The Red Banner!

Welcome to another great issue that is jampacked with original content from our members far and wide covering strategy, tactics, rules, and commentary. Sit back, relax, and enjoy.

Nostrovia!

Commissar's Corner

Comrades

After thorough consultation with all concerned, the Central Committee has decided to start reporting Human Wave tournament results to the ASL Player rating system: http://asl-ratings.org/

This will afford each of you a chance to demonstrate your commitment to the Motherland by surpassing the bourgeoisie from other clubs! It might also encourage our comrades from more distant regions, like North Carolina, to join us this summer as they too will see their victories recorded for all to see.

Spasibo

Conscript Communications

Comrades, A Call to Arms!

The Red Banner is looking for volunteers! Please consider submitting an article, proofing/editing, playtesting, or anything else to help our venerable fanzine!

Rules Lawyer

By Scott Romanowski

"Being a good rules lawyer means always pointing out the rules, especially if it's to your detriment."

Routing

You rout a unit to a leader but then have second thoughts: did the rules require you to rout elsewhere?

The rules on routing, A10.5-.533 are written to simulate a unit that's interested in self-preservation, not following your orders, and so force a routing unit to behave in certain ways. As a result, it can be difficult to figure out if you're following the process correctly.

What can rout? Only units under DM can rout. A10.5 lists several circumstances where units must rout, but those circumstances all involve the broken unit becoming DM, so saying only DM units can rout is correct. Units must rout if it is:

> in an Open Ground Location in LOS and in the Normal Range of a non-Melee Known enemy unit/its-SW/Gun. Even if that Known enemy unit (KEU) is in melee, the broken unit becomes DM at the start of RtPh per A10.62.
> ADJACENT to or in the same Location as an unbroken, armed KEU. The broken unit becomes DM at the start of RtPh per A10.62. Note that a broken unit ADJACENT to a broken enemy unit becomes DM at the start of the RtPh, but need not rout unless other enemy units force it to rout.

What happens if they don't rout? Elimination. A broken unit that ends the RtPh ADJACENT to an armed, unbroken KEU is eliminated for Failure to Rout (A10.5)

Where do they rout to? Broken units rout to the nearest (in MF) woods/building Location, without moving closer to or staying ADJACENT to a KEU. You might be able to choose to ignore some possible destinations, and you have a choice between equidistant legal destinations, but that's all the control you have. If the broken unit can't reach a legal woods/building hexes, that you aren't ignoring, in that RtPh, you can choose any Location consistent with the routing rules.

Broken units rout one at a time *[EXC: Voluntary Rout A10.711]* and overstacking (A5.11) applies during the RtPh, so when routing multiple units from a Location, what's closest for the first routing unit may not be closest for the next. Determine the destination for each routing unit one at a time.

What can you ignore? You can choose to ignore some possible destinations, thereby gaining some control over where the broken unit routs.

A. A broken unit in a building can ignore Locations of that building.
B. A broken unit can ignore Locations that are no farther away (in hexes) from a KEU than it's starting Location.
C. A routing unit need not consider a route through a Known minefield or FFE when determining the nearest in MF building/woods. You can choose to rout into/through them, but it is your choice.

It's often easiest to decide where you want your broken unit to rout, then try to find ways to ignore all the Locations that are closer in MF to where your unit starts. You can also make free LOS checks to see if a broken unit has LOS to enemy units, at whatever range. If you can eliminate Locations as possible rout destinations, maybe you will be able to rout the unit where you want.

How do they rout? All broken units have six MF, with the exception of wounded SMC, which have three. Broken units can't rout toward – closer in hexes to – an armed KEU. It "remembers" what it saw, so it can't move out of LOS of one then approach it later in the RtPh. Enemy units that rout out of your broken unit's LOS don't affect your broken unit's routs (multiple A10.51 PerrySez). If a new KEU prevents a routing unit from reaching its destination, you must figure its new destination at that point.

A routing unit can't move closer in hexes to an armed KEU. It can stay the same distance away though, with one exception: a routing unit may never move ADJACENT to a KEU unless it is leaving that KEU's Location when it does so.

As long as it reaches its destination in a single RtPh, a routing unit need not take the shortest route to its destination. If it does follow what would be otherwise the shortest path in MF, it may spend additional MF to enter shellholes, entrenchments, or pillboxes to avoid Interdiction, even if it doesn't reach its destination.

After reaching its destination a routing unit can continue if and only if it can enter a woods/building Location in its next entered hex. Note that there is no "closest" restriction on this additional routing; for instance, you could choose to continue routing over a wall and into a woods hex for 3 MF rather than into a building hex for 2 MF.

Interdiction If a routing unit moves into an Open Ground hex (without Low Crawl), an unbroken enemy unit has LOS to that hex, the hex is within that unit's/its-SW's/Gun's Normal Range (16 hexes maximum), and that unit can fire at least 1 FP, then the routing unit is Interdicted. It has to take a NMC. An Interdicted unit suffers the normal results of that NMC, including pinning, although a pin counter is not needed; the routing unit just stops routing. A10.51 defines Open Ground for routing and other purposes. A10.532 tells you which units may Interdict, and it's important to note which *can't*: a CX or Encircled unit can't Interdict, nor one whose FP is halved (e.g., pinned) *[EXC: mortars]*, or a unit that would suffer a positive DRM for CA change, BU, Stun).

An unbroken, unpinned, non-berserk leader stacked with a broken unit can voluntarily rout (A10.711) with that broken unit, but be careful: if the broken unit fails an Interdiction MC, the leader is <u>eliminated</u>.

Low crawl is a rout of only one Location that prevents Interdiction. You can Low Crawl at any time, not just to avoid Interdiction. It's a useful way to avoid having to rout all the way to the unit's destination when you have a leader nearby.

Concealed enemy units are ignored by broken units. Enemy HIP units are also ignored, but you don't know you're ignoring them. Your opponent can reveal them at any time, forcing a broken unit to select a new destination. A broken unit can even try to rout into a concealed enemy unit's Location. A Dummy stack would be removed, but it there is ≥ one real unit there, one loses its Concealment and the routing unit is forced back to its previous Location, where it may be eliminated for ending the RtPh ADJACENT to an armed, unbroken KEU.

There is nothing in the rules about the timing of the "I end its rout there" and "I reveal this unit" statement, but the general consensus I've seen on social media is, to quote a PerrySez on a different topic, "ASL is not a race". You don't have to blurt out "Ienditsroutthere" before your opponent can say "I reveal this unit". If the routing unit has MF remaining, even after you say the unit ends there, your opponent can reveal a HIP/concealed unit and force you to continue routing. If the routing unit doesn't have MF to move away, or there are no Locations it can rout to legally, then your opponent can leisurely reveal the HIP/concealed units during the RtPh and the routing unit is eliminated at the end of the RtPh.

Surrender Sometimes a broken unit will surrender to the enemy instead of routing away (A20.21). If a broken unit cannot rout away from an ADJACENT Good Order, armed Infantry/Cavalry KEU, the broken unit will surrender instead of rout *[EXC: See A20.3 No Quarter and the exceptions at the end of A20.21]*. Also – and this is the tricky case – if a broken unit can *only* rout away from such an enemy unit only by suffering Interdiction, or using Low Crawl to avoid Interdiction, the broken unit will surrender.

Sometimes it's easy to spot a surrender:
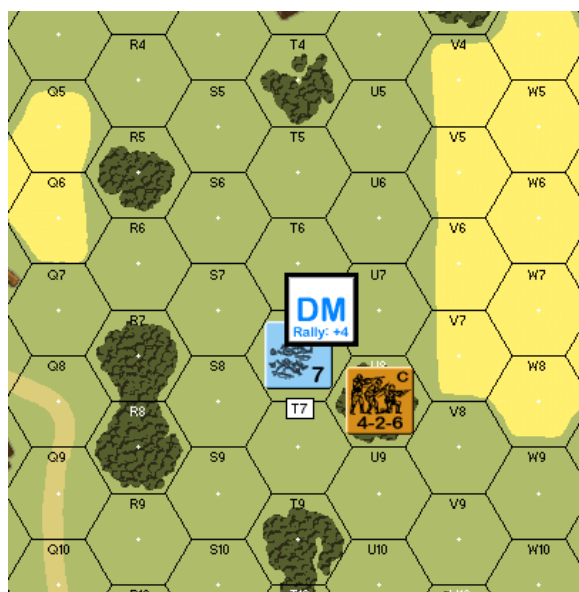
The broken German unit in T7 surrenders. Its rout destination is either R7 or R8, both 2 MF away, but whichever is chosen, the routing unit will be Interdicted unless it Low Crawls, and those conditions cause it to surrender.

Now consider this case:
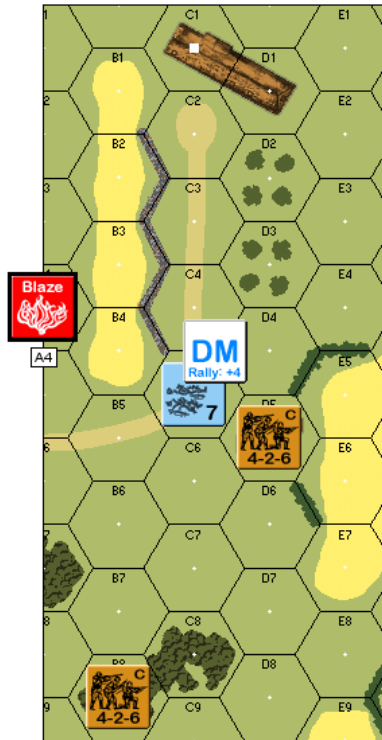
Grain is in season. The broken German unit has to rout to either C1h0 or D1h0, both 5MF away. It looks like the unit could rout B4-B3-B2-B1 for 6 MF and avoid Interdiction but remember A10.51 says "As long as it reaches that hex during a single RtPh, it need not use the shortest route…". In this case, taking the longer route prevents the broken unit from reaching its destination in this (single) RtPh, so it *cannot* take the B4-B3-B2-B1 route. Again, it will be Interdicted unless it Low Crawls, and thus will Surrender.

