

2016 World Boardgaming Championship

A World At War

July 25-30, 2016

Seven Springs, PA

Game 6

Graham McCabe – European Axis
Erik Hutton – Japan
Eric Krug – Western Allies, Europe
Joseph Kester – Russia
Ed Schoenfeld – Western Allies, Pacific

This report is primarily based on notes hastily scribbled during play by the player for the Western Allies in Europe, and focuses mostly on that part of that theater, as that was what he was attempting to focus upon during the game (with mixed results). Some data for Japan was available from the videos that the Japanese player posted online and was transcribed into this report. The Western Allied Pacific player did not keep as detailed a record during the game, but has commented on general strategy (as remembered and perceived by the WA) as well as some events in the Pacific Theater.

Thus far, Russia and the European Axis have not added comments and so are not given a proportionate share of attention in this report.

General Strategy:

The European Axis followed up Poland with a Winter 39 attack into the Low Countries and France, keeping tensions low by delaying the Italian DOW until Winter 1940. As is sometimes the case, using 1939 BRPs on DOWs instead of unit builds led to a complex attrition situation on the narrow front in France and Paris held out until Fall 40. The Axis research program, as was later revealed, went for strategic bombers.

Japan pursued an aggressive bombing campaign in China and rapid mobilization on each of the first four turns plus two additional shipbuilding points by Spring 1940. After US BRP grants rescued China, Japan attacked Britain only in Fall 1940 to delay US entry while aiding the global Axis cause by putting extreme stress on Britain's ability to defend the Middle East and India. Japan also laid down 3 additional BB5s.

The Western Allies chose to emphasize general research and production targets with an active diplomatic program (Norway in 1939, France in 1940). The diplomatic cost was lower USAT as WA diplomacy ignored tensions. Focusing on production helped the WA cover additional defensive fronts in Norway, the Middle East, but at the cost of deferring some research projects such as Air Defense. (Note: The Western Allies produced **4** forts in this game and needed every one of them.)

Russia pursued an aggressive diplomatic and military strategy, subverting Greece, invading Turkey, and associating Sweden all before the main confrontation with the Wehrmacht.

Fall 1939

The Axis names Ireland for diplomacy with two Axis DPs vs. one WA DP, gaining no result on a roll of five. An Axis DP is placed in USAT.

A harbor attack against Scapa Flow destroys the BC3 Renown despite Britain using a tactical card.

Germany loses one 3x3 in Poland.

Two BB2s raid unopposed and sink a transport. This was the only raid of the war in the Atlantic. Transport losses from all causes cost Britain six BRPs.

Japan bombs Chungking, but does no damage. Japan mobilizes.

China tries a 10:8 attack against Canton and blows out with an 'A' result (die roll of one). [Comment from Ed S: I should have known better after he started bombing.]

The WA name Norway with two DPs and a covert operation, a one is rolled, and it associates with the British. The Norwegians allow the British to place mines without increasing USAT, reducing the German UCL in Winter and Spring turns.

Russia demands Bessarabia, at +2 from 25 BRPs of adjacent Russian forces, a four is rolled, and a border war breaks out.

The British redeploy a 3x4 to Norway via Bergen, the German Navy intercepts, and the Royal Navy counter-intercepts. Both sides lose CA2 and DD1, and a British BC3 is damaged, but the Kriegsmarine withdraws in the face of additional British task forces set to arrive in round 2 of naval combat. The 3x4 arrives safely and reinforces the beach next to Oslo in the Wi39 turn.

Ed: This turned out to be a permanent win for the Allies (though several battles were hard fought to keep it so) and had a significant effect on both the Russian campaign (Murmansk was effectively a safe route for RP grants to Russia) and Allied research. The need for Britain to defend in more places made us do even more production as opposed to qualitative research projects such as NDRM, perhaps to too great an extent.

USAT are 1 and USJT 3 at the end of the turn.

Winter 1939

The Axis announce a spy ring in WA Air research.

The winter roll is six, for a winter level of 12.

Germany rolls for the Balkans, except for Rumania, which is fighting a border war and is ineligible for diplomacy without a German DOW on Russia.

Yugoslavia is at +6, a two is rolled, hex control is granted.

Hungary is at +8, a six is rolled, full alliance.

Bulgaria is at +6, a six is rolled, full alliance.

One Axis DP is placed in USAT.

Germany declares war on the Low Countries, defeats and occupies them without loss, and takes Sedan with a 2:1 attack via an empty Luxembourg.

Eric K: In Belgium I simply set up normally with one infantry per hex to try to force him to disperse his efforts fighting for each hex, hoping that he'd roll badly at least once if he had to make four combat rolls. If you leave Belgian hexes empty then the Germans just go around them and attack France immediately, instead of rolling over the 'speed bumps' of Belgian infantry first. The Germans can always steamroller the Low Countries, so the setup usually doesn't matter that much. If there's a better way to set up Belgium, I'd like to know for next time.

Ed S: In this case the Germans went into France anyway with a gutsy (but successful) attack from a one hex front.

Russia finishes its Rumanian border war, occupying Bessarabia.

The WA advance advance a 3o5 and 2x3 into an empty Luxembourg, then attrition and force the Germans to retreat from Sedan, successfully disrupting the next turn of the German attack.

Japan again bombs Chungking (this time more effectively with 9 AAF for an additional USJT tick for the offensive), and mobilizes adding shipbuilding. With tensions increasing rapidly, the US grants 5 BRPs to China, saving the Kuomintang from an early collapse.

USAT is at 4; USJT = 8 (!!!)

YSS 1940

Country BRPs DPs RPs

Britain	171	4	9
France	90	2	3
US	137	1	4
WA		7	16

Germany	235	7	12
Italy	73	2	3
EuroAxis		9	15

Japan	110	1	10
-------	-----	---	----

Spring 1940

Germany calls Ireland with three unopposed DPs, and rolls a two, for a result of five, to no effect.

Submarine warfare: Both sides do 0/1, two transports sunk, one damaged, 6 BRPs lost.

