

THE PHOENIX

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THE CONQUERORS

THE GAMES IN ONE PACKAGE

CHARLES VASEY REVIEWS
THE CONQUERORS: THE ROMANS



THE PHOENIX

A BRITISH BOARD WARGAMERS MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL JOHN SPENCE

You may have noticed that you have a new editor for Phoenix, Ray Bowden stepping down from his exalted position due to pressure of work but for the present will continue on as our Art Director. I would like to thank him on your behalf for all the hard work he has put in to the magazine over the last two years — I hope that I can continue in his footsteps.

In this, my first editorial, I wish to comment on this new post of mine, how I view the hobby, and what I would hope Phoenix could contribute to the British board wargaming scene.

The readership of Phoenix could be 3000 odd gamers covering the whole gamut of experience from rank novice to hard core gamer. However it can also be subdivided by game preference (tactical through to strategic), whether simulation content is considered more important than playability, whether games are an end in themselves or just a lead into an in-depth examination of the battle/war, etc. etc. ad nauseam. For any one magazine to please all tastes all the time in such a polymorphic population is quite impossible and you, the reader, must realise this. Thus, it has been the Phoenix policy over the last two years to cater in the main for the newcomers to the hobby. However novices soon become 'mainstream' players and look for more meat in their reading.

In the future I would hope that Phoenix will expand 'upfield' to include such players as well as maintaining a close contact with the novice as at the present. This issue reflects this approach with a number of in-depth articles plus a goodly sprinkling of shorter notes as in the past. In time I would hope to cover many of the varied sub-cultures within the hobby such as fantasy, SF, D&D, play-by-mail, and so on but would suggest patience since there is only so much room between the covers!

It must be realised that the Phoenix editorial staff, as with all UK boardgaming magazines at the present, are 'amateurs' and that neither Ray nor myself are in this job for a living. Whilst I would hope to make contact with as many of you who write to the editor as possible I fear a family precludes as much as I would wish !!!

I feel that it is salutary to remember (and a personal view strongly held) that board wargaming is a hobby for most of us and not a way of life. I hope that discussion and constructive criticism will grace the pages of Phoenix but I also hope that it will be written in this spirit — as a discussion of our hobby.

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Fulda Gap

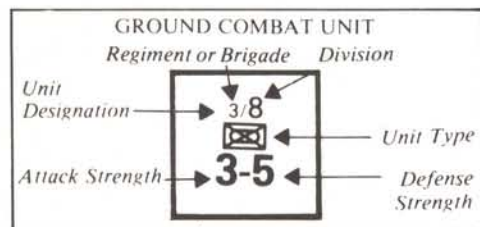
The First Battle of the Next War

DIES ILLA FULDA GAP REVIEWED BY D I A MACK

Fulda Gap, which became available in Britain last September, is one of SPI's 'future history' games on the theme of Warsaw Pact v. NATO; at regimental/brigade level it comes between 'Wurzburg' and 'NATO' in scale and its game system derives from 'Panzergruppe Guderian' — but with improvements — as well as having a touch of 'Modern Battles'. Let me say now that this game is, in my opinion, one of SPI's ace productions and could become as popular as PGG has done. Designed by James Dunnigan, it is colourful, fluid, exciting and a reminder that 'War is the province of uncertainty.'

The overall scenario is a major drive towards Frankfurt and the Rhine by the Soviet 1st and 8th Guards Armies as part of a general assault. The invading force crosses the East German border from Thuringia (the bulge at the bottom left corner of East Germany), the axis of advance being through the Fulda Gap and the long, irregular funnel of comparatively level terrain running southwesterly towards the Rhine at Mainz. The big, coloured map covers a quadrilateral with Cologne, Göttingen, Bamberg and Zweibrücken at its corners, with rough terrain flanking the easier central area (the Times Atlas shows the Vogelsberg rising to 772 metres inside the mouth of the funnel, whereas SPI content themselves with mere forest, but never mind).

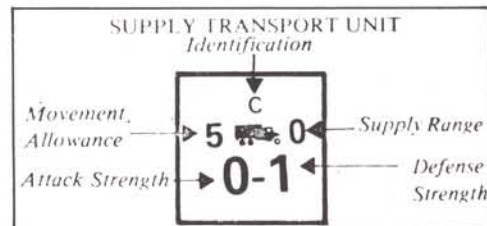
Game scenarios deal with: an unheralded invasion, NATO units still in garrison; the same attack with NATO already alerted; the situation as it might be on D+7 (the first two scenarios end on D+6); and a full D to D+14 campaign for those wet winter weekends. Variants include Soviet main effort (another Army joins in), weakened NATO and ditto Warsaw Pact.



The game system features two movement phases per turn for both sides, locking zones of control but combat at discretion only and the opportunity to disengage in lieu of combat proper, untried units (UTUs), overruns and, for the Soviet player only, accelerated assault reflecting the Russian willingness to accept high casualties as the price of a quick knockdown. All this makes for very fluid play, even when the front stabilizes for a time: there is a constant ripple as units manoeuvre to break a line or close a gap and the NATO player especially will find his greater ability to lunge and then fall back to the 'en garde' a considerable impetus to thinking in terms of a mobile defence well laced with offence. If, particularly during the D — D+6 scenarios, a game seems to bog down over the last two or three turns, this will be in cases when the Soviet player has failed to maintain the momentum of the attack, not because of any inherent game-fault. As it would be (we hope) in the real thing, the Soviets will have overdone it, too many units will have had too many casualties, supply problems will be making themselves felt and NATO will have had a breathing-space to consolidate a firm line of defence.

There are a number of clever touches, some of which deserve particular mention. The Untried Unit concept is much more variable, as FG's method makes use of the game's step-reduction loss system; on UTUs being committed to combat each player rolls for his units, hex by hex, cross-

referencing the result on the UTU table with the appropriate nationality. As a result, the unit may fight at one of three strengths, possibly vanish altogether or (rare bonus) fight gallantly at double CF. Secondly, the Soviet accelerated assault rule allows the Soviet player to increase the odds in his favour by up to three steps in any attack or overrun but only at the risk of loss to his own units (it should be noted that the Soviets are rather brittle; combat factors fall off markedly with the very first step-loss). Thirdly, the Soviet Doctrine rule, applic-



able during most of the D — D+6 moves, reflects real-life Soviet insistence on the 70km per day rate of advance; in their second movement phase the Russians may move westward only, i.e. enter a lower-number hex-row. This virtually precludes their attacking when opportunity offers and then stepping out of reach of the counterstroke as NATO can do: it is, as the designer admits, a rather contrived rule, but it certainly attempts to simulate the rigidity of Soviet command control and its effect is to make the massive Soviet force a less effectual instrument of war than the NATO army. Last, but not least, a nice innovation is the award of Retreat Points on the largely bloodless CRT: these are expended according to the type of hex exited and, like MPs, determine the maximum distance a unit must retreat in a given type of terrain — to take the best case, a unit in an urban hex must get at least 5RPs to retreat one hex. Moreover as the owning player chooses the retreat path he will often have the choice of getting out fast or of falling back one hex only.

Advanced Rules cover air supremacy, airstrikes, nuclear weapons and airmobile units. They are intended to be added one by one or in the mix which players find suits them. I recommend that newcomers to the game keep to the basic rules until they have the sequence off pat and then add the air rules, followed by the nuclear ones. The air element begins with an abstract system of establishment and maintenance of air supremacy, all at cost in VPs (a nod to the airstrike rules in 'Chinese Farm' here): the side with the air superiority then flies in actual air units to strike alone or in conjunction with forces, or to deliver nuclear bombs. Range and effectiveness of different plane-types varies.

'Fulda Gap' is tense, absorbing and full of movement and cliff-hanger moments, requiring both players to keep on their toes. The Soviet player has a mighty steamroller indeed and if he can drive an irreparable breach in the thin NATO lines the game will be his. His advantages lie in his sheer weight of numbers, his Accelerated Assault option, his being in automatic supply for the first five days and his trump card, Chemical Warfare: the largely morale effects of this, when used, last for two moves, double Soviet combat factors, slow movement and severely inhibit NATO supply. On the other hand his units are less reliable, his force is less supple than that of NATO and when he does run out of automatic supply his sketchy system will hobble him: if he has not yet reached the Rhine by the end of Day 5 he could miss his victory.

To contain the horde the NATO player will have to stretch his units thinly and if he ever has more

Donald Mack has a particular interest in the modern era for the very good reason that until recently he was a serving member of our armed forces. I would recommend this review to you as a very good example of the genre; both basic information and constructive criticism are given by an author who both obviously knows his game and also is very enthusiastic about it. Editor.)

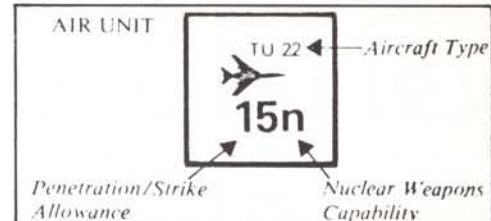
than one full division in reserve he can count himself lucky. Fortunately many of his units, especially the German ones, are stout defenders and the terrain favours the strategic defensive; however defence must be by the sword, not by the shield and here his ability to strike and withdraw (provided the enemy is eliminated) will help him; the infantry-light Soviet tank divisions are very vulnerable to counter-attack. After three days he is dependent on his supplies and the best positioning of his depots must always come into his calculations as must the networks of routes on which his supply lines must be traced; a major breakthrough could knock half his army out of supply. Funnily enough the NATO player cannot blow the bridges over the main rivers as he withdraws; one would have expected a demolition rule in a game of this sort. As a serious study of an absorbing if grim subject and of modern mechanised warfare in a hypothetical setting, 'Fulda Gap' has a lot to offer the player who is interested in the NATO v Warsaw Pact theme and/or in mobile operations. Nor does it do so at the cost of a mass of complicated rules; there are certainly a lot of little details to remember and, for example, untried units putting in an accelerated assault require several die-rolls to sort it all out but the general sequence is orderly and logical. The complications, such as they are, lie in the Advanced Rules and, as has been said, these are intended to be added when one is ready for them; FG is still a very good game without them and very playable in all modes.

Did I get my money's worth? YES. Would I buy again? YES, YEAH, JAWOHL, OUI, DA!

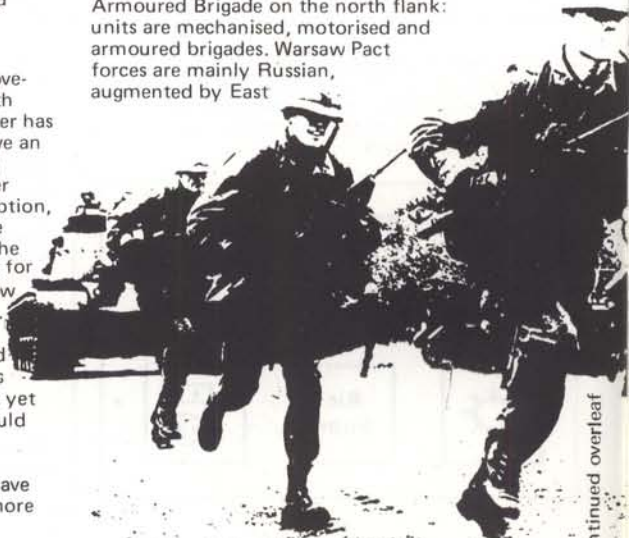
ANNEX 'A'

FULDA GAP — GAME SCALES

No time or distance scales are given in the rules but it is obvious that each move represents 24 hours and reference to an atlas indicates that each hex measures just over 6km (almost 4 miles) across. These scales are confirmed by a note on the game in Moves 31, page 31; hex-scales are in fact 6.25km.



NATO forces are mainly US, German and French plus a small Belgian division and British 6th Armoured Brigade on the north flank: units are mechanised, motorised and armoured brigades. Warsaw Pact forces are mainly Russian, augmented by East



Fulda Gap

The First Battle of the Next War

German and Polish divisions and the unit is the regiment, tank or motor rifle (WP regiments are roughly equivalent to the brigade). Brigades/regiments are grouped by divisions, normally at three per division: the division number is prominently displayed on the counter and Divisional Integrity doubles combat factors when the units operate as a formation. In addition, there are corps and army artillery formations and supply units.

Front	Back
13/5 Mechanized Infantry (Untried)	13/5 5-7
13/5 Mechanized Infantry (Full Strength)	

WP organisation is too 'tidy' at three regiments to the division. A division has four, the fourth being a motor rifle regiment in a tank division and a tank regiment in a MR division but the FG counter-mix ignores this. While it could be argued that closer Soviet integration in the tank division allows the 'factoring-in' of the MR regiment, this is **not** the case in the MR division where the tank regiment operates as a unit over and above the tank battalions organic to the rifle regiments.

All combat units have a movement factor of 10, only attack and defence factors being printed on the counter.

2/57G 3-5	13/5 4-6	15/5 6-4
42 7-2	1/106G 2-4	AirMbl 0-1
A/11 2-2	R Main 3-1	Koblenz HSK 1-4
0115 0-2	0115 0-3	Jaeger S 9n

Air units represent groups of different types of aircraft with varying ranges and capabilities: they expend Strike Factors to move and the balance left on arrival at the target hex determines the resolution of the attack.

C2	Air Supr	Starforce
Sun	Air Supr	Starforce

THE SUBTLE ART OF MACHIAVELLIAN WARGAMING

CHRIS RUFFLE

A wargame is a wargame is a wargame — you can rationalise and abstract it, make it big enough to fill a room or small enough to fit a matchbox, set it in Outer Mongolia or Lower Scunthorpe, but in essence it remains the optimal movement of a number of bits of cardboard over a sheet of paper. Why then is it so much fun and worth the outlay of so many hard-earned pennies? The answer is literally in the mind.

Every wargame, whatever its theme, is basically a battle of wits between a number of fellow-gamers but too many people seek to confine this psychological contest strictly to mapsheet and rule mechanics, leaving such spiritual occurrences as panic and command control to a flick of the wrist. My aim is to break away from this rules strait-jacket by suggesting a number of psychological stratagems, used by statesmen, generals and machiavells throughout the ages, in a wargaming context. I am not talking about those crude (though not ineffective) ploys one might expect to find in a "Course Art of Wargaming" such as the advantages of being both teetotal and generous with alcoholic beverages, of possessing dogs/cats with a taste for cardboard or of having a timely bus to catch. No — "vee hav more subtle vays of vinning der Game"!

First, undermine the opponent's morale. Arrive with any book featured in the bibliography casually showing from the pocket — refer to it at crucial points in the game. Use of facial expression (as any poker player knows) can prove particularly invaluable. For example, we have the 'flick to page in rules — amazed whistle — ominous silence' ploy. There is also, of course, the 'knowing smile' ploy, used when an opponent points out an "apparent" mistake you have made — more encircled, outflanked and generally doomed troops have been saved this way than I care to remember. Another golden rule for any would-be Machiavelli — always pretend that you have some grand, match-winning strategy, especially if you haven't. This illusion can be fostered by such muted utterances as "By Turn 43 they should be round there..." or (with knowing smile) "straight into the trap".

To maintain the psychological offensive it helps to have a sound knowledge of the rules of the game

you are playing or, better still, to have invented it. Failing this, one should put on a bold face (I have seen even the most hardened veteran turn pale at being handed the rules of "Wellington's Victory" or "Terrible Slow Sword" with the words "I'm sure the rule is in there somewhere"! Holes in the rules should be mercilessly exploited. In my last game of TSR's hilarious "Custer's Last Stand" the antisocial Sitting Bull, forced by the rules to sit away from the main Indian camps was charged down by a psychic Custer in his wood hideout before he had even had time to say "How?" — all the distant Indians immediately fled. On the other hand, the inducement of a false security in one's opponent by frequently referring to rules you know back to front can also prove effective.

