

# A World at War Tournament

## World Boardgaming Championship 2013

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# A World at War Tournament

## World Boardgaming Championships

2013

By Mike Crowe

### Introduction

This document provides a complete report on the *A World at War* tournament at the 2013 World Boardgaming Championships, held July 28 through August 3, 2013 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 six full games recreating World War II at the convention this year. For the first time, two games began with starting positions that resulted from playing the as yet to be published *Gathering Storm* game, which is a prequel to *A World at War*. Publication for *Gathering Storm* is anticipated some time in 2014. *Gathering Storm* covers the pre-war period from 1935 to 1939+, and allows for non-historical economic, military and naval development, diplomacy and aggression.

The first game, which arose from *Gathering Storm*, began in Spring 1939, six months ahead of the historical schedule. France fell in 1939, and the Soviet Union was invaded in Summer 1940. Meanwhile, Italy, which began the war neutral, was attacked by the Western Allies, and placed in a permanent defensive mode. Russia was "stabbed in the back" by Japan in Summer 1941, and eventually surrendered. Not to be deterred, the Western Allies were ashore in Europe in 1942, and eventually pressed forward, with

help from a resurgent Russia, to take out Germany historically, in Summer 1945. However, Germany did set off an atomic bomb, delivered by an advanced submarine, in New York harbor. In retaliation, the Allies delivered bombs to both Berlin and Tokyo the same turn, ending that game.

In the second game, an unusual contest developed when Germany decided to postpone the invasion of Russia until 1942, while the Allies decided to move all of the Russian air to Siberia, to tie down the maximum number of Japanese troops, limiting their conquests. In 1942 the air stayed in Siberia, allowing Germany to make a nice advance into Russia. Somehow, Japan managed to achieve most of its conquests, and even held out long enough to achieve an adjudicated one turn victory. Meanwhile, a larger than normal German fleet turned back a Spring 1943 invasion of France, and held on for an adjudicated two turn victory in Europe.

The third game proceeded in a more historical fashion, with the traditional invasion of Russia in Summer 1941, and the Japanese invasion in the Pacific in Winter 1941. Although the Battle of the Atlantic was quickly won by the Allies, Germany invaded Russia in possession of all of Rumania and all of Finland. In 1942, the German summer offensive drove the Russians back beyond Moscow. Both Moscow and Leningrad fell, but the Russians managed to stay just above water without offering to surrender, thanks to a successful 1942 invasion of France. Meanwhile in the Pacific, the Allies, delaying U.S. entry in Europe, added a British 3-4 infantry to the defense of Singapore. While Japan took care of Singapore, the Allies solidified their hold on Port Moresby and most of the Solomon Islands. The game in Europe ended in Summer 1945 as a tie, after an unsuccessful attempt to deliver an atomic bomb on Berlin

in Spring. In the Pacific, the Allies forced a Japanese surrender, with the help of a few atomic bombs, in Summer 1945, for a one turn victory.

In the fourth game, which arose from *Gathering Storm*, the game began in Summer 1939. This game also featured a conquest of France followed by a 1940 invasion of Russia. The Axis found themselves a year ahead of schedule. To keep the game interesting for all parties, the players decided to move the timetable of the game forward one year. This was chalked up to growing pains with *Gathering Storm*. The final result was adjudicated as a tie in both theaters.

In the fifth game, the Axis followed a fairly conventional path, with an emphasis on an attempt to conquer Russia. The best chance for this was in Winter 1942. However, the Russian player made a gutsy 1:1 attack on Rostov, and won it, putting surrender off the table. Russia was sufficiently wounded, though, to result in a three turn victory for the Axis in Europe. This was balanced by a very successful Allied campaign in the Pacific, resulting in a two turn Allied victory in that theater.

In the sixth game, two players made their first debut at this tournament. The Axis were doing well in both Europe and the Pacific, but both games were far from finishing. No adjudication was made.

This year the second printing of AWAW began shortly before the convention. Those with pre-orders, who wanted to receive their copies, could do so. Several did, and had the pleasure of using the newly printed, and completely current, rules and components. A new rule suggestion was tried by some at the tournament, dubbed the "Einstein rule". This allowed each faction (Western Allies, Russia, European Axis and Japan) to take one research roll per year that resulted in a "1" or "2", and make it a "3". Not all games used it, although those that did liked it.

However, it was not clear that it solved any pressing play balance issue, and some expressed concern that it made getting the atomic bomb too easy. After discussing this and other options on the *A World at War* mailing list after the convention, the designer decided not to make any changes.

Everyone was reasonably content with the rules as published in the second printing. A concern was voiced about the number of games which saw an atomic bomb deployed earlier than it was historically. This occurred in two games, with one game featuring a nuclear exchange between Germany and the United States in Summer 1945, a convention first. Another game saw the Western Allies get an atomic bomb in Winter 1944, but it was not successfully used until Summer 1945. Historically, the first atomic bombs are viewed as delivered in the game turn covered by Fall 1945. No specific change has been proposed.

## ***Plaque Winners***

- 1st - Randy Scheers (Best Overall)
- 2nd - Ken Cruz (Best Axis, Europe)
- 3rd - Dave Hanson (Best Allies, Europe)
- 4th - A.J. Johnson (Best Allies, Pacific)
- 5th - Paul Milne (Best Axis, Pacific)
- 6th - Peter Brickwood (Best Newcomer)

## Game Summary

	Axis	Allies	Axis Strategy	Atomics	Europe End	Pacific End	Game Result
1.	Tor Abrahamsen Bruce Harper	Randy Scheers Greg Wilson	GS: Sp '39 Su'40 East Wi'40 Pac Su '41 Siberia	Al: 2 in Su '44. Ax: 1 in Sp '44.	Su'45 (0) [actual]	Su'45 (-1) [actual]	Allied (-1) [actual]
2.	Jon Hogen Vic Hogen	Jason Moore Brian Conway	Su '42 East Wi'41 Pac	No atomic bomb.	Wi'45 (+2) [est.]	Wi' 45 (+1) [est.]	Axis (+3) [est.]
3.	Kevin Milne Paul Milne	Elihu Feustal Mike Crowe	Su 41 East Wi 41 Pac	1 in Wi '44 2 in Sp '45 2 in Su '45	Su'45 (0) [actual]	Su'45 (-1) [actual]	Allied (-1) [actual]
4.	Thomas Stanley Don Stanley	Dave Hanson Jim Sparks	GS: Su '39 Su'41 East Wi'41 Pac		Su'45 (0) [est.]	Fa' 45 (0) [est.]	Tie (0) [est.]
5.	Ken Cruz Kevin Leith	Chris Collins AJ Johnson	Su '41 East Wi'41 Pac		Sp '46 (+3) [actual]	Sp '42 (-2) [actual]	Axis (+1) [actual]
6.	Steve Rossi Thomas Shaw	Peter Brickwood Jerry Smolens	Su '41 East Wi '41 Pac				

## Detailed Game Descriptions

Additional comments provided for each game by Mike Crowe.

### Game 1.

#### Abrahamsen-Harper-Scheers-Wilson

European Axis:	Tor Abrahamsen
Japan:	Bruce Harper
Allies Europe:	Randy Scheers
Allies Pacific:	Greg Wilson
European Result:	Sum 1945 (Tie)
Pacific Result:	Sum 1945 (-1)
Overall Result:	Allied (-1)

*The game arose out of Gathering Storm. Narrative provided by Randy Scheers and Bruce Harper.*

**Gathering Storm Starting Position.** This is an overview of the differences between the starting position of this game and the normal AWA start. Note that there are no changes to the starting Japanese or U.S. positions, so nothing will be listed for those nations. If something is not listed, it is because there is no change from the normal AWA starting position.

**Starting Situation.** The game begins in spring 1939 with Germany attacking Poland and Italy attacking Albania. Britain and France are at war with both Germany and Italy. Russia is neutral. The U.S. is neutral, and the USAT level is -1.

**Starting Research Changes.** Note that the normal starting research result is in [].

#### Axis.

- +2 Air Range [0] ↑
- +1 Air Defense [0] ↑
- +0 Torpedoes [+2] ↓
- +1 Harbor Attack (normally a one-ship harbor attack result) ↓
- +3 Radar [0] ↑

Counter-Intelligence Result (normally no results) ↑

+1 Covert Operations [0] ↑

+1 Espionage [0] ↑

#### Western Allies.

Jets starting in 1943 [1944] ↑

+5 Air Range [+3] ↑

+1 Strategic Bombers [0] ↑

+5 Air Defense [0] ↑

+3 ASW Tech [+2] ↑

Rockets starting in 1945 [1944] ↓

+2 Radar [+3] ↓

+1 Counter-Intelligence [0] ↑

Counter-Intelligence Result (normally no results) ↑

Spy Ring Result in Axis Military (normally no spy rings) ↑

Anglo-French Coop. banned [0] ↓

#### Russia.

Jets starting in 1943 [1944] ↑

Rockets starting in 1945 [1944] ↓

Spy Ring Result in Axis Air (normally no spy rings) ↑

+2 Espionage [0] ↑

#### Starting Production Changes.

##### Axis.

No German Air Transport, 1 RP toward 1<sup>st</sup> AT [1] ↓

Germany limited to BB4s

Italy limited to BB4s

3 German SBP [2] ↑

1 Italian Sub [2] ↓

1 Russian Occupation Policy [0] ↑

2 ULTRA Cards, 1 RP toward 3<sup>rd</sup> card [3] ↓

##### Western Allies.

France limited to BB4s

39 Transports [40] ↓

1 British Sub [2] ↓

1 ULTRA Card [3] ↓

##### Russia.

2 RPs in Air Transports [0] ↑

#### Starting Diplomacy Changes.

Note that the normal starting diplomacy modifiers are in [].

Hungary +6 [+5]

Ireland -1 [0]  
 Rumania+5 [+4]  
 Sweden +1 [0]  
 Turkey +1 [0]

**Starting Forcepool Changes.**

**Germany.** Germany has 10 extra BRPs of Base and 20 extra BRPs of units in their forcepool, which is broken down as 3 extra AAF, 2 extra 3-3 infantry, and a third SBP. They do not have an air transport. Germany takes their last mobilization in spring 1939, and three of their 4-6 armor show up in 1940.

**Italy.** Italy has already taken their last mobilization. They will get two 3-5 armor units in winter 1939 and in spring 1940.

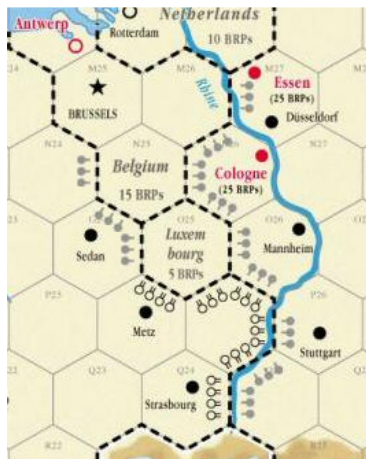
**Britain.** Britain has 5 extra BRPS of Base and 5 extra BRPs of units in their forcepool, which is an extra AAF and 2 NAS. They have already taken their last mobilization. They have their normal 4-5 armor showing up in spring 1940.

**France.** France is basically the same, except that they have a fourth 3-5 armor showing up in summer 1939 and only 3 AAF.

