

# KGP- Stoumont Third Playing

KGP-ST-20N CG Date Commentary

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## Pre-Game Planning: German Player

The 20PM CG date was a strategic victory for me because I kept hold of the Sanitorium and prevented the Chateau from falling while clearing the Americans out of St. Anne's. As a result, I am still in the game. However, the price was considerable. I lost most of my Panthers (two in combat, one while attempting to escape after the game), both my Mk4s (one in combat, the other attempting to escape) and eight squads (seven in combat, one while attempting to escape), two 9-1 infantry leaders and my very precious 9-2 armor leader, Donitz. As I have said before, I cannot make good those losses. In contrast, Eric, the American player, lost two light tanks, seven squads, and a couple of average leaders.

German forces remaining on the board include 12 squads altogether, 1 Panther, and 3 halftracks. By my count the Americans have 22 squads and four AFVs, basically a two-to-one advantage. The force ratios alone suggest the Americans can attack and win at any point on the map where they can mass and strike decisively. The American operational problem is that he must capture key Location Victory Point (LVP) terrain widely dispersed across the map. This will require Eric to prioritize and weight his main effort accordingly. Should he choose to attempt to capture multiple objectives simultaneously, he risks having insufficient combat power at the point of attack to win. Tonight both sides receive as many as 60 purchase points, which can buy a lot of stuff. I am pretty sure Eric has already bought all the straight-leg infantry he can buy. Therefore he's going to have to buy armored infantry platoons, medium tanks, and other supporting arms.

The German operational problem is that I must once more attempt to defend widely-dispersed locations (the Sanitorium, the Chateau and St. Anne's chapel). In the previous CG date, the Sanitorium caught fire and is now rubble, which reduces the LVP value of the building by half. This is significant. The other significant issue is my forces in the Sanitorium are isolated and I am unable to reinforce. In light of current force ratios already on the board, I do not have sufficient strength to turn back another American assault on the Sanitorium, especially if it's a night attack. As I saw in the 19N turn, it's pretty easy for cloaked Americans to move up on my defenses into CC, where my morale advantage is negated. While I'd like to delay the capture of the Sanitorium as long as possible, I don't have the infantry to throw away to do it. Meanwhile, the expected loss of the Sanitorium makes St. Anne's all the more important, since loss of the chapel, along with the Sanitorium, will cause me to lose the game.

## Enemy Situation

The Americans have to use another attack chit and go on the offensive, again. Eric is too far behind on LVP to be idle. American strength and units were covered above. Eric has 50 points to buy reinforcements. He can buy two more straight-leg infantry platoons and then he can buy only the very expensive Armored Infantry platoons at 24 points each. Knowing Eric, he will buy all the infantry he can afford and spend the rest of his points on artillery and tanks.

The most likely enemy (American) course of action is to seize the Sanitorium and clear the Chateau. He could do this by entering his reinforcements from the west board edge (that is, the top of the map considering the board orientation) and using existing motor transport to quickly get them to the fight. This will provide him with two of the three buildings he needs to win the game outright and a big LVP boost. With that accomplished he can then go for the couple of remaining LVP locations (such as Peiper's HQ) and St Anne's and win by either LVP or possessing the three victory buildings (St. Herbert's, the Sanitorium and St. Anne's).

The most dangerous enemy course of action is for the Americans to pay to start his newly-purchased infantry at (or he could shift infantry to) one of the control markers immediately west of St. Anne's and then attempt to retake the chapel, while simultaneously making moves to capture the Sanitorium and the Chateau. Two fresh infantry platoons, in addition to the forces already there, will make it tough for me to hold. Whatever other additional reinforcements he enters could march from the west or north board edges and administer the *coup de grace* to my men defending the Sanitorium.

## Friendly Situation

This is the first CG date in which I am outnumbered by American infantry, even if I buy the maximum amount of infantry I can, and at night I really need infantry. That is not a good sign. I will need to be selective about what I hold and what I try to take. Since it is no longer possible for me to hold the Sanitorium and I need to preserve as much of my infantry as I can, I decided to try to Escape from the Sanitorium in the Refit phase. I initially considered attempting to egress out of the Sanitorium during play since I could be cloaked at night but, after looking at the map, decided that the American troop density was probably going to be too high for that to be practical. My Escape dice weren't bad and I managed to get out two 'stacks' of leaders/squads/HMGs, one leader/squad/MMG and another squad with two LMGs. One of my two Panthers escaped but I lost the halftrack and squad I put in it. I will use these surviving men to bolster the handful of stragglers I collected earlier to defend Peiper's headquarters. I left the crew manning the Flak gun as a "detachment left in contact" to keep Eric's Americans busy as long as possible.

It is imperative I hold St Anne's and clear the Chateau. I also want to form something that looks like a perimeter to better position myself for the onslaught likely coming in the 21AM turn.

## Terrain and Weather

Historical weather is no moon and overcast with Very Heavy Mist. The base Night Vision Range (NVR) in KGP is 3 minus the NVR Modifier shown in the table in E1.11 of 2. Since  $3-2=1$  NVR, we are going to have a lot of close-in fighting. Normally restricted visibility favors the attacker. In theory I can use the low NVR to close with the enemy. My high morale should allow me to weather his point blank fire. However I want to avoid Close Combat since CC negates my morale advantage.

## Rules Interpretations

There are at least a few rules we are going to play differently based on a better understanding of them now.

Routing at Night. Previously we routed units 'normally' at night. Unfortunately we didn't get that right. Rule E1.54 Routing states, "A broken unit does not rout normally at night, but instead, always uses Low Crawl..." I've confirmed through a post at Gamesquad this means a unit can rout one hex, and one hex only. The plan to 'break and run away to fight another day' is not an option and will probably only serve as a setup to die in CC. My 'die' I mean that literally. A broken squad in CC must pay -2 for being broken and an additional -2 for having to withdraw, or a net of -4 on the *attacker's* dice. This must be avoided.

