



F&M Special Report
History of Tactical Games

20 Years Later and 10 Years After Squad Leader

by Rodger B. MacGowan

The year was 1969...

*Richard M. Nixon began his first term as the President of the United States; Soviet and Chinese forces were fighting on the Manchurian border over some disputed island; 25,000 U.S. troops were withdrawn from Vietnam, leaving 474,000 remaining; Formal truce negotiations began in Paris to end the Vietnam War; Charles de Gaulle resigned as the President of France; Americans Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, Jr. were the first men to walk on the Moon; Radio Hanoi announced the death of Ho Chi Minh; John Wayne won the Academy Award for Best Actor in **True Grit**; the New York Jets beat the Baltimore Colts in the Super Bowl; the New York Yankees beat the Baltimore Orioles in the World Series; and New York's **Strategy & Tactics** beat Baltimore's Avalon Hill to the punch in designing and producing the first true tactical wargame...*

I. A Radical New Approach

As you can see, 1969 was a pretty important year in both the "real world" and in the gaming world, except in Baltimore of course, they wanted to forget '69. The wargame hobby and business were now over ten years old (Avalon Hill Game Company having been formed in 1958 by Charles Roberts). As game players we had cut our teeth on AH's **Tactics II** and **Gettysburg** in the late 1950's and early 1960's. We came of age with All's **Afrika Korps**, **Midway** and **Guadalcanal** in the mid-60's. And we were beginning to broaden our base and mature in the late 60's with new game companies, magazines and game designers, i.e., GameScience's **Battle of Britain**, *Strategy & Tactics* magazine and James F. Dunnigan.

In 1969 the latest release from Avalon Hill was **Anzio: A Realistic Game of Forces in Italy, 1944** — the ad copy read "Why not visit Rome this year... and bring along the 5th Army." Game reviews on **Anzio** were mixed, with Paul Serio writing in *S&T* #18, "... In conclusion, I feel that the amount of time, paperwork and energy expended in playing this game is not worth it. I feel that Avalon Hill has gone off the deep end with this game..." Well, as we know today, AH didn't go off the deep end and **Anzio** (revised of course) has stood the test of time — in fact, many today consider **Anzio** to be a *classic*. We didn't know it then, but that 18th issue of *S&T* also marked a turning point in the history of our hobby. A second generation of board wargaming had begun.

James F. Dunnigan formed a new company in 1969 called Poultron Press and purchased *Strategy & Tactics* magazine from its founder Chris Wagner. Dunnigan's first issue was #18 and he began the "game-in-the-magazine" format which revolutionized the industry (later to be imitated by *Conflict*, *Battle Flag*, *JagdPanther*, *The Wargamer*, etc.). Also in that issue, Poultron Press (later known as SPI or Simulations Publications Inc.) ran a full-page ad announcing ten new games! This was unheard of. We had all become accustomed to one new release per year from AH and an occasional "independent" title like **Battle of Britain** or **Trafalgar**. This ad marked the beginning of a flood of wargames which would reach its crest in the late 1970's. But let's return to the Poultron Press ad in *S&T* #18. Among the many exciting titles listed were **Barbarossa**,

Squad Leader

Normandy and Leipzig (all later released as SPI, boxed games) and a game entitled simply Tactical Game 3. The ad copy read:

"A new departure in games. A platoon/company level game whose main objective was to compare different weapons/tactical systems. This version deals with the situation on the Russian front in 1944. Counters include T34c, T34/85, JSII, Su85, PzIV, PzV, PzVIb, and many other armored fighting vehicles as well as infantry, mortar, artillery and other types of weapons. A radical new approach to historical gaming. The first to be published of a series of similar games... \$5.00."

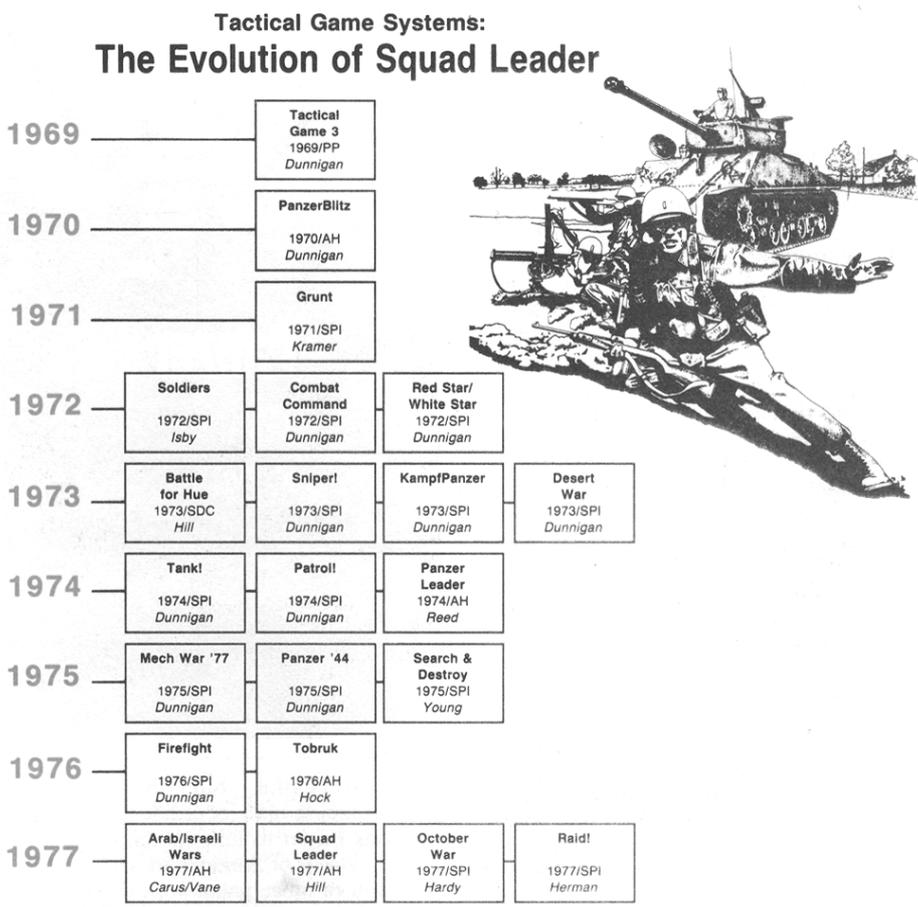
This truly was a "new departure" in wargames. It seemed, to many of us, that for quite a number of years we had been experiencing some kind of self-regulation in the game design business. As if certain topics or subjects were off limits or just plain "undesignable." Tactical level wargames fell into this off limits area, but then Tactical Game 3 opened the door to a new genre of games as well as a new approach to designing and playing wargames. It wasn't that we disliked strategic/operational level games, like AH's Stalingrad or Guadalcanal, but some of us found it difficult to imagine each cardboard counter representing thousands or tens-of-thousands of men. How about one counter representing a handful of men or a few tanks, like miniatures do — we could relate to that. What about realistic terrain considerations, like line-of-sight and proper tactics like fire-before-movement. Maybe some kind of "plug-in" multiple scenario format.