**Russia.** Russia is standard.

**Anglo-French Cooperation.** The Anglo-French cooperation restrictions are lifted at the start of the fall 1939 Allied turn. The Anglo-French Cooperation research project may not be started. ↓

**Starting Fortifications.**



The Maginot Line has the normal six hexsides as fortresses, plus the two hexsides for O24 (Sedan) and one hexside for N24 fortified. ↑

The West Wall is standard.

**Russia.** The Nazi-Soviet Pact has been signed. The concession level was 30. Russia got all of the historical concessions except for the Finnish Border Hexes. Germany did not get a 10 BRP Economic Interest. Russia is at full cohesion and doesn't suffer from any cohesion effects.

**1939 Spring Axis.** Germany conquers Poland. Italy doesn't conquer Albania

**1939 Summer Axis.** Germany conquers Belgium, Denmark and Luxembourg and attacks Norway and the Netherlands. Italy doesn't conquer Albania.

**1939 Summer Allied.** France and Britain invade Taranto and the beach west of Taranto. A 1:1 counter-attack in Albania fails.

**1939 Fall Axis.** Germany conquers France, Norway, and the Netherlands. The French surrender level is -1, mainly because the Axis players failed to realize that the maximum pro-Axis modifier for an early conquest of France was +2 (so they didn't put any diplomatic points in France). Vichy is established and French North Africa goes Free French on a die roll of "1". The Western Allies are pushed out of Italy, but Britain refuses to give up and invades Sicily. Albania remains unconquered.

**1939 Winter.** Germany activates the Balkans, boosting Russo-German tensions. Germany reveals a winter preparation result, which had been prepared in case the French campaign lasted three turns. The Italian conquest of Albania continues to drag on.

**1940 Spring.** Germany builds up for an attack on Russia; otherwise everything is quiet, including the non-campaign in Albania.

**1940 Summer Axis.** Germany attacks Russia and isolates nearly all of the Russian army (only a lone armor escapes after being supplied through Odessa.). Kiev falls. Germany and Yugoslavia take out Albania for Italy.

**1940 Summer Allies.** Britain starts attacking the Italian army in Tunisia, making full use of its control over French North Africa.

**1940 Fall Axis.** Germany isolates Leningrad, Smolensk, Dnepropetrovsk, Kharkov, and Sevastopol but doesn't take any of them. The leading edge of the German panzers approach Moscow and Rostov.

**1940 Fall Allies.** Low level fighting in Tunisia continues.

**1940 Winter Axis.** Germany reveals a second winter preparation result, but the winter roll is a "6" and Germany can take no offensives.

*Bruce: It was difficult to determine how critical this roll was to Russian survival, but it certainly didn't hurt!*

**1940 Winter Allies.** Low level fighting in Tunisia continues, as BRPs are something of an issue for Britain, even though the German submarine and raider campaign is something of a fizzle.

**1941 Spring.** Mud keeps anything from happening in Russia. The Axis build a fort in Tripoli.

**1941 Spring Allies.** Britain continues to push forward slowly in the desert.

**1941 Summer Axis.** Germany captures two Russian industrial centers in Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov, taking advantage of their reduced defense from isolation, while generally moving the line forward and getting armor next to Stalingrad.

Italy abandons eastern Libya.

**1941 Summer Allies.** Britain gets to the Libyan border on the west and sends infantry into Ethiopia.

**1941 Fall Axis.** Germany takes Leningrad and isolates Stalingrad.

*Bruce: It is agreed that Russia faltered by not garrisoning Stalingrad strongly enough (which it could have done fairly easily) and by not fortifying it (which was more difficult), because it proved impossible for Russia to get additional units into Stalingrad. But it is always easier to attack than to defend in Russia.*

**1941 Fall Allies.** Italy is pushed back to Tripoli.

**1941 Winter Axis.** The Russian winter roll is a "4", for an effective winter level of 5, because the Axis have four winter preparation levels. This lets Germany take Stalingrad and start to push around Rostov. Globally, both Germany and Japan declare war on the US.

*Mike. Germany is a year ahead of schedule in Russia, but the US is entering on time. I assume that British offensives have helped keep the tensions in check.*

*Pacific.* The US loses a carrier and a BB4 in Pearl Harbor. Japan makes the usual advances in Southeast Asia, and takes Lae, Kavieng and an island in the Gilbert Islands in the Pacific.

*Mike: One carrier down.*

**1941 Winter Allies.** Things go better for the Allies in the Mediterranean theater: Tripoli and Ethiopia fall, and Italy is pushed out of North Africa.

*Mike: The Allies are a year ahead of schedule in the Mediterranean, which is some compensation for the German progress in Russia.*



### **1942 Spring Axis.**

*Bruce: The big controversy in the Axis camp concerned Axis military production: Japan strongly advocated production of a second 5-6 armor unit, in order to increase the pressure on Russia, while the European Axis convinced themselves that additional infantry was necessary. One of the great attractions of partnering in a global war game is the fun of such disputes. Ultimately the European Axis dishonored themselves and produced the infantry.*

Nothing much happens in the Russian mud. The Axis (over) defend southern Italy, fearing that the Western Allies will invade in order to follow up their victory in North Africa.

*Pacific.* Japan finishes their conquests in Southeast Asia.

**1942 Spring Allies.** The defense in southern Italy gives the Western Allies a different opportunity, however – to retrieve the impending disaster in Russia, the Western Allies invade France at Rennes and Cherbourg.

**1942 Summer Axis.** Germany surrounds Rostov, weakens the Russian line, and makes a strong push toward the oilfields in south Russia. Russia defends strongly in the Caucasus with several 4-5 armor units and its remaining air units. In France, Germany retakes Cherbourg via attrition, but with the German army and air force fully engaged in Russia, there is no way the Western Allies can be pushed out of France.

*Pacific.* Japan declares war on Russia, sacrificing their long-term prospects in the hope of assisting Germany in forcing a serious Russian surrender.

*Bruce: In doing so, the Japanese were well aware that the Axis atomic program had been going well and that a high-level Axis victory in Europe was still a real possibility.*

*Mike: This is an interesting board position. The British are ashore in France, but can probably be contained for at least a year with primarily infantry. The US buildup will take that long to make itself felt. So, going for a deep Russian surrender, while taking a chance, seems viable.*

Japan sinks four (!) US carriers in a naval battle off the coast of Lae. The Americans took a chance in fighting this early, but the Japanese victory was due mainly to luck, as they just got good dice rolls (and the Americans got bad ones) at the key moments. Japan also takes Rabaul, which completes their largest point of expansion.

**1942 Summer Allies.** In France, the Western Allies invade Caen and the beach west of Bordeaux and take an isolated Lorient and Brest as well as St. Nazaire. With the US sending most of its army air to Britain, the situation in France was becoming serious for the Axis.

*Mike. This is the perfect (and courageous) response to the Russian DoW on Japan. Randy is playing both theaters on his own (against Bruce and Tor no less), so he doesn't have a Pacific partner to convince! Most Pacific players would be crying for that AAF, with five carriers gone! Randy has found a way to threaten to jump ahead two years in France.*

**1942 Fall Axis.** With the Russians defending strongly in the south, Germany takes advantage of its interior lines and switches its attack to the north, surrounding a large part of the Russian army and capturing the industrial center in Gorki in what amounts to a raid. Russia's problems are worsened when Japan captures Vladivostok, costing Russia BRPs and reducing its unit construction limit.

*Mike: I was surprised that the Axis were attacking south, rather than north, to begin with. Taking the BRPs and keeping*

*the German line short seems to work better than a reprise of what Hitler attempted.*

**1942 Fall Allies.** The Western Allies advance in France, linking up their two invasion areas, giving them a line from Caen to Toulouse. Russia retakes Gorki, but losses to the Russian army force a Russian surrender offer.

*Pacific.* With only one carrier left, the US cannot do much to take advantage of Japan's overreach in Siberia.

*Bruce: In this situation, the Axis had to make a key decision – accept the Russian surrender, knowing that Russia would reenter the war in Summer 1943, or press on in order to try for a longer lasting surrender.*

*The European Axis, fearful of a collapse in France, favored taking the surrender. Japan, having mortgaged its future to a successful Russian campaign, wanted to keep fighting. Russia could have avoided a second surrender offer at the end of Winter 1942 by deficit spending for unit construction, so that in 1943 it would a BRP base of zero, and by exhausting its oil reserve. This assumed a pro-Russian winter roll – on a pro-Axis winter roll, which would have allowed overruns and airdrops, the Russian position would have been worse.*

*In what Japan considered a perfect example of “he who tries to defend everything defends nothing”, the European Axis decided to accept the Russian surrender and Japan was forced to follow suit. This was a turning point in the game, as it meant (at the very least) that the Axis couldn't seriously expect to win big, barring a flukey series of atomic research rolls. In the Pacific, despite the American carrier losses and the heavy commitment of American army air in western Europe, Japan had no way of*

*improving its position, because it had committed so much to the campaign against Russia.*

*Strategically, the war was likely lost for the Axis at this point.*

*Mike: The fact that this was a difficult decision which Bruce and Tor did not agree on, indicates that the game was, and would be, close, possibly regardless of what decision was made.*

**1942 Winter Axis.** Nothing much happens as Russia is quiet (Germany and Russia being at peace) and the winter restrictions apply in France. Germany withdraws from Russia and heavily reinforces its defense in France, but inexplicably leaves a number of strong units in Poland and Rumania, even though the Red Army won't arrive there for another three or four turns.

*Bruce: This mistake rules out any chance of taking advantage of the Russian surrender to knock the Western Allies out of France.*

The German attrition in France kills a bunch of big units, because of the favorable German winter preparation modifier.

**1942 Winter Allies.** The US builds up in the Pacific.

**1943 Spring Axis.** Germany continues to withdraw in Russia and sets up a line near the original Russian border, and starts to fortify Poland. Germany attritions in France, causing the Western Allies to remove several large units rather than give up a hex.

**1943 Spring Allies.** Losing units to the Axis attrition, but keeping hexes, lets the Western Allies get next to Paris.

*Pacific.* The US starts a slow advance in the South Pacific, advancing under their land based air towards the Dutch East Indies. Japan, which still has units to build as a result of its Siberian adventure, can't contest this advance.

*Bruce: Japan had pinned its hopes on winning another naval battle, using an Air Nationality DRM increase.*

**1943 Summer Axis.** Germany pushes the Western Allies away from Paris in an attrition, but makes a serious error by failing to fortify it.

**1943 Summer Allies.** The Western Allies attack and take two hexes next to Paris. Russia declares war on Germany and starts an uncontested advance toward the German line in Poland and Rumania.

*Pacific.* Russia decides not to declare war on Japan, because of the expense.

*Bruce: From the Japanese point of view this was a major strategic error, as Japan wasn't strong enough economically to fight on two (or three or four, depending on how you count it...) fronts.*

The US captures Lae and continues to advance towards the Dutch East Indies.

*Mike: Summer 1943 is early for capturing Lae, but a 1942 DoW on Russia really hampers the Japanese BRP position. With Japanese forces stuck in Manchuria to fight off an anticipated Russian assault, the Allies get real benefits of the Japanese Russian adventure, even without the Russian DoW.*

**1943 Fall Allies.** The Germans are now on the defensive everywhere. Russia makes it up to the German lines and prepares to attack in 1944. The Western Allies capture Paris, having been pushed back in the south.

*Pacific.* The US captures Hollandia and invades the Dutch East Indies.

