Using Cyberboard to Play *Downtown*

Introduction
Cyberboard is a computer gaming program developed by Dale Larson that allows users to create electronic versions of their favorite board games and play them by email. To comply with copyright laws and since game rules, charts, graphs, log sheets, etc., are not incorporated into the Cyberboard (CB) version of the game, each person playing a game of *Downtown* with CB is required to own the print version of *Downtown*. This tutorial is written with the assumption that the reader has some basic experience with CB. To learn more about CB in general and to download this great free program please visit: http://cyberboard.brainiac.com

Cyberboard Basics
To understand how to play Downtown using CB it is helpful to have general understanding about how CB works. CB uses four different file types. They are: a gamebox file (.gbx), a scenario file (.scn), a game file (.gam), and a move file (.mov). The gamebox file is where the mapboard and counters are stored. All other files reference the game file so each player needs their own gamebox file. The scenario file is an interim file used only to create a game file. Once the game file is created, the scenario file is no longer needed. The game file shows the current status of the game. Each player will have a copy of their own game file. The move file records moves as made by the player. Once the move file is created by a player, it is sent to the opponent and then loaded, played back, and accepted into their game file. Since the gamebox file is the "glue" that holds all other files together, changes made to the gamebox file will affect or invalidate the other file types. Therefore care should be taken not to change the gamebox file once it is in use.

Creating a New Game
For player convenience the scenario files for all *Downtown* scenarios and campaigns have been created. To start a game, players should follow these steps:

1. Open the desired scenario file.
2. Select "File", "New", "Game".
3. Designate the scenario file you want to base the game on.
4. Update the player names if desired (default names are DRV and US). You may check the box to create a referee game file if desired.
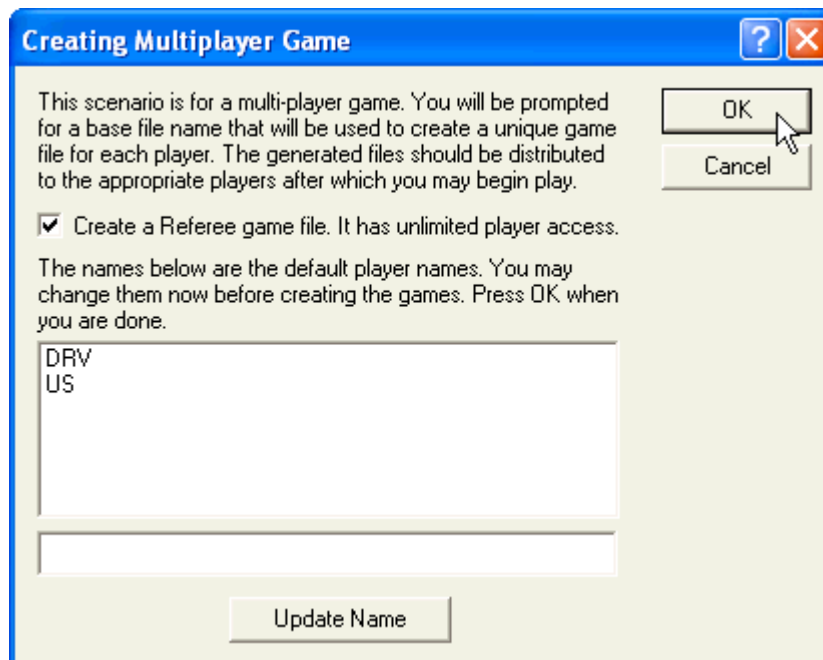

Update player name window

5. Name the game file. (See "Suggested File Naming Conventions" later in this tutorial.)

You have now created three (or four if a ref game was selected) game files. The US and DRV game files are specific to that side. They will allow certain units to be hidden from the other player. The spectator game file is for a non-player. It cannot see either side's hidden units. The referee file can see both sides' hidden units. Distribute the applicable game file

to the appropriate player. Also distribute the gamebox file to all players/observers. You are now done with the scenario file.
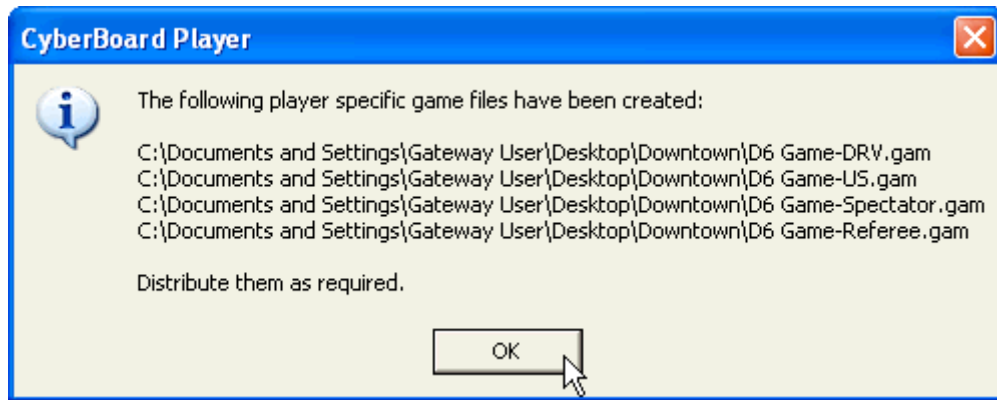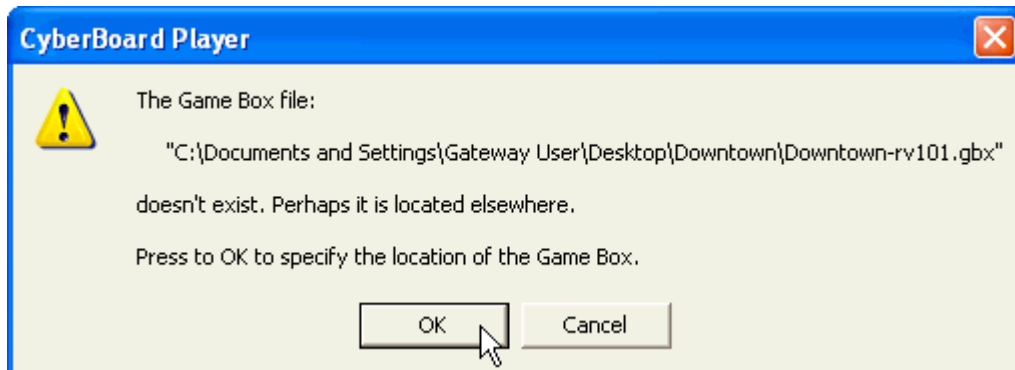