Most wargames are played with a group of friends whose methods of play you will already be acquainted with. Such knowledge can be valuable — especially as Games Master in TSR's excellent "Dungeons & Dragons". Many have been the traps laid for a certain character named "Boris Hog-slayer" who exhibits a fatal determination to barge down dungeon doors through which angels would fear to tread. If, however, your opponent is new to the noble art of boardgaming, a quick burst of SPI Jargonese can work wonders. Who could control an army after being asked whether he had consulted his attenuated CRT after augmenting his WEC taking into consideration the mandatory ZOC? (American accent optional).

There comes a point, however, in all this skull-duggery where a line must be drawn, despite the realism it adds to any game. Wargaming should always remain a fun thing to be played on a friendly basis. Perhaps Stephen Potter's description of his "Oneupmanship & Gamesmanship" — "The art of winning without actually cheating" — should also be applied to machiavellian wargaming. It might not be ethical but it is certainly effective!

Bibliography:
Machiavelli: "The Prince"
Sun Tzu: "The Art of War"
R F Dixon: "On the Psychology of Military Incompetence"

scenario:

THE RECONQUEST: A NEW SOLO SCENARIO FOR SPI'S OUTREACH

J D BEARDSWORTH

After the collapse of the Galactic Empire, the remnants were left under the control of the descendants of five generals who had preserved civilisation within the areas under their command. One of these dynasties — the only one deriving from the former Imperial dynasty — began to reconquer the former Imperial territory, bringing it into conflict with the autonomous dynasties to whom a loss of sovereignty was abhorrent. The Imperialists are handled by the player whilst the Separatists are represented as autonomous forces.

Initial Set-Up

Use the seedwinds table to determine the location of the Imperialists and four Separatists. The Imperialists set up as per 18.53 but the Separatists' set up is different. The first-named has a stargate placed in it and then a die is rolled.

- 1 That force is a G
- 2 That force is an H
- 3 That force is an I
- 4 That force is a J
- 5 Roll again
- 6 Roll again

The remaining stargates and the starforces are set up as per 13.1.

Victory Conditions

All the Separatists must be eliminated.

Game Length

50 Game Turns maximum. Reduce the maximum if you feel your task to be too easy, or why not set your own record times for victory?

Special Rules

(1) During every fate phase the Separatists interact with the Imperialists even if they are not in contact.

(2) If at any time all the Imperialists' starting stargates are neutralised, the game is lost — the Imperial family has been murdered.

(3) If the 'X' wisdom chit is revealed the game is lost — hitherto hidden evidence proves the Imperial dynasty to be hoaxers — unrelated to the true Imperial family. The effect of the 'X' chit is neutralised if, on the turn of its revelation, the Imperialist civilisation level rises — enabling the hoaxers to suppress the evidence of their origins. The 'X' chit may be expended on the aforementioned die roll.

«What country, friends, is this?»

«This is Illyria, Lady»

«And what should I do in Illyria?»

CHARLES VASEY

(Charles is a very active member of the British boardgaming scene. Not only does he edit 'Perfidious Albion', a monthly roneoed magazine with much emphasis on the news and new games, but also finds time to get immersed in games! In the case of Conquerors he was in the happy position of games testing it prior to publication so has a long acquaintance with it. His article, based on the game as purchased, reflects his deep interest in the era and his critical appraisal of games. Since it was written errata have appeared in Moves 35 and Fire & Movement 9 and some of the points raised are answered therein. Editor.)

So asked Viola in *Twelfth Night*. Doubtless she had just been engaging in a little strategic planning in *The Conquerors*; this must be the first game to bring the political importance of Bato the Dardanian into the lives of boardgamers and was eagerly awaited by ancient buffs. In this article, I hope to look into the historicity of the game with special consideration of *The Romans*. Fashions come and go in boardgaming as to whether realism or playability are the most important factor in a game. This is not an argument into which I wish to delve, however, it must be realised that the reason anyone buys a "simulation" is that he wishes to savour some of the problems and glories of that period. Of any game it can be asked - "does this tell me anything about the handling of an empire/battalion/squad etc."; when I mention the game fails to simulate a factor, this should not be regarded as the same as saying the game would have been better if it had been included - it could well have been much worse!

Oh yes, to answer Viola's question, there is not much one can do in Illyria, git while the going's good.

Series Replay: Second Macedonian War

This is an overview of just one game with myself as the noble Phillip and Geoff Barnard as the malevolent and evil Senatus of Roma. It does not disclose any great play by either side; it is given purely to show what can happen and as a comparison as to what did happen.

September 200 BC - Roman bribery brings King Nabis of Sparta into the war, allowing a second front to be opened against Macedon. The King is somewhat restricted by the fortress of Corinth with its Macedonian garrison. He contents himself with capturing Cyllene to get a port. Consul Aelius lands at Appollonia and is joined by the Illyrians. He swiftly destroys the garrison of Antipatreia. Phillip can make no reply to this due to his useless army and must move south collecting phalangites and dropping off light infantry. The Macedonian fleet moves to Corinth in case of Roman moves on Attica. The Aetolians join Phillip (historically quite impossible). The Pella army under Nicanor lays siege to Pydna and takes 20 days to capture it, only to find the place contains little wealth. They fall back with the Aetolians in tow.

October 200 BC - The consul moves inland to threaten Thessaly. Phillip bribes his way into Athens (odd this, seeing Athens was the reason for the war), giving him the supply base in the south. The fleet moves Naupactus to push back the possibilities of Roman naval landings. Phillip crushes Cyllene to keep the ports closed. In the north a fierce battle occurs with Nicanor defeating Aelius near Aegenium. The consul flees towards Apollonia and Nicanor takes the town.

Winter - Phillip gets his peltasts frosted in the Peloponnesus: Aelius is re-appointed consul amongst some surprise from the Macedonians, mercenaries are raised but Rome neglects to build the naval base at Apollonia. Macedon raises ships, men and a siege-train.

March 199 - Two legions arrive in Macedonia to bolster this front, the fleet takes Zacynthus where it is joined by the Pergamene and Rhodian fleets. The Macedonians are thus neatly bottled up in the Gulf of Corinth with the reinforcements miles away at Demetrias. To complete their misery, Nabis leaps out of Sparta and defeats Phillip and his army



Continued overleaf

in a very close battle, causing him to fall back to Attica. Trenches are opened before Chalcis by Nicanor.

April 199 - Rome continues to play dirty. The consul, with two legions, moves on Pella. The praetor moves through Illyria sacking cities and the Roman fleet moves on Naupactus. Here the Gods played fast and loose with our Latin friends; the legate proved to be incompetent and the entire fleet was overwhelmed: The Macedonians were surprised by this but, glad to be free of confines of the Gulf, they sail on the island cities of Cephallenia. Epirot troops arrive to guard Naupactus. Chalcis surrenders. Fortune believes in not doing things by halves.

May 199 - The praetor and consul join in moving south sacking cities to fill their empty treasury. The Macedonians offer battle but the Romans refuse.

June 199 - The Macedonian armies mass at Naupactus obliging the Romans to pull back.

July 199 - The Romans move into Aetolia on the look-out for loot. The Macedonians clamber into the fleet and land at Hydruntium in Italy, the phalanx moving on Brundisium.

Aug. 199 - The praetor sacks Naupactus - proving his claim to being the dumbest Roman of them all. Had he simply held it, Rome would finally have had a naval base. The consul treads on Thebes and moves to Corinth where Nabis joins him. In Italy the epic siege of Brundisium begins. A small force of light infantry, Epirots and Athenians is sent off to raid Italy - they capture Tarentum.

September 199 - Corinth surrenders immediately while the praetor continues to ravage Aetolia. In Italy, Beneventum, Capua and Terracina fall. The consul, Domitius, sallies with his mercenaries, cursing the Third Legion which refuses to leave Roma. In the skirmish that follows he is killed and his army smashed.

October 199 - Leaving Nabis to hold Corinth, the consul moves towards Chalcis to repeat the mixture as before. The praetor keeps on sacking. In Italy Ostia and Senna Gallica are taken. Brundisium keeps on trucking.

Winter - The Romans decide they cannot afford to have Roma threatened and spend everything on legions in Italy. The Macedonians decommission some squadrons in order to get a new army in Pella. A naval base appears at Hydruntium extending the naval range via Senna Gallica right up the Adriatic. Readers will have noticed that the action has slowed considerably as the purses empty.

March 198 - The Romans in Greece have no base and no money - they just starve. In Italy, the Sixth Legion retakes Ostia and Terracina. The Macedonian raiders switch north sacking Ariminum to help bolster the treasury.

April 198 - Capua is retaken. The raiders burn Ancona and Firmum.

May 198 - The praetor for Italy decides to stop these depredations and seals off Senna Gallica - he cannot get in, they dare not come out. Brundisium (in case you forgot) continues to hold out. The Pella army sacks Tricca and Larissa for much-needed booty.

June 198 - Aeginium is sacked.

July 198 - At Pherae the praetor's starving army is crushed in the last battle of the war.

August and September 198 - Senna Gallica remains sealed, the Pella army sits in Thessaly and the citizens of Brundisium celebrate the anniversary of the siege by making vulgar signs at Phillip. In the distance the sound of dice being shot can be heard! If this is war, what can peace be like?

October 198 - The Macedonians admit defeat and pull out of Italy back to Cephallenia. Only the Senna Gallica army remains.

Winter - Rome builds more legions and Macedon rebuilds its phalanx.

March 197 - The Senna Gallica forces flee into Venetia.

April 197 - The legions smarten up Italy and look vaguely threateningly at Brundisium but without a fleet or money they are a spent force. The Pella army retakes Antipatreia, Phillip lands at Athens, takes Megara and slays the last of the consul's army.

May 197 - Apollonia falls and the Senna Gallica force arrive after an epic march down the Danube. The King takes Delphi.

June 197 - The King lands at Gytheum moving into the Peloponnesus to meet the Spartan army that did him over in the dark days of 199.

July 197 - The Pella army retreats into supply range while Phillip raises subs from the good people of Pylus.

August 197 - Messene falls and Sparta is sieged.

September 197 - Sparta falls!

Result - a Macedonian victory but an unpleasant burning smell covers most of Greece.

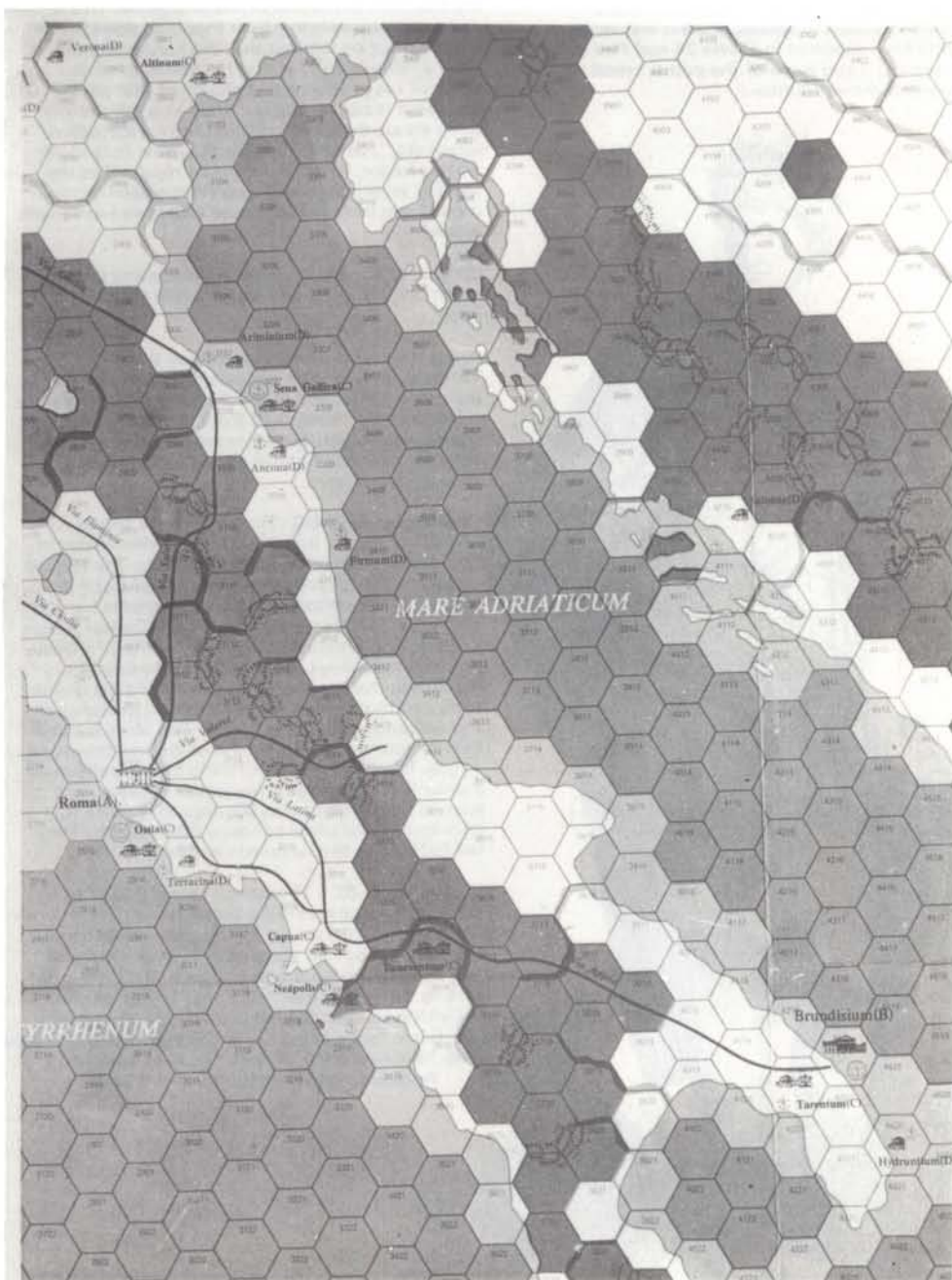
Comments: Obviously, the game was very much in the balance until the Winter of 199/198 when the Romans overspent and killed off their Macedonian army. The two victories of Nicanor and Nabis had less effect than the naval battle off Naupactus which handed the control of the sea to Macedon where a little care would have cleared the area. The Mace-

donian army in Italy failed to emulate Pyrrhus as Brundisium held for a record-breaking time. It was only a moral victory that a small army of Epirote mercenaries, Athenian citizens and Macedonian peltasts terrorised Italy and killed a consul. This was a nebulous principality best symbolised by the epic anabasis of Brachylles to reach Macedonia. The importance of Athens and Corinth are very apparent and a supplied consul would have obliged Phillip's return earlier. It was the flexibility of the fleet that gave Phillip the edge.

And now what really happened

Working from Livy's account I played through the real war in terms of the game map which was surprisingly accurate with very few problems considering the small number of hexes and the 'strange' shape of Greece. Players should note just how much strategy in the war cannot be simulated in the game. It is strange to think that what appear bare mountains are worth ravaging but research into the Galatian Campaign of Gnaeus Manlius Vulso reveals that said worthy moving through Caria and Pisidia made off with at least 140 talents in protection money. No-one in his right mind visits these areas in most games. Note also the time spent sitting watching the other fellow, followed by a sudden skirmish or battle and a quick retreat. I am reminded of the 18th century campaigns of Marlborough.

