



## Chance Encounter AAR

The Dulles Wargaming Club gathered at Huzzah Hobby Shop near George Washington University Center on Saturday December 20, 2014. Present were Steve Fliss, Rich Fisher, Mike Ottenberg and me (Ben Lacy). The terrain was similar for each side, and the line of sight was equally broken. In this way, neither force could gain an unfair advantage by virtue of the board. The outcome would rest squarely upon each player's skill in combat.

Rich and I opted to play as the U.S. That left Steve and Mike to try their hand with the German force. The objective was to control three of four identified buildings. Although this would force us to game-play, as opposed to a more authentic and cautious, tactical approach, we decided to rush pell-mell to the village by taking advantage of our jeep's greater speed.

### The Game

So, as the first chit was drawn to activate the initial force on phase 1, I had to make a TQR (troop quality rating) roll of 1-2 on a d6 in order to move full speed down the road towards the village. I missed the roll and had to settle for half-



speed. This immediately derailed our plan and allowed the German players to stay even with us. A successful roll would have placed my two jeeps at the first objective building. We kept our platoon commander off the board, and he was able to control the action via radio. By the end of phase two, the first two machine gun teams were in the backyard of the first objective building. But as we prepared to disembark and rush to capture our first victory points, Steve and Mike also pulled up across the street with several 251/1 halftracks and infantry.

Rich wanted to move two 60mm mortar teams into a covered position. But they also failed their roll, and ended up in the middle of Main Street, facing a German halftrack with a short-barreled 75mm gun. After several high explosive volleys, this gun made short work of our mortar teams. Both jeeps were destroyed and the teams sustained casualties. They took cover for what seemed like the entire game, so much for our artillery support.

On a positive note, Rich moved two M8 Greyhound armored cars into great blocking positions. They were able to challenge a platoon of Germans attempting to move through a pass between the woods and some high ground. A well-placed fire zone, that included the destruction of an armored car, caused Steve to change his mind about the advance. He opted to move through some woods instead.

The enemy infantry, under Mike's command, proceeded to occupy some buildings opposite my machine gun teams. But I opened fire prematurely, and revealed myself. The German counter-fire suppressed my two teams for most of the game. Consequently, I was not in a position to oppose the enemy advance into another objective building.

Meanwhile, my rifle platoon and Rich's recon platoon moved into position for the final thrust into the village. Rich's A/Cs systematically destroyed one enemy half-track after another, either with .50 caliber machine gun fire or 37mm HE. One of Steve's armored cars also knocked-out a Greyhound with 20mm canon fire. Although this made us feel better, it did little to advance our mission of controlling three of the four objective buildings.

As I mentioned earlier, my two machine gun teams were suppressed and unable to prevent the German infantry from infiltrating one of our objective buildings. But now with the support of Rich's M3 halftrack and its mounted .50 caliber gun, my rifle platoon moved through an orchard into an adjacent building. It was not an objective building, but it offered a great springboard to capture a German objective.



Using covering fire, a veteran U.S. rifle squad entered an enemy occupied building. The ensuing close-quarters battle continued until the conclusion of play, with the German MG42 sustaining 3 damage points. However, Steve's platoon, coming through the woods, was now in position to tip the balance in that house.

As our time expired, the outcome was still in doubt. It was agreed that the Germans were in a stronger strategic position than the U.S. However, it could still have swung in the allies favor.

Once again, Steve created a spectacular gaming experience, with a superb scenario, stunning terrain and beautifully painted miniatures. When I ponder a game's outcome long after the fact, what I should or should not have done, it means the game was great fun!

In retrospect, I should have rushed the two MG teams into the same objective building with standing orders (fire zones). This might have preserved that objective while denying one to the enemy. But hindsight is 20/20. I will know better next time.