

The Kommandeur



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From Your President Bob Best

Today is Wednesday March 25, 2020. For us here in the San Francisco Bay Area it is Day 9 of our "Loose" Shelter in Place order. All non-essential businesses, government services, events, and activities have been shutdown including game stores and hobby shops. Schools are closed until next school year. All non-essential gatherings of any number of people are prohibited. People are directed to stay home unless they need to perform an "essential function." People may be outside their home to perform outdoor activities, like taking a walk or performing an essential function, etc. but must remain at least 6 feet from any other person not from their own home family unit when doing so. There is a 10 page "Shelter in Place" order that defines all of this! "Essential Services" include going to work if your job is deemed essential. You can buy food at grocery stores and restaurants that have takeout food service only, buy gas, get auto repairs and go to medical/dental appointments, etc. There are other exceptions but generally they are something like picking up mail, etc. There was an initial wave of panic buying here. People stripped the shelves of stores, with toilet paper and bottled water being hot sellers. People are just being crazy hoarding TP and water! Neither of which are needed if you get the virus??? Initially there were long lines at big box and other retail food and supply stores, but that has pretty much stopped. We shop at our local grocery stores now and find most things (except toilet paper!) in stock and you can walk right up to a checkout counter to pay, no lines. Some things are rationed, but we have found just about everything we need to sit out the shelter in place so far.

I do miss my local game store and my model railroad hobby shop, which are both closed. GMT Games here in CA has announced they were ordered to shutdown, which they have done, so don't expect to receive any orders or new items from them until the crisis is over. I saw yesterday that MMP in Maryland has also shutdown for the duration.

Around AHIKS

We have filled the volunteer webmaster's position we announced in the last issue of *The K*. I would like to welcome Steve Blake who has volunteered to work with Tom Thornsen as the new webmaster for AHIKS. Welcome aboard, Steve, and Thank You for stepping up! Tom is gradually turning over the webmaster's job to Steve as he becomes familiar with the inner workings of our website.

I want to thank Tom for all of his outstanding work keeping our website up and running over the years. Tom, we appreciate all of your efforts and hard work! THANK YOU!

As a reminder, this is election year for AHIKS executive committee officers. So far we have not had any interested candidates submit applications to run for any of the officer positions. The window to submit an application to run for any of the 8 officer positions is June 30, 2020. You must file your application to run with the executive committee by the June 30 deadline to be included in the election process. All candidates are welcome. If you want to know more about any of the executive committee officer positions you can contact the current holder of the job. Contact information is printed on page 12.

I have found our wargaming hobby is alive and well on Facebook. Our AHIKS Facebook page has had 10 new membership requests approved in the last two weeks. I would like to take a moment and welcome all of our new members to AHIKS. I hope you all have fun and get "hooked up" with another member to play a favorite game! WELCOME ABOARD!

If you are "locked down" and want to find an opponent for a game, just send Duncan Rice, our Match Coordinator, an email or go to the AHIKS Facebook page and ask Duncan to arrange a match for you. He is doing game requests in real time on the AHIKS Facebook page and it's fairly easy to get matched up with someone in short order. You can check out the list of members looking for opponents in various games in the Match Coordinator's column elsewhere in this issue. If you find something you would like to play, just contact Duncan.

If you are missing your wargaming social interaction fix with the "lockdown," it is definitely available through a plethora of wargaming Facebook groups including the AHIKS Facebook group. If you are worried about political or other nongaming gossip and BS, I can say that most of the gaming groups flat out do not tolerate ANY posts not gaming related and most people are friendly and helpful, and very polite. If they are not, they are GONE from the group at the first sign of deviation from the group rules. Our VP Ken Oates who was not a Facebook member just joined after some "arm twisting" from me. I helped him set up his Facebook account so he sees only game and hobby related stuff. So far he seems quite happy with the wargaming activity there. If you are not a Facebook member and think you would like to try it out, join Facebook and contact us. We can help you set up your account to see just gaming topics and get connected to the gaming groups.

On the Gaming Front

I still have a game of SPI's **Chinese Farm** going with member Bill Klitzke. We ran into a couple of recording errors in our play by mail game. I think that is fixed now, so we are still working through the early turns of the game. It is my move, and I will be using some of my "Shelter in Place" time to get my game move out to Bill.