200 BC - Sulpicius with two legions (and attend-



ant Italian alae) lands at Apollonia. Phillip is busy capturing Abydos off the map. The praetor, Apustius, sacks Antipatrea (4919) and ravages the borders of Macedon. Roman ships arrive in Athens and raid Chalcis (a Macedonian fortress - Berg please take note!). Phillip returns, picking up Thracian cities which owe allegiance to Egypt, entering Attica he surrounds Athens twice and ravages the whole area. The Dardaniens, Illyrians and Athamanians join Rome which means Macedon is surrounded. The Hellenes remain neutral.

199 BC - Sulpicius proposed to invade Macedonia from the west, the Illyrians and Dardaniens from the north, Amynder from the south, while the fleets of Rome, Pergamum and Rhodes were to take the port of Cassandreia (5722). Sulpicius moved into Lyncestis (5118-5218) where Phillip loses a skirmish. Sulpicius moves to the Banitza Pass (52197) where he runs out of supply and retires to Illyria, raiding the Macedonian provinces of Eordaea (5319-5320-5220-5221) and Elimiotis (5222-5322-5323). The Dardaniens entered Paeonia (area on the game map north of the Macedonia legend). The Aetolians, spurred by Phillip's retreat from Lyncestis, join with the Athamanians in looting Thessaly up to 5422. Phillip beats them while Athenagorus chases off the Dardaniens. The Roman fleet takes Oreus but fails at Cassandreia.

198 BC - Phillip seeks to prevent the Romans joining the Aetolians by sitting down at Antigoneia on the Aous. Flaminius is now consul. He flanks

Phillip and forces him to flee back into Thessaly finally making a stand at Tempe (5524). The Aetolians sweep into southern Thessaly (5325-5424) while the Athamanians seize Gomphi. Flaminius marches by the Zygos Pass (5021-5122) and south to winter in Phocis (5528). The Roman fleet winters off Corinth while diplomacy and threats persuade the Achaean League to join Rome. Argos secedes to Macedon.

197 BC - Phillip attempts to bribe Nabis of Sparta with Argos. Nabis accepts the gift and joins the Romans! The Beotians abandon Phillip's cause. Flaminius moves north as Phillip builds up his last army. They meet near Pherae and after some fancy footwork battle is met in 5424. Phillip is crushed at Cynoscephalae, Corinth is surrounded and the Acarnanians defeated - his cause is lost. He finds Flaminius ready to be generous to snub his uppity Aetolian allies - the Peace of Nicaea is signed.

General Comments on the System

The game is quite good fun and contains quite a few elements of ancient warfare; in the final result it fails to satisfy. I prefer to look at it as advancing the design art in this period, **Punic Wars** broke new ground. Things have advanced with **The Conquerors** and will, hopefully, continue to do so. Let us therefore examine some specific problems.

Cities

Anyone trying to cram a living organism, like a city, into a few categories is bound to have

problems. Imagine the problems of doing this when you don't have many statistics upon which to work. Is Tyre really stronger than Aradus? Does its population simply have a greater spirit of independence (as Polybius claims for the population of Gaza)? Does one estimate cities by their population, by the length of their walls, by the politics of their people? Tyre held up Alexander for six months, provided Demetrius Poliorcetes with a safe base for his thalassocracy as well as many of his ships and admirals, yet its "cousin" Sidon seems remarkably silent. One can name the fiercer of the cities - Tyre, Rhodes and Gaza - but what about the smaller towns?

To illustrate the importance of these decisions to the rules one must realise that an A-class city will hold for (on the average) five months, a B-class city for three months, but a C-class for a mere 12 days, while D-cities hold for a puny 9 days. One hell of a big gap. Bad news for Antiochus III who used Ephesus (C-class city) as his HQ for the invasion of Greece. Clearly, in game terms, he was mad with Lysimachae or Mytilene (B-class city) quite near at hand.

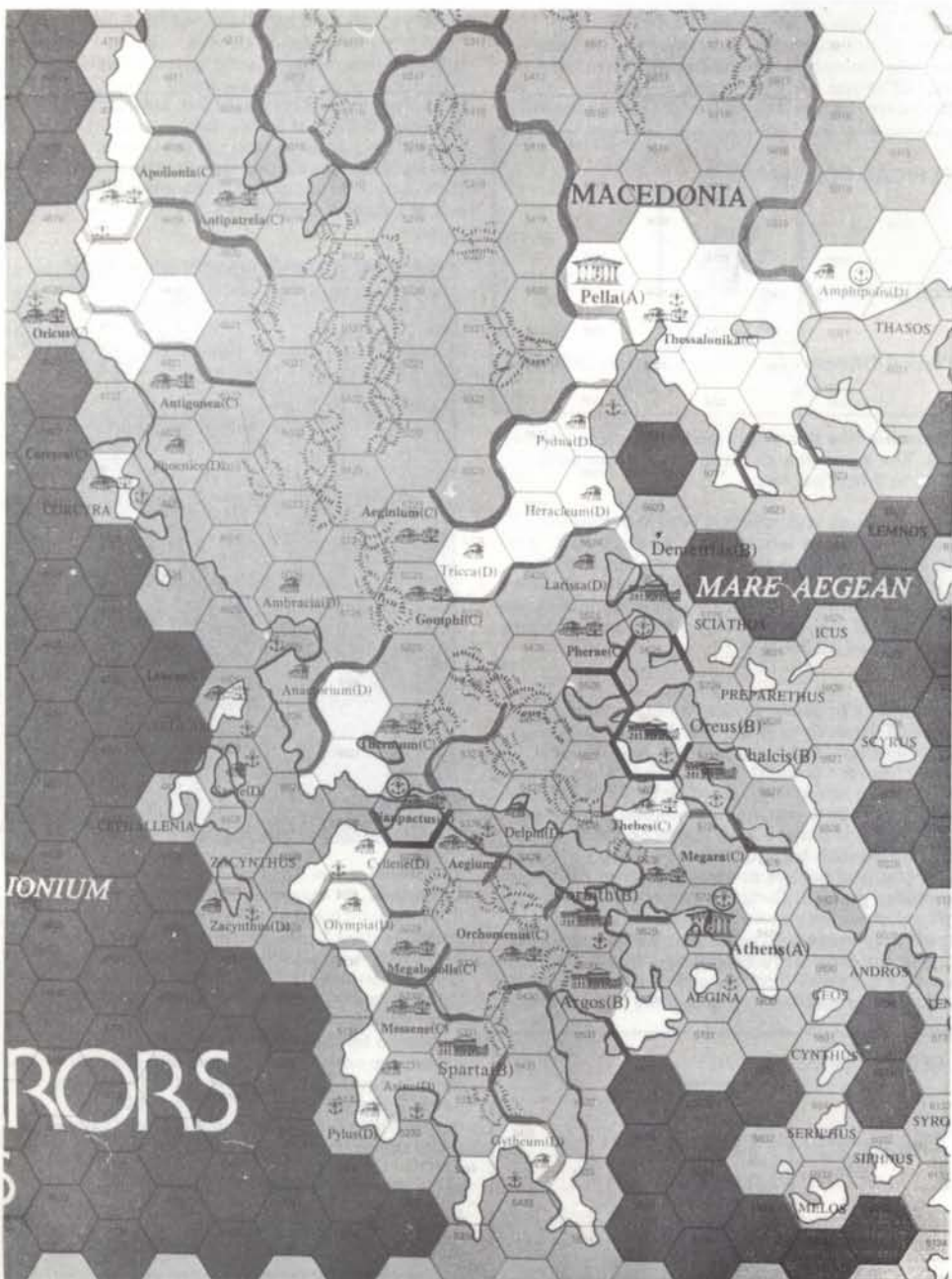
The plot thickens when history decides to turn the spotlight on one city. In the Second Mithradatic War (100 years after the Macedonian War) the whole campaign revolved around Cyzicus. In the game this is a mere D-class city. Yet the city provided a marching army of 3,000 hoplites to serve with the Roman army at Chalcedon, a force of about 8 SSPs in game terms. This is rather too large a force to be disregarded, especially as the littoral of the Sea of Marmora had several such cities. Once under siege, the city held through the Autumn and into the Winter before Mithridates realised his bluff was called and pulled out. This is, practically, impossible in the game. It may only be a D-city but it defended like an A-class.

The real clue to a city's reaction to a besieger is neatly covered in **The Macedonians** where Alexander is allowed to "summon" cities without attacking: they simply admit his army. The real-life factors that influenced this sort of thing were (i) victories, (ii) reputation (iii) presence of a large army, (iv) political chicanery and (v) the policy of the besieger. As the cities ceased to defend themselves with their own citizen-levy they often felt that loyalty to some descendant of a Macedonian General of Division was too expensive a luxury for them. If he was close, or the enemy were blood-crazed Gauls, then it was worth hoping the walls would hold. If he was far distant or beaten, then he did not give them the protection of a good lord; they could simply ensure that the gates were opened, food was provided together with a small donation to the costs of their liberator's army, possibly a few oligarchs/democrats could be killed depending which army stood their gates. Where a city had no intention of being plundered or simply decided to tuck its toes in you were in for a fight be it Gaza, Tyre, Cyzicus or Abydos (where the population slew themselves). The use of revolt points in **Punic Wars** also comes close.

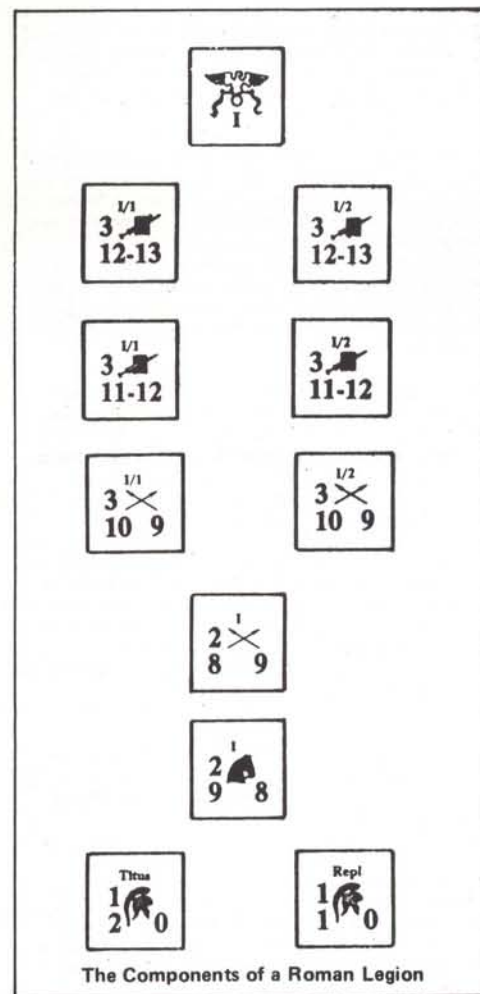
The Cost of Living

A legion costs a talent to maintain for a year in TC. A fleet of 20 quinqueremes costs three times as much - right? Well, I'm not so sure, even without the problem that the talent is the Berg Talent which bears little relation to the real akkers of the period. One can get an interesting comparison by considering the Peloponnesian War: Thucydides tells us the Athenian league had an income of 600 talents - enough for 150 triremes (according to Nelson's war-fleets of Antiquity - WRG) in that period. Eight squadrons of triremes would cost 16 talents to maintain - that is the average tax revenue of Rome for one game year!

Again at Artemesium the Greeks fielded 127 triremes from Athens, 40 from Corinth, 20 from Megara, 20 from Chalcis (crewed by Athens), 10 from Sparta and 64 from "others". This little lot would cost 28 talents to maintain - more than Macedonia could raise in a year! The Athenian alone would need 14 talents a year without cash to maintain the army of 16,000 (40 SSPs - 2 talents) or fortifications. Rome in a bad year could produce 9 talents - yet this is the sum to be produced from tiny Attica! These figures are ridiculously high because if Athens spent this 16 talents on an army



it could maintain 320 SSPs (128,000 men - almost a Persian horde). As it is it only spends the equivalent of 20 triremes on its army. In fact, Richard Berg admitted this section was done on a guess-work basis. It will require careful reworking of the maintenance, supply and tax rules to make it work again.



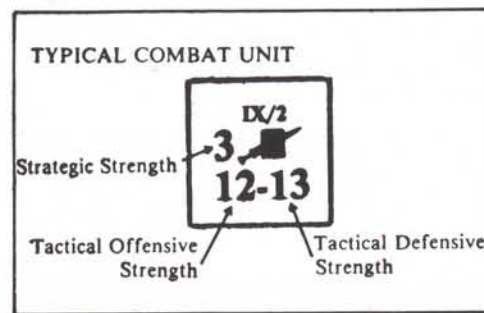
The method of taxing is also odd. Note the importance given to ravaging the land of your enemy in the real war; it cut down his chances to recruit and tax. In TC the sacker gets loot but nothing happens to his opponents. Thus in our game the fact that Phillip held most Italian cities availed him not one jot. Thus the gamer is left with the Attila the Hun choice - either hold it or sack it. If you have to guard your recruitment areas you are more likely to have to behave like the real commanders did.

Movement

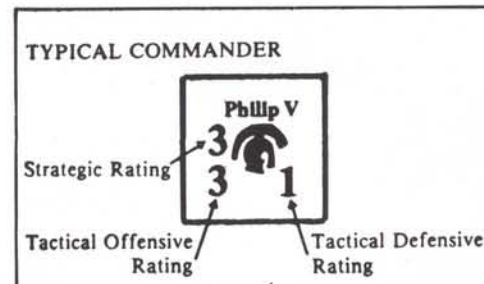
Anyone who has seen what a six week move in Syria looks like (in TM) may have questioned the speed of things. To my way of thinking a move of this size offends against "reaction-time". Armies can go too far before their opponents get a chance to react. Sequential movement resembles the stop-frame animation technique. One change of drawing per frame is time-consuming but beautiful, two frames may be normal but any more and things will begin to look tacky. The actual movement abilities of ancient armies may seem rather too esoteric a subject for research; in fact, in Xenophon's *Anabasis* we have a good example of moving over most of the terrain types on the Eastern map in his march from Sardes to Trapezus.

In his initial march to Tarsus the army tended to move for 3-4 days and then rest three days. Sometimes a longer rest was had, for example, upon crossing the Taurus and Amanus ranges. This disregards long waits for reinforcements or political discussions. Working through this we arrive at: crossing river +1, clear hex with road 1, mountain hex with road 2. The effect of the road on the mountains was nowhere near as powerful as the game suggests. On this basis, it would take an Asiatic army a day to traverse one hex of clear terrain; it seems such an army would only move

15 days in the average month. This indicates an allowance of 15 in TR and 23 in TM - (as against 25 and 30 respectively).



After Tarsus the marches quickened into forced marching. In the desert of Arabia (the area from Thapsacus down towards Babylon along the river) the army marched for 39 days with only 14 days rest (three times their normal rate). This was sufficient of a long march for Xenophon to comment upon it and to mention the losses in the baggage animals. That works out at 22 MPs a month on the march. The marches in Syria and the desert give an average cost of 1½ MPs a hex of clear terrain. The desert hexes may well have cost double and the forced-marching has covered this up, one cannot discover which. Passing the Syrian Gates (3214 - 3215) took 2 MPs. When the enemy was close speed tended to drop to 50% of optimum moves. When Xenophon was in retreat towards Assyria he was under constant attack but still moved at full speed; my only theory is that not only was Xenophon leading a purely Greek force but that he was not attempting to feint or manoeuvre - he was making straight for the foothills.

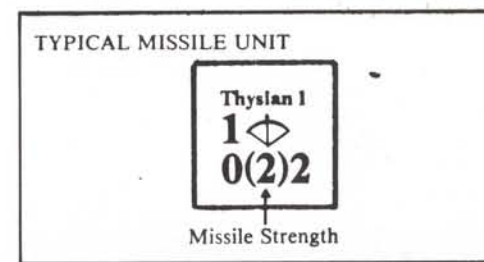


Skirmishes like this might increase costs by about 50%. The actual march through the mountains came to 3 MPs per hex.