OBA. Eric and I debated the value of OBA at night. Previously we demonstrated the value of OBA in this CG. OBA was essential to a successful breach on the 19AM turn and the Americans used it to good effect on the 20<sup>th</sup>. How can it be used in a scenario where the NVR is only 1? A close read of the Advanced Sequence of Play and supporting rules shows that Flares and Illuminating Rounds can be fired before OBA contact is gained or maintained. Therefore it becomes possible to shoot a flare or IR and use that illuminated target as the basis for calling in a SR. If adjusting (instead of going directly to an FFE), the observer will have to regain visibility with a follow-up Flare or IR the next Player Turn. Eric pointed out another interesting twist. That is, OBA which fires only IR does not count as 'used' in CG terms since no SR or FFE is placed. Therefore it can be used again the following CG date. This could be a nice way to stack combat power for the 21AM turn. That is, buy OBA tonight, use it only for IR, and then have it available for HE in the morning turn. Unfortunately KGP SSRs don't show any OBA as having IRs, so that doesn't appear to be an option.

Slopes. Less of an issue for us at night but will matter a lot more during the day. Previously we played it so that a slope would allow a unit to see over an obstacle (such as a hedge) to see to the downhill hex but no farther, since I believed the base level of the hill had to be used. It turns out that the "three quarters" of additional height conferred by a slope hexside is added to the base height of the hex for LOS determination off the hill as well. For further explanation, see "The Bishop's" site at <https://jekl.com/>.

## Purchases.

My purchases are as follows:

- 1x HW2 SSPzGr HW Pltn
- 1x I1 Para Inf Pltn
- 2x I3 SS PzGr Pltn
- 1x V2 Pz V Sect.
- 3 points of Fortifications

I didn't buy OBA because I thought it would be too hard to use at night, all things considered. I don't like bringing tanks on at night, but I think I can use the IR from the mortar carrier in the heavy weapons platoon to keep my target lit so my Panthers and Weapons platoon can blast whomever may be hiding in the Chateau or elsewhere. I like the idea of a sniper number upgrade this CG date since a "3" becomes a "5" at night. A SAN of 5 means there's an 3% chance of a sniper effect every time Eric rolls the dice (11% chance of a 5 \* 30% chance of a 1 or 2 = 3%). For better or for worse, I decided it was more important to better defend against Eric's "most dangerous" course of action of an attack on St. Anne's and allocated those two points into fortifications. This also gave me a few more points to use for Dummy Concealment markers.

### Plan of Attack.

My mission tonight is to hold St. Anne's, clear and hold the Chateau, and hold Peiper's HQ so I am in a better position in the 21AM turn. I will do this by improving my position at St. Anne's, expanding my perimeter by taking control of the objective markers, continuing to hold Peiper's HQ (the roadblock) and clearing the Chateau of *Amis*.

This will require me to both attack and defend, but more attacking than defending. To secure St. Anne's I'm going to improve my position by adding some mines. I will also expand my perimeter by seizing the objective markers along the dirt woods road. As readers may recall, I placed these to help form a 'picket fence' to isolate Americans who may have chosen to raid my rear area. If I can regain control of them, I can use them as the basis of a more defensible perimeter. Ideally I'd like to have a horseshoe shaped perimeter so the American onslaught I expect on the 21AM is more survivable. This perimeter will consist of the objective markers along the woods road, tie-in to Peiper's HQ, and the Chateau on the left. The main effort is clear the Chateau by driving reinforcements due west along the N33, dismount and clear the building. To make all this happen, I'll use one of my two remaining attack chits. I may also have to spend a point or two on reconnaissance to develop a timely and accurate picture of Eric's actual deployment.

I am assigning the newly-arrived Panzer Grenadier and armor units to clear and hold the Chateau. I'm going to throw in both Pz Grn Plts. The Heavy Weapons platoon and the Panthers will support with direct fire by taking advantage of the IR-firing 81mm in the SPW 251/2. Depending on what the Americans have in the Chateau, the fighting could go fast or slow. My new Fallschirmjager platoon has excellent leadership: a 10-2, thanks to my 'snake eyes' roll for them on the leadership table. That platoon and the SS Assault Engineers will clear the dirt road north of the N33 and regain control of the objective markers. *Leutnant* Reidel's platoon of Fallschirmjager acquitted itself quite well

last afternoon and two squads are now first-line 467s. They will defend St. Anne's and be prepared to assist in either attack.

Last but not least is the crew manning the Flak gun remaining in the Sanitorium. They don't have many options. I am hoping I can use Night so they can escape & evade back to friendly lines. But if the Americans form a tight perimeter and escape is impossible, they'll have to stand and fight to the last bullet.

Since "war is deception", a night scenario is perfect for an active deception plan. The desired effects I want to create are to make myself look strong where I am weak, and make it look like I am attacking where I am not. Both of these effects support the higher purpose of tying-down as many of Eric's Americans and keep them away from my actual objectives – clear the Chateau, hold Peiper's headquarters, and establish a perimeter. Specifically, I will use my abundance of concealment markers to 'strengthen' the Sanitorium and make a feint for STOUMONT. The pile of markers I'll put in the Sanitorium should cause Eric to allocate a preponderance of his forces to clear the building. Once clear, it will take most of the remaining game for them to get to other parts of the board. At the same time, Eric will have to respond to my 'attack' driving west along the N33 to STOUMONT. To make the attack more convincing, I've assigned a dismounted crew and LMG, in the event I do get to flip any Control makers. My hope is this will draw reinforcements away from the Chateau and Peiper's HQ. Once he realizes it's a fake, he will require more time to get to my actual defensive line.