Omar DeWitt and I have moved into our second game in our VPG **Arduous Beginning** two-game set. Omar pulled off a stunning victory over the Soviets in the first game, and now I am trying to duplicate his feat while playing the Germans in our second game.

I am also ramping up for a solo game of DVG's **Warfighter - Pacific World War II**. I am relearning the rules and playing a few of the scenarios to re-familiarize myself with the game. A member of the "Solitary Games" Facebook group is setting up a cooperative Campaign Game using **Warfighter - Pacific WWII**. He plans to game the battle of Guadalcanal, beginning this coming August. I am running a few games early to get ready for the campaign. I will probably post some After Action Reports on the battles here in *The K*. He is also working DVG's **Corsair Leader** game into the campaign for those players who prefer not to be "Mud Marines" and want to fly in the Cactus Air Force instead. It's looking like Great Fun to me!

There is a group on Narrative Games that recently started up on Facebook. It is about all of the narrative style games like **B-17 Queen of the Skies**, **Target For Today!**, **Silent Victory**, **The Hunters**, and **Warfighter**. If you are on Facebook and enjoy these kinds of games, you should check them out. They have some interesting posts and content on their group. There are several game designers in the group also if you have questions about the games.

If you enjoyed the solo game **Target For Today!** and you are interested in the RAF's strategic night bombing campaign over Europe from 1942 to 1945, you should also check out Legion Wargames' **Target For Tonight!** Legion Wargames just released the game on March 1st, and it is shipping now. The game rules are quite similar to **TFT**, so, if you play it, **Target For Tonight!** should be an easy transition. **Target For Tonight!** covers the RAF's night bomber campaign against Germany at the same level as **TFT**, and the game contains rules that allow a player who owns both games to use aircraft from either game in both games. You can also link Steve Dixon's **B-28 Superfortress** game and use B-29s over Europe and the British bombers against Japan if you own all three games.

That is about all for this time. I hope all of you stay safe during this crisis time and you have fun enjoying some of those games that are still in "shrink wrap" on your gaming shelf!

So, until next time... Happy Gaming!

Games for Sale

from Duncan Rice

Shipped from Canada (V3B 8A6). Or pick up in Coquitlam BC. Two games are left:

Bitter Woods 1ed with 2ed update, by Avalon Hill
Bitter Woods 2ed update (just the update - no game)

duncanr@telus.net



Intercontinental Wargaming Society



Book Review

Omdurman

by Philip Ziegler

©1973 \$10 at Amazon

237 pages, illustrations, good maps

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

Major-General Charles Gordon was killed in Khartoum in 1885 by dervishes who had stormed the city defended by Sudanese and Egyptian forces. The defenders had been waiting for reinforcements and supplies, which never came.

Fourteen years later, in 1898, Adjutant General Herbert Kitchener was able to organize a force to revenge Gordon. He had to keep the force small enough so that a senior officer would not be required to lead it.

A rail line had to be built down from Egypt, and gunboats had to be built and transported up the river. All of this took time.

As Kitchener and his force approached Omdurman [which is across the Nile from Khartoum], he thought he would have to attack the dervishes, led by the Khalifa, in the city itself. The Khalifa, after consulting with his spiritual forces, decided to leave the city and attack the force approaching, although he wasn't exactly sure where they were.

Kitchener's men were at El Egeiga, about ten miles north on the Nile. When they learned the dervishes were advancing, they stayed behind their zariba, a fence made of thorns. The Khalifa had about 62,000 dervishes attacking, but they were in four unequal groups. Not being sure where the invaders were, about half of them went north into the hills, and some 8,000 attacked the force at El Egeiga. The dervishes had rifles and spears. Kitchener's British, Egyptian, and Sudanese had rifles, Maxim machine guns, and artillery. The machine guns and artillery tore great gaps in the attackers, but they kept coming. They did not make it to the zariba, however; they slowed down and then retreated.

The 21st Lancers, eager for glory, charged to the southwest without much reason, and found a whole bunch of dervishes. They charged through them, and some charged back.