*Bruce: Japan, which has finally built its force pool, has prepared a counter-blow.*

*Mike: The Allies are ahead of schedule in both theaters. But appearances can be deceiving. The Allies do not have overwhelming strength in France, and Germany should be in an excellent BRP*

*position, having spent little in 1943. The Japanese position is more troublesome.*

**1943 Winter Axis.** Not much happens on the eastern front. Germany withdraws a hex in France to set up a new line.

*Pacific.* Japan, having positioned its army air units in the Dutch East Indies, launches an aerial attack, followed by a patrol that inflicts losses on an American task force, and supports an invasion of a key port in the Celebes, blunting the American offensive.

**1943 Winter Allies.** The Western Allies do nothing more than take the hexes vacated by the Axis.

*Pacific.* The US has started to gain a carrier superiority, and the Americans counter the Japanese blow with a push in the Pacific to Saipan.

*Mike: Bruce has defended his oil for another turn. However, assuming that the Allies can supply Saipan and build a port on it in Spring 1944, they can threaten an invasion of Japan in Summer 1944. It is hard to defend both Japan and the other possessions.*

**1944 Spring Allies.** The Russians start attacking in the east and take Lvov and one mountain hex south of it, and move a little closer to Warsaw.

**1944 Summer Axis.** Germany withdraws to Belgium and the West Wall and the mountains on the Italian border in the south.

*Pacific.* Japan pulls back from the Dutch East Indies.

*Mike: Japan has probably seen the last of its oil.*

**1944 Summer Allies.** The Western Allies liberate the rest of France. Russia takes the hexes between Warsaw and Lvov.

*Pacific.* The US starts to invade the abandoned Japanese possessions. The US helps the Chinese take Haiphong and opens a supply route into China. The rest of the Southeast Asia is secured with a few

isolated Japanese pockets of resistance. Russia declares war on Japan.

*Bruce: This is too late to significantly change the outcome of the war in the Pacific.*

*Mike: It should help. Russia has more time to take back Vladivostok, and obtain Harbin, Mukden, and perhaps Peking.*

**1944 Fall Axis.** Germany continues to defend in the west, but fatigue is starting to set in. The Germans build a precious fort in Rotterdam, and garrison it only with infantry.

**1944 Fall Allies.** The Axis immediately lose Rotterdam to a strong Western Allied exploitation attack which puts Western Allied armor on the north German plain.

*Mike. A Market Garden that actually worked!*

Russia takes Warsaw, while the Western Allies also take Cologne and Mannheim.

*Pacific.* The US, trying to speed things up in the Pacific, invades Okinawa before it can get land-based air within range, and a massive naval battle ensues. The end result is the destruction of the Japanese fleet and a +10 increase in the Japanese resistance level from American casualties. After the battle is completed and Okinawa successfully invaded it is discovered that the Japanese and American Air Nationality DRMs were actually equal since early 1943.

*Mike: Bruce extracts a high price for Okinawa. This is an impressive amount of American casualties (250 BRPs worth). This could easily cost the Allies an extra turn or two. But Fall 1944 is three turns early for taking Okinawa.*

**1944 Winter Allied.** Russia takes Budapest and Bucharest, knocking Hungary and Rumania out of the war. They also take Krakow and the cross the river west of Warsaw. The Western Allies take Essen and The Hague.

*Mike: The Western Allies are four hexes from Berlin, and the Russians six. A draw or one term victory seems possible for the European Axis.*

*Pacific.* The US invades Shikoku, one of the Japanese Home Islands. Japanese kamikazes do their best.

*Mike: Okinawa has fallen and the Home Islands are invaded, but Japan still hangs tough. Obviously, the Western Allies don't yet have an atomic bomb, and I am sure they could use one!*

**1945 Spring Allies.** Germany “turtles” as best it can, and both Russia and the Western Allies advance close to Berlin while clearing the skies of the German air force. The Russians take southern Germany isolating Italy from the Germans. The Western Allies attack into northern Italy, take Genoa and airdropping and redeploying into Spezia, destroying the European Axis’ last hope of a one-turn victory, which was holding onto Italy until Fall 1945.

*Pacific.* The US mops up China and a number of other Japanese positions, and expands its position in Japan. Heavy Allied losses in these attacks add enough Japanese resistance modifiers to leave Japan in the war with a net +1 resistance level.

*Mike: Well, the resistance level modifiers for casualties certainly add some nail biting to the end of the Pacific campaign!*

**1945 Summer Axis.** Germany uses an advanced submarine to make an atomic attack on New York, which has no effect on the game other than to vastly expand post-indictments against the surviving Germans.

*Mike: This is the second convention in a row where Bruce has convinced his partner to pursue a German atomic program! Too bad it didn't work quite as well as last year!*

**1945 Summer Allied.** The US responds by dropping bombs on Berlin and Tokyo. The

WAs also capture Rome, and all three Axis powers surrender.

### **Post Mortem.**

*Bruce: The Axis suffered a narrow one-turn defeat, and rightly so.*

*Germany ought to have pressed harder in Russia, refused the initial Russian surrender offer and tried to keep Russia out of the war for more than just a turn. In the west, the Axis should have given a higher priority to France, even at the expense of Italy, because it is easier to fight the Western Allies up the Italian peninsula, rather than in the open expanses of France.*

*Having taken the Russian surrender, the Germans made a strategic mistake in failing to redeploy all their forces to France while there was time, in favor of defending against non-existent Russian threats, and made several tactical mistakes (not fortifying Paris, not properly defending their Rotterdam fortification). These errors accelerated the collapse in the west, which ultimately allowed the Western Allies to knock Germany out of the war with only one atomic bomb, leaving the other for Tokyo.*

*Interestingly, the Germans also fell for a brilliant Allied bluff, in that they were convinced the US had an atomic bomb in Spring 1945, and therefore didn't attack the US in that turn, triggering a one-turn truce in the west. This might have saved the game for the Axis, by delaying the Italian (but not the German) surrender by a turn. The Axis would have to have been psychic to try this, though, as it would have meant their only atomic bomb was unavailable for tactical use.*

*The Allies made some suspect strategic decisions as well, by not attacking across the Alps into northern Italy sooner (a timely German defense in northern Italy might well have tied the game) and by delaying the Russian declaration of war on Japan until 1944 (Russia didn't really need its BRPs in*

*1943, because Germany didn't oppose the Russian advance to Poland and Rumania, which regained Russian ICs and reopened the Murmansk convoy route).*

*In the Pacific, neither player had that much choice. A Japanese attack on Russia dooms Japan, and the outcome of the war then depends on what happens in Europe. The course of this game made that obvious, as Japan sank five American carriers in the first few turns, but didn't have the forces or BRPs to exploit this advantage.*

*Had the Japanese been able to use their Spring 1943 Air Nationality DRM increase, they would have held the Americans off longer, probably losing Okinawa in Winter 1944 to an invasion under American army air units based in China and being invaded in Spring or Summer 1945. But this mistake, while serious, turned out not to affect the outcome of the game, because the German collapse allowed the Western Allies to use their second atomic bomb on Japan in Summer 1945. The Siberian campaign precluded Japan from fending off the Americans until Fall 1945, and the combination of an invasion and an atomic bombing would have forced a Japanese surrender in Summer 1945.*

*All in all, the game was very enjoyable and exciting, with the outcome in doubt until the final few turns. The game confirmed what had been expected – that an A World at War game arising out of Gathering Storm is not only viable, but can be even more interesting and challenging than a “classic” A World at War game. In the end, the game wasn't decided by the Gathering Storm preparations for war or by luck – the team that made fewer strategic and tactical mistakes (and in the course of five days of hard fighting everyone made their fair share) won.*

## Game 2.

### Hogen Hogen Moore Conway

European Axis: Jon Hogen  
Japan: Vic Hogen  
Allies Europe: Jason Moore  
Allies Pacific: Brian Conway  
European Result: Winter 1945 (+2)  
Pacific Result: Winter 1945 (+1)  
Overall Result: Axis (+3)

*Game narrative provided by Jon and Vic Hogen.*

**Axis Europe.** The initial plan was to keep US/Axis tensions low, to delay US mobilizations and help with a similar strategy in the Pacific. The most likely strategic path was a gambit through Spain to hopefully take Gibraltar (sealing off the Mediterranean), build a large navy, and make a Summer '41 attack on Russia.

*Jon: I was determined to keep my options open: threatening Egypt and a Sea Lion to see how my opponent would react. As it turned out, the defensive positions of my opponent changed the course of my game.*

**Axis Pacific.** The strategy featured a low tension approach, to possibly catch US carriers at Pearl, but also to delay US mobilizations.

**Allies.** The Western Allied strategy, aside from survival, was to defend strong, avoid an invasion of Britain, and when defending in Russia, slowly bleed some Russian units to put pressure on Japan.

*Vic: Neither strategy turned out as planned.*

**1939 Fall Axis.** Poland went down with a three BRP loss (a single air factor). The sub war was not good due to a bad Axis roll, combined with a good Allied roll. Raiders, however got two transports, which made up for the sub roll.

*Jon: Generally my sub rolls were unimpressive for the first 5 game turns and I had trouble drawing the sub warfare card. '39 research didn't go well, although a good roll on radar laid the groundwork for air/naval nationality upgrades earlier than I usually expect.*

Pacific. Japan attritions. Japan builds and sits.

**1939 Fall Allies.** Britain Mobilizes a 4-5, a 2-5, a 3-4 and 1 NAS.

**1939 Winter Axis.** The Low Countries fall to high odds attacks, to prevent losses (1 army air factor lost). This sets up a 210 starting BRP level for 1940, resulting in two extra DPs, and extra RP help.

**1939 Winter Allies.** Russia takes the Finnish hexes with no losses.

**1940 Spring Axis.** Germany takes northern France with no losses. Submarines inflict 2/2 on transports. Two 2-6 German armor end the turn in port, to threaten Sea Lion. Germany produces a second air transport.

**1940 Summer Axis.** Paris is occupied and most of the French army is destroyed or surrounded, at a cost of 16 German BRPs. Submarines inflict a paltry 1/1 on transports. Two 4-6 armor and a parachute SR to Libya. The Italians declare war on Allies and attrition occupy one hex in Egypt. Sea Lion is threatened. The Germans begin to lay down their big navy, starting with a BB5.

**1940 Summer Allies.** France falls (+3 surrender level). Vichy is not established. With the maximum German diplomatic result in France, all colonies become inactive minors. The British react to the Sea Lion threat with a heavy focus of ground/air/navy in Britain, while fortifying London. Eleven army air is left forward. In Egypt, British forces pull back two hexes to stay out of range of approaching German armor.

**1940 Fall Axis.** Germany conquers Denmark and Norway, while taking a big

(and critical) counter air on the 11 British army air held forward in Britain. This sets British building back quite a bit. German armor, air and infantry move to the Spanish border. USAT is 16. (*Editor: Is this correct?*) German air moves to Sicily. The sub war starts to pick up (sub card finally drawn), inflicting 6/2 on transports, plus raiders sink two transports.

**1940 Fall Allies.** The British invade Morocco, figuring it will help if there's a siege on Gibraltar.

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

**1940 Winter Axis.** The Axis take a straight 2:1 in Egypt which might destabilize Allied defenses there. A "1" is rolled, and mostly Italian losses are taken. The following bold second attack at 1.5 to 1 results in an EX-2 for no German losses. Exploiting armor surround the remaining British units and take Egypt. Submarines inflict a 5/2 result on transports. Raiders sink a BB3 with NAS from a German CVL.

