

THE RED BANNER

A quarterly fanzine for the Advanced Squad Leader (ASL) board game

By the DC Conscripts ASL Club



*Translation: "Fight the enemy harder, let's liberate our towns and villages from Fascists"; or,
"Punch the enemy harder, free our cities and countryside from the Fascist nemesis"*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Commissar's Call.....	3
Conscripts' Chatter: HUMAN WAVE 2019	4
Seen At the Front	7
Human Wave 2019 Sponsors.....	9
Game Report and Analysis: Defiance on Hill 30.....	10
Prelude	10
The Plan	10
What Happened.....	11
After Action Review	13
History and Analysis: The Battle for St Vith.....	14
Upcoming Club Meetings	26
Useful References	26
ASL Scenario: Who's In Command Here?.....	27

COMMISSAR'S CALL



Conscripts, Attention!
Stand At, Ease!

Welcome to another edition of your newsletter and fountain of Truth, the Red Banner. The DC Conscripts Club is coming off of a strong summer during which we held a highly successful ASL Tournament, the “Human Wave” in Tysons Corner, VA. This was our second year running the tournament and our biggest yet, with 35 gamers coming to play from around the region: Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Virginia, Washington DC and Maryland. We are planning to build on our success next summer by getting a somewhat larger venue and negotiate better discounts for rooms and food at the hotel. In a change from the initial plan (since plans often change) we are currently planning to hold the event the last weekend in **June, 26-28 2020** at a hotel in the Northern Virginia area. While we are still working the logistics, we have settled upon a theme: Commonwealth vs Germany, or “Tom and Jerry”. Our esteemed Tournament Director, Conscript David Garvin, has once again volunteered to run the event. With David moving back North, we are going to need a lot of volunteers to make Human Wave 2020 a success. We have openings on the Recruiting, Marketing, Finance, and Logistics committees. If you’d like to help out in some way, we could use your expertise! Email conscripts@googlegroups.com to learn more.

As exciting as the tournament may be, it’s the monthly game days which really keep the DC Conscripts together. Credit goes to Conscript Brian Scully for arranging our game days, [Games, Comics & a Pair o’ Dice](https://www.gcpairodice.com/) (<https://www.gcpairodice.com/>) in Fairfax for hosting. Our June game day – same month as the tournament – had eight Conscripts attend, plus one walk-on. The “walk-on” hadn’t played ASL before, liked the look of it, and – with some tips from longtime Conscript Gary Fortenberry, played his first game with us that afternoon! The July game day – just one month after the Human Wave – counted 11 Conscripts, another great showing. As a reminder, our game days are the last Saturday of every month starting at 1000 hours. We hope to see you there!

In this edition of The Red Banner we are excited to include information about Human Wave 2019 and Human Wave 2020, and Game Report and Analysis from the tournament. Since the Red Banner is internationally known and recognized throughout the ASL community, we have “upped our game” and included a scholarly article and companion scenario by Dr. Eric Michael on the Battle of St. Vith. And yes, the Commissar has allowed us to share what had been previously restricted information about the efforts of the West against the Fascists, so read on!

PS: your humble editor is always looking for new content. Please email thegoldinchild@gmail.com with your suggestion and we’ll see how we can include it in the next edition.
Slava!

CONSCRIPTS' CHATTER: HUMAN WAVE 2019



By Conscript David Garvin

Human Wave 2019 was the second of our now-annual tournaments hosted by the DC Conscripts. This year it was at the Sheraton Tysons and there were a total of 40 registered players, with more than 35 attending. Having said that, there was no dampening of enthusiasm.



The event took off on Friday Evening with round 1 of the main tournament as well as a special PTO coaching for ASL SK 4 PTO, which was released a few weeks prior to the tournament. Kevin Boles, who was a play tester for the newest ASL SK release, was kind enough to run a work shop for some of the new players



Photo 1: Pacific Starter Kit Instruction

The first round wrapped up and some of the players decided on a beverage. Or two. Or even some of the sights, given that a Comicon was going on at the same time as the tournament. As a result, players had to avoid any number of super heroes, Star Wars characters and fans, of course, much more. But it was a distraction only to the faint of heart!



Photo 2: Visitors from the Comic Convention

Saturday was the big day! The Main tournament entered the second and third round as the mini and SK tournaments took off. Games went on all day long, with a pause around 4 pm for the raffle. With thanks to the many sponsors, many players were able to head home with close to their money back in terms of prizes and prize support. Of course we had the glasses for sale and by about 9 pm, most of the gaming had been completed.



Photo 3: Ken Dunn receiving his award from David Garvin, Tournament Director

The Mini Champion was Ken Dunn of Maryland, and David Wiesenbahn, one of the DC Conscripts' very own took home the championship for the ASL SK mini. The Main was down to two heavy-hitters, Danny Stanhagen of the DC Conscripts would be playing Bill Cirrillo up from southern Virginia.

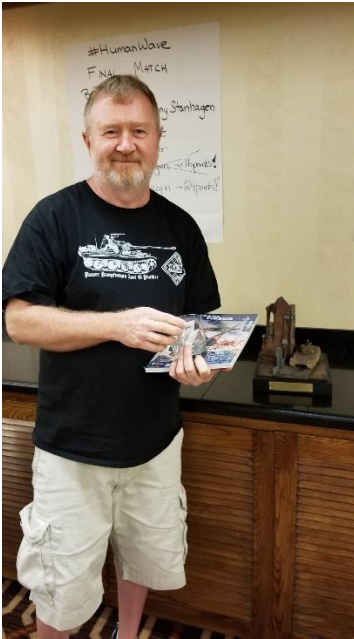


Photo 4: Bill Cirrillo enjoying his victory

The next day saw the two face off in an epic battle that went to the very end. In the end, Bill emerged as champion, taking home the great trophy that our very own Scott Bricker put together. Meanwhile, ASLOK's first-ever Champion, Ray Woloszyn took the sniper ace award.

In the end, it was a great tournament and the feedback gave us some good pointers for next year. Sadly, I have to move back to Canada; however, the reins are being taken on by the very capable members of the DC Conscripts, and soon enough we'll be booking for next year's Human Wave, carrying on the themed-tournament. So watch out for Tom and Jerry, as we'll see the Germans square off against the forces of His Majesty the King!



Photo 5: Ray Woloszyn, Sniper Ace



Photo 6: To the Victor go the Spoils -- Tournament Winner's Award, by Scott Bricker

SEEN AT THE FRONT

Photos from recent Conscript activities:



Photo 7: Conscripts Hard at Play at the July Game Day. Pictured: Right front: Conscript Bob Schaaf, right rear Conscript David Garvin. A prize to whomever can name the two Conscripts seated on the left.



Photo 8: A Scene of the Action at the Conscripts Human Wave June 2019



Photo 9: New Conscripts with a new Recruit. ASL is family-friendly activity!



Photo 10: June Game Day. Pictured: Conscripts Doug Bush (l) and Jan Spoor (r)



Photo 11: June 2019 Game Day. Pictured: Conscripts Bill Stoppel (l) and David Garvin (r)

HUMAN WAVE 2019 SPONSORS

Conscripts,

Our Tournament was a success in large part due to the generosity of our sponsors. Please support them with your business!

