

A World at War Tournament

World Boardgaming Championship 2012

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World Boardgaming Championships

2012

By Mike Crowe

Introduction

This document provides a complete report on the A World at War tournament at the 2012 World Boardgaming Championships, held July 29 through August 4, 2012 in Lancaster, PA. It begins with an overview of the tournament and the plaque winners. It provides a table summarizing the results of each match. And we provide a complete description of each match, written by the participants.

Overview

A World at War (AWAW) had five full games recreating World War II at the convention this year. The first game was one of the most memorable in convention history. The game started normally, but the Allies first roll for atomic research was the lowest possible. The Allies decided to abandon nuclear weapon development, and spend their research money on more promising projects. What the Allies didn't know was that Germany was developing atomic weapons. This is very unusual, and extremely hard to be successful with. The research commitment to develop "the Bomb" is huge, and Germany must fight without many of the units and weapon systems that it usually has. However, this time it worked, and a nuclear warhead was delivered to the U.S. by an advanced submarine, and detonated at the end of 1944. By rule, if the U.S. gets nuked and doesn't have an atomic program of its own, it stops fighting in that theater, and its forces are

frozen in place. This allowed the Germans to concentrate on the Russians. Despite this, and in another surprise, the Russians were able to keep successfully attacking the strengthened German army, and conquered Germany in Fall 1945 (only one turn late). The Pacific war ended in a draw, giving the Axis an overall one turn victory.

In the second game, the European Axis coupled a conventional attack strategy along with an aggressive German naval building program (four additional large battleships). Opportunity and Allied miscues allowed the conquest of Spain, Gibraltar and Egypt. This was paired with a low tension Japanese pre-war strategy, and aggressive Pacific island conquests once war broke out. The Allies were always off balance, and the Axis won a combined four turn victory.

The third game produced the only Allied victory this year, which was by a single turn. The game itself developed conventionally, but produced one of the most unusual Pearl Harbor attacks of all time. The Allies had moved the two Atlantic carriers to the Pacific before the war, making a total of five there. The Allies were unlucky, and three of them were caught and destroyed during the Pearl Harbor attack. But luck runs both ways, and against all odds the remaining two U.S. Carriers found the Japanese strike force, and sank two of its carriers. Veteran players could not remember ever seeing such a result.

In the fourth game, the Axis coupled a large naval build strategy (featuring German and Italian, as well as Japanese, carriers), along with an attack on Russia. The Japanese successfully invaded Australia, but could not take Townsville. The Russian campaign was fairly historical. However, the Axis pushed across the Suez Canal, and seriously damaged the Allied fleet in a series of engagements, including a massive raider battle. A decisive Axis victory was achieved.

In the fifth game, a joint German and Japanese attack on Russia resulted in a high level Russian surrender, and a decisive Axis Victory. A Japanese attack on Russia is always extremely difficult to successfully execute for Japan, as the reduced forces available must capture the Indonesian oil, and fend off the U.S. at the same time.

AWAW is constantly evolving; and this year, prior to the convention, the naval rules were substantially revamped. The goals of these rules revisions were to encourage more naval combat (especially carrier air battles), rules simplification and faster naval battle playing time. It had taken play testing most of the previous year to get the changes right, but the new rules worked well at the convention.

The rules changes identified after this years' games were minimal, and included an adjustment to Russian mobilizations, the end to free Red Chinese offensives (Russia will now have to pay for them), and some clarification to the new naval rules in the areas of interceptions of returning naval units, and air attacks on submarine patrols.

It should be noted that a new companion game, "Gathering Storm", was also play tested this year. Gathering Storm is a much shorter game that deals with the prewar years, and allows for non-historical economic, military and naval development, diplomacy, and aggression. When fully developed, Gathering Storm will be played just before AWAW. This will allow for different pre-war strategies and scenarios for the start of World War II, rather than the historical basis that is currently used. Gathering Storm can also be played as a standalone game.

Plaque Winners

- 1st - Elihu Feustal (Best Overall)
- 2nd - Chris Goldfarb (Best Axis, Europe)
- 3rd - Don Stanley (Best Allies, Europe)
- 4th - Vic Hogen (Best Axis, Pacific)
- 5th - Rob Carl (Best Axis Plan, Pacific)
- 6th - Thomas Stanley (Best Newcomer)

Game Summary

	Axis	Allies	Axis Strategy	Allied Atomics	Europe End	Pacific End	Game Result
1.	Chris Goldfarb Bruce Harper	Elihu Feustal Eric Thobaben	Su'41 East Wi'41 Pac	None. Axis A-bomb NYC in Wi' 44	Fa'45 (+1) [actual]	Fa'45 (0) [actual]	Axis (+1) [actual]
2.	Jon Hogen Vic Hogen	Kevin Milne Paul Milne	Su '41 East Wi'41 Pac	1 in Fa '45 1 in Sp '46	Wi'45 (+2) [actual]	Sp'46 (+2) [actual]	Axis (+4) [actual]
3.	A. J. Johnson Randy Scheers	Don Stanley Thomas Stanley	Sea Lion Su'41 East Wi'41 Pac		Sp '45 (-1) [est.]	Fa '45 (0) [est.]	Allied (-1) [est.]
4.	Jim Sparks Greg Wilson	Ed Schoenfeld Chris Collins	Su'41 East Fa'41 Pac		Wi '46 (+6) [est.]	Su '46 (+4) [est.]	Axis (+10) [est.]
5.	Dave Hanson Rob Carl	Steve Rossi Jerry Smolens	Su '41 East Su'41 Pac		Wi '46 (+6) [est.]	Sp '46 (+2) [est.]	Axis (+8) [est.]

Detailed Game Descriptions

Additional comments provided for each game by Mike Crowe.

Game 1.

Goldfarb-Harper-Feustal-Thobaben

European Axis: Chris Goldfarb
Japan: Bruce Harper
Allies Europe: Elihu Feustal
Allies Pacific: Eric Thobaben
European Result: Fall 1945 (-1)
Pacific Result: Fall 1945 (0)
Overall Result: Allied (-1)

Game narrative provided by Chris, Bruce, Elihu and Eric.

Axis. The European Axis pursued a “serendipitous research” strategy that eventually culminated in a super sub torpedoing New York City with a strategic nuke in Winter 1944. Japan, instead, focused a larger imperial army on China with the intent of driving the Chinese resistance level down sufficiently to enjoy resistance modifiers for many turns.

Bruce. The Axis atomic strategy was anything but “serendipitous” – the Axis went for a 1940 breakthrough in atomic general research (which they got) just in case the Western Allies either didn’t go atomic, fell behind or gave up (which they did after rolling a “1” for their atomic general research in 1939). Once an Axis spy ring in Western Allied atomics confirmed this, the Axis went for a single uranium bomb.

Elihu. Actually, the Fall 1939 German research rolls included a “5” (+3 RPs) for both Air and Naval General research, securing general breakthroughs in both (the odds of which are around 12%). These early general research breakthroughs cleared the way for other

German research, most notably advanced submarines. So to describe the German research as anything but “serendipitous” rings of pro-Axis propaganda.

Bruce: “Optimistic” might be a more accurate description, but if the Germans don’t play for absolute victory and World Power, what kind of Germans would they be?!

Allies. The Allies, globally, pursued a “DRM” strategy where quality units would allow them to force a precipitous collapse of the Axis and Japan.

1940 Summer Allied. France surrenders.

1940 Summer Axis. The Axis bomb Britain.

1940 Fall Axis. The Axis re-position air to Egypt.

1940 Winter Axis. The Axis attack in Egypt, but do not break through.

Spring 1941 Axis. Axis codebreaking reveals no Allied atomic bomb program.

Elihu: In 1941, the Allies had identified nearly all of the Axis research projects. There was only one unidentified project: was it Controlled Reaction or Harbor Attack? When Germany placed a 1941 spy ring in Western Allied Atomics, the worst nightmare began to come true – the Western Allies were up against a dedicated German Atomics program after abandoning theirs.

Pacific. In the Far East, Japan mobilizes and produces infantry rapidly, and, together with above-average attrition die rolls (for both Japan and China!), pounds the Nationalists before Japan attacks the U.S.

Spring 1941 Allied. Pacific. To make matters worse, the U.S. refuses to send aid to China, choosing instead to preserve its BRP base growth and build many big ships.

Mike: To make matters worse for whom?

Bruce: From the Japanese point of view, the attrition rolls in China didn't seem particularly high. As mentioned above, the Japanese plan of emphasizing infantry and trying to reduce the Chinese resistance level by attritioning is just bad – the U.S. can grant China BRPs, and the Chinese can always revive by a timely withdrawal. The Allies did neither, and the plan still didn't work – at least not as intended!

Mike: Well, this plan resulted in a draw in the Pacific, so it appears no worse than many an Axis plan!

Summer 1941 Axis. The Axis attack Russia. Most of the Russian army dies.

Fall 1941 Axis. The Axis advance, and take Kiev and Dnepropetrovsk.

Winter 1941 Axis. The Axis endure the Russian winter.

Pacific. . Pearl Harbor and the Japanese attack see average results (Japan stays to make a second air strike, but the U.S. rolled a “12” on air defense, and Japan’s second strike die rolls were sub-par).

1941 Winter Allied. Pacific. The Americans mobilized two 3x2s for early deployment and defense, and by defending Guadalcanal in the initial defense, were able to NR one 3x2 into Guadalcanal (and four 1x2s into the Gilberts).

Mike: I like this Allied action.

Winter 1942 Allied. The Allies invade Morocco, and take Lebanon-Syria.

Spring 1942 Axis. An Axis reaction die roll results in hex control of Vichy France. In Russia, a typical attrition occurs.

Pacific. Japan fights back, attacking the Gilberts. Japan begins a land campaign in China aimed at crushing the Nationalists.

Spring 1942 Allied. 1942 Allied codebreaking indicates an active German nuclear program! America enters the war.

Elihu. When America comes into the European war in Sp'42, we knew there

was a chance that it might withdraw from the war if the Axis nuked New York. This possibility weighs heavily in the Allied plans. How can Russia, alone, defeat Germany?

Summer 1942 Axis. The Axis push toward Leningrad and Moscow, and take Kharkov.

Pacific. Japan secures the Gilberts. With the perimeter established, much of the Japanese army focuses on attritioning the Nationalist army out of existence.

Summer 1942 Allies. Pacific. The Allies secure the Solomon's.

Fall 1942 Axis. Fighting in Russia continues. The Russian line runs from Leningrad to Moscow to Rostov.

Winter 1942 Axis. The Axis attack and dissolve Vichy France, to allow pouring more troops into Algeria and Tunisia. Malta falls.

Winter 1942 Allied. The Allies, faced with a solid double-line of Axis forces, make no progress in Egypt in 1942.

Pacific. The U.S. invasion of Nauru is repulsed.

Mike: I like the aggressive Allied play, which should help attrition the Japanese navy.

Spring 1943 Axis. The Axis defend North Africa and attrition in Russia. France is secure. The first Axis advanced submarine appears! The Allies now know the Axis are researching the bomb, and can deliver it, should they succeed.

Elihu. The Axis had a 1939 naval breakthrough and maximized sub production and shipbuilding. The risk of advanced subs diverted some of our production and mobilization efforts towards transports. When the first advanced sub hit the board in 1943, we had already added eight transports.

Spring 1943 Allied. Pacific. The Allies take Lae.

Mike. This is two full turns ahead of the historical conquest of Lae, which was completed in early September (fall by AWA standards, though this is somewhat subjective).

Summer 1943 Axis. With limited prospects for further BRP growth in 1944, the Axis make some attacks in Russia to drain Russian BRPs. The Axis position in North Africa is rapidly eroding.

Summer 1943 Allied. The Russians begin attacking back, pounding the Axis in earnest. Everyone hears the atomic bomb clock ticking.

Pacific. The Allies take areas adjacent to Lae.

Fall 1943 Axis. The Axis are forced to abandon North Africa.

Pacific. Chungking falls to a 24:8 attack.

Fall 1943 Allied. The Allies bomb the Kriegsmarine in Bergen, invade, and capture Oslo by exploitation.

Pacific. The Allied invasion of Hollandia is turned back, at the cost of some Japanese carriers.

Winter 1943 Axis. Pacific. With the Chinese retreating beyond Chungking, the Japanese army returns to defend the Pacific more staunchly.

Winter 1943 Allied. The Swedes then ally with the U.S., providing a bombing platform for the Allies. A cataclysmic naval battle sinks most of the Italian fleet. The Allies successfully invade the western beach in mainland Italy. Italy surrenders.

Mike: How did the Allies pull off getting Sweden to become an ally (where were the German DPs?), and what was your plan if this did not succeed?

Elihu: The WA had a pretty big diplomatic advantage. Getting any of Greece or Turkey would have caused Ploesti to fall. We had several good chances at Greece earlier but missed. With Sweden, we put 7

or 8 points there, where the Axis maximum was three or four. I don't remember how many the Axis had there.

Pacific. The second Allied invasion of Hollandia is turned back, at the cost of more Japanese carriers.

Bruce: Throughout the Pacific campaign, the naval battles were fairly frequent, interesting, and easy to resolve. The Imperial Japanese Navy actually acquitted itself more honorably than the Army.

Mike: Bruce appears pleased with the massive overhaul of the naval rules! The honorable acquittal serves the Allied purpose of further attritioning the Japanese fleet.

Spring 1944 Axis. The nail-biting commences when the German uranium separation die roll of "4" secures weapons grade material by Wi'44.

Spring 1944 Allied. Turkey allies with the U.S., and the Western Allies, through Istanbul, capture both Ploesti and Bucharest.

Mike: Sounds ominous for the Axis.

Pacific. The U.S. has amassed a large carrier fleet, and strikes out by patrol-sweeping the Japanese LBA in the West Carolines and invading Palau Korar.

Mike: Palau is 10 hexes from Lae. Eric has created an 800 pound gorilla that has no need of Hollandia or LBA in range of its primary target. Palau is captured two turns ahead of its historical capture on September 20th, 1944. It would seem that Eric is on track to win in the Pacific. Bruce will need to pull a rabbit out of that hat, even without an Allied a-bomb!

Summer 1944 Axis. Pacific. Japan withdraws most of its forces to the home islands and its immediate vicinity.

