

Anatomy of a Victory: Who Wins the Next War in Asia?

BY GENE BILLINGSLEY

GMT's new modern battle game, **CrisisKorea 1995** has been designed for playability, fun, and simulation value, in that order. We know, however, that many gamers want the simulation value to be high, even at the risk of sacrificing playability. We have gone for a balanced approach, and are very happy with the final product. We put the game to the test recently, with a Basic Game replay to test just how flexible the game system is in allowing players to simulate the potential options and strategies of both sides in a future Korean war. We're reprinting the highlights herein so that you can judge for yourself.

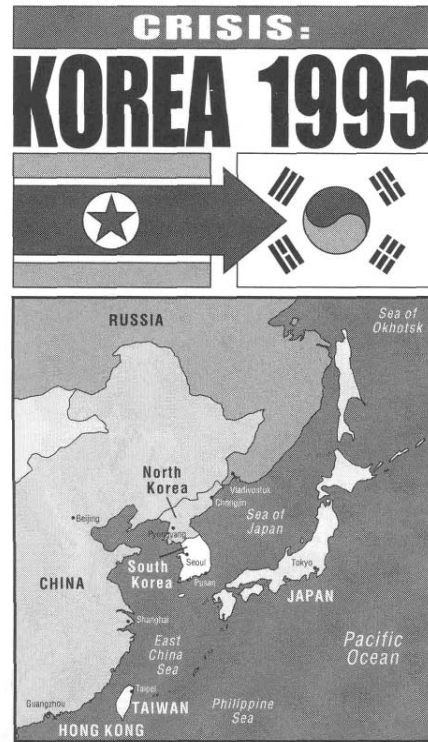
The scenario is *38 North Yankee*. This campaign game represents an NKPA (North Korean People's Army) out-of-the-barracks attack on the South. Since warning time is minimal, neither side has any reserves mobilized or deployed at the start of the game. The US posture is much like it is in the real world today. The 2nd Infantry Division is positioned Northeast of Seoul, with a fighter-bomber wing and several attack helicopter battalions also in country. As the scenario begins, the ready brigade of the 82nd Airborne and the west coast ready battalion of marines are also on the ground in South Korea. These are the only US units available at game start, although turn 1 reinforcements will include additional Marines from nearby Okinawa.

Game Turn 1

(Game Scale is two turns per week)

The Air Battle:

The North Koreans have Air Superiority (on a scale of Neutral, Advantage, Superiority, Supremacy) on Game Turn one due to the surprise nature of the attack and the effectiveness of their Special Purpose Forces attacks on South



Korean airfields. US air units based outside of South Korea are mobilizing but not yet in the theatre. This results in the North being able to support their ground attacks throughout the turn with a few squadrons of fighter-bombers and their limited number of attack helicopters. The South gets very limited close air support, mostly from American AH-64 Apaches.

The Land Battle:

The NKPA attack hits at all points along the Demilitarized Zone, with especially strong thrusts aimed at clearing the east coast highway and advancing north of Uijongbu and Munsan. The Assaults by I and IX corps in the east blast through the ROK fortifications, sending III Corps reeling southward and shattering the understrength VII Corps guarding the coastal highway. Lead elements of the NKPA IX Corps capture the ROK airfield near Sogcho, completing a 40-mile advance during the first three days

of the war. Only two ROK Mechanized Brigades block the NKPA advance down the coastal highway, as reserves tasked with blocking the highway are not yet mobilized. To make matters worse for the South, the powerful North Korean X Mechanized Corps advances south through Wonsan and heads for the DMZ.

Meanwhile, in a daring gamble, the NKPA commander launches an amphibious assault with one brigade of amphibious light infantry just north of the ROK city of Pohang (a major allied port and airbase earmarked for US reinforcement) along the southeast coast! The assault succeeds, and the fast-moving NKPA troops quickly overcome the still-organizing ROK reserves to capture the city's port facilities.

The battle in the central region goes better for the South. The ROK II Corps holds against continuous assaults from the North Korean V Corps. The terrain there is favorable to the defense, and steep mountains and rugged forested highlands do as much to stop the North Korean Advance as do the ROK troops.