Sponsor Name	Contact
Matrix Games	www.matrixgames.com
Slitherine Games	www.slitherine.com
Ritterkrieg	http://ritterkrieg.com/
ASL Battle School	http://asl-battleschool.blogspot.com/
Le Franc Tireur	https://www.lefranc tireur.org/
Lone Canuck	http://www.lonecanuckpublishing.ca/
Multi-Man Publishing	http://www.multimanpublishing.com
Key's Games and Hobbies	hobbies747@gmail.com
Orcada Media Group	http://www.orcada.com/
Gamer's Armory	https://gamersarmory.com/

GAME REPORT AND ANALYSIS: DEFIANCE ON HILL 30

By Andy Goldin

PRELUDE

My first game of the 2019 Human Wave tournament was with Alan Saltzman, who came in from North Carolina for the event. Alan is fun to play with, knowledgeable about the game and a retired “All American” himself, having served in “The Division” (that is, the 82nd Airborne Division) in the 1990s. We selected ASL11: Defiance on Hill 30, as our game because it’s a well-known and classic scenario. And it features his old unit, so how can we go wrong? The scenario rates well on aslscenarioarchive.com as 5 German wins vs 8 US wins and 189 German vs 186 US on ROAR. I rolled the Germans and was on the attack.

THE PLAN

My concept of the operation was to get across the open fields, seize the military crest of Hill 621 to set up a base of fire to support clearing the village below. My plan consisted of three elements, as shown in Figure 1 below. The main effort was in the center and led by the 9-1. To this effort I apportioned the MMG, the 50mm mortar and a platoon of infantry. Their job was to move as quickly as possible to the building in 4O6/4P6 and establish a base of fire against the enemy support positions which on Hill 621. Suppressing the enemy on the high ground would allow my supporting effort on the right to close with the enemy with minimal interruption. A third element – a “flying wing” – would seize the heights of Hill 621 to grant me freedom of maneuver, serve as a base of fire for the main attack, and interdict American reinforcements. By my arithmetic, I had concluded the “flying wing” would be able to take the heights just before the arrival of his reinforcements. Seizing Hill 621 would be the cue for the main effort in the center to continue west and seize the village, aided by the platoon on its right. The main effort is indicated with the double-arrow. Planned positions are shown with dotted lines. Individual weapon systems are also shown (single arrow with one hash mark is an MMG, no hash mark is an LMG and the arrow with the circle at the bottom is the planned position for the mortar). The positions of the US MMG and Mtr are as learned early in the game, while the squad positions are approximate. Concealment markers are omitted for clarity.

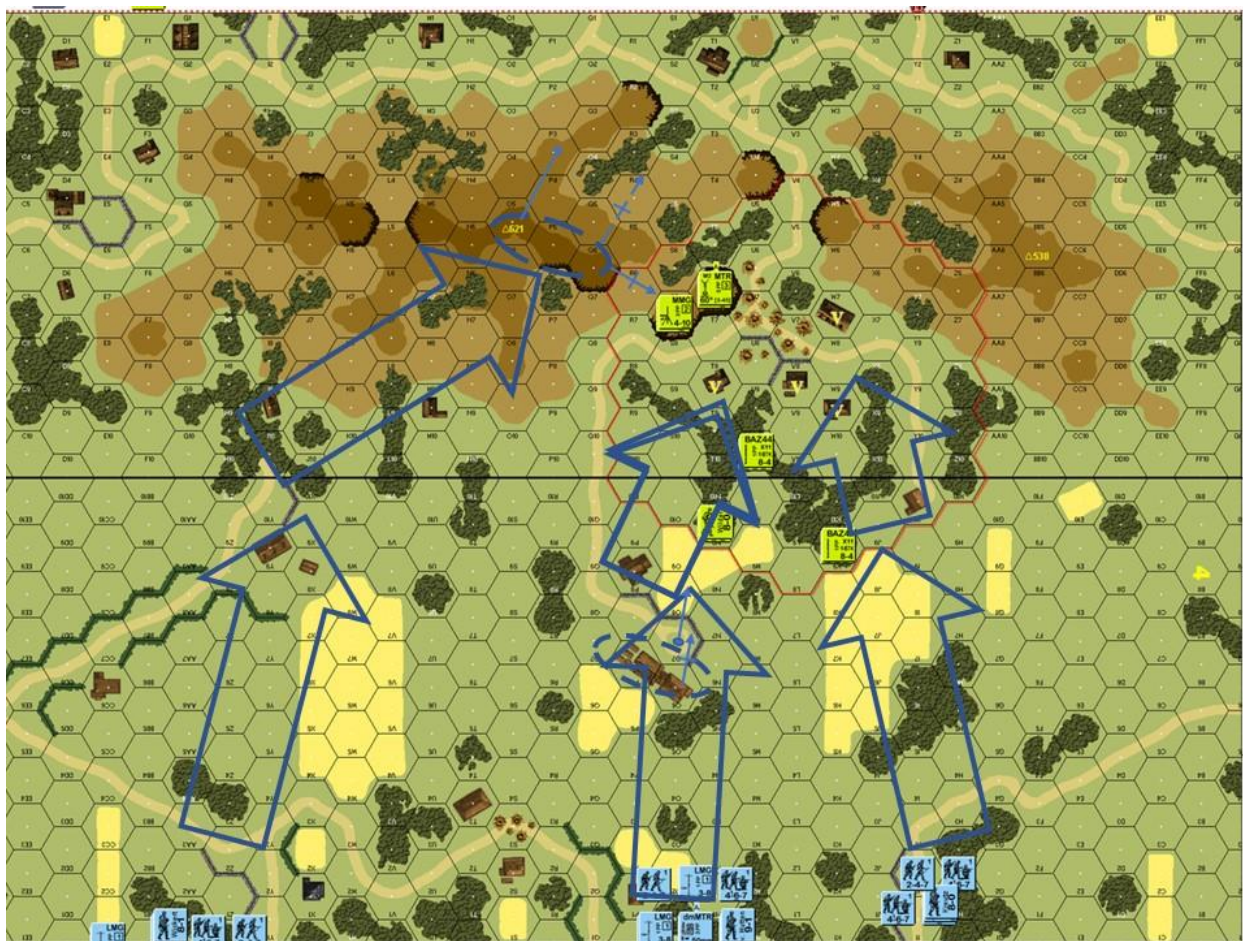


Figure 1: Plan of Attack

WHAT HAPPENED

Alan chose to focus his long range mortar fire on the units on my right, as they entered the woods and became eligible for the -1 TEM for indirect fire. He used his MMG against my 'flying wing' as it moved across the open to little effect. These units were able to gain positions on Hill 621 largely as planned. My center succeeded at establishing itself in O6/O7 and laid effective fire on his MMG, breaking the HS manning it. Fire from my own MMG on Hill 621 broke his mortar crew. While the broken MMG team was able to rout away and escape, my left had closed with the broken mortar crew and accepted no prisoners.

Now that I had freedom to maneuver, I focused my efforts on clearing the buildings on the near side of the road. The troops on my right had made it across the wheatfield and begun clearing the woods of paratroops. In the center, my weight of numbers enabled me to outmaneuver the defenders and claim my first building, T8. At about that time, tragedy struck. An American sniper's bullet found the head of my 9-1, killing him and causing his comrades to break and remain in cover. This left the 8-0 in charge of rallying troops. Fire from the American occupied buildings gave him plenty of work as I attempted to force my way in.



Photo 12: Alan Contemplating the Situation – Germans on the hill, his paratroops taking fire, what now?

Meanwhile, the American reinforcements arrived on Turn 4 thanks to some more good rolling by Alan. My position on Hill 621 made it tough for the reinforcements to relieve the town, such that two squads and the 9-1 didn't make it. That meant that three squads did, and I think in the end, that proved decisive.

By Turn 5 I was starting to think I had spread myself too thinly and was feeling the effects of my losses. Some (in hindsight) too aggressive moves against "Dummies" (which turned out to be real units) cost me, as did the three "boxcars" I rolled on morale checks. Combined these had sapped my strength so that I didn't feel I had enough mass to do the job. I had considered conceding at that point but decided to stick with it, as I was expecting (or hoping) for good things resulting from the fire I would now be able to pour on the town from the hill.