Thus, although too generous with the road the total effect of the terrain chart is about right. It is the actual allowance that seems too large for me. It is perhaps worth commenting that the reaction-interception rules look rather silly when they allow a hex full of mountains to count the same as a hex of the Syrian plains.

Supply

It is rather a problem to determine how armies supplied themselves in this era. The Romans certainly used corn contractors in Asia, in Gaul, Caesar has corn brought to various points as tribute. What we do not know is whether an 18th Century system of depots was used or whether the army carried its one convoy with it and no contact was maintained with base. Lucullus once employed a large group of porters to carry corn into the barren Anatolian plateau. Certain other armies either foraged or levied quotas on various areas through which they moved. Granted that we do not know for certain what really happened, we will have to examine the game from the point of view of what we know did not happen. Berg links naval move-



ment to their bases (cities chosen for their naval history, dockyards and because they fit the hex-grid) which I think is probably a reasonable choice - a lesser of two evils. It does not work for land supply however. If one assumes that the armies live off the country then Athens seems a silly supply base. One wonders why Corsica and Sardinia are too barren to support armies; if one assumes the "contractor" theory then any port could allow the supplying of an army. In any case, a 10 hex supply-line is 200 miles long, far longer than any convoy-system could hold together. One must assume that this is another jury-rigged supply rule which works sometimes but nobody knows why! Richard notes few armies operated outside their supply ranges, yet it seems to me, if his map is correct, the Romans were out of supply for most of the war and Phillip's position on the Aous where he hoped to halt Rome was definitely out of supply. This whole subject requires further work.

The Battle Board

I gave my initial thoughts on this module in *Perfidious Albion 18* (5 Albion Terrace, Guisborough) with the basic conclusion that it fitted no battle of the period. Returning to my erstwhile example - Magnesia - and using Kochva's reconstruction of the line (in his "Seleucid Army" CUP) at a scale of 1,000 men per SSP (twice that given in the game), we get the following problems. First, even at this scale, Livy's figures indicate a force of about 76 SSPs. This force would fill to overflowing the first three ranks of the Phalanx-formation board. The stacking limit of 2 SSPs is especially silly when the phalangites were known to form twice as deeply as other units. 2 SSPs might only be allowed to fight out of the "box" but they should be able to stack 4 deep (in my opinion they should be forced to do so). Assuming we make the necessary change, we get a main line that fits on the board. Unfortunately, we have 20 SSPs of light infantry to fit in as skirmishers, either in front of the line, or behind it (assuming the skirmishing has been completed). Definitely in front of the line are the dromedaries and the scythe-chariots. No line for either force exists.



The Romans (on this scale) would have 6 SSPs per Legion/ala. Of course some of this would be light infantry which also would have retired behind the lines like their Syrian cousins. This gives us a line of correct length with the 3,000 peltasts and cavalry (another 3,000) on the right flank. Unfortunately, if the Romans stack 3 SSPs to a box things are too tight. If they unstack they will be beaten by the strength of the phalanx, even odder, the entire force has the SSP strength of one game legion!! One could allow the Romans to count 3 Roman SSPs as 2 "other" SSPs, to represent their superior organisation. This would make things better but still a trifle odd.

All this tinkering should demonstrate to you the essential inaccuracy of the Battle Board. Although a clever and well-designed abstract design, it bears no resemblance to the real thing, a factor which can be especially annoying when you are losing!

Arms and the Man

Richard Berg admits to having done a lot of guessing in designing the armies, in practice he comes out with some quite accurate guesses. Taking the Romans as an accurate standard we can consider the other forces. I felt the Macedonians were a very good mix; their pikes may not be the ones that fought for Alexander but they were still the best in the Hellenic world. This very fact should alert one to the problems of filling losses in their ranks. The use of the counter-mix gives one limit but one year's losses have a habit of returning next year! Accounts of the war make obvious the problems Phillip had in raising enough troops. The mercenary hoplites are a good representation of the mainstay of most armies - although why Rome can produce better ones is really beyond me. The light troops suffer from having very little to do in the game - I use them as siege casualties or garrisons. The Macedonian horse is accurate although perhaps too numerous in the counter-mix (usual proportion is 10-1).

SUMMARY OF UNIT TYPES MACEDONIANS		
Front		Back
Phalanx Perdicaa 5 III 14-16 (full-strength) (reduced-strength)		Phalanx Perdicaa 4 III 13-14 (full-strength) (reduced-strength)
Phalanx Perdicaa 3 III 10-10 (reduced strength)		Phalanx Perdicaa 2 III 7 8 (reduced strength)
Phalanx Perdicaa 1 III 4 4 (reduced strength)		
Hypaspist Agema 4 II 11-12 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Hypaspist Agema 3 II 9 10 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Hypaspist Agema 2 II 8 9 (reduced strength)		Hypaspist Agema 1 II 4 4 (reduced strength)
Hoplite League 8 3 I 8 9 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Hoplite League 8 2 I 4 5 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Hoplite League 8 1 I 2 3 (reduced strength)		Diades [20]
Siege Train		
Peltast Thracian 2 X 3(2)2 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Peltast Thracian 1 X 1(1)1 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Archer Cretan 1 2 0(2)2 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Archer Cretan 1 1 0(1)1 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Javelin Agrian 1 2 X 0(2)3 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Javelin Agrian 1 1 X 0(1)1 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Macedonian-type Heavy cavalry Royal Sqd 1 5 3		Paronion 1 2 1
Light Cavalry Thracian 1 5 2		League 3 2
Lancer Thracian 1 5 2		Squadron 2

SYRIANS

Front		Back
Phalanx Syrian 1 2 III 13-11 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Phalanx Syrian 1 1 III 6 5 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Hoplite Cretan 1 2 10 9 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Hoplite Cretan 1 1 5 4 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Barbarian Infantry 2 I 8 7 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Barbarian Infantry 1 I 4 3 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Asiatic Heavy Cavalry Media 1 2 13-11 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Asiatic Heavy Cavalry Media 1 1 6 5 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Chariot 2 I 12 6 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Chariot 1 I 6 3 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Camel Archer Arab 1 2 6(1)5 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Camel Archer Arab 1 1 3(1)2 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Hypaspist RylGds 2 II 11-11 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Hypaspist RylGds 1 II 6 5 (full-strength) (reduced strength)
Horse Archer Dabao 2 2 6(2)6 (full-strength) (reduced strength)		Horse Archer Dabao 2 1 3(1)3 (full-strength) (reduced strength)

The Syrian phalanxes are passable for the main phalanx but the Royal Guard is both too weedy and does not cover the whole Guard - only the agema. The Agyraspides are better represented by the Macedonian phalanx counters. Taking the game scale as being 1,000 men per counter one could give the strength of the phalanx in the west as 21 counters of "normal" phalanx and 10 of Guards Silver Shields (including the actual agema). There would be another 11 counters in the East. The lack of the Guards is of great moment as they represent the regular army with the phalanx being the reserve. The axemen of Syria are a problem. If they are mercenary Gauls or Thracians then Syria has had an enervating effect on them; if Babylonian foot they are far too good!

4 2
17-16

2 1
13 7

The Syrian elephants are better than the Roman's African elephants but not by enough in my opinion. The Median cavalry is excellent. However, the masses of cavalry from Asia Minor are the reverse of the real situation. Syria raised seven times more cavalry than did Asia Minor - it also tended to be better cavalry. The Arabs are amusing and the chariots seem reasonable.

2 2
8 2

The size of the neutral armies is a matter of some debate. In 279 BC when the Gauls invaded Hellas the Greeks mustered in full strength in Aetolia/Beotia/Phocis with 25,000 men (50 SSPs in total). Aetolia alone provided 12,000 men (30 SSPs) which is more than they are given (24 SSPs) and the game forces include the separate kingdom of

Athamania; it is possible that the garrison strengths need to be added.

As to content we must examine the types of armies. The **Hellenes**: Sparta quite rightly has the finest troops and the worst cavalry. The Aetolian cavalry is good but the foot is too good (see Polybius, Vol. V, Loeb, P133). The Aetolians were primarily good mountain troops who defeated the Gauls in 279 by attrition and ambush. The hoplites of Achaea, Athens and Acarnanians are good average troops. The Pergamene foot and horse are good, perhaps too good, while the Rhodian foot are obviously garrison troops. The Bithynians are odd, Prusias seems to have adopted Greek practices, thus barbarian foot may be wrong (although the strengths are right). Egypt appears to lack any real army which is difficult to believe - although its weakness is legendary. Epirus (although not really Hellenic) is not too well simulated. Its puny warriors are weak descendants of the warriors of Pyrrhus who often invaded Macedonia - 3,000 men it seems a very small army for so large an area (see my remarks on Cyzicus). **The Barbarians of Europe**: apart from being far too few in number the Illyrians, Dardanians and Thracians seem reasonable. **The Barbarians of Asia**: the Gauls are believably effective but should have more cavalry. The Cappadocians similarly should have more horse. The Paphlagonians are reasonable banditti. Heraclea should have hoplites and a navy, as should Chalcedon and Byzantium.

Notable for their lack of appearance are the fleet and army of Pontus and the army of Armenia. Neither were involved in these wars because Antiochus got beaten so soon but their position, flanking the Taurus and within range of Antioch, is important and could have been decisive. Also silent are the remains of Beotia and Thessaly, not to mention the disappearance of several large islands!



Control of Cities

Perhaps the most basic mistake in the game is the allegiance of various cities, according to my Cambridge Ancient Histories the following towns are in the following hands:
Illyria - Scodra
Epirus - Phoenice
Aetolia - Thermum, Naupactus, Delphi, Gomphi, Tricca, (NB. Amynder's kingdom is hex 5124)
Achaea - Cyllene, Megalopolis, Aegium, Argos and Orchomenus
Sparta - Gytheum and Sparta
Acarnania - Leucas and Anactorium
Roman Protectorate - Oricus, Antigoneia, Apollonia
Macedonia - Antipatreia, Aeginium, Corinth, Creus, Chalcis, Demetrias, Pherae, Larissa, Heracleum, Pydna, Pella, Thessalonika and Amphipolis
Independent - Ambracia, Same, Zacynthus, Olympia, Athens, Messene, Thebes, Megara, Asine, Pylus.

NB. Chalcis-Corinth-Demetrias were of immense importance to the Antigonid domination of Greece. The failure of Chalcis to be included is thus rather surprising.



Since we have, to some extent, been looking at the classical period in this issue let's take a look at some books also dealing with that period of history. The great series of Penguin Classics is where we ought to look for this kind of work and I've found four titles which will be of interest to **Conquerors** addicts. Happily they flow together almost perfectly to bring the period together almost as one. Let's begin with a title which has been on my shelves for two or three years now and that is **The Peloponnesian War** by Thucydides. This is in translation by Rex Warner and is very readable indeed. By the by, don't let yourself be put off by the somewhat imposing 'academic' notes at the end of a lot of these books. These are there to make the book more useful for the academic reader and thus allow Penguin to sell a few more copies which in turn means that the price is kept reasonable, e.g. this edition cost only 70p. The period covered is the Great War between Athens and Sparta and it's worth remembering that the author was a general and writes therefore from a professional standpoint as well as that of the historians. I'm unable to say whether this volume is still in print at the moment but it's worth looking for as, indeed is the next one which is **The Age of Alexander** by Plutarch. Penguin do this for a very reasonable ninety-five pence and Ian Scott-Kilvert's translation is flowing and usefully helped by footnotes on unclear references. I prefer this method of note presentation to the recently fashionable notes at the end of the book under chapter headings. Where Thucydides takes us from 435 BC to 411 BC this latter book, a series of nine biographical essays including Alexander, Demetrius and the historic Pyrrhus, takes us quickly through that flowering of Greece under Alexander, into the period immediately after his death, in 323 BC. The maps in this book, as in the others in this series, are adequate without being enormously helpful.

Let's skip ahead a little now and look at Livy's **Rome and the Mediterranean** which was translated for Penguin by Henry Bettenson. This covers the period during which Rome conquered the Med. and made it very much a 'Roman Lake'. All this in the remarkably short time of forty three years — from 200 BC to 167 BC. Herein are details of the second Macedonian War, campaigns in Spain, Gaul, Italy, the war with Antiochus and the Third Macedonian War. Complete with maps and a good chronology this volume costs a not unreasonable £1.50.

We leap on again and this time to 49 BC and Caesar's account of **The Civil War** translated in this edition by Jane F. Gardener. This was written by Caesar and finished just about six months before his assassination so it's almost hot off the scroll! Penguin are asking one pound for this book which will help bring the series almost to the end of the **Conquerors** period. The fascination I've found with these books is that they give all sorts of economic and political reasons for some of the odd things that seem to happen in those dim and distant days and for students of that period or players of games of the period the four volumes mentioned here will be grand reading for before, after and in between games.

I mentioned Arrian's **Campaigns of Alexander** in Phoenix no. 4 and another book also well worth the reading is Robin Lane Fox's biography **Alexander The Great** which is in Omega paper back at £1.60. Richly illustrated and brilliantly told this book will do wonderfully whether the interest is in the man or the military.

A look now at some other books of interest. From Cassell comes the last book to be prepared by Sir Basil Liddell Hart. I say prepared because he died before the work on the book could be started properly. The book is an anthology of writings on war and is called **The Sword and the Pen**. The final editing and selection has been done by Adrian Liddell Hart working closely to his father's notes and with a similarly encyclopaedic knowledge of military writings. You will undoubtedly have read D I A Mack's splendid article "The Principle of the Thing" in Phoenix no. 9. Well this book contains more essays — in part on the principles — but also on the impression gained by those who actually took part in some of the battles (viz. Private Wheeler's letter from Waterloo — page 137/8). It's a fascinating book which is impossible to describe in any brevity. Instead have a look at

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some of the names of the authors which have been selected. Here in chronological order, as they are in the book. Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, Cromwell, Frederick the Great, Suvorov, Nelson, Napoleon and Wellington, Von Clausewitz, Von Moltke, Sherman, Mahan, Ludendorff, Douhet, Mao Tse-Tung and of course Capt. Sir Basil Liddell Hart. This is but a selection of a selection. The whole is supported by a bibliography which will allow you to order the books mentioned therein from your bookshop or library. As a splendid browse for the enthusiast or an introductory tasting for the tyro this book is a must. Cassells are asking £6.25 for the volume and that's not bad considering that you're getting over seventy authors for the money!

In 1961 a major book on Napoleon's Guards was published. It was called **The Anatomy of Glory** and it was translated from, and based on, a huge work by the French historian Henry Lachouque. The translation was done by a librarian called Anne S.K. Brown and the book rapidly sold out as did a second edition. Ever since then the book has been out of print and has been almost impossible to obtain except through second hand shops where you could expect to pay upwards of £60.00 for a copy in good condition! The reason for this is partly due to the very fine illustrations (the book contains 173 plates of which 73 are in full colour) but it's also due to the enormously careful and searching analysis of how and why the Guard functioned as it did. From structure to tactics the Corps d'Elite of Napoleon's army is examined in enormous detail. Why talk about a book that's unavailable except at second hand prices? Well the good news is that Arms and Armour Press have re-published it absol-

utely as it was first produced with the addition of a foreword by David Chandler who lectures in the Dept of War Studies at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. The price for this magnificent and monumental work is an almost incredibly low £14.95. This is not just "another book on Bone-part" but a major study of how men function under the stresses of war and how they are led and how they follow great leaders and it must be vital reading for anyone who professes any interest in military history of what ever period.

