

BATTLE REPORT:

Wellington's Victory

F&M's Battle Reports are 'first impression' game reviews intended to assist our readers through the bewildering maze of titles in the burgeoning wargame market. The emphasis of these reviews is on how well the game in question plays, its feel and flow, with additional comments on physical quality, historical accuracy, and special design features. We hope these Battle Reports will serve as a useful source of consumer information and call attention to games of interest which might otherwise have been overlooked.

by Rodger MacGowan
with Frank Aker, Richard DeBaun and Jim Loughlin

WELLINGTON'S VICTORY \$20

Simulations Publications Inc.

Designer: Frank Davis

Development: Fred Georgian, Tom Kassel,
Pete Bennet, Joe Balkoski, and Ron Toelke

Graphics and Physical Systems:

Redmond A. Simonsen

History is fantastic. Things are seldom exactly as they seem. Hearsay distorts; a casual examination of anything reveals surprisingly different perspectives. The American Revolution's battle of Bunker Hill did not take place at Bunker Hill (an observer confused it with nearby Breed's hill); the Woodstock Rock Festival of 1969 did not take place at Woodstock (the Woodstock city council cancelled permission after tickets were printed, and the event was hastily moved 150 miles to Max Yasgur's farm); and the battle of Waterloo did not take place at Waterloo (Wellington simply refused to give his victory the French name of Mont St. Jean).

WELLINGTON'S VICTORY -- A NEAR RUN THING

Nonetheless, there is no doubt Wellington won a victory in 1815; a victory so smashing it changed the course of history — to this day we attribute the cast of the modern world to the period 1815-1914. Moreover, this is a battle Napoleon felt he should have won. 'As a general, Wellington's plan did not show talent,' he complained later, blaming his debacle on the fact that it rained and 'The conduct of Marshal Grouchy...was as unforseeable as if his army had been surprised by an earthquake and swallowed up' (Cf., **F&M** #3, page 8, 'Why Wellington Should Have Lost At Waterloo,' by Napoleon Bonaparte).

Whatever the reason, the plain fact is that Wellington and Napoleon had both run out of options when they squared off at the crossroads of Mont St. Jean. This in itself was no small achievement for Bonaparte — a few months earlier the pressure had been on Napoleon alone.

When Napoleon returned from exile on Elba in March and formed his new government, he hoped desperately that the other great powers would recognize him. (Bertrand Russell says in his autobiography that his grandfather, Lord John Russell, a member of Parliament, voted for recognition of the Bonaparte government and lost a very close debate on the matter.)

England, Prussia, Austria, and Russia all decided against recognition and declared war on France. Napoleon had no chance against such an alliance and knew it. His only chance was to act quickly — defeat his enemies in detail before they were fully mobilized — and negotiate individual treaties to break up the alliance. To do this, he accomplished what nobody thought possible. Seemingly overnight, he mobilized 200,000 Frenchmen, stole a march, and placed himself across the border in Belgium, within striking distance of Brussels. It was weeks yet before Austria and Russia could hope to field their armies. Only a small Prussian force under Blucher threatened Napoleon's flank at Ligny. The British force at Quatre Bras was even smaller; with the rest of the British army strung out along the roads of Belgium to Brussels, where Wellington was attending a grand ball. 'By God, he's done it again!' Wellington is supposed to have exclaimed when he heard the news, 'We've been bamboozled!'

But the local superiority Napoleon thus achieved was temporary. He needed battle — an quickly. He knew Wellington's peninsular reputation, and doubted the 'old fox' would accept engagement under these conditions. Blucher, on the other hand, was an impetuous and hard-headed Prussian. Accordingly, Napoleon moved toward Ligny, and his suspicions proved correct: Blucher stood firm. The Prussians were routed; the remnants of Blucher's army fled in total disarray toward Wavre, their supply base. Napoleon assigned his trusted Marshal Grouchy to give pursuit; and Grouchy rode off with 34,000 men into a **unique** place in history. Napoleon now moved against Wellington with a main force of 62,000 men (these are Napoleon's figures, quoted from memory on St. Helena).

As expected, the British gave up Quatre Bras after light resistance. Wellington fell back toward Brussels; picking up the reinforcements constantly arriving on the various roads. But Wellington would have to make a stand.

It was not coincidence that Wellington chose Mont St. Jean. (1) This was a crossroads (like Gettysburg), from which his various forces and reinforcements from all directions could arrive and deploy quickly; (2) his was as far as he dared retreat without giving up all hope of mutual support or, indeed, ever again linking up with the Prussians based at Wavre. A further northern retreat was possible only by road march through the Forest de Soignes to Brussels; this would abandon the Prussians completely and almost certainly knock them out of the war.

At the same time, as Napoleon was quick to point out, Mont St. Jean was a very poor choice for a British stand from a strictly tactical standpoint. Wellington deployed his troops into battle formation with their backs to a forest: this gave them no means of retreat and indeed very little room for tactical maneuver. Clearly, this was a desperation 'do or die' stand. If the British line broke anywhere, they were finished. Still, it was the only alternative to abandoning the Prussians.