Luckily I was not disappointed. The 8-1/467/MMG combination went on a rate tear which broke a couple squads in important locations. Knowing I had to bleed the defender, I kept fire on them until they eliminated by breaking. By Turn 7 I had cleared the town on the near side of the road and brought up my second MMG, which had self-rallied. This MMG then went on a rate tear, shooting into W7, while the MMG on Hill 621 kept chewing up Americans in the woods in V6. His 8-1 leader in W7 kept enough paratroops in good order to hold the building. Had my 9-1 still been alive, I would have gotten better effects. Even so, the real problem was the squad of

paratroopers he left in the shellholes in V7. Placing them there effectively denied me access to the last building. It wasn't until Turn 8 that I had managed to drive them away. This set up the infamous end of game rush for the last objective hex, which had to succeed at all costs. Troops rushing off Hill 621 didn't have enough movement points to get to W7 from the only available open route through W6 since the remaining Americans in W7, although broken, prevented me from moving in. My troops rushing across the street from V8/W9/X8 broke in response to his defensive fire, leaving me with only one 467 in position to advance into close combat against his remaining good order 8-1/747. Then his sniper struck once again. My last fire attack generated a sniper, which found its mark and pinned the only 467 capable of entering CC. And so the American paratroops held the town.

AFTER ACTION REVIEW

Overall a great game with Alan and a very closely fought match. The perimeter Alan formed around the remaining victory building (W7) prevented me from rushing it until the last turn of the game. His sniper, and my boxcars on MCs, were key contributions to his victory. We were surprised at the high casualty count on both sides. By the end I had only four (?) MMCs remaining, and he had only three.

Sustain:

- I think I had a good plan, well executed, which largely worked as I intended. Seizing Hill 621 to interdict his reinforcements worked well, and is a great place for a support by fire position to pour lead into the town. Movement through the woods and using strength of numbers to maneuver around the enemy and compel him to pull back is also good. Movement through the woods was facilitated by taking out the MMG and mortar on the high ground – another advantage of clearing Hill 621.

Improve

- Obviously I need better dice – boxcars on MCs never ends well. Even so, my luck probably evened-out in the form of two or three rate tears with MGs. That's one of the nice things about a longer (8+ turns) game, is they tend to be less dicey.
- Spray fire. Both of us used it quite a bit, but neither of us really got much benefit from it. Yes of course one could always blame the dice but I think it's going to be more effective against troops in the open (especially if you can use FFMO or FFNAM) than stationary in terrain.
- I should do a better job of using cover to move up to suspected (concealed) enemy units. The loss of several half squads to confirm enemy positions is sometimes unavoidable. In observing better players, I've noticed how they use terrain to limit their casualties on the approach movement. While FFNAM may often be necessary, they almost always avoid FFMO.
- I could second-guess my decision not to press in on the last building earlier. Even taking the woods in V6 by forcing the broken enemy to rout out of it would have put me in a much better position from which to take building W7. At this writing, I'm not 100% sure that was an option at the time, but I do need avoid getting tunnel-vision and being overly focused on a single point. Instead, I need to periodically re-evaluate the situation on the map and see if there are new opportunities.

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS: THE BATTLE FOR ST VITH

By Dr. Eric Michael

December 16th, 2019 will mark the 85th Anniversary of the World War II Battle of the Bulge and within the Bulge Campaign the small but significant battle of St Vith, Belgium. When most people think of the Battle of the Bulge they think of either the siege of Bastogne with the 101st Airborne Division (Battle Ground, 1949) or the mad dash by Kampfgruppe Peiper (The Battle of the Bulge, 1965). In December of 1944 the battle for St Vith was seen as one of many initial defeats of the US Army in the Battle of the Bulge. It was a disgrace and failure where the leaders needed to be replaced and lessons needed to be learned. Ironically, it was the commander of the 5th Panzer Army, Hasso Manteufel who saw the five day struggle for St Vith as the critical turning point of the battle that doomed the offensive to defeat.

The battle for St Vith only lasted from the 16th to the 21st of December. It was initially perceived by the commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps, Major General Ridgeway, as a defeat. Many of the units that fought at the battle had to wait until after the end of the war to be awarded the prized Presidential Unit Citation. During and immediately after the Battle, the role of poor decisions made by Generals Bradley, Hodges and Middleton were largely under played and initial rout of the front line forces was blamed upon the green 106th Division. Ironically, the true extent of the victory only became clear in the 1950s when the newly formed NATO was attempting to understand how NATO could stop a Soviet armored thrust into West Germany. It was during this time interest in the battle was revived and the fighting re-examined in search of lessons which could be used in the event of an invasion by the USSR.

The recognition of the true American victory at St Vith only became clear when former Wehrmacht General and Commander of the 5th *Panzer Army*¹, Hasso Manteufel, identified the delay at St Vith as the key event that doomed his ability to get to Antwerp. He noted that his main supply route ran through St Vith where five roads and two railroads converged. The rain and the local soil composition made cross-country travel by wheeled vehicles impractical and as a result, supply columns could not bypass the town. Without the capture of the town he could not fuel and arm his mechanized forces. Therefore, he could not advance beyond the town until he took it. He also understood that each day of delay allowed the Allied forces to move reserves and once the numerical advantage was equalized the offense was over.

Trevor Dupuy graphically presented this in his book "Hitler's Last Gamble." He noted that initially the Germans had 406,000 men, 2,485 AFVs and 4,224 guns against the Americans with 228,000 men, 2,903 AFVs and 971 guns. Eight days later, on the 24th of December, Germany had 449,000 men, 2,227 AFVs and 4,131 guns. In contrast, the Americans had 541,000 men, 8,681 AFVs and 2,408 guns. By the 24th of December the offense was essentially contained and over. The rest of the fight was slow attrition.

In the rough terrain of Ardennes, weather was a contributing factor to the difficulty of the campaign. From a post war study (see <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a121480.pdf>) the following was noted:

¹ *Italics* is used to identify German units and organizations.

.... East of St. Vith and just inside the German border is the Schnee Eifel, a high tree covered ridge. It extends from the northeast to the southwest, creating a characteristic thrust line in the entire area.... The Eifel is thickly covered with forests and provides good cover from air observation even in the fall and winter. The area has no large towns but is marked by numerous small villages.... The streets in the villages are narrow and usually restrict travel to one-way flow. The road net in 1944 was far better than the population and economic activity of the Ardennes would seem to warrant. All the main roads had hard surfaces, generally of macadam. Although the road builders tried to follow the more level stretches of the ridge lines or wider valley floors, in many cases the roads twisted sharply and turned down steep grades into deep ravines and out again on the opposite sides. There were 10 all-weather roads crossing from the German frontier into Belgium and Luxembourg in the sector between Monschau and Wasserbillig, but not a single main highway crossed the Ardennes in a straight east-west direction. The geography of the Ardennes channels large troop movements east to west, tends to force large units to pile up on each other, and restricts freedom of maneuver once the direction of attack and order of battle are fixed. Movement across country is limited even in good weather, since movement along the narrow valley floors may be blocked there or in the villages at points of descent or ascent. The weather that occurs in the Ardennes and Eifel terrain during the winter generally is severe, and it was in 1944. The structure of the soil will permit tank movement when the ground is frozen, but turns into a clayey mire in time of rain.”

The report further notes the actual weather conditions of the battlefield. On the 16th it was cold and heavy snows with ground fog. The ground was frozen which allowed tanks to move off road. The fog was so heavy that in Roth (just north of St Vith) the 14th Cavalry did not see the Germans moving through their sector until the sun came up. Part of what happened to Colonel Devine and his unit can be attributed to waking up and discovering that what had been the front was now deep in the enemy rear.