The dervishes seemed to have disappeared, so Kitchener had his men leave the zariba. They were in four groups; three went southwest, and one west. The group going west, Macdonald's, soon ran into trouble, as the 20,000 dervishes that had been wandering in the northern hills chasing the cavalry, decided to move south. There was a frantic redeployment of troops, but aid came to Macdonald in time, and the attackers were driven off.

It was hardly a fair fight, but if the dervishes had been led properly, their masses could have done much damage to Kitchener's men.

Winston Churchill was present in the cavalry, and some of his letters to his mother are quoted. His caustic attitude was not much appreciated by his compatriots.

Game Review

The Road to Cheren, 1941 East African Campaign

Revolution Games

\$24 ©??

Reviewed by Omar DeWitt

I bought this game because it has a great cover.

My local nonAHIKS friend where I live and I played a game. The map is good: 12 x 18 inches, with ¾ inch hexes. The terrain is clear, rough, hill, and mountain. Very few units can go into a mountain hex, and mountains are all over the place. Rules include isolation and an extra MP to move into a ZOC. There are native units that can change side.

The units are attractive, but they cause a problem for the players. Units can stack six high. They are slippery. When several stacks are near each other and a player reaches for one, he usually knocks over a couple of stacks. Units can be flipped. Units do flip when the stack collapses. So, one has to restack the units and guess which units had been flipped deliberately.

Mentioned above, the mountains are prevalent and cut down on movement possibilities (as does the isolation rule). If a player wants something else to think about, there are chits, too, like "Exploit!"

The result was that we did not find the game fun to play. Someone with adept fingers would enjoy it more.

Multiplayer Info

From Jeff Miller

Hopefully everyone is staying safe in these crazy times we live in.

Not too much activity on the multiplayer front, so not too much to add in the way of new games starting, although hope springs eternal. ☺

Which leads me to a thought, all the current games we have going at the moment are PBEM, although using Vassal to track the game.

Would there be any interest in starting some live games over the internet? Vassal certainly has the capacity to do live play. I've used it a few time's for ASL, and, if you combine it with a voice program like Discord, it is as close to live play as you can get without actually being face to face.

On the positive side, the games will move a lot faster and be more like a FTF experience.

The downside is that you have to coordinate a time that all the players can be on. While this can be an issue at times, it is doable. I currently run an AD&D game using Fantasy Grounds and Discord, and it's working quite well, even with 8 players.

If anyone has an interest in playing something along those lines, feel free to drop me a line, and we can look at setting up a game.

Stay safe out there!!

As AHIKS strives to keep costs and dues down, there is something you can do to help. Our Perpetual Fund, started by Bruce Monnin and Frederick Kraus, can always use more donations. The interest from the Fund helps the Society. A few dollars from you could help AHIKS become totally self sustaining. Give it some thought. Send Brian Stretcher a couple of dollars. Especially since there are no dues this year.

Brian Stretcher, 117 Camellia Trail, Brevard, NC 28712

After Action Report: The Hunters

by Bob Best

For all of you who enjoy the solitaire wargame **The Hunters** by Consimpress, here is an After Action Report for the German Navy's Submarine U-66, a Type IXC boat. The U-66 is commanded by Kaptain-Leutenant Joachim Schmidt and this is U-66's third war patrol. The war with America is just starting and this takes place during the "Happy Times" for the KreigsMarine Submariners. Kpt. Lt. Schmidt's patrol report is submitted below for your enjoyment!

Patrol Report

Name:	Kpt. Lt. Joachim Schmidt
Medals:	Knight's Cross
U-Boat:	U-66, Type IXC
Date of current Patrol:	1 Jan 1942
Total Tonnage sunk with this boat:	106,900 Tons
Total Tonnage sunk this patrol:	39,500 Tons
List of ships sunk:	

Diala - Tanker	9100T (06)
Francis E. Powell - Tanker	7100T (08)
Tacoma Star - Lg. Ftr.	8000T (06)
Toltenr - Sml. Ftr.	1900T (08)
Republic - Tanker	5300T (14)
Empire Gem -	8100T (05)

The January 1942 Patrol:

WAR with America! It had finally come. The officers were clustered around a radio in the Officer's Club near the U-Boat pens in Lorient Harbor. The Fuhrer was making another of his bombastic speeches. Today, December 11, 1941, the Fuhrer had decided it was time to declare war on the United States. This followed 4 days after the Japanese bombed the American fleet anchored at Pearl Harbor and sank eight battleships. Though the Fuhrer was talking about American's policy of attacking German submarines in the Atlantic and violating Neutrality laws.