There was even greater pressure on Napoleon. France could never win a war against an alliance of four great powers. But by luck, skillful maneuver, and forced marching, he had brought about an opportunity to inflict individual defeats in detail to dismember that alliance. Now he had to win the battle.

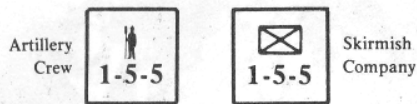
So it was all or nothing — for both sides — at Mont St. Jean. There could be no second chance; not for Napoleon, not for the Alliance. Both sides staked everything upon this one battlefield on June 18th.

GAME COMPONENTS

Wellington's Victory is the latest and surely the most ambitious of SPI's giant 'in depth' studies of 19th century battle. The focus here is on the final showdown between Napoleon and Wellington at the crossroads near Mont St. Jean; it is **not** a strategic study of the full three days' maneuver and encounter across Belgium that most other Waterloo games cover. No, this is June 18th, near Mont St. Jean. Moreover, as David Isby recently cautioned in **Signal** #110, this is 'a game by and for

groggnards, even more than **TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD**. SPI warns that 'learning to play the game effectively will demand more from players' because of the many innovative concepts introduced to force a 'necessity for using sound Napoleonic combined arms tactics.'

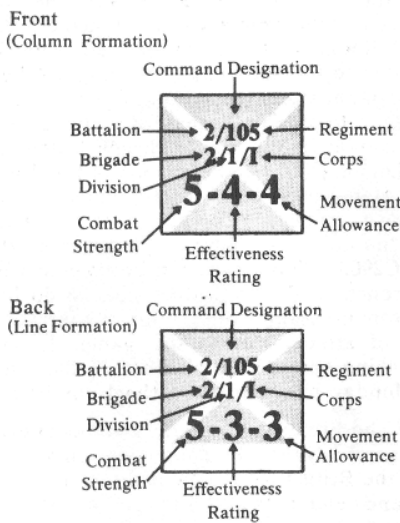
Nonetheless, it must be said that SPI has done its number to make the game and package as attractive and easy to 'get into play' as possible. The four-color 68 x 44 inch mapsheet (four 22 x 34 inch sections) depicts this battlefield on a 100 yards/hex scale that includes farmhouses, ponds, orchards, raised and sunken roads; and, five contour levels of height — differentiated by color — to define the ACTUAL fields of fire on this ground. The various charts and play aids are distributed either on the mapsheet or on separate cards.



Although 2,000 counters come with the game, only about 500 or so of these are actual French, Prussian, and Anglo-Dutch combat units. The rest of the counters are mostly numerical combat strength chits used to denote current strength of a particular combat unit. Thus, it requires two counter chits to represent one combat unit in this game; one chit to denote the particular historical unit, and a strength chit to show its current condition.

Each infantry unit represents either a battalion or a company-sized detachment; each cavalry unit a regiment; each artillery unit a battery.

Sample Infantry Unit



RULES:

Wellington's Victory is not a simple game. At the same time, much of its complexity is due to its 'bigness' (there is a lot to do in a turn) and some innovative design concepts. Remember, this is a game played in 15-minute Turns on 100-yard hexes. Apart from this, there is nothing really 'obscure' or 'hard to understand'. Nonetheless, let's take a quick look at exactly what play entails.

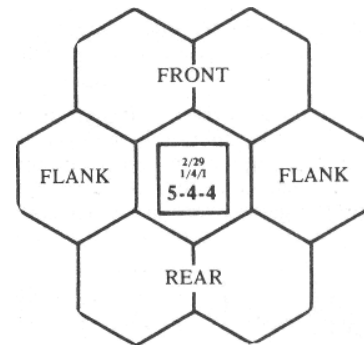
Probably the most confusing thing for a lot of gamers is a sort of 'alternating' game phase system — similar to **FIREFIGHT** — in which opponents alternately take turns doing various things during one complete Game Turn. For the record, a complete **WV** Game Turn consists of: (1) French Command Phase; (2) French Rally Phase; (3) Allied Facing/Formation Phase; (4) Allied March Phase; (5) French Shock Phase; (6) Reciprocal Artillery Fire Phase; (7) Reciprocal Infantry Fire Phase; (8) Allied Command Phase; (9) Allied Rally Phase; (10) French Facing/Formation Phase; (11) French March Phase; (12) Allied Shock Phase; and (13) Game-Turn Phase.

Now, you can see for yourself **WV** is obviously not a fast game, nor something you can casually whip off while watching a football game on TV, etc. Each individual phase, depending on the tactical situation, can take at least 3 to 4 minutes. This makes the **average** Game-Turn around 35-45 minutes. When a major battle developer — because you have to move and fire each unit individually — a Game-Turn can run much longer.

Movement of combat units is fairly standard, calculated in conventional Movement Points. Also, a special Grand Tactical Movement rule allows a unit to double its movement allowance in certain circumstances. On the other hand, enemy fire and 'levels' of contoured terrain provide unusual movement inhibitions.

