

THIS ISSUE'S HISTORICAL WARGAME

Includes

20 Page Rulebook 22"x34" Game Map 280 Piece Countersheet

A Dark and Bloody Ground

by Paul Rohrbaugh

The game and accompanying article in this issue, *A Dark and Bloody Ground*, were designed and authored by me. This marks my first non-DTP game to be published, and one that I've wanted to do for quite some time. Enjoy!

In this space of the magazine we like to give some background on the designer of the issue's game. Now it is my turn to be under scrutiny. I've been playing war games since I was

13, way back in 1969, when a new classmate introduced me to playing miniatures. Later that year at Christmas my parents gave me Avalon Hill's *Bismarck* and *Afrika Korps*, and it was off to the races! I have earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History (1979), a Masters in Education (1981), a Masters in Library Science (1990) and a Masters in History (2001). My career began in the Teacher Corps (two years from 1979 to 1981), seven years teaching

7th and 8th grade history, two years of substitute teaching, and now as a librarian from 1990 (McKinley Memorial Library in Niles, Ohio, the Carnegie Public Library of East Liverpool and currently at Youngstown State University as the Librarian in charge of the Wilcox Curriculum Resource Center). Besides war games (published by the Microgame Design Group, Schutze Games, Minden Games and the Academic Gaming Review), I have presented

and published on President McKinley (a biography geared for young adults/middle school students is forthcoming from Chestnut Publications), and am currently researching and writing a biography on the President's life-long friend and local philanthropist, Joseph G. Butler. If you'd like to read my master's thesis that deals with these other topics of great interest to me, check out this URL: <http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd/view.cgi?ysu1002293540>

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EDITOR

Andy Nunez

PUBLISHER

C. Rawling

ART DIRECTOR

Craig Grando

MAGAZINE'S COLOR MAPS

Eric Hotz

GRAPHIC PRODUCTION

Craig Grando

PROOFREADING

Jack Beckman

ADMINISTRATIVE

C. Rawling

GAME EVALUATION AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

Dennis Bishop, Frank Hakstege, Barry Kendall, Warren Kingsley, Rich Lechowich, Kim Meints, Arnold G. Rawling, Markus Stumptner and Dale Woods

PRINTING COORDINATION

Print One Communications
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Against the Odds Magazine, PO Box 165, Southeastern PA 19399-0165 USA
Email: admin@atomagazine.com

ORDER OF APPEARANCE

By Paul Rohrbaugh, ATO Staff Developer

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next issue's game, *Fortress Berlin*, is just about done. A final proof read of the counters, map, and charts is all that remains at this point. I have been playing the Operation Eclipse variant a lot recently. This deals with the hypothetical Allied airborne offensive to take the Fascist Beast's lair before the Soviets can move in. Currently we're fine-tuning some of the rules regarding the Allied airborne procedure, supply requirements, as well as the OOB/reinforcement rates for both sides.

This one is a wide open free-for-all, with fewer units on both sides than in the historical game. The basic premise is that Hitler has met an earlier demise, setting the stage for an Allied grab before the SS/Luftwaffe/Wehrmacht can consolidate power. The potential is there to bring the war to an earlier conclusion, but also one that makes Arnhem look like a playground squabble! This variant will appear in a future issue of *Paper Wars*, and includes the extra die-cut counters.

COMING UP

Other games in the pipeline include *Suliman the Magnificent: the Battle of Mohacs* by Richard Berg, *Into the Bear Trap: the Battle for Grozny: January 1st, 1995* by Perry Moore, *Big Push: the Battle of the Somme, 1916* by Roger Nord, and Chennault's *First Fight: the Aerial Campaign for Burma, December 1941 to March 1942* by yours truly. *Suliman* is done and ready for Craig's graphical magic as well as the final round of edits/proofreads. This is a really fun game that uses the same design as that in GMT's *Men of Iron* game that is currently in their P500 status. To get a hint of how the *Battle off Mohacs* rules work, you can download a free game on the battle of *Agincourt* from GMT at <http://www.gmtgames.com/miv1/sneakpeek.html>. This game has also been played by my friend and me at work at YSU during our lunches. There have been several times students have come over to investigate, even playing a turn or two. The consensus has been that the game is "really cool." Cavalry charges by knights and hordes of medieval jihadists help a lot, too.

Playtesting has just begun on the other three games. Steve is

handling *Chennault's First Fight*, so look for commentary on this game's development from him in this column. The game concentrates on the aerial battles over Burma, China and Indochina for control of SE Asia, but the ground war is also dealt with. *Into the Bear Trap!* has already benefited from some very useful and lively commentary that is making this already fascinating and easy to learn game even better. Look for more on this one soon on ConsimWorld as well as in the next issue's OOA. *Big Push* was just sent out, but the game was already well-developed by the designer when accepted. The popular perception is that this battle was a senseless waste of humanity in a futile effort. The game shows how desperate the fighting was for both sides, as well as being the first 20th century combined-arms offensive. The Allies would throw into the battle masses of artillery, gas, tanks, and huge underground mines, as well as cavalry to end the deadlock. The Germans were also as innovative in stemming the Allied offensive. There will be plenty of tough calls and "white knuckle" die rolls in this one! Let the dice fly high!