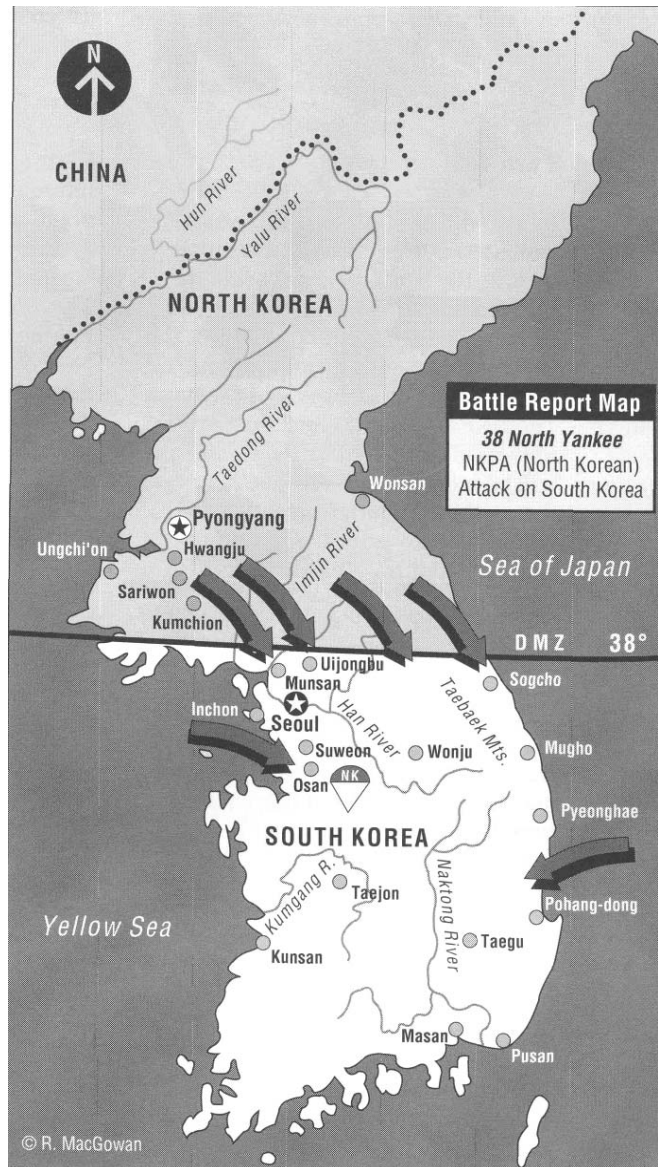
In the west, north of Seoul, the North Korean employs the majority of his Light Infantry Brigades to aid his advance. These specially trained troops infiltrate allied front-line positions, providing flank and rear attacks for the main NKPA spearheads. As the DMZ infantry divisions engage the allies all along the front line, the two most powerful North Korean formations, the 815th Mechanized Corps and the 820th Armor Corps, attempt to exploit. Finding a small gap between the ROK V and VI Corps, they blast through the DMZ forts, split and scatter the ROK VI Corps, and head southwest for Seoul. Directly in their path, headquartered at Uijongbu, are the three maneuver brigades of the US 2nd Infantry Division. The Americans resist fiercely, supported by what little attack helicop-

ter support is available. Though they hold at Uijongbu, the US Division's 2nd Brigade is eliminated along with a full Division of North Korean Mechanized troops in the wild melee. By the end of the turn, the allies, though forced to retreat from their DMZ positions, hold a steady but attrited line only fifteen miles north of Seoul.

To further complicate the allied problems around Seoul, North Korean amphibious troops land south of Inchon, and a brigade of light infantry paradrops into Anseong, threatening the airfields at Suwon and Osan. Finally, air cushion vehicles speed two brigades of light infantry across the the Korean Bay mud flats and onto the peninsula northeast of Seoul, barely fifteen miles from Kimpo International Airport. In the ensuing combat, the North Koreans are repulsed, but at the cost of heavy damage to the South's Capital Corp's Marine Division.

North Korean casualties are high during this first turn. Virtually every corps has at least one shattered or damaged division. Losses among the irreplaceable light infantry and reconnaissance troops are appalling, but the infiltrations achieved by those troops were critical to the success of the advance.