'Facing' in this game is extremely unusual. (In fact, the only other time we've seen this system is in an amateur game called **MANASSAS**, winner of the 1975 Charles Roberts Award at Origins I and since acquired by GDW). A combat unit in **WV** does not face a particular hexside; rather, it faces a particular vertex **between** two hexsides. Those two hexsides thus describe the unit's front. (Richard Berg wanted to use this system in **TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD**. See his comments in **F&M #5**.) Obviously, this system is a little more tedious than a traditional game like **STALINGRAD**; and if you're playing against a real klutz it can be a nightmare.

FACING EXAMPLE (Infantry unit in Column Formation)

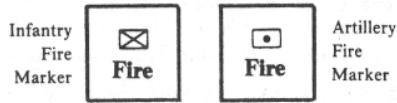


The game covers formation rules in unusual detail; including column formation, line and extended line formation, skirmish formation, and square formation. Frank Davis says, 'The formation rules reflect a wealth of information the bulk of which, unfortunately, cannot be substantiated from historical accounts unless one is willing and able to 'read between the lines'. Prior to **WV**, the subject of Napoleonic formations was consistently avoided by boardgame designers probably because there is so little trustworthy information available on this subject.' It will be interesting to see how Frank's information in **WV** holds up in coming months.

Stacking limits are rather generous — up to eighteen strength points per hex. Theoretically, this could create some amazing problems. Remember, each combat unit is composed of two counters; a 'unit' counter and a 'strength' counter. If you have a lot of weak units, they could add up to an awesome stack.... In fact, Richard and Jim remarked during play of the following **Hougomont** scenario that — because of the stacks — they wished larger (**PANZERBLITZ** sized) hexes had been used on the mapsheet. On the other hand, designer Davis says, 'Stacking up to eighteen points per hex...would certainly create a problem if Players frequently exploited this rule on restricted frontages. The game system, however, makes it highly unprofitable to advance massed formations on contiguous hexes as it increases the likelihood for a rout of truly epic proportions'.

Terrain rules also require special attention and a little study. They are complex and will take some getting used to; and since observation is dependent upon terrain you must master these interdependent rules together. Frank Davis comments, 'Ultimately (and I mean ultimately!), I came up with the Observation procedure which no one has read from beginning

to end and lived to tell about. I think it works. Who knows? He may be glad to hear it worked during our test game, although questions did arise from time to time. CI can see you from here.' Like hell.' Etc. Observation procedure always seems to go like that).

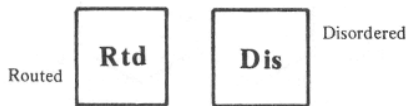


Combat between units in this game — as in this historical period — is divided into two main types: Fire Combat and Shock Combat. Fire Combat uses a cleverly integrated Combat Results Table (pioneered in SPI's **FIREFIGHT** game) that incorporates strength, quality, and formation of the firing unit — PLUS formation and terrain cover of the defender — into ONE CRT column for resolution by a single die roll. No arithmetic or computation of odds necessary.

Shock Combat, on the other hand, does require a simple odds comparison (plus a troop quality 'differential'). This is usually the crucial game decision. Fire Combat is for 'softening up' the enemy. When you commit to Shock Combat, you're going for all the marbles. This is direct body contact directed at taking ground held by the enemy and seeking to break his morale (and you can break your own just as easily).

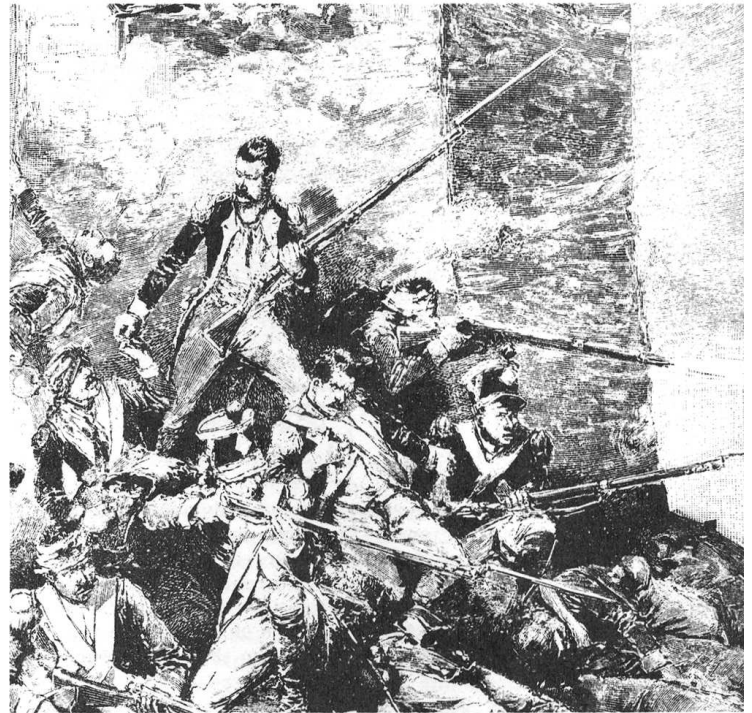
Napoleon never tired of boring subordinates with interminable homilies on the importance of morale ('...as three is to one,' etc); but not without reason. He had seen many a magnificent army transformed within minutes into a spectacular mob when morale 'cracked'. This was often what decided battles in Napoleonic times.

