamer. No collection is fully complete without it since it is something of a break-

through in World War 11 wargaming. Much can be learned from playing the game and indeed, one could write a whole book about the systems and the tactics available. The player who likes to plan his moves with meticulous care and fool the enemy in many tactical simulations should really be at home with this. Montgomery said that in years to come it would be a great thing for a man to say "I fought at Arnhem". In time to come, it will be a great thing for a man to say "I played through a campaign game of Highway to the Reich". I doubt whether I shall be remembered for the quotation however.

HIGHWAY TO THE REICH GAME SCALE

Each hexagon on the mapsheets represents an approximate distance of 600 metres from side to side. The hexes are used to differentiate specific types of terrain: clear, mixed, broken, rough, woods, forest, city or town. In addition various other features are represented on the mapsheet: primary roads, secondary roads, trails, railways, bridges, hill-tops, streams, rivers, lakes dikes, ferries.

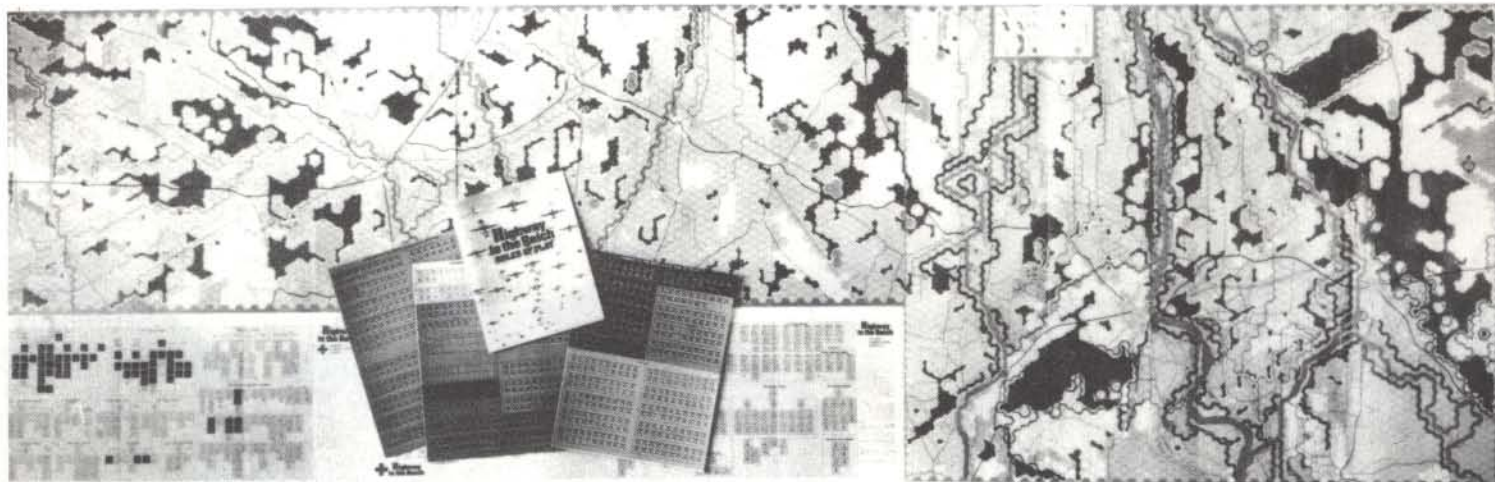
Each infantry unit represents a company with each strength point indicating 25 men. Armoured units represent platoons, troops or zugs with each strength point indicating individual vehicles. Each artillery unit represents a battery with the strength points indicating each gun.

All units have a movement factor of four. The units mode and the type of terrain it is moving into affects the expenditure of points or fractions of points.

Each Game-turn indicates the passing of two hours of real time.

HIGHWAY TO THE REICH GAME TURN PLAYING SEQUENCE

1. **Allied Command Phase:** when the Allied player assesses the supply status of his headquarters units and attempts to restore disrupted units.
2. **German Organisational Phase:** the German player may reorganise the mode of any of his units — such activity may trigger allied opportunity fire.
3. **Allied Conditional Fire Phase:** Allied player executes Fire Attacks, direct and indirect, with any eligible units. Units firing in this phase may not then move in the following phase.
4. **Allied Conditional Movement Phase:** the Allied player may move any unit, within the limits of the rules, that did not participate in Fire Attacks in the previous phase. Reinforcements arrive. Moving units may Close-Assault according to the rules. German units may have the chance to Opportunity Fire upon moving Allied units.
5. **German Conditional Fire Phase:** as phase 3.
6. **German Conditional Movement Phase:** as phase 4.
7. **Allied Free Fire Phase:** all eligible Allied units may fire.
8. **German Command Phase:** as phase 1.
9. **Allied Organisational Phase:** as phase 2.
10. **German Conditional Fire Phase:** as phase 3.
11. **German Conditional Movement Phase:** as phase 4.
12. **Allied Conditional Fire Phase:** as phase 3.
13. **Allied Conditional Movement Phase:** as phase 4.
14. **German Free Fire Phase:** as phase 7.
15. **Game-turn Record Phase:** the marker should be moved one space on the time track indicating the passing of two-hours of real time.



The purpose of this article is not simply to methodically relate the history of a game but rather to highlight some of the points and pitfalls that I came across during my very first attempt at playing the game. Hopefully readers will find it useful in helping them during their first attempts, if they have the game or are considering purchase.

I cannot claim to be very expert at playing boardgame simulations, as the following will undoubtedly reveal — lack of time prevents me fully developing my interest in the hobby. Some of the mistakes I made will make the experts laugh but they may help the less-expert players from making the same errors. Highway to the Reich is not a game for the novice but anyone with a little experience of boardgames and a good deal of perseverance will, I think, thoroughly enjoy it. I certainly did.

I would hazard a guess that in the UK the most commonly played scenario will be "28. Drop of the British 1st Airborne — 17-18th Sept 1944". Certainly it was the one that I couldn't wait to get to grips with. It is a good starter to the game, being played on a single mapsheet and in 14 Game-turns. The rules say it should take 4 hours to play — I took 4 weeks! (But then my game was a somewhat disjointed effort due to lack of time).

Whenever I first read a new set of game rules I mark the 'new' rules in pencil so as to be able to quickly backtrack and pinpoint these during play. HWTR does have a good many new rules to take in and at first read through I ground to a standstill. Not deterred I re-read them and then decided to play regardless — picking up knowledge as the game progressed.

A lot of things were done wrongly in the first few turns. This is almost inevitable with a complex game like HWTR when it's first played. But with a lot of thumbing through the rules book progress, though painfully slow, was made.



I used the historical deployment, though the Drop Zones really do seem a long way from that bridge! The scenarios are all played without the use of the rules governing weather, air-lift capacity, flight paths or German flak effects. Although this makes them less complex at the start it seems a pity since the uncertainty and excitement of the actual airborne assault is greatly lessened, though some losses and scattering do still occur. (Historically, 11% of the glider force bound for Arnhem were lost or crashed with their vital equipment and vehicles).



THE SCENARIO FOR Arnhem

A FIRST ATTEMPT BY SAM MARKS



The airlanding operation proceeded smoothly in accordance with the rules and only 3 strength points were lost. The total confusion on the Drop Zones must very closely approximate reality with stacks of 2, 3 or 4 units placed one against the other over a considerable portion of the mapsheet. This may have been the first major error in my game. In retrospect it may have been more sensible to have staggered the drop over two turns or at least over both phases of turn 1.

Some clear idea as to which units are intended to do what is also essential. In my eagerness to get started I overlooked this very basic point. I lost valuable time carefully re-grouping battalions with nary a thought for their ultimate task — to defend the DZ or head for the bridge.



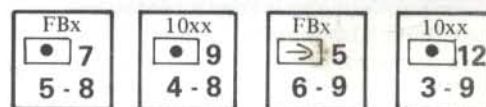
The airborne recce squadron — that's a key unit. If you can get them down more or less in one piece near to Heesum you're in with a chance. The historical plan called for this unit (25% of which never even reached the DZ) to race ahead to the bridge and hold it. I didn't even realise that it could race ahead until it was too late and I had sent it plodding up the road like infantry.

Other units that can race along are the AT companies in Travel Mode. You have to watch that they don't get caught in their Travel Mode though — they don't last long if they are!



As happened historically, the main Arnhem-Heesum road was blocked by German units camped astride it and more valuable time was lost in attempting to force a passage. They should have been by-passed initially and cleared later. In my game it was the 3rd battalion, 1st Brigade that made the best progress — via the Hevedorp trail (probably also the best route for the recce squadron to take). It managed to take the rail bridge without it being blown and crossed over to attack the flak units defending the southern approach to the main road bridge at Arnhem. After several hours these defences were eliminated and the 3rd Battalion installed itself on the southern end of the bridge (Historically, it should have been the 2nd Battalion at the north end).