Two books on aircraft now and both worth looking at especially if you play "Foxbat and Phantom" or "Air Force". Arms and Armour Press have published a very fine, although slim, book on **Soviet Aircraft of Today**. Nico Sgarlato is the author and he has included over two hundred illustrations with quite a number in full colour. There are cutaway drawings of seven of the most interesting Soviet 'planes and after a look through this the names of "Fitter", "Flogger", "Fencer" and "Backfire" start to make some real sense. I was disappointed with the brevity of the section on naval aviation which is tucked away at the back of the book and I was amazed at the very poor coverage of "Forger", the Russian equivalent of our Harrier, which is currently damaging the flight decks of the Kiev Class Through-Deck Cruisers to such an extent that they are having to consider docking the vessels for repairs. Those comments apart this is an interesting and useful book for "Foxbat and Phantom" freaks.

For the "Air Force" enthusiast comes another marvellous book from the incredibly prolific Alfred Price. This is another title in the Ian Allen "...at war" series and it can only help to build the reputation of this already highly graded collection of titles. It's the Focke Wulf 190 which comes under close scrutiny this time. The results of the investigation make fascinating reading for Mr Price, back on form after his regrettable lapse with the "Luftwaffe Handbook", has come up with all sorts of 'First Time Published' information including a very stiff letter from Sholto Douglas about the superiority of the 190 over the Spitfire IX addressed to the Under Secretary of State for Air. The letter is dated 1942 and is followed by a reproduction of a report of evaluation tests carried out at Farnborough which would have had me worried if I had read it sitting in the Under Secy.'s chair in 1942. Needless to say as well as all the high quality text...and there's a lot of that, the illustrations are on the usual lavish scale that we've come to expect from Ian Allen with this kind of book. Perhaps one of the most interesting pictures is at the end of the book and it shows a brace of 190s and Spitfires flying in formation all wearing Turkish Airforce markings. Truly peace and expedience breeds strange bed-fellows! £5.95 is the price Ian Allen ask for Alfred Price's **Focke Wulf 190 at War** and that price isn't really bad value.

Finally two paperback.... the first **A Man Called Intrepid** by William Stevenson published by Sphere at £1.25 discusses much the same material that's covered in "Body Guard of Lies" which I mentioned in this column in Phoenix no. 9. Unfortunately it does it in a rather hectoring and propagandist style which I found out of place in a history — even a popular history. It is interesting to hear another version of the story and compare the two but the reference book to which I shall turn will not be Mr Stevenson's I'm afraid.

The other paperback is a beauty. It's by Capt. Jack Broome who commanded the escort of Convoy P.Q.17 and has written about that in "Convoy is to Scatter" the signal he had to make, on Admiralty instructions, at the end of that fateful voyage. In this book he takes a more light hearted look at signals and signalling in "The Senior Service". **Make Another Signal** is the title of this anthology and it is a delight to have about the house. For a browse, to tickle the sense of humour, to ponder on how things might have been different if such and such a signal had, or hadn't been sent. All such foods for thought are contained in this book which is delightfully illustrated by the author's own fair hand. The book is published by Futura at 90p and how better to finish than with an example of the kind of signal which I find the most enjoyable — especially when read in a comfortable armchair. "From one corvette to another during a full Atlantic gale:—"Have Just Seen Down Your Funnel. Fires Burning Brightly."

All Skilful in the Wars

The Gambits of War in Wargaming

D I A MACK

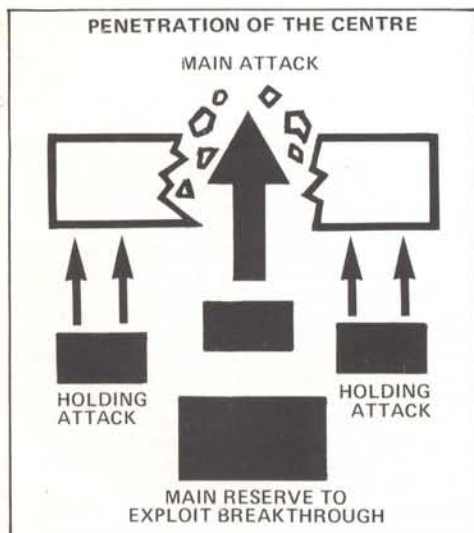
In an earlier article published in Phoenix No.9 I covered the ten Principles of War and their application to board wargaming. This time the subject is the Gambits of War, the form your operations can take. These are few for it has been reckoned that, short of sitting tight and waiting for the other fellow to come at you, there are only some six basic manoeuvres or gambits and that all battles have been the realisation of, or the attempt to realise, one of these six. They are:

- Penetration of the Centre
- Envelopment of One Flank
- Envelopment of Both Flanks
- Assault from a Defended Position
- Feigned Withdrawal
- Strategic Flank March

All can be used effectively in board games, with the proviso that, first, some are more suited to certain types of games than to others and, secondly, Feigned Withdrawal is more difficult to do on the game-map than on the ground owing to the "Eye-balls in the Sky" factor. The first five can be used in a tactical context i.e. involving a small number of units in a limited area of the board, or in a strategic one where the whole of one's force takes in the gambit. The last, Strategic Flank March, is more suited, as its name implies, to the strategic context alone.

Penetration of the Centre

Probably the oldest of them all, this gambit consists of, once battle is joined and the enemy's reserve has been wholly or largely committed, using part of one's own reserve to breach a weak point in the enemy line and then passing the remainder through the gap to fall on the enemy's rear to disrupt his supply lines, rear installations and any reserves he may have left. This is best done when the enemy force's flanks are secure or when his line is too long to outflank: essential for its success is the pinning of his front by secondary attacks on either side of the point of penetration and the holding of a strong force ready to pass through the breach: the breaching force cannot do this as its task will be to hold the gap open and, if possible, widen it. The chief danger incurred is the possibility of the penetration being caught as in a bag and crushed in from either flank if the enemy reserve has not been pinned or if the penetrating force is too small and on too narrow a front.



In game terms, this gambit is best suited to games where there is a second movement phase and when combat effectiveness is dependent on supply units and routes from them. The secondary movement phase allows the penetration force to move immediately after the breach has been created in the combat phase and before the other player can move a single unit to block the gap and the sudden loss of combat factors as supply units are destroyed well simulates the paralysis that can fall on a modern army in this situation. "Fulda Gap" is an ideal example of such a game: "Panzergruppe Guderian" and "Seelowe" follow close behind.

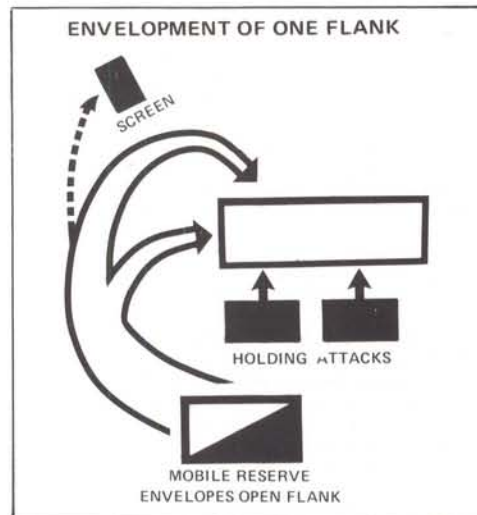
In games in which supply is very simple or non-existent, the gambit is less devastating but still useful nonetheless. Its best application now becomes the cutting in two of the enemy force, followed by the holding-off of one part whilst the other (generally smaller) part is enveloped on both flanks (see the 3rd Gambit) and destroyed prior to the whole of one's force turning on the remainder of the enemy. This is a manoeuvre especially useful when a 'tripwire' has been laid across the map, pending the arrival of reinforcements; the 'Gramschatzerwald' scenario in "Wurzburg" positively makes it mandatory for the Soviet player if the US player has thrown such a crust across the routes south. The second part of "France 1940" also calls for this variant if the retreating Allies set up a defence line covering Paris.

The gap must be at least two hexes free of enemy ZOC and a strong force must be passed through to spread out on a fairly wide front. If there is no secondary phase, try to advance two or three units after combat to cover the breach; they probably won't last long but their presence will inhibit enemy movement in front of the breach long enough to let more units pass through on one's next turn. In addition, the initial assault force, now divided in two, should keep chewing away at the edges of the gap to widen it, while on either side other forces pin the enemy front either by assault or, where the front is thin and there are no reserves, by their mere presence.

Envelopment of One Flank

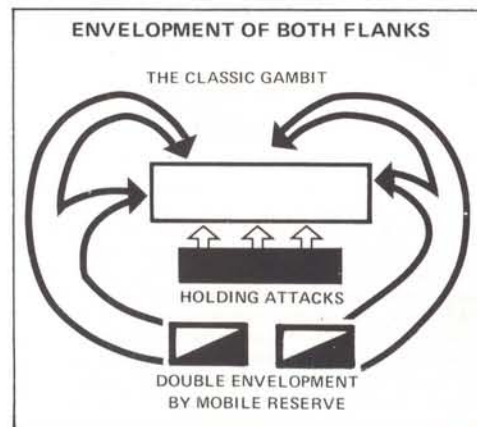
In a tactical context battle is again joined and the enemy's reserve drawn in. Then a mobile force, hitherto held back, is passed round the enemy's flank to take him in the rear while one's forces in front redouble their efforts in order to catch him between two fires. On a strategic (or, rather, grand tactical) level, one's main force engages the enemy while a strong detachment, not in contact, moves round behind him on a wide flank march to render his position untenable. Envelopment, properly used, means that one has both tactical advantage and crushing local superiority and that the enveloped flank will collapse, leaving the enemy the choice of changing front under disadvantageous conditions, withdrawing altogether or having his line chewed up like a stick of rock. Strategic envelopment can often force him out of his position into a hurried withdrawal, leaving himself vulnerable to an aggressive pursuit. The dangers? Those of the out-flanking force being itself outflanked or of a counter-attack breaking the hook.

On the game-board the swift tactical envelopment can result in two or three enemy units being caught front and rear and destroyed at a blow; then judicious movement after combat closes up the attackers into a coherent force poised on a suddenly-vulnerable flank, possibly with the chance of taking



the enemy centre in the rear next turn. Or, if a quick local victory is the object, the flanking units can be weak but fast-moving, pinning the enemy from the rear while heavier units deliver the knock-out from the front: if any of the weak units are destroyed in their turn one is still up in combat points. Where a more permanent advantage is sought, first, move other units out as a screen on the 'open' side of your flanking movement and, secondly, have more strong units coming round the flank to weight the upper jaw of the trap.

When this gambit is being implemented strategically then a time-span of two, three or even four moves can be accepted provided that the enemy's main force can be pinned by yours and that his reinforcements are few or non-existent. The flanking force may even move round through rough terrain which your opponent thought wasn't a likely approach. The US player in "Wurzburg" who puts nothing east of the Main can find himself in this situation as an entire Russian division slides south through the woods while two more divisions hold him by the lapels.



Envelopment of Both Flanks

The general's dream gambit since Hannibal did it to perfection at Cannae almost 2200 years ago: the Schlieffen Plan for the swift defeat of France was no more than this one writ large. Two simultaneous flanking movements meet behind the enemy, crush

All Skilful in the Wars

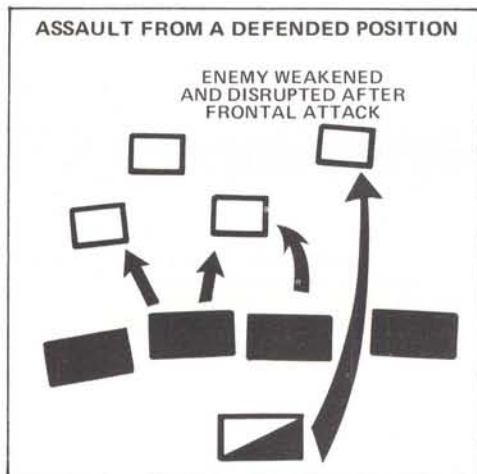
in his flanks, fall on his rear and there you are: total destruction. But make sure the encircling arms are both strong and rapid otherwise one of them may be mangled or your centre disrupted ('the b'ar blew fust'). Also the terrain must be suitable for the double encirclement.

Meanwhile, back on the board... I would advise that this is done either very much at a tactical level, with only a small pocket (8 units or so) surrounded, or else at a strategic level. In most wargames to attempt to surround tactically a larger enemy force simply closes it up into an immobile but compact mass which must then be chipped away over several turns. Readers who have found themselves at Shiloh, trying to lever apart a beleaguered swarm of Yankees will know what I mean. If there are few game-turns left or if enemy reinforcements are due, one could be thwarted at best or done for at worst. A small detachment thus isolated, however, perhaps after Penetration of the Centre, can be totally destroyed in two moves.

Done strategically, it is usually a more slow-moving operation but when it is successful it can make a good position untenable: once again the options are retreat, possibly hasty, or being bitten off at both ends. Strategic or tactical, do not forget that the double encirclement must be done in conjunction with pressure, or at least a very real threat, from the front in order to inhibit movement of the enemy's reserves and to hinder him from changing front.

Assault from a Defended Position

In this case one takes up a strong defensive position from which the enemy **must** seek to dislodge one, as Wellington did at Waterloo. Let the enemy attack unavailingly until his army is depleted, exhausted and possibly approaching demoralisation. Then counter attack.



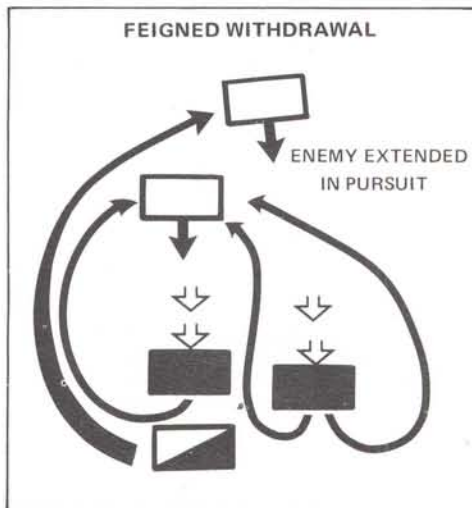
In a wargame, this gambit will work best on a large scale when the attacker is liable to suffer loss or disruption on the CRT as the result of an unsuccessful or misjudged assault: where failure merely incurs retreat without penalty his force will remain intact, making a major counter attack inadvisable. The 'classic' AH games are examples of the sort of simulation in which this method can be used; more recent games in which the attacker is liable to suffer step-losses or, as in 'Shenandoah', when attrition does not favour him unless he has much superior numbers are also examples; and grand tactical games such as 'Terrible Swift Sword' permit a strong defensive to shoot a misjudged or unlucky attack into fragments.

However, attrition of an attacker can also be achieved by very local counter attacks, involving no more than two to four units, to nip off an exposed or temporarily isolated unit, especially if

there has been a foolhardy advance after combat. Indeed, this tactic is only the Assault from a Defended Position in miniature and, applied often enough against a gung-ho attacker, will enable you to undertake it on a grander scale.

When the counter-assault comes it may be a general one. More often it can be put to good local use against a holding attack intended to pin part of **your** force while your opponent seeks to use one of the first three gambits against **you**. It is very disconcerting when, just as he is building up his real effort on one part of your line, another part swings out, scattering the weakened assailants, and begins to envelop his flank.

A word of warning. As few opponents will batter their armies into fragments just to suit you, this gambit can be double-edged. Do not use it unless you are now strong enough to be able to quit your position, where you probably have the advantage of terrain and/or breastworks or improved positions and beat the weakened enemy in the open: or, failing that, when you can launch a swift attack to destroy a number of opposing units and then regain your original position before he can react. (The NATO player in 'Fulda Gap' can do this over and over again, thanks to the double-move rule and his flexible doctrine: indeed this particular game makes this form of the gambit essential to NATO's survival). Finally, Assault from a Defended Position will not have time to develop if your position can be flanked: the enemy must be forced into having no alternative to the frontal assault, due to lack of time or space.