This weather changed on the 18th when it warmed up and snow was replaced by freezing rain. Troops experienced trench foot and other wet weather maladies. However, for the Wehrmacht, the rain meant that the ground thawed and it was no longer possible to move tanks off road. This is the day that the 5th Panzer Army ran up against St Vith in earnest.

Three days later the weather changed again when a new cold front came through and once again the ground froze and heavy snows fell. It was this change in weather that allowed the defenders of St Vith to retreat to the rear. General Bruce Clarke talked about how the cold front is what kept his entire command from being destroyed. The last major change in weather occurred on the 23rd when the weather cleared and Allied Air Forces could participate in the campaign. From the 23rd on the outcome was never in doubt.

When the Germans attacked on the 16th of December, the American force protecting the St Vith road network was the newly arrived 106 Infantry Division. This division had its headquarters at St Vith and was commanded by Major General Alan Jones. This division and its deployment should be a case study in what not to do.

The 106th Infantry Division was activated on March 15th 1943 with an initial cadre from the 80th Infantry Division. The division was filled up to strength in 1943 and then completed the McNair division training program. The McNair program started with individual training, followed by collective training up through the battalion level. Once the battalions were trained,

it engaged in combined arms training culminating with the division participating in Corps level wargames in Tennessee in 1944. Immediately in July of 1944 the division lost 3,000 riflemen, NCOs and lieutenants who were pulled out to be replacements for the losses incurred in Normandy. In August they lost a further 2,000 and in September another 3,000. These losses were made good by the Army decision to pull soldiers from the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP)².

ASTP was a program created in December 1942 to direct highly intelligent draftees and volunteers into a compressed college program to learn specialized skills needed by the then rapidly expanding Army. This included skills in engineering, medicine and foreign languages. Soldiers enrolled into this program were assured that they would not enter service in the infantry, would get a college degree, and would be commissioned into key staff work after they completed their course. In 1942 it was thought that the war would go on for many years and there were more recruits than there were formations for them to fill. By 1944, the US Army was on the borders of Germany and the losses had emptied the replacement depots of troops. Therefore the Army grabbed the best available replacements and by the fall of 1944 that was the troops in the ASTP. The ASTP soldiers were therefore very surprised to find that their program was ended early, that they were reclassified as combat riflemen and that they would serve as privates.

The 106th Division staged into Camp Miles Standish on October 10th, 1944 to prepare for overseas embarkation. They left Boston harbor on the 10th of November, arrived in the UK on the 17th and were allowed 19 days to train and unpack their equipment. On the 6th of December they moved from the UK to France and were in continuous transit until arriving at St Vith and the Schnee Eifel on the 14th of December. Therefore, there were few days to train the replacements into a cohesive unit. Also the repeated loss of NCOs and junior officers did little to help the cohesion of the unit before combat³.

The defensive zone the 106th took over was 32 kilometers long. US Army doctrine stated that a division on the defense should only cover a front of 12 to 16 kilometers. This was well over the prescribed limit and as a result, the division committed eight of its nine battalions to the front. They also allocated out all of the tank destroyer, engineer and other assets. Two regiments were put on the Schnee Eifel while a third was posted to the south to link up with the 28th Division. Once in sector, they took over the positions vacated by the previous division. These positions were sited as jump off assembly areas for an attack and not originally intended for defense. Also, they were meant to be backed up by a reserve that could plug the gaps.

In addition its organic regiments, the 106th Infantry Division also had the 14th Mechanized Cavalry Group assigned to it. Approximately regimental in size, this force was located to the north at Roth and consisted to two squadrons armed with scout cars and light

² Editor's Note: Although the numerical losses were filled by ASTP men, the transfer out of 5,000 trained men from the Division immediately prior to deployment likely had a significant adverse impact on unit cohesion and effectiveness. No doubt this had a role in how the Division performed in the Bulge.

³ Editor's Note: Several other US Army divisions faced similar circumstances. The dynamics of this problem is discussed in detail in the book *Draftee Division*, which details the establishment, training, deployment and combat record of the 88th Division. In contrast, the 88th had the good fortune to survive it's formative training period in the United States intact. That fact, combined with in-theater training opportunities and good leadership, enabled the division to earn a solid combat record in Italy.

tanks. Their doctrinal purpose was to screen and delay. They were neither designed nor trained to hold fixed positions in a main line of defense.

The reserve allocated to the 106th Division was a combat command of the 9th Armored Division. The 106th Division also had one battalion of the 424th, the division band, one platoon from the 424th Regiment guarding the division headquarters, and the headquarters company of the division engineer battalion in the division rear area. When the German attack came, on the division's third day in combat, the division was poorly trained, lacked cohesion, was stretched over a front that should have had two divisions assigned to it, and had only limited mobile reserves.

Facing the 106th Division was the *LXVI Corps* of the 5th *Panzer Army* and elements of the 6th *Panzer Army*. The German plan featured 18 divisions allocated across three armies and seven corps. The best formations and equipment were allocated to the 6th *Panzer Army* that had the shortest route to their objective of Antwerp. Facing them was the 14th Cavalry Group in the Losheim Gap that straddled the primary attack route of *Kampfgruppe Peiper* and the road to St Vith. The 14th Cavalry Group was destroyed as a combat force between the morning of the 16th of December and the afternoon of the 17th of December under the twin hammer blows of the 2nd *SS Panzer Corps* and the 18th *Volks grenadier (VG) Division*⁴.

The *LXVI Corps* had the shortest route to Brussels and therefore consisted of the 18th and 62nd *Volks grenadier Divisions* with no armor forces. Each division had a battery of tracked assault guns. In addition, the 18th VG was reinforced with the 244th *Assault Gun Battalion*. Subsequently they were reinforced by the addition of the *Fuhrer Begleit Brigade* ("Fuhrer Escort Brigade", essentially a Panzer Grenadier Brigade) and elements of the 6th *SS Panzer Army* that drifted south in to the 5th *Army's* zone in search of open roads west.

Neither of the VG divisions were particularly good troops. The 18th VG had started existence as the 18th *Luftwaffe Division* and had fought in Normandy. It was destroyed in Normandy and was reconstituted with a combination of Luftwaffe ground crews, excess *Kriegsmarine* personnel and with whatever officers and NCOs were available from schools and hospitals. Significantly, when it was reconstituted in September, General Hoffmann-Schoenborn was assigned to command it.

General Hoffmann-Schoenborn had served in the prewar army and had commanded an assault gun battalion on the Eastern Front with distinction. He was awarded the Knight's Cross in May of 1941 and Oak Leaves to go with it in December. He was then wounded and removed from combat and spent 1942 through 1944 in command of the Assault Gun School and training center.

Upon gaining command of the division he created an active training program. When the division was put into the line in the Ardennes in November, he continued this active training program and also removed most of the Luftwaffe officers and NCOs and replaced them with Wehrmacht leaders. As a result the 18th VG was one of the better VG divisions in the offensive.

The 62nd VG division was a veteran of the East Front that had been reconstituted in November for the offensive. To bring the division up to strength Volksdeutsch (ethnic Germans who had emigrated from Germany in the 18th century but now lived in the East) were drafted and sent to the division. It detrained the first week of December and went into combat with a

⁴ Editor's note: Volksgrenadier Divisions were often remnants of veteran divisions which had suffered considerable losses in previous campaigns and were made whole with replacements comprised primarily of 'old men and boys' – the very last of the German manpower pool. Their performance in battle was usually sub-standard.

commanding general that had never commanded in combat.

(https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/7-8/7-8_7.HTM). It was considered one of the worst divisions in the offensive.

