

1998 WORLD IN FLAMES ANNUAL



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Editorial

Welcome to our latest Annual, the first since the release of *World in Flames*, the final edition. It has been a tumultuous two years since the last Annual, both for the hobby and myself personally.

Now that we have had a chance to digest all the rules to WiF: the final edition, this annual will concentrate on war-winning strategies and tactics. We have had many submissions from a variety of people with a great deal of experience playing WiF. The tips included in this Annual should give you some new insights on WiF that will see you bowling over all comers in your next game.

We also have articles on the *World in Flames* World Championships, After-Action-Reports, a new 1940 campaign game set-up, and of course *Leaders in Flames*.

The *World in Flames* World Championships are held each August in Rhode Island. This 8-9 day convention allows you to play a full game of WiF at a great location, with some very interesting people. It also includes talks by a variety of excellent speakers, and I cannot recommend it highly enough. I look forward to seeing you there this year.

The after-action report describes the game at last year's WiFCon which pitted the designers against the Official US team. I hope some of the excitement of that eye-opening game comes through.

The 1940 campaign game set-up completes the series of campaign scenarios with one now starting every year from 1939 to 1944. The 1940 campaign starts after Fall Gelb, with both Poland and France in German hands. Where will the Axis strike next?

Leaders in Flames includes 140 counters that give you more late war kit, particu-

larly for the French and Italians, the Soviet Guards Banner Armies, some more minor neutral units and all the great military leaders of World War II.

The rules for *Leaders in Flames* are only a couple of pages in total, and form part of the 16-page insert which also contains the complete errata for WiF Final. This will bring you completely up-to-date with the WiF world.

Unfortunately, for the first time since we started *Line of Communication*, we are being forced to increase our prices for an Annual subscription to *Line of Communication* (of which the Annual is the flagship issue).

As some compensation, we are increasing the minimum size of the newsletters to 24 pages each, and the Annual will be a minimum of 64 pages plus inserts that increase it to a minimum of 72 pages. We will also endeavour to be much more timely in their output.

Furthermore, due to the wonders of modern technology, we can now offer two reduced rate subscriptions called the "Virtual" Sub and the "Virtual + Annual" Subscription.

The standard paper Sub, will now cost US\$30. For each 4-issue sub, you get all the usual benefits:

- * 3 normal issues (24+ pages on all aspects of *World in Flames*, including designer's and player's notes, new scenarios, after-action-replays historical info and much more)

- * 1 special Annual issue, 72 pages on WiF, and a countersheet of WiF counters and the rules to incorporate them into your next game of WiF; and

- * a 25% discount on all normal prices, or 10% off any special deal offered on all our mail-order ADG games.

The "Virtual" sub will save you US\$10 per year. For only US\$20, you will be

sent the electronic version of the newsletters and Annual instead of a paper version. You will also receive an authorisation that will allow you to make 1 copy of the electronic version of the newsletters and annual for your own use.

You will still of course be sent the Countersheet separately, as we can hardly expect you to play with virtual counters.

Other benefits of the Virtual sub are:

- 1) Timeliness - As soon as it is finished being laid out it will be e-mailed to all virtual subscribers. Thus you will get your version up to 2 weeks before paper subscribers.

- 2) Complete Subscriber's list - Instead of just your region you can receive the listing of all subscribers who are listed and thus keep in contact with opponents around the world.

- 3) More Colour images - If we have color images you will get them in color where the printed version may only be in Black & White.

The virtual + Annual sub gives you all the benefits of the virtual sub, except you get the paper version of the Annual, instead of the electronic version.

As you can see, Australian Design Group is gradually lumbering into the 20th Century and to continue this trend, we are now asking for your e-mail address. This is purely voluntary, but will allow you to contact other subscribers by e-mail as well as snail mail.

Now, a brief word about our upcoming products. The next cab off the rank is *America in Flames*, coming out in August (at WiFCon in RI) which includes a 1945 Invasion of North & South America by Germany, Japan and Italy. It includes a political generator up front, that determines the political attitudes of the Central and South Ameri-

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can countries. This ensures a different start for every game.

As America in Flames is expected to be released in August at WiFCon, I don't think Larry would mind if the competition game you played was America in Flames, rather than WiF:FE. You could be the first person in the world to play it (give or take 1 or 2 playtesters). It might be interesting to base your competition points on rules you know intimately, in a game you know not at all.

Next, in October, we expect to be bringing out Glorious Empires, our history of the World game and WiF: the Computer game (depending on bug fixing).

WiF: The Computer game moves WiF Final Edition to the computer. The entire world is represented on the European scale on a wrap-around map of the world. At 360 x 195 hexes, this is the largest computer wargame ever produced.

For those who play WiF Final Edition, this game will be very familiar and will require minimal time to understand. It will be playable by yourself against the computer, hot-seat, direct connection, modem, over the internet and by e-mail.

Glorious Empires: World History 4000 BCE ~ 2000 AD. This game includes over 100 civilisations spanning the entire history of human civilisation. You control the fate of the world. Can your civilisations, through religious, scientific and cultural progress, dominate the world so that you become the most glorious ruler of all?

The standard game of Glorious Empires comes with 2 x A1 maps, 1280 x 5/8" counters, 100 x 1/2" markers, 84 cards and an 8-page rules book.

Glorious Empires Deluxe comes with 2 x A1 maps, 1280 x 5/8" counters, 200 x 1/2" markers, 144 cards and an 8-page rulebook.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who helped in the production of this Annual, Siegfried Nelson who did a brilliant job editing most of the articles, Larry Whalen whose layout makes my previous efforts look down-right amateurish, and Beth who did a huge job in producing it.

I would also like to thank all those who submitted articles for this Annual. The build plans found in the gray boxes with these articles are Australian Design Groups's suggested builds and may not necessarily agree with the article's writers. In many cases they propose their own views giving you yet another suggestion for builds. The setups found in the center of the annual assume you are playing with

Planes in Flames and Asia Aflame, but not Ships in Flames or Africa Aflames.

We received a record number of excellent articles - so many that we have been forced to keep some over for later newsletters and Annuals. The number and standard of submissions has made this the best Annual yet. I hope you enjoy it.

Regards
Harry Rowland
ADG

...And Siegfried Adds

A good game will maintain a tension between the eternal desire for a "perfect plan", and the actual ability to execute such plans. The many articles in this annual testify that WiFFE stimulates creative thinkers to contemplate more perfect plans. Gaming organizes the mind. WiFFE has increased clarity, common consent, probability and system while assuring that the player does continue to face uncertainty.

Marc Bloch, writing in 'Strange Defeat' about his experiences in the French army of 1940, commented that the German's used a different rule book. Far behind the supposed frontlines, he saw a senior French officer run out into the street to redirect some tanks that seemed to be going the wrong way. A civilian passer-by stopped him by shouting "Look out! They're Germans!" This same feeling confronts players whenever that extra impulse comes along after all your own units are flipped.

The unchanging fundamental core of WiF, the gestalt or WiFZen, has been, for me, the harmony between great uncertainties of turn-length, US entry and weather on one hand and on the other hand, all the nitty-gritty complexity of handling lots of counters each seemingly under the complete control of the player. With the fundamental rules digested, as Harry says, all further modules and Annual supplements can concentrate on the nitty-gritty elements. As a long-time tweaker and occasional historical quibbler, I applaud this direction in the presentation of ADG products.

I am an addict. I own every edition of World in Flames. I even have all the t-shirts, including the rare Paul Reynaud, sky blue French number. Previous to this annual, I have not ever had any official contact with ADG. With the rise of the internet, contacts have become much easier. Naturally, I agreed gleefully when Larry asked me to help edit this issue of the annual. Larry has labored long to draw together the wide-range of articles appearing here. My wee contribution amounted to attacks on run-on sentences and needless passive voice. If any remain, I welcome comments to brule31x63@aol.com or on the WiF internet list.

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A Primer to World Domination:

A German road-map for making friends and influencing people

by Harry Rowland

The World in Flames Rules contain extensive players' notes that should give you plenty of information on all aspects of good German play. In this article, I will restrict myself to some tips for the best method of striking hard and fast from the start of the game, in an attempt to knock the Allies off their socks and keep them down without the initiative until final victory is yours.

Most Adolf's I have met are not renowned for caution. So I won't bother explaining the methodical attack in Poland, followed by a slow advance into France. I am sure all that bores you. What you want to know is how do we get "Total War" from September 1939.

First off, have a look at the German set-up provided in the middle of this Annual. This was one of the set-ups used at WiFCon '97. As you can see, the set-up is finely balanced with 11 Corps & HQs on both the Polish and French fronts, with 1 corps opposite Denmark.

Your precious AMPH and TRS should set-up in Memel to avoid those pesky long-range British bombers that are likely to port strike you in their first impulse with something harder than leaflets.

The excellent Polish set-up was used by Rick Henderson at WiFCon '97 against the Official Australian Designer Team. 11 Corps/HQs in the East is the minimum required to overcome this set-up, and in our game, it took me 8 months to do it (I didn't say this was going to be easy).

Start with a ground strike of Warsaw with your Ju-87, and Lodz with your best 3-engined bomber, saving the rest of your theatre's bombers for ground support.

Then, you should only launch high odds (or automatic) attacks against the Poles this impulse, leaving Lodz and Warsaw till later in the turn. This should guarantee you the maximum number of attacks and should give you at least a 50/50 chance of taking Warsaw before the end of October 1939.

The one corps in Denmark is there to occupy Copenhagen. Many CW players like to land in Fredrikshavn to cause you pain in the Baltic, but don't worry

about this, it fits perfectly with the plans if they intervene.

This leaves 11 corps to attack Belgium and France, the bare minimum needed to attack here ("Total War" starts on a bit of a shoe-string budget, I'm afraid). You can't attack at all in the first impulse. "But I'm the Fuhrer", I hear you cry. Unfortunately, a Fuhrer caught on the hop.

Your usual next decision is whether to give in to a Soviet demand of the Finnish Borderlands. Usually, you want to just concede as you will lose Petsamo and a Russian resource if you don't. However, if you are a tough guy (and which Adolf isn't?), you could decide to fight.

If you do, set up Mannerheim in Helsinki, one INF in Vyborg and your other INF in the Petsamo box (or S0802 if playing with the Scandinavian map). If playing with Ski divisions, place it with whichever INF is under the most threat of attack.

This set-up should minimise your losses in the first impulse, while guaranteeing the integrity of Helsinki. You will need to send German corps to bolster your Finnish defenders along with 1 or 2 aircraft, to maximise the time it will take for Russia to gain Finland.

From the 2nd impulse, you can start rocking and rolling - declaring war on Denmark if the weather is fine and declaring on Belgium if it isn't. From 0739, you can enter Copenhagen in one move. Ignore Fredrikshavn. If the British occupy it, all the better for you. Just move your corps in Copenhagen north to W0642, screening the CW interlopers.

I know it sounds weird to advise the invasion of Belgium in rain, but if your opponents are smart, they will set up the Belgiques as shown in the middle of this annual. This will limit their losses to the one cavalry corps on the first impulse, and the Germans will not cross the Dyle. In these circumstances it is critical that the French don't get to the Dyle in one impulse.

The only time you can afford to go into Belgium in fine weather is if the French are badly positioned or the CW have set up or moved their Transports in such a fashion that the CW and French cannot man the Dyle-Maginot line adequately (you will be surprised how often this occurs).

A risky way you can engineer this yourself is to declare war on Belgium in fine weather, and attempt to ground-strike

the French in W1231 or W1232. If successful, it is unlikely that the Allies will be able to defend Antwerp, Brussels, W1132 and W1131 adequately.

On the first rain impulse, advance into Belgium capturing Liege in a 10-1 attack. If they defend Brussels, attack it immediately, before reinforcements can arrive. If not, wait until the next Fine weather impulse to attack it. Use your offensive chit now, and then attempt to ground-strike as many of its defenders as possible (this is what the Ju-87 is for).

This should give you odds of 4 or 5:1 +1 (depending on how many enemy bombers get through in support) giving you a 70-80% chance of success. It might even be worth-while to use HQ support if this will help you - you must get across the Dyle.

Capturing Brussels unhinges the entire Allied position north of the Maginot line. The Allies likely cannot form a coherent line, let alone a strong one.

From now on, you hope for fine weather every impulse, but regardless of the weather you must attack, attack, attack. Hopefully the Polish campaign is going well enough that you can afford to rail 1 or 2 corps back from this front to Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Saarbrücken, releasing your corps here to expand your blitzkrieg into Northern France. With luck, you can force your way into Paris, but even if you fall short of this target, you should still end October with Belgium, Lille and the resource in W1232.

Over winter, you must continue to attack towards Paris, destroying as many French corps as possible. Ignore the British when you can. The allies can't co-operate. Exploit that by attacking the partner who has the weakest units.

Meanwhile, you should be building as many aircraft as possible. By May/June 1940 you want to have air superiority against the CW and France.

Your winter attacks will attrition both you and the French, but you can afford it, France can't. Your Polish campaign should be finished so most of your forces there should be available for duty in the west. Leave a strong enough garrison (including your Mountain and SS Inf) in the East to avoid a Russian declaration of war. All your entry chits should be face-up to facilitate this task.

Come summer 1940, you should launch your bloated Luftwaffe against every French stack capable of attack. Try to ground strike as many French artillery and HQs as you can as well. Once you

have disrupted the majority of the French, they are ripe for the plucking.

Use your 2nd offensive chit now. It is no point waiting until you attack Russia, if you haven't even taken out the French by then. Attack in strength at high odds. Use your air assets lavishly, reorganising them occasionally, even in land actions, if that will maintain your air superiority.

Even if the French have survived Winter reasonably well, it will be very difficult for them to survive the double sledgehammers of offensive chits and overwhelming superiority. By the end of Jul/Aug at the latest, Paris should be under your control.

You now have a major strategic decision to make, westwards or eastwards, Britain or Russia, now or later.

You would definitely want to head eastwards for a 1941 Barbarossa is if Russia is still embroiled against Finland, or has taken heavy losses in an anti-Japanese war. If Russia is looking pretty sharp, you may decide to go for a 1942 Barbarossa or Sea Lion instead.

The major disadvantage of a 1941 Barbarossa is you are unlikely to get Gibraltar, the critical hex in the game (although Jack Greene's excellent Italian article has a great little trick that may drop this plum into your, er sorry Jack, I meant the Italian, lap).

Going for a 1942 Barbarossa gives you time to take Gibraltar, Suez and the Iraqi oil wells beforehand, making the Mediterranean an Axis lake in the meantime. It does however give Russia time to get very strong. Operation Sea Lion is harder with the WiF:FE naval system, which severely limits the influence your short-ranged fighters can play in naval combat. Furthermore, you must be in a reasonably high box to invade, during which time your tiny Kriegsmarine is extremely vulnerable.

However, you only need to successfully invade once. From then on, you can fly in reinforcements, or transport them from the '0' or '1' box where your ubiquitous Messerschmitts can provide excellent cover.

If you decide on a 1941 Barbarossa, turn your entry chits on the Russian border face-down from now on, along with all reinforcement chits.

If you decide on any other option, keep heading westwards towards Spain, declaring war as soon as possible (before you have declared Vichy France). Gibraltar is the critical hex in the game, and if you can take it, the

Allies will be severely hampered in destroying Italy, your Achilles heel.

The French may well defend the Garonne in strength, in which case continue ground-striking and attacking. If possible, cross the Garonne where there are no defenders. If Toulouse is occupied in strength, just screen it, and plunge ever southwards.

Barcelona and Bilbao are bastards to take. They are also cities through which the only rail lines pass back to Germany, so taken they must be. Take W1922 and W1620 as soon as possible and then isolate and take these two cities.

If possible, have your mountain units built by the winter of 1940 so that they can be used to ignore the usual winter combat modifiers as you drive towards Madrid. As soon as a majority of your corps are inside Spain, declare France Vichy. You can then land in Morocco and Algeria with a guest German HQ and his chums, allowing a southern attack towards Tangiers.

By summer 1941, you should be opposite Gibraltar, where you should attempt to isolate, ground-strike and then attack it. Remember that your artillery can bombard from W2413, so use them lavishly (if playing with this option).

The attack on Gibraltar is just a straight-up crap-shoot, so just think 10's. If you are playing with emergency HQ supply, you might as well resign yourself to never isolating Gibraltar, unless you have wrested Er Rif from the Allies.

Once you have taken Gibraltar, you must finalise your plans for further expansion. Which is it to be Britain or Russia? If you have so far been brilliantly successful, and it is only the summer of 1940, a 1941 Barbarossa is very tempting.

Otherwise you must decide between a 1942 Barbarossa or Sea Lion. I don't believe that the passive defence is any option as it will just hand over the initiative to the Allies. Furthermore, the Russians begin their counterattack from Poland rather than Siberia.

The advantage of an Operation Sea Lion against Britain is that it forces the CW to fight. Whereas the canny Brit will not have lost much prior to Gibraltar, Winnie must put his balls on the line in Britain. If he loses this, he loses all (more or less).

Furthermore, Operation Sea Lion forces the US to send everything they have got against you. This not only allows the Japanese to run riot on the

Pacific, it also gives you the possibility of destroying the vast bulk of the US forces along with the British. In this situation, once you are ashore, you relish US intervention, not fear it.

To get ashore and stay ashore, you need a port so that you can expand inland while having a secure base for reinforcements. The best locations to invade are Harwich if lightly defended, or Aberdeen or Inverness if not. The advantage of Inverness is that it is out of supply in bad weather, providing you control the North Sea, making for an easy invasion. The bad news is that it is unlikely you can extend any air power this far north.

Once ashore, expand as quickly as possible, and throw every aircraft you can into Britain. You want to overwhelm the defences as quickly as possible, and since you have more aircraft than the CW, you should be able to dominate the skies.

Run every reinforcement you can with your transports. Although it is tempting to move your transports directly from port to port to evade the enemy fleet, you actually want to fight the British fleet, so leave yourself in the '0' box with access to plenty of FTRs and NAVs.

The Italian fleet should concentrate off the Bay of Biscay while the Germans concentrate theirs off the North Sea. Your air forces allocated for naval support should be based around Brest so they can intercept into either area.

Unless your transports are destroyed, you should be able to out-reinforce the CW relatively quickly. Go for the jugular as quickly as possible. The US is going to be in the war real soon, and unless you can tame the savage CW beast, you may well find yourself outnumbered.

If you do start getting the upper hand, you should now welcome US intervention. For the next turn or two concentrate as many aircraft as you can in the sea area containing the American fleet, go for combineds (or Italian air, combineds or naval) and try to start combat. There is nothing more pleasurable than watching FDR squeal as his Lexington, Enterprise and Yorktown sink beneath the waves. Thanks for coming, Frankie.

The down side of Sea Lion is that if you do get thrown off, you might suffer hideous casualties. Furthermore, you must resign yourself to a Russian declaration of war against you. Finally, even should you succeed, you will receive only 3 UK resources, while potentially foregoing the 6 oil in the Middle east.

Funnily enough, if you are to fail, you want to fail at the initial invasion. Far better to have your fleet mauled at the start, with just the loss of a couple of German corps, rather than getting ashore, being put out of supply, and then destroyed piecemeal. If you fail early, you can still go for Barbarossa.

If Sea Lion takes longer than you expected, you may have a Russian declaration of war on Germany in 1943 if not 1942. You should have a LOT of troops on this front, and you just have to hold here as best you can. Things should go well enough in Sea Lion so that you can afford to move the bulk of your forces to this front in 1943, for a late Barbarossa.

If you decide against Operation Sea Lion, you must now do some house-keeping. While moving the bulk of Army Group Spain eastwards to the Russian border, you will also want to use the winter of 1941/42 to take out Suez, Iraq and Arabia. If possible, take Aden as well.

You might even consider an invasion of Greece. If you can take Athens, then you will get the Yugoslavs as allies after you have aligned Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. Whatever you decide, by Spring 1942, Panzer Armee Africa should be speeding towards Persia, ideally at the same moment you declare war on Russia.

The best turn for a declaration of war is Mar/Apr if the Russians are defending back, May/Jun if forward. Assuming a rear-ward defence, you need to use Mar/Apr to get to the Dnieper defence line. You should consider using a combined or two to get as many of your aircraft forward as quickly as possible. By the end of this turn, you may not have killed many Russians, but you should have Minsk and be closing in on the Dnieper. In May/Jun, you want to

ground-strike your likely avenues of attack (e.g. E1429, E1432, E1533, Kiev, Vitebsk and north of Smolensk). If E1527 is vacant, seize it, re-organise and then attack E1528.



German 150mm Gun and crew in action.

Don't waste any offensive chit you have remaining yet. It is better spent in Jul/August after you are across the Dnieper. By then, your aircraft should all be at the front, and you should be able to get good odds attacks, 5:1 +2 with an offensive chit, 3:1 +2 without. You should have 4 HQs in Russia, (2 North of the Pripet marshes, 2 south) - use them aggressively, re-organising all failed attackers whenever possible.

Depending on how successful you were in your first few attacks across the Dnieper, by the end of August, you should have Stalino and/or Kharkov, and be advancing towards the Don. In the North, the Russians may still be holding the Upper Dnieper, but Vitebsk, Smolensk and the vital hex of E1544 should be in your hands and you should be close to Kalinin.

Unfortunately, Pskov and Novgorod may well still be in Russian hands. It is worthwhile to take these vital Russian reinforcement cities if possible, but is not worth it if this diversion will severely slow Army Group Centre's assault towards Moscow.

You want to keep the Hungarians away from the Rumanians, and with the Rumanian HQ, Army Group North is the perfect place for Antonescu, stiffened with a few Germans who can at least screen, and possibly advance towards Leningrad. With the Rumanian MTN, and a German MTN, they can even continue their assault in Winter.

Further north, the objects of your Finns are:

- stay alive (garrison Helsinki and Petsamo);
- put pressure on Leningrad; and
- cut off Murmansk and Archangel.

You can do (a) & (b) when setting up the Finns. To achieve the latter, you

need to set up your HQ, your fastest Inf and your Ski divisions (if any) in S0702 and/or S0703 striking rapidly eastwards, first for S0403, and then if still unopposed into S0303 or S0302.

Any canny Russian will probably stop you before you get this far, but at the least you should be able to cut Murmansk off while tying down substantial Russian units (possibly including an HQ) on this back-water front.

Meanwhile, in Persia, Panzer Armee Africa must take the Persian oil-wells while guarding the Iraqi wells, a difficult task, especially if the Russians garrison Basra, A3135, A3036 and Tabriz. If they do, you need to garrison Baghdad, E0111, E0113 & E0115, while maneuvering a Marine towards Kuwait. This will force the placement of Soviet armies in Bandar Shapur and Bushehr, or face losing them.

If you were very lucky, Japanese peace keepers may still hold these oil wells from the original Russian declaration of war on Persia. Italian convoy points could then ferry them across the Persian Gulf to Kuwait, which can then fuel your huge war machine struggling on the eastern Front.

Over winter, you should still not let up on the Russians. You should form a couple of battle-groups based around your vital mountain units and Finns, to attack and attack. You should also use this period to get as many land and air forces into the east as possible. There should be little chance of a counter-attack in the west yet, and you need to defeat Russia next year if you are going to do it at all.

During the summer of 1943, attack as many places as possible. You want high-odds of 4:1 at least, so form yourself into as many battle-groups as possible and attack wherever the Russians are weak. Remember, you want to keep the weak units. A Russian 2-1 Garrison unit costs as much to re-build as a 7-1 does.

Your major objectives in 1943 are Moscow in the North, and the Caucasus in the South. Between the two, you just want to leave light screening forces, preferably defending on the Upper Don.

Try to surround Moscow north and south, and then squeeze the life out of her. In the wide-open spaces, Russia's face-down aircraft are sitting ducks. The Moscow-Yaroslavl-Gorki triangle is a tough nut to crack, but once you are across the Volga anywhere the Russian forces in this theatre are doomed.

Continued on page 53

GERMAN BUILDS

1939	SEP/OCT	Ftr2, Lnd3, 5 x P (15)
	NOV/DEC	Ftr2, 2 x Lnd2, P, Synth Oil (15)
1940	JAN/FEB	2 x Ftr2, 2 x Lnd2, P (15)
	MAR/APR	Mtn, Inf Div, Ftr2, Synth Oil (15)
	MAY/JUN	2 x Mil, Nav4, Synth Oil (15)
	JUL/AUG	HQ-A, 3 x Mil, Nav3, Sub (fd) (18)
	SEP/OCT	Inf, 2 x Mil, Inf Div, Nav4, P, Sub (fu), Sub (fd) (18)
	NOV/DEC	4 x Mil (incl. loss), Ftr3, 2 x P, Sub (fu), 2 x Sub (fd) (18)
	1941 JAN/FEB	2 x Garr, Para, Ftr2, Lnd2, 2 x P, Sub (fu), 2 x Sub (fd) (22)
	MAR/APR	HQ-A, Inf, Mil, Ftr2, Ftr3, ATR4, 2 x P, Sub (fu), (24)

FRANCE

Steven Jacobi

For early defensive action, play France. The defense of France is one of the most important battles of the World in Flames – Global War campaign. While France will fall, how it falls will set the tone for the rest of the game. Should Germany breeze through France quickly with few losses, the Soviet Union will be in trouble later in 1941. Conversely, should Germany stumble in France, forced to slug it out in a war of attrition, her strategic options will be limited. If the Allies are looking to slow down the Axis juggernaut early, France is the place to do it.

This article will cover the basics of playing France: the set up, defending against the 1940 German attack, and the role of Free France. It will also give suggestions for defending against a Sept/Oct '39 German attack through Belgium. This early German attack, which Harry Rowland, among others, recommends, comes before the French receive their reserve troops and before the Commonwealth can deploy in force in France. It is therefore a particularly dangerous and difficult attack for the Allies to meet.

SET UP

Scrap most of your weak, obsolete units. France cannot find enough production to build them anyway. Keep all your INFs and GARs for set up, even those pathetic 3-combat-factor units, unfortunately, and your artillery under the latest errata France cannot set up its 1937 or later artillery. This leaves the weak MTN and TRSs, as well as your bad SUBs (if playing with SiF) and your weak LND and FTR (if playing with PiF) to scrap. This should maximize the strength of France's at-start forces.

Italy sets up before France, and will likely garrison its northwestern border. To prevent Italian troops marching into France, some units must oppose these forces. Deploy the MTN in Nice and two weak INFs (or a weak INF and the CAV) to the north at 1123 and 1025. Do not use French GARs in the south because they flip if moved into the mountains. Take care if the Italian MTN sets up in or near Turin. The Italians could then declare war on you, ground strike your CAV or INF at 1025 during their surprise impulse, march their MTN across the alpine hexside into 1024, and cut off the supply to the flipped, black-print French unit. To counter this, set up an INF DIV in 1024 (if playing with DIVs) or instead

use the white-print MTN to garrison the mountain hex 1025. Or, trust to luck – leave your set up unchanged and hope that the Italian ground strike fails.

Set up your North African INF in Morocco, along with the TRS, for a fast return to France without interference from the Italian Navy. Until Italy declares war, the other overseas INF should remain in Syria. Don't let Italy invade this important minor country in a surprise impulse – that would both interfere with the shipment of the lent Iraqi oil and threaten an Italian alignment of Iraq (with Persia to follow). Tripoli is a good spot for your Syrian garrison; from there it exerts a ZOC into the coastal mountains and ports. If the Italians do invade Syria with a division off an SCS, they will have to invade the clear hex 1008. The Syrian INF, supported by shore bombardment from the French Navy, might then counterattack. Of course, if Italy cannot threaten invasion (if playing with the AMPH rule but without SCS invasions, or once Italy has declared war), then return the Syrian INF to France.

Next, garrison the Maginot Line. Station Billotte in Metz, the 4-factor GAR and a weak INF in Strasbourg, Georges and the MOT at 0929, and the 3-factor GAR at 0928. Reserve the two strongest INFs in 1129 and 1130, allowing them to advance into the Ardennes (1131) unflipped even in bad weather.

Believe it or not, this completes the French corps set-up. France certainly does not have any to spare! Try to play with artillery because these extra land units really bolster the defense. Deploy the guns as stiffeners for your line. The field artillery can support the Maginot line, with the stronger gun at 1029 and the weaker at 0929. The stronger AA/anti-tank unit should support the mobile reserve at 1231; start the weaker gun at 1129.

Base the FTR (and CVP if playing with SiF) behind the lines to support the ground forces. Forward deploy the LeO 451 LND at Strasbourg. It can have fun during the surprise impulse against Germany.

Coordinate with the Commonwealth about how best to use the French naval assets. French convoys can deploy to the most vulnerable sea zones (such as the Cape St. Vincent) to take losses in lieu of CW convoy points. Avoid the Mediterranean which becomes too dangerous

once Italy goes to war. Likewise, the surface fleet should not base in southern France where it would be vulnerable to an Italian port strike. Christen the worst 6-speed SCS the "1st French Naval Suicide Squadron," and base it in Brest for future Baltic Sea operations.

In WiFFE, France keeps most, if not all, of its navy when Germany declares Vichy. So don't squander the fleet early against the Italian NAVs in the Mediterranean. In fact consider right from the start how the various ships will eventually reach their safe havens in New Caledonia and French Equatorial Africa – the two administrative groups most likely to remain Free French when Vichy is established.

Finally, discuss NOW with your Commonwealth ally the mutual defense of France. Do not put this off a few turns because by then it could be too late. To prepare against a possible first turn German attack on Belgium and France, convince, cajole, threaten or bribe the Commonwealth to set up all four of its TRSs, along with some good CVs, in Plymouth. To maximally reinforce Belgium/France in the event of an early German attack, the British artillery, DIVs and ATR should also start in England.

FIRST TURN DEFENSE

The first turn is nail-biting time for France. France sets up after Germany; if Germany sets up most of its troops in the west (and leaves just a screening force against Poland), expect an attack on the second Axis impulse.

Germany usually will concentrate on Poland and not aggressively deploy in the west. In that case, breathe a sigh of relief and expect no serious attack until Mar/Apr, 1940. Use the first surprise impulse against Germany to safely take the war to the enemy. 'Have the Germans based their AMPH and TRS in Stettin, safe from the Commonwealth NAVs?' If so, port strike Stettin with your extended-range LeO 451 LND. Even though the bomber has only one air-to-sea factor, the surprise shifts will eliminate the German naval AA fire and increase the bomber's attack table. 'Have the Germans set up their convoys in the Baltic Sea?' If so, sail the SCS from Brest into the sea area and blast away. There is a 50% chance of spotting the convoy, and once spotted, it is sunk. 'Have the Germans set up a

fast-moving INF on the Danish border with the intention of conquering Denmark the next impulse?' If so, ground strike the offending unit (or, better yet, have the Commonwealth do it) and save Denmark for a turn or maybe longer. As long as Denmark is neutral, the Baltic Sea remains a happy hunting ground for French naval raiders.

If Germany sets up in force in the west, forget these cute ideas. The Germans plan a first turn western attack, an attack that could see France conquered within two turns if things go badly. Alarm bells must ring in both Paris and London. All Allied efforts must be directed toward the defense of Belgium and France.

Call a combined action for the first impulse and sail the TRS and INF from Morocco into Brest, then rail the Moroccan INF to Metz. All troops are needed immediately at the front!

For air moves, if the LND based in Strasbourg can get a good surprise ground strike on von Rundstedt consider taking it – a successful strike could disrupt Germany's ability to use its offensive chit this turn. Otherwise, rebase your LND behind your lines for defensive duty (particularly if playing without artillery which otherwise provides defensive ground support). Suggest a Commonwealth ground strike on the German troops massed near Belgium. The Commonwealth starts with more planes than France, and so can better afford to do this mission. A lucky hit, particularly on von Rundstedt or against a multiple-unit German stack, could stop the early German offensive before it starts. A clever German player will hide his important units in forests and keep the Flak 88 AA unit nearby to ward off the Allied bombers.

Confer with your Commonwealth ally on joint land response to the German western deployment. Suggest a Commonwealth combined action, with the Royal Navy CVs and TRSs sailing into the North Sea ('3' box) and embarking Gort, the MECH and 2 MOTs from England. These troops, save the slowest moving MOT, then land in or near Calais. This means no land moves for the Poles the first impulse, so the Commonwealth should have set them up accordingly. If playing with artillery, DIV and SCS transport options, the Commonwealth can leave its slow moving MOT home and instead embark the Royal Engineers on a SCS with the two field artillery pieces on the TRS.

The next impulse is the moment of truth. If Germany attacks Belgium, all

FRENCH BUILDS

1939 SEP/OCT Art (5)
 NOV/DEC HQ-I (5)
 1940 JAN/FEB Inf, Garr, P (7)
 MAR/APR 3 x Mil, Ftr2 (8)
 MAY/JUN Art, Lnd3, P &
 losses (11)

hell breaks loose. The Commonwealth will want to align Belgium rather than France since a French-aligned Belgium Congo would likely go Vichy upon the fall of Paris. The Belgium CAV must set up in Liege to prevent Germany's immediate capture of Brussels. The Belgium INFs should not set up in Brussels or Antwerp, where they could be ground struck and attacked in the surprise impulse. They should instead deploy at 1233 and 1234. Germany's second impulse will see Liege captured and a general advance to the west, but the critical Dyle line will not yet be breached. With luck, German ground strikes will fail to disrupt at least one of the Belgium INFs.

On their second impulse, both France and the Commonwealth should take land actions to reinforce Belgium. The French reserve – the two best INF and the best AA/anti-tank gun – advances to defend the Ardennes at 1131. Billotte, with the best field artillery and the weaker AA/anti-tank gun, moves to cover the river line at 1030. Georges reinforces the INF at Metz.

French defense suffers greatly in games played without the artillery rule. The Billotte HQ is then your only unit defending the river line at 1030. If Billotte is reinforced with an INF, this shifts the line around and leaves a lone GAR to defend Strasbourg, but that makes Strasbourg quite vulnerable. In a game with the engineer option but without artillery (the French nightmare situation) let Strasbourg be vulnerable – the river hex 1030 is now too weak with just Billotte and must somehow be strengthened.

While France covers the Maginot Line and southern Belgium, the British defend northern Belgium. The Commonwealth should advance the BEF from France (along with any undisrupted Belgians) into Brussels and 1132. The British MOT at sea (or the Royal Engineers and 2 field artillery pieces) debarks in Antwerp. If both Belgian INFs are disrupted, the Commonwealth can air transport the remaining INF DIV from England to reinforce the line. The worst possible case for the Allies is rain on their second impulse, which makes CW troop movements very difficult. In that case, the CW can

use the ATR to reorganize one disrupted 5-speed MOTs that advanced 3 hexes into Belgium. Royal Navy CVs in the North Sea, and rebased FTRs from England provide decent air cover for the BEF.

With this initial Allied set up and response to the early German western attack, the Allies normally will hold the critical Dyle River line. On the German third impulse, expect the enemy to burn their offensive chit to try to crack that line. What will be the result of this attack and what does the rest of the turn hold? Much depends on the weather, attack, and turn-end die rolls.

If Germany has an incredible run of luck, France could fall within the first two turns. But that is the unusual case, and, in any event, the Allies will have done their best to prevent it. Germany takes quite a risk with an early attack. If the weather turns bad or the turn ends quickly, the Allies will be strongly entrenched in their river lines throughout the winter. The Commonwealth, based in Belgium rather than France, will have no limits on the units it can deploy in that country. In that case, the early (and premature) German foray into Belgium will have hindered, not helped, the German conquest of France.

1940 DEFENSE

Once France weathers the first turn without incident, the French reserves can deploy. France may look forward to a quiet winter. Springtime, and German campaigning season, will arrive soon enough. It's time to start preparing.

Use land impulses to rail the eastern French factories to the west, away from the impending German onslaught. Build up the land forces; France needs every one of them. Start with long lead-time units first, and finish off with the quick ones (MIL, INF and GAR). That way the maximum number of French land units will have arrived as reinforcements by the critical May/June '40 turn. Also consider finishing the SiF SUB in the construction pool – half-built French naval units have a way of falling into Axis hands under the Vichy/conquest rules.

If playing with the artillery option, build field artillery and AA units in the first two turns. Artillery is great. It is the poor man's air force. Not only can field artillery support adjacent attacked hexes, it also increases the strength of the hex it is in, and strong AA/anti-tank help blunt German blitz attacks. If not

playing with artillery, build the Pretelat HQ and some FTRs instead.

Convince the Commonwealth to defend France in force. A strong Commonwealth commitment to France adds many turns to the defensive campaign. The argument for this strategy is compelling. Every turn the Allies hold out in France is a turn that they, rather than the Axis, build with the French resources. Each additional turn is one less for the Germans to use western France as a SUB and NAV base to disturb the Allied convoys. Every extra turn helps the Commonwealth prepare the defense of Spain and Gibraltar.

If this logic does not persuade your Commonwealth ally, bribe him! Offer to give him all French build points from July/Aug '40 on, provided he strongly defends France before then. Make this offer in conjunction with a Commonwealth commitment to lend France a few extra build points during the first few turns. That way France can also build a few FTRs to protect against the German Stukas.

With regard to build points, WiFFE presents the Allies with a wonderful arbitrage opportunity. Once Germany attacks in France, the French production multiplier increases by .5. That means in mid-1940 the French production multiplier will be 1.25 while the Commonwealth's PM will be only .75. Take advantage of this! Have the Commonwealth ship France resources, in exchange, France ships the Commonwealth the build points that would have been produced from the lent resources. The Commonwealth's existing convoy line through the Cape St. Vincent and the Bay of Biscay easily supports this trade deal – the Bay of Biscay convoys ship the French build points to England, and the Cape St. Vincent convoys ship the Commonwealth resources to Gibraltar, which then rail overland to the French factories.

Suggest that in Sept/Oct '39, the Commonwealth accelerate the Alexander HQ and build pilots (or FTRs if not playing with PiF). For the next several turns the Commonwealth can concentrate on building up the RAF FTR force. By springtime, Alexander will arrive in France allowing an extra four British units to defend the country. In the first impulse of May/June '40, the Commonwealth can declare an air action and ground strike the German front line and HQs. Not only will this draw Luftwaffe FTRs into combat, it will likely disrupt later German ground attacks against the French. The Com-

monwealth can then reorganize 7 planes, using Alexander and 3 TRSs stationed in the North Sea. The resupplied RAF will await another round of combat, supported by carrier planes from the Royal Navy. The Luftwaffe cannot sustain this high intensity air combat with the RAF and overwhelm the French FTRs at the same time. The German land offensive could stall as a result. To pursue this joint air strategy with the Commonwealth, make sure to build some French FTRs to help gang up on the Luftwaffe.

Once the German attack comes, use sound defensive tactics. Garrison the Maginot Line with at least two units in each hex, and reinforce your southern border if the Italians/Germans threaten. Do not allow the Axis any easy attacks into the country. Hold out in the strong defensive lines. Do not abandon them unless they are breached or outflanked to the north. Only when the Germans eventually threaten to break-through near Paris should these forces be withdrawn to reform in the west.



French Char B1

Deploy the strongest land units to the north, ready to reinforce southern Belgium whenever Germany attacks, regardless of the weather. Defend hex 1131 and, depending on the level of BEF commitment, perhaps also 1132. If playing with artillery, reinforce these likely points of attack with AA/anti-tank guns, and place field artillery behind or next to these hexes, preferably in several adjacent hexes. That way the Germans will have to make several successful ground strikes to disrupt French defensive artillery support.

Do not attack the Germans. Leave that lone German INF alone if an adverse combat result would see French forces flipped. Do not disrupt the army and render it subject to attack. Once in a while, late in the turn, when the Germans are themselves disrupted and unable to counterattack, the French can take that 2:1 +3 attack if French casualties will not hurt too much.

Use the Paris MIL early and often. It is a cheap, relatively strong unit; it can be rebuilt in just one turn; and it arrives at a good defensive location. Stack it in the most vulnerable front-line hex (along with another strong corps and an AA/anti-tank gun).

HQs can reorganize disrupted artillery and front line units in a land action. When the line is solid but many planes are disrupted, take an air action to reorganize the air force. Don't squander HQs' reorganization capabilities in a combined action.

