

Red Banner

A quarterly fanzine for the Advanced Squad Leader (ASL) board game
By the DC Conscripts ASL Club



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Commissar's Call: *Playing Outside*



Human Wave 2021 – our annual tournament – is just around the corner, July 9-11. We're outside this year under three tarps with plenty of ice water. Ten brave souls, a full squad, have proven their loyalty by volunteering to brave the heat among grassy fields, not unlike that Summer of '42 in Ukraine. After action report to follow.

<https://humanwaveconscripts.com/>

Conscripts' Chatter: *Red Banner Machine Gun Workshop*



Red Banner Machine Gun Workshop, Fairfax, VA, May 29th, 2021, by Mick Bedard
Commander – Kaptain Andy “Golden Boy” Goldin

In attendance:

Starshina John

Ryadovoys from Cadre of Ground Troops Replacement Depot

Buck, Dan, John and Mick

Method – Lecture with Demonstrations and Examples

Sources – per tactical paper *Pick Em Deep* as published in Red Banner Q2 2018 by the legendary Hero of the People David Garvin.

Distinguished Comrade Goldin gave an excellent review and exposition on the use of Pulemets in ASL competition. He provided a list of topics to be covered and a paper. The session lasted 90 minutes. Review of Counter information based on type and nationality. There was lively discussion on the use of different IFTs – standard vs incremental; the later allows use of each fire point.

Topics covered included – range, rate of fire, use limitation by conscripts, spray fire, fire lanes, repair, moving the equipment including advantages/disadvantages of dismantling them down (LMGs can be used when dismantled) and the utility of Pulemets against AFVs in Early War and Far East Scenarios (fire may penetrate thin armor).

If gun keeps ROF, it is as if it had not fired yet; can fire again on target or select another target. Unless leader directed, gun can cover on doubles and goes “final fire.” Full fire on First Fire; half strength fire on Subsequent First Fire usually with increased chance of breakdown.

Amazing ASL Lore: *Making Your Enemy Better*

While playing J29, The Capture of Balta, John Stadick and I witnessed more amazing ASL drama. His Russian squad assault moved into a wooden building adjacent to my STUG, seeking close combat no doubt. In reply, my adjacent LMG squad with 8-1 leader fired on him and stripped concealment, but nothing else. The STUG then fired its main gun at the now unconcealed adjacent enemy squad and hit! The resulting 12-flat shot scored a morale check, but the Russian rolled heat of battle that generated a hero and triggered battle hardening. So, that lone 4-4-7 was now a 4-5-8 with a hero and hence far better as a result of STUG fire. The STUG’s intensive fire shot also hit, but to no avail. The 4-5-8 passed it’s PAATC and so joined the hero to advance on the STUG, but they rolled a 9 in close combat to merely immobilize the hapless STUG.

New Article: *White Tiger (the movie)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= yNZsomWa7U>

For some very convincing recreations of armored combat in WWII this is a must-watch even if the premise is a bit cheesy. The Soviet protagonist, a born-again burn casualty, stalks the Eastern Front in his purpose-built T34/85 seeking the mysterious and deadly “White Tiger” tank that ambushes Soviet forces across unlikely tank terrain, like marshes, and then disappears.

After Action Report: *S5 Clearing Colleville*

Game Day AAR, May 29th, Fairfax, VA

Buck K. and I were the only gamers having a *Conscripts* match after Andy Goldin’s Machine Gun Workshop.

Buck is returning to ASL after a 10-year hiatus. This was my first game in 2021 since Jon Plott last cleaned my clock October 2020 in VASL play.

I chose SK#1 Scenario S5 “Clearing Colleville”. It is reported as balanced with infantry and MGs only. Simple and sweet for getting back in. Buck had been at full ASL level before while I have struggled to get up to SK#2 play.

Buck took a Big Red One Company on attack and me the Heer elements of 352nd Division. Victory entails clearing all the Colleville stone buildings within 3 hexes of M5 of good order German MMCs by end of turn 5. The U.S. gets two North edge reinforcement waves supplemented by up to 7 to 9 half squads on turn one and two. Buck got the minimum of 7. The German has a leader, 4 squads and MMG entering south edge on their bottom of the First turn.



I set up as hedgehog with some interlocking covering fire to North and West. The near worthless 6+1 Staff Leader was put in center out of way (for start). I had reservations about putting HMG so far forward in O6 building. That position is at risk to initial Prep Fire and if the manning squad breaks, the HMG will be dropped and left there. I was hoping of two or more good defensive shots before that probability. I barely got those two opportunities. By late Turn 2, the HMG was abandoned and later captured. It broke on U.S. use to my relief.

I neglected to log moves, dice and die rolls and results of the later. Suffice it to say the match was closely fought and went down to the bottom of the Fifth turn before it could be called. While pressed dearly, I was able to delay Buck's advances with occasional good/lucky shooting. At Game's end, I had two of victory buildings with good order units in them – N6 (two squads) and N5 (one pinned squad).

Both of us needed this ASL SK reboot. We were rusty on several rules like covering, grain hinderances, ELR and rout routes. Suspect when Buck gets his Cobwebs out, he will be a dangerous SK opponent.

Buck adds: "We both enjoyed the scenario, especially as it was a meaty refresher. The scenario seemed well balanced with plenty of options for both sides. It came down to how well the Americans were able to get into Gerry's grill and how effective the German's defensive fire phase was. In this case, Mick's defensive fire was the difference."

Back to the Rule Book for more study!

Mick Bedard, Alexandria VA, June 2, 2021