"Damn! You'd think he might give us the courtesy of a war warning before he declares war!" said K.Kpt. Wulf Kreuger in charge of wolfpack planning at Admiral Donitz's U-Boat Headquarters. (The Fuhrer was notorious for not including his military in decisions such as these.)

Kreuger shook his head, "This is the first I've heard of it, but it looks those contingency plans we made up after Schmidt here took on that American Navy destroyer Greer back in September!"

A cheer went up from the crowd of U-Boat officers. "Let's hear it for Captain Schmidt!" yelled one of the U-Boat skippers. "For Schmidt," yelled the assembled crowd. Everyone raised his glasse to Kpt. Lt. Joachim Schmidt and then drank deeply.

Schmidt's cheeks colored slightly as he remembered U-66's clash with the US Navy destroyer Greer back in September. The Americans claimed U-66 had fired torpedoes at Greer but that wasn't the case. The Greer had attacked U-66 while she was in the process of maneuvering on a British convoy. Greer, a supposedly neutral ship, had "pinged" U-66 then followed her for several hours while broadcasting her position and actually dropped depth charges on U-66 when Schmidt had tried to evade. An air bubble release from a damaged ballast tank as U-66 dove below test depth to escape was reported by USS Greer as a torpedo attack. Schmidt had been debriefed and had to submit a secret report on the incident to the High Command. Now Germany was going to war with America.

"Drink up there Joachim!" said Korvetten Kaptain Wulf Kreuger, former commander of U-66 and now on Adm. Donitz' staff "I think you are about to go to sea... Again!" With that K. Kpt. Kreuger filled Schmidt's glass and with a hearty laugh of someone who has had one too many, emptied his own glass!

Twelve days later on December 23rd, U-66 was backing away from the pier and heading to sea to begin her next patrol. U-66's refit had been rushed to completion as she was previously scheduled to depart for an Atlantic Patrol in the first week of January 1942. Leaves had hastily been cancelled and crew members recalled for duty. Operation "Paukensschlag" (Drumbeat) was under-

way. This was to be known as "The Happy Times" by the submariners, as America was not prepared for a submarine war with Germany.

Only five U-Boats were available to send to American waters. U-66 was one of those boats. Schmidt and the other four captains were briefed by Admiral Donitz personally. K.Kpt. Wulf Kreuger from the Admiral's staff assisted in the briefing. The five U-Boats were to take up positions along the American seaboard between Cape Hatteras and Halifax. They were not to attack until they received a radio message from U-Boat Headquarters to start the campaign unless they found a ship over 10,000 tons. U-66 did not find any ships and waited in its patrol zone off New York for the radio message to begin operations.

The message came on January 11, 1942. U-66 found its first victim shortly thereafter. Patrolling the shipping lanes on the surface just off the coast line, Schmidt was amazed to see that the American cities were ablaze with lights. Cars could be seen driving the coastal roads with their headlights on. There was no blackout! Schmidt and his crew were amazed. The Americans acted like they were not at war!

Schmidt had positioned U-66 off the entrance to New York City harbor on the seaward side of the shipping lanes. He was now watching a tanker back lit by the lights of New York steam slowly out of the harbor. Schmidt followed the heavily-laden tanker that he identified as Diala, 7100 tons, until daylight, when he moved U-66 to close range. Schmidt ordered "Battle Station - Surface!" The gun crew for the 10.5CM cannon began firing as soon as U-66 was in range. After 50 rounds the Diala was ablaze and sinking by the stern.

U-66 found its second victim, another tanker, the 8000 ton Francis E. Powell, after picking it up not far away. This one was sunk with a spread of torpedoes.

Schmidt moved U-66 south toward Cape Hatteras to give the New York area time to cool down a bit. Off the coast of New Jersey, U-66 encountered two ships sailing within sight of each other. Schmidt positioned U-66 in front of the pair and boldly sailed U-66 between them on the surface and sunk both of them with spreads of torpedoes and deck gun fire. The large freighter Tacoma Star, 8000 tons, and the small freighter Tolten, 1900 tons, went to the bottom.

