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THE POCKET AT FALAISE

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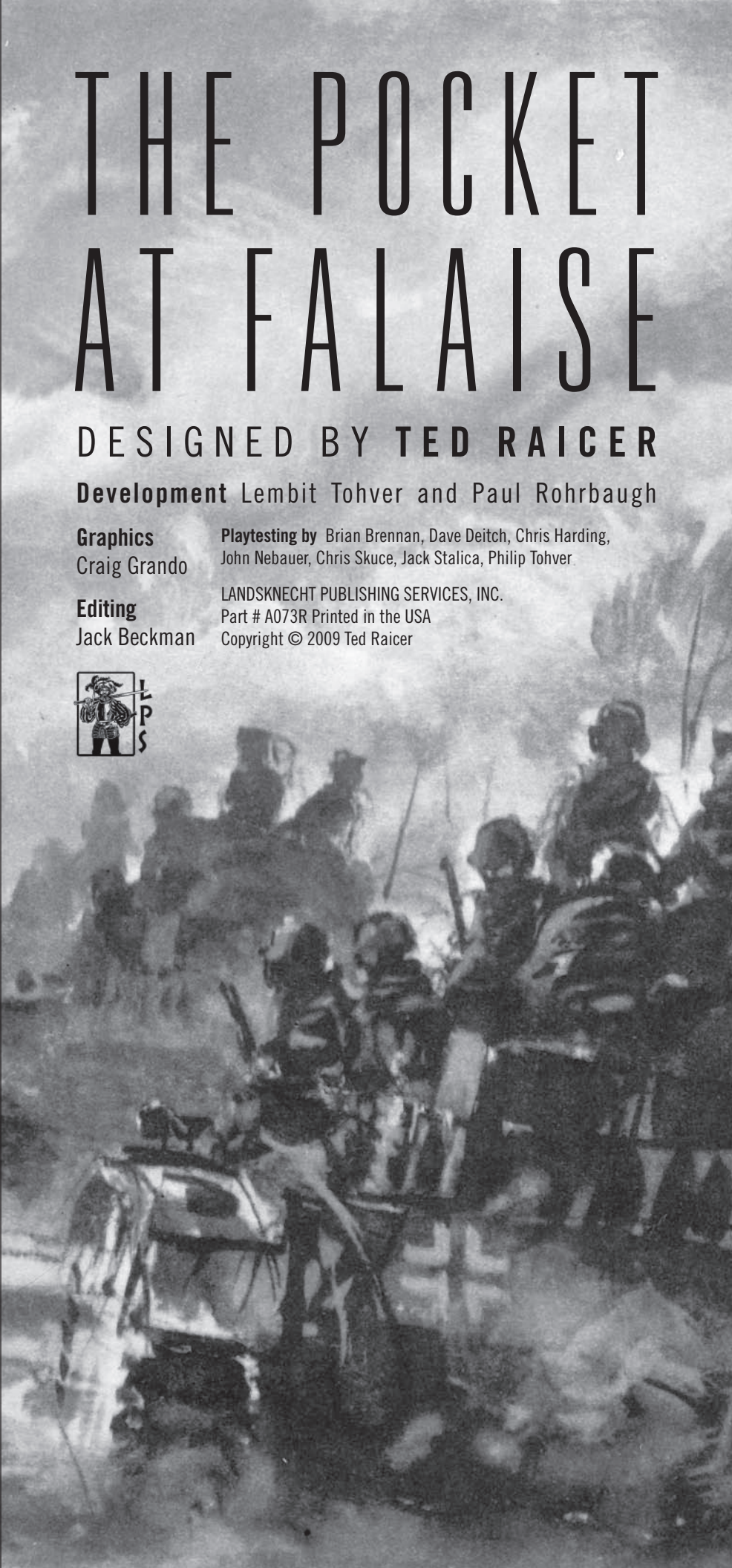
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READ THIS FIRST

We've organized the overall structure of the rules of this LPS simulation game to follow this game's sequence of play in introducing concepts. The rules themselves are written in a format known as the Case System. This approach divides the rules into Modules (each of which deals with a major important aspect of play). Modules are numbered sequentially as well as possessing a title. Each Module is divided into Sections (that deal with a major sub-topic inside the Module) which are also numbered sequentially. Modules and Sections are introduced by some text that briefly describes the subject covered by that particular Module or Section. Finally, the majority of each Section consists of Cases. These are the specific, detailed rules that govern play. Each Case is also numbered sequentially. The numbering follows a logical progression based upon the number of the Module of which the Cases are a part. A Case with the number 7.51, for example, is the first Case of the fifth Section of the seventh Module of the rules. Each Module can have as many as ninety-nine Sections and each Section can have as many as ninety-nine Cases. The numbering system is designed as an organizational aid. Use it to determine where a Case is located in the rules.

3.1.4

The example above is the number of the fourth Case of the first Section of the third Module of the rules.

Learning to Play the Game

Begin by familiarizing yourself with all of the components listed for this game. Then skim through the charts and rules, reading all the titles of the Modules and Sections. Set up a game scenario or portion of a scenario (after reading the applicable Module) and play a trial game against yourself. During this trial game, try referring to the rules only when you have a question and remember the numbering system we employ makes it easy to look up rules when you do. While a trial game may take you an hour or two, it is the quickest and most pleasant way to learn (short of having an experienced friend teach you). We also don't recommend attempting to learn the rules word-for-word. Memorizing all the details is an effort that few can do. We've written these rules to be as comprehensive as possible – but they are not designed to be memorized. Taking in the rules in this way (as you play along) is the best approach to mastering this game. We're always open to suggestions on how to improve the comprehension of our rules. Write to us (see addresses below) if you have an idea on how we can communicate better with you.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Pocket at Falaise is a game on the final phase of the Allied campaign in Normandy. After the failure of Hitler's counterattack in early August to halt the Allied breakout from Normandy, the German 7th and 5th Panzer Armies found themselves on the verge of being pocketed by converging American and British pincers. On the evening of August 16th the Germans began to pull back behind the Orne and Dives rivers, hoping to regroup for a defense of the Seine, even as the Allies attempted to close the trap on some twenty-five German divisions. Ultimately, about half the German forces in the pocket escaped, leaving almost all their heavy equipment behind. It was a major Allied victory, but not a war-winning one.