Your game files have been created

Playing a Game

Follow these steps to start play of the game.

1. Open the game file. If the gamebox file is not in the same location as the game file, you will need to designate where it is.


CB may want to know where the gamebox is

2. The DRV player accomplishes the DRV Planning phase by placing hidden SAMs, AAA, and Fire Can units. Optionally, the DRV player can record hidden units on the printed planning map and DRV log sheet.

A note about hidden units: When initially placed, the hidden unit will be invisible to each player. This is because the "top" of the counter is made up of transparent pixels. The other player can only see the top of the unit whether it is flipped to its' bottom or top. To reveal the unit to the owning player, immediately flip the unit over. This will make it visible to the owning player but it will remain invisible to the non-owning player.
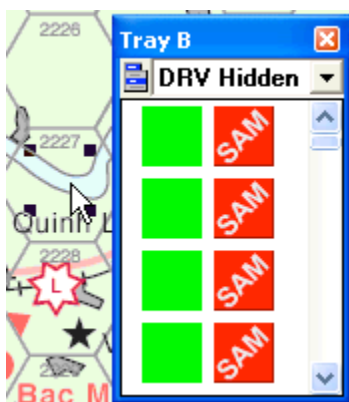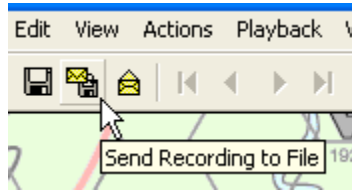

Hidden unit placed…   …   …and flipped over.
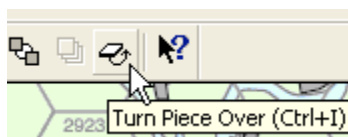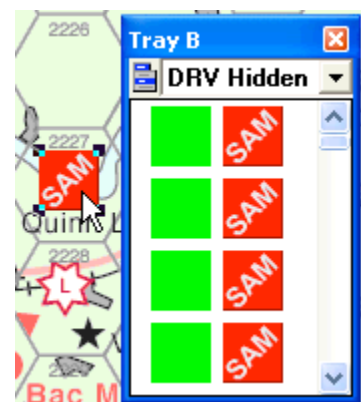
3. Once all hidden units (and only hidden units) are placed, the DRV player should save the move file. Do NOT send this move file to the US player. This will keep DRV hidden units from being recorded as part of the US game file and thus keep them truly hidden.
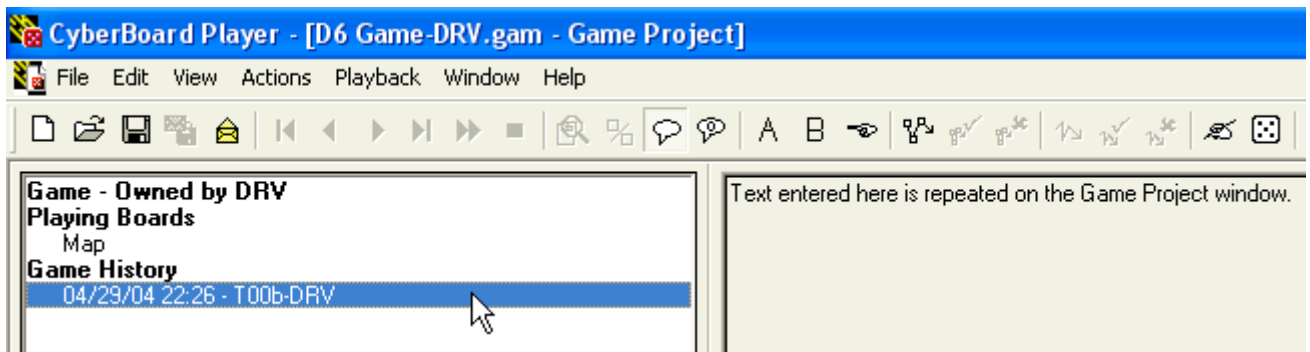