To change the situation slightly, now the German unit will not surrender.
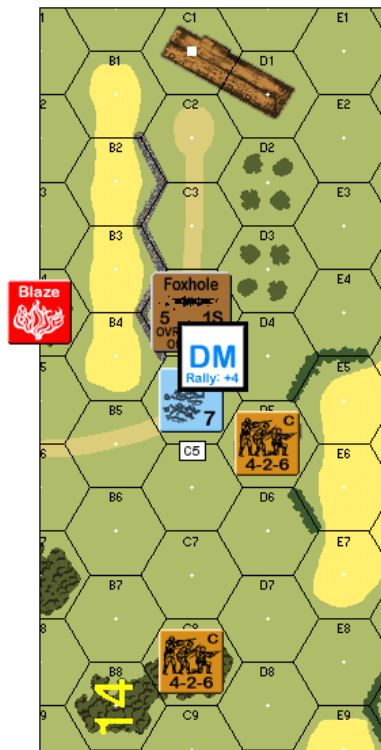
A10.51 also says "as long as it follows the shortest path in MF otherwise, it may enter a shellhole/entrenchment/pillbox to avoid Interdiction even if it can no longer reach that woods/building hex in a single RtPh" (that's actually the end of the sentence quoted in the previous example). Now the broken unit can choose C1h0 or D1h0 as its destination and rout into C4, into and out of the foxhole for 3 MF total, avoiding Interdiction (B27.41), then rout to C3 and C2 for 5 MF total. C3 and C2 are out of the Russian units' Normal Range so it can't be Interdicted in either of those hexes. Because C4-C3-C2-C1h0 or D1h0 is otherwise the shortest path in MF, here the rules specifically allow the routing unit to not reach its destination in a single RtPh.

Human Wave

By: Andy Goldin

Many thanks to all those who organized and participated in this year's very successful HUMAN WAVE, which took place at the Tysons Corner, Virginia Marriott 8-10 July 2022. This year's theme was "Italy at War" to highlight the release of MMP's re-release of "Hollow Legions". Our tournament was a great success. Building on the 'recovery year' of 2021, this year we enjoyed the bourgeois luxury of a conveniently located and luxuriously furnished venue.

A total of 33 players led their cardboard warriors through grueling combat around North and Central Africa and the Italian peninsula itself. The scenario list included classics such as 265 "Men of the Mountains", A93 "Faugh A Ballagh!" and 180 "The T-Patchers" as well as some new favorites such as FT256 "Radio X-MAS" and WO29 "Pynda Avenged". Over 100 scenarios were played in total across the three days of the tournament during which all players enjoyed the challenge and realism of the Advanced Squad Leader game system while immersing themselves in the camaraderie and esprit de corps known only by those who love the game.

In addition to challenging ASL action, we successfully 'field tested' a couple of 'new features' for the tournament. The venue provided breakfast, lunch and dinner options while adult beverages flowed in the evenings, thanks to the generous support of David Garvin (who made the trip in from Canada to attend) and others. Saturday evening featured our first annual raffle for prizes very graciously donated by several sponsors, including Lone Canuck, Key Games, Matrix Games, Hazardous Movement, Le Franc Tireur, Multiman Publishing, Orcada Media Group and Andy Hershey. Our own Scott Bricker of Orcada Media Group hand-crafted the plaques again this year which were received with great fanfare by those earning such prestigious awards.

The "Swiss-style" tournament produced over 100 games but only one winner: Neil Stanhagen, who clinched the title in the very last turn of the last game of the tournament. Second place was David Ready, who lost a very close game to Neil. John Gorkowski placed third, while Scott Bricker earned the Sniper Award for the most sniper effects over the course of the tournament. Other awardees included a three-way tie of Starter Kit winners (Jack Wilson, Steve Gibson, and Jim Liang), Ed Barnes for Best Sportsman and Ray Woloszyn for Oldest Player. Your humble recorder can personally attest to Ed's sportsmanlike conduct, as he pointed out to me during our game how I might compel three of his broken squads to surrender. Thanks Ed!

All the fun could not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the DC Conscripts ASL Gaming Club. Key roles were played by John Stadick as our Tournament Director, who provided key rules interpretations while keeping the games running on time. Dave Wisenhahn wore many hats. He ran the checkbook and signed the bills this year, served on the Logistics Committee and, during the tournament itself, served as the Starter Kit tournament director. The Scenario Development and Selection Committee was manned by David Garvin, John Gorkowski, and John Stadick. Many thanks to Stephen Frum and Bob Schaff for proselytizing the good word about the tournament in multiple forums and formats. Dave was joined on the Logistics Committee by John Gorkowski and Scott Bricker. Did I mention that Scott also designed our commemorative T-shirts (which sold out by the way) and dice glasses? Finally, your humble servant, in his role of "Chairman" and "first among equals", kept the committees 'rowing together'. And no, the rumors of an untimely demise of the previous Chairman are false, as he left the position due to poor health and a desire to spend more time with his family. No, it was *not* his body found in a ditch but that of an unfortunate vagrant, who slipped and fell on the ice. Lastly, all this talk of the single gunshot wound to the back of the man's head are simply wild conspiracy theories and are totally false.

No article about the 2022 Human Wave would be complete without talking about our upcoming tournament! Dates are venue are set for 7-9 July 2023 at the same venue (Courtyard Tysons Marriott 1960-A Chain Bridge Road, McLean Virginia 22102 USA). This year the Conscripts are returning to the East and – for the first time – the Far East. Our theme this year revolves around Human Waves in the East (Germany vs Russia) and Far East (Japan vs USA). Action depicting fighting between Germany and the US as well as Japan and Russia will likely be included.

The Tournament itself will consist of four rounds, Swiss-style, and a Starter Kit tournament. We will offer a three-round mini-tournament Saturday and this year — based on interest — we will match interested opponents for a monster scenario or campaign-style game.

This will be an in-person event only. Learn more and sign up at: https://humanwaveconscripts.com . Hope to see you there!

6TH ASL ANNUAL TOURNAMENT

DC AREA CONSCRIPTS ASL CLUB

JULY 7-9, 2023
HUMAN WAVE

WHERE IS IT HAPPENING:
Courtyard Tysons McLean
1960-A Chain Bridge Road
McLean Virginia 22102
Minutes from Washington DC on the Metro Silver line

Tournament will be an in-person event (only) and will not have a virtual (VASL) component.

WHAT IS OFFERED:
- Main tournament will be four rounds Swiss Tournament style
- Saturday - 4 concurrent Mini-Tournament Round-robin, guaranteeing plenty of play!
- ASLSK
- Open Gaming

$60
ASLSK | MAIN TOURNAMENT

THE HUMAN WAVE TOURNAMENT WILL BE THE BEST ATTENDED AND MOST FUN ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT IN THE REGION IN THE SUMMER OF 2023. THE TOURNAMENT WILL OFFER CHALLENGING, BALANCED AND FUN SCENARIOS SUITABLE FOR ALL LEVELS OF PLAY. GAMERS WILL DEMONSTRATE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND A SPIRIT OF FRIENDLY AND COMPETITIVE PLAY THROUGHOUT THE TOURNAMENT. FOR 2023, THE THEME IS "BANZAI / HUMAN WAVES". HUMAN WAVES IN THE EAST (GERMANS VS RUSSIANS) AND BANZAIS IN THE FAR EAST (JAPANESE VS AMERICANS).

DC-CONSCRIPTS.ORG/TOURNAMENTS

In Defense of Prep Fire

by John Gorkowski

Preparation Fire (Prep Fire) fell out of fashion in Advanced Squad Leader (ASL) about 25 years ago, and it is too often dismissed as a bad option. Schwerpunkt led the move away from prep fire with quick, light scenarios that played on one board in six turns and punished he who dared waste time. That was a marked departure from the Avalon Hill originals that often spanned three boards, went to 10 turns, and demanded prep fire to "soften" the defense. Many players interpreted that shift from long plodding scenarios to short sharp scenarios as an indictment of prep fire which compels an attacker to forgo a move in order to fire and thereby impedes his progress. Yes, that perspective has some merit; but it should not be viewed as a universal maxim because sometimes – even in short scenarios – prep fire is the attacker's best option.

As with all things, when contemplating prep fire one weighs costs and benefits, an analysis further complicated by the variability of ASL. At first glance, the cost of prep fire is movement and the benefit is a full and first shot; an unattractive trade considering one could do both by firing (at less than full strength) in the advancing fire phase instead. But there's more to it than that. A prep firer need not shoot first; he can opportunity fire to deliver a full shot after movement by others has stripped enemy concealment. Opportunity fire is in effect a delayed prep fire shot. A prep firer still has an advance phase and has therefore not forsaken all movement. And, a prep firer denies his opponent use of the -1 FFNAM/FFMO modifiers against the prep firer (because he did not move). Therefore, when contemplating prep fire, one should remain aware of the additional opportunities presented by opportunity fire, the advance phase, and immunity to -1 FFNMA/FFMO.

The combination of prep fire and advance can be linked in a chain of successive pre fires and advances across several turns to slow roll an impressive juggernaut. If and when the defender's front crumbles, one can then sprint into full movement for a single turn of sweeping gains. This slow but steady advance is often better than a risky "too much too early" blitz launched before the defender has cracked. Indeed, if during the movement phase your force lunges, gets hit with modifiers for FFNAM/FFMO, breaks and later routes backward, you are worse off than if you had just prep fired and advanced.

Opportunity fire (deferred prep fire) waits for your maneuver elements to expose the enemy so that you can target more effectively. Therefore, just as prep fire pairs nicely with advance, opportunity fire pairs well with half squads. Have those half squads dart forward to strip enemy concealment so your opportunity fires can land with full force.

This leads to the "HMG corollary." A heavy machine gun, in fact any support weapon that weighs four or more portage points, cannot advance fire if it moves during the movement phase. That lost shot also means no chance at making rate of fire. Firing in the prep fire phase, or as opportunity fire, avoids that enormous loss of potential. Numbers illustrate the case well. Imagine a typical heavy machine guns with firepower 6 and rate of fire 3. If it fires in four prep fire phases, one can expect it to make rate twice, and one of those would make rate thrice, for a grand total of 42 fire power factors dished out across four attacker player turns. But if it moves during the movement phase of two of those four player turns then its expected output, across four attacker player turns, drops to 18 fire power factors. Moving a heavy weapon incurs a huge (lost) opportunity cost, and should be avoided, most of the time. To be sure, there are times when prudence compels one to move an HMG. But a player should keep them still – and prep firing – as much as possible.

There are no constants in ASL. So, I can't tell you exactly when to prep fire. But, awareness of the aforementioned linkages between prep fire, opportunity fire, the advance phase, FFMO/NA, and the HMG corollary should help one select the right moments in any given scenario.