Designer's Note *The scale of The Pocket At Falaise places it at the borderline of tactical and operational combat, and experienced wargamers will note elements of both tactical and operational games in the design. In general I've tried to avoid "fiddly" rules and complex mechanics in order to make TPaF a game where players can concentrate on, well, playing.*

2.0 GAME COMPONENTS

Each copy of *The Pocket At Falaise* is composed of the following:

One 22" by 34" inch map

One sheet with 176 ⁹/₁₆" counters

2 pages of tables

1 six-sided die

This rules booklet

If any of the supplied parts are missing or damaged, write to:

Against the Odds Magazine
PO Box 165
Southeastern, PA 19399-0165 USA
Attn: *The Pocket At Falaise*

Or e-mail us at: support@atomagazine.com

We hope you enjoy this game. Should you have any difficulty interpreting the rules, please write to us at the above postal address, or send an e-mail to: gamesupport@atomagazine.com, phrasing your questions so that a simple sentence, word, or number can answer them. If you send a letter by mail, you must enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope to receive a reply. We recommend e-mail as the best way to resolve a query. Although we welcome comments and suggestions about the game's interpretation of events, we cannot promise to respond to questions on theory or design

intent. Additionally, check out the *Against the Odds* and *The Pocket At Falaise* discussion folders at www.consimworld.com.

2.1 Game Map

The game map represents the area of Normandy over which the battle was fought. The map is divided into hexagons, used to regulate movement and unit positioning. Each hex is approximately 3/4s of a mile across. The terrain symbols are explained in the Terrain Effects Chart. In addition, the map contains a number of Tracks used to facilitate play. They include:

Turn Record Track The map contains the Turn Record Track (hereafter TRT) used to track the current game turn. Each turn represents either the hours of daylight or night, with two turns making up a 24 hour period.

German General Records Track This is used to keep track of the Movement Points available for currently Activated German Corps Commands.

Allied General Records Track This is used to keep track of the current Movement Points available for currently Activated US/Allied Corps Commands, the Tactical Efficiency Ratings (TER) of the US 80th and Canadian 4th Armored Divisions, as well as the total Allied VP (see Sections 11.6 and 11.8).

2.2 Counters

There are four basic types of counters: Combat Units, Bombardment Markers, Corps Command Markers, and Game Markers. Combat Units represent ground forces of the campaign. Bombardment Markers represent the effects of air and artillery assets. Corps Command Markers are used to decide the order of Corps Activation and track an Active Corps' available Movement Points (MPs). Game Markers are used to keep track of various game functions.

Combat Units German units are mostly regiments or kampfguppe (battlegroups) of approximately reinforced battalion size. American units are mostly regiments, and British Commonwealth units are mostly brigades. **Designer's Note** *During the battle, German organization was rapidly breaking down, with more and more ad-hoc formations.*

All Combat Units have a Zone of Control (Module 6.0). Infantry, Tank/Panzer and Mechanized are Combat units. These units have one or two steps. A one step unit is eliminated after losing a single step. A two step unit is flipped to its reverse (reduced) step on a single step loss, and eliminated on a second step loss. Panzer and Tank Units

are considered Mechanized for game purposes. Combat units have a Combat Factor of 1 to 4 on the left used in Assaults (and to determine the die roll modifier in Op-Fire) and a Tactical Efficiency Rating (TER) on the right used in various game functions. There are special rules concerning the TER of the 80th US Division and the Canadian 4th Armored Division. Each Counter also indicates nationality (color), size (company, battalion, regiment, brigade, kampfguppe, task force) and the unit and Corps Identification. (Corps ID is important for Activation and Artillery Bombardment purposes; Division ID is important for Set Up and German Victory Point purposes.)

Bombardment Markers There are two types of Allied Bombardment Markers: Air and Artillery. Airstrike markers represent the effects of Allied tactical airpower. Artillery units represent the effects of Allied Corps-level artillery (with the exception of the marker that represents the Polish Division's divisional artillery, see Sections 8.2 and 8.3).

Corps Command Markers These Markers (which also include the Polish Division as a separate command) are randomly drawn from the Activation Cup to determine the order that units on the board perform Action Rounds. They are also placed on the players' respective General Records Tracks after the Activation Table is consulted to mark that Corps' Movement Points available that round.

Game Turn Marker keeps track of the current game turn.

Disrupted Markers are used to indicate units that are suffering Disruption (loss of unit cohesion) from Bombardment, Op-Fire, or Assault.

Attached Markers indicate the German units currently assigned to a new Corps Command.

Victory Point Marker is used to track Victory Points (VPs). The back of the marker reads +20; flip the marker to this side if the Allied VP count goes above 20. Allied VPs are added or subtracted as they occur during the game. German VPs are subtracted during the Victory Check Phase of Turn 10. If the result is 1 or higher, the Allied Player wins the game. If the result is 0 or a negative number the German Player wins the game.

2.3 Player Aids

Player Aid Card containing the Terrain Effects Chart, Assault Table, Activation Table, Bombardment Table and Op-Fire Table.

3.0 SET-UP AND VICTORY

Each player should separate his units by Corps and Division. *Note Not all units are part of a Division; the two German companies do not have a Division or a Corp affiliation.*

3.1 Set-up Directions

The German Player sets up first, then the Allied/US Player. All units set up at full strength. Division set-up boundaries are marked on the Starting Front Line on the map. Units must be set up adjacent to the Front Line within their divisional boundaries (except as noted below). Stacking restrictions apply. If because of those restrictions a unit cannot set up adjacent to the Front Line, it must set up adjacent to a unit of its division that is adjacent to the front line.

Exceptions

The units indicated below set up as follows:

German Panzer Lehr Recon Battalion in or adjacent to hex 3437.

9th SS Panzer in or adjacent to hex 2432.

501st SS Panzer Battalion within the 12th SS Panzer Division starting area.

Lehr KG and 1st SS KG stacked with or adjacent to units of the 2nd FJ Corps.

7th Army Company anywhere west of the River Orne west of hex 3221 (and not required to be adjacent to the front line).

Panzer Group Eberbach Company anywhere west of the Dives River.

British 8th Corp (8C) Armored Brigade sets up adjacent to any unit of the British 30th Corps.

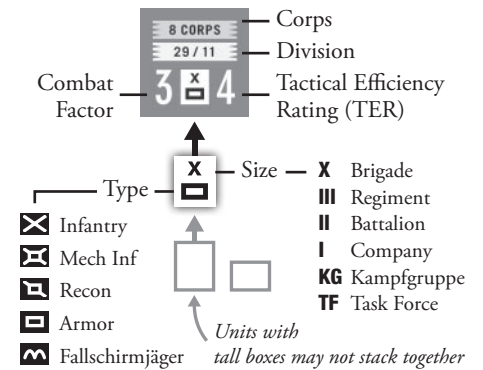
The two units of the British 4th Armored Brigade set up stacked with any infantry brigades of the British 12th Corps (note that these units are considered battalions for game purposes, and are marked as such, though they were officially designated as regiments).

The three units of the Canadian 2nd Armored Brigade set up stacked with any infantry regiments of the Canadian 2nd Corps (note these units are considered battalions for game purposes, and are marked as such, though they were officially designated as regiments).

The Canadian 10th Mechanized Brigade of the 4th Armored Division has two units: a unit with a Combat factor of 2, and Task Force Currie with a Combat Factor of 1. They must begin stacked together.

Units of the US 1st, 9th and 90th Divisions may not set up adjacent to one another.

