

A World at War Tournament, World Boardgaming Championship, 2009

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By Gamemaster Mike Crowe

Introduction

This document provides a complete report on the A World at War Tournament at the 2009 World Boardgaming Championships, held August 3-8, 2009 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 it provides a complete description of each match, written by the participants.

Overview

For the first time we offered two mini-games on Monday afternoon, one on Bombers and one on Raiders. Both games are standalone, last only a few turns, and focus on two important subsystems. Free copies of the games were provided.

Twenty people participated in five full campaign games this year. Three new players joined for the first time, one from England. Of the games played, one was an Allied decisive victory (against a Russia first strategy), one was an Axis decisive (successful invasion of Britain), and three others were Axis victories of varying degree (traditional Barbarossa campaigns). Axis success was aided somewhat by a new set of strategic warfare (SW) rules that in retrospect were a bit too harsh on Britain. The German U-boats inverted fewer transports, but sunk more, especially in the critical 1940-42 period. Last year we had three ties, two Axis victories, and one Allied victory.

GMT made available, shortly before the convention, a counter sheet with all of the new counters for the second edition. These included new advanced submarine counters, Allied Pacific bombers, beach defenses, correct Japanese marine units, island control markers, revised Greek minor country counters, and hit markers for naval combat. This allows players to update their games by purchasing the counter sheet, and downloading the latest rules from the website (www.aworldatwar.org). All games took advantage of these. The second edition is in P500 status, so those interested in the second edition can place orders. The game will be printed when GMT has received enough pre-orders (typically 750).

Several new rules, in addition to changes to SW, were also used for the first time at this convention. These included reduced effects of atomic attacks on triggering Axis surrender, and limiting German base growth based on German conquests. The latter prevents large German base increases during the 1944 and 1945 year start sequences. Two changes came out of this year's convention. The SW rules have been amended with a "Cash and carry" provision, which lets Britain build transports in American shipyards before the Americans are at war, using British BRPs. Also, the Western Allies cannot reinforce newly captured areas during the redeployment phase using transports (destroyers are required). This restriction previously applied only to Japan.

Plaque Winners

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1st - Kevin Milne (Best Overall) | 4th - Mike Crowe (Best Axis, Europe) |
| 2nd - Jon Hogen (Best Allies, Europe) | 5th - Keven Leith (Best Allies, Pacific) |
| 3rd - Paul Milne (Best Axis, Pacific) | 6th - A.J. Johnson (Best Newcomer) |

Game Summary

Match	Axis	Allies	Axis Strategy	Allied Atomics	Europe End	Pacific End	Game Result
1.	Jim Sparks and Greg Wilson	Vic Hogen and Joe Brophy	Med and Sea Lion	On track.	Winter 1946 (projected) (6 point Axis)	Winter 1946 (projected) (5 point Axis)	11 point Axis
2.	Jason Moore and Brian Conway	Jon Hogen and Ken Cruz	Russia First	Not researched.	Winter 1943 (6 point Allied win)	Spring 1944 (5 point Allied win)	11 point Allied
3.	Kevin Milne and Paul Milne	Randy Scheers and Bruce Harper	1941 Barbarossa	Late.	Fall 1945 (tie) (Actual)	Winter 1945 (1 point Axis) (Actual)	1 point Axis (Actual)
4.	A. J. Johnson and Chris Collins	Nick Carter and Jerry Smolens	1941 Barbarossa	On track.	Summer 1946 (4 point Axis Win)	Fall 1945 (tie)	4 point Axis
5.	Mike Crowe and Rob Carl	Tim Schroeder and Keven Leith	1941 Barbarossa	Fizzled.	Fall 1946 (projected) (5 point Axis win)	Summer 1945 (1 point Allied win)	4 point Axis

Detailed Game Descriptions

Additional comments provided for each game by Mike Crowe.

Game 1

European Axis:	Jim Sparks
Japan:	Greg Wilson
Allies Europe:	Vic Hogen
Allies Pacific:	Joe Brophy
European Result:	Axis surrender in Winter 1946 (6 point Axis win)
Pacific Result:	Axis surrender in Winter 1946 (5 point Allied win)
Overall Result:	11 point Axis win

Game narrative provided by Jim Sparks (Europe) and Greg Wilson (Pacific).

Axis Plan, Europe. *Jim.* My initial plan playing the Axis in the European theatre was to be flexible, and see where research and opportunity led. My initial goal was to take Suda Bay (Crete), and transport into Tobruk under the cover of air. At the same time, I planned to hold Italy out of the war until Fall 1940, to obtain the favorable diplomatic modifier for Yugoslavia. This plan changed as opportunities presented themselves.

Axis Plan, Pacific. *Greg.* The Japanese strategy was to lay low, and then attack the US in Summer 1941, *before* the oil embargo was enforced. Also, by attacking early, the Japanese are likely to catch one or more carriers in Pearl Harbor. They also have an extra turn or two to grab and hold important islands groups that will prop up the Japanese resistance levels. Without an oil embargo in place during the Summer 1941 attack, the Japanese receive unlimited oil counters the turn of their attack. They can then uninvert their fleet without touching their oil reserve. They receive the full six oil in their Fall turn, to keep the war effort going. By limiting builds to less than 25, the Japanese can again uninvert their entire fleet during the Fall and Winter 1941 turns, and still not affect their oil reserve.

The downside to this strategy is that the Japanese cannot add to their shipbuilding, and must save BRPs like a miser in 1939 and 1940. They are going to need all the BRPs they can get for 1941. They will need to grab conquest BRPs to be able to build anything in the Fall and Winter turns. BRPS will be tight until the 1942 period! Japan also needs to keep the USJT below 20 before the start of their Summer 1941 turn, or the oil embargo strikes. To get troops in place for the attack, the Japanese must invoke their second mobilization in Fall 40 (all ground troops), and take all of French Indochina in the Winter 1940 turn.

The Japanese attack plan was as follows:

- Summer 1941. Attack Pearl with five CVs (too early for sixth one). Take the oil centers and setup to finish off the Philippines and Singapore in the Fall turn. Make sure the maximum possible BRP conquests are done to keep the Japanese war machine in the black. Start laying ground work for the resistance surrender modifier for Islands Conquests, by taking Rabaul and the Gilberts. Hopefully the Allied player is caught napping with Australians back in Europe. Take an Aleutian Island too.
- Fall 1941. Finish off Singapore, Manila and the last Dutch colony. Continue to press southeast to grab all islands in range of Rabaul. Grab Dutch Harbor and start the conquest

of New Caledonia. The war in Asia is now over, other than manning the mountain range in Burma, and keeping the Chinese honest. The focus of the Japanese war effort is to grab and hold as many island groups as they can, for as long as possible.

- Winter 1941. Finish off any allied resistance in range of Rabaul. Decide whether to isolate and take Port Moresby.
- Spring 1941. Place an artificial Port in the Gilberts, so that the Japanese can continue to advance further into the south Pacific. Keep going till we get to Tahiti!!

1939: Fall. I placed 3 RPs each in air and naval general research, hoping to get an early breakthrough. I miss the air but get the naval. Germany conquers Poland with only the loss of 1 air. Russia demands Bessarabia and starts attritioning. Germany builds a destroyer.

Winter. The phony war begins, and only sub warfare occurs. Italy DoWs Greece. Russian attritions Bessarabia. Germany builds a destroyer.

Mike: It seems odd for Germany to fight over Bessarabia, but it also seems odd for Russia to demand Bessarabia in 1939, and then merely attrition them.

1940. Spring. The real showdown begins. Italy DoWs France, Germany DoWs Belgium/Luxembourg, The Netherlands, and Denmark/Norway. I see a flaw in the French defenses. A sole British 2-5 is in southern France uncovered by British air. It is vulnerable because it is overrunable.

Mike. Jim did something similar to me in a convention game several years ago, overrunning a 2o5 in Lyons during exploitation.