James F. Dunnigan provided us with the system and tools to simulate these concepts with Tactical Game 3. The next big step came in 1970 when Avalon Hill bought the rights to the game from Dunnigan and released PanzerBlitz: The Game of Armored Warfare on the Eastern Front 1941.45 — the start of the second generation.

II.

The Blind Alley of Realism

For many wargamers PanzerBlitz was their renaissance in wargaming. It brought many disenchanted, disinterested and "turned-off" players back into the fold and for many others it marked the beginning of a new and exciting hobby experience. The level of energy and activity in the hobby and business went up. PanzerBlitz was a giant hit (it would eventually sell over a quarter-of-a-million copies!).



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Of course nothing is perfect and PanzerBlitz was no exception. The game naturally had its limitations and its critics. One of the critics was the designer himself. Dunnigan stated in *Fire & Movement #15*, "...I always felt that **Tactical Game 3** was a better game than **PanzerBlitz**. I think we just added a lot of accessories on a small, but nimble little vehicle and thus loaded it down..." And among PanzerBlitz's devoted fans were those who didn't like the "PanzerBush Syndrome" or they wanted more "realism," more weapons systems, more game maps, more scenarios and more of everything.

Thus the early 1970's saw numerous new tactical game systems. Almost all of them were designed by Dunnigan and SPI. They included **Grunt** (1971), which depicted the ongoing war in Vietnam on the platoon level; **Combat Command** (1972), which was suppose to be the Western Front sequel to **PanzerBlitz**, but failed to generate much excitement (change of scale hurting it most); and **Soldiers** (1972) truly one of the real *sleepers* in the history of the hobby — an excellent WWI tactical wargame.

Then, in 1972, Dunnigan did it again, he crossed into another of those off limits areas. The game was **Red Star/White Star: Tactical Combat in Western Europe in the 1970's**. The controversial subject of potential future wars in Europe and the clear depiction of the Soviet Union as the real *enemy* opened another door. Since the release of **Red Star/White Star** we have seen numerous tactical level games on the subject and related subjects — not to mention operational/strategic level designs. This dividing line between World War II and Modern Era tactical game designs remains today as most 20th Century tactical games fall into one of these two categories.

Red Star/White Star proved to be a big success for SPI, but again its designer was disappointed with it. Dunnigan reflected on his overall development of tactical wargames in *MOVES #12* (1973):

"Red Star/White Star is an unrealistic and obsolete game. Just for the record, so is **PanzerBlitz** and **Combat Command**. Unfortunately, the two most popular games available today are **PanzerBlitz** and **Red Star/White**

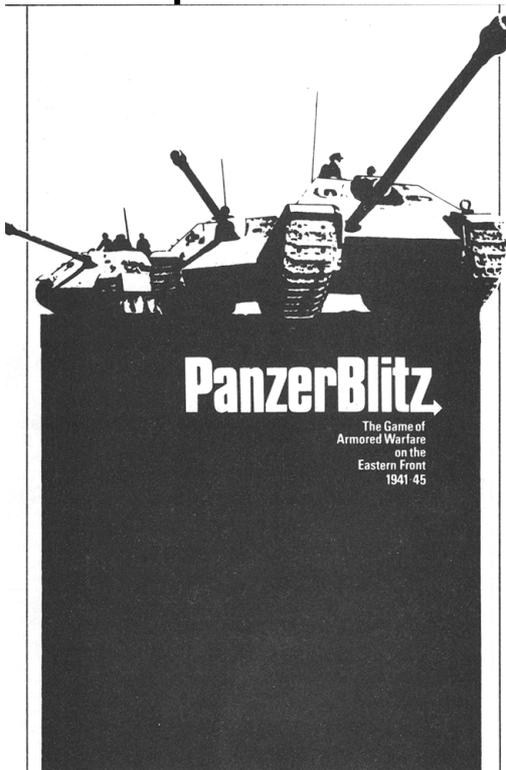
Squad Leader

Star. While it is true that I am not representative of most; or even many, of the people who play **PanzerBlitz** and **Red Star/White Star**, I did *design* both of them. So that does, I feel, give me the right to say something about their authenticity and design quality.

The basic reason for this rather negative attitude lies in the fact that tactical games are extremely difficult to design with a large degree of realism. This was readily apparent while designing **PanzerBlitz**. We went through a good **half dozen** approaches. The one we finally arrived at was not, in our opinion, the best one. In other words, the research and development on tactical game designs could not stop with **PanzerBlitz**. This is probably fairly obvious to those of you who later saw **Combat Command**. Some of you may also have seen **Tactical Game 3**, the predecessor of **PanzerBlitz**. Still later, of course, we came out with **Red Star/White Star**. This game was the highest development of the tactical game system begun with **Tactical Game 3** and continued through **PanzerBlitz** and **Combat Command**. The **Tac3** approach was ultimately a blind alley. It could really go nowhere. In order to add any more realism to a game using this approach required enormous sacrifices in playability... This brings us to the obvious point of this article: redesigning **Red Star/White Star**. The most important thing needed for the redesign of **Red Star/White Star** is the use of a simultaneous movement system... Of course, in redesigning **Red Star/White Star** we could not merely be 'adding' simultaneous movement. Many other changes will be made also. This is, of course, because no game is ever finished as far as its design goes. Not only does the state of the art change and improve, but the historical data on which you base a game becomes more abundant, more insightful, and more useful, the longer the game is out. A game, after all, is a research tool..."

Thus Dunnigan realized that tactical wargame design had reached a fork in the road and the correct direction was towards simultaneous movement. The first two games using this new system were released in 1973, **KampfPanzer** and **Desert War**.

The concept of Simultaneous Movement was originated in the optional **PanzerBlitz** modular movement system, which was really only half-turns. The concept held that all combat is really simultaneous — one force doesn't sit back while the other moves past it or fires at it. The integration of movement /fire was the goal of this system. In part it



was successful, but the cost in bookkeeping and recording each units actions began to take its toll — as the *S&T* review of **Anzio** had said, "...the amount of time, paperwork and energy may not be worth it..." Dunnigan's fear of sacrificing playability for realism was coming true. Tactical wargames were in danger of losing the "fun factor."

III.

The End of the First Era

Simultaneous movement had become the centerpiece of SPI tactical wargames. **Sniper!** *House-to-House Fighting in WWII* (1973) was the next design to use the system. Here again Dunnigan's leading edge concepts crossed into another off limits area as man-to-man, vehicle-to-vehicle combat was being simulated. For the first time each counter represented an individual soldier. The ability to visualize each counter representing thousands of men was now boiled down to visualizing only one — yourself. The foundation for future small unit tactical games and even role-playing was initiated with **Sniper!**. The counter you were moving was "you" and this resulted in new playing habits. Greater concern for cover and limited risk taking became the order of the day — looking out for number one took on new meaning.

Sniper! was followed in 1974 by two additional SPI simultaneous

movement/combat system games: **Patrol!** *Man-to-Man Combat in 20th Century* and **Tank!** *Armored Combat in 20th Century*. Dunnigan was working on expanding the series and stretching the system. **Patrol!** was the natural sequel to **Sniper!** featuring open terrain and countryside. **Tank!**, on the other hand, emphasized armored fighting vehicles over infantry and other weapons systems — the tank was the "queen of the battlefield."