Historical Overview: Armor in Advanced Squad Leader

By Andy Goldin, Edited by: Eric Michael

Introduction

Soon after their introduction at Cambrai in 1917, tanks became known (at least in the US Army) as the "combat arm of decision". The tank's combination of speed, mobility, firepower and crew protection have no equal on the battlefield. Then as today, only a tank can perform an approach march under fire, achieve a breakthrough, conduct a pursuit of a retreating enemy, and exploit to gain tactical, operational or strategic advantage. In WW2 as today, armor achieves its tactical goals through fire, maneuver and shock effect. In the offense, a commander masses tanks at the decisive point and time on the battlefield to achieve overmatch against a defender. The commitment of tanks at a designated place and time almost always indicates the attack's main effort. On the defense, a commander uses tanks to conduct a mobile defense, provide lethal direct fires in support of infantry, or as a reserve to respond to threats or opportunities as they present themselves on the battlefield.

Cavalry Missions

Since ancient times, the roles of mounted soldiers were limited to scouting, raiding and shock. Alexander the Great's Companion Cavalry served as a shock force for his army, while the Roman Legion Auxiliary Cavalry were essentially a scouting and raiding force, as were the Mongols later. Medieval knights were formidable fighters, but vulnerable once unhorsed due to the weight of their armor. The shock effect of mounted cavalrymen has won battles, as the charge of Napoleon's Guard cavalry at Borodino, and the failure of same has also lost battles, as evidenced by French charges at Agincourt and later Waterloo.

The light and heavy cavalry concept was tried with varying degrees of success throughout WW2. The debate about roles and missions, and the equipment needed to perform cavalry missions continues to this day.

Figure 1: Shock Effect: 19th Century Calvary Charge. Image source: historum.com

Europeans generally organized their Cavalry into medium and heavy shock units (e.g. Horse Grenadiers, Horse Guards, Cuirassiers, and Dragoons.) and light scouting, raiding and shock units (e.g. Lancers, Uhlans, Hussars, Chasseurs, Cossacks, and the like). They brought this philosophy with them into their armor design, organization and doctrine for employment into World War 2 and arguably the current day.

The US Army was one of the few major armies that fought in Europe which did not have its own tradition of heavy cavalry. At no time in the US Army's history did it deploy formations of heavily armored men with lances, sabers and breastplates as their counterparts did in Europe and therefore has no tradition of shock warfare. The needs of the US Army in the 18th and 19th centuries did not require that capability and therefore the great cost of building and maintaining these formations was not justified. What the US Army needed was men who could quickly move long distances and fight when they got there. To do this, the US Army fielded what we would call today "light" cavalry.

Light Cavalry was initially organized to fight the Indian wars starting in the Northwest Territories and later against the plains Indians. In the years leading up to the American Civil War, the Army had regiments of "light" cavalry equipped with sabers, pistols and carbines (that is, short barreled rifles suitable for firing from horseback). Cavalry was primarily used to conduct reconnaissance and security operations, and occasionally to raid lightly defended targets, such as supply trains, campsites, and so on. Cavalrymen typically fought mounted to maintain a mobility advantage over their adversaries but, from time to time, would occasionally fight dismounted if the situation required (think of Buford's defense of the 'high ground' on the first day of Gettysburg). Since cavalrymen have more class and panache' than the typical ground-pounding infantryman, dismounted fighting was a good capability but not used all that frequently – especially if enemy cavalry was nearby.

The American Army fought the Indians using a "Legion" concept (today we would call it a 'task force' or 'combat team') where they mixed an artillery battery with several companies of infantry and a troop of cavalry. The purpose of the cavalry troop was to find and fix the enemy that the artillery and infantry would then destroy. As the enemy retreated the cavalry would go in pursuit. But essentially, American cavalry did not generally engage in fire or shock combat. In the middle of the Indian Wars, a concept was tried to improve the mobility of the infantry. First the Army tried to put the infantry in wagons and second they created the mounted rifle regiment. Neither was satisfactory and in the late 1850s they created two additional regiments of mounted troops as the 1st and 2nd Cavalry Regiments.

During the American Civil War, US Army cavalry was essentially used as a scouting and security force in support of the friendly main body, which was typically comprised of infantry and artillery. When the main body was on the move, the cavalry scouted ahead and around the flanks to identify key terrain, obstacles to movement, and attempt to locate the enemy. On the defense, the cavalry would provide reconnaissance and security beyond the range of the infantry pickets to provide early warning to the commander and harass an incoming enemy within their capabilities to do so.

As you may have observed, it is important to note that these tasks – reconnaissance and security -- are common to basically every army from ancient times to today. The only question is what formations and techniques are available to the commander to perform those tasks. As technology has changed, so have the tools and techniques. Rapid technological change, combined with doctrine, formations and techniques to use them, drives the way these mission are performed today just as they were changed in the years up to and during WW2.

Figure 2: European 18th Century Dragoon (that is, a mounted infantryman). Note the musket instead of a carbine.

Image Credit: Wikipedia Commons

Cavalry and Armor in WW2

WW2 was the first war in which machines replaced horses in widespread use. Although the horses were (mostly) gone, the fundamental missions of cavalry (or mounted fighting men) had not changed. Reconaissance and security missions still needed to be conducted, as well as the need to close with the enemy and destroy him with fire, maneuver, and shock effect. Each major army had to figure out how it wanted to perform these missions and with what type of equipment. That is why you see – especially early in the war – a mix of both lightly armored and heavily armored AFVs. An examination of the AFVs of France, Great Britain and Russia especially shows you how each nation chose to implement the concept of light and heavy "cavalry". These nations developed AFVs which were to be used as "fast cavalry" (such as the Russian BT-series) for reconnaissance, security and exploitation, while heavy armor (such as the KV1, British Matilda, and so on) was designed for effecting a breakthrough with infantry. In contrast, Germany used tanks for it's *Blitzkrieg* style of warfare which prized mobility, some armor, good machine guns and a medium-range gun to destroy both tank and infantry targets. Germany's well known heavy tanks (such as the King Tiger) traded mobility for enhanced armor protection. Unlike the Allies, Germany did not specifically design a tank for the 'light cavalry' role but instead used armored cars and halftracks.

Like its British and Russian counterparts, the US Army developed armored cars and light tanks for reconnaissance and security operations. Examples of this include the M8 Greyhound and the M24 Chaffee light tank. Where the US Army differed was in how its pre-war doctrine viewed the role of armor on the battlefield. Whereas the British and Russians viewed the role of heavy armor as decisive in achieving a breakthrough (while working with infantry and artillery, as they had done successfully in WW1) the American view was that a breakthrough would be performed by infantry and artillery while tanks would be used in the pursuit and exploitation phases. The differing philosophical approaches drove different design decisions, which are easily seen in the vehicle counters in ASL. Consider for example the early war British

Crusader tank versus its contemporary Matilda. The Crusader, intended as a 'cruiser' tank to perform exploitation and pursuit, sported a 40L gun and armor about average thickness for its time period in the war and a high speed (assuming it starts!) for a fully-tracked vehicle. Meanwhile the Matilda possessed the same gun, significantly better armor, but slightly less than half (in ASL terms) of the speed of the Crusader. A similar comparison can be made with the Russian BT-series and the KV-series tanks. The BT has an adequate gun for its time of the war, light armor and a high top speed (23 MPs!) while the KV has a larger gun, substantially better armor (11 or better) and is only about half as fast. Why? Different roles to support different intended purposes on the battlefield.

Meanwhile the US Army's different vision for armor called for a different design, which became known as the "medium tank" concept. The intended purpose of the medium tank was primarily to conduct pursuit and exploitation. For that role, the M4 Sherman was well suited, as it had a good speed (13-15 MPs in game terms, depending on the model) adequate armor (especially for the time of the war in which it was initially fielded) a fast turret, and a quick-firing 75mm gun with favorable HE characteristics. The absence of a 'heavy cavalry' tradition in the US Army and the belief that a medium tank would be suitable for the US Army's approach for using armor meant that there was no practical heavy tank on the drawing board at the start of the war. In fact, no purpose-built heavy tank was fielded until 1945 (the M26 Pershing, which is featured in several late war scenarios).
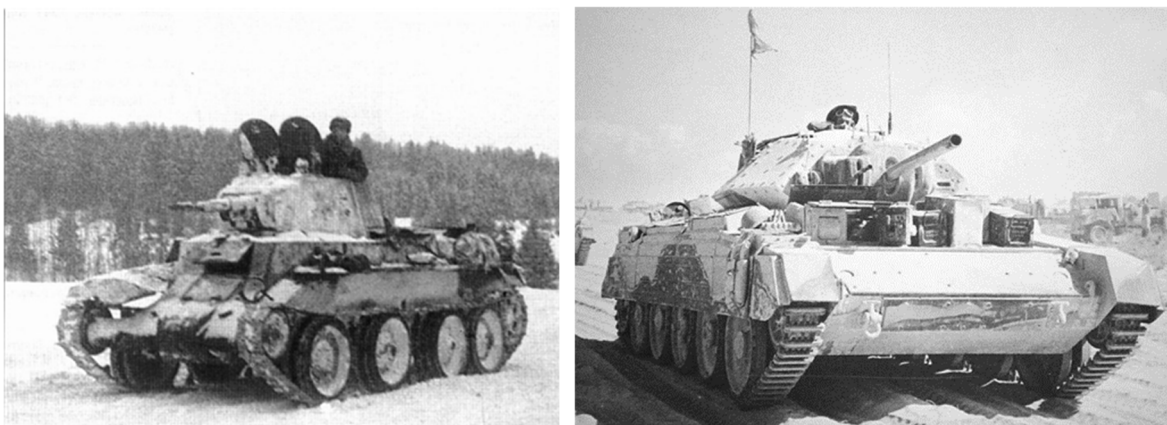
Figure 3: The Russian BT-7 "Fast Cavalry" tank (L) and the British Crusader "Cruiser" tank (R) were designed for similar roles.

Photo credits: Reddit and worldwarphotos.info

While the US Army's medium tank design differed from other nations, the US light tanks had similarities with those of its allies. The M2 and M3 series light tanks were a more reliable realization of the light tank to implement the light cavalry concept than were its British or Russian counterparts. As the thinking went, light tanks (and armored cars such as the M8 Greyhound) would be used in the traditional light cavalry role for reconnaissance and security operations while the medium tanks would pursue and exploit the enemy.

Figure 4:Scouts Out! M8 Greyhound and crew conducting reconnaissance (source: worldwarphotos.info)

Another area in which the US Army doctrine varied from its allies was in the tank destroyer concept. Since US medium tanks were intended for pursuit and exploitation, the thinking was that another branch of the Army – tank destroyers – would have the mission to destroy enemy tanks. According to the thinking of the American army at the time, the vehicle required to do this would need a high-velocity gun and a high top speed to quickly reposition itself on the battlefield to respond to the rapid moves of German *panzers*. The first purpose-built, fully tracked implementation of this concept of course was the M10 Wolverine, which possessed a good gun, adequate armor and good speed (15 MPs). The M18 and M36 tank destroyers further refined this concept with a higher speed (24 MPs!) or bigger gun (90L). The only other country to build tank destroyers in any significant numbers was Germany which had several successful designs, such as the Hetzer. Several other German designs were simply intended to provide better mobility to AT guns, with the Marder being an example of this (which is why Marder and Marder-like vehicles were often referred to as Self Propelled Anti-Tank Guns, or simply SP Guns). Although Germany fielded successful tank destroyer designs, the philosophy behind them was more practical than doctrinal: the absence of a turret made them less expensive to produce and lower profile was better for the defense.