WV morale is treated on both tactical and strategic levels. Unit Morale concerns the individual unit and is based on the Effectiveness Rating assigned to every infantry battalion, cavalry regiment, skirmish company, and artillery crew in play. At all times during the game every individual unit will possess 'Good Morale'; or, it will be suffering 'Disruption' or 'Rout'.



On a higher level, the strategic concept of Army Moral -- simulated via historical brigade, division, corps and Army Command units — actually determines the outcome of a scenario. Frank Davis explains, 'The concepts of Command, Army Morale and Brigade Commitment and Deactivation introduce the main grand tactical problems which characterized a major Napoleonic engagement. The importance of army endurance and fatigue are particularly appropriate to Waterloo due to the fact that most of the participants had hardly eaten or slept during the preceding 24 hours. Thus fatigue is a major cause of Army Demoralization. Although treated abstractly, the interrelation of Brigade Commitment and fatigue is probably the design feature which contributes most to the overall 'flavor' and historical accuracy of the game.'

There are five scenarios in **Wellington's Victory**. The first is **Hougomont** and is covered in detail in the following After Action Report. The second is **La Haye Sainte** - this 20 game-turn scenario covers the advance of D'Erlon's Corps, supported by a French grand battery of almost 70 guns and Milhaud's cuirassiers, on the center of Wellington's line. D'Erlon's objective is to break the Anglo-Allied center and continue driving straight up the Brussels Road to Mont St. Jean. But to do this the French must 'sweep by' La Haye Sainte. The third scenario is **Plancenoit** - this is also 20 game-turns in length and covers the Prussian intervention at Waterloo. The fourth scenario is **The Battle of Waterloo** - this 30 game-turn scenario covers the heart of the battle. The final scenario is entitled **The Early French Assault** - this 50 game-turn scenario allows the French to begin at 0915 hrs. A real 'What If?'...