Already, the ROK Army is a mess. One Corps is wiped out, three others are shattered and disorganized, and only a few of the reserve divisions have mobilized. All available reserves are moving toward Seoul, as the threat there is deemed greater than the NKPA breakthrough down the eastern coast road. As the turn ends, one bright spot appears, as an American Amphibious group rounds the southern Korean coast into the Yellow Sea.



Marine Division, augmented by the US Marine ready battalion, retake the Pohang Airbase in heliborne assaults. NKPA light infantry in Pohang City are reinforced by sea, but unable to breakout to retake the airfield from the marines.

While the battle in the center remains stalemated, the fight north of Seoul brutalizes both sides. The US 2nd Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade and several ROK Divisions are wiped out, along with virtually all of the North's powerful 815th Mechanized Corps. The remaining Americans retreat from Uijongbu to avoid being outflanked. Only a thin line of regulars, including most of I Corps, the remnants of VI Corps, the 1st brigade (armored) of the US 2nd Division, and some hastily assembled reserves guard the way to Seoul. Still, the NKPA advance north of Seoul gains little ground as both sides take heavy losses.

Southwest of Seoul, marines of the US 5th MEB assault the beaches near Inchon. After consolidating their beachhead, they turn south and overrun the beachhead of the NKPA amphibious units. Unfortunately,

the Americans arrive too late to stop one North Korean amphibious brigade from taking the allied airfield at Songtan in a hasty assault. Losses there included a South Korean transport helicopter company and the entire US 52nd Aviation battalion with their full compliment of AH-64 Apaches. Their loss is avenged as ROK reserves destroy the amphibious brigade and retake the airfield.

As the turn ends, both sides have taken enormous losses, but still have large mobilized armies in the field. Wonju is besieged from the east and Seoul is only lightly defended beyond the front line, but the ROK cause looks hopeful, as US airpower begins to arrive in large

Turn 2

The Air Battle:

American air power is beginning to arrive in the theatre, though most of it is not operational yet. The North Koreans still have a slight edge in the air over the peninsula, but ground combat support for the allies is slowly becoming available.

The Land Battle:

In the east, the NKPA I and IX Corps turn inland toward Wonju as the X Corps exploits their breakthrough along the coast road. The city of Mugho and its nearby port both fall to the X Corps advance. Meanwhile, in the far southeast, major portions of the 1st ROK

Crisis: Korea 1995: The Next War in Asia

numbers. The US 82nd Airborne Division is airlifted into Suwon and the recaptured Songtan airbase as additional defenders for Seoul or the beginnings of the counterattack force.

Turn 5

In a frustrating and distressing turn for the allied cause, severe storms across the peninsula ground all air activities and prohibit sea movement for the entire turn. Weather hampers both sides on the ground, as roads turned to mud and monsoon conditions slow both North Korean exploitation and the movement of ROK Reserves.

The Land Battle:

Along the east coast, advance elements of the X Corps reach Pyeonghae, still sixty miles north of the now besieged amphibious units holding out in Pohang. ROK and US Marines, unable to expunge the North Koreans from the city, bide their time, awaiting clear weather and air power. Further north, I and IX Corps units combine to capture the major central city of Wonju, advancing across South Korea's east-west highway to within sixty miles of Seoul.

The fight continues north of Seoul, with both sides pounding away in spite of the weather. In a surprise move, the ROK 26th Infantry Division retakes Uijongbu in a lightning assault. A major NKPA counterattack later in the turn repels the South Koreans and destroys the South's vaunted Capital Mechanized Division. US Marines move north from their beachhead to take up positions protecting Kimpo International Airport northeast of Seoul.

There are no US reinforcements due to the bad weather.

After a week and a half of fighting, the northeastern quarter of South Korea is in the hands of the NKPA. Pressure on Seoul from the east (the I and IX Corps) along with concentrated attacks from the north pose a serious threat to the capital. The NKPA, though battered, still packs a wallop with their armor and mechanized divisions. The ROKA, on the other hand, is a battered shell of its former self, with only about half of its original divisions fit to fight. In spite of

this, ROK reserves, fresh American troops, and the allied buildup of airpower provide hope. If only the weather will clear...