SAMPLE UNIT



MARKERS



The US 80th Division sets up on the Allied side of the Front Line within 5 hexes of Argentan. Units of this division may not move north or east of Argentan until that town is in Allied control. This unit may not set up adjacent to any unit from another Allied/US Division.

The US 610th TD enters as a reinforcement on Turn 5 (see Section 11.5).

The German 272nd Division enters as a provisional reinforcement (see Section 11.4).

After both players have completed their set ups the German player can remove up to six units from anywhere on the map and redeploy them. Two of the units can be set up anywhere on the German side of the set up line as long as they are not adjacent to an Allied unit. The remaining four units are set aside and are designated "German Unknown Forces" (GUF). Alternatively, the German player can withhold five (leaving only one on the map) or all six of the redeployed units off of the map as part of the GUF. The GUF units will enter the game as reinforcements

(see sections 11.3 and 11.4). If the German player elects to withhold more than 4 units off map as part of the GUF the Allied player is awarded 1 VP.

Historical Note *Even the German High Command could not be certain exactly where all of their formations were in this increasingly chaotic sector of the Western Front. The counterattack the Germans launched later in the battle was in some measure made possible by some units having apparently disobeyed orders and “bugging out” a bit sooner than allowed, ironically allowing them to be in the wrong place at the right time to rescue their slower and/or more faithful comrades...*

Design Note *The US Corps and Army boundaries were shifted during this battle, with the 15th Corps becoming a Provisional Corps attached to First Army as Patton's Third Army advanced west to the Seine (and beyond). For purpose of the game rules, this command juggling is ignored.*

3.2 Victory Point (VP) Marker

At the beginning of the game, place the VP Marker on the 0 space of the Allied General Records Track (or in the 1 space if the German player deployed 5 or 6 units to the GUF).

3.3 Award and Control of Victory Points

Victory Points are awarded for each of the following:

The Allied player receives 1 Victory Point for each German Unit eliminated that had no Line of Communication at the instant of its elimination, including units that Surrender at the end of the game (see Section 6.5). **Exception** *The two German company-sized units do not count for VP purposes for either player.*

The Allied player loses 1 VP for each reduced brigade or eliminated battalion (one-step unit), 2 VP for each eliminated brigade/regiment (two-step unit).

German Surrender During the Victory Check Phase of Turn 10, German units without an LOC must roll for Surrender. A die is rolled for each such unit with 2 added to the roll. If the modified die roll is greater than the unit's printed TER it surrenders (is eliminated) scoring VPs for the Allied Player. **Gameplay Note** *No die roll is required for German units with a TER of 1 or 2; these will always surrender.*

Gameplay Note *If the Allied VP total goes above 20, flip the VP Marker to its +20 side.*

The German player receives VP during the Victory Check Phase of Turn 10 only. Subtract the German VP total from Allied VP total.

The German player receives 2 VP for each unit belonging to a different division east of the German Withdrawal Line.

The German player receives 2 VP in addition for each Mech unit east of the Withdrawal Line. (These are cumulative—a Mechanized unit that is the sole unit of its division east of the Withdrawal Line would be worth 4 VP. It pays to get those KG exited. Hint, hint, hint!).

The German player gets 5 VP if he controls Argentan at the end of the game. He instead receives 10 VP if he controls Argentan with a Line of Communication at the end of the game.

The German player gets 1 VP for each German unit withdrawn from the south map edge. **Designer's Note** *Substantial German forces escaping in this direction would make the liberation of Paris that much more problematic.*

If the result is 0 or fewer VP the German player wins. If the result is 1 or more VP the Allied player wins.

Designer's Note *The VP for each German division represent the importance of getting out divisional cadres around which the divisions can be reformed. The VP for Mechanized units represents the importance of both the experienced panzer troops, and whatever tanks and heavy equipment could be salvaged. Given the chaotic nature of the game system (which reflects the battle) the balance of the game between any two players can be difficult to judge. Some options are offered at the end of the rules for players to use to balance play if one side (or one player) has an advantage.*

3.4 Control

The German Player begins in control of Argentan. When an Allied/US unit enters the town, the Allied/US Player takes control of it. If the German player should reoccupy it, he takes control back, and so on. What matters is whether the German player controls Argentan at the end of the game. **Note** *If all German units in Argentan surrender, the Germans do not control the town.*

Designer's Note *The German position in Normandy was doomed at the point TPaf begins. Holding Argentan, with or without a Line of Communication, can't change that, but it does help represent the German reluctance even during a retreat to give up ground without a fight.*

4.0 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Each game turn is divided into Phases during which players conduct specified actions.

Every action taken by a player must be carried out in accordance with the sequence given below. Once a player finishes his activities for a given phase or round, he may not go back to performing some forgotten action unless his opponent permits it.

GERMAN SPECIAL COUNTERATTACK INITIATIVE (once per game, Turns 5 to 10 only) On Turn 5 to 10 the German Player may declare a Counterattack, choosing one Corps Chit to Activate first.

ALLIED AIRSTRIKE AVAILABILITY (Day Turns only) The Allied Player rolls one die to determine number of Airstrike Markers available this turn (see Section 11.3).

ALLIED BOMBARDMENT The Allied Player may use available Airstrike Markers and Corps/Division Artillery Bombardment Markers to attack German units (see Module 8.0).

CORPS COMMAND POOL Place all available US, Allied, and German Corps Command Chits in a cup. **Exception** *Corps Chit chosen for German Counterattack and 58th Corps Chit are kept out of the cup.* Allied Player rolls 1 die to see if the Canadian 4th Armored Division commander is replaced, Turns 5-10 only (see Section 11.6).

ACTIVATION German Player plays Counterattack Corps Chit (if he has chosen to Counterattack this turn). Then Players randomly draw chits one at a time from cup. **Note** *On turns 1 and 2 the German player automatically has the first two activations (see Section 11.10).* As each chit is drawn an Action Round takes place. German player may substitute 58th Corps Chit for any drawn German Command Chit once per Turn on Turns 1-4 only (see Section 11.2). German player may attach units to currently Activated Corps (see Section 11.1).

ACTION ROUNDS Player rolls for Movement Points of Activated Corps units. Active Corps units may Assault or Move/Mechanized Assault. Resolve Assaults. If Move/Mechanized Assault was chosen, Active units may Move, suffering Op-Fire from entering Enemy Zones of Control or in some cases from Breaking Contact. After Movement, resolve any Mechanized Assaults. All units which activated during the action round should be rotated 90 degrees to indicate they are finished and can not activate again. Continue until all Corps have been Activated. Score US/Allied Victory Points as they occur.

RECOVERY Rotate all finished units back to their normal facing. Remove all Allied DISRPT markers. (*Exception During Night Turns Allied units must have Line of Communication*). Remove all German DISRPT Markers during Night Turns or on units east of the German Withdrawal Line.

VICTORY CHECK (Turn 10 only) Check Victory Points and Determine the Winner.