*Jon: This was probably the most important turn as far as determining future game developments.*

**1940 Winter Allies.** The Allies transport units into Suez to try to hold the Suez canal.

**1941 Spring Axis.** It is decision time. With German forces on the Spanish border, and seeing a chance to again penetrate Allied forces around the Suez Canal, the Axis decide to put the Russia attack off till 1942. The Germans declare war on Spain and surround Madrid. In Egypt, newly arrived Allied forces are again surrounded, as the German begin to push into the Middle East.

*Mike: Another factor in Jon's thinking was the realization that he would not be able to take Spain in one turn, as he misplaced some air factors. This, together with some armor already in the Middle East, would make an attack on Russia less than optimal.*

**1941 Spring Allied.** The Russians start to transfer larger forces than (*Japan*) planned to Siberia.

*Vic: Japan is getting pretty nervous. Russia also builds 6 ground factors in Siberia, making Japan more nervous.*

**1941 Summer Axis.** German/Italian forces pour into Lebanon. Spain is taken with an attrition and a follow up paradrop in exploitation phase. Air bases near Gibraltar are taken during the movement phase so that 15 German air can begin the siege of Gibraltar. Germany starts a reposition to Russia, but with no rail heads, and with Russia having 2 rail heads in Siberia, Japan is looking desperate.

*Vic: In fact, I was desperate.*

*Mike: Just to be clear, were their two Russian railheads, in addition to Vladivostok and Irkutsk? This would imply that Jason and Brian, at the 1941 YSS, were confident that Jon would postpone the invasion of Russia until 1942 and throw Japan under the bus. And that they would take advantage of it if he did. It's not obviously the best thing to do, although perhaps they thought Jon might wait for Russia to DoW Germany (though I have never seen him do that). The alternative to putting pressure on Japan, is for the Allies to let the Pacific theater develop normally, while keeping the entire Russian army at the Polish-Rumanian border. In that case, Germany is likely to bounce off in 1942 if it attacks, and the war will start with Russia close to Poland in 1943, whether Germany attacks, or not. I am personally inclined to favor this approach against Jon's strategy.*

Pacific. Japan prepares for war in winter by repositioning forces. A critical tension roll keeps WA tension at 19.

**1941 Summer Allies.** Russia continues to draw forces to Siberia to try to take the bite out of the coming Japanese attack.

**1941 Fall Axis.** The Germans declare war on Arabia and surround the last defense of the British in Iraq. Britain abandons the Middle East and Germany controls the oil! This is the second turn of Gibraltar isolation. Germany does a counter invasion of Morocco to retake this area. Sea Lion still a threat. Italians raid in Indian Ocean while Germans raid in Atlantic. Germans are not found. Italians are found but only by a single British destroyer. The combination of German/Italian raiders and the sub war (coupled with an unusual confluence of good rolls for the Axis, while the Allies roll poorly) resulted in a 12/3 transport result, a devastating outcome.

**Fall 1941 Allies.** 80 BRPs of Russian units are now in Siberia.

**1941 Winter Axis.** Gibraltar is isolated for a third turn. The subs inflict 5/3 losses on transports. The Germans declare war on Persia and take Basra and Abadan. The Axis move some more units towards Russia. The sub war continues to take a toll, as Allies didn't build CVEs as early as they could have.

Pacific. The Japanese attack anyway, despite having most of their army in Manchuria to prevent a DOW by Russia. They take Singapore, Rabaul, Palembang, and Brunei. They find no CV's in Pearl, but they get +2 victory points. They get the oil also.

*Mike: Getting that oil is still important, as it can hamstring early U.S. offensive operations.*

**1941 Winter Allied.**

Pacific. The WA fail to supply the Solomons.

**1942 Spring Axis.** Germany declares war on Russia and the US. Gibraltar falls and Portugal is occupied. In Russia, Germany takes an attrition with limited offensive for position. The sub war is in happy time, with an 8/6 result against the transports. Germany begins fortifying Western beaches.

Pacific. Japan announces an air DRM. Japan takes the rest of the Gilberts, but with most of its army left behind and only 7 AAF, cannot take Lae or Port Moresby.

*Vic: For the air DRM, thank you Einstein!*

**1942 Spring Allies.** The US proceeds with a nuclear program, which eventually fails. It matches the Japanese air DRM with one of its own.

The WA take New Georgia. US sea transports 4 factors of ground to Lae under lots of air in Australia. Russia is not scared by the German DoW, and keeps units in Siberia, but starts to move a lot back also. Russia has 128 BRP worth of air and ground factors and armor in Siberia and Japan matched with 65, but transfers units back to Siberia in what will turn out to be a double fake out.

**1942 Summer Axis.** The German offensive surrounds a large part of the Russian army. The sub war is still cooking and achieves a 7/3 result against the transports.

Pacific. The Japanese advance in Burma is stalled in the north by heavy WA reinforcements in the mountains. Japan realizes it will not make it to the jungle mountain hexes of Burma, and settles for taking Mandalay and holding the Irrawaddy. Japan retakes New Georgia and reinforces Rabaul. It destroys 8 WA AAF on the ground. It finally captures Rangoon. Japan decides they can only hold the interior lines of the Rabaul-Hollandia-Palau area.

*Vic: Japan keeps the pressure on by air attritioning in New Guinea each turn to advantage.*

*Mike: This is a pretty effective way for Japan to fight at this point. Although the air Japan can devote to the perimeter is only a fraction of their force, it can make its presence felt by attacking the Allies each turn, before the Allies attack them.*

**1942 Summer Allies.** The Russians re-form a line and re-build their losses. In England, the Allies build up.



Pacific. The WA take Santa Cruz and the southern islands of the Solomons against little resistance, but the northern Solomon's holds. The WA land south of Rabaul, and take the hexes west of Lae. Russia transfers all of its Urals box forces back to Siberia. It now has 125 BRP worth of various units, including air and armor there. This double move nukes the Japanese reinforcement of its front again for the Fall turn. It will give the WA the Solomons and New Guinea.

*Vic: Atlantic sub pressure forced the delay of much WA light and heavy ship production, to rebuild transports over these turns.*

*Mike: Jason and Brian are playing an interesting game, keeping Japan on a string like a yo-yo. However, allowing Jon to advance so freely into Russia in 1942 is asking for trouble, unless they can come up with a masterstroke in France. Jon will make them pay to retake every hex in Russia that they give up.*

**1942 Fall Axis.** Because of Russian forces in Siberia, Germany is able to make a massive encirclement of the southern 2/3 of the Russian army.

**1942 Fall Allies.** The Fall encirclement finally prompts Jason to start a major exodus from Siberia.

**1942 Winter Axis.** Germany has penetrated further than expected considering a 1942 Russian attack with no surprise. Two IC's have been taken. The sub war begins to lose some steam with the arrival of some CVEs, inflicting 4/2 on the transports.

Pacific. Finally, Japan can try to defend the interior triangle. Japan sits, frankly exhausted by the strain.

**1942 Winter Allies.** the Russian line stabilizes and is reinforced slowly.

**1942 Winter Allies.** The build up continues in England.

Pacific. The WA take several undefended islands, including New Ireland.

*Mike: With Kavieng and Lae in their possession, and the imposition of an air blockade, the fall of Manus and Rabaul should not be far behind. But now the going will get more difficult, with the Japanese army freed from garrison duty in Manchuria. And the U.S. must still achieve significant carrier superiority to really break out from New Guinea, especially in the face of newly released Japanese LBA. The Western Allies have gotten quite a bit from their Russian Siberian gambit, but will it be enough?*

*Although it may seem counter-intuitive, since the U.S. appears to be doing well, it might make sense to send a full U.S. carrier group to the Atlantic (along with the British CVLs) to assist in an invasion of France. If the Western Allies can get ashore in Spring or Summer, the carriers can be back in the Pacific for use by Fall or Winter 1943, when they finally have carrier parity. Presumably the Japanese will have given up in New Guinea by then, and the breakout can begin a turn or two ahead of schedule.*

**1943 Spring Axis.** The Axis subs inflict a very respectable 6/6 on the transports, and Germany attritions Russia, for an 11C/6H result. Germany positions enlarged German and Italian navies in the Atlantic. Beaches are fortified.

*Mike: The attrition is only one counter less than the maximum possible result.*

Pacific. Japan continues to counter air in the New Guinea area to good effect and retakes Kavieng.

*Mike: This is a setback for Brian. I am assuming that the air Brian needs is in Europe, preparing to invade France.*

**1943 Spring Allies.** The build up continues in England. The Russians also achieve an 11C/6H result.

Pacific. The WA sit in the New Guinea area, with a shortage of AAF the culprit.

**1943 Summer Axis.** The Germans attack in Russia to keep the Russians off balance.

*Mike: Jon must feel rather confident of his defense in France to use his air in Russia in a full offensive.*

Pacific. Japan counterattacks Port Moresby and runs supply to Rabaul and sits. Forts go down slowly in Truk, Palau, and Guam.

*Mike: The Western Allies have difficulty keeping enough air in both theaters at this point in the game. With Allied air massing in England, the Pacific appears too short of AAF.*

**1943 Summer Allied.** The Western Allies attempt to come ashore in France. The combined Italian/German navies intercept part of the invasion force outside most of the Allied air cover, and a huge naval battle ensues. They inflict enough losses to turn back an initial invasion of France, but Axis loses more ships than the Allies in the exchange. Curiously the Italians do more damage to the Allies than the Germans do.

*Mike: This is probably the turning point in the game, at least in Europe.*

Pacific. The British CVLs, which have been in the Pacific since Winter 1941, return to the Atlantic. The WA subs against the Japanese begin to sink 2-3 transports per turn.

*Mike: I assume Jason hopes that the addition of the British CVLs to the Atlantic fleet may turn the balance and allow a Fall invasion of France.*

**1943 Fall Axis.** The sub war is the star, inflicting a 9/6 result on the transports. The Germans go defensive in the East while most army air is diverted to France. Paris is fortified.

*Mike: The sub war is not going in the right direction for the Allies. With the transfer of most of the German air to defend France, the best opportunity for the Western Allies to get ashore early and*

*start advancing toward Berlin appears to have been lost.*

Pacific. Japan sits and rebuilds air from the numerous air attritions. They supply Hollandia but not Rabaul. The Japanese are able to rebuild all their transport losses.

*Mike: Vic appears to calm down, now that he has an air force to defend with.*

**1943 Fall Allied.** The Allies rebuild transports and continue the build up in England, but do not attempt another invasion this year.

*Jon: An Allied Fall invasion is deemed impossible after much hand wringing and trash talk on both sides.*

Pacific. The WA attack and capture Nauru. Russia stabilizes.

**1943 Winter Axis.** German air is switched back to the East, making Russian offensive progress difficult to impossible. The Germans hold behind the Leningrad - Rostov line, although Germany didn't take either of these ICs.

*Mike: Jon has achieved the position he normally strives for, and in fact, is perhaps in a better position than usual, being this far forward in Russia, especially after a 1942 invasion. Plus he has a lock on oil from Mosul, until the Allies re-enter the Mediterranean, and that campaign appears on permanent hold until the Western Allies are ashore in France.*

Pacific. Japan heavily reinforces its interior triangle.

**1943 Winter Allies.** Russia pushes forces into Baltic States.

*Mike: I assume this is on the strength of a Russian winter attrition. I see that Jason is focused on moving toward Berlin.*

Pacific. The WA take Rabaul and Manus clean on 2-1s.