But with these sequels and series expansions the degree of complexity, additional bookkeeping and the "plug-in" look of the games started to turn players off. What price *realism*? More to the point, was this *realism* or just more dirt? Wasn't there another direction to go? Had Dunnigan selected the correct fork in the road after all?

1974 also saw the long awaited release of Avalon Hill's second tactical wargame, **PanzerLeader: Game of Tactical Warfare on the Western Front 1944-45**. The rulesbook did not identify the "designer", but everyone knew the game was based on Dunnigan's **PanzerBlitz** system. It was the natural sequel. Randy Reed had done the extensive development work and he tried to improve and update the system. **The** result was quite successful and this also helped to inject renewed interest in that "old warhorse" **PanzerBlitz**.

The sequel and expansion kit were becoming the norm. Just like television and motion pictures, the game companies were developing "spin-offs" — new concepts were being ignored. The answer was simple, design a system and then put out as many variations as possible.

1975 saw wargaming steal another page out of TV's book, "replacements" for old series — the "new and improved" version. SPI released three:

- 1) **MechWar '77** replaces **Red Star/White Star**
- 2) **Panzer '44** replaces **Combat Command**
- 3) **Search & Destroy** replaces **Grunt**

All three titles had the "new and improved" Simultaneous-SequentialPlay-System (SSPS). Each player committed his units to fire without knowing his opponent's intentions. Movement, on the other hand, was sequential. The plotting and bookkeeping chores found in **KampfPanzer** to **Tank!** were eliminated. It worked!

Dunnigan's continued efforts to find the solution, the "magic bullet," paid off with the new SSPS system. There were many who doubted the new system at first and quite a few who were upset with having to "replace" old favorites, but the result was successful. Players could now achieve new levels of "realism" without sacrificing playability. This system allowed players to handle more units than ever before without overloading them. Dunnigan wrote of this in *Fire & Movement* #15 (1979):

MechWar '77 was a big improvement over **Red Star/White Star** and I think with that I finally achieved the 'state of the art,' as it were. In fact, since then, I have stepped back from tactical level games content to let other people carry the torch. Of course, the main reason I did the tactical games in the first place was because nobody else wanted to do them..."

Thus the first era of tactical wargame design had come to an end. Dunnigan began it all in 1969 with **Tactical Game 3/PanzerBlitz** and closed the book on it in 1975 with **MechWar '77/Panzer 44**. Now someone else had to take the lead and try to advance the state of the art—who could carry the "torch?"

IV. The Commandments of Playability

The new year, 1976, brought us two new, tactical wargames: (1) AH's **Tobruk: Tank Battles in North Africa, 1942** was designed by a new, independent designer, Hal Hock. His background in the civilian end of the defense industry proved of great value to his work; (2) SPI's **Firefight: Modern U.S. and Soviet Small Unit Tactics** was actually designed and developed by Irad Hardy. Dunnigan was involved, but mostly in terms of putting the project together with the U.S. Army. You see, SPI was approached by the U.S. Army to design a wargame on modern tactical combat to be used as a training device—SPI had come quite a way from the **Tac3** days! It really made you stop and think about our hobby.

This same year, 1976, saw the premiere of *Fire & Movement* magazine. Due to a number of reasons (see *F&M* #49 for details) I had chosen AH's **Tobruk** as our first, feature "Close-up" review. The extensive report and analysis, as you may recall, centered on weapons capabilities relating to projectile shapes, ballistic coefficients, round-to-round dispersion, muzzle velocity and the like.



James F. Dunnigan

Founder of Simulations Publications Inc.; designer of **Tactical Game 3/PanzerBlitz** which were the first modern era tactical wargames.

The debate went on for the first three issues of *F&M*. It was the beginning of the "realism" and "accuracy" debate.

Firefight, on the other hand, was a game that emphasized "tactical doctrine" over everything else. The fact it was designed for the U.S. Army resulted in all kinds of restrictions for the SPI design staff. The limitations imposed, the one-sided scenarios, the rigidity of Soviet doctrine dominated everything and helped to make **Firefight** dull.

No one picked-up the "torch" with **Tobruk** or **Firefight**. 1976 was a bad year for tactical wargames. The quest for more "realism," be it in weapons systems or tactical doctrine, was again hurting "playability." This was all about to change.

The first real hint of something important happening in tactical game design was reported in *F&M*#2 (July 1976) during an interview with Jim Dunnigan in Los Angeles. We asked Jim about any recent hobby rumors he knew about and he said that, "... (AH) have approached John Hill to do a game like **Tank!**, (but) a squad level game..."

John Hill was, probably, the most respected, independent designer around. He had his own design philosophy, in fact, he had recently written an article in *MOVES* entitled "Designing for Playability." The article

concluded with his "ten commandments" of playability. Hill's reputation as "head designer" for *Conflict* magazine and President of the Conflict Games Company kept him much in the game publics' eye. His **Bar Lev** game was a big success and his **Battle for Hue**, tactical game, was very popular. Could this be the fellow who could pick-up the "torch" and run with it?

Now, ten years later, we know that the answer was "yes." John Hill's design for Avalon Hill was released in 1977 as **Squad Leader: The Game of Infantry Combat in WWII**. The rest, as they say, is wargame history.

As fate would have it, I was contacted by Avalon Hill to do the packaging on **Squad Leader**. I followed its progress during development and knew that this game would be important. I asked for rush copies of the game for coverage in *Fire* and *Movement* and Avalon Hill quickly responded. Therefore, in November of 1977, *F&M* #9 was released and the feature on **Squad Leader** was the first, in-depth report on the game in the business. It would prove to be one of *F&M*'s early scoops and it helped to draw attention to this "radical new approach" to tactical wargame design.

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F&M Special Report Squad Leader



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F&M Digest:

The following are excerpts from the Reviews and Designer's Notes of the **Squad Leader** series as they appeared over the last ten years in the pages of *Fire & Movement*.

(Close up **Squad Leader** by Ray Lowe in the November, 1977 issue of **F&M** #9)

Ever since the publication of Avalon Hill's **PanzerBlitz** in October of 1970, tactical land wargames have more or less followed a clearly discernible trend. Thus, industry writers will refer to the **PanzerBlitz** "family" of games, or the **Sniper-Patrol-Starsoldier** 'series' of games, and so on and so on. Usually the use of such generalizing terminology is justified by the clear 'evolutionary links' between most tactical land warfare game systems. It is therefore only after careful consideration that I dare refer to any tactical wargame as being truly innovative. Avalon Hill's new release, **Squad Leader**, most certainly deserves that distinction. Mind you, innovation and excellence do not always go hand-in-hand, but excellence in my mind certainly implies at least some degree of innovation.