Germany attacks in northern France and Luxembourg, kills five French infantry and one French armor, retakes Sedan and takes Dieppe plus a hex in front of Paris. It advances on a broad but jagged front into France, putting some French units between Dieppe and Sedan out of supply. The south of France is quiet, as Italy has not declared war.

The WA place one DP in USAT, with no other diplomacy. WA diplomacy will be almost entirely defensive for the rest of the game.

Anglo-French cooperation restrictions ending on the WA player turn (second turn after the German's first West Front offensive action in W139), British units integrate fully in the defense of Paris and France. The WA attrit and take back one hex in France, slowing the German advance even more by getting supply to some of the units in the pocket north of the Seine.

France builds 20 BRPs of units and ends with 70 BRPs.

Britain builds 34 BRPs of units and ends with about 130 BRPs.

A Finnish border war begins. Russia tries to attrition, but rolls poorly during the next year. The border war then becomes a northern adjunct to the Eastern Front. (Ed: I'd like to know the Russian force level against Finland – Joe later commented to me that in hindsight he may have been better off not claiming the Finnish border at all.)

Russia places two DPs, does a covert op, and a -5 subversion on Greece, for a net -7. The roll is three, Greece allies with Russia.

Japan once again bombs Chungking with 9 AAF, mobilizes again, and adds a second shipbuilding point. A lucky random tension roll lets the US grant 10 BRPs to China, making up for almost all of the Japanese bombing damage over two turns.

Japan now gives up the bombing campaign in China as futile, but the damage is done as the US will mobilize every turn from this point onward.

USAT remains 4 (due largely to the Russian success in Greece); USJT (actual) = 13

Summer 1940

A counterintel arrests and interns the spy ring in WA air research.

Germany announces torpedo and air range results and plays a sub card unopposed. The WA get a single ASW result this year, and will also get one per year in 1941 and 1942.

Sub warfare kills two transports, damages four, and costs Britain 8 BRPs.

Five GAAF counterair five BAAF in England. Three German and five British air die. British air were somewhat forward deployed to cover both the coastline and British Expeditionary Forces that moved forward in France. The British were somewhat more aggressive than usual in defending France, trying to take advantage of lower German force levels after the Winter DOWs.

Germany takes a second hex in front of Paris on a 3:1, rolls a six, and wishes that it had attacked Paris instead of that hex.

Ed: Paris was strongly defended because the British and French were no longer under Cooperation restrictions beginning on the Allied Spring 1940 Player turn – the second turn after the Axis began attacking on the Western Front. As a result, the attack against Paris would have been a 2:1 and may have blown out with a different die roll. Graham shouldn't feel bad for being prudent here – had Paris fallen in Summer almost all of the French army would have survived, and the Germans had no chance to get Lyon. So the effect on the surrender mods – pro-allied for surviving unto Fall, pro Axis for fewer surviving French units and getting Lyon – were pretty much a wash, if not actually in favor of the Axis. But an unsuccessful Bulldog attack into Paris might have forced the Germans to build for a turn, allowing France to survive into Winter, a disastrous result for the Germans.

Finnish attrition kills a Russian 1x3.

France spends 16 BRPs on builds.

USAT is at 11.

USJT reaches 18 on the Japanese turn, and another good random tensions roll sends them to 20, allowing the US to mobilize again and impose an oil embargo. USJT end at 19 actual, 21 effective, but more importantly Japan is now in a tough position: the oil embargo begins before the fall of Paris allows Japan to enter French Indochina, and the ports there are needed to invade the Dutch East Indies. Even worse, USJT will now increase by at least 6 per turn – with other required events adding points here and there Japan is looking at possibly losing surprise (effective tensions 40+) by Spring of 1941!

Fall 1940

The WA belatedly check their notes on Tuesday morning and realize that they forgot to add an Ultra ASW card, which they then officially buy.

The Axis reaction roll for Yugoslavia after the Greek subversion is at +7, a one is rolled, it stays at hex control. [This roll should have been taken in the Summer turn.]

The Axis places three DPs in Rumania, rolls a one, and still gets a full alliance, after the Greek subversion.

Italy still has not declared war.

Japan declares war on Britain only (yes, in Fall 1940). France has not fallen, so Japan is briefly at war with France also, and must 'fight' for French Indochina. In practice, this simply means that Japanese units only control the hexes that they walk through rather than getting the entire country after they take the capital.

Many Indian and Australian units are in North Africa and must still be transferred to the Pacific. Their absence allows Japan to take the Bismarcks and Solomons in the Pacific, although on the SE Asian Front, Japan can only reach Brunei and one obscure non-oil related port in the DEI on this turn. To counterbalance a bit, Britain builds a fort in Singapore, defending strongly along the Straits of Malacca.

The early transfer of Indian and Australian units also leaves North Africa more vulnerable than is usual in 1940 and 1941.

The US goes on alert, so Pearl Harbor is no longer possible. It also mobilizes much faster than usual in the Pacific and takes control of all of the British Pacific Island groups Japan did not reach. Also, USJT are now on a programmed track to reach 50+ in Summer 1941.

Sub warfare sinks four transports and damages two more. Britain is able to ship five oil.

Counterairs in France destroy three FAAF, two BAAF, two GAAF, and invert all of the Allied air able to fly defensive air support.

Germany attacks Paris at 32:12, rolls a one, loses six factors, attacks at 2:1 in the second round, rolls a five, and takes Paris. At the same time, French Indochina is invaded by Japan.

A mistake by the WA allows a Fallschirmjager to airdrop into an empty Lyon.

The Axis attrits in Finland and kills a Russian 1x3.

Both sides have three DPs in France. The French Surrender Level is -1. Vichy France is formed. All colonies go Vichy.

Winter 1940

Germany calls Yugoslavia at +10, rolls a three, and finally gets a full alliance.

Italy declares war on the WA, mainly to avoid a negative resistance modifier for declaring war too late. The slow evolution of Italian campaigns in the Med may ultimately be what saved British positions in Egypt and Iraq. However the Axis do get the solid benefit of slower US involvement in Europe as a result. This will have a significant impact in Russia.

Sub warfare in the Atlantic sinks seven transports and damages one more. No German subs are stopped as the +3 modifier (which is -3 for the WA roll) and a bad WA die roll combine for a 0/0 result. Some transports are rebuilt in the US, as five or more were sunk in one turn.