Watch out for those German offensive chits. Any second line unit of strength 5 or less (4 or less if not playing with ART and DIVs) is vulnerable to a breakthrough attack. For example, the Germans use their offensive chit in a land action to attack the front line at 5:1 +2 blitz, and achieve a */1B result. The Germans then use their remaining 3 HQ points to double the strength of their attacking 8-factor armor, 8-factor MOT and 3-factor 88 AA gun. That's 38 combat factors, more than enough to breakthrough and overrun the 5-factor Billotte HQ positioned in a clear hex just behind the front line. To add insult to injury, the German offensive HQ could have taken part in the original attack and advanced into the breakthrough hex, permitting the Germans to reorganize the three motorized units that flipped in the breakthrough overrun. To counter this, stack field artillery with second line HQs to raise their combined combat strength to above 5 points. Such HQ/artillery stacks will present tempting ground strike targets for the Luftwaffe, so provide FTR or AA cover.

Watch out for that annoying German engineer. When playing with this option, the Germans can unhinge any river or fortress line, particularly if the Germans play their offensive chit – the doubled ENG can provide its attack advantage to two German corps. The fortifications at Metz and the river lines adjoining hexes 1030 and 1131 can be negated. All three of these hexes are important to hold – they are a central part of your line and permit you to use the two easternmost French resources, so defend them strongly.

With appropriate tactics, a strong Commonwealth commitment, and reasonable luck, France can hold out for a surprising number of turns. During that time, the Allies will reap the advantages of both the French resources and the increased French production multiplier.

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Soviet Strategy for WIF Deluxe

Morgan Conrad

This article gives pointers on Soviet strategy for WIF, the Final Edition. Sorry, but there is no one secret winning strategy! Instead, you face some difficult choices, each with benefits and risks. Generally, this article assumes play of the Deluxe version with all the optional rules, but most of the ideas still apply anyway.

The Soviet Union faces a more difficult challenge in WIF/FE than in earlier versions. Your armed forces start off weak, and will remain weak until 1943. You have few white-print units until then, so winter counteroffensives are difficult to muster. Even worse, the German HQs can now move in bad weather, so Manstein and Rommel remain nimble and dangerous even in the winter. German mountain units and engineers can often mount better winter attacks than the Red Army! Those four readily available Siberian resources tempt a grab by the militaristic Japanese. Various changes to the rules and sequence of play favor the mobile attacker, i.e. the Wehrmacht. A 1941 Barbarossa strategy for the Axis will be common because it is good, especially if you are playing with the optional Oil rules, which make Baku a huge target for the Axis. The forces of Communism face a nightmare situation should the Axis make a concerted attack in 1941: the German army, ably supported by Italian aircraft, attacking from the west, and the Japanese from the east.

Pre War Strategy

Russia wants a peace treaty with Japan. One signed in 1940 or 1941 is best, as it provides extra protection during 1941, and yet may draw off a little heat from the Chinese in 1939. Any treaty helps, however. If you truly play with individual victory conditions, your Japanese opponent may agree, especially if you include some form of trade agreement.

Otherwise, prepare to bluff and play “chicken” in 1940. Do not put much, if anything, in Vladivostok. This area is indefensible on your side of the frontier, and the defensive terrain on the Japanese side is all mountains. Instead, build up along the northern border of Manchuria, preparing a drive on Harbin. Have the USA make a big show of placing entry chits in the Japanese Entry Pool. Without these, the Japanese player will laugh at your threats, knowing that you cannot actually declare war without knocking FDR forever out of the Pacific war. Make threatening moves with your SUBs

against his convoy lines - maybe even build another SUB to turn up the heat. By the middle of 1940, you must either make peace, declare war, or back down. If Japan attacks you, sit patiently on defense and enjoy the chance to build your militia and do real land moves. Beg the CW for build points - it will be good practice.

Turning to the west, the key *strategic* area to defend is Rostov, gateway to the Caucasus oil. The Germans will try to reach here to cut off your access to the Baku oil, then to progress and capture it themselves. This region is doubly important if playing with the Oil rules. Judge Hitler's plans with a look to see if Speer is building any synthetic oil plants - if not, expect a “Baku or bust” attack in 1941.

No matter what you do, if the German pushes hard and gets a few lucky rolls he could easily reach Rostov and cut your tenuous rail links to Baku. Therefore, at game setup, start 2 convoy points in the Caspian Sea, so some of the oil can still make it to your Siberian factories. If using SiF, start one or more convoy points in the Black Sea. As we will see later, be wary of placing any ships in Murmansk or Archangel.

Build land troops primarily, with a smattering of planes and forts. Frankly, the motorized corps are overpriced, especially if you are using optional movement rule #34. Pay the extra points to get real MECH or ARM with better factors and the ability to blitz. Do not produce many - just enough to keep the Germans honest. SKI troops do not do much any more - they were really only useful in Snow, and the Wehrmacht now functions just fine in the snow. Once you realize that Manstein is faster than your ski troopers, you will realize that the age of lone ranger SKI troopers ravaging the Germans rear is gone. SKI troops will not be effective until you achieve rough equality, in the winter of '42-'43. This is an optional rule to avoid, since it helps the Germans more than you.

Build all the HQs, cavalry, garrisons, and infantry and especially the mountaineer which improves counterattacking possibilities in the winter. You need force pool in 1941, so scrap few units - only the 3-5 MOT and the really bad artillery. For the Red air force, because the Axis forces can keep under better fighter cover than in WIF 5, you will need a few fighters, but otherwise, long range bombers are the most useful, par-

ticularly those with ATR capabilities to unflip your troops. Short range bombers get overrun too easily after use, so avoid them until the front stabilizes. Build all your TB-3s, and try to work in the Li-2.

Should you build forts? They are tempting, especially in cities that already have river protection. Many players build a fort in Smolensk to defend the key northern rail junction that helps protect Moscow and Leningrad. Dnepropetrovsk is also tempting. Resisting temptation, this article proposes a “mobile, stay back” strategy to protect the oil, so skip those cities and build, at most, a two side fort in Rostov, and a one hexside fort north of it, extending to the river.

Forts are most effective where the German army is weakest. The Wehrmacht is finite, so Hitler can only have a strong front on one side of the Pripet marsh (usually the south), with a weaker attack on the other side. If you do place forts in places other than Rostov, time them to arrive in early 1941, after you have seen German dispositions.

In 1939, you must move into eastern Poland, probably on the fourth impulse of the game. There is no hurry to move into the Baltics. First, you must decide upon your Western defense strategy. There are two main options :

FORWARD AND BACK. You need to decide by the middle of 1940, perhaps after seeing the first few garrison chits you draw.

The forward strategy hopes to avoid a 1941 German DOW by preventing them from obtaining a 2:1 garrison ratio. If following this plan, do not claim the Finnish borderlands or Bessarabia, as this just gives the Germans easy garrison forces. Do move into the Baltics. Note that a peace treaty with Japan is of little use in this strategy, as you will want to place all of your garrison chits against Germany. Your army is slightly larger than half of the Wehrmacht, so maybe you have a chance, but only by abandoning Siberia. The main problem is that by 1941 the German chits are twice as numerous and twice as valuable. Keep track of German losses in France, how much they commit to other theatres like Norway or Egypt, the early chit picks in order to judge accordingly. Personally, the forward defense seems like too much of a crap shoot on which to risk the future of Communism. It seems not to turn on “skill”, just “luck”.

From here on, this article will concentrate on the back strategy: the USSR

deploys forces away from the western border and makes no effort to increase garrison count. If there is a peace with Japan, place all garrison chits in the east.

After the Nazis attack, you have two conflicting goals, to preserve your army and your industry. Good deployment and play will try to balance these goals.

Do not claim the Finnish Borderlands. Do not occupy the Baltic States - after all you will not defend them so they are just as good a buffer unoccupied. Beside the small US entry benefit, an overeager Hitler may attack them in, say, March/April of 1941. Forewarn FDR that if Hitler moves in, you will declare war. This avoids the surprise, gets your reserves on the board one turn early, lets you start moving factories, and, most importantly, knocks Finland out of the war, making Leningrad and Murmansk solid and safe links to western aid - the western allies can easily rail resources through a neutral Norway - Sweden - Finland to Leningrad!

Whether to claim Bessarabia is a hard call. The advantage is that you ship one less resource to Germany, and may gain Bulgaria. An alert German player must take out Yugoslavia anyway, to avoid CW shenanigans in the Balkans, so you could claim Bessarabia as soon as possible to save one resource. The disadvantage is that Germany can get Rumania "for free". Without Axis troops already in Rumania before the declaration of war, a lone Russian corps near Lvov really slows an enemy southern thrust. If you do not occupy Bessarabia, Germany must declare war on Yugoslavia in order to activate Rumania early. Not only is this a distraction, it is a good hint that he plans to attack you. Especially if France put up a good fight, and with good CW distractions, this may throw off the German timetable. Use this chance! So potent is the German 1941 Barbarossa that anything the Allies can do to throw off the timetable is worth it. This is undoubtedly the best way to defend Russia - always allow the German player opportunities to make mistakes.

Keep an eye on the Middle East and be prepared to take out Persia before the Axis can align it. Such an attack should be done late in the turn when to it is more difficult for Japanese to intervene. Should their "peacekeepers" occupy the oil wells, try carpet bombing them with your STRs before going through the lengthy operation of rooting them out of the mountains. Likewise, the CW must be prepared to intervene in Iraq. Hold this lend lease line, as the Mur-

mansk - Siberia route is difficult to defend in the long run.

Once Barbarossa Begins

General Comments:

1) No matter how well you seem to be doing, the Allies must send maximum aid. A USSR that seemed to survive the summer well can still easily find itself back in the Urals in 1942. The Wehrmacht will still kill many of your troops over the winter. The CW will run out of troops to build in '43-'44 anyway, so they may as well send the build points to you now. Sending a few build points from India and Australia through Persia is easy (until Japan intervenes), but the rest will probably have to come through Murmansk. The CW must plan ahead and have the convoy points in the right places.

2) In general, unfortified hedgehog cities will fall quickly. Check out the 5:1 +2 assault chart and weep. Avoid getting trapped in unfortified cities unless they control a key rail junction. Base no fighters there - if they end up in such a city, get them into the Reserve Pool at the first chance. A weak third unit seldom helps but will more likely just be flipped, giving the Germans another +1 die modifier.

3) In addition to Siberia, also rail one factory each to Murmansk and Archangel, one or two to Tiflis and two to Baku. If the Baltic gambit worked and Finland is neutral, perhaps move a third factory to Leningrad. These factory moves are vital. If the Germans do make a big breakthrough, you do not want your precious army tied to defending the long rail route from Murmansk to Siberia.

4) The CW must send forces to garrison Murmansk/Archangel. That is why you do not want your own ships up there getting in the way. This involves prior planning on their part, as they must have the HQ and TRSs ready.

5) When calculating what you need for defense, figure that each attacking German stack will be worth 20. That is a little high, but within the ballpark. Puny Red Army units of four factors do not look so good now, do they?

6) Do not forget that you can now rail move into or out of a ZOC if you have a unit there. This is one way for slow, expensive units to escape, and for slow, cheap garrisons to fulfill their role as speed bumps.

7) Flip German HQs! Ground strike any found foolishly outside of fighter

cover. Otherwise, try to get the Nazi to attack at odds of 3:1 or lower and hope for kindness from the dice. The 4:1 and higher tables are just way too favorable to the attacker.

8) Due to the lack of white-print units, you cannot mount a winter counterattack if the few such units are scattered all over. Keep the white-print corps together in the same region so that they can combine for a key counterattack.

9) Some times you can get away with a Combined impulse. Look for opportunities to hit Hitler's Swedish convoys. A wise Germany will ignore you and continue to do Land impulses, figuring to kill more Russians that way, but many players overreact to guard their resources. Just risk one ship - do not learn the hard way that ice can set in almost anytime and is a far harsher opponent than the Kriegsmarine. Besides, your force must look weak to further tempt Germany into doing a Combined impulse.

10) You can seldom guarantee that Germans are out of supply because their HQs can move or rail before other units move and attack. Never leave poor flipped units guarding key cities just because you think the nearby Germans are out of supply.

11) Mountains are your friends. You are doubled and cannot be blitzed. Swamps, except when they freeze over, are even better.

12) In general, scrap any unit with a higher cost than combat value, e.g. the two and three factor units. Later, scrap the 4-3 INF. Keep the 4-4 the speed on the Pacific map. You need quality and quantity.

13) Scream, scream at the CW to tie down Luftwaffe and Italian fighters. You need your air force to survive and provide occasional ground support.

14) If the Germans commit all their HQs in Russia, scream at the CW to do something to make them pay.

15) Go back and beg the CW for more resources and build points.

The key decision point is when the Germans arrive at the Dnieper. Assuming that they have an Offensive Chit and ENGs available, it is not much of a defense line. In particular, your stacks need to be strength 7, not 4, to avoid overrun. You have three options:

a) Run

b) Defend with stacks of strength 4. Force Manstein to use the Chit to kill them. Meanwhile, the rest of the boys run.

c) Defend with stacks of at least 7 and duke it out. The danger is that he is still likely to get a breach, maybe even a double move, and pocket your units.

Which option is best depends on how lucky you feel, when it is during the turn, and how much air cover you have. A German breakthrough of the Dnieper often leads to a Soviet rout, so be very wary of standing and fighting. Watch for the possible pockets and get the faster units where they can run, with slow white print where they can stand and die. In the detailed plan below, you stand only briefly, then run.

Expect no ease over the winter of '41-'42. If the Germans planned ahead and sent their winter clothing and mountaineers, they can still make considerable progress. Weather rolls, especially



XXXIX Panzer Corps Fall of 1941

in March/April, play a big part. Your goal is to avoid heavy losses so that, by the Summer of 1942, you can have a decent line of solid troops. If these can hold through the Summer, you have done your job keeping both the USSR and the Allies in the game.

By late 1943, you should move to the counterattack. Keep building FTRs in an attempt to gain local air superiority. Your FTRs can and must make up in sheer quantity what they lack in quality. Though you will need a few armored corps, do not spend too much money on them - instead concentrate on your excellent Sturmoviks and anti-tank divisions. Just one ARM, plus one or two anti-tank DIVs, will give you the choice of combat tables against almost all Nazi defenses. MECH corps are not that useful during this phase, because most of the key German stacks will contain an ARM or anti-tank gun, which makes your MECH merely a thin-skinned liability. Besides, you need to launch a

limited number of high quality attacks, so every factor counts, and it is important that you be able to call the attack chart.

The Luftwaffe still has some nasty TAC, so have your fighters ready to bounce them at +2 or better. Ideally, Hitler will still have delusions of glory, and will launch a few risky attacks, flipping much of his army. So, play it quiet during the first few impulses of a turn to give him the chance. Then, make him pay. Do not be afraid to accelerate INF. You need those big juicy factors.

Early in a turn the front is often static, and you have no obvious or necessary land moves or attacks. This is an excellent time to do an Air impulse to groundstrike the Nazis, then use your HQs to reorganize key planes in the vicinity of stricken German stacks, ready to participate in the followup attack next impulse. This way you get double duty out of the elite planes in your air force. The Germans are pretty much stuck with Land or Combined impulses at this stage of the game in order to fend off the Western Allies, so they use a plane once only. Warn Mao of your intentions - he has little use for air impulses!

Compared to WIF5 your partisans in the Nazi rear do little. Instead, you may need to liberate key rear area towns via paratroops. Find an out of supply rail hex next to a city and paratroop with a corps, late in the turn against zero defense. The PARA remains face up, and, next turn, your ZOC prevents the Nazis from rail moving in.

Eventually, you should be able to launch more attacks with confidence. Once you are the attacker, you can exploit the advantages. Get the odds up to 4:1 or 5:1, and worry less about who will be able to call the combat table. Rebase your fighters forward to provide air cover. Remain selective of targets. As usual, attack hexes which contain German HQs and Stukas. A German HQ in Russia faces a horrible dilemma, even if it has the choice of combat table. With blitz and a 'B*' result, a huge chunk of the Nazi line may fall out of supply. With assault, the Soviets can now choose to retreat it, and it will be flipped and immobile, an easy target for later attacks. Germans who choose assault also risk the loss of two expensive units, and still end up out of supply!

Do not lose sight of the strategic goal, which is to grind down the Wehrmacht to rubble. Your main fear is that the enemy will fall back, at the proper time,

to a strong defensive line. During one game I accidentally discovered a good way to prevent this. Maintain constant pressure, and keep threatening to trap small "mini-pockets" of roughly three to five corps. Most German players will continually send forces forward to rescue these pockets, often showing tremendous tactical skill. Compliment them on their skill, and complain how their forces keep getting away! Soon you will both notice that somehow the Wehrmacht never managed to disengage and regroup, and the Red Army has ground them into pieces.

Generally, your MIL are not a good value, especially if you do not have some house rule to allow scrapping of MIL from captured cities. And, by late 1942, most are worthless on the attack vs. the Germans, as are many of your weaker units and 2-4 CAV. However, these units are ideal as garrison troops vs. the Japanese. If you build them, rail them to Siberia where they are safe and threaten Manchuria.

Once Barbarossa Begins

Specific Advice:

Only allow the Germans to attack your double stacks at 3:1 or lower odds. If they attack two units at 5:1 or better your losses are just too high. Kick yourself when that happens. On the other hand, any time the enemy must roll the die in an attack against a single unit is acceptable to STAVKA. Since your double stacks are roughly 10-11 strength, and his stacks are about 20, the simple guideline is this - do not let the Germans attack from more than two hexes. You cannot have double stacks across the whole front, so they will have to support each other via ZOCs. Once the Germans move next to you in two hexes, they are threatening to "ooze" through and get more hexes, so FALL BACK.

Keep track of Axis fighter cover and try to fall back beyond it. At a minimum, try to fall back to where they have to commit their FTRs as escorts, not as interceptors. Avoid their Stukas and Ju-88 as much as possible.

Setup: This assumes all HQ, GAR, INF, CAV and MTN are on the map and that Option 34 (leg and motorized movement) is in effect, making 'B*'s hard to achieve in woods. The Germans have the initiative and attack during the first impulse May/June 1941 in good weather. For simplicity, ignore the Scandinavian maps. Assume that Germans get four impulses of fair weather. More likely, they will get 5 impulses, but one with rain, and during that impulse you can stand and defend bet-

ter. Your weather will differ, so pray for rain!

Finally, I assume that the Germans have already aligned Rumania and have lots of troops there, including stacks of 21, ready to overrun your three factor units. This is actually a very pessimistic scenario, as it is unlikely that they will have stacks of 21, and possible that they have not aligned Rumania yet.

You cannot afford too many defenders versus Japan. The 5-4 MTN, a 3-1, 3-3, 4-4, and maybe a low-value gun will have to do. Ignore Vladivostok. Until early 1941, try defending 2944, 3045, and 0445. Force hostile Japanese players to commit some real troops and HQs during the bad weather of early 1941. If they do so, quickly abandon 2944 and 3045 and just defend 0445 and Chita. Stay near cities, as some of these units may have to hop on trains to fight Germans.

Back in Europe, in the far north, you must briefly defend Murmansk against the Finns. They can have 25-something points in Petsamo, plus planes for a total of 27+. Since Murmansk is vital, do not let them get a 3:1, and make it hard to get a 2:1. Guard it with a 5-1, 4-1, and 3-3. Hex 1849 needs a 3-3 to keep them from running through 1749 to Archangel. On your first impulse, the CW will garrison Murmansk. The 5-1 moves to 1749, the 4-1 rail moves to Sevastapol. If the Finns are strong in Petsamo, the 4-3 moves to 1749, otherwise, it moves south at full speed to be a reserve in Novgorod or Pskov.

Leningrad should have your fresh new 7-1 GAR, plus some fast unit, like the 3-4 CAV, to vaguely threaten Helsinki. Add in an ack-ack gun, or DIV if you are using SCS Invasions, again, to keep the Finns honest. Depending on the Finnish deployment, one of these units may be available as a reserve.

2145 has a 5-3. On your first impulse, it moves to Pskov and defends. It would be nice to have a second unit there, but you do not have many to spare early in the turn. Maybe a spare DIV, or that reserve unit from Murmansk or Leningrad.

1842 and 1943 should each have one 5-4 Siberian who sits. You need two other good stacks of troops north of the Pripet marsh, but deploy them dispersed away from the German ground strikes. On your first impulse, they move to 2041 and 1939. They generally fall back one hex a turn, in keeping with the plan of

only allowing the Germans a two hex attack. On your second impulse they hold 1941 and 1839, on impulse 3 1741 and 1739, and so forth. (This assumes no fort near Smolensk) If the German main thrust is south of the Pripets, this is pretty much all you can spare up north. You can add a 2-5 CAV around 2036, which falls back as necessary. Put Timoshenko in charge as a reserve.

South of the Pripet marsh, you need two delay units, whose only goal is to keep Nazis from crossing the Dnieper on the first impulse. If the Germans have stacks of 21 available, you must be careful of supply, else you will be ground struck and overrun. The key unit is a 4-1 GAR in 1629 which cannot be overrun even if flipped because of assured supply through 1628 - 1528 - Dnepropetrovsk. You also need a "mighty" defender of Kiev. Use the 2-1 GAR.. The other frontline hex in 1431, which should have two tough units, such as the 6-4 Siberian and a 6-4 INF. With the woods and Kiev's ZOC, the Germans can only hit it from one hex, so it should be safe.

Kiev also briefly keeps the Germans

out of 1734. If they are not poised to move there, and you are not afraid of THE CHIT, you do not need the 2-1 in Kiev. I think of it as cheap insurance.

Start a 6-1 white print in Gomel which will head towards 1635, and your brand new, 1941 model, 6-3 INF which will shortly rush to 1634. Stalino entertains

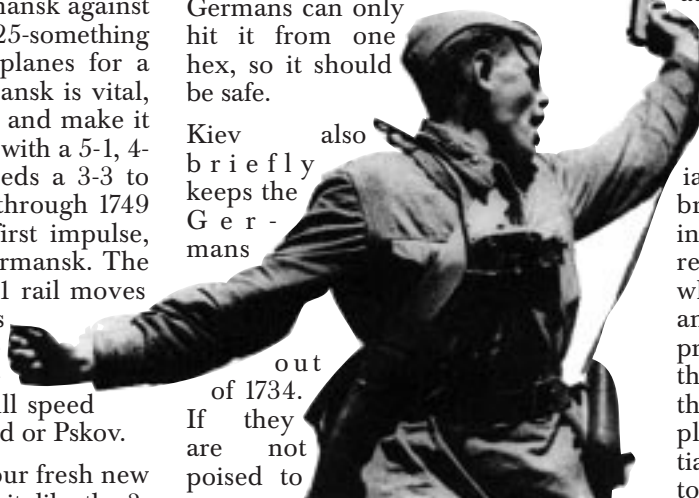
the brand new white print 5-3 INF, about to rush to 1429. 1934 has a 3-5 CAV, 1527 a 3-3 INF, and put a reserve 4-3 in 1028, ready to rush to defend Rostov or the Kerch straits as needed. The rest of your units start further back. On your first impulse move a 7-4 Siberian to 1528, and tough double-unit stacks to 1429, 1533, and 1331 and 1634. The second unit in 1429 should have speed 4. Throw in anti-tank guns or artillery as you like. You should still have some reserve units. Rail move the Dnepropetrovsk factory out, probably to Murmansk.

Unless they use their Chit, the Germans have no great attacks on their second impulse. They will ooze forward. Your ZOCs keep them out of Dnepropetrovsk.

On your second impulse, rail move out the Vitebsk factory. Things get dicey down south. Although gutsy, you can probably try to hold the Dnieper for one more impulse by deploying tough stacks at 1432 and 1433. The Germans may wait "just one more impulse" while they walk into undefended Dnepropetrovsk.

On your third impulse the units in the far south must run! The 7-4 Siberian and the fast INF in 1429 scurry bravely to 1330. Put something in Stalino so that a German breakthrough result does not let them walk in. The white print 5-3 in 1429 either stands and dies or scurries back to 1327. The problem is that the Nazis may try to use their Offensive Chit to blast a hole, then hope for a double move. Your plan must depend on who has the Initiative and who had Intelligence points to spend. Alternatively, you can do the mass panic and fall back from the Dnieper. The fast southern troops run to Stalino. The 5-3 might stand and die in 1429, with speed bumps in 1432 and 1634 - that 6-1 white print GAR makes a nice one. Placing good double stacks in 1333 and 1535 assures supply to the speed bumps. Rail out the Stalino factory. You can now see some more hexes where you wish you had forts!

Hope the turn ends, aided by your allies' passing. Assuming you went into panic mode, your losses should be light. In the south, planned losses are 3 GAR and 2 mediocre INF, while, in the north, losses may be as low as zero. You have fallen back near a nice city line where you can bring in reserves and militia. You have lost two blue factories, in Odessa and Kiev, plus the red



RUSSIAN BUILDS

1939	SEP/OCT	Inf, Lnd3, P (8)
	NOV/DEC	Garr, Lnd4, P (8)
1940	JAN/FEB	Arm, Garr, Lnd4, P (14)
	MAR/APR	HQ-I, Arm, Inf (14)
	MAY/JUN	2 x Inf, Art, Lnd2, P (14)
	JUL/AUG	Inf, Gar, Para, Lnd3, P (15)
	SEP/OCT	2 x Inf, Mtn, Cav, 2 x P (16)
1941	NOV/DEC	3 x Inf, Garr, Lnd2, P (16)
	JAN/FEB	HQ-I, 2 x Inf, Garr, 2 x Ftr2 (16)
	MAR/APR	Mot, Mar, Ftr2, 2 x Lnd2, P (17)

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The USA

Richard Dost

The USA is the least understood of all major powers. Most games do not last long enough to see the full flowering of American power. Many veteran players have never seen August 1945 and so found it difficult to gain experience. At the same time, the USA enjoys an unparalleled range of truly strategic options under circumstances which vary widely from game to game. The USA is fascinating and is the key to the game.

I have attended two WiF championships, both times on the winning team. My first five games of WiF final edition were as the USA. I have given American strategy a lot of consideration, inspired by the thought that it is the Allies who face the most challenges in WiF, and that the USA is the strategic allied power.

We cannot discuss USA strategy in minute detail like other powers – do not expect to find exact instructions on where to position each 4-1 GAR. Circumstances vary too much, the subject is too big, and I am unsure of the true value of such instructions anyway. Instead, look for principles, themes and general advice on specific problems.

This article assumes the global war scenario with most optional rules.

Prewar Politics

It is not the Axis the US must fear. It is the other Allies. They think they can defeat the fascists alone. They are wrong. Make sure they do not squander US entry chits with naive and selfish entry actions. Make sure they know the US will be generous if and only if the US economy is strong.

American power relates directly to production. American production relates directly to entry. Every turn lost getting into the war is a turn lost at the very end of the game at the height of US power. US entry sets the tempo for the game. There is nothing more important.

Consider: Should the Commonwealth attack Italy in 1939 you lose -12 for the DOW. You also lose -7 because Italy does not need to DOW the Allies. That is two extra-valuable 1939 chits. Take two turns of lost gear up (18 BP), two turns off war appropriations (16 BP), and approximately one and a half turns off entry into the war which determines three later US production increases (40 BP). Wait! There is more. Play of other US entry options like oil to the Com-

monwealth and the oil embargo of Japan will be delayed. The total cost of the Commonwealth attack by 1945 adds to around 80 build points!

Other adventures by the Allies are often even worse than that. God forbid the USSR declare war on Germany! Many a game has been cast away by “allies” through the crippling of the USA in 1939 and 1940. The game trudges on. It seems balanced in 1942, but the Axis are strong as steel in 1944. Use all your diplomatic skills to avoid this fate. A rich USA can be generous with aid. If your “allies” have not been your friends but instead have made you poor, you will have to be stingy.

The Grand View

American commitments span the globe defending Pearl, aiding Russia, fighting in Africa and Italy, all while maybe invading Argentina. Often, otherwise good players get so absorbed in the Pacific that they completely forget about European affairs. Do not approach playing the US as you would a small, limited, simple power like Germany. It is a big job. Search for the big picture.

Look at the game in terms of production in Europe versus Asia. For example, when charting production for a large fleet to squash Japan, also chart how many build points will remain to use against Germany when the time comes to finish this fleet. Detail the production for the European theatre accounting for both portions of naval construction, realizing the broad implications.

The easiest and most enlightening big perspective comes with understanding that the structure of the war divides quite naturally into three phases. First comes an Axis offensive which ends about three turns after the US enters the war; second follows a period of rough equality lasting about a year during which time neither side accomplishes much; third the Allies finally counterattack.

Offensive operations need a significant force edge, around three to two at the theatre level to do more than nibble at the opposition. Use this rule of thumb to build up for transition from the first phase to the second as quickly as possible on all fronts. Once all fronts reach rough equality, pick one theatre to shift to Allied counterattack and build the forces necessary to make the transition. Send only enough reinforcements to other theatres to maintain rough equality. Concentrate the bulk of your action

limits and personal energy where one side or the other has the edge.

A common but quite horrible mistake is to continue reinforcing a theatre already in rough equality while allowing another theatre to languish under the Axis offensive. If Germany rampages in Russia and the US carrier fleet in Pearl roughly equals the Japanese carrier fleet, then do not focus on the Pacific war. Do not worry about getting Marines to the Pacific. Nothing much will happen there until the US can achieve a significant edge. Instead, figure out how to help Russia and hinder Germany.

Consider the US timeline to victory. What will be accomplished when? The war is structured so that the Allies have only two years to retake what the Axis conquered in three. There is no use crying about how unfair this is. Instead plan carefully. Have a master plan with a timeline. Do not just randomly push green pieces around the map like an Adolf sending goose-stepping simpletons from one little country to the next.

For example, let us say the Mediterranean is an “Italian lake”, with both Suez and Gibraltar in enemy hands. The US may need to invade Spain in 1943 to have a chance to conquer Italy by 1945. If Spain is not attacked until 1944 then larger forces will need to be committed right away when that front opens up. For another example, think about when Europe will need a large battle fleet to support a major invasion. Realizing the need a year ahead of time allows preparation of this fleet. Maybe a more aggressive approach against Japan will destroy their offensive capabilities before the fleet goes to Europe, or possibly, just positioning defensive troops on key islands will stave off any Japanese attacks. Either is better than realizing the need in Europe too late.

Some responsibility can be handed off to allies. For example US players often ask the Commonwealth player to manage the convoys. Mistakes will occur. Plan for the possibility.

The Major USA Limitation

What is the great limitation on American power? Build points? Number of units? Corps quality? A homeland distant from the field of battle? None of these. It is action limits. One secret of the fascist advantage in WiF is that when they are on the attack, relatively few units are in play. Their action limits are sufficient, but when the Allies counterattack the large number of counters dwarf the Allied action limits. Action limits are critical, especially for air missions.

Most USA players deploy large numbers of land based air in the Pacific and then are trapped into using the bulk of their air missions there. Land based naval air are great but some things are safe bets. Bears poop in the woods. The Pope is Catholic. And the US cannot defeat Germany without massive air activity consuming the bulk of US air missions.

This is why a strong navy is so important. With it a single naval mission is all that is needed to deploy a crushing fleet to any sea zone. A big fleet can shift hemispheres in a single mission. Ships based in Aden can reach the three box in either the Italian Coast or the South China Sea. Land based air is limited to one or two sea zones once deployed and activation requires one mission per plane. The initial deployment is not cheap in air missions either. So, although land based air is useful, especially defensively, build lots of aircraft carriers.

When the US is really rolling, say around the summer of 1944 and later, expect a hard time employing all your assets. Try to have an offensive chit budgeted for super combined impulses most turns. A chit used in a land offensive may give some real oomph in one area. There are times for that. A super combined is generally more profitable because US forces throughout the world benefit. Super-combined impulses take especial advantage of good weather impulses in otherwise short bad weather turns.

The most obvious advice still needs to be said. Minimize combined impulses. They idle most of the forces. Do them only when there is not much to do (maybe all fronts are in rough equality) or if there is an opportunity to accomplish something significant like evicting the Japanese navy from Truk. If the US ends up taking more than one combined in a turn, reconsider option selection technique for the future.

Prewar Build Guidelines

Consider this a rough guide with some key ideas. An exact build schedule is impossible because of variables in entry and world conditions. For example, if Germany has invaded the United Kingdom then transports and land forces become a higher priority.

The synthetic oil increases the number of excess resources available for the Commonwealth. It should be built as soon as possible. Many players build one factory which is somewhat efficient because of rounding. If playing with oil

this may be unwise – the Allies are too short of resources.

Spending all available BPs every turn is the most common error players make. The USA is at peace. Saving excess BPs allows massive expenditures at critical junctures (SO '41) to deliver your carriers as soon as possible. The carriers control the pace of the Pacific war and are key to protecting a United Kingdom in extremis.

Starting ships is a high priority because they take so long to build. Battleships, important mostly for shore bombardment, are needed for the attack. Do not go overboard finishing them early; complete only one or two. They cost as much as a good CV and plane. Later the others started early can be finished to time their arrival with the '42 carriers.

Land forces needed for Pacific defense have been omitted from the suggested build skeleton. They can be built anytime before summer 1941, but figure out which hexes will need garrisons ahead of time. When March/April of 1940 arrives look at US entry to confirm you have the build points.

Notation: “+” means start, “++” means finish, BP costs in parentheses

1939

SO synthetic oil (8), save (2)

ND +1 CV (Hornet) (2), save (8)

From this turn on naval gearing rises one per turn until we build carriers in JF 1941.

1940

JF +2 TRS (4), save (6)

MA +3 TRS (6), save (4)

MJ +2 BB (4), +2 TRS (4), save (2)

JA +2 BB (4), 4 CP (4), repair CV (Saratoga) (2)

SO ++ 4 TRS (16), 4 CP (4), spend (10)

Finish the range four TRS. These can make it from the East Coast to Bombay in one turn. They carry your strategic reserve. If US production lags due to bad US entry, then replace them with CPs and/or drop naval gearing by one (two CPs).

ND 10 CPs (10), ++CV (Hornet) (2), ++1 CVL (Langley) (2), (spend 4)

Langley is OK for Atlantic escort duty. If CPs are not important because the other Allies are safe or are not receiving lend lease, then replace some with other naval builds. Keep up naval gearing up for the carriers. Remember to start building garrisons for Pacific

defense with the unallocated build points.

1941

JF +3 CV (6), +5 CVL (5), spend (1)
Where is Germany going? If the USSR is the target then CPs become important – build more to maintain a higher gearing than the following schedule.

MA +2 CV (4), 1 CVP (1)

For planning purposes, this schedule assumes gear up occurs here. Finish the BBs whenever you actually gear up. If entry level looks really grim cut naval gearing to two. If gear up has occurred and the Axis attacks the USSR, then keep gearing high with CPs.

MJ ++2 fast BBs (10), +1 BB (2), 2 CVPs (2), 1 pilot for Hornet

Two fast battleships are all that is needed until the American counterattack begins.

JA +4 CA (4), 1 pilot for Saratoga (2), 3 CVPs (3)

SO ++5 CVL (arrive MJ) (15), 2 pilots for CVLs (4), 4 CVPs (4)

Expect rough equality in the Pacific once these five CVLs arrive.

ND ++3 CV (arrive SO) (9), 3 pilots for CVLs (4), some CVPs

1942

JF ++2 CV (arrive ND) (6), 2 pilots for CVs (4), CVPs

Start your '42 carriers before finishing other ships. Accelerate '43 carriers right away if Japan is doing well. Finish other ships as needed.

This build skeleton is just a base – adjust to the unique situation in the actual game being played. The schedule gets significant carrier reinforcements to Pearl as soon as possible and creates a reserve of four fast TRS to carry reinforcements to a hot spot when the US enters the war. Decide no later than MA '41 (earlier is better) whether US entry is shot. If it is cut back naval gearing or do not finish all the TRS for the reserve.

South America

Does the USA want to bring both Mexico and Brazil into the war or just one of them? With the Axis doing well, declare both minors in the war for the help because there will be plenty of Axis controlled objectives to conquer. Should the Axis do poorly, bring in just one. An objective hex is a terrible thing to waste.

The second big decision in Latin America is whether to conquer Argentina and also occupy Columbia. Two prized resources, including an oil are at stake. The Brazilians are chomping at the bit to do the job. Unfortunately Argentina is tougher than her army appears. Should conquest take more than one turn the Argentineans will get their reservist corps and may even destroy their oil well. The Brazilians need help. When US players realize units flip when moving and cannot trace supply even one American map hex they often give up on the whole venture.

The key to conducting an Argentine operation is to use the American 5-3 paratrooper in Rio Grande do Sul and invaders off the coast to threaten the ports of Buenas Aires, Bahia Plata and La Plata. Following the build schedule, the US should have one '5' speed transport which can reach the three box off Argentina. The Argentinians have only two units to protect those three ports. Grab the vacant one. In the second impulse, transport Brazilians directly from Brazil into the captured port to attack Buenas Aires. This requires significant shore bombardment. A carrier is also required because the Argentinians have an impressive navy which can hide in Buenas Aires safe from port strike.

Conquering Argentina is more work than conquering France. Is it worth it? You play President Roosevelt. You make the call.

Defending Asia

The first consideration must go toward defending Pearl Harbor and your other islands. Disaster can strike in three ways. First, the Japanese can use their chit in a land offensive during a surprise impulse. This is far easier than most players realize. Second, they can cut your supply lines to Pearl, ground strike, and invade. Third, the Japanese can worm their way into the area by taking minor islands and using their excellent naval air to drive out the US forces from the area.

Guarding against the direct invasion threat is imperative but simple. Put two good white print corps in Pearl with a division and hope for the best. Later try to base a supply unit there, but in the beginning, scrape up a third unit. An AA unit helps defend the fleet. Finding the two white print corps is more difficult. One solution is to transfer MacArthur from the Philippines, scrap the 1936 paratrooper, and build the 1940 white print PARA. People shud-

der in horror at scrapping a paratrooper, but defending Pearl is important and there are plenty of good American units to build.

Guarantee supply by having redundant routes from New Zealand to the USA. Put CPs in lots of sea zones, backed up with CPs in ports at both ends. If all else fails use emergency supply from Pearl or Samoa. Insist the Commonwealth build one CP a turn which can show up in Australia or India if need be. Once Pearl is safe, oil and a supply unit should be placed there.

Preventing gradual Japanese penetration requires garrisoning every port and maintaining significant land based air in the area. Build and position all garrison units before war begins. Be sure to garrison every port. Put Nimitz in Samoa.

Tojo will usually not attack your possessions if they are defended well. He does not really like a fair fight. Instead he will attack India or Australia. If Germany has not attacked Russia in 1941 then the Commonwealth is probably weak. This makes Commonwealth possessions even more attractive for Tojo. The primary role of the fast TRS reserve fleet in the build skeleton is to save a beleaguered India or Australia.

Base these four range transports on the East Coast with most of the American fleet. At least one should carry a good fighter to help protect the fleet from port strikes. When war begins, or one turn later when reserve corps arrive, deploy the troops to the more vulnerable of India or Australia. If the Mediterranean is open, Bombay can be reached in one turn. If not, a stopover in South Africa is required. Try to coordinate this movement to pick up prepositioned CW troops at the halfway point and see if the Commonwealth wants to send some of their own fleet along. This is a good job for those old battleships. When the transports disgorge their troops it often seems like the US cavalry has arrived.

Significant carriers begin arriving in May/June of 1942. Japan only has a few turns to enjoy the Axis offensive portion of the game. Try to avoid fighting naval battles then. When the carriers do arrive, sail them directly into Samoa and



Dauntless with dive brakes deployed.

Pearl in a naval action. End the impulse by unflipping them with HQs and TRS. Smile! Unless something dreadful happens immediately, these islands are safe.

Aiding the USSR

Germany often cripples or conquers the USSR. To prevent this, get this theatre to rough equality. Distract Germany by invading Europe somewhere. Send US troops to Russia. At the least, the USA will find it feasible to send economic aid.

