



ORIGINS '83 COD SCENARIOS

By Jon Mischon
(GENERAL Volume 19, Number 5)

SQLA NOTES: Although listed as COD scenarios, these are suitable for COI play as well. Pertaining to these scenarios, the only COD rules that are applicable are;

1. Covering/grounding/pinning
2. Infantry Bypass
3. Vehicle Bypass
4. Third Level Buildings

Each of these scenarios were played 3/00 between Pete Pollard and Bill Thomson; with exception of 3rd level buildings for TS2, these scenarios were played at COI level. My comments based on this play are appended. An additional scenario of TS2 was played between Chris Edwards and Bill Thomson in 1998. Sad to say, I lost all scenarios played, so at least my point of view is consistent.

Other than formatting, the original text is in black with all additions in magenta text.

Something special happened at the COD tournament this year. There was the usual run of good and bad luck (one player obtained three critical hits versus AFVs in one scenario while another lost a 9-2 SS leader on a rally roll of 12). There was the spectrum of fair to excellent play. There was even a recurrence of faces we have seen at *SQUAD LEADER* tournaments in past years. What made this year special, however, was the spectacular final game.

Played between Lon Culbertson and Bill Conner, it was nothing short of marvelous, as we had expected when they sat down to the table. By the end of the second turn, there was a silent audience of ten or so aficionados grouped around the board. For three hours, while the rest of the hectic activities of *Origins '83* swirled past, these players paid quiet tribute to superb play. As the final desperate charge by two SS squads and two assault guns against a lone JS-II supported by six Russian squads broke, the only sound was the shuffle of cardboard and the rattle of dice. After the winning hit was made there was a burst of spontaneous applause. Permit me to

congratulate both First Place Winner Bill Conner and his opponent Lon Culbertson.

This clinic will review the outcome of each tournament scenario (to be found on the insert of this issue) and our thoughts about play. As always, please consider that the best learning may be obtained by playing the scenarios without prior examination (Just as those in the tournament had to do) and that the tactical suggestions herein made are just one of a number possible. Alternative play based on the changing situation is always a requirement of good play—of any game. Look on the following as but basic general tactics gleaned from the best players known.

TOURNAMENT SCENARIO 1

There were thirty players in the first round of the competition. At the end of three hours of play, the Russians had won seven times and the Germans eight. In Tournament Scenario 1, a powerful Russian tank-infantry mix tries to pass through or around a well-led, mixed-arms German force stiffened by the arrival of an 88L Flak gun. *Russian Strengths:* a) heavy armor on the KVs; b) all AFVs carry powerful guns; c) strong infantry firepower that is totally tank transportable; d) two very fast tanks. Offsetting this are the *Russian Weaknesses:* a) very poor infantry leadership; b) inaccurate long-range tank fire; c) time limitations; d) other than KVs, the Russian armor is light; e) two radioless AFVs; f) poor AFV morale in non-KV AFVs. *German Strengths* are: a) good leadership; b) good mobility for tanks and infantry; c) multiple hits possible for the 37mm weapons (130.5); d) excellent penetration and ROF of Flak 88. *German Weaknesses:* a) outnumbered about 2 to 1; b) lack of mobility of AT and AA guns once in firing position; c) multiple Russian exit lanes; d) DCs function as captured weapons.

GERMAN SETUP: PzKw IIIE (CE) and squad and DC in 4P7; PzKw IIIIE (CE 9-2 leader) and squad and 8-1 leader and LMG in 4O8; Spw251/2 and ATG and crew in 4B7 (in bypass); Spw251/2 and squad and 9-1 leader and LMG in 5FF2; PzKw IIID (CE) and squad and DC in 5P5.

RUSSIAN ENTRY: All between 4GG5 and 4GG10 moving at eleven hexes per turn with KVs in front, T26Ss behind, BT5s in the rear and all infantry mounted.

RUSSIAN TACTICS: Move as a wedge straight forward to the northern half of the center of board 4. Then cut rapidly across the bottleneck of board 5 into the gully of 5FF7 to 5AA10. Move down the gully till out of LOS of the AA and AT guns. Then pull up out of the gully and exit. Plan to dismount your infantry as close to the AA and AT guns as your movement will permit. Use the Soviet infantry to engage the guns while your AFVs battle the German tanks. Don't pull the light tanks away from the KVs unless there is an extremely tempting target of opportunity. The light stuff falls prey to the German infantry while the KVs are subject to immobilizing shots from German tanks.

GERMAN TACTICS: Stay flexible till the last possible moment. Time is on your side. Remember that one halftrack can bottle up the forest road for two turns, perhaps longer if given infantry support. Use long range potshots to force his infantry support to dismount as early as possible. We like to place the

AA gun in 4D1 and the AT gun in 4B7 unless the Russians are driving down board 5. A single squad with a DC can influence both the forest road (blocked by a halftrack) and the 5U4 bottleneck (especially if another halftrack is in bypass at 5V3). Play for immobilizations unless your chances to destroy a unit are quite good. Use your AFVs for a final tank assault on the seventh turn to force the Russian to expose himself to side and rear shots as he tries to exit.