5.0 STACKING

Stacking is the placement of more than one unit into a single hex at the same time. The term "Stack" refers to one or more Combat Units legally placed in a hex. Note that a lone Unit in a hex is a Stack.

5.1 Stacking Limits

Stacking limits are enforced at all times including: (a) throughout each Movement Segment, (b) during the placement of Reinforcements and Replacements on the map, and (c) throughout the Combat Phase, including Retreat and Advance after combat.

5.2 Over-stacking

If a hex is over-stacked, the owning player must eliminate sufficient units (of that player's choice) to bring the stack within the stated limits.

Exception US/Allied units (only) forced to retreat by a DR Assault Combat Result may ignore Stacking Limits during the retreat and may extend their retreat as needed to avoid over-stacking.

5.3 Combat Units

A player may stack up to two Combat Units in the same hex. No more than one of them may be a Regiment or Brigade. Kampfgruppe and Task Forces are considered Battalions for stacking purposes.



Note A rectangle behind the unit size (as on left, above) indicates regiment/brigade sized units that cannot stack with one another. US and other Allied units may not stack together.

Exception US and Polish units may stack. Task Force Currie may only stack with the Canadian 10th Mechanized Brigade of the Canadian 4th Armored Division, and when stacked it has the same TER as the 10th Mechanized Brigade for all purposes.

Designer's Note Task Force Currie was a mixed force of a couple hundred men—infantry and tanks—formed from the 10th Brigade.

5.4 Bombardment and Game Markers

These markers do not count for stacking.

6.0 ZONES OF CONTROL & OP-FIRE

Units influence activities both in their own hexes and in the six hexes adjacent to their location. Those six hexes are called the Unit's Zone of Control. Zones of Control are inherent to all Combat Units, but they may be cancelled.

6.1 Zones of Control (ZOC)

In general, ZOC allow for Opportunity Fire (hereafter Op-Fire), hinder the ability of units to Break Contact, and affect Lines of Communication. They have no other effect. ZOC do not extend across River or Dives/Orne River hexsides except at Bridges or Fords. Armor/Panzer units' ZOC also do not extend across the Trun (Dives River) Bridge hex side. Whenever a unit moves into an enemy ZOC the enemy unit may perform Op-Fire.

Exception Units advancing after combat ignore enemy ZOC. Under certain conditions Op-Fire may also take place when a unit Breaks Contact.

6.2 Opportunity (Op) Fire

When a moving unit enters or exits an enemy ZOC, the enemy player must immediately announce if he is performing Op-Fire. If so, the moving player ceases his movement until the Op-Fire is resolved. A moving unit may only be attacked by one stack per hex entered or exited, so if a unit moves into multiple ZOC extending into a single hex, only one attack is made. Units that enter an enemy ZOC during an Assault-mandated Retreat also suffer Op-Fire. (Also see Breaking Contact, Section 6.3) The Player performing Op-Fire chooses which stack fires; stacks may never combine in Op-Fire. Roll the die on the Op-Fire table, applying appropriate die roll modifiers (DRM).

Gameplay Note A unit's TER cannot be reduced to less than 0, regardless of the number of modifiers.

If the result is Halt the moving unit must stop moving in the hex just entered. Halted Mechanized units may still perform a Mechanized Assault. If the result is DIS, the moving stack is Disrupted. Place a DISRPT marker on the units, which must also end their movement in the hex just entered.

Mechanized units Disrupted by Op-Fire may perform a Mechanized Assault. In judging TER Die Roll Modifiers during Op-Fire, each player uses the highest TER involved.

Exception Task Force Currie has the TER of the Canadian 10th Mechanized Brigade when stacked with that unit. It uses its own TER only when it is not stacked.

6.3 Breaking Contact

Units that exit an enemy ZOC and don't move directly into an enemy ZOC are Breaking Contact. During Night Turns, Breaking Contact is automatic but costs 1 additional MP. During Day Turns Breaking Contact costs 1 additional MP and is subject to Op-Fire. The units Breaking Contact benefit from a -2 DRM. Units do not roll for Op-Fire when exiting a hex that contains a friendly unit that will remain in the hex throughout that Corps Activation. Breaking Contact is a function of Movement; ignore it for Assault Combat Retreats.

6.4 Op-Fire Disruption

Disrupted Units do not suffer an additional Disruption from Op-Fire; consider a Disrupted result a Halt result instead and the unit must remain in the hex.

Exception Disrupted units forced to retreat by an Assault DR result are eliminated if Disrupted by Op-Fire during their retreat. In the case of German units such units score Allied VP.

6.5 Lines of Communication

Disrupted Allied/US Units require a Line of Communication (LOC) during Night Turns only to recover during the Recovery Phase. When a German Battalion/Regiment/Kampfgruppe unit is eliminated it must be checked for an LOC; if it lacks one the Allies score a VP. Such German units without an LOC during the Victory Check Phase of Turn 10 must roll for Surrender. An LOC is a path of hexes no more than 10 hexes long to a road, and then along the road to a board edge hex on the north, west, or south map edges for Allied/US units, or hex 1703 for German units. An LOC may not cross River or Dives/Orne River hexsides except at Bridges or Fords, and may not enter an enemy ZOC. Friendly units in a hex negate enemy ZOC for the first 10 hexes of an LOC trace only. Once the LOC reaches a road, friendly units do not negate enemy ZOC. Units may also trace an LOC directly without a road if they are within 10 hexes of a map edge (this LOC must also be free of enemy units/ZOC).

7.0 MOVEMENT

Movement takes place during the Activation Phase in a series of Action Rounds. Each time one of a player's Corps Command Markers (including the Polish Division Marker) from the Corps Command cup is drawn, units of that Corps may perform an Action Round. These units are considered Active. If the Corps is German, the German Player may immediately Attach up to three units to the newly Active Corps (see Section 11.1). The German Player may also declare that he is going to use the 58th Corps Marker in place of any drawn German Marker (the drawn Marker goes back into the Command Cup) during Turns 1-4. The player then rolls on the Activation Table to determine the number of Movement Points (MP) that the Corps (or Polish 1st Armor Division) has, using the Command Marker to mark the resulting MP on his General Records Track. The player then announces if he is performing an Assault Round or a Movement/Mechanized Assault Round. If he chooses the former, no Movement takes place (apart from Assault Advances and Retreats, which are not considered Movement). If he chooses the latter, he may move any units of the Active Command up to the limit of their MP allowance. Note that individual units may have their MP reduced or increased by their particular Tactical Efficiency Rating (TER).

7.1 Movement Rounds

Conduct each Movement Round according to the following procedure:

7.1.1 Movement Allowance Step The Moving Player determines the MP available to the Active Command by rolling a single die on the Activation Table with the appropriate die roll modifiers (DRM) to determine that Command's MP allowance. Individual units may have 1 MP subtracted or 2 MP added to that number on the basis of their current TER (taking into account Disruption).