*Mike: Way to go, Brian! A very nice result, without surrendering any resistance points! This keeps Allied hopes very much alive in the Pacific. Considering the fleet losses one can take on a full exchange on a 2:1, generating 1 or 2 resistance points, this now takes even more courage.*

**1944 Spring Axis.** . Germany surrounds the Baltic incursion with an attrition. Russia has to lose some armor to retain part of position. Calais is fortified again.

Pacific. Japan strings a conga line across Burma to Mandalay.

**1944 Spring Allies.** Research. The Western Allies fail to obtain an atomic bomb result for 1944.

*Mike: I assume this means they failed in either plutonium production or uranium separation, although it is odd to roll for this before making an atomic breakthrough roll.*

*Vic: This makes taking down Japan and Germany very difficult.*

*Mike: I agree. The atomic bomb was the Allies best hope of insuring a win in the Pacific, and giving them a chance at a tie or one turn loss in Europe. It's hard to get even a tie in the Pacific without the A-bomb.*

With a beach defense and fort in Calais, the Allies come ashore at Lorient, but at a cost of 26 army air factors and a 3-4 infantry. Russia attacks around Riga and crosses the Dvina river there in force. Russia is still along the Dnieper, and Germany is holding strong.

*Mike: Jon almost always strives to encourage an Allied invasion somewhere other than Calais. The Lorient invasion is five hexes further south, which can easily add three to five turns to the drive on Berlin. The good news is that the Allies are ashore, and Jon must continue to defend the coastline.*

Pacific. The WA take Truk at 3-1 odds, with 6 losses. Hollandia holds. The Burma-Mandalay line holds

*Vic: By now, its nearing 6 PM on Saturday. Brian and I are content to watch the contest of wills between Jon and Jason. But, moves slow down.*

**Summer 1944 Axis.** Germany viciously counterattacks the Riga salient, retaking 2 of the most forward hexes. The Allied invasion is bottled up.

*Jon: At this point it is clear how the game will proceed so we call it.*

*Vic: With not enough time to expand the Allied bridgehead in France, and no atomic bomb, the game is adjudicated a level one Japanese, and a level two German victory. Guam probably would have held, forcing the Western Allies to go laterally. Germany would have survived relatively longer. It was a great game, and we would have loved to finish it, but we went to the Texas Roadhouse instead and had a few beers and steaks.*

*Mike: I don't quite understand the comment about "no bomb". Couldn't the Allies roll for it again in 1945?*

**Post Mortem.**

*Vic: Russian transfers to Siberia did nuke Japanese expansion and reinforcement of New Guinea and further on. It was not enough, and Russian delay in getting back to Russia from Siberia allowed Germany to expand just enough. There were numerous tactical battles that the game depended on, not the least of which was a gutsy 1.5 to 1 attack in Egypt to blow the position out. We felt Russia should not have done the double fake on the transfer of units from Siberia back to Russia, which allowed the German expansion. We also felt the WA could have transferred more forces back to the Atlantic to give them the edge they needed to get ashore a little earlier. They kept the British CVLs at a critical juncture in the Pacific instead. Research on both sides was rather*

*traditional except for the failure to get the bomb. This was the blow which I think gave Germany the game and likely Japan also.*

*Jon: With the additional oil at Germany's disposal, the Axis had the ability to take grave losses voluntarily to hold their ground. A concerted attack may have taken Germany down by Winter 1945, but then there was still the question of conquering Italy. Since Russia was making no headway toward Rumania, it would have been left to the Western Allies to fight across the Alps to take Italy down. I believe in this position I could have held out till Spring 1946, but we called it a two turn Axis victory in the Europe. The game followed a different trajectory than planned, largely due to the German tactical victory in Egypt and the Middle East. Not building CVEs at the earliest chance helped the German sub war quite a bit. The Russian campaign went better than expected for the Germans, largely due to the concentration of Russian forces in Siberia. Perhaps the forces were held in Siberia for too long a time, but in an unconventional game, these types of decisions are not clear cut.*

## Game 3

### Milne-Milne-Feustel-Crowe

European Axis:	Kevin Milne
Japan:	Paul Milne
Allies Europe:	Elihu Feustel
Allies <i>Pacific</i> :	Mike Crowe
European Result:	Summer 1945 0)
Pacific Result:	Summer 1945 (-1)
Overall Result:	Allied (-1)

*Game narrative provided by Elihu Feustel and Mike Crowe.*

**Axis.** *Kevin.* The plan that Paul and I planned in anticipation of the Con was an all-in against Russia, where we would combine a German high production strategy, with a strategic Japanese attack against the Russians, most likely in Summer 1941. In the end, Paul thought this would result in Japan's early defeat, as war with Russia is very rarely profitable for Japan.

*Mike.* A 1941 attack by Japan, prior to establishing the perimeter, is not for the faint of heart. I have employed a Summer 1942 attack, after establishing the perimeter. That is also not easy, but it is easier than a 1941 attack!

The plan we switched to was one where Germany would try to deal as much damage to Russia as possible, in order to gain ground and weaken the inevitable counter-attack, allowing Germany to defensively focus on keeping the Western Allies at bay. Meanwhile Japan would pursue a conventional strategy with a defensive posture, focusing research on programs such as ASW and radar, to keep the Japanese transports alive late in the war

*Mike.* That part of the plan worked very well. From where I sat, I was able to place zero pressure on Paul's economy or build rate.

**Allies.** *Mike.* Elihu and I hammered out an Allied research plan before the convention, although we altered it some along the way. I wanted a strong nuclear program, and a large NAT rate, and a lot of transports for the Pacific. I advised using production for armor and air, and mobilization for some armor, and a lot of air and infantry. Elihu suggested using mobilization for transports, as they come in right away. We both wanted a big emphasis on the battle of the Atlantic. Originally we were going to try for a Naval DRM by 1940, but postponed that to 1941, in favor of upping Allied shipbuilding. I wanted to achieve carrier parity with Japan quickly, by building primarily CVLs, and by transferring some British CVLs to the Pacific. Elihu expressed reservations about the all CVL strategy.

**1939 Fall Axis.** The beginning was pretty standard. Poland falls. Raiders get through to eliminate a transport. Subs inflict a 3/1 result on the transports.

**1939 Fall Allies.** The U.S. lays down a CV (the only one built) in response to Hiryu, which will launch in Fall 1941.

**1939 Winter Axis.** Germany sits and builds. Subs do no damage.

**1940 Spring Axis.** Germany takes the Low Countries and takes Denmark and Norway. Britain announces an ASW result. Germany announces a torpedo result. Both sides announce an air range result. Subs inflict a 3/1 result on the transports.

*Mike.* The early Axis air range is impressive.

*Pacific:* Japanese NAT increases to 4.

**1940 Spring Allies.** Britain committed heavily to France. Britain announces a shipbuilding increase in Glasgow.

**1940 Summer Axis.** Britain announces an ASW result. The subs inflict a 2/2 result on the transports. Germany suffered moderate losses and took Paris. Britain lost 12 factors of infantry in the campaign.

**1940 Summer Allies.** Britain announces a shipbuilding increase in Canada. The French surrender level is +1, reduced to 0 after DPs.

**1940 Fall Axis.** Germany bombs Britain. Germany fails to activate Rumania. The subs inflict a 5/2 result on the transports.

**1940 Winter Axis.** To insure that Rumania can be conquered if it doesn't activate in Spring, Germany takes out Yugoslavia. The subs inflict a 2/2 result on the transports.

**1941 Spring Axis.** The Axis attempt to activate Rumania, but are thwarted by a Russian subversion. However, the Axis do get hex control in Greece. Germany conquers Rumania from a well planned setup. Britain announces an SW result. The subs inflict a 5/1 result on the transports.

*Kevin: This isn't the first time I've had to invade a defiant Rumania. The Russian subversion was useful for securing Greece though, but the lack of Rumanian infantry put a strain on Germany in the late game.*

**1941 Spring Allies.** The Western Allies announce a shipbuilding increase in Glasgow.

*Pacific:* The U.S. lays down a CVL in response to the launch of CV Shokaku, which will launch in Spring 1942. The U.S. adds a strategic Magic card. US naval air training increases to 5.

**1941 Summer Axis.** The German attack was not hurt by the diversion to conquer Rumania. Germany makes a fairly typical attack. The Western Allies announce a naval DRM. The subs inflict a 1/1 on the transports.

**1941 Summer Allies.** The Russians hold in the north. Britain opens the Persian BRP route. Russia receives 5 BRPs via Murmansk. The Western Allies announce a shipbuilding increase in Canada. The US lays down a CVL in response to CV Zuikaku, which will launch in Summer 1942.

*Pacific:* A 3x4 British infantry is sent to India. The British add 7 FF to the existing British fleets in Colombo to form a TF.

**1941 Fall Axis.** Kharkov falls, although Dnepropetrovsk continues to hold out. The northern pocket holds, but won't hold for long. An Italian armored unit moves adjacent to A47, cutting the Murmansk route for Winter and Spring. The subs inflict a 2/2 result on the transports.

**1941 Fall Allied.** The Allies send 10 BRPs to Russia via Persia.

*Pacific:* The 3x4 British infantry in India reinforces Singapore. The British TF in Colombo moves to Singapore, in hopes of interfering with Japanese operations. Three carrier groups are in the Pacific, while two remain in the Atlantic. The sixth US CV launches.

*Mike: I was tempted to place all five carrier groups in the Pacific. However, Elihu pointed out that Paul was pursuing a low tension strategy, so that the conservative move was to minimize exposure of carriers and lights. I took his advice.*

**1941 Winter Axis.** The Axis announce two winter preparation results, and proceed to roll a 1 for winter, allowing them to press their attack. Dnepropetrovsk falls. The Axis advance to Leningrad. The subs inflict a 2/4 result on the transports.

*Kevin: I believe the subs only killed 6 transports in all of 1941. The lack of transports killed worried me greatly as the Germans, as the Allies would likely be able to threaten early invasions and would thus require me to commit more ground forces in the defense of France.*

*Pacific:* Japan attacks with tensions at 32. Japan plays one strategic magic card, while the U.S. plays two. Japan is able to use the 0-33 column (now the lowest). Japan is disappointed by not finding any carriers at Pearl (and the associated lights). Japan kills

the air and the lights that are there, and does some damage to the battleships. Japan decides against a second strike. In Southeast Asia, attempted interception of Japanese missions results in the destruction of most of the British fleet factors in Singapore, with only a few remnants escaping. Japan manages to lay down a few CVLs.

*Mike: An unwise waste of good British ships! I had to ask Elihu to build some more British cruisers!*

**1941 Winter Allied.** The Allies send 10 BRPs to Russia via Persia.

*Pacific:* The Allies reinforce the Pacific as best they can using 5 transports and 7 DDs. Infantry and some air are transported by DDs to Pacific islands, including Guadalcanal and Tarawa. Additional air and infantry are carried to Australia by transports. About 12 US AAF plus the 2 Australian AAF, the two British AAF, and the two Flying Tigers, are in the Pacific theater. The U.S. fleet bases at Noumea. Great Britain sends two British CVLs to Australia. Three CVs and supporting ships change base from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and then NR to Tahiti. The US begins its CVL building program in earnest, laying down seven of them.

**1942 Spring Axis.** Both sides rebuild and attrition. Russia isolates two German armored units in the forests near Kalinin. The subs inflict a 5/3 result on the transports.

*Pacific:* Japan focuses on establishing its perimeter, and sets up to take out Singapore. Japanese NAT increases to 5.