At no time in the game can I say that the north end of the road bridge was really seriously threatened. 2nd Battalion reached the city hexes of Arnhem in good time but believe me trying to assault in these hexes is very frustrating. Just when you think the opposition has been whittled down ready for a close-action assault another German Independent unit arrives to bolster the defences. And once the German's Flak Brigade arrives in the vicinity — forget it! I'd say that it's the German player's artillery that holds the key to his actions — more so than the armour. When the Flak Brigade and the 10th Panzer's artillery are concentrated even a fresh full-strength unit can be eliminated during a single fire phase.



The 10th Panzer Division arrives from the south-east edge of the map and historically tried to force the road bridge. During this game the German player decided to swing the 10th Pz round through Deelen to deploy on the open ground north-east of Wolfheze and the DZs. Historically this would have been a very unlikely approach as the Germans were anxious to force the bridge, cross the river and reinforce Nijmegen). Some infantry units were dropped off on the way near Schaarsbergen to bolster the 9th Pz in their holding actions north-east of Arnhem and the Utrecht-Arnhem highway. Though it took a good many hours to move the 10th through Deelen and deploy it the result was, to say the least, effective.

In order to protect the DZs from this threat and prepare for the incoming 4th Para Bde many units of the Glider Pilots Regt and the Airlanding Bde had to drawn back away from Arnhem itself — with disastrous results later in the game.

Odd German Independent formations kept popping up all over the place but apart from one incursion into Heesum (which took several hours to eliminate) the real threat to the DZs was from 10th Pz.

In the event it proved impossible to protect 4th Brigade's DZ but a very effective defensive perimeter was drawn in an arc through the forests north of Wolfheze. When the 4th Bde dropped it came down on top of a number of Independent units but losses were not heavy in spite of this. But by the time the brigade had sorted itself and made the cover of the forest hexes it had accumulated a good many more losses — almost entirely from 10th Pz artillery firing from north-east of the highway.

THE ARNHEM SCENARIO CONTINUED

All this activity to the north of Wolfheze had distracted my attention from two vital areas. Firstly, the 3rd Battalion had been all but wiped out by artillery firing from east of Arnhem. Secondly, armoured units from 1/10th had overrun para units defending the highway north-east of Oosterbeek, threatening the supply line to all units fighting in Arnhem city. It is virtually impossible to hold a position if it's subjected to the kind of massed artillery fire that the German player can muster (especially if it is positioned around the OBW unit).



P.I.A.T. — the paras anti-tank weapon

It's also very difficult for the airborne infantry to stop armour. One hex gap and they're through! — and all the Opportunity Fire you can muster does little to stop them.

A point worth noting for the re-play — if there's armour about keep a continuous hex front. Also fire your artillery first so that gaps created can be exploited by units that do not have to fire and can then move in the subsequent phase.



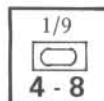
I found myself rushing Travel Mode AT units all over the place just to plug gaps (they can deploy out of Travel Mode at the end of their movement by expending one movement point). I was caught out, though, on many occasions both by the Subordination rules (which reduce the effectiveness of multi-formation attacks drastically) and more often by the fact that once committed these AT units are difficult to pull out. They have to change to Travel Mode (being subjected to Opportunity Fire usually) and then have to sit there — often through an enemy Fire phase and a movement phase. Units in Travel Mode are very vulnerable to close-action and incoming fire. More often than not the unit did not survive to be removed.

Units like these that are in danger of being surrounded seem, frankly, to be better off sitting there and doing nothing — thereby obliging the German player to commit units to reduce them. If cut off think twice about firing since to do so risks Depletion — once depleted the end is nigh!

Having now lost the south approach to the road bridge (and the entire 3rd Battalion) I decided to try to hold the road at Elden.

Historically, this would be important since it would slow down German reinforcements moving south against the US 82nd at Nijmegen. Not that there were any in this game as they were all swarming over the DZs to the north-west. Since things were now getting decidedly shaky on the north bank of the river I could not find more than a few Glider Pilot AT units to do this.

I only just managed to stabilise the armoured incursion towards Oosterbeek and began to withdraw 4th Bde back towards Wolfheze. That open ground north of Wolfheze was very tricky to cross especially since 10th Pz had finally broken through the forest perimeter line and were able to spot for their artillery. Several units were caught in the open in concentrated mode and took considerable losses as a result. Once the armour had broken that perimeter at hex 2716 it was vital to pull everything back into the forests around the Supply DZ to prevent this from being overrun and thereby putting the entire Division out of supply!



The Div AT units with their 2 hex range and ZOC were positioned in wooded hexes overlooking the clear terrain around Wolfheze. Their fire really started to have effect on the armour. I think that these units are about the only ones that the Airborne player has that are capable of dealing effectively with armour. They need to be carefully deployed and husbanded.

So preoccupied was I with the actions around the Supply DZ that I made yet another error of deployment. This time south of the river. I had some AT units positioned in wooded hexes covering the approach to the rail bridge and reinforced these with a full-strength GP infantry unit. However in my enthusiasm to repulse a German unit approaching along the river bank I moved this unit one hex too far from the rail bridge end. A single hex gap was created — and lo and behold an Independent armoured unit rushed the bridge and sat on the south end. This not only gave the south approach to the German but it placed every unit south of the river out of supply with no route back to safety. Worse still, it meant that the Airborne Div Artillery was overlooked and soon the German artillery began to systematically reduce it. (Thus was lost the most effective units I had to deploy against infantry). Total disaster was but a die throw away at this point because the Div HQ was also spotted and began to take losses. By quickly withdrawing this unit back into Oosterbeek disaster was delayed for a few turns more.

By now the airborne perimeter had taken on almost the exact shape of the historical one. A 'thumb' with its base on the river and its tip just above the Supply DZ.

You will have noticed that I have not given any indication of the time scale of these events. I'm too embarrassed!! Arnhem was a glorious disaster — my re-enactment was an ignominious one! The time was 08.00 Sept 19th (Game turn 18) just 36 hours after the initial assault. In our enthusiasm we had overrun the scenario time length and carried on into the next scenario entitled "The Destruction of the British 1st". An apt title. This scenario is scheduled to last until turn 44 but there is no chance that my shattered remnants will last that long. I'll carry on to the end (when ever that may be) and then I'll start again. This time I'll take into account the lessons learned during this first attempt.

It's a pity that the real thing couldn't have had a practise run! But even so they still did a lot better than me!

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J.L. Gillson, La Maison d'Aval, Rue Bellee, Torteval Guernsey. Tel: 64113.

Dear Sir,
I wholeheartedly agree with Tony Dinsdale that GDW's Torgau is full of interesting game playing ideas and recreates the flavour of mid-eighteenth century tactics beautifully. However, no one I play with has ever taken the hill as the Prussians, if the Austrian remains on it? Poor play by us or poor play-balance by GDW?
P H S Hatton (Dr)

Dear Sir,
 Christopher Perleberg (Moves No. 31) was completely correct to take issue with the chateaux rules in *Napoleon's Last Battles*. The chateaux were formidable defensive positions but were not impregnable. Consider Waterloo. It was bad tactics on Prince Jerome's part as much as natural strength which prevented Hougoumont from being taken. La Haye Sainte, the victim of the only French combined arms attack of the battle (cf. Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*, p. 1085), did fall with the use of little more than two supported infantry brigades. This is impossible in the game. Now I agree that some historical events might be made improbable according to game rules, but surely not impossible.

Also, the defensive strength of the chateaux could be reduced by shell-fire from howitzers, as was belatedly done at Hougoumont. This is a tactic advised by both Fuller and Chandler in their accounts of the battle. And yet, according to the game rules, artillery (of any sort) may not fire at chateaux.

Consequently, I suggest the following rules changes and additions:

(10.4) (Change) Artillery may fire at chateaux at half strength.

(10.6) (Clarification) Combined arms attacks on chateaux are possible and have the normal effect, i.e., odds are increased by one column.

(10.7) (Addition) Each regular artillery (not horse artillery) unit has a howitzer strength of one. Each chateau has an intrinsic anti-howitzer strength of two.

(10.8) (Addition) Artillery units may bombard chateaux with their howitzer strength during their friendly combat phase. A Dr result means that a fire has broken out in the chateau.

(10.9) (Addition) After a "fire" result has occurred against a chateau, the defending player rolls one die during each friendly combat phase. A roll of one or two means the chateau has been destroyed and reverts immediately and permanently to the status of a town hex in all respects.

(10.10) (Addition) Artillery which bombard with their howitzer strength in a friendly combat phase may also fire normally at half strength in the same phase. All reductions in artillery strength are cumulative.

Philip Gray

Dear Sir,
 Would you be interested in a light-hearted article for "Phoenix" consisting of a parody review of Chess as though it were a new wargame?