Moving back north, off the coast of New Jersey again, with the lights of the coastal cities illuminating the passing ships, U-66 was able to sink two more tankers, Empire Gem, 8100 tons, and Republic, 5300 tons, within sight of the beaches.

Low on torpedoes and fuel U-66 sailed for France. Schmidt came across a convoy forming from Halifax but was never able to get an attack position. An escort drove U-66 under and held them down until the convoy passed. Schmidt did surface after the encounter and radioed the last known location, course and speed of the convoy to HQ as was the practice. No damage was sustained by U-66 as the small patrol boat did not drop depth charges.

Upon arriving in Lorient, U-66's crew was welcomed as returning heroes. The tonnage totals of the 6 ships sunk brought U-66 to 106,900 tons for the last three patrols. Admiral Donitz presented Joachim Schmidt with the Knight's Cross for this feat. Other crew members were decorated for their actions and the crew of the U-66 moved into Veteran Status! Leaves were granted for the crew, and U-66 would take the routine two month refit time and be ready for patrol again in April, 1942.

So ends U-66's third patrol. With the one month patrol plus the two month refit time for the Type IXC boats U-66 will be ready for patrol again in April, 1942.

Open Match Requests

from Duncan Rice

1914	AH	John Troskey (1554) CVS
1985 Under Iron Sky	TRL	Martin Hogan (1704)
Adv 3rd Reich	AH	Michael Mitchel (1086)
Bastogne	MMP	Scott Romanowski (1965) EFV
Bloody Hell	HFDG	Jay Unnerstall (1264) EPS
Breakout Normandy	L2/AH	Art Dohrman (1551) VF
Conflict of Heroes	AG	Lourens te Beer (1908) EL
East Front	CG	Alexander McBay (1966) EFV
Empires of Rising Sun	AH	Mike Scott (1555)
Eurofront	CG	Alexander McBay (1966) EFV
GBACW	AH	Paul Warnick (1430)
To Green Fields Beyond	SPI	John Troskey (1554) CVS
Jutland	AH	John Troskey (1554) CV
The Longest Day	AH	Max Chee () ELV
Main Battle Tank 2ed	GMT	Martin Hogan (1704)
Midway	AH	Edson Ramos (1954) E
Monty's Gamble: Market		
Garden	MMP	Jerry Wong (1974) FV
Mortain Counterattack	DG	Jay Unnerstall (1264) EPS
No Retreat: North		
Afrika	GMT	Jerry Wong (1974) FV
Panzer 2ed	GMT	Martin Hogan (1704)
Panzer Blitz	AH	Douglas King (1961) E
Panzer Leader	AH	Brian Nickel (1797) V
Red Winter	GMT	Chuck Leonard (711) VE
Rock of the Marne	MMP	John Troskey (1554) CV
Russian Front	AH	Michael Mitchel (1086) VA
Soldiers	SPI	John Troskey (1554) CVS
Stalingrad	AH	George Phillis (697) VZX
Tank on Tank	LnL	Duncan Rice (1394) V
Thunder at Cassino	AH	Jerry Wong (1974) FV
Titan	AH	Jim Dowrey (1951)
West Front II	CG	Alexander McBay (1966) EFV

The Cabinet War Rooms

(A.K.A. The Match Coordinator's Office)

by Duncan Rice

The Match Coordinator's office has been busy this month. I have set up 12 matches so far this year. Older AH titles seem to still be the most popular, with multiple matches of **Panzer Blitz**, **Afrika Korps**, and **Waterloo** assigned. AHIKS also had a tidal wave of new applicants in March that will likely increase available matches significantly. We have a lot of new members because of a posting on the ConSim Marketplace Facebook group. I know some of these gents, and they are all excellent people and hard-core wargamers. I would encourage the membership to take advantage of them. If you see a new match request, in red, grab it. Let's give the new guys some good reliable opponents.

The long-standing **Storm Over Arnhem** tournament is still running. Andrew Patience recently defeated Tom Thorsen. There are two games in progress, Tom Thorsen vs Jeff Miller and Andrew Patience vs Ken Oates; with one left to begin, Jeff Miller vs Ken Oates. Here are the standings:

Andrew Patience 1.5 points
Tom Thorsen 1 point
Jeff Miller 0.5 points
Ken Oates 0 points.