**1942 Spring Allied.** The Allies roll a 1 on USAT, delaying U.S. entry by another turn. The British increase shipbuilding in Glasgow to seven. Russia receives 10 BRPs in aid through Persia.

*Pacific:* The U.S. takes advantage of the Japanese preoccupation with Singapore to contest the Solomons, and to fight for supply

of Port Moresby. The U.S. launches a CVL laid down pre-war. US NAT increases to six.

**1942 Summer Axis.** Germany declares war on the United States. The Western Allies announce a second air range result, and a fourth ASW result. The subs inflict a 5/2 result on the transports. Germany air supplies the two isolated armored units, allowing the Axis to eliminate a second line Russian armor. The Russians lose almost two-thirds of their army, from Leningrad down near Stalingrad.

*Elihu: Summer 1942 was a critical turn. I planned on having about one-third of my army encircled, but made a tactical error which Kevin successfully exploited.*

*Pacific:* Singapore falls to a combined attack, both overland and via invasion, with lots of shore bombardment.

*Mike: For some reason I have been oblivious to the rule which states that if Singapore is attacked by land, then the fortifications facing the sea are negated. Given that it has been this way since the first edition, I'm not sure why I never learned this rule, but there it is. So I thought my defense would be eight if attacked by land, and sixteen if attacked by sea and land, but it wasn't. Paul used marines to negate the +1 for invasion, and attacked my four factors at strength eight. It wasn't that hard to take with help from shore bombardment. Paul was alert enough to keep it isolated, so I couldn't build a fort there. It's a supply source, so it is always in limited supply, but a fort would have been nice!*

**1942 Summer Allies.** The U.S. finally enters the war! The Western Allies successfully invade France, to take some of the pressure off Russia, which needs the help. The Allies begin mobilizing one transport a turn in the Atlantic. The Russians retreat. The U.S. builds the Alaska Highway.

Russia receives 30 BRPs in aid through Persia and Murmansk.

*Elihu: The Allies had mobilization problems. Three "I"s rolled on USAT in 1940-42 caused us to just miss U.S. mobilizations at various points. This was compounded by our "Singapore Gambit", where we sent a 3x4 to Singapore in Summer of 1941.*

*Mike: We were risking postponing U.S. entry by a turn when we sent the 3x4 to Singapore, but it definitely made a difference in the Pacific.*

*Pacific: The Allies continue to have success supplying Port Moresby, and build a fort there. US NAT increases to seven. A second CVL laid down pre-war is launched.*

*Mike: I laid down one pre-war CV, and two pre-war CVLs. My objective was to achieve carrier parity with Japan as soon as possible, so that I could offer combat, and either advance more quickly than Japan might be comfortable with, or cause fleet attrition. I learned this trick from Ed Schoenfeld.*

**1942 Fall Axis.** The Axis inflict 6/5 in transport losses, as Happy Time starts to bite. The Axis take Moscow and Vologda, closing the Murmansk route. The Axis start shifting air, infantry and armor back to France, to contain the Allied bridgehead.

*Pacific: With Singapore secure, and his navy at Rabaul, Paul takes the last island holding out in the Gilberts.*

**1942 Fall Allies.** The Western Allies build up their bridgehead, and start to advance in North Africa. Russia receives 20 BRPs total, through Persia and Alaska.

*Pacific: The Allies take Tarawa. Two British carriers arrive in Australia to support the U.S. forces. The Allies now have 26 carrier factors in theater, to 22 for Japan.*

**1942 Winter Axis.** The subs inflict 5/4 in transport losses. The Axis roll a second consecutive "I" for the Russian winter. They

take Gorki and Leningrad. A fortified Rostov holds.

*Kevin: The first one for winter was terrific for giving the Germans extra pressure against Russia, given our strategy. The second one was nice as well but unfortunately because of Western Allied pressure I wasn't able to press the advantage against the Russians.*

**1942 Winter Allies.** The Russians receive 15 BRPs in aid, through Persia and Alaska.

*Elihu: The successful war in the Atlantic allowed much money to be sent to Russia. 25 BRPs were sent in 1941 including Persia (which the UK opened before US entered the war), and 75 BRPs in 1942. That, plus 30 BRPs from IC increases in 1941, and 40 BRPs in 1942, kept Russia in the game, despite my tactical error in Summer '42. I was very worried that Germany would continue pressing hard in Russia in 1943, and was considering producing an IC for surrender purposes, although Mike talked me out of it.*

*Mike. I wasn't worried. He hadn't surrendered yet, his army, including air, was rebuilt, the Western Allies were ashore for good in France, and Germany was about to switch to the defensive. I wanted Elihu to use those RPs for shock troops and take the offensive.*

*Pacific: The Allies supply Tarawa, and build a port there. Seven newly launched CVLs and some other ships NR to Tahiti.*

**1943 Spring Axis.** The Axis commit heavily to containing the Western Allied bridgehead in France. The Allies announce a fifth ASW result. Subs inflict a 1/3 result. The Allies are hemmed in by Paris, the Loire and the Seine.

*Pacific: The Japanese consolidate their fleets at Truk, adding some recently launched carriers. Japanese NAT increases to five.*

**1943 Spring Allies.** An Allied attempt to deny hex control to the Axis in Greece fails.



The Allies, blocked for now in France, reinforce an ongoing campaign in North Africa and the Mediterranean. Russia moves to the offensive.

*Pacific:* The Allies, with air support from Tarawa, invade Makin. The Japanese have air support from Majuro, and contest with four task forces and approximately 28 carrier factors. The Allies oppose with three TFs and approximately 26 carrier factors. The Allies fly maximum CAP. Japan flies somewhat less CAP, and has more factors on strike. Search rolls favor the Allies. The Allies have one CVL damaged. The Japanese lose a CV and a CVL, and have a CVL damaged. Japan withdraws.

*Mike: I got what I wanted - a fight. But I know you have to be careful what you wish for, and this could easily have gone the other way. This was an ideal result, giving me carrier superiority, and an airbase in range of the Marshalls. Now Paul has more real estate to defend on the perimeter, and fewer ships to do it with. The US never loses carrier superiority from this point forward.*

US NAT increases to eight.

**1943 Summer Axis.** The Axis begin retreating in Russia to keep casualties down. A lot of Axis air appears in the Mediterranean, to match the increasing Allied commitment. Subs inflict a 2/5 result.

**1943 Summer Allies.** The Allies advance in North Africa, closing in from two directions on Tripoli.

*Pacific:* The U.S. takes advantage of its carrier advantage to make progress in New Guinea and the Northern Solomons. Kavieng, the beach southwest of Rabaul, and the beach west of Lae are all invaded. These hexes allow bracketing the heavily fortified positions in Lae, Rabaul and Manus with land-based air. US NAT increases to nine.

**1943 Fall Axis.** The Axis subs inflict a 2/5 result.

*Elihu: The WA did very well in the battle of the Atlantic. We used double SBP production in 40 and 41 (Getting Glasgow to six, and Canada to three in early 41). This allowed Glasgow to hit seven in Spring 42, allowing England alone to build six lights per turn. The WA got an NDRM in 41, two ASW in 40, another in 41, and five total by 43. Additionally, seven extra transports were mobilized in the Atlantic (and five were later transferred to the Pacific).*

**1943 Fall Allies.** The Allies take Tripoli, completing their conquest of Africa.

*Pacific:* The Allies take Manus.

**1943 Winter Allies.** The Allies conquer Sicily.

*Pacific:* The Allies take Rabaul, and build a port in Manus.

**1944 Spring Axis.**

*Pacific:* Japanese NAT increases to 6.

**1944 Spring Allies.** The Allies take two hexes in mainland Italy, forcing an Italian surrender. The Allies called Turkey in diplomacy, and with a Russian and Western Allied covert had a chance of either hex control or alliance, which would have threatened the Rumanian oil. Fortunately for the Axis, they missed on their diplomatic roll, and Turkey remained neutral.

*Pacific:* The Allies opt to take a lightly defended Mindanao, rather than risk a huge naval battle at heavily defended Palau. US NAT increases to 10.

**1944 Summer Allies.** The Allies break their containment in France and push toward Berlin. Russia attacks into Western Poland.

*Pacific:* The Allies take Saigon, Brunei, Haikou, islands in the Marshalls (but not Kwajalein), Wake and Hollandia. Supply to Kwajalein cut. US NAT increases to 11.

**1944 Fall Axis.**

*Pacific:* Japan, seeing an opportunity to provoke a naval combat that might favor Japan, runs a patrol straight through the Philippines, to in or around BB19, with the

entire IJN. The Allies respond, intercepting with four task forces. In a fight that goes on for five or six rounds, the IJN is largely destroyed, while the Allies lose 100 BRPs of ships and planes.

*Mike: I could have sent six TFs with some arriving after 2 or 3 rounds, but I didn't realize what Paul intended to do! Paul stayed put, fighting round after round. Eventually my carrier superiority carried the day. This was a battle I really couldn't afford to lose, as it would have cost me a turn, and Paul would have gotten a last shipment of oil as well. It really worked well from Paul's point of view, as he was primarily out to inflict casualties and rack up resistance points. Given that I let him have a reasonably fair fight, he came out well, generating 100 points of casualties, for four resistance points. I wasn't too concerned about the resistance points, although I should have been. I was happy to see the IJN destroyed and eliminated as a factor in my calculations for the rest of the game.*

**1944 Fall Allies.** The Allies continue advancing on Germany from both East and West. Warsaw falls.

*Pacific:* This was an ambitious turn. The Allies take Taiwan, Lingayen, Canton, Foochow, Kwajalein, and Oroluk (next to Truk). Without casualties, which disappointed Paul. The Allies also bomb Japan for the first time, but suffer heavy casualties.

*Mike: I was satisfied with what I took that turn, and was fortunate to have so few casualties. I did not bomb again, though, until delivering an atomic bomb in Summer 1945. I was just giving Paul resistance points.*

**1944 Winter Axis.** Heavily pressed from two directions, the Axis set up to give ground to Russia, in order to limit Western Allied access to airbases near Berlin.

*Mike: Kevin knows we have the atomic bomb, as they put a spy ring in atomics. Elihu ostentatiously places A-bomb markers in each turn space when they will be available.*

*Kevin: We believe this tactic to be primarily one of intimidation. However, it certainly meant that any faint hope of a German victory was completely out the window, and there were several nukes available for Japan as well.*

**1944 Winter Allies.** The Western Allies announce a winter preparation result, and capture as many hexes as they can near Berlin. The Russians continue their advance, but still won't be able to hit German air in northern Germany or Denmark.

*Pacific:* The Allies take the rest of Taiwan, Singapore (by invasion), cut supply to Truk, re-invade the Philippines, take Formosa, and advance to the hex north of Foochow, in air range of Okinawa.

*Mike: As I was planning how to bring the game to an end, I noticed that Rangoon, the Dutch cities, and Bangkok, don't deprive Japan of any resistance points, and thus, don't really matter. I focused on the ones that did*

**1945 Spring Axis.** The Axis encircle Berlin with a defending ring of infantry and armor. The Germans spend almost all of their UCL on Army Air, Jets, and Interceptors for the final defense of Berlin.

*Kevin: Aware that lasting until Fall was virtually impossible given the strong Allied position, I concentrated all of my efforts on securing airbases outside of counter air range for the air defense of Berlin. Unfortunately, because of an earlier error, the Allies had Norway and could easily activate Sweden, giving them airbases in range of all of my hexes, all I could do was spread my air and pray that the dice fell my way.*

*Pacific:* Japanese NAT increases to seven. 14 Kamikazes are ready and waiting.