To make all this happen I need to attack first. Assuming Eric attacks (as he has to) it's going to be a "dual attack" scenario and the side attacking first will be determined by a dice roll.

## Pregame Thoughts by American player:

Campaign Score – US 61 LVP Total

Situation: I have reached the crisis point of this campaign game. I have three scenarios and two attack chits left. My goal for the 20PM was to take the Sanitarium and hold St Anne's and win an automatic victory. He has retaken St. Anne's and short of a major attack I am not going to get it back. Similarly, my botched effort at the Chateau will make me vulnerable to his attack there by overwhelming numbers.

A quick tour of remaining LVP;

10 LVP / Sanitarium = 10 LVP

11 LVP / Chateau = 11 (I currently own 3 LVP) LVP + 1 for Pieper HQ nearby

5 LVP / St Anne's

Analysis of what I need to do to win. I have 3 scenarios to get to 130 LVP. I currently have 61 LVP in the campaign. (According to Dellwood / see [An American in Stoumont: KGP I CG \(delwood.org\)](#) I am currently winning a promising victory – 26 LVP 19AM, 0

LVP 19PM, 5 LVP 19N, 14 LVP 20AM), 16 LVP 20PM). Simple math dictates that I must attack to gain the LVP needed so that I can win if I idle. I can't afford to idle before I am at a winning threshold. To get to 130 LVP I need to control 23 LVP by the end of the scenario. I currently have 16 so I need to add a minimum of 7 and avoid losing any. I suspect I will lose the three spaces at the Chateau but if I take the Sanitarium I will still come out 7 ahead. So, I have to take the Sanitarium this scenario or 10 LVP worth of the Chateau or I will lose.

Enemy Forces: The German forces are now limited to 1 panther tank, 4 HT, 1 light Flak and 12 squads. He will add 50 CPP to this force. Fortunately he will not be able to reinforce the Sanitarium or get much force there. At best he can buy 2 PzGrn Platoons and increase his squads by 6. My guess is that he will buy OBA, fortifications and more Panthers. I think his most likely course of action will be to recapture the Chateau and move my forces away from St Anne's. With his SS engineer platoon I will not be able to contest the loss of the Chateau.

Weather and Terrain: It is night with Very Heavy mist. LOS is going to continue to suck. My guess is that he will illuminate the Sanitarium which means that OBA and long range fires will work. With the burn down of the Sanitarium Andy has lost the LOS obstacle (rubble is only a ½ elevation LOS) which means that my troops on higher ground can see all of his troops with no LOS block. It also means that I can achieve encirclements. Another consideration is that my 60mm OBA can only shoot 20 hexes from a US entry area (I was wrong. It is actually per chapter H note 1 40 hexes). After this engagement they will mostly be out of the game. Lastly, there is simply less board as we head down toward the Chateau. But, if I can take the sanitarium and not lose anything else ... I will win.

Friendly Forces and Deployment: My forces consist of 4 Tanks, 0 HT, 2 x 81 mortar and 28.5 squads including 1 assault engineer. I have 60 OBA. I have a simply staggering amount of support weapons including .50cal, 16 MMG, 10 Bzk and 4 60mm mortars. I also have captured German HMG, 4 LMG and 2 PSK. I get 50 CPP less ½ a dr or 49. I plan to buy the following;

- 2 Infantry platoons – 14 points (1<sup>st</sup> Line, Green, 7-0, 8-0)
- 105 FA with 1 reg points – 9 points
- 3 Assault Gun Tanks – 11 points
- 2 81 mortars – 6 points
- 2 M24 Light Tanks – 7 points
- Fortification – 2 points (10 foxholes, 20 concealment)

I have 18.5 squads in and around the Sanitarium. That is 3x his defensive force. With the 60mm OBA [Due to an error in understanding the rules, I had this OBA module. In actuality I should not have had it] they should be enough to get the job done quickly with the good leaders and plethora of support weapons. They will also have the fire of two 81mm mortars. I am pulling back my other forces out of the Chateau as they will be

outnumbered by the Germans and it will allow me to pound the Chateau. My plan is to move the reinforcements on vehicles to join the Peiper HQ force. It will start with 7.5 squads and the 105mm OBA to which I will add 7 squads in reinforcements, M-36, 3 x M-5, 2 M-24, 3 assault guns and another 2 mortars. I have also put another 2.5 squads on the light tanks and a HS on a Jeep. I will move other forces toward Andy. I will put dummies in near St Anne's to slow him down.

## What Happened: Turn-by-Turn Highlights

### German Setup

As expected, both of us are using attack chits. Eric's dice rolls show us that he attacks first. This isn't the outcome I wanted, but I'll have to live with it. I see the Americans are set up immediately north of St. Anne's and east of Peiper's HQ. The Americans are also in the Chateau in about the same places they ended the previous game. It looks like Eric has two platoons immediately northwest of Peiper's HQ, and only 10 hexes away from the Chateau, well positioned to drive on the Chateau should he want to take it. There's plenty of Americans around the Sanitorium but I expected more. A breakout of my forces in the Sanitorium may have been possible, had they not already escaped but I'm glad I got them out when I did.

### American Set Up

Andy went for an attack chit so we got a dual attack. I have to set up first but we don't yet know who will move first. Not sure if Andy has figured out yet that if I hold the Sanitarium and the rest of the board I win. So, I want to spend this turn taking the Sanitarium and moving my forces to go after the Chateau. I am going to try to hit the Chateau with 105 OBA under the assumption Andy will have shifted his forces to throw me out.