Ten German AAF counterair ten BAAF in Liverpool. Four BAAF are killed and four abort. The other two fly north to survive. A few GAAF are also destroyed.

Germany bombs London with 21 GAAF. Five British AAF oppose. The UK announces a radar result. Britain loses three more AAF and suffers 19 BRPs in bombing damage. One more GAAF is killed.

Italy attacks a 3x4 in Egypt at 2:1. Both sides lose three infantry factors. Axis attritions do no damage in Egypt or Finland. The British attrit one Italian infantry factor.

Two transports are sunk in the Indian Ocean. Three one-factor British and Indian infantry are killed in SE Asia. More British units are sent there to plug the holes.

Two British subs in Malta try to intercept supply to Tripoli, one succeeds, a CA2 is damaged.

In the Pacific, Japan takes Balikpapan and the rest of the DEI, securing its oil supply, and Japanese units slowly move across French Indochina and Burma on the way to India. There is considerable fighting in Burma over the next few turns as the British contest each step. China, its economy and resistance level intact thanks to US grants, builds units along its southern frontiers and gradually takes over the defense of northern Burma.

Russia invades Turkey, including an invasion of a northern beach. Russia loses lots of units but gets a beachhead in the north and units along the NE border, while the Greeks invade across the Bosphorus to realize the ancient dream of liberating Ionia.

[Note: We later were reminded that seaborne invasions are not allowed across the Black Sea in Winter, but play had progressed too far to take back the error.]

Turkey cannot associate with Germany without a declaration of war against Russia by Germany, and Germany is not yet ready to fight Russia, so Turkey fights alone.

The Russian player rolls badly in combat for the next few turns, suffering five ones in a row at one point in time. His research rolls are also noticeably below average. Outside of diplomacy, Lady Luck is not smiling upon him.

YSS 1941

Country BRPs DPs RPs

Britain	175 base 120
US	373
WA	9 21
Russia	170 6 9
Germany	312 base 152
Italy	73 base 63
EuroAxis	12 17
Japan	184 1 10
	base 109

Spring 1941

The Axis calls Spain with four DPs, the WA have three, a one is rolled to no effect.

Germany declares war on Russia to the genuine surprise of the Russian player. Even though it is a 'mud' turn and no great progress is made in Russia itself, surprise effects trap most of the Russian armor in Turkey and will allow decent chances for German exploitation in Summer as a result, in addition to allowing German forces to assist the Turks. In Russia, Germany airdrops on Kiev, does a limited offensive, and attrits on the 61+ table for a result of 3H/6C.

Turkey and Finland associate with Germany.

Four GAAF counterair four BAAF over England. The rest of the Luftwaffe then bombs London, with five BAAF defending, costing Britain 20 BRPs in damage. However, the Luftwaffe is not in Russia at the start of the Eastern war, and Britain is not invaded.

Submarines damage or sink all but 10 Atlantic transports.

The Greek and Turkish navies fight to the last undamaged fleet factor. One Greek DD survives intact and prevails. The Turkish BC2 and a CA2 survive but are damaged. The Italians then sink the last Greek DD. The British decline to intercept the Italian fleets, and a 2o6 is moved from Africa to Greece to attack Athens successfully, ending the Greek dream of an Aegean Empire once again. The Royal Navy does not intervene to try to save Greece, preferring to use its forces conservatively in the Atlantic until the US enters the war.

Germany declares war on Denmark and attempts an invasion of Norway at an empty beach at Bergen. Five GAAF provide air cover. The Royal Navy intercepts. Germany loses BB4 Bismarck, CA2, DD2, and one AAF. The Royal Navy loses a slow BB4, a fast BB4, and a BC3; also, CA4 are damaged. The invasion is turned back at sea. Once again, the fighting weight of multiple Royal Navy task forces turns back the Kriegsmarine in spite of the British taking heavier losses.

In terms of overall strategy, it is profitable for the British fleet to trade warships with the German fleet early in the war on a 1:1 or even a 3:2 basis. This lessens the chance of damage from raiders or an invasion, especially if the lights are sunk before a Sea Lion is possible. Every two destroyers lost is one less ground factor that can invade, and every CA2 lost is one less cruiser counter that needs to be sunk in an invasion fleet before the destroyers can be targeted. - Eric

There could have been an Allied reaction roll for Norway when Germany declared war on Denmark, but the WA forgot to take it.

The British mobilize and/or produce 1 ship building point (their first) and two ASW, which they then build. The WA also buy a second Ultra ASW card. The second US ASW also deploys.

Four oil are shipped. The US grants 10 BRPs to Britain, eight of which are spent in Canada to save shipping.

On the desert front, an OOS 3x4 suicide attacks and a 2o5 armor moves up to block the Italians from advancing further into Egypt.

Once again, two British subs in Malta try to intercept supply to Tripoli, one succeeds, a CA2 is damaged.

Britain builds a fort in Suez and moves an airbase to Cairo to guard against partisans while a very thin line holds at El Alamein. A task force remains in place at Port Said, but the destroyers detach, and go to South Africa to potentially help transport troops. A Canadian 4o5 is shipped to South Africa, and it goes to the Suez fort next turn and stays there. South African troops are moved to Egypt. A 3x4 is moved to Gibraltar.

A task force is moved to the South Africa box to help escort troops to the Mideast and also to deter Japanese raids into the Indian Ocean. Two transports are moved from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean to address the needs of the Pacific theater.

The British are constrained by shipping for the next two years, and take the Construction and Army oil effects in many turns to keep the British oil reserve at two or three for most turns. The Japanese early DOW has the effect of sinking some extra transports in the Indian Ocean and stretching the British by constant small fights that kill infantry and some ships in the Pacific theater, mostly around India. The Pacific player is forced to take British units to India to keep the Japanese out, including two 2o5 armors that are either in transit or in India for a year.

However, the US mobilizes again and again in the Pacific, and is quickly becoming a behemoth, as BRP growth starts to compound.