Germany invades the beach in Norway, conquers Belgium/Luxembourg, attacks southern France, overruns the British 2-5, exploits to Paris, and takes Paris. Unfortunately Paris' fate was not sealed. A lucky round of counter air allowed five British to invert seven German army air factors. This allowed a joint British and French venture to attack Paris at 1-1 and recapture it. The Russians attrition Bessarabia. Germany builds a destroyer.

Summer. The German calls Yugoslavia and get association, since the Russians are still at war in Bessarabia. It does not cause an early Russian Mobilization. Germany conquers The Netherlands, and France. The FSL was +3. Germany builds a destroyer.

Fall. Germany calls Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria. The Russian war with Bessarabia continues, and gives the German big modifiers. All three countries are full Allies. Germany sets up for a 1-1 invasion of Portsmouth. It was initially an attempt to draw out the British fleet. The British fleet came out to play under a heavy Axis air umbrella. The British intercepted the German invasion with three slow TFs. The Germans found CGs 2 and 3 and the British found the German CG twice. Since the British only had slow TFs, only one British CG could intercept. Meanwhile the Luftwaffe attacked CG 2. After one round of Naval combat the British retreated. German naval losses were a BB3 damaged, and two PB2 damaged. The British suffered one CVL sunk, two damaged, two BC3 sunk, one damaged, two BB3 sunk, one damaged, two cruisers sunk, and one damaged. The roll for the invasion attack was a three, and the Germans suffer an exchange, leaving only a 2-6 on the port. In the exploitation phase, the Axis drop a paratrooper to reinforce the landing.

Winter. Germany supplies and transports more troops into England. I am afforded a 2-1 on London and take it. I get London clean! Greece, Norway, and Malta are conquered.

1941. Spring. I call Spain and get association. Germany attacks Coventry and exploits to take Manchester.

Summer. I call Vichy and get association. I DoW the USA. Japan DoWs the USA.

Mike: It is a very good thing that Japan had planned all along to attack in Summer 1941, as otherwise this much Axis success in Europe would have thrown off their plans. At the con last year, Bruce teamed with Jim, and found that he needed to attack with Japan earlier than he had planned, because Jim's Mediterranean conquests had increased USAT too rapidly.

I am able to clear the box with a +8/-8 modifier. Germany takes Birmingham and attacks Rosyth at 1.5 to 1. Success allows me to exploit through Scotland, taking all but Scapa Flow and the hex adjacent. I paradrop on Glasgow. There is no supply to England due to the loss of transports and London. England Surrenders! (*Mike: I believe it was a -10 surrender level.*) Germany uses forbearance, and returns everything back to England. The USA signs a separate peace and the war with the Western Allies is over for at least 2 years. At this point the game is basically over in the ETO, and the Japanese story is just beginning.

Mike. Vic, as ever the good sport, soldiered on for a while as Jim marshaled all the countries of Europe in a grand assault against Russia. Russia did not appear to be in danger of surrendering, as Vic did a very thorough job of defending the oil fields.

Pacific. The biggest thorn in the side of the Japanese plan turned out to be the success the Germans had in Europe. By managing to wipe the British out so quickly, the US had nothing left to do but go after Japan with *everything!* Also Joe saw the Summer attack coming, and put all the forces he had in the best spots he could. So Rabaul and Port Moresby were well defended, and slowed me up a bit. Still, the plan mostly held together.

USJT was 18, and I caught two carriers in Pearl. All attacks came off well. The Japanese took the oil, Rabaul, and part of the Gilberts and the Solomon's. The Allies reinforced where they could in their turn (Dutch Harbor, Port Moresby), but the Japanese sank an attempted reinforcement of the Gilberts.

Fall. Pacific. The Japanese pressed forward to grab more islands, and invaded New Caledonia, Ellice and the Hebrides in their turn. The US Navy stayed home. Japan finished off its Asian conquests. The Allies again reinforced threatened areas such as Noumea, and the Solomon's.

Winter. Pacific. The Japanese finished off resistance in the Solomon's this turn, and started to collect their first resistance points. The Allies conducted a patrol raid on my three army air in the New Hebrides. They came away killing all three AAF, with a loss of only three NAS. This was after first conducting an air raid on Rabaul, to verify that my carriers were not there.

1942. Spring. It was good to have money again. I needed it to start building the mountain of ground troops I required to defend Burma. All the US ground troops seemed to be heading that way. The Spring turn does not have too much action. The Japanese need a port to press on. They build one in the Gilberts this turn. They plan to use it in the Summer 1942 turn to press further Southeast. I did move my carriers to Rabaul. I planned to cut supply to Port Moresby, to keep the pesky allied scout planes away, just in case the Allied carriers want to repeat last turn's patrol fun. I put my three AAF back in the New Hebrides as bait!

During the Allied turn, sure enough, out comes the patrol to take the bait. This time he gets intercepted by the Japanese Carrier fleet. The US fleet is in a pickle. Nine Japanese AAS and eight Japanese carriers, against four US carriers.

The action goes three rounds before the US get spotted. Two waves of Japanese NAS come in with surprise, and sink all four US carriers and a BB4. The US have no carriers in the Pacific. The US fall back on troops to defend the islands.

Mike: What was Joe thinking? I assume Noumea was isolated, so that no AAF could be based there. But patrolling under Japanese LBA without any American LBA to counter it seems suicidal.

Joe: I have forgotten everything except that I got spanked.

Greg: Joe had counter aired my air in the same spot in the previous turn when I had no carriers in Rabaul in range. Joe had taken the precaution of checking for them by bombing Rabaul from Port Moresby for one round. His CV Counter air of my air in New Hebrides had crushed my air. I lost 9 AAS to about 3 of his.

For the next turn I had moved my carriers to Rabaul and cut supply to Port Moresby to make sure he could not check out Rabaul. Then I put the air back in New Hebrides to see if Joe would take the bait. I guess he felt safe because he had succeeded so well at the same thing in the earlier round. It was still not a sure thing to intercept him, but I got a good roll and one carrier group made it, with the second one hex away. Then I had all the mods in my favor to set up the kill.

Mike: I can hardly fault Joe here, having fallen prey myself to one of Greg's sucker punches at the convention three years ago. He tempted my Germany to attack his Russia in 1943. I took the bait, overextended myself, and he managed to surround most of the German army, with no hope of my breaking the encirclement. The game (in Europe) ended in mid 1944.

Summer. Pacific. The Japanese invade the rest of the Ellice Island chain, and all of Fiji. They take all the islands in a massive invasion sweep. The US fleet can do nothing but watch. The US try to garrison Pago Pago in their turn, but get intercepted, and lose another BB4. Now they fall back to Tahiti, and build and a fort there.

Fall. Pacific. The Japanese take Pago Pago and all the Islands around it.

Winter. Pacific. Tahiti has a fort, big troops and lots of air. I could risk an attack, but why?

Mike: Because it's there? To give the Allies a sporting chance? Of course, Greg is right.

It is better to just sit back and take in four resistance points a turn.

Mike on behalf of the Allies: :-)

The action has been heating up in Burma as a couple of heavy U.S. armor and air show up. The land battle goes back and forth in the jungle mountains. The Allied player does announce they have one carrier in the Pacific front again.

1943. Spring. Pacific. The game is called after the YSS , as it is obvious that the US 1944 election is already decided. The Japanese resistance level will be an estimated 50+ at that point, and even if the US started grabbing back islands, they can only reduce the damage by one point a turn. So the US was doomed to declare peace in Winter 1944, no matter what happened on the board at this point.

Generally other than the Germans doing too well and sweeping the board, and the Western Allies counters into the Pacific, the Japanese plan held up and succeeded quite well.

Adjudication. A decisive Axis victory is projected on both boards.

Post-Mortem.