The *XLVI Corps* deployed the *18th VG Division* in the north facing the 422nd and 423rd Regiments of the 106th Division on the Schnee Eifel while the 62nd was in the south facing the 424th Regiment of the 106th Division and the 112th and 110th Regiments of the 28th Division. The Corps assault plan was a double envelopment of the two Regiments on the Schnee Eifel by the *18th VG Division* while the mobile battalion (The assault gun battery, division Fusilier battalion and a company from the 1818th Pioneer battalion) would advance west along the St Vith road and take St Vith by the evening of the 16th. The road to St Vith led through the town of Roth and southern outposts of the 14th Cavalry Group. In the south the *62nd VG Division* would attack the seam between the 106th and 28th divisions and then advance up the southern approach to St Vith. After taking St Vith the Corps would advance to the west to Veilsalm to open the main supply route and shortest distance to the *5th Army* spearheads heading toward Brussels.

The attack commenced on the 16th of December 1944 with a large bombardment. The bombardment cut the lines of the field telephones and from that point on, all communication between General Jones in St Vith and his regiments was restricted to either radio or messengers. Radio traffic also became problematic because the Germans employed jammers to keep the Americans from communicating. The end result was intermittent communications and reduced situational awareness by the American commander.

The *18th VG Division* spent the first day pushing the 14th Cavalry Group out of Roth and creating a wedge between the 422nd Regiment and the 14th Cavalry Group. The southern force, comprised of the *62nd VG Division*, was stopped with heavy losses by the 423rd and 424th Regiments. The *62nd VG Division*, attacking toward Winterspelt did manage to create a wedge in the South between the 28th Division and the 424th regiments. The German attacks had forced the commitment of all the regimental reserves and the 106th division artillery was committed to the regiments on the Schnee Eifel. In addition, Major General Jones committed the division reserve battalion in the south to reinforce the 424th to stop the *62nd VG Division*.

Facing this situation, on the first day Major General Jones was convinced that he was in for a serious fight and called VIII Corps requesting reinforcement. He was told that the 7th Armored Division was enroute and would arrive the morning of the 17th. He asked if he should pull his regiments back from the Schnee Eifel. VIII Corps made it clear that maintaining control of the Schnee Eifel was essential to continue the offensive and it was not to be given up unless absolutely necessary. Based upon that directive, he ordered CCB of the 9th Armored Division to support the 424th Regiment that was facing the concentrated attack of the *62nd VG*. His plan was that he would use the 7th Armored Division, when it showed up, to attack down the St Vith road to Roth, replace the 14th Cavalry Group, and reform the line. Late in the evening of the 16th, when Major General Jones learned that Roth had fallen and that the 18th Cavalry Squadron of the 14th Cavalry Group no longer existed, he again called VIII Corps and asked permission to pull his troops from the Schnee Eifel. Rather than give a direct order, VIII Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Middleton, stated that “the man on the ground” should make the call but reiterated that they should keep the ground if possible. After the war, this call was considered very controversial, and after the battle and war both claimed that the other had prevented the withdrawal of the troops.

On the morning of the second day of the battle, December 17th, the German hammer blows fell swiftly. In the north, the 32nd Squadron of the 14th Cavalry Group was essentially

destroyed by a combination of the Tiger II tanks of the 506th Panzer Battalion of the 6th Panzer Army which had drifted south in search of open roads, and the drive of the 18th VG mobile force down the St Vith road. As the 14th Cav Group retreated and disintegrated, the 18th VG was able to close the northern pincer around the Schnee Eifel. In the south, the 18th VG pushed into the gap of the 423rd and 424th Regiments and got into the artillery positions. The Germans met up with the northern pincer and encircled the two regiments an artillery battalion and various supporting companies.

In the south the American CCB of the 9th AD, along with the reserve battalion, counter attacked and pushed back the attack of the 62nd VG Division. This repulse caused the LXVI Corps commander to travel to the 62nd VG division headquarters to get it moving. Much of the American VIII corps artillery supported the counter attack and the 62nd VG Division took heavy losses.

Back at St Vith, the morning of the 17th brought CCB of the 7th Armored Division to the 106th Division HQ. That morning, CCB consisted of the commander, Brig Gen Clarke, his driver and an aide. Clarke then informed General Jones that the main body of CCB would not arrive before the evening of the 17th at the earliest. General Jones was shocked and he immediately called off the counter attack by CCB / 9th AD and the 424th. He realized that at this point the 424th's left flank was in the air after the 18th VG had penetrated the seam between it and the 423rd. Later that morning General Jones learned that what remained of the 14th Cav Group was retreating toward Veilsalm. This meant the road between Roth and St Vith was open.

With the destruction of the 14th Cavalry Group, the only available force in St Vith was the Headquarters Company of the 81st Engineer Battalion, commanded by LTC Riggs. General Jones put this force under General Clarke's command and gave Clarke the job of defending St Vith. Clarke sent the engineer force to the east, along the St Vith road, along with the newly arrived 168 Engineer Battalion from VIII Corps reserve, to set up blocking positions on the road. One piece of good news was that the direct support artillery unit of the 14th Cavalry Group, the 275th Armored Field Artillery, was intact and attached itself to CCB. The blocking force encountered the 18th VG advance guard 4.5 miles east of St Vith at 1300 on the 17th and stopped them with a quick firefight. It then became a race between the German 18th VG mobile force and CCB 7th Armored. An hour later, the 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron of CCB became the first unit to arrive. One company of armored cars was sent to reinforce the engineers while the others were deployed to the north to find the enemy. The German forces kept pushing and at the end of the 17th, they were only 2 miles east of St Vith. (see https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/7-8/7-8_12.HTM#p273)

Realizing that there was not going to be an attack by CCB on the 17th and maybe not even until the evening of the 18th, General Jones made the decision to order the 422nd and 423rd Regiments to attack to break out to the west. At this point they were encircled and it was too late. The 5th Panzer Army commander had released the *Fuhrer Begleit Brigade (FBB)* of crack troops to advance down the high way to St Vith. By the time the 422nd and 423rd Regiments had organized for an attack and commenced the attack on the 18th, they ran into the tanks and artillery of the *FBB*.

General Clarke was still planning to attack down the St Vith road on the morning of the 18th. However, the 18th VG got their attack off first with their mobile force attacking the outskirts of St Vith at 0800. The armored cars of the 87th and the engineers quickly fell back and called upon CCB for help. After the German attack, both Jones and Clarke realized that it no longer made sense to attack. Clarke then set about organizing the defense of St Vith.

Also, the weather changed from frozen ground and heavy snow fall to freezing rain and swampy ground. The result is that German AFVs could no longer move off road. It also restricted American vehicle movements and the rest of the day was spent with the Germans stopping the repeated attempts by the encircled Americans break out, CCB arriving and taking up positions in the perimeter, CCB / 9th AD and the 424th forming positions to the south of St Vith and CCA/ 7th AD forming positions to the north of St Vith and the reorganization of a provisional squadron from the remnants of the 14th Cavalry Group. That evening, General Jones informed General Clarke that he had “thrown in his last chips” and the 106th Division command post was relocated to Vielsalm. With the departure of the 106th CP, all telephone communication with VIII Corps ended. There was no communication between the 106th and CCB / 7th AD. For all intents and purposes, General Clarke was on his own and now commanding his own CCB, CCB 9AD, the 424th Regiment, and the 112th Regiment of the 28th Division.

The 19th was a day of rest as both sides reorganized. Clarke formally took command of the 112th Regiment of the 28th Division and made the decision to pull CCB / 9th AD, the 424th and 112th back across the Our River to where they could retreat on roads that did not run through St Vith. In the center Clarke rearmed and prepared for the next attack. Good news showed up with two 155mm batteries from the 956th FA BN of VIII Corps Artillery arrived in support.