Andy's defense was not what I expected. He pulled his troops out of the Chateau north of me. So he has his six squads at St Anne's and the other forces north of me. Looks like some of his forces escaped the Sanitarium. So, I am going to shift more and work on taking the sanitarium quickly.

### German Commentary Turns 1&2

Eric has cautiously moved into the Sanitorium and I am unable to do much about it. He moved a cloak unit into the HIP location of my Flak gun. Had we played it correctly, he should have bounced out and I would have gotten a good shot. Instead, both of us missed it and I decided it might be better to try to take them in CC. Luckily his CC roll enabled me to advance out of CC and keep him guessing for another turn.

I'm not sure what he's trying to do around St. Anne's, but he is moving generally west. In any event, a direct attack on St. Anne's does not appear to be coming. In contrast, Eric is moving on Peiper's HQ and the Chateau, albeit cautiously.

In a slight change of plans, I am entering one of my PzGr platoons with the Fallschirmjager along with the tanks along the southernmost branch of N33 while the second PzGr platoon enters farther north, to help deal with any move on St. Anne's, should that happen. Reidel's platoon will remain entrenched and follow the Assault Engineers and the PzGr platoon.

It looks like we may have some action around Peiper's HQ. I'm glad I managed to escape those units out of the Sanitorium as they provide much-needed muscle to hold this position. His infantry advance between Peiper's HQ and St. Anne's is worrisome. I need to hustle my reinforcements into the Chateau. My assault engineers, second PzGr platoon should be able to handle whatever he tries to move in across the open ground, as I may be able to crush him with a flank attack.

On my Turn 2, I am once again glad I exfiltrated those units from the Sanitorium, as the HMGs are shooting up the Americans east of the woods around Peiper's HQ to good effect. Somehow I managed to keep the CC going in the Sanitorium but it's not looking like I'll be able to keep the Americans tied up as long as I had hoped. Eric has not yet responded to my feint toward STOU MONT. By the end of the turn, my vehicles have arrived at the Chateau and my cloaked infantry is not far behind. My assault engineers have eliminated the potential threat against St. Anne's, which were mostly dummies.

I got crazy lucky on another CC at the Sanitorium, rolling a 'snake eyes', and generated an 8-1 leader. Not wanting to face another CC, I routed them into one of my own minefields, where they broke and broke again once the Americans fired on them. The 8-1 leader won't last long, either. Unfortunately it looks like my rearguard action is over, thereby freeing the Americans detailed to the job to move to the actual fighting.





I went after the Sanitarium and Andy did not defensive fire. I advanced into close combat and it was mostly dummies. My prep fire has been ineffective. Roger Hall walked into a minefield and died. Andy's 20L AA seems to be the only thing in the Sanitarium. I should have the Sanitarium cleared by turn 3. Major task accomplished. Night and mud are slowing my transition of forces to the Chateau. A couple of squads have arrived but the main forces is not going to get there before turn 4. So there is not a lot of action, mostly movement. He flamed dummies near St Anne's and I shot up a unit that subsequently broke some of my forces. My OBA did not make contact. It looks like he bought at least two platoons of PzGr and probably one of second line. Have not confirmed it yet but my folks near the sanitarium are going to be outnumbered until turn 4.

In his turn I learned he bought the HT Heavy Weapons Plt, 1 PzGr Plt, 1 panther Plt, - 37 of 49 CPP identified. I think he also bought a second PzGr Plt plus fortifications. He must have had points left over from last scenario.

### Turns 3&4 German Commentary

The Americans are moving a motorized column east along N33, out of STOUMONT. I move my 'attack' off the road. If I can hold him up for a couple turns, any attack from the positions east of Peiper's headquarters won't have the benefit of whatever firepower is in this column. By Peiper's HQ I am now seeing entrenchments, from which I infer those units won't make a move for the Chateau. Eric's Americans there seem content to trade fire and call in artillery on my positions around the HQ, luckily to no effect. The crest lines he's on are, however, in position to interdict my move to reinforce Peiper's HQ. I have to be careful to avoid unnecessary losses. I expect my assault engineers and second platoon of PzGr are going to apply sufficient pressure to keep him busy, with the goal still being to take enough control markers to support a cohesive defensive perimeter for the 21AM turn. At the chateau itself, I finally re-discovered "Mopping Up" and learned the Chateau had been abandoned.

By the end of my Turn 3 my assault engineers and second platoon of PzGrn have taken the foxhole with his artillery observer. The PzGrn and Assault Engineers are in position to blast the exposed Americans from the flank while my Panthers blast them from their front. I continue to be lucky with Eric's OBA, as the last FFE came in near my 75mm HT but had no effect. Now the observer is broken, I expect to be rid of that problem for a while. The other bit of promising news is the two squads I detailed to chase down an American unit attempting to infiltrate to the Chateau through the woods immediately south of Peiper's HQ managed to close with and eliminate it (a HS) in CC. Another problem solved.

In US Turn 4, the Americans continue their long march from the Sanitorium and environs to the "sound of the guns". I am a little surprised to see Eric pull back from his entrenchments by Peiper's HQ. Capturing both strategic location markers will be a big win for me, if I can pull it off. To the west, he has dismounted infantry from the

motorized column and is coming after my 'attack'. I hope to play rope-a-dope with the pursuing Americans to make him spend the time to come after me.