Mike. Noumea can be hard to take, although killing the US carrier force helped. Reverse Midway. Ouch. Usually I defend Noumea at all costs. What kind of forces did Joe put there, and where were the forces he should have put there?

Greg. Joe sea transported a 3-4 and 2-3 to Noumea after I invaded the beach with a 1-3 in the Fall 1941 turn. Then I reinforced in my Winter 1941 turn. The land troops were waiting out the results of the sea battles. Once I cut supply, I just waited until I starved the Noumea garrison down to base level before I took it out. Joe had trouble getting forces in the area. My naval forces totally outclassed him, and I kept the entire Japanese air force down there to boot. A full focus of Japanese force in one spot forces the Allies' hand in the early game. It did not really matter that the Allies were ready or not.

Of course, this meant I ignored Dutch Harbor, Midway and India

Mike. What does a Summer attack do for the forces the Western Allies have available to defend in the South Pacific? I know you were hoping to catch the Australians out of position, but are there critical US forces that don't arrive soon enough (e.g. AAF)?

Greg. I think the Summer 1941 attack is a viable option for the Japanese. It is tough for the Allies to defend against, and it gives the Japanese a chance to grab up resistance points for island groups that are tough for the Allies to get back.

I know I will try it again the next time I am the Japanese.

Mike. Greg is an excellent player, and I am sure that his plan took considerable skill to pull off. However, it may be a little too good. With the Allies hamstrung by the loss of two carriers at Pearl, as well as reinforcements arriving later than expected, it is difficult to see how the Allies can defend against this adequately. At the very least, it may be necessary to allow the Allies to make up more than one resistance point per turn. A more conservative defense by Joe that conceded Noumea, but kept the rest of the southwest Pacific, may still have lost, but it would have had more hope of succeeding.

Game 2

European Axis:	Jason Moore
Japan:	Brian Conway
Allies Europe:	Jon Hogen
Allies Pacific:	Ken Cruz
European Result:	Axis surrender in Winter 43 (6 point Allied win)
Pacific Result:	Axis surrender in Spring 1944 (5 point Allied win)
Overall Result:	11 point Allied win

Game narrative provided by Ken Cruz. Comments by Jason Moore.

Axis Plan, Europe. Russia First?!

Mike: Jason had specifically asked to play Jon and Ken. Although Jason kept his Russia First plan under wraps before the convention, I kidded him about it when he was setting up his game.

Me: "So, you're going to do Russia First, right?" *Jason:* Total deadpan look, as if to imply, what? followed by subsequent attempts to suppress a smile.

Jason. I wanted to try Russia First, and I wanted to play against two of the best in the world, Ken and Jon. I knew everything would need to go almost perfectly.

Dramatization: As the Fuehrer scowled at his General's jaw dropping astonishment, he proclaimed; "Poland is not our target, not Warsaw, not the Gdansk corridor, but Russia herself!" "We shall attrition the Poles away so as to preserve our army. I have received assurances from our Hungarian and Japanese allies that they will join us in our cause. Once Poland is gone, we will then sweep away the corrupt regime in Bucharest and take their oil fields for ourselves. We will then plunge into Mother Russia and crush her in one swift stroke!"

The Fuehrer's generals shot incredulous glances at their colleagues. "Is he kidding?" they all thought to themselves. A long silence endured as the Fuehrer scanned his General's eyes for any sign of opposition to his grand plan. Finally, one brave soul uttered, "But mein Fuehrer, what of the Low Countries, and the Anglo-French forces? Surely, they will attempt to cross the Rheine while we are involved in Russia and attack the Ruhr basin. Should we not defeat them first and then deal with Russia?" The Fuehrer laughed. "Do not concern yourself with such trifles. The West is weak and divided, they pose no threat." Blithely, he then commanded, "The Army will station strong infantry corps along the West Wall and we shall fortify the Ruhr basin. No Anglo-French army will penetrate our defenses there. They will break upon our wall like the ocean upon the rocks. The Fuehrer stood and marched for the conference room door, "I have decided our course; crush Russia immediately!"

Axis Plan, Pacific. Attack Russia pretty darned early. Japan must be sacrificed for the greater good of European domination by the Axis. Japan will get 1 resistance point per turn as soon as it takes Vladivostok and Irkutsk, although not until the turn after U.S. entry. Who says there is no upside?

Dramatization: Premier Tojo had his head in his hands. Downcast, he could not believe what had transpired between him and von Ribbentrop. "Why did I agree to this insanity, Yamamoto-san? Why?" Yamamoto pushed his resignation letter further into Tojo's downward stare. "The die is cast between Japan and German now. The plan may work, and if it does, Japan will conquer all of China and Russian Siberia. The vast Asian resources will be a boon to the Japanese empire."

Yamamoto then let out a long sigh, "But this plan cannot succeed. The Anglo-Americans will be at our throats far sooner than you fear, and any conquests in Asia will not matter. The Americans will overwhelm us with their awesome industrial base." Tojo, looked back up at Japan's top admiral, "Will you not help your Emperor?" "No.", replied Yamamoto. "This folly is yours and his; I will have no part of it." The admiral swiveled in place and marched out of the PM's office tossing his shoulder boards on one of the plush leather chairs.

Mike: Ernie Faust had planned to play Japan with Jason, but had a conflict at the last minute and could not attend. Jason said he would have no problem playing both sides, and proceeded to do so until Brian Conway arrived on Wednesday. Brian took up what he foresaw as the lost cause of Japan, attempting to salvage what he could. He referred to his position as "this devastation".

The Beginning.

1939: The German Army reverts to WWI tactics, and attacks on a broad front in Poland, with two attritions in Fall and Winter.

Mike. This approach, which increases tensions by +5 per turn in Fall, Winter and Spring, insures that the Russo-German tensions will rise above 20 by Spring 1940. This forces the Russians to deploy according to the surprise rules.

1940. Spring. Germany takes Warsaw in Spring 1940. Hungary is activated in Fall 1939 as well. The Germans line up against Rumania and attack and conquer them in Spring 1940.

Mike. At a previous convention, I suspected Jason might try Russia First, and I derailed it by putting two Western Allied DPs, and a spy ring, in Rumania, in 1939. In that incarnation of his plan, Jason planned on Russia First only if he had favorable rolls for both Hungary and Rumania. Because Rumania stayed neutral, he decided on a more conventional attack, and won anyway! This time, though, he isn't letting anything derail his plan.

Nothing happens in the West, there is no sub war to speak of.

Mike. Without the French ports, the sub war is unlikely to do much, so there is not much advantage in pursuing it.

The Italians stay neutral, to keep US-Axis tensions low. In Asia Japan keeps tensions low doing nothing, but they do mobilize a large army. They set up their forces in China and Manchuria for an invasion of Siberia. The Allies see how everything is lining up against Russia, and make big changes in their research and diplomatic plans.

Summer. Germany attacks Russia, destroys the Red Army, and makes good advances. The Japanese also attack in Siberia, taking Vladivostok. At the end of the turn Russia offers a -2 surrender. The Germans aren't interested, as they are looking for a crushing surrender level of -10 (more or less) The Russians rebuild their lines out of range of German air and armor.

Jason. I destroyed every factor in the Russian army.

Fall. The Germans advance as far as they can, but no Russian units are attacked. The Japanese begin the long march to Irkutsk, as the Russians fall back to the mountains. The winter roll is a one and Germany is able to take Moscow and Leningrad, but the Russians hit back with an attrition that claims nine German 3x3 units. The front stabilizes as the Germans look to administer a coup-de-grace offensive in Summer 1941.

Jason. I revealed a winter prep, and had another -2 modifier for no attacks in the Fall. The winter roll of a 1 was helpful, but all I needed was a 4 or less to make two attacks and take

Moscow and Leningrad In compensation for my winter roll, Jon rolled a six for the winter attrition, and devastated my infantry. My overreaction in trying to replace the infantry would turn out to be fatal.