The Match Coordinator's office recently had a double loss of computer and USB drive. A lot of historical match data was lost, and I won't be able to provide information farther back than 2020. I have a new computer and have invested in an external solid-state drive to prevent this from happening again. It's also a convenient place to keep my John Tiller Software Games so I don't have to annoy them for additional downloads.

One final note. I've been dragging my heels as match coordinator and causing delays in service. This is completely my responsibility. The issues needing my time have eased up somewhat. I have also replaced my old desktop computer with a new wiz bang laptop. Therefore, I should be able to produce more timely service. Now go play a game!

Multiplayer Games

If you are interested in playing any of the following games, contact Jeff Miller (address on page 12).

Angola MMP	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Amoeba Wars AH	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Colonial Twilight GMT	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Crown of Roses GMT	Mike Kettman (1067) V
Conquistador AH	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Dune AH	Jeff Miller [1303] V
Empire in Arms AH	Kevin Conway [1930] V
Empire in Arms AH	Andrew Patience [274]
Empire in Arms AH	Thomas Scarborough [1345]
Empire in Arms AH	Mike Kettman [1067] V
Empires of Middle Ages SPI	Mike Kettman (1067) V
Falling Sky GMT	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Fire in the Lake GMT	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Fire in the Lake GMT	Art Dohrman, [] V
Gunslinger AH	Matt Scheffrahn [1844] VMG
Kremlin AH	Jeff Miller [1303] V
Stellar Conquest	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Time of Crisis GMT	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
War of the Suns MMP	Jeff Miller, [1303] V
Wizards Quest AH	Jeff Miller, [1303] V



Match Coordinator

To accept one of the listed matches or have a new match listed, email to: DUNCANR@TELUS.NET

Match Codes

A: ADC2	P: Postal Mail
C: Cyberboard	S: Slow Play
E: Email	T: A.C.T.S..
F: Fast Play	V: V.A.S.S.A.L.
G: Will Gamemaster	X: Non-rated Game
L: Learning Game	Z: Zuntzu

Treasury Notes

Brian Stretcher



The Obligatory Coronavirus Update

So, at the time of the last issue, this COVID-19 stuff was little more than something that was going on in China, at least as far as we were told. Since then, all of our lives have been pretty much upended, I imagine, in many ways. The North Carolina Supreme Court suspended normal court operations on March 16, meaning no court except emergency hearings, protection orders, and constitutionally mandated criminal hearings. This is supposed to last through April 17, but the Governor has since issued a 30-day stay-at-home order starting four minutes from the time I write this on Monday, March 30. I therefore expect the court system to remain mostly shut down past the April 17 date. Legal services are deemed essential, however, so I can still go to court and my office when necessary. I fortunately have a solo practice and no employees, and even at the best of times there is frequently no one else on the floor of the old building in which my office is located, so nothing too different for me. Court proceedings do eat up a lot of time during a business week, and so I have found myself with some extra time on my hands and can do a lot of my work from home. Nevertheless, as I usually earn money being in court, if this continues for too long, my estate work is not going to be enough to make up the difference.

Working from home saves me the commute time of about an hour a day. I don't have to get up at the crack of dawn to exercise and make it to court by 9 am, and I am largely saved all of the "when's my court date?" phone calls. My children are adults, and they and the rest of my family live out of state and are healthy, although massage therapy, real estate, and food service are not good money-makers right now. But other than my wife's mother, they are all low maintenance. I have, therefore, been able to catch up on all my games and continue to prod my opponents to do the same.

What I have not done is buy any more games recently, since even for lawyers and doctors (my wife is a physician), there are issues concerning long-term income looking ahead, especially given the recent stock-market dive on which our not-too-distant retirement relies. For now, we are fine, but it's hard to say how long the current situation will last. You all need to know that the American healthcare system was hanging by a thread even before the pandemic, and this crisis has shown how the corporate way of living for today and the government cutting back on services so some people can get rich while the rest of America can watch reality TV and professional sports and drink cheap beer is not sustainable. All of us wargamers know what tends to happen when people cannot provide for themselves and those people realize that they significantly outnumber those who like to think they are in charge, and historically, English-speaking peoples tend to be rather willing to take matters into their own hands when they don't get what they want.