Much of the uniqueness of **Squad Leader** can be attributed to the design philosophy of designer John Hill. A veteran designer with many well-known titles to his credit (SDC's **Jerusalem**, Conflict Game's **Kasserine Pass** and **Bar Lev**, to name a few), John Hill is unique in his own right. That is, he is one of the few independent, out-of-house game designers ever to make a name for himself. Those readers who have ever played a John Hill design will probably recognize his touches in **Squad Leader**. I will discuss some of these later on.

The other major personality responsible for the finished product of **Squad Leader** is developer Don Greenwood. Greenwood's refining tenacity and Avalon Hill's resources combine with John Hill's talents to make a game which far outclasses any of Hill's previous efforts.

Gameography of Tactical Simulations

(20th Century Period)

Published: 1969-1987

Game Title	Release Date	Publisher	Topic/Period	Unit Size	Time per Turn	Distance per Hex	Designer	Review F&M#	Special Notes
1 Tactical Game 3	1969	PP	WWII/EF	Platoon/Co.	6 minutes	250 meters	Dunnigan	—	Father of PanzerBlitz
2 PanzerBlitz	1970	AH	WWII/EF	Platoon/Co.	6 minutes	250 meters	Dunnigan	—	Bought from Poultron/SPI
3 Grunt	1971	SPI	Vietnam	Squad	12 minutes	50 meters	Kramer	#18	Issue #26 of S&T
4 Combat Command	1972	SPI	WWII/WF 1944	Platoon	6 minutes	750 meters	Dunnigan	—	Issue #30 of S&T
5 Soldiers	1972	SPI	WWI 1914-15	Platoon/Co.	1-6 minutes	200 meters	Isby/Glynn	—	WWI Tac. Game
6 Red Star/White Star	1972	SPI	Modern/ Europe	Platoon/Co.	6½ minutes	300 meters	Dunnigan	#15	NATO in the 70's
7 KampfPanzer	1973	SPI	WWII/WF 1937-40	Platoon	3 minutes, 40 sec.	100 meters	Dunnigan	—	Issue #41 of S&T
8 Desert War	1973	SPI	WWII/ Africa	Platoon	3 minutes, 40 sec.	100 meters	Dunnigan	#10	KampfPanzer System
9 Sniper	1973	SPI	WWII/ EF & WF	Man-to-Man	5-300 seconds	40 meters	Dunnigan	—	Simultaneous Movement
10 Battle for Hue	1973	SDC	Vietnam/1968	Company	daily	200 yds.	Hill	#18	City combat
11 Patrol	1974	SPI	WWII/Modern	Man-to-Man	5-300 seconds	40 meters	Dunnigan	#18	Sniper/System
12 Tank!	1974	SPI	WWII/Modern	Tank-to-Tank	36 sec.- 2 minutes	50 meters	Dunnigan	—	Issue #44 of S&T
13 Panzer Leader	1974	AH	WWII/WF 1944-45	Platoon Co.	6 minutes	250 meters	Reed	—	PanzerBlitz System
14 Search & Destroy	1975	SPI	Vietnam	Squad	12 minutes	50 meters	Young	#18	2nd Edition Grunt
15 Panzer '44	1975	SPI	WWII/WF 1944-45	Platoon	1-6 minutes	200 meters	Dunnigan	—	—
16 MechWar '77	1975	SPI	Modern '70's	Platoon	1-6 minutes	200 meters	Dunnigan	#1, 15	Europe, Asia & Mid-East
17 FireFlight	1976	SPI	Modern	Fire Teams	40 seconds	50 meters	Dunnigan/ Hardy Hock	#5, 15	—
18 Tobruk	1976	AH	WWII/Africa	Tank-to-Tank	30 seconds	75 meters	Hamilton	1, 2, 3, 10	—
19 SuperTank	1976	SATS	WWII	Tank-to-Tank	36 seconds- 2 minutes	50 meters	Hamilton	—	Expansion Kit for Tank!
20 Squad Leader	1977	AH	WWII/EF	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Hill	#9	Design for Effect System
21 Arab/Israeli Wars	1977	AH	Mid-East 1973	Platoon	2 minutes	200 meters	Carus/Vane	#8	Developer R. Reed
22 October War	1977	SPI	Mid-East 1973	Platoon	2 minutes	200 meters	Hardy	#8	Issue #61 of S&T
23 Raid	1977	SPI	WWII/Modern	Squad	2 minutes	25 meters	Herman	#18	Issue #64 of S&T
24 Cross of Iron	1978	AH	WWII/EF, WF	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Hill	#16	Developer D. Greenwood
25 Commando	1979	SPI	WWII/Modern	Man-to-Man	15 seconds	3 meters	Goldberg	—	Role Playing System
26 Panzer Battles	1979	SPI	WWII/WF	Platoon	5 minutes	200 meters	Walczyk	—	Issue #73 of S&T
27 Panzer	1979	YPI	WWII/EF	4-20 men	20-90 seconds	50 meters	Day	#28	Developer S.C. Taylor
28 '88'	1979	YPI	WWII/Africa	4-20 men	20-90 seconds	50 meters	Day	#28	Panzer System
29 City Flight	1979	SPI	Modern 1956-Fut.	Fire Team	20 seconds	16.7 meters	Balkoski	#25	Hidden Movement
30 Mech War 2	1979	SPI	Modern/ Europe, ME	Platoon	5 minutes	200 meters	Herman	—	Two games in one

The map art is absolutely **superb**. Scott Moores deserves all the credit due to him. The closest thing to the near-photographic realism of the **Squad Leader** boards is the board art for **Richtofen's War**, but **there is** one important difference. The artwork on the **Squad Leader** boards is also highly functional. For instance, brown buildings are wooden, while gray ones are stone, which has greater protective value. The shape and size of woods, buildings and other obstacles is important, since Line of Sight is blocked only by the **symbols**. This is radically different from most tactical games where the entire hex locks the LOS if any part of it contains blocking terrain. In these and other ways, the **Squad Leader** boards achieve the clean functionality of SPI maps (and then

some) while also achieving an unprecedented 'real' look.

Up until now I have deliberately avoided mentioning the time/distance scale of **Squad Leader**. This is because such a discussion must necessarily lead into a discussion of John Hill's design philosophy. Nominally the Turns in **Squad Leader** represent two minutes of real time, while each hex is 40 meters across. That sounds easy enough, until you realize that on the urban terrain board it is an 80 meter trek to cross the street and that it takes the better part of two minutes to do so. These anomalies are discussed in the game's Designer's Notes. Essentially, these time/distance inconsistencies are by-products of Hill's 'design-for-effect' philosophy. In short,

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LEGEND:

● PP: Poultron Press (BP); AH: Avalon Hill Game Co.; SPI: Simulation Publications Inc.; SDC: Simulations Design Corp.; SATS: Strategic and Tactical Studies; YPI: Yaquinto Publications Inc.; GF: Game Forms; OG: Omega Game Co.; VGC: Victory Game Co.; WEG: West End Game Co.; TSR: Tactical Studies Rules, Inc.; 3W: World Wide Wargames