No stacking, automatic combat elimination, movement restrictions, mobile fortification units(!), victory conditions, lack of realism, etc., etc.

I'm sounding out opinion before I actually write it!

Roger Misson

Well...is anyone interested?

Dear Sir,
 Congratulations on Phoenix 7 — certainly the best yet. I was sorry the article on "Panzergruppe Guderian" only covered suggested tactics for the first few moves. Not being a player of "Dungeons and Dragons" I was totally at a loss to understand what "Expedition to Castle Fil" was all about. I think one has to be careful to make your articles interesting to readers who do not possess the game — "Guderian" was a model in this respect, tempting newcomers to try the game.....

.....Improvements I'd like to see would be articles on designing one's own games (something I'd like to try — but how do you start?), details of activities of local wargaming clubs, a start made on producing your own games (even if this puts the price of Phoenix up), and more on the basics of wargaming for newcomers — which links up a bit with my little article on using wargames in schools. I may do an article on how I adapted some of the games if you think it would be of any interest.
Walter Oppenheim

MAIL CALL



Dear Sir,
it is unfortunate that your first article on *Dungeons & Dragons* should have contained so many glaring inaccuracies. I do not think this is Mr Bolton's fault as I suspect he has not read the rules of the game (strange as it may seem to regular gamers, in *Dungeons & Dragons* the players are not required to know more rules than the referee sees fit to tell them); rather his referee is at fault, may his face be red for evermore. Admittedly, varying interpretations of rules are quite permissible, and one man's potion is another man's poison, but there is a definite dividing line between a personal interpretation and a sheer misunderstanding. So let me try to clear things up a bit.

The word "level" has three distinctly different meanings in the game: one refers to "levels" of the dungeon which are physically one below the next, become progressively richer in treasure (and more dangerous) as one delves deeper; then one refers to a character's "level" of experience — as each new character learns the tricks of his trade he achieves higher levels of experience and becomes progressively stronger (but it takes a long time to go up levels); thirdly, there are different "levels" of spells, progressively more powerful and harder to use. These spell levels are an independent classification; a 2nd level magic-user does not have the ability to use 2nd level spells, he may use but two first level spells per day. Only when he reaches the third level of experience does he gain a 2nd level spell. The level of the dungeon the fellow is on has no effect on this at all, so the magicians in Mr Bolton's story would not have gained an extra spell when they were whisked down to the second dungeon level. This also means that humble first level magic-users do not kill copper dragons; the spell "power word: kill" is a ninth level spell and quite unusable by all but the most powerful wizards. And how a copper dragon manages to fit into a small triangular room, I don't know.

Another point about the levels of experience attained by characters is that increasing levels make one more resistant to magic. This applies to beasts as well as to men, and since the spell "sleep" only affects creatures of the fourth level or less, that eighth level orc would not have dozed off quite so conveniently if the referee had been awake.

The secret of successful refereeing is to maintain balance, so that the weak characters do not make mincemeat of copper dragons, but on the other hand, large parties do not get completely obliterated unless they are very stupid or extremely unlucky. If Mr Bolton finds a more competent referee he may find he lives a bit longer.
Paul Morphine

The opinions and comments made in *Reader's Letters* are not necessarily those of the editor or publisher. The editor requests that letters submitted for publication in this column should be short and to the point to avoid unnecessary abridgement. Letters sent to the editor that are *not* intended for publication must be clearly marked as such.

Dear Sir,
 First a few thoughts provoked by Phoenix 8; this is easily the best issue of the magazine so far; the physical quality is very pleasing and it is also gratifying to see a wider variety of articles and contributors. Paul Hirst's comparison of '1776' and 'American Revolution' was outstanding but the critique of 'Sorcerer' represents a regrettable aberration. I am all in favour of serious criticism of published games, but this reads like something out of a student rag magazine — "Stopcloning around", "a bit of local colour"?? — really Stephen and Andrew! — and what have the Roman Emperors to do with it?

I was most interested to read of your ideas to include short comments on games from a variety of readers; I have recently been concerned with the problems of rule interpretation and should like to suggest the introduction into 'Phoenix' of a column in which readers could discuss the problems and ambiguities they have encountered in particular games. It seems to me that this could reasonably be linked to the column of reader's reviews. Along with the reviews you could perhaps invite readers to send in details of any problems they have encountered. The two could then be printed together with an invitation to other readers who have the game to suggest ways round the difficulties. The intention is not to emulate the early issues of S&T where answers to rule queries were given by the game designers, but rather to promote discussion. If you see any merit in this suggestion, perhaps you will put a question on it into the feedback.

A. McGee

Have done — editor

Dear Sir,
 In my opinion Phoenix has improved appreciably over the last three issues (the only ones I have got). However, there is still a lot to be done to make it better.

Because I have limited cash to buy new games, most of mine are the S&T subscription games — to encourage new subscribers, like me, can I suggest publishing scenarios on games which have recently appeared in S&T. I would also like to see more solo scenarios printed as I find I can not play as often as I would like owing to not having partners — preferably solo scenarios on recent games.

I agree with the idea of "general strategy and tactics in wargames" articles but I would also like to see advice on designing new scenarios for games.

Because so many (in fact, all so far) of the scenarios and modifications printed have not been relevant to me I would like to see fewer of these and more of the reviews and other articles. Salamanca and West Wall Quad (Issue 6) were very good but my favourite article has been Expedition to Castle Fil (Issue 7). The article on Montrose in Issue 6 was very good and made the scenarios in Issue 7 much more relevant to those of us who did not have the games.

The Fire & Movement review (Issue 7) was also interesting.

Is Walter Oppenheim (the Use of Simulation Games in Schools, Issue 7) underestimating his pupils? I am 15 and have not yet had much difficulty in understanding the rules — my first go at Assassinate Hitler (my first game after N.A.W.) was not perfect but since then I have been OK. As for the use of SPI games in schools I wish our History Teachers would follow his example and use them. It would improve our already interesting History lessons.
Matthew Perry

Battle for Midway

GAME DESIGNERS WORKSHOP
SIMULATION REVIEWED BY
ROB GIBSON

The recent film on the Battle of Midway will doubtless help the sales of this latest opus from GDW — not that it really needs any help.

Unlike the earlier GDW simulation "Coral Sea" with which it has much in common this is a two-map simulation covering the expanse of the Pacific between the western Hawaiian Islands and Tokyo Bay. At first sight, the westernmost map seems irrelevant, since the other map covers the actual battle area. However, having both maps enables the Japanese player to vary his approach and deployment from the historical one. One

thing strikes me as odd, though — the Midway main force sailed from Kure which is off the map, west-south-west of Tokyo. So Tokyo is a wee bit pointless, unless you are planning the Doolittle raid (on 18th April 1942, twenty-odd B-25 Mitchell bombers flown off the deck of the USS Hornet bombed Tokyo almost without opposition. This strike precipitated the Midway operation).

When compared with "Coral Sea" the new simulation shows considerable additions to the use of ships and aircraft. In effect, this makes it a more sophisticated simulation. For example, battleships are included, which brings in extra gunnery factors (I liked Marc William Miller's reason for including the USS "West Virginia" — would you believe his father served on her in the '30's..... and he thought it would be nice?!). Submarines also

play their part, plus seaplane tenders and Midway Island's own radar.

This review has been somewhat long 'in the pot' as your reviewer has been going through the histories (from both sides), the orders of battle and reams of technical data — and I am happy to say that nothing has been overlooked. No, sir! — not even the latest aircraft available to and used by the Japanese. (The H8K 1 Emily flying-boat, which has a high air defence factor and the DAY1-C Judy scout plane, marginally better than the standard scouts of either side).

"Battle for Midway", in short, is a first-class simulation of the battle that destroyed the Japanese capability to wage an offensive naval campaign and passed the initiative to the United States.

The following SPI games are being made available to S&T subscribers for a limited period

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Please note that this offer is valid on orders received on or before Dec.31st, 1977.
No discounts may be taken on these prices which do include Inland P & P.

Two 'addicts' in the Manchester area (myself included) wish to locate players sufficiently partisan to enter into and maintain a postal game of *Drang Nach Osten*. We feel that, given sufficient support, we can come close to recreating the true position that an army commander could find himself in. Players would not enjoy the usual 'God-like' strategic knowledge that tends to detract from the normal face to face game. As a commander in the field you would know what troops were at your disposal, where your troops are, what battle zone you are responsible for and to a limited extent what opposition you are up against. As for what is happening on your flanks...well!! Interested? If you are, and you feel you could maintain your interest, please write to Ray Smith, (SPUK Customer Service), 46 Whitchurch Road, Withington, Manchester M20 8EY, for full details (please enclose an SAE).

