ON THE DRAWING BOARD

BY RODGER B. MACGOWAN
Publisher, Executiive Editor & Art Director

As I put this issue to bed, I'm already planning issue number three. Let me know how you feel about the ***Sketch Maps*** for ***Arctic Storm*** and ***Mine Run*** (yes, feel free to photocopy them and use them). I think they should prove useful to you as player's aids. Let me know which GMT games you most want ***Sketch Maps*** for and I'll do my best to prepare them for future issues.

I've also tried to give you as much geographical information as possible to support the variety of articles we have in this issue. For example, in the ***Mine Run*** article, I've gone from a strategic view, to an operational view, to the actual tactical area game map to try to give you as much perspective on the battle as possible within a magazine format. I await your comments on this approach in consideration of future article layouts.

We have some exciting, new die-cut counters for you as an Insert in this issue. You'll find counters for Jack Polanka's ***Arctic Storm*** variant; counters for the new upcoming ***SPQR*** Module ***Pyrrhic Victory*** with anti-elephant ox-carts, additional Roman Consuls and the Tarentines (white shields and all); and a few additional Detection markers for our new boxed game ***Crisis:Korea 1995***. Enjoy.

We hope to see you at Origins '93 in Fort Worth, Texas this year. Many of the GMT Team are planning to be there including Richard Berg, Mark Herman, John Vanore, Gene Billingsley and yours truly.

THE GERMAN VIEW

How have GMT games been received in Germany?

BY ULRICH BLENNEMANN

First, a brief backgrounder on board wargaming in Germany is in order. Wargaming is a very small hobby in my country. There are probably fewer wargamers in all of Germany than in New York City alone. The *Gesellschaft fuer historische Simulation e.V.* (GHS), the German National Board Wargaming Association, currently has a little over 150 members. *Der Musketier,* is the only German board wargaming magazine, and has a circulation of 280. It is very difficult to promote the idea of "gaming war" in a country that started two World Wars in this century.

In 1990, the first three GMT releases, ***Silver Bayonet, Air Bridge to Victory*** and ***Operation Shoestring*** were all well received in Germany. None became an "instant hit " with German wargamers, but they all received positive reviews in ***Der Musketier.***

1991 was the year that German wargamers realized GMT had the potential to become one of the industry leaders. GMT published ***1863, Hornet Leader*** and ***The Great Battles of Alexander.*** Both ***Hornet Leader*** and ***The Great Battles of Alexander*** became instant hits in Germany. True, the rulesbooklets were not perfect, but this did not stop the popularity of these games. ***Hornet Leader,*** in my opinion, is one of the best solitaire games around, period. The truly great graphics work by Rodger B. MacGowan gave the garners the feeling that they were really flying F-18 Hornets in combat. Also, ***The Great Battles of Alexander*** quickly developed its own loyal following. The interesting, interactive game system gave players the chance, for the first time, to refight ancient battles on a tactical level in a very enjoyable and realistic manner. By the end of 1991 all German wargamers were aware of GMT Games and their hopes for more great games from this company were high. They weren't disappointed...

In 1992 GMT released ***Thunderbolt + Apache Leader,*** the ***Juggernaut*** Module for ***The Great Battles of Alexander, SPQR*** plus its first Module ***War Elephant*** and ***Arctic Storm.*** With its new line of games, GMT established itself as one of the industry leaders. ***Thunderbolt + Apache Leader*** continued the success of ***Hornet Leader.*** In my opinion, it is the finest solitaire game on the market. German garners welcomed the release of ***Arctic Storm*** because it is both a good game and simulation. Moreover, a simulation on the Winter War was very much needed. However, the highlight of 1992 was clearly ***SPQR,*** a big improvement over the already popular ***Great Battles of Alexander.*** German garners felt that ***SPQR*** not only had the best written rulesbooklet around, but also had balanced scenarios and dramatically improved graphics. The counters for example, are real beauties! In the Netherlands, ***SPQR*** was the best selling wargame of 1992 and German garners loved it as well! In a Reader's Poll of ***Der Musketier*** it was voted Best Game of 1992.

In conclusion, I would like to present several reasons why I think GMT Games have earned such a positive reputation here in Germany. First, all of the latest releases have proven to be good games, fun to play, with interesting mechanics. Second, GMT has some of the best wargame designers in the business: Mark Herman, Richard Berg, Vance von Borries and Dan Verssen — each have proven that they are able to design superior products. Third, the beautiful components of all GMT

Games make you really want to play the games. Hats off to GMT's Art Director Rodger B. MacGowan! Fourth, GMT now supports its products line with its own "house journal" ***C3i.***

(I will continue to update you on the views of German wargamers in future issues of ***C3i.)***