● EF = Eastern Front; WF = Western Front; ME = Middle East

History of Wargaming Series by Rodger B. MacGowan

Game Title	Release Date	Publisher	Topic/Period	Unit Size	Time per Turn	Distance per Hex	Designer	Review F&M#	Special Notes
31 Crescendo of Doom	1980	AH	WWII/WF 1939-41	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood	#22	Squad Leader System
32 Armor	1980	YPI	WWII/WF	4-20 men	20-90 seconds	50 meters	Day	#28	Parazer System
33 Beachhead	1980	YPI	WWII/Pac.	10 men	20 minutes	25 yds.	Matheny	#24	Album Format
34 Storm Over Arnhem	1981	AH	WWII 1944	Squad	8 hours	100 ft.	Allen	#28	Arnhem Bridge
35 G.I.: Anvil of Victory	1982	AH	WWII/WF 1944-45	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood	#33	Squad Leader System
36 Combat	1982	GF	WWII/WF	Man-to-Man	1-2 minutes	10 meters	Damon	#29	—
37 Up Front	1983	AH	WWII WF/EF	Man-to-Man	—	—	Greenwood	#41	Squad Leader Card Game
38 Close Assault	1983	YPI	WWII	Man-to-Man	30 seconds	5 yds.	Taylor	#38	Album Format
39 Commando Actions	1983	YPI	WWII/British	1-10 men	10 minutes	25 meters	Matheny	#36	Album Format
40 Rapid Deployment Force	1983	SPI	Modern/1985-86	Platoon	10 minutes	200 meters	Herman	#37	Issue #91 of SAT
41 Assault	1983	GDW	Modern/Europe	Platoon	5 minutes	250 meters	Chadwick	#43	—
42 Ambush	1983	VGC	WWII	Man-to-Man	Relative	10 yds.	Reiser	—	Solitaire System
43 Firepower	1984	AH	Modern/1985-pre.	Man-to-Man	30 seconds	5 yds.	Taylor	#46	Close Assault Scale
44 Boots & Saddles	1984	GDW	Modern/Europe	Platoon	5 minutes	250 meters	Chadwick	#45	Assault System
45 Move Out!	1984	VGC	WWII	Man-to-Man	Relative	10 yds.	Reiser	—	Ambush Module
46 Ranger	1985	OG	Modern/C. America	Squad/Platoon	30 minutes	1000 meters	Gibbs	#47	Solitaire System
47 Advanced Squad Leader	1985	AH	WWII	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood/McNamara	#53	Update of System
48 Beyond Valor	1985	AH	WWII/EF	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood/McNamara	#53	ASL System
49 Streets of Fire	1985	AH	WWII/EF	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood/McNamara	#53	ASL System
50 Purple Heart	1985	VGC	WWII	Man-to-Man	Relative	10 yds.	Reiser	—	Ambush Module
51 Paratrooper	1986	AH	WWII/WF	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood/McNamara	#51, 53	ASL System
52 Air Cav	1986	VGC	Modern/Europe/ME	Squad	2 minutes	100 meters	Merridy	#52	Emphasis on Helicopters
53 Tank Leader	1986	WEG	WWII/EF	Platoon/Co.	45-60 minutes	150 meters	Hill	—	Designer of Squad Leader
54 Battle Hymn	1986	VGC	WWII	Man-to-Man	Relative	10 yds.	Reiser	—	Ambush Module
55 Battle Cry!	1986	3W	WWII/Pacific	Man-to-Man	1-2 minutes	10 meters	Damon	#51	Pacific Combat
56 Bundeswehr	1986	GDW	Modern/W. German	Platoon	5 minutes	250 meters	Chadwick	#52	Assault System
57 Sniper!	1986	TSR/SPI	WWII	Man-to-Man	5-10 seconds	3 meters	Winter	—	Revised Edition
58 FireTeam	1987	WEG	Modern/Europe	Squad	10 minutes	80 meters	Southard	—	—
59 Tank Leader	1987	WEG	WWII/WF	Platoon/Co.	45-60 minutes	150 meters	Hill	—	WF Sequel
60 Yanks	1987	AH	WWII/WF	Squad	2 minutes	40 meters	Greenwood/McNamara	—	ASL System
61 Silver Star	1987	VGC	WWII/Italy	Relative	Man-to-Man	10 yds.	Smith/Butterfield	—	Ambush System

Hill is willing to sacrifice cartographic accuracy for a game which 'feels' correct in play. Streets in Europe are not really 80 meters wide, and Hill does not mean to suggest that they are. But what he does want to depict is the fact of life that in order to cross the street, one must cross open ground. And since the 40 meter hex works so well with the rest of the game, rather than change the scale or sacrifice the correct 'feel' of having open space between blocks, Hill simply makes the streets 80 meters wide. To those of us familiar with other John Hill designs, this type of *fudging* is nothing new. **Jerusalem's** map is a Boy Scout's nightmare, and movement values in **Battle for Hue** were fudged to represent history more than unit capability.

Before anyone condemns this sort of fudging before the *Grand Inquisition of Realism*, they would do well to consider the question, 'What do we mean by realism in a wargame?'. Is realism most vital in scales, unit values and charts, or is it to be sought in making the players make real-life decisions? Sure, both are desirable, but where do our priorities lie when something has to be compromised? These are questions that every designer and gamer should consider because they make a profound difference in the way a subject is treated in a game. Just as one example, note the vast difference between Hal Hock's 'hardware' approach to tactical warfare in **Tobruk** and John Hill's 'software' approach in **Squad Leader**.

Squad Leader stands as a truly innovative and outstanding treatment of tactical warfare, and one which has great potential. Expansion kits with additional counters, boards, and scenarios are being planned for publication in 1978. It would be nice to see **Squad Leader** burgeon out into a 'family' of games in its own right, and to see the attendant refinements in the system that such a move usually entails. But even as it stands now, **Squad Leader** is certainly a game that any serious gamer should at least take a look at. And for you tactical buffs... this one is a must!

(Designer's Notes by John Hill; F&M #9)

The fundamental design approach used in **Squad Leader** is what I call 'designing for effect' — creating a game system that dramatically shows the 'decisive effect' of the battlefield events being simulated. In almost all cases this effect will be multi-layered, with many effects interrelating. In real life, for example, it makes little difference if you shoot at a squad, torch it with a flamethrower, blast it with mortars, or run through it with a tank — the final effect is quite limited. True, all these events are distinctly different, but in each case one of three things will happen: either the squad can be wiped out; it can be 'shocked' to some degree; or there can be no effect. No matter how you look at it, any result will fit into one of those categories. This is what is meant by 'effect' rather than 'incident' designing. By concentrating on the 'final result', a designer can quantify a large diversity of battlefield incidents. And this is the heart, the basic design assumption of **Squad Leader**.