Figure 5: German JgPz38(t). Note the low silhouette and small size of this tank destroyer. Image credit: Pinterest

Why this Matters to You in ASL

To become an effective "tank commander" in ASL you must understand not just the capabilities and limitations of each vehicle but also have some appreciation of the vehicles intended use on the battlefield. Does your plan of attack call for a flanking movement? Are you intending to screen an advancing enemy? Do you need to know what's behind that hill? In those cases, light cavalry vehicle designs may be your best choice. Do you need to breakthrough an enemy line? Breach an obstacle? Mass armor at the decisive point? Punch an 'armored fist' through your opponent's weak spot? Then the "heavy cavalry" designs like the Churchill, KV, or Panther tank will be your best choice. If you are unsure of the capabilities, limitations or intended role of the vehicles in your order of battle, the vehicle notes provide a rich detail of historical and technical information for every vehicle in the game and should be consulted as you plan how you will fight the scenario.

Now that you have a basic understanding of cavalry and armor usage, doctrine, and resulting design philosophies, you have better context for the types of tactical tasks those tanks on your scenario card were intended to perform and you can (hopefully) use them as intended. However, in ASL, as happened historically, many times armored units were used not in accordance with their capabilities but with immediate tactical needs of the moment. And, like your real-life predecessors, you will have to find a way to make it work. Good luck, tank commander!

Kampfgruppe Peiper Campaign Game: Clash at STOUMONT, Third Playing

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10 September 2022

Editor's Note: throughout this article we use current-day US Army conventions and terminology. Proper place names are CAPITALIZED and operational terms are defined when first used.

Background.

Our readers may recall reading about our Kampfgruppe Peiper Campaign Game 1, Clash at STOUMONT in the February 2022 Red Banner. In play of the later CG dates, we got to the beginning of the 20AM turn and realized the German situation was no longer tenable thanks in part to an American raiding party having captured Chapelle St Anne. Although the Germans were able to drive the Americans out they no longer had enough force to retain the sanatorium and it was clear the CG would end in a decisive American victory. Substantial analysis of the way we played the game and a detailed re-reading of the rules showed we missed several important points which effected game play and we decided to restart. This write-up, below, details our third playing of the 19AM turn in which we applied many of the lessons we learned earlier and I think learned some new ones. We hope you enjoy reading the story as much as we enjoyed playing.

STOUMONT, 19AM Turn, German side
Mission, Enemy, Terrain & Weather, Troops, Time Available (METT-T) analysis is the same as described in our original article, which was published in the February 2022 Red Banner.

Lessons Learned

Summary of things we learned and got wrong before:
1. "Zone of Control" for the strategic objective (location) hexes. They remain in place after the scenario end. As the Delwood site states, this enabled the German to control more territory by stringing together a 'picket fence' of objective hexes and is important to isolate American raiders, or perhaps even to isolate Americans in positions they don't want to give up.
2. A better understanding of the poorly written rules and the at-start forces. Eric missed two platoons he should have started with (one tank platoon, one AT platoon) while I missed the possible entry of infantry from the south. These are substantial omissions.
3. The American player also did not understand how gyrostabilizers work, how a wreck blocks a road in woods or Narrow Street, that the combination of slope and elevation

change is impassable for vehicles and how night time movement into a hex occupied by a broken unit works. All of these had significant impacts upon game play.

4. Winning the Game. More broadly speaking, both of us have a better appreciation for how the German player *must* score a knock-out blow on the Americans on the 19th to win the campaign game. To do this the German must kill or capture most of the Americans on the board while also blocking entry areas and seizing the Sanitorium. This is a tall order. While the German starts with a substantial advantage in men and materiel, he is constrained by limited time. While the randomly-determined game end adds uncertainty and increases the replayability, our analysis of other writings on the Delwood site (http://www.delwood.org/squadleader.html#KGP) and the online boards shows that the Germans can win if the 19AM date goes for eight turns. More often than not, eight turns gives the German sufficient time to get to the Sanitorium and effectively block the 19AM/PM entry areas, thereby making a CG win more likely than not. At the same time, the Germans lose the CG without an eight turn in 19AM, every time. Finally, in discussing the material and potential German approaches, Eric and I resolved that one of the things the German winners had in common is that they succeeded at destroying the American force in the field while also preventing them from reinforcing successfully. Meanwhile the stated victory conditions in the CG are location-based. This is the classic dilemma for every commander – should he focus his efforts on the enemy, or on capturing terrain?

Operational Concept

Last game I (the German player) defined success as seizing Location Victory Points (LVPs) as quickly as possible. This time I decided to test our observations and focus on the enemy instead of the terrain, in the belief that I'd be able to take the terrain once the Americans were eliminated. My concept would follow a conventional approach: create a breach, effect a penetration, bypass and isolate remaining units, and position myself to block the entry of reinforcements from the 19AM entry area. Bypassed Americans would then be caught in what the Germans would call a *Kessel* ("cauldron" or "pot", or what Americans would call a "pocket") and then be forced to withdraw or be defeated in detail. To do that, I knew I had to solve a couple of specific tactical problems. They are:

1. Hold terrain without sufficient forces. The answer we read about is to make a 'picket fence' of strategic objective hexes to help me 'fence' off territory I acquired. This would be one of my major efforts for the 19AM game. To very briefly summarize the confusing rules, the German player gets as many objective hex designations as infantry he buys. These objective hexes can only be placed in terrain which has a +1 TEM, a manned foxhole, or a Gun. Note: when I had planned my attack I mistakenly believed that functioning AFVs with a main armament of 20mm or greater could also count as a strategic objective hex but it turns out it counts only if it's immobile.

2. Effect the breach. Last game I bought King Tigers to punch the hole through the American line. I had fun playing with them and they did cause my opponent a couple of

Personal Morale Checks (PMCs). However, one of them failed to start and never crossed the Line of Departure (LD). The second suffered a mechanical breakdown in STOUMONT later on the 19th and was little use thereafter. The Delwood site says they're not a good value for the purchase points, and sadly I must agree. So if the King Tigers aren't a good choice, what else is there? The SS Assault Engineers pack a good punch but must close with the enemy to be effective. The Delwood site doesn't believe OBA is a good choice, since it's really hard to call fire effectively due to the mist and the German player loses the battery at the end of the CG date. These are valid points. Nonetheless, after thinking about it quite a bit, I opted to buy OBA again. I had decent results with OBA in my previous games (in fact, it was an FFE which knocked out a key US 76L ATG and thereby allowed me to advance in STOUMONT. In the Night game, my OBA broke up the infantry attack on the Sanatorium). Therefore I had good reason to believe I could use it more effectively this game. As Eric pointed out, the purchase of a Pre-Registered hex adds to the draw pile and gives your observer a place on the ground at which his fire is going to be more accurate. We also determined that placing the observer within five hexes of the intended target meant that you could call the spotting round two hexes away from the observer (and thereby more likely to observe the SR if it falls short or long) and still be able to adjust the SR three hexes, to be 'on target' with an FFE. So if I was going to buy OBA, what module should I buy? I liked the results I got with the 120mm battalion mortars (which come in at 16FP). Since the purpose was to create a breach, then why not spend another couple points and buy the 150s? The question answered itself and I chose the 150s with a pre-registered hex.
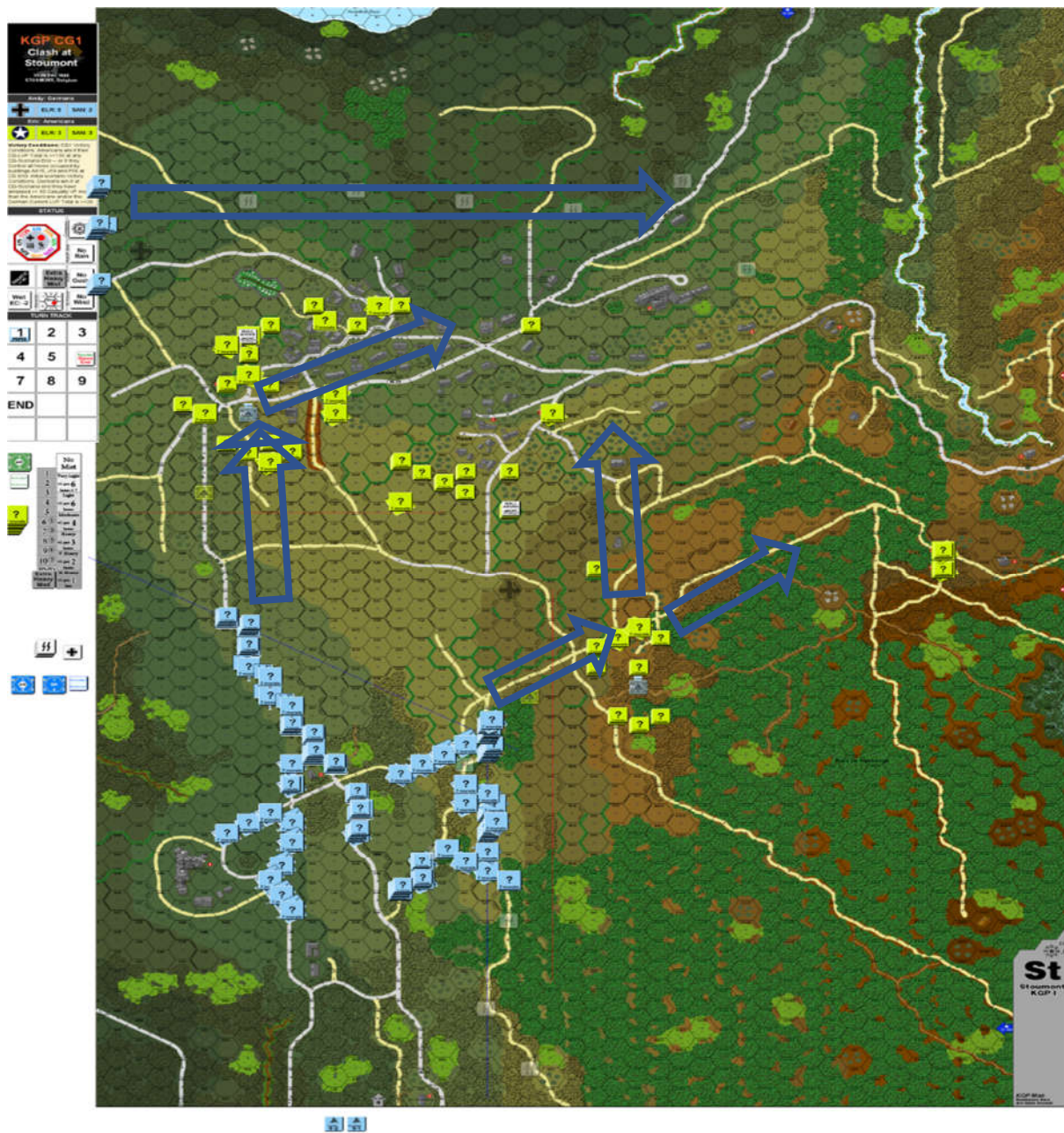
Figure 1: German Plan of Attack