Feigned Withdrawal

Quite simple. You withdraw rather precipitately and as your opponent follows up close behind you, you turn on his extended vanguard and destroy it.

This, as I have said, is not easily done on the game-board. Your opponent can see all your units and is unlikely to follow too swiftly or to walk into an ambush. In fact, the only game I know of in which you really can do something like this is the 'Teutoburgerwald' scenario of 'Caesar's Legions', when you do have completely hidden stacks into which a pursuing Roman force can be persuaded to blunder, or which can leap out, howling dreadfully, in his rear. 'Shenandoah', with its lettered counters representing — well, what? — offers opportunities for this gambit, especially when one's retreat is along a route to your opponent's objective: and in modern, ranged-weapon games like 'Mech War 77' a judicious withdrawal can induce your adversary within range of more of your units; but if he is any good he will do so very carefully, nipping from cover to cover and affording you no sitting ducks unless Command Control plays him false.

Strategic Flank March

A derivative of Envelopment of One Flank on a grand scale; you leave your enemy facing a part of your force while, unbeknown to him your main body moves right round behind one flank to cut across his L of C and/or attack his base.

Straightaway one can see that this is another gambit of limited application in wargaming; no player is going to feign ignorance while twenty



counters move down one side of the board carrying their boots in their hands. Strategically it is possible in games where you can bring on reinforcements behind your enemy's flank and where you can afford to save up these until they amount to a strong force. Even so, your opponent, unless he is an idiot, will be aware of the threat and will keep a reserve to deal with it. It can also be done in 'Shenandoah', using the Concealed Deployment rule. Indeed, I once did it to perfection: my opponent was so sure that Force A was my main body that he paid little heed to humble C moving cautiously up the South Fork of the Shenandoah — until it suddenly force-marched to his depot at Winchester and made away with all his supplies and wagons, forcing him to withdraw precipitately from what had been a good position.

On a tactical level and transmuted into The Blow at the Enemy's Rear it can work in many games, provided that one is quick. Here the gambit is to move a fairly strong force quickly round one flank with a view to striking at some vital rear location on the map; it may be a hex which the other fellow must keep you from occupying, or a vital supply unit, or even a road by which he is expecting some much-needed reinforcements. With any luck your move will make him react so hurriedly that he will be thrown off balance, which is what your main force, still to his front, is waiting for. As you will have realised, it can often lead to the mauling of the flanking move and is therefore best kept in hand for when things are not going too well and disruption of the enemy is important enough to justify the risk, or when one wishes to break a stalemate. Needless to say, it will apply only in games in which some such tender area in the rear exists but many recent ones have some form of supply rule which gives importance to certain roads or hexes. In 'Mukden' for instance, the Soviet player is forever sensitive about the thin umbilical cord that joins him to the north map-edge and in 'Lee Moves North' a threat to Washington's communications can often send the Union scrambling back from some threatening foray. And 'Caesar's Legions' is all about bad, hairy men jumping out of the woods into the rear areas of the Pax Romana.

The Six Gambits: of them you will find the first three most readily applicable in most games, with One Flank hitting the balance between effectiveness and ease of implementation — I recommend it as being a good way of putting an enemy force off balance and, done vigorously, of cutting a stronger one down to something more like parity. Both Flanks is even better provided you don't try for too big a mouthful at one go, but falls into the 'nice work if you can get it' class. Penetration is, although simple, not to be despised but it is not recommended when the enemy is strongly placed and has defence in depth; against a 'crust' defence it can be both swift and effectual. From the start of any game you should be alert to openings for one or other of the various gambits. Sometimes the initial set-up of units will dictate one; sometimes you will seek to contrive an opening; and sometimes a mistake or oversight on your opponent's part will hand you an opening on a plate. Remember always that whether the situation is strategic or a very small tactical one, the key will usually lie in the application of a suitable gambit.

BATTLE FOR HUE

A review of SDC's game from the 1968 Offensive

ROB GIBSON

I obtained this game as a subscriber to the ill-fated "Conflict" magazine which expired some years back and was delighted to see it reappear on SPUK's lists again. It is an unusual game about a controversial subject but a very playable game that will please any gamer who tries it. The title outlines the battleground — the medieval city of Hue, the ancient capital of Vietnam, and principal objective of the 1968 offensive by the North Vietnamese Army. As the game narrative explains, the city of Hue was a political objective (or rather, series of objectives) for the NVA and its Vietcong adherents. The resultant simulation is aptly described as a cross between a modern small-unit battle and medieval siege warfare.

The NVA player starts with a complete division on the board: the US/ARVN player with small units "holed up" in compounds and small reinforcements initially available. The facility exists for upgrading certain NVA units by exchanging counters and by capturing armouries inside the compounds but the only substantial reinforcement the NVA player receives from then on are elements of the 324B NVA Division some six turns after the start of the game (even these are limited by the total result of two dice rolls). The US/ARVN player will eventually receive substantial reinforcement but until then, he must desperately hold on until help arrives. Complicating the matter is the fact that the US/ARVN units have separate command control systems, reflected in their inability to call in fire support other than from their own artillery.

Each turn consists of two sequential phases (NVA/VC first, US/ARVN second), each followed by a mutual fire phase. Terrain other than canals and rivers has no effect on movement but considerable effect on combat. Those readers familiar with SPI's "Soldiers" will recall that combat results in that simulation depended on the terrain the defending unit occupied and not on the strength of the defending unit itself — **Battle for Hue** uses an essentially similar approach but factored for modern firepower. Therefore, there are no results other than "unit eliminated" or "missed"!

I could be wrong, but I think **Battle for Hue** was one of the first simulations to use the full first-fire option for units moving adjacent. The rule is that if you move adjacent to an enemy unit or units, it or they may fire immediately, without retaliation fire from you, and prior to the mutual combat phase where eliminated units are removed after all firing has been completed. Once you are committed to the struggle for control of the city of Hue, this is a risk which both sides will have to take — the sighting rules for indirect fire are such that contact with the enemy is essential to bring down artillery fire on his head. If you opt for a swift solution, the casualties in eliminated units will mount alarmingly (a recent game which played out in twelve game-turns left exactly seven US/ARVN counters in possession of the board, with over one hundred units eliminated).

In fact, there is no time limit for the game. It continues until all NVA/VC units are removed from the walled city itself, however long that takes. However, the victory is calculated on the basis of points awarded for units destroyed, with extra points for each turn that the NVA/VC player retains a foothold in the Inner City. So the removal of the NVA/VC units has to be conducted with skill and care, as has the NVA/VC defence of its gains. The result is a finely balanced simulation.

The finest tribute to this game came in the magazine it appeared in. A Marine veteran of the battle wrote in commending the game and the accompanying article as being "just the way it was". No better tribute to a simulation could there be.

AIRWAR

Modern Tactical Air Combat

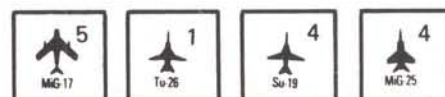
DAVE MILLWARD

I've been interested in aeroplanes for as long as I can remember.... books, models, magazines, the whole lot. When SPI brought out 'Flying Circus' I got hooked on air games too. 'Richthoven's War', 'Spitfire', 'Foxbat & Phantom', 'Air Force', Ed Smith's 'Battle of Britain', 'Fight in the Skies' — I've played them all. What I really wanted to do though was fight Migs v. Sabres over Korea; so naturally, when **Air War** came out I just had to get a copy.

Well, they warn you in the adverts that it is a complex game and when you open the box you can see why. The rule booklet is quarto size and covers 48 pages. Add to that a quarto size sheet on each of 30 aircraft, full characteristics table for 16 different guided missiles; add 12 pages of charts, a one-page sequence of play and a two-page rules summary and then, on top of it all, take a look at an aircraft's control panel sheet.... it's 3 inches deep and 21 inches long... for each aircraft. Of course you also get an 8 piece 'geomorphic' board and 600 counters. Well, it's enough to put anyone off and it was a week or two after I got it, after several "well, perhaps tomorrow's", before I finally settled down to try to digest it all.



Once you do get started however it's not at all as bad as it seems. Having played an air game before certainly helps. The game is split into steps, of increasing complexity, each with its own scenarios. The first deals with aircraft movement and cannon/mg combat; after reading and mastering this (it is 11 pages long) players can go on to play the first three scenarios and make up their own situations covering any combat which does not include missiles. The complexity level at this stage is still fairly high, as players have to master such things as "energy levels", "12 point facing", "turning progress" (before each 30 degrees turn is made) and to be successful manoeuvres such as the Immelman, wingover etc etc.



Once mastered, however, games flew fairly well and can be very enjoyable. Pilots rated 'Turkey', 'Novice', 'Average', 'Honcho' and 'Super Honcho' and the survival chance for a Turkey is pretty poor over a number of games. Although jockeying for position in a Mig 15 against an F86 Sabre can be pretty enjoyable, the game's constant aim for 'realism' results in a low number of aircraft shot down or damaged which is somewhat frustrating... so is the Mig's limited ammo!

To get more kills you gotta get missiles and that leads to stage two.... heat seeking missiles. The

increase in rules is actually fairly small, three pages and all the systems are for aircraft so its straightforward. However, the disadvantage of missiles is that you need a new control panel in use as soon as you fire one of the damned things! Heat seekers soon lead you to radar homing (two more pages) then you can fly a basic game with any type of aircraft and the full panoply of weaponry.

After this, optional rules cover visual and radar search, clouds and sun, infra red and radar counter measures, bombing and strafing, ground to air fire and ejecting. Some of these e.g. visual search and ejecting, are useful even in stage one games, as soon as you've covered the basics, as they enhance the game considerably (make sure your wing man has good eyes).



Next come the scenarios, 10 historical ones, covering everything from 'action over Mig Alley Sept. 13th 1952' involving 2 F86's and 2 Mig 15's, to the 'Return of the Red River Rats Route Pack Six, Dec. 22nd 1972' involving F105's, F4E's, A7E's, Mig 21's, AIM 7 and 9 Atoll missiles, buildings, trucks, dumps, bridges, barges, SAM missiles, AA guns, bombs, SMART bombs and Bullpup missiles.

Finally, a section on constructing your own scenarios, aircraft availability, pilot capabilities and situation types, followed by some general hints on playing.

Despite its complexity, I enjoyed **Air War** — in fact, it might be partly because of its complexity — there is always something new. However, I guess you've gotta be an aeronut like me because it does require commitment to master it all. And, most difficult of all is finding an opponent. Still, I know this guy in Brum who's pretty interested in aeroplanes, if...



MAIL CALL



Gunnery Rules in 'Tsushima'

While it seems a little late in the day to take up Ralph Vickers' criticisms of the gunnery rules in 'Tsushima' in Phoenix 10, I must plead that at the time of publication I was separated from my source books on the subject. This state of affairs being rectified, some comment seems relevant.

While Mr Vickers is quite right in saying that the battle-board rules leave something to be desired and that GDW's rules tend to have holes in them the first point to be seized by him, namely that concerning fire from more than one ship on the same target, has real justification. 'Guns at Sea' by Peter Padfield, a book concerned entirely with the development of naval guns and gunnery, devotes a chapter to Tsushima in which the following passage occurs:

'It is apparent that in these conditions (haze & smoke) and with the primitive communication system aboard the ships it was impossible for the officers controlling the guns to be sure that they were looking at the same target as their gunlayers or their range-finder operators. Similarly concentration of fire from two or more ships, frequently discussed and tried in peace manoeuvres, was impossible to control scientifically.' Later on Mr Padfield says:

'It (spotting) became increasingly difficult as more guns were brought to bear until when more than one ship concentrated its guns on one of the enemy the task became impossible.'

The state of gunnery at the time of the battle justifies, in my opinion, the rule that when more than one ship engages a target 2 is subtracted from their die-rolls; even at the best of times a capital ship with a mixed main armament, varying in trajectory and time of flight, and lacking any system of centralised fire control could not straddle a target in the way that was possible even a few years later. On the other hand the rule forbidding more than a certain number of divisions to fire at one time is unfounded and should simply be ignored.

On the subject of the Russian formation at Tsushima, while it is true that their fleet was in two columns at the start of the battle this was **not** the intention; Roshdestvensky had been deploying from line ahead into line abreast when the appearance of the Japanese caused him to cancel the manoeuvre just as it was beginning, leaving his First Division out to starboard of the main body. He restored the line ahead as quickly as he could but Russian maritime ineptitude (may it flourish yet!) resulted in a foul-up under the Japanese guns; this is brought out in 'The Fleet That Had to Die' by Richard Hough and in 'The Tide at Sunrise' by Denis and Peggy Warner. Togo fought in line ahead throughout the battle; however he did cross the T with devastating effect, a manoeuvre which cannot be reproduced in the game. On the other hand let us not forget that it is a strategic game in which one tries to have outsmarted one's opponent **before** battle is joined.

D I A Mack

(There is little doubt that Ralph Vicker's article evoked a very positive response from the readers. I only wish that all had been as **constructively** written as this letter! Editor)

Miniature Boardgaming

I was interested to read Mike Doe's article 'Miniatures Vs. Mech War & Firefight' in the Jan/Feb edition of Phoenix, as this is a subject that I have been going over just recently. The question that was raised in this article was basically: what is best? Why both are! Why chose one or the other when the optimum game system is a complete integration between the two. I haven't tried playing the Mech War/Panzerblitz size games using miniatures but I have used Tank! rules to great success, the visual impact of miniatures with the 'completeness' of a game offered by the hex sheets and exact rules of this system save the best from both worlds.

Using the SPI blank hex sheets a player can make the board as large or small as he desires, terrain can also be included using other sheets for hills and bridges, etc. First decide where you want a hill to be, then the hex numbers that cover the area, then cut a piece representing the shape of the hill you desire and fit it over the base sheet first sticking it to a piece of hardboard cut to shape. Using another sheet a smaller hill can be made to fit over the first so that the main hill rises in steps with the appropriate cost in movement points to move a unit up each step. This is not perfect if a gradually rising hill is what is required unless the gamer cuts pieces out with each hill portion one hex band smaller than the last. Bridges, to the player's own design can also be made using this method, this would be especially effective making a bridge with its sides anchored to hill portions. The main thing to keep in mind is that whenever a piece of terrain is laid on the base hex sheet the numbers must correspond for si-move plotting.

When players make up their own scenarios they may find that arriving at a Preservation Level, I have Tank! in mind now, gives them a problem, I solved this by allotting 2 points to each unit involved for both sides, thus: seven tanks would have a preservation level of 14. Whenever a tank is destroyed a die is rolled, (a la Sniper!) the die roll is then taken off of the preservation level until the morale is broken.

Mr Doe rightly praises GHQ miniatures as being the best, they are the best. (Available mail order from New Hope Design, Rothbury, Northumberland NE65 7QJ) GHQ also make some fine terrain pieces which may or may not fit into a board game, I haven't tried them. Counters may be used with this game or figures (also supplied by New Hope) of infantry painted then glued to a small square of plasticard look quite effective.

John Smart

(I feel that this letter is a reflection of my comments in the editorial whilst I would disagree that miniatures have any part to play in my hobby I also admit that John has every right to his view. You will see further articles on the miniatures/boardgames interface! Editor)

The opinions and comments made in this column 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. All letters addressed to the Editor will be considered for publication unless they are clearly marked "Not For Publication".