On German Turn 4, I can see that he is pulling back and I press the attack. I want the ground and to inflict maximum casualties, so I overrun the dazed Americans in their foxholes with my Panthers while my infantry push out from Peiper's HQ through the woods on one flank and along the dirt road to press his repositioned defenders. It feels good to be on the attack again... and the tragedy strikes. An American sniper kills *Hauptmann* Zweig, the 10-2 leader of my reinforcing Fallschirmjager. I had rolled a '2' on that leadership check to get him, and now he's dead without having fired a shot tonight. One of the squads following him breaks, distraught at his loss. At the same time, Eric's 10-2, Ortner, becomes Heroic in response to another fire attack. Fortunately he stands nearly alone, as the only other good order unit in the stack of Americans is a 667. And did I mention another of my fire attacks generated a hero for him, too?

Even so, by the end of my turn I've killed another of his broken squads in CC and the Casualties Bin shows us as even on CVP, 9 to 9.





the south. I don't think Andy realizes that he has to take LVP or I eke out a win at the end of the game. Should be a rude awakening for him. Also I finally killed something. I am mostly surrounded down south. Time to pull back.

In turn 3 Andy advanced on me and in turn four and five and destroyed 3.5 squads of elite troops. Essentially, all I was able to kill was a 10-2 leader with a sniper. My dilemma going forward is this. Do I pull back to ROUA and STOU MONT and Idle or do I advance and try to kill stuff. Good news is that I got my 9-2 heroic leader Ortnr out of the mix as well as my radio.





## Turns 5&6

Eric's Americans continue to push east along N33, easily brushing off my feint and killing the lonely crew in CC. I call it a 'win' since it's Turn 5 and he hasn't yet gotten to Peiper's HQ. The scratch force I initially threw together to defend it has been substantially strengthened by men who escaped from the Sanitorium with their MMGs and HMGS. With the addition of the Fallschirmjager platoon, I feel pretty good about pushing back his attack. I want to grab the Objective hex in R38, since that will clear the woods of any lingering Americans during the next Refit phase. My probe of the Americans defending the woods-road leading to it (Q44 to R40) met an untimely end at the hands of a 36FP and its 18FP follow-up DFF/Dfire attacks, resulting in a double break and elimination. I also have to contend with the likelihood of incoming 105 OBA, so I scramble the infantry out of LOS of the observer. In light of increasing resistance, I decide it's necessary to mount a deliberate attack on his new line, running North to South, U40 to R39/R38. I start maneuvering the mobile Panther and the PzGrn HW platoon (minus the mortar) to support the attack. The infantry I move behind the woods, out of site of the observer, avoided artillery fire. However, another squad I sent to probe their defense was double-break eliminated and I started to wonder how I might actually take that objective hex I wanted. I decide the best use of the mortar is to fire IR so I keep it positioned near the 'roadblock' on N33. By the end of my turn, the infantry is in position, awaiting the vehicles which move slowly due to the soft ground and night.

## Turn 6&7 American Commentary

At this point my focus was getting my troops back to set up areas in STOUMONT and holding my ground in the woods near Peiper's HQ. Andy and I traded back and forth but mostly we killed nothing. He did advanced some unconcealed units near me who died but there was little actual movement and the game ended with my Turn 7.

## Turn 7

On Turn 7, Eric's Americans on N33 decided to pull back to the west rather than face my defenders at Peiper's Headquarters. At the edge of the woods to the north, where I was forming my attack, the American Forward Observer calls in a fire mission which breaks up my Assault Engineer platoon just as the Panther was coming on line for my attack. Other than shifting around some reinforcements which had just arrived from other parts of the map, the Americans are largely idle. Much to my surprise, Eric rolls a '1', which ends the scenario.







## German Player Post-Game Analysis

The good news is I conducted a successful nighttime attack and accomplished all the objectives I set for myself at the beginning of the scenario. I held St. Anne's, cleared the Chateau, and formed a defensive perimeter around Peiper's HQ. I even scored one more CVP than the Americans (16 Axis, 15 Allied). Unfortunately the loss of the reduced-value Sanitorium provides Eric with a scenario win by LVP. I am prepared to continue the defense and believe I can hold my reduced but solid perimeter, especially with the reinforcements I'm due.

Unfortunately, while I may have won the battle, I lost the war. A tally of LVP shows that Eric's Americans ended the CG date with 85 LVP and, if nothing changes, earn 24 LVP per CG date. Therefore the Americans can simply idle the next two CG dates and win with 133 LVP, unless I can take away at least 3 LVP in one of the next two CG dates with my last attack chit. How can I do that?

## American Player Conclusions

Our losses were essentially the same (i.e. I had 15LVP to Andy's 16LVP) but I had captured more LVP which made me the campaign winner. I captured 10 LVP (the smoking remnants of the Sanitarium) and Andy 0 LVP. However, this added 24 LVP to my total of 61 for a new total of 85LVP. At this point, if I just hold my position, I win. By abandoning the Sanitarium Andy saved forces but also gave me the LVP I needed to be in position to win.

So, I would assess this as tactically a draw. We had equal losses. But operationally it was a victory because I eliminated the forces in my rear and am positioned for defense in the next scenario. Strategically it is a clear win. I own the Sanitarium and the LVP I need to win. I have one attack chit left. So, I can idle and force Andy into a tough choice. If Andy attacks and fails to take 3 or more LVP I win. If he idles and attacks in the 21PM scenario he will need to take 6 LVP and I will have that many more forces on the board. Either way, I think it is unlikely that he can recover.