The End of the Beginning

1941. Spring. The Anglo-French forces counter attack across the Rhine and take a Ruhr hex. The grand German plan crashes to a halt. There are no German forces in range to retake the hex, and Germany can't afford to lose the UCL. All panzers and AAF are sent to Western Germany to evict the Anglo-Americans and take out the French. They are successful in kicking out the Allies from the continent, but the contest is over. The Russians have fully rebuilt and are huge. The Americans will be entering in 1942. The WA research has been redirected to producing units of all types. There is no battle of the Atlantic, so the US can supply infinite amounts of BRPs to the UK and to Russia. It is now a question of how quickly Germany will go down.

Jason. Sigh. My single-minded focus on attacking in Russia blinded me to the need for more force in the West. If I had it to do over again, I would happily have left five factors of air and four more infantry corps, to prevent Jon from doing what he did. My attack in Russia would have been slower than I had hoped, but the game would have been much more interesting, and lasted longer! My compliments to Jon and Ken, who did exactly what I would have done to undermine my plan. I expected no less, because of their solid grasp of the underlying principles of the game.

Pacific. The same is true for Japan. Having sunk their resources into Asia, there is no Pearl Harbor attack. Japan does conquer the Philippines, Singapore and the DEI but nothing else. Irkutsk is eventually taken and the Russians end up retaining only two hexes of Siberia. Rabaul remains in Allied hands. The US lays down only CVL's, so as to get them sooner, and boosts its NAT levels as fast as possible. Japan's defenses are very weak in the Pacific. The Allies won't have to wait long to begin their advance toward the home islands.

The End

1942-44. The Axis are on the defensive throughout 1942 and 1943. The Russians hammer away with a huge army. The Anglo-Americans land in Normandy in Fall 1942, and drive into Northern France and Germany. The Allies grow in strength every turn, and Germany can do nothing to stop the onslaught. Germany surrenders in Winter 1943. Japan shifts focus and takes Chunking, but only holds it for a turn as the Chinese and US-UK forces counter attack and retake it just a turn later. The Japanese are overwhelmed and cannot hold back the American and British Navies. They surrender in the Spring 1944 turn, following landings in Kagoshima.

Post Mortem.

Ken. The early attack on Russia in 1940 is interesting and can reap great dividends, but it must be executed with the precision of a neurosurgeon in order for it to succeed. The slightest mistake in defense in the West can wreck everything, and the Axis position will fold like a house of cards. The real problem with the strategy is that the Western Allies can simply take 1:1 attacks on the West Wall until one succeeds. When that happens, the Germans must shift forces West, and that ends all attacks on the Russians. The Japanese focusing on Russia in 1940 obviously helps drive down the Russian resistance, but Japan will be at the mercy of the US Navy, having made no progress in the Solomon Islands.

All in all, a very fun game was had by everyone. We finished up Friday night and then saw Gettysburg on Saturday!

Mike. Jon Hogen left thinking that the plan had some possibilities. Upon reflection, I have concluded that the plan probably has too many things stacked against it now. In the last convention where Jason planned to use it, the Western Allies were still restricted from building forts in France. Also, if the U.S. was in France when it fell, they had to withdraw. Both of those rules have been eliminated. Previously, Russian mobilizations proceeded at a rate of one every two turns. That rule has been changed to allow one full mobilization per turn once Russia is at war. In 1940, the Russian troop strength is not much different than 1941. Although they have fewer ICs, these now come on very rapidly. The only difference between a 1940 attack, and a 1941 attack, is perhaps two or three fewer units and air factors, and one less IC. This is not much compensation for an unconquered France. Nevertheless, had Jason been lucky enough to hold in the West through 1941, while attacking with almost all of his air and armor, a Russian surrender at a high level might have resulted. If followed by a successful campaign in France, this would likely result in a victory on the European board, though probably not a decisive one. Japan, however, would definitely lose, and probably quickly.

Jason. The plan does operate on a knife edge, but it was going very well in this game until I misplayed responding to the Winter 1940 attrition. The early attack by Japan is intended to compensate, to some degree, for the changes in the rules that Mike mentions above. At the beginning of Spring 1941, I had Moscow and Leningrad as well as the Crimea. I was two hexes from Vologda. I was poised to attack into the oil fields, which is what I needed to gain to get a sufficiently high Russian surrender. Although the U.S. would enter in 1942, they are weak, and I might have been able to continue the attack through 1942 if necessary.

I will definitely try this again, although not at the convention. I'm done with this plan, and have several others I am eager to try!

Mike. I would not bet money on not seeing Jason try this again! But only after he wins the plaque one more time!

Game 3

European Axis:	Kevin Milne
Japan:	Paul Milne
Allies Europe:	Randy Scheers
Allies Pacific:	Bruce Harper
European Result:	Axis surrender in Fall 1945 (tie)
Pacific Result:	Axis surrender in Winter 1945 (1 point win)
Overall Result:	1 point Axis win

Game narrative provided by Randy Scheers, Paul Milne and Bruce Harper, with comments by Paul Milne.

1939. Fall. Germany takes Poland in Fall at a cost of 15 BRPs of losses. They start their raiding efforts in grand fashion, getting a PB2 sunk and second one damaged.

Winter. Germany sinks a British CVL with their harbor attack, but otherwise just builds up.

1940. Spring. Germany attacks the Lowlands and France.

Summer. Germany takes Paris. A 2:1 attack on Marseilles fails on a roll of a '1'. This has a swing of 2 points to the French Surrender Level. As a result, French North Africa goes Free French, even though Vichy was established.

The sub war continues to go moderately well for Germany, but raiding continues to be a fiasco. No raiders get through, and more German ships are damaged.

Fall and Winter. Finland and Sweden (on a lucky six) associate with Germany, in addition to the usual Balkan countries. Britain is bombed in Fall, but not in Winter, for lack of BRPs. The impact is minimal. The German Luftwaffe heads south to help the Italians defend what can't be defended. Italy is able to hit a British task force and sink two CVLs, but Britain manages to damage three of the four Italian BB3s.

1941. Spring and Summer. Germany attacks Russia. The Russian army is isolated. Germany

Fall. Germany attritions as their units rush forward to catch up to the fleeing Russians. Two 4o6's are sea transported through Parnu to assist in the isolation of Leningrad. The sub war continues to go well. Raiding continues to be an embarrassment to the German high command. The high point of the year is in Fall, when the WAs are reduced to 6 transports in the Atlantic SW box.

Pacific. Fall 1939 through Fall 1941. Generally quiet. Japan does not take any offensive actions. The WA's do not send any aid to China. The Japanese are able to link up the Foochow bridgehead with the main force using attritions and ZOC's. The Japanese mobilize in Fall and Winter 1940, with the final mobilization occurring in the DOW turn (Winter 1941). Shipbuilding is increased by mobilization in Winter 1940 and by production in Winter 1941 and Spring 1942 and eventually reaches 7. No carriers are started prior to the DOW.

Winter. Kharkov and Dnepropetrovsk are captured. Leningrad falls. Germany had two winter preps for Winter 1941. Italy retreats to a circle around Tripoli. Due to lack of significant Allied force commitment, Tripoli hangs on through the year.

Things go better for the Allies in the sub war in Winter because of a combination of factors – Germany lost a sub in Fall trying to oppose a Murmansk Convoy, a U.S. ASW is deployed, and the rolls favor the Allies. The WAs end the year with every transport built.

Pacific. Japan attacks Britain and the U.S. in Winter and does a raid of Pearl Harbor. No carriers are caught at Pearl Harbor. Two BB3's are destroyed and two are sunk along with the AAF being destroyed. With five carriers lurking about there is no second strike. Sumatra, Malaya, Burma, Brunei, Kavieng, Lae, Makin, Wake and Guadalcanal are taken with moderate casualties (mainly air). Lingayen is invaded and Singapore is taken with exploitation.