Turn 4

Incredible! Another turn of Storms! In game-terms, this could be a decisive turn, as the North Koreans begin the turn leading in Victory points by +98 (When the difference reaches 100+, the leading side begins making Automatic Victory die rolls at the end of the turn). The NKPA again has the initiative, but movement is slowed by the weather. It will be interesting to see whether or not the combined South Korean-US forces, without air cover for the second consecutive turn, can stop the NKPA onslaught.

The Land Battle:

Lead elements of the NKPA X Corps finally reach Pohang, only to find that the city has already been retaken by ROK marines and reserves. A hasty assault is launched, but thrown back with heavy losses. The relief has arrived too late, and Pohang, at least for the moment, is secure in South Korean hands.

In the North Central area, the NKPA I Corps guards the Approaches to Wonju, securing the southern flank against possible ROK counterattacks, while IX Mech pushes on toward Seoul. After two successful combats that bring them to the gates of the city, they are pushed back with heavy losses by a US Marine-led counterattack. North of the city, the North advances seven miles across the front, shattering the US 2nd Division's 1st Armored brigade and sustaining extremely heavy losses for their trouble. A two-division attack along the west coast south of Munsan pushes to the outskirts of the capitol, but again with heavy losses. Almost all of the NKPA formations have now taken heavy damage, and the ROKA reserves are beginning to arrive in force. Near the end of the turn, three separate counterattacks push the North Koreans back, one threatening to envelop their flank east of Uijongbu. The impetus of these attacks, combined with the victory at Pohang, gives the allies the initiative for game-turn 5. Total victory point

differential is now +94 in favor of the NKPA.

Turn 5

Clear weather at last! The American reinforcements won't land until the end of the turn, but US air power is now out in force.

The Air Battle:

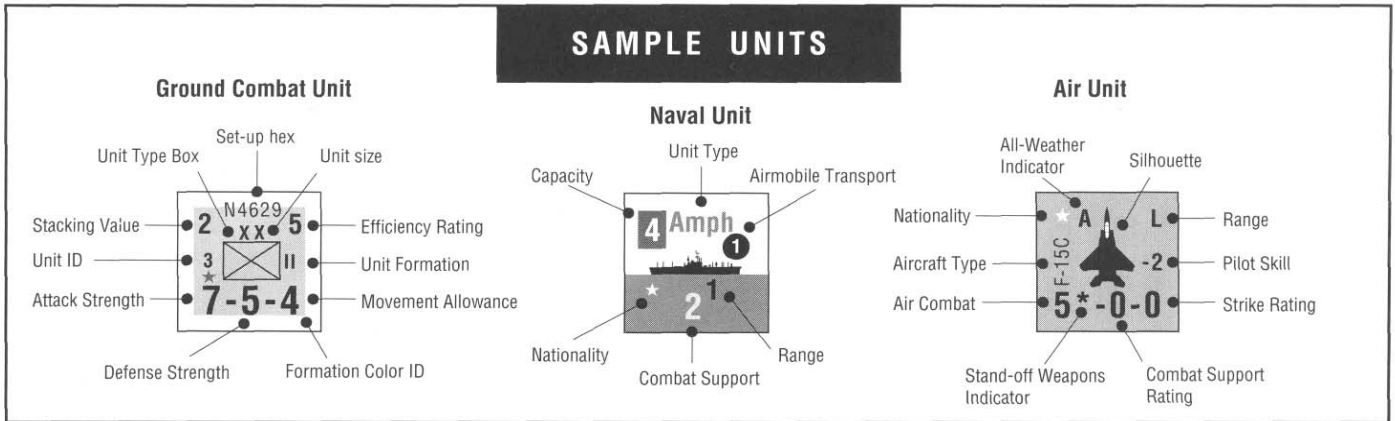
For the first time in the game, the allies have control of the air over the battlefield. The air superiority level is *Superiority*. Thus, with the 82nd Airborne already on the ground in Korea and plenty of airmobile capabilities, the allies will be able to threaten the North with vertical envelopment.

The Land Battle:

The allies, with the initiative for the first time in the game, quickly move to cut off the enemy army north of Seoul. Two brigades of the US 82nd Airborne make a surprise airdrop at Kumchion, 30 miles north of the DMZ! They dig into blocking positions along the main NKPA supply and reinforcement route. Their job is to delay the three Corps of reinforcements streaming south from Pyongyang.