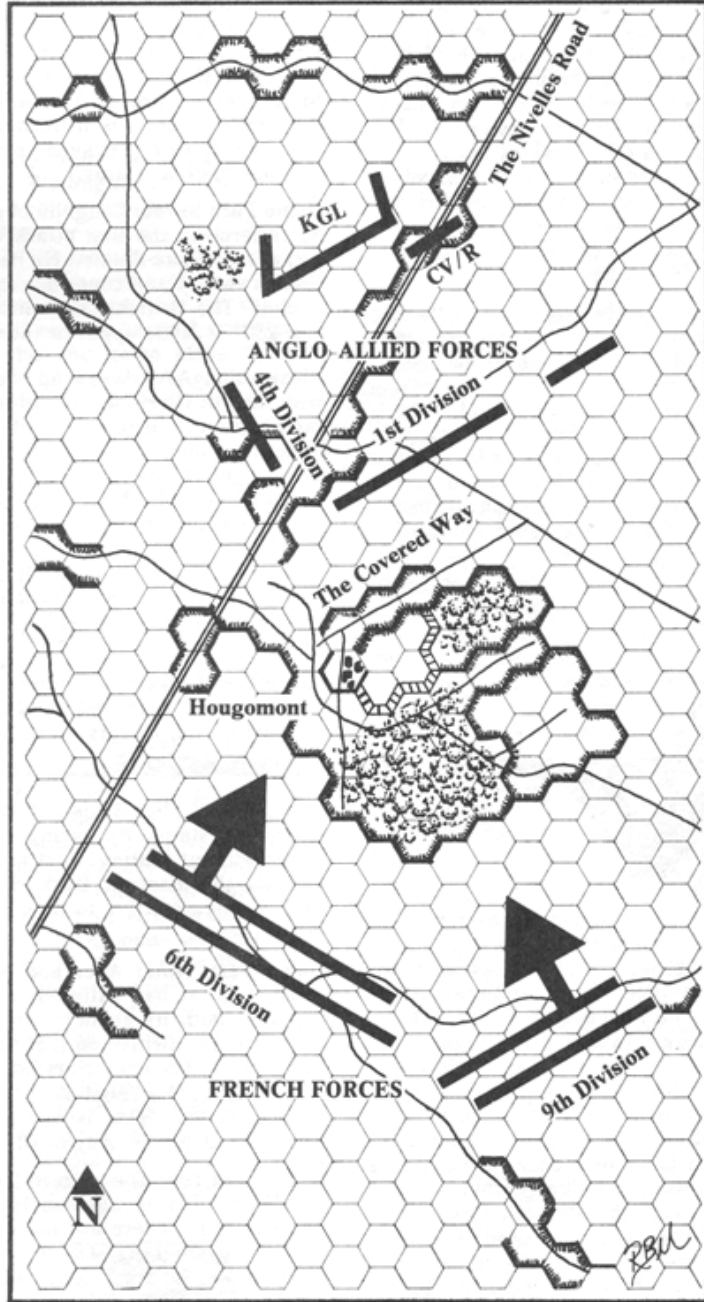
AFTER ACTION REPORT: HOUGOMONT

The initial deployment places the French forces within eight to twelve hexes of their objective — hex C2903, the chateau of Hougomont. Jim Loughlin commands the French 6th Division to the southwest of Hougomont, and Frank Aker commands the French 9th Division to the southeast. The Anglo-Allied forces, under Richard DeBaun, are deployed roughly in an arrow north of Hougomont four to twelve hexes from the chateau. The British 1st Division is in the front, closely followed by the King's German Legion (KGL) and elements of the 4th Division. Nine Dutch and Hanoverian Skirmisher Companies are in the Hougomont orchard. Critical to the play of this scenario is the special rule that 'no unit may voluntarily move more than eight hexes from hex C2903.' This restriction pretty much limits the options of the French, and they will be able to do little more than attempt a frontal assault even though the terrain does not favor that type of attack. During the game, I played war correspondent, taking notes, keeping track of the body count, and acting as Monday morning quarterback for both sides.

Game Turn One: The French commanders immediately activate their entire force and advance on Hougomont on a broad front. DeBaun deploys the British KGL with artillery support to cover the west flank, sends elements of the 1st and 4th Divisions with artillery support to cover the east flank, and sends the strongest battalions of the 1st Division to establish what he hopes will be an impenetrable defense within the chateau's garden walls. He then begins singing "The British Grenadier" more than slightly off-key in an not-so subtle attempt at psychological warfare.

Game Turn Two: As elements of Aker's French 9th Division advance east of the orchards, they suffer mild losses at the hands of Hanoverian skirmishers. On the other flank, Loughlin's 6th Division appears to be attempting to sweep around the Allied line in an enveloping, end-run maneuver in order to avoid a direct assault on 'fortress' Hougomont. Skirmishers from the 6th Division are as far north as hex 2333, six hexes northwest of the chateau!

After reinforcing the chateau defenses with a British artillery battery, the Anglo-Allies draw first blood with a cannonade on the advancing French 6th. Three battalions of the 6th are disordered or routed. (DeBaun found Bull's howitzer battery with its indirect fire capability particularly valuable in this type of attack as it is able to hit enemy targets without exposing itself to return fire.)



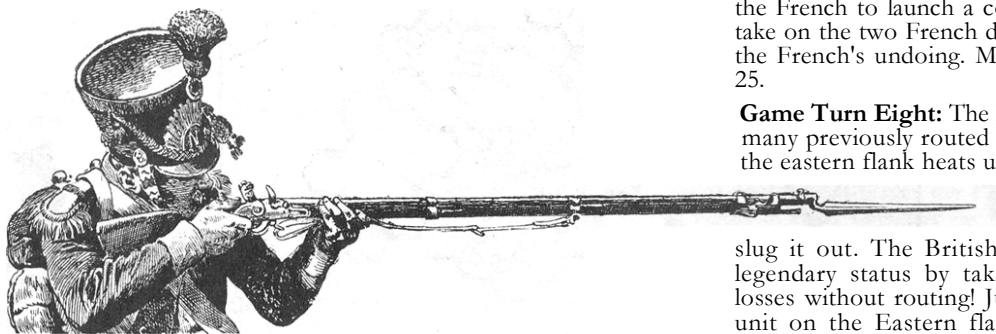
Wellington's Victory

Hougomont Scenario

Fire & Movement's Sketch-Map of SPI's WELLINGTON'S VICTORY.

Game Turn Three: The French are now closing all along the line, poised for what will surely be a bloody assault. Facing them on the western flank, the KGL has deployed in extended line with covering artillery support and one battalion held in reserve. British artillery take their toll as the French advance to positions adjacent to enemy lines, a bayonet's-length from what looks like an irresistible shock attack. On the eastern flank around the orchard, the British 1st and 4th Divisions have also deployed in extended line. They, too, are supported by reserves and artillery. Most of DeBaun's Dutch and Hanoverian skirmishers have been eliminated, but the Anglo-Allied force overall looks ready to meet the French attack. Morale levels at the end of the Turn are: French 56 - Allies 47.

Game Turn Four: Aker's 9th Division pushes on the east flank and overwhelms the remaining Dutch skirmishers in the orchard. Loughlin's assault on the western flank is met by devastating fire from the KGL. The French 6th Division falters, then crumbles as the massive attack columns rout under the withering volleys. On the brink of disaster, Loughlin's troops rise to the challenge. With the stirring battle cry **Wive la plume de ma tante!**, French battalions of the 6th breach the Hougomont garden wall and overrun the defending British battery. The French are about to take Hougomont chateau! Morale levels: French 36 - Allies 37.