Invading Europe to distract Germany from Russia rarely works. Allied forces are not ready when the USSR most needs help. Often just when the invasion forces get ashore, the Russian player starts demanding you pass. Superior German land units usually bottle up small Allied invasion, even worse, sometimes enemy naval air sinks transports. Do not disregard small invasions altogether, however. If you are playing with SCS invasions then use cheap divisions. My favorite invasion point is Northern Spain and Southwest France. Check Italian defenses for weakness. Germany cannot ignore invasions of Italy.

Send troops directly to the USSR only with great care. Neither USSR supply sources nor their air power will be available to American forces. Most commonly, US/CW troops defend the far north, freeing Russian troops for duty elsewhere. Ideally, these forces can attack Finland removing the worry over HQ limits for troops in Russia. If Finland is conquered then aid can easily be shipped to Russia through Norway. Do not expect a quick conquest. If Persia is under allied control and Japan is not too rambunctious then is also possible to help defend the Caucasus. Be prepared in either case to make lots of land moves.

By far the best way to help Russia is through economic aid. If Germans are inside Russia, such aid will not be wasted. Russian build points are far more effective than USA or CW build points. They are spent on troops which march right up to the enemy and fight. There is no need for transports and naval actions and other such. There are no great invasions to conduct. All in all, lending to Russia is a great investment. If the USSR is under vigorous attack both the USA and Commonwealth need to send as much aid as possible.

You can get aid to Russia through Persia, through the northern ports of Murmansk and Archangel, or from the East through Vladivostok. Historically all

three routes were employed. Each has unique problems.

Persia is simply too far from the USA. Encourage the Commonwealth to send Indian production that way. Accept no excuse other than strong enemy threat to India.

Devoting CPs to Archangel which is only guaranteed to be open in July/August and spends about half the year iced up is a little inefficient. Nothing is more depressing than to set up the convoy line, spend the build points, fight off the nazi subs, and see it all come to naught when Archangel becomes ice bound in June. If Russia is in trouble then it still should be done, absent alternatives. The Finns can easily cut the rail route to Murmansk from Siberia. If it happens to still be open then make sure the Allies send two resources to the minor port or, sometimes, the USSR may rail to two factories to Murmansk before the Finns cut the line.

The best route is through Vladivostok. Historically more than 50% of aid flowed through this port. How did they get past the Japanese? They made a deal. American freighters flying Soviet flags were allowed to pass through Japanese controlled waters. In return the Soviets agreed not to permit US land based air in the Soviet far east. For the same kind of thing in a WiF game, here is an example treaty from a recent game:

1. Russia sends Japan some resources each turn until JF 43.
2. Japan sends Russia some build points each turn until JF 43.
3. Russian convoy points and transports on the Asian and Pacific or Americas maps (excluding the Caspian Sea) will

not supply units on the Asian or Pacific maps of any nation at war with Japan.

4. Japan will not initiate a search in the Sea of Japan, the Okhotsk Sea, the Bering Strait or the Gulf of Alaska. This restriction may be lifted in individual sea areas under the following conditions:

- a) Permanently if supply or oil is traced through the sea area to any Allied non-convoy point unit on the Asian or Pacific maps.
- b) Temporarily in a sea area where an allied unit, excluding subs and convoy points, is present.
- c) Temporarily in the Sea of Japan while any hex bordering that sea area is controlled by an Allied power.
- d) Temporarily while any non-convoy point unit occupies a hex bordering the sea area.

5. Japan can ship resources through Vladivostok and neighboring hexes.

This treaty helps Japan in several ways. First, Japan can use Vladivostok to ship her mainland resources. Japan can move her convoys from the dangerous South China Sea to the relative safety of the Sea of Japan. And if the USA is taking advantage of the treaty to place convoys in the Sea of Japan then the Japanese convoys will be very safe. Japan may not be able to initiate searches but it can sure take advantage of them!

When playing with individual victory conditions you should be able to strike a deal that is good for Japan even though it is bad for Germany. That is what happened historically. For this simple reason, ignoring individual victory conditions hurts the Allies immensely. Cooperate with Tojo if a treaty can be worked out, however strange it seems.

Invading Europe

Major invasions are extremely tricky. Danger lurks in every shadow. Disparate elements must come together into a whole. Thorough planning is required. Planning for what? Plan to avoid the following four common failure scenarios.

Invasion fleets move into the Bay of Biscay and the North Sea at the start of the turn. At the same time transports carry more troops from the USA into the Bay of Biscay zero box. The troops land. Flipped transports (and battleships) are stuck in three boxes. Germany and Italy have lots of time to move naval air into the theatre and counterattack. There are three sea boxes that need fighter protection, but splitting fighters three ways protects nothing. The only thing to do is

wait for the Axis blow to strike. This can lead to a disaster of the worst sort. Amphibious capability takes almost a year and a half to replace.

The invasion of Southern Portugal comes off without a hitch. Six or seven hexes are taken before the Germans erect a solid defensive line. But now there is a real problem. The invasion area is too far from supporting air bases and no cities have been taken. Excluding HQs and engineers only six or seven allied planes can fit. Germans easily move overpowering air into the area. Disaster awaits.

A load of Allied units land in France. Von Leeb is in the area along with a few high quality German corps. Normally, Allied air support would be enough to hold off this paltry force. The Germans burn a chit on a land offensive and with two forty factor stacks blitz through the Americans to the sea.

Last turn the boys landed and, in a mad dash took Rouen, Lille, Antwerp and everything between. It is winter now. After a couple low odds attacks which take a hex, lose a division and flip most of the Allied units, the weather turns to storm. The German fleet sorties to the North Sea and gets surprise. They use all their surprise points to pick targets, aborting every Allied transport. Adolf smiles more than he used to. He has stopped whining about luck. Instead, he is focused on all the out-of-supply flipped units on the beachhead.

This discussion has been depressing so far. Take heart! Plan an invasion with awareness of these dangers. Some helpful rules of thumb to cheer you up:

- Invade at the end of the turn, not the beginning. This limits the number of impulses before the fleet unflips. Spend five intelligence on the initiative for next turn. Sometimes the invaders will get a double move. Avoid invasions at the beginning of summer unless the Allies have overwhelming superiority.
- Invade when the enemy will have mud weather. Allied troops arrive by ship. The bad guys have to walk. In the unpredictable weather turns, spend three intelligence to learn the weather next impulse. The information is useful globally.
- Think about cutting enemy rail lines to limit the enemy rail reaction. For example if hex 1351 is invaded then think about how to cut the rail line

UNITED STATES BUILDS

1939	SEP/OCT	CV Hornet (fd), Para, P (10)
	NOV/DEC	Atr3, BB, Sub (fd), Conv, 2 x P (10)
1940	JAN/FEB	HQ-A, P (10)
	MAR/APR	Mar, Ftr2, TRS (fd) (10)
	MAY/JUN	Para, BB Washington (fu), Conv, Sub (fd) (10)
	JUL/AUG	BB North Carolina (fu), Amph, Trs, Sub (fd), CVP0 (10)
	SEP/OCT	CV Hornet, TRS, Sub (fu), TRS (fd), Conv, 2 x CVP0 (10)
1941	NOV/DEC	CV Saratoga, BB Colorado, BB Maryland, BB, Sub (fu), TRS (fd), 2 x CVP1, P (17)
	JAN/FEB	5 x CV, CVL (fd), CVP0, 2 x CVP, 2 x P (17)
	MAR/APR	Trs, Amph, Sub (fu), CVL, Amph (fd), 3 x CVP1, P (17)
	MAY/JUN	Inf, Lnd4, Trs (fu), CVL, CA (fd) 3 x CVP1, P (17)
	JUL/AUG	Garr, Ftr2, Lnd4, Nav3, CVL, CA (fd) 2 x P (17)

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A Rising Sun that never sets: a Japanese Strategy for the Pacific war

by Jonathan Woodger

Japan can succeed with a viable strategy in World in Flames, Final Edition. The strategy outlined here is obviously not the only such strategy, but it is one that seems to work consistently, if unspectacularly, given average luck and skillful opponents. I developed it with Greg Pinder and Harry Rowland in the course of practicing for and playing in WiFCon 1997.

The strategy elaborates on the defensive “bastion” strategy described in the players’ notes in the WiF final edition rulebook. Points made there are not repeated, so you should read those first.

The key elements of this strategy:

- 1.) Reduce China to a state of effective harmlessness by a 2-year campaign of sustained, but controlled, aggression in mainland Asia.
- 2.) When war with the USA comes, be ready to seize your basic “perimeter” objectives quickly and cleanly by the most efficient possible use of your limited resources.
- 3.) Expand further in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean, focusing on objective hexes, resources and major ports, *but only so far as doing so does not seriously expose your battle-fleet or your economy.*
- 4.) After this expansion phase, establish a defensive air-sea-land network throughout your critical sea areas. The aim is to defend your vulnerable economic arteries in strength against the Allied strategic onslaught and to lure the enemy CVs into accepting a war-deciding major fleet action on *Japanese* terms.
- 5.) Depending on the Axis anti-Russian Schedule, if possible, seize the Vladivostok area from the Soviets in a quick attack launched at a time after China has been subdued but before the USA has built up the assets to put you under pressure in the Pacific.

1. CHINA

Japan can neutralize China if Japan attacks with discipline, patience and persistence. At first, the fighting will be in 2 theatres - the northern temperate zone and the southern monsoon zone. Conveniently for your army, the best weather for attacking occurs at the opposite time of year in these 2 theatres. Exploit this vigorously.

In S/O 1939, make one or two telling blows in the north before winter. Mean-

while, send reinforcements from Japan to the southern beachheads to be ready to evict the enemy from the clear terrain and the scrumptious resource hexes near Canton during the fine weather from Nov/Dec to Mar/Apr.

Meanwhile, your northern boys should lick their wounds and receive another reinforcement or two in time to resume their offensive when the sun comes out and the monsoon hits the south in May/Jun. Your offensive thus develops a sustained one-two rhythm. Air assets should swing over to the action and aggressively support the local offensive with ground support and speculative ground strikes.

Some particular tactical points: when playing with WiF Deluxe, always try to have DIVs or MIL ready to take combat losses. This is what makes all those 2-1 and 3-1 assaults economically viable for you - China loses 3 BP corps to your 1.5 and 2 BP casualties.

As long as Japan kills two or more Chinese corps a turn and grabs real estate from them, you win this war. You can afford to lose and rebuild a few cheap units because taking Chinese resources and destroying their potential to hurt you pays off in the long run.

Send lots of planes to help your army (even CV planes if they are any use—what else do you need them for in 1939-40?) Do not be scared of his FTR—you will kill it sooner or later with your superior flyers. Keep 1 or 2 long range bombers unused and in range of the whole line in case opportunity knocks late in a turn or the enemy tries to counter-attack.

If a crazy China sets up any land units on the coast, send all your battle-wagons to shell these innocents mercilessly. Do not worry about the oil cost when using this optional rule. There are few better uses of Japanese oil than destroying Chinese land units on the first turn.

If this results in a total loss of 4 or more Chinese units on the first turn, you have probably sealed the Chinese fate there and then. (This whole strategy minimizes long-term oil consumption anyway: see below.)

Unless the Russians are up to something, march extra units into the northern plain from Manchuria. Ship your Japanese home forces into Canton and Hainan ready for the northern winter. If China neglects to occupy hex A0638,

try to take it. Otherwise, the Yellow River/mountain combination in that district is tough to breach.

Aside from this, expect to use Chengchow as your northern meat grinder. If the enemy falls back to defensive positions, march in at once. Maintain focus not only by taking resource and factory hexes but also by securing the railroads for your use, or to prevent China from using her resources.

Make no attacks if you cannot afford the worst result. Target stacks with at least one face-down defender because each +1 is almost as good as an odds shift in your favour. Conserve your HQs for reorganization if you can, but late in a turn hurl them into your attacks for the combat factors and the HQ support.

The Chinese may counterattack you, especially when you are disrupted. In most cases their risk in rolling a 3 or less exceeds the damage done you with a roll of 10. You should secretly be overjoyed if China makes this sort of attack because with average luck it will only hasten their demise.

Do watch for cases where a successful Chinese attack will kill HQs or aircraft, or put significant Japanese forces out of supply. Anticipate that danger.

All this is far less of an issue for you if you are playing with “Nationalist Attack Weakness”. For play-balance reasons I do not recommend this rule because the Nationalist Chinese combat factors are bad enough to begin with and if halved they can almost never attack once the Japanese have fought their way into the mountains and rivers of the Chinese interior.

Always use ZOCs to ensure that partisans do not step on your face-down aircraft or cut your supply. Go ahead and take a time out from the front-line campaign to annihilate these pests – otherwise they continue to disrupt you turn after turn, besides begetting more partisans.

Remember, do not rush your campaign against China. You win so long as Chinese units keep being killed at some point each turn. Wait an impulse or two to improve your overall position, as needed. With focus, China should be driven well back into the mountains after 2 years, her army and economy greatly shrivelled.

When Japan takes Chungking, the Chinese seldom recover. Even without that prize, Japan normally can reduce China's ability to fight. Meanwhile, you are using all those lovely "liberated" Chinese resources to churn out shiny new ships for your navy.

2. SEIZING THE PERIMETER

Sometime in 1941 or early 1942, war with the USA will come. It does not ultimately matter who "starts" it, although you can sure use the surprise impulse to implement your initial attack. Base your production from the start of the war on the probable date of US entry. In most games, take Sep/Oct 1941 or maybe the turn after as the target. Time a large infusion of ships, mostly TRS and AMPH, and INF, especially DIVs and MAR, to come onto the map in those 2 turns. By mid-1940 you must raise your naval gearing limit to finish as many ships as possible in time for the war. Build them in strict priority order: first fast CVs and AMPH, then TRS and fast battleships, then slow CVs, slow battleships and cruisers. Try to bring them all on in time for the war.

If you think this sounds difficult, it is. In WiF Deluxe, it gets even worse because you need to replace all your CV planes with 1940/1941 models. (All CV powers need to do this at least every 2 years throughout the war, or their CVs become hopelessly obsolete.)

JAPAN BUILDS		
1939	SEP/OCT	CV (fd), Synth Oil (10)
	NOV/DEC	Mech, Mil, CV (fd), CVL (fd) (10)
1940	JAN/FEB	Synth Oil, 2 x CVL, BB (fd) (13)
	MAR/APR	Mil, Atr3, BB, Amph (fd), 3 x Conv, P (14)
	MAY/JUN	2 x Mil, Amph (fd), 2 x CVL (fu), CVP0, 2 x P (15)
	JUL/AUG	2 x Mil, Nav2, TRS (fd), 2 x CVL (fu), CVP0, 2 x P (16)
	SEP/OCT	Inf, Nav3, 2 x CV, CVL (fu), Sub (fd), CVP0, CVP1, P (16)
	NOV/DEC	Ftr2, 2 x CV, CVL (fu), Conv, Sub (fd), 2 x CVP1, 2 x P (16)
	1941 JAN/FEB	Para, CVL, Amph (fu), CV (fd), CVP0, 3 x CVP1 (16)
1941	MAR/APR	HQ-I, TRS (fd), Amph (fu), Sub (fu), 2 x CVP1, P (16)
	MAY/JUN	Mtn, Ftr2, Nav3, TRS (fu), Conv, Sub (fu), P (16)
	JUL/AUG	Inf, Ftr2, Nav2, BB (fu), 2 Conv, P (16)
	SEP/OCT	Inf, Gar, Ftr2, Nav2, TRS (fu), Conv, Sub (fd), P (16)

* Note all build plans are based on PiF, SiF, and Asia in Flames. They also include saved resources, the numbering brackets at the end of the line is the expected average build points for that turn.

You will also have to cut reinforcements to China and even pull some units out of China for your initial Pacific assault. Expect to resume the offensive there later if all goes well at sea.

Build long-range NAV and FTR to guarantee immediate control of the South China Sea and the China Sea, and short-range NAV (and FTR, if the Allies have planes of their own) to escort your CP in the 0 box. Build 1 or 2 SYNTH oil plants in 1940 and a few CP to ship home your gains from China.

The intricacies of Japanese production strategy could form the basis of an entire WiF Annual. No other major power has to plan production as carefully and so far in advance as Japan.

Only send the carrier fleet against Pearl Harbour if there is reasonable certainty of sinking at least 2 CVs. All other US ships are trivial targets. It is wiser to leave the bulk of your CVs as a "fleet in being", carefully guarded by two corps and a FTR in Truk or Japan.

Do not sortie out extravagantly and sink a couple of 1916-vintage US battleships but:

- protect your invasion fleets from interference by enemy navies; and
- support the invasions directly if this is essential.

This strategy leaves the Allies with the invidious choice between sitting helplessly by while your invasions proceed or attacking your invasion forces thereby exposing their precious carriers to an overwhelming counter-counterattack by Nagumo's flattops.

This is what I mean by forcing the Allies to accept a major naval battle on *Japanese* terms. The last thing you want is to lose a CVs fighting the US fleet plus US land-based air without air cover of your own, in the 2-box of some meaningless expanse of ocean 500 miles north of Hawaii.

As in China, Japan must attack Pacific land targets furiously but not foolishly. With careful planning, many invasion forces will be ready to roll, so you can use your offensive chit to do a supercombined impulse. Within two turns, aim to have Hong Kong, Manila, Guam, Singapore, Malaya, Rabaul (unless it is strongly defended) and the NEI.

Keep fighting ruthlessly until all these have been captured. If French Indo-China was Vichy, you will have already

declared it yours and used it to outflank the Chinese. Now declare Siam and Madagascar yours too.

If Indo-China is Free French, you will need to take it from them. This can be tough if there are lots of French troops there, but you simply cannot accept the presence of Allied bases on the coast of the South China Sea.

You should use surprise and the supply rules to reduce the notional defence of invasion sites. Use your superb cruisers to surround invasion targets and cut them off from help. Pre-position slow, heavily armed old battleships in Canton to provide maximum shore bombardment where needed.

Any spare invasion forces can be used to seize juicy undefended targets of



Yamato 1941 Sea trials. Note the flight deck on the rear for float planes.

opportunity such as Tricomalee, Wake, Timor, Rangoon (there's black gold in them thar' hills), North Borneo, Dutch Harbour, Pago Pago etc.

Rabaul is very tough to get if properly defended. But get it you must, or you can be sure that the US will use it as its Pacific Fleet base. You cannot allow the enemy to own major ports so close to your main sea areas.

Land next to it if you cannot land on it in a surprise impulse. Put the defenders out of supply and disrupt them. You will probably need to use your main CV fleet for this purpose, but in this case the circumstances justify it.

Study the weather chart to see where conditions will most favour the offensive for each time of the year. If it is the north, attack there. If not, seal it off and make hay somewhere the sun shines, but be prepared to attack elsewhere the moment the weather clears.

If war comes earlier than you expected, do not panic (like I momentarily did at WiFCon). While you will not have the forces you need to do everything, you can at least make a start.

The Allies will probably be as unprepared as you are for the campaign, and you might even be able to grab some

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Commonwealth Mediterranean Operations

Bruce Jurin

Introduction

Italy fared well at WIFCON. Indeed, at some tables Italy prospered even though Germany was not overpowering. In many games, Italy was a fortress by late 1943 that just could not be conquered without the commitment of too much force.

Subtle but basic strategic mistakes CW players make in 1941 and 1942 explain much of Italy's strength. Focus and efficiency must underlie Commonwealth Operations in the Mediterranean. Focus refers to the portion of Harry's strategic notes about having enough to defend in areas needed to be held (out-numbered 3:2) and providing greater forces for the offensive. Efficiency refers to planning. More than any other player, the CW must place the minimum force, using the least amount of time, to accomplish necessary tasks. Many people feel that the CW is the hardest country to play. The Soviets require the most tactical skill but the CW requires the best planner.

First, let us assume that Germany has Vichied France, not taken Gibraltar, and is headed East. That is, we are reproducing the historical situation, akin to that faced by the CW player in the Lebensraum scenario.

Strategic Background

To achieve as much as the Commonwealth did historically, CW players had better concentrate on the Mediterranean and hit Italy very hard, very fast.

The first item on the CW agenda is supporting its Soviet ally. At the least, they must keep as many Italian units out of the Soviet Union as possible. Therefore, until the US entry into the war, the CW will ferry lots of build points and resources to the Soviets. They will need convoy points and escorts. The CW must prepare to garrison the Soviet Union with troops, especially around Murmansk or Archangel. Reserve Alexander and 4 land units, and probably a fighter, for this duty. Defeating the Italians comes second on the agenda.

Strategic Principles

Do Not Try to Outproduce Italy

The CW cannot wait until they have turned the tide against the submarines and have built a large part of their force pool. Often, CW players see their wonderful force pool of ships, land units,

and planes, and want to build them all. To do anything of the sort, protecting convoys will become the paramount concern. This course of action allows the Italians to build their air force and land units in strength, making invasions difficult later in the war.

Strategically, attacking forces should achieve a 2:1 superiority at least, and even more for a campaign in Italy which will confront defensible terrain, choke points throughout, and supply difficulties. The CW relative advantage against Italy will be largest while Germany pays attention to the French or the Soviets because of the quality advantage CW units enjoy over their Italian counterparts. If the CW can start inflicting large losses on the Italians, then Italy never gets to be a fortress.

Italy will be getting usually 8 - 11 build points in mid-1941, going up in 1942. The CW, after using oil (4 a turn or so) and lending build points and resources to the Soviets, will hardly match that amount. On top of that, the CW will be replacing convoy losses, perhaps 3-4 a turn. Therefore, it is unlikely that the CW will beat Italy in the Mediterranean through production. Italy will build as many units, although of lower quality. On top of that, the Italians will be able to bring them to bear more quickly than the CW in the Mediterranean.

The CW player should attack Italy as quickly and forcefully as possible before Italy has a chance to get to full production through German loans of resources. The CW starts with larger forces and must take advantage of this while Italy has their strength on the production spiral.

An even more important reason to hit Italy hard and fast is time. Even if the CW would outproduce Italy eventually, the Allies cannot wait. They need to keep Italy involved in the Mediterranean. The CW needs to keep the Italian air force, headquarters and army out of the Soviet Union.

Build Twin Engined Fighters

I am positive every reader of this magazine recognizes the following wisdom. To paraphrase Mackinder, 'Who controls the air controls the sea zone. Who controls the sea zone controls the Mediterranean.' Supply and the ability to reinforce dominate this campaign, so players must control sea boxes.

One critical advantage that the CW has in the Mediterranean is that Italy will have trouble producing aircraft carriers. The CW will have a carrier advantage. Alone, the carriers cannot neutralize the Italian land based air-power. The CW should build every twin-engined fighter, and never scrap any. These planes are the instruments of victory.

Risk the Surface Fleet

The powerful, long ranged Italian naval bombers frighten many CW players out of taking on the Italians in 1941 and 1942. They can get into high sea boxes and have high air-to-sea ratings. Entering the Mediterranean against them will lead to substantial losses for the CW.

But the CW cannot worry about that. They must remember Mahan's rules: the fleet does not exist per se to defeat other fleets – fleets are necessary to protect lines of shipping and support land battles, and to prevent the enemy from performing those tasks.

In WIFFE, the major roles of the CW fleet are to escort convoys and transports, provide shore bombardment for invasions and land units, defeat the Italian and German fleets, and help the US against Japan.

Unless the CW is reckless, there are enough battleships around that there will always be some for D-Day and invasions. The CW starts with about 20 battleships either on the board, in the repair pool, or in the construction pool. If all of these are built, then a loss of even 10 of them will not matter if it means the early destruction of Italy. The cruisers and carriers are more important in fighting the submarines, and 10 battleships can provide shore bombardment and be a credible force in the Indian Ocean, assuming most of the carriers survive. In actuality, the CW will likely have more damaged ships and fewer sunk.

The CW can stomach even the loss of a few carriers. Again, the prize, control of the Mediterranean, justifies the loss. CW battleships should defeat the Italian navy to fulfill their purpose. If the CW conquers Italy and still has 10 battleships in 1944, many of them will have only limited remaining use. In real life, the CW used its fleet aggressively. The correct game strategy mimics this behavior.

If the CW builds its twin-engined fighters they can contest the Mediterranean without getting clobbered. The fighters will partially protect the carriers and battleships and fighter losses can be rebuilt fairly quickly.

Cultivate Free France

The CW will find it a pain giving a build point to Free France each turn, but do it! The CW can mix options with the Free French, similar to its coordination with the US. The CW almost always takes a naval action on the first impulse. If some emergency land unit needs to be sent somewhere, the CW can load a Free French land unit and land it. In addition, many Vichy areas need to be attacked and the Free French do this best. If a large part of the French Navy goes Free French, then it relieves substantial pressure on the CW fleet. In Lebensraum, the CW does not have much Free French support, but they can get it in most Global War games and should use this advantage.

Operational Issues

CW Advantages in the War at Sea

At first glance, it appears suicide to put ships out in the Mediterranean, especially transports or amphib's. The Italian land based air power appears overwhelming.

Deeper inspection shows up the CW's many advantages. The CW can escort its ships in higher sea boxes than the Italians. This is important for sea box control, transport, and surprise rolls. The Italian weakness is its fighters. Only the Centauro, a 1944 fighter, can reach the 3 box. Until then, escorted Italian NAV's can reach the 2 box only, and most can only reach the one box. If the Italian NAV's fly without fighter escort, eventually the CW will shoot them down with twin-engined fighters. The Italian NAV's are powerful bombers but are weak in air-to-air. Even with Italian fighter escort, the CW fighters are still better, and Italy has, at best, a 30% of finding the CW fleet. Remember, the CW carriers provide tremendous flexibility. Carriers remain in the fight for subsequent rounds if they abort in air-to-air combat, while the land-based planes must return to base and flip. So, if the CW can neutralize the Italian NAV's, the CW will turn their carrier planes into bombers and blast away at the Italian fleet. Even if the Italian NAV's bombers find and clear through against the CW ships they face the excellent CW anti-air factors.

Of course, the main advantage the CW has is that their fleet is much larger, and their planes and land units are better. In the end, the war for the Mediterranean

will be a battle of attrition. There will be a sea-saw of surprise rolls, lucky rolls, etc. By placing units at sea aggressively, the CW forces the Italians to fight. Like the historical outcome of the Allied strategic bombing campaign, the CW wins the Mediterranean not by clever tactics, or overwhelming advantages, but by eventually whittling down an out-gunned foe. Destruction of the Italian fleet and NAV force dooms Italy.

Grand Strategy and Strategic Focus

While the fight for dominance of the sea zones takes place, what does the CW do with its land forces? Focus! The CW player should never attempt to attain parity everywhere. Defense does not need parity. Strip the defense to minimal levels to hold, and concentrate a large force against one enemy at a time.

The CW can apply a tight focus more easily than other powers at this stage of the war. That is, the CW must take out several small areas. Fortunately, these areas rarely can be reinforced by the Axis. Therefore, the CW can make precise plans.

For the CW, efficiency goes hand-in-hand with focus. The CW will always be short of land units, and has much to do. They must have the correct concentration of forces, and also bring them to bear at the appropriate place in the minimal amount of time. The CW must especially be aware of how many transports they need to pull off a specific action.

Early Italian Entry

Early Italian entry provides the Allied players with some opportunities. Italy starts the game with only two battleships on the board. Two are in the repair pool, and three are face up reinforcements that will not appear for a few turns. Italy has only two vulnerable transports and one NAV.

If Italy decides to enter the war before the fall of France, punish him! Try to minimize the gain that the Axis receives from early Italian entry. German aid to Italy can add substantially to their production, and of course, Italy opens another front in the war against France. To compensate, the Allies can use the considerable French fleet. Submarines pose only a secondary threat before France falls, leaving the Allies with a tremendous sea superiority.

Unfortunately, most of the Allied land units go to France. Nonetheless, it is a good time to be aggressive. The Allies may be able to cut North Africa out of

supply, and can reinforce difficult areas. The CW may even pull off a major coup, like taking Sardinia. Unfortunately, without an amphib or a marine, offensive action is really limited to divisions, so do not get crazy. I've seen Italy ill prepared for defending North Africa. In that case, the CW may be able to seize Bardia, Tobruk, or even Tripoli, as Italy will have trouble using transports until its NAV's are built and the French fleet is gone. Finally, it is a good time to take Ethiopia if the CW can concentrate the force.

1940 and early 1941

The CW must always be vigilant about an invasion of Britain. Some land units always need to stay there for opportunistic attacks on Europe, emergency responses (moving to Norway if it is attacked for instance), and to spoil an invasion. While the CW stands alone against Germany and Italy and prepares for the Japanese onslaught in the Pacific, they cannot make aggressive use of their land units in direct attacks on Europe. The Germans will just laugh and thank you for the free training.

Instead, try to get air/naval control of the Mediterranean. Shore up land defenses of critical areas, and prepare to counter-attack when ready.

Obviously, Gibraltar and the Suez Canal control the Mediterranean. Always put two land units in Gibraltar if the Italians have amphibious capability. I do not think Gibraltar needs forts at this stage, but often they are built earlier when German intentions are not so clear. The rule is never to even let the Italians get a 1:1, which gives them a 10% chance of taking the rock. Nothing is more important than this concept!

Egypt will have to be defended if Germany gives the Italians some help, which is likely before the attack on the Soviet Union. See the tactical notes for specifics. Land units will be needed along the entire coast to head-off backdoor invasions. At this stage, when the Germans have nothing better to do than beat you up, the CW must defend and not think of counter-attacking where German land and air pressure can be felt. Put a supply unit in Egypt if available.

Malta is the other key spot in the Mediterranean. Malta will be discussed in detail in the tactical notes. Very early, you must decide if you think you can hold Malta, which means keeping it in supply. If you do, you cannot go halfway. Deploy a good fighter (Spitfire) along with a twin-engined fighter

and some land units to Malta, and be ready to keep those sea-lanes open.

KNOCKING DOWN THE FRONT DOOR DIRECT OFFENSIVE ACTION AGAINST ITALY 1941 TO 1942

The Commonwealth must juggle many operations. As explained in the companion article, 'Rear Area Operations - Closing the Backdoors to the Mediterranean', the CW should undertake clean-up operations to close out the threats that the Axis can pose from just outside the Mediterranean.

Offensive action can be taken in the main theatre while the backdoor is being closed. Make sure that enough force is available to close the backdoor. Use the force necessary, and not a division more (efficiency). Extra units go to the main theatre, meaning Gibraltar, Malta, and Egypt.

Historically, the CW did perform offensives in Italy and Egypt – O'Connor's offensive, and operations Brevity, and Battleaxe – even before the backdoor was completely closed. Offensive action in Egypt is a matter of force disparity. The Commonwealth will face the same problems that the Axis had attacking, namely that a land based attack can move along the coast only. Otherwise, supply is impossible. Obviously, if Bardia and Tobruk are ready to be taken, do so, but even then be mindful of Axis amphibious capability.

Malta

Holding Malta can be critical. The CW needs the airbase it supplies. It can also be the springboard for further offensive action, like paratroops. Malta's location on the sea zone boundaries makes it the most powerful naval and air base in the entire theatre.

Holding Malta will be a nightmare. The Italians will constantly seek to put it out of supply and flip the garrison. Indeed, if the Axis does not threaten invasion of Gibraltar and England, the CW should move a white print unit there, along with a division. An anti-air unit is ideal.

If you play with limited overseas supply and without defensive shore bombardment, you may find Malta indefensible. Even with defensive shore bombardment, defense can be difficult. Malta must be kept in supply, and enough air cover provided to make flipping the defenders a difficult task. If the Axis must commit a large tactical air force to attack Malta, the main agenda – keeping Russia as free as possible of Italian units – will at least be served.

If you do not play with limited overseas supply try to hold Malta. You will usually keep it in supply using land based airpower out of Egypt. Any naval unit in the zero box, or a naval bomber, can be supported by a fighter (ideally, a Spitfire) based on the coast.

Malta greatly enhances CW offensive power. There just aren't that many airbases around to hit Italy directly. It is by far the best place for the decisive twin-engined fighters. If the CW doesn't hold Malta, they should look for every opportunity to invade. Otherwise, there is probably no alternative to clearing out North Africa first, taking Tripoli, and leapfrogging. In real life, Gort commanded Malta during the critical period. Putting Gort on Malta really helps, if he can keep in supply. He allows a third air unit, and allows reorganization.

Further operations

With Malta in hand, the CW will always have a chance to invade Sardinia. Corsica can also be useful especially as a feint against southern France. These two islands provide bases for aircraft and staging areas for land units, especially paratroopers. If Greece has been invaded, Crete can be very worthwhile but is hard to take because of all of the mountains.

I have no clear advice on an order for winning the land war. It depends too much on where the Italians are. Usually, try to clear out Africa first, and then Sardinia and Corsica, if only to avoid the Italian production multiple increase. Tactical considerations will dominate. In amphibious combat, you must take what is available and then reinforce massively, instead of following a fixed plan. By controlling the air and sea, the CW can land anywhere, and so should hit the most vulnerable spots.

Never do what the CW did historically – fight up the length of Italy. Always use amphibious capability to attack along an East-West coastal frontage. If the Axis has conquered Yugoslavia and Greece, these become potential invasion areas and tie up Axis troops if the CW maintains an amphibious threat. Once the CW lands in Italy, align Yugoslavia if it remained neutral.

Do not expect to defeat Italy economically. Their factories are mostly in the north and there are several rail lines from Germany.

The assault on Italy proper should be proceeding by late 1942 if all went

according to plan. US help will speed the progress of the Mediterranean campaign.

PRODUCTION

By 1942, the CW needs to build for offensive warfare. The CW should have at least one amphib. Also, build the Royal marines in 1941. Only twin engine fighters and Monty should have priority over the marines. The paratroopers can also be useful, but amphibious warfare is usually more useful than paratroops.

Build the good anti-air capital ships. With extra build points, consider laying down the Conqueror and the Thunderer. These are great ships, costing only 5 build points each. They are about as good per build point as any surface unit. Of course, if you build them, start early or they arrive too late for much use. Alternatively, build them a little later, and you can be more aggressive with the fleet on the board.

At all times, make sure that the CW has at least 4 transports and amphib. Nothing gets done without these ships.

If all goes according to plan, Italy will be on the defensive by 1942, and should be conquered in late 1943, unless too many of those grey pieces arrive. In that case, the campaign succeeded in drawing away Germans from their more important tasks elsewhere.

Tactical Notes.

DEFENDING EGYPT

Go to the defensive in Egypt once German sends units to Africa. Anchor a defensive line with the Quattara Depression. If the CW defends Alexandria with 2 units and two units in 1502, Egypt stands pretty much impregnable from overland attack out of Libya. Placing forts in Alexandria will make it even stronger. If you do place forts there, recognize that a sea invasion is a greater danger than an attack from hex 1602. The Italians need practically their entire fleet for shore bombardment if they wish to take Alexandria. The Axis can attack Alexandria by sea and from the coast. Attack from hex 1602 requires 3 HQ's to be in supply from Bardia. So much of a force is unlikely.

The biggest threat to Egypt is not the direct attack from Libya, but a frontal assault against the coast along with assaults from the rear. Defending Egypt becomes an adventure in defending against invasions. Port Said and Damietta are particularly vulnerable, followed by Jaffa and Haifa. I recommend putting two units in Port Said, the most

important of these ports. If the Axis invades Damietta, CW units from Port Said can move to hex 1303. Of course, with enough pressure, Egypt cannot be held. The CW needs to damage the Italian transports regardless of its land defense. Early on, if Italy and Germany have many land units and air units, it is more important to defend Palestine and the Egyptian rear than attempting any CW advance from Alexandria. Always pay most attention to the Italian marine units and amphib. The defense of the Egyptian coastline will ultimately rely on the naval and air battle.

The CW must make Egypt difficult to take. The CW starts with Wavell and two territorials – a reasonable start at strong defense. Ideally, the fastest units built should go to Egypt. Armored and mech units can be reorganized by Wavell without penalty. More important, their speed is useful in the desert, allowing a shift to offense quickly when the opportunity arises. When the CW attacks, they can move forward from Alexandria, declare emergency HQ supply, and take Bardia from stunned Italians. CW mobile units have few uses elsewhere on the board.

COMMONWEALTH HEADQUARTERS

Commit Alexander to the Soviet Union, and Wavell and Montgomery to Egypt, leaving Gort for Iraq, Persia, moving to Malta, and the like. Gort is the most efficient headquarters for supply and to risk becoming a casualty. If the CW does not need both Wavell and Montgomery in Egypt, one may be left in England, or sent to India where Wavell went historically, although an armored HQ may not belong in India. After building Montgomery, consider building Mountbatten ahead. (I know

he stinks, but he shows up in India at the exact right time! He can also give emergency supply to three units very useful in Burma in bad weather.)

FLEET DEPLOYMENT

Always use the battleships Renown, and Queen Elizabeth and the carriers Formidable and Victorious in the Mediterranean. Together these 4 ships have 12 anti-air factors. Put three other battleships and 1 or 2 Cruisers with 2 AA factors and you are at 21, giving a lowest of 3 against one plane and a lowest of 2 against 2. These will not stop the Italian airforce but will restrict damage substantially. As the more modern ships, battleships Howe, Duke of York and Anson and the carrier Illustrious complete, assign them to the Mediterranean. All four have good anti-air ratings.

As well as these three carriers and 5 battleships, the CW will probably have many CA's at Gibraltar and Aden which can be used either for anti-sub duty or for work in the Mediterranean as operations warrant. A couple more old battleships, as available, should also berth in Gibraltar – possibly replacing two of the new battleships which will often move around the world using their long range for strategic flexibility (Howe and Anson in particular). As Italy takes losses, release battleships for the submarine war unless the Germans haven't built up their U-boat threat.

This force will give the CW rough parity with Italy in a sea fight. Italy has about 8 battleships. These battleships are quite good, but again the CW can afford to take more losses than the Italians because they start with more, and, in the long run, CW airpower will destroy them. Unless they cower in low sea boxes protected by short range fighters, the Italian surface fleet must risk defeat by the CW carriers.

If the CW runs a particularly important mission (moving an HQ to Malta, for instance) they can easily get to the 29 column of anti-air. Even if 2 bombers get through the CW still gets a 1/1 for an anti-air effect.

Be aware of the specific abilities of the CW ships. Place the best shore bombardment ship – old, slow Rodney where land fighting rages, not necessarily in the Mediterranean.

This deployment allows the CVL's (Eagle, Argus, Hermes), and the Furious and Ark Royal for other duties. When the action gets hot the Ark Royal and possibly Furious can be also used in the Mediterranean. The CVL's are

best used for sub hunting and escorting the Murmansk run.

Remember that Free France's ships should be helping, also. If Free France doesn't want to risk ships in the Mediterranean campaign, at least they can help with anti-sub duty.

Do not fear over-committing forces to the Mediterranean. Be careful about frogmen. The fleet in Gibraltar can do little about them besides placing pickets. The CW may be better off placing the Eastern Mediterranean fleet in Aden than Alexandria if the Italians have frogmen around.

In real life, the CW tried to maintain capital ship parity or slight superiority. Italian entry found Italy weak with few battleships. The CW had Force H in Gibraltar, consisting of the Ark Royal, Valiant, Resolution, and Hood, and the Mediterranean Fleet in Alexandria consisting of Eagle, Warspite, Ramilles, and Malaya. When the new Italian battleships joined their fleet, the CW transferred in the Illustrious, moved the Valiant to Alexandria, and another battleship to force H. After the Taranto raid, the Ramilles and Malaya were released for convoy duty. The Free French fleet performed more duties as the CW shifted to the Far East. The CW was able to de-emphasize battleships in the Mediterranean because the Italian fleet was so passive and suffered from lack of oil, but did bring in land based aircraft and some of its best carriers.

Conclusion

In WIFFE, the CW player will almost always need more force than they did in real life, since the historical successes of Taranto and Matapan will be hard to replicate. Of the three Axis powers, Italy proved easiest to knock out of World War II. British Empire and Commonwealth forces made this true. In WIFFE, the CW, operating with focus and efficiency, can achieve equal results.