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SCHWEINFURT '43

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On the 14th of October 1943 the US Air Force attacked Schweinfurt situated deep into Germany. The city was the centre of the German Ball Bearing industry and if the factories could be destroyed a major blow to crush Germany would have been struck.

The raid was a disaster however, 60 giant bombers were destroyed and a mere 121 damaged. Though the factories were severely damaged no major disruption of German Ball bearings was discernable and Germany managed to carry on production.

Regensburg though not attacked in October was attacked in conjunction with Schweinfurt in August 1943 and as added to give more interest to the game. This latter raid was also expensive with again over 60 bombers being destroyed. All this is represented in our full colour production with over 60 die-cut counters and clear rules. Only £4.00 in our pre-production offer!

The BORODINO game system is one of the finest SPI has developed. Happily, it has not been debased by being adapted for the North Africa Quadrigame. In fact, one of the flaws of the original system — the exchange combat results — has been eliminated and quite a number of interesting innovations have been added.

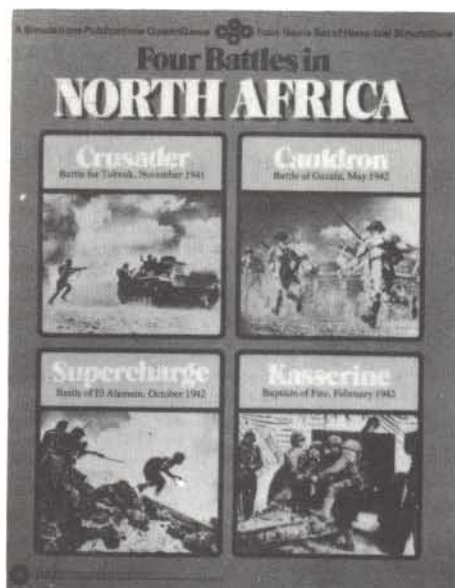
The quadrigame is four games in one — four attractive half-sized maps and four sets of units dealing with various battles of the WW11 North African Campaign. There is a basic set of rules for all the games, then special and/or optional rules for the separate games and their scenarios. Play level is battalion-brigade, hexes are scaled at two to three miles and game turns represent one day. There are never more than a hundred units in play, games tend to be reasonably short, so they're good games for two players on a wet afternoon.

Most of the scenarios stick fairly closely to the basic rules. No difficulty in shifting from one game to another. The exception is Kasserine which has special weather and withdrawal rules and a rather complicated victory point scoring system and reinforcements schedule.

Kasserine deals with the German attempt to knock out the newly-arrived Americans and Cauldron is the battle of Gazala. Both have only one scenario. Supercharge (the battle of El Alamein) and Crusader (the struggle for Tobruk) both have three scenarios.

For the price it's a rich feast — far more material than one reviewer can cope with within reasonable time and space limitations, but the crux of the matter is the game system. It is still a basically simple system — no stacking, rigid Zones of Control (ZOCs) mandating combat and a play sequence of movement, then combat. There are interesting embellishments on this theme — the advance after combat rules, for instance (up to four hexes) gives the game great fluidity. After a combat phase the front line rarely looks even remotely like it was. There are usually a few deep armoured thrusts into somebody's back yard cutting off units and/or obliging one side to hastily mount a counter offensive that wasn't anticipated. It is a very realistic rule simulating the cut, thrust and parry of open desert warfare.

The Integrated Combat Results Table is a good example of how far wargame design has progressed in the few years since the advent of BORODINO. Instead of the simplistic "defender doubled for rough terrain" combat results are fine-tuned to six different situations: an attack into rough terrain; broken terrain, ridges, stream or town; bridge, grove or ditch; mixed terrain; and an attack by armour against a position supported by an anti-tank unit. It's a bloodless CRT — there are only three results of Attacker Eliminated and none of Defender Eliminated — so the same BORODINO strategy of outflanking to cut retreats is preserved. I hope to see more of these Integrated CRTs in future games.



NORTH AFRICA QUADS



SPI's QUADRIGAME REVIEWED
BY RALPH VICKERS

But that's not all. Another fine rule enables a defender, after the phasing player has launched a specific attack, to bolster his defences with protective fire from his artillery and/or ground support strength (air and off-board long-range artillery). This is a far more legitimate technique of introducing uncertainty and surprise into combat results than a die roll. (I hope that SPI will continue to develop this idea to the point that one day they can try a game with no die rolls at all).

On-board artillery and ground support strength can also be used to reinforce attacks, so it isn't a one-sided rule. In fact, without impairing the "fairness" of the games it adds to the drama by enabling both players to escalate their attacks when a vital position is at stake.

Regrettably, however, this review cannot be wholly on a paen of praise. While SPI (and the other game producers as well) has made breathtaking advances in the sophistication of game mechanics, they still persist in their ancient ways of rule writing and playtesting. To err, forget and goof is human, so we can all forgive SPI for omitting a dozen units from one of the Initial Deployment Schedules and a rule here and there (all confessed in the errata) but as usual there are other sins that are harder to pardon:

(1) When is a unit's status for attack determined? At the beginning of a player's turn, or at the instant of combat? On this point the rules are mute. Yet it is a vital point and it is hard to understand how the playtesters overlooked it. I opted for the latter alternative, which seems to be the norm in SPI games today.

(2) Does the list of omitted units for initial deployment in the Crusader errata apply to *all* scenarios?

(3) Just like they did in PanzerArmee Afrika the art department all over the map drew trails and roads running parallel but not touching through the same hexes. Again the rules are mute on how much, if anything, it costs to switch from one to the other. (I'm certain this is a detail that will fox many players, particularly the uninitiated.) Well, in PAA the errata ruled that if you moved into such a double-trail hex paying normal terrain costs you could claim to be on whatever trail or road suited you. But if you move into a hex along a trail or road and want to switch over to a parallel line, then you have to pay normal terrain costs. A lot of dirt that could have been avoided by running parallel roads through separate hex rows, surely?

(4) The basic rules say ground support points and reinforcements are listed on the Turn Record Tracks; they are not. (Suggestion: to keep score on ground support points expended, use a pile of discarded units on the track like chips).

(5) The Dash to the Wire scenario of Crusader begins in mid-turn. The British player is assumed to have completed his phase. A natural question left unanswered is whether the British player expended any of his ground support points or not. This should have been mentioned, even if the British player is assumed not to have expended any. Just because the rules say nothing it doesn't assure me that for play balance a "no expenditure" answer is fair.

(6) Rule 7.97 has a diagram demonstrating the mechanics of advance after combat. I think that the majority of players will assume that this diagram depicts a segment of the battleline. Let's assume that it does. The diagram depicts units A, B and C advancing along an enemy's Path of Retreat — all advancing illegally and no doubt causing endless confusion and arguments among players not wise in the ways of interpreting wargame rules. A, B and C have all advanced out of supply (even a friendly occupied hex does not negate an enemy ZOC in respect to supply) and Rule 12.24 states: "No unit may move into an unsupplied position during an advance after combat..." Do they really mean this or not? My guess is it's the diagram that is wrong, not Rule 12.24.

Of course, it can be argued that this diagram isn't part of a continuous line, that in this case the supply path of the advancing units comes around the bottom or top of the diagram etc. etc. Okay, but my point is that the confusion wrought here is unnecessary — the diagram could easily have been changed one way or another. Remember, a diagram has more impact than a thousand words.

The truth is that this is the sort of error — let's call a spade a spade — that will continue to creep into rules so long as the game publishers continue to playtest in their old ways. It is no good having "Friday night

playtesting sessions" by players who are already familiar with the game. And worse, with the anxious designer hovering over their shoulders "explaining" everything.

Games have to be finished, then playtested by bright, independent people who have never seen the game. And the game designer should be locked up in another room. All those willing to pay a few pence more to cover these costs, please write to your favourite game publisher.

Here I must confess that when I faced this multi-game I had to decide on one of two review strategies — either skim through all the games, or concentrate on one. Right or wrong, I elected to concentrate on one. I picked at random *Crusader: Dash to the Wire*. It was the game I *didn't* want to study because it looked to me like a static siege of Tobruk. I am elated to report that the designers were much more crafty than I expected. If all the games and scenarios are typical of this one, then all are first rate.

There is a siege of Tobruk, but the Axis don't win a single victory point even if they overrun the fortress. The main battle takes place in the open desert where allied relief columns are attempting to push through. The Axis win points for destroying and/or cutting supply to allied units. The allies also receive points for destroying the enemy but their big payoff is for reaching Tobruk.

Tobruk is in the upper left hand corner of the map, surrounded by Italians who must keep the feisty Tobruk garrison penned up. To be sure they do, the Axis player must assign the Italians a backbone of German units that he can ill spare. The main concentration of German power is massed in the desert about forty miles southeast of Tobruk. The allies are confronting this strong force with a line stretching in a semi-circle from the south to the seacoast in the north. On the far right is another pocket of Germans defending Bardia. This is a weak but constant threat to the British "corridor" running to the coast. Everybody is almost surrounded by everybody else. A fascinating game situation.