German Attack Planning

The plan of attack itself is show in **Error! Reference source not found.**. As in the last game, the main effort would necessarily be down the 'hardball' road, into STOUMONT, and then to the Sanitorium. The supporting attack would clear the hill and have to split itself in two directions: one to outflank ROUA and the other for his entry areas along the north board edge. The OBA, and the majority of the Panthers and infantry would support the main effort. The shaping attack would be conducted by dismounted infantry attacking from the south, as allowed by SSR. Due to purchase restrictions, this would be a combination of SS infantry and Fallschrimjager (late war paratroops who start as 2nd line squads). By SSR, no vehicles could accompany this force. This force's lack of firepower suggested to me that they would be most effectively used to flank any Americans who stayed in STOUMONT. Since we learned in the previous CG that infantry have comparable cross-country mobility as vehicles owing to the soft ground, it seemed that a 'flying wing' of infantry might be my best choice to get to the Sanitorium or the US 19AM entry area. This force would also activate a 'fence' of objective hexes to isolate Americans in STOUMONT (another lesson learned from the previous game).

Eric expressed his belief that an experienced American player, barring atrocious luck or the German player getting 8 turns in the initial scenario, is almost always going to win the campaign. From reading other after action reports, the American players lose when they try to hold a line, counter attack, defend too far back, the German player gets eight turns, or a combination of the above. Further evidence of difficulty for the German side is the Roar database, which indicates that Germans win in less than 25 percent of all CGs.

Considerations for the American Defense

A couple of comments for those who will play the Americans;
1. Fanatical SS have a base morale of 9 – they are supermen who have all of the advantages of berserk units with none of the disadvantage
2. Only the 3" gun has a real chance to kill a Panther or King Tiger from the front. Everything else will need a flank shot and a lot of luck in the heavy mist
3. The American wins by not losing more CVP than the German and keeping his force intact and having strategic positions that interlock at the end
4. The German player will drive everything before him on the 19th AM and PM scenarios. It is very demoralizing and frustrating for the American player. Fight and Run Away to live another day. If you stay and fight, which you will want to do, you have lost the campaign.

The American Strategy was to cause losses along the line of deliberate defense and then, as the "supermen" broke through to conduct a slow retreat to run out the clock. To implement this strategy, Eric's approach was to buy extra anti-tank guns, establish the 60mm OBA, and AT Mines and HIP. First, he placed AT Mines to obstruct the roads. This would limit German

mobility. Then he put the ATG in platoons where they were mutually supporting with the intent of getting flank shots on the Germans and covering the AT Mines. Infantry was then placed to protect the ATG. Lastly, teams with BZK were place HIP in ambush positions.

Deployment: Because Eric believed Andy is coming for ROUA, he put the 3"AA there along with 2 x 76L, 2 x 57L, the 9-1, 3.5 squads, 2 MMG and a mortar. The "Hill" (that is, the hill mass east of ROUA) has the remainder of the company along with 2 x 76L, 3 x 57L, the FT M4A3, a 7-0, 6+1, and 5.5 squads, 3 x MMG, LMG and a mortar. STOUMONT has the balance with a 7-0, 6+1 observer, 2 x 76L, 2 x 57L, 2 x M4A3, 8 squads, 5MMG and a mortar. The reserve consists of 2 M8SC, 3 BZK teams, a HS to run for the Sanitarium and two vehicles with 2 HS to secure the southern flank and threaten an end run.

What Happened: Turn-by-Turn Highlights

German Comments: Turn 1&2: I can see that Eric has a similar set up as last we played. I will proceed as planned. That is, I'll use my artillery to breach his dug-in positions outside Wilkin's House and Harteman's House immediately outside STOUMONT. My dismounted infantry will move by Armored Assault to 'lean on' the barrage to get me as close as possible to the enemy. When the shelling lifts, I'll be on top of him to collect the prisoners and kill by fire or close combat any remaining good order units. My 'flying wing' to the west (at the top of the map) looks like it will proceed unhindered, activating objective markers as I march to the N33 road. From there I will turn east to activate the last objective marker and I will have the sanatorium and every American remaining in the town nearly isolated. If all goes well, my supporting effort attacking up the hill to the north will be able to drive from east to west along the hilltop to complete the encirclement while also driving for the 20 and 21AM entry areas. I have a platoon of Mk4s and my halftrack-mounted killing force of the Flammwagen and Flakwagen in reserve, with their probable deployment being in support of reducing knots of resistance on the hilltop.

In Figure 2: German Turn 2: Germans have crossed the Line of Departure and are closing on American positions. The figure shows I have three armor and one mechanized (Panzergrenadier) platoons moving west along the N33. My 150mm OBA is adjusting to the pre-planned target of immediately behind the American line of foxholes. To the west, the "flying wing" of straight-leg infantry is moving to envelop STOUMONT. Meanwhile, attacking the hill, I have five platoons of armor and Panzergrenadiers, attacking both dismounted out of the woods immediately east of the dirt road and, less than 100m to the east of them, I have a tank/panzergrenadier company team (minus) attacking the American flank with a mounted panzergrenadier platoon following.

American comments: Andy is ignoring ROUA and going for the flanks. This is not what I expected him to do. It is a double envelopment. I think I would rather be isolated in the center to stretch him and increase my combat power to wait for night. I killed his recon HT on the right but he discovered my AT mines in the road. On the left Andy learned the rules of Gyros but I had no canister. I pulled a Sherman out against his HT to make it hard for him to drive

around ROUA. I want to limit him to dismounted infantry. If I can keep his vehicles bottled up behind STOUMONT for three turns, they will not be able to get near the 19AM entry area. The two key questions are when do I pull back in STOUMONT and how am I going to deal with his infantry to the north of STOUMONT. They are 7-8 hexes in and potentially should be able to get another six. But to do this they are going to need to move bunched up with a leader. I am going to try to use vehicles against them and move infantry. On the right I am going to pull back. Would like to secure the 21AM entry area but ultimately I do not have enough force to stop the hill attack.

On turn 2 the Americans finally identified the German main effort is STOUMONT. I have now identified 6 of 8 Panthers, 150mm OBA with Reg Point, 3 of 4 PzGr Platoons, 2 Abn Platoons and an SS infantry Platoon headed for or around STOUMONT. On the hill we have the remaining 2 Panthers, MG Platoon, remaining PzGr Platoon, and I think 4 MkIV. Significance of this information is that it now time to run away in STOUMONT. He has 6 tanks, 16 squads and 150+ OBA versus my 3 tanks, 2 AC, 3ATG and 6.5 squads. It is not much better on the hill. The recon battle is over and it is now the initial ambush time or time to run away.
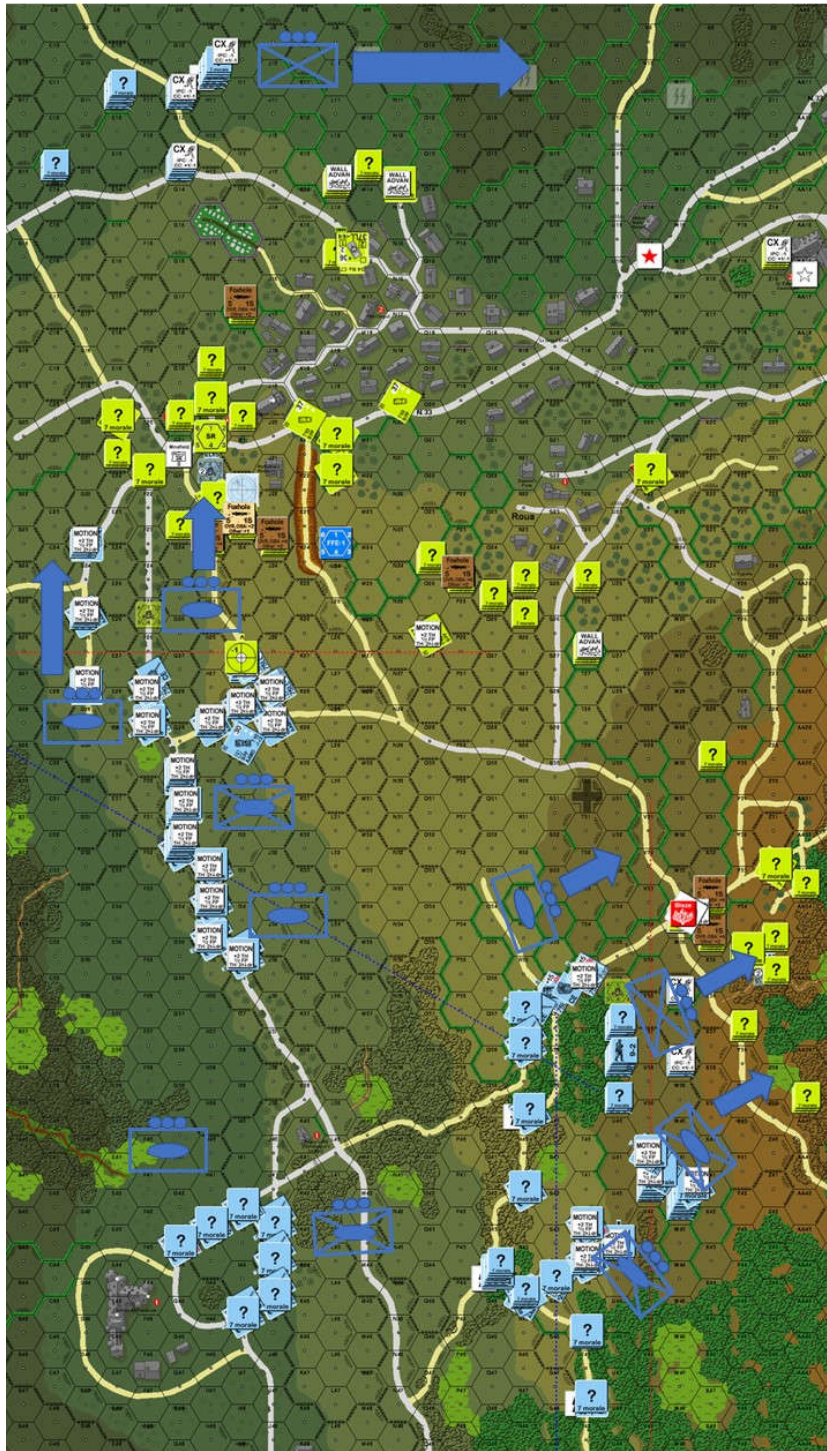
Figure 2: German Turn 2: Germans have crossed the Line of Departure and are closing on American positions