We believe that, played well, this scenario is rated 60/40 pro-German in balance.

PP/BT: The Germans won this contest with a needed '2' to hit the last exiting KV in the final turn, preventing the Russians from winning this contest. This playing saw everything, infantry attacks, deliberate immobilizations, dud DC, use of HEAT, random immobilization, and DR in both extremes. We considered this an enjoyable scenario with no balance issues.

TOURNAMENT SCENARIO 2

There were sixteen players in the second round (one player who lost the first round was chosen by lot to play in the second round). Six times the Russians won and twice the Germans were victorious. In this small, violent scenario, a small but fanatical force of Russian infantry tries to hold out against a combined tank-infantry German assault force. *Russian Strengths* are numerous: a) fanaticism; b) good support weaponry; c) good leadership; d) good lanes of fire; e) protective cover; f) concealment; *Russian Weaknesses,* few: a) few pieces; b) limited setup area. *German Strengths:* a) very good leadership; b) good infantry firepower; c) armor support; d) the ability to create scouts. These go a long way toward offsetting the prime *German Weakness:* the necessity of crossing open ground to enter building 1Z7.

GERMAN SETUP: 8-0 leader and three squads in 1P7; 9-2 leader and three squads and four LMGs in 1Q9; 9-1 leader and three squads and MMG in 1Q7.

RUSSIAN SETUP: ATG and crew in 1Y8, first floor; 6-2-8 and ATR and crew and 8-1 leader and concealment counter in 1Z7, second floor; 4-4-7 and two LMGs in 1Y8, second floor; 4-4-7 and MMG and 9-1 leader and concealment counter in 1Y7, second floor; crew and Mtr. and concealment counter in 1Z6; sniper and four concealment counters on **third floor**; three concealment counters in 1Y7, first floor.

RUSSIAN TACTICS: Take any shot that has a chance of a KIA. Try to rotate your squads in and out of the firing line. Whenever possible, use your crews to hold up under fire; they have a morale of 8 and, if broken, don't affect your chances to win. Use concealed movement in the Advance Phase to make the enemy guess where you are (this lets you move those "?"s out of the third floor on the first turn). Play for time and have faith that sometime, somewhere, he is going to have to rush the building.

GERMAN TACTICS: Move quickly to a position (e.g.: 1U8/1V7) where you can take a ground level hex like 1Y8 under heavy fire. First, insure that the hex doesn't have the ATG functioning and then move your tanks adjacent. Use the tanks to pound a hole. When it looks as though

the way is relatively clear, try for a smoke round or two, split into two or three subgroups and run like hell for the cleared hex. If you outnumber him in the building, just stay put and make him come to you. You've got firepower, better leadership and lots of time. Use it all.

We feel that this scenario is probably 60/40 pro-Russian.

PP/BT: The Germans won this contest in short order. An infantry charge resulting in a protracted melee mixed with a KIA on a German fire attack and a malfunctioned ATG greatly diminished Russian hopes resulting in a quick German win.

CE/BT: The Germans won this scenario with repeated IFT KIAs directed by the 9-2 leader. The ATG did succeed in killing one AFV and keeping in the other at bay. However the Russian squads were depopulated, resulting in a German victory

Both of my playings resulted in decisive German victories (I was the Russian in both cases). I cannot offer significant play balance insight as in both of my plays, the Germans benefited from favorable die rolls at key moments. Despite the Origins '83 German record of 2-6, I have proven the Germans can win this scenario even with 'excellent' Russian play.

TOURNAMENT SCENARIO 3

There were eight players in the third round. Final tally was two German and two Russian victories. This scenario has a powerful pure armor Soviet force attempting to breakthrough a more lightly armed German tank-infantry team. *Russian Strengths* include: a) excellent mobility; b) strong armor on the T34 and the KVIIA; c) an armor leader; d) all AFVs carry good antitank weapons; e) the KV, and to a lesser extent the T34, are potent anti-infantry weapons. *Russian Weaknesses* to be considered: a) the lighter AFVs are very thin-skinned; b) three radioless AFVs; c) poor off-road mobility for the BA32; d) the BA32 and KV cannot move and shoot; e) poor tank crew morale in the non-T34/non-KV AFVs; f) poor long-range gunnery. *The German Strengths* are: a) excellent leadership, both armor and infantry; b) good infantry firepower and morale; c) no need to kill the heavy tanks to win; d) boresighting. *German Weaknesses*: a) armor very vulnerable to Soviet tank guns; b) three possible exits to be covered.

GERMAN SETUP: 10-2 leader and three squads and HMG in I2; 9-1 leader and three squads and two ATRs in I1; PzKw IIID and 10-2 leader in I8; PzKw IIID in G3; PzKw IID in F2; PzKw IIID in H2. All tanks are CE. Boresight weapons on roads.

RUSSIAN ENTRY: KVIIA first, T34 second (moving for hill 522), T26s next, lastly BT5s and BA32.