7.1.2 Movement Step The Active Player moves none, any, or all friendly Active units.

7.2 Unit Movement

All units move according to the rules in this section, except as may be limited elsewhere. Units move from hex to adjacent hex, paying varying MP costs to do so depending upon the terrain in the hex being entered and/or hexsides crossed. These costs are detailed on the Terrain Effects Chart.

Movement is governed by the following limitations:

Movement Points may not be accumulated from Movement Round to Movement Round, nor lent from one unit to another.

Moving units need not expend all available points before stopping.

The movement of each unit must be completed before that of another is begun.

Exception Units may move as stacks within the stacking limits.

No unit may move more than once per Turn.

Units moving as stacks may not move farther than the lowest MP of the stack; however units with lower MP may be dropped off so that the remaining unit may continue movement. Units may not pick up other units as they move; a moving stack must consist of two units that began the Round stacked together. **Exception** *Task Force Currie has the same TER (and thus the same MP available) as the Canadian 10th Mechanized Brigade any Round it starts stacked with that unit.*

7.2.1 One hex movement All units with a current Movement Allowance of 1 or more may always move one hex regardless of the movement cost (subject to normal movement, terrain, command restrictions and prohibitions). **Note** *Armor/panzer units may not move or attack across the Trun River Bridge.*

7.2.2 Combat Results Advances and Retreats Advances and Retreats are not considered movement, although units cannot enter or cross terrain hexes/hex sides that would be prohibited during regular movement.

7.3 Road Movement

All units pay 1 MP regardless of other terrain (except Bridges) moving from one contiguous road hex to another. Mechanized units can use Road Movement, paying 1/2 MP per hex entered (+1 MP for crossing any bridge) provided that they begin their movement on the road and move only through contiguous road hexes that Round, and don't stack at any point. Such units may not Break Contact with enemy units or enter an enemy ZOC.

Exception *Enemy ZOC do not extend into Town hexes for the purpose of this restriction.*

8.0 BOMBARDMENTS AND AIRSTRIKES

Artillery Bombardments and Airstrikes are attacks by Artillery and Air that precede assaults. Artillery Bombardments and Airstrikes only take place during the Bombardment Phase. Only the Allied/US Player may conduct Artillery Bombardment and Airstrike attacks.

8.1 Artillery Bombardment and Airstrike Procedure

Determine the target hex. Designate a target hex within range, and roll one die. Cross-reference the die roll (taking into account all DRMs) and apply the results as indicated.

8.2 Artillery Bombardment



Artillery units may fire at any enemy hexes within range.

Range is determined by tracing a line of hexes (ignoring terrain,

stacking, and enemy units and ZOC) from any unit of a particular Corps to any enemy occupied hex. If the unit being traced from occupies a crest hex, and it is a Day Turn, the Bombardment Marker may be placed within Extended Range (2 hexes greater than the normal range printed on the Marker). There is no Line of Sight requirement, simply range. Conduct the Bombardment on the Bombardment Table, using all appropriate DRM, and inflict the results (if any). That Artillery Marker is done for the Turn. Continue until all possible Bombardments the player wishes to make are completed. Artillery Bombardments and Airstrikes may be conducted in any order, and a single hex may be attacked by any number of Bombardments/Airstrikes that are able to do so. US units may never conduct a Bombardment on a hex adjacent to non-US Allied units unless a US unit is stacked in the Allied occupied hex (which can only happen with the Poles).

Designer's Note *The effects of Line of Sight are covered sufficiently, given the game's scale, by the advantage of occupying a Crest hex. Actually tracing an LoS would in my opinion be both more trouble than it is worth, and more tactical than intended. The inability of US Artillery to bombard most hexes adjacent to Commonwealth units represents General Bradley's fear of an accidental "clash" between the advancing Allied and US forces.*

8.3 Airstrikes



Airstrikes may only take place during Day Turns. During the Allied Air Availability Phase the Allied Player rolls a die to determine the number of Airstrike Markers available (up to 6). Air units may be placed on any German-occupied hexes on the map. After the airstrike attack, the markers are removed from the map until the following Day turn.

Designer's Note *Allied Airstrike Availability is basically a function of the weather: the lower the number rolled, the more overcast the skies.*

8.4 Friendly Fire

If an Airstrike, or an Artillery Bombardment at Night, targets a hex next to Allied/US units, those units may suffer Friendly Fire. For each such hex roll one die. On a roll of 1-3, one unit in that hex is Disrupted (German Player's choice). The Airstrike or Artillery Bombardment against German units is otherwise conducted normally.

9.0 DISRUPTION

Units are Disrupted as a result of either an enemy Assault, Bombardment or Op-Fire. Disruption is automatic when a DL1 result is rolled.

9.1 Disruption Effects



A Disrupted Marker subtracts 2 from the units TER. Op-Fire Disruption also halts movement in the hex just entered.

A Disrupted unit may not be Disrupted by Bombardment Fire, and if Disrupted by Op-Fire during Movement it Halts but is not otherwise affected. However, Disrupted units that are Disrupted again by Mechanized Assault (not regular Assault) or during Assault Retreat Op-Fire are eliminated.

Designer's Note *Disrupted Units which suffer a second Disruption by Mechanized Assault have suffered the classic "blitz" fate of mechanized warfare; the unit has broken up under the impact of a mechanized assault.*

9.2 Disruption Removal

During the Recovery Phase remove all Allied DISRPT Markers. (**Exception** *During Night Turns Allied units must have a Line of Communication*). Remove all German DISRPT during Night Turns or on units east of the German Withdrawal Line.

Historical Note *During the day the Allies could get at least minimal supply requirements from the air. German units, under constant Allied air harassment during the day, could really only pull themselves together at night, or outside the zone of the forming pocket (east of the Withdrawal Line on the map).*

10.0 ASSAULT

When a Command Marker is pulled, after determining MP, the owning player must declare either an Assault Round or a Move/Mech Assault Round. In an Assault Round all Active units may assault, but there is no Movement. In a Move/Mech Assault Round, activated units may conduct Movement, and then Mechanized units (including US/Allied

Infantry stacked with any Mechanized/Combined Arms units of the same Corps) may Assault after all Movement (including enemy Op-Fire) is completed.

10.1 Assault Combat Particulars

Each Assault consists of the units in one or more hexes attacking one and only one hex containing defending Units. Attacks may be conducted from multiple hexes, providing all units involved are currently Active and eligible. A defending hex may only be attacked by Assault Combat once per Round. All units in that defending hex must defend together. All units in an attacking hex do not have to attack together. Some Active units in the hex(es) from which the attack is made may attack a different hex, or not attack at all. **Exception** *Allied/US Infantry performing a Mechanized Assault must attack with the Mech unit that allows them to perform a Mech Assault.*

The following conditions apply to all combats:

No attacking unit may attack more than once per Turn.

No defending unit may be attacked more than once per Combat Round.

No single attacking unit may have its combat value divided and applied to more than one battle.