Game Turn Five: The Anglo-Allied situation is extremely critical. If Loughlin's battalions are not thrown back over the wall before the French Movement Phase, it is almost certain he will be able to reinforce the assault force and capture Hougomont chateau in the next French Shock Phase. The French are moments away from victory. In a frantic attempt to stop the French breakthrough, DeBaun wheels three batteries of his British artillery to support his two strongest infantry battalions which are eyeball-to-eyeball with the French in Hougomont. During the Fire Phase, the British open up at Point-blank range, and the French are blown back across the wall in disorder. There is still, however, a clear path for the French into the now empty chateau hex. In a desperate gamble to seize the victory that looks so near, Loughlin sends in five skirmisher companies, one at a time, to run the gauntlet of British firepower and occupy the chateau. None of the skirmishers survive. It has been close, but Hougomont remains in British hands. Morale levels: French 20 - Anglo-Allies 31.

Game Turn Six: Loughlin's shattered French 6th Division is now in full retreat. It cannot hope to continue the fight until it has reformed and reorganized. Aker's 9th Division is left to hold the field alone with its slow, methodical advance on the eastern flank.

It is at this point in the game that all the players become acutely aware of the importance of artillery ammunition supply. Much to Loughlin's chagrin, DeBaun tricks him into using up a lot of artillery ammo by running a sacrificial skirmish unit through the French artillery fire zones. Jim uses up a lot of ammo trying to kill the pesky little unit. He realizes too late that the 6th's next attack will consequently be without adequate artillery support. **C'est la guerre.** The French console themselves by knocking out a KGL artillery unit as they withdraw.

With the pressure on the western flank relieved by the rout of the French 6th Division, the Anglo-Allied commander is

'optimistic'. Richard feels that since the French were unable to take the chateau when they were at full strength, they will have even less of a chance the next time, especially now that the British troops are in control of the most favorable defensive positions. He orders his men to stack arms for a tea break. Morale levels: French 28 - Allies 27. (You will note here that the French morale is increasing. This is due to many French units which were previously routed reforming and returning to 'normal' morale status.)

Game Turn Seven: Loughlin observes that the apparent 'losses' he suffered in the first attack were mostly units which routed and **not** eliminated units. He has renewed hope, therefore, for a French victory and continues to regroup his forces for a second assault. The British KGL consolidates on a strong line (from hex 2501 - 3103) opposite them.

Meanwhile, Aker keeps up the pressure on the eastern flank with his 9th Division. The 9th has moved very slowly, and thus far losses have been kept light. Aker is reluctant to launch shock attacks against what he considers strong British positions behind the hedgerows until he has adequate force. Unfortunately, since DeBaun is no longer threatened on the western flank, he is able to release troops from that part of the line and shift them over to face the grinding French 9th. The inability of the French to launch a coordinated attack, allowing DeBaun to take on the two French divisions one at a time, will prove to be the French's undoing. Morale levels: French 24 - Anglo-Allies 25.

Game Turn Eight: The French morale level increases rapidly as many previously routed units return to the line. The battle on the eastern flank heats up as both sides hold their ground and

slug it out. The British 2/1Gd of the 1/1/I has achieved legendary status by taking **seven** successive strength-point losses without routing! Just as the single Anglo-Allied artillery unit on the Eastern flank runs out of ammunition, British reinforcements arrive to plug the gap and stop the French 9th in its tracks.

Game Turn Nine: Aker and his French 9th Division is near exhaustion. It has suffered 60% losses and the British have captured both its artillery units. The 9th simply has no more push left. The British on that flank are equally worn down. The last hope for French victory lies with the revitalized 6th Division. Jim 'Look-for-the-Loopholes' Loughlin takes a quick body count and concludes: 'This is one hell of a bloody game.' Morale levels: French 16 - Anglo-Allies 21.

Game Turn Ten: The eastern flank has suddenly become silent. The French 9th and British 1st Divisions have bled each other to a standstill. There are not enough units left there for either side to do anything. On the western flank, the Anglo-Allies prepare for the final confrontation. The French 6th Division slowly advances on the strong positions held by the KGL. Morale levels: French 16 - Anglo-Allies 20.

Game Turn Eleven: The eastern flank is now totally inactive. The British have prudently withdrawn beyond firing range. The French 6th Division cautiously advances toward Hougomont. Both sides reach a morale level of 15. Sensing victory, DeBaun puts bagpipe music on the stereo.

Game Turn Twelve: The Morale levels for both sides are dangerously low. The French make a wide sweeping move to the west to destroy a KGL battery which anchors the end of that flank. This artillery position has a clear field of fire on the advancing French and must be eliminated if the advance is to succeed. All hell breaks loose as the Anglo-Allies rake the French columns with artillery fire. At the end of this Turn, French morale is at 4 and the Anglo-Allies is at 14. The French can only hope for a miracle.

Game Turn Thirteen: Both armies are exhausted. The battle-weary French 6th Division stumbles forward onto the Allied line at the crossroads west of Hougomont in a last-ditch assault. The French ranks are cut to pieces by massed artillery

fire. The French cannot withstand the fury of the British guns and fall back, totally demoralized. The French II Corps is broken. Weary but proud, the Thin Red Line has held. Final morale levels: French 0 - Anglo-Allies 13.