Concerning articles on tips for players, how about one on the tactics of WW II / modern combat and the principles behind them? I find it difficult to grasp the principles of games like 'Panzer '44' and 'October War'. To be more specific: where do you best position your forces in defence? How do you attack, i.e. what portion of your forces should fire while the rest move? What range is optimum for conducting armoured combat? When and why should infantry dismount from APCs? How does one best use artillery? etc. The list is endless.

I have been playing SPI games for over a year and find no problem in comprehending grand tactical i.e. Napoleon At War (congratulations, Mr Merry, on an excellent article in Phoenix 11) and larger scale games, but tactical games baffle me. If some gallant Phoenix contributor would write an article on the subject I would be very grateful.

Andrew Finkel

(It is up to you, the reader, to supply such articles; on my part I will be only too pleased to publish them if they come up to scratch. Editor)

Anti-British Bias?

In his letter printed in Phoenix 11, Ed Merryweather says he is sure he detects an anti-British bias in S&T. I believe he is detecting things that are not there.

To quote from his criticism of Phil Kosnett's 'Highway' article: 'They (Guards Armoured) got off to a slow start because of terrain, traffic jams and resistance ... Despite what Mr Kosnett says, XXX Corps fought well and did their job!' Now surely the planners of Operation Garden must have considered the effects of terrain, traffic jams & resistance in their planning? And, though XXX Corps did fight very well indeed, they did not do their job. Their job was quite simply to take and hold that last bridge. Nothing can alter the fact that the bridge was not taken, thus the whole of Market-Garden was a failure.

Mr Merryweather then comments on the American Military. He compares US Intelligence unfavourably to British, completely ignoring their code breaking work which went a long way to winning the Pacific war. May I point out to him that our work on Enigma owed a very great deal to Polish Intelligence! He defends the British on the matter of the Fifteenth Army borders; one cannot blithely ignore an entire army simply because it **might** be resting or transferred to the Eastern Front. The statement that 'The Allied fighters (that spotted the Fifteenth Army) ... must have been American' is entirely unsupported. The Americans flying by day and the British by night applies to strategic bombing, not tactical missions. The fact remains that the Fifteenth Army escaped from a British sector.

Next he states that 'The Americans have never been noted for bravery'. Since we've been talking about Market-Garden, I suggest he examines the 82nd's incredibly brave assault across the river at Nijmegen.

Finally, it is a shame that Mr Merryweather should choose to ignore the large number of complimentary remarks that have appeared in S&T about the British armed forces. There is an example from the very article that Mr Merryweather criticizes. Mr Kosnett says of the First Airborne: 'Given their position it is simply amazing that they did as well as they did. They were outnumbered, outgunned, and seemingly without hope of rescue. Their guts and their talent and their desperation, and perhaps most importantly their esprit de corps, held them together where almost any army would have surrendered.'

Does that really smack of anti-British bias?

John D Salt

GAME PROBLEM: ?

PANZERARMEE AFRIKA

JOHN SPENCE

0703



TO ENTER:
40 MPs



(B.7) COMBAT RESULTS TABLE

Attack Superiority (Attacker minus Defender)

die	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2	2	3	4	4	6	6	6	8	10
2	*	2	3	3	4	4	6	6	8	8
3	*	*	2	3	3	4	4	6	6	8
4	*	*	*	2	2	3	3	4	6	8

Notes:

Command Control throw for turn 7 = 1
Supplies for the Axis are represented by two loaded trucks near El Agheila; otherwise the Axis network of supplies is intact but stretched.

Answer (or at least my attempt) in the next issue.

1352



1350



TO ENTER
BY RAIL:



HIGH WYCOMBE WARGAMERS, 19.00hrs
Wed, British Legion Hall, Tel: Beaconsfield
4116.

ULSTER MILITARY MODELLING SOCIETY
meets every last Saturday in the month at 3,
Cheviot Gardens, East Belfast at 2.00pm.

Chris Newey, 21 Calver Grove, Great Barr,
Birmingham B44 9BE, Tel: 021-360 3478.

BLANTYRE BOARDGAMES CLUB, c/o
Elizabeth Scott Community Centre, Logan
Street, Blantyre, Strathclyde. Every Wed.
7-10pm. Tel: East Kilbride 27030 (G.Munn)

LINCOMBE BARN WARGAMES SOCIETY,
Overdale Rd, Downend, Bristol. Meets Sunday
2.30pm to 9.30pm. Contact: A.Swanson, 40
Rockland Rd, Downend, Bristol. Tel: 565003.

Brian Griffin, 3 Ambleside Avenue, Roath Park,
Cardiff. Tel: 762069.

A.G.V.Riddell, Thornton, Penyfford, Chester.

O.Bowles, 42 Stuart Road, Highcliffe, Christ-
church, Dorset. Tel: Highcliffe 3252.

CRAWLEY WARGAMERS CLUB, Northgate
Comm. Centre, Crawley. Meets every Wed. at
7.30pm. Tel: J.Liddiard- Crawley 34434 even.

CROYDON WARGAMES GROUP, Sec: P.J.D.
Taylor, 56 Woburn Court, Wellesley Rd,
Croydon, CR0 2AF.

R.Petty, (Vice Chairman Darlington Military
Mod. Soc.) 30 Dundee St, Darlington, Co.
Durham. Tel: Darlington 62184.

Peter Shee, 51 Upper Leeson St, Dublin

TRINITY WARGAMERS ASSOCIATION. Meet
every Sunday in Trinity College. Details avail-
able from the Sec: Andrew Finkel, 88 Rathdown
Park, Terenure, Dublin 6.

EALING GAMES GROUP, Northfields Mission
Hall, Northfields Ave, Ealing W13 (meet
18.45 hrs every Wed.)

Contact!

SPRINGHEAD WARGAMERS (Sec - D.
Lockyer) 171 Dover Rd, Northfleet, Gravesham
Kent. Tel: 0474-55698.

BOSWORTH COLLEGE CHESS & WARGAME
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SOCIETY. Both clubs are interested in finding
High /Upper School age opponents with idea of
extending contacts & players. Sec: Andrew
Poole, 27 Holmfield Ave, East, Braunstone,
Leicester LE3 3FD. This is a new society still
forming.

Mick Godwin, 42 Jellicoe Rd, Leicester.

MERSEYSIDE BOARD WARGAMERS CLUB
meets at "Games", 50 Manchester St, Liverpool
(50 only) Sundays, 2.00pm onwards. Tel: 061-
236 2605.

Ian Wooler, 16 Harcourt Rd, Dorney Reach,
Maidenhead, Berks. Tel: M'hd 25039.

J.Garrett, 19 Weaverthorpe, Nunthorpe,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland.

OXFORD UNIV. WARGAMES CLUB. Meet in
Quarrell Room, Exeter College, at 1.30pm on
alternate Sundays in Full Term. Sec: Andrew
McGee, Magdalen College, Oxford.

C.G.Luke, 'Cathay', Polmear, Par, Cornwall.

Peter Swineburn, 87 Lavernock Rd, Penarth
Tel: 707400.

R.B.Walker, (Sec. South Wales Wargames Fed.)
10 Wildbrook Close, Taibach, Port Talbot,
West Glamorgan. Tel: Port Talbot 87954.

S.Dalby, 89 Stakes Road, Purbrook, Hants.
Tel: Waterlooville 56467.

Nigel Spike, Univ. of St Andrews Wargaming
Soc. Students Union, St Mary's Place, St
Andrews, Fife. (meet every Tues., Chaplaincy
Centre).

Kim Dent, K17, Glen Eyre Hall, Glen Eyre Rd,
Basset, Southampton, SO9 2QN.

K.A.Smith, 6 Darwin Avenue, Edgley, Stockport
Tel: 061-480 2891.

Petersham Institute, David Read, 46 Crane Rd,
Twickenham, Middx. Tel: 01-894 5286.

K.T.Cockbill, Frank F Harrison Comprehensive
School Simulations Club, Leamore Lane,
Bloxwich, Walsall, W.Midlands.

Barry Sheridan, 75a Hamlet Court Rd, Westcliffe
on Sea, Essex.

B.Norwood, Menzies High School Simulations
Club, Clarkes Lane, West Bromwich, W.Midlands

Overseas

R.Cremers, Maanstraat 65, Nijmegen, Holland.
Tel: 080-771276.

Maurizio Bragaglia, 00135 Roma - Via Camp-
ocattino, 39, Italy. Tel: (06) 3381304.

B.J.Ward, 2 Nediva, Earls Avenue, Windsor,
Handburg, South Africa.

Opponents Wanted

P.James, Oak Lodge, Fulmer Rd, Gerrards
Cross, Bucks. Tel: Gerr. X 88265 (even.)

G.R.Sparks, 88 Acre St, Denton, Manchester,
Tel: 061-336 9571.

David White, 30 Mulgrew Avenue, Saltcoats,
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MAIL ORDER ENQUIRIES INVITED.

CONTINUED
FROM
PAGE
14

**Starsoldier**

In Phoenix 11 you asked for comments on Starsoldier, here are mine:

- 1) It is often over too quickly. Short sharp slug-fests as soon as the two sides are fairly close. What is the point of a fast moving tactical game if the units cannot make flanking manoeuvres without coming well within the killing range of the enemy?
- 2) The method of taking hits is good, and I am in favour of a recovery rate, but the rate for humans is too high. It makes it necessary to score two or even three consecutive hits on the one soldier, while the other members of the enemy force create havoc. Still, this can lead to some exciting moments as you try to send a wounded soldier into cover, under protective fire from his comrades.
- 3) There should be more 'colour' (like the 'Dink-blo'g' and asteroid scenarios).

The link game. The main problem is the time it takes, but there in one point about Tac Point allocations. A fire team costs the same as an android team, and as androids are inferior, there is therefore no sense in ever purchasing an android team. I prefer to make an android team cost one Tac Point.

Despite these points, I like the game. I enjoy playing it and that is what counts.

A Tennent

(Whilst much of this letter applies to 'Target of Opportunity' the slow response negates the separate column for the time being! Editor)

HOTLINE...HOTLINE...HOTLINE

MALCOLM WATSON

Question: What do I do about 'Global War'? The Axis win every time, very easily.
MW: Make sure you don't get the Allies! Perhaps some of our readers would like to dispute this claim through the columns of Mail Call.

Comment: Put errata on current S&T games in Phoenix

dark when a few lines of explanation can put them in the picture and prevent any aggro.

Comment: Most of the Hotline items are of no interest at all, or the answers are obvious?
MW: If the answers are so obvious, how come the questions get asked in the first place? As for interest, your idea of interesting may not be the same as other readers. As long as the feature gets good ratings it will be included.

MW: Strange you should say that. We are in the process of setting up a games test panel with a view to going through new SPI games as they come out to locate as many errors/anomalies as possible before the game goes onto the market. I would like to see the errata that we compile printed in Phoenix and have put this to the Editor, who has agreed in principle. It could be that the first of such errata, based on HWTR 2nd Edition rules, will appear in this issue. (See page 18)

Question: Any chance of S&T/Moves binders?

MW: When these were first brought out SPI could not get enough to keep their own market supplied, let alone ours. I did look into the possibility of getting some made up in the UK but this proved abortive and, as I recall, demand was very limited. I will look into the possibility of getting supply from SPI again. Watch for future announcements in Phoenix.

Question: What percentage of Feedback Cards you receive do you actually use?
How many S&T Feedback Cards are forwarded to America?
MW: We take into account all cards received up to the point collation takes place. We forward all S&T cards received up to the deadlines stated on the card. In both cases it usually works out at 10% of the readership.

Comment: I know it's SPI's (USA) fault but I wish you could still supply spares. When you buy a car you don't expect to replace the whole car when the tyres wear out.

Comment: Re your comments on stockists, I have not seen any games at Beatties, Birmingham, for 4-6 weeks. When they are stocked they carry a very small range — mainly British printed. Why don't you try to make shops take a minimum pack, maybe it would pay to try a sale or return policy ... at the moment I know of only two stockists in the Midlands area.

Comment: Although you are distributing an American product, I wish you wouldn't resort to all these nasty Americanisms found in News From SPUK, etc.
MW: If I were to resort to my native tongue you wouldn't understand a word I wrote. Kenwhutehmeenatanatjumpy? Americanisms have been creeping into our everyday life for years and I'm sure that the structure of our society will not be undermined if some should slip into Phoenix. However, just to reassure you, we at SPUK do not deliberately go out of our way to ape our American cousins. We're British thru and thru.

MW: I wish we could too but without getting spares from SPI our hands are tied. To carry your equation further, when your tyres wear out, you do not go along to a car dealer and ask him to strip a new car of its tyres knowing that he cannot obtain a further set of tyres for that car.

MW: Beatties, as a matter of policy, carry only UK-produced games. Initially, they were not tremendously enthusiastic about stocking wargames. Apparently they had already tried a line of non-SPI games which proved unsuccessful. Undaunted, yours truly got 3 titles into 3 of their branches on a S.O.R. basis for a trial. This trial proved successful and we now have all branches carrying up to 16 titles. Wargames are too specialised for general hobby shops such as Beatties to carry the full range. However, I do hope to get further UK-produced titles into their shops this year. Incidentally, the main reason that Beatties go for the UK-produced games is their availability — obviously we carry a much larger stock of these than we do imported titles, therefore they are more readily available. Also, you must be aware that imported titles are liable to interruption of supply from source, last year's dock strike being a prime example. It stands to reason a shop will want continuity of supply. Having created an interest in a product they will want to maintain that interest. Your comment re the number of outlets in the Midlands tends to rule out your suggestion that we should force shops to take a minimum quantity of games. Surely, such a step would tend to discourage outlets who are prepared to have a go on a limited basis. Your suggestion that we should supply on a sale or return is really a matter for debate within the SPUK corridors of power. There are many pros and cons and you can be assured that the subject has been debated at length. As a matter of interest, 18 months ago we contacted over 300 model shops throughout the UK in a bid to set up a dealer network. Out of that 300 we got some 30 new outlets. From the answers we got then, wargames were too specialised for many model shops and that's something we can't do much about.

Question: Why no special order form for S&T back issues with games mentioned in S&T 65?
Question: Do the special offers in S&T apply in England?
MW: Special offers in S&T apply only to US domestic subscribers or foreign subscribers who take out their subs direct with SPI in New York. UK subscribers enjoy special offers put out by SPUK.

Question: I have a game which I think may be worth publishing. How do I find out whether you agree?

MW: To date SPUK has not been in a position to consider the publication of games in the UK however during my recent visit to SPI this subject was discussed in detail. (See this issue's News from SPUK).

Question: Can we be kept informed of the games to be included in future S&Ts, i.e. what comes after S&T 65?

MW: We did not know ourselves until two weeks ago what was to appear in future issues of S&T. Here is the info now to hand: S&T 67 — Stonewall - The Battle of Kernstown, March 23, 1862. A regimental level simulation of Jackson's spoiling attack against General Shields' division in the Shenandoah valley. Based on the award-winning 'Terrible Swift Sword' system.
S&T 68 — Izyum: Debacle Before Kharkov.
An operational-level game depicting the first premeditated Soviet counter-offensive, in May of 1942.

Comment: Stop letting people persecute Andrew Gilham!
MW: Hey Andy, you forgot to sign this! Seriously, if Mr Gilham writes provocative letters and articles, as is his wont, then he must be interested in learning what the reaction to his contribution is. In allowing fellow readers to state their views we are hardly allowing or encouraging persecution, all we are doing is affording them the same facilities that Andrew has already made use of.

Comment: In News from SPUK, is there any chance of having brief game reviews of newly-available games? I would like to know (a) topic of the game (b) complexity (c) time (d) how good it is for solitaire play — are there scenarios specifically designed for it?

MW: It could be that we could tie in such a feature with our proposed errata service. I will take this up with the Editor. Roll on War in the Pacific, that should keep us busy.