Turns 3 & 4:

German Comments My main effort against STOUMONT has, with the help of the "King of Battle", blasted its way through his front line and I have entered STOUMONT with light casualties. I have been able to get artillery to work well for me this game. As I had hoped, the

additional black chit owing to the purchase of the registration hex and simply getting close to the target allowed me to call fire quickly and accurately. My 150s rubbled Wilson's house (and, unknown to me at the time, also eliminated an AT mine there). I was able to use the incoming artillery to cover a move of a HS through the sunken road and get behind the broken Americans, thereby compelling their surrender in the Rout Phase. Eric's 60mm OBA (one of the setup choices for the American side) broke my dismounted assault force attempting to fight its way into "Robinson's House". Having to rally them while blasting him out of Albert's Church (and capturing the Forward Observer on my Turn 5) took me a couple of turns I'd rather have used to push through town, but at least I have acquired more Location Victory Points. The only bad news is I mistakenly moved a Panther too close to an American crew, which passed its TC and, despite the fairly low odds, succeeded at street fighting and knocking it out. I had thought I was far enough away but that turned out not to be the case. In attempt to get around the infantry facing me in the town and get a shot on a lone Sherman, I swung slightly to the south and attacked from the west, discovering a hidden 57L. Luckily the ATG didn't have any APCR and its AP fire was ineffective.

My 'flying wing' is making good progress despite Eric's reactionary moves against it. I 'dropped off' a squad to dig an entrenchment which will anchor my 'picket fence' of objective hexes in the south. There was some noteworthy action. I had moved a HS and a squad, leader and LMG closer to the town to try to keep him in a tighter perimeter. Eric moved at least a few squads up in response and, being outnumbered, I decided to pull that section back while the flying wing continued north. Sadly Eric got a lucky shot with an MMG-toting 666 and scored a KIA. Sensing an opportunity, Eric then attempted to overrun the second line HS which was also trying to disengage. I held my fire until the Sherman was in my hex, found a PF which fired and hit the Sherman, blowing up the tank in spectacular fashion (my rolls were 1 for the PF, 3 TH and 3 TK). His now half-strength overrun was ineffective, and – extremely frustrated – Eric sortied his Gyro-equipped M8 Armored car after a section of Fallschrimjager. These men were not as lucky or good as their HS platoon mates and broke with terrible DRs. Still in search for more blood, he flanked my plucky 237 HS and fired on it in the AFPh with the same 666/MMG unit and a HS toting a dm mortar, expecting to break it. Thanks to the smoke and cover provided by the burning Sherman, his fire was ineffective and he jumped into CC. While his roll of a '7' on the 4:1 odds was enough to kill me, my 'snake eyes' was enough to kill him also. Iron Crosses for everyone!

Fighting on the hilltop is going as I expected. My reconnaissance halftrack confirmed the location of a suspected AT minefield and was unfortunately lost. His strength around the road junction is why my main effort – a dismounted infantry attack supported by tanks and halftracks – struck the hilltop along the road, starting at Y39/Z39 and then moving through the woods to take the Guns from the flank. By turn 4 I have largely cleared them out, killing or capturing many of them.

We do have one non-trivial sideshow. Eric has decided to move a couple vehicles with mounted infantry east along the woods road in the Bois de Bassenge, toward the single hex wooden building I like to call the "hunting lodge" (PP47). From our last game I know that he aims to try

to capture St Anne's Chapel or other important terrain I leave unprotected. I reluctantly detail a tank and three halftracks (with one mounted squad) to chase them down.

Finally I have decided to commit my reserve. The Mk4 platoon will be used to back up the main effort in STOUMONT. I'll attempt to slip them into the town generally along the sunken road. I have committed the special weapons halftracks to provide fire support to the troops on the hill, as I may need the FP to blast them out of the woods.

American Comments. I'm aware that the Americans are going to lose tactically in this scenario. There is nothing I can do to keep the "Fanatical" Germans from rolling forward. By turn 3 Americans have lost 6 ATG with only 2 HT to show for it. Similarly, I've been badly outflanked at STOUMONT. I chose to stay and fight and lost a Sherman and multiple squads in a close combat. I'm slowing the German player down but at high losses. By turn 4 I'm in full retreat. An overly aggressive Panther dies to street fighting and a MkIV is also killed. The first German armor killed. STOUMONT and the Hill are in full retreat while ROUA is untouched. This is an unexpected result. I'm hoping that the game will end early.
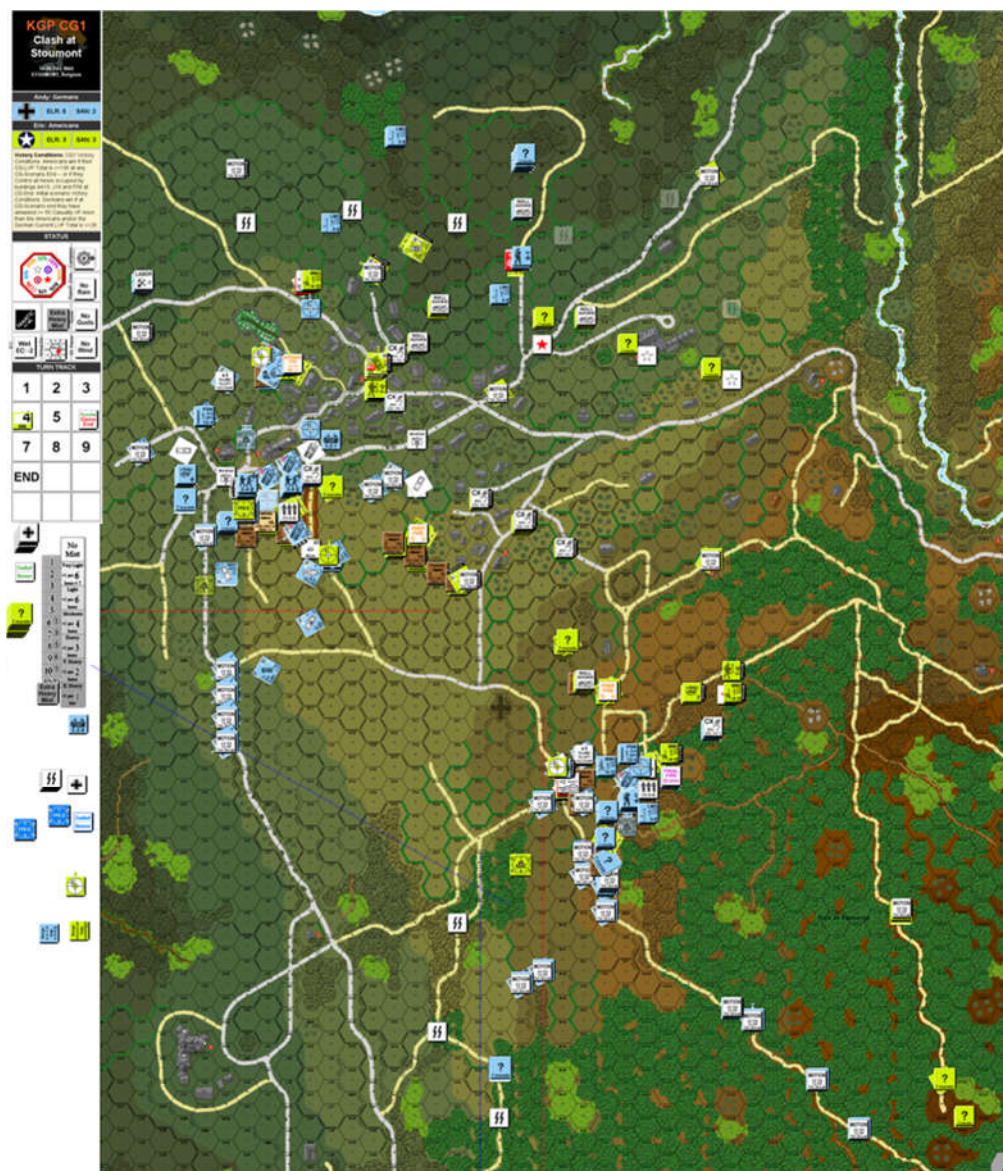
Figure 3: STOUMONT 19AM CG US Turn 4. The close-in fight in STOUMONT and the Hilltop is on!

Turns 5 & 6:

German Comments. In STOUMONT I have finally occupied St. Albert's church and am moving down the street cautiously. I really want to seize the intersection at S18, which would allow me to isolate any Americans remaining in the town but must focus my attention on a BAZ-toting crew in P18 (same place he HIP'd a HS with a BAZ in the last game). At the cost of two halftracks I learned that he has placed AT mines in the line P19-P21. Since an obstacle is not an obstacle unless it is guarded by fire, he has also positioned yet another Bazooka team in Q27 which I did not learn about until a halftrack entered its hex. Since moving vehicles down the road would also expose them to fire from the 76L ATG immediately south of ROUA, I have concluded that vehicle movement on the N33 is too risky at the moment. Therefore I must seize the intersection with infantry (only). I have eliminated the 57L ATG position in the southeast of the

town at J16 and am pushing my Panthers to the eastern edge of STOUMONT, from where I hope to get some shots on the vehicles he is using to disrupt the movement of my 'flying wing'.

Speaking of which I have decided it's become necessary for me to divert a part of my flying wing to deal with his armored cars and recently entered tanks. I decide to use my 8-1, two 658s and PSK stack to go after one of the M8s which has been using its Gyro-stabilized Gun and coax to take potshots at me as I'm trying to get by. The M8 fires ineffectively at the LMG toting 658 while the 8-1, 658 and PSK move adjacent. Even with leader direction, my PSK shot misses in the soupy mist. Eager to knock the M8 out of action, I advance into CC. Before I roll the dice I wonder about how I can improve my odds in CC and ATMMs come to mind. Might I have one? A quick rules check shows that German infantry in '44 and '45 get them on a dr of 1-3 and I pin on a 6 (same as for a PF). A '1" on the dr tells me I have one and my CC number against his OT Armored Car is now 11 (-3 for the ATMM, -2 for CE/OT AFV, -1 for the leadership). I leave the M8 burning for my second infantry vs AFV kill in this game. The rest of the flying wing moves through the woods to the N33 road, attempting to stay out of the LOS of the Shermans he has recently entered.