Also, the Norwegian strategy proves its worth as Britain transfers US grants onward to Russia via Murmansk with only minimal opposition from German U-boats. There is no other Axis opposition because the Allies control Bergen. Because of the rapid US mobilization, the Allies are able to provide maximum economic aid to Russia throughout the game, except for a few turns where low numbers of surviving Atlantic transports limited the size of BRP grants.

Russia takes Ankara and thereby conquers Turkey and eliminates the Turkish armed forces. It builds a railhead in Batum to help move units back to Russia. Russia has a UCL of 46 and spends 44 BRPS on rebuilds.

Japan begins a campaign to degrade the defenses of Singapore by basing AAF in Sumatra to cut supply. The British never risk the TF they eventually bring to Colombo by running supply to Singapore; it remains strictly a 'Fleet in being'.

USAT tensions are 34 actual and 35 effective. The US will now mobilize in the Atlantic on every turn.

Summer 1941

The Axis calls Vichy France with four DPs, the WA have three, the roll is a six, a few volunteers go to the Eastern front.

More Axis forces enter Turkey. The Russian air and armor are still mostly in Turkey, which hurts the defense of the Eastern front in Russia.

The Germans slowly advance on the Eastern front without any major breakthroughs, but Russia is stretched thin in Turkey and the Eastern front and Finland.

The Italians roll a five and a six in attacks in Egypt and advance two hexes.

Russia places a spy ring and maximum DPs in Sweden, rolls well, and it associates with Russia. The modifier for the Allies holding Oslo also helped. This was the last major country that the Russians could usefully target for diplomacy, so this year they did Sweden and the Western Allies placed maximum DPs in France and Spain to defend those targets. The diplomatic coordination works as planned.

Japan declares war on the US, without surprise but with a very forward position in the Pacific that allows an attempted invasion of Espiritu Santo, but the US finds the task force carrying the troops and sinks the transporting destroyers. The invasion defeated, the US breaks from combat and goes home. However, a Japanese invasion of Lae under significant LBA support is successful.

The more important Japanese operation is the invasion of the Philippines, which lands successfully in Summer but then grinds slowly toward Manila due to losses in the invading force, but still successfully conquers to US Territory by winter.

Japan takes Rangoon, allowing the Japanese to build Indian Nationalist units to help on the front line and Indian Partisans to interfere with redeployments.

The US responds to the Japanese attack by invading the Solomons under heavy land based air cover and patrolling carrier TFs. It also moves significant LBA forces to Cairns and Port Moresby. The tactic of sending US LBA to the Pacific front is successful there, but leaves Britain stretched quite thin for air units in the Channel, North Sea (to provide cover if the Germans try for Bergen again), and Mediterranean. The rapid Japanese mobilization and advance is looking like a pretty good German strategy.

The Allies pull back in Egypt and suicide a few OOS units and rebuild them at double cost in South Africa. The Cairo airbase moves to Transjordan to cover a fortified Suez. The British hold the line behind the Nile. They are very short on ground units, as the Aussies and Indians and many British units are defending in the Pacific.

Troops are also sent to Basra and Baghdad to start to hold that area against partisans, although none are there yet. The Russian player wants the Persian route to be opened, but the Axis are close enough that they might be able to take Persia before the British could reinforce it.

In any case Britain does not have the BRPs to spare and the US is not yet at war with Germany. Russian actions that slowed the USAT are exerting a cost. Was what Russia gained worth that cost (Ed)?

Norway is reinforced with a 3x4, which then moves to the beach hex next to Oslo next turn, and a Free French 2x3, which stays on the beach in Bergen. This locks down Norway for the rest of the war. No interception of Murmansk convoys is possible except by one German submarine, which never does more than three BRPs of damage. A small task force is assigned to guard convoys, using a slow BB4 as the lone capital ship as it can absorb three hits without sinking. Cruisers are added to absorb hits, and any extra destroyers that are available are used to subtract from the submarine's attack roll.

A small 5 BRP Murmansk convoy sails.

The Allies intend to eventually use the beach hex as an airbase for strategic bombing of Berlin at a range of eight hexes, but there's only one bomber in Britain, and the British are still playing defense rather than offense.

Fall 1941

Germany calls Ukraine, at +6 including DPs, and rolls a six for a full alliance.

Submarine warfare: three subs vs. six ASW @ +2 . The British roll a three for a 0/2, the Germans roll a six for a 5/1 result.

No Murmansk convoy is run this turn, as the British are too stretched by using transports to plug holes with troops, and to ship oil and 20 BRPs granted by the US.

The Axis, using mostly Italians, advances in the Mideast and isolates a fortified Suez, which is supplied using a task force from the South Africa box.

The Germans continue to advance in Russia and are stretching the line thin. Russia has trouble rebuilding enough units to hold the front.

A fortified Singapore falls to the Japanese, who also begin moving through the jungle mountain hexes toward Dacca. In a surprise twist, the Nationalist Chinese retake Canton, which was left undefended when the Japanese infantry there was used in an invasion. The Japanese player honorably refused to take back the blunder.

The US prepares an attack against Lae for the next step forward. There will be several fleet combats involving supply and/or reinforcements to Lae and Rabaul throughout late 1941 and 1942. The US, still limited to an attack of only eight squadrons due to poor Air Nationality research, wants to fight under land based air cover as much as possible, but is very willing to take on the Japanese in attritional combats while the US shipyards churn out the planned 70-odd carrier factors over the next year or so.

USAT end the turn at 48 actual and 48 effective.

Winter 1941

Germany declares war against the US.

The winter roll for Russia is a three, for an effective winter of eight for the Axis.

The “Happy Time” gives a +6 overall modifier for sub warfare. Five subs vs. eight ASW results in all five subs getting through. Eleven transports are destroyed, and five are damaged in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

A 1:1 attack on a fortified Suez fails.

Germany bombs Russia, with only AAF and no strategic bombers, as winter effects limit the usefulness of the air for ground attacks. Russia deficit spends 30 BRPs to rebuild units.

The Japanese take Malaya and set up an attack on Dacca. The Flying Tigers are lent and combine with a small British AAF force to counterair the Japanese, forestalling the attempt for a turn. The British are redeploying a force of five AAF and two 3-4s via South Africa to India, but it does not look like they will arrive in time to save Dacca.

