

NEWS & INFO: IN THE PIPELINE

Behind the scenes reports on the design and development of **Battle for North Africa** by Richard Berg; **Hundred Years War** by James F. Dunnigan; and **Down in Flames Modules** by Dan Verssen. In the next issue of **C3i** we will have an updated version of our *Production Log* with listings of all our games in design, development, playtesting, and production.

BATTLE FOR NORTH AFRICA

The second entry in the Gameplayers Series, following hard on the heels of *Glory*, is the forthcoming *Battle for North Africa* (BNA). Like its predecessor, BNA concentrates on ease of play and accessible rules to evoke the sweeping maneuvers and logistical nightmares of the campaigns in Egypt and Libya in 1940-1942. While the need to include the dreaded *Sword, supply*, was unavoidable, we have linked it to the Activation Marker system featured in *Glory*, allowing us to retain the tension and play fun inherent in that mechanic while not overburdening it with massive columns of trucks, piles of dumps, and other assorted desert paraphernalia. The playtesters assure us — and who else can we trust? — that it all works, coming together rather elegantly.

BNA uses two full, large-hex maps (8.5 miles per), providing a playing surface about 5 feet in length, although several scenarios use only one map. This space gives a strong visual and visceral feel for the (often deceiving) wide open space of the desert war. We are also using 5/8" counters for the main combat formations, which are brigades and regiments (although some of the less effective Italian divisions are portrayed at that level), and HQ, with assets, such as anti-tank and artillery units, smaller, 1/2" counters.

Those of you who are enjoying *Glory* — and we do hope you are legion — will find most of the BNA mechanics quite similar, including a variation of *Glory's piggy-back* rule for the assets. The CRT is a somewhat advanced version of the one you will be seeing in Gameplayers games, as the use of armor and unit mobility required a need for a wider variety of results.

The two major additions are, of course, logistics and a series of Random Events. Essentially, players have a bank of Resource Points, from which they allocate RPs for a given turn (monthly, but units get to go more than once within a turn). With those allocated RP, the player buys the Activation markers he wishes to use that turn, as only units so *activated* get to do all the wonderful things garners so love. Trouble with the *allocation* requirement is that you can't add more from your bank during the turn, and you don't get to save ones you don't use. No dumps, and no supply lines (well, hardly any).

And part of the command system is an optional Random Events system, which we recommend for the campaign games. A look at the events serves best to illustrate what you can run into, noting that some events apply only when a specific player rolls.

Description of Random Events A. Snafu. Player rolling this cannot move units out of

Home Base Box (Cairo or Tripoli) this turn.

B. Allied RR Movement. Allied Player may move one Formation as far as he wishes directly between Alexandria or Cairo and Tobruk using Strategic Movement, except that the unit may move through units on the road. The unit must start its phase in one of those locations.

C. Sandstorm. For the first AM randomly drawn from The Pool, place a Sandstorm marker in that AM's HQ hex. There is a Sandstorm in effect for all hexes within five (5) of that marker. Roll the die; the Sandstorm lasts for the number of AM's drawn (after the one just drawn) equal to the DR. (A '0' means it applies only to that AM's Phase. The effects to those hexes are:

- No construction may be undertaken
- No Air Support for those hexes
- Double the cost of all movement.
- No Strategic Movement into any Sandstorm hex.

D. Massive Rain Squall. Same method for Rain as for Sandstorms, except the effects are as follows:

- No construction may be undertaken
- No Air Support
- Roads are treated as Tracks (and thus no StratMove into those hexes)
- Wadis and Rivers are uncrossable for all purposes, except where traversed by a Road.
- Delta and Marsh are

impassable, except by Road (which is now a Track).

E. Crete Falls. If rolled on or after the April 1941 turn, the Axis Player may increase his maximum available Air Support markers by one for the rest of the game. Only applies once; if rolled again, treat as "J".

F. Allied Naval Bombardment. For any (all) combat this turn in which the Axis defender or Attacker is in a coastal hex, or in a hex adjacent to a coastal hex that is east of Derna (inclusive), the Allies may add one (+1) to the combat DRM if attacking, -1 if defending.

G. Raid. Applies to Player rolling this. If a friendly Recce or LRDG unit enters any village or city along his opponent's LOC that the latter has used previously that turn, he may attempt to *Blow the Dump*. Roll the die and halve the result, rounding down. The resultant number is the number of RP that the enemy must remove from his Allocation total for that turn. In addition, if the DR was even, the friendly player adds one RP to his **Allocated RPs for that turn.** (Captured supply.) It costs the moving unit 2 MP to Blow the Dump.

H. Increased Axis Logistical Commitment. The Axis Player may roll one additional die for Resource Points.

I. Allied Lend Lease. The Allied Player may motorize

(use one of the 2 Truck markers) any one infantry Formation at no cost. Motorization increases the unit's MA to '16'.