I would like to thank many of the regulars on the World In Flames list on the Internet. Some of the subtler ideas come from them. I especially wish to thank Andrew Hackett who talked through many of these ideas with me. I also wish to thank Morgan Conrad and Steve Jacobi for laying out the issues in attacking Persia, and to John Bosch for explaining them to me.

COMMONWEALTH BUILDS

1939	SEP/OCT	Mil, CV, CA London (fu), CV (fd), CVP0, P (9)
	NOV/DEC	Mil, Ftr2, CA Suffolk (fu), Trs (fd), P (9)
1940	JAN/FEB	HQ-I, Ftr3, CA Frobisher (fu), CV (fd), P (13)
	MAR/APR	Mil, Ftr2, CV Indomitable (fu), Amph (fd), 2 Conv, CVP1, P (14)
	MAY/JUN	2 x Mil, Ftr3, Trs (fu), Conv, 2 x CVP1, P (15)
	JUL/AUG	Para, Ftr2, BB QE (fu), 3 x Conv, 2 x CVP1, P (16)
	SEP/OCT	Mil, CV, Trs (fu), CVL (fd), 2 Conv, 2 x CVP1, 2 x P (16)
	NOV/DEC	Inf, Lnd4, Amph (fu), Conv, 2 x CVP0, 2 x P (16)
1941	JAN/FEB	Mar, 2 x Lnd4, CV (fu), 2 x CVP1, P (19)
	MAR/APR	Inf, Ftr2, 2 x Lnd4, CV (1942 fd), Conv, 2 x P (21)

US and the Road to War

"And while I am talking to you mothers and fathers, I give you one more assurance. I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars."

Lawrence Whalen Jr.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Speech, 30 Oct. 1940, Boston.

Design

During the development of "World in Flames – Final Edition" the method for US entry received a major overhaul. A radical change to the model for the US path to war was proposed. Harry eventually chose a different system.

Harry chose a system more in line with the view of history. In particular, selecting an option did not necessarily slow the path to war, and you were actually required to select some options in order to declare war. With this as a model, there could be new options added. Unfortunately, space constraints did not permit these in the game as issued, but now there was an opportunity to produce an extension of the system that makes the US entry system even more intriguing for the US player and we are happy to present it to you.

The charts are color coded with the explanations of all the options included in the "98 WiF Rules Addendum". This should make referencing them easy.

You will also find a few changes on the charts from the regular game's concept. For example, lend lease and lent resources use just one entry level for all countries, but you roll for each country added. If the Axis decides on a Russia first strategy, Russia can receive lend lease first.

Although it is often felt the US entry rolls for Russian action are uncommonly high, they cannot be changed because of play balance considerations. Until 1941 US opinion historically lumped Russia in with Italy and Japan as just another German lackey, but we must suffer this inaccuracy.

This chart replaces the one included in the game. The text of the Rules Addendum, or the chart, specify the only rule changes. If you have any questions concerning use of this aid please call Larry Whalen Jr. at:

The GameKeeper
1-401-351-0362
email: fmf@pipeline.com

Strategy

"War is a contagion."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, 5 Oct. 1937, Chicago.

US entry seems to be one of the most talked about systems in the game. The original intent was to have the base date of US arrival be MAY/JUNE, 1942 with a variance of plus or minus three turns so long as the Axis followed a somewhat historical path. New historical information makes this date the earliest Roosevelt might have engineered war, but, perhaps surprisingly, he aimed for war with the Germans.

US ENTRY CHITS - STRATEGY

How can you push the US into the war at the earliest opportunity? First, analyze the US entry chits for the game you are playing. Remember, the values differ if playing with the new AsA/AfA update.

The chart displayed at the bottom of the page gives you year by year totals and average chit value, but not the full story. You will have drawn some chits when you add the 1940 chits to the 1939, and many chits will have been drawn when you add the 1941 chits. You need to determine your average future draw taking this information into account.

Here are some helpful statistics to help determine this. First we have to determine the frequency of each chit. The layout below has the chit values on the left and the year across the top; the count is represented as #/# = Classic/Deluxe. Using this information we determine the expected chit values per year and our actual expected entry level.

Value/Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	Total
0	3/4	6/8	0/0	0/0	0/0	9/12
1	4/6	5/6	1/1	0/0	0/0	10/13
2	5/6	4/5	2/3	1/1	0/0	12/15
3	6/7	2/3	3/4	2/3	1/1	14/18
4	4/5	1/1	2/3	3/4	2/2	12/15
5	1/2	0/0	2/3	3/4	4/4	10/13
6	0/0	0/0	1/1	2/2	4/5	7/8
Total Value	53/69	23/29	38/52	47/59	55/61	216/270
Average by year	2.3/2.3	1.3/1.3	3.5/3.5	4.2/4.2	5/5.1	2.92/2.87

Now based on the frequency and the expected number of draws, we estimate each year's chit value after adding the next year's chits.

Year	Classic	Deluxe
1939	2.3	2.3
1940	1.8	1.8
1941	2.9*	2.9*

*This is based on Germany not declaring war on Russia in 1941. If Germany and Russia do go to war, the chit average will drop to about 2.19 – a big difference. Calculations for the future years require the knowledge of whether or not Germany and Russia are at war. In 1942, the US will be in the war shortly due to drawing two chits a turn.

With knowledge of the expected chit draws, we can formulate a plan. Our plans should include: (1) on which map the US wishes to be first at war, (2) a method to inform the other Allies whether to take actions, (3) which actions the US optimally wants to select for war on a specific map, (4) where to place chits in the US entry phase, and (5) when to start rolling on the "It's War" chart.

Place the initial three US entry chits on the European map. This gives the Allies freedom to perform actions that might be necessary. The expected chit total of 7 times 1.5 results in an average entry level of 11.

Expect to gain at least one chit during the first turn while losing one or two when Russia occupies Poland. Thus, without any additional Axis actions, expect to end the turn with one chit in the European pool worth either 2 or 3. It is a long way to war.

How do you tell your Allies when to slow down on actions and when to speed up? This should be kept simple, but is a major part of planning. If, for

example, the initial draw came out three "0's" or a mixture of "0's" and "1's", tell Russia to declare war on Persia or the Western Allies to declare on Italy.

This serves two purposes – it gets the low chits out of the entry pool and it forces the Axis off their timetable to deal with the problem of the Allies being active early.

With a strong initial draw, slow down your Allies' actions. This can be done in a number of ways. For example, flag a certain entry option for your Allies to take as notice for a summit conference. If you take the flagged option on your first opportunity, your Allies are cued that you started the game with a high entry level. They may reconsider some of their aggressive actions until a later time to assure early US entry.

In 1940, you must decide where to place your entry chits. Normally, place all the chits you get during the US entry phase on the Pacific map, for two reasons: First, Europe, unlike the Pacific, generates its own chits through Axis actions. Second, some chits in the Pacific will be needed to perform actions there. Again, if the 0's show up in this pool, have the Allies perform actions such as Russia or even the Commonwealth declaring war on Japan or others. With good chits, delaying aggression will often serve the long term Allied good.

When 1941 arrives how do things change? The value of the chits increases dramatically, but Axis actions giving the US chits slow dramatically, and, should Germany go to war with Russia, the value of the chits will be indeterminate. The placement of the US entry phase chits is key in 1941.

Put most or all these chits in the European pool. A complete examination of the reasons would require an article on US strategy, not entry. For now, consider: The Allies have two brittle major powers, the Commonwealth and Russia. The loss or crippling of either one generally means the end of the war. As Franklin Delano Roosevelt quickly discerned, Japan could not break or defeat either of these two powers, but Germany could. This is true in "WORLD IN FLAMES" as well.

"Japan will have to declare war in order to gain more objectives."

Japan generally targets either Commonwealth or US controlled objectives. In order to gain these objectives Japan will have to declare war while Germany gains nothing by a declaration of war on the US, and is already at war with the Commonwealth.

With a US entry first against the European Axis, the US can still fight an indirect war with Japan. Using Stillwell, the US can send 2 units into China and they can even trace supply to him. This tremendous advantage allows the US to pre-deploy units for the attack on Japan, as well as help in China's defense.

In addition to the use of Stillwell, the US or Commonwealth can sortie some ships or planes into the Japanese convoy routes. Should the Japanese not react, they risk the loss of the majority of the Japanese merchant shipping. The Allies force the Japanese to look to their own defense and often, to a pre-emptive declaration of war on the Allies.

Once at war in Europe war in the Pacific will follow very rapidly

For these and other reasons I recommend placing chits in Europe in 1941. Once at war in Europe, war in the Pacific will follow rapidly, for as Roosevelt said "*War is a contagion*". Early US entry can have the greatest impact in European operations.

Sometimes players may decide for early war in the Pacific. War in the Pacific will generally come even more rapidly than war in Europe would have. Remember whichever side you put the chits on you should be in the war by May/June of 1942. Early setbacks in chit draws should not cause despair: in 1942 the value of the chits increase and you pick 2 a turn. Your path to war will conclude soon.

A final word on US entry: the Allies should do everything possible to gain chits for the US while not losing more than necessary. Support minors where possible and even consider not having Russia occupy the Baltic states. The sooner the US enters the war the sooner the Allies can go on the offensive to win.

Options

"It is the duty of the President to propose and it is the privilege of the Congress to dispose."

Franklin D. Roosevelt, July 23, 1937

What options should the US select and when?

Play of certain options depend specifically on the course of your game. Other options should be selected in every game. When to choose these nearly necessary options can be examined here, as well as checking how many chits will be required in the entry pool to make the choice.

18. US sends resources to Allies - Select this first and as soon as possible. Normally, the US can select this by May/June, 1940. To calculate: by the end of 1939 you should have 3 chits (or more) on the European side totaling about 7 for a US entry level of "11". Placing chits on the Pacific map in 1940, the first two turns add about 3 in value or 1.5 to the European side. By May/June 1940, with the Axis actions, expect about 7 chits in Europe, normally more than enough to achieve the 18 required. If you drew many "0's", make sure the other Allies are very active and sending those chits back into the common chit pool.

28. Gear up production - You must be at the "28" level on both maps – thus this takes a little longer than expected. Normally, gear up requires somewhere between 13 and 16 chits and should happen by mid 1941. Balancing the pools for this key gear up partly explains why the 1940 chits should go in the Pacific pool. You should have a minimum of 6 there and as many as 8 chits in Europe, giving a Pacific value of about 14 time 1.5 or 21 of the required "28" level before adding in the European contribution. The European situation cannot be predicted so well because so much hinges on Axis operations. Normally, by May/June 1941, you will have a minimum of 5 chits in Europe for an average value of 11, or a level of "24" there, not quite enough to gear up. Activity by the Axis in Europe greatly improves your chance to choose this option early.

31. Relocate fleet to Pearl Harbor - This option is a necessity. It helps control the loss of chits on the Pacific map as well as making it easier to declare war on Japan. Expect to choose it in mid 1941; it will require between 12 and 14 chits.

33. Lend lease to Allies - Your allies immediately employ the weapons you give against your future opponents.

It will generally be available for selection towards the mid to latter part of 1941 when 13 to 17 chits have accumulated in the two pools. Take it as soon as possible.

43. Pass War Appropriations Bill - Besides increasing the US production it makes the declaration of war easier. This will generally require about 20 chits and should occur at the end of 1941 or beginning of 1942.

These are the minimum options I believe necessary before war. Other options to



1997 World in Flames Championship

At last the day arrived, August 9, 1997.

The night before gaming began, I held a preliminary meeting to divide the players into groups wanting to play with Africa or without, which determined table size. With this in hand, players matched up according to rule and version preferences, sometimes after lengthy, but friendly, discussion over optional rules. Many players discovered that rules their local group "always uses" were rules that other groups never play. Once players found their game assignments, counter punching could begin.

There were nine games with one more starting later as a Brute Force scenario. Of the 10 games, only one table played Classic and even there they used "Planes in Flames". Tournament players prefer Deluxe, based on this convention! I intend to track this trend in future conventions.

Sunday morning saw everyone setting up. By early afternoon, World War II raged on every table, save one where a misfortune prevented an expected player's arrival. Finally, they started as a three player game with hopes for another player from a table ending early, or an unexpected attendee.

Studying the games at the various tables definitely gave me a different perspective on how gamers from other parts of the world play, but I detected a consensus among the Axis on what to do. Attack Russia early and often as they are the weak link in the Allied cause!

To refer to the final results as you read this article look on page 55. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves here and we are certainly looking forward to the next WIFCON.

For a blow by blow description of the battle of the century see "The Battle of the Titans" article on page 36.

"German aggressiveness leads to early attack on Spain!"

The war opened with a German assault into Poland, and in the second impulse, they turned to attack Belgium, unhinging the French front. With minimal British aid, the French heroically held

Paris until May/June 1940. The Germans belligerently bypassed most of the French army to rush to the Spanish frontier and declare war on Spain. Once they established their foothold in Spanish territory, France was Vichied.

While all this was happening in Europe, Japan attacked China at every opportunity. The Japanese soon occupied Chungking. We considered a Russian declaration of war on Japan to ease the crunch, but we held off due to fears the Germans might turn back and take advantage of the situation.

In May/June 1941, the US declared war on Japan. The European Axis immediately declared war on all the South American countries and some other countries as well. The Axis hoped to so increase tension that the US would stay out of the war in Europe for a time. This ploy backfired when Russia took advantage of the high tension to declare war on Italy and Persia leaving the US in good position to declare war on the European Axis. A bit of chit counting by the Axis could have saved them a lot of grief in this case. After the US declared war on Japan, the US had only a 10% chance of declaring on Germany & Italy, but once the South American DOW's added so many chits to the European pool, the Allies could do whatever they needed to bring the tension level down to that needed for a DOW.

The US prewar builds aimed at a Europe first strategy. Japan had free rein. In Europe, Germany immediately came under attack; the Western Allies secured a foothold in Denmark and followed with a conquest of Finland. Unfortunately, we frittered away our good position and allowed the Germans to liberate Finland later.

The Western Allies failed to draw enough enemy force away from Russia and did not hit hard enough when we had the opportunity. The US failed to build enough transports and Amphibs.

In 1943, Germany seized Rostov in a glorious assault during a blizzard and broke the Russian back with a vicious offensive in the north. If the western allies had done their job properly, the Germans would not have had the troops to launch this offensive. Thus the USA team fell to defeat – American honor must await a rematch.

Lawrence Whalen Jr.

Partly because my other duties left insufficient time for further play, the game was adjudicated on turn 24 with no time penalty. Neither side was even close to having time run out.

"Offending Axis dice mysteriously lost in Narragansett Bay!"

Game 2 saw old friends meeting once again. They had spent months sorting out which rules they would use, and in the end decided on most optional and Super Deluxe Rules.

The Axis planned a conservative game plan with a joint 1941 attack on Russia by all Axis powers. Operations started off well, but by the summer of 1940, things had gone wrong for the Axis. The weather did not clear up until J/A and when the Germans launched their attack with their offensive chit they rolled three 1's on their attacks. Despite low French rolls also, most of the German Army was dead or flipped and only Brussels was taken. Under the influence of the short turns and poor dice rolling the German player, Eric, ventured out for a walk to contemplate fate. Along the way the offending Axis dice found their way into Narragansett Bay.

The tempo for the rest of the game now seemed set. Winter set in quickly and not until the fall of 1941 did the Germans reach and take Paris to establish Vichy France.

With the late start the Axis decided to launch a 1942 attack on the USSR and spent the rest of 1941 and early 42 smashing the Royal Navy. Surface units and CPs took a pounding but then the weather of 1942, the worst in recorded history, set in. Weather was terrible in J/F and M/A giving an all clear impulse to start off M/J 1942. Following the saying, "Fortune favors the bold," the Germans, Italians, and Japanese DOWed the Russians. That impulse was the one of the few clear weather impulses the Germans would see in 1942. The Germans enjoyed only 2 impulses of clear weather that M/J. The Germans advanced to the Dnieper and around Minsk in the north. Set to play their chit and smash the Russians, the Germans waited for the long clear turn of J/A.



That turn never came. The weather roll was a 10, putting rain in the arctic. The Germans played their chit anyway and smashed into the Russian defenses along the Dnieper, but the same generals that could not break the French lines in 1940 still commanded in 1942 and a series of 1's stalled the Germans flipped or dead west of the Dnieper. The following 3 impulses saw 3 consecutive 10's rolled for weather and the last two turns were no better. All in all the Germans had only 2 impulses in 1942 where there was clear weather in the Arctic and the North Temperate. This doomed the Axis.

Axis play continued defensively until the end of 1943, but by then the writing was on the walls. The Russians, with massive lend lease and few losses in land or air units in 1942 pushed the Germans back into Poland and took Rumania. US/CW forces forced an Italian surrender in S/O 1943 and the US put pressure on the Japanese. The Axis gave up.

In 20/20 hindsight, the Axis should not have DOWed the Russians but played more defensively, thereby keeping the Allies off the shores of Italy until 1944. Both sides played a solid game. There was no great Allied play or poor Axis play. The Allies had good dice; the Axis had poor luck on land – at sea the Axis did well, but the game was lost in Russia.

In game 3, we had some tremendous personalities and fun. Here, a team from California looked to play every option, and play they did against a very lively team from Texas. The Italian player at this table, Robert Guerrero, was one of the most enjoyable opponents at any of the tables. Every day he made his appearance in Jodphur boots while strutting around the table proclaiming his intent to restore the Roman empire – then he proceeded to do it.

Italy truly ruled the Med and tried for more, but the Axis seemed to have some internal conflict. While Germany conquered Yugoslavia, Italy conquered Greece – if Germany had not gone after Yugoslavia Italy would have had the opportunity to align it. This could have helped tremendously later in the game.

In the Pacific, Japan almost conquered China and grabbed the Pacific island perimeter, but the US had started to punch some holes in it, having acquired

Kwajalein and begun to put pressure on Truk. On Sunday, when this game had to be judged, it was in turn 27 and the Axis had exceeded their time by a large margin. This added a -26 to all their scores while adding +13 to the Allies and is one of the reasons for the large differential. Without the time penalty it was a closer game. Italy cannot carry the Axis, as we all know, but there wasn't a player at this game that didn't have fun.

Game 4 played the most turns of any of the games and, again, time played a part. In what would otherwise have been a hard-fought draw, the Allies exceeded their time which damaged their score dramatically.

This game had players of all levels with the US player, probably the most experienced, playing with the least experienced team. This contributed to the time problem.

The Allies had a -16 time penalty while the Axis had a +8. Absent this penalty, the Japanese/Italian player would have still been first, but all the Allies would have finished ahead of Germany with the US player in second.

This game saw little US activity early as they felt the US progressed slowly towards war, but the US came to life with a rush and entered the war by the beginning of 1942. The US grabbed a few overseas possessions which helped make the game a draw, but they could not turn the tide. Russia played a fairly strong game, but he made a very high bid giving him a tough position to play.

Overall, the less practiced Allied team took on a hard position to overcome with their high bid. Achieving a raw score of a draw required too much time which led to their downfall. It still seemed a good game.

Game 5 featured so much wild action it will be written up for an LOC replay. Look for it in a future issue.

When adjudicated on Sunday, players discussed recording the positions and trying to get together to finish the game. I'm sorry they didn't – this game had many twists and turns. Judgments do not satisfy as much a actual final results.

In scoring, the Axis lost 8 to time penalty while the Allies gained 4. Both Italy and Germany penetrated into France on the first turn following an early Italian declaration. By the second turn, Japan sent Italy a resource by convoy pipeline unusual to say the least! In JAN/FEB 1940 Germany took Paris,

and, following a declaration of war on Spain to the shock of all players, Germany did not declare Vichy. France, in its turn, did not surrender. In M/A, 1940, the German player rethought his position and declared Vichy.

The Axis played with fire when Russia demanded Bessarabia; they refused the demand and a Russia-Rumania war resulted. Fortunately for Germany, Russia could not take or isolate Ploesti so peace came to this front.

After this incident, the Axis began a long drawn out campaign for Gibraltar which finally succeeded in JUL/AUG 1941. This gave Italy their opportunity – early in 1942 Italy invaded Greece, conquering it and then aligning Yugoslavia.

"In a surprise move the Commonwealth declared war on Japan!"

The big surprise came though when the Commonwealth declared war on Japan. They proceeded to land some troops in Hong Kong and in a move since ruled illegal, walked a unit into an undefended Canton, the base of the Japanese main battle fleet! They succeeded in capturing and scuttling a number of Japanese ships leaving the Japanese navy a poor shell of its former grandeur, but Japan fought on.

In the end, the Axis had not accomplished enough and victory fell to the Allies. The complete replay should be printed in the next couple of LOC newsletters.

In game 6 the Allies conceded in JUL/AUG 1942. The Axis always seemed on the go with the Allies reacting, but the Allies probably did not give themselves enough time to fix the situation. When one of the Allied players fell ill, the remaining Allies did not feel the game warranted playing on. The final scores here reflect the early victory by the Axis.

Game 7 also had a concession. The tournament winner played in this game. The Axis never did get going and in NOV/DEC of 1940 they surrendered. In so short a time little can be said about the eventual outcome. The strong play of individual tournament winner Steve Jacobi as France put this Allied team in a good position to win the tournament. A well deserved win, but if he returns next year he will face a greater challenge: the word is out!

Game 8 was the one game of Classic and even there they added Planes in



but if he returns next year he will face a greater challenge: t h e word is out!

Game 8 was the one game of Classic and even there they added Planes in Flames. Fortunes turned all during the game making for a lot of fun.



Steve Jacobi accepting the WIFCON Trophy

The Germans opened slow, but persisted. This was one of the few games where Germany went through Netherlands, then Belgium. France persevered and was not Vichied until SEP/OCT 1941. Italy conquered Yugoslavia, Germany conquered Greece and took the Suez and Cairo. This fighting whittled down the Italian fleet some, but they managed to keep supply open and the African campaign going. Germany turned its sights on Russia in 1942. They pushed Russia back, taking Kiev and breaking the river line and planned to keep on marching. During this period the Commonwealth paradropped into Libya and, in conjunction with a follow-on invasion, took Tripoli and conquered Libya. Italy was now on the plate.

"Japan's declaration of war included a successful invasion of Hawaii!"

Meanwhile in the Pacific, Japan opened their war brilliantly against the US with an invasion of Pearl Harbor. Unfortunately they failed to capture or scuttle any of the American navy. Combine this with a declaration of war on Russia and capture of Vladivostock but with a Russian refusal to surrender, and Japan found itself in a precarious position.

Japan continued to push into China while taking the Netherlands East Indies, but failed in the invasion of the Philippines. The US sortied their fleet and won a major naval battle sinking the Japanese amphibious fleet. Japanese expansion ended. The Japanese lost Pearl Harbor after only a couple of turns, and the Americans marched back as they concentrated on a Pacific only strategy.

This game had to be judged on Thursday as some of the participants had to

leave. With the game only in turn 19, (NOV/DEC 1942), who knows how it would have finally ended.

Game 9 had the difficulty with finding its fourth player, so started as a three player game. When we discovered the planned fourth player could not make it, the Allied player asked that as soon as a game broke up could he please get some help. Fortunately, he did not have long to wait. Andrew Waterson agreed to jump in and play on the second day. I wish to thank him.

At the start, then, the Allied player coped with great stress as he played the full side. He held his own except on the clock where naturally he could not keep up with the other players. They took advantage of this. I believe in this situation I would have had to make an adjustment on the time. Once the Allies had another player, things got a bit easier on the clock, but then things began to fall apart on the board. Japan conquered China and the Germans pushed hard into Russia. With all of the other problems the Allies had, they still fought on into turn 28 before surrendering. This was the latest surrender in the Con and the last one until Sunday when the remaining games were judged.

Credit Brian Norem for playing alone in a difficult situation. I will strive to avoid this problem in the next convention.

Game 10 did not start until Thursday and so, they played a Brute force scenario. This game pitted a Canadian team against two US players with the Canadians winning the bid and taking the Allies. This had to be the tightest game played and was a draw when it was finally judged on Sunday.

This game saw the players almost at the historical position for this turn. The bids reflected the Brute Force scenario, in which the Axis can really take a beating and so have to be careful. The scenario starts just before the Axis collapse, making for an exciting game.

By the final Sunday, WIFCON 97 wound down and we had time to take stock. During the week, we played ten

World in Flames games, listened to five guest lectures, and held a panel discussion of the two drives across the Pacific. Mistakes made at this first convention will be addressed in the future.

So, how did each country fare and which players scored best? Check the chart at the bottom of this page. 'Bid' is the average total bid for that country, 'End' is the average total cities held by each country, 'DIFF' is the average differential, and 'Score' is the average total score.

The players final positions and scores are found on page 16. It was a fun time for all and we are certainly looking forward to seeing you at the coming WIFCON to again watch the most impressive games in the world.

Steve Jacobi was the winner with an impressive 186 points. The LOC winner was Rich Dost and the good sportsmanship award went to Russ Craft. Russ never had a bad word or lost his temper even after he had lost a good portion of his fleet to a Commonwealth surprise invasion.

After gaming ended, some gamers visited Fall River to see the Massachusetts (BB59) along with the other vessels moored there.

WIFCON 98 has been confirmed. The dates for this event are August 8 thru August 16th. Play will start the morning of the 8th ending early afternoon on the 16th so make your arrival and departure plans accordingly.

The game site this year will be:
Johnson & Wales Inn
213 Taunton Avenue
Seekonk, MA
1-800-232-1772

This site is where the players were lodged last year. This year we will stay AND play at the same site. To reserve your rooms just call the number above.

To register for the Con contact:
Larry Whalen Jr.

Continued on page 55

Country	Bid	End	DIFF	Score	High	Low	Games
Germany	9	5.6	-3.4	4.9	145	-102	10
Japan	5.2	4.4	.8	3.6	142	-98	5
Italy	0	2.4	2.4	9.8	153	-92	5
Japan/Italy	1	7	6	18.4	89.5	-10	5
UK	20.9	18.3	2.6	19.2	173	-57.5	8
UK/USA	45.5	31	-14.5	-31.3	-5	-57.5	2
USA/China	18.4	20.6	2.2	23.8	170	-44	8
USSR/France	13.9	17.5	3.6	23.9	186	-45	8
USSR/France/China	16.5	15.5	-1	-17.5	5	-40	2

Italy and her Role as the Decisive Weight

On a historical plane, a conflict between Italy and Great Britain is inevitable.

... Benito Mussolini

...the war would be a fight "neither for Germany, nor with Germany, but at Germany's side".

... Mussolini to Marshall Rudolfo Graziani

If we will win, the best we could be in the future is one of the several minor members of the Germanized Europe.

... Alberto Pirelli, Italian industrialist, January 1941

Italy is one of the most interesting nations to play in World in Flames. A good Italian player, who does not simply follow Germany's lead, can make the Mediterranean an exciting theater and can win the game. Often times, though, he must show, cajole, and even threaten his ally Germany to demonstrate the importance of the Mediterranean. Italy's goals are vital for Germany's victory.

Have a look at the set-up. Garrisons in Rome, Tripoli and Trieste forestall any surprise invasion by the Allies. There is nothing more embarrassing than having to surrender in 1940!

The weak Trieste garrison will nevertheless delay any surprise Yugoslav invasion. Remember that if the French or CW get 4 units into Italy, Germany or Albania, this will trigger Yugoslav entry into the war. That is the reason you also have a strong army on the French border and a corps in Tirana.

The fleet port should be La Spezia as it borders the Italian Coast and the Western Mediterranean.

Next, you must decide what production strategy will you follow. Even with Germany supplying you with help – and you must insist upon production help from Germany – you will never build everything in your force pools. Strong-arm the German player to play ball with you on your terms.

Italy cannot suffer heavy losses. Once a war of attrition has begun, you will find replacing losses difficult. Keep losses to a minimum. Germany should suffer the loss in a joint attack. The hard part is to convince Germany of this incontrovertible fact. She can replace those losses easier than the wretched Italian industries. Italy can, and should, design builds around some overall Axis strategy. If you are going to adopt a blue-water strategy, then you must build your fleet, transports, and NAVs. An aircraft carrier (or two) is a must in this mix. A few submarines do not hurt, either.

This strategy suggests a later entry of Italy into the war – possibly 1942

[Groan! What German would want you for an ally, Jack?]. I believe in bringing Italy in as late as possible so that it can build out a portion of its strength and possibly gobble up some minor target nations if the opportunity presents.

Build the two frogmen units and make sure you use them on the first turn of your entry into the war. If you use them straight off and fail, everybody at the board says how stupid you were. But if you succeed . . . they praise your move. The Allied player usually has to scramble to come up with some extra naval units to hold off the Italian fleet. Gamble sometimes to win – and it is a gamble, but Italy cannot simply take the easy safe road.

To pursue a land strategy, build fighters, bombers, and land units. You must build at least one of your pathetic armoured units just to give you some chance for a Blitzkrieg. This strategy supports launching a joint invasion of the Soviet Union with Germany. You obviously can not rival Germany in strength, but your Alpine troops and other specialized units can help on the southern front. They can be the decisive little extra that Germany needs in defeating the Soviet Union.

I like to build out my specialized units in chunks. That is, build all your Alpine units, or even consider building all your armor units or AT units (vital to fend off Soviet armor). If they operate as a group you can often achieve some exciting results. Your forces act as a unit this way, like an Army Group fighting the hated Communist enemy. Your weak land units do have a role to play. They can garrison, garrison, and garrison. Be it in Yugoslavia or behind the

frontline in the Soviet Union, those slow weak pieces take the place of German units that can better fight on the front line.

Regardless of your strategy, always build enough fighters and land units to protect your key positions, including fighters to cover your fleet base – even a weak fighter provides useful protection.

Build your marine corps in Nov/Dec 1939 so you have the option of attacking Gibraltar on the 2nd impulse of May/June 1940. Germany also needs to build its Marine no later than this turn for this strategy to work.

To come up with this possible coup and early entry into the war, you need to have Germany rail her Marine to Genoa (reorganize it with her Ju-52s) and station a DIV with your Marine at La Spezia. On the second impulse, everything goes to sea and takes a shot at Gibraltar, even if it has as little as a 10% chance of success. If you do storm ashore, crack open the bubbly and then invite Spain to unite with her ancient brethren (and senior partner), Italy.

This strategy can be helped by seizing the French North African cities early on and basing powerful Italian or German aircraft there to attack Gibraltar. Even if you just set up this possible threat, you force the Allies to think about and divert troops for this theater, which helps Germany in her battle with France.

If the German player gets bogged down in France you might have to enter even earlier into the war to bail out your ally. This is not a good harbinger of the future, but sometimes it is required. I remember one game with Harry Rowland as Germany that I had to bring Italy way early into the war, but again you can act as the decisive weight in bringing about victory, at least in the French campaign [I don't remember that, my memory must be failing:Ed].

By opening up an additional front along the Mediterranean Alpine border you stretch the Allied forces that much thinner. Have the Germans send at least one armor to that front and some additional troops will not hurt. Some German players will be strong individuals who try to sweet-talk you to do as Germany wants. This must be resisted when it is not in your interest – which is quite often!

Continued on page 60

Breakfasting in Berlin:

*A Russian road-map to survival and success
by Harry Rowland*

Morgan Conrad's excellent Russian article covers many aspects of Russian strategy and should be closely studied. This article concentrates on a narrower theme, Russian survival.

The question I am most asked is, "How does Russia survive Operation Barbarossa?" Here are twenty tips towards answering that question.

The first thing you must realise is that you cannot simply rely on your huge size. It helps, certainly, but the European map holds most of your factories, and many of your resources. If you lose all of them, you may never come back.

Thus, the object of your Barbarossa defence is forcing so many Germans onto garrison duty that there are insufficient Wehrmacht corps on the front to actually attack you.

The Germans can only destroy your units if they have concentrated kill-groups of six to eight corps that wander from battle to battle. Each kill-group can only destroy a maximum of two Russian armies an impulse, so the fewer kill groups, the fewer units you will lose.

The more units you have, the better your defence line and the fewer your losses. This can quickly become a vicious circle for the Germans that will first slow, then stop their offensive. Once they stop killing Russians, they may never start again, and you will inexorably move to the offensive. The sooner you do this, the sooner you will see Berlin.

The following tips are arranged in sequence order. The number in brackets is their importance (ranked from 1-5, with '5' highest). The first seven tips are pre-Barbarossa, the remainder apply once the war with Germany starts.

1. Optimise your set-up (2)

Your set-up is on the whole not critical, since you have at least two years to fix any mistakes. You must make some early decisions, however.

Do you intend to demand the Finnish Borderlands? Do you intend to demand Bessarabia? Usually, your answer to these questions is yes, but if you think that Germany intends to concentrate against the CW, and you will be able to declare war on Adolf, not demanding these places may keep Finland and Rumania out of the war permanently.

If you do want to demand the Finnish Borderlands immediately, make sure the US has put enough chits in the US entry pool to cover this action. Check out the suggested set-up provided in the middle of this annual.

You will note that it includes 5 convoy points in the Caspian Sea. This allows you to move your oil overseas if Rostov is occupied. This applies only if you are playing WiF Classic.

If you are playing WiF Deluxe, place one convoy point in the Arctic Ocean, one in the Caspian Sea and the 3rd in the Baltic Sea. This last is only required if you are playing option 11 (limited overseas supply), and should otherwise also go into the Caspian Sea.

2. Optimise your production (4)

Prior to war with Germany, you must maximise the number of units you have when attacked. You will need every unit you can lay your hands on to stop the initial German onslaught.

Surprisingly, your best units are your garrison units. They only cost two but have reasonable factors. They are perfect to leave behind in cities as rear-guards, turning each into a small fortress.

Your next most important units are your INF units and you should have them all built by 1941.

Next come your aircraft. These units are force multipliers, potentially converting every German 5:1 success to a 2:1 failure. They particularly help with a rearward defence, because the Luftwaffe will waste the first summer rebasing forward, during which time you have complete air superiority at the front.

You should concentrate on building your cheap aircraft, like Sturmoviks. Only start building fighters in 1940, avoiding the pre-war rubbish.

Next, you want to build 4-engined bombers. They have long range, good factors, and some can even reorganise or air transport - giving all-round excellent performance. Complement the bombers with PARA, all of which you should build - I will explain why later. You should also build the marine.

Only if you have any spare build points should you build motorised units, MECH units, and the occasional armour and convoy point (which you place in Baku). Unless you take heavy losses in border wars, you will have spare build points for these additional units - remember that these units take longer to build than INF or GAR, so

start them in time for Barbarossa. MECH are a better build than ARM because they are cheaper but have almost as many factors. I have included a possible build strategy as part of this article.

3. Suck up to Japan (3)

A compliant Japan allows you to minimise your eastern garrison, putting the bulk of it against the Germans. Start a pact in 1940, as this should provide good protection in 1941 and reasonable safety in 1942.

If Japan remains aloof, you should point out that a pact serves both players' interests, in that the USSR and Japan are the only major powers that can be picked on by all major powers from the other side. If Japan still refuses, you might want to say "OK, I might go down, but you will come down with me".

You must carry out this threat by attacking Japan in 1940 with the objective of conquering Manchuria and Korea, and forcing the Japanese to suspend all operations in China. The resources you capture will help offset any losses.

One good trick is to leave Vladivostok vacant to tempt the Japanese in to it. You then carve out a circle of territory in Manchuria, and declare the war over when the pincers close.

All terrain inside this circle is now isolated and comes over to Russian control when you declare the war over (which you can do anytime after Vladivostok is Japanese controlled). This operation can be conducted successfully with as few as 2 Russian armies, and can take most of Manchuria for no losses.

4. Conquer Persia and Iraq in 1940 (4)

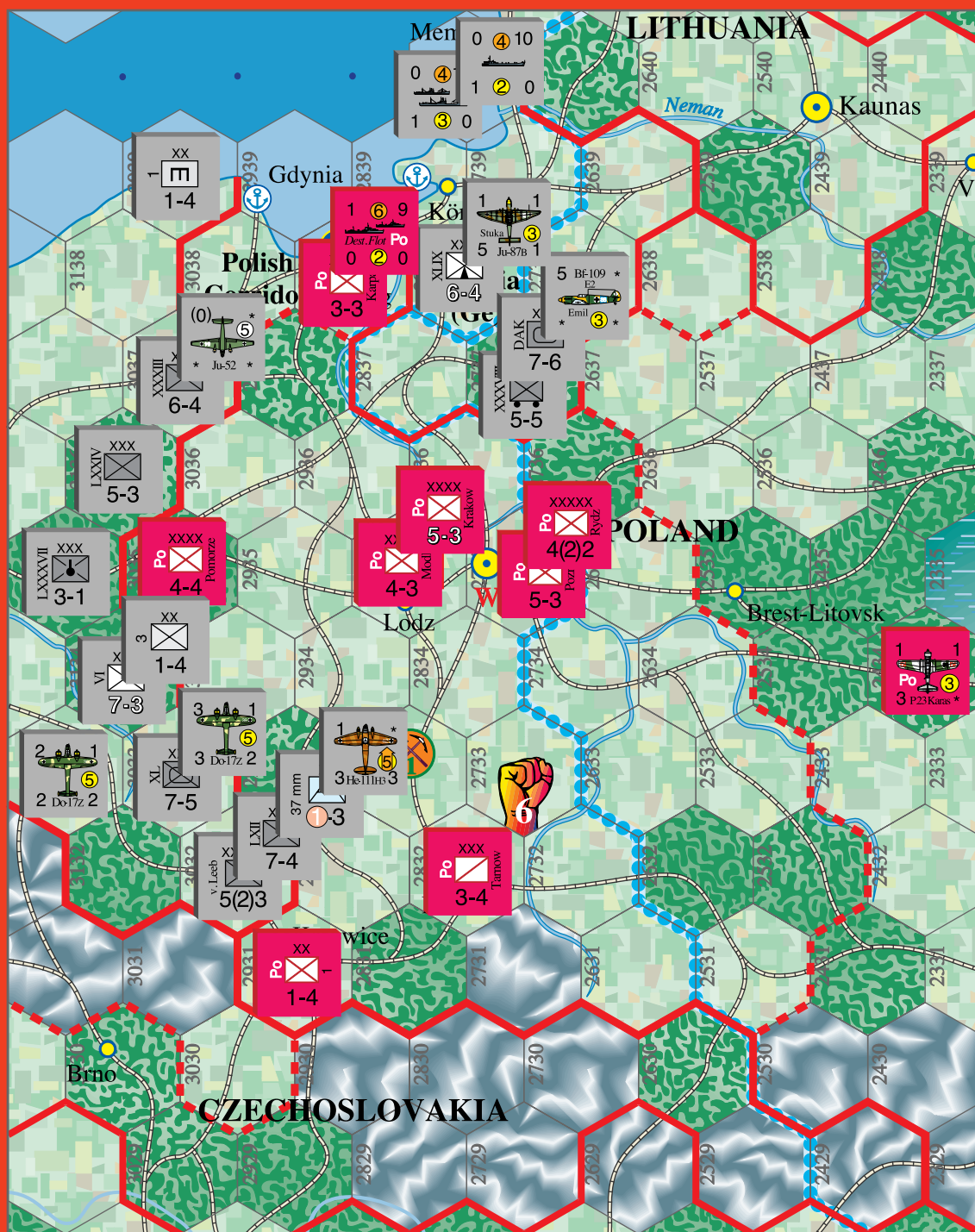
Persia contains three vital resources that can increase your production during 1940 by up to 2 build points a turn. It does lessen CW oil by one so should only be attacked after the US is giving five resources to the CW or the NEI is aligned with the CW.

This operation can be conducted with 30 factors of land and air units, and should only take one turn for no losses. It could provide you with as many as 90 oil over the life of the game, and is easy to defend against the Germans.