Two isolated 3x4s suicide attack in Egypt. The Mideast takes the Air oil effect, as the South African oil reserve dips down to two. A task force escorts supply to Suez.

There are 14 transports available in the Atlantic, and five oil are shipped. Three transports are used for 15 BRPs in grants from the US to Britain.

A small 5 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent directly from the US, even though it is the “Happy Time” after Germany DOWs the US. The Alaska highway is built.

US units are sent to Britain and British and US units to South Africa, where they will be used for either Persia or India, depending on events.

The US and Canada are significantly ahead of the historical average in mobilizing and shipbuilding, as the early Pacific war has altered the usual pattern. All 11 transports that were destroyed this turn are rebuilt in North America, relieving the pressure on British BRPs and construction. The British, under pressure from transport shortages, take the Army and Construction oil effects.

YSS 1942

Country	BRPs	DPs	RPs
Britain	151	base	120
US	651		
WA		14	35
Russia	NA	5	9
Germany	375		
Italy	87		
EuroAxis		15	18
Japan	NA	NA	NA

Spring 1942

The Axis places three DPs in Ireland and activates it.

A partisan is built in Ireland.

Anticipating this, a Free French 1x3 was previously placed in Ulster as a placeholder. The WA declare war on Ireland, walk through Dublin to officially “conquer” Ireland and use a sea transported 3x4 with some AAF based in England to eliminate the partisan with a 4:1 attack. Two more one-factor infantry are built in Northern Ireland or moved into Ireland, so there is a double row of infantry in and around Ulster. This effectively neutralizes Ireland for the rest of the war. The 3x4 is later moved out of Ulster and replaced with a one-factor infantry.

The British held both Ireland and Norway for the rest of the war, which helped greatly with the naval war in the Atlantic, as it eliminated the submarine modifier for Ireland and all but eliminated the risk for Murmansk convoys. The cost was that about nine WA infantry factors were not available for offensive operations. The benefits exceeded the costs, but it did stretch the thin red line of British infantry even more than usual.

Germany continues to advance in Russia.

Britain builds a fort in Basra and deploys South Africans in the area to block a possible Axis advance and begin to secure the Persian oil. The Germans have preferred to keep their forces in Turkey oriented against Russia, while the Italians, with some German assistance, have been advancing in Egypt but have not invaded Syria to flank the British position there.

Two 2o5s and one AAF are sent to South Africa.

Dacca in India repels a 1:1 attack.

A large task force with three CVL2s moves from Britain to Gibraltar.

Many other ships are moved about to handle lots of transfers of BRPs, oil, and troops.

A 20 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent. The Siberian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs.

Summer 1942

Submarine warfare is six subs versus eight ASW @ +3. Each side does 1/4, the net result is a 5/4 for a loss of 11 BRPs.

The WA invade Morocco with two 2o5s and a 4o5. The WA also invade Algeria at the beach near Oran with a 3x4. The Italian navy opposes only with three subs, as there are five BAAF in Gibraltar providing air cover to the Algerian beach. Two subs intercept and they damage CA4. The invasion succeeds.

Morocco goes Free French. Algeria deactivates. The WA units then march east.

Russia is pushed back again. Moscow is isolated. Maikop is taken. Russia must now keep track of its oil reserve.

In the Pacific, the Allies hold the Solomon Islands, Port Moresby, Canton in China, and most of India.

Japan has the Bismarck Islands, the Gilbert Islands, Singapore, SE Asia, and three of the five mountain / jungle hexes close to India. A US island in the Gilberts was invaded and taken to prevent an artificial port being constructed there. Fighting continues around Lae.

In India, Dacca is fortified and this ends the Japanese campaign on that front.

A fortified and surrounded Suez is once again supplied with a task force, and some naval losses are taken from Italian air attacks.

The two 2o5s in South Africa and some infantry go to India to plug holes in the line.

US infantry goes into Iraq, almost 50 years ahead of the historical schedule.

A 20 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent. The Siberian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs.

Fall 1942

Japan places a spy ring in the WA air research, and a counterintel is used to kill it. Sadly, unlike the Axis spies arrested back east, the Japanese spies discovered near Camp Cooke (the future Vandenberg Air Force Base) did not survive to reach the courtroom. The local Sheriff in Lompoc, CA had no further comment. – Ed S

The Vichy reaction roll after the first invasion of their colonies is a four, for no effect.

Moscow falls, Leningrad and Stalingrad are still held by Russia. Russia is hurting. The Russian surrender level is calculated

at +2.

The WA move forward into Algeria.

An isolated Malta, defending with no modifiers, is taken by the Axis.

The British force pool is fully rebuilt for the first time since 1940.

Basra is reinforced. The Persian route is opened, as there are now enough WA troops there to defend it.

Suez still holds out, and continues to do so until the game ends. It is something of a sideshow by now, so I won't write much more about it.

There is more naval combat around Lae, as the US and Australians cut supply and begin to try land based attacks across the mountains (sacrificing the attacking units as supply can not be traced out of ports in New Guinea.) Japan uses the inversion of the US fleets after the battle around Lae to successfully invade Midway Island and the Aleutians. The loss of Midway reduces US operational range from Pearl Harbor and threatens an invasion of the other Hawaiian Islands, but mainly forces the US to divide its fleet at a time when it has not yet achieved numerical superiority over the IJN.

A 20 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent. The Siberian route is used to send Russia an oil counter.

Winter 1942

The Winter roll is a three, for a winter effect of six for the Axis.

Russia tries to scrape together enough troops to fight back against the Axis.

Submarine warfare is five subs versus eight ASW, @ +1. The Germans get a 1/3, the British a 1/5. The submarine war is starting to slow down but oil is still scarce for Britain during the rest of the war.

The WA invade Tunis, which goes Free French. The WA send more troops and air, including a 5o6, into North Africa.

Five USAAF and a 5o6 are sent to Gibraltar. The AAF then go to Algiers.

The US once again fights an indecisive naval combat supporting an invasion of and overland attack against Lae, but this one is a feint for a successful landing on the beach south of Rabaul, which also has supply cut.