Click to save a move file

A note about saving move files: No description is required to be entered but doing so can be useful because it shows up in the Game Project window for easy reference.
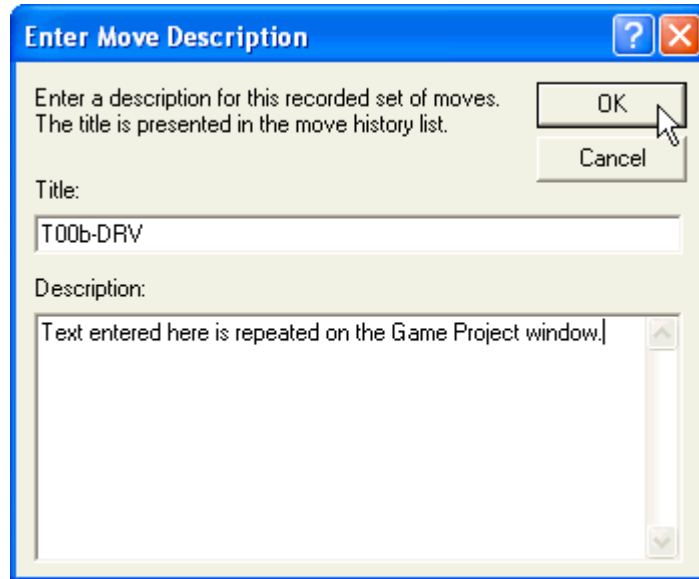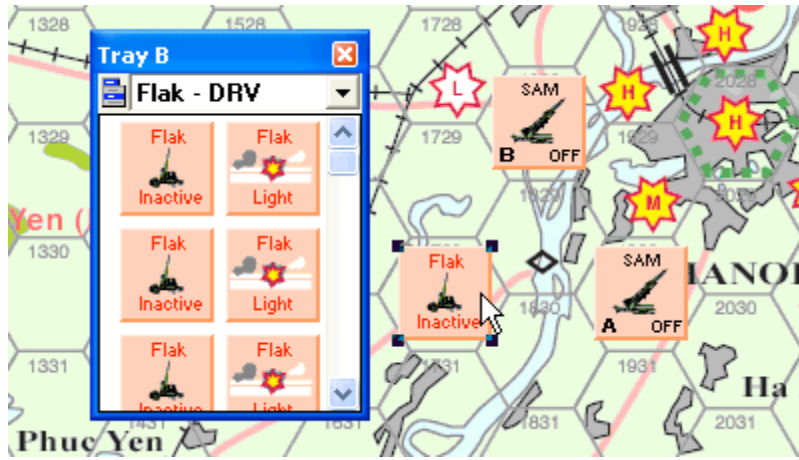

Text entered here…

…shows up in the Game Project window

4. The DRV player now starts another move file by placing located SAMs and AAA as part of the DRV Ground Deployment phase.
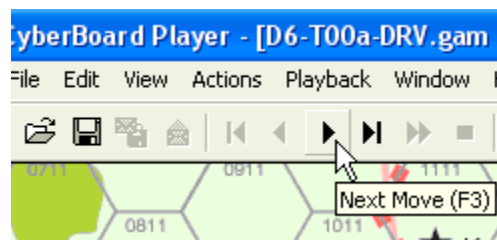
Accomplishing the DRV Ground Deployment phase

5. Save this move file and send it to the US player.
6. The US player opens his game file and then loads, plays back, and accepts the DRV move file. To load a move file, select the yellow envelope icon and open the move file. Step through the move file by clicking the forward arrow in the menu bar.
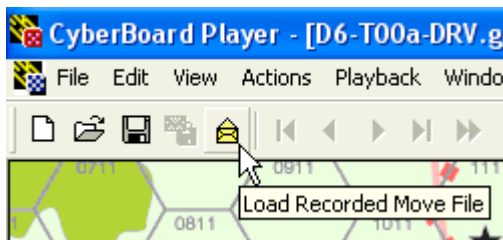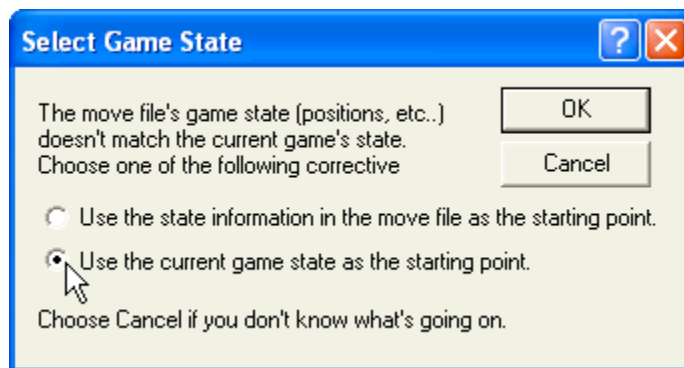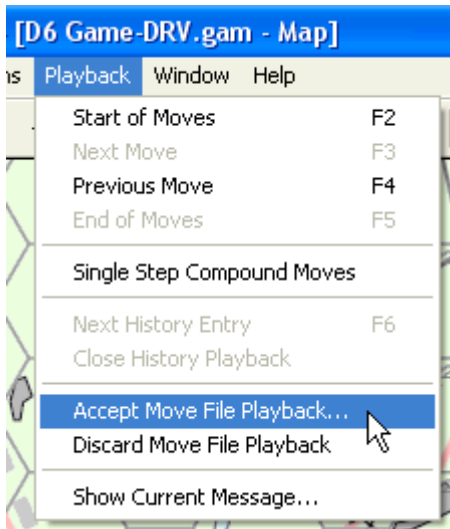