In working with this 'effect technique', it is very important to accurately define the decision-making process at the simulated level of conflict. An Army General, for example, is concerned with the deployment of many Corps, and will not be involved in the decision-making process of which Squad will be used in the initial attack. Likewise, a Captain, worrying over which machine guns to use to soften up the enemy, will not be involved in the decision-making process of divisional resupply. Hence, if **Squad Leader** was to be an accurate simulation of platoon and company level combat, the game decision making of the Player had to correspond to the decisions that would generally be expected of a company or platoon commander. Now a company commander will know how many squads he has and what their probable morale and fighting ability will be. He will also probably know the number and type of support weapons his

company has. And, if he is worth his salt, he will know generally which men, in terms of leaders, he can depend on, and those who are a little "flakey". That is all he knows or can control in his 'frame of command'. He cannot control the throwing of 'a' Hand grenade, or exactly how a particular squad will deal with a particular enemy tank. As a decision-maker he can only deploy his squads, leaders, and weapons, and hope for the best. As a decision-maker, that is the extent of his 'effect'.

Both Don Greenwood and I are 'old line' wargamers. We both started our wargaming back with the original **Tactics II** and **D-Day**, and both of us were 'entrenched' wargamers when SPI was but a gleam in Jim Dunnigan's eye. This is both good news and bad news. It is good news in terms that both of us have been exposed to the evolution of board wargame design in its entirety, but it also means that we are probably 'set' in our ways'. Thus, while we brought an incredible inventory of experience to **Squad Leader**, we also brought a lot of preconceived notions concerning the 'best' way to do things. A final ingredient in the process was that both Don and myself have the immense egos typical of wargame designers.

The first package I sent to Don consisted of the first three scenarios and the basic game rules. I expected that I, the 'soft' rule prophet, might run into some problems with the 'hard' rule philosophy of Don and Avalon Hill, but tried to be ready for them. I labored mightily to write the rules in a 'soft' approach that still covered all the loopholes — or so I thought. The initial feedback from **AH** was that the game was really brilliant in its concept, but there were a **few** possible loopholes in the rules. Don then produced a list of **seventy-six** relevant, pertinent questions concerning ambiguities, oversights, clarifications, etc. Those seventy-six 'good' questions were sobering. I began to suspect that perhaps I was wrong, and the 'hard' approach might have something to say for it. The spectre of Mr. Murphy peeked around the corner...

From then on, things got... worse. Don attempted to re-do the rules from scratch, but the translation was horrible. In going from the 'soft' approach to a 'hard' approach, the spirit of the game was lost. We now had a set of loopholetitis 'soft' rules and a set of indecipherable 'hard' rules. The result, no progress, and a month of time down the drain. Meanwhile, back at the drawing board, it was decided — or negotiated — that **I** would do the designing and Don would

criticize, then Don would write the rules and I would criticize. Now, that might not be the best system, but at least we had a **system**. And it was certainly better than Don and me yelling at each other long-distance.

Eventually, Don and I developed a good working relationship — although we were still plagued by Murphy's Law. For example, one of the game's armor concepts was the 'short gun' which had a hitting detriment at long range. I defined the SU-122 as having a short gun, but Don thought I meant the JSU-122, which had a very long gun. We argued statistics back-and-forth without realizing we were each talking about a different vehicle. It was finally cleared up when I sent Don a *picture* of an SU-122 labeled: 'This is tank I talk of'. It took two weeks of 'mail time' to get things ironed out. No one was 'wrong', it was just another instance of crossed signals.

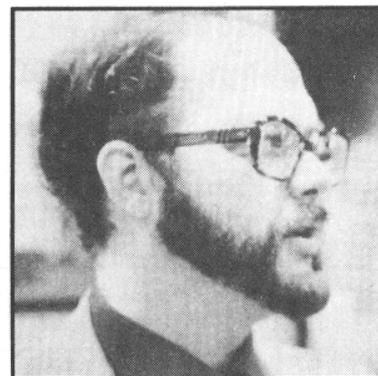
At long last the development process was completed — the playtesting, the artwork, and everything. All that remained was the typesetting, a final proofreading by Don, and then off to the printer's in time for Origins '77. We were home free, nothing could go wrong. HA! Mr. Murphy was not to give up that easily. At this critical time, Don was strick down by Amebic Botulism. But the game had to go on. Surely someone else at AH could do the proofreading, though no one knew **Squad Leader** like Don... Crunch! Crunch! The presses grind out 2500 of the little devils. It is done. Now Don is better and looks over the final, printed version of the game. Uh-oh! Don is sick again!...

The rulebook was loaded with typos. Such irritating things as the red being off-center and screwing up all the carefully drawn line-of-sight 'clarification' sketches. And the example on the tank counter, MG's, is backwards, and —what's this?!? The random Order of Battle Chart has been guillotined! The final aggravation: SGT Hill's name has been misspelled **three** different ways...

I was aware of none of these problems when I collared Tom Shaw at Origins '77 and cheerfully asked, 'Well, how did **Squad Leader** turn out?' You can imagine how I felt when I heard his one-word answer: '*Disaster*.' Fortunately, Tom's judgement was premature. Despite what may be an Avalon Hill record for printing gaffs, the hard work that was done by Don and myself shows. The game rules themselves are glitch-free. What errors are there are mostly so blatant that they are quickly dismissed by Players as what they are — goofs. At

least in this case, screwing up big was better than screwing up small...

Will **Squad Leader** become a 'classic'? No, I don't think so. It is simply too complex, and one of the requirements of a classic is that it be a good beer-and-pretzel game. **Squad Leader** is too intense for casual playing, the margin for error is almost nil in terms of tactical mistakes. You cannot fudge your way through. One Turn of mental laxness and 'WHAM' you take 70% casualties.



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Don Greenwood

*(Developer's Notes
by Don Greenwood;
F&M #9)*

I entered the **Squad Leader** picture during ORIGINS I in 1975 when John Hill and I sought each other out for collaboration on an Avalon Hill design. John was one of the first freelance designers to make a name for himself with his hit **Bar-Lev**, and I was as anxious to develop one of his games as he was to do a title for AH. He had three brands in the design fire at the time, and the one we finally agreed to try was called **Firefight** — a name I dropped in favor of **Squad Leader**. (As things turned out, the name change would have been necessary anyway due to SPI's use of the same name.)

By August, 1976, John had finished the infantry rules, and sent me GAME SET **I**. I was immediately impressed by the novelty of the system and the suspense it generated in play — all the winning features of **PanzerBlitz** but in an entirely new system devoid of that game's drawbacks and oh, so realistic. I liked it so much that I resorted to solitaire play — something I detest — to get the system down, and recruited some local playtesters to go through the first scenario over and over again. As it turned out, we were playing it wrong, but enjoying it nonetheless. After a postal

question-answer session covering several hundred separate questions, I had the basic game down pat enough to write my own first draft of the rules — the first of an eventual **four rewrites**.

This rewriting was the cause of the only real friction I was to experience with John Hill. John had a humorous, conversational approach to rules writing, which I could not abide, but which apparently his local playtesters found to be the only way to write rules. His draft was full of ambiguities and contradictions, it was going to be me who would be stuck answering the 'nut mail', it was my 'legalese' style which would be the medium for the rules. This was John's sole complaint throughout the nine months which followed, but I wasn't about to have another **Third Reich** rules mess on my hands, and which style was better quickly became a non-issue as far as I was concerned.