1942. Spring. Germany declares war on the U.S. The U.S and Britain respond by invading Portugal, much to the surprise of the Axis players returning from dinner!

In the Mediterranean, Tripoli falls. Italy builds beach defenses in its southern beaches and makes sure there are two 3x3s on each beach.

Mike. This invasion also occasioned a rule change. Randy, after taking Portugal, proceeded to use transports to land a huge army there. After some discussion, Bruce decided that this tactic was too strong for the Allies. The Allies are now restricted to using destroyers to redeploy units into a port on the turn it is captured.

Pacific. Java and Balikpapan are taken to complete the DEI conquest. Manila falls on a 2.5 to 1. Tarawa and Bougainville are taken by the Japanese. Rabaul, which had been originally bypassed, is taken. An invasion in the Aleutians is intercepted by "MAGIC". An invasion of Johnston is intercepted normally. Japan secures its perimeter and then just digs in.

Summer. Spain associates with Germany as a result. Germany fortifies Madrid. In Russia, Germany captures Moscow and manages to surround Gorki, while isolating the entire northern Russian army. Moscow was attacked on a 2.5:1. However, a 1 followed by a 1 makes it a very costly (around 100 BRPs!) attack for the Germans.

Pacific. The Allies are able to supply Port Moresby contested by Japanese air. The Allies fail to supply the Gilberts, and they come under Japanese control. The Japanese also cut supply to Santa Cruz, the only Solomon Island garrisoned by the Allies.

Fall. A vastly overstretched Germany is forced to retreat to the Moscow line, abandoning any wild dreams of capturing Gorki.

Pacific. The Japanese take an isolated Santa Cruz to complete the Solomon's conquest. Attu is also taken. The Allies decide not to contest the landing because of Japanese air and naval superiority in the area.

Winter. The WAs have taken about half of Spain but have not captured Madrid. The rest of North Africa falls to the Allies.

Pacific. This is a quiet turn for the Japanese, who are short on oil and money by now. The Allies maintain supply for Port Moresby for the next couple of turns in a series of small naval, air and submarine actions. The Allies land on an unoccupied San Cristobal.

Paul. The meat grinder is in full force, but no significant gains are made by either side.

1943. Spring. Germany abandons Spain.

Pacific. This is a quiet turn for both sides. Each side is able to supply all of their territory. Attu, which had supply cut, is retaken by the Allies.

Summer. Madrid falls.

Pacific. Santa Isabel is taken by the Allies with no naval battle.

Fall. The Pyrenees are cracked. Germany starts to retreat in Russia.

Pacific. Bougainville is taken and the hex south of Rabaul is invaded. A port is built at Santa Isabel.

Winter. The WAs advance into southwest France. Moscow and Leningrad are recaptured.

Pacific. A single destroyer with a 1x3 is sent to take Majuro in the Marshalls. The Japanese intercept and the Allies counter intercept. The search roll favors the Japanese and the Japanese are able to surprise a WA task force. However it is the Japanese who are surprised, when it is revealed that the Allies have three radar results, negating surprise! But the destroyer is found and sunk, foiling the invasion! The carrier battle results in the loss of a US CVL and CA4. The Japanese suffer only a CA4 and a CVL damaged. Both sides suffer heavy losses of NAS. While this is going on Beru and Tamana in the Gilberts are retaken. Kavieng and Santa Cruz are also retaken.

1944. *Spring.* The advance in France continues.

Pacific. Rangoon falls to a sea invasion. The Allies clear the rest of the Gilberts. Manus is also taken.

Summer. Russia continues to advance, and reaches close to the original Russian border.

Pacific. Fighting continues in Burma, with the Japanese continuing to hold Mandalay. Lae, which has been isolated for several turns, falls to a combined sea invasion and land assault. Guadalcanal and New Georgia fall to finish off the Solomon's. A port is built in Manus.

Paul. *The U.S. finally starts to make progress. Lae and the Bismarck Archipelago are captured, and the British also invade Rangoon. The Japanese retreat and defend the approaches to Japan.*

Fall. Paris is liberated, and the WAs make it into Italy. Genoa is captured and Italy surrenders. Bucharest is captured, along with Mosul. Germany's four oil plants prevent oil depletion throughout the game.

Pacific. The Allies judge Truk to still be too strong, and opt to invade Korar in the West Carolines instead. The first round search rolls favor the Japanese. The US finds the CA10 and old BB task forces and punishes them. The Japanese are able to attack an American carrier task force with their two strongest task forces. The Japanese air strikes are used to soften up the BB4's while the US strike attacks the carriers. The fleet combat led by the Yamato and Mushasi are able to sink the softened up BB4's and the remaining warships are able to sink two CV's. The next round goes decidedly to the US and their air strikes decimate the Japanese. Total losses to the Japanese are three CV and five CVL sunk. Two additional CV's and the Yamato are damaged along with a number of old battleships either sunk or damaged. US losses are minimal in the second round. Both sides lose 21 NAS, with the Japanese losing an additional 9 which splash because their carriers are gone. Mindanao is also invaded. Bombing Japan starts from Manus at extreme range with minimal results. An isolated Mandalay falls in the CBI.

Mike. *I assume Paul stayed for the second round because it was late in 1944, and he was running out of oil anyway However, in the comments below, Bruce observes that Paul had 10 oil for the 1945 YSS. So it appears that this was the last chance he expected to get to use the fleet, and planned to use kamikazes rather than NAS. Or had no choice, after the disastrous second round!*

Paul. *It was a tough decision, but I decided to stay. As usual, you never know if it's the right move. Oil was not a factor as I was still full up. I was hoping for one more advantageous search result, but it went the other way. I wanted to hurt him so he couldn't invade Okinawa right away.*

If I waited, he could replenish his NAS on the carriers for the next turn, where I would not be able to (NAS losses were high on each side). This way, if I could hurt him again and then build kamikazes (my NAT was 7 I think), I might be able to stop the Okinawa invasion one turn. As noted, it was late 1944, and things only get worse for the Japanese at this stage. One other reason was that his ADRM was 4 (I think), and I wanted to engage in more surface combat this turn, after I had knocked down a number of his NAS the first round of combat. I had lost virtually all of my remaining elite air, so any air combat/strikes would have been at a great disadvantage the next turn. There was never any thought that the Korar invasion could be stopped, but I was trying to delay Okinawa.

Winter. The WAs get to the West Wall but can't breach it. Warsaw falls, and much of the Balkans fall. Bulgaria surrenders due to Russian diplomacy.

Pacific. The entire US fleet is used to attack Okinawa, which has two 3x2's and a fort. The Japanese have what's left of their Navy in port there to slow up the Allies. However three rounds of air strikes finish them off with minimal NAS casualties. The Japanese launch their first Kamikaze raid of 16. The chosen task force is carrying some of the invasion force and infantry is lost. The attack is reduced to 2 to 1 but the result is an Ex-2. The Japanese are retreating in China but only Canton is lost.

1945. Spring. The WAs liberate the Low Countries and get into the Ruhr. Russia captures the rest of the Balkans and gets to the eastern and southern borders of Germany. Yugoslavia finally abandons neutrality to fight for the Western Allies.

Pacific. The US patrols off Japan and wipes out all of the AAF. Japan has 32 Kamikazes but decides to wait for the invasion force. The US decides it isn't strong enough to invade Japan yet and the turn ends. The Allies are busy in the south invading SEA front objectives to eliminate Japanese conquests.

Summer. The WAs and Russia close on Berlin, but cannot quite attack it yet.

Pacific. A massive invasion is aimed at Kagoshima. The Kamikazes are unleashed, but unfortunately (for Japan) the two task forces chosen are carrier forces and not the invasion forces hoped for. The Allies suffer 3 CV and 3 CVL sunk, along with a damaged BB4, but the invasion is successful. Armor exploits into the adjoining two hexes, and Tokyo is firestormed. The allies also invade Guam, Truk and Wake to try to reduce the surrender level to 0. As it is late Saturday evening this is all a little hurried. Truk holds out on a double 1 roll and Japan survives until Fall.