Digressing, as I tend to do. Anyway, Compass Games and Avalanche Press remain functioning and are both offering some pretty good sales right now, with many titles in the 40% off range, and the ability to ship. I have learned since last issue that **Game of Thrones, the Board Game** does indeed have a Vassal module, although I still wonder how well an eight-player game played by email would progress, given that four- and five-player games can at times come to a complete standstill. But maybe, if it remains relatively inexpensive on Amazon once most of this is past, I will take another look at it. I'm passing on the other game sales right now. If you weren't aware, GMT, which is based in California, is completely shut down right now and not shipping or processing new orders.

Meanwhile, my games progress. Jeff Miller and I have reached Fall, 1915, in our second game of **The Lamps are Going Out: The First World War**, and I am no longer convinced that the Vassal module regularly gives better results for the first die roll in a series; that seemed to be the case in our first game, where the attackers repeatedly ran the table in a long series of attacks when the attacker rolled first. In the second game, results have been much more balanced, and the Technology card draws have also been much more even (in our first game, Jeff's Germans had every technology advance possible, while my Allies, by the end of 1917, only had Q-ships).

Tony Arena and I have made it to Spring, 1943, in our **Pearl Harbor** game, the old GDW title designed by John Prados. I don't think this game really works, even if it has some interesting concepts. Tony's Japanese have secured the Philippines and Borneo and have made a little progress in China, but that's about it. Well, he did take Midway. My Allies have been working their way across the Marshalls, while they continue to hold the rest of Indonesia, New Guinea, the Carolines, and most of Indo-China. The Allied forces grow stronger and stronger each turn, but I don't know if that is going to be enough for an Allied win. My best description of this game is that it's clunky. Ground combat largely produces indecisive results, AA fire is too good and thus it's hard to sink ships by air (AA only aborts, doesn't destroy air, but those big fleets can abort a lot). And it takes a while to plan out a turn, which is not my preferred style of play these days, given the time I have available to work on moves in the evening.

Graeme Dandy and I are well into our current game of Avalanche Press's **Jutland**, now about halfway through the Helgoland Bight scenario. Fleets have just converged on the island, after the British have lost a few DDs to mines, and the Germans a few Torpedo Boats that wandered too close to Beatty's Battlecruisers. May be a big battle brewing. We are looking to soon start a game of **Bismarck**, second edition, which is part of the Second World at War Series.

And then there is **Here I Stand**, still in the third turn. Having some issues keeping this one moving, although the game is a lot of fun. Probably the game I enjoy the most out of all of the above, but the one most prone to delays, due to that 5-player thing. I don't think anyone has any particular advantage in the game yet, even if the Ottomans are in the lead with the French just behind.

What I don't have in progress right now is a game with tanks. I may have to remedy that. Incidentally, there is now a website devoted to online play of the myriad of **Panzergranadier** titles by Vassal. **Panzergranadier** is one of Avalanche Press's flagship game series, and apparently has a devoted following, as the site was not developed nor maintained by AP. I have a few titles, picked up a few years ago for cheap. I have hesitated to get into the game because of the obvious problem that many tactical games have by mail or email, that of opportunity fire. Even if one is playing by email, you don't want to stop and reply each time a piece moves to where it can theoretically be fired upon. But, I think I will check out the website further and see what sort of resolution they might have to offer. If it's live play only, well, that probably won't work for me. But, I have the urge for some panzer-pushing of some sort, so I'm going to see what I can scrounge up.

Book review: What, none?

Only fiction reading since last issue, so this is the rare column without a military history book review. Finished several books, but nothing of military history. Started the **Priscilla Hutchins** series, which is fun, hard science fiction, essentially archeology in space, but with action. Also read the second book in the **Half a King** trilogy, which is probably science fiction masquerading as fantasy, as in it doesn't seem to take place on future Earth,

but it probably does, even though the technology is medieval. Also read a very long Greg Iles book set in early 2000s Mississippi and Louisiana, a thriller without thrills called **Natchez Burning**, first of apparently a very long trilogy. Meh. Characters were dumb, lawyer-mayor, newspaper (how quaint!) editor, and a doctor, with the bad guys being more interesting, but cliched (bad cops, KKK, evil businessmen). The most interesting character was a Flammenwerfer '41. I won't read on unless they pop up nearly for free. I have a space opera trilogy to start next, I think, while escapism still rules. Then maybe a book on Bunker Hill or Stalingrad.