For the allies the best approach to Tobruk is along the coast. But how much strength can they afford to commit there and still contain the panzers in the south?

On the other hand, should the Axis try to push their panzers along the south, joining with Bardia and cutting supply to the allies in the north, or should they switch their strength to the north to meet the allied advance head on? They certainly cannot afford to have their northern front sandwiched between the allied relief column and the Tobruk defenders. Yet they have got to guard their southerly supply lines against a swift allied strike. It is a delicate situation for both sides and meanwhile those Italians around Tobruk keep tangling with the garrison and screaming for reinforcements. On the other hand, Tobruk cannot hold out indefinitely. Really intriguing!

If the other games and scenarios are half as good, then North Africa Quadrigame is going to be popular for a long time.

British Subscribers to S&T

BY BRAD HESSEL SPI

The following comparison between SPI's British and American customers is based exclusively on the Feedback results for S&T 59, for which the SPUK results have just recently been processed.

One's preconception of the British wargamer may reasonably include pipe and middle-age paunch. This, however, is not a very accurate profile of the British S&T feedback respondents. 53% of the Britons who sent in FB cards were 21 or younger (33% under 18) as compared to 41% of the American audience (24% under 18). Generally, the Briton had less education (55% with no college compared to 43% American), had subbed for a shorter time span (45% were in their first year compared to 31% for the Americans) and had been in the hobby for a much shorter period (3.89 years to 5.60 years on the average). They owned a lot fewer games (65% of the Britons had fewer than 31 games, 47% of them fewer than 21 games, compared to 45% and 28% on this side of the Atlantic; 13% of our boys have over eighty games while only 4% of the Britons are so inclined). And, 4-day week or not, they played their fewer games somewhat less than the Americans played their games (1-9 hours — 31% of the Britons, 27% of the Americans; 10-20 hours — 40% of the Britons, 37% of the Americans; 20+ — 29% of the Britons, 36% of the Americans). The Britons like slightly more complex games on balance (6.24 average for Britain, 6.15 for America), though the tendency to bunch towards the middle that is evident in America (only 8% total answer "1", "2", "3" or "4" and only 5% answer "9") is even more pronounced in Britain (only 3% answered "1", "2", "3" or "4" and only 2% answered "9"). That may be a function of the smaller sample, however. As to preferred periods for game subjects, the British were generally more enthusiastic about older periods. When asked to name their favourites, 12% picked Ancient (7% American), 10% picked Middle Ages (5% American), 6% picked pre-Napoleonic (5% American) and 8% Napoleonic (7% American). Americans favoured the somewhat chauvinistic "Civil War" 8% to 5% over the Britons, but both samples were equally enthusiastic over World War 1 (8%).

World War II (19% British/22% American), Post-WW II (11% British/13% American) and Future (21% British/ 25% American) were less popular in Britain than America, although they were still elected by 51% of the British audience overall (as compared with 60% of the Americans).

Finally, one preconception was buttressed, as more of the Britons wanted letters in S&T (55% yes; 29% maybe; 17% no) than Americans, (49% yes, 32% maybe, 20% no).

In rating things, the British generally liked games better and were more critical of writing. For example, the issue game (Plot) was rated 6.45% by the British and 6.02% by the Americans, while the Britons gave lower ratings to the two main articles (6.34 for Plot and 6.35 for the Russo-Japanese War compared to 6.42 and 6.74 respectively) than the Americans. Similarly, OGM (6.41 British/6.71 American), Briefings (6.26/6.40) and FYEO (6.77/ 7.01) did worse in the British eyes than Americans. They also gave a lower opinion of the format (question 26) — 6.32 compared to the American rating of 6.61. Nevertheless, the British rating for issue overall was just about the same as the American. I guess they lower their standards for Americans writing English. (The figures were 6.59 for the British and 6.51 for the Americans).

Games, on the other hand, as I mentioned above, were received more generously by the Britons. 46 games were rated in issue 59 (not counting Plot). Of these, 15 received fewer than ten votes from the British sample and were thrown out. Of the remaining 31 games, 21 were rated between .15 and 1.0+ higher than the American sample had rated them, 3 were about the same and the Britons panned (relatively) 7 games. However, many of the British results were based on scanty results and it is quite likely that the pattern which we have noticed in analysing FB data here (namely, that game ratings tend to go down the larger the sample) is in operation. Of the 5 games rated by more than 30% of the total British sample, 2 were higher, 2 were lower and 1 was a standoff.

FEEDBACK RESULTS PHOENIX 7

During the period April/May 1977, SPUK service was rated at 6.88. This is higher than the previous two month period with 27.06% saying that we are improving and 65.02% saying we are steady. Customer service got a rating of 6.56, again an improvement on the previous two months. 22.81% felt this service was improving whilst 74.56% felt it was steady.

No non-SPI games were feedbacked in this issue, indeed such questions have met with so negative a response to date that I am discontinuing them with immediate effect.

Starsoldier got an overall rating of 7.24 for physical quality. The following table gives details of your reaction to the game.

	Map	Frontsheet	Rules book
Worse than SPI	6.06%	18.18%	6.06%
Level with SPI	75.76%	75.76%	87.88%
Better than SPI	18.18%	6.06%	6.06%

96.88% said that the physical quality would encourage them to buy UK produced games again. It is interesting and not too surprising to note that the Rules Book and Frontsheet, both of which were taken from our Wigan printer and given to the Stockport printer who already produces the Maps, got the least positive reception. I do not think that the figures above are anything to be ashamed of, however we will continue to strive for improvement.

48.91% of those who returned the Phoenix 7 Feedback also sent in that from Phoenix 6.

81.07% said they would subscribe to Phoenix, 24.62% purely on merit and 67.48% on both merit and desire to support a UK magazine.

Issue 7 was rated 6.28 overall, 66.34% said was better than the previous issue (which was rated 6.5) and 74.59% said they wanted more articles on boardgaming basics.

There is a continual calling for such articles but no one ever seems to come forward with the right kind of material. How about it you veteran gamers? Send us articles that can help beginners get into the hobby.

Finally, 86.92% of you said that, given the number of SPI games on the market, Phoenix is not SPI orientated.

S&T 61 Feedback Results	
Rate October War (Simulation)(1-9)	7.04
Rate October War (Article) (1-9)	6.99
Rate Arnheim (Article)(1-9)	6.31
Rate Outgoing Mail (1-9)	6.45
Rate Briefings (1-9)	6.08
Rate 'For Your Eyes Only' (1-9)	6.45
Rate This issue overall (1-9)	6.95
Was this issue better than the last?	
No opinion	6.01%
Yes	74.05%
No	19.94%

Foxbat & Phantom

GLENN ROBINSON

I quite enjoy "Foxbat and Phantom", yet I was forever losing my sorry MiG-21's to the Phantom. The main problem was the all singing, all dancing RH missiles. As I was interested in this I did some checking on them. This is the basis of the modifications. In order they are:

1. Missile Range Point Allowance
2. RPA Hit Point (Rule 7.48)
3. Missile Carriage/Turn mode link.
4. Addition of the Phoenix missile
5. Modification to the Lightning's 'RH' missile.

1. Missile Range Point Allowance

New RPA for Radar-homing Missile weapon for Starfighter, Phantom, Tomcat, F111E, F-15, **now** 13 Range Point Allowance.

New range for Soviet Heat Seeking Missile weapon. Foxbat, Fishbed, Flagon **now** 3 hexes.

New range for all non-Soviet aircraft Heat Seeking Missile weapon, **now** 4 hexes. When calculating the chance for a Soviet Heat Seeking Missile weapon **do not** use ranges one or two. Instead count ranges 3,4, 5 as 1,2,3 respectively. The same goes for Non-Soviet Heat Seeking Missile combat except only range one is ignored — 2,3,4,5 **now** 1,2,3,4.

2. RPA Hit Point Modifications

(replaces Rule 7.48)

RPA	5	0 Hit Points
RPA	6-10	2 Hit Points
RPA	11-15	1 Hit Points
RPA	16+	-1 Hit Points

(This last one is to show the fact that a missile's motor fires only a few seconds, so at long ranges the missile's ability to manoeuvre is greatly depreciated).

3. Missile Carriage/Turn Mode Link

Firstly, the Phantom, Tomcat and F-15 can have 4 Radar-Homing Missiles **and** 4 Heat Seeking Missiles. If they do carry this weapon load their manoeuvrability will be affected. To show this:

Add 2 to the present turn mode

Reduce by 1 for every 2 missiles of any type fired.

4. The Phoenix Missile

I don't use this one much as it is not much fun.