Loading a move file

Stepping through a move file

A note about opening move files: A move file contains the starting position of all units in the game file and then records the movement of each unit. At this point in the game, the DRV player game file contains hidden units that the US player game file does not contain. CB recognizes this and offers the US player two options when opening the DRV move file. The first option will sync up the US player game file to match the DRV player game file. In order to keep DRV hidden units truly hidden, the US player should NOT accept this option. The second option keeps the game files separated and is the option that should be accepted. The same will be true later of the DRV player when opening a US move file that contains US hidden units. Each time either player loads a move file, select option two.
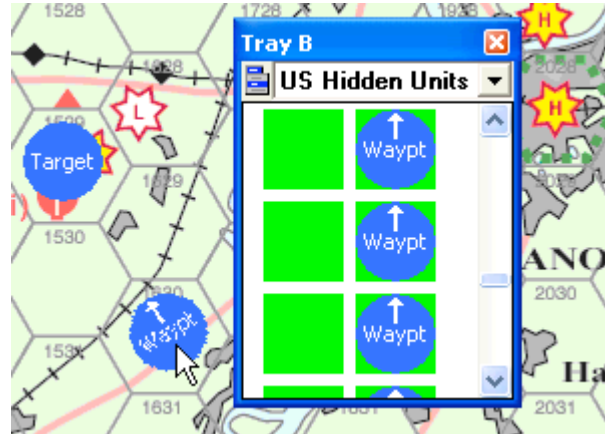

Always choose option two when opening a move file

7. At the end of the move file, accept it by selecting "Playback", "Accept Move File Playback…".

Accepting a move file

Placing US hidden units

7. The US player can now accomplish the US Planning phase. Place hidden units marking targets, waypoints, rally points, ingress and egress locations. Optionally, record this information on the printed planning map.
8. Save this move file but do NOT send it to the DRV player. This will keep these units hidden from the DRV player.
9. The US player starts another move file by accomplishing the Early Warning phase (See "Entering a Message and Rolling the Dice" later in this tutorial). Save and send this move file to the DRV player.
10. The DRV player loads, plays back, and accepts the US move file then accomplishes the DRV Air Deployment phase. Save and send this move file to the US player.
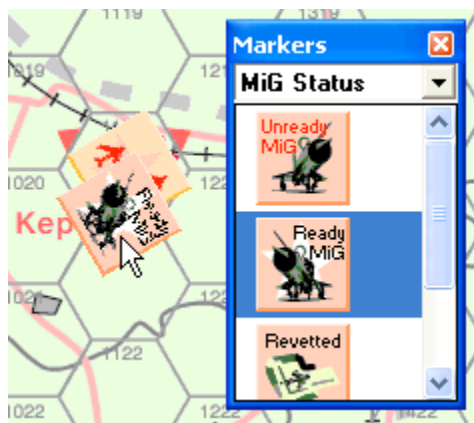

The DRV Air Deployment phase
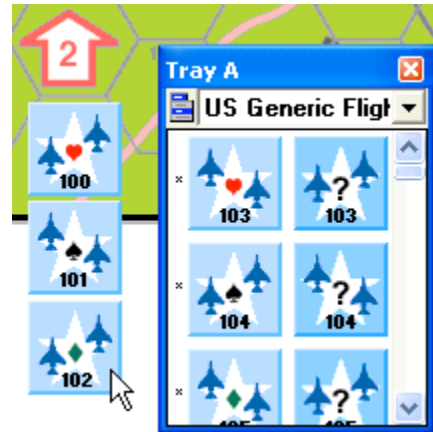
The US Deployment Phase

11. The US player loads, plays back, and accepts the DRV move file then accomplishes the US Deployment phase. Save and send this move file to the DRV player.
12. The DRV player loads, plays back, and accepts the US move file then accomplishes the DRV Radar phase. Save and send this move file to the US player.
13. The US player loads, plays back, and accepts the DRV move file then starts play of the game with the Turn 1 Random Event, Jamming, Detection, and Movement phase (if the DRV player passes movement initiative).
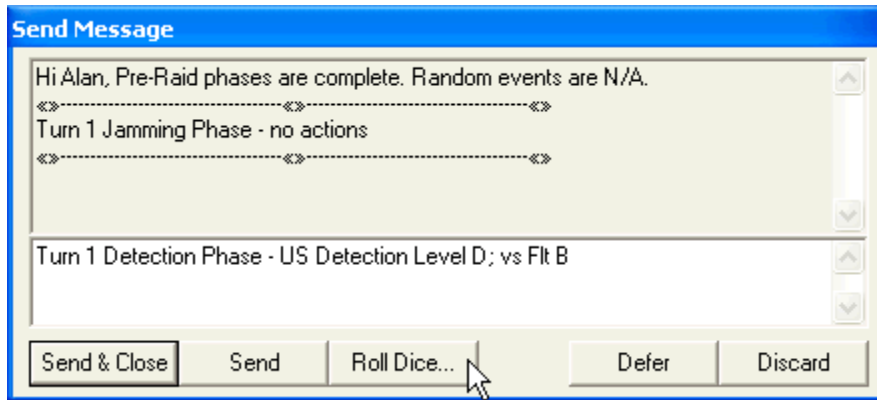
Game play has started!

Move files are exchanged back and forth in this manner to accomplish game play. Where possible, players may combine more than one phase in a move file.