On the hilltop I have discovered another 57L, which is holding up my advance. I dealt with it by advancing an infantry platoon backed by a Panther. Behind that gun are two more: a 76L and probably another 57. I must destroy them in this CG to clear the way to the Sanitorium. Slightly to the north from there I see Eric is re-forming a line of infantry. More interesting than that to me at the moment is the unprotected strategic location, which I need to help set myself up for the next CG date.

American Comments. By Turn 5 the American player is predictably demoralized. My ATG has killed one MkIV. All of the other kills have happened with AT Mines, the aforementioned street fighting and one Bzk shot. Significantly, almost all of the German squad losses have come from failed rally rolls. In turn 6, the 3" AA Gun scores a hit on a Panther only to roll a dud on effect. A 76L in ROUA fires and is broken by a sniper attack. The same happens to a 76L on the hill that scores a CH. While the German player is now strung out, the American player has few units (one green HS) to match or contest the German player taking the sanitarium or the 20AM entry area. The American pulls back and hopes for the end of the scenario. God has not heard his prayers, the scenario does not end and goes on to a turn 7.
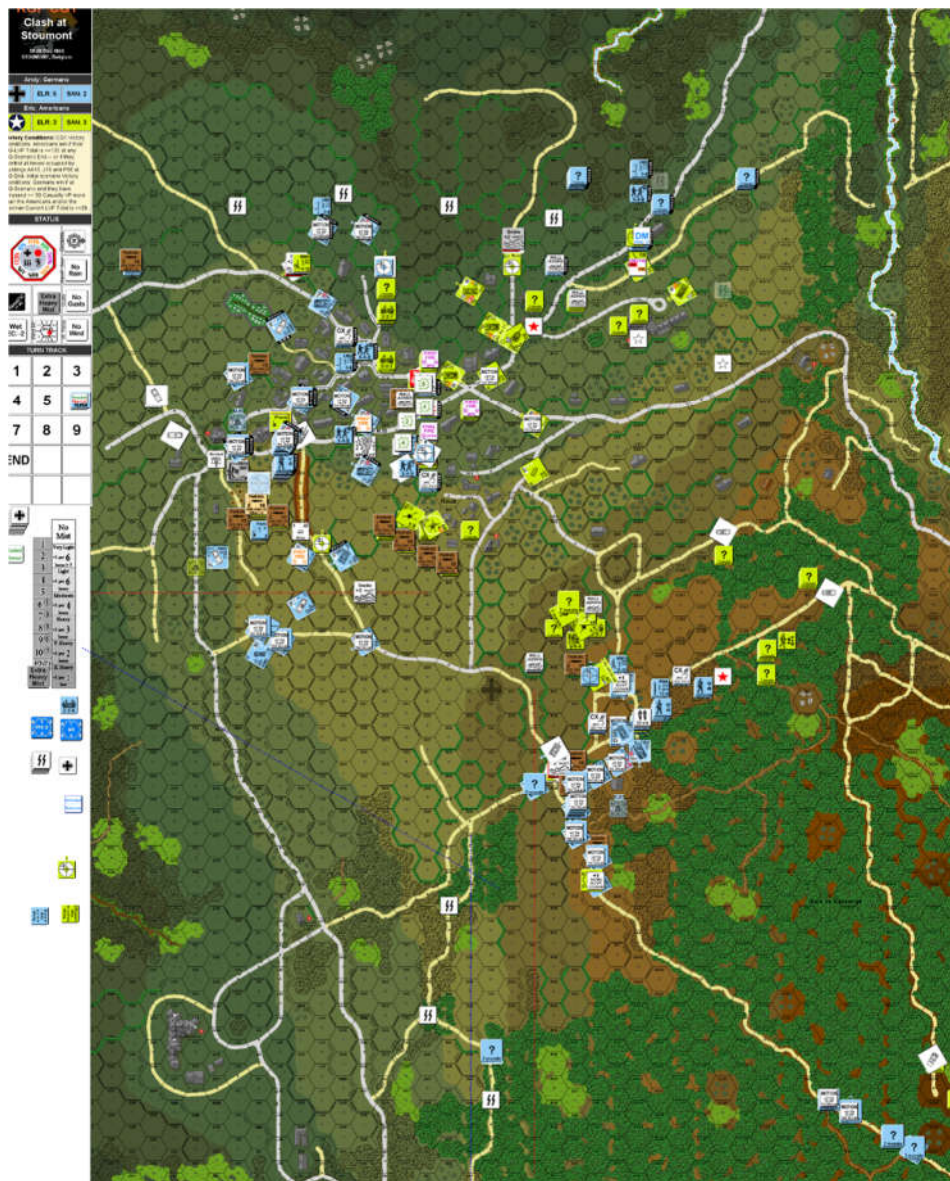
Figure 4: German Turn 6: Americans are getting pushed back

Turn 7

German Comments. I'm making some good progress but also know I have to 'run the table' to set myself up for a CG win. I don't know how much more time I have left in this CG Date and I need to be really aggressive to get the win.

On the hilltop, my priority is to finish off the remaining 57L ATG and clear the orchard 100m to the west. Eric loves hiding Bazooka teams there and in La Sopette. Clearing them now will nicely position me for a run in to the Sanitorium. We established the 57L has no HE remaining, and I can now use infantry to surround and destroy it. Second, Eric has created another tactical problem for me by using abandoned halftracks to block the dirt roads leading to the 20AM

entry area. Naturally each roadblock is manned by infantry and I'll need combined arms to take them down. Since the roadblock defenders are concealed I will use infantry to draw their fire or move in to strip their concealment and my Flamm HT as the finishing move. I discover another ATG in ROUA when it knocks out an Mk4 I had hoped to use to flank the 57L. Disappointing indeed but shouldn't be surprising.

In STOUMONT, I want to use my dismounted infantry to flank the line Eric is forming and I am anxious to get into the stone building at S19 to control the intersection.

I'm going to use another "infantry kill stack" of two 658s with LMGs and the 10-2 to go after his 90L in ROUA. With the Fanaticism and the leader, the stack's morale is effectively 11, so pending a K result they should be able to withstand any fire from the gun. I'm going to chance deploying a Panther against it to keep Eric honest as the likelihood of even the 90 of getting a kill to the front of a Panther is pretty low.

The good news is my 'flying wing' has reached is destination and has cut the N33 behind (west of) the Sanitorium. In fact, the building is nearly encircled, thanks to the quick feet of CPL Meier, my personal leader of the game. Eric is using his Shermans to defend the Sanitorium and I am eager to try out my PSK and PFs against them, since the mist will give me an opportunity to get close enough for a shot without getting whacked.

American Comments. At the start of Turn 7, Eric was in complete panic and all he could think is that his entire force was going to die. In ROUA Andy brought up a Panther, Eric fired the 76L at it and with a squad and a half adjacent and elected to intensive fire. End result was the ATG malfed with a 12 resulting in elimination. The 76L on the hill whose crew was broken by the sniper was captured and the 57L was now surrounded. Andy moved a Panther next to Eric's last hidden Bzk team, took the shot and missed with an 11. Really? North of the sanitarium Andy charged the American tank line. So, Eric intensive fired the 76L tank because it was dead anyway, Malfed it and in the ensuing CC, Andy failed to get a ATMM and pinned himself. The final American element on the hill was broken and surrendered. Then mercifully, the scenario ended. Had it gone another turn, the Germans would have seized the sanitarium and been well on the path to victory.

Eric was glum and despondent. When we went into the intra campaign sequence he was stunned to discover that he had not outright lost and still had a majority of his force intact. This is the truth of the American experience in STOUMONT. The American player feels like he is losing right up to the moment when the scenario ends.
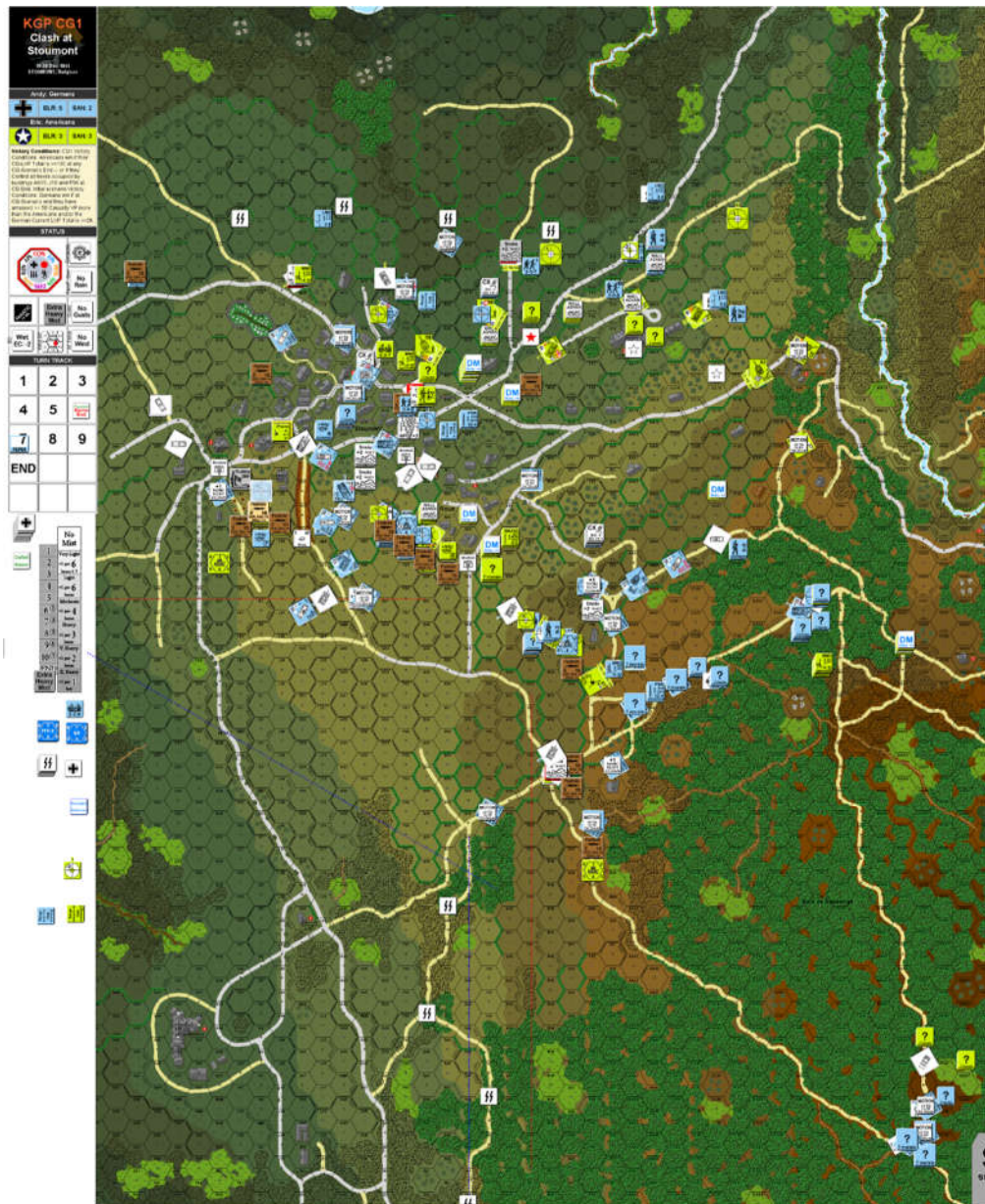
Figure 5: End of the 19AM CG Date. Germans are approaching the 20AM entry area, have cut the road to the 19AM entry area and have nearly isolated the Sanitorium. Americans continue to resist in ROUA and the western buildings of STOUMONT. American raid of German rear areas has been blocked at the "Hunting Lodge" (PP47)