PLAYER'S NOTES:

With the smoke of battle still rising from the hexsheets we discussed our first impressions of **Wellington's Victory**. Jim started off by stating that in his opinion the Allies must be pushed back at least three hexes from the objective hex (2903). Otherwise Hougomont will not fall to the French. He also added that to do this the French must have adequate reserves — this point about 'reserves' came up often. It seems that the key to most any combat action in **WV** will revolve around reserves. Jim's personal impressions were that the game plays 'fairly easily' and that it was indeed worth the money. At games end Jim was still not sure about the rules regarding retreats — especially about when adjacent units to a retreating unit must check for morale.

Frank's main point was that a Player must adapt his thoughts to the period. One must think like a commander would in 1815 with Skirmishers out front and lines of infantry neatly moving forward and so on. Modern **Blitzkrieg** ideas will most likely not work. That's not to say that you can't be innovative or use 'modern ideas'. But you should realize that the Designer is simulating 1815 and not 1941. Frank also felt that the 'direct approach' in the **Hougomont** Scenario will not work. As the French Player he recommends you try to approach from both flanks at the same time — might be worth a try.

Richard was impressed with the amount of innovative, original thought in the game design (e.g., variable individual unit effectiveness, the easily identifiable counter graphics, the topographical maps, the fire combat results system, the cavalry charge zone, and combat fatigue). He commented that the rules are an example of what happens when designers start listening to players' demands for 'completeness' in rules: 'The rules are an heroic attempt to give us the exactness we've been clamoring for all these years. The result is a 27-page opus with all the charm of a legal document drawn up by the firm of Pettifog, Obfuscate, & Tedium. I don't mean this as criticism of Frank Davis' efforts, for it is obvious a great deal of work went into trying to plug loopholes, it's just that the result is a bitch to read. He's given us what we've been complaining about for years and I guess it serves us right...' Richard suggests that players shouldn't let the rules scare them off and jump into play as soon as possible. Play a couple of 'rough' games to get the hang of the system. Overall, he felt the game was exciting and fun to play with relatively few rough spots considering it presents a completely new game system. ••



FORWARD OBSERVER:

Since I only observed the action and didn't take part in the actual play of the game I won't comment on tactics and so on. But to me, **Wellington's Victory** represents the answer to a long-held wish — an accurate, detailed simulation on the Battle of Waterloo. I grew up playing AH's **Waterloo**. It was one of my favorite games and today it is considered a **classic**. I wouldn't disagree with that at all, but **Waterloo** was not Waterloo. It wasn't the battle. We've had SPI's **Napoleon at Waterloo**, **La Belle Alliance** (quad), Gamma Two's **Napoleon**, GDW's **1815 The Waterloo Campaign** — I can't say the battle or campaign hasn't been covered, but I can say now that with **Wellington's Victory** we have a beautiful simulation of the battle. Frank Davis has put a hell of a lot of work into this game (as Richard Berg did in **TSS**). I think you can see a token of his work in the Designer's Notes section of the rulesbook. In my opinion they are among the finest Designer's Notes I've ever read covering a new title. He explains **why** he did what he did in **WV**. He is honest and straightforward with his comments on the game and you feel a sense of real concern for his 'baby'. **Wellington's Victory** may not be perfect — odds are it isn't. But I would venture to guess it isn't because Frank and his staff didn't try to make it so. In the Designer's Notes Frank comments, '...I cannot claim that **Wellington's Victory** is an accurate simulation of the Battle of Waterloo. Like Wellington, I believe that an accurate account (much less a game) never has or will be produced on the subject of Waterloo. No soldier, historian, or game designer knows or fully understands exactly what occurred that Sunday afternoon more than a century and a half ago. All I can therefore claim is that the game accurately reflects my own carefully constructed interpretation of the events of June 18, 1815. I am grateful that our exhaustive playtesting indicates that when the game is played effectively, it does in fact resemble a reasonably accurate working model of the actual battle. Which is not to say that the game slavishly recreates an inevitable historical result. To my surprise, after months of playtesting which produced an almost unbroken string of Allied victories, I was soundly defeated commanding Wellington's forces in the full-length historical Scenario by a French Player who correctly utilized Napoleon's tactics and simultaneously avoided the grand tactical errors which cost Napoleon his empire. Thus, despite its title, the game offers; both the Wellington Player and his opponent a fairly equal chance for victory. I must admit, however, that play balance was never a high priority in terms of the overall design of the game.'



I'd also like to take a few moments here and comment on the graphics and physical systems in **Wellington's Victory** — being a graphics man myself, such things are most important to me. I'd like to start by saying that, in my opinion, Redmond Simonsen is one of the most gifted artists this hobby has today. He has pioneered so many graphic and physical system innovations that it would be an injustice to attempt to quickly list them here. I'd just like to say that **WV** is in the fine, tradition of first class graphics I've come to expect from SPI. Each part of the game seems to have been clearly thought out for its clarity, ease of use and functional performance. I know that Frank Davis had much to do with this with his work on the game map and fire tables, but Redmond is able to bring these innovative ideas into sharp focus and make them work — I'm impressed. I'm also impressed with the fine graphic work I see coming from Avalon Hill, Game Designers' Workshop, Battleline and so on. Our hobby has come quite aways from **Tactics II**. If you like, we'll cover this subject of graphics and physical systems within our hobby in an article in **F&M** — let me know if you're interested or not. ••

RBM

LAST MINUTE NEWS!