**1945 Spring Allies.** A Western Allied attempt to activate Sweden succeeds, and with supply from conquered Norway, the allies are able to place 3 airbases in range of Berlin. With no direct ground assault possible from East or West yet, the Western Allies do everything they can to drop an atomic bomb on Berlin. A massive air battle is fought, against German jets, 10 interceptors, and AAF based in Kiel and northern Germany. Five SAC penetrate the air cover and attempt to overcome Berlin's air defense, which includes a fort, an airbase and three flak. If Kevin rolls less than an 8 on air defense, the atomic bomb can drop, and Berlin will surrender. Kevin rolls a 10, saving Berlin!

*Pacific:* US NAT increases to 12. The Allies advance next to Shanghai, take o25 (in air range of Kagoshima), attrition Manila, and take Truk. The hex next to Shanghai proves costly, giving Japan another resistance point.

*Mike: I spent some time looking at resistance points and trying to determine if it was possible to take down Japan this turn. I could only count on using one atomic bomb, of the two we had available in Spring, as Elihu needed one if he was to have a chance at a win on his board. That didn't work out, but it was only fair to give him the chance. As it turns out, Paul had enough resistance points to survive this turn even if I did have two bombs. His total was at 15. If I could invade Kagoshima (with help from a tactical nuke) I would get -5 (2 for control, 3 for a hex in Japan). If I also took Tokyo with help from a tactical nuke, that would be another -5 (2 for a second hex in Japan, and 3 for control). I would gain -1 for island group control, but lose at least 1 for casualties. I could not see inflicting enough losses to make up the remaining 5 points. Although I probably could have invaded Okinawa successfully, I did not want to trigger the kamikazes, and then*

*face who knows how many in Summer! Note that I also could not succeed in dropping an atomic bomb on Tokyo this turn, as I had only six bombers to go against Paul's five interceptors.*

**1945 Summer Axis.** Kevin concedes. He cannot prevent an atomic attack this turn. In addition, Elihu will be in a position to make attacks on Berlin by both the Western Allies and the Russians.

*Pacific:* The Japanese resistance points total 13. The Allies force a surrender as follows. A carrier sweep eliminates all remaining Japanese LBA, though at a cost, as the kamikazes inflict enough damage, along with losses from other attacks, to gain 3 resistance points. Tokyo is nuked for -7 (3 for control, 3 for the nuke, and 1 for a firestorm). Kagoshima is successfully invaded with the help of a tactical nuke, for -5 (2 for control, 3 for the first hex in Japan). -1 for island groups. -1 for Manila. -1 for Nanking (taken with help of a tactical nuke). -1 for Shanghai (taken with help of a tactical nuke). Japan loses 3 resistance for casualties. Japan surrenders at -3, though 0 would do.

*Mike: After the game, I spent some time thinking about what contributed to an Allied victory. The 3x4 in Singapore diverted Paul's resources and allowed me to hold onto Port Moresby and some other perimeter islands. The CVL strategy, plus Elihu's willingness to send me some British CVLs, allowed me to fight Paul in Spring 1943. This is about three turns ahead of dominant US carrier superiority. It was a battle I could easily have lost. But instead, his 28 carrier factors dropped to 21, while my 26 only dropped to 24, and 14 more factors were available from my 1941 Winter carrier starts in Summer. I could take any single objective from that point forward, and was able to penetrate New Guinea starting in Summer 1943. Paul hung tough, though, and my*

significant breakout did not occur until Spring 1944, when I took Mindanao in the Philippines. At that point, while he plugged up the Palau/Guam/Okinawa route, he couldn't stop the advance up the Chinese coast. His patrol in Fall 1944 caught me by surprise. It was a good way for him to pick up resistance points. I didn't realize he was willing to sacrifice most of his fleet to do it, and kept waiting for him to go home! I achieved the maximum result on uranium production in 1944 (which required five atomic breakthroughs, and rolling a six). Needless to say, I rolled extremely well on atomics throughout the game. By contrast, the plutonium program yielded us absolutely nothing in 1944, and a minimal result in 1945 (we rolled two ones). The uranium result gave us one atomic bomb in Winter 1944, one in Spring 1945 (with a second plant), and two in Summer 1945. This allowed me to finish Paul off fairly easily at the end. However, I scored very few negative resistance points for his casualties. His strong defense left me few opportunities to inflict them. If we hadn't done so well on the atomic bomb program, it could have been a tie or a Japanese win. I believe I had a good chance for a win with only two atomic bombs, but one would have required some good luck, and with none a tie was likely, and a win possible.

#### **Post-mortem.**

*Kevin:* Given that the last time Paul and I played Mike, we decimated him with our sub campaign, it's only fair that our Germans had the same thing happen to them in the battle of the Atlantic. After the Russian encirclement in Summer and Fall 1942, Elihu thought that the Axis were headed towards a two-turn victory. However, the very strong Allied battle of the Atlantic combined with the very successful atomic program and some very smart tactical

*moves by Elihu, pulled the Allies back into it and almost into a victory in Europe. Meanwhile the luck the Allies had in those fields was matched by some very mild Russian winters, and a United States which consistently dragged its feet on entering the war. Ultimately only the brave pilots and flak gunners who sacrificed their lives allowed the Germans a draw this game. I very much enjoyed playing Elihu and Mike, they were very friendly and great opponents. In particular with Elihu, it was interesting to see an opponent who played so aggressively with his Russians. He would regularly take 1:1's if he felt the losses would be acceptable on a blowout, which caught me off-guard a couple times. I thought the game was very exciting, with plenty of twists and swings in the strength. Even in France in 1940, Elihu had me sweating, because I had never seen such a strong British commitment to France before! I couldn't have asked for better opponents, or a better ending to the game (other than the loss!), with the entirety of the war coming down to one last bombing run from the Allies over Berlin.*

*Paul:*

*Mike:* It felt good to finish a game in the Pacific, to beat Paul, who is an excellent player, especially in the Pacific, and to avenge the loss Keven Leith and I experienced at the hands of Kevin and Paul in 2011. Elihu was a marvelous partner. This was our first time to team, and we are probably the Odd Couple. Elihu plays extremely fast, and well, I don't. Our views on research and strategy conflict. We had extended discussions before the convention on research, and I think it was a great help. For example, I encouraged him to plan to invade France in 1942. He felt that was unlikely. He said he had a strategy for running the Axis out of BRPs, based on the use of high quality units and strategic bombing. I favored quantity of units and invading France as early as possible,

*ignoring the Med if necessary. He was not used to my plan for a large number of transports in the Pacific (19 in 1944, 22 in 1945), to maximize use of fleets in both my turn and Japan's. He did not normally increase NAT in 1940, or increase it by 2 each year starting in 1942. He was willing to accommodate my desire for a heavy atomic bomb program (focused on obtaining three or four breakthroughs by 1944), as he hadn't tried that. He was very skeptical of my plan to build only CVLs. In spite of our differing views, he was more than willing to accommodate me. I also thought it was ironic that he invaded France in Summer 1942, the turn the U.S. entered the war! I didn't remember until reading this report that Kevin rolled 1's for the Russian winter in 1941 and 1942. It doesn't guarantee an Axis victory, but it sure doesn't hurt! Elihu did a great job of recovering from that, and his encirclement in 1942, and still having a better than even chance to win at the end. Kevin and Paul are wonderful opponents, easygoing, friendly and fun to play. This game could easily have ended in a tie or an Axis victory, had a few things turned out differently.*

**Game 4. No description available.**

**Game 5. No description available.**

## **Game 6.**

### **Game was played through Summer 1942**

#### **Rossi Shaw Brickwood Smolens**

European Axis:	Steven Rossi
Japan:	Tom Shaw
Allies Europe:	Peter Brickwood
Allies Pacific:	Jerry Smolens
European Result:	N/A
Pacific Result:	N/A
Overall Result:	N/A

*Game narrative provided by Steven Rossi. No Pacific narrative was available. Commentary provided by Chris Collins.*

**1939 Fall.** The Axis opened the war in Europe with an invasion of Poland. My tactic for this is slightly different than those I have seen or read about. The counter air of the Polish Air Force is done in typical fashion. This inverts 2 AAF. Next, two pairs of 4o6 German armor move south from East Prussia, one west of Warsaw and one East of Warsaw. Each Armor group overruns two Polish 1x3 infantry with the help of 4 AAF each. This inverts a total of 16 AAF. Then two pairs of 3x3 German infantry occupy the vacant hexes in the wake of the overrunning Armor. The result is that Warsaw is surrounded by 4 Armor and 4 Infantry. The pair of Polish 2x3 infantry in Warsaw are still tripled, and thus have a defensive value of 12. With 16 armor, 12 infantry, and the remaining 2AAF the attack on Warsaw is executed at 30 to 12 or an odds of (2.5 to 1). This means that expensive Air and Armor units are not vulnerable to losses during a breakthrough. There is no breakthrough (just 4 overruns and 1 attack), thus losses may be taken from the infantry attacking, up to a full exchange. The plan worked fairly well. 1 AAF was lost during a counter-air battle, and 3 factors of infantry as well. For 6 BRP of losses, Poland fell. Russia occupied the Baltic States and

Eastern Poland, but held off on the seizure of Bessarabia/Bukovina. What were the Soviets planning?

*Chris: Normally Russia doesn't push for Bessarabia/Bukovina until Sp/Su 1940 – when they can get the adjacent ground factors modifier to influence the diplomatic roll – this buildup normally discourages the Rumanians from entertaining an actual fight.*

**1939 Winter.** When I drilled for the convention at home the month prior, I had good fortune in a Winter 1939 attack on Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxemburg, but statistics were lurking in the dice. In winter, without the ability to make overruns or conduct breakthroughs, the operation had to be conducted as a series of attacks with the goal of occupying all hexes adjacent to the French border. Emboldened by success in the drills, the fact that there was no French Armor in Sedan, and no French AAF within range, I also divided my forces to be able to attack Sedan. This created a series of 3:1 attacks. (Normally, this should be done with all 4:1 attacks, and just forget about Sedan for the moment). The French Armor unit placed in the Maginot Line seemed out of position to me. It mattered very little, as exchange after exchange resulted from these Winter Lowland attacks. Yes, you can roll 4's and 5's during practice, and 1's and 2's when at the convention. While Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxemburg did fall, many infantry and AAF were lost in the process. The Sedan attack which was to occur last was abandoned due to these losses, and the assault overall would have gone a bit better without it. Still, Germany spent most of its remaining BRP replacing destroyed AAF. Italy remained neutral. Keeping nearly its entire army on the French border did draw a good number of French units south, including the second French armor unit. However, the British would have made quick work of the 1x3 in Tobruk. Besides, I

had a diplomatic strategy in mind for Italy which is discussed below. The Low Countries fall to high odds attacks, to prevent losses (1 AAF lost). This sets up 210 BRPs for the 1940 YSS, resulting in two extra DPs, and extra RP help.

The entire idea of keeping Italy out of the war was born from the idea that Yugoslavia could almost certainly be activated as a minor ally if France had fallen, but Italy had not yet entered the war. Thus in Winter 1939, diplomatic rolls were made for Rumania and Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was considered particularly important as the police force for the occupation of the Balkans (which are worth a total of 65 BRP). A Yugoslav minor ally could produce fewer partisans, and Yugoslav units could fight these partisans very effectively, thus freeing up German infantry which would otherwise need to garrison there. In keeping with the awful luck the Axis were having, the activation of Yugoslavia blew out on the roll of a "1".