Summer 1944 Allied. The U.S. and Britain advance into Hungary while also invading France.

Pacific. The U.S. conducted many small, unopposed invasions in Su'44, from the DEI to the Philippines to Marcus, the Marshalls, and the East Carolines, which were all undefended.

Fall 1944 Allied. We know the bomb is coming. Most of the Western Front ports have been taken. Germany controls only Kiel, but there is no land supply route to it. An Allied paratroop into Stettin, Germany's only other supplied port, is thwarted by Germany's remaining air. The Germans fight tenaciously on all fronts, but the Russians advance to within three hexes of Berlin; the Western Allies are in western and southern Germany; and the Western Allies have firestormed three cities and destroyed all but one German oil plant.

Mike. Elihu has insured that it isn't just the Allies that are biting their nails!

Bruce: While no one could have asked for a more entertaining finish, the Germans made some serious errors with victory in sight. The first was not garrisoning Bergen, which allowed a Western Allied invasion of Scandinavia. This led directly to a serious oil problem. The second was overlooking the fact that if Turkey aligned itself with the Western Allies (as it did), Rumania was open to a seaborne invasion.

But the most fundamental mistake was precisely "fighting tenaciously on all fronts". In Spring 1944, the Germans knew that the Western Allies would be out of the war after another three turns, so the only dangers were losing every western front port (which very nearly happened) and losing Berlin. A German withdrawal to the Reich in Spring 1944, abandoning western France, Italy and the Balkans in order to trade space for time (and a fully built German force pool), would have led to a much calmer ending!

Mike. Why can one never think of these calming strategies until afterward? "You

WANT Ploesti?? You TAKE Ploesti!" is a pretty good plan for most players.

Pacific. An invasion of Guam, Iwo Jima, Formosa, and other areas in the DEI forced a final showdown in the Japanese home islands.

Winter 1944 Axis. The Swedish navy sets sail to try to stop supply from Stettin to Kiel. The German Luftwaffe is barely able to destroy the Swedes en route to the unescorted supply line. Germany nukes New York City.

Mike: Talk about a shaft to the heart, just making it by "this much"!

Winter 1944 Allied. With the war over for the Western Allies in Europe, Western Allied naval forces are transferred to the Pacific.

Pacific. The U.S. carrier-swept 20 Japanese AAF and destroyed half the IJN in a massive naval battle that included the first wave of kamikazes. Losses on both sides were horrendous, but the US was able to build back enough NAS to have 53 CBA for the following turn. With only five marines, only a 70:36, or 1.5:1, attack was possible against Okinawa, so the U.S. chose to invade Tokushima, the port southwest of Osaka. Up to this point, the cumulative resistance modifiers for Japan were at +6, much lower than average. But due to high Allied losses in winter, Japanese resistance began to increase rapidly.

Spring 1945 Allied. Russia fights on, alone, facing a German war machine severely lacking oil, and with a near pre-war BRP base.

Pacific. The threat of two waves of 15 kamikazes each (Japan built only kamikazes during its spring turn) made it extremely difficult to patrol, sea supply Tokushima, and sea transport three 5o6s and 7 AAF into the Allied bridgehead. The U.S. patrol destroyed every last Japanese ship, clearing the waters for future turns, but kamikaze and

ground attack losses resulted in no change in the overall Japanese (the Allies gained 8 points, and Japan gained 8 resistance points). But the Allied navies from Europe (remember, the Allies were at peace with Germany at this point) had arrived as reinforcements, and the American bridgehead had expanded to N29 (east of Kagoshima) and, via exploitation attack, M29. With land-based air bases secured, but without adequate range to protect further sea supply and sea transport/invasion into Japan, we adjudicated that Japan would survive until Fall 1945.

Bruce: Prioritizing kamikazes was an act of desperation, as Japan hadn't managed to get many resistance modifiers in the Pacific (nor did they expect to) and had almost completely failed to get their anticipated (or at least hoped for) compensation in China. But it was also probably the smartest thing the Japanese did in the war, as the kamikazes inflicted heavy casualties on the U.S. Navy. The Army may have had something to do with this, as it wasn't that easy for the U.S. to invade the China coast, so Okinawa was a serious roadblock, and the Americans ended up going into Japan with no land-based air cover.

It was clear that the Japanese resistance modifiers were right because the final turns in the Pacific were hard-fought and important to the outcome of the game, although nothing could match the tension in Europe!

The Pacific mapboard was fun to play even though play was often suspended when all four players planned and strategized over the dynamic and unusual board positions in Europe. Overall, it was a very close and enjoyable match.

Summer 1945 Allied. Germany exhausts her oil reserve to enable all her air to oppose Russia. 27 German air attempt to intercept the airborne drop over Berlin; it is opposed

by 29 Russian air. After five rounds of air combat, the German air is turned back.

Chris and Elihu, both exhausted, agree to a game-ending resolution: a Russian 37:36 attack on Berlin, which fails on a die roll of "2". The European board is adjudicated as a one-turn Axis victory.

Bruce: The Germans came close to a complete victory, as they would have had a second atomic bomb in Winter 1945, with more to follow in 1946. The Russians therefore had to take Berlin in Fall 1945 or never take it at all. A classic finish to an exciting game!

Post-mortem. It was agreed by all the players that their game was one of the most interesting and exciting A World at War games they have had the pleasure of playing.

Bruce: The Japanese strategy essentially failed, because the Chinese eventually retreated, and Japan gained only one cumulative resistance modifier (although freeing up the Japanese Army had considerable value).

Game 2

Hogen-Hogen-Milne-Milne

European Axis:	Jon Hogen
Japan:	Vic Hogen
Allies Europe:	Kevin Milne
Allies Pacific:	Paul Milne
European Result:	Winter 1945 (+2)
Pacific Result:	Spring 1946 (+2)
Overall Result:	Axis (+4)

Game narrative provided by Jon Hogen and Vic Hogen. Additional comments provided by Paul Milne.

Axis. The overall plan was to keep tensions in both theatres low. This would limit WA shipbuilding, especially light ships. Also, it would delay WA carrier production as much as possible. Germany planned to build a fairly big navy, threatening Sea Lion, but taking what we were given in any case.

1939 Fall Axis. The beginning was pretty standard. Poland falls with no losses.

Mike: This is always nice for Germany, as it helps with 1939 shipbuilding or acceleration. Losing air is never good for the Winter attack that Jon almost always does, but that has been helped by the rule change eliminating casualties in overruns.

Pacific. Two destroyers are allotted each available turn, giving a total of 26 DDs available for the DoW turn. China and Burma are anticipated as stalemate zones.

1939 Winter Axis. I make my usual attack into the Low Countries at 4:1 odds or better (again with no losses). I try to activate some Balkan countries, but get nothing. I declared war with Italy, so that the excess BRPs won't be wasted, and I can concentrate on Italian fleet builds in 1940. I plan to have a larger than usual German fleet, which will include a 5 factor battleship.

1939 Winter Allied. The French fleet supplies Malta, and is intercepted by two

Italian subs. The attack rolls on the subs are 11 and 12! The French fleet factors lost will help the French surrender level.

1940 Spring Axis. The Germans attacked through the Low Countries and grabbed the hexes adjacent to Paris. Simultaneously a very real Sea Lion threat kept the British somewhat honest. I laid down an extra DD to put a little more teeth in the threat.

Mike: This is the key to a successful 1939 Winter attack in the West, which Jon is very good at. With the German air able to project over England from bases in Holland and Germany, particularly the beach northwest of Great Yarmouth, Britain must be careful about what it commits to France. Germany will have less armor than it would in a Spring 1940 attack, but usually faces less on the ground because of this. The extra DD won't matter before Fall, and is probably window dressing. Two DDs launched in Winter 1939 would be a REAL threat. Jon often scraps his CVL, but not to lay down a DD. He wants a BB5.

Pacific. An early Naval Air Training result is obtained to mobilize as much elite NAS as possible for the Japanese. Japanese losses in China are obligingly low, thanks to poor die rolls, helping growth.

1940 Summer Axis. The Axis take Paris and surround a bit of French ground forces, with light losses. Vichy is not established. The French surrender level is +3 (it was actually +4). All French colonies go neutral.

Mike: Jon plans to invade Spain, so DPs that would be put there go instead to France, to lower the troops gained as Free French, and to prevent the colonies from going Free French as well.

1940 Fall Axis. Germany takes out Denmark and Norway, bombs Britain with twenty four air, and masses armor on the Spanish border.

Japan gives itself the luxury of mobilizing a shipbuilding point, the only extravagance in the low tension strategy. This is used to build a few extra BBs, but no new carriers are laid down prior to war. Japan will spend the rest of her mobilization points on army and air units.

1940 Winter Axis. The Axis declare war on Spain (which will end up being a two turn conquest) and announce one winter prep result. Throughout 1940, the Italians build ships, gain an occasional hex with an 11+ factor attrition in Egypt, and occasionally spend a few BRPs for a small offensive in Egypt. It helps that the Germans are continuously threatening a Sea Lion in the Atlantic, to keep reinforcements in Britain. As a result, the Italians are threatening a push to Suez by year end.

1940 Winter Allies. The British reinforce Madrid (which I will be happy to attack in Spring 1941).

Mike: Things are going a little bit too well for Jon. He has had very few losses, and nothing to upset his timetable. Kevin is going to have his hands full.

1941 Spring Axis. This turn is mop up and position. I attack Madrid and exploit down within air range of Gibraltar. I make a small initial push in Egypt. I end the turn with most armor back on the Russian border. My air can go east or west from Germany to support a Sea Lion or a Barbarossa, and my armies are poised to go for Gibraltar and/or the Suez Canal.

Mike: His positioning of his army to give him his array of options is masterful.

Pacific. The Japanese research plan is plain vanilla. No DRM increases are tried for. I go for a submarine force pool increase, air defense (it's very cheap), an extra air base, and one air range. The lower air DRM will hurt me a lot when air attritions begin in 1943.

1941 Summer Axis. This is decision time. With a lot of British forces discouraging a Sea Lion attempt, I opt for a balanced attack against Egypt and Russia, while getting units adjacent to Gibraltar. The Russian attack is not spectacular because of some force diversion in Egypt, but it destroys enough of the Russian army to get them on their heels. The advance in Russia was moderate.

1941 Fall Axis. The forces diverted to Egypt achieve the breakthrough that pushes the British across the Canal, and forces them to retreat to await reinforcements in Iraq. Axis partisans in the area play an important role in the breakthrough. Ten German army air are diverted from Russia to the Gibraltar area to start the isolation effort.

Paul: He got lucky in Egypt and got two early hexes in attritions, and then decided to attack.

Mike: Jon's judgment on what to do with his options is excellent. He is very good at strangling or bottlenecking the West, while he keeps Russia at bay.

1941 Winter Axis. I announce an air DRM modifier, and divert an additional two German army air to Gibraltar (along with the larger than usual German navy). So by the close of 1941, the Med is sealed, while adequate German gains were made in Russian territory. My sub warfare was hampered by poor torpedo rolls, but the Spanish ports help to compensate.

Mike: With the new naval rules, the number of air squadrons that can attack a combat group at sea is limited by air DRM. With air DRM of 2, only 8 can attack. Jon's increase to air DRM 3 allows 12 to attack, hence the transfer of two more from Russia.

Pacific. The initial attack was planned for Winter 1941, and setup and execution were as normal. Surprise is good. A carrier was in Pearl. I dispatch the air, sink and destroy

the carrier with 3 ENAS, leaving 10 ENAS. I switch the remaining air to the light ships. In the second wave, all remaining light ships are sunk. I get 3 victory points for PH. Paul defended Port Moresby heavily with two 2x2's. Rabaul is lightly garrisoned. Lae is garrisoned, but Hollandia and the beach east of it are open. Guadalcanal is undefended and is taken by a small force. Rabaul and Wake fall. The southern Gilberts are also taken. Armor lands in Singora, and my infantry make a slow advance against a good defense. Java and Sumatra fall.

1941 Winter Allies.

Pacific. Paul only had 10 DDs left, so only 5 could be used to carry units in. With only 5 DDs available, Paul reinforces the Noumea area with infantry and places his two remaining carriers in the Australia box.

Paul. After PH I have two carriers, CA4 and 10DD for fast ships, and of course the eight almost useless BB3's. That change still really bugs me. (Ed. note: Paul is referring to the new naval rules, which significantly reduce the usefulness of slow ships, and which Vic exploited by targeting lights, instead of the BB3s.) Obviously I have to use 5 DD for transport. So to oppose his second turn I have 2 carriers, CA4, and 5 DD (and the Aussie CA4, DD2) cowering in the Australia box to avoid annihilation. He will be able to invade everywhere. I move some of the Atlantic fleet, including the carriers but they won't be available until his third turn.

1942 Spring Axis. Since the Russians hadn't gotten hit by the full force of the German army, the challenge in 1942 was going to be keeping a stronger than usual Russian off balance enough to allow my Med gains to bear fruit. The bulk of the German land force is committed to discourage Russian aggression. Gibraltar continues to be isolated by twelve army air and the German navy. Portugal is taken.

Pacific. Burma, Philippines, Malaya and Borneo fall. Paul was unable to reinforce the Solomons, so Japanese forces capture the rest of the Gilberts, the Solomons, and New Hebrides. Four Aleutian islands are captured.

Paul comes out of the box under air cover with his carriers. America has laid down lots of five factor BBs. Other ship production is less robust, but the worry is Germany with a larger navy. It appeared to me that a Germany first strategy was underway, which helped me a lot.

Paul: I had very little useful Navy and used what DD's I had left to garrison New Caledonia and retain it. It will be a long road back. Another strategy (or trick as I call it) is to invade the Philippines initially with a 1x2, and then re-invade the second turn with a 1o3 armor and exploit into Manila with the 3o3 armor. This saves DD4 on the DOW turn, letting the Japanese go that many more places. I apparently am one of the last people on earth to learn about this.