A 20 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent. The Persian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs. The Siberian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs.

Spring 1943

The Vichy reaction roll after Tunisia continues French neutrality.

Russia rebuilds its forces but it is stretched very thin, and the Axis makes deep penetrations into Russian territory, up to the upper Volga river.

Six CVEs are added to the Atlantic SW box.

Germany suddenly reveals five strategic bombers and boosts its interceptors up to six. Britain has only four AAF defending, as it has sent five BAAF to North Africa and more to the Mideast and India. It hastily rebuilds some more air this turn.

The WA also build interceptors and bombers, but one of the two British bombers is not built because of the Construction oil effect being taken, as oil is still tight.

Submarine warfare is six subs vs. eight ASW and six CVEs, @ +1. The British inflict a 1/2 and suffer a 5/4 final result.

The WA counterair Italian air in Sardinia and patrol forward with two British subs. With five fresh AAF in range, they base change two task forces forward to Tunisia. To their surprise, the Italian navy comes out to fight, even though there are five

AAF in Tunis and, unknown to the Italians, ten NAS on five CVL2s available against no surviving uninverted Italian air. Three Italian subs also join the fight.

The WA get three search results in the first round of combat, but seven search dice somehow fail to find either Italian task force in the second round of combat. Air strikes in the first round are followed by fleet combat in both rounds. The Italians then retire.

When the smoke clears, 22 Italian and eight British fleet factors are sunk, and many other units are damaged on both sides. This gives clear naval superiority to the WA in the Med.

The WA air cover is somewhat depleted, so the task forces soon move back to Oran,

The WA attack an Italian 2x3 in Tunisia. They destroy it and move units within attack range of Tripoli. Any potential exploitation is limited by the fact that the WA still do not have a CTL breakthrough.

The WA build three DD in Britain as the emphasis shifts from defense to offense. The WA have 18 total destroyers available, for an opposed invasion limit of nine ground factors.

In Persia, a partisan is built near Tehran and is attacked and killed by a 3x4 and air that is sent up from Basra. In Iraq, the WA are moving forward to engage the Axis.

The Japanese are threatening the Hawaiian Islands, and the Pacific needs naval reinforcements. Two US BB4s are detached from a task force and sent to Gibraltar to later go to the Pacific. However, they have somewhat consolidated their fleets and brought AAF back to Asia, where they begin a ground offensive against China that takes back Canton and threatens a breakthrough in that area.

The US finally takes a breather from attacking to concentrate its naval forces in the South Pacific, preparatory to the next big push. Only one TF is left in Pearl, however each region has an inverted carrier task force newly redeployed from the US. Time appears to be running out for the IJN as the US also adds an airbase from production and builds an artificial port on Santa Isabel.

Two 2o5s are moved to South Africa from India as the front is stabilizing over there, and the armor is more useful on the European mapboard.

A 20 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent. The Persian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs. The Siberian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs.

Summer 1943

Six more CVEs are added to the Atlantic SW box.

Both sides launch bombing raids against each other, but the damage is relatively light on both sides, as more BRPs are lost in air factors than from the actual bomb damage.

The WA finally get air NDRM, naval NDRM, and CTL increases this turn. This significantly affects their ability to attack, especially to exploit.

Russia is in trouble, and the WA need to become more active to help.

Sicily is lightly defended and is a tempting target after the Italian navy was weakened in the spring.

However, Vichy is a more tempting target. There are no Axis units in Vichy. With three colonies conquered, the modifier for the WA is -2 this turn. A successful invasion can now exploit into Italy, as the WA CTL just went up to two.

The WA could wait, but the Axis might kill Vichy next turn, as the danger is becoming more evident. Also an invasion of the continent may draw significant German units away from the Russian front, even if it is jumping out ahead of the Allied air cover (Corsica and Sardinia would be needed to support a proper invasion of Southern France). They decide to chance it.

The WA call Vichy at -2, roll a two, and Vichy deactivates. The beaches in the south of France are wide open. With no

opposition, each destroyer can escort one ground factor, so the invasion packs twice as much punch (21.513 A & B).

The Italian navy tries to stop the invasion, but after a sharp fight ten more Italian fleet factors are sunk. The WA land, attack with armor, and exploit into Italy, taking Genoa.

The WA also attack and take Tripoli and start to roll units east to take back the rest of North Africa.

Units in Iraq also advance. In Persia, a partisan is rebuilt near Tehran and is once again attacked and killed by a 3x4 and air that is sent up from Basra. Mosul has been fortified by the Axis, and the Allies consider a 1:1 attack but decide to isolate it instead.

Two 2o5s from South Africa are moved to Gibraltar to reinforce the invasion of Europe next turn.

The WA try a risky invasion of Denmark. The German navy intercepts it, sinks a few cruisers and a destroyer, and kills one factor of infantry. The surviving infantry then attacks, but fails. However, seven German naval factors are lost, which will make a second attempt a bit easier in a later turn.

Russia ends the turn at +2 surrender level, helped a bit by the WA taking a few hexes in the south of France. The Germans are deep into Russian territory, but they are also dangerously overextended and have no forces near the WA beachhead. The Italians have lost any semblance of a naval balance of power in the Med.

A 20 BRP Murmansk convoy is sent. The Persian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs. The Siberian route is used to send Russia 10 BRPs.

[The next battle report is partially based on a video posted by the Japanese player.]

In what appears to be a blunder, the US has not sent any ground units to defend its new artificial port on Santa Isabel. To take advantage, the main Japanese battle fleet moves to invade it. At the same time, a Japanese task force invades Dutch Harbor, hoping to draw off some of the US fleet via a magic interception to stop it. However, the US sends only a TF of old battleships on the Magic interception, and concentrates three TFs against the invasion at Santa Isabel, with another TF arriving in Round 2.

In the first round, the Japanese found a US carrier TF with one air and one surprise fleet attack (the Japanese wanted to try out their 5-factor superbattleships on the unsuspecting Americans). Because the US had 11 AAF and three land based NAS in range, the air attack was severely reduced and only put two 'hits' on the newly launched BB5 Wisconsin. The fleet combat was another matter, as (in spite of the US NDRM increase) both Yamato and Musashi combined to sink Wisconsin while the rest of the Japanese TF savaged the American lights. Wisconsin managed two hits on Yamato before going under. The US TF withdrew.