With northern reinforcements delayed, the allies go all out to reduce the bloodied Communist army assaulting Seoul. Beginning east of the city, a combined US marine-ROK reserve counterattack wipes out the last of the enemy's IX Corps. US marines and elements of the ROK I corps perform a left hook on the NKPA right flank, utilizing airmobile assaults to surround and destroy the IV Corp's 26th and 41st Divisions along the west coast near Munsan. ROK reserves regain fifteen miles by flanking and wrecking two NKPA divisions east of Uijongbu. While the North's center holds fast, its army's flanks are being savaged and it is threatened with encirclement. Heavy allied use of air and attack helicopter support turns several low-odds attacks into big wins for the allies, but the NKPA refuses to retreat!

In the central region, ROK reserves counterattack south of Wonju, driving the only remaining divisions of the



NKPA I Corps back into the city, and blocking North Korean reinforcement across the east-west highway.

North of Pohang on the coast road, the ROK 1st Marine Division spearheads an attack that breaks an enemy mechanized brigade. A ROK airmobile assault recaptures Pyeonghae forty miles to the north, temporarily cutting off three brigades of mechanized units. The NKPA counterattacks swiftly, reopening the supply route through Pyeonghae and overrunning the ROK airmobile unit.

In the north, a full North Korean corps assaults the 82nd airborne's blocking positions along a narrow front at Kumchion. In a furious three-day battle, the 82nd holds its ground, refusing to retreat, buying precious time for the allied counterattack north of Seoul. Finally, with supplies running low and only half its original compliment of troops, the 82nd calls for evacuation. Anti-aircraft fire from the North Koreans aborts the evacuation attempt, sealing the fate of the men of the 82nd. Attacked on four sides, they are finally overrun by communist armor and mechanized troops, clearing the way to reinforce the beleaguered troops north of Seoul.

As the turn ends, allied spirits are bouyed by the arrival of two American Light infantry Divisions (the 7th and the 25th), two battalions of I Corps attack helicopters, and another brigade of Marines.

The NKPA victory point advantage is now +81 VPs.

Turn 6

Overcast weather makes air support and airmobile movements more difficult, restricting allied capabilities for this turn.

The Air Battle:

Ground support and helicopter transport is limited by the weather.

The Land battle:

Hampered in the air, but still possessing the initiative, the allies strike by sea! Two full MEBs of the US 3rd MEF launch an amphibious assault into North Korea. Target? A lightly defended beach hex south of the port of Ungchi'on on the peninsula southwest of Pyongyang. The marines consolidate their beachhead and march north, capturing the port. As the North Koreans shift their reserves to the west to meet this threat, they leave the key city of Sariwon, and thus the supply line between Pyongyang and the front-line troops, momentarily unguarded. Seizing the opportunity, at great risk in light of the poor weather, the 8th Army commander orders a massive heliborne assault into the area, utilizing the US 7th and 25th Light Infantry Divisions as well as units from the seasoned South Korean 2nd Army's 90th Reserve Division. The assaults are targeted at Sariwon and Hwangju, to the north. Both assaults succeed, and both cities, as well as the major NKPA airbase at Hwangju, fall under the weight of the attack.

The End

Shocked by the boldness of the allied attacks, and understanding the gravity of the threat posed by an allied port and an airhead in the heart of North Korea with US Armor in route to the theatre, the NKPA commander sees the handwriting on the wall and surrenders.

Amid a chorus of catcalls between sighs of relief from the allied players (who really didn't have the combat strength to expand the beachhead or exploit their attacks into the north for several more turns), the debate begins. Would the real-life North Koreans really have given in? Not likely, is the consensus. Would the war have played out the way the game did? Would the North Koreans, in the same situation, have folded their tents, or would they have escalated the conflict with nukes or the threat of nukes? The players felt that they probably would have escalated, and that the game could use some optional rules to deal with that possibility. In the end, though, everyone agreed that the rapidity of the change of fortunes and thus initiative in the game had been shocking. The battle for Seoul was a very near run thing, as was the battle for Pohang in the southeast, with the NKPA failures leaving them open to counterattack virtually everywhere. Had a few die rolls gone differently, however, all agreed that an NKPA victory was within reach.