Question: Can you send on photos to illustrate an article submitted for Phoenix?
MW: You can indeed — black and white preferably.

Question: Why talk about S&T 64 and 65 when both have been delivered i.e. in Stop Press re delays?

MW: Because if I didn't, customers would write in complaining that our service is lousy. Over the past 5 years I have found that delay is acceptable if it is adequately and truthfully explained. I see no point in keeping people in the

Comment: Bring old Phoenix issues into print again.
MW: It's nice to know you want them but the cost of reprinting would be prohibitive as overall demand for these is not high. We just could not justify a print run.

NE...HOTLINE...HOTLINE...HOT



NEWS FROM S.P.U.K.

MALCOLM WATSON

This article is in response to the discussions on errata in Mailcall and in the feedback replies. I would like to see more rules clarifications in these pages since rules are the most likely cause of problems in our games. If any of you have information supplied direct from the publishers on games queries and would like to share this with other gamers I would be only too happy to start up an errata column. This project is in your hands! Editor.

HIGHWAY TO THE REICH 2nd EDITION RULES CLARIFICATIONS

Rule 14.52 Should a stack of units, including an Art. unit, land overstacked, the Art. can stay on the landing hex with no adverse effect while another unit(s) in that serial is displaced to an adjacent hex. Should a second serial land on the hex occupied by that Art. unit (presumably through scatter) that serial would be displaced to an adjacent hex. The Art. unit plus any accompanying units in the original hex would be disrupted as would the second serial. Any Art. units accompanying the second serial would be displaced, disrupted but **not** automatically eliminated.

Rule 8.51 is an exception to 8.46

Rule 5.23 states that indirect fire weapons (including heavy weapons) can fire at any unit in a stack top or bottom. 18.1 contradicts this as does 5.62 para 1. 5.23 is **incorrect**, heavy weapons may only fire at the top two units in a stack.

Rule 7.43 10.93 appears to contradict this. However ZOCs do extend both into and across river hexes regardless of ferries.

Rule 17.21 is an exception to Rule 12.2

Rule 8.22 states that units can leave travel mode (at the cost of 1 MP) after moving. Rule 13.51 states the exact opposite. Rule 8.22 is **correct**, disregard 13.51.

Rule 14.1 Allied player rolls separately for weather conditions on each flight route.

Rule 31.17 states 44th Royal Tank Regt. comes into play on turn 13. This is correct. Disregard formation display which brings these on 10 turns earlier. 31.17 takes precedence over all arrivals given on formation display.

Misc. German reinforcements are considered to be in an off the map box prior to arrival. They can be moved to an adjacent off the map box (within the normal restrictions) on the movement phase they arrive rather than bringing them onto the map.

Should a unit's HQ be eliminated it may be attached to an alternative HQ **on the first command phase following the elimination.**

Weather conditions at the start of the campaign game are considered to be '0'.

Close assaults at 0- any value are treated as 1-3. Thus if units in travel mode close assault a unit(s) which has a strength, effectiveness and morale rating the attack would be resolved at 1-3 because units in travel mode have no effectiveness rating. Units with a CR, ER and MR that close assault a disrupted (depleted) unit do so at 4-1 as the disrupted (depleted) unit has no effectiveness or strength rating. Should a unit(s) in travel mode close assault a disrupted (depleted) unit(s) it would do so at 1-1 since both have at least one '0' factor in their combat ability.

Hopefully these clarifications will be of some use and, should reaction be suitably positive, we will be happy to run this column as a part of our regular service on new SPI games as they come out.

Malcolm Watson

1978 continues to be a year of trial and tribulation. Following hot on the heels of the infamous American — Liverpool dock strike we found ourselves at odds with Mother Nature. The container which held our Moves 36 shipment sprung a leak and the resultant water damage totalled all of the Red Sun Rising frontsheets, 240 out of 300 Up Scope games, 250 Moves 36, plus various quantities of other games. The damage came to somewhere in the region of £2,000. Foul weather in Boston caused Moves 37 to be late. Seemingly, the weather was so bad that there existed, in that fair city, a state bordering on martial law. Police would not allow people onto the streets thus the printers could not get to work. Obviously the B.P.D. does not contain any Moves subscribers. The artwork for Phoenix 12 was late in getting to the printer because the gentleman who sets the text put it through the shredder in error — or was it a cunning ploy to deprive gamers of this stupendous magazine? Last on the list, the machine used to churn out our Standard Game Boxes broke down and was out of operation for a couple of weeks. Having repaired this wonderful example of precision tooling, the box company duly got our boxes together and sent them off by lorry. It broke down!

Could 1978 continue in this way, we ask ourselves? If yes, then I thank God there are only 8 months till 1979.

I have just got back from my annual pilgrimage to New York, a trip that allows me to catch up on the gossip, learn what SPI have in mind for the future and endeavour to sort out any problems that have cropped up over the previous 12 months. As important as any of these, it gives me an insight into any problems that SPI might be wrestling with and their present big headache is getting games out on time.

The powers that be at SPI are acutely aware of the discontent that is stirred up amongst customers when games do not come out on schedule and they are doing all they can to put matters right. Don't look for any miracles, it will take some time for improvements to take effect but be assured that no-one at SPI is burying his head in the sand on this one.

In the UK we should be prepared for some disruption in the not-too-distant future. SPI may be moving their operation to larger premises and such a move will almost certainly be felt by us. Naturally, we will do all in our power to keep our operation running smoothly.

We are putting the S&T and Moves schedules back by two weeks since it looks like delays in future shipments are inevitable due to SPI's workload. It seems pointless clinging to the old deadlines when they cannot realistically be met.

SPI has now shelved plans to publish books on October War and Red Star-White Star. I doubt if we will hear any more on those projects.

The Middle Earth saga now enters Peyton Place proportions as the wheeling and dealing continues. SPI have failed to reach an agreement with the Film Company which holds the Tolkien rights. I have now approached them direct with a proposition which I feel they will find acceptable and expect to have some word by late May. SPI and SPUK have already come to terms on the sale of the game outside the USA. All we need now is permission from Fantasy Films and this, I am confident, will be forthcoming.

Our 1978 print programme enters its first stage with the printing of Napoleon's Last Battles in May. Negatives for the other three games, as detailed in Phoenix 12, are in our hands and counters for these games are expected within the next two months. Once they do arrive we should be all set for UK production without the hitches we ran into

PHOENIX 11 FEEDBACK RESULTS

BASED ON A 10% RESPONSE FROM UK S&T SUBSCRIBERS

During the period December 1977 — January 1978 SPUK service was given a rating of 6.8 which is slightly up on the last period monitored (June — July 1977). 63% felt our service was steady against 11% who felt that it was on the decline. 60% of customers receiving orders by second class post got their goods within 14 days of ordering, while a surprising 22% did not know how long orders took to arrive. 49% receiving orders by parcel post got the goods within 14 days of ordering and 34% did not know. 16% and 14% respectively received their goods within 15 — 21 days and 2% and 3% waited 21+ days. Predictably, 2nd class post beat parcel post in the 10 day delivery bracket (35% against 25%).

Customer service got a rating of 7 which is well up on the previous rating. 27% said it was improving and 70% said it was steady. Our resident Customer Service Department, alias Ray Smith, was highly delighted at this result. However, one must bear in mind that the same Mr. Smith collates the Feedback answers. Surely he wouldn't be dastardly enough to fiddle the figures!! 41% of rules queries were answered within 10 days, 27% within 14 days and for the rest he gets a slapped wrist.

Moving onto questions about Phoenix, 65% considered Issue 11 superior to Issue 10. 42% of contributors would like to see their article ratings

published and 26% would not. In the latter category, 100% said that they would contribute no further articles if ratings were published. 47% of non-contributors would like ratings to appear against 36% who would not. Taking a deft sidestep, I will pass the ratings buck to John Spence. How about it, John? Do you feel we should publish ratings?

Non-contributor ratings were as follows:—

Issue overall	6.9
News from SPUK	5.9
Hotline	6.3

S&T 65 Feedback results

Rate the following on a 1—9 scale:—

4. Cobra (Simulation)	7.3
6. Cobra (Article)	6.6
7. The War Against Japan	5.8
8. Outgoing Mail	6.2
9. Briefings	6.0
10. For Your Eyes Only	6.4
12. This Issue overall	6.8
13. Was this issue better than last?	Yes 74%
	No 26%

last year. The next game to be printed will be put on offer in Phoenix 14 — watch that issue for details.

It seems that Simulations Design Corporation have finally gone to the wall. I have written to that company for clarification but NY sources advise me they have bitten the dust. On receipt of clarification we will take appropriate action on the outstanding SDC orders that we hold.

SPI are giving serious consideration to packaging all their games bookcase style. If they decide to go ahead with this course of action it will commence with "War in the Pacific" and "Cambrai", both of which are due in the UK late June. Yes, "War in the Pacific" is a fact. I brought a set of counters and maps back with me along with rules and charts in proof form. Games already available will be put into this new style packaging when they are re-printed. This should take between 1 — 1½ years for the full range.

The slow-selling games to be dropped by SPI when present stocks run out are as follows: — Fall of Rome, Franco-Prussian War, Leipzig, The Marne, 1918, Rifle & Saber and Year of the Rat. Once our stocks run out we will not be reordering so if you want any of these games I suggest you put your order in straight away.

I apologise to those of you who are still waiting for a copy of the HWTR 2nd Edition rules. We were short-shipped and did not find out until after the announcement was made in Phoenix 12. We will fulfill all requests as soon as possible.

On to the feedback now. Some of you have commented that questions 4 and 5 are identical. Not so. Question 4 relates to goods despatched by 2nd class post and question 5 to goods sent via parcel post. Please bear this in mind when answering this issue's feedback.

The following is the up to date details on upcoming SPI games: Objective Moscow in stock now, Crimean War Quad expected in late May, Descent on Crete expected late May, War in the Pacific expected late July, Cambrai expected late June. Note that War in the Pacific is now £20.00 boxed and £17.00 unboxed, due to an SPI price change.

From GDW we have 'Imperium', a science fiction game of interstellar empire in conflict with terran colonial expansion, Price £10.35 inc. P & P, complexity rating 5. Also in stock we have Battline's 'Machiavelli', a game of combat and politics in Renaissance Italy, price £10.65 inc. P & P.

The big news to come out of the New York sortie is that SPI want SPUK to obtain UK designed games for them and this is how it will work... hopefully. We will feedback a number of possible situations to gauge UK desire for same. If the response is good we will pursue the subject and look at any designs submitted to us. Should a game be acceptable we will buy it from the designer and send it to SPI in a 'ready to publish' state. This means that games will be tested here and revised as necessary. SPI will also test them on receipt to iron out any problems that we might miss. The onus is on SPUK to sort out the wheat from the chaff so come on all you budding game designers — pick up thy thinking caps and set to. Initially we expect to tackle games on the Quad level, utilising SPI's standard rules with us supplying the scenarios, maps, countertermix and 'special rules'. SPI would do the final artwork. The periods I expect to be feedbacked initially are The Peninsula War, English Civil War, War of the Roses and possibly Colonial Wars. Anyone with suggestions for what they would like to see designed, please write to me.

Finally, SPUK continues to grow despite the numerous problems that have beset us. In the year ending March 31st 1978 we moved 53,500 units, an increase of 12,500 (30.5%) on the previous year. We estimate that the increase would have been in the region of 45% had supplies not been held up by the ten week US dock strike. According to my reckoning, these sales put us fourth in the world wargames stakes with only SPI, Avalon Hill and TSR outselling us. Not bad for a business that started out six years ago as a two evenings a week job stemming from my own involvement in the hobby.

FEEDBACK

Phoenix 13

Published May/June 1978

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/numbers on the card in the response boxes which correspond to each 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 June 30th 1978.

- (1) Did you send in the Phoenix 12 feedback?
- (2) Based on the last two 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 post when writing to us, that you have ordered an item that comes back to you **2nd class post** and that the item is not out of stock). (1) 10 days; (2) 14 days; (3) 17 days; (4) 21 days; (5) more than 21 days.
- (5) What is the usual time lag between your order being mailed to us and the receipt of that order? (When answering this, assume that you use 2nd class post when writing to us, that you have ordered an item that comes back to you **Parcel Post** and that you have ordered an item that is not out of stock). (1) 10 days; (2) 14 days; (3) 17 days; (4) 21 days; (5) more than 21 days.
- (6) Indicate which area in the UK your orders usually go to: (1) SW England; (2) SE England; (3) London; (4) N.Ireland; (5) Midlands; (6) NW England; (7) NE England; (8) Wales; (9) Scotland; (10) West Country; (11) East Anglia.
- (7) What is the usual time lag between your order being mailed to us and receipt of an out of stock note (assuming all items on your order are out of stock). When answering this assume that use 2nd class post when writing to us. (1) 10 days; (2) 14 days; (3) 17 days; (4) 21 days; (5) more than 21 days.
- (8) Based on the last two months how do you rate our After Sales Service (i.e. rules queries, complaints, etc)? (1-9)
- (9) Do you feel that this service is (1) improving; (2) the same as always; (3) declining?
- (10) 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) 10 days; (2) 14 days; (3) 17 days; (4) 21 days; (5) more than 21 days.
- (11) How many combat simulation games do you have (Quad games count as four)? 1=1-10; 2=11-20;...9=81 or more.
- (12) How long have you been playing board wargames? 0= less than a year, 1= 1 year, 2= 2 years... 9= 9 or more years.
- (13) Rate your appreciation of the longer type of article, as represented by the article on Conquerors in this issue. (1-9)
- (14) Rate your preference for the shorter type of article which would be less than a page in length e.g. Outreach scenario or Machiavellian Wargaming in this issue.

- (15) Do you read other simulation conflict publications other than S&T? 0= no, 1= 1 other, 2= 2 others, 9= 9 or more publications.
 - (16) Would you like to see annotated game replays in Phoenix?
 - (17) Would you be willing to run such a service? If yes please add name and address in the space below.
 - (18) Would you be interested in game problems such as the PanzerArmeeAfrika one in this issue?
 - (19) Would you be interested in producing such problems? If yes, please enter your name and address below.
 - (20) As a contributor (prospective or otherwise) would you like to see article ratings published in Phoenix?
 - (21) If no, would the printing of article ratings discourage you from further contribution?
 - (22) As a non-contributor would you like to see article ratings published?
- Rate the following articles on a 1-9 scale:
- (23) Conquerors
 - (24) Fulda Gap Review
 - (25) The Gambits of War in Wargaming
 - (26) Airwar
 - (27) Battle for Hue
 - (28) Outreach scenario
 - (29) Machiavellian Wargaming
 - (30) Panzerarmee Afrika game situation
 - (31) Book Reviews
 - (32) Mail Call
 - (33) Hotline
 - (34) News from SPUK
 - (35) Boardgame Contacts
 - (36) Highway to the Reich Errata
 - (37) Rate the overall presentation of this issue(1-9)
 - (38) Do you think that this issue was better than the last? (1) Yes; (2) No; (3) about the same.
 - (39) Do you have rules clarifications direct from the game publishers that you would be willing to publish in Phoenix?

STOP PRESS

Now in stock S&T/Moves binders at £4.25 for the first one and £4.00 each subsequent binder. Limited stocks only.

SPI's War in the East book at £6.50 prices include P & P.

No discounts on these items.

TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY

To date the response to this column has been poor. In order to cater for the more thoughtful of you and to allow for the printing schedule of Phoenix I am going to repeat the Target of Opportunity from issue 12.

The suggested subject for this issue will be:

AVALON HILL'S SQUAD LEADER

Let's have your views and comments please to go into the proposed column of reader's comments, brief reviews, modifications, queries, etc.