Mike: Well, not the last, since this trick has never occurred to me either. It takes advantage of the fact that the maximum defense in Manila on the DoW+2 turn is six. Thus a 3o3 with 9 AAF can get a straight 2:1 on it, though it is not without risk, and could be expensive. It falls rather naturally out of the Los Angeles style of play, as they (Ken Cruz, Vic Hogen, Jon Hogen, Stephen Erickson) are almost all in the habit of mobilizing a 3o3 armored unit in Japan's first mobilization. This has a variety of uses in India, Australia and Siberia, as well as the Philippines. It's not a bad unit to have handy.

1942 Spring Allies. The US enter the war but initially are pretty helpless, of course. The Allies make knocking Germany out of the war the first priority, and divert a large amount of army air to Europe. Much of it is

committed early on to rescue Iraq and start a push back toward Egypt.

Jon. The commitment of air to Iraq was fortunate from my point of view.

Pacific. Lots of WA air starts to appear in Australia and Noumea.

1942 Summer Axis. The Axis successfully activate Sweden. The siege of Gibraltar continues. The Axis attack in Russia to keep Russia at bay.

Pacific. Japan settles down to a long war by taking Niutao and Singapore. Transport losses in the Atlantic put India out of oil. Maximum island expansion of 10 points is achieved. Japan starts to fortify Lae, Rabaul, and Hollandia; with sub patrols in the Gilberts and air to facilitate an interception there.

1942 Summer Allies. The Allies start to push forward in Iraq.

Pacific. The WA begin the slow process of slogging up the Hebrides into the Solomons.

1942 Fall Axis. The siege of Gibraltar continues, and the Axis attack again in Russia, but send much of their air west at turn end to help finish off Gibraltar in winter.

1942 Fall Allies. An Allied Fall raid gets ashore in Brittany (in an effort to draw some air from the Gibraltar area). The raid did have the effect of weakening the East somewhat.

Paul. When Gibraltar looked ready to go down, Kevin made a hasty French invasion to try to take the pressure off. We were still woefully short of Navy (especially light ships).

Pacific. With the Japanese carriers in Rabaul and a lot of AAF in Northern Borneo, air attrition starts to occur from Port Moresby and the Cairns area of Australia. Eventually Paul wins this battle. He has more air than I do, but he has to advance slowly up the Solomons to stay under his air cover. Destroyer levels and bombardment forces have been sucked into the Atlantic to try an

early invasion of France, assisting in slowing the advance up the Solomons.

1942 Winter Axis. The French invasion is bottled up. Gibraltar falls. The Italian navy joins the German navy in the Atlantic. The Russian line is stable and the Russian closest point to Berlin is 10 hexes (with 10 turns to go before a German victory).

1942 Winter Allied. With Gibraltar gone, Axis air transferred to the channel, and the combined Axis navies available to oppose supply to the bridgehead, the raid on France withers on the vine.

Paul: Jon was able to take Gibraltar and then kick Kevin out of France. I'm still amazed he could do all that and not get hurt more in Russia.

1943 Spring Axis. All is quiet on the western front. Since part of the Allied air was committed in the Middle East, there was no chance of a 1943 invasion of France, especially with a larger than usual German navy augmented with a larger than usual Italian navy. The sub war was still a factor thanks to the addition of the Gibraltar modifier.

Paul. The Germans got a naval DRM, a second air range, another torpedo result, and the modifier for Gibraltar. The BoTA, which had started to go our way, went bad again, and we started losing about eight transports a turn. It was impossible to rebuild enough light ships in these circumstances, and we were behind the eight ball the whole way.

1943 Spring Allied. In the east, the Russians begin to make some headway, but have the whole German army (just about) against them.

1943 Summer Allied. Russia drives forward, using shock troops and exploiting armor.

1943 Fall Axis. The Axis put the Russian armored spearhead out of full supply by an attrition.

1943 Fall Allied. The Russians spend the turn to clear a supply line.

1944 Spring Allied. The Allied army reopens the Suez Canal. But the more significant event occurs when the enlarged German/Italian combined navy does the job they were created for by turning back the Spring invasion of France against a now fortified French coast.

Paul. Jon was able to use his ships to disrupt D-Day by attacking fleets up in the north of the UK, where there was no air (it was all down south for the invasion). He didn't win the naval battle, but enough damage was done to postpone the invasion for a turn. On that turn you have a lot of navy moving around, it isn't mutually supporting, and the air is all needed for the invasion down in the south.

Jon: This created a situation where the allies were a full turn behind in the West, and meant that they had to get ashore in Summer and make a "no detour" beeline for Berlin.

1944 Summer Allied. The Allies land in France for good this time.

Pacific. Lae falls.

1944 Fall Axis. The Russian forward armor spearhead gets surrounded again by attrition.

1944 Fall Allied. The Russians spend more time extricating, instead of advancing.

Pacific. The Allies successfully invade Ceram (Anbon), One of the westernmost islands off New Guinea, with our first major carrier battle. Japan loses the battle with two CVs and two CVLs sunk. The WA lose one CV sunk and one damaged. The invasion goes through.

1944 Winter Axis. Attrition on the western front succeeds in surrounding the most forward elements of the Allied western push around Paris.

1944 Winter Allies.

Pacific. Paul then decides to turn north and invades Oroluk, the island adjacent to Truk, hoping to build a port there as he did in Guadalcanal. Rabaul is still holding on at this point, and the Caroline's are heavily defended.

1945 Spring Axis. As 1945 began it was clear that Berlin would not fall to a ground advance till maybe Wi'45. An attrition in Spring on the Eastern front deprived the Russian of a few forward airbases, limiting the advance in Spring.

Pacific. The Japanese take back Oroluk on a 2 to 1 attack.

1945 Spring Allies.

Pacific. With limited resources, and only 45 carrier factors, the WA take Palau Korar (the port in the West Caroline's) on a 2-1 attack. I was hoping for an exchange, but Paul got it clean.

1945 Summer Axis.

Pacific. With the oil centers, transports, Manila and the Chinese coast intact, Japan begins to drive the Chinese back. Burma is quiet, owing to the lack of WA shipping and oil.

1945 Summer Allies. The Western Allies get sufficient airbases within range of Berlin. They will drop the A-bomb on Berlin and put them out of the war in Fall 1945.

At this point, the outcome of the game is easy enough to see, and it is adjudicated by mutual agreement.

Europe: Germany will succumb in Fall 1945. However, since there were not enough resources (or time) to drive on Italy simultaneously, Italy will last till Winter 1945 for a 2 turn Axis victory.

Pacific: With Okinawa heavily defended, it looks like Paul is going to try the Philippines next. Paul has been getting island victory points since Spring of 1944, but the Japanese resistance point total on this turn is

19. With the Atlantic wrapping in winter, 1945, Japan is awarded a 2 turn victory by adjudication. The WA have only one bomb for use in Europe, so the earliest they can drop the bomb on Japan is 1946. This was due to very poor rolls and Japanese spying.

Post-mortem. *Paul: the European Axis coupled a conventional attack strategy along with an aggressive European Axis naval building program (four additional large German battleships). Opportunity and Allied miscues allowed the conquest of Spain, Gibraltar and Egypt. This was paired with a low tension Japanese pre-war strategy and aggressive Pacific island conquests once war broke out. The Allies were always off balance and the Axis won a combined 4 turn victory. We made some mistakes to be sure, like not building enough CVEs in 1942 when we had the chance, but I needed DD's in the Pacific to get back on the offensive. Also, the CA shortage was a real problem. You do not have enough fast ships. I also believe I cut off the double shipyard mobilization in the Pacific one turn too early. Another area I helped him with was that I had two 2x2s in Port Moresby, and in fact was able to fortify it the next turn. I kept it the entire war, but I had been pushed so far down the chain it wasn't nearly as valuable as I expected. It also left Rabaul and Lae lightly defended and easily taken. For strategic redeployment of air, Rabaul is too valuable and clearly needs to be defended very tough the DOW turn. When I finally worked my way thru the Solomons/ Bismarcks, Truk, Guam, etc. were almost impregnable.*

Vic: WA losses in the Atlantic were heavier than anticipated by us and helped the Japanese immensely.

Game 3

Johnson-Scheers-Stanley-Stanley

European Axis: A.J. Johnson
Japan: Randy Scheers
Allies Europe: Don Stanley
Allies Pacific: Thomas Stanley
European Result: Spring 1945 (-1)
Pacific Result: Fall 1945 (0)
Overall Result: Allied (-1)

Game narrative provided by.

Game narrative provided by Don Stanley and Randy Scheers.

1939 Fall Axis. Poland is attacked with multiple overruns and then a 3:1 on Warsaw. It falls with minimal losses.

1939 Winter Allies. Nothing of note happens as Germany sits tight and builds up their forces. Russia attacks the Finnish border hexes and takes two of them.

1940 Spring Axis. Germany conquers the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Italy declares war on Britain and France, and the Axis capture Marseilles. Italy attacks in Egypt and kills the front line of British units. The British lines in Africa look very thin.

1940 Spring Allies. Britain suicides a South African 3-4 in France for a fast redeploy to Egypt. They also redeploy a number of units from Britain through the Med. The line in Africa is now stable.

1940 Summer Axis. Paris falls.

1940 Summer Allies. The WA take a 1-1 attack in Africa and get lucky, isolating most of the Axis armies in Africa. There is a +3 French surrender and no Vichy is declared. Russia takes Bessarabia.

1940 Fall Axis. The Germans bomb London and drop two paratroopers in Great Yarmouth. They also rush some units to Africa.

1940 Fall Allies. Britain walks forward through Libya at the same time taking an open Tobruk. Britain attacks the paratroopers at 2-1, killing them and six German air.

Don: In retrospect I think this was my biggest mistake of the game. I should have just surrounded them with my three 3x4's and one 2o5, and attritioned. I had a fort in hand and two more 3x4 that I could build. I could have also moved units from Africa back. Also the Germans only had six DD.

1940 Winter Axis. The Germans bomb Birmingham. Britain loses seven transports.

1940 Winter Allies. USAT is 28 before the tension roll, but unfortunately, the roll was not a six. Britain uses maximum lend-lease to help re-build all the transports, all though it increases the deficit. Britain ends the year with -43 BRPs. At least the high tensions will mean that the US will have European mobilizations each turn in 1941

1941 Spring Axis. Malta falls while the war in Libya continues to be very static. Germany prepares for Barbarossa. Britain loses seven transports.

1941 Summer Axis. Barbarossa. The Germans make a nice attack. All of the Russian units on the border are isolated.

Don: The Russian defense was not so strong, but at least had no major holes.

1941 Summer Allies. The Germans forgot to cut supply to Odessa, so the Russian defense recovers somewhat. Britain again uses maximum lend-lease to rebuild the transports.

Don: Overall the mistakes on both sides roughly cancel. I felt I worked out a good Russian defense for the German fall attack.

1941 Fall Axis. Germany takes Smolensk, Kiev, Dnepropetrovsk, and Sevastopol. Germany advances into the woods in the north and gets next to Kharkov. The Finns

recapture their border hexes, cutting of spring and winter Murmansk grants. German raiding has been ineffective. No transports have been sunk by raiders, and a BB4 and some other ships have been lost.

1941 Fall Allies. The Russians move next to the Finnish border hexes, and form a mostly straight line. USAT is 48, but a six is not rolled. Britain invades an independent Morocco with a single factor. Britain has managed to build all its transports.

1941 Winter Axis. The Russian winter roll is a '5' for a winter level of 10. Germany declares war on the US.

Pacific. Japan declares war on Britain and the United States. The game produces one of the most unusual Pearl Harbor attacks of all time. The Allies had moved the two Atlantic carriers to the Pacific before the war, making a total of five there. The Allies were unlucky, and three of them are caught and destroyed during the Pearl Harbor attack. But luck runs both ways, and against all odds the remaining two U.S. CVs find the Japanese strike force, achieve maximum surprise, and sink two of its carriers. So five CVs are sunk as a result of Pearl Harbor! Veteran players could not remember ever seeing such a result. Japan takes Hong Kong, Rangoon, Singapore, Brunei, Palembang, Lae, Wake, San Cristobal, Tamana, and invades Lingayen.

1941 Winter Allies. Russia manages to get a couple of 4o6's through attrition. They also take back most of the woods hexes south of Leningrad. Britain conquers Morocco. The U.S. opens the Alaska highway. They don't open Persia, since the WA don't have enough spare units to protect it. Britain ends with zero BRPs thanks to about 70 BRP of grants from the US over the course of the year. Russia ends with 5 BRPs, but lots of unbuilt units. The British had no unbuilt transports when Germany declared war. Although up to now in the sub war Germany did well, they failed completely at raiders.

1942 YSS. The U.S. had 554 BRP at the start of 1942. This number was helped along by their 6 mobilizations (4 ETO, 2 PTO).

Don: I made some mistakes by mobilizing too many 5o6's for European mobilizations. AAF would have been more useful to have in 1942 and 1943.

1942 Spring Axis. Nothing much happens in the Russian mud. Britain pushes forward a bit in North Africa.

Pacific. Japan takes the Philippines, the rest of the DEI, Rabaul, and Bougainville. The Gilberts fall by isolation.

1942 Summer Axis. Germany pushes the Russians back a bit between Kharkov and the forests north of Smolensk but do not capture Kharkov, and does not get next to Moscow. They exploit to get a ZOC on Vologda.

Pacific. The air grind over New Guinea starts as both sides attack each other. Japan doesn't advance the perimeter anywhere.

1942 Fall Allies. Russia pushes the Germans back, reclaiming the gains that Germany made in summer. The Russians also take the one hex protecting access to Murmansk back from the Finns. They take the woods back.

The US invades Nauru. The air grind over New Guinea continues.

1942 Winter Axis.

Pacific. Japan retakes Nauru and reinforces it.

1942 Winter Allies.

Pacific. The U.S. air force starts to overwhelm the Japanese air force in New Guinea; after this turn the Japanese have to start pulling back and protecting their air.

1943 Spring Allies. The Western Allies push the Axis back to Tripoli in North Africa. Russia starts a slow push forward.

Pacific. The US takes San Cristobal.

1943 Summer Allies. Tripoli falls; there are now no Axis units in North Africa. Russia continues to grind forward slowly.

Pacific. The U.S. takes Bougainville.

1943 Fall Allies. The Western Allies liberate Malta. Russia continues to slowly advance.

Pacific. The U.S. takes Lae and Nauru.