Round 2 was more even, however, as both sides found each other. The Japanese once again fought through massive amounts of air cover but managed to badly hurt a smaller US TF and sink a carrier. The US attack, however, revealed the Air NDRM and enough of the 12 carrier NAS strike survived to sink two Japanese carriers. However, the Japanese stuck for another round, as they really wanted that port.

In round 3 the Americans, who still had two carrier TFs and most of their land based attack squadrons brought off two 12-factor air attacks, one with surprise. The attack against the Japanese carrier TF drove through minimal cap and sank another two carriers. The one against the surface combat fleet, preceded by a smaller attack by army air that cleared the cap away, sank Yamato, a BC3, and a CVL.

Meanwhile in the Aleutians, the old battleships faced off against the IJNs old battleships. Here the US Naval NDRM increase provided a combat advantage as the Japanese were carrying troops. After one round of mostly indecisive fighting (although a few lights were sunk), the invasion force withdrew.

The three remaining Japanese task forces had a CV3 and CVL2 with one NAS and one elite NAS between them, the BB5 Mushashi, two BC3s, two slow BB4s, four slow BB3s, twelve cruiser factors (six CA2), and DD12. This is 60 fleet factors and two naval air units. (The sixth Japanese CV3 had been damaged in earlier 'attritional' combat).

On the US half of the turn, the Americans liberated Midway, took Rabaul, and ended the turn with six uninverted task forces (approximately 100-120 fleet factors).

Naval losses in Europe at the end of Summer 1943 were 37 British fleet factors, 33 Italian fleet factors, 19 German fleet factors, three American fleet factors, and three Russian fleet factors sunk. Minor country losses included all of the Greek and Turkish navies. Many British, US, and Italian units were also damaged in the last two turns of naval combat.

[I left the con at 8:00 Friday to drive home. - Eric]

Japan did its Fall turn (another ground based attack in China) but the Axis players were leaving early Saturday morning and we did not continue play that day (Ed).

At 8:00 on Friday, the six games were at Fall 1943, Fall 1944, Winter 1943, Fall 1943, Winter 1943, and Summer 1943.

The game ended after Fall 1943, with Russia avoiding a surrender.

Post-Mortem:

Some things worked well for the Allies and some things did not.

Norway went very well, and Sweden went well.

Allowing an unopposed paradrop into Lyon was a blunder.

Ireland was a minor affair, but it was shut down quickly once the Axis activated it.

The forts in Suez and Basra did not really provide good launching points for counterattacks. The Persian route probably should have been opened a turn or two earlier, as the Axis in the end did not go into Iraq with a strong force, and the WA were in a position to reinforce Iraq and Persia faster than the Axis could reinforce there.

Here there was a blunder in Su43, as the WA had set up to make a 3:1 attack recovering Mosul but neglected to take it, in Fall it became more important to restore supply lines that had been cut by advancing Axis 2-factor armor. Holding on to Suez and Basra prevented the Axis forces there from defending in the Western Mediterranean. Malta was going to be recaptured in Fall 1943 and there were good prospects for a successful invasion of Italy in Winter (though this may have been delayed due to the losses in the premature invasion of Southern France – not that the units hurt so much, but it takes transports to get them onto the board). There was also quite a bit of US air coming on line that would not be needed in the Pacific. Two turns of that might have been enough to set up a cross channel invasion for Sp44, otherwise ‘on time’ in Summer. (Ed).

IIRC, the attack in Iraq was not a 3:1 because some of the air was used to kill a partisan in Iran in Summer 1943. The Mideast did distract the Italians from the creeping threat from the WA as the North African French colonies were occupied or changed sides (Eric).

This highlights one of the challenges in changing off players in mid-turn. When I took over the WA in Europe after Eric K had to leave, I was not aware that some parts of the turn in Iraq had been completed. However the ‘blunder’ (to the small extent it was not mine) then was not to mark the hexes the Allied units had moved through with control markers to indicate that Mosul had at least been isolated – I was completely unaware of how Eric K executed our tactics on that front (Ed).

Eric: I was pretty brain dead by that point and the fault for the fumble on the hand-off is mostly, if not entirely, mine.

However, flipping two out of the three western Vichy colonies and disintegrating the third was a cheap way to get back on the offensive. It paid off with the deactivation of Vichy itself and a Summer 1943 landing in France and exploitation into Italy.

Ed: Note that said invasion was wiped out by the Axis in a single turn (well OK, I basically abandoned it.) We had used Brits to hold Marseilles and advanced a US 5o6 into Genoa, but neglected to place an Allied unit adjacent to Lyon. Because of this oversight, the Axis were able to redeploy an armor unit into the French Alps and cut the supply line from Marseilles to the 5o6 – it would have needed a separate sea supply line to Genoa. The Axis also pulled in a large force of ground units and especially about 15 German and 5 Italian AAF to oppose the invasion, and really needed to stop only one of the supply

lines to cripple the operation.

The whole attack was an example of what Joe Brophy (one of AWAW's "Three Wise Men") calls a 'jump out' – we had not secured more easily supplied air bases in supporting range (for example in Corsica) before invading, and even if we pushed supply through there were only about 18 British AAF total available on the map – and those were also needed elsewhere, for example in North Africa. Advancing US armor was about to slam into the Italians besieging Suez from behind. (Note: This AAF total was about to change rapidly with the arrival of US AAF after the Japanese carrier fleet was neutralized, but they were still a turn or so away.)

From a strategic point of view, though, the invasion may still have been necessary and somewhat of a success, at least to the extent it pulled those AAF and Axis ground forces away from the Eastern Front, where Russia had been flirting with surrender of and on for several turns.