Suggested File Naming Conventions
Because CB play of *Downtown* involves many exchanges of move files between the players, a good file naming system is important to avoid confusion. One suggestion follows this format: D6-T00a-DRV.gmv

     Where: D6 = the scenario in play
             T00 = turn number (00 = Pre-Raid, 01 = Turn 1, etc.)
             a = the first move file for the turn
             DRV = the player creating the move file
             .gmv = the file extension that CB automatically saves the move file with (you don't need to type in .gmv)
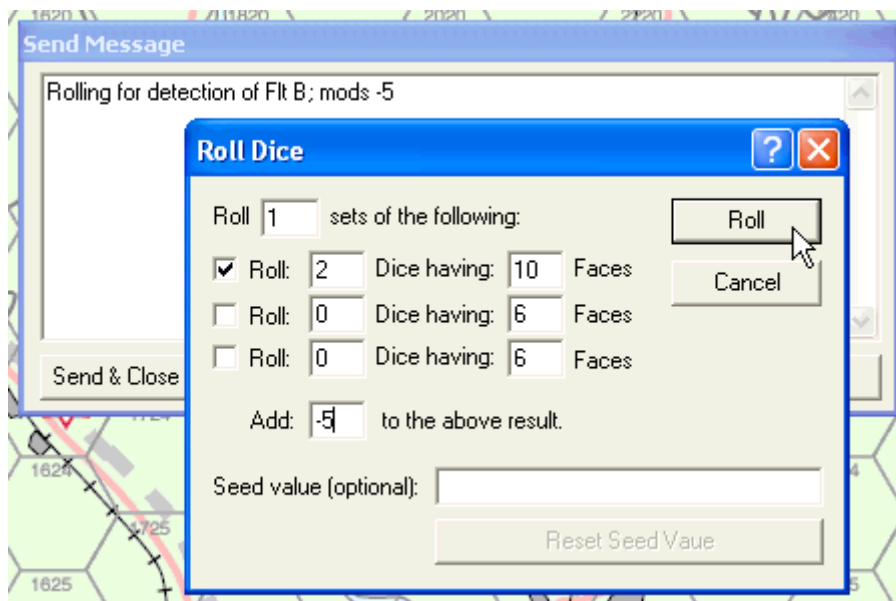
Following this example the fourth move file of turn 2 created by the US player would be: D6-T02d-US.gmv. The DRV move file following this would be: D6-T02e-DRV.gmv. Adopting this file naming convention allows move files to be sorted by name in playback order. This is helpful in case a game needs to be reconstructed for any reason.
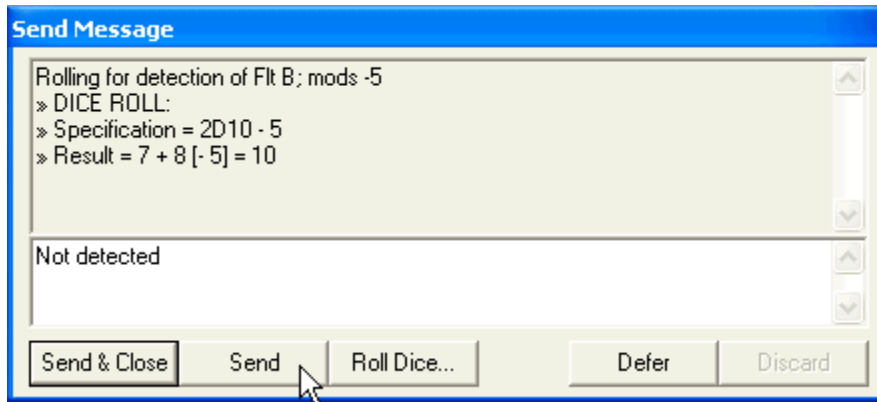
Entering a Message and Rolling the Dice
To enter a message, click on the message icon and enter your text in the window. Click "Send" to record it as part of the move file. Click on "Roll Dice" to open the dice rolling feature. You will need to designate how many and what type of dice to roll and also input any dice roll modifiers. Click "Roll" to see the results in the message window.


Enter Message button

Rolling the dice…

Send Message

```
Rolling for detection of Flt B; mods -5
» DICE ROLL:
» Specification = 2D10 - 5
» Result = 7 + 8 [- 5] = 10
```

Not detected

| Send & Close | Send | Roll Dice... | Defer | Discard |

…and the results

Playing Piece Trays

CB stores counters in two playing piece trays: A and B. Each tray is the same so it doesn't matter which tray you drag counters from. Counters are double sided and cannot be deleted from the map. They must be returned to the playing piece tray.

Markers

Markers differ from playing piece trays in that they are not double sided and are available in unlimited quantity. When not needed any more, a marker is deleted from the map whereas a counter must be returned to the playing piece tray.
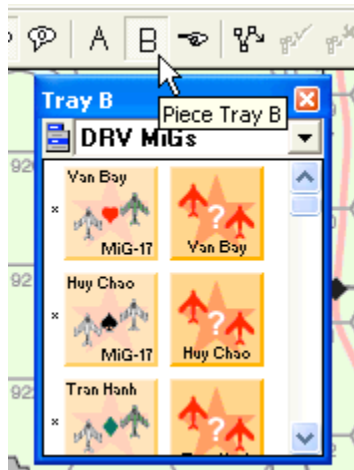

Playing Piece Tray
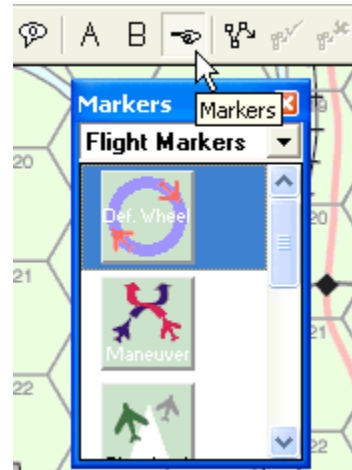
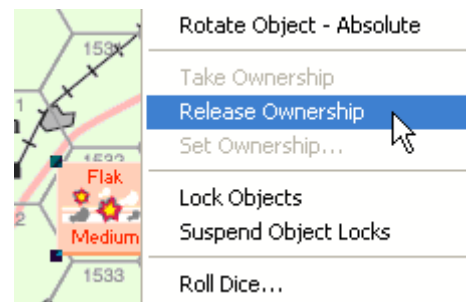Markers