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(Profile: **A Cross of Iron** by Al Bisasky in the March, 1979 issue of **F&M #16**)

Even before **Squad Leader** made its debut at ORIGINS '77, the braintrust at Avalon Hill was already hard at work developing ideas for future expansion games that would transform it from a game unto itself into an entire gaming system with literally endless possibilities. Each of these expansion games, called 'gamettes', would concentrate on a particular theme such as the Russian Front, France 1940, etc., and each would build onto the basic system and its predecessors. These future gamettes would introduce the personnel and weaponry of the major and minor antagonists that took part in the Second World War.

For the first gamette, Messrs. Hill and Greenwood have chosen the Russian Front as the theater of operations and the armor and artillery rules for redesign and expansion. It isn't difficult to see the reasoning; both the Russian Front and armored combat are extremely popular subjects among wargamers, and in order for the gamette series to be successful it would need a good starter. Actually,

Cross of Iron is quite a bit more than what a gamette was originally intended to be, due to its sheer scope. In this single gamette the designers have not only revamped and expanded the armor and artillery combat rules to their final form, but have also completed the entire German and Russian orders of battle for the **Squad Leader** system. According to Don Greenwood, **Cross of Iron** will be the largest of the gamettes. It proved to be quite a bit more than any of us expected to see in a gamette and, in the case of the price, a hell of a lot more than we probably wanted to pay.

Avalon Hill claims to have spent almost as much time on the rules of **Cross of Iron** as they did on the whole **Squad Leader** design. It shows — Hill and Greenwood did their homework well as usual. I have but one major complaint: with all the added detail, playability does suffer, although not excessively so. Realism? About as much as you could reasonably expect out of the **Squad Leader** system. And to face facts, how much can you really expect from cardboard, paper, and a brainstorm?

(*Designer's Notes*
by John Hill; **F&M #16**)

Cross of Iron, unfortunately, will always have one strike against it. It had the unenviable task to 'follow' **Squad Leader** — and that is a difficult task indeed. When Don Greenwood and I sat down to design **Cross of Iron**, we were well aware of the problem. And, we asked ourselves, what exactly was **Cross of Iron** to be? What really is an expansion kit, a 'gamette'?

Originally, our intention was merely to fill in the major holes, to supply the vehicles and troops that were left out of **Squad Leader** — for example, the *Tiger* and *Panther* for the Germans, the T 34/85 for the Russians, some SS infantry, some cossacks, maybe a few 'funnies'. Yet, **Cross of Iron** turned out to be much more complex than **Squad Leader**; is nearly a complete game by itself; and carries a rather non-gamette price of \$12. I am sure, many a gamer is asking, 'what happened?'

This philosophy of 'design for effect' was my cornerstone in **Squad Leader**, and I was determined to carry it over to **Cross of Iron**. However, **Cross of Iron** was to be a tank expansion kit, for the tank buff, and in its development it was felt more and more that the tank buff would demand greater detail, and that 'actual data' would be better received than 'effect data'.

Both Don and I developed a bit of tunnel vision in that we began to think of all these playtesters as being the all-and-end-all of the whole market. But the playtester is a **Squad Leader** freak. This was a group of true historical fanatics that would crave only realism, provided it were playable. And here is the catch which both Don and I missed: being historical and game freaks all in one, they had an 'unplayability threshold' much higher than most other gamers. What is playable to them might not be so for the average fellow who perhaps didn't even know there were that many different tanks around. And to these playtesters we became slaves. In many respects, they designed the game, not we. However, the game they designed — or, rather, made us design — was the game they wanted: a game with maximum historical information and realism, in a format they could handle. To this group, we delivered. In terms of nuances of tactical tank warfare, **Cross of Iron** is unequalled.

The most apt final comment on **Cross of Iron** was probably made by Don himself. He said, "If I had known at the start that it would become this big and this detailed, I would have broken it into two expansion kits — it simply is too much for one".



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(Profile: **Crescendo of Doom** by Jay Selover in the July, 1980 issue of **F&M #22**)

Crescendo of Doom is Avalon Hill's second "gamette" in the **Squad Leader** series and covers the early years of World War II. It is an expansion kit, and both the parent game, **Squad Leader**, and the first gamette, **Cross of Iron** are needed for play.

The "feel" of the scenarios is distinctly infantry. There is a closer link to **Squad Leader** than to **Cross of Iron** in that armor is almost always functioning in an infantry support rule.

It would be a mistake, though, to prejudice this gamette on the basis of the historical facts it models. The situation in 1940 was mostly infantry, but was by no means trench warfare; and the twelve

scenarios generally present that situation very well.

The rules fall into what I see as three categories: 1) rules which make important additions to the system, and are applicable to most scenarios you are likely to play; 2) rules which add to the system in terms of spice or flavor, but are more specialized or options; and 3) rules written specifically to cover the new situations. These latter are concerned with the pre-1942 combatants, the terrain on the new boards, and the peculiarities of combat early in the war.

One thing I can't help but be curious about is the future of the **Squad Leader** system, both specifically for the next gamette and generally for the whole system. I imagine that **G.1.: Anvil of Victory** will cover American forces, with scenario potential of North Africa, West Front 1944-45, and perhaps Italy (if Italian counters are included) The gamette can be envisioned as a limited expansion (say \$6-7) with only the American order of battle and several scenarios, but I'll bet the more comprehensive \$15 type will be delivered. It is hard to imagine that Don Greenwood and his friends will be able to write another 36-page rule booklet, but I am sure they'll come up with something.

In the long run, what does the future hold for **Squad Leader**? Now many more gamettes will be produced? The design of the **Squad Leader** series so far will result in a pyramid for the sales of each succeeding gamette. This is, **Crescendo of Doom** cannot sell any more copies than **Cross of Iron** did. With each gamette requiring the preceding one, sales of each new one will decline as subscribers to the series gradually lose interest and drop from the ranks of the faithful. Whether this will eventually spell the end of additions to the system, or Don and friends will run out of combat situations to model first, only time will tell.

(Designer's Notes by Don Greenwood; F&M #22)

I should like to allay Dr. Selover's fears that the gamette series might not continue. The popularity of the **Squad Leader** system remains high, and sales have already justified the **G.1.** gamette, which should appear in 1981 and for which the basic research has been completed. Plans beyond that depend indeed on future sales. As Dr. Selover points out, the gamettes are destined by their very nature to have a pyramid sales structure; should any one of them suffer a disappointing sales performance, the

ones that follow would be similarly affected. Yet, there are always new enthusiasts joining the fold with their initial purchase of the basic **Squad Leader** game — and enthusiasts of the system are extremely dedicated. If they had their way, not only would the number of gamettes be expanded, but the system would be used to cover everything from ancient warfare to science fiction. Doubtlessly, they will be disappointed in the time it takes to produce whatever else is forthcoming. **Crescendo** received a great deal of playtesting and design input. In my opinion, it was worth it. The errata compiled thus far are practically nonexistent, and that is remarkable for a game as involved and detailed as this one. As I am the fellow who has to answer all those questions when they do come in, you can rest assured that I shall take my time in making future gamettes as tight and error-free as **Crescendo** —all of which translates into time. Don't expect **G.1.** before next July.