Republic of Korea (ROK)

North Korean People's Army (NKPA)

United States Army (USA)

United States Air Force (USAF)

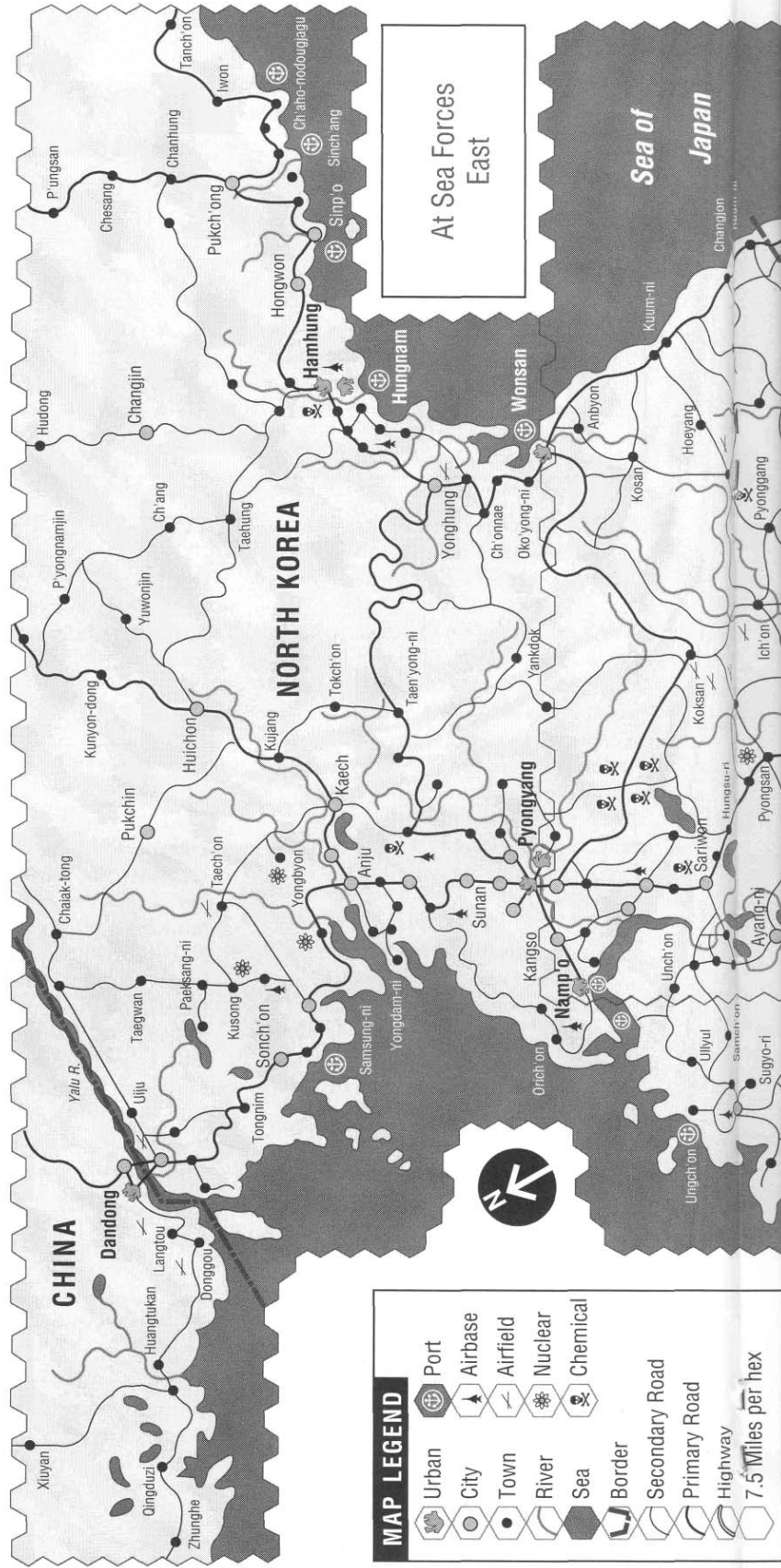
United States Navy (USN)

--	--	--	--	--

United States Marine Corps (USMC)