More About Hidden Units

Hidden units are hidden because they are owned by one player but not the other. The non-owning player only sees the top of the hidden unit. Most times there is no need for the other player to see a hidden unit, however; there is one exception: Flak. The DRV player owns the Flak counters so that they can be placed without the US player seeing the strength side of the counter. When a Flak counter is revealed (i.e. flipped over) it is necessary for the DRV player to release ownership so that the US player can see the strength side. The DRV player does this by right clicking on the counter, then selecting "Release Ownership". Once ownership is released, the US player can see the Flak strength. You can see the map as your opponent would see it by hitting the "F8" key.
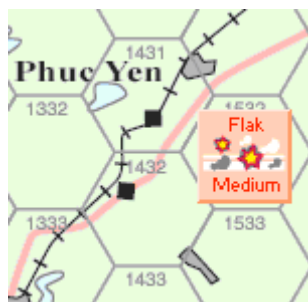
When owned by the DRV…   …this is what the US sees   Release ownership to reveal Flak to the US

Despite best intentions, players should realize that it is hard to truly hide hidden units using CB. The best way to do so is to not place hidden units and manually record their location on the printed planning map and log sheets. If placement of hidden units is desired though, a couple of things can be done to help keep hidden units hidden.

First, once placed, do not move hidden units. Doing so outlines them to the opponent when playing back a move file. Second, do not associate text with a hidden unit. Doing so allows a pop up text box to appear when the cursor is moved over the unit.
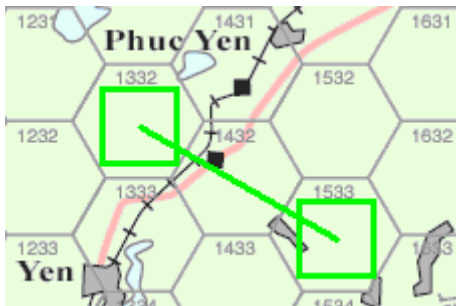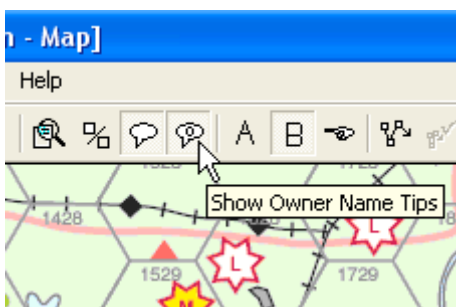

Hidden unit revealed when moved
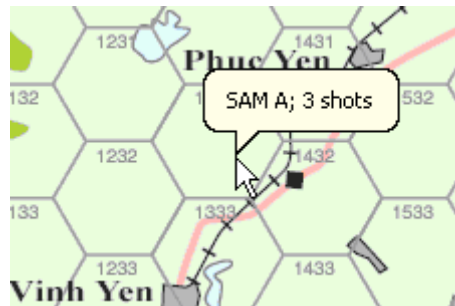
Hidden unit revealed by pop-up text box

Third, as mentioned earlier, only open move files using option two; "Use the current game state as the starting point". And finally, play the game with the owner options off. This will prevent a pop up ownership text box from appearing when the cursor is moved over the unit.
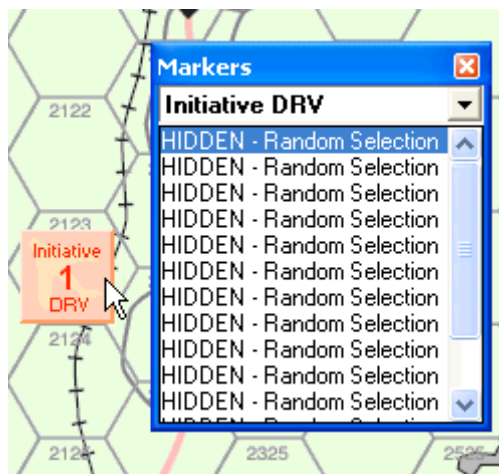

Owner name tips turned on…

…and what it reveals to the opponent

Quickly Navigating the Map
To quickly navigate on the map, right click on the tiny map in the lower right hand corner of the Map window then left click where you want the big map to be centered.

The tiny map

Drawing initiative

Drawing Movement Initiative Chits
Initiative chits are stored in two separate marker trays, one tray each for the US and the DRV. To draw an initiative chit left click anywhere inside the tray and drag out a chit to an out of the way location on the map. No matter where you left click

inside the tray, the actual chit drawn will be randomly determined. When finished with the chit, delete it by selecting it, then right click and select "Delete Marker" from the pop up menu. Even though the drawn chit is deleted, the number of initiative chits in the marker tray has not changed.