You will only hold Iraq temporarily if the Germans invade the USSR in 1942 for you should assume the Germans will use 1941 to take Suez, among other places. However, if they launch Bar-

Continued on page 60

POLAND ~ 1939



Stettin

5 (6) 3  Gneisenau 3 (3) 3	2 (4) 7  Schlesien 1 (2) 2	4 (5) 7  Deutschland 2 (5) 2	3 (6) 6  Adm. Hipper 2 (3) 1
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Baltic Sea



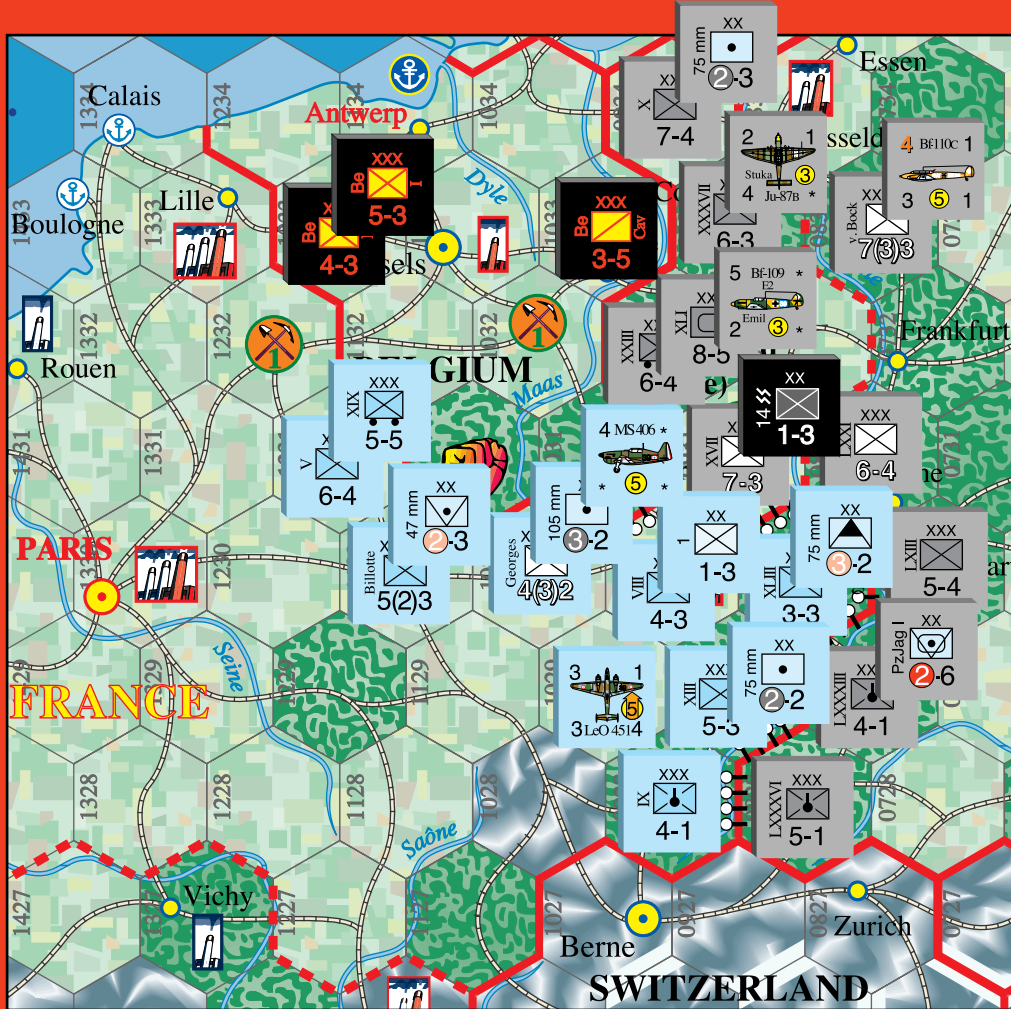
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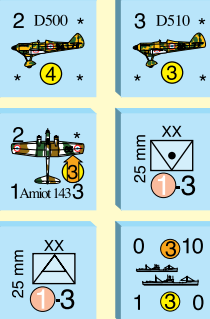
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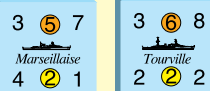
FRANCE ~ 1939



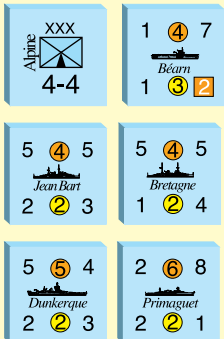
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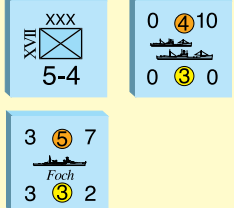
Brest



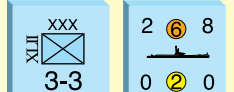
Toulon



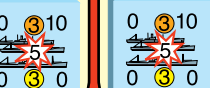
Beirut



Gabes



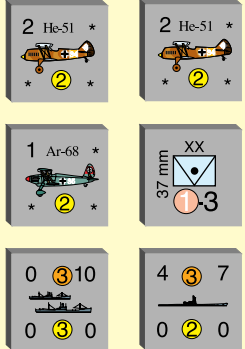
East Med.



West Med.



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W0739



Hamburg



Kiel



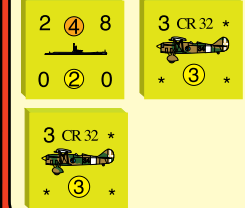
Bremen



ITALY ~ 1939



SCRAPPED



Tripoli



Tobruk



Tirana



Addis A.



USSR ~ the Northern Front ~ 1941



SCRAPPED

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2 I-15 * * 2 *	0 3 10 1 3 0

Reserves

XXXX 1 7-6	XXXX 16 7-4
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Moscow XXXX 7-2	Leningrad XXXX 6-3
Kiev XXXX 5-2	61 XXXX 5-1
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Reinforcements ~ Jul/Aug 041

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Caspian Sea

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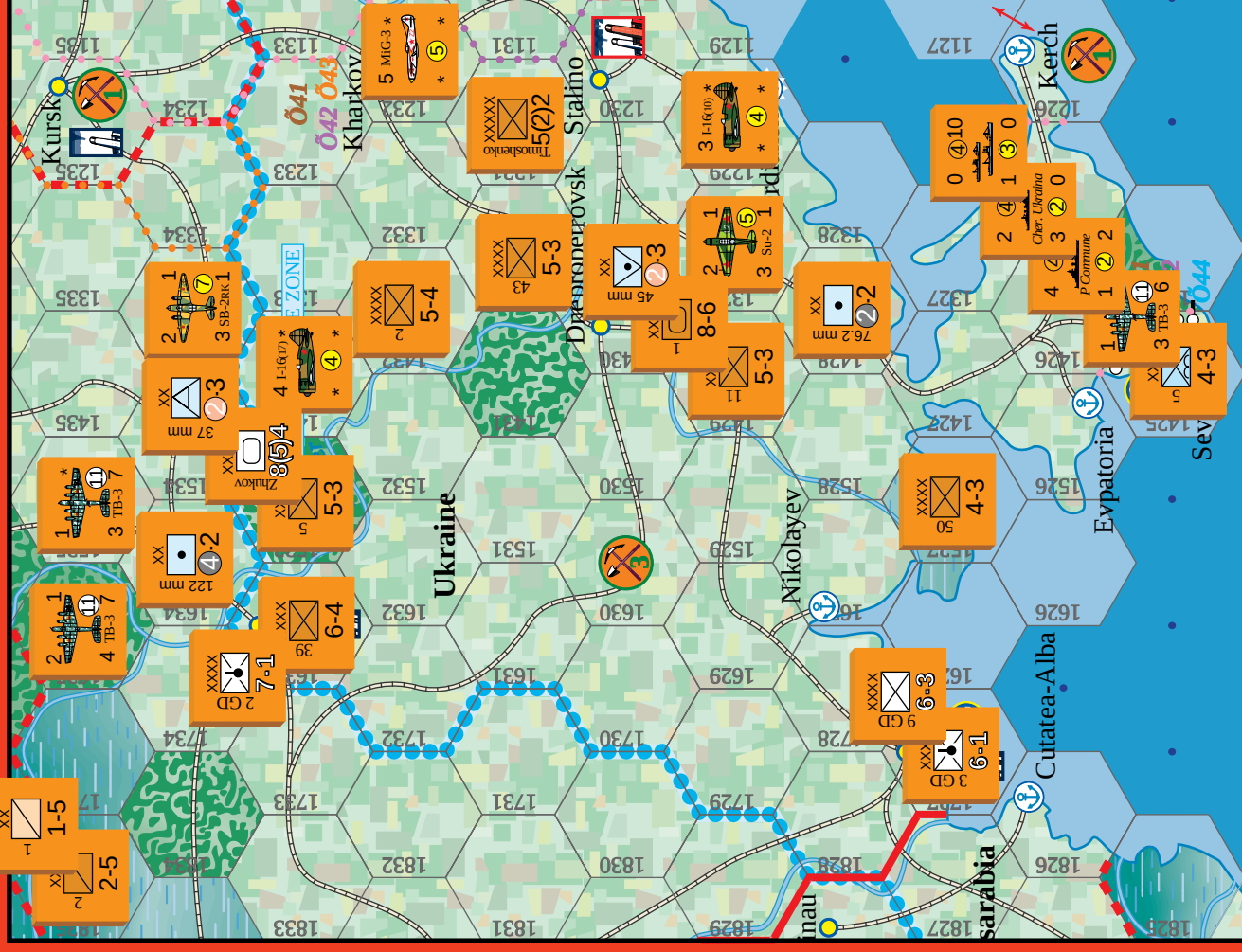
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CHINA ~ 1939



USSR, the Southern Front ~ 1941

~ 1941





Lessons learned

*Plus some thoughts on how to play
by Steve Peterson*

I played the USA and China in WiF Classic with PiF. I learned a lot. I had very little game experience with WiF Final, so these notes are probably best read by novice WiFers.

Entry Options:

Many US Entry options seem worthwhile but they all have a cost. Increasing US production is so valuable that any other option that slows down the gear-up had better be worth a lot! For example, I made the mistake of lending resources to the Western Allies because I thought it necessary. This resulted in a much-needed '4' chit leaving the Entry pool and going to the Tension pool where it was not needed. I had not paid close enough attention to the submarine war, which was not hurting the CW much. In fact, the CW did not need all the resources I offered. For little gain, the US waited an extra 3 turns for the option #28 gear up. I made a huge mistake, worth 3 full CVs and a hull in the long run.

The US should choose almost all Entry Options based on what is happening on the map. Just two options always should be taken before War Appropriations (#43):

#4 - get a free TRS (or half a CV); and
#28 - increase production by 9 BP.

All other options should be chosen prior to #43 only if the map situation forces them. For example, if the Japanese make a big push in China, choose options #1 and #11, and consider #22. If the Japanese go after Russia while the Germans take out France by October 1940 but do not attack Spain/Gibraltar or threaten to invade Britain, then feed Russia with options #23 & #38. If the submarine war has sunk convoys and Britain looks weak, then options #18 & #20 should be chosen, along with #33 and maybe #13, #30 or #36.

Once the US chooses War Appropriations (#43), next choose option #31

and move the minimal fleet to Pearl. Choose one or two options each turn in order to arrive on the premium diagonal on the 'It's War' chart, then start the attempt to declare war. Choosing options #15 and #25 in one turn, and #41 the next turn, will hurt the Japanese quickly. If War Appropriations and a fleet in Pearl do not provoke Japan into declaring war, then cutting off all those resources and attempting to declare on them almost surely will.

Builds:

Unfortunately, the USA cannot build CVs early, so get started on the fast battleships which will be very valuable later. Of course, build CV, TRS and Amphs as soon as they become available. Taking the 1941 TRS for the Bearn rather than spending money on a slow and weak CV makes sense. As soon as the 12 range FTRs are available, produce them. Build the 7-3 MAR ahead right away after the USA is in the war.

The All-Japan Offensive, or 2 front war?

At WiF CON I chose to pit the USA offensive strength completely against Japan. No US forces went to Europe from 1942 to early 1943. In this game, the Japanese player looked strong, and I did not have enough experience to maintain focus on three fronts (China, Pacific and Europe) given the short play time per turn. In a way, the chess clock made this choice for me.

Although this experience worked out well, I agree with Bruce Jurin's thesis that, in general, the US player should not go after Japan exclusively. He argues that a huge benefit of a two front war comes when the Allies choose different actions, such as the CW taking a naval action on an impulse that the USA chooses a land or air action. This is something like playing a free offensive chit and getting a super combined every impulse.

Another benefit of a two front war comes from the weather. The North Monsoon weather is favorable during the months of European winter, and the European theatre has good weather when the storms make invasions and para-drops and air missions impossible in the North Monsoon. With forces in both theatres the Americans can perform actions in fine weather, somewhere.

Protect the Fleet:

Do not lose any CVs or TRSs early in the war. If Japan threatens Pearl Harbor with a port strike, move the 2 CV

out to safe waters (just like history). Once at war, do not mess with the IJN early. The valuable US carriers provide a nice threat while in port. If a 4 factor CV is destroyed, scrap it. I found myself forced to rebuild them, so I didn't get to build all my faster, better CVs. And to top it off, the old CVs take longer to build!

US Threats to Japan:

The three best threats in the Pacific are:

- 1) MAR on TRS in port, supported by cheap casualty ground units on Amphibs,
- 2) A fleet of as many CV, CA and fast BB as possible, all in one (or 2) ports,
- 3) A NAV and FTR in the 3 or 4 box in each sea area on the front line (providing "presence of the enemy" for that optional rule, as well as air cover for the US fleet)

Invasions

Keep each Marine in port stacked with a face up TRS. Anytime the main Japanese fleet sorties (usually late in a turn), these Marines can launch invasions. A good Japanese player will think twice before sending out the fleet. Eventually, growing US naval and air supremacy will provide adequate cover to any MAR invasion even before the Japanese fleet sails. MARs in port can take advantage of opportunity and keep the Japanese at bay.

Each invasion should consist of a MAR and a MIL, GAR or INF. Most invasions should be automatic (10-1 odds). The cheap casualty unit can either take the hit in case of counterattack, or else stay to garrison the objective when the MAR leaves.

As a general rule, invade late in the turn. Make exceptions if an opportunity arises that might be lost, or if you want to bait the IJN. Invasions leave the landing craft flipped in a sea zone, vulnerable and unable to move.

Invasions can also be augmented by Para drops. They can even be entirely para. Transport PARAs to the front by TRS, not by ATR, because the ATR will flip after each mission. Instead, air rebase the ATR to the staging area to join the sea-transported PARA unit before the parachute assault.

In the Pacific, island chains can be controlled and become air bases by dropping a single MAR on one out of supply island, and "walking" the MAR to other islands in the chain. Even a

Continued on page 55

Battle of the Titans



by Harry Rowland

This Second World War was fought out at the inaugural World in Flames World Championship with the American Rhode Island Reds vs The Official Australian Bounders team played between the 10-16 August 1997.

The game was secretly recorded throughout the game to provide a blow-by-blow description. All references to hexes are preceded by the letter of the map the hex appears on (W=West Europe, E=East Europe, A=Asia, P=Pacific & S=Scandinavian).

As this is a war history, the game is measured in months not turns, so reference to production of 'x per month' should be doubled if you wish to work out production per turn.

The World in Flames Final edition rules were used with the following optional rules agreed beforehand: 1 Scandinavian map only, 2, 3, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 44, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65, 66, and finally 69.

The Allies (Official US RI team)

The Allies are an exceptionally talented bunch of players.

David "Josef" Le Lacheur is that rare breed in wargaming, a brilliant strategist, a cunning tactician and a thoroughly delightful opponent. With Lerch as Joe Stalin and Paul Reynaud, it

would be a lucky Adolf who still holds Berlin in '41, let alone Moscow.

Rick "Winnie" Henderson is a very capable and wily player, perfectly cast as Winston Churchill. Resolute, doughty and resourceful, Rick is renowned for his ability to carry out stunning special operations.

Larry "FDR" Whalen Jr. is the overseer of grand Allied strategy. He has a cool calculating eye that can see opportunities, that the more operationally inclined Allies might miss. Larry's only problem is that he has to run the convention as well as play, which would tax any WiFer to the full.

Overall, these players are undoubtedly going to be tough opponents.

The Axis (Official Australian Bounder team)

Jonathon "Tojo" Woodger is one of Australia's best players. Normally aggressive on the attack, he is able to alter his style to be a bit more cautious with Japan's limited capabilities. Having said that, he is always on the lookout for fresh Japanese objectives and opportunities against his opponents.

Greg "Il Duce" Pinder, is one of the designers. Thus he knows the rules intimately (or so we are led to believe) and can always be relied on to come up with a way of doing something that you thought was impossible.

He has saved the Axis more than once during training by commenting "er Adolf, I think you might want to have a look at the Soviet garrison in Poland. Looks like they can declare war next month". As holder of the Axis WW II timetable, he is the critical link in telling us what we are supposed to be doing each month.

Harry "Adolf" Rowland is the perfect tyrant and author of the article. Gets nomination for best casting. Can rant with the best of them. Generally regarded as reckless, prefers to describe it as "controlled aggression" (which unfortunately occasionally goes out of control). Has little knowledge of naval warfare, preferring to fire off ships like torpedoes, "Los..."

In prospect, it promises to be a tight, closely contested game, as indeed it proved to be.....

The Allied Master Plan

The Allies have the difficulty of having to devise a plan in a vacuum. As the



Axis have the initiative at the start of the game, the Allies have to plan after second guessing what the Germans will do.

Since Adolf is considered a pro-Sea Lion advocate, the Allies feel that the Axis will conquer Poland, before attacking Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Gibraltar, and finally, Gt. Britain.

To forestall this, FDR decides on a Germany first strategy. He either hopes that, whether the Nazi horde head for Britain or Russia, the weight of Yankee material will turn the scales. The sooner Adolf and Il Duce are defeated, the sooner the Allies can turn their attention to Tojo.

He cautions his allies to be as passive as possible so that he can enter the war as soon as possible.

Winnie in particular is worried that the British cannot withstand a determined Sea-Lion, and further (correctly) believes that Adolf thinks this way too.

His initial strategy is to delay the Germans every-way they can while keeping CW losses to a minimum. Then defend Gibraltar to the hilt and have as many land units in the UK as possible. If deterrence fails, hopefully the US cavalry will come to the rescue before it is too late.

After the Germans have been halted, a swarm of CW Strategic bombers will turn Germany into rubble, followed by

the inevitable 1943 D-Day, and onwards to victory.

Stalin's plan is very sophisticated. He too believes that Adolf is going for a Sea Lion, and thus Joe plans to go to war against Germany in 1942. He also does not intend to demand Finnish Borderlands or Bessarabia. Thus if the Russians can declare war on Germany, the Finns and the Rumanians will never enter the war.

Stalin's plan against Japan is armed neutrality. He will not sign a non-aggression pact, but will not go to war either. However, if the Japanese declare war, the counter-attack will be terrible to behold.

Finally, if the Axis do go for Sea-Lion, Stalin plans on the Jackal strategy. He will provide all aid to Britain so she doesn't collapse, but is quite happy for the CW to end up being the sick country of Europe, provided Germany is sicker.

France's strategy is to run from the start of the game, while preserving as much of her forces as possible. Believing that no defence of France will survive a competent attack, Reynaud doesn't even try. Although this could mean a quick conquest of France, Reynaud thinks that this would be OK if it increases Russian production from the start of 1940 (note that this is no longer a consideration, since Soviet production is 0.5 during 1940 regardless of what happens in France ~ see errata included in the annual).

China's plan is to survive.

The Axis Master Plan

The Axis have decided on a different strategy than that anticipated by the Allies. Adolf is indeed heading for Gibraltar believing it to be the most important hex in the game. It means the certain collapse of Malta and Suez, and then the Iraqi and Persian oil, that alone can drive the Panzers and Stukas on to ultimate victory.

Thus the plan is to take out Belgium and Poland in Sep/Oct 1939. Then knock France out of the war as soon as possible, certainly no later than Jul/Aug 1940 (we hope).

After France, head off to Spain with numerous MTN units leading the charge (all built in early 1940), thus negating the snow during winter.

Don't declare Vichy till after the Germans are in Spain, and never collapse Vichy, thus keeping the French fleet out of Allied hands.

Hopefully conquer Spain by Mar/Apr 1941, then advance to Gibraltar and take it by Sep/Oct 1941, after which, turn around the army and declare war on Russia in Mar/Apr 1942, using the bad weather to advance to the Dvina/Dnieper (assuming a Russian rear-ward defence), attacking it in the summer of '42, continuing the attack in Winter with MTN units and hopefully crack the Russians in 1943, the year D-Day is expected.

From then on, we hope to grimly hold out in the west while mopping up in the East, allowing us to return some forces to the west.

Il Duce, on the other hand, is to stay out of the war until Mar/Apr 1940. This gives the Italians time to build a Marine corps in Jan/Feb '40 which would invade Gibraltar in Jul/Aug 1940, provided there is a non-zero chance of success.

Mussolini would then advance towards Oran and Suez simultaneously, while at the same time leaving corps in Tirana, Rome, Tripoli and the French border.

After Vichy is declared, it is vital that the Italian Navy at least contest the Western Med. sea area, otherwise the German Southern Spanish Army around Barcelona would be out of supply until the Spanish are driven off the Ebro.

The master plan also calls for Il Duce to launch an invasion of Greece on Jul/Aug '41, hopefully after Gibraltar has fallen (thus minimising Allied "peace-keepers"). He then has to take Suez (including transporting German "peace-keepers" through Vichy Syria to attack the Tommy defenders from behind).

After that, Mussolini is to advance towards Aden, Iraq, Persia and Saudi Arabia and occupy the oil. This was perhaps the most important operation of the war (we were playing with the oil rules).

From then on, Il Duce is Ober Kommando West, in charge of the Atlantic Wall. On his skill would depend the fate of Western Europe. All in all, a very tall order.

For all Mussolini's complaining about being asked to do too much with too little, Tojo can only dream of having Il Duce's problems. He has big-daddy Adolf to look after him, Tojo is all alone, with all the Allies right next-door; China, France, Russia, the CW and the USA.

Just as Josef is the only Ally who can be picked on by the Axis, Japan is the only major power that can be picked on by all the Allies. Worst case scenario can

see the start of the war against the USA with the Philippines, Singapore, Rabaul and Batavia stuffed with Allied troops.

With such gloomy prognostication, Tojo decides to build both oil synth plants, as a last ditch 1 per month oil reinforcement. Tojo needn't have worried. Nothing like that occurred, thing's turned out far worse.

The initial attack of the Japanese army is intelligently planned. Attacking China in the temperate zone in Sep/Oct, the attack migrates down to the North Monsoon in Nov/Dec - Mar/Apr 1940 when the weather is good there. Finally, the Japanese again swing their attack northwards back into the temperate zone during May/Jun-Sep/Oct 1940.

Hopefully, the attacks in the North Monsoon in early 1940 will drive the Chinese defenders north into the Temperate zone so that the Japanese attacks in the South might go a whole year benefiting from fine weather. With luck, China will be finished before the US enters the war.

The Japanese building strategy is finely honed. Expecting to declare war on the US and CW in Nov/Dec '41 or Jan/Feb '42, the Japanese has to be very careful if they want to maximise the number of CVs, planes, pilots, AMPHs, Marines and Paras that they are going to need by then. All while financing a land war in China. One tough assignment.

After war with the US and CW starts, Tojo is going to stop the war in China, take Hong Kong, Manila, Singapore, Colombo, Rabaul, Burma and Batavia, then go on the defensive. Building up her air-force, Tojo will try to lure the US fleet into a decisive defeat at sea, or, if they are too cautious to commit, invade their bases, and overrun their fleet.

Tojo makes a vague commitment to Adolf that the Japanese might come in the war against Russia in 1942 or 43, provided Japan isn't hard-pressed at the time.

It isn't much, but Adolf is happy to grasp at straws. Adolf knows how good Josef is going to be, and feels that all Axis assets are going to have to be thrown at the Russian bear, to tame it.

The Axis are stuck in a typical wargamer's quandary. All we can see for the Allies are opportunities. All we can see for the Axis is crisis. All we can hope for is that the Allies are suffering the same quandary about us.

The Aussie Challengers from Left to right: Harry Rowland, Greg Pinder, Jonathan Woodger.



The Set-Up

The US set-up is the usual meaninglessness, that is so unimportant (the US cannot make a mistake in set-up since they have 2 years to correct anything) that I forgot to record it, sorry Franklin.

The Russian set-up is heavily anti-Japanese, leaving no strike force to take Finland or Bessarabia. Tojo's brow becomes a bit more creased with sweat. Japan offers Russia a non-aggression pact commencing Jan/Feb 1940. Josef declines.

Italy is terrified of being conquered in 1940 by French, CW and Yugoslav forces. Thus 2 corps set up in Tripoli, 2 in Rome, 1 in Tirana (to force the CW/French to invade this colony at less than 10:1, thus making it a bit more difficult to get the 4 corps in Albania to trigger Yugoslavia as an Allied ally).

The rest of the Italian army sets up aggressively against the French border, to both hold the French out, or drive in, depending on circumstances.

China's set up is fairly typical with a couple of notable exceptions. First, Chang-Sha to Canton and all points eastward are left unoccupied, giving Japan quick access to Chang-Sha and the resources in A0531 & A0630 (even though the Chinese in A0632 & A0532 stop the latter resource from getting to Japanese factories).

The second oddity is that A0638 is left undefended, completely unhinging the Yellow river line. Tojo feels that Chiang is handing China to him on a platter. Time will tell.

The Commonwealth set-up is interesting. If Winnie is concerned about a German blitz through Belgium, he certainly doesn't show it. He set-ups the Queens in India meaning that a maximum of only 3 Corps and 1 division (or artillery) will be available to support his French and Belgian allies during Sep/Oct '39.

The rest of the set-up is standard with convoys to South Africa, Canada, India and Australia providing 10 build points production as well as 3 oil.

France's set-up is incomprehensible to the Axis. The MTN sets up in Dakar, while Georges and a division set-up in Bordeaux stacked with the French fleet. The Maginot line is full, and Paris is ringed with artillery, but there is only 1 corps available for the defence of Belgium.

Paul Reynaud's idea is two-fold. First off, to maximise the number of French corps that survive Vichy declaration, while enticing the Germans into France early to maximise Russian production.

The War

Sep/Oct 1939

The CW set-ups a masterly Polish defence that minimises Polish losses. The 11 German corps move gingerly forward killing 2 Polish corps (7 factors). The remaining Polish armies converge on Warsaw.

On the 5th of September, the CW establish their convoys and launch an unsuccessful ground-strike on the German concentrations facing Belgium. The French sit tight, awaiting developments.

In China, Tojo exploits the gap deliberately left open in the Chinese set-up advancing through A0638 towards Lan-Chow and Sian. This forces the Chinese to abandon the Yellow River line altogether.

The weather in the middle of September remains clear and sunny. The Germans declare war on Denmark and Belgium, both of which appeal to the CW for help. The Belgians set-up their CAV in Liege, and their 2 Inf corps in W1032. This location can be put out of supply by German occupation of W1034, since there are no CW HQs in France. Hitler decides to expend his offensive chit in the blitzkrieg of Belgium.

The Belgians are successfully ground-struck by a swarm of Bf-110s and Ju-87s, and then destroyed (along with the CAV in Liege). The Germans blitz into W1132, isolating Brussels, and outflanking the Dyle River. By the end of September, Belgium is defenseless, betrayed by her so-called Allies.

On the Polish front, Lodz falls to German forces but at the cost of massive German disorganisation. With only 2 HQs to provide leadership, most of the German expeditionary force is hors de combat until the end of October. Warsaw might hold out.

Even worse, Adolf's excitement at the destruction of the Belgian army, means that he forgets to dispatch the orders to the 35th corps on the Danish border to occupy Copenhagen.

Winnie pounces on the opportunity, landing Gort and a corps in W0640, stopping any invasion of Denmark cold. However, this leaves only Wavell available to help in France.

Realising with horror that France is open to invasion, Reynaud reacts quickly. Georges orders to go to Equatorial Africa are rescinded, and he is hustled up to Lille, along with the division and the Paris artillery park.

The Maginot line is minimised to try to cover as much of the French-Belgian border as possible. Unfortunately, there are oh so few defenders and a long border to cover. After the disaster in Belgium, Reynaud realises that the Maginot line is outflanked, and Paris is threatened. The entire Maginot defence line pulls back to the Seine.

At the start of October, Adolf must make a decision. Should he advance into France increasing France's production multiple in 1939, and Russian production in 1940? You betcha. Crying "Damn the torpedoes" Hitler lunges forward on a broad front advancing almost to the Seine river.

In a wild, swirling melee, the Germans advance to the very gates of Paris itself. For a moment it looks like France might fall before the end of October, but Reynaud steadies the ship brilliantly, maneuvering his units in such a manner that the Germans just cannot go the extra mile.

Unfortunately, in Poland the attack on Warsaw is a disaster, with German dead everywhere, and the valiant defenders of Warsaw thumbing their noses at the shattered and disorganised German columns. With winter closing in, Poland seems tougher than France.

Meanwhile, in line with pre-war plans on China, Tojo reinforces the Canton front and starts advancing on the two undefended resources in A0630 & A0531. The northern drive on Lan-Chow is stopped at Sian and in the mountains just in front of Lan-Chow.

Nov/Dec

The weather closes in early and severely restricts all operations. Germany does not even bother to launch an attack early in November and fails dismally later in the month, again stopping all operations here this year.

Even more worrying is that the German garrison ratio against Russia is virtually negligible. As of January, Russia could declare war on Germany. Luckily though, so far the Russians seem more concerned with the Japanese, so the Russian garrison ratio is also negligible at the moment. This could change in a matter of turns though.

The Allies still hold all of Denmark. Since Germany can only attack from W0739 against 2 CW corps defending W0640, it looks like it is going to take a long time to dig these Brits out.

In France, the Germans complete their occupation of the right bank of the Seine except for Paris and W1431 on its flank. Unfortunately, there are almost as many French units as German, and the Germans cannot afford a disastrous assault, for fear of a devastating French riposte.

Thus for many reasons, it is critical that the Polish front be finished as soon as possible. To do this, Adolf actually orders reinforcements to the eastern front, thus weakening the German drive on Paris even further.

In China, and following the weather, Tojo switches the focus of attack from North to South China. Chang-Sha is taken without a shot being fired, as are the 2 southern resources.

However, the Chinese defence begins to stiffen as the Japanese approach the mountain line. The Chinese defence stretches from Nanning to A0532, and then swings north-west to A0837. From now on, the Japanese are going to have to fight for every inch of ground.

Jan/Feb 1940

The winter of 1939/40 is becoming the worst experienced in Europe in 25 years. The Germans make no ground in Denmark, or Poland. However, they do manage to work their way round to the North of Paris driving a bridgehead across the left bank of the Seine. Unfortunately, Paris itself is too powerful to

be taken out directly, due to a paucity of Germans.

In the East, the Poles still refuse to surrender, even though Warsaw is surrounded. Adolf's ranting reaches a new pitch as he refuses to accept von Leeb's pitiful excuses for failure on this front.

In the Pacific, the Japanese begin their drive into the mountains, but start taking losses doing so. The Chinese are starting to recover from the shock of the early Japanese assault, and with a smaller line to defend are making life very difficult for the Japanese. However, the Japanese still manage to capture Kwei-Yang and Nanning and commence their advance towards Chungking.

March/April

On a cold, foggy day in early March, Il Duce appears at the Palace windows to announce everlasting war against the degenerate, shambolic democracies, in particular France and the CW. He was considering just declaring war on the French, forcing the CW to declare war on him, but decides to go after both after studying his intelligence reports on the slim CW forces currently operating in Egypt.

As a sign of his extraordinarily keen military mind, on the day of the declaration, Italian Marines storm ashore in Malta against negligible British opposition, gaining a quick and virtually bloodless coup.

Simultaneously, in North Africa Italian Panzers cross the Egyptian border and race towards Suez. Due to the large British forces in France and Denmark, the Egyptian forces are fairly paltry, consisting of only 3 corps, and no air-force. Balbo advances aggressively.

To complete this sudden burst of activity, Mussolini unleashes the Army of the Po across the French-Italian border, quickly isolating Marseilles & Toulon and occupying the Provence resource (W1223). All in all, an impressive first month for Italy.

In France, the combination of good weather and Italian pressure, finally sees the French line give way. The German Panzers, from positions north and south of Paris, break out and fan westwards.

The French forces are fragmented and disoriented. 2 corps still hold Paris, and another couple are holding out between Toulouse and Bordeaux. The Navy has evacuated to French Equatorial Africa where they join up with their mountain corps. The only other French forces are 1 corps in Algeria.

In Poland, Warsaw finally falls, releasing more German forces for mopping up operations in France. Even better news for Adolf, Denmark finally succumbs to an elegant Marine-led crossing of the Baltic Sea between Lubeck and Copenhagen, supported by troops and von Leeb landed on W0540. This cunning manoeuvre isolates the 1 corps in Copenhagen from the rest of the CW forces in Denmark, leaving it easy pickings for the Kriegsmarine & Wehrmacht forces.

After the initial German debacle in Denmark, the German Marine division was built specifically for this operation, but Raeder was amazed that the critical locations W0540 & W0539 were left unguarded by the slothful Commonwealth forces. Finally the Baltic is an Axis lake.

In East Asia, the Japanese offer a non-aggression pact with Stalin, who again contemptuously refuses. Perhaps the Allies are planning to gang up on Tojo and his cronies. This spurs Tojo into ever more frenzied activity in China, keeping her loss rate above production, but also bleeding the Japanese. By the end of April, the Japanese have taken several critical mountain hexes and have advanced adjacent to Chung-King.

May/Jun

Paris finally falls, and to the Allies' horror, Hitler does not stop his troops there. Panzers sweep towards the Spanish border, preparing Franco for the kind of goodwill visit that has studded German diplomacy for the last 4 years.

In North Africa, Italy invests Alexandria and advances to the Nile. Indian troops are rushed to the theatre to bolster the CW defences, but with complete mastery of the skies, the Italians can choose the time and tempo of their attacks.

On the other side of North Africa, an Italian corps walks into Tunis unopposed.

The war in China explodes spectacularly. A bold attack by the Japanese takes Chungking in a 2:1 attack. Pulling a swift, an out of supply Mao provides emergency HQ supply to a desperate Communist counter-attack that miraculously overwhelms the tired Japanese victors of Chungking, leaving it, for the moment at least, in Communist possession.

Jul/Aug

The swirling combats around Chungking leave holes all along the Chinese front that the Japanese are quick to exploit. By the end of August, Mao and a corps of his best troops are hunkered down in Chung-king, completely sur-

rounded by elements of the Kwantung army. Further north, Si-An is captured despite stiff opposition.

In Europe, the German-Italian plan to conquer Gibraltar by a joint Marine invasion is forced to be shelved due to the large CW forces stationed there. Even if there was only a 10% chance, the Marines were going to be ordered in, since the consequence of Spain becoming an active Axis Ally is worth any loss of German and Italian Marines.

Instead, Adolf is forced to declare war on his old chum Franco. The Spanish forces set-up a weak border force, with 1 corps in Madrid and 2 corps in Er Rif. Although the German forces quickly rip the front open, the going gets tougher as CW reinforcements flood towards the Ebro.

After the vast majority of German and Italian forces enter Spain, Hitler accepts the creation of Vichy France. Unfortunately, much of France's overseas territories become Free French. What particularly hurts is that Algeria and Morocco become Free French, giving the Allies a secure base in Nth. Africa on which to pin their Gibraltar defence. Critically for Tojo however, French Indo China and Madagascar join the Vichy Empire.

Winnie himself is not convinced that it is worth fighting for Gibraltar, because he ultimately believes that it is just a rat-trap for the CW forces. His whole strategy so far has been not to fight unless he can win. As it is hard to stop the Germans this early in the game, this has resulted in very little fighting by the CW.

This is certainly a better strategy than fighting and dying, but it is not as good as supporting and then evacuating, before the losses mount up. Adolf himself is pleased that this CW strategy sees the Germans fighting in Spain in the summer of 1940 rather than the winter of 40/41, but it does mean that there are an awful lot of CW units on the map.

Due to constant pressure by Stalin and Roosevelt, Winnie reluctantly decides to fight for Spain and Gibraltar. Massive CW reinforcements start unloading in Gibraltar, Tangier and Cadiz.

The Italians meanwhile are attempting to strike out for Morocco from Tunis. Algiers is too well defended by the French to take, so is bypassed, and Oran captured.

In the China Front, Chungking finally falls to the Kwantung army after a massive 3 month siege involving numerous assaults. Mao manages to escape, but

the bulk of the communist forces are destroyed. However, Japanese losses have also been high, losses that Japan can ill afford to replace, especially with war with the USA just over the horizon.

Sep/Oct

Just like last year, the weather closes in early on most battlefields. In Spain, German troops take Barcelona and struggle slowly in thigh deep mud towards Madrid. With the bulk of the Spanish forces already destroyed, Franco changes his strategy to a series of hedgehog defences based around cities. This tactic works well in slowing down the German advance while driving up their losses.

In North Africa, the Italian army, with the shore bombardment support of the Regia Marina, take Alexandria in a brilliant coup, destroying 2 CW corps in the process. Even so, the forces arrayed against them on the right bank of the Nile are so numerous, that they can advance no further.



Roma

Von Leeb leads an expeditionary corps into Algeria, landing in Oran as a 'guest' of the Vichy Government. Extra forces are funneled through Algeria into Morocco and Er Rif as fast as Italian transports will allow. By the end of October, Mellila is captured, providing a more direct route to the Moroccan front.

The CW respond by declaring war on Vichy France and invading Morocco, quickly conquering this vital base in the defence of Gibraltar. Thus begins the biggest military build-up yet seen and it is unclear who will win this arms race.

The Japanese meanwhile start a general drive across the Chungking plain towards Kunming, Cheng-Tu and Lan-Chow, the last industrial centres still controlled by the Chinese. However, due to the atrocious weather, attacks are few and losses light.

The Japanese also demand basing rights in French Indo-China off the Vichy French, who reluctantly agree after heavy pressure by Adolf on Petain. The ever voracious Japanese then demand a 'Protectorate' of Madagascar to protect the Western flank of

her 'Co-Prosperity' Sphere. Again Petain is forced to accept, but the US Public take a very dim view of these acts of bullying by Tojo and Hitler, of a so-called ally. 'If this is what they do to allies, what do the Axis do to the enemy?' they wondered.

Nov/Dec

The weather only worsens bringing all operations to a complete halt. Madrid is surrounded but repulses all attacks. In Morocco, the Italians are somewhat reinforced (at Suez's expense) and advance toward Tangier. However, they only get as far as W2310-W2311, not managing to capture the crucial mountain hexes W2410-W2411.

The Italian forces here are so outnumbered, they cannot afford to leave their fox-holes, praying the CW don't attack them. Fortunately, the CW cannot afford a disastrous combat either, and decline the chance to destroy the Paltry Italian forces around Mellila.

In the East, an ever bolder Stalin starts advancing to the Russo-German border. He also has placed all his entry chits face-down, obviously preparing for a surprise assault. Although fairly sure that Stalin cannot declare war in 1941, Adolf has to start withdrawing troops from France and Spain to serve as garrisons in the east. A sudden Soviet offensive against Germany would just about finish off the Axis.

In the Pacific, the Japanese start feeling the squeeze from the USA as their assets are frozen and strategic materials are embargoed.

Jan/Feb 1941

If the Axis were disgusted with the Nov/Dec weather, Jan/Feb is unbelievable. Blizzards are seen in the Mediterranean, leaving most units of both sides out of supply and incapable of attack. The steam generated by the Axis sledgehammer blows in 1940 is quickly dissipating in the snows of '41. Adolf orders the postponement of Operation Barbarossa from 1941 to 1942.

The only significant advances occur in Morocco where the Italians extend their line southwards to W2409, forcing the CW to thin their lines by occupying W2509.

Due to the continuing CW air superiority in the Med (the Luftwaffe is yet to arrive en masse), the Italian transports attempting to reinforce Morocco must scuttle back to base, leaving the Italians in Algeria/Morocco more isolated than ever. Il Duce screams for more reinforcements, and demands German land

based air cover for this vital water corridor. Adolf agrees with the latter request, mainly because the Luftwaffe is required near Gibraltar now in any event.