## Considering a German Attack in 21AM (German Player)

Let's look at the numbers. The CPP Base # Chart on Page P17 shows I can get up to 20 Purchase Points (PPs). Assuming I get the maximum possible after my die roll of 1, I'll have 19 points to spend. Since I have to use my last attack chit to attack, I'll buy the 120mm OBA, a Pre-Registered hex to increase my black chit draw and call fire faster and more accurately, and a section of Mk4s. Alternatively I could buy a Panther section and something else but if I'm going on the attack, I want OBA. I cannot buy more infantry, since I've reached my game limit. Adding that to what I already have on the board (3 Panthers, the PzGrn Heavy Weapons platoon, 17 squads and good leadership) I have a shot at taking St. Hubert's and Robinson's house. In comparison, Eric has on the board 3 M4 105s, 4 M3 Stuarts, 3 M24s, 1 M36, 22 squads and two 10-3 leaders. As the map looks right now, it's not a good shot, but a shot nonetheless.

This is where it gets worse. Eric gets 60 PPs. That will buy him armored infantry, tanks, and enough OBA to keep my head down. Eric has enough Americans to *both* absorb my attack somewhere (I'd attack to the west along N33) *and* drive on one of my LVP areas, and likely take it. Therefore my attack, even if successful, wouldn't win me the game. I do not have enough combat power to seize and hold my objectives, so it's over.

### What Went Wrong

Where did I go wrong, what happened, and why? The numbers tell the story.

CG Date	LVP (by CG Date)		LVP (running total)		CVP		Winner	Margin of Victory
	German	US	German	US	German	US		
<b>19AM</b>	26	26	26	26	50	60	US	2 LVP by US German failed to earn 50 CVP more than the US or to earn more than 28 LVP
<b>19PM</b>	52	0	78	26	87	44	German	German LVP total is 20% greater than start of CG date
<b>19N</b>	45	7	123	33	37	73	US	US LVP total is 20% greater than start of CG date (also amassed >25% CVP than German)
<b>20AM</b>	45	14	168	47	10	42	US	US amassed >25% CVP more than German
<b>20PM</b>	36	16	204	61	27	53	US	US amassed >25% CVP more than German
<b>20N</b>	18	24	222	85	16	15	US	US LVP total is 20% greater than start of CG date
<b>21AM</b>	?	24		109				
<b>21PM</b>	?	24		133				Projected US CG victory by 3 LVP (130 LVP needed to win)
<b>Cumulative CVP Totals</b>					227	287		

Table 1: Location Victory Point (LVP) and Casualty Victory Point (CVP) Totals by CG Date

Table 1: Location Victory Point (LVP) and Casualty Victory Point (CVP) Totals by CG Date shows a roll-up of LVP and CVP I collected from each game. A quick scan of the “winner” column shows the Americans won almost every CG date. While winning a scenario has some nice benefits for improving troop quality and leadership, the real indicator of winning is the running total number of LVPs collected by the Americans. Eric earned 26 LVP on the first CG date, a few more on the 19N turn, and then really ramped-up his winnings on the 20<sup>th</sup>, earning the most LVP on the 20N turn thanks to the capture of the Sanitorium.

The other numbers which are interesting are the CVPs. Except for the first CG date and the last, the CVP numbers were a blowout mostly in favor of the Americans. The 19PM turn saw my Germans kill 87 CVP of Americans. As the record shows, that’s the CG date I got an eighth turn and was able to overrun, kill or capture a bunch of Americans who had been driven out of their positions on Turn 6 or 7. By the end of the 19PM turn, I had in my possession all the LVPs on the board, the 19AM entry area and nearly the 20AM entry area as well. It went downhill from there. The next CG date (19N) saw the CVP numbers nearly reversed. On that night I lost a company of SS infantry, Panthers, my remaining FlammHT and both FlkPz. As I wrote earlier, I didn’t get the “shifts” I wanted and, while the defense may have been adequate against a daytime attack, it was not for defending against a night attack. As a result I got defeated in detail, one infantry platoon at a time. These are losses I could not make good later. This also put in a position where I *had to* hold key pieces of ground without enough troops to do it. Since I had to hold the Sanitorium or lose the game early, it also meant that I needed to hold the ‘ridge’ to the north to prevent Americans entering at the 20AM entry area, whatever I could hold on the N33 in front of and around the Sanitorium itself, and ROUA to prevent the whole line from being encircled. These losses reflect the lack of men and flexibility I needed to hold that ground after the disastrous night before. I held the ground for as long as I could, and paid for it. That’s the way it goes.

The losses I incurred on the 19N turn also set up the “Mosby raid” on the 20AM turn since I no longer had enough force to defend the front and my rear. Although I took back both St. Anne’s and the small piece of the Chateau which had been captured, once ‘banked’, those LVPs cannot be taken out. It turns out the ‘raid’ provided Eric his margin of victory.

## Observations and Lessons Learned (German)

At the start of the CG, I wrote that I wanted to focus on destroying the enemy force, and not necessarily seizing terrain, since destroying the enemy would allow me to take the ground I wanted. Destroying the enemy would also make it more likely I could keep my winnings. That approach worked for me on the 19<sup>th</sup> but once I transitioned to the defense on the 19N, I became focused on holding key terrain instead. How did that work out? My defense became a war of attrition which favored the Americans and their lopsided PP advantage. Eric rightly determined that I couldn’t defend everywhere, so he attacked all along the front to stretch me thin enough for him to make incremental gains, each building on the next, and it worked. A time-lapse of the fighting around the

Sanitorium would show Americans approaching from two directions, isolating the Sanitorium and then capturing it by the 20N turn. Eric also observed the Germans do better on the attack than the defense. In theory, some kind of mobile defense, oriented on the enemy, might work better than a defense focused on holding ground. In light of LVP as the CG victory conditions, limited vehicle mobility due to soft ground, and German fuel shortages starting on the 20<sup>th</sup>, I'm not sure how that would work.