During my 58 years, I have read several books and seen more than one film about the fall of Berlin at the end of WW2. It is always depressing that so many in the bunker continued to live in fantasy until the end, sending out orders to fantasy armies, refusing to see the obvious surrounding them, encouraging all that everything was fine and under control, despite the Russians at the gates. And some party with abandon. I wonder why I have been thinking about that moment in history lately...

Treasurer's Report

Income! I recently received another donation for \$25.00, but it has not been deposited yet and so is not included in the balance below. Errands are few and far between these days.

Total balance 1-30-20:	\$ 8,308.10
Donations:	70.00
Dividend 1-31-20:	1.76
Dividend 2-29-20:	1.66
Total balance 3-30-20:	\$ 8,381.52

Until next time!



12.4 REINFORCEMENTS

Reinforcements may enter at any friendly North, South, East, or West mapboard edge. New units may arrive by ground, rail, sealfit, or airlift and count against stacking limits. Reinforcements are fully combat-capable on Turn of entrance.

- 1966 Alexander McBay, Texarkana, AR
- 1967 Chuck Tewksbury, Gardner MA
- 1968 Tom Meir, Leavenworth, KS
- 1969 Gordon Todd, Norfolk, VA
- 1970 Michael Brown, St. George, UT
- 1971 Mark Moad, West Burlington, IA
- 1972 Vince Rhee, Nashua, NH
- 1973 Benjamin Crehore, Midland, MI
- 1974 Jerry Wong, Bayside, NY
- 1975 Michael Kennedy, Pittsburg, PA
- 1976 Thomas Carpenter,

From the Editor

We are all delighted that Steve Blake stepped forward to work with our web site. He has a few words for the membership: "Hi guys, glad to help!"

Your editor has become more active in gaming. After several years of playing only one or two games, he has expanded to playing four or so games of the Avalon Hill classic era. This is all to the unbounded joy of his opponents. Your editor no longer has the steel-trap mind that confounded his former opponents. He makes errors, forgets rules, walks into door jams. His wife is annoyed at wearing a name tag, but she knows the converse. But he enjoys obviously moving his units around the board until his opponent gently mentions that he no longer has any counters.

My local face-to-face gaming opponent, who must remain anonymous because he is not a member of AHKS, and I started a new game a few days ago: **Strike South** from Avalanche Press ©2005. The Introduction reads: "In **Strike South the Second World War at Sea** system rulebook is used except as noted." Then I kind of got lost in the 26 pages of rules. There are two large maps, about three feet by two feet; one covers from Formosa to Sumatra and from Mindanao to Nanking. The other map runs from Mindanao to Java and from Australia to Mindanao. Gasp.

However, there were a couple of scenarios that used only the Tactical Map. Piece of cake. I chose the first scenario, which pitted four US DD destroyers against three Japanese DE destroyers and 12 small transports. Charles (oops) as the US attacked my DE and destroyed it!! What? In one salvo? The game would be over in five minutes. This did not seem to be going right, so we decided to read the rules. Char My opponent found that the attacking unit had to roll a six **before** we used the Gunnery Damage Table. We tried again. He rolled a six and **then** destroyed my DE. That made me feel better.

During combat, there are 22 steps. If both sides remain in the hex, there are 22 more steps. The game was not as easy as I thought. We are now rereading the rules.

With Covid-19, our summer excursion has been cancelled. I will be here for the next issue: June 2020. The request I made for a one-issue replacement went as I suspected. However, the offer is still open: You write the issue, I mail it.

With the virus keeping people home, I thought there might be more contributions. However...

Upcoming Events

June 17-21, Columbus, OH
Origins Game Fair
<https://www.originsgamefair.com/>

July 10-12, Atlanta, GA
Southern Fried Gaming Expo
<http://southernfriedgameroomexpo.com/>

A good source for information on all kinds of conventions is the Steve Jackson game site: <http://sjgames.com/con>