Mike. I didn't realize that Paul's tie result depended on a 1 in 36 chance until I read this! Of course, luck with the Kamikazes might have influenced or stopped the Kagoshima invasion. It does make up a bit for the double 1's that Kevin rolled against Moscow!

Manila and a heavily fortified Singapore remain in Japanese hands. Russia is still occupied in Europe.

Fall. Berlin falls and Germany surrenders. It is a 1 point victory for the European Axis. The U.S. invades Japan and Japan surrenders. It is a tie in the Pacific.

Pacific Post-Mortem.

Bruce.

Research. The Japanese achieved single breakthroughs in Air, Naval and Military and spent mainly on production. ASW rolls went well with a plus-one result in 1942 and a plus-two result in 1943. Eventually five ASW were produced. These, along with an ASW card and air range

result, kept the US submarines at bay for most of the war. The Japanese increased Naval Air Training by one each year starting in 1941.

The WA's pursued a high growth strategy which, along with pretty good rolling, produced two ADRM and NDRM results, along with the previously mentioned three radar results. Three air range and bomber results were also achieved. However, the good rolls abandoned them in 1945 for the important Atomic bomb rolls. Two aspects of the high growth strategy that affected play were China received no aid the entire war, and the US didn't accelerate any ships. Japan was happy to have a quiet Chinese front. Not accelerating ships definitely affected naval play in 1943 and early 1944.

Japanese Strategy and Comments. A normal Japanese strategy was contemplated and offensive action was anticipated to stop after two turns. Japan was able to continue attacking a little longer than expected, and the entire Solomon's and Gilberts were captured briefly. Japan was able to accumulate two Island group surrender points. The Allies accumulated 6 points by Summer 1945. Japan built a fort each turn starting in Spring 1942. Guadalcanal, Lae, Rabaul, Hollandia, Truk, Guam, Okinawa and Singapore were all fortified. Beach defenses were built on all beaches in Japan. After 1942 money was not an issue, and Japan ended 1943 with 74 BRP's. Oil was also not a large problem because of the previously mentioned ASW results. Japan began taking army oil and construction oil effects starting in Summer 1944. Japan had enough money to pay double to keep fully built that year. The convoy route collapsed after Winter 1944 because of surface forces, but Japan ended the year at full oil. Both sides were cautious with the carriers and were reluctant to fight outside an LBA umbrella, so there were not a lot of carrier battles. It was a very hard fought contest.

Game 4

European Axis:	A. J. Johnson
Japan:	Chris Collins
Allies Europe:	Nick Carter
Allies Pacific:	Jerry Smolens
European Result:	Axis surrender in Fall 1946 (5 point Axis win)
Pacific Result:	Axis surrender in Fall 1945 (tie)
Overall Result:	5 point Axis win

Game narrative provided by A. J. Johnson and Chris Collins. Comments provided by Nick Carter.

1939-40. The World War started traditionally, with Germany dispatching Poland, the Low Countries, Denmark, Norway and France in short order. (*Nick: France was just happy to hold on until Summer 1940!*) Germany then focused its attention on Britain, conducting a dual-focused Strategic Warfare campaign comprised of submarines and strategic bombers. This strategy was very successful, keeping Britain unbalanced economically and providing a significant distraction.

1941. Germany, along with her Italian ally, then capitalized on this distraction, mounting a very successful campaign in North Africa which culminated in the taking of Suez and Alexandria.

Nick: This was assisted by the Royal Navy and French Fleets proving no match for the Italians in the Med, who were allowed free reign very early on.

This campaign coincided with the attack on Russia.

Nick: The Russians put up a heroic defense for the initial German onslaught. Had the attack been for real, I'm sure heads would have rolled in the German High Command. Never have so many one's been rolled in succession in one assault.

Pacific. Unfortunately, these successes were quickly ratcheting up the U.S./Japanese tension levels, forcing Japan to declare war in Fall 1941 on the U.S. and Britain, to take advantage of a surprise attack. The attack on Pearl Harbor was very successful, sinking all battleships, but alas no carriers.

1942. With the gateway into Iraq and Persia open, Germany took full advantage of this to throw the Russians off balance on their southern flank; keeping sufficient pressure on the Russians and not allowing them to create a strong defensive line and depriving them of critical oil resources. In addition, Germany turned its strategic bombers on Russia, quickly creating an economic hardship on Russia.

Nick: A crafty move by the German armor, via the Crimea and across the straits, didn't appear too threatening at first, as they had no supply line. Hopes of their demise were dashed when the Rumanian Navy stepped in with a timely supply run across the Black Sea to Batum. Once the Russians was tracking oil, and running out fast, their downfall was only a matter of time. The fact that the Finns resolutely refused to join the fun, repeatedly shunning the German diplomatic advances, proved immaterial.

Pacific. Japan quickly expanded her empire in the south and southwest, and dug in to await the eventual U.S. onslaught. However, a couple of opportunities presented themselves. Japan made a successful invasion of Midway; and won the only carrier battle of the war after successfully being intercepted by the U.S. Fleet. In addition, Japan made a successful drive into India,

spearheaded by Japanese armor forces. Japan captured both Dacca and Calcutta, and put significant pressure on Britain to protect the remaining territory. This allowed Japan to begin building the Indian National army. But while this was happening, the U.S. was mounting a very successful campaign in the South Pacific. The Allies took back the Solomon's, and started to put pressure on the Bismarck Archipelago and Rabaul, as well as the Gilbert Islands.

1943. Unfortunately the game had to end in Spring 1943 due to time constraints.

Adjudication. The extremely strong Axis position in Russia made conquest of Germany before 1946 unlikely. This was projected to be a 4 point Axis win. On the other hand, the U.S. position in the Pacific was likely to lead to at least a tie for the Allies there. This was projected to be a draw.

Game 5

European Axis:	Mike Crowe
Japan:	Rob Carl
Allies Europe:	Tim Schroeder
Allies Pacific:	Keven Leith
European Result:	Axis surrender in Fall 1946 (5 point Axis win)
Pacific Result:	Axis surrender in Summer 1945 (1 point Allied win)
Overall Result:	4 point Axis win

Game narrative provided by Mike Crowe, with assistance from Rob Carl, Keven Leith, and Tim Schroeder.

Axis Plan, Europe. The Axis plan going in was to threaten to invade Britain by building destroyers early. I would invade if practical. Otherwise, I would attempt to make some gains in the Mediterranean and then invade Russia on schedule in Summer 1941. I planned to try a Winter 1939 attack, which I had not done before. Instead of bombing Britain I would send my air to the Med. I did not plan to establish Vichy. Most of this plan was suggested by Rob, and since it was a bit different than what I normally do, I thought I would try it. I was not planning to invade Spain or Yugoslavia, as we wanted to keep tensions low because of Rob's plan.

Axis Plan, Pacific. Rob: My plan (partly inspired by Vic Hogen) was to hold off war as long as possible, as there is no way you can win. There is nobody you can conquer - not the U.S., not Britain, not Russia, not even China! So I wanted to simply give the Allies the shortest possible amount of time to come at me. I didn't want to wait too long and be unable to establish my basic perimeter, however. Summer 1942 was definitely pushing things to the limit. I figured that by successfully attacking late, I could delay U.S. shipbuilding, U.S. mobilizations, and the U.S. comeback. My research plan was to research magic to help fight the U.S. submarines, getting one in 1943 and one in 1944. I planned to put the 1939 intelligence RP into a spy ring in atomics, to slow down atomic research. I did not plan to produce Wangs or Indian Nationals. I planned for breakthroughs in air, naval and military. I hoped to build 11 NAS in 1940, 12 in 1941 and 3 in 1942. In addition to the 12 at start, that would give me 38 enas. I would expand the Japanese air to 25 AAF, produce all the Japanese infantry, and an armor or two. I did not plan to take a single hex in China. I planned to produce an air transport and a second paratroop. I planned to build no additional ships beyond a third CVL, to create two full carrier task forces. I planned to send a single carrier to Pearl, to take advantage of the rule that limits the U.S. to using only half their destroyers in their turn when Pearl is attacked. The rest of the carriers would help establish the perimeter. With a late start, my oil would be low, so I was going to be very conservative with my fleet. I would keep the fleet in being, and hopefully allow the U.S. to take whatever they wanted, but only a hex or two per turn.