(Eric) The real problem is that I don't think that there were enough AAF in the European theater that could be built and shipped to Tunis and used in Winter 1943 to run supply for a second time. Most of the USAAF was sent to the Pacific, so there were only five of them in the European theater, and the British needed to defend Britain from bombing, so they couldn't empty the Isles and send everything to North Africa (and then stage it to France). Even if Corsica, for example, was occupied and used as an airbase, there simply wasn't enough Allied air around to survive counterattacks by 20 Axis AAF. The US would have needed to ship in at least 10 AAF to make it practical to hold the beachhead in the winter, and I don't think that there were that many available.

But, I left early so I forfeited my right to complain too much. It's completely academic at this point. It is an idea for the next game if a similar situation should arise (Eric K).

This is an AAR; you 'forfeited' nothing. It's not possible to learn without discussing errors. Besides you are right that we likely concentrated too much air power in the Pacific – but I needed every single squadron to finally put paid to the IJN, so that was partly a function of the Axis Global Strategy, which they had, whereas we were scrambling from the get go trying as best we could to 'stop the Axis until the US is fully involved.' Though some of our disarray had to do with the way the game wound up being scheduled – I was a last minute addition who had no time prior to the con to discuss overall strategy with Eric and Joe, both Eric K and I arrived after things had started on Sunday so we did not want to slow play for the sides who were ready to roll. Ideally, the WA would at least have laid out a tentative strategy and approach to research and diplomacy, and discussed the general way we were going to play with our Russian partner before the con. This needs to be done as soon as matchups are finalized, even in a classic game (See Bruce's article "Get me to the Bar on Time.") – Ed S

I wish that we had fewer errors to discuss and that I had less to learn (Eric).

However, it might have been possible to start invading North Africa in Winter 1941 or Spring 1942, rather than Summer 1942, with better resource management by the WA in Europe (Eric).

The invasion of Morocco would have been illegal in Winter 41, Spring 42 might have been realistic, but Britain was very short of units due to ongoing Construction oil effects and the happy time (Ed).

Atlantic-crossing invasions are illegal in the Winter turn, but it is legal to invade a southern Med. beach such as the one next to Oran in a Winter turn (34.23A) (Eric).

That would have had to be done exclusively with fleets and ground units based in Gibraltar, so at most two 2o5 armor. You can get the one exploiting unit into Morocco, but that is a very thin invasion force if the colonies don't turncoat or disintegrate in addition to being very hard to set up in Fall 1941 -- especially considering the units we eventually did the invasion with were rebuilt after being taken as casualties in Egypt and India across the Fa/Wi 41 turns. Britain does not have a lot of strategic options in late 41 other than hang on for dear life. But certainly Spring 1942 might have been possible (Ed S).

The invasion of Denmark failed, so that was an error, but a relatively minor one.

The Battle of the Atlantic was painful but never crippling for Britain. Producing a few extra ASW was a good investment.

The US also mobilized four additional transports and the WA produced another four in 1942. By 1943 there were 13 Transports in the IO and Pacific SW boxes and 22 in the Atlantic. However, the pro-Allied turn in the Atlantic SW combat when those Su43 modifiers, ASW, and CVEs came together was astounding (Ed).

The ANDRM, NNDRM, and CTL research probably should have been invested in a bit more, as the late results slowed down the switch from defense to offense (Eric).

Agreed 100% (Ed).

Overall, I think that Britain probably waited a turn or two too long to go on the offensive, and that hurt Russia (Eric).

In hindsight, the Russian player was correct to state that the WA were playing too conservatively in Europe, although the uncertainty in the Pacific did make it hard to judge when the tide had turned in the overall war (Eric).

I will disagree somewhat. Some of the actions suggested were very risky at a time when the WA could not afford the risk. Sailing your fleet across the Mediterranean to save a minor ally (Greece) sounds wonderful, and is wonderful if the dice cooperate, but all it takes is one bad naval battle and half your fleet is in the drink and you've got nothing left to invade France with. Eric's strategic judgment as Britain – wait to risk the Royal Navy until the US was in the war – was absolutely correct. But how to switch more quickly to an aggressive mentality once that happened is harder to think through. The switch to the attack mentality in Europe is, I think, one of the hardest parts of the game to do right. It's so easy to stay in the rope-a-dope mentality, but if you attack a turn too soon, you will lose that fight and it will take two turns to recover. Maybe pep rallies and calisthenics at the beginning of the Spring 42 turn would help. I will say that I might have sent more air to the Atlantic sooner; our European bombing campaign was severely underfunded (ok, non-existent) in terms of RPs. I probably over-estimated the danger of Erik's 1942 Japanese attacks. On the other hand, when Japan gives the Allied team the opportunity for a decisive win in the Pacific, you need to secure that, and that often means fighting Europe on a careful budget (Ed).

I think that the Allies as a whole, considering the entire globe, were in a good position by Fall 1943, as Japan and Italy had both lost naval superiority and the Allies were contesting southern France and northern Italy. Russia was pushed back pretty far, but that also would cause problems by overstressing Germany, as Russia was still fighting and the Western Allies were already in Europe. The USA started 1943 with 898 BRPs and was going to be a monster to deal with in 1944 and 1945 (Eric).

The bigger opportunity in the Pacific came from the retreat of the Japanese land based air to the Chinese front, allowing the US to advance though both the Central and Southern Pacific with each fleet significantly larger than what was left of the IJN. The Southern French invasion was unsustainable and wiped out by the Axis Fall 43 turn, and (from a victory level point of view) served mainly to delay the invasion of Italy by two turns and give the Germans a surrender modifier. However US AAF and fleets (including carriers and a BB5) were on the way and I see no reason we could not have brought off the surrender of Italy in mid 44 even with the delay, and that operation was sustainable without slowing the buildup for cross channel invasion in France (Ed).

And of course, the A-bomb was going to show up on time or early, too (Ed).

The A-bomb always helps quite a bit, especially when the US can afford to build lots of uranium and plutonium plants, which it most definitely was going to do in this game, when it had almost 900 BRPs and about 37 RPs at the start of 1943. That's the downside (to the Axis) from a hyperactive Japan giving the US a big head start in mobilizations in 1940 (Eric).

It will be really interesting to read what Joe, Graham and Erik have to say (Ed).

So far, the AAR is very light on details about the Eastern front and could really use some comments from Zhukov and von M

a
n
s
t
e
i
n

(
E
r
i
c
)
.