### Specific Lessons Learned:

- German Attack Chit Use. Conventional wisdom is for the Germans to use their attack chits at night to avoid the "No Move" problem as the Scenario Defender. Now I can see the benefit of that.
- OBA. We successfully demonstrated how to use the "King of Battle" effectively in low-visibility conditions. I would not have been able to take my objectives without it. The Heavy Artillery was especially useful for effecting a breach on the 19AM turn.
- Use of the Reserve. The "Reserve" (that is, the ability of the German to put units on board cloaked and released the following CG date) seems like a handicap but now I think I understand how to use Reserve forces. The Reserve is best used to defend the German rear area (such as the Chateau, St. Anne's chapel, or other locations such as road junctions away from the expected fighting). Although the Reserve unit will activate when it has LOS to an enemy within six hexes, the German cannot count on Reserve units to play a role in a defensive line since the German must then rely on Americans to cooperate and activate the unit. Again, on the 19N turn I had Reserve units along N33 and the Sanitorium. Although they did activate they were not capable of acting in concert with other units since their activations were not timed with each other. It's better to keep the Reserve back at a key location (such as the Chateau, for example) as a deterrent against a Mosby-style raid. The Germans have sufficient motor transport to shuttle infantry to the front in the next CG date as required.
- Fighting at Night. I understand the rules better and am a better player in the night fighting now.

Considering the CG in total, I think we validated most of what Delwood and the Houston ASL crew wrote about the CG years ago and much, but not all, of what players say about the game today. In particular, the "picket fence" for Strategic Location / Objective hexes strategy is a 'must' for the German player, as it's really important to help control captured territory. Use of Reserve purchases to hold key terrain is another 'must'. The 'third leg' of this 'stool' (to use a common metaphor) is a mobile reserve to respond to threats which may appear unexpectedly. A mobile reserve of a couple halftracks with mounted infantry, a leader, and a Mk4 section would have been quite enough to deal with "Mosby" or any bypassed personnel making their way through the German backfield. This mobile reserve could also be used to plug a hole in the line if needed but would be best stationed near Peiper's HQ and moved along the N33 as required. To recap, the German player must use a "picket fence" of strategic location / objective hexes, a well-placed (static) Reserve, and a mobile reserve.

Where we differed from Delwood and 'conventional wisdom' is in play style and the use of OBA. The extensive American use of AT Guns in the 19AM CG date was effective in keeping me out of the Sanitarium. Eric knows that as a player I am tank-centric (thanks to being a now-retired Tanker and Cavalryman) and I'm going to prioritize tanks over infantry. When faced with limited utility of my tanks due to environmental conditions (mist limiting main gun TH and soft ground limiting cross-country mobility) I fell back to relying on artillery backed by infantry to get the job done. Credit where credit is due, Eric correctly determined that while armor may be the German's strength, infantry are the German side's critical vulnerability. By prioritizing the destruction of my infantry, Eric compelled me to shrink my defensive perimeter until I could no longer hold key terrain and the LVP gains followed.

And now we come back to the age-old question where we started: should the German player focus on destroying the enemy, or capturing ground? Campaigns are won or lost on commanders correctly answering this dilemma. For the German on the 19<sup>th</sup>, the answer is clearly to focus on destroying American forces. I want to say the answer is the same for play on the 20<sup>th</sup> but in light of the challenges facing the German, a mobile defense, oriented on the enemy is going to be hard to do and I'm not sure how a German player might implement it. Maybe we will figure it out next time we play.

## Observations and Lessons Learned (American Player)

Now on this side of the crisis it is clear that there were several decisive points in the campaign. First, I continue to believe that against a competent American player, the German player probably only has a 20% chance to win the campaign. The first decisive point was the 19AM scenario. To achieve that 20% chance the German player needs eight turns on the 19AM Scenario with an occupation of the Sanitarium. The 26 LVP I got in the first scenario, because Andy did not get eight turns, is driving victory now.

The second decisive point was the 19N scenario. The eight turns Andy got on 19PM caught him back up to a 20% chance and he ran the board. However, during the 19N scenario Andy lost infantry he could not afford to lose, specialist vehicles and also failed to secure the 21AM entry area. Because I was able to come in on the 21AM entry area on the 20AM scenario I was able to take St Anne's. (*Editor's Note: CG 8.6194b states, "By increasing the listed CPP cost of US RG... that RG may enter at a US Entry Area... one CG date prior to the CG Date printed in that Entry Area's arrow". Therefore the Americans were not able to use that entry area at the time they entered*). The infantry lost on the 19N scenario impacted his ability to respond on the 20AM scenario. It also impacted his ability to hang on to, avoid encirclement of, the Sanitarium. The loss of St Anne's largely dictated the loss of the Sanitarium because Andy could not both hold the Sanitarium, the Chateau and retake St Anne's. The result is that I was largely able to surround the Sanitarium and take out German tanks.

The third decisive point was the 20N scenario we just played. Andy was better concentrated toward the bottom of the map but was slowed by the need to achieve fire superiority. His abandonment of the Sanitarium without a bold thrust to retake

STOUMONT or ROUA has now placed him in a losing position. Again, it all tracks back to a seven turn 19AM, the heavy losses of 19N and failure to close the 21AM entry area.