The German *LXVI Corps* spent the day accepting the surrender of 7,000 American soldiers from the Schnee Eifel and repositioning their artillery for the attack on St Vith. The Germans had been shocked to run into American tanks on the 18th and therefore decided to stop the hasty attack and prepare a deliberate attack instead. The plan was to repeat the double envelopment with the 18th *VG Division* on the north of the St Vith road and the 62nd to the south. They expected that divisional horse drawn artillery would finally have made it through the traffic jam and be in position to attack on the morning of the 20th. In addition, the corps was reinforced by the *Fuhrer Begleit Brigade (FBB)*.

The *Fuhrer Begleit Brigade* was an unusual formation. It consisted of the former Hitler east front headquarters guard. When Hitler abandoned his east front headquarters, this guard unit was designated a brigade and organized into three grenadier battalions reinforced with a tank battalion from the *Grossdeutschland* division. Their mission was to wait for the VG divisions to capture St Vith and then to exploit to the Meuse River.

The 20th also passed mostly quietly. As forces to the north and south of St Vith fell back a long, narrow perimeter formed with St Vith at the apex. Forces at St Vith could no longer communicate with VIII Corps at Bastogne even with radio. The commander of the 7th Armored Division sent a liaison officer to the 1st Army HQ at Spa and learned for the first time that the XVIII Corps and 82nd ABN Division were moving in. Artillery ammunition was also running short and orders went out limiting artillery to seven rounds per tube per day. At the end of the day, contact was made in the north with the 82 ABN Division which closed that open flank. The southern flank was still open to the enemy. The defenders of St Vith were not aware of that fact. (see https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/7-8/7-8_17.HTM#p393)

The *LXVI Corps* jumped off to attack and discovered that the Americans were gone. As the 18th *VG* northern pincer went forward they found vacant positions. Similarly, the 62 *VG* went forward and the 424th and CCB/ 9 AD were gone. They spent the rest of the day moving forward to find the Americans. In the center, the *FBB* was still mostly tangled in the traffic jam on the road to St Vith. Therefore, the planned major attack became instead a series of piecemeal hasty attacks with the 18 *VG* mobile force and the elements of the *FBB* that had made it to the

front. This force soon discovered that St Vith was still held and that there was a lot of American artillery. They took heavy losses and achieved no progress.

The other significant effect of the 20th is that the VIII Corps Headquarters retreated from Bastogne and relocated to Neufchatteau while 1st Army Headquarters retreated from Spa. That evening orders came down that VIII Corps had been transferred from 1st Army to 3rd Army and 3rd Army wanted CCB / 9 AD to extricate itself from St Vith and refit west of Bastogne. This clearly would have opened a gap in the line. The commander of the 7th Armored was able to get this order rescinded and at this point command of the St Vith forces was transferred from the VIII Corps to the newly arrived XVIII Airborne Corps.

The inability of the Germans to use the St Vith road network was thwarting the flow of supplies to the 6 Panzer Army and the German forces attacking Bastogne. Therefore the 5th Panzer Army felt intense pressure from behind and ordered the LXVI Corps to take St Vith with an all-out attack using the 18th VG, 62nd VG and FBB on the morning of the 21st. However, it was not possible to get the orders to the units and therefore the attack was postponed until 4 in the afternoon.

This delay allowed the German artillery to prepare for the assault. The assault began with a fifteen minute concentration that was the worst fire CCB / 7th AD experienced during the war. In one tank platoon, three tank commanders were killed and the platoon withdrew. This barrage was followed up with an immediate attack arriving just as the artillery was lifting.

This first attack was stopped at 5 p.m. by heavy artillery fire and the commitment of a reserve platoon of tanks. It was followed by a second attack at 8 p.m. that overran small outposts and created a hole in the line. At 9:30 p.m. General Clarke ordered a withdrawal to the west side of St Vith by mobile troops abandoning about 600 soldiers in St Vith proper. The German attack continued with the help of the Tiger II tanks of the 506th Panzer Battalion. This battalion was part of the 6th Panzer Army but had wandered south in search of open roads. They ended up helping take St Vith by first firing star shells into the buildings to blind the American defenders, then driving up to point blank range and firing the main gun into the buildings. While some soldiers were able to evade back to American lines, most of the forces in St Vith surrendered.

In addition to the direct attack on St Vith, the 62nd VG division had attacked the CCB / 9th AD, 424th Regiment and 112th Regiment in the South and pushed them back with significant losses. The northern regiments of the 18th VG along with elements of the 6th Panzer Army also applied pressure on CCA and CCR of the 7th AD in the area north of St Vith. The entire perimeter consisted of adhoc units because the front line platoons had been removed from battalions to create local reserves. These local reserves were then committed to fix a hole and new platoons were pulled out to create the next local reserve force. By the 21st, no battalion commander commanded more than six or seven of the original twelve platoons organic to their battalion.

The First Army and XVIII Airborne Corps wanted the forces of the St Vith salient to hold the line. In particular, General Ridgeway, the acting commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps demanded that it be held. Brigadier General Hasbrouck, the commander of the 7th Armored Division stated in writing his thoughts to XVIII Corps the evening of the 21st.

. . Unless assistance is promptly forthcoming I believe our present position may become serious for several reasons, namely: a. Our supplies must come in through a bottleneck over a bridge near Vielsalm. b. We may become subjected to enemy artillery fire from practically any direction. c. The road net within our position is totally inadequate to the

troops and vehicles concentrated therein. The map shows many roads, but on the ground, the majority of these are mere tracks on which even a jeep bogs down if more than two or three travel on it. d. If the *2d SS Panzer Division* attack should succeed in driving back the two RCTs of the 82d Airborne Division now between Salmchâteau and Hebronval even as little as 3000 yards we will be completely severed from any source of supplies.

Since the chances of assistance in the immediate future do not seem bright, I would like to suggest that consideration be given to withdrawal of the 7th Armored and 106th Divisions to a position to the right (west) of the 82d Airborne Division where they may be of assistance in halting a possible advance north by the *2d SS Panzer*.

The withdrawal of CCB, 7th Armored Division, last night from St. Vith was expensive. So far we are missing at least one half of Clarke's force. Of course many of them will show up, but they will be minus weapons, ammunition, blankets and rations as well as at a low physical level. *I don't think we can prevent a complete break-through if another all-out attack comes against CCB tonight* [italics supplied] due largely to the fact that our original three infantry battalions have at present melted to the equivalent of only two very tired battalions.

Ridgeway, an airborne infantry officer believed in the power of small units holding out behind enemy lines. He was unhappy to learn that 1st US Army and by assignment, XVIII Corps now came under the command of General Montgomery of the 21st Army Group. General Montgomery made the decision to pull the units out of the salient and have them "regroup." General Ridgeway, an infantry officer, saw value in not paying for the same land twice. He thought that it should be held and went to talk with General Clarke. Clarke stated that the ground was not worth dying for and that it was time to retreat.

Unhappy with this response, General Ridgeway sought out Brig General Hoge, commander of CCB / 9th AD. Ridgeway and Hoge had played football together at West Point and Ridgeway hoped to get a different response. Instead, General Hoge's response to whether the St Vith forces should retreat was to counter with the response that he did not think that it would be possible to pull the entire force out through the one open road at Vielsalm. Hoge thought that the forces were already lost. With that response Ridgeway realized that it was time to retreat and issued the orders on the 22nd of December.