(Profile: G.I. Anvil of Victory by Jay Selover in the March, 1983 issue of F&M #33)

You may remember that Don Greenwood's preface to **Crescendo of Doom** stated "the next gamette in the series, **G.I.: Anvil of Victory**, will not be available prior to February of 1981." One certainly cannot accuse Avalon Hill of breaking its promise: the gamette did not even appear before February of 1982!

There may be some grumbling about the list price (\$30), which is more than that of **Squad Leader**. If prices are correlated to the amount of design, research, quality, and volume of physical components, then the price is justified. The research is on a par with **Squad Leader's**. Game system changes are well thought out and the American armor listings are as complete as can be expected (*ad hoc* field modifications are glossed over, but anything approaching a significant change in battlefield performance is covered). In physical size, **G.I.: Anvil of Victory** is actually larger than **Squad Leader**, with one more mapboard, three more scenarios, 856 more counters, and a bonus of two sheets of cut-out terrain overlays.

G.1.: Anvil of Victory presents us with a number of significant additions to, and changes in, the basic **Squad Leader** system. One such change is the inclusion of "green" units. These infantry units have low firepower, range, and morale levels (generally the same as "inexperienced infantry") but are not in the order of battle of any scenario. Rather, some forces (Americans at all times) are given "experience level ratings" for a scenario. Whenever a unit fails a morale check by more than its experience rating, it breaks and becomes a "green" unit. This system reflects the reduced efficiency of an inexperienced unit which loses one or two key members, even if the unit as a whole is rallied and gets back into the fight.

Assuming the use of all published rules, the **Squad Leader** system's playability rated low after **Crescendo of Doom**; now it is virtually nil. Of course, there is the standard cop out: "If a rule causes you too much trouble, don't use it." And also, of course, many of the rules cover special situations. If you design a scenario with paratroops landing, swimming a river, climbing a cliff, then commandeering bicycles to assault a split-level building, you are asking for trouble. It is hard to argue against anyone rule in the **Squad Leader** system, as each has a perfectly valid justification. But if ever a game was screaming for a "game assist program" to be written on a home computer, this is it. The famous **Squad Leader** Player Aid Card is now a marvel of condensed information and rules references (with 24 separate tables, up from 19 in **Crescendo of Doom**) but it just cannot do the whole job. For instance, there is still nothing on the card to remind us of special die rolls such as partial armor penetration, burning AFVs, or infantry cowering, pinning, or grounding. (One very bright spot on the Player Aid Card is a complete, succinct rewrite of the seriously outdated Support Weapons Chart.)

The idea of a complete rules compilation is very timely, but what can we expect in the next gamette, and when? I was hoping to learn that the other major Axis powers, Italy and Japan, might be due for representation. There is no indication that this will be the case. Don Greenwood's notes indicate that the next gamette will include comprehensive listings and revised vehicle counters for Germany and Russia. I am not so sure that the German and Russian vehicles are now "somewhat obsolete," as Don contends. It would be a shame for the **Squad Leader** system to degenerate into "Armor *Ad Nauseam*"; this is

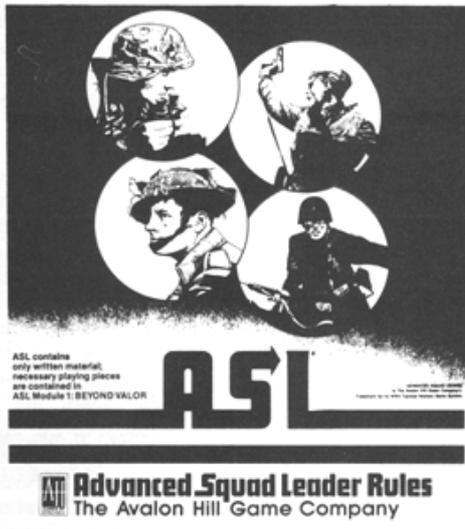
Squad Leader

certainly not what John Hill originally conceived as capturing the feel of infantry combat in World War II. If concentrating on armor continues, we may never see the Japanese. **Squad Leader** should not neglect an army which provided so many innovations in infantry tactics. On the question of when, there are no rash predictions; I can only say that we will get what we get when we get it. 'Nuff said?

(Designer's Notes by Don Greenwood;
F&M #33)

Surprising, perhaps, is that Dr. Selover passes over the concept of "green" American units without really letting us know whether he approves or not. This conceptualization of the **G.I.** was the cornerstone on which the entire design was based, and proved very controversial. Many of my playtesters, among the game's strongest adherents, were quite bitterly opposed to the concept. Indeed, some of them even accused me of being unpatriotic. They did not care for a game system which represented the American fighting man in a comparatively unfavorable light.

Thus we come to my big confession, the one that will doubtless brand me by some as one who blindly attributes glorious abilities to the Nazis: In my opinion, the average soldier fielded by the *Wehrmacht* in the first five years of the war was, indeed, the best man on the field. There... **I** said it. By the time American divisions took the field, the cream of the German *Wehrmacht* had been scattered all over (and under) Europe. American land victories, by and large, were won in the steel plants of Pittsburgh.



Advanced Squad Leader:

Beyond Valor, Streets of Fire, Paratrooper and Yanks
by J.M. Collier

"Advanced Squad Leader (ASL) is a new game complete unto itself and entirely separate from its predecessors... ASL does not bear the burden of many of the initial design errors that plagued Squad Leader and its progeny... Therefore, if a distantly recalled rule isn't found herein, it hasn't been forgotten — it has been removed!"

From Introduction to Rulesbook
Advanced Squad Leader
1985

The core of **ASL** is the rulesbook. It is a separate purchase (\$45) item and consists of four chapters of basic rules (infantry mechanics, terrain descriptions, gun and artillery mechanics, and vehicle mechanics), and a rather thorough index (itself twelve pages long), a short chapter on generating "Design Your Own" scenarios and an extensive chapter on vehicle and gun descriptions for sizeable arsenals of German and Russian weapons and their corresponding game configurations. Each chapter contains a few pages of footnotes which amount to designer's notes elucidating the rationale for certain rules provisions.

The rulesbook is a standard three-ring binder in a book-shelf sleeve. The end pages contain blow-ups of common counter configurations. Also included are seven glossy fold-out tables on card stock — two each of a consolidated Quick Reference Data Card; a player aid card for tracking turns, weather, and

other functions; plus four other data cards intended as chapter dividers containing tables and summaries from their corresponding chapters. The rulesbook pages and several of the data cards are in full-color. This allows many rules passages to be illustrated with reproductions of mapsheet sections and counters, often accompanied by examples of play. Most pages contain one or more illustrations. The entire basic book runs over 150 pages using an 8 by 11 inches format.

The ring binder format is employed because some subsequent modules include additional pages of rules and tables which can be inserted into the binder. More importantly, in clear recognition that such an ambitious project cannot be error-free, nor escape evolutionary changes, future rules amendments will be in the form of *replacement pages* inserted in place of the revised pages. The system contains a coupon which can be submitted annually



The source for in-depth reports on all of the **SQUAD LEADER** games and gamettes, specializing in articles, new scenarios, and a national player rating system.

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