### Specific Lessons Learned (American Player)

- The American player has to hold the Sanitarium on the 19AM scenario to win. I like the Anti-Tank Gun Defense that I played. Even though I lost most of my guns I held the Sanitarium at scenario end and it made all the difference.
- American troops have inferior morale and leadership for the most part. They cannot hold on defense (find and develop fall back positions) and they will constantly break on the attack. Play to the American strengths of mass infantry squads, heavy firepower and superior broken morale.
- The Americans need to win through maneuver. The Germans can't be strong everywhere and the Americans need to win through attrition. So, send a Mosby raid into the German rear to grab LVP. Stretch the German defensive line from the 20AM entry area to St Hubert's in STOUMONT. In the game of mass, somewhere the Americans will be 2:1 or better in force and can win the isolated fight.
- It is worth the cost to buy the early arrival and send troops into the German rear. Taking St Anne's will severely disrupt German reinforcements. [Review the rules. This can only be done one campaign date early – not 24 hours early as I did]
- Build kill stacks to kill German infantry. 3 x 6-6-6 with 3 x MMG even with a 8-0 leader is powerful.
- Always attack at night. This is the best American chance to overwhelm a portion of the German force.
- Expect to be routed on the 19AM and 19PM scenarios. Remember that victory is holding the Sanitarium on the 19AM and getting most of your squads out of the Sanitarium on the 19PM scenario.

### Conclusions (German Player)

The KGP STOUMONT campaign game has been among the most intense ASL I have ever played. My three favorite parts of the CG were:

1. Conducting the breach on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>. I had a huge firepower advantage and used combined arms (artillery, tanks and infantry) together as a team and was pleased with the results – captured objectives with minimal losses.
2. The tanks-and-infantry on-line assault on Eric's dug-in Americans behind (east of) the Sanitorium on the 19PM turn was a by-the-book hasty attack which worked almost entirely as I intended. Mass and shock effect, striking decisively, are what armor is about.
3. My Panthers' counter-attack around the Sanitorium on the 20th was an act of desperation, but it worked. Overrunning Eric's infantry after they'd gotten out of their holes but before they closed on the Sanitorium was timed perfectly and bought me another CG date of holding on. Although my men at the Sanitorium fought bravely, they were still doomed – perfect stuff for a made-for-TV movie.

These are examples of where ASL shines as the premier tactical simulation of WW2.

These desperate moves and defenses – all of which were ‘must win’ fights – are pretty remarkable, even for a CG. The terrain and weather transform what should be a fast and hard-hitting Panther tank battle to a slow-moving point-blank fight where all arms are needed. This is a great CG but not for the inexperienced player or the faint of heart. I highly recommend it for the intermediate for advanced ASL player.

## Conclusions (American Player)

Completely agree with the German player. Best campaign of the three that I have played (Decision at Elst, Singling, and KGP Stoumont). Great psychological, tactical and strategic challenge with both sides having to conduct different types of operations; movement to contact, hasty attack, deliberate attack, pursuit, hasty defense and deliberate defense. I would be happy to play it again.

## Retrospective

Since finishing the CG and preparing for the LaGleize campaign, we have (re-) discovered additional rules we didn’t play correctly and had an important effect on the game. We cancelled our first campaign game when we realized that while we were playing ASL it was not KGP. We were missing too many of the campaign game rules to make it a viable campaign and ended after the 19N campaign date. This time we made it all the way to the 21AM campaign date. Along the way we had some epic battles but again, we still missed the nuance of the campaign and feel like we were still not playing KGP.

1. Activating entry areas early. Rule 8.6194b allows the US player to pay to activate an entry area no earlier than one CG date before the printed date. Therefore Eric’s “Mosby” raid couldn’t enter when it did. That made a big difference the outcome of the game.
2. 60mm mortar exchange for OBA. The US player can convert three 60mm mortars and crews into OBA for a single CG date. This OBA can range 40 hexes from the east side of the map. Once the OBA is used, it’s no longer available as with all the other OBA. This explains why the option is generally not used.
3. Strategic Locations – Essentially, we did not understand that all strategic locations are never unoccupied after the start of the game. They are either US or German controlled. For example, we did not get that putting a foxhole in the ground makes it a strategic location. Had we understood that nuance, we would both have placed more foxholes to build up defense lines and set up areas. Failure to understand these rules allowed the German to gain control of the American 20AM set up areas.
4. Weather and Mist – Somewhere in the process of playing this through we realized that heavy and very heavy mist are LOS hindrance. This had an impact that we had not taken into account. Similarly, we rolled for wind change but not rain. We were supposed to roll for rain but did not. Completely missed this rule. Rain would have added additional hindrances to all of our fires.



5. .50 Cal from vehicles – Another rule that Eric, as American, mostly missed initially. There are certain vehicles that optionally come with .50 Cal MGs. The 3" gun prime mover has one at the start of the game. But it also shows up on the Jeeps with fairly achievable rolls. It is also why the Armored Infantry Platoon is so expensive in terms of CPP. The MG HT comes with a .50 cal and 2 x MMG and each of the three troop HT come with MMGs. So the platoon reinforcement, if dismounted, is actually 3.5 squads, 3 crews, 1 .50cal HMG, 6 MMG, 60mm mortar and Bzk45. We did not appreciate the dismounted impact of this reinforcement.
6. German elite forces – Similarly, Andy mostly missed this rule and did not get that his depletion numbers are one greater due to his forces being elite. This may have helped him with smoke and other attack forces.
7. Slopes – We got confused by the slope rules and played them wrong. We read that the slope location was at the same elevation and therefore was able to see over same-Level hedges but not over same Level LOS obstacles. This reduced the American ability to defensive fire at long range and/or added a lot of orchard hindrance that was not applicable. It also allowed some German forces to maintain concealment they would otherwise have lost.
8. Night rules – Per KGP, units in cloak can have assembled SW. We were playing standard rules. Even then we did not get that a leader can fire a star shell in the DFPh even if fired in the MPh. Many German units during the 19N scenario might have not died if we had understood this rule. Finally, although Boresighting is NA throughout, it *is* available at night so an MG owner can fire at the boresighted hex without seeing a known enemy unit.

In light of this 'new' information, all in all, we decided this CG is a 'draw'. We will cross swords again in LaGleize!