Fortunately for the Americans, the weather changed again on the morning of the 23rd with another extremely cold front. The ground once again froze and it became possible to move cross country and off road. The Germans maintained heavy pressure and overran several more outposts. Four hours were lost creating a withdrawal plan. The first to withdraw was CCB 9th AD. They started their retreat at 6 a.m. on the 23rd. They lost several halftacks to bogging in streams but due to the frost, were able to travel cross country. The 424th, 112th and CCB were across the Salm River by 10 in the morning. CCB / 7th AD was next and started at daybreak. Their retreat required them to use a farm lane. Again, were it not for the frost, the entire command would likely have been lost due to a physical inability to traverse ground which heretofore had been made essentially impassable due to the wet clay-like ground. They lost a tank to a thrown track but by noon they were across the Salm River. The last force to pull out was in the north. Here CCA was attacked by the *18th VG Division* and *FBB* while attempting to

pull out. The Germans were driven off by the appearance of Allied warplanes and by 7 p.m. the entire force had escaped the St Vith pocket.

The battle of St Vith was initially seen by General Ridgeway and the First Army commander, General Hodges, as a defeat. Allied losses were very heavy. The 4th Cavalry Group no longer existed, save for a single ad-hoc Squadron. The 106th Division only had one regiment remaining and had lost most of its artillery and divisional troops. The 112th Regiment of the 28th division had lost all its heavy equipment. The 7th Armored Division had lost two-thirds of its tanks. Roughly 8,000 had surrendered on the Schnee Eifel. The 7th Armored and 14th Cavalry group had suffered a combined 3,397 casualties, while the 7th Armored Division had lost 59 medium tanks, 29 light tanks and 25 armored cars. There are no loss figures available for CCB / 9th AD. There were no unit citations or valor awards being handed out as were handed out to the 101st Division at Bastogne.

However, St Vith was a critical victory that doomed the entire German offense. As General Clarke⁵ wrote in *Armor Magazine* in 1974;

I could well afford to be forced back slowly, surrendering a few kilometers of terrain at a time to the German forces while preventing the destruction of my command and giving other units to my rear the time to prepare a defense and a counterattack. Therefore, by retiring a kilometer or so a day, I was winning, and the Germans, by being prevented from advancing many kilometers a day, were losing – thus proving my concept that an armored force can be as effectively employed in a defense-and-delay situation as in the offensive.

Presidential Unit Citations and valor recognition had to wait until after the war, when prisoners returned and German interrogations revealed the true story. Major General Jones was promoted to deputy Corps Commander on the 22nd of December, had a heart attack and never saw combat or command again. He was portrayed as the failed leader in the initial post battle reports. However, he was welcome at 106th division reunions and attended until his death in 1969. Brigadier General Clarke rose to command United States Army Europe. Lieutenant General Troy Middleton remained in command until the end of the war and then returned to Louisiana State University to become its President.

Appendix A – Leaders from the battle of St Vith

The 106th Division belonged to the VIII Corps commanded by Lieutenant General Troy Middleton. It is hard to understand the disaster of the Schnee Eifel without understanding the personality of Middleton, Hodges and Bradley. Troy Middleton enlisted in the army to play football and later earned a commission as an infantry officer prior to World War I. During World War I he served with the 4th Infantry Division and successfully commanded a regiment during the Meuse Argonne offensive. Before WWI ended he was the youngest full colonel in the American Expeditionary Force. After the war he had plum assignments as an instructor at the Infantry School, the Command and General Staff College and War College. He retired from the

⁵ Editor's Note: In 1965, the US Army produced a two part documentary on the battle in which BG Clarke and General Hasso Manteufel discuss the battle from their respective sides. It's a must-see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tdy_O81rLw

Army in 1937 to become the Vice President of the Louisiana State University. He was widely considered to be one of the great “brains” of the pre-war Army and was eagerly recalled to service in 1942.

Troy Middleton commanded a corps during the Normandy Breakout and led the successful effort to capture Brest. In both cases he was on the attack and primarily engaged in punching through fortified lines. Therefore, his assignment to the Ardennes where the 1st Army had been fighting to breach the West Wall made sense, as the high command expected to resume the offensive against an entrenched German army in the Schnee Eifel as soon as practicable. His corps consisted of five infantry divisions, one armored division and two cavalry groups. He placed the 106th in an exposed position because he wanted to pull the 2nd Infantry Division out of the line to take on replacements and rest and because he thought it would be a good place for them to get their first exposure to the front. In accordance with the Infantry mantra of the time, his forces were holding the ground that had been painstakingly taken during the previous offensives and their positions were jumping off positions for the next attacks planned in January. In effect, he had placed the forces in a vulnerable position. In the most exposed position with large 2-3 kilometer gaps in the front was the 106th Division. In a typical infantry officer approach he had broken his once mobile reserve, the 9th Armored Division, into three combat commands and had allocated each to a different sector as a mobile reserve; CCA was attached to the 4th division in the south, CCB to the 99th Division in the north and CCR to the 106th. When the attack came he had no reserves because he had committed them all before the fight. He had unwittingly set the stage for the worst defeat of the American Army since Kasserine Pass in 1942.

Troy Middleton’s boss was Lieutenant General Courtney Hodges who commanded the First US Army. Like Middleton, Hodges was an infantry officer who had fought in World War I. Unlike Middleton, he ended the war as a battalion commander and lieutenant colonel. Between the wars, he was an instructor at West Point and instructor and commandant of the Infantry School. He was brought over to be Bradley’s deputy commander for the First US Army for Overlord and took over the Army when Bradley was made an Army Group commander. His major achievement as a commander seems to have been that he was well liked. He had supported the poorly coordinated offensive in the Hurtgen Forest and Aachen that had stalled at the cost of over 33,000 casualties. There is no indication that he questioned Middleton’s force deployment, and when the Germans attacked on the 16th of December, he had no reserves to contribute. He increased confusion when he elected to retreat the headquarters from Spa to Liege as his first priority on the critical day of the 20th of December.

The Army Group commander for whom Hodges and Middleton worked was General Omar Bradley. Bradley, in contrast to Middleton and Hodges, was assigned to a division that did not see action in World War I. After the war he taught at West Point and as an instructor in the infantry school. He was perceived as an able staff officer and administrator. He owed his position to his mentor George C. Marshall. He had briefly commanded the 82nd Infantry Division as it transitioned to Airborne in 1942. He was a combination of innovation and ineptitude. His planning for Cobra including the use of heavy bombers was innovative. His support for the Hurtgen Forest campaign is inexplicable today. In his memoirs Bradley claimed that he was seeking to control the Roer River Dams. He did not think that the Germans had an offensive left and was focused on attempting to get to Germany before his rival, Field Marshall Montgomery.

Bradley's conduct during the Battle of the Bulge only made sense after the secret of Ultra was revealed in the 1980s. Essentially, he and the rest of the Allied high command had come to rely upon signals intelligence intercepts from ULTRA. Initially, they simply did not believe that a major attack was underway because there was no ULTRA traffic to back it up. This reliance upon ULTRA is what made him push back against Eisenhower's turning off Patton's offense in the Saar. Bradley also disliked General Montgomery and pushed back over assigning forces north of the penetration to Field Marshall Montgomery's command.

It is this historian's opinion that General Bradley was a great manager but not much of a leader. As the longest lived five star general (he lived until 1981), he had an office in the Pentagon until he died. He intervened in the official history that was written after the war and actively campaigned for his version of events. He was less flashy than Patton but equally adept at self-promotion. If Montgomery's Market Garden strategy was a disaster, it was less of a disaster than the combined Battle of the Hurtgen Forest and Battle of the Bulge. Similarly, it is generally forgotten by historians today that Overlord was planned by Montgomery and commonwealth staff officers. Montgomery also should get credit for the Battle of Alamein and Tunisia. His decision to pull out of the St Vith pocket was the right decision. Bradley, by contrast, was a general who simply followed the plan someone else wrote. His one innovation was Cobra and the tactical use of heavy bombers. The campaign to capture Brest was largely pointless. By the time Brest fell the port was wrecked and could not transit supplies for the Allies until after the Battle of the Bulge. He also made the decision to stop at Falaise.