1943 Winter Allies. The Russian continue their advance, pushing Germany back to around the line between Riga and Odessa. Sicily is invaded and Syracuse and Messina are captured.

Pacific. The U.S. takes Rabaul.

1944 Spring Allies. The WAs invade France at Caen, exploit next to Paris, drop a paratrooper in St. Nazaire and isolate all of Brittany. Italy surrenders. Russia advances close to the pact line.

Pacific. The U.S. takes Hollandia, Wotje, Majuro, and gets the Gilberts by isolation

At this point, the game was called. It was adjudicated as a draw in Europe and a one-turn victory for the Western Allies in the Pacific.

Post-Mortem. Randy. The game was fun and enjoyed by everyone. There were no major mistakes, and the mistakes that were made didn't affect the overall result. As a newcomer to the convention, Thomas did a great job. It was unfortunate that we ran out of time and couldn't complete the game.

Game 4

Sparks-Wilson-Schoenfeld-Collins

European Axis:	Jim Sparks
Japan:	Greg Wilson
Allies Europe:	Ed Schoenfeld
Allies Pacific:	Chris Collins
European Result:	Win 1946 (+6) (est.)
Pacific Result:	Sum 1946 (+4) (est.)
Overall Result:	Axis (+10) (est.)

Game narrative provided by Greg Wilson, Jim Sparks and Chris Collins.

Axis.

Greg: Japan's strategy will be to shoot for Summer 1941, attack with three CVBs on the way, and yet keep tensions low enough so it will not hit 20 by Winter 1940 (so Russia can't pull units to fight the German summer 1941 invasion). Also a heavy investment in NAT, NAS and Air DRM will be made, to come together for a summer 1941 attack. To help in this effort Germany played a low tensions game.

Jim: The European Axis strategy was to be supportive of the Japanese strategy, allowing Greg to realize his plan. Since Greg was building pre-war carriers, which the U.S. would have difficulty matching anyway, both Germany and Italy also built three or four carriers each. This was combined with producing NAS and researching NAT, as well as air and naval DRMs, one air range result, and two torpedo results. Additional German subs (beyond those needed in the SW box) were added via production, to allow on-board activity.

1939 Fall Axis. Poland falls. Italy mobilizes 2 AAF and 2 NAS.

Pacific. Japan starts an aggressive shipbuilding campaign, laying down a large number of additional CVs, including a CVB.

1939 Fall Allies. The British commit heavily to France.

Pacific. The U.S. tries to match the Japanese within the restrictions of their shipbuilding points. They also lay down a CVB.

1940 Winter Axis. Italy declares war on Greece and begins taking attrition options. Crete is invaded, to allow using it as an airbase to cover operations to Tobruk. Germany builds a seventh destroyer.

1940 Spring Axis. Germany declares war on the Low Countries and takes them out, as well as taking some hexes in France. Denmark and Norway are left alone for now. Germany builds an eighth destroyer. Italy produces a 2o5 armor.

1940 Summer Axis. Paris is occupied.

Pacific. To make sure Japan has the BRPs it needs, they mobilize for three successive turns, beginning this turn.

1940 Summer Allies. France falls. Vichy is established normally. Britain re-builds its forces in Britain and defends strongly against a possible Sea Lion.

1940 Fall Axis. Germany rolls for the Balkan minors, including Yugoslavia, and benefits from a +2 modifier for Italy not being in the war. Rumania and Hungary activate, but no gains are made in Yugoslavia. Germany takes another full offensive on the Western front. Germany declares war on Denmark and Norway. With eight destroyers and two 2o6 armor, Norway is conquered in one turn. Germany also bombs Britain.

Pacific. Japan enters French Indochina. Japan completes its second mobilization.

1940 Winter Axis. Italy sea transports the Italian armor and a German 3x3 into Tobruk, and threatens the Egyptian line. Two submarines in Tobruk and seven Italian AAF in Crete, discourage interception from Alexandria. Germany is short of BRPs at this point, and elects to simply build forces to prepare for Barbarossa.

Pacific. Japan completes the conquest of French Indochina. Japan completes its third mobilization.

1940 Winter Allies. Britain, concerned about being able to hold the line in Egypt, retreats to the Nile.

1941 Spring Axis. Germany assists Italy in taking Athens, to complete the conquest of Greece. Malta falls. Germany continues to hold the possible invasion of Britain over the Western Allies head. Italy produces another 2o5 armor.

1941 Summer Axis. Germany invades Russia, killing most of the Russian army. The Italians attack in Egypt and cross the Nile.

Pacific. Japan attacks. Pearl was not too great, as there were no CVs, but Japan did manage to take the key hexes needed, namely, Wake, Rangoon, Singapore and Rabaul. An important key to the plan was to try to grab and hold the Gilberts and Solomons as quickly as possible. To do this, NAS was in position to stage to the islands grabbed in the initial attack, and an uninverted TF was SRed to Rabaul so it could intercept any Allied reinforcements.

Chris: Japan caught the Western Allies unprepared. Fortunately, the Japanese did not find any CVs at Pearl. However, this aggressiveness paid off, because the U.S. mobilization strategy was approximately two turns behind where it needed to be.

1941 Fall Axis. Germany continues the advance, pushing to Kharkov.

Pacific. The rest of the Dutch possessions are taken, and the mountain line in India/Burma is ready for occupation.

1941 Winter Axis. Germany attritions in Russia.

Pacific. Japan continues pushing the Allies back, taking the New Hebrides and the Ellice Islands.

1941 Winter Allies. Britain is hurting under the twin pressures of Happy Time, and the loss of all of her Far Eastern possessions.

1942 Spring Axis. In spite of the extra +1 modifier for Japan being at war with the U.S., the European Axis have successfully kept tensions low enough to postpone a DOW on the U.S. until Spring 1942. This pushed off by a turn the arrival of some more U.S. carriers, helping Japan. Germany declares war on the U.S. The Axis produce submarines and infantry, and send a 2o6 to assist the Italians in Egypt.

Pacific. Port Moresby falls to a combination of overland and sea invasion.

Chris: Japan was able to successfully invade and take Port Moresby, with limited Allied airpower able to intervene.

1942 Summer Axis. Germany pockets a significant number of Russian units between Kharkov and Rostov, with the help of a paradrop. The Italians advance across the Suez Canal.

Pacific. The advance in the islands hits its high water mark (10 island chains). Japan also successfully gains a foothold in the Aleutians.

Chris: The Allies pressed a major naval battle this turn, but lost 2 CVs, to none for Japan.

Mike: I like the fact that Chris chose to fight, in spite of the outcome.

1942 Summer Allies. The Western Allies ship BRPs via Murmansk to aid the Russians. Very little gets through the gauntlet of two on-board submarines in Bergen, one submarine from the Atlantic SW box, six German NAS, and a German task force containing a carrier, which, to add insult to injury, achieves surprise. The light ships are targeted, contributing to a light ship shortage.

1942 Fall Axis. Fighting in Russia continues.

Pacific. The Japanese successfully invade Cairns and Darwin, and start collecting a Japanese resistance point each turn, for holding Port Moresby, Cairns, and Darwin.

1942 Winter Axis. Attritions on the Eastern Front.

Pacific. Japan takes a 1:1 attack on Townsville, but rolls a "1".

Greg: At that point I just worked on holding Australia as long as possible to get as many resistance points as possible.

Mike: Given how well things are going, I suspect Greg was considering raiding the Pacific transports from Townsville. Chris has managed to hold New Caledonia and the Fiji Islands, so those avenues are safe from predation.

1943 Spring Axis. Germany begins adding interceptors.

1943 Spring Allies. The line in Russia has stabilized, and the Russians begin pushing the Germans back. The Allies go on the counter-offensive in the Middle East.

1943 Summer Axis. The European Axis observe that Britain has lost quite a few light ships, and decide to challenge the British fleet. The entire Kriegsmarine is sent to raid, in groups of three. It has been augmented with several carriers, as well as more destroyers. Although no ships get through to the transports, Britain is severely taxed in opposing these ships. In the end, although the Germans suffer damage, the British suffer more, because of the German's +1 NDRM advantage for raiding.

1943 Summer Axis. The Germans retreat several hexes in Russia, to blunt the effect of the Russian attack.

1943 Summer Allies. Russia takes what the Germans give them.

Pacific. The Allies counter offensive kicks off against Gilberts, but Japan gets lucky,

and manages to again take out carriers with no losses. At this point the Japanese have a serious CV advantage. The Allies are also suffering big naval losses in the Atlantic, as a German Z plan comes to fruition.

Chris: The second major naval battle occurs when the Allies try to invade Tarawa (Gilbert Is.), where the Japanese have built a port. The Japanese successfully intercept from Rabaul, and hold off the Allies.

Mike: Ouch! A port too? Greg has pulled out all the stops.

1943 Winter Allies. The Russians push the Germans back to the hex row running from Tallinn to Dnepropetrovsk.

Pacific. The Allies re-take Cairns, finally shutting down the Australian resistance point.

Chris: Overall, the Japanese had accumulated 13 resistance points for Allied losses and 5 Australian resistance points by Winter 1943. Concurrent with challenges in the Pacific, naval successes in the European theater drew naval reinforcements earmarked for the Pacific to that theater, keeping the Allies from being able to build overwhelming superiority in the Pacific. The game was called in spring 1944 as an overwhelming Axis victory.

For research, Western Allied efforts were on track, including Atomics, a second NDRM in 1944, and a second ADRM in 1944.

Mike: I feel Chris's pain. Greg has successfully prosecuted his Summer 1941 Japanese attack every time he has used it at the con. The combination of a powerful plan with an outstanding player is pretty deadly.

Game 5

Hanson-Carl-Rossi-Smolens

European Axis:	Dave Hanson
Japan:	Rob Carl
Allies Europe:	Steve Rossi
Allies Pacific:	Jerry Smolens
European Result:	Win 1946 (+6) (est.)
Pacific Result:	Spr 1946 (+2) (est.)
Overall Result:	Axis (+8) (est.)

Game narrative provided by Dave Hanson.

Mike: I have to commend Dave for the most detailed commentary I have ever seen, for a game played at the convention!

Gathering Storm. Originally this game was to be the "example" game, played from Monday's *Gathering Storm* game. In that tightly-fought event, Germany, at the peak of its powers, went to war against Russia (trying to climb from a trough) in Fall 1938. The Western Allies then declared war against Germany. So, a two front war! Germany at start had some seven 4o6s, 20+ AAF, a droppable airborne unit, and prewar hex control of Finland, Poland, and Rumania. Plus six BB4s launching in 1939. Starting with a two-front war in Fall 1938, and lasting to 1945, was a bit too daunting to consider for the Axis. By agreement we decided to play an 'ordinary' World At War contest.

Mike: Steve made a BIG mistake by letting Dave talk him out of using this starting point! But it probably is not yet feasible to start a Global Campaign scenario in Fall 1938, as transition rules for Japan have not been written.

Axis Strategy: The Axis Powers decided that they would mount a full-court press against Russia. Japan horrified the methodical Germans with a hari kari strategy: Go to war against an unready U.S. in winter 1940, rather than 1941!

Mike: This strategy, more than most, throws Japan under the bus, to achieve a dramatic victory in Europe. Since war in the Pacific starts four turns earlier than it did historically, the Allies would hope to take Japan down four turns ahead of time, which would be by Fall 1944, a four point Allied victory in that theater. This is not a foregone conclusion, however, as one critical component, the atomic bomb, is not going to arrive any more quickly. To achieve at least a tie, the Allies would then need to conquer Germany by Summer 1946. Once all those ships arrive from the Pacific, there is no doubt the Allies can land in France. But with little or no pressure from Russia, can they make much progress?

Rob: Being such the Japanese player I am...I have to tell you, hari kari is really Harakiri. Stupid Americans...Ha Ha! (ME...correcting somebody's spelling...the world may end...AGAIN. And point of trivia...seppuku is normally used in writing form and harakiri in spoken form. Same thing.)

1939 Fall Axis. Germany takes down Poland without loss, using two 3:1 attacks, one on breakthrough and one on exploitation. Pocket battleships on a raid get intercepted by a British CVL and CA2. NAS sink the Graf Spee. The Lutzow can only damage the British CA2. Going home, a NAS damages Lutzow. German submarines score 2/1 against British transports. Italy mobilizes two AAF and two NAS, and builds its 1939 units.

Pacific. Japan rolls well on ADRM research and decides to continue with it as a project. Japan attritions China, mobilizes six ENAS, two 3x2s, and four 2x2s, and builds 1939 units.

1939 Fall Allies. Britain calls Ireland with one DP - no effect. Britain mobilizes a 2o5, 3x4, 4o5 and one NAS. Britain starts a 3x4 in Egypt, deploys a 2o5 and 3x4 to France,

South African 3x4 and 1x3 to Gibraltar, and Indian 2x3 to Malta. Russia occupies East Poland, declares war on and occupies the Baltic States, deploys next to Rumania, and builds.

1939 Winter Axis. Research: Allies roll a "6" on a project. It turns out to be Air Range. (*Dave: Ouch!*) Germany conducts phony war, and builds. Submarines score another 2/1 against the transports.

Pacific. Japan attritions and finishes 1939 builds.

1939 Winter Allies. France sets up a defense to face the 1940 onslaught. Germany discovers a hole, and allows a reset of the defense to prevent a spring 1940 capture of Paris. Britain defends Britain strongly. Egypt contains only a couple of infantry counters. Canadian 3x4 gets overlooked in the U.S. box, by all players, and fails to deploy anywhere. Canadian absence compromises the Empire defenses in 1940. Russia builds more 1939 units, mostly next to Rumania.

1940 Spring Axis. Japan places a spy ring in Allied atomics. DoWs: Italy v. Western Allies; Germany v. Netherlands, and Belgium/Luxemburg. Germany leaves Scandinavia alone, for now. Belgians set up a 2x3, 1x3 and AAF in Brussels, and two 1x3s in N25.

Dave: This Belgian defense was perhaps suboptimal, as it allowed Germany to occupy vacant Antwerp.