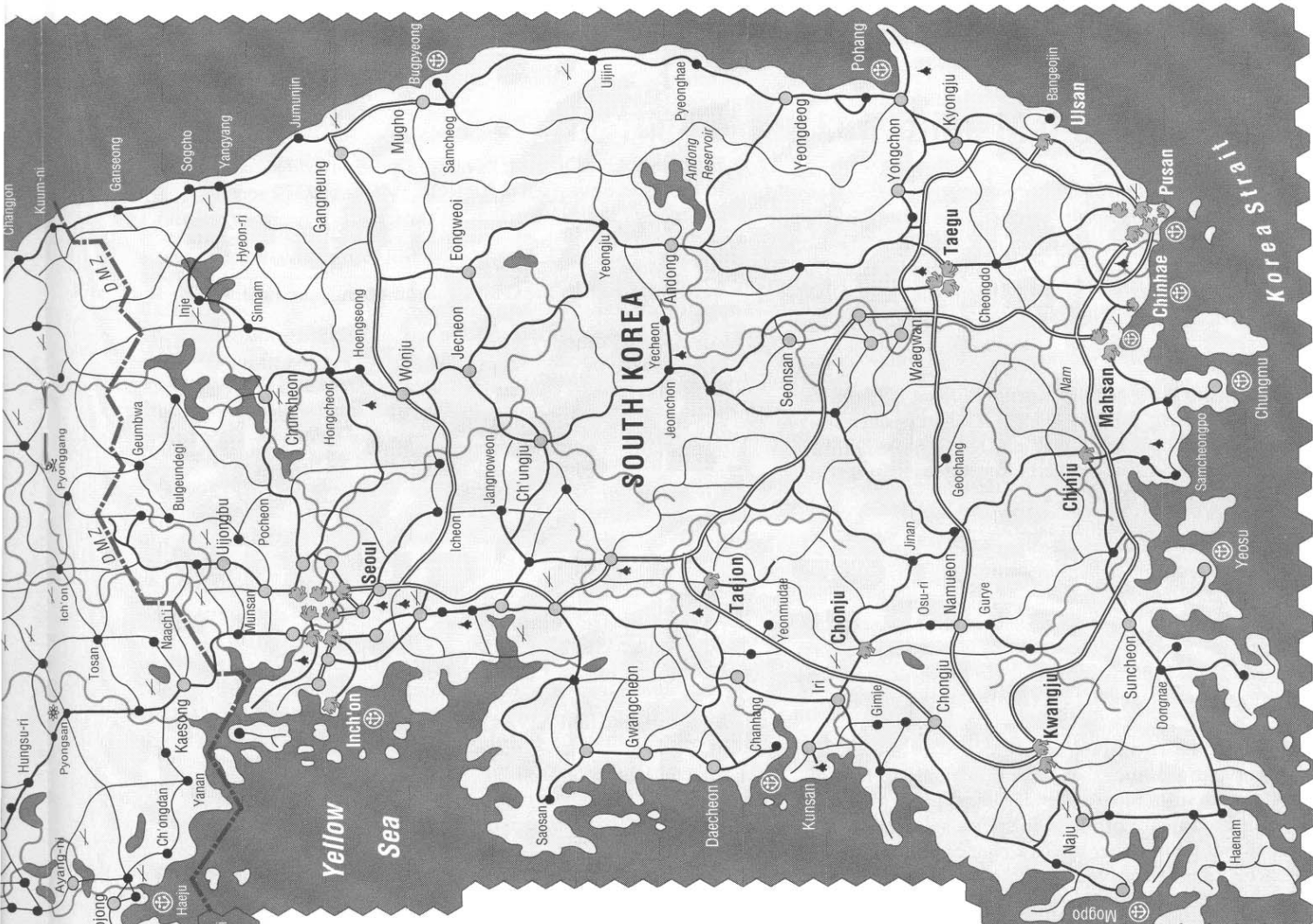
--	--	--	--	--

People's Republic of China (PRC)



MAP LEGEND

- Urban
- City
- Town
- River
- Sea
- Border
- Secondary Road
- Primary Road
- Highway
- 7.5 Miles per hex
- Port
- Airbase
- Airfield
- Nuclear
- Chemical



Highway
7.5 Miles per hex

At Sea Forces
West

Air Superiority Track

NKPA Supreme	NKPA Superiority	NKPA Advantage	Contested	US/ROK Advantage	US/ROK Superiority	US/ROK Supreme
--------------	------------------	----------------	-----------	------------------	--------------------	----------------