RUSSIAN TACTICS: If the German has left road 2GG6 unguarded, then try a dash of the light armor offboard on the first turn. However, against an experienced German, don't expect this to work. Normally, you should get a dominating fire position with your KV to force the German light stuff off the heights. Then move a wedge down the center. When it looks as if the German cannot cover one of the exits, throw everything at that point.

GERMAN TACTICS: Use your infantry to make a rush down board 2 very risky for the Soviets. We like to put the HMG up in building 3M2 as soon as possible to keep the Russians buttoned up. By using the second level building, hill 534 and hill 547 as screens you should be able to keep your armor mobile. As time draws to a close, put your armor back on the heights and wait for your height-assisted side and rear shots. Do not forget Intensive Fire, trailbreaks and infantry assaults when things get desperate.

We rate this as 60/40 pro-Russian.

PP/BT: This was a memorable scenario characterized by swirling tank action with substantial maneuver and counter-maneuver over a larger playing field. With the advantage moving back and forth, the Germans prevented a likely Russian victory by scoring an AFPH hit on the rear of the KVII from medium range. This favorable result negated the dismal performance of the German leader-led CC attacks on the Russian AFVs. The German reinforcements nearly wore out their tread by traveling the full length of both boards. I highly recommend this scenario playing either side.

TOURNAMENT SCENARIO 4

Players used Scenario 4 for the fourth and fifth rounds. Although there were four entrants in the semi-finals, one player dropped out of the final round (the game to decide third versus fourth place) so that play balance were one Russian and two German wins. Scenario 4 portrays a matchup between two very tough mixed infantry/AFV combinations. *Russian Strengths* are a) strong infantry firepower; b) heavy tanks with good armor, good MG firepower, strong tank guns with potent anti-infantry and anti-tank capabilities. *Russian Weaknesses*, the usual ones: a) so-so leadership; b) poor infantry fire range. *German Strengths*: a) good leadership; b) SS morale; c) very potent anti-tank gunnery; d) armor of the JagdPzVIE; e) infantry fire range. *German Weaknesses*: a lot of ground to cover with few troops; b) Nashorn armor; c) AFV vulnerability to infantry assault.

GERMAN SETUP: Nashorn in 4Y2 facing north; JagdPz VI in 4Y3 facing northwest; 9-2 leader and squad and two PFs in 6V9; squad and LMG and ATM in 6X9; squad and ATM and PF in 6X5; squad and PF in 6X3; squad and LMG and 8-1 leader in 6X2. All AFVs are CE.

RUSSIAN SETUP: JSII carrying squad in 6I8; JSII carrying squad in 6I7; JSII carrying squad in 6I6; JSII carrying squad in 6I5; 8-1 leader and two squads in 6I3.

RUSSIAN TACTICS: Using the hedges and walls as cover, move rapidly forward. Try to use your tank guns (tanks buttoned up) at six-hex range to strike at the SS infantry while your infantry advances to try and close assault the German AFVs. Sometime in the game you must cross the 6Y1-6Y10 road, so plan to throw a sacrificial tank the turn before into the road. Then you can cross behind its bulking wreck.

GERMAN TACTICS: Try to screen your AFVs with your infantry. By hiding behind woods (e.g.: 6Y3 and 6AA3), your assault guns will get defensive and hopefully prep fire on assaulting tanks. Don't try

to stand up to the JSIIs with your SS infantry in the open. When things get tight, don't hesitate to throw the JagdPZ into an overrun.

Rate this one even up—50/50.

PP/BT: This was a disappointing effort for my Germans. The scenario result was a quick Russian win by an intact exiting tank force. Although the Germans were initially successful in breaking and dismounting the infantry, the JSIIs never blinked. Low odds PF shots failed to score a hit. The Nashorn never got off a shot and the JdPzIV spent its short life fighting off infantry.

Both players considered the recommended setup as flawed. However my setup may have been a greater handicap. My recommendation would be to use the German AFVs to threaten any movement down board four and the infantry to force a delay from the Chateau. The AFVs can then reinforce the threatened exits. The opposing AFVs are lethal; scoring the first hit should be a kill. The greatest Russian weakness is time. The Germans can afford to expend their force for both time and kills. No need to survive the day for a scenario win.

With proper play, this is expected to be a relatively even scenario, time will tell. Given the small unit density, the few DRs will significantly affect the scenario outcome.

We enjoyed watching the tournament unfold. Hope you will have fun with these COD scenarios. For those who really want to duplicate tournament play, limit yourself to three hours per scenario, never look at the scenario until just before play, and play the first three back-to-back. If this taste whets your appetite, you are ready for Origins '83A in Detroit. Good Luck.

BT: Statistical theory states 32 as the minimum number of units to be statistically significant. The number of plays of these scenarios is below this number. Additionally the range of player strategies, randomness and timing of die rolls is likewise restricted. Until adequate scenario play occurs, balance can not be fully assessed. Do not restrict yourself to the recommendations. Squad Leader mirrors life, each new die roll presents a new situation, each turn presents a new game. A cause is not lost until time expires or a player mentally gives up. Approach a poor situation as the replacement commander expected to salvage the situation. The lessons learned can be applied to the next challenge.