A German submarine sneaks into the Firth of Forth at Rosyth, and sinks a CA2 and DD for the German harbor attack. Germany sends five 4o6s from the Alps into northwest Italy. With an Italian 3x3 and AAF, the armor breaks into southern France through U20. They take Vichy, isolate Marseilles and Lyon, and displace five French AAF from Q20 without having to counter air it. In the north, two 3x3s hit the Hague at 1:1 and die on a "1". Six 3x3s crush the Belgians in

Brussels; two 3x3s, a 1m3 and 2o6 kill the 1x3s in N25. In exploitation from N25, two 4o6s and 16 AAF overrun two 2x3s at Sedan, and armor also overruns a 2x3 at P23, to get 4o6s adjacent to Paris. Exploiters also kill two 2x3s in N24. All remaining French Army units not garrisoning KEAs are isolated out of supply. Italian infantry in Egypt kill a 1x3 in MM26, on a full Ex result. All Axis attack rolls this turn were 1s, 2s, or 3s.

Mike: Is Dave looking for a dark lining for his silver cloud?

Euro Axis generate Air and Military production. The Italians get most of the benefit, gaining a 3x3, AAF and one NAS.

Mike: Italy will soon have 8 AAF and 4 NAS!

Germany gets a 1m3 airborne, a SBP at Hamburg/Kiel, and three submarines. One BRP each of Air and Military production gets deferred to 1941.

Pacific. Japan pulls five AAF out of Manchukuo; attrition captures a hex in eastern China. Japan mobilizes 20 infantry factors. Japan produces a SBP, five BRPs of Air production (five ENAS), and five BRPs of Military production (infantry, one BRP deferred).

1940 Spring Allies. Diplomacy: USAT hit 11, and the U.S. mobilizes. Russia activates two DPs in Rumania and demands Bessarabia. A modifier of -1 reduces a die roll of "6" to a "5" result. Only about half of the Red Army's heavy units sit along the Ukraine/Rumania border, so Rumania elects to fight for its eastern province. Russia kills four Rumanian units. A 2:1 attack on Kishinev is an exchange, causing serious pain to Russia. On a second 2:1 attack at Cernauti Russia rolls a d, which kills only one of two Rumanian infantry units and allows Rumania to hold the town. Four Rumanian 1x3s survive the first turn. France eliminates an isolated 3o5 so as to be able to

rebuild it later in the turn. Unescorted Allied sea supply to Calais is cut by German AAS. The remaining French in north France will surrender at turn's end. The British navy runs sea supply to Malta from Egypt, escorted by a TF with 22 FF. Two NAS and two AAF cover Malta from Sicily, allowing interception by Italian submarines from Messina, and the Italian battleship TF from Genoa. British strategic Ultra card allows a TF in Gibraltar to counter intercept. Italian submarine in HH19 sinks a CA2 from the escort force. Sea fight in the Malta hex goes to the Italians, narrowly. Four search dice give the Italians the locations of both British TFs. The escort TF, from Egypt, is found twice. With only one search the Brits do not find the Italians. A land-based air strike scores one hit on BB3 Royal Sovereign. Surface battle trades hits. Royal Sovereign takes one more hit, for damage, while BB3 Valiant scores two hits for damage against Italian BB3 Cavour. Five British light ships score a single hit on an Italian CA2. Seven Italian light ships sink a British CA2. Then each side loses a CA2 and DD sunk by the other side's submarines! With no more usable light ships and only four undamaged BB3s, the British abandon the sea supply effort. Malta is isolated. The Italians take great interest in useful intelligence about the Eastern Mediterranean Fleet supply TF: 1) composition is known; 2) it is weak; 3) it returns to Egypt, and 4) the Gibraltar force does not reinforce it but returns to Gibraltar. French attrition kills two counters. A German ZoC on Paris ensures that its garrison remains at a 3o5 and 2x3. French rebuilds go next to Paris, and to the south of France, to inhibit any German thrust toward Spain. Both French 1x3s defend Tunis. Russia produces a fort (Leningrad) and five BRPs of military production (one 3x3, two BRPs deferred). Russia rebuilds losses suffered against Rumania: a 3o5, two 3x3, three AAF. Britain does not reinforce Egypt,

whose only defenders are a 3x4 British and 2x3 Indian infantry, and five BB3s (one damaged).

1940 Summer Axis. Research: German research improves torpedo technology.

Dave: Otherwise German and Japanese research sucks wind.

The Allies gain ASW Tech. The Germans roll snake eyes on their submarine Strategic Warfare (SW). The modifier drops to -1 as both sides announce their new technology modifiers. The Allies lose no transports or BRPs. Germany grants 15 BRPs to Italy to enable combat and rebuilds. Rumania cedes Bessarabia to Russia and withdraws the surviving half of its army into Rumania proper. The Germans take down the Netherlands and France with 3:1 attacks against the Hague, Paris, Lyon and Marseilles. An Italian 2o5 in northwest Tunisia occupies vacant Algiers. Italian infantry and AAF flying from Sicily capture Tunis on a 2:1 attack. Italian ground forces move deeper into Egypt. up to the defended Alamein position. Italians patrol their BB TF and a submarine off Alexandria, daring the British TF to sortie. It waits for the Italian invasion TF trying to land infantry at Port Said. A fierce naval battle ensues, which the Italians win. The British lose Resolution and Malaya sunk; the last operational BB3, Warspite, shepherds damaged Royal Sovereign and Valiant back to Suez, since they could no longer prevent a landing at Port Said. Italian BB3 Caio Duilio damaged.

Mike: I find all this Italian naval success disturbing! This does not bode well for the Allies.

The Italians land two 1x3s and a 2x3, and place a BH counter.

Mike: Dave has conquered most of North Africa and threatens to break across the Suez Canal, while simultaneously taking Paris and generating a very positive

French surrender modifier. A good turn for any Axiholic.

Germany lays down a third BB4, Moltke. A Rumanian 2x3 reappears. Germany sends five AAF to Cyrenaica.

Pacific. Japan mobilizes one SBP, two AAF, and nine infantry factors.

1940 Summer Allies. The British sea supply to Malta goes unescorted, and Malta goes unsupplied for a second turn. Britain scrapes up six DD and some BRPs to sea transport three AAF from South Africa into Suez. Britain's six ground factors in Egypt (3x4, 2x3 and 1x3) abandon Alamein to attack the Italian ground units in the Port Said BH. The British manage a 9:8 attack. They roll a full Ex.

Mike: This was a gutsy attack in an attempt to save Egypt. On a better roll, Steve might have succeeded. With his fleet hurting and too few troops left, he really can't prevent what Dave does in his next turn.

A 1x3 survives to occupy the BH. Britain reinforces Egypt as best it can with rebuilt 1x3 and 2x3 Commonwealth units back at the Alamein position. The French Surrender Level is +3.

Dave: Germany welcomes a powerful Vichy Republic to European society.

1940 Fall Axis. Research: Germany gains a spy ring, which goes to Spain. Diplomacy: Germany calls the Balkan countries except Rumania (waiting for a second unit rebuild). Hungary gives full alliance; Bulgaria and Yugoslavia associate. Finland remains aloof. Germany declares war against Denmark and Norway. BB3s Scharnhorst and Gneisenau raid. The Royal Navy intercepts, and get a "6" for their single roll. A CVL and CA2 show up. The British NAS hit a BB3; the BB3's damaged the British CA2. British reinforcement join on the second battle, and the Germans are fortunate to escape without damage. After "2" in Summer, in Fall

Germany rolls "12" for submarine warfare. The ASW whiff. The subs score against Britain's transports: five sunk and three aborted, the U-boats' first solid win. Germany invades D35 with two 2o6s, backed by an airborne unit with transport and nine AAF. The defending Norwegian 1x3 at D35 gets smoked at 3:1; Oslo falls to an exploiting 2o6 and 1m3 with five AAF mounting a 4:1. Two Italian AAF stage to Benghazi from Sicily. Italian TF and a submarine change base to Tobruk, under cover of five German AAF in Tobruk and the Italian AAF in Benghazi. Italian DDs then sea transport two German 4o6s into Tobruk. A 4o6 and Italian 2x3 hit the New Zealand 1x3 at MM28 at 4:1. The second 4o6 exploits through vacant Cairo to occupy Suez and displace the British BB3s to South Africa.

Mike: The Med status modifier has been turned on. That, coupled with the planned early Japanese DOW, and whatever Med event modifiers are triggered, insures that the U.S. will be coming into the war early in Europe, possibly as soon as Summer 1941.

Germany lays down a fourth BB4, Siegfried. Germany builds and deploys units to Poland and the Balkans.

Pacific. Japan occupies Saigon. All players note the darkening skies in Asia. Japan mobilizes one SBP, four AAF, and three infantry factors.

1940 Fall Allies. *Steve: Our main concern at this point is to run like hell.* Malta goes unsupplied for a third turn. The last 1x3 in Egypt vacates Port Said by voluntarily eliminating itself.

Dave: A smart move, as German ZoC from Suez prevents it going anywhere useful.

A 3x4 and three AAF from South Africa redeploy into Basra. So do the rebuilt NZ 1x3 and Indian 2x3, although Asian colonies also scream for these units.

Mike: There really is no good choice for the disposition of the European deployable Commonwealth units in this position. Should we give up the Middle East, or help Japan establish its perimeter?

Russia garrisons its Leningrad fort.

1940 Winter Axis. Diplomacy: Germany calls Rumania and gains Alliance. With only 17 BRPs between them (all German) the Axis forgo taking Malta. German 4o6s move eastward out of Egypt into Palestine and Transjordan. BB3s Scharnhorst and Gneisenau raid. Britain again intercepts with a CVL and CA2. A NAS hits Scharnhorst; the BB3s damage the CA2. No reinforcements this turn. The Germans draw an unanswered submarine card for the first time this war. And for the first time they have a modifier as high as +2. A roll of "9" benefits. The British roll a "3" and whiff again. The submarines sink six transports and abort two.

Mike: Britain is really going to feel some pain by the end of the year with Japan jumping off this turn. Next year could become a nightmare, with raiders and subs in the Indian AND Atlantic oceans.

Germany deploys a third submarine to the Atlantic Ocean SW box to prepare for the spring turn. Germany sends a fourth submarine to the Indian Ocean (I/O) SW box.

Pacific. Japan declares War against Britain and the U.S. Japan starts the winter turn with 66 BRPs, and gains two for Indochina. Japan goes to war with its shipbuilding at five. Japan spends 35 BRPs on its DoW, 27 for offensives, and six for builds, ending with zero and no deficit. Japan sends a single CV3 to raid Pearl Harbor (and thereby reduce U.S. redeployments). They find the CV3 Saratoga and destroy it.

Mike: Ouch! Not a bad return on a single CV Japanese raiding force! The good

news for the Western Allies is that they have plenty of time to pay Japan back!

Japan counterairs two U.S. AAF at Lingayen, killing one. Japan mounts the following invasions: 3:1 Balikpapan; 3:1 Palembang; Japan lost a CA2 on an Ex result at either Balikpapan or Palembang; IJN destroys the Dutch Navy; 4:1 Lingayen; Uncontested landings at New Britain, Malaya, Sarawak (to attack Brunei); Wake. Japan moves into Malaya and positions land-based air to isolate Singapore. Japan causes Allied casualties of at least 25 BRPs in value.

Mike: This seems rather good given that DDs are only available from four turns of construction.

1940 Winter Allies. The U.S. sends two CV3s from the Atlantic Fleet to the Pacific Fleet (Pacific U.S. box). From there they redeploy onward to Hawaii. Malta goes unsupplied for a fourth turn, dropping to DM1. No combat occurs in Europe or Asia, aside from a few attritions in the Pacific theater, which accomplish little. Britain sends some stuff to augment the new Mesopotamia Field Force. Russia adjusts its western defenses.

Dave: They conform to what Steve calls "Rob Carl's cook book."

No German threat appears to threaten England in spring. So Britain sends two 3x4, an African 1x3 and five AAF to join the Mesopotamia Force. Britain cannot supply Singapore and its remaining positions in Malaya. Commonwealth units rely upon limited supply. The U.S. reinforce the Solomon Islands with heavy infantry in Bougainville, Guadalcanal and St. Cruz.

1941 Spring Axis. Diplomacy: Germany calls Spain with six DPs, a spy ring, a covert operation, and +1 for Suez. The Allies oppose with three DPs. A die roll of "2". gives Germany ten BRPs and two 'volunteer' 2x3s.

Mike: Germany is rolling at a whopping +5 modifier. (The inertial modifier keeps it from being a +6.) A 3 or better would have given at least hex control and thus another sub modifier. The Allies dodge a bullet.

The Kriegsmarine sends the newly launched Bismarck with BB3 Gneisenau on a raid. The RN intercepts with a CA2, DD and BB4 King George. The Gneisenau damages the CA2. The BB4 and DD score two hits on Bismarck. (*Dave: The Germans suspect what's about to hit them next.*) Going back, the British get BC3 Hood into the fight. Gneisenau sinks the DD. Bismarck misses Hood, which joins with King George to score two more hits and sink Bismarck.

Mike: The first solid British naval victory of the war. But it will make little difference, if Dave can afford to accelerate and launch his extra BB4s.

The German submarine SW costs Britain ten BRPs this turn - a new high. Italy mounts the long-expected invasion of Malta, using two 1x3s and four CA2 for shore bombardment (SB) at 4:1. Germany lays down two more BB4s (one a replacement for the Bismarck). The Axis produce five BRPs each of Air and Military production (which combine with 1940 leftovers), a German SBP and three submarines, an air transport, Italy gets a 3x3 and 2o5, Germany gets two AAF.

Dave: Much to the later chagrin of the Axis, Germany pays for these two AAF, but fails to place them on the map. They will be sorely missed next turn.

Italy sends armor, AAF and infantry to Iraq in the wake of the 4o6s.

Mike: Dave has committed to the Med in a big way, and will miss not only a couple of AAF, but the two German 4o6 armor as well, going into Russia. It's a reasonable strategic choice, and it should help keep Britain troops tied down there, instead of

threatening Europe. The potential for extra transport damage could also further hamstring them, as does the loss of all their Asian possessions one year early. I am beginning to see the appeal of this strategy, as it will be hard on Britain as well as Russia.