Rotating Counters
To rotate a counter, select a counter by left clicking on it; right click; select "Rotate Object-Incremental…", then click on a facing box. Clicking multiple times makes the counter rotate in multiples of the amount shown.
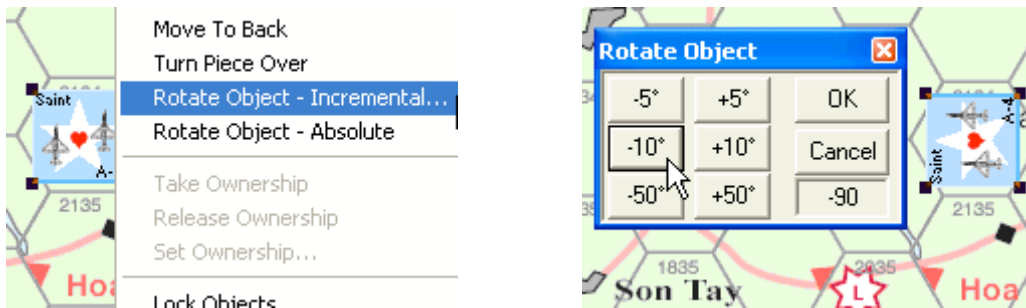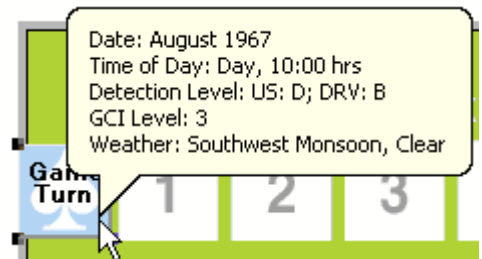

Rotating a counter

Adding Pop-Up Text
To add text to a counter or marker, double click on it and then enter the desired text. This will create a pop-up text box that appears automatically when the cursor is placed over the unit.
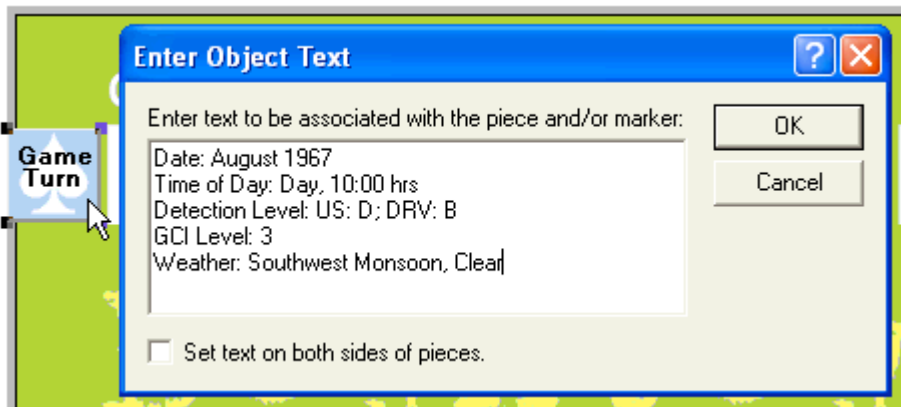

Adding text to a counter   Pop-up text box

Selecting Units in a Stack
During play of Downtown, many counters and markers will need to be stacked. To make working with stacks easier, Cyberboard has a nifty select/deselect feature that allows a player to choose specific game pieces. To use this feature, select the pieces in the vicinity of the desired piece by left clicking and dragging a box around them. The selected pieces will appear in the select window on the right. Click on the desired piece or pieces in the select window. Use the keyboard control or shift key to select more than one piece. Once the desired pieces have been selected, use the keyboard insert key to select only those pieces on the map (or the delete key to deselect those pieces on the map). Bring the pieces to the front and then move them on the map. In the following example we will select and move DRV Flight A which is buried beneath Cactus flight.
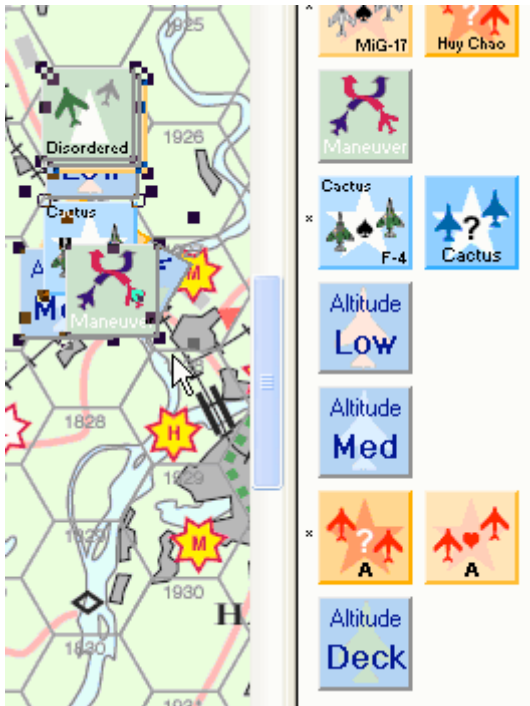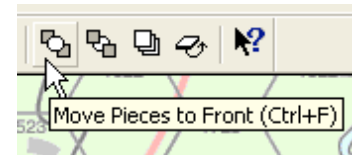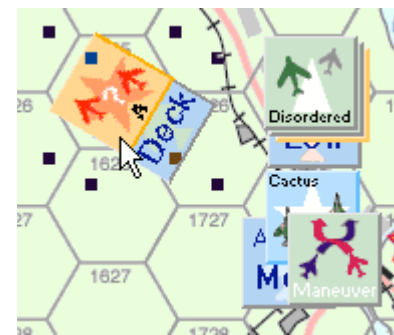
Drag a box to select pieces nearby flight A…
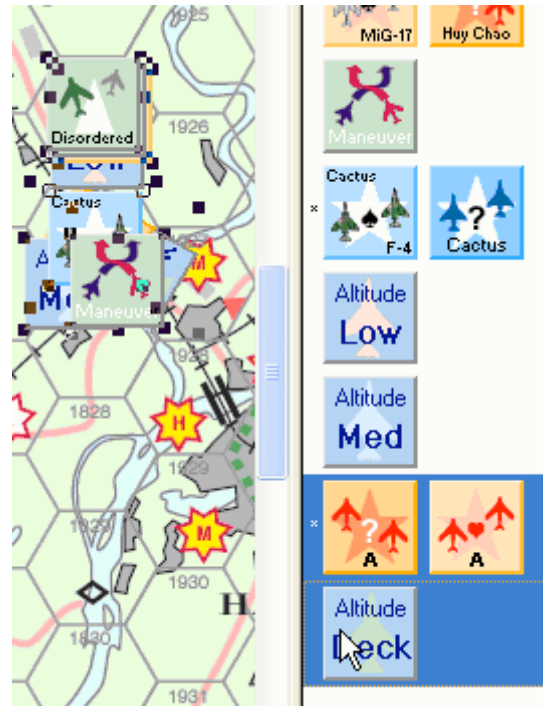
…select Flight A and its' Deck marker in the select window…