Wikipedia describes Bradley as such:

In 1970, Bradley served as a consultant for the film *Patton*, though the extent of his participation is largely unknown. Screenwriters [Francis Ford Coppola](#) and [Edmund H. North](#) wrote most of the film based on two biographies, Bradley's *A Soldier's Story* and *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph* by [Ladislas Farago](#). As the film was made without access to General Patton's diaries or any information from his family, it largely relied upon observations by Bradley and other military contemporaries when attempting to reconstruct Patton's thoughts and motives. In a review of the film *Patton*, S.L.A. Marshall, who knew both Patton and Bradley, stated that "The Bradley name gets heavy billing on a picture of [a] comrade that, while not caricature, is the likeness of a victorious, glory-seeking buffoon...Patton in the flesh was an enigma. He so stays in the film...Napoleon once said that the art of the general is not strategy but knowing how to mold human nature...Maybe that is all producer Frank McCarthy and Gen. Bradley, his chief advisor, are trying to say." While Bradley knew Patton personally, it was also well known that the two men were polar opposites in personality, and that Bradley despised Patton both personally and professionally, though in the film they're portrayed as close friends. Bradley's role in the film remains controversial to this day.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omar_Bradley

UPCOMING CLUB MEETINGS

Mark your calendars! The half of you who have been issued weapons must have them cleaned and ready for each event. The other half of you (that is, those with the five rounds of ammunition for the rifle) will report for inspection daily – the Commissar knows some of you have traded bullets for vodka. Anyone missing ammunition will report to the penal company for mine-clearing duty.

Event	Date	Location	Comments / Reference:
Regular Game Day	Last Saturday of every month at 1000 hours	Typically Games, Comics & Pair o’ Dice (or sometimes elsewhere)	Check the Facebook group or the Conscripts mail list to confirm event location
Multiman Publishing’s Winter Offensive	16-19 January 2020	Comfort Inn Bowie, MD	http://www.multimanpublishing.com/Conventions/
Human Wave Tournament	26-28 June 2020 (tentative)	Northern Virginia	https://humanwaveconscripts.com/

USEFUL REFERENCES

DC Conscripts web page: <https://dc-conscripts.org/>

Club Tournament, the Human Wave: <https://humanwaveconscripts.com/>

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1509862685741585/>

Ladder Webpage: <https://conscripts-ladder.blogspot.com/2018/11/current-ladder-as-of-12-november-2018.html>

Email list: conscripts@googlegroups.com

ASL SCENARIO: WHO'S IN COMMAND HERE?

"Who's in Command Here?"

DC Conscripts Red Banner Scenario 6

Scenario Design Eric Michael



N^

	5
	10
	17

Rows A through F are not playable. Victory buildings are 10Q7, 10T8, 10U3, 10U6, 10W5, 10W8, 10X2, 10Z7, 10AA5, 10BB2, 10DD5, 10EE7.

The Americans win by collecting 45+ CVP at scenario end. The Germans win by capturing six of the victory buildings. If both sides meet their victory conditions or if neither side does, it is a draw. Rowhouses are considered a single building for victory point purposes.

ST VITH, BELGIUM: 18 December 1944. On December 16th the stillness of the Ardennes had been broken by a massive bombardment. Hitler's last surprise, a winter offensive through the Ardennes, had started. Newly promoted Brig Gen Bruce C Clarke received orders that day to move his CCB of the 7th Armored Division to St Vith, the Division Headquarters of Maj Gen Alan Jones' 106 Infantry Division and to fall under Jones' command. After a 24 hour journey, he arrived on the 17th to find total confusion. The next day General Jones departed for the rear and his eventual relief. General Clarke found himself in command of demoralized remnants of the 106th Division, his own CCB of the 7th Armored Division and whatever stragglers could be gathered together. His scratch force was in the middle of the main axis of advance of the 5th Panzer Army. His orders were to hold the line.

Balance: Change off board observer to onboard observer with radio.

Turn Record Chart

US Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6
Germans Move First						

US Forces:

81st Engineer Battalion, 106th Infantry Division and elements of CCB, 7th Armored Division [ELR 3] {SAN4}

Setup on or west of hexrow L, inclusive.

5-4-6	9-1 (LTC Riggs)	8-0	MMG	M2HB .50CAL	DC	“?”
8	1	1	2	1	4	6

814 Tank Destroyer Bn, Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division

M36
2

D Troop, 89th Cavalry Squadron, Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division

M8
2

275th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, VIII Corps

Off Board Observer / Phone / 105MM OBA normal ammunition (8B/3R)

Reinforcements enter anywhere on the west edge of the map on Turn 2:

Elements of CCB, 7th Armored Division

Armor Ldr 9-2	6-6-7	9-1	DC	MMG (dm)	BAZ’44
1	3	1	1	1	1

Make a DR to determine one of the following reinforcement groups to enter with the above reinforcements:

DR Reinforcements

(2) -- 3 x M4A3(76)W, M4A3E2(L), M4A3(105)

(3) -- 2 x M4A3(76)W, 2 x M4A3(75)W, M4A3 (105)

(4-5) -- 3 x M4A3(76)W, M4A3(75)W, M4A3(105)

(6-8) -- 3 x M4A1(76), M4A3(75)W, M4A3(105)

(9-10) -- 2 x M4A1(76), 2 x M4A3(75)W, M4A3(105)

(11-12) -- M4A1(76), 3 x M4A3(75)W, M4A3(105)

German Forces:

Elements of the 18th Volksgrenadier Infantry Division [ELR 3] {SAN3}

18th Fusilier Bn Enter on the east map edge on Turn 1.

5-4-8	4-4-7	9-1	8-0	7-0	LMG	PSK
6	12	1	1	1	4	2

244th Assault Gun Bn

STGIIIIG(L)	STGIIIH(L)
3	1

1818 Field Artillery Rgt

Off Board Obs / Phone 150mm OBA. See SSR for Artillery Support)

Turn 3 Reinforcements enter on the east map edge.

Fuhrer Begleit Brigade

PzIVH(L)	Armor Ldr 8-1	8-1	5-4-8	LMG	PSK
3	1	1	3	1	1

SSR:

1. All roads are paved.
2. EC are Snow with no wind at start. There is ground snow present and if rain begins / assume it to be snow.
3. All water hexes are open ground.
4. The American player may Bore Sight (C6.4).
5. Any American SMC or MMC starting in Concealment terrain may start the game Concealed (A12). Any American unit starting the game in allowed terrain may start entrenched (B27).
6. The American vehicles starting on board at setup may set up Concealed if starting in Concealment Terrain.
7. German OBA – German Artillery may use a barrage to lay down smoke on the first prep fire phase. (E.12) Smoke does not require a second black chit draw and does not need to be placed on an enemy unit. The correction distance is halved. German observer is offboard at elevation level 3. (note per rule E.12, the Germans get a registration hex. That registration point is only used for the barrage if a barrage is used. Otherwise ignore).
8. American artillery has normal ammunition (8 Black, 3 Red).
9. All gyro-capable American tanks have gyro stabilizers. All German AFVs have scheutzen.

Aftermath:

The initial battalion strength attack was stopped with few losses. However, later in the afternoon the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade joined the attack and the defenders were pushed back after significant losses. While General Clarke held the line in the center, the supporting attacks to the north and south had bent back the 9th Armored Division and what remained of the 424 Infantry Regiment. The St Vith salient had formed that was to stall and ultimately defeat the 5th Panzer Armee and doom Hitler's last gamble.