Game Phase

Weather Phase	Second Strike Phase
Supply Phase	Second Move & Combat Phase
Initiative/Air Phase	Isolation/Surrender Phase
Special Forces Phase	Reorganization Phase
First Strike Phase	Reinforcement Replacement Phase
First Move & Combat Phase	Victory Determination Phase
Emergency Resupply Phase	Game Record Phase

CRISIS:

KOREA 1995

New Campaign Scenario: Korea 1995

Campaign #6: ROK Attack
by Gene Billingsley

In the late Spring of 1991, a United States Army officer, recently returned from the Team Spirit exercises, gave me an entirely new perspective on the American mission in Korea. "Son", he confided, "We aren't over there to keep the North Koreans from overrunning South Korea. Not much chance of that. No, the real danger is that the ROKs will attack the North. We're there to reign them in."

Could the South really attack and win? Without US help, that would seem unlikely. Still, we thought it might be interesting to see how such an attack might play out. The Surprise DRMs in this campaign reflect that the North Koreans are as surprised by the audacity of the ROKs as we are.

We've structured the scenario assuming US troops have withdrawn from Korea, and without the possibility of US Intervention, mostly for play balance, but also to reflect what we perceive to be a lessened commitment from the current administration to quickly and aggressively reinforce our allies. If you want to play the campaign with US Intervention, you can use the Variant from Campaign #4 (the first eight turns worth) for this one, too.

Game Length: 8 Turns (4 Weeks)

This campaign assumes that, after one month of heavy fighting, both sides have expended most of their stockpiles and exhausted their populace. In such a state, the side that's losing at that point either forces a change of government (Overwhelming/Decisive Victory) or forces a political settlement, brokered and enforced by the UN.

Play Area: Both maps

Initial Set-up:

NKPA (Set-up First): All NKPA units except those with *Res* or *PRG* as their unit designation set up in hexes listed on their counters.

NKPA Attack Helicopters set up in any Airbase or Airfield hex in North Korea.

ROK (Set-up Second): All ROK units except those with *M* or *HR* as part of their unit designation set up in hexes listed on unit counters.

Additionally, Step 1 and Step 2 of ROK Reserves are placed at start in the hex listed on their counters.

There are no US units in this Campaign.

Sea Control Roll on the game-turn 3 row of the Sea Control Chart for the duration of the game.

Initiative: The ROK player has the Initiative for the first two turns of this scenario. After that, Initiative is determined normally.

Initiative VPs: 15

Surprise: All ROK attacks on GT1 receive a *three-column shift* to the right on the CRT. All ROK attacks on GT2 receive a *one-column shift* to the right on the CRT.

Air Points:

Both sides roll on the GT 3 Column during each game-turn.

Airmobile Points:

NKPA: 4

ROK: 6

Tunnels: 0

Covering

Forces:

NKPA-4

ROK-6

At Start Air Defenses:

NKPA: Detection: 7 • SAMs: 7 • AAA: 2

ROK: Detection: 7 • SAMs: 6 • AAA: 2

Beginning Allied AWACS Advantage: 1

Special Forces Points:

NKPA-20 plus 2 per turn on GTs 3-7

ROK- 20 plus 1 per turn on GTs 2-10

Note: The Initiative of the ROK attack blunts a significant number of NKPA Special Purpose Forces missions. This accounts for the lower number of SF Points for the North in this campaign.

Supply Points:

NKPA-40 + 2 per turn

ROK-40 + 2 per turn

Reinforcements:

NKPA: Turn 1: Step 1 • Turn 3: Step 2« Turn 4: Step 3»
Turn 6: Step 4

ROK: Turn 2: Step 3 • Turn 3: Step 4

Replacements:

NKPA: 2 per turn • ROK: 3 per turn

Victory:

Automatic Victory Die Roll: +75 Points

The winner (barring Automatic Victory) is the player with the most victory points at the end of the game. To determine level of victory, subtract the loser's total from the winner's and find the result below.

Overwhelming: +65 Points

Decisive: +41-64 Points

Substantive: +21-40 Points

Marginal: +1-20 Points