No defending unit may have part of its defense factor attacked by one or more attackers while another part is attacked by others.

ZOC: Mechanized Assaults take place only after any defending Op-Fire is resolved.

Aside from the restrictions noted above, there is no limit on the number of attacks each player may initiate during his Combat Round. The attacker need not declare all attacks beforehand, and he may resolve them in any order he wishes, as long as the resolution of one is completed before the next is begun.

10.2 Assault Combat Procedure

The attacker chooses the order in which Combats are conducted. Each combat is conducted using the following procedure:

Determine Strengths Each player totals up the combat strength of friendly Units engaged in the Combat and translates it into an expression of Combat Odds (Attacker vs. Defender). Fractions are ignored (so 12 attacking 7 is 1-1). Find the determined odds in one of the columns of the Assault Combat Table. Odds less than 1-3 result in automatic AL1. Odds greater than 6-1 are treated as 6-1.

Roll the Die The Assaulting player then rolls a die on the indicated column of the CRT, taking into account all applicable die roll modifiers (DRM), which are cumulative. **Note** *All DRM from each hex involved in the combat are used.* **Example** *In an attack launched from two hexes, both across a river hex side, the DRM is modified by -2 (-1 for each river hex side).* The results are explained under the Assault Combat Table. Note that a TER difference between the attacker and defender (always use the highest final TERs in the Assault) may modify the Combat Result once (and only once). **Note** *A unit's TER cannot be reduced to less than 0.* This new result may not then be changed again by the definition of the new result. For example, an Attacker with a higher TER may change an AL1 result to Contact. The decision to change the CRT result by the TER difference is optional and is made by the player with the higher TER.

Determine losses If a player is directed to lose a step he may choose what step to lose, but no two step unit in the Assault Combat may be eliminated until all friendly two step units in the combat have taken a step loss. The owning player determines losses.

Retreat Units and Conduct Advances See Section 10.3 below.

Repeat Until all desired Combats are resolved.

10.3 Retreats

Defending Units (only) that receive a DR result must retreat 2 hexes unless an Op-Fire result halts their retreat in the first hex entered. They may cross River and Orne/Dives River hexsides only at Fords and Bridges, may not enter enemy occupied hexes, nor enter a hex already entered, exit the map, over-stack while retreating (**Exception** *US/Allied units may over-stack while retreating*), or end their move adjacent to the hex they started in. If unable to meet these conditions they are eliminated (and automatically count as out of LOC for Allied VP purposes). Retreating units may suffer Op-Fire from enemy ZOC entered (but not exited) during the retreat (friendly units not also retreating do negate Op-Fire for this purpose) and Disrupted retreating units Disrupted again are eliminated (and once again count as having no LOC for Allied VP purposes). US/Allied units may ignore stacking limits during a Retreat, provided they end their retreat within the stacking limits. They may retreat additional hexes if required to end their retreat properly stacked.

10.4 Advance After Assault

Attacking Combat Units may advance after Assault combat. Advances may be made if the defending hex is cleared of enemy units. Advances must be made immediately after the resolution of that combat. Units do not expend MPs in order to advance. All advances ignore enemy ZOC for the length of the advance. Advancing units must stop after crossing a River, Bridge or Ford. All advances are subject to Stacking Limits during and at the end of the advance. Infantry units may only enter the hex vacated by the Defender. Mech units (only) may advance 2 hexes, following the Defender's path of retreat. If all defenders are eliminated, advance after combat is limited to the defending hex.

Designer's Note *If the Defender is eliminated the advance is slowed by the need to round up prisoners.*

11.0 SPECIAL RULES

The following rules deal with specific limited situations:

11.1 German Attachment



After pulling a German Corps Command, the German player may attach up to three units to that Corps. They may not have had their Corps previously activated or have been activated themselves earlier during that turn. All the units chosen must be within 2 hexes (one intervening hex) of a unit of the newly Active Corps. When the units are finished with the Round, rotate them 90 degrees to their Finished position. Attachment may only be done for 3 units total per Turn.

Historical Note *The German command structure remained adept at juggling formations even as it was breaking down.*

11.2 German 58th Panzer Corps



On turns 1-4 the German player may replace any one drawn German Corps Command Marker with the 58th Corps (the drawn Command Marker goes back in the Activation Cup). All German units that have not previously had their Corps activated this Turn, or are not Finished, may activate for a Move/Mech Assault Round only, provided they are west or south of the Orne River, west of hex 3321. Rotate to indicate they are finished any units that take part in the 58th Corps Activation if their movement ended **east** or **south** of the Orne River.

Historical Note *The German 58th Panzer Corps was stripped of its combat units in order to act as the traffic control and military police for the German withdrawal over the Orne, a role it handled very effectively.*

11.3 German Counterattack



On any after Turn 4, the German player may declare a Counterattack during the German Special Counterattack Phase. He may choose any one of his Corps Command Markers and hold it out of the Activation Cup, activating it automatically as the first Action Round of the Turn. He may attach up to three units to the Counterattack Corps, but all activated units must start the turn east of the German Withdrawal Line. Whenever the German Counterattack is declared any or all of the off-map units of the GUF (Section 3.1, last bullet of the Set Up) enter play at any hex east of the German Withdrawal Line that is also not adjacent to an Allied unit. The GUF units may be brought on at this point, and if so, they are now considered part of the counter-attacking Corps and do not count against the 3 attachment units the Germans have a turn.

Historical Note *Historically it was the German II SS Panzer Corps that was ordered to reform around Vimoutiers in order to prepare a counterattack back into the pocket, to open a line of retreat for the units still trapped. The attack on August 20th failed to dislodge the Poles from Mt. Ormel where they acted as the cork in the bottle, but did distract the Allies sufficiently for many Germans to escape.*

11.4 German 86th Corps Zone and the German Withdrawal Line



Allied/US units may never move or attack across the German Withdrawal Line. German units may not enter the 86th Corps Zone until an Allied unit has entered it. If an Allied/US unit enters the 86th Corps Zone marked on the map, or any Allied unit comes within six hexes of any bridge over the Dives River (south of 20XX hexrow), immediately place the Corps Command Marker in the Activation Cup. When it is pulled the 272nd Infantry Division, and any or all GUF units (Section 3.1, last bullet of the Set Up), may be placed in any hex in the 86th Corps Zone on the German side of the Front Line not in an enemy ZOC. The GUF units are now considered part of the 86th Corps and do not count against the 3 unit attachments allowed per turn. Both players may freely enter the Zone thereafter.

Designer's Note *The Withdrawal Line represents the German goal in the game—escaping*

the rapidly closing Allied pincers. On the other side of the hill, the Allies had no plans to close the trap east of Mt. Ormel, short of the Seine itself (which is, of course, well off the map). The German 86th Corps was north of the Falaise battlefield, but could have been brought south if needed.