J. Bad Weather Grounds Axis Mediterranean Bombers. Axis may not use Air Support for Port Suppression this turn.

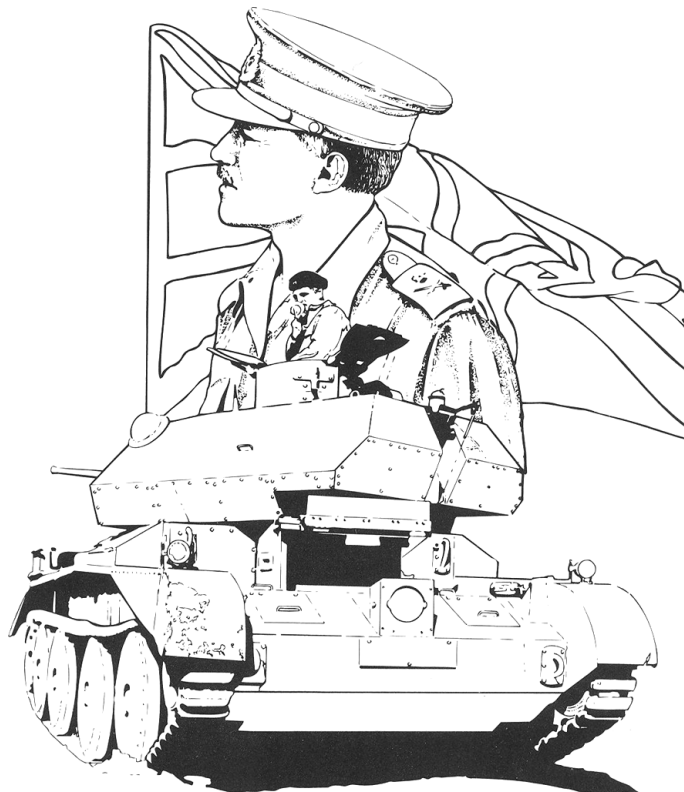
K. Italian Birdmen. If this is rolled in a turn in which the Folgore Division is either in play or scheduled as a Reinforcement, the Axis Player may airdrop any one Formation of his Folgore Division by allotting one Air Support marker to such operation. The unit must start in a Tripoli or Transit Box, or a hex not in an enemy ZOC, and it may be airdropped only if its AM is selected. It may then be placed in any Clear or Rough hex on the map.

- If it is a Rough hex, roll the die. If higher than the unit's Cohesion, it is Reduced.
- If the drop hex is adjacent to an Allied combat unit, the latter, if it can, must immediately attack the Folgore unit. After being dropped, and if it survives an enemy counter-attack, it may move up to one-half of its MA.

L. Allied Air Withdrawal. Reduce available Air Support markers by one for this turn.

M. Amphibious Operations. The player may move a Foot Formation — German or Allied only; no Italians, except for the San Marco battalion, which is actually an Asset-sized unit — from any port it starts in to any coastal hex that is

- not enemy occupied
- is clear or rough (but not a city)
- for the Allied Player,



by Rodger B. MacGowan ©1996

within 60 contiguous coastal hexes of Alexandria, or 20 contiguous hexes of any other port.

- for the Axis Player, within 15 contiguous coastal hexes of the starting port. For purposes of this rule, any city/village with a port symbol qualifies for this. The unit is moved when its AM is selected, or in the Secondary Phase, whichever applies. If the latter, it costs 1 RP to undertake the operation, in addition to any other cost.

N. Ultra and Enigma. The player rolling this may, after his opponent selects his AMs for that turn, look at all the AMs he has selected.

Playtesting has wrapped up for **BNA**, and initial map and counter graphic art production has begun.

HUNDRED YEARS WAR

Manual **HYW** will start *beta* testing in January 1996. Based on the online game running on *GEnie* and *AoL*. It's a six player game of the epic struggle between France and England that began in 1337 when Edward III of England began invading France. The invasions kept coming into the early 15th century. The manual version has six player positions Philippe VI de Valois, king of France d'Anjou, the Duc d'Anjou d'Armagnac, the Comte d'Armagnac de Burgundy, the Duc de Burgundy Edward III Plantagenant, king of England de Grosmont, Earl of Lancaster. Each player has different victory conditions (all, however, involve money, land and power.)

Most of the features of the online game are present, but in a much simplified form, as there is no computer to do all the bookkeeping. The map shows all of France and the British isles, as well as adjacent German, Italian and Spanish lands. Many NPCs (Non-Player Characters) are involved. Play mechanics are kept simple in order to maximize the opportunity for player interaction.

Chaucer would have loved this game, but, then, he's in it....

DOWN IN FLAMES Modules

We plan on releasing a line of DIF Modules which will add aircraft and other special cards to the *Down In Flames* series (**The Rise of the Luftwaffe and 8th Air Force**). Each module will include 66 cards, several pages of Campaigns, Operations, Targets, and any special rules required by the new aircraft. The modules will be sold directly from GMT by phone or mail order.

WWII Modules currently under consideration are — (1) additional aircraft for the European Theatre of Operations; (2) the Russian Front; and (3) North Africa and the Mediterranean Theatre.

We are also planning to produce a line of DIF Modules on the *Jet Age*, covering the Korean War of the 1950's; the Arab-Israeli Wars of 1967 and 1973; the air battles between India and Pakistan; and the Vietnam War from the early 1960's to 1973, and a general selection of aircraft from the 1950s through 1970s.