Pacific. Japan conquers the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, New Britain, and Burma. Japan tightens its siege of Singapore. Japan does not do much in the South Pacific - in particular it does not contest the Allied forward defense in the Solomon Islands. Japan increases its shipbuilding to 6, builds lots of its remaining infantry, launches a CV3 and lays down more ships. Japan sends multiple armored units and heavy infantry units to North China and Manchukuo.

1941 Spring Allies. Russia braces for Barbarossa; Britain tries to construct a defense in Iraq. Russia produces a fort, five BRPs of Air production and five of Military (with 1940 BRPs): two 3x3s and an AAF (one Military BRP and two Air BRPs deferred). Russia builds its fort in Vladivostok (not Moscow).

Mike: A reasonable choice.

Red defenses in east Europe look sturdy: Air: five AAF on bases at each of Vilna, O37, N38, plus produced AAF at Leningrad;

Mike: I am hoping that half the produced AAF are out of counter air range, but in DAS range of the Russian front line. This at least forces the Germans to hold back air to account for them.

Ground units: three factors (DM2) in each plain terrain hex of Bessarabia; 3x3 in Leningrad fort; lots of lighter infantry units in east Poland with 3o5s behind. Britain fails to fully supply Singapore, which remains isolated.

Mike: Singapore is a colonial capital, and therefore a limited supply source. The defense of ground units there is not

affected by isolation. However, the Axis do get a +1 to attrition rolls if it is not in full supply.

The U.S. strengthen their hold on Port Moresby and the Solomon Islands, and move into the Gilberts.

Mike: I hope that Jerry laid down the maximum number of CVLs that he possibly could in Winter 1940, even at the expense of building transports. It's the best way for him to achieve carrier parity with Japan starting in Spring 1942.

1941 Summer Axis. Diplomacy: Vichy France joins the Axis as a full minor ally.

Mike: The Allies faced the very real prospect of both Spain and Vichy as Axis Allies. Getting one of them on board is enough to complete the Axis domination of the Med, plus adding armor and air to the forcepool. Given their position in the Med, it is hard to see the Allies pulling this game out.

And--wait for it... GERMANY STABS RUSSIA. and--wait some more... JAPAN STABS RUSSIA.

Mike: I hope this didn't come as a surprise at this point!

Submarine and ASW rolls in the Atlantic yield a "12" for the German subs and a "2" for the British! Even without modifiers. The Germans do manage a +2 for themselves, a novelty, thanks to a for-once-unanswered submarine card. Subs sink seven transports and abort four, while losing one submarine sunk and a second negated. Russia presents a formidable and complete defense.

Steve: I used a cookbook from Rob. - who's playing Japan at the moment!

Dave, dripping irony: Japan is a Big Help to Germany! No hex can be overrun. The Germans have several armor in the Middle East, so only about ten 4o6 and a 2o6 stand ready to operate in Der Ost. Exploiters cannot pass out of reach of the Russians' armored linebackers. Dnieper

River and Lake Peipus will mark maximum exploitation range.

Barbarossa kicks off, and the Germans run into a buzz saw. To start, a perplexed Luftwaffe falls short of the expected total of AAF. The air shortage leads to a couple of attacks being made at narrower odds than necessary.

Dave: Post-combat after-action review by the General Staff reveals a Nazi Spring failure to deploy two produced and constructed AAF. Goering gets kicked upstairs to Reichprasident, losing the Air Ministry to Albert Speer, who also receives appointment as Munitions Minister Plenipotentiary to clear up the fiasco and maximize arms production.

German AAF launch three counter air attacks against Russian AAF, losing three of their own while killing six Reds. German ground attacks suffer on a profusion of "1"s and "2"s on 2:1 and 2.5:1 attacks. But the Germans manage to gain their necessary key breakthroughs. Axis casualties in Russia eventually run to five 3x3s, a 4o6, a 2o6, and eight AAF. Worse, tight Russian ZoCs prevent much in the way of deep penetration by exploiters; the 4o6s can't break out past the secondary line. Germans satisfy themselves with killing or isolating almost all of the forward-deployed Red Army. Only the Leningrad garrison and five lonely rear-area 1x3s escape the cauldrons. Russia will be forced to take offensive to kill off the trapped units. Russia's Baltic Fleet sorties, because it can. (Finland is neutral and Estonia is Red.) German light ships intercept and the two sides fight the "Battle for the Baltic". Even while lacking heavy ships in action the Kriegsmarine sinks a Russian BB2 and damages a CA2 while taking no losses. The Vichy French in Syria open the road to Iraq for the Axis armies coming northeastward out of Egypt. Italy attempts a counter air in Iraq to clear out the RAF. Horrible rolls for the Axis cost seven Italian

AAF dead in exchange for only three of eight British AAF. The British grimly hold Basra against all but certain loss on a 21+, but the Italians roll "1"! A German 4o6 creates a ZoC on Basra. During redeployments three Vichy French AAF fly to Rabat and two German submarine surface in Casablanca, to begin a siege of Gibraltar. Vichy French DDs sail to Syria, from whence they can ship Basra oil counters in the Fall turn. Italy reinforces Ethiopia with a 2x3.

Pacific. Japan attacks a Russian position next to Manchukuo, at 2:1, and makes the Wehrmacht look successful by comparison, by blowing out on a "1,1". Japanese units occupy eastern Mongolia, and move into eastern Siberia. A Malaya attack clears Singapore of defenders. Due to monsoon Japan cannot take the jungle-mountain hexes in Burma but get a BH for future operations. With a view to saving money, Japan keeps quiet in the South Pacific.

1941 Summer Allies. Britain commences summer with nine transports active in the Atlantic SW box and five in the IO. Britain can do little but hang on by finger nails and attrition everywhere. Britain escorts sea supply to Gibraltar. The German subs in Casablanca levy a tariff on the supply, sinking CVL Glorious and a CA2. To get armor and infantry units from South Africa into the Middle East the Allies must open Persia, which they do during the construction phase. Meanwhile, lacking sufficient IO transport, Britain diverts a 4o5 from South Africa into Ethiopia to liberate the Horn of Africa from Italian dominion. Russia contemplates using its available AAF to counter air Axis AAF in Rumania, and escorting sea supply to a pocket of Russian ground units around Odessa. But a cold-hearted Stalin rejects Stavka's proposal because even if supplied the units would remain trapped and would die in Fall. Russia mounts lots of low-odds attacks in Europe,

to kill off and destroy most of its trapped units and thus "liberate" them from German ZoCs. In Rumania Russia kills a 3x3 and 4o6 on "4" rolls; a German 1m3 perishes in S38 but the "victorious" units die also. Russia mobilizes a 4o5, an AAF and three 3x3s. With UCL of 47 Russia builds what it can: three 3o5s and the rest in infantry, mostly 3x3s. Russia places these units in two clumps, forming "Hedgehog" positions. These are anchored on and cover Smolensk/Moscow (in the north) and the Ukraine ICs (in the south). The Hedgehogs lie far out of reach of Axis infantry (mostly stuck back on the Pact line), but can be touched although not surrounded by the German armor that exploited in summer.

Mike: It is regrettable that Steve is not aware of Rob's tactics for the fall defense of Russia. Steve is actually in a good position at the end of the first Axis turn. Their casualties are high, and the Russian casualties are as expected. But the Axis penetration is low. The key for Russia is to prevent penetration in fall. To do so, Rob rebuilds his armor and places it in forward positions to limit how far the Axis infantry can go. He then defends with a solid line of 1x3 infantry just out of German air range, to back up the line. The exploiting German armor cannot overrun the 1x3's (because of supporting Russian DAS), and so the German advance is halted. The best they can do is attack the 1x3's, potentially at low odds, depending on how much DAS the Russians are willing to commit. At best the Axis can kill a few 1x3s and take a hex or two. With winter and spring for the Russians to recover, they can form a decent defensive line. They then need to defend strongly in the north, to hold onto Moscow, Leningrad, Gorki and Vologda. They should also be able to form a decent line in the south. If the Germans expend their

energy in the south, they risk getting over extended.

The British deploy what units they have to hold the line of the Euphrates, from Baghdad south to Basra.

Pacific. The U.S. mount a naval push into the Marshall Islands, which Japan does not resist. The U.S. occupy and supply Majuro and Wotje. Russia attritions in Siberia, managing to cause Japan some casualties Japan can ill afford. The U.S. continue their mobilizations and shipbuilding. Three British CVEs deploy to the IO SW box. USAT will pass 50 in Fall.

Mike: I'm surprised it is taking this long.

1941 Fall Axis. Diplomacy: USAT passes 50 but Germany refrains from declaring war against the United States. Finland grants Germany control of its hexes. SW continues as an Allied bright spot; the WA draw two ASW cards and manage to force the net modifier to "0" in the Atlantic; The I/O net modifier is -3, preventing any serious Axis penetrations in that theater.

Mike: I am assuming that some Allied DPs have been diverted to generate Ultra cards. Given that Germany almost activated Spain, I'm not sure if that was wise. It is difficult in 1941 to defend against activation of both Vichy and Spain, but one can usually be thwarted. Only luck has kept Spain out.

Germany spies a weakness in the northern Russian hedgehog, and concentrates against that Russian force to pin and destroy it. Army Group center moves its 4o6s against the southern part of the North Hedgehog to pin it, and screen the southern Hedgehog. In the north, infantry clears the Baltic States while a 4o6 aided by five AAF attack and kill a 1x3 in the E42 forest. Exploiters reach F45 and D46. Another 4o6 and an airdropped 1m3 break a 1x3 at I43, and an exploiter from that breakthrough occupies

I44. The northern Red Hedgehog now is paralyzed without possibility of relief.

Mike: This is a major disaster. In addition to the units lost, the Axis will now control every forest hex, and are a mere three hexes from Vologda and Moscow, with Leningrad, and any units on the Finnish border, isolated.

In the south, two 4o6s and AAF capture Sevastopol. (Had the Russians not managed to kill the other 4o6 in Summer that 4o6 would have crossed the Kerch Strait.) The South Hedgehog units are free to move, but German armor and infantry screen them to prevent interference with Axis operations. Axis units spread through western Iraq, reaching Kuwait city in the south. A German 4o6 occupies undefended Mosul, gaining the great prize of oil for the Wehrmacht. An Italian 2o5 moves through Tabriz and cuts communication between the Caucasus and northwest Persia. A partisan appears in Persia. Italy sends a second 2x3 to Ethiopia. Five German AAF redeploy to Kuwait to cover the Persian Gulf. The Allies suddenly realize that they must ship oil by transport from Abadan to Basra, to fuel the Mesopotamia Field Force.

Mike: And they may have a hard time finding any transports for doing so, if the Axis begin rampaging in the Indian Ocean. Steve is obviously quite aware of this, since he is making every effort to shut down Ethiopia, and has neutralized the Axis subs in the I/O with CVEs. The Axis are now perilously close to approaching the Caucasus from the south. This is definitely a Rommel fantasy game.

The Germans produce two railheads and build one in Vichy French Morocco, to enhance the siege of Gibraltar. Italian and German LBA redeploy to cover the Straits of Gibraltar.

Pacific. The Siberia early Winter roll is a "6", which will prevent Japan from its

planned exploitation adjacent to Irkutsk. Japan advances ground units westward through Siberia and attritions the Russians. Japan also acquires Burma's jungle-mountain hexes, and stages LBA to position to contest sea supply to Port Moresby. Japan tries to hang onto those Marshall Islands it still holds but does not contest the U.S. held islands. Being short of money, Japan basically sits tight in the Pacific (*Dave: Rob is ever the Land Animal*) and lets the U.S. do what they will. This isn't much, yet, as U.S. shipbuilding increases have yet to produce much in the way of new combat power.

Mike: Rob is short on money, so he is doing what makes sense.

1941 Fall Allies. The U.S. stay at cold peace with the European Axis--apparently because they overlooked the fact that USAT passed 50 this turn.

Mike: I am sure Steve has a lot on his mind, but hopefully this will be closer to the top in the next game! The sooner the U.S. is in the war, the sooner the shipbuilding rate can be double mobilized, the Battle of the Atlantic won, and the carriers needed to defeat both Japan and Germany can be built.

For reasons best known to themselves the British do not have their AAF in southern Iraq counter air the five German AAF in Kuwait. (*Dave: Presumably due to fear of irreplaceable losses, and desire to use their own AAF as Air Cover for Persian Gulf operations.*) Britain orders TF2 to evacuate Gibraltar ahead of sea supply to that beleaguered port. Eight Axis LBA squadrons and two German submarines intercept. Above the surface, excellent British CAP and Air Defense dice and horrid Axis attack rolls score nothing but one dead British NAS in exchange for an Italian NAS and two dead German AAS. Under the sea, though, German submarines stalk and sink BC3 Hood (thereby avenging the earlier loss of Bismarck) and a CA2 and

DD. (*Mike: Pretty good shooting, since each of these rolls requires a 9+.*) No Axis force remains to oppose British TF4's escort of sea supply to Gibraltar, which succeeds. The garrison eats, but is not as strong as it might be: a 3x4 and 1x3.

Mike: Given that sea supply arrives, I am surprised that the garrison is not reinforced.

RN also escorts sea supply from South Africa to Abadan. The few German AAS in range do not interfere; they prefer to threaten to sink IO transports if Britain tries to send oil to Asia. Which Britain therefore does not do; Persian oil stays in Persia, and likewise the Indian AAF and 2o5 stay in India. Britain cannot spare naval escorts for these missions. Britain diverts a second 4o5 to Ethiopia, making the force ratio 8:7.

Mike: At this point, the better part of valor for Steve is to abandon the Middle East, including any attempt to take Ethiopia, and put those units, and his air in England, to threaten a cross channel invasion. Armor tied up by Italian infantry in Ethiopia only helps the Axis. If India is not under pressure, he can use the 2o5 and 2 AAF in England as well. This will require sending oil to the South African reserve, and then sending it to India when necessary. He can secure the Indian Ocean transports with CVEs and/or NAS to stop the subs, and to insure the raiders can't get through.

Russia pulls back the southern hedgehog into a coherent line for Winter defense, and attritions at the 31+ level. A "1" roll prevents recapture of Bryansk. Three CVEs deploy to the Atlantic SW box.