11.5 US Tank Destroyer



The US 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion enters as a reinforcement unit on Turn 5. Place it with any unit of the 80th Division within the stacking limits.

Designer's Note *In general Allied tank and tank destroyer battalions have been abstracted into the counter-mix, but this representative unit was chosen because it played a significant role when the US 80th Division's attack on Argentan became stuck.*

11.6 Canadian 4th Armored Division Commander



The Canadian 4th Armored Division uses its printed red TER (2) until its divisional commander is relieved of command and replaced. Thereafter its TER is increased by 2. Starting on Turn 5 the Allied player may attempt once per turn to relieve the division commander during the Corps Command Phase by rolling an odd number on a single die. Once the commander is relieved, no further die roll checks take place. Task Force Currie, when stacked with the Canadian 10th Mechanized Brigade, has the same TER as its parent unit for all purposes.

Historical Note *The 4th Armored's commander, General Kitching, was officially relieved on August 21st, for mishandling his advance and being too cautious, and replaced by General H.W. Foster on August 22nd. But unofficially he was effectively superseded by Corps HQ on the 19th.*

11.7 Polish 1st Armored Division



The Polish 1st Armored Division is treated as a Corps for all purposes. Its Divisional artillery is treated as a Corps Bombardment Marker, but with a shorter range and a -1 DRM. Polish units are treated as battalions for stacking purposes. Polish units may stack with American units.

Designer's Note *The Polish division of two brigades is divided in the game into three operational Task Forces, each named after its commander. The Poles played a key role in the battle, one Task Force holding the crossing over the Dives at Chambois until the 2nd Battalion of the 359th Regiment of the US 90th Division*

arrived to help, while the other two blocked the German retreat routes past Mt. Ormel.

11.8 US 80th Division



The 80th Division has a ? instead of a printed TER on its units. At the start of the game, roll a die, halving the result (rounded down but not to less than 1) to determine its TER for the rest of the game. Use the TER marker on the Allied General Record Track to indicate this.

Historical Note *The 80th Division was a green unit and given the difficult assignment of digging the Germans out around Argentan. The historical rating of this Division would be a 2 TER.*

11.9 Allied Command Restrictions

Units of the US 80th Division may not move north of the hex row containing Argentan while it is controlled by the Germans. This restriction is permanently lifted once the Allies control Argentan, even if it is subsequently recaptured by the Germans. Units of the French 2nd Armored Division may never move adjacent to or cross the Dives River.

Historical Note *The 80th Division was tasked with taking Argentan, and its orders (and inexperience) prevented any wide flanking maneuvers, while the French 2nd Armored's commander was looking west to Paris and despite orders, had no wish to embroil his unit in contesting the Dives crossings.*

Only units of the 1st Polish, 3rd Canadian Infantry, 4th Canadian Armored and 90th US Infantry Divisions may move adjacent to or cross over the Dives River. This limitation is lifted on the turn following the one a German Counterattack is declared.

11.9.1 Coordinated Mechanized Assault

When a Movement activation is chosen by the Allied Player, normally only the mechanized units (with attendant stacked infantry) of the activated formation may attack. But if a Mechanized Assault activation (Section 10.1) is declared by a player, the assaults by the activated formation can be assisted by units of other formations that are adjacent to the moving units **at the beginning** of the formation's activation. This represents the temporary re-assignment of those non-active forces to make the attack. The following restrictions apply:

- The additional units that are participating in the Assault must also be capable of conducting a Mechanized Assault (either mechanized or stacked with a mecha-

nized unit that will also participate). All of the activated units **must** attack during the activation (*no changing of minds here...*).

- If all the units involved are not from the same nationality, a -1 DRM is applied the Assault Combat DR. Treat German units of the separate service branches (SS, Wehrmacht, Luftwaffe) as differing "nationalities" for the purpose of this rule (for example, units from the Wehrmacht and SS both activating and assaulting at the same time would incur a -1 DRM in the assault combat).
- If there are units involved from both US and Commonwealth forces, an additional -1 DRM applies (net -2 DRM). **Note** *For this purpose, Polish units are treated as Commonwealth and French units are treated as US.*

Any unit of the non-active formations that participated in an Assault is considered activated and rotated to note it is finished along with the units that just completed the regular mechanized assault.

11.9.2 Prepared Assault When an Assault Action is chosen by the Allied Player, normally only units of the activated formation may attack. With this rule, units of another formation may also attack if adjacent to the defender's hex and a DR check less than or equal to the un-activated unit's TER is made. Add 1 to the DR for each of the following that apply:

Unit is of a differing nationality than the activated formation (as per 11.9.1 above).

Any Allied unit (SNAFU rears its ugly head).

Any unit of the non-active formations which participates in the assault is considered activated and is rotated to note it is finished along with the units that just completed the regular assault. **Note** *Units that do not pass the TER check are not noted as finished and can activate normally when their formation's Command Marker is drawn.*

11.10 German Initiative

On turns 1 and 2 the German player performs the first two activations. At the beginning of the turn only German Command markers are placed in the cup. After the German Player completes these two activations all of the Allied Command markers are then placed in the cup. Return any German Command marker if drawn for the turn's third activation until an Allied marker is drawn. Resume randomly drawing Command markers normally for subsequent activations in the turn.

12.0 OPTIONAL BALANCING RULES

These are intended to be used as players feel warranted to deal with any perceived imbalance between players or between the US/ Allied and German sides.

12.1 Better German Command Control

This is a pro-German option that assumes the Germans began to organize their withdrawal earlier than was the case. Allow the German player to choose the initial Activation Chit from among his Corps Command Chits on Turn 1 to 4. The German player may choose the 58th Corps.

12.2 Stronger German Counterattack

This is a pro-German option that assumes more supplies and co-ordination for the German counterattack. When the German Player counterattacks, the German player may Attach an additional three units on the map, including those without a Line of Communication.

12.3 Sunny Skies

This is a pro-US/Allied option that assumes less variable weather. The Allies always get a minimum of three Airstrike units, even on an Air Availability roll of 1 or 2.

12.4 Better Allied Co-ordination

This pro-Allied/US rule assumes Monty and Bradley were on better terms. The restriction on US Artillery Bombardments adjacent to Commonwealth units is lifted. The US Activation Table Night DRM is changed to -1.

12.5 Paris Beckons

Starting with turn 3 the Allied player rolls a die for the Free French 2nd Armored Division. Modify the DR as follows (use all that apply):

+1 for each unit of this division that is reduced or eliminated.

+1 for every 4 complete turns that have been played (for example, add 1 to the DR on turn 4, 2 to the DR on turn 8, etc).

+1 if none of the units of this division are adjacent to a German unit.

If the modified DR is 5 or 6 the Free French 2nd Armored Division may not move that turn except to withdraw from any German unit's ZOC. **Note** *The units of this division may move adjacent if the DR is 4 or less in a later turn's DR check.* If the modified DR is

7 or more all of the units of the division are removed from the game.