However it is difficult to comply with the former request for reinforcements as these are limited by Italian transports and still must fight for domination of the Med. Furthermore, every reinforcement to Morocco is one less reinforcement on the Suez front.

Adolf sheets all Il Duce's problems home to Mussolini. If only he had built up his merchant marine in 1940, the Axis would be able to clean up the Med quicker now. Il Duce, muttering sarcastic remarks about 'doubling all production', gears up production on Italy's merchant marine, but is it too late?

In Spain, Cartagena and Almeida are occupied against negligible opposition as the Wehrmacht struggles towards Gibraltar.

The bad weather does allow for stepping up the U-boat campaign against the tenuous CW supply lines to the USA. Unfortunately, the CW have had 2 years of training with few losses, and see off most of the attacks with few losses. So far, in 18 months of war, the CW has lost less than 2 million tonnes of shipping, much less than the 6 million tonnes historically lost. Hitler invites Raeder to the Reich Chancellery for a spot of carpet chewing, an experience distasteful to Raeder's delicate disposition.

The USA passes war appropriations, giving the Axis pause for concern, not so much by the gearing up, but by the few number of US entry chits required to do this compared to the bundles of chits they have in the Japanese and Ge/Italian Entry pools.

Roosevelt appears to be the consummate politician. Every nasty thing he does, the US people couldn't care less about, and every minor atrocity committed by the Axis receives the severest condemnation. Clearly, the USA is not far away from war.

Mar/Apr

The skies finally clear over Madrid, allowing the Germans to resume the offensive. Madrid quickly falls, and the Wehrmacht rapidly advances towards Cadiz and Gibraltar.

Adolf declares war on Portugal, and diverts 3 corps from the southward drive to capture Lisbon from the ill equipped Portuguese defenders.

In the Western Med, the CW sorties to try to stop reinforcements arriving on

the Moroccan front. Unfortunately, the Marina Italia gets the jump on them, sinking the Glorious and damaging the Ark Royal. This is the first sinking of a CW CV in the game, leading to the pinning of the Ordre Il Merito to the Italian Squadron commander.

The Italian forces in Morocco are so encouraged that they launch an assault into W2509 that is brilliantly successful. An Italian corps starts running amok in the CW rear areas temporarily capturing Rabat, Casablanca and Mogador.

Unfortunately, this unit cannot be supported without abandoning the lines in front of Tangier (they are already stretched paper thin). Thus CW reinforcements just advance behind the Italian corps recapturing all these vital locations. Even worse, W2509 is recaptured by the CW before the end of April, shutting off any further Italian excursions west of their lines.

In the Battle of the Atlantic, the entire German surface and sub fleet break out into the Faeroes Gap and begin to terrorise the CW convoys there, sinking 600,000 tonnes of CW shipping and the Rodney. Force H sorties, forcing the Kriegsmarine to retire back to Kiel. Unfortunately they get intercepted by the Home fleet in the North Sea, but due to superior seamanship, the Germans manage to damage another British battleship while getting away unscathed.

On the China Front, the Kwantung army continues its advance towards Lan-Chow, taking Cheng-Tu in the process. The back of the Chinese has now been broken, but there are still 12 Chinese corps desperately holding Kunming and Lan-Chow.

By the end of April, after almost a year in the Iberian quagmire, the German troops arrive adjacent to Gibraltar after taking Cadiz unopposed. Next stop, Gibraltar.

The US sets off alarm bells in Tokyo when Roosevelt announces the militarisation of Pearl Harbor.

May/Jun

Summer comes early in the Western Med, and the Luftwaffe sorties in strength. Just as Adolf and Il Duce start dreaming of Mare Nostrum, disaster of the worst sort strikes. Roosevelt declares war on Japan, earlier than could ever have been expected, and certainly far earlier than all the pre-war Axis strategists had thought possible. Heads roll.

Immediately, pre-stationed US cruisers and subs fan out along Japan's exposed

and unescorted merchant marine. Unfortunately for Roosevelt, having only militarised Pearl Harbor in April, not many ships were stationed there on the outbreak of war. If the US carriers had been searching, the Japanese could have lost 2 million tonnes of shipping in a week. As it is, the Subs and cruisers find little before large squadrons of Japanese cruisers quickly shepherd her most important assets, the merchant marine, to safe harbours.

This bolt from the blue completely unhinges Tojo. His nerves give out, and he starts deliriously shouting 'Game over man, game over', until he is slapped around the head a bit, which brings him to his senses somewhat. Tojo's main concern is that his production plans are geared for a campaign in the Pacific commencing not earlier than Nov/Dec 1941.

Japan is short of everything required for a Pacific war, from Marines to CVs, carrier planes, land-based long range fighters and bombers and pilots. Those pilots he does have are currently in reserve, with the carriers sitting ducks, some even in port without their planes on-board. If Roosevelt had only 3 CVs in Pearl Harbor, he might have sunk several of these CVs before they could even sortie ('possibly at the cost of several US CVs too', comments Tojo, shaken but not stirred).

Although realising the seriousness of the situation, Adolf points out to Tojo that the US has mainly been gearing up for a European war, and there are few US forces currently in the Pacific. Tojo might have to begin a crash naval programme, and it might be a good idea to place a few more planes (preferably with pilots) on his carriers as well, but it is going to be 9 turns before the first swarm of Essex's turn up. This gives Tojo 8 turns to sort out his mess and run riot in the Pacific.

Tojo calms down and agrees, but states that his only chance is to declare war on the CW immediately, use his offensive chit for a super combined action, and take out Batavia, Singapore, Rabaul, Manila, Hong Kong, Wake and Tricomalee simultaneously. Tojo points out that though he is short of most things, just by sheer chance, he does have divisions and ships in Canton, Truk and Tokyo that can take all these vital ports and cities in one drop. However, this might mean that the USA can declare war on Germany and Italy next impulse.

Although displaying his usual nonchalant savoir-faire, inwardly Adolf is deeply worried. All the hard work of

years of planning, scheming and plotting world domination now seemed to have gone up in smoke because Congress votes for war, the first time that rotten Roosevelt asks them. Considering the massaging of Congress that is required, Roosevelt had about a 1 in a 1000 chance of entering the war so early.

In a sudden state of inspired insanity, Adolf not only gives Tojo the go ahead to declare war on the CW, he also declares war on most of South America himself, hoping to forestall a US declaration of war on Germany and Italy, by the US overshooting its US entry. Overnight, the astonished Peruvian, Paraguayan, Ecuadorian, Bolivian and Chilean ambassadors queue at the Reichskanzlei to receive the bad news in alphabetical order. US controlled forces are doubled (although their effectiveness is halved). The combined Allied fleets are now as numerous as the stars.

Sadly, all this frantic activity does is convert a 10% chance into a 60% chance, meaning the US congress declares war on Germany and Italy in mid May, possibly 6 months earlier than she otherwise would have been able to.

As the Axis knew who voted what in Congress (having seen the US entry and tension chits), and thus should have known precisely the low chance of the US declaring war on Germany and Italy, this was by far the worst Axis decision of the war so far and reflects the panic Roosevelt's political maneuvers have caused in the Axis ranks. So much for savoir-faire.

To show that Roosevelt means business and to rub Adolf's nose in it even further, 6 corps lead by Eisenhower and 2000 US aircraft are directed to Morocco, virtually doubling the Allied forces on this front. Churchill comments that the 7th Cavalry couldn't have been better timed. Any plans Il Duce had of an end run around the southern flank of Morocco are now scotched by this bold US move.

To round out a perfect month for Adolf, the 3 prepared assaults on Gibraltar that are launched during the 2 months are bitterly repulsed by the Allies. In the toughest fighting yet seen, 20 German and Italian corps and 6900 aircraft face only 13 US and CW corps and 4200 aircraft. However, due to the narrow front north of Gibraltar, and the paucity of troops in Morocco and Algeria, the Axis cannot bring their full weight to bear, and manage to lose 4

corps and 900 aircraft, as against the Allies 2 corps and 600 aircraft. These losses are becoming predictably worrying for the Axis.

The only bright light for Adolf is that Roosevelt has his fleet stationed in the Pacific, and the CW Navy is finally driven from the Western Med as the Allies do not have the aircraft to effectively match the 1200 Axis long range fighters and 1500 Naval bombers committed to this vital theatre of war, and nor do they want to lose their navy should Gibraltar fall.

On the Pacific however, Tojo recovers well from his momentary bout of 'Nerves'. In a brilliant coup, minor forces easily occupy all their assigned objectives. All that pre-war planning by the Imperial Japanese Navy has paid off, and Japan has reached the limit of her proposed expansion in the first strike, quadrupling the size of her empire in less than a month. The only planned areas of continued expansion, are Malaya, Burma and Papua.

Tojo also launches a counter-strike against the US cruisers astride his convoy pipelines, but fails to find the enemy ships in the fogs off the East Asian coast.

The CW had left all these vital bases undefended, as they did not want to give the Japanese propagandists any ammunition by a build-up in the Pacific (at least that is the official story, the Axis suspect that Churchill was taken as much by surprise as the Axis were, by the US declarations of war).

Italy takes advantage of this sudden burst of activity to declare war on Greece. The attack however is pretty feeble as the only troops to attack Greece are the Italian Marines stationed at Rhodes. They start island hopping across the Aegean Sea towards Athens.

The CW declares control of Greece, upon which Bulgaria enters the war on the Axis side. Against negligible opposition the 1st Bulgarian Corps races towards the Greek resource.

Finally, the US allies Brazil and Mexico. US production jumps from 27 to 46 immediately, becoming the largest military power in the world overnight. US production will be 74 from May 1943 onwards, a truly staggering prospect.

Showing true Aussie grit, the Axis fight on. After all, although Adolf has never seen the Axis win from such a position, he has never been in this situation before, so he has never seen them lose from such a position either. Adolf tries

to ignore the fact that he has seen the Axis lose from far better positions.

The Russians use all this feverish diplomatic activity as a cover to declare war on Persia. It is quickly subdued by overwhelming Russian hordes.

Stalin then casually announces a Russian declaration of war on Italy. Il Duce is puzzled. Russian units are not in range of Italy or her units and thus can do no damage. However, this is a cunning move that gives the USSR several advantages.

First, she is no longer restricted in only performing combined operations, allowing her army to move en-masse. Second, her Militia are available for building. Next, she gets several free reserve units. Finally, she can receive vital resources and build points from her Allies immediately. She waited until now to do it, since she did not want to retard US entry, by declaring war before the US had pitched in.

Jul/Aug

In the Pacific, and after both sides have sorted out (more or less) their organisational difficulties, the US and Japanese navies are so equally matched that neither can sortie, for fear of the counter-strike by their opponent. Japan has already established her co-prosperity sphere and is happy to let the US come at her. Equally Roosevelt wants the Japanese to commit themselves and then destroy them in detail. Both Tojo and Roosevelt know they could lose the war in an afternoon, and thus neither dares risk their shiny new CVs.

Tojo abandons his Mr. Nice Guy policy and declares Siam in the war as a Japanese ally. Kuala Lumpur is captured unopposed and these forces start advancing northwards towards Burma.



Field commanders desperately reviewing the rules of engagement during combat.

On the Gibraltar Front, it is deja vu all over again. The Germans again die in windrows as attack after attack fails. At one point, the Axis think they have the Gibraltar garrison out of supply, and

triumphantly launch what they think is a 4:1 assault +3 against the disrupted defenders, only for the Allies to commit an HQ to provide emergency HQ supply, reducing the odds to 1:1.

The Axis hotly complain that this isn't legal under the Geneva Convention Articles of War. Roosevelt calmly points out that Adolf and Il Duce may be mistaken since Article 2, section 4, sub section 3 optional article 13 doesn't mention when this can be used so obviously they can do it any time.

Adolf quickly whips out the red pen for an immediate revision of the offending article of war, to which Churchill replies yah-boo sucks Adolf, you can stick your amendment up the relevant committee, and all amendments will be considered in due course at the appropriate juncture and in the fullness of time (preferably after Adolf's trial).

Adolf and Il Duce rant and rave about Allied war crimes, and how all the Allied leaders will be shot after a fair 3 minute Nuremberg trial, and generally lash their tails against their cages. They fight on, (as if they have much option).

On the Moroccan front, Mussolini has managed to establish a line from W2411 to W2408, but the US/CW forces start to outflank it to the South. Unless immediately and massively reinforced, Il Duce will have to fall back to the Mountains in front of Oran.

Displaying a certain lack of focus, the long sitzkrieg in the Middle East is broken by an Italian invasion of Beirut (Syria also being Free French) by the Italian Marine that was crawling towards Athens. Apparently Il Duce believes the Bulgarians can finish the job.

The nominal French forces in Beirut, supported by CW aircraft, easily repulse the Italians, destroying its Marine corps in the process. If only Il Duce had landed in E1008, the attack would have been automatic. This was the first of a disastrous series of Italian amphibious operations, which seemed to indicate a paucity of combined arms ability by the Italian commanders.

In China, the sudden war in the Pacific means this front slows down. However, not enough to save Lan-Chow which is surrounded and destroyed. The only cities that are still in Chinese control are Kunming and Urumchi. However there are still 10 Chinese corps scattered in the mountains North of Kunming and south of Lan-Chow, threatening to recapture Lan-Chow, Cheng-Tu and Chungking. These units (and the ever present partisans) force the Japan-

ese to leave 14 Corps in China to contain this threat.

In Madagascar, after a quick declaration of war against Japan, Free French forces invade and recapture Diego Suarez, forcing the Japanese cruisers stationed there to re deploy to Tricomalee.

In Russia, Stalin has now moved nearly all his army onto the German-Russian border, forcing Adolf to siphon off more and more units from Spain into Poland. This constant build-up on his border starts to worry Adolf. Next year, his garrison ratio will be halved. Thus Stalin may well be able to declare war on him next year. Then it strikes him. Of course, no wonder the Russians haven't demanded the Finnish borderlands and Bessarabia, nor put a garrison on their borders.

Adolf fires off an invitation for the Rumanian and Finnish Ambassadors to come to the ReichsKanzlei for a chat. When they arrive, he asks each of them, 'Purely hypothetically speaking, what would be your Government's response to a war between Germany and the Soviet Union'.

Their answer was as startling as it was identical. Both Rumania and Finland would be happy to pitch into the Soviet Union if Germany were to declare war on her, but would maintain their strict neutrality if the Soviet Union declared war on Germany.

The ramifications were horrifying. Russia would only need to defend 1600kms of border rather than 2500 (4500 if you include the Finnish front), and would be fighting 10 fewer Axis corps and 1000 fewer aircraft. It looked as if whoever went first in Jan/Feb 1942 would be able to humbug the other. All plans of conquest of the vast communist edifice were rapidly turning to dust.

Sep/Oct

Finally, a light at the end of the tunnel. After 7 unsuccessful attacks, Gibraltar falls to the Axis on only a 20% chance on the 20th of September. Although the relief for the Axis is palpable, the attackers are disrupted, and all 3 HQs in Spain are required to reorganise them.

Now, the Axis have almost undisputed control of the Med. However, the Allies still have 15 corps and 6000 aircraft in Morocco, against only 7 Italian/German corps supported directly by only 1200 aircraft (although the 5000 German aircraft in Spain could quickly re deploy/fight in this theatre).

The Italians occupy a defense line from W2411-W2310-W2409-W2408, but

there are no units south of this, and the US start infiltrating into W2507 forcing the Italians to stretch their lines even thinner to occupy W2407. The US responds by occupying W2406.

Although the winter will slow down this US infiltration, the Allies have far more units in this theatre than the Italians, and the Italians will be forced to abandon this line unless Germany can provide massive reinforcements immediately.

Adolf is in a quandary. He could use Army Group Spain in Morocco, perhaps destroying much of the US/CW forces stationed there. But this would guarantee that the Soviet Union would be able to declare war on Germany, handing the Allies the initiative for the rest of the war, and the Attacks on Morocco might fail, leading to a long drawn out stalemate on this front (the Atlas Mountains are hardly great tank country after all).

Alternatively, Adolf could turn around and attempt to declare war on Russia as soon as possible in 1942, while hopefully having a sufficient garrison ratio to stop the Russians declaring war on him. But what if Adolf does this, and Russia still declares war on Germany first.

Adolf's entry chits are in a complete muddle. Initially, they were all defensive. In early 1941, Adolf started turning them face-up preparatory for a 1942 attack on Stalin. However, now Adolf has to again turn them back down to stop an early Russian attack in 1941, but that might mean Adolf can't declare war on Stalin till 1943. What a hopeless mess.

Stalin's mind on the other hand has been rock firm. All his chits are face-down, obviously intending to declare war on Germany as soon as possible. This was consistent with Allied pre-war planning that presumed an Axis invasion of Gt. Britain.

This almost guarantees a Russian declaration of war on Germany if Stalin gets to go first in 1942. Initiative is +1 Allies, with the Axis going first this month, giving Stalin the edge. For Adolf to get the edge, both sides have to have equal blows by the end of October, the Allies get the initiative in November and have an extra offensive in December, and even then Adolf will only win ties. It's not looking good.

Knowing that this decision could decide the outcome of the war, and without much conviction either way, Adolf reluctantly decides to go after Stalin. This decision is arrived at without any of the above uppermost in his mind. Instead, he does so to try to

maintain the initiative, and because it is in accordance with pre-war planning.

In this Adolf is deluding himself. Pre-war planning called for a summer 1941 or '42 campaign against Stalin, not a winter '41/'42 campaign. Adolf has no experience of such a campaign. Except insofar as shunning such an option in all planning, it has never so far been considered an option.

Il Duce, although understanding Adolf's reasoning, is not at all sure it is the right move. In addition to not necessarily stopping Stalin from declaring war first, Adolf's decision ultimately dooms the Italian forces in north Africa. Furthermore, since Tangier (and its key defensive location, W2410) are still in Allied hands, the Med. is not completely cut-off to the Allies. They can feed capital ships into this theatre, 2 per month and, over time, dominate it.

Adolf assures Il Duce that 1200 German long-range Fighters, 600 land bombers, 900 Naval bombers and 300 air transports will remain under Il Duce's control, along with Rommel and 6 German corps. This should be sufficient to destroy the CW forces around Suez and advance towards Persia, and the vital oil wells.

Adolf further states that he doubts the Allies will use Tangier as a staging post as it takes too long to move sizable forces in/out of the Med. Il Duce then asks what happens if the Allies retake Gibraltar, to which Adolf replies that Gibraltar will never be recaptured, and promises to leave 5 corps and a HQ in Southern Spain and another 3 corps in Northern Spain to maintain order and hold onto Gibraltar.

Il Duce grumbles, but is ultimately powerless, except to be ready to fire off a number of 'Told you so' telegrams should all go wrong. The elite elements of Army Group Spain commence entraining for the Russian front. The HQs being disrupted however, must remain in Spain until November.

The temporary control of the Med by the Axis allows Il Duce to again invade Syria, this time in E1008 (he's learning) with 2 German corps, against negligible opposition. They quickly fan out north and south occupying Damascus, Jaffa and Amman before the CW can stretch their forces thinly enough along the Nile to send a corps to Jaffa and Amman.

At the same time, the newly arrived German Marine corps launches an automatic invasion of Cyprus adding it to the growing Axis empire.

In the Pacific, there is some minor skirmishing of each other's convoy pipelines that causes minimal casualties. However, Stalin dramatically ups the ante by declaring war on Japan, and then performing naval operations against Japan's surprised convoys. Stalin had spent not inconsiderable sums of his production to augment his Pacific fleet with extra cruisers and Subs for just such a declaration of war.

Luckily for Tojo, most of the Russian naval task forces fail to find anything, but in the Sea of Japan, 600,000 vital tonnes of Japanese merchant shipping is sunk. Tojo quickly responds with his own cruisers and Light Carriers, and manages to sink most of the raiders. The Russian Subs will however remain a pest for a long time to come.

Nov/Dec

The Allies gain the initiative and move first. The rapid German build-up on the Polish border rattles Stalin. He doesn't believe that he will be able to declare war on Adolf first, and is terrified of his forces being caught on the border. An APB flashes out over the radio. All units retire to the Dvina-Dnieper line immediately. The Germans are amazed to find the intricate Russian border defences unoccupied virtually overnight.

Adolf's heart skips for joy, but only for a minute. His fear of a Russian declaration of war is replaced by a fear that the Russians are getting away. It is currently raining in Eastern Poland which slows the Russian withdrawal, while maximising their supply problems. However, in 2-3 months, the Russians will have retired behind the Dvina, and Dnieper and will be prepared for the Axis advance.

Adolf quickly convenes an Axis conference at the Berchtesgarden. He announces to an astonished Duce and Tojo, that unless his Allies can figure out a very good reason to the contrary, he intends to declare war immediately on the Russians.

Il Duce points out the small factor that there are no German HQs in Eastern Poland and won't this rather restrict the supply of the Germans. Adolf replies that he intends to rail his HQs directly into the front lines and use them as advance supply bases. As the front moves further east, more HQs will be railed in to enable the advance to continue. he admits that this leaves him with 1 perhaps only 2 axes of advance, but he doubts the advance will advance out of supply before the end of December.

After a brief perusal of the map, Tojo and Il Duce announce that as there are no Russians facing the Rumanians, would not a declaration of war by Rumania allow Rumanians to set-up around Cernauti and strike north into Eastern Poland, cutting off Russia's entire army group south in Poland, opening them up for extinction.

Adolf thanks Tojo and Il Duce profusely, as it is a brilliant idea. If he can cut off half the Russian army, he can destroy it in detail, without requiring Rumanians to enter Russia, thus not increasing Russian production. The only possible down-side is the Rumanians would be unsupported by Germans for some 6-10 weeks until the Germans can come to their aid from the west. In the mean-time, the Rumanians could be destroyed by the ever more desperate Russians. Still, no guts, no glory. Adolf thanks his allies for their approval, and announces to a stunned world that Operation Barbarossa has commenced. Antonescu is summoned to Berlin personally for consultation (dictation?).

Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin each shake Adolf's ambassador's hands as they hand them their credentials (and marching orders). Churchill states that he didn't know Adolf had the cojones to declare war on Russia during winter without HQs. Adolf assures Stalin that he has had them for quite some time. War is now raging across the globe.

The Rumanians dutifully declare war, and immediately march north from Cernauti putting the Russian Southern Front out of supply. Meanwhile the advance forces of Army Group North, Central and South advance forward smashing the delaying Russian forces on the Neman, in Brest-Litovsk and west of Lvov.

The Russians respond by railing Timoshenko from the Pacific to E2234 (bypassing the Northern-most Rumanian corps in E2232) temporarily placing most of the Russians back in supply. However, the weather is still atrocious and the armies struggle eastwards, moving less than 50km/week. In the North, the bulk of the Russian forces eventually escape to the Neman. However, in the South, a gigantic battle develops around Lvov, as the Russians desperately try to break through the Rumanian lines. 8 Russian armies are destroyed in the opening 2 months of the war.

In the Middle East, the German forces in Syria are too small to advance

towards the Caucasus, and they decide to concentrate on finishing off the CW forces first. The Syrian Expeditionary army advances to the Suez canal pocketing 9 CW corps between the Nile and the canal.

Il Duce orders an invasion of the Nile Delta (E1404) with the newly arrived German Marine corps. The attack is brilliantly successful, completely outflanking the CW on the Nile line. The CW are forced to pull back behind the eastern branch of the Nile, but Dami-etta cannot be occupied without thinning the Suez line to breaking point.

The German Marine walks into Dami-etta, and is reinforced from the sea. The augmented forces launch an attack on E1303 from 3 sides, capturing it. On the 15th December, The Axis forces on the Canal and on the Nile link up. The CW forces are now reduced to a few corps in Suez and Cairo. The CW position is irretrievably lost.

Unfortunately for Churchill and Roosevelt, their fixation with Gibraltar cost them Suez. They could have easily diverted 3 or 4 corps and 600 aircraft from Gibraltar to Suez, that would have not cost them anything in Gibraltar, but would have saved Suez. This focus problem is a regular occurrence for both sides that continues repeatedly throughout the war (e.g. the Germans 'forgetting' to invade Denmark after its declaration of war is another case).

However, the concentration of the Axis forces around Suez goads Stalin into declaring war on Iraq. The Russian Persian army quickly subdues the gallant Iraqi Cavalry corps.

In Greece the 3 Bulgarian corps are held up in front of the Greek resource. They cannot advance until Wehrmacht forces reinforce them. The Germans declare Hungary an Axis Ally and the first German corps rail to Salonica.

The Pacific meanwhile is more or less living up to its name. The constant sniping of each other's convoy lines continues, with the Allies attempting to break the Japanese lines from Japan to the Dutch East Indies, while the Japanese try to break the CW convoys coming from Australia and South Africa round the Cape to Great Britain. Each side has minimal success.

Roosevelt turns Pearl Harbor into an impregnable air-sea-land fortress while Tojo does the same with his 2 critical sea areas, the Sea of Japan and the South China Sea. Neither side feels strong enough to attack, each secretly

hoping for the other to crack first and make a mistake.

Roosevelt is happy to defend until his Essex-class CVs arrive to double then triple his fleet. After all, with the USA's enormous production, when the Essex's start coming, they will come thick and fast.

Tojo orders the Imperial Naval Staff to plan a Midway style assault on Roosevelt's bastion. The risks that such a move could lead to disaster however are judged just too great.

The Imperial Japanese Navy would have to fight from further away than the US navy, without friendly air cover and would expose his vital convoy pipelines to the wrath of Fletcher's flattops.

Doing nothing ensures the safe arrival of the merchantmen in Japanese harbors, comforts Tojo to himself. The question is, can the Nipponese forces churn out material fast enough to counter the impending US build-up. Tojo hopes that it can. Roosevelt hopes it can't. Thus both sides stay idle.

In East Asia, the Japanese disengage forces from the Chinese front to bolster the Manchurian front against the Russians. This condemns Hata to a strictly defensive posture, while the Chinese very gradually begin to build back up. Overall, the Japanese are now under severe pressure, and could easily crack if Churchill sends the bulk of his navy to the Pacific. Churchill however is not interested in anything east of Gibraltar, and tells Roosevelt to get stuffed.

The Japanese use the good weather in the North Monsoon to advance unmolested against no opposition into Burma, capturing Rangoon and the vital oil resource. They continue their march towards the Indian border, but as there are only 3 Japanese armies, they will be unlikely to make much headway against the strong CW forces in and around Calcutta.

Jan/Feb 1942

On the Russian Front, the Russians finally bust through the Rumanian cordon after having a third of their army destroyed. Adolf secretly admires the brilliant Russian defence that not so much lost a third of its force, but saved two-thirds.

On the Northern and Central front, most of the Russian forces are now out of range of most of the German army, as it struggles eastwards in the appalling weather. The Russian defences begin to consolidate around the Dnieper-Dvina rivers.

The Finns use these huge kessel battles to declare war on the Russians. Finns quickly invest Leningrad from the north, but are too weak to assault. Further north, 2 Finnish Corps and 2 ski divisions race across the snow cutting off Murmansk from the rest of Russia. They are stopped in S0403 by Russian reinforcements arriving in S0303. Murmansk itself is firmly held by a Russian army.

In the Suez front, the CW units in Suez are destroyed by another glorious assault, allowing the Italian Marine (which has just been reconstituted after the Syrian debacle) to immediately sail through the Suez canal, the first forces to do so (no CW units now block the Canal). Their objective is Aden which is directly invaded at 7-1 odds. Miraculously, it is again destroyed by a notional defence of a few local militia. Their motto changes amongst the troops from 'Always fight, always win' to 'Always fight, always die'.

Tojo mocks Il Duce for his lack of karma, as Japanese forces are in position to seize Aden at any time, but refrained in the belief that Italy needed Aden as a fleet base more than Japan did. He expresses hope to Mussolini that Italy will have Aden before the end of the war.

Although Aden is undefended, and Il Duce's intention to take it is quite clear, Winnie is still not interested in anything east of Gibraltar, contenting himself with safeguarding India, and Australia, and happy to lose the rest of the Asia/Pacific region. Since Aden (a mountain city) only requires 1 CW corps to defend, this extreme case of Euro-focus seems a little short-sighted.

In the Pacific, the Japanese fleet remains at Truk watching and being watched by the US fleet in Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt tries to tempt Tojo to attack a reinforcing fleet of 3 US CVs in the Clarion Sea. However, only half the Japanese CVs can reach this sea area, and they could be destroyed by a US counter-sortie from Pearl Harbor. Knowing the importance of the Japanese fleet to Axis survival, Tojo declines the offer.

Mar/Apr

After ignoring strategic bombing for the entire war so far, all of a sudden 1600 CW 4-engined bombers commence bombing runs of Germany. Due to the lack of prior warning, Germany's air-defence was ramshackle and factory losses are heavy. Attacking in mass raids, both Lille and Paris are destroyed. Goebbels uses this barbarian

destruction of a beautiful city to great advantage in the propaganda war.

After the usual nasty winter weather, the Battle of the Atlantic recommences with relish, with Germany losing 2 Subs, but the Allies also losing another 600,000 tonnes.

In the Middle East, the Italians mop up the remaining CW forces in Cairo and commence advancing towards Iraq. However their supply lines are tenuous requiring 4 HQs in a chain back to the Syrian coast before they can recapture Baghdad. Orders are sent out for all Italian HQs and Von Bock (Panzer Armee Africa's commander) to report to the Iraqi border.

Another invasion is launched with the ultimate object of taking Aden. This time it goes in at A2827 which is out of supply (the Red Sea is Italian controlled). This is automatic, and the Axis forces begin the long march to Aden. Still Churchill refuses to be prodded to provide a defence. Even more criminal, when an undefended Aden is finally occupied, the CW cruiser Australia is captured and re-flagged as the longest ranged ship in the Italian Navy.

In Greece, the arriving German reinforcements finally tip the scales, and the Greek resource is captured.

In Russia, the Germans nestle up to the Dnieper river and, during snow, cross the Dnieper at an undefended E1527. Stalin confesses that he forgot the swamp had frozen, but even if it had been swamp, the Germans would have crossed and been disrupted, rather than keep it in Russian hands.

If the Germans can get their Marine corps into this location, they can cross to E1526 and/or E1427. Unfortunately, this vital unit is now in the Syrian desert, the least hospitable terrain possible for a Marine unit. Adolf sighs at his underling's bungling, and orders its immediate re-deployment to the Eastern front.

In the North, the Dvina is crossed at several locations, and Riga and Minsk are captured. However, the line Gorny-Smolensk-Vitebsk-Pskov is held in strength and the Germans cannot afford to attack.

In Finland, the Finns advance onto the frozen Lake Ladoga with a Motorised and Mech corps and then attack Leningrad directly. The attack fails, disrupting the attackers. As Mannerheim is further north, they cannot be reorganised. The lake then unfreezes and the Mech and Motorised corps sink

beneath the waves. 'Brilliant' mutters Il Duce, 'what's your next trick?'.

In the far north, Finnish forces try to outflank the Russian units in S0303 by occupying S0402. Unfortunately, this disrupts the Finnish corps which is then quickly destroyed by the Russian forces and S0402 occupied by the Soviets. From now on, the Finns are firmly on the defensive.

In Morocco, the sudden lack of pressure by the Axis (coupled with the withdrawal of 4000 Axis planes), allows the Allies to take the offensive, the first time they have been able to do so during the game. They capture W2408, forcing the Axis to abandon the entire line. They fall back to W2110, W2209 and W2108, leaving Mellila unguarded if the Allies want to take it.

The Allies follow up the Italian withdrawal from Tangier only fitfully. This is mainly due to Winnie's predilection for performing combined operations. Although this always allows Winnie to do a little bit of everything, overall it serves to limit the CW counter-blows.

An example of this is in the strategic war discussed above. Instead of launching an Air Impulse and reorganising all the CW strategic bombers with 1 or 2 HQs, Winnie launches it in a combined which requires 3 or 4. Furthermore, this uses up all the CW air missions, not allowing any for attacking the Japanese in the Pacific, or the Italians in Morocco.

On the China front, the war has degenerated into a sitzkrieg, with the Japanese only defending with 1 corps per hex, and the Chinese too weak to counter-attack against the Japanese in the mountains between Kunming and Lan-Chow.

On the Burma front, the Burma Road is cut by the Japanese and the Indian border reached, but cannot be breached. The one ambitious project is the invasion of A2931 by a Japanese division against no opposition (it is out of supply). Riyadh is firmly occupied by the Saudi Cav, but the oil is under Japanese possession. Whether they can transport it across the Indian Ocean however is a different matter.

May/June

May opens up fine and sunny in Southern Russia and the Germans begin their sledgehammer blows against the Russian defenders on the left bank of the Dnieper. They drive their way across the river at E1429, forcing the Russians to abandon the lower Dnieper. In a brilliant blitzkrieg, Dnepropetrovsk and

Berdiansk are liberated on behalf of the Ukrainian people by the Wehrmacht, and Stalino is invested. North of Dnepropetrovsk, the Russians still hold the Dnieper line however.

In the centre, the winter lingers longer, forcing the Germans to delay their assaults across the upper Dnieper. Instead, limited offensives are launched on Vitebsk which fails. Vitebsk is screened and the Germans attempt to drive between the swamps NE of Vitebsk in an attempt to outflank the Russian defenses around Smolensk. The going is slow in the bad weather.

In the far north, the remaining Finnish units holding the Murmansk railway retreat to S0504 daring the Russians to attack them across a river into a swamp. Stalin declines.

CW strategic bombardment continues unabated but with less effect than their initial blows. This is partly due to the quick re deployment of German fighters back to Germany from both the Moroccan, French and even Russian fronts. Only 2000 German fighters remain in Russia to conduct an offensive campaign.

In another combined operation, the CW launch a massed air raid into the Cape St. Vincent Sea area forcing Il Duce to abort his puny attacks on the Sth. African supply lines. Il Duce screams for German Jets. 'I wish' Adolf sarcastically replies.

In the Indian Ocean, the Italians launch an invasion of India (A2128) against negligible opposition. Although this is lauded by Il Duce as Roman hands extending across the water to their Japanese brothers, this manoeuvre is derided in both Tokyo and Berlin as a ridiculous waste of effort. Sure enough, this incursion is quickly contained by a single CW corps despatched from Bombay to Ahmadabad.

In Iraq, the Axis drives into northern Iraq capturing the oil wells intact. However, the Axis are operating at the limit of their supply line, so 1st Panzer Corps races southwards past Baghdad, advancing to Kuwait and captures it with its last litre of petrol.

The Greek front reaches a climax with the Germans launching an assault on Athens that captures the city. The remaining German forces quickly rail to the Russian front, while the Bulgarians settle in as the new masters of Greece.

In Algeria, the Allies advance to the Mellila line but decline to occupy the port itself. Again they use the indirect

approach, attempting to outflank the Italian line southwards. This forces the Italians to occupy W2107, which the Allies respond to by moving further south taking the Algerian resource.

In the Pacific, the desultory war continues with neither Roosevelt or Tojo feeling strong enough to commit their fleets. This phony war has the unanticipated benefit of allowing both to build up their oil reserves.

The US make their first appearance among the Japanese merchantmen. They are surprised by squadrons of Japanese Seiku's which sink 90 US subs.

The Japanese could have sunk another 30 subs if the commander of a wing of Betty's had used his initiative when encountering the fray purely by chance. He is publicly court-martialled for his incompetence.

The remaining US subs limp into Calcutta to lick their wounds.

In Siberia, the Japanese use their forces released from the Chinese front to occupy Vladivostok and the resources in P2849 & P2842. The Russians immediately sue for peace releasing their remaining Pacific forces around Chita to bolster their forces arrayed against Germany.

Jul/Aug

The Yugoslav Government, realising the inevitability of Axis supremacy, sign the Anti-Comintern pact on the 4th of July, joining hands for a peaceful united Europe.

Yugoslav forces, led by Prince Paul himself, are immediately railed to the Russian and Western fronts. Prince Paul waves their departure from the station, then retires for a brandy at the chalet.

Army Group Centre launches another attack against Vitebsk which fails again. Stalin conveys the Order of Me award to Vitebsk for their stubborn defence of this loyally Communist city. Rundstedt decides to bypass Vitebsk, leaving 4 corps behind to screen it. This proves to be a poor decision as this boil continues to fester.

Elsewhere however, AGC does well taking Smolensk and advancing across the upper Dnieper. Even better, the Germans cut the rail line to Leningrad at E1745. This forces the Russians to evacuate Pskov and Novgorod to stop the Germans outflanking them from the South-east. AGN follows up cautiously for a closer investment of Leningrad.

Unfortunately, the success of the assault goes to Rundstedt's head, and while

leading from the front, his headquarters is attacked and destroyed, immediately putting AGC's command in disarray and leading to half the German forces there being out of supply. Rommel is railed northwards to help take over control of this vital theatre.

In the south meanwhile, AGS continuing its blitzkrieg. Recently promoted Kesselring uses Germany's last offensive chit to blast his way through Stalino. Stalin, though concerned, had been more worried about a German air impulse to disrupt all the Russians and then the use of the offensive chit in a land offensive to destroy the survivors.

However, Zhukov is still forced to evacuate the Dnieper line all the way to Gomel as he falls back past Kursk and Kharkov to the Don River. The German Marine corps after finally getting to the Eastern front, uses small barges to cross from E1130 to E1029 temporarily cutting off the vital Caucasus oil from the Russian factories. The Russians respond quickly to this.

The Axis forces in Iraq recently renamed Army Group Orient use their new supply base at Kuwait to launch an attack on Baghdad from the South. Baghdad falls and the Russians retire to the mountains of Persia.

In Algeria, the constant infiltrating south of the Mellila line forces the Italians to execute a gradual withdrawal towards Oran. Again the Allies follow up in a desultory fashion, because of an endless series of combined actions.

In the Pacific, the Japanese take Lae but are prevented from taking Port Moresby by a CW corps there. Wellington, Canberra, Pago-Pago and Hawaii are all heavily defended by CW and US corps and there is little Tojo can do here without risking his fleet, so he contents himself with stuffing his vital objectives with corps and fighters.

Roosevelt continues to make bellicose threats of further 'operations' against Japan, which concentrates Tojo's mind still further on the task of perfecting his defences.

In the strategic war, the US join the CW effort over the German skies causing massive casualties for both sides. The Allies continue with their attacks by launching all their aircraft in one raid at a time.

This limits the damage to German factories as the Allies nearly always abort against the overwhelming German fighter response. However, it puts a lot of pressure on the Axis because if they

ever break-through, the damage to the factories is likely to be devastating.

All German and Italian fighter production is being consumed in this war, and although there are now 4000 German fighters in Germany, Stalin believes Adolf has already lost the air war. Adolf believes everything is OK now, but is not looking forward to the long-range Allied fighters which the Abwehr predicts will be in the UK within a year.

Furthermore, the air raids were just a cover to suck up as many German fighters as possible. In this they are successful, and on Aug 3rd, the Allies launch a surprise invasion of Denmark, occupying Frederikshavn and W0740 simultaneously.

Although a complete surprise, the Allies have chosen their invasion site poorly. If they had invaded W0640 they would have taken Denmark in less than a week. Instead, the German defending corps in W0741 falls back to W0640 and thence over the crossing arrow to W0540.

The Allies could have attacked the corps in W0640, but as Adolf had ordered 400 fighters and 400 bombers to be rushed to the Danish front and Churchill was afraid that a repulse would allow the German reserves in Germany to counter-attack and drive him off his beach-head. As the chance of this happening was less than 20%, Adolf was very relieved.

Overall however, this one strike has turned the war around dramatically. Historically, the Germans had 3 years in the East before North-West Europe was invaded by the Western Allies, Adolf got 6 months and winter months at that. Adolf sighs, but prevents any egress from Denmark by rushing 2 corps to Kiel. The Allies, fearing the effect on German production do not enter Germany itself. Thus a 100km no-go zone is created between the armies.

Although this was an excellent 2 months in the east for the Axis with 65 BPs of Russians being destroyed (even Churchill thinks he might eventually have to send the odd build point to Stalin), the war was rapidly going down-hill for the Axis and Adolf guessed he had no more than 12 months to finish off the Russians or he would be destroyed.