Game Designers' Workshop is pleased to announce the publication of three new games, two revised games, issue number two of the Newsletter, and a catalog!

At Origins II, GDW unveiled three brand new games to the wargaming community, ready for shipment immediately.

1. **AVALANCHE**, the Salerno Landings, 1943. Company level (some platoons). 1300 meter hex scale. 8 hour turns. 960 die cut counters, some back printed for step reduction and all vehicles marked with silhouettes for recognition. Two 4-color maps resembling military topographic maps of the period. Avalanche, only \$12.75 postpaid.

2. **BATTLE FOR MIDWAY**, Decision in the Pacific, '42. Ship level, 37.5 mile hexes, 6 hour turns. 240 die cut counters. Two maps (one of the Midway area, the other extending the area of play west to Tokyo). Game system similar to Coral Sea, but adding primary guns, submarines, and aircraft scout elements. Battle for Midway, \$10.00, postpaid.

3. **BURMA**, the Campaign in Burma, 1942-45. Brigade level (some regiments and battalions, some Chinese divisions). Monthly turns. One 4-color map, plus 240 die cut counters. Tanks, air transport, LRP units. Provisions for building the Burma Road. Burma, \$8.00 postpaid.

In concert with the publication of the new games, two revisions of older GDW games were made.

1. **CORAL SEA** (2nd edition). All new artwork from the ground up, and added or clarified rules and charts as necessary. 240 die cut counters, one map (of the Coral Sea area), and a rules booklet, plus charts. Added are several scenarios and more ships for the scenarios. [Gamers already owning Coral Sea can purchase the new rules for only \$1; the new counters are not necessary, but we recommend them, at \$2; the new map is essentially unchanged from the old.] Second edition Coral Sea, \$8.00 postpaid.

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2. **MANASSAS** (2nd edition). The award winning Civil War battle game returns basically unchanged, but with new artwork on map and counters. The first edition (privately published) has sold out and we had to reprint to keep up with demand. Second edition Manassas, \$8.00, postpaid.

GDW is currently experimenting with a Newsletter, covering primarily the games, research and milieu of the Europa Series (our series recreating World War II on the division level; four games out already, and more coming), as well as news and information about GDW in general. Subscriptions to the Newsletter through issue 4 are free, provided you subscribe using our official subscription blank (available in our catalog; see next item below). Issues one and two are already out, and available free if you include a stamped, self addressed envelope with your request.

Finally, to fully describe our growing line of games, to provide you with an order blank, to tell you about our free errata service, and to convince you of the quality of our games, we have published a 20 page catalog. Illustrated with color and photographs, the new GDW catalog covers our entire line with pictures and illustrations, descriptions of contents and components, and news of things to come. If you want more information about any of the games listed above, or about the rest of our line of over 15 military simulations, ask us for our catalog, its free! (Asking us also gets you on our mailing list, and assures you of getting future announcements as we issue them.)

We would like to point out that all GDW games are postpaid in the US and Canada. Other foreign orders please add \$2 per game surface postage.

Write us at:

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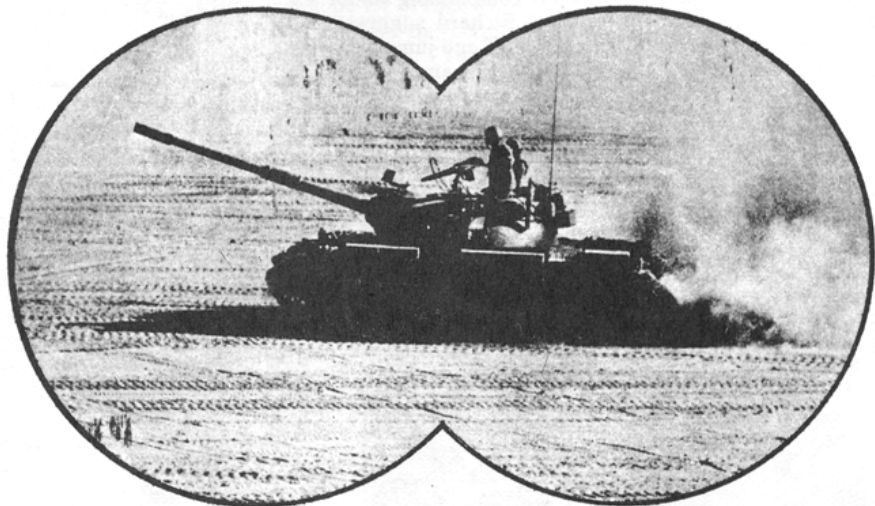
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