Historical Note *The unit's commander was preoccupied with participating in the liberation of Paris, sometimes to the point of disregarding orders.*

13.0 SOLITAIRE PLAY

The Pocket at Falaise plays very well solitaire as-is, but for those who don't have quite enough "controlled schizophrenia" the following rules are offered to help playing the game when an opponent can't be found. When playing solitaire the "active" player takes on the role of the Germans, while this set of rules guides the actions of the Allied units. Unless otherwise noted, all regular game rules are in effect.

13.1 Allied Airstrikes and Artillery Bombardment

The number of Airstrikes is determined by a DR normally. To determine the target of each Airstrike the Allied player rolls a die for each German unit on the map, working from east to west. If a DR of 6 is obtained an airstrike marker is placed on the German unit. Do not roll for a German unit if it is already targeted for an Airstrike. Any Airstrike markers that are not placed for the turn are lost (for example, there are 6 Airstrike markers available but only 4 sixes were rolled; the remaining 2 markers will not be placed that turn). Once all of the available markers are placed discontinue rolling and resolve each Airstrike normally.

For each formation that has an Artillery Bombardment roll a die for each German unit that is within range, beginning first with German units that are adjacent and working out to those that are furthest away. A DR of 5 or 6 results in the Artillery Bombardment marker being placed on the German unit. A DR of 1 through 4 results in the German player moving on to another German unit for possible targeting. Discontinue making the DR once a DR of 5 or 6 is made, or all eligible German units are rolled for. It is possible that no German units will be targeted despite being in range if a DR of 5 or 6 is not made.

13.2 Allied Activation

Activation is handled normally with the player determining initiative and withdrawing formation activations per the rules. If the Allied side has won the initiative one Allied formation marker is selected at random to perform the first activation. When an Allied formation is to activate the player rolls a die. Modify the DR by +1 if there is at least one German unit adjacent to any Allied unit from that formation. The modified DR result determines how many units from that formation, and what type of action the formation will perform, in the turn. See the Solitaire Allied Activation chart in the Player's Aid.

13.3 86th Corps Boundary

Allied units may not cross the 86th Corps Boundary until a DR check is passed. At the beginning of each turn, starting with turn 2, the Allied player rolls a die. Add 1 to the DR for every two turns that have been played (i.e., add nothing on turn 2, add 1 on turns 3 and 4, add 2 on turns 5 and 6, and so on). With a DR of 6 or more the Allied player may cross the 86th Corps Boundary and the terms of Section 11.4 are in put in play.

14.0 DESIGNER'S NOTES

The rules for *The Pocket At Falaise* contain various design notes explaining some of the historical background to certain rules, so I won't repeat myself here. And in general I think that wargame design has something in common with stage magic—if you explain how the trick is done you risk shattering the illusion you are trying to create. (Or maybe like sausage-making, another area where we are advised to enjoy the product without looking too closely into its manufacture.) But since this is my first design for *ATO*, and *TPaF* the first game (as far as I know) devoted just to this battle, perhaps a few words of my general design philosophy and how it relates to this game are in order.

I was attracted to the wargaming hobby (almost 40 years ago now) by the promise of the old ad-line "Now YOU are in Command!" As a Boomer kid brought up on a steady diet of WWII movies, those words sent a thrill through my brain: to not just watch the drama, but to take part; not just take part but be in command. The secret whoever wrote that ad copy understood was the desire not just to play an abstract game of skill, but to play a game of skill while engaging in "let's pretend." For me wargames are roleplaying games. When I play a wargame I'm not just looking for another form of chess. I want the drama and color (minus the actual blood and pain and tragedy) of history.

Drama implies narrative, and a good wargame in my view should tell a story, or rather a series of somewhat different stories each time you play. The story of the Falaise battle is that of two German armies trying to escape a trap set for them by their own high command, and of the Allied armies trying to close the trap despite the hesitations and divisions of their own higher commanders. So the game starts with limitations imposed on both players; it is too late for the German to avoid the jaws closing round his forces, and too late for the Allies to direct their entire post-Normandy campaign to seeing that the Germans don't escape. The German counterattack at Mortain and Hitler's failure to recognize reality in time are built into the start date, as are the shift of Allied forces (especially Patton) towards the "long envelopment" at the Seine rather than the "short envelopment" at Falaise.

But if the situation isn't ideal for the Allied player, it is still little short of catastrophic for the Germans. As you can see as soon as you set up, some 25 German divisions are holding three sides of a ridiculously elongated salient with several Allied divisions closer to their escape routes over the Dives River than the bulk of the German armies. And it gets worse when you realize that those escape routes are concentrated in a very narrow area. The German forces are a ship in a bottle, and the trick is to get them out through the bottle's narrow opening without becoming completely "dismasted." I suspect it is the seeming hopelessness of the German position that has kept this topic from being tackled earlier.

But *Against The Odds* is the name of the magazine, and in reading about the Normandy Campaign (for another project) I realized that there was a gameable topic here. The Allied forces in France may have been overwhelming, but the forces trying to seal the pocket weren't. Basically a handful of Canadian, American, British, and above all Polish units, threw themselves in the path of much larger German forces to prevent their escape. Desperate fighting ensued, and they were not entirely successful (roughly half the Germans escaped, albeit minus almost all their vehicles and heavy equipment). The key, I thought, to making a game of this was to avoid a traditional Igo-Hugo system where the Allies could unrealistically bring all their forces to bear at once, every turn.

Fortunately I've dealt with somewhat similar problems before, so I had an answer ready to hand from my *Clash of Giants* designs for GMT. Chit pull activation combined with variable movement allowances keeps both sides from unrealistically coordinating their armies in what was actually an extremely chaotic and quickly-changing battle. But I couldn't use the *CoG* system (designed for WWI battles) unchanged, not least because of the difference in scale. The scale of *TPaF* isn't tactical, but it is getting in the neighborhood. I needed some sort of "opportunity fire" and tying it to the Zones of Control rules allowed me to blend a tactical element into an operational system.

As for the effects of artillery and airpower (which historically shattered the German attempts at an orderly withdrawal) I wanted to tie them into the basic combat system as much as possible, so their Disruption effects are key to setting up Allied attacks. I also wanted to handle them without the player having to learn entire new rules systems, so the air and artillery rules were kept intentionally simple and abstract. Basing the airplanes or moving the guns is left for other officers to worry about—your job is to direct them where they are most needed.

The Falaise battle was one where the retreating Germans were forced to attack, and the advancing Allies found themselves engaged in desperate defense. I've tried in my design to give players a taste of that chaotic and bloody week in August 1944. I hope you enjoy the result.

Additional Reading

For an introduction to the Falaise battle and the Normandy campaign that preceded it, I can do no better than suggest the following:

Brueer, William B. *Death of a Nazi Army: the Falaise Pocket*. New York: Stein and Day, 1985.

Hasting, Max. *Overlord: D Day & the Battle for Normandy*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985.