Sep/Oct

The Western Allies launch another brilliant coup by invading Helsinki with CW marines and US divisions based in Fredrikshavn. The single Finnish militia

corps is no match for the Allies naval, air and land forces and Helsinki quickly falls.

Mannerheim is sacked for his incompetence as Finns rush back from Leningrad to try to retake Helsinki. This fails and Finland is conquered by the CW (funnily enough, Churchill sends more CW factors than the US, so this becomes a CW rather than a US colony).

For the first time, Tojo and Mussolini openly criticise Adolf for this lapse of judgement, and Adolf is now very worried. An Allied invasion of the Baltic states followed by a drive to the Black Sea could completely cut-off all the Axis forces in Russia. This forces Adolf to use most of his reinforcements as garrisons on the Baltic Front again denying his Eastern Front vital reinforcements.

To make matters worse, the Allies follow up with an invasion of Portugal at the other end of Europe against the sole Italian corps defending there. Bringing in enormous amounts of shore bombardment from 6 Battleships, the Allies stroll ashore with minimal losses, as the Italians quickly break and run.

The majority of the Italian fleet was stationed at Lisbon and is scattered, with several cruisers captured and sunk, as well as 750,000 tonnes of transports. The remaining fleet rebases to Bordeaux.

Needless to say, there are no German forces nearer Lisbon than Gibraltar, Madrid and Ferrol. Units from all 3 locations rush towards Portugal.

Meanwhile, the weather in the Arctic serves to limit the German drive against Russia. The Vitebsk ulcer still holds out, forcing Rommel to divert forces westwards to try to take it this winter.

The Russians use this respite to counter-attack the remaining emaciated AGC forces, making considerable headway. For the first time since the commencement of Barbarossa, German losses are heavy (7 corps lost).

In the South however, the Axis continue their drive to the Don capturing Stalino and Bryansk but are held up in front of Rostov, while Kursk valiantly remains in Russian hands.

In the vital theatre of Persia, the Russians have 5 armies and an HQ defending from Basra north to Tabriz. This terrain is tough, and the Axis are operating at the limit of their supply. Stalin laughs at the foolishness of the Allies wasting so many HQs in this theatre.

The Axis however know the importance of the oil and if they completely re-direct their lines of communication through the Persian Gulf, then they are open to naval interdiction by the CW. Although admitting it is a heavy investment, they don't know what else they can do. To expand their base, the Axis head south from Kuwait capturing Bahrain.

The Russians use this respite (and rather pointless manoeuvre) to advance towards the Iraqi oil wells. Armee Gruppe Orient rapidly re deploys northwards again forcing the retreat of the Russian expeditionary army. Until the Italians can drive the Russians out of A3036, the Iraqi oil will always be vulnerable to a Russian advance. The oil has started to flow to the Axis, but for how long?

Adolf orders the capture of A3036 immediately, to which Mussolini responds 'sure, send 6 corps and Manstein and I will comply'. Muttering 'I would rather fight allies than be one of them', Hitler stalks off.

In Denmark, Germany stiffens the Copenhagen garrison by Air transport from the Reich by a fleet of gigantic BV-222s. The rest of Denmark is occupied by the Allies, but as W0540 and W0541 are defended by German corps, Adolf may be able to forestall its inevitable collapse for some time at least.

In the Pacific, the US launch their first strike against the Japanese, with the 1 Marine Corps storming ashore at Eniwetok against a notional defence. Tojo is not overly concerned however, as Kwajalein is the objective and it is defended by 2 Japanese armies.

So far, apart from convoys, the IJN has only lost 1 cruiser against the US attacks. Japanese manufacturing is now running at wartime capacity and aircraft, ships and tanks are starting to stream off the production lines.

The Italians meanwhile have a notable success in the Battle of the Atlantic, when her subs spot and sink the Hornet on her way from England in an attempt to reinforce the Pacific fleet. They round out their good work by sinking a total of 1.4 million tonnes of merchant shipping in the last 2 months.

This is more like it, especially as Winnie has not built 1 tonne of merchant shipping since the start of the war. According to Winnie, this is one of Roosevelt's many responsibilities. Winnie is only interested in building the pointy bits of his armed forces.

Nov/Dec

Finally, and 18 months earlier than historical, the US 34th and CW 1st airborne corps paradrop against an undefended W1731. The Germans had attempted to place 1 corps every 2-300 kms, but unfortunately on this sector, the defending corps had 500 kms to look after, and it was inevitable that there would be some holes.

The Axis had another conference to decide whether to try to hold on the beaches or back on the Seine-Loire line. Due to the lack of units on the Russian front, the garrison in France had been denuded down to a few Italian and Yugoslav corps, propped up by the occasional German. The decision is made to go forward, to limit the paras' maneuverability, even if this might lead to their destruction in the open.

Even so, the paras quickly fan out to capture Cherbourg and St. Malo, and are reinforced by extra corps shipped over from England. All the Axis defenders race towards the Brittany front, leaving only 1 corps in Amsterdam, and another at Calais.

In Russia, the Germans temporarily cross the Don north of Voronezh, but are driven back with savage losses including a Panzer corps. Soviets forces don't stop there though, splashing across the Don themselves.

All Stalin's attack are exquisitely planned at odds of 4-1 and 5-1. Even when the attacks occasionally fail, they are launched in such a manner that they leave little opportunity for a counter-strike by the Germans.

A serious breach south of Tula is only averted by a desperate counter-attack from the north that hustles the Russians back across the Don.

The Germans now barely have sufficient forces to adequately hold the Don, let alone attack further.

Both Vitebsk and Kursk continue to hold out behind the German lines, as repeated assaults on both fail. Tensions are exacerbated around Vitebsk when the Yugoslav HQ controlling this sector refuses to hand out rations to the brave Hungarian and Rumanian mountaineers trying to bust into Vitebsk.

On the Spanish front, Axis blocking positions are established at W2620 and W2517 but they are only single corps and it hardly seems enough. The Gibraltar garrison is now only 3 German corps, while Madrid is empty. With the serious situation in France, there are no

reinforcements for this front and the end is looking nearer in Spain.

How soon, was quickly discovered. On the 15th December in the operation of the war, the Allies captured Madrid in a move believed impossible by the German General Staff. US Transports in Scapa moved out to the North Sea, moved into Portsmouth, picked up 800 C-47's stationed there, moved back out into the North Sea and then moved 1 into Cherbourg and 1 into St. Malo.

The paras stationed there, then flew 1500kms to an undefended Madrid and took it in a dramatic coup-de-main. Spain was liberated. The Axis had not bothered to destroy the factories there so they were operational almost immediately, and all the Axis units in Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar were out of supply.

Simultaneously, Bordeaux is invaded and the Italian fleet is again scattered, captured or sunk. A few damaged cruisers limp into the remaining harbors in Axis hands on the Bay of Biscay.

Hitler falls into a swoon, while Il Duce starts raving 'game over man., game over' and Tojo had to send some of his finest sedatives (pre-war Australian Chardonnay) to restore some order in the Big 3 meeting immediately called (Tojo was starting to take up permanent residency in the Ritz since he was hardly needed in the Pacific and everything seemed to be collapsing in West Europe).

After finally calming down, the position is looked at dispassionately, and they realise that although things are critical, they are not yet terminal. The most disturbing aspect of the last few moves was the incredible flexibility of the Allied paras. Due to the range of the C-47, they could fly anywhere within 1500kms, thus forcing the Germans to station large number of garrisons from Warsaw to Gibraltar.

As a small example, it was realised that Hungary could be conquered from Denmark, and Rome could be captured from Spain. Neither location was currently garrisoned. Il Duce was sat down and ordered by Tojo and Adolf to defend Italy now.

Il Duce is unconvinced until told that in 3 impulses, the Allies could take Rome, then Taranto, then Tripoli and Italy would be conquered (later, it was discovered, this was precisely the Allied plan). It was stressed to Il Duce that Rome and Tripoli must be defended now, not next week or next month. Il Duce finally realises the gravity of the situation, and troops are taken from Suez and Morocco back to Italy.

The Moroccan army that remains behind thins the Oran line close to breaking point.

The scattered forces in Spain and Portugal head eastwards as quickly as possible, leaving the Gibraltar garrison alone and lonely on the Rock, supply being provided through the Western Med., which could now be easily interdicted by air power in Algeria.

In France, the sudden capture of Madrid leaves the front fairly static, with 1 Italian corps in W1724 blocking the egress of the US marines in Bordeaux, and the St. Malo-Cherbourg line being hugged by 2nd-line Axis minor forces.

The larger question is what Germany should do in Russia. There, the battle was delicately poised. As both sides were very aggressive, losses for both were high.

Adolf had only 2 options, retreat and go into hedgehog mode around Germany, putting all reinforcements on the Western Front, or go for broke, throwing everything possible at the Russians and hope to break them before being broken himself in the west. Knowing Adolf, do I need to add what he decided. German troop-trains hasten eastwards.

In Iraq, the Italians drive towards the Gulf, capturing Basra, and work their way around the Russian army in Bandar Shapur, in an attempt to capture Bushehr. In this drive, an undefended Isfahan falls to the Italians.

Christmas comes to a much subdued Axis command with the Allies apparently being able to conquer and liberate at will. Would 1943 prove to be the year of decision?

Jan/Feb

The Allies in Portugal link up with the Paras in Madrid and head towards the French border against no opposition. This at least means that Gibraltar might still hold out for awhile keeping the Mediterranean as an Axis lake, at least more or less.

In France, the Allies destroy the Yugoslav corps in W1931 and rapidly capture Brest, Lorient and St. Nazaire. The remaining Axis corps fall back to the Seine and Loire, leaving a large garrison in Nantes. Fortunately 5 German corps arrive as reinforcements to bolster Paris.

In Russia, Vitebsk finally falls on the 5th assault, allowing 6 corps (including 3 mountain corps) to rush forward to stabilise the front. The weather keeps other attacks by both sides to a minimum and the front now runs from Ros-

tov along the Don to Tula and from there NW to Kalinin and then up to E1445. The Germans lacking the punch to continue attacking, try to infiltrate north of E1445 instead. Luckily, 6 German corps arrive as reinforcements, as well as the Vitebsk garrison to bolster the sagging German forces.

In Finland, the Allies have stopped garrisoning Helsinki, so at the end of February, a German Marine division rails to Tallinn. Now if only the Axis can get the initiative in March.

In Persia, the Italians capture Shiraz and Bushehr, isolating the Russian army in Bandar Shapur. Tehran and Tabriz are still heavily garrisoned by the Russians however.

In Morocco, the Italians hold the Oran line and Algiers while the US sends a long range recce unit south of the mountains in an obvious drive to capture Tunis and Tripoli. There is little Il Duce can do about this since he has no reserves left. At least Tripoli, Rome and Genoa are now heavily garrisoned.

In the Pacific peace reigns as both sides continue to build up but still do not dare to face each other. China launches her first attack in 2 years. It fails miserably reverting the front to stalemate again.

Mar/Apr

The Axis get the drop on the Allies and go first. The German Marine division boats across the Gulf of Finland and enters Helsinki to rapturous applause from the Finnish people. The ever present BV-222's drop in a corps to garrison the city against the expected frenzied Allied counterattacks.

Unfortunately, for the Allies, they have removed most of their ships from Fredrikshavn and can only land limited forces in Finland. Furthermore, there is only 1 Russian corps in Leningrad. These Allied counter-strikes are easily contained and by the end of April the Finnish Government is restored to power. 'Hah', says Adolf 'two can do these combined operations you know'.

In Russia, Kursk finally falls to the 4th assault. This releases German troops to flood towards Rostov, which they attack at 1-2 +1 in a blizzard. On a 10% chance, the Germans, flushed with success at Kursk, storm into the city on the 27th April, destroying 2 Russian armies and 1 German corps in the process.

Stalin starts muttering that Hitler has the luck of the devil, and even Hitler has to admit that it was pretty fluky. It is also critical, since this unnerves Stalin to actually abandon the Don River.

Meanwhile, Il Duce, who is in charge of the Western Front, skillfully withdraws completely behind the Seine-Loire defence line except for fortress Nantes and one delaying Anti-Tank unit in W1428.

Taking no risks whatsoever, Churchill wastes 3 precious weeks launching a 40-1 assault against it. He is not mollified when it is pointed out he could have overrun it, and launched an attack across the Seine before the defences have solidified.

Il Duce uses this time wisely, slotting another 4 reinforcing German corps into the Seine defenses. Churchill now uses an offensive chit (the first of many, the Allies are building between 1 and 2 per month) to try to cross the Loire. Due to the massive amounts of Italian bombers covered by flocks of Focke-Wulf fighters, the Allies are stopped in their tracks.

Now Mussolini and Stalin both point out something that Tojo has long enunciated. All Allied players waste their strategic bombers on ground support and ground-strike as soon as the land war in Western Europe starts.

Thus German production receives a welcome respite and passes 50 for the first time in the war. Although still far less than the US (65, about to go up to 74), it means the Germans are building 5-6 corps per month, as well as 1500-2000 aircraft.

Of course, Adolf still must leave 6000 fighters in Belgium and Germany to cover the threat of the 7500 Allied 4-engined bombers, but they are suffering few losses and those in Belgium perform the dual role of supporting the French front as well.

Stalin believes that this Allied policy is their biggest mistake of the war so far, and he may well be right.

In Spain meanwhile, the Allies are almost at the French border. Adolf, needlessly worried about the reliability of his Vichy Allies, collapses it. This provides a boon in Vichy build points for the German war machine. But it is gleefully pointed out by the Allies that the Vichy would fight to the death to defend their hearth and homes, and all Adolf has done was to remove 5 Vichy corps from the Axis order of battle.

Hitler mutters glumly at his stupidity. If he is making these mistakes in defending Finland, Spain and France, what sort of mistakes will he be making defending Germany?

In Algeria, Tunis is captured by the Allies. However, the Axis still can't see the point in this until Gibraltar is recaptured by the Allies. Unfortunately for the Allies, they cannot have corps everywhere.

In the Pacific, the ponderous US navy moves for the first time in almost 2 years, lurching out of Pearl Harbor and sortieing to the New Zealand coast. 10,000 Japanese aircraft black out the sun as they re deploy southwards in response. It turns out to be a feint however, as the US navy then meekly returns to base in Auckland.

Tojo then elaborately sends cruisers to surround New Zealand in an attempt to prevent the US fleet from refueling (followed by the mother of all port strikes). Nimitz foils this by sending a few lousy Liberty ships with enough oil to refuel the entire USN. Nearly all these blockade runners evade the watchful eyes of the cruisers' look-outs.

It is obvious that Roosevelt plans to strike further westwards, but Tojo is not worried. He has the land-based airpower to stop the US from entering any of the sea areas in the Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.

May/Jun

Realising that Russia's fate is in their hands, the US uses another offensive chit to again attempt to cross the Loire. Winnie launches 3000 aircraft to ground strike several locations. Then, in the biggest air-battle of the war to date, 4000 bombers and 3000 fighters of the Luftwaffe and Regia Aeronautica confront 3000 bombers and 3500 fighters of the RAF and USAAF. After substantial losses, the Axis drive off the Allies and 2500 Axis planes get through to save the threatened portions of the line.

After two months of bitter fighting, the Allies make few gains in France, only capturing Nantes. The cost is high in losses of men, material and 2 offensive chits. Adolf compliments Il Duce on his exemplary defence.

However, Adolf demands that communications across Iraq should be permanently cut, and 3 of the four HQs strung across the desert be immediately shipped back to the Western Front. This summer could be long, and once the Allies get across the Loire or the Seine, there is no other defence line before the Rhine and the RhTMne.

In Spain, the Allies capture Bilbao but are stopped by Rundstedt's newly re-created HQ who places his personal

guard directly in the front lines at Bayonne. The Germans then advance through the Pyrenees towards Madrid. This temporarily panics the Allies into retreating, but Madrid is never seriously threatened as the Germans lack the strength to attack.

The Moroccan and Danish fronts remain quiet due to a lack of Allied command. The Western Allies still insist on conducting one combined operation after another. If they had instead concentrated on land actions interspersed with the occasional naval action, they would have achieved far more.

Although the Allies are geniuses at combined arms operations, performing breath-taking coups, it limits the number of attacks they can launch in a month, and costs them dearly during reorganisation. This limits the pressure the Allies can exert in the West allowing Adolf to concentrate on the Russians.

The eastern kessel becomes mobile for the first time since the beginning of the war. Screening Russian held Sevastopol, Manstein's Armee Gruppe Sud wheels south-eastwards, racing towards the Caucasus after the fleeing Russians. The Russian defence crystallises between Krasnodar and Stavropol in front of the Caucasus Mountains.

Not believing his luck, Manstein attacks the oil in E0827, which his troops capture but become disrupted. Manstein rallies them personally. The Russians evacuate Stavropol and Krasnodar, and fall back to the first foothills in the Caucasus.

The Germans capture E0826, but are forced to call off further attacks when the Russians successfully counter-attack across the Don in front of Stalingrad. Several corps speed northwards to shore up the German positions there.

Meanwhile, half of AGC is left to confront the strong Russian positions between Tula and Kalinin. Kesselring takes the other half and swings south of Tula (still Russian held) snapping up Voronezh and its substantial Russian garrison without pausing, then wheels north eastwards towards the upper Volga. An undefended Ryazan is captured, but the Volga itself is too strong to attack. Instead, AGC moves eastward along the upper Volga attempting to outflank the Russian line. The Russian conform to this movement, denying them the opportunity, but only by thinning their lines between Tula and Kalinin.

This movement begins to open up a yawning gap between AGC and AGS in the upper Don region that could become dangerous unless Germany can

destroy the Russians quickly. Unfortunately, Zhukov's units are skillfully placed, using every advantage of terrain, space and time to delay the Germans without suffering substantial losses.

In the North, the Germans march north-eastwards, masking Kalinin. The going here is much tougher, slowing the advance considerably. The Russians hold E1344, E1245, and E1445, but allow the Germans to squeeze through at E1346. One corps breaks through and capture Vologda, but the gap is then sealed leaving the German corps very, very isolated.

In Persia, the Axis capture Bandar Shapur and then stop, believing their work is done. Il Duce does start to embark the first Italian HQs back to the western front, and moves spasmodically in Persia at Adolf's suggestion.

Meanwhile in Greece, partisan activity increases dramatically due to the lack of garrison units (one) and they re-occupy the resource. German production drops below 50, probably permanently. Italy however is producing at 17 and Japan at 30, and oil is flowing freely from the Middle East at last.

In the Pacific, nothing.

Jul/Aug

The day of decision arrives. Will the Russians fall before the Western Allies can drive into Italy and Germany. In France, the ever more desperate Allies launch offensive chit after chit at the Loire and the Seine, again without the air superiority required to make the result a certainty. Again they fail everywhere except W1628 where 2 corps of disorganised Yankees struggle across the Loire.

Il Duce calls a quick conference. He is for a counter-attack against the disrupted Allies. With some trepidation, Adolf agrees. Mussolini rallies the Italian and German defenders and then hurls them at the US corps, forcing them back across the river, but at the cost of Axis disorganisation as well.

Luckily for the Axis, Adolf has authorised almost all this turn's reinforcements for the west, figuring that if the Russians don't go down this summer, it is all over anyway, and any units sent to the East now will not be able to participate until September anyway.

On the Spanish front, the Axis are forced to pull back to the Pyrenees as the Allies rush reinforcements to this theatre. They retreat unmolested, as the Allies are severely limited in land moves, still religiously avoiding land actions.

In Morocco, the Allies fitfully advance towards Tripoli from Tunis. The Italians still hold the Oran line, and they shut off all further infiltration by the Allies when they place their Alpini corps in W1806.

In Denmark, the Allies finally stir themselves to paratroop directly onto a German corps in Copenhagen, crushing it under overwhelming air superiority (only 500 Axis bombers are on this front). This opens up the Baltic and the rest of the Germans in Denmark will be quickly mopped up.

In the vital eastern front, the Wehrmacht continues Operation Blue (world domination via Russia) by sledgehammer blows across the Don towards Stalingrad. These are all wildly successful and much of the Russian forces in front of Stalingrad are surrounded.

To relieve pressure Stalin orders a series of rash attacks out of the Caucasus. These are the first poorly judged attacks by the Russians since the beginning of the war, and imply that Stalin is getting ever more concerned about his position. The attacks fail, disrupting the defenders. This allows the Wehrmacht to surround the entire Southern Russian army and destroy it in detail.

In desperation, the Russians evacuate Persia in an attempt to provide some defence in the South but it is too late. Stalingrad and Saratov are taken undefended. Further south, the Germans advance towards Tiflis, Baku and Batum. Tiflis is occupied by the withdrawing Russians in Persia, and they do recapture Stalingrad unopposed, but the Russian position is very grim at this stage.

In the centre, the Germans burst across the Volga east of Gorki and race north-westwards towards Vologda. Meanwhile further west, the rest of AGC bulldozes into the Kalinin-Tula line destroying the Russian defenders there.

Meanwhile, AGN continues to screen Leningrad, and concentrates on the Moscow front. On the 20th of July, it smashes through the Russian defenders in front of Vologda, and rapidly drives eastwards.

Russian pockets are isolated in E1245 and E1445, but these are only screened by the on-rushing German forces. Finally, on the 8th of August, AGN and AGC link up east of Vologda. The entire Russian army is now surrounded in the Volga basin between Moscow, Yaroslavl and Gorki, and lend-lease can no longer get through via Archangel or Murmansk.

This is not the end of the disasters for the Russians. One German Panzer corps speeds eastwards towards Asia capturing Kazan. However, it is out of supply, and Russian reinforcements starting in Sverdlovsk advance eastwards, disrupt and destroy it.

Further west, Moscow itself is invested, and attacked. In a glorious assault, the wicked capital of the evil empire is occupied by the jubilant Wehrmacht. By the end of August, Kesselring orders the huge Yaroslavl-Gorki kessel be systematically reduced.

The Russians give orders for a massive withdrawal, and they punch through the thin German screen east of Vologda in their desperate attempt at escape.

The last Russians on the Eastern Front intend to die gloriously for Mother Russia, but, even so, Adolf will soon be master up to the Urals. In this one 2 month period, Stalin suffered 95 build points in losses, including over 20 armies, and 4000 aircraft. Adolf lost 3 corps and 500 planes in wrecking the Russian army, north and south.

For the first time since Operation Barbarossa began, the elite of the German army begins to be railed out of Russia. The 1st SS Panzer Corps is the first unit to entrain for France.

When Roosevelt hears that elements of the 1st SS Panzer Corps are now in France, he realises the war is lost. Even Winnie briefly looks up from the Loire front to survey the wreckage in Russia, and says, 'Gosh Stalin, I think we might have to send you some lend-lease'. Stalin gives Churchill an icy look and laconically replies 'Yes, that would be timely'.

On the Pacific, goaded into action by Adolf, Japan takes Guadalcanal and rebases his air squadrons closer to New Zealand.

Apart from these minor actions, peace reigns throughout the Pacific. War, what war?

Aftermath

All players decide to end the game at this point. Neither Stalin nor Tojo are having much fun, although for entirely different reasons. Stalin is down to 12 armies and 3000 aircraft in the Urals, 4 armies in the Caucasus and another 15 armies and 1500 aircraft east of Moscow.

Germany still has 55 corps and 11,000 aircraft in Russia, of which half will head to France once the Moscow pocket is reduced. Furthermore, as there are no Russians south of Tiflis,

the Germans would be able to get 4 corps adjacent to the Turkish-Russian border next impulse bringing Turkey into the war as an Axis minor Ally. This would add another 11 corps, 1 HQ and 1000 aircraft to the Axis order of battle.

In the west, the Allies were too strongly entrenched in Spain and France to be ejected, but they were not going anywhere fast. Even Gibraltar still held out, despite being isolated for 8 months.

Tojo on the other hand was bored. He had followed his pre-war plan of creating the Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, and then went on the defensive. He could lose the war in an afternoon for the Axis and thus felt compelled to be cautious. This plan was approved by the rest of the Axis because they know how fragile Japan is.

However, Tojo was aware by Mar/Apr 1943 that the Allies no longer had the time to conquer Japan by 1945, even if he did lose his fleet. He had built all his land forces including his 1945 Armour and he certainly could have gone on the offensive at this stage. His concern was that if he did, and lost his fleet, he would be much reduced by 1945 and might only eke out a marginal win.

As it was however, he held most objectives above his required level for this stage of the war, and could console himself that he was the overall victor of the game. Then came Adolf, Il Duce, Stalin (who despite all his losses, still held Teheran was only down Moscow and Vladivostok from the objectives he is required to hold by 19443), Roosevelt and lastly, Churchill, who even though he held Paris and Madrid suffered because the middle east was in Axis hands.

Overall, the game was one of the most interesting I have been involved in. One of the great things about WiFCon is that you get to play different groups who have a different style of play to your usual group.

This was vividly illustrated by the very clever Allied use of paratroopers. After Madrid fell to what was the play-of-the-game, Greg asked why I never did anything like this. He criticised me that I use paras as very expensive weak Inf corps, usually garrisoning some quiet front to keep them out of trouble.

The Allies on the other hand used them en masse to fly deep behind enemy lines using their long-range C-47's. This resulted in the capture of Denmark, Finland and Spain in rapid succession, forcing the Axis to keep 20 badly needed corps miles behind the lines

garrisoning vital objectives all over the map. Thus 10 points of paras required 60 points of Axis units to be kept permanently out of the war. The paras of course were very much in the war at the same time. A very efficacious use of force by the Allies.

Churchill did not build 1 Transport or convoy during the entire game. As far as Winnie was concerned, this was one of Roosevelt's job. This could have been a serious miscalculation if the Axis had had a more successful early U-boat war.

This war did end up being quite successful with the Allies short 4 million tonnes of shipping (21 convoy points to maximise production) by the end of the game. However, as the US was building 1.5 million tonnes per turn by then, this did not have nearly the significant impact it could have had.

As it was, the Allies made only 4 major mistakes throughout the war:

- (a) giving Russia only paltry amounts of lend-lease;
- (b) using their strategic bombers tactically;
- (c) the Western Allies consistently employing combineds, rather than air, land and naval actions; and
- (d) the Russian army setting up forwards believing the Germans were preparing for an Operation Sea Lion against Britain.

As far as lend-lease goes, they could have been giving lend-lease as early as May/Jun 1941, when Stalin declared war on Italy, 6 months before the German declaration of war. They didn't because they thought Stalin wasn't going to be attacked.

This was perhaps their most tragic miscalculation, as early lend-lease has a cumulative effect over time, and is much more important than late lend-lease. Early lend-lease means more units early, which means the front line is stronger, which means fewer casualties on your side and more on the other. Perhaps as few as 20 build points in 1941 might have meant that the Russian counter-attack in late 1942 would have been decisive, rather than merely serious.

The Allied belief that Adolf wasn't heading east, also led to the Russians being set-up on the border rather than back on the Dnieper. If they had, the Germans were unlikely to declare war on Russia until Mar/Apr 1942 (the pre-war scheduled time of commencement)

and may never have got across the Dnieper at all.

This was because of the incredibly early US entry which for a while completely unhinged the Axis commanders. This led to their major mistakes which were:

- (a) attacking Russia too weakly;
- (b) not garrisoning critical objectives adequately, particularly in Denmark, France, Finland and Spain;
- (c) not keeping an eye on CW production to ascertain when the strategic bombardment war was going to start; and
- (d) remaining on the defensive for too long in the Pacific.

Of these errors, the most egregious were the first two. For most of the war in Russia, Adolf only had 2 strike forces, one in the centre and one in the south (the northern front against Leningrad was always just a screening force, as Adolf believes it is too difficult to take).

This limited the Germans to 2 and sometimes 3 attacks per impulse in summer and 0 or 1 in winter. This was one strike force too few, and Germany always needed only 4-5 more corps to launch an extra attack per impulse. It is a credit to the pressure the Western Allies applied, that Adolf although aware of the problem, just could not scrape together the forces to correct this deficiency in the east.

Overall, the game was very enjoyable and I learnt a lot about the rules and the game. It seemed that every hour Greg or I would pompously pontificate on some aspect of the rules, only for one of the Allies to ask 'are you sure that is correct? Perhaps we could check the rules, just to be sure'. Almost invariably they were right and we were wrong.

Throughout the game, both sides were very skillful and very aggressive. If there were 5 fronts going, each of us would be looking around to open up a 6th in the belief that one more blow would do the trick. This led to an exhilarating match, with events unfolding at breathtaking speed.

I would like to thank my partners and my opponents for participating in this Battle of the Titans, and I will be back again this year, with a new and even more cunning plan. I look forward to seeing you all there.



Primer to World Domination

continued from page 6

In the South, you want to get across the Don as soon as possible. Ignore Stalin-grad if it is heavily defended, and head south-eastwards towards the ultimate prizes, Baku and Batum. With the first, your oil problems are permanently solved. With the latter, you can ask your Turkish brethren to join you in the crusade against communism.

There are so many valuable objectives down here, that if there is a choice of only one drive, north or south, you should only choose North if the Russians have severely misplaced their units in this theatre.

You should expect an Operation Overlord in 1943. Hope your Italian and Bulgarian allies slow them down. The bulk of your summer reinforcements can head westwards anyway, since you should have enough Germans to overwhelm the Russians this year.

When you are attacked in the west, defend The Seine and the Loire in strength. If you lose this line, fall back to the Rhine and the Rhone and start putting ALL your German reinforcements in the west. There is no point if, just as Russia lies at the point of your sword, you lose Germany.

You might want to consider defending Denmark in strength, with 1 corps in W0640, Fredrikshavn and Copenhagen. You don't want the Baltic to be available to the Allies until as late as possible.

To summarise, regardless of whether you choose Sea Lion or Barbarossa, you must take advantage of your interior lines, combining lethal assault on one front, and stubborn defence on the other. In this way, you can destroy 300 Allied corps/armies by 1943, with the loss of perhaps 30 corps in total, a 10:1 average in your favour.

Your watch word should always be *vitesse*. To win the game, you need to maintain the initiative as long as possible. If you can keep waving that red flag in front of the Allies, they are more likely to concentrate on you, rather than Japan, a far easier target.

If you can take Britain or European Russia by 1943, the game will usually be yours. Even if you don't, the Allies will have to throw so many assets at you that you may well still eke out a win by August 1945, with Japan thriving. On the other hand, it could all go horribly wrong. Good luck, you might need it.

Deluxe Soviet Strategy

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one in Dnepropetrovsk. How does this compare to an alternate strategy, where you sacrifice many more units to gain time? The only factory you could permanently save was Kiev. The red Dnepropetrovsk stack will likely fall in July/August no matter what. And you can easily lose seven to nine corps in the process. Those saved corps will be very valuable in the next couple of turns by allowing you to maintain strong stacks. Overall your light losses of roughly one corps per impulse saved most of the factories. Remember, this was the very pessimistic scenario with big bad 21 factor Nazi stacks in Rumania. It could go even better.

What if the Germans do not have big bad stacks in Rumania?

If the Germans have not aligned Rumania, comfort yourself that you have a couple of extra impulses and a not-so-serious German opponent. Put your 2-1 in 2322. With this unit's non-overrunnable ZOC and the rough terrain (with Option 34), the Wehrmacht will be stifled for one valuable impulse. Then follow the general plan given above. You will take even fewer losses (or can afford more delaying units) and will be able to evacuate the Kiev factory.

The most likely situation is that the Germans have aligned Rumania, but do not have stacks of 21 available. In this case, deploy the delaying forces further forward. Place the 2-1 in Odessa, and a white print unit in 1930. This buys you a vital extra half impulse or so, even more if you throw a second white print unit into 1730. Losing one corps per impulse can be sustained. Then follow the general plan above.

What happens if Germany does not attack in 1941?

Generally, follow similar strategies through mid-1940. If you are pretty sure that the German player will ignore you in 1941, be more aggressive in scrapping units. You are also in a stronger bargaining position with Japan. In late 1940 to early 1941, when German intentions become clear, start building more ARM and planes and less INF. Throughout 1941 you will produce some high quality units. If Hitler has eyes for Gibraltar, he typically pays less attention to the eastern front garrison ratio, and lends Italy a lot of resources. You have a good chance to exploit this by obtaining a 2:1 garrison ratio in mid 1941. Since you are stuck with Combined impulses, it is hard to move masses of troops, so be sure to use your planes. I-15s still count as one factor and are very mobile.

At worst, you draw off Axis land units from Egypt or Spain. Often, the Axis has few land units available, and desperately sends vital long range airplanes to maintain their garrison. Your CW ally will be most appreciative when Condors leave Brittany for Warsaw. With luck, you will break the garrison ratio. At this point, FDR is about ready to gear-up or something and frantically tells you not to declare war and cost him four Chits. Maybe he is right. You can break the Pact instead, which costs FDR no chits and costs Hitler many resources. Then pull back and await a better time (like right after the US Congress declares war on Germany) to make your move.

Acknowledgements

Much of this article is inspired by my horrible experience as Russia against Steven Jacobi's Nazi hordes, and our subsequent discussions on what both of us could have done better. Others have contributed valuable ideas, especially Rich Dost and Dave LeLacheur.



Soviet Cavalry Charge 1943

France

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I've seen quite a number of WiFFE games in which the Germans, faced with a strong Allied defense in France, got bogged down and were reduced to fighting a World War I style war of attrition. Germany simply cannot afford this type of economic fight – without the French resources, the Reich produces less than the Commonwealth and France do combined. German players often will resign if they cannot capture Paris by early 1941.

At the very least, a stout defense of France in 1940 will weaken the 1941 German attack on Russia. Because a powerful 1941 Barbarossa can cripple Russia and ruin the Allies' chances of victory, this is a major achievement.

FALL OF FRANCE

So, maybe things weren't so easy. Perhaps that obstinate Commonwealth ally refused to help out much. Or maybe the Germans got hot with the dice. Or maybe my advice wasn't that great after all.

Cheer up, even the best French players suffer defeat. In most games there comes a time when France collapses. You will recognize that this time has come for you when you have few land units left, your air force has been shot from the sky, the BEF flees the country in terror, most of your resources have been captured, and the Germans are next to or near Paris, clobbering you with high odds attacks.

At this point, unless the weather turns bad very quickly, there is nothing to do to save Paris. Further resistance would only serve to destroy the remainder of the French army. Declare Paris an open city and retreat to the Pyrenees. Toulouse provides a supply source and the other nearby mountain hexes – Bayonne, 1722 and 1822 – offer great defensive terrain.

Germany now confronts a dilemma. To pursue a Spain/Gibraltar strategy, Germany will not want to occupy Paris and declare Vichy. That would force Germany to collapse Vichy before attacking Spain. So Germany will have to dig out entrenched French units from the mountains or make a sub-optimal attack on Spain. Especially if the weather is turning bad in late '40, this 11th hour defense can buy the Commonwealth an extra turn or two to defend Spain and Gibraltar.

Before turning out the lights in France complete the rebasing of the French Navy to those administrative groups

most likely to stay Free French. Send four of the best 2-range naval units to French Equatorial Africa. If using the Africa in Flames map, many more ports are available in this region permitting rebase of the entire 2-range fleet to this administrative group. The expanded map also allows rebase of the PiF NAV to the region for anti-submarine duty against the Italians (just hope that the area stays Free French).

The best 3-range ships – the TRS, the Richelieu and two others (or convoys points) – should rebase to New Caledonia. This is actually a two- or three-turn trip from France, so plan ahead. Consider loading the TRS with the best French land unit. Load your SCSs with DIVs if playing that option. These land units in New Caledonia (which is 90% likely to remain Free French) will form the cadre for the Free French Army. Make sure to have a convoy chain to New Caledonia if playing with limited overseas supply, and conserve oil if playing the oil rule.

FREE FRANCE

France's existence as a major power effectively ends with the German overrun of the home country. Germany probably has either declared Vichy or incompletely conquered France. It is not a bad situation if France can surrender once Germany captures over half the printed factories – France then keeps all fleet units and overseas possessions.

The rules say Free France is still a major power – usually with a government-in-exile based in French Equatorial Africa. Some naval units and a few land units remain. But Free France is a mere shadow of former glory, without so much as a factory or a resource. In most games, France's role will be that of Allied convoy protector.

Do more! With lending by both the USA and the Commonwealth, at a maximum rate of 2 build points total received per turn, the French slowly build up land and air forces. Look for opportunities to make this lending as easy as possible. Once the USA is at total war, invade the Vichy territory of Fort de France in the Caribbean and establish two convoy points in the sea area (the USA may need to lend an engineer to repair the major port). After that, it's quite simple for the USA and Commonwealth (from Canada) to ship their builds to this handy Free French Caribbean port.

For an aggressive play using the Africa in Flames map, save the lent Allied resources until eight have accumulated

in French Equatorial Africa (which must have remained Free French when Vichy was established, of course). Then build a factory in Africa. The factory can receive the Belgium Congo resource using a single convoy point, and from 1943 on it will produce at 2 build points per turn. Combined with the 2 resources/turn lent by the allies, France will produce at 4.

Why go to such trouble to build French units? After all, on average they're not as good as the Commonwealth and USA units.

The answer lies in the activity limits imposed on the other major powers. While the USA and the Commonwealth will have huge forces in 1944 and 1945, they will be unable to use them all effectively because of these activity limits. Anyone who has played the USA late in the game, knows what I'm talking about. It is July/Aug '44. The USA must do a naval move in the Pacific to attack the Japanese, but really needs some more air missions in Europe and would love to make a Pacific invasion as well. Don't bother asking the Commonwealth for help; they've got their own activity limit problems.

Here is where Free France fits in. Even with activity limits half of what France's used to be, a combined action still permits two land moves, an invasion attack and two air missions. Free France becomes the utility fielder for the Allies, filling in the gaps on an as-needed basis. If you happen to liberate a few objective hexes in Europe and in the Pacific along the way, so much the better!

The later-year French units are not that bad. Some are as good or better than their American or British counterparts. Scrap the obsolete French units.

Make the case for an active lend lease campaign and the re-emergence of France. Free French land and air units can make a significant contribution to the combined war effort. Who knows, maybe the 1st Free French Armor Corps will lead the way to liberate Paris.

VIVA LA FRANCE!

People tend to underestimate this country, especially its defensive resources in 1940. By itself France is strong, but not strong enough to stand up to Germany alone. The key to French success – both early in 1939-40 and later with Free France – is good coordination with her allies. If France and the other allies can work together, they will go a long way toward securing an Axis defeat.

Lessons Learned

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weakly garrisoned Taiwan can fall to this method.

Sea Boxes

Concentrate Naval and air units in the same sea box. Forces divided among different boxes allow your opponent to fight against a single box with a weak force ignoring awesome forces in the other boxes.

Front line sea zones should be controlled by planes, not fleets. A single NAV, or a NAV with a FTR, will exert presence of the enemy and slow down the IJN such that the rear is safe for TRS.

Honolulu

There is no way to keep Japan from taking Honolulu with an HQ, 2 MAR and an O-chit. This happened to me,

and it was beautiful. Nevertheless, the Japanese found Honolulu indefensible once taken – I simply put all available ground troops into the Philippines, along with an HQ in Legaspi, and held Manila by maintaining a supply line through the Bismark Sea & the Coral Sea to Brisbane. This also meant the Japs could not take Rabaul, so that is where my fleet docked. I moved US units from San Francisco, past Samoa to Rabaul and on into Legaspi. The Allies easily garrisoned the NEI.

With Rabaul, Samoa, Batavia and Manila, the Allies control the Pacific even with the Japanese in Pearl Harbor.

Acknowledgements

Thanks so much to Nathan Stovall, Rick Henderson, Bruce Jurin, and of course, Larry Whalen, Harry Rowland and Greg Pinder. WiF CON was awesome!

WIFCON

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Preregistration is \$10.00 a day through May 1998. After that date the registration fee will be \$12.00 a day. If you have any questions please contact me at The GameKeeper. I'm looking forward to seeing many of you this August in Seekonk.