End of 19AM CG Date

German Comments: Overall I made good progress but didn't run the table. As the reader may observe in Figure 5, I very nearly completed an encirclement. Had my force on the hill been able to push 800m west, I could have had Eric's entire force in the bag. Lacking that, my 'flying wing' cut the N33 west of the Sanitorium, nearly isolating it. The force on the hill cleared the road to the 20AM entry area and seized the key building at Y24, thereby opening the most direct route

to the Sanitorium in the 19PM CG date. Based on prior play I was hot to capture the stone building at Y24 since that prevents him from using the building and orchard as starting (HIP) locations for BAZ crews. I have nearly cleared STOUMONT but the key intersection S18 in STOUMONT is still contested and the Americans retain a foothold in the western buildings.

How did I do solving my tactical problems?
1. Holding terrain without sufficient forces. I invested a major planning effort in addressing this problem and think I executed the right plan successfully. The 'flying wing' to the west of the town uncovered every Strategic Location hex and, where terrain was unsuitable, dug-in a foxhole.
2. Effecting the breach. I took a chance with the 150mm OBA and I have to say I'm pleased with the results. Six morale units (or even eight morale units) can't withstand such massive firepower even with the benefit of entrenchments for very long, and the player morale check on Eric was an added bonus. The target registration point was well placed and if I had to do it over again, I would have spent two more points and placed a second registration point in ROUA and the third somewhere near the S18 road junction.

Even with all that success, I'm concerned I may have already lost the game. As we've stated previously, our analysis of games which the German won show that the German side got eight turns and largely wiped the American player off the map. This is something I did not do, so I'm starting the 19PM turn 'behind the curve', which is not a good place to be. Despite all my success, it's entirely possible I could still lose the campaign game. We'll see what I can do in the next CG date.

American Comments:
This is my third time playing the initial 19AM scenario at Stoumont. Each time I have felt like I suffered a terrible and humiliating defeat. Instead I learn that I somehow won the scenario. I then count squads and find that most of my force has survived the onslaught and I wonder what just happened. This has happened three times and each time I am still shocked to find that my defense was actually quite good and I won the scenario. My words can not express how many PMC's the American player suffers in this initial scenario. Based upon my initial goals I accomplished or failed to accomplish the following;
- Delay in zone –
  - Hold Sanitarium – mission accomplished
  - Hold 19AM entry area – mission accomplished
  - Hold 20AM entry area – mission accomplished
  - Hold 21AM entry area – failed
- Destroy 4+ German Tanks – Accomplished
- Destroy 4+ German HT – Accomplished I got 6
- Kill 6 German Squads – Failed; I killed 4.5 squads
- Lose 4 or less ATG – Failed; I lost 10
- Lose 6 or less Squads – Failed; I lost 7.5
- I killed 84 CVP to his 62

- I won the scenario

Some American lessons learned
1. An integrated defense up front delayed the German so that I accomplished my objectives at a reasonable cost. I have 26 LVP toward my goal of 110. I am not sure that the German player can recover from the game ending on turn 7. I think if it had gone one more turn he would have been in the Sanitarium.
2. The 60mm OBA with a HIP observer worked and caused both time loss and killed a HT, a 7-0 leader and a HS. It also broke supermen and delayed the defeat.
3. The gyros are a game changer now that I understand how they work (thank you Dave Ready)
4. HIP BZK and Guns force the German to move slowly
5. Better use of AT mines killed 2 HTs and canalized the attacking forces

Some German lessons learned
1. OBA against massed targets will punch a hole in the line. I have to wonder if it would not have made more sense for Andy to go straight at ROUA and ignore Stoumont. His artillery would have done a number on ROUA and unhinged my entire line.
2. More infantry was helpful but not decisive. Use of strategic hexes helped create a perimeter and the flanking party form the South stretched American lines but they did not get into the Sanitarium or take the 19AM entry area
3. Fanaticism really works. Essentially my kills either came from KIA results or rally attempts with a 12. Fanaticism is hard to stop.

Comparison to the last effort when we played 9 months ago. Overall the new German tactics worked better but were not a knock out blow. I am inclined to believe that the Germans need an extra turn on the first scenario to win.

Comparison	July 2021	March 2022
German Tanks Killed V / IV	3 / 1	1 / 3
German HT Killed	5	6
American 57AT	3	3
American 76 AT	3	5
American 90L	1	0
American AC	1	1
American Tanks	0	2
German Squads	6	4.5
American Squads	8.5	7.5
German Leaders Inf/Arm	1 / 0	4/1
American Leaders Inf / Arm	0 / 0	1/0
CVP German / American	68 / 73	62 / 82
CPP Destroyed German / American	58.5 / 50	45 / 51
American LVP	26	26

A couple of highlights …

- Germans lost IVs instead of Vs this time (positive trend)
- Germans killed more ATG and AFV and lost fewer of your own (positive trend)
- Germans lost less infantry but also killed less (neutral)
- Germans lost a lot of leaders (negative trend)
- Americans got a lot more CVP because of the extra HT and leaders. (negative trend)
- Germans killed the same number of CPP of Americans but lost significantly less of your own (positive trend)
- LVP was exactly the same (neutral)

So overall three positives, two negatives and two neutrals. I would rate this statistically as about the same as last time. The difference is position. German positioning is vastly superior than the first go and Germans kept more combat power (e.g. Panther's alive) this time through. On the American side of the ledger

- Lost more AFVs – (negative)
- Lost roughly the same number of ATG per German AFV (neutral)
- Kept the 90L alive (positive)
- Squads killed ratio (negative)
- Leaders killed ratio (positive)
- CVP (positive)
- CPP (negative)
- LVP (neutral)

So overall three positives, 3 negatives and 2 neutrals for essentially a draw. Again, American positioning is better this time but I would give the Germans a slight edge in where they are at versus where the Americans are at. The Germans have quite the dilemma for the 19PM turn because I don't think they have enough combat power for all the things they need to do (e.g. seize the sanitarium, cut off the 19AM entry areas, reduce ROUA, reduce Stoumont and take the 20AM entry area. I think that they can get three done of five and if lucky and the game goes extra turns four but not all five. I just don't think they have enough forces.

Based upon this experience I still believe that the Americans are going to win. Essentially, the key determinate seems to be whether the German gets 6, 7 or 8 turns in the first scenario. In every case where the German player gets the Sanitarium and wins; the German gets 8 or more turns. In the three playings of this CG with Andy, the German player has gotten 7 turns and failed to win the initial scenario.

Appendix

Leader Result – Cpl Michael secured the sanitarium which was worth five hexes at +2 each and +2 for winning the scenario. Promoted to Sgt Michael +2.

Orders of Battle

Unit	At Start	Bought	Max	CPP
I1 – Para Inf	0	1	3	5 CPP
I2 – SS Plt	0	2	5	18 CPP
I3 – SS PzGr Plt	4	2	4	24 CPP
I4 – SS Eng Plt	0	0	1	
V1 – MkIV section	4	0	1	
V2 – MkV section	4	0	4	
V3 – MkVI section	0	0	1	
V5 – Flam HT	0	1	1	7 CPP
V7 – Fk Pz	0	1	1	8 CPP
V8 + 9 – Staff Car	0	1	2	1 CPP
G1 – 75 inf	0	0	1	
G2 – 75 AT	0	0	1	
G4 – 20L AA	0	0	1	
HW1 – SS MG Plt	0	1	2	12 CPP
HW2 – SPW Plt	1	0	2	
01 – BN 120 Mtr	0	1	2	
02 – 150 FA	0	1	2	10 CPP with Reg
M1 Fortifications	0	0	15	
M2 Sniper	0	0	4	
Unit	At Start	Bought	Max	
F1 – Fighter Bombers	0	0	2	
I1 – Inf Plt	6	0	16	
I3 – Eng Plt	0	0	1	
I4 – HMG Plt	0	0	3	
I5- Med Mtr	0	0	2	
I6 – Arm Inf / 20AM	0	0	3	

Unit	At Start	Bought	Max	CPP
I7- Arm Mtr / 20AM	0	0	1	
I8 – Arm MG Plt / 20AM	0	0	1	
V1 – Lt Tank Plt / 20 AM	0	0	2	
V2 – Lt Tank Plt	0	0	1	
V3 – Med Tk Plt / 20 AM	0	0	3	
V4 – Med Tk Plt	2	0	2	
V5 – Aslt Gun / 20 AM	0	0	1	
V6 – TD 1	0	0	2	
V7 – TD 2	0	0	1	
V8 – Jeep	0	0	2	
V9 – Trk 1	0	0	3	
V10 – Trk 2	0	0	3	
V11 – Trk 3	0	0	1	
G1 – AT 1	1	1	1	
G2 – AT 2 / 20AM	0	0	1	
G3 – 76L	2	1	2	
G4 – 105	0	0	2	
G5 – 3"	1	0	1	
O1 – BN 81	0	0	3	
02 – Med 105	0	0	2	
03 – 150 OBA	0	0	1	
B1 – Bombardment	0	0	3	
M1 – Fortification	1	4	18	
M2 – Sniper	0	0	7	

62 Axis CVP
84 American CVP / 26 LVPs

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