RPA — 60 (I worked it out as 120 but I thought your enemy should at least have a chance to get on the map).

Turn-Mode

It retains the normal	2 up to 20 RPA
	3 21-30 RPA
	4 31-40 RPA
	5 41-50 RPA
	6 51-60 RPA

5. Lightning/Mirage F1 Missile Mod.

Firstly, the Lightning does not carry a Radar-Homing Missile weapon. Technically it is a 'Super Heat Seeking' missile. To show this count it as a normal Heat Seeking weapon for ranges 1-5. For ranges 6-12 use the Radar-Homing technique but **do not** count electronic counter measures; instead move **two** columns to the right of the actual hit point column, i.e. 9-12 is now 16-20.

Finally, the French Radar-Homing Missile can change 'heads' to a Heat Seeking missile. If used as this then keep then Radar-Homing range and treat as for the British weapon.

I hope you find modifications acceptable. Without drastically altering the game structure the game is balanced up in some respects and, as the Americans found in Viet-Nam, MiG-21's are not lightly dismissed.

Bibliography

Janes 'All the World Weapon Systems'
Janes 'All the World's Aircraft'
Aviation & Marine Magazines
International Defence Review Magazines
Flight Magazines
Aircraft Illustrated Magazines
Armies & Weapons Magazines

BUY THE BOOK HAMISH WILSON

In the last S&T (no.62) the game deals with the future of the southern part of Africa and, following their usual style, they've given us a series of brief background essays on the histories and comings and goings of the peoples of that perennially troubled part of the world. As an addition to background reading do look for Brian Robert's fine book "The Zulu Kings" which Sphere Paperbacks have recently published at £1.50. The story is not perhaps the most edifying of tales if one wishes to discuss means of democratic government but if you seek some understanding of the formation of the Zulu "nation" then this work must be amongst the most eminently readable, richly informative and sweepingly vivid. The names Chaka, Dingane and Cetshwayo are bound to echo down the histories of mankind in South Africa, but it was the latter gentleman whom the British army intended to teach a sharp lesson when they invaded Zululand in January, 1879. This was the start of the Zulu war which was to cost £5,000,000 and many lives on both sides. The imperial pride of the British was to take a severe pounding through the dark days of Isandhlwana and Rorke's drift and it wasn't until the Battle of Ulundi in July that the "red soldiers" as Cetshwayo called them, were to achieve a victory which led to the capture of the Zulu king and to the signing of a peace treaty on the 1st of September. Frank Emery has produced a marvellous book called "The Red Soldier" which deals with the war in excellent military detail but this is far from your usual run of campaign histories, for as well as following the campaign Mr Emery allows us to witness it from within the ranks of the men who fought, for large parts of the text are composed of extracts from letters written by the men prior to or just after the battles concerned. From staging post, bivouac and fortification there are descriptions which place us right there and give us a really exciting insight into the army life from squaddy to officer, of the Imperial Army of 1879. With eight clear maps, good photographs and drawn illustrations from the period, this hard back book is published by Hodder and Stoughton at £6.25. Incidentally both the foregoing titles are well equipped with useful bibliographies which will help to provide even more background on this interesting but neglected period of history.

Many of you will have shared my interest and enjoyment of Geoff Geddes' article on Montrose

(Phoenix 6&7) and there are four books which are worthy of mention as companion reading or as further inspiration either to Mr Geddes or another Civil War player to provide some more of the same — who knows. A biography of Montrose is the first title. Written by Max Hastings and published by Gollancz at £7.50, "The King's Champion" is a good though romantic version of the events in the life of the Marquis. There can be no doubts as to the author's sympathies as he paints a glowing picture of this brilliant soldier as a knight more suited to the court of King Arthur than to the political intrigues of the Reformation and the extraordinary figure of Charles the First. Twelve maps and almost as many illustrations round out an interesting if somewhat rosy picture of one of Scotland's greatest fighting soldiers.

There is a briefer and possibly more objective view of Montrose in a series of biographical essays called "The Cavaliers" by Mark Bence-Jones which Constable have published in uniform with a similar series called "The Roundheads" by Jasper Ridley. (£5.25 and £5.50 respectively). For the student or discoverer of this period of revolution and counter revolution in British history these works have immense value in showing the leading lights on both sides in clear and reasonably brief chapters and, at the same time, most usefully demonstrating the internal workings of the political machinations of a truly convoluted time. With illustrations and adequate bibliographies these books can only help to encourage interest in the Civil War. The final biography of the period is that of "General Monck" by Maurice Ashley. Jonathan Cape offers this at £6.95. Monck was the man who was (militarily) mainly responsible for the Restoration in 1660 but here is Monck, man, admiral(!), administrator, general and soldier in Roundhead and Royalist armies. It's a tremendous tale well told and thoroughly based in research as the more than ample notes demonstrate. As a rounding off to the period this biography is to be highly recommended and as a damn good read you'll go a long way to find better.

The very stuff of game design and of armchair consideration of military history is wrapped about the consideration of the country over which a particular battle, campaign or war was fought. Weidenfeld and Nicholson publish a most useful

series of works by Martin Gilbert in a series of "Historical Atlas" books. The latest title in this list is the revised version of the "Recent History Atlas" which covers the period 1860-1960. These books are a marvellous means of following, almost at a glance, the periods of history in which one is interested and this revised edition of a work which is already justly renowned can only be welcomed with open arms. This book, like the others in the series, is the perfect companion to an ordinary book of maps for here, as well as the lie of the land, you get what happened, when it happened, to whom (for the most part), and for how long. If you want to follow, in brief, the Franco-Prussian War, the First World War, the Russo-Polish War of 1920 or the Second World War, and you would like to be able to see the mass movements of humanity caused by all these and other occurrences then this book with cartography by John Flower and a most useful chronological table at the beginning is for you — and at £4.75 that can't be bad.

I know of no game which has been designed around the command problems involved in intelligence and deception but if one were successfully designed I know it would be enormously exciting. The kind of excitement you can share by having a read at "Bodyguard of Lies" by Anthony Cave-Brown. (Wyndham at £1.95). It's a big thick paperback and is one of the most fascinating and exciting books I have read in many a year. The book deals with the enormous deception plans and espionage networks which were developed and mounted as the Second World War progressed. It answers questions which have hitherto remained unanswered. Why was Hitler sure we were coming ashore at the Pas de Calais? — Because we told him so. Why did Churchill know to warn Stalin in 1941 of Barbarossa? How did Churchill know about it? Who was the man who told the Germans about the invasion six hours before it happened and why did his British spy masters tell him to do it? I know this begins to sound like a bad commercial but the book is full of stories like those. It's well written, eminently readable and makes Buchan, Bond and all that mob look a wee bit thin on the ground. It is also a salutary lesson in how ruthless this country can be when it needs to. The author has spent some fifteen years in researching the book and for my money it's time

well spent. Of course the reason we were able to do so much was that we were able to read the German codes, and one of the gentlemen responsible for a part of that amazing fact was one Colonel William F. Friedman whose biography, by Ronald W. Clark, is published by Weidenfeld and Nicholson at £5.25. While this is really the biography of an interesting if possibly irritating person it must be of some interest in military history since the subject is regarded as having been one of the best code busters in the world. The book is written with a light touch and is as thoroughly entertaining as Mr F. must have been. As a diversion from the merely military or as an adjunct to the Anthony Cave-Brown book it's good value at £5.25.

The great preparation during the period 1941-1944 was for the invasion and two books from the David and Charles stable cover aspects of the Normandy Campaign. The first deals with that incredible achievement, the great Mulberry Harbours. "Code Name Mulberry" is the title and author Gerry Hartcup is at pains to share with us the intricacies of the problems of design, construction, emplacement and employment without seeking to drown us in a sea of engineering jargon. The drawings are beautifully clear and the illustrations include an enormous amount of material which hasn't, as far as I know, been seen before. £4.95 will secure this goodie and might inspire the design of a solitaire game played by the builder

of the harbour against the elements and so on — anyone for Mulberry jam? I wish I could be as enthusiastic about Henry Maule's book "Caen — the Brutal Battle and Breakout from Normandy". The book covers a period which has already been heavily dealt with in several really good works and Mr Maule contributes nothing new either by way of knowledge or insight and, it appears to me that he tends to make light of some important aspects of the campaign. Perhaps if someone had never read anything about the invasion and the breakout this might do as an introduction but for useful detailed work look elsewhere.