Guderian

Montgomery



Name	Country	Bid	End	Score	Finish
1					
Harry Rowland	Germany	9	15	27	11
Greg Pinder	Italy	-1	0	23	15
Jonathan Woodger	Japan	3	10	28	10
Rick Henderson	UK	22	14	-22	41
Dave LeLacheur	USSR/France	14	16	-12	34
Lawrence Whalen Jr.	USA/China	20	12	-22	41

3					
Michael Burke	Germany	12	2	-48	49
Robert Guerrero	Italy	1	4	-31	43
Jose Barretto	Japan	6	2	-41	46
John Gibbins	UK	20	16	25.5	12
Jim Burns	USSR/France	12	20	24.5	13
Eric Sedlar	USA/China	16	23	38.5	9

5					
Bob Rutherford	Germany	13	1	-20	39
Don Walker	Italy	0	2	-4	29
Russ Craft	Japan	5	0	-13	35
Kevin Bernatz	UK	20	21	16	21
David Swasey	USSR/France	12	16	21	16
Siegfried Nelson	USA/China	17	27	24	14

7					
Karl Foelshe	Germany	11	0	-102	53
Andrew Waterson	Italy	1	0	-92	51
Jeff Cumming	Japan	6	0	-98	52
Rich Dost	UK	19	22	173	2
Steve Jacobi	USSR/France	12	27	186	1
Cliff Purkiser	USA/China	18	18	170	3

9					
Bill Bartos	Japan/Italy	2	22	89.5	7
James Hapner	Germany	6	17	79.5	8
Brian Norem	USSR/Fr/Ch	15	8	-40	45
Andrew Waterson*	UK/USA	44	20	-57.5	50

Name	Country	Bid	End	Score	Finish
2					
Eric Schultz	Germany	8	0	-17	37
Dean Lueke	Japan/Italy	1	0	-10	32
Don Peterson	USA/China	20	24	17.5	20
Bill Duncan	USSR/France	15	21	19.5	17
Steve Viltoft	UK	23	22	14.5	22

4					
Augie Thiesing	Germany	11	1	-2	28
Bruce Jurin	Japan/Italy	1	11	18	18
Jeff Donahue	USA/China	20	25	-11	33
Rob Robertson	USSR/France	16	15	-17	37
Ron Platt	UK	19	15	-20	39

6					
Michael Panzer	Germany	10	17	145	5
Peter Wilkins	Italy	-1	6	153	4
Stan Leghorn	Japan	6	10	142	6
Glen Bailey	UK	21	20	-37	44
Dave Rosenfeld	USSR/France	13	4	-45	48
Steve Bondi	USA/China	18	10	-44	47

8					
Nathan Stovall	Germany	9	1	-15	36
Nathan Spencer	Japan/Italy	0	2	-4.5	30
Steve Peterson	USA/China	18	26	17.8	19
Paul Zrimsek	USSR/France	17	21	14.3	23
Brett Crouse	UK	23	17	3.8	25

10					
Dave Velten	Japan/Italy	1	0	-1	27
Mike Covert	Germany	1	2	1	26
Sylvain Rioux	USSR/Fr/Ch	18	23	5	24
Betrand Pepin	UK/USA	47	42	-5	31

Japan

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key objectives for free because the defenders are not in position yet.

If you see signs of early war, start positioning your invasion forces sooner than you planned (at the expense of the Chinese campaign if necessary) so that you are not caught totally on the hop.

3. FURTHER EXPANSION

What happens next depends mostly on Allied posture towards Japan. If they do not commit many units in the Pacific, then you might as well grab some more territory.

Take the most rewarding gain for the smallest cost. The further your operations are from strong Allied sea and air power, and the closer they are to your own, the safer your operations are.

If there is only a weak CW presence, India, Aden, the Persian Gulf and even South Africa are possible targets for 1942-43 Japanese ambitions. Most CW players rightly put daunting defences in India if they see it as threatened, but you might be able to baulk the CW into over-capitalizing on Indian land units, which will only facilitate your attacks elsewhere.

Ignore Australia unless it really is left naked as it is too big and too close to the US forces to be worthwhile. Your fleet needs oil resources for fueling; not beer resources.

4. BUILDING UP YOUR DEFENCES

Sooner or later the Allied build-up makes further territorial gains too costly or too risky. Deciding this time has arrived constitutes a critical judgment for you. It depends a lot on how much of their kit the Allies are sending against you.

The US always builds all its Essex-class CVs as soon as possible, and invariably brags as if this were a stroke of strategic genius, but do not be alarmed - there are ways of dealing with the beastly things when they come.



Japanese transport a victim of US submarine attack.

A more alarming signal is if all US reinforcements of all types are being placed on the West Coast for shipment to the Asian theatre. If this pattern persists, you are in big trouble. (Aren't you glad you have me to tell you this?) At least you can feel flattered that your opponents think you are worth such a commitment of materiel.

In terms of the defensive "bastion" strategy, it means you must implement your defensive phase sooner, while imploring the Germans and Italians to punish the Allies in Europe for neglecting that theatre of war.

If you are in good defensive position and play with more discipline than the Allies, you might be able to hold out long enough to ruin Allied plans in Europe (which may in turn remove some of the heat from you). If, however, you have not yet seized all your initial objectives, do so quick smart or you will be facing total defeat in 1944.

The 2 controlling ideas behind the bastion strategy are to protect your economy as much as you can and to force the enemy fleet to risk an unfavorable battle against yours if the enemy is to achieve its objectives.

What are the threats to your economy? The most serious one by far is a campaign against your convoy pipelines in the China Sea and the South China Sea. These can be attacked by SUBs, land-based aircraft or surface fleets, whether or not including CVs.

All of these threats are mitigated by removing potential Allied bases from the vicinity, as discussed above. The best answer to SUBs is aircraft. They are immune to SUB attack and they force the SUBs to use 4 surprise points to attack at all. You need a NAV in, or with the range to intercept into, the 3 or 4 box at all times and a plane or 2 (preferably with naval attack factors) ready to fly into the 0 box at all times.

Anticipate when the non-flying weather is coming and have some old cruisers ready to step into the breach. Judge the level of defence needed against the size of the potential threat. If you are cautious, the SUBs alone should not do you much damage.

Your anti-SUB warfare requirements are far less complex than those of the CW in the Atlantic because only 2 sea areas really matter to you and there is no "black gap" sea zone lacking friendly air cover.

The US SUBs did so well historically, as I understand it, because the Japanese

foolishly neglected their defences, not even forming proper convoys. Do not make this mistake.

Your task is harder if there are long-range enemy aircraft striking at your pipelines. The only short-term solution is to have superior FTR defences to kill them. You need short range FTR to ride shotgun for the CP and long range ones to hunt the blighters down on favourable terms. The best long-term solution is to take the enemy bases so they cannot fly at all.

An enemy carrier and surface strike force running rampant among your merchantmen poses the worst threat. A surface force can be handled in much the same way as SUBs with the addition of those slow Japanese battle-wagons to pummel the odd US cruiser force, but the only way to stop an Allied carrier strike group is to deter it or defeat it with superior naval air strength.

The other element of the "bastion" idea is the idea of luring the enemy battle-fleet into your carefully laid naval deathtrap. Success in a large naval air action hinges on numbers and quality of planes, and surprise points.

Games played as playtesting for WiF-Con showed that a small margin in either of these categories makes an alarmingly large difference, so much so that the first major fleet action between the USN and the IJN will often decide the whole issue in the Pacific.

It follows that when this titanic battle happens, you want every advantage. You are much more likely to get critical advantages close to home than in some remote corner of the Pacific.

In one battle I fought against Harry's US fleet in the Bay of Bengal, he had a lone 3 factor twin-engine French FTR backing up his carriers, and a lousy 1-factor Mosquito as an extra naval bomber. I had no land-based air in the region, relying on my superior carrier firepower.

In the air-to-air fighting, that French piece of junk added 1 to the US fighter strength throughout the battle, which was just enough to secure some critical air-to-air results for Harry to clear most of his bombers through and kill or abort just enough of mine to save his CVs from destruction.

Attempting to rely on my anti-aircraft defences, I found to my horror that the Mosquito could absorb up to 10 points of flak hits, which allowed his SBDs and TBDs to scream through and splifficate my flattop force. If only I could have mustered 1 land-based Zero

and 1 Nell, or if only Harry had lacked his own land-based assets, I believe the result could have been totally reversed.

Clearly any player, not just the Japanese, should think carefully before sending a carrier fleet into a zone without land-based air support where the enemy has it, or where the enemy has a two or more seabox advantage.

This is not to say “never attack”. If you see your best chance to attack an Allied fleet before your situation deteriorates further, then hoe into it aggressively. In other words, never be a mindless conservative but never be mindlessly aggressive either.

Before choosing to give battle, make a sober assessment of the costs and benefits of doing so, relative to possible future opportunities. If you lose a big battle, console yourself by remembering that there are no certainties in the WiF naval system and that you took what appeared at the time to be the best chance.

Japan must weigh future opportunities heavily because by waiting you can often force the enemy to offer a more lucrative battle to you.

How do you achieve this? By realizing that there are certain places the USN must eventually enter if it is to defeat Japan and by preparing to do battle there on your terms. These areas are your two vital economic zones (the South China Sea and the China Sea) and, depending on the direction of the Allied advance, certain of the sea areas adjacent to these two.

Base your ships, NAVs and FTRs such that as many of them as possible can reach the 3 box if an enemy fleet enters one of these critical areas. If you can set it up so they can all reach the 4 box - even better. Such a marginal improvement might make all the difference.

Always base your finest planes near the boundaries of 2 or more sea areas. Good areas for this purpose are the northern Philippines, the Bonin Islands, Saipan and Canton.

The two convoy zones should be absolute deathtraps for the Allies. If you deter the Allies from attacking these sea zones until they are overwhelmingly powerful, great: take all those juicy Chinese and NEI resources directly to your humming factories and build more kit with which to strengthen those very deathtraps.

If the enemy fleet enters these zones before it has overwhelming strength, take a deep breath and then hit it with

everything you have: WWII is about to be decided in a single afternoon and the stage could not be better set for a famous Japanese victory.

This Fabian strategy has the side benefits of minimizing your naval losses and conserving lots of oil. Of course, the Allies get these benefits too, but you need them more than they do since you have fewer resources than they.

Keeping a massive fleet-in-being sitting in port also hampers enemy freedom of naval movement because, even if you generally take a conservative attitude to sailing for distant waters, the enemy always has to consider the *possibility* that you will change your tune at any time. If they get cocky, punish them. You cannot afford to be too predictable.

Watch out for sneak long-range invasions of your rear areas, especially Japan and the NEI oil regions. Defend your main fleet bases from invasion at all costs. Ensure your own supply and look to cut enemy supply.

Never surrender! Japan is a much tougher place to invade in WiF final edition than in previous editions. Two white-print corps in each remote objective hex force the Allies to take many turns to weed you out even if they after they gain fleet superiority.

Build all your fast carriers as soon as possible while they will come into the war to join a meaningful Japanese fleet. The small slow (size 1, speed 4) carriers are less useful.

Complete the Yamato for propaganda value and because it the first decent battleship that can keep up with your fast carriers, but do not build the subsequent super-battleships; they cost too much steel for what they give you.

Your cruiser force is outstanding (the best in the world) and is better value-for money than new battleships. After war with the western Allies starts, build an average of two CP per turn, and more if you are taking CP losses. Maintain reserves in port ready to repair the pipelines.

There is no excuse for running out of CP later in the war because you forgot to build extras. Build the odd TRS or AMPH too, as these sitting ducks must often sail into harm's way with large 'target' cross-hairs painted on their decks. Land units will still need to move around in 1944 to shore up your defences, so new construction will prevent an embarrassing absence of sealift.

Forget about TAC but build all your NAV and FTR. Only build the more

expensive land units (other than MAR) when you have completed the cheaper INF types. The only possible use you have for panzers is to blitz invading Allied MAR off the beaches of Japan in 1945. You can dream about it anyway..

5. SOVIET EAST ASIA

What Japan does about the Russians depends a great deal on developments in Europe. If the Axis go after the CW, Russia is probably too strong for you. But if, by 1942 or 1943, the Russians are under pressure from the Germans, and you are not yourself under too much pressure from the Allies, the time could be ripe for a lightning attack on Vladivostok.

Defeating Russia will lead to Axis victory, so some sacrifice is on your part is justified. Do not attack (sorry Adolf) if you judge that doing so will hasten your own demise on your other fronts by more than your attack will hasten Stalin's fall.

Your offensive commitments in China and then the Pacific normally will engage all your land force, so fighting the Soviets before 1942 will not go forward. For this reason, offer Stalin a non-aggression pact early in 1940. In any attack, go in hard and fast. Use an overwhelming battleship force to land behind or even directly on Vladivostok. Grab as many resources as you can, as Stalin will surrender at the end of the turn if he is weak.

If Stalin attacks you in strength, try to hold on and draw in as many of his units as you can for the minimum commitment of your own boys. Every Allied major power has attacked your meagre empire. Scream for help from Berlin!

CONCLUSION

This is obviously not the only viable Japanese strategy, but it is one that plays the “percentages” fairly well. Should you confront a very passive US opponent, or one who pursues a Germany-first strategy, you may be left with little to do in the game by 1943. If so, consider switching to the offensive, at least you can have a bit of fun. Be wary though: that wily Franklin may be waiting for you to take one chance too many.

In the end, the Pacific war will always come down to chance. All you can hope to do is to tilt the odds in your favour as much as possible by careful planning and sober analysis spiced up by a dash of old-fashioned Samurai spirit: Banzai!

Road to War

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be considered if tension levels are too low or you have the opportunity are:

- 15. Freeze Japanese assets
- 25. Embargo on Strategic materials
- 41. Oil embargo

These options reduce Japanese production and in an oil game will almost require Japan to go to war to get oil.

- 13. US East Coast escorts
- 20. Gift of destroyers to CW
- 30. Repair Western Allies ships
- 36. North Atlantic escorts

These options are needed if the Axis are pursuing an anti-Commonwealth strategy with the invasion of Britain a possibility.

Finally general options which are good plays would be:

- 34. US reflags merchant ships
- 40. US militarizes the canal zone.
- 51. Commonwealth reinforces NEI.

Which of the foregoing options to choose depends on the situation in the specific game.

War

When to attempt to declare war on the "It's War" chart and when will it happen?

As always, much depends on the specific game. Optimally, try to declare war with the 70% chance, which first occurs in the 54 to 59 entry with a 14 to 19 tension. This requires a total raw chit value of 45 for one side. This will generally happen from late 1941 to May/June of 1942.

What about earlier attempts? If at the end of 1941 entry level stood at 44 and a tension level of 8, this would give you a 50% chance of success. Worth trying for a couple of reasons. If you miss the roll, you will replace the 2 chits you lost with the two-chits-a-turn draw that begins in 1942. The 1942 chits have a higher average value as well. Your chance to try again in January/February 1942 should be at least as good. The Axis may take the failed roll as a signal to pre-empt you to avoid surprise. Even with a bad chit draw in January/February 1942, you will only drop down to a 40% chance for war. Mid-1942 will mark the latest time for US entry. In my own game at the last WIFCON, the US entered in May/June, 1941, using these guidelines. My preparations for war left something to be desired, which brings us to the next topic:

Preparing for War

Build Strategy

The US must prepare to fight a two front war.

First priority is transportation which I learned the hard way at WIFCON. Build every TRS and AMPH as they become available. With these ships built, you can deliver your war material to the front and keep the Axis hopping.

Expect about ten turns of production before your production goes up in mid-1941. A good trick may be to save some BPs in some of the early turns. This will give you the opportunity later to keep gearing up on one of your classes when needed or even to build a key unit you might not have normally squeezed in.

Build navy early, but you should not build only navy as many players do. Go ahead and start the early battle-ships, but hold off on finishing them until late 1941 or early 1942. They will still have a large impact on the Japanese when they arrive. In the first two turns of 1941 you should lay down all the Essex carriers. These are the linchpin of your attack on Japan.

All HQs should be started the first turn they are available. This will ensure your having these vital units when needed.

Also remember to look at your force pools for units to remove or place in the lend-lease pool. This will trim your build strategy significantly by removing many of the lesser quality units from your force pools.

Other units should be built according to the situation developing in the game, but with a Europe-first strategy, make sure you have land and air units to employ in that theatre as soon as you enter the war.

Garrisons

Among the few places the US wants to garrison is obviously Pearl Harbor. To hold it, you must also have at least one unit on the adjacent islands otherwise you will surely lose it to an offensive chit play.

Other islands to consider are Wake, Dutch Harbor, and Pago Pago. Wake gives you an airbase to send planes forward into the Marianas sea area, while Dutch Harbor gives you a naval base from which you can strike directly into Japan. Pago Pago gives the US an alternate major port of use early on, but as the war progresses it will rapidly become of little importance.

Entry Actions

We've looked at what the US is doing while travelling down the road to war. Now let's step back and see what the rest of the world is doing.

Axis actions:

In 1939 the European Axis are generally very quiet. The Germans declare

war on Poland, and often, Denmark and Belgium. The new action 27 on the chart included with the annual: "First Allied convoy point to be sunk by Axis SUB" should also come in 1939. Occasionally, the Allies provoke (or tempt) Italy into a 1939 declaration on either the CW or France.

In the Pacific, Japan might rent convoy points via option 45, and may align Siam. Unless China does very well, Japan should take at least one city.

Counting all these actions, anticipate one chit in the Pacific pool and as many as three chits in Europe.

Operations in 1940 determine the European Axis direction. If France falls fast, many Axis players will turn on Russia; others will continue on through Spain to Gibraltar. A still-neutral Italy will almost invariably declare war this year.

If Germany decides to attack Spain and Gibraltar there is a possible gain of four US entry chits of fairly high value. This increased US entry level allows Russia and the CW to prepare for the potential assault on them with knowledge that US entry will not drag out too long.

In the Pacific, unless Japan has ignored China, they will capture at least one more city and form the Wan Ching Wei government with entry action 10. They might also have elected to try option 12, the use of poison gas and have occupied French Indo-China.

Look for between 3 to 7 chits in Europe and as many as 3 chits in the Pacific.

As the war grows heated in 1941, German intentions become clear. Regardless of the direction of Germany's offensive, certain actions will happen in this year.

The Axis will attack Greece, and either attack or align Yugoslavia. The Axis will align all remaining Axis minors, as well as Iraq or Persia, unless the Allies have already conquered them.

A German attack on Russia and the resulting alignments normally are the last US entry actions of the European Axis until the US goes to war.

The Pacific actions during this period vary tremendously according to Japan's intent and previous actions.

Japan may attack Russia if Germany does. This may also lead to the Vladivostock puppet government. A major consideration may be an early declaration on the Commonwealth. If Germany is going after Britain this is a very good move which can stretch Britain to the breaking point. Japan will certainly be able to gather a lot of their Pacific

possessions as well as the Netherlands East Indies if the Commonwealth has already aligned them. Sometimes Japan declares war on Panama, normally the turn before war with the US. Because these add a lot of chits to the American entry pool, expect Japan to follow almost immediately with a declaration of war on the US. Most Japanese players prefer to avoid bearing a 1942 surprise attack from the US declaration on them.

Allies

In 1939 the Allies make the required declaration on German and Russia should occupy the Polish frontier on the first impulse. Russia should also demand Bessarabia in 1939 – do not allow German to prepare to defend it. Further operations such as occupying the Baltic States or demanding the Finnish borderlands offer small rewards but a potential heavy penalty in US entry. Check with the US for any other actions that might cost entry chits. In all cases the Allies should try to get four corps into minors for the US support roll.

1940 should see some Allied actions: these may include a declaration of war on Italy, Russia declaring on Persia and or Japan and most certainly the rental of convoy points. The Allies will start to be pressed so the US player has to consider this and not panic when the Allies start taking actions to alleviate their situation.

By 1941 the Allies should have performed all the actions necessary for their hoped for survival. The US should be well on the road to war and the Axis will be looking over their shoulder for the day the Yanks are coming. Because help is on the way, Russia and the CW should not take actions in this year to jeopardize it. Whatever actions they felt necessary should have been done by the end of 1940.

Conclusion

The US should be at war by the end of 1941 to mid 1942. How the US enters will be determined by the Axis, but if they allow the US to declare war, America will have both more forces and a better position.

Japan cannot stand alone against the US. Sometimes Germany must declare on the US to diffuse the American effort and save Japan for the long run.

Whatever the case, the play of the US road to war is one of the most interesting and intriguing components of a WORLD IN FLAMES game.

The USA

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to the west – maybe paradrop a unit into hex 1730.

- Invade near an existing air base such as England. Grab cities and ports during the invasion or as soon as possible – make them Allied rather than Luftwaffe airbases.
- Send a supply unit to any sizable beachhead as quickly as possible as cheap insurance. Their mere presence will often stop the Germans taking long shots to cut supply.
- Watch enemy air for a naval counterstrike, and budget the best fighters towards protecting your most valuable asset, your fleet.
- Have a large reserve of half built transports which are cheap to start. Regardless, the US will eventually complete them. And if disaster strikes, there will not be a long period without any invasion threat for the Axis to worry about.
- Harass enemy HQs. Ground strike them early in turns. Carpet bomb them. Land on them. Ground strike the largest enemy units in the area the impulse of an invasion.
- Try to use one nationality per front, even when not playing with the Allied non-cooperation rule. Otherwise you will find the Commonwealth doing a naval impulse just when you want to attack.
- Work with the Commonwealth. Have one power invade while the other does a naval or air impulse. An air offensive with good TAC backed by a chit is the most powerful accessory to an invasion.
- Have unflipping capability for the first wave. Transports work better than ATRs because they do not consume missions. Leaving transports at sea between turns is a great use of your worst transports.
- Notice a theme here? The actual invasion merits little discussion because getting ashore is easy. Figure it out but then mostly think about the aftermath.

Remember that the USA is the glue that holds the Allies together, diplomatically, economically and militarily. Stay confident. The USA possesses a tremendous power, so when your allies suffer grievous losses early in the game, this just leaves more objectives for you later. Good luck. God is on your side!

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ITALY BUILDS

1939	SEP/OCT	(3)
	NOV/DEC	Mar (3)
1940	JAN/FEB	Nav2, Amph (fd) (4)
	MAR/APR	Nav2, P (4)
	MAY/JUN	Garr, TRS (fd) (4)
	JUL/AUG	Nav3,
		P (5, with 2 German resources)
	SEP/OCT	Mil, Amph (fu) (5)
	NOV/DEC	TRS (fu), P (5)
1941	JAN/FEB	Para, Ftr2 (6)
	MAR/APR	Mil, Lnd3,
		P (7, with 3 German resources)

Italy

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A more long term and realistic strategy for victory argues against an early entry into the war. The earlier you enter, the less you will have on the map, and the longer you will have to face the Allies in the Mediterranean unaided by your allies.

When you do come to war, you must decide with whom. In WiF5 you had to declare war on France and the Commonwealth – now you choose among 3 options, weighing the merits game to game.

First, if you were going for Gibraltar and Suez, you could declare war on the Commonwealth only, attempting to force the French to declare war on you

Second, to help your German ally in France and set up the attack on Gibraltar by attacking Algeria, you could declare war on France only. This may force the Commonwealth to declare war on you.

Either of these options slow US entry, while giving you a free hand against only one protagonist, at least until the other declares war on you. However, they also risk you being forced to do 2 declarations of war yourself (e.g. you declare war on France, take Algeria, and are now ready for Gibraltar, and the CW refuses to declare war on you), thus worsening US entry, rather than helping.

Third, you could declare war on France and the CW at the same time, just like you used to have to. This works if you can gain objectives against both Allies at the same time.

At the least, have your Marines on hand for use against either opponent. Sometimes the Allies leave Algeria, Suez, Gibraltar or the South of France weak early, in which case go in against the target of opportunity, usually declaring war only on the vulnerable enemy.

I know this is hardly cut and dried, but this is probably going to be the toughest decision you will have to make in the game, so ponder carefully, and if finely balanced, veer on the side of prudence.

When you do come to war, strike hard and fast. As you cannot afford casualties, you must only open up a front when you have overwhelming advantage.

The most critical piece of real estate in the world for you is Gibraltar. You must do everything possible to get Adolf to grab it, by whatever means. Once it is

secured, you can relax as you will probably survive until the end of the game.

Next, you must focus your attention on Suez, and ultimately all of the Middle East. This will give you the vital oil you need (not to mention a rich harvest of victory objectives, which are of course yours, not German). Demand as many German units to help you gain these objectives. Tell him you might even give him some of the oil - a promise easy to break.

Malta's greater importance in WiF:FE should not be overlooked. If the Allies base some strength there it can be a royal pain in the butt. If you can snap it up easily early in the game, maybe on the first turn, do so. One of the best plays I saw with Malta in the old 5th edition against me, was Harry basing two aircraft at Malta with a garrison. It forced weak Italy to divert air strength to deal with the threat.

Consider your position in the Africa Orientale Impero (AOI). Basing troops in Ethiopia can force the Allies into some bizarre activities. Base some old minor naval units down there at Mogadishu – at minimum the San Giorgio. I have also based the Piaggio long range bomber down there just to mess things up for the Allied player. An Alpine unit may also make sense down here – one alpine division was employed in the 1935-36 war with Abyssinia to good effect.

Italy should tie down Allied units and threaten as many sea areas as possible. The AOI offers an additional area to threaten the Allies from and should be used.

A land offensive is possible, but once losses are suffered from your land units in the AOI you may want to go over on the defensive unless you link up in Egypt with Panzerarmee Afrika.

When you are invariably placed on the defensive, garrison all your factories, Rome and Tripoli, and get as many Germans in possible to stave off the inevitable. Unless your Adolf is a complete fool, he should realize that the longer you survive, the longer he survives. Hang on until your enemies seize your last Albanian mountain fortress.

So there you have it. Throw some spice on this and you will end up with a fine Italian entree, not some German side dish. If you plan carefully, enter the war at the right moment and thrust forcefully, your armed might may just be the decisive weight to turn the scales of victory.

Breakfasting in Berlin

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barossa in 1941, you may hold this theatre for the rest of the game because the CW should be able to hold the Canal against Italians only.

5. Take advantage of any declaration of war by another major power (4)

If you do find yourself at war with Japan or Italy before Germany, take full advantage of it. There are many advantages to you not being neutral. They are:

- (a) you are not limited to taking combined actions;
- (b) you place your RES units on maps;
- (c) you can build your MIL;
- (d) you can advance build units (particularly your garrisons);
- (e) you can save all your oil (if playing the oil rule); and
- (f) you can receive lend-lease build points from your allies.

Of these, the last is the most important and, if it looks like there is any chance of a Barbarossa, you should scream long and loud for as much lend-lease as possible. You must explain to your allies that a build point lend-leased now will be worth ten after any attack. You can even promise to not demand build points later if that is all your allies will concede. (a bird in the hand is worth 2 in the bush, after all).

Only take advantage of (c) if you plan to stay at war until Barbarossa, as any builds will be wasted if you revert to neutrality. The MIL are removed from the game.

6. Consider declaring war on Italy before Barbarossa (1)

Declaring war on Italy pre-Barbarossa gives you all the benefits of tip #5, with the only downside being the US entry effect. Italians may not enter the border zone between Russia and Germany, so they cannot enter Soviet ZOCs to lower your garrison value, or convert your border zone into Italian controlled hexes, allowing the Germans to follow up.

If the Axis plan a 1942 Barbarossa, it is worth your while to declare war on Italy once the US enters the war because by then no real downsides to this action exist.

7. Garrison your fortresses (5)

Keep Sevastopol, Rostov, and Leningrad strongly defended. The Germans will face great difficulty capturing these cities with their ramparts fully manned. Usually, the best odds the Axis can get is 2:1 assault, giving only a 20-30% chance of success.

Every Axis failure disrupts large numbers of Axis corps, leaving them useless for the rest of the turn.

If the Axis bypass these bastions, the screening units reduce the Wehrmacht front line units. Heavily garrisoned fortresses also provide excellent sallying points for counter-attack. The beauty of attacking from Sevastopol and Leningrad is that you can reinforce success (by placing your reinforcements in your cities) faster than your opponent can bring up forces from central Europe.

An offensive from Leningrad threatens to isolate all of the Eastern Front while forcing all German reinforcements to shore up the gaps. In my last playtest before WiFCon, I left just a few Yugoslavs to screen Leningrad. Before I knew it, I was defending behind the Dvina having lost Riga, Minsk and Vitebsk to a surprise Russian breakout.



*Left Vasilevsky
Right Kleist*



WAR

8. Defend back and in depth (5+)

If you think there is any chance of Barbarossa, defend rearwards. If you defend at the border, you will be facing German air superiority, giving them the opportunity to disrupt, then destroy the bulk of your forces.

If you defend behind the Dnieper, you will have air superiority through much of the first summer of the war.

I have included as part of the set-ups in the middle of this annual, my 1941 rearward Russian set-up. It defends the Dnieper in strength, with cheap delaying units in forward cities. I do not claim this set-up is the best, and you may well come up with a better one. The set-up aims to make it hard for the Germans to get to the Dnieper, maximise their disruption during their advance and minimise your build point losses.

Against each delaying city, the Germans can only get 5:1 odds at best, giving them a 50% chance of disrupting all German units, with a 30% chance of at least one unit surviving, all for a cost to the Soviets of a maximum of 4 build points.

Apart from city rear-guards, do not leave any other delaying units. They will only be blitzed and destroyed.

If you are playing with divisions, defend Batum. A German DIV stacked on Rumanian destroyers can invade in non-clear weather. If you lose Batum, then that pesky BV-222 could carry enough

reinforcements to get the Turks in the war against you - not a pretty prospect. Any unit defending in Batum or E0523 will stop all thoughts of invasion.

9. Set up an Asian oil reserve (2)

If you are playing with the oil rule, store whatever spare oil you have in Central Asia. This maximises the flexibility of your production and re-organisation, especially if the Caucasus gets cut off from your Asian factories.

10. Demand CW ground forces (3)

Once Barbarossa starts, you are going to need every Russian you can spare for the main fronts. CW forces can be guarding both your northern and southern flanks - the latter by holding Suez and the former by sending a few corps to Scandinavia.

The initial job of the blue units will be to defend Murmansk, Archangel and the rail lines. When these are secure, the CW can drive towards Helsinki. Even if this drive fails, it may draw German units away from the Dnieper line, while you concentrate your own forces there.

11. Rail out your factories early (4)

In game after game, I am amazed about how slack the Russians are at railing their factories out of danger. Everybody is very good about this during the first summer of the war but, come winter, when the German drive has slowed, every Stalin I have met seems to assume that the advance will never restart, and so stops railing factories. The summer then inevitably sees the Germans again on the offensive with the Russians desperately trying to extricate newly endangered factories.

There are two important reasons why you want to rail out your factories early. First, it guarantees they will not be captured. Second, as the factories produce more build points over time, if you rail them out early, you will lose less production in the long run.

Only write off the Odessa factory as certainly lost. Every other factory should be evacuated as soon as possible. That means railing out the Leningrad factories before the Germans reach the rail line at E1544.

Rail as many factories as possible to the Caucasus, Murmansk and Archangel. Allied resources reaching Karelia, and the Caucasus oil resources will still then reach factories, even if these regions are cut off from the rest of the country.

12. Demand maximum build points from the US and the CW (5+)

Most Allies base lend-lease on how the Eastern Front goes at the time. The flaw

here is that no matter how well the Russians are doing, things can always turn sour. To guarantee Russian survival, maximise Russian production.

In our game at last year's WiFCon, the Allies had given Russia less than 20 build points during the entire game up to Jul/Aug 1943. Of these 15 were sent in the last 3 turns. Considering the Russians could have received 10 build points a turn from May/Jun 1941 onwards, the Russians were effectively robbed of 120 build points.

Even just half this number would have been enough for Russia to survive. With the US entering the war in May/Jun 1941, a Russia that survived would have meant an Allied win. Ignoring this tip cost the Allies the game.

Aid before war (which our Stalin spurned) is the best aid of all. The more units you have on the map when the Germans hit, the fewer units need to be rebuilt. Only stop demanding aid when every unit is on the map.

13. Keep your PARAs stacked with your TB-3s (3)

Your TB-3s are fantastic aircraft for paratropping. Of course, you must have built your paras.

Drop them on any out of supply Axis-controlled Russian city nine to eleven hexes behind the German lines late in the turn. If you attack with five para factors, and five ground support factors, the paratroop is automatic. If attacking a coast, you can go in with 4 para factors, 4 ground support factors and 2 shore bombardment factors.

The successful seizure of a city will force the Germans to send some corps back to deal with the Russian city. This could consume 2 or more impulses.

If the turn ends before the Nazis arrive, adding a strong GAR reinforcement in the hex and a DIV, if available, will turn the city into a fortress. If you have another ATR, you can extract the PARA and return it to the Russian lines for another paratroop as early as next impulse, after reorganising with an HQ.

Even doing this once will disrupt the German drive and force Adolf to garrison all cities within 11 hexes of your TB-3s. This will dramatically reduce the number of Axis units at the front.

14. Scorched earth purifies the soul (2)

If you are playing with factory destruction and oil synth plants, destroy every Persian, Iraqi and Russian oil well you can before the Axis take them. Each oil resource you destroy will require 4 Ger-

man build points to repair and keeps them out of action for 2 turns. These are German build points not being spent creating units for the Eastern Front.

15. Counter-attack rarely and only in strength (5)

You can only afford to counter-attack rarely during the first 2 years of Barbarossa. Any failure will see you disrupted, and easy pickings for the superior German forces.

However, late in a turn, when most of the Axis are disrupted, there can be opportunities for counterattacks at high or even automatic odds. You should always be alert to these opportunities, even on the first turn of the German invasion.

Do not counterattack at all unless you can get a minimum of 3:1 odds after factoring in all available German aircraft and artillery support. If the Axis has any possibility of counter-attacking you, you should not attack at less than 5:1.

If they can counter-attack, assume you are going to roll a '1', and then ask yourself "can the Axis exploit my disrupted units?" If the answer is yes, do not attack.

16. Always look for the Gallipoli option (3)

The Baltic and the Black Sea are excellent locations to outflank the Germans with an invasion. The Russian marine should be built as soon as possible and placed in Sevastopol (along with your at-start TRS).

This unit garrisons Sevastopol and threatens the Wehrmacht's southern flank. It forces the Germans to defend Odessa, Rostov, and Berdiansk lest a Russian descent on the coast liberate vital Russian cities.

Such an invasion should elicit an immediate German response, dramatically reducing their eastwards drive, as they deal with the irruption in their rear. If they ignore the landing, drive northwards and put their whole army out of supply.

Similarly, Baltic invasions by divisions on your SCSs (if you are playing with this option), in conjunction with a drive from Leningrad, can rip open the Northern Front.

17. Make lebensraum work for you (5)

A quick look at the map shows how large Russia is. You have an enormous amount of space and terrain, so use it. Whenever possible, defend in mountains, swamps, cities and behind rivers.

When one river line is out-flanked, fall back to the next one, leaving 2 low cost units behind in each city to slow down the Axis advance. The best garrisons

curiously enough are strong and cheap garrison units. Never leave HQs, Mech, Armour or any other expensive units.

When falling back, always have 2 armies in every 2nd or 3rd hex, rather than single units every hex. It is often far better to have no units at all in a hex (defending an adjacent hex instead) rather than one. After all, the Germans cannot attack an empty hex.

Once you have all your factories off the European map, you can even withdraw to Asia if you like. It does not matter how much space you lose, but rather how many units you have left at the end of the retreat that counts.

The only exception to this is the Caucasus. It contains so much of your vital oil resources as well as your potential enemy Turkey, that it must be held, whatever the cost. You want to stop the Germans at Rostov and the Don if possible. If not, fall back to the Caucasus. You can hold from Sukumi to Tiflis, just by holding E0225, E0425, E0525, E0625 and E0725. Only fall back from these positions when forced.

18. Do not forget supply and demand (3)

If you are playing with the oil rule, store at least 1 oil in each major city (e.g. Moscow, Leningrad, Sevastopol and Leningrad). These can reorganise your oil-dependent units there if they get cut-off from the rest of Russia. They might end up being captured by the Germans, but, with fortune, only after massive German casualties. There is nothing sadder than seeing your tank armies permanently disrupted and overrun at 7:1.

19. Use your partisans (5)

Your partisans are amongst your most effective units. They wander around behind the German lines destroying aircraft and oil resources and occupying cities.

Their ability to destroy disrupted aircraft will force the Germans to leave more units behind as airfield garrisons, again reducing the front-line units.

After the Axis start garrisoning Russian cities, and stacking aircraft on top of them, always check the Axis stacking. Most Germans I know (including myself) tend to stack Hungarian planes on Rumanian corps and vice versa. Do not be kind. Just demand the destruction of the excess.

Use partisans to occupy captured Russian cities behind the German lines. You can then fly in reinforcements with your trusty old TB-3's, liberating these cities and then converting them into

bastions with reinforcements. As with your paradrops, this will compel the Axis to send sizable forces westwards to deal with these irruptions of Russians, lest they spread like a plague.

I always laugh when Germans complain at the effectiveness of my partisans. They say it is unhistorical. Well of course it is not. Just point out to them that historically, Russian partisans destroyed more than 5000 Axis planes during the war, and forced the Germans to deploy 30+ divisions behind the lines as garrisons. Most German players expect the partisans to be useless. If they were, we would not have included them in the game.

Partisans cost you nothing to build. Used effectively, they will quickly become your most cost-effective units.

20. Demand a second front now (5)

From the moment Barbarossa starts, you should be screaming at your allies to honour their pledge, and invade Europe now. Tell them that if you go down, they will not be far behind you. They should already have started their strategic bombing campaign against Germany, and this should keep 10-15 German fighters in Germany and France, and out of Russia.

However, this is not enough. Obviously your allies are too slow-witted to think up their own operations, otherwise they would have been you. So suggest the operations you recommend they carry out now. Apart from operations in Finland in direct support of you, they should be considering attacking Spain (if Axis), North. Africa, Italy, France and Denmark.

An Allied invasion of Denmark is particularly dangerous for Germany. It requires few Allied units to prosecute, cuts off Swedish and Finnish resources, and threatens an invasion of the Baltic States with the objective of racing southwards and cutting off all Axis forces in Russia. If this happens, a decisive Allied victory, will soon follow.

Well, there you have it, victory in 20 easy steps. Following each of these tips will accumulate benefits to you over time. Performed successfully, they will whittle away the Wehrmacht until it is so small even you can attack it. Before you know it, you will have broken the Axis offensive and it will be your turn to dish it out. Then you can dream of breakfasting in the Berghof before Ike is across the Rhine.

COMING SOON TO A STORE NEAR YOU

AMERICA IN FLAMES

Democracy vs. Darkness



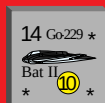
The Invasion of Washington ~ 4th July, 1946

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The 1998 **WORLD IN FLAMES** Annual

incorporating *Line of Communication*, Issue No. 10

Leaders in Flames Unit Description

UNIT TYPE	Front of Counter	Back of Counter	Nationality
Leader			USSR
Veto Chit			Italy
Guards Banner Armies (GBA)			USSR
Militia * (MIL)			Japan

* ~ US Entry expansion option

World in Flames: the final edition brought this award winning game of World War II strategy to a new level of gaming pleasure. Now, Australian Design Group is proud to present to you, direct from the designers, **the 1998 World in Flames Annual**.

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Regardless of whether you need to know about Barbarossa, the Battle of the Atlantic or anything in between, **The 1998 World in Flames Annual** has everything you need to become a Grand Master of this great game.



Blitzkrieg, France ~ 1939



(Map ~ 72% of actual size)

The 1998 World in Flames Annual contains:

Leaders in Flames expansion ~ including 140 full-colour counters (WiF countersheet 25);

64-page 1998 WiF Annual, including;

- Players' notes for every major power,
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- 1997 WiF World Championship,
- all the latest from the WiF World;

16 page Rules insert including;

- Leaders in Flames rules,
- 1940 Campaign Set Up,
- complete & up-to-date errata;

1 Veto Chart; and

1 US Entry Option Chart.