Pacific. WA sea supply to Port Moresby fails in face of Japanese strength in the air and at sea. Moresby units are isolated. Russia defends Irkutsk but cannot spare much for Siberia. The U.S. constructs the Alaska-Canada Highway.

1941 Winter Axis. The Russian Winter roll is "3". The Axis have no winter preparation, so can make only one attack in Russia.

Diplomacy: USAT hits 59. The five German AAF in Kuwait counter air five British AAF in Abadan. Each side loses four AAF dead; the last British survivor inverts. Italians and Germans attack and breach the Euphrates Line at 3:1. Exploiting armor cut communications between Baghdad and Basra, and capture vacant Ahwaz and Abadan. Basra is defended but isolated. With their one combat roll in Russia, the Axis swarm isolated Leningrad at 3:1 and capture it, losing one 3x3. The Germans assemble a North-to-South line running fairly straight from Lake Onega to the Crimea. They plant single-factor and minor ally units stacked with most German 3x3s and 4o6s. Germans and Italians restock their LBA besieging Gibraltar. The noose tightens.

Pacific. Japanese ground units round the north end of Lake Baikal and walk westward through Mongolia, occupying the remainder of that country. Lack of BRPs and bad Siberian weather curtail Japanese options, so Japan attritions in Asia. Japanese fleet units operate against the U.S. in the Gilberts and Marshalls to invade Makin.

1941 Winter Allies. Diplomacy: The U.S. Peace Movement stands exposed as a Nazi fraud. The U.S. go to war against the European Axis. All the World is now At War. Britain elects to forgo escorting sea supply to Gibraltar against the large Axis air force deployed in Morocco. Gibraltar goes to isolation level 1. The British in Basra make a suicide breakout attack. They kill a Vichy French 2x3 from Syria. The remaining Commonwealth units in central Mesopotamia withdraw to a tight cluster south and east of Baghdad. Britain withdraws an armor unit from Ethiopia. The Russian Army attritions all along the line west of Moscow, scoring a 9C/5H result.

They push five hexes between Tula and Dnepropetrovsk, including T39, to temporarily isolate the Axis Crimea.

Mike: It is more important for Russia to push the Axis as far away from Moscow and Vologda as it can at this point.

Pacific. The U.S. sea supply to Wotje and Majuro Islands in the Marshalls fails in the face of Japanese opposition. Moresby is supplied.

1942 Spring Axis. Research. The Axis obtain their second Torpedo technology result. Diplomacy: German penetration of Finland remains at hex control, only, on a die roll of "1". More usefully, Germany activates Ukraine as a minor ally, using five DPs aided by modifiers for Sevastopol and Leningrad. Ukraine advocacy will aid Axis generation of two Occupation Policies results this turn. The Axis attrition around the map, except for some limited offensives in Russia. Limited offensives include an airdrop into K45, and another airdrop on J44 in conjunction with ground units to place a BH. Attrition with 101+ Axis units scores 9C/5H to balance the Russian Winter result. Russia eliminates front line units and several isolated by the limited offensives; the Axis smell a retreat coming. The Axis attrition the Commonwealth units in Mesopotamia, killing two and capturing a hex. Three 3x4s remain to the Mesopotamia Force. They drive south to the oil centers. The Axis produce ten BRPs of Air production (three German AAF and a NAS), a 5o6, two more railheads, four submarines, and a shipbuilding point at Hamburg/Kiel (raising SBP to five).

Mike: I'm curious to see what Dave will do with the railheads. But given the dearth of objectives in most of the Middle East, and in Russia once past Moscow, I can see that they might have some uses.

Italy withdraws a 2x3 from Ethiopia.

Pacific. Japan mounts an offensive and recaptures Majuro Island from its isolated U.S. defenders. Otherwise Japan refrains from offensive spending, as Japan still carries many units unbuilt. Japan moves through vacant hexes in Siberia. Japanese units surround Irkutsk and in subsequent turns will attrition away the units remaining in that city. Japan increases its shipbuilding to 7.

1942 Spring Allies. Russia withdraws from the Winter-Spring front to begin setting up a defense for Summer. Russia produces forts and ground units (3x3s, I think) and builds a fort in Stalingrad. Southern Russian armies re-form and double stack in the hexes along the west bank of the Don River. A 3o5 goes to Stalingrad with AAF. Moscow gets a backstop from a 3o5 in I47 and another in G48. The northern wing does not withdraw but forms a double line Hedgehog, running from Moscow northward through swamp and forest.

Dave: This northern forward defense may have been a mistake for Russia. Withdrawal behind the Volga might have been a better move, since Russia lacked the armor to backstop the entire line.

Gibraltar sea supply goes undefended and is cut again. Gibraltar goes to Isolation Level 2. Britain withdraws its last 4o5 from Ethiopia to South Africa. The Allies cannot save Persia.

Pacific. The U.S. press forward in the Pacific, but slowly and cautiously. Their fleet, although matching the Japanese in old BBs, still remains inferior in aircraft carriers, new BBs and light ships. However, that situation will begin to change soon.

1942 Summer Axis. Research: Germany gains an Air Defense result. Russia announces increases in CTL and Air NDRM. Diplomacy: Germany gains hex control of Sweden. Happy Time makes German submarine SW mildly painful for

the Allies. For the first--and only!--time in the war the Germans reach a +3 modifier. They score a 1/6 on the dice roll, and sink a total of eight transports. Even then the Allies manage to sink a submarine and abort one. Axis ground units move into northern Persia and southern Russia. The Germans launch their summer campaign against the Russian northern line, which lies within marching distance of the German infantry. Armor skates through the gap between Moscow and Stalingrad, occupying vacant hexes and swinging northward to cut the road east from Moscow. Infantry follows this force to secure the hexes. Infantry, AAF and a 4o6 converge on D48, breaking through with a 3:1 attack. Eight armor units exploit from this hole, reaching out as far as C53 and grabbing a vacant Gorky. German controlled hexes separate Moscow from the Urals.

Mike: I don't see Russia surviving after this blow. A high level surrender is approaching, even without the participation of Japan.

A secondary breakthrough occurs at Z47. A 1x3 there gets immolated in a 4:1 attack, and four 4o6s exploit northward into the Caucasus from Persia. Two 4o6s and four Italian AAF dare a 6:1 overrun of a 2x3 at Y47: only one German and one Italian AAF remain to counter intercept three Russian AAF in Grozny that might fly DAS. They fly. A Russian and the Italian AAF die, and the surviving Russian AAF make the attempted overrun a 3:1 exploitation attack. Ex-1 result takes out the Russian defenders, and two of the Italian AAF providing DAS

Mike: While Dave is under the impression that the restrictions on Italian offensive actions on the Eastern front were not made until after the convention, those changes are clearly in the rules issued BEFORE the convention. So the use of the Italian AAF in Russia was illegal.

Axis attrition in Mesopotamia kill a 3x4 in Baghdad and one adjacent to Baghdad. One

3x4 remains alive in Baghdad. Germany sends four uninverted AAF to join the Gibraltar siege.

Pacific. Japan gets six ground factors adjacent to the Asia Urals box. Japan attritions the isolated Irkutsk garrison and moves infantry toward Vladivostok, planning for a fall attack. Japan manages to build most of its remaining unbuilt units, and begins to climb out of its economic and strategic hole. Most of the newly built units go to garrison Japanese controlled islands ahead of the building U.S. counteroffensive.

1942 Summer Allies. Russia voluntarily eliminates all of its units in the surrounded Moscow pocket, except those in the (unfortified) city itself. Russian infantry forms a line along the Volga River. In the south Russia withdraws all units behind the Don River, placing at least three ground factors in each hex along the east riverbank. Russia abandons Rostov.

Dave: Rostov could have been fortified and held. But apparently the Russians worried about a three-hex German attack on Rostov that then could exploit across the river.

Three surviving AAF cover the line from a base south of Stalingrad. Five more hold Kuybyshev. Britain again declines to escort sea supply to Gibraltar. Gibraltar drops to Isolation level 3. The U.S. concentrates upon expanding shipbuilding, keeping the transport fleet working and getting aircraft carriers launched. The U.S. activates partisans in Europe, in Poland, Croatia, and SW France. The U.S. send replacements, infantry and AAF to aid the hard pressed British.

Pacific. The U.S. recovers Makin Island, securing the Gilbert Islands and eight full island groups, and gaining a -1 per turn for Japanese resistance. Russia builds what it can afford, mostly infantry factors. Some of

these go to the Urals box to deal with Japan. China builds partisans in northern China.

1942 Fall Axis. Germany concentrates to crash the center of Russia's Volga River Line, hoping to land a knockout punch. German and Vichy French armor units advance to the Kama River and Upper Volga, taking Kazan and reaching the north map edge east of Kirov. Three AAF and two air transports stage to new airbase counters at L48 and M47. Two 1m3s walk to the airbases to join their transport. All other German armor and the easternmost 3x3s (including Italy's CSIR!) concentrate at L50 and K51. From these hexes the Axis units mount a 3:1 attack on the Russian 2x3 and 1x3 holding L51, taking the hex and placing a BH over the Volga. Four German armor units exploit southeastward to capture Astrakhan and cut the Soviets in the Caucasus from their supply sources in the Urals. Army Group South in the Caucasus region hits a Russian 2x3 in W48 at 3:1. From that breakthrough a 4o6 and 2o6 capture Grozny, and clear an SR path to Grozny by snuffing a 1x3 in W47. The Axis attrition the last Commonwealth 3x4 in Baghdad. They also kill the partisans in France, Poland and Croatia. Axis air units assure that sea supply will not reach Baku, nor Gibraltar.

Pacific. Japan walks into a vacant Irkutsk, and moves 25 (!) ground factors adjacent to the Urals box. With a 2.5:1 attack, Japan captures Vladivostok. So Japan gains a +1 resistance point per turn to offset the point lost to the U.S. for eight Allied island groups. Japan manages to build more units than it lost, significantly reducing the pile in its force pool.

1942 Fall Allies. Russian oil effects bite hard, effectively shutting down the Red Air Force and armor ZoCs. Russia draws only a single oil counter this turn, from the Urals box. Baku generates two more, but they cannot reach the oil reserve from the oil

center. Stavka considers advancing to the Kama River and hex row 53, but ultimately elects to withdraw the ground units around Kuybyshev toward the Urals. One 3x3, that was ZoCed by German armor, can't reach the Urals, so it stays to garrison Kuybyshev.

Mike: I'm not sure of the exact board position, but it seems that this unit might simply be a springboard for exploitation. Of course, winter is approaching, so it won't be as bad as it might otherwise be.

The Russians attrition at 31+, -1. They cause some minor Axis casualties but gain nothing useful. Britain strengthens its beach defenses, aided by American infantry, and set about trying to pose some sort of offensive threat.

Mike: If you are building up forces sufficiently to threaten an offensive, it would seem beach defenses are superfluous. Most of the German army is deep into Russia. But perhaps the impending fall of Gibraltar is causing concern.

Gibraltar, covered by over 20 Axis air squadrons and a German submarine, remains unsupplied and drops to Isolation level 4. The U.S. ship 5o6 armor units and more AAF to Britain.

Pacific. The U.S. run sea supply to the Solomons. Japan attempts interception. The Japanese abort short of any significant naval engagement. After two years of war, NO major naval interactions have occurred. The U.S. builds a port in Tarawa, and commences launching the first four or so of a score of new aircraft carriers.

Mike: I wonder if Jerry will eventually have trouble populating his carriers with NAS, which is the hazard of being the Americans.

During builds Russia discovers that 24 BRPs of base increase had been overlooked during the 1942 Year Start Sequence. The Axis agree to 'give' Russia 24 infantry

factors to make up the shortfall. They go to the Urals box to deal with Japan.

Mike: Russia can only lose 15 BRPs per turn. It's better to abandon the theater, take the loss and use the troops elsewhere.

Russia offers to surrender this turn. The Germans would like to accept. But they have a couple more objectives to capture (e.g., Baku.), and have a deal with Japan than they must keep. Surrender declined, for the moment.

Mike: Rob has no doubt requested that surrender wait until sometime in 1943. He knows that once Russia surrenders, the Western Allies will have nothing to do other than focus most of their force to destroy Japan.

1942 Winter Axis. The Germans announce a Winter Preparation result. Three Italian BB4s -Vittorio, Littorio, and Roma - raid into the I/O SW box. Only possible opposition is a U.S. TF in the South Africa box, on its way to Asia. The Axis bet that it contains mostly slow BB3s, and play a strategic Ultra card. The Allies can't answer it. A "2" roll yields a single intercepting ship. The selection roll is "1", calling for a DD--and the U.S. TF contains no DD. The Italian BB4s proceed to roll an "11" against the transports, sinking four. Going home the interception roll comes up "6". Selection rolls again yield a DD, plus three capital ships: and the U.S. TF proves to contain none of those, either! Obviously it consists of cruisers, only. One of the better SW showings for the Axis, this war.

Mike: Insult to injury...

But the Atlantic SW submarine modifiers turn decidedly pro-Allied: -/+4! The WA announce their Naval NDRM increase this turn. Germany has eight submarines facing six WA ASW. Each side scores a 1/4, and the pro-Allied modifier offsets all surviving subs. German armor units trail the retreating Red Army to the Urals Mountains. A 4o6

reaches the map edge next to Perm. Another 4o6 moves eastward from Tabriz, occupies Tehran and moves to the east edge of the map, south of the Caspian Sea, cutting Russian access to Persian oil and BRPs. Other 4o6s pass north of the Caspian. Armor and infantry cooperate to capture Kuybyshev (IC 15 BRPs) with a 2:1 attack, and surround and screen Stalingrad (IC 10 BRPs). Moscow (IC 10 BRPs) remains isolated. Axis consider taking a 2:1 attack on isolated Gibraltar but elect to wait for one further DM reduction. Germans and Italians send yet more AAF to strengthen the Gibraltar siege force, in case the WA try to relieve the hungry fortress.

Pacific. Japan begins to pull ground units back from the Urals, for use in the Pacific against the burgeoning U.S. forces. Japan defends aggressively, hoping to hold the U.S. to their Marshall Island footholds for another turn. With the U.S. reinforcing the Solomons, the Bismarck Islands face serious pressure. Rabaul becomes unusable by the IJN, due to WA LBA. Japan builds beach defenses to protect the Bismarcks.