…use the insert key to select Flight A and Deck on the map…
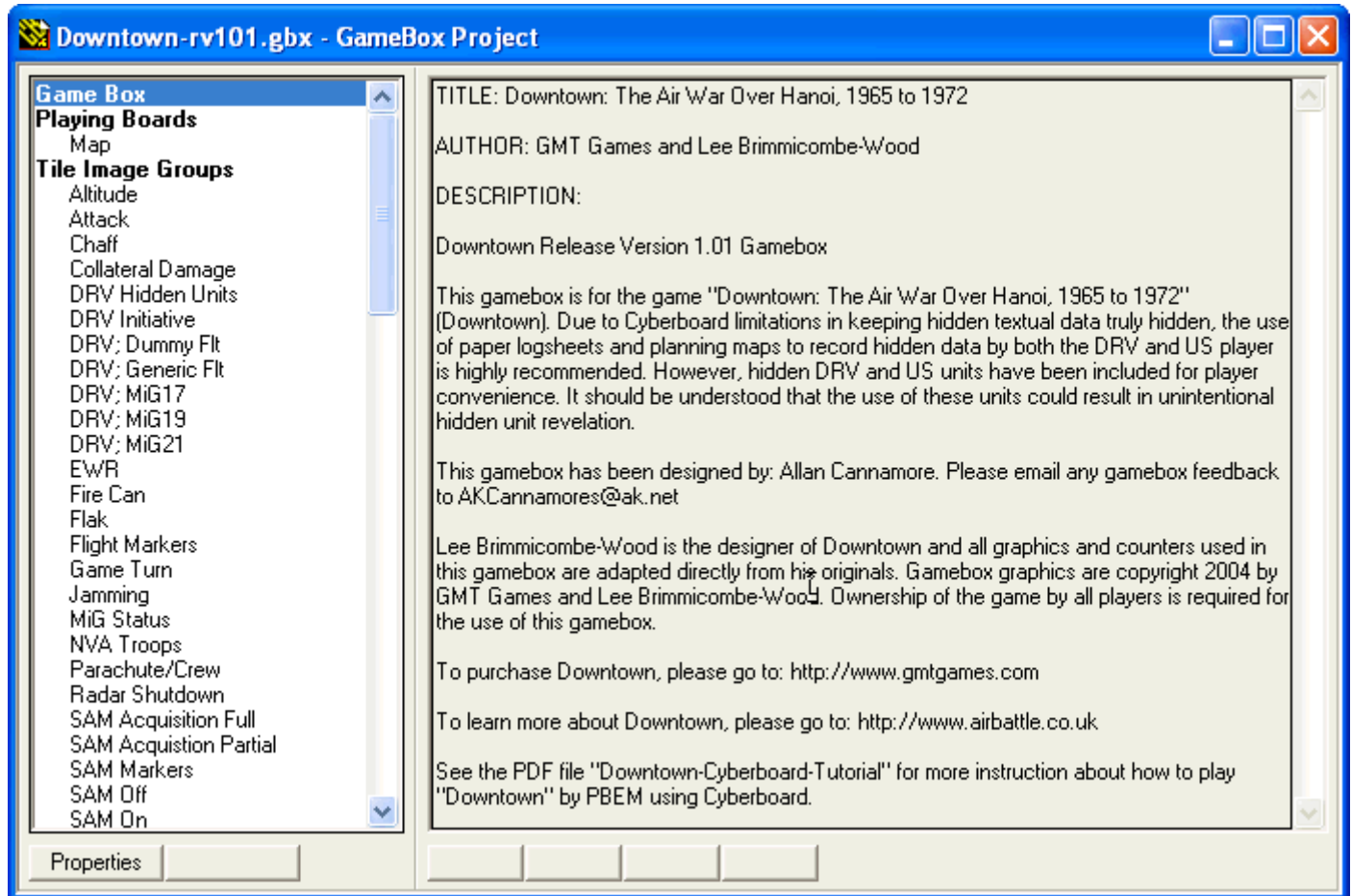

Move Pieces to Front (Ctrl+F)

…then move them to the front…

..and move them on the map.

This concludes the tutorial. If you need more help, please see the Gamebox Project window for contact information. Have fun playing *Downtown* and learning more about Cyberboard.

Downtown Gamebox Project window