1939: In Fall, Germany conquers Poland. I take Warsaw on a 2.5-1, overrunning a couple of Polish infantry to do so. Losses are around 12 BRPs of units. German raiders kill two transports. I scrap the Graf Zeppelin and build a destroyer. I build out all the Axis air. Britain mines the Norwegian waters. In Winter, I attack the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, without loss. The German harbor attack against Gibraltar kills a cruiser and two destroyers. In Winter I forgo building a submarine to build a destroyer. I will start the Spring turn with six 4o6 armor, the two

2o6's, and all 30 AAF. I begin the YSS with 210 BRPs. Russia demands the Finnish border hexes and gets them without a fight.

1940: Spring. Italy declares war. I attack into France. The attack leaves Axis units adjacent to Paris, and England faces the threat of invasion and paradrop. I invade Norway, and drop a paratroop there to impede British intervention. Italian infantry march into Tunisia. I add an Italian 2o5 armored unit, one air factor, a Muslim partisan, and three submarines. I plan to use a submarine in the Med. Tim decides to give up on France and discourage an invasion of England. He also sea transports infantry into Norway and kills my airborne.

Summer. I achieve an air range result and a torpedo result. Tim achieves an air range and an ASW result. Tim left a bunch of air over his fleets, which were stationed in Southampton. Air attacking the port in the combat phase forces him to stay while we kill each other off, so that his fleets would not get hit. Paris falls. Tim manages to keep enough French alive to contribute two to the French Surrender level, which is a net zero. I don't establish Vichy. The North African colonies go Free French, while Lebanon-Syria remains neutral. Oslo falls. Supply succeeds to North Africa, at the cost of a destroyer and a cruiser. Tim abandons Norway and concentrates on defending Britain. He sends some units to South Africa. Russia does not demand Bessarabia.

Fall. I flirt with invading Britain because I have a larger air differential than I expected, but his ground defense is pretty good, and I wanted to invade Russia anyway. I roll for the minors, and get Hungary as an ally, Rumania as an associated minor, and get 5 BRPs (but not hex control) from Bulgaria. Yugoslavia provides 10 BRPs, and Finland provides 5 BRPs. Spain is called, but remains neutral. In the case of Rumania, I actually get Bessarabia as well, and hope to take advantage of this with a strong advance in the south. With Axis air cover, North Africa is easily supplied. I build a railhead in Tobruk. A 4o6 and a 2o6 join the 2o5 already there. Ten Axis air also redeploy within range of Egypt, which faces a serious threat.

Winter. The sub war starts to take a serious toll. Tim loses 7 transports, and can't re-build them all. I break through in Egypt, and am in position to take Cairo and cross the Suez Canal. Tunis falls. Tim deploys a sizable force (4o5, two 2o5, 3x4) into Algeria to contest my advance.

1941. Germany begins the year with 340 BRPs.

Spring. I achieve a second torpedo result, and Tim obtains a second ASW result. I am able to take Cairo and cross the Suez Canal, taking Port Said. I refrain from walking into an empty Alexandria or attacking Suez, to help Rob out by keeping tensions down. He is trying to hold off his initial attack until Summer (!) 1942, but also wants to maintain surprise. The raiders evade detection and kill three transports. Sub warfare has lopsided rolls, resulting in the loss of eight more transports, plus three inverted. I leave 10 AAF over Suez in an attempt to prevent supply. My armor pulls out to reinforce Barbarossa. I add another Italian 2o5, 2 air factors, another Moslem partisan, and 2 submarines. Tim easily brushes aside my air with 50 fleet factors and supplies Suez. For good measure he builds a fort. He will hold it. I advise Tim to start checking the British surrender level. He sees that it is below zero and changes his builds to keep it at 1. This process will continue for several turns.

Summer. The initial invasion of Barbarossa manages to kill or surround most of the Russian army. Another good turn of submarine warfare prompts the Allies to pull all their transports out of the Atlantic SW box; the Allies don't expect to have any functioning transports after the next round of sub attacks, so clear the box voluntarily to avoid the sunk transports that would have cleared the box involuntarily. The delayed entry of America is helping here. The Finns make some progress in taking back their border hexes. In North Africa, I leak around Suez and into

Palestine and Trans-Jordan. I prepare to fight a war of attrition in Algeria. Tim surrenders a lot of territory in Russia, including most of the forest hexes around Leningrad. He defends strongly in the south. He has no intention of letting me get into his oil fields! In the Middle East, Tim sends the cavalry in from Basra, but it will take time to arrive. Meanwhile, Suez is surrounded – but still under Allied control.

Fall. There is little for me to do in Russia, other than gobble up territory. Sevastopol falls. The strong defense in the south prevents me from doing much other than moving adjacent to his line. I forgo any attacks, hoping for a good winter die roll, as I have one winter preparation result. Russia still holds Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov. I am able to isolate Leningrad and take almost all of the forest hexes in front of Leningrad and Moscow. The Finns walk into their remaining border hexes. In North Africa, an attrition against the Algerian force eliminates two strong units. Britain is relying on the limited colonial supply source, as there is no oil to offset the army oil effect even if full supply were traced from London. This results in Tim's abandoning North Africa, an unexpected consequence of having no transports. Another consequence of emptying the SW box was to (ironically) avoid the modifier for losing more than five transports in a turn. There would have been a chance of U.S. entry in the Fall if this modifier had been incurred in Summer and Fall. (*Editor's note: A rule change has now eliminated this modifier altogether.*)

Winter. I announce a winter prep result. The winter result after modification is a 5. I am able to take both Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkov, one on a 3:1, the other on a 2:1. Elsewhere I simply move up my infantry. In Africa, I take Algiers and finally actually occupy Alexandria. The U.S. will enter this turn. The Allies will avoid the worst of the happy time by deferring re-entry into the Atlantic SW box until the end of their Spring 1942 turn; however, they continue to suffer the 25 BRP penalty for no Atlantic transports each turn (there are 5 transports in the Indian Ocean). To avoid surrender in 1941, Tim deficit spent to build units in Britain. This reduced the British base to 44 in the 1942 YSS.

Pacific. With no attack in the Pacific, the U.S. is able to take some chances with a forward defense and its carrier placement. Rabaul is strongly defended in the hopes of holding it through the eventual Japanese onslaught, since it is such a difficult place to retake if it does fall. It is also clear that the British will not be able to provide much assistance in the Far East.

1942. Germany begins 1942 with 431 BRPs.

Spring. Germany calls Sweden and brings them into the war. Swedes begin deploying into Russia. Morocco falls. I fortify Kharkov. Russia builds and waits for the summer attack.

Pacific. Rob realizes he has forgotten to put an RP into ASW research!

Summer. I obtain a third torpedo result, at the expense of moving 2 RPs from submarine production into torpedo research. The Allies announce a third ASW result. I call Spain, with no result. The Germans surround Moscow and Gorki. In his turn, Tim breaks the encirclement with attrition.

Pacific. Rob survives a tension roll that could have eliminated surprise and proceeds with his initial attack. He sends a single carrier to Pearl Harbor to take advantage of the rule that halves the DDs that can be used to carry units if Pearl is attacked. He uses the rest of his carrier force to take the British and Dutch possessions. Keven has strongly defended Rabaul, and it will take Rob several turns to actually take it. The single Japanese carrier actually catches an American carrier in Pearl! However, Rob's surprise roll is low and no NAS get through to make an attack.