Finally another paperback. From Futura this is called "The War of Atonement" and it looks at the Yom Kippur Campaign of 1973 from the Israeli side in considerable detail. Author Chaim Herzog is well placed to research this amazing meeting of opponents in the Middle East and his telling of the story is crisp, concise and clear (an achievement in this confused series of engagements). His handling of the fighting in the Golan is masterly and despite the cramped conditions of the pocket sized paperback, the maps are of some assistance in following the intricacies of what went on. Of course the "War, War" stopped and then came the "Jaw, Jaw" and Mr Herzog's comments thereon are most revealing as are his comments on the immediate past and the possible future. If you haven't played "Sinai" or "Golan" then this book will make you want to and if you have played them and haven't read the book it's about time you did. At £1.25 it'll not break the bank but it might help you set up or break the first fine ferocity of the Syrian armour the next time around.

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The following questions/comments have been extracted from the Phoenix 7 Feedback Cards and have been answered where applicable.

Question: What about a SPUKORGY down South?
MW: It would be impractical for us to organise a meeting outside our own area. To set up a meeting requires detailed knowledge of the proposed area and the venues available within that area, not to mention travel details. I think you will find that all companies/clubs/individuals that get involved in organising such meetings ensure that they take place at a home venue.

Question: Any possibility of marketing the resealable plastic bags to keep the pieces in?
MW: It would cost us 16.5p (includes postage & packing costs) to supply a single small plastic bag and that before taking into account handling costs and, dare I say it, profit. Would you pay upwards of 20p for an item that costs us only 1p per unit to buy into stock?

Question: Why not UK print 'War Between the States'?

Comment: Please print some of the big SPI games in Britain (Wacht Am Rhein, Highway to the Reich, War in the East/West/Europe).
MW: In a word...cost! To print any of the above titles would take up a minimum of three months UK print allocation per game. I do not believe that demand for any of them is sufficient to justify the expenditure.

Question: What's an Andrew Gilham?

Anon: Please, this is a family show.

Comment: Suggest you advise SPI of the current subscription (S&T rates) in the UK.

MW: Have done.

Comment: A great number of errors in the StarSoldier rules book, particularly with reference numbers.

MW: Not much we can do about this one. We print direct from repro negatives bought from the States, therefore any error made over there is duplicated here. The only way to alter this situation would be to playtest every game, digging out all the errors and to do that would kiss all UK production goodbye.

Comment: I think it would be well worth while publishing UK games, not necessarily for insert with Phoenix.

MW: As a wargamer I would advocate the production of UK designed games. As a business person (Women's Lib please note!) I would be more cautious. From

the experience gained through publishing Phoenix and printing SPI games, I have learned that nothing comes cheap in the printing business. UK Wargamers who have recently produced Issue Two of 'The Wargamer' are already feeling the bite from producing games and magazines in the UK. According to the editorial in that issue, they must increase their membership immediately by 71.43% or go bust. I see no point in putting SPUK in a similar position by entering into UK designed games prematurely.

Comment: Print more British games involving British Forces, or else!

MW: Come on now, don't beat about the bush, be brutally frank, you really want more British games involving British Forces don't you?

Comment: Keep the funny jokes going!

MW: Certainly.... game production schedules. How's that for a joke!!!

Comment: The centre spread is still the best bit, keep up the offers from SPUK.

MW: A fellow Scot perhaps?

Comment: The special offers are a good inducement to buy games.

MW: And yet another!

Comment: Hope that miniatures sets mentioned in S&T will be available to UK subscribers.

MW: This seems a bit like carrying coals to Newcastle. Britain is already very well served in the miniatures field. However, if there is a reasonable demand for these sets I will certainly bring them in.

Question: Could you give a list of titles you intend to print?

MW: We could do. However, this year has taught me that any print schedule set up is very much subject to alteration due to outside influence. I feel that such a list could cause more problems than it would solve.

Comment: American (Starsoldier) counters rather poorly printed.

MW: Did you ever see the UK produced Outreach counters?

Comment: SPUK O.K. (What games will be produced next month in England?)

MW/RJS/VEW/GB/BP/EAW/SMW: God Bless You, Mr TFRJ/7/76! If you ever want a job just give us a bell! UK print details are given in News From SPUK.

Comment: Put games in Phoenix.

MW: What, all this and a game for now? Who said optimism was dead?

NEWS FROM SPUK

The printing of NATO and WW11 in November of this year will mark the end of the 1977 UK print programme. Since March we have endeavoured to maintain a flow of two SPI games per month but for various reasons we have been unable to do so. StarSoldier and Mech War '77 were produced on time in April. Sniper and Dreadnought also kept to schedule and were produced in May. Sorcerer and Fulda Gap were scheduled for production in June but the former was late in coming from the printers and did not come in stock until mid-July whilst Fulda Gap negatives did not get to us until the end of July. A further two weeks' delay ensued due to the late arrival of sample games without which the printer could not make a start. It looks like Fulda Gap will now be available September 10th, three months behind the original availability date.

Patrol and StarForce were to be produced in July but again negatives were late in arriving and we put their production back by a month. StarForce eventually came into stock 12th August and Patrol is due on the 22nd. Thus, even with what I consider to be sufficient time, the printers could not get Patrol to us on schedule.

WW11 and Panzer '44 were to be produced in August. They have now been put back to October because negatives are still not to hand. Since the people who shoot the negatives in the States have now embarked on a move to new premises it would be totally unrealistic to hope for these games any earlier. Even October might be optimistic though, hopefully, we can get them for then.

Finally, WW11 and NATO are to be produced in November. Again we await negatives.

We dropped plans to print Modern Battle Quads 11 and Road to Ruin as it seemed to be pointless adding to our problems by pushing more into the programme than the printers could realistically cope with.

Was it worth all the headaches? Our sales figures and your own reaction to the attempt tells us yes. This being the case we will make a further attempt in 1978 to get into the swing but with a few changes in our modus operandi.

Firstly, we will not attempt to produce new games as they come out. There is too much uncertainty involved in their availability as Fulda Gap has shown. Also we cannot be totally certain what components will be included in a game that has not yet been produced thus we cannot work out an accurate costing.

What we will do is select a number of released titles for which we will obtain negatives prior to the start of the production programme. This should eliminate the sort of problems experienced in the second half of this year. Further details will probably be given in Issue 12 of Phoenix.

Ah, War '78 and War in the Pacific have continued to be a problem. Initially they were expected May and July respectively. It now looks like being October and November of this year, as long as nothing further goes amiss.

S&T looks like getting back onto an even keel with Issue 63. According to the documentation presently to hand we should have these in good time to meet the September 20th deadline, so we will stick with the original schedule and hope that we do not fall on our faces over the Xmas period. Moves 33 also looks good. It should be in stock within the next few days and be out a couple of days after the 20th August.

Philmar's two new games, Seastrike and Decline & Fall are still not to hand. ETA is now late August — quite a difference between that and the original launching date which was mid-April. I have heard the inside story on this debacle but will not repeat it in print since to do so might invite a writ or two from aggrieved parties. Suffice it to say that Philmar have not had their troubles to seek in this venture.

Another story of late arrival — GDW's Citadel, Pharsalus and Pearl Harbour, which have been out in the States for some time now, are still not available in the UK. Their agents do not know when they will arrive and what they will cost as and when they do show up. As many of you will be aware, we were at one time acting as agents for GDW but elected to drop their agency almost two years ago. The reason for taking this step was GDW's insistence that we should have been able to move more units than we were doing. What they appeared to forget is that you can only sell an item if your supplier gets said item to you, a task which, with boring regularity, they seemed unable to perform. Since they were unable to back up our stock requirements we dropped our wholesale commitments and brought in sufficient supplies to take care of our mail order customers only.

GDW have since appointed a new agent who, although actively engaged in pushing their product, is apparently receiving the same support we did, which was very little. Come on GDW, how about backing up your agent and letting us in the UK get hold of your games!! I would like to stress that this is my personal opinion based on what we at SPUK have seen of the situation as prospective buyers.

The Autumn Orgy attendance is now up to 68. Add SPUK staff and local gamers and you have yourself a full house. What is particularly gratifying is the number of gamers coming back for their second and third time. At this rate we may have to look around for a larger hall next year. This possibility will be evaluated after we see how well this year's attendance fits into the Ashley Hotel.

Those of you going to the National Convention and/or the Northern Militaire, please call and see us. The dates and venues are as follows:-

National Wargames Convention
Royal Victoria Hotel
Victoria Station Road
Sheffield
Sept. 24th and 25th

Northern Militaire '77
Lancastrian Hall
Swinton, Manchester
Nov. 5th and 6th

New SPI games currently in stock are "A Mighty Fortress", "Modern Battles Quads 11" and "First World War". Expected shortly: "Air War '78" (ETA October 1977), "War in the Pacific", "Up Scope" and "Canadian Civil War" (ETA November 1977).