1942 Winter Allies. Russia receives one oil counter from the Urals box. Russia attritions (to no effect). Russia prefers to keep the Red Army concentrated, so it abandons another indefensible industrial center at Krasnovodsk. Russia builds more infantry and a 4o5 in the Urals Mountain hexes and the box.

Mike: There really are no options for Russia at this point. If Russia is reduced to four industrial centers (and it looks like it will soon be down to three), it is not coming back. All potential sources of aid have been completely cut off. All of its BRPs will be going to pay the indemnity.

Britain sends no escort for Gibraltar supply, which fails. Gibraltar goes to Isolation level 5. Britain places its 2o5s and 4o5s in ports, hoping to find openings for their use in Spring.

Mike: With Russia out of the war, surrender accepted or not, the Western Allies are not going to accomplish anything in Europe until Japan is defeated. As soon as the surrender is accepted, the U.S. will pull out of the European war in whole or part, depending on the concessions the Axis are willing to make. Britain needs enough force to rebuff an invasion. Otherwise, as many forces should be sent to the Pacific as the Western Allies can reasonably use.

Japan increases its shipbuilding to 8.

The U.S. build and send many ground units and AAF to Europe. Even so, the U.S. BRP base will reach 972 BRPs in the 1943 YSS. Russia offers surrender. Germany hopes to acquire Krasnovodsk, to assure future Russian non-participation in the war, and therefore declines.

Mike: Russia is already out for good, but the suspense appears to be giving the Allies hope for doing something in Europe.

1943 Spring Axis. Research: The Axis achieve an Air Nationality DRM increase. The Germans conduct submarine warfare, to no particular damage to the Allies at sea. Modifiers drop to -/+5 net in Allied favor. The Wehrmacht moves for the kill in Russia.

Mike: Dave, the body is already lifeless!

Krasnovodsk is occupied by a 1m3 air-dropping from Baku. All available armor, and a few forward infantry units, get adjacent to either the east map edge or to the remaining Russian ground units on the Ural Mountain hexes. The Caspian Sea becomes the Kaspiansee. The Axis attrition Russia at 31+, +1 due to oil effect, and gain 3C/1H. Russia eliminates 3x3s in K60 and K61, the only available clear terrain hexes Germany could capture. The Italians, joined by Vichy French AAF, launch attack on Gibraltar at DM2. Italians think they have 3:1 odds, but miscount; the attack came in at 2:1. A die

roll of "5" produces a "d" result. Rather than wait another turn to snuff the Gibraltar garrison the Italians bite the full exchange. They lose twelve factors, including an attacking 3x3 and numerous AAF. The Germans produce five interceptors, four German submarines, a SBP at Hamburg/Kiel, five 3x3 infantry units, and another Occupation Policies change. German air units move back to Germany for duty in northwest Europe.

Pacific. Japanese infantry captures Nikolaevsk, displacing the Russian Far Eastern Fleet to Petropavlovsk. The IJN is busy elsewhere so the Russians get away, for the moment. Japanese infantry continue to withdraw from the map edge, since the Germans have taken over the job of pressing the Urals box. In China, Japan surrounds the Communist Chinese from the west, and commences some punishing attritions intended to eliminate the Reds around Yenan. Japan patrols and attacks in the Marshalls, to recover Majuro Atoll. They succeed. Japan insists to Germany that Germany not accept the Russian surrender offer until at least Summer 1943 - Japan needs to sink the Russian Far Eastern Fleet in order to gain another +1 for Resistance. Germany agrees. Japan produces (among other things) an air transport, and redeploys its 1m2 to Paramushiru Island in the Kuriles.

Rob: When I chased the Russian fleet out, I had a TF there to intercept. I did intercept, but could not find him (which goes hand in hand with INTERCEPTION for me), and he ran away. So the ONLY fleet combat in the game ended in NO COMBAT!

1943 Spring Allies. Reduced in Europe to nothing but Great Britain, the British Empire can do nothing except rebuild its losses and strengthen England against concentrating Axis air and naval fleets.

Pacific. The U.S. recapture Wotje Atoll in the Marshall Islands, at expense of two 1n2

Marine divisions lost in exchange. Russia attritions the Axis but rolls "1" to no effect. Cut off from supply by Russia, the Communist Chinese hunker down in the face of extermination by Japan. The U.S. sends more infantry and AAF to Britain. Russia again offers surrender; Germany ordinarily would accept but it promised Japan it wouldn't...

Mike: Rob wants to kill the Russian fleet before the Allies realize nothing is going to happen in Europe. I'm not sure I would bother to ever accept Russian surrender, as long as the Allies keep putting so many units in Britain! Only a fraction of the German army is needed to entertain the Russians at this point.

1943 Summer Axis. Germany keeps the submarines home, attritions in the Urals, and eyes the Anglo-American buildup in Britain. Germany deliberately avoids spending. Italy rebuilds losses from Gibraltar, and likewise stands pat.

Pacific. Japan dares a second reinvasion of Wotje--and again succeeds. Japan re-establishes full control of the Marshall Islands, for the moment. Japan airdrops its 1m2 from Paramushiru onto vacant Petropavlovsk - thereby "capturing" the Russian Far Eastern Fleet, which has no remaining ports to which to flee. By this one-BRP limited offensive Japan gains 27 BRPs worth of dead Allied units, and a +1 Resistance modifier. Japan builds beach defenses in an island group.

1943 Summer Allies. The U.S. send a carrier sweep to slaughter Japanese LBA at Rabaul. The Japanese AAF are wiped, but the U.S. have no ground units to follow up and launch invasions anywhere.

Europe. Britain watches the Germans on the Continent watching the British in England. A tacit Armistice develops in Europe: The WA don't try to bomb Germany (which would achieve nothing substantial), and the

Germans mount no serious threat to invade England. Russia attritions but accomplishes nothing beyond a handful of Axis casualties. Russia offers surrender, and this turn Germany accepts. Russia permanently departs from the world war (and from the world in general, isolated as it is in western Siberia).

U.S. Election: Axis DP total as of Summer 1943: 29 (23 DPs Germany, 6 DPs Italy); Allied DP total as of Summer 1943: 10 (1 DP Britain, 9 DPs U.S.); The U.S. review their participation in the European War. Congress elects to formalize the Armistice with Germany. USAT drop to 18, on a Level 14 U.S. Election. Japan views this result with some trepidation, given the vast number of U.S. combat factors, especially AAF, now freed for use in the Pacific. Germany announces that the European Axis consider the European War to be at an end. Britain begs to disagree, albeit ineffectually. Given lack of Axis offensive activity the U.S. cannot reenter war in Europe until Fall 1944 at the earliest. But even then U.S. units could not leave the U.S. box. Post-election Tension increases, per turn: 7, without event modifiers (+1 automatic per turn, +2 Russian resistance < 0, +1 Britain at war, +1 Japan at war, +1 Axis in Russia, +1 Axis in Mediterranean).

1943 Fall Axis. Germany elects to not conduct submarine warfare, even though 12 of the 24 WA CVEs in the AO SW box departed when the U.S. withdrew from Europe. The technology modifiers remain strongly pro-Allied, even as the port modifiers shift in the Axis favor.

Rob: At this point Dave and Steve stop play in Europe, and get into another game of Gathering Storm.

Pacific. Japan attritions the Communist Chinese, killing three or four counters. Japan builds beach defenses in the East Caroline Islands. Japan redeploys heavy 3x2s out of

Asia to garrison most of the Pacific islands. Japan has all of its force pool on the board.

1943 Fall Allies. The U.S. again counter air Japanese LBA, in the Marshalls this time, and reinvade and recapture Majuro Atoll.

Dave: Probably they should have done this last turn.

Rob: Jerry lost two Marine units when he took the Marshalls in spring 1943. When I retook the Marshalls in summer, I killed two more Marine units, so that Jerry was out of Marines in his summer turn. That's why he waited until this turn to re-invade.

Japan elects to not intercept against the overwhelming power of the U.S. Navy. At this point the Emperor prefers to retain the IJN as a "fleet in being". U.S. naval and air factors more than double Japan's maximum available combat power, even without the units now entering the Pacific from Europe.

1943 Winter Axis. The Japanese attrition eliminates the last Chinese Communist ground units. Yenian is vacant, ready for capture in Spring. Japan at last abandons its forays into the Marshalls; Majuro will remain U.S. territory, which means the rest of the Marshalls will soon be lost. Japanese growth prospects for 1944 look slim.

1943 Winter Allies. U.S. LBA from Majuro counter air Japanese LBA at Kwajalein, leaving the Marshalls open to invasion. However, the U.S. Main Effort goes elsewhere. To Hollandia, defended by one Japanese 3x2. The U.S. gain control of that critical port, bypassing the Japanese controlled Bismarck Islands. The U.S. builds a port in Majuro. Now the U.S. control ports bracketing the IJN's main base at Truk.

Mike: Jerry now has a good offensive position. From Hollandia he can threaten Palau, Mindanao, Manado and Ambon, which in turn can quickly put him astride Japan's oil. From Majuro he threatens Guam, which in turn can threaten the

Home Islands. The outer perimeter is perforated like Swiss cheese.

1944 Spring Axis. Japan sends unescorted sea supply to the Marshall Islands. The islands go isolated, in the face of U.S. LBA and naval units in Majuro. Japan captures Yenau, gaining a resistance point. Japan deploys heavy ground units to defend Truk, Davao and Ambon. Japan builds beach defenses in the Marianas Islands and defends them with 3x2s. Japan produces more defensive units. Japan increases its shipbuilding to 9.

1944 Spring Allies. The U.S. invade Bikini Atoll, to completely secure the Marshall Islands.

Mike: At this point, Jerry should have enough carriers and NAS to go anywhere that he wants. Bikini should be left to wither on the vine. With more targets than Rob can defend, this appears to be a missed opportunity.

U.S. units from Europe now flood into the Pacific Theater.

Mike: I hope he has transferred all the destroyers, and any British ships he can spare.

1944 Summer Axis. The Japanese 3x2s have spent a fat and easy war in Burma. Now they shuffle out for Pacific duty, replaced by 1x2 and 2x2 infantry. Likewise, heavier ground units leave China, and pull out of indefensible forward islands (East Caroline's, Bismarcks).

1944 Summer Allies. WA ground units from Port Moresby cross the Owen Stanley Range in Papua to strike Lae from the rear. The U.S. naval forces invade and capture Manus, aided by LBA from Hollandia. Rabaul henceforth is isolated.

Mike: Either Jerry is much weaker than he should be, or he is simply too cautious. The Allies need to advance ten hexes at a time, somewhere, not two. Jerry already has enough ports to project 100 fleet

factors to any point within 10 hexes of Hollandia or Majuro. The Japanese fleets cannot possibly be in position to defend everywhere. For example, could he not invade Makassar (at hh16)? Although the new naval rules do give additional interception dice (up to three) when invading, so that interception from a central location like Truk is more likely than under previous rules, you want the Japanese to fight. You don't even have to win, just do a lot of damage. At the very least you can invade a lightly defended, or undefended, beach, bring air in with destroyers, and dominate the area in the next turn. Unless there is something important that I am overlooking, I would think this approach should have been possible starting in Spring 1944.

Rob: As long as I keep the "fleet in being", I can minimize his gains each turn. He has to send his whole force to one objective area, rather than two, three or more.

1944 Fall Axis. Japan eliminates units in Kavieng, and fortifies Iwo.

1944 Fall Allies. The U.S. reinvade Wotje Atoll and grab Eniwetok and also Lae. Now the U.S. shall not lack for forward port facilities.

1944 Winter Axis. Japan fortifies Wake Island.

Mike: I am surprised this is still in Japanese hands, but the fort may keep it around until 1945, yielding a Japanese resistance point.

1944 Winter Allies. The U.S. launch a gigantic carrier patrol against Truk. Over 70 NAS counter air Japanese LBA, which include: 27 AAS +1 NAS LBA, and 30 NAS CBA. After one round the U.S. lose 20 NAS. Doing the math, the U.S. realizes they can't kill or invert all of the remaining Japanese air, so the U.S. withdraw.

Rob: I had 9 AAF, and 31 NAS, in Truk, for a total of 58 air squadrons. And if he

got past that, I had an air defense of 21 (inherent defense of 5 with two cities, one being an objective; 99 fleet factors for another 10; a fort for 1; an airbase for 1; two BB5s for 2; and two CVBs for 2). When Jerry called it off, I still had my fleet available for interception.

The U.S. forces invade and capture Sarong clearing all Japanese units from New Guinea and Ambon.

1945 YSS U.S. Election, Europe. Axis DP Total: 31+ (est. 23 DPs Germany, est. 8 DPs Italy); WA DP Total: 22 (1 DP Britain, 21 DPs U.S.); U.S. Election result in Europe = -9. Armistice is temporarily extended, USAT drops back below 50 down to 42.

Pacific. Japanese Resistance Level: + 8 for Objectives: (Okinawa, Truk, Wake, Kwajalein, Rabaul, Guam, Singapore, and Manila) +10 (Vladivostok + Irkutsk) + 4 WA casualties + 7 Japanese Island Groups - 11 WA Island Groups = 18. So the U.S. Election result is 20-18 = 2, just enough to keep the U.S. in the Pacific war. The Pacific war continues through 1945.

Dave: But not with any great pressure, because all can see where this war goes.

1945. The U.S. eventually ends up capturing in Southeast Asia: Davao/Mindanao; Saigon; Halmahera; in the Pacific, all Marshall Islands, including Kwajalein; Rabaul; Guam; and Palau. At the close of 1945 Japan still retains: Okinawa, Truk, Wake, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies, Burma, and Thailand (although the convoy route from Southeast Asia is cut). Japan is not bombed, and still retains some oil and some ships. The Allies do not obtain atomic bombs during 1945.

Adjudication: Axis gain a +6 victory in Europe, and at very least a +2 Japanese victory in Pacific.

Post-mortem. *Mike:* I would like to commend Jerry and Steve for their sportsmanship in continuing play, when

some type of Axis win, probably large, was pretty obvious by late 1942. Dave and Rob put together an interesting and creative plan that was well executed. It seems to be a good one that I expect to see again.