*Chris: It is risky activating Rumania as an Axis Minor Ally this early –will most likely result in an early Russian Mobilization in Summer 1940 vs. Fall 1940 – giving the Russian some unit mobilization options (armor) ahead of the Summer 1942 Axis offensive.*

**1940 Spring.** The typical tactic for the invasion of France was applied. A French armor remained in the Maginot line. The British had brought over a small BEF consisting of one 2o5 armor and one 3x4 infantry. Because Germany kept the bulk of its armor in Austria, an Italian DoW would have opened up southern France with the likely result that Marseilles and Lyon would fall. Thus some additional French infantry moved south. Again, Italy had no intention of entering the war until the last possible moment. German units broke through at Sedan, and exploiting Armor overran the single French infantry placed in the second

line. As is typically done, the BEF was ignored such that the RAF would not see action due to restrictions in Anglo-French cooperation. The BEF was put out of supply. Still, German losses continued to mount as exchanges forced the loss of many AAF. On the Allied Spring 1940 turn, the situation grew more problematic when the Allied attrition option forced Germany to yield the hex it had gained adjacent to Paris. The BEF was back in supply. The option to lose the exploiting armor there could not be taken because of these continued heavy losses. The decision to build up additional Air Transports probably saved the situation from disaster. During the Summer 1940 Axis turn, a hex adjacent to Paris was attacked, and six armor piled onto the breakthrough hex. From that single breakthrough hex, the 24 factors of Armor, backed by some 15 AAF and an airborne attacked both Paris and the hex to the south-west of it. The odds were again close (2.5:1) and under a full exchange a pair of Armor and several AAF were destroyed. Meanwhile Denmark was occupied, Norway was invaded, and a German airborne landed in Bergen to prevent British meddling in Norway. In hindsight, this probably was not necessary, but German losses were such that the German Navy could not be increased in size. This would be critical in the coming seasons.

**1940 Summer.** However, France did fall in Summer 1940 despite close to 100 BRP worth of losses to the German Army and Luftwaffe. I realized then that there would be no Battle of Britain, no invasion of Spain, and indeed the rest of 1940 consisted only of building the rest of the German allowable builds in preparation for Barbarossa.

**1940 Fall.** As soon as Bergen was an operational German port, a pair of German Battlecruisers based there and began raiding into the Atlantic. This was done as a matter of form. During drills prior to the

convention, surface raiders caused no damage to the British transports at all. This time would be different. All of this combined to eliminate every British transport in the Atlantic by mid-1941. Britain began taking oil effects, eventually spending only on the Royal Navy and Economics (so as to avoid the erosion of the British BRP base). Had Germany not invaded the Low Countries in Winter 1939, and instead had the BRPs to build a few more destroyers, a Sea Lion operation was clearly possible. However, this was not to be. Rather, Britain was prevented from sending reinforcements to Egypt except by the use of destroyers into Gibraltar, and then across the Mediterranean (the hard way).

**1940 Winter.** Italy had to declare War on the Allies during the subsequent phase (or face an increased chance of surrender later in the war), and so the Mediterranean conflict began. Another benefit of a late entering Italy was that Italian units were moved to the Western Desert in Summer and Fall 1940. 10 German AAF also made their way south, and could thus help keep naval supply lines open, and be used in Spring 1941 in the Western desert. The initial Italian only assault on British positions in Egypt was a success. The sacrifice of building additional Italian Armor using the Military production research of 1940 had paid off. Commonwealth units were put out of supply by the most basic of breakthroughs.

During the course of late 1940 and early 1941, a combination of U-Boats, raiders, poor Ultra draws, and a blown Allied ASW research roll allowed an unprecedented success in the Battle of the Atlantic. Raiders went unopposed four times, and even though the Germans had to delay the launch of the Bismarck, much havoc was made.

**1941 Spring.** The Battle of Cape Bon was fought off the north coast of Tunisia between two Italian Task forces and two

British task forces. The use of destroyers instead of transports to reinforce Egypt was necessitated due to the extremely effective Axis SW efforts. The naval battle was a closely fought battle, but in the end the Italian navy barely prevailed and so stopped the movement of reinforcements to Egypt.

Greece joined the Axis, and Suda Bay became the airbase of preference to defend Axis deployments into Tobruk. Meanwhile, Britain was beginning to have problems of its own.

**1941 Summer.** The invasion of Russia commenced on schedule in Summer 1941. I had learned in prior drills that it was not worth waiting until Fall 1941; not for Suez, not for Gibraltar, and probably not even for Sea Lion. Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria all activated as Axis minor allies. Spain sent a pair of 2x3 'Blue Divisions' into the fray. Vichy France also sent volunteers. German research was focused heavily on Barbarossa. Two levels of winter preparation, one level of occupation policies, and a third airborne/air-transport were created. The Axis luck had changed somewhat, and the Army Group north of the marshes was able to create a three hex wide gap in the Russian front lines by overrunning one unit, and then attacking the armor which backed it up. German Airborne dropped on Saare Island off the coast of Estonia, clearing the way for a subsequent invasion there. In the south, the gap in the Russian lines was only two hexes wide due to the fact that the single armor unit designated to widen the gap failed on the roll of a '1'. This had consequences, as the host of minor allied infantry was unable to TR through the gaping hole as planned. Still, the northern and southern German Army Groups were able to send breakthrough panzers to meet behind the marshes, and nearly the entire Russian army was out of supply. The Russians put of a hard fight during the counter-air battles



which occurred, preferring to fight to the death than to retreat after a single round of combat. After this, Russia made the interesting choice not to rebuild any AAF.

In Egypt, a German 2o6 armor, and 3x3 infantry and 5 German AAF were able to assist the Italians in taking Suez, and then crossed the canal eliminating all British units. As a direct consequence of the Battle of the Atlantic, the war in the Mediterranean tilted dangerously towards the Axis. Italy sent additional infantry up the Nile and into Ethiopia on two successive turns as well, bringing the number of factors there up to six. Italian surface raiders (newly repaired after suffering damage at the Battle of Cape Bon) struck out into the Indian Ocean and compounded the British Transport problems. Britain did what it could, and began sending units into the theatre via Basra while Axis forces occupied Palestine, Trans-Jordan and eventually Mosul.

**1941 Fall.** Russia then created another line of infantry which the Axis forces assaulted in Fall 1941. Kiev had fallen in Summer. Ukraine activated as an Axis minor ally in Fall. Also in Fall, Leningrad, Moscow, and Gorki also fell as the Germans did not divert units to the south. Sevastopol also succumbed to a combination of airborne, AAF, and breakthrough armor. This was a dangerous game to play as the Axis. Kharkov did not fall in 1941, and it was evident that something would need to be done in 1942 to get the Russian steamroller farther away from the Rumanian oil supply. A large salient of breakthrough units had penetrated north and east of Moscow, but the Russian winter die roll would soon change all that.

As a direct result of the Axis success in taking Leningrad and Moscow, the United States was able to DoW in Fall 1941 instead of Winter 1941. This at first led to more transport problems in the Atlantic. A total of 98 BRP worth of damage was caused to the

British in 1941. Had the United States not entered in Fall and contributed additional ASW, Shipbuilding and Fleets, it is possible that Britain might have surrendered in Winter 1941. There would not have been any more oil in the British Isles. As the Axis, I would have accepted a British surrender, even if it had lasted only a turn or two. Axis units in the Middle East were never very strong, merely lucky in their assaults and especially in their air battles with the RAF. The final Axis victory was possibly the sinking of four British BB3's which had been stationed in Malta to prevent an Italian invasion there. These left Malta in route to the Far East and became prey to German AAF which had come south for the winter. In retrospect, one German Airborne should have been SR'ed to Sicily in order to seize Malta from the air. Soon Britain was full of U.S. troops, and the British troops, including a very dangerous Canadian 4o5 armor were making their way to Basra. Other Allied units were gathering in South Africa, but could not reach Ethiopia all at once because of Transport losses in the Indian Ocean.

**1941 Winter.** Ordinarily, one would think that a low Winter die roll would be great for the Axis. This is not so. As a result of rolling a "1", the Russian units had no restrictions on their actions during winter. Had they an Air Force, the Axis in Russia would have been in dire straits. Still there was the special Russian winter attrition to consider. The difference in preparation levels was 4, which isn't awful, but the Gorki salient had to be evacuated, and the Russian armor units which were pinching it off had to be attacked (all with a limited offensive only). Thankfully this worked, or half of the German armor in the north would have been isolated behind a strong Russian position. In the south there was less that could be done. Russia continually used the successful tactic of pressing at the northern and southern

edges of the front, leaving the middle of the German lines alone. The Russian winter attrition option managed to isolate the Crimea, and German AAF and Rumanian DD had to run supply into Sebastopol. Again, had the Russians any AAF, the Axis position might have been very grave.

**1942 Spring.** As 1942 began, Germany was busy reopening a land route into the Crimea. Other attacks were made along the line, but without spring breakthroughs these only serves to eliminate as many Russian units as possible. Very little ground was recovered. In the Atlantic, the “happy time” had come to an end, and Allied transports were quickly refilling the Atlantic Box despite a second German torpedo research result.

**1942 Summer.** Axis forces in the Middle East (which were never more than 3 Italian 2o5, 2 German 2o5, 2 Italian 3x3, and 2 German 3x3 became outnumbered. The Italian adventure into Mosul failed to draw the British army northwards, and the threat of an easy American DoW against Arabia inclined the remaining Axis units to pull back into Palestine. There the Commonwealth forces liberated Haifa and Jerusalem. Transports were replaced in the Indian Ocean, and the Italian position in Ethiopia began to look perilous. Another 2x3 infantry could move up the Nile, but within a turn American units would be in South Africa, and thus Ethiopia would probably have fallen before the end of 1942. The Axis began to fortify their lines. A fort was placed in Suez, and another in Moscow which remained on the front lines as of Fall 1942. While a German Breakthrough across the Straits of Kerch (aided by airborne) was successful in putting Rostov in a ZoC and capturing Maikop, it was clear that the Russian center would hold, and that point defense of Grozny and Baku would likely hold. From there forward, the battle of Russia would be the kind of back and forth slog which the Russians can easily afford,

but which would become increasingly difficult for the Axis to sustain as the defense of France became increasingly critical.

### **Post Mortem.**

*Steve: My opponent, Peter Brickwood and I had decided that we would play a gentleman's game at our own pace. We played an average of 11 hours per day, compared to the 16 to 18 hours played on other boards. The lack of ergonomic seating took its toll on both of us. Whenever there was a question we consulted the rules, and this became much easier once the new 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition rule book arrived in my P500 copy of AWAW. As a result, we agreed that we would be satisfied to make it halfway through the war, which (ending after the Summer 1942 turn) was what we managed to accomplish. If either of us noticed a glaring error in the opponent's strategy, we simply pointed it out to each other and concentrated on learning the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition rules. I must compliment Peter. His tactics were excellent for a first time player of AWAW, and he was understanding when jet lag got the best of me after two days of no sleep. Indeed, I also had only drilled for AWAW once prior to the con this year. On Saturday, we could have pushed on until the 10PM meeting time, and probably finished 1942, but we opted instead to have a nice supper and celebrate the good time which we had in our “Gentleman's Game”. I would also like to thank Randy Sheers, David Hanson, and Elihu Feustel for their mentoring on our board, as well as Mike Crowe for being an understanding Game Master when the chips were down.*