Non-SPI games expected soon: From Avalon Hill — "Squad Leader" (£9.65p. inc. P&P) small infantry tactics, "Gettysburg" (£8.65p. inc. P&P) a complete re-design of the original AH game, "Victory in the Pacific" (£8.15p. inc. P&P) simple WW11 Pacific theatre game similar to "War at Sea", ETA September. "Assault on Crete" based on the major German paratroop action of WW11 (£8.65 inc. P&P) ETA December. The following Battle-line games are expected in approx. October — "Flat Top" (carrier battles in the South Pacific during 1942), "Alpha Omega" (tactical combat in space), "Objective=Atlanta" (ACW), "Viva Espana" (Spanish Civil War 1936-39). Firm delivery and price details are not yet available. Please contact us before ordering. Finally we now have GDW's "La Bataille de la Moskowa" in stock, see price list.

We are now, again stocking a selection of Arms & Armour books which we feel will be of interest to boardgamers. Where possible, these will relate to current games. Should demand be sufficiently encouraging we will expand the coverage and look into the possibility of stocking books by other publishers. The War in the East S&T Staff Study No1 is to be published by Arms & Armour later this year and will be available through us.
Malcolm Watson

FEEDBACK

Phoenix 9 Published Sept/Oct 1977

How to use the Feedback Response Card: After you've finished reading this issue of Phoenix, please read the feedback questions below and give us your answer/number on the card in the response boxes which correspond to each question number. See centre spread for card. Please be sure to answer all the questions (but do not write anything in the box for question-numbers labelled "no question"). Incompletely filled out cards cannot be processed.

What the numbers mean: When answering questions, "0" always means NO OPINION or NOT APPLICABLE. When the question is a "yes or no" question "1" means YES and "2" means NO. When the question is a rating question, "1" is the WORST rating, "9" is the BEST rating; "5" is an average rating; and all numbers in-between express various shades of approval or disapproval.

The deadline for the return of this card is October 30th 1977.

- (1) Did you send in the Phoenix 8 feedback?
- (2) Based on the last 2 months, how do you rate the service you receive from SPUK (1-9)?
- (3) Do you feel our service is (1) improving, (2) the same as always, (3) declining?
- (4) What is the usual time lag between your order being mailed to us and receipt of that order? When answering this assume that you use 2nd class mail when writing to us and further assume that the item ordered is not out of stock. (1) one week, (2) two weeks, (3) three weeks, (4) four weeks, (5) more than four weeks.
- (5) Based on the last 2 months, how do you rate our after sales service (i.e. rules, queries, complaints, etc.) (1-9)?
- (6) Do you feel that this service is (1) improving (2) the same as always, (3) declining?
- (7) What is the usual time lag between your complaint/rules query being sent to us and your receipt of an answer from Customer Service? (1) one week, (2) two weeks, (3) three weeks, (4) four weeks, (5) more than five weeks.
- (8) Do you feel that the physical quality of the following UK produced components were (1) lower than SPI standards, (2) level with SPI standards, (3) higher than SPI standards, (4) did not purchase therefore cannot comment?
- (9) Panzer '44 Frontsheet
- (10) " Map
- (11) WW11 Frontsheet
- (12) " Map
- (13) " Rules
- (14) Patrol Frontsheet
- (15) " Map
- (16) " Rules
- (17) StarForce Frontsheet
- (18) " Map
- (19) " Rules

If you consider the quality fell below SPI standards, please give a specific criticism at the foot of your feedback card.

Rate the overall physical quality of the following games on a 1-9 basis:

- (20) Panzer '44
- (21) WW11
- (22) Patrol
- (23) StarForce
- (24) Will the physical quality attained encourage you to purchase further UK printed games?
- (25) Based on this issue, would you subscribe to Phoenix?
- (26) If yes, would you do so on (1) merit (2) to support a UK-orientated magazine (3) both?
- (27) Do you think that this issue was better than the last (1) yes, (2) no, (3) about the same?

Rate the following articles on a 1-9 basis:

- (28) The Principle of the Thing
- (29) Designing for Schools

- (30) Salamanca
- (31) Highway to the Reich
- (32) The Scenario for Arnhem
- (33) Mail Call
- (34) Battle for Midway
- (35) North Africa Quad
- (36) British Subscribers to S&T
- (37) Foxbat & Phantom
- (38) Buy the Book
- (39) Comments, Questions & Answers
- (40) News from SPUK
- (41) Overall presentation of this issue

- (42) Would you like to see Phoenix article ratings published in the Feedback Results
- (43) Would you like to see a regular column in Phoenix which dealt with problems encountered and ambiguities on a given game (probably linked to a series of brief reviews by several subscribers)
- (44) In order to find the maximum article space would you like to see the Boardgame Club Contacts list published in alternate issues of Phoenix, rather than in every issue as at present, and the subsequent space utilised for article material.
- (45) Do you intend to submit material for publication in Phoenix (other than in Readers' Letters)



MAIL CALL CONTINUED

Dear Sir,

I have just read with interest Mail Call, Phoenix 7. I am fully behind A. (sorry, Andrew) Gilham's comments. Well, mostly. 'Ish' (as in "Mail Call, ish 5") immediately brings to mind the sound of a flushing lavatory, not, as the writer presumably intended, a reference to a magazine. As to the play-testing of scenarios, I personally find it most difficult to get a game out of a scenario. Each playtest turns out a different result, (wildly different, that is) and so most of my scenarios turn out compromises.

To undercut the venerable writer's 500 'News from Bree' fans, "The Wargamer" has, as yet, a subscription of 300, and comes out quarterly (at the moment). It is of equal size and at least equal quality as the "Phoenix", contains a game in each issue (ish for Andrew) plus a wealth of discounts on various things, and all for £2.00 a year. Perhaps most importantly, many services are supplied, and a whole range of play-by-mail kits are being published. Such things as play-by-mail kits, names and addresses of gamers, and which games they have, a player-rating service, a game review service, should have been brought in by SPUK long ago. Goddamit! This was just their first issue! (as Redmond Simonson would put it, 'I own no stock in the magazine, I just like it'.) I am not saying this in criticism of what SPUK are doing, but what they're NOT doing.

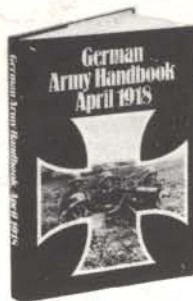
To the question 'Do you think that 'Phoenix' is going in the right direction' I routinely put '7' in the box. I consider the answer to that question too diverse to be put in a simple rating. I therefore do not try. (To my heartfelt relief that question has been omitted from the last two feedbacks). As to a 'Phoenix' 'For Your Eyes Only' I would certainly approve.
Graham Wheatley

SPUK WARGAMER'S BOOKSHOP

An Offering of Books Useful to the Gamer, Historian and Miniaturist

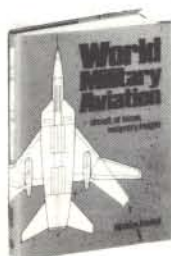


The Russian War Machine 1917-1945
 Antony Preston, Ian Hogg, Douglas Welsh and John Bradley.
 The Russian war machine was arguably the most formidable fighting weapon of the Second World War. More than any other single factor, it was the Soviet Army and Air Forces that destroyed Nazi power and bought victory to the Allies. Nevertheless its origins were shaky, its organisations weak – indeed, the very existence of the Soviet Union was in doubt for many years, as the Red Army forged by Trotsky in 1917, divided and destroyed a series of adversaries to give victory to the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War.
 Though thrown back in the Nazi invasion of Russia in 1941, the reorganised Russian forces, spearheaded by the magnificent T-34 tank, fought their way back to Berlin. With the largest air force in Europe, and a navy that could boast the biggest submarine fleet in the world, the Soviet Union at the close of the Second World War had become one of the two most powerful nations on earth.
 The story of the rise of the Russian war machine – the men, their weapons and campaigns – is vividly recounted in this large and lavishly-illustrated history.
 256 pages with 64 in full colour; over 375 illustrations.
 £6.55 P&P



German Army Handbook, April 1918
 Compiled by British Intelligence for restricted official issue by the General Staff, *German Army Handbook, April 1918*, is a comprehensive assessment of the German Army during the latter stages of the First World War.
 Illustrated throughout with plates, diagrams, charts, tables and maps, it provides a detailed breakdown of the army, covering all aspects from recruiting and training, mobilization, command and organisation, weapons and signals to transportation, medical and veterinary services, and uniform. There are also two fold-out maps, showing Army Corps Districts, and Zones of Administration and Lines of Command in June 1917.
 As an account of an army as seen through the eyes of its opponents, this unique document affords valuable insight, not only into the degree of detailed information available to (or discovered by) the other side during world war, but also into the factors considered important by Army Intelligence during the First World War.
German Army Handbook, April 1918, is enhanced by an introduction by David Nash of the Imperial War Museum, placing it in its historical perspective. 196 pages; illustrated.
 £6.65 P&P

World Military Aviation
 Aircraft, Air Forces, Weaponry and Insignia.
 Nikolaus Krivinyi; translated by Elke C. Weal.
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