Rob's strategy was new to Keven, who had seen early attacks and Winter 1941 attacks with low tension, but never a deliberate strategy to delay the oil embargo and U.S. entry. It produced the

desired couple of turns delay in U.S. mobilizations, had some small effect on overall Allied BRP and RP levels, and probably had some effect on naval and air buildup for the Pacific map offensive – although Mike’s success on the European map was probably more decisive in the latter. One difficulty that Rob’s strategy caused Japan was an overall smaller number of DD’s, even though the attack came later. Japanese shipbuilding had been kept low to avoid the tension increases, which hobbles the Japanese. Rob increases his shipbuilding to 4.

Fall. I surround Moscow and Gorki again. This time the bag is drawn a bit tighter. A number of Russian units die of isolation. The Swedes and Finns, with a little help from German air, take Leningrad on a straight 2:1. Moscow also falls.

Pacific. Rob takes Rabaul on a 2:1, after an ‘a’ result on the first roll. This resulted in a weak defense, and the U.S. immediately re-invades on the Allied player turn. The Allies launch a diversionary invasion of Wake (also weakly defended by Japan) at the same time. Rob decides to counter the Wake invasion (which is clearly less supported) due to his desire to conserve oil. (Since he started the war in Summer 1942, Japan began with a weaker oil situation than normal.) The counter-interception fails and both invasions succeed. Rob announces an air range.

Winter. I announce a second winter preparation result, and the winter roll allows me to attack. Gorki falls. Vologda is isolated. In his turn, Tim conducts a clever attrition that leaves five of my armored units overstacked in an isolated Gorki. I could restore supply in my Spring turn, but not before three armor would be eliminated to correct the overstacking. Instead, I suggest that Tim calculate the Russian resistance level, as he may want to deficit spend to avoid surrender. The resistance level is (barely) negative, but Tim doesn't want to deficit spend; he did enough of that with Britain! Russia offers to surrender, and Germany accepts. Peace will be guaranteed only through the Spring turn, and Russia will have the option of declaring war in Summer. The surrender will require Russia to send Germany the value of an IC in Spring, and cost Russia 35 BRPs to declare war in Summer. After losing 55 BRPs of his 1943 total, Russia would have to be conservative in his attacks. One interesting consequence of the surrender is that Russia reclaims Gorki (it was isolated) – no “trick” is beneath Stalin when there is something he wants! The overstacked German armor is safely repatriated, however.

1943. Germany begins 1943 with 521 BRPs. I am looking forward to a lot of BRP base growth in the 1944 YSS, but have forgotten the rule that limits growth based on conquests! I achieve a second air range result and a fourth torpedo result, matching the second air range and fourth ASW results of the Allies. This made the fourth (!) year in a row that Germany matched the new Allied modifiers in the Atlantic. The Allies did slowly begin to accumulate modifiers for CVEs, but Germany was still doing well in the Atlantic.

Spring. Sitzkrieg in Russia. I fortify Moscow and hope to hold Russia in place for the year. After a long siege, Malta finally falls to a German paratroop drop; I would only hold it for two turns! Tim has managed to retain control of Vologda, so he will get Western Allied BRPs in Summer and Fall. Tim builds Russians. The Western Allies deploy a full complement of transports in the Atlantic box, and look forward to better times.

Pacific. Rob blows out on his ASW roll, and the U.S. subs really start to hurt. After isolating Rabaul for three turns, Rob has a plan for taking it. He did not want a straight winner-take-all fight with the U.S. fleet. Instead, with his second paratroop in range of Rabaul, he sea transports an air transport from the coast of Thailand to Lae. If the U.S. intercepts the sea transport, Rob can force the U.S. to commit their fleet by threatening to counter-intercept. This would then leave him free to invade Rabaul. Keven declines, so now Rob can attempt to take Rabaul on a

straight 2-1. Rob, certain of his ability to roll poorly, offers to bet \$50 that he will roll two 1's on this attack. This is a bit out there, even for Rob, and unwilling to take his \$50, I decline. He rolls a 1 on the first roll! The second roll goes well however, and he finally takes it. Rob increases his shipbuilding to 5.

Rather than retaking Rabaul, the U.S. will leave it to eventually wither in isolation while the Allies go directly to Hollandia and work their way towards the Philippines.

Summer. I wait to absorb Tim's attack in Russia. With the Allies able to invade, I strengthen the defense of France with additional infantry, armor, and air. In the Middle East, the Allies reach Suez in force and relieve the Axis siege. Seeing France well-defended, the Allies land in North Africa (Oran), cutting off Morocco and threatening to take Algiers. Tim declares war with Russia and attacks, gaining a few hexes in central Russia.

Pacific. At my request, and because I had sacrificed advancing in the Middle East to support his Summer 1942 DoW, Rob agrees to declare war on Russia! He is feeling fairly flush with BRPs anyway.

In response, Tim fortifies Vladivostok, which Rob will never take. But the BRP grants via Siberia drop from 10 to 5, and Tim suffers attrition losses each turn.

Fall. I counter-attack in Russia and regain the hexes. The Allies take Algiers and successfully invade Malta and Tunisia. Tim attacks again in central Russia, gaining a few hexes. The Allied build-up near Suez threatens a breakthrough across the Nile.

Winter. I attrition and re-gain the Russian hexes lost in Fall. In North Africa, I know that I can't hold out for long. I actually send a German 3x3 into Ethiopia to prolong its survival, which amuses me and surprises Tim. I withdraw the rest of my units from Egypt to make a last stand at Tripoli. I defend Sicily, but defend Italy more strongly, figuring a landing in Sicily is more desirable than a landing on the mainland. Tim, in an effort to speed things along, takes a 1:1 attack on Tripoli ... which blows out. This hurts, because it will take a couple of turns to get the units into position again. The invasion of Sicily at 2:1 succeeds. Tim sends more units to Ethiopia. In Russia, Tim has run out of BRPs and simply attritions. I eliminate a number of frontline units to prevent advances. Although we did not play beyond the 1944 YSS in Europe, I should probably have conceded the hexes; it would not be easy to get units to replace the losses into position.

Pacific. The U.S. and Japan spent 1943 fighting over western New Guinea and the Indonesian islands off its coast. The U.S. re-established positions in the Gilberts. End-of-the-year invasions of the Marshalls, Brunei, and the southern Philippines put the U.S. in a strong position on the Pacific map.

1944. I finally realize that most of the German leftover BRPs from 1943 are wasted. My conquests limit growth to a mere 30 BRPs, when I had hoped to grow my base by 100. In retrospect, I could have been more aggressive, attacking in Russia and causing some additional casualties.

At this point we stopped play in Europe. By playing ahead, Rob and Keven did get several turns into 1944 on the Pacific map. With Rob playing a conservative game to save oil – and because the U.S. sub campaign was every bit as effective as the German sub campaign – the Pacific turns went more quickly.

By Fall 1944, the U.S. had successfully invaded Rangoon, Singapore, Palembang, the northern Philippines, the Carolines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. However, the Western Allies had “blown

out” on an early nuclear research roll, so there would be no A-bombs available. Rob had successfully gathered an enormous army and kamikaze force in Japan. Unfortunately it was late and our brains were fried trying to reconcile two very different U.S. positions (end of 1943 and end of 1944), so we didn’t do the big invasion that Truman was able to avoid.

Adjudication. In Europe, with the Axis still in Moscow and still holding out in North Africa and Italy, the Allies were at least a year behind schedule. The European theater was adjudicated to end in Fall 1946.

In the Pacific, Keven was well positioned to advance quickly. Nevertheless, the slower U.S. mobilizations and delayed shipbuilding because of the late Japanese attack were causing delay. The Pacific theater was adjudicated to end in Summer 1945, for a one turn Allied victory.