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Ray Merriam, Publisher/Editor  
THE MILITARY JOURNAL  
218-P3 Beech Street  
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Abraham Lincoln (Dakota Territory) destined to become central figures in the biggest national tragedy since April 12th, 1865. The tragedy, of course, was the annihilation of Custer and five companies of the 7th at the Battle of the Little Big Horn on June 25th. Custer's "Last Stand" gained him everlasting notoriety. Custer's ending was one of the great news stories of the 19th Century and it cast a black shadow over the Centennial.

Tents were not always taken along on expeditions. Most of the time the troops had to be content to crawl into crude sleeping bags made from buffalo hides. The buffalo was important to white man and Indian alike. The Indian used buffalo hides to make tepees, blankets, winter clothes, even boats. A buffalo tail made a good fly swatter. The ribs became runners for dog sleds. Buffalo meat was a principal staple of the Indian diet...sometimes sun-dried, sometimes cooked over buffalo chips.

A lot of the troops were in the field for a good part of 1876. The Big Horn expedition Brigadier General George Crook and nearly 900 men left Fort Fetterman (near what is now Douglas, Wyoming) on the 1st of March. The men were on half-rations, had no change of clothing and were exposed to temperatures that often reached 30 degrees. At mealtime, knives and spoons had to be dipped in hot water or ashes before use; otherwise they would pull the skin off the tongue. These privations were part of daily life in the many expeditions against the Indians.

Their heroism of the Army of 1876 can be summed up in an incident of June 17th, 1876. An expedition led by General Crook was attacked at the Rosebud River by the Sioux and Cheyennes under Crazy Horse. During the fighting, Captain Guy V. Henry, of the 3d Cavalry, was shot in the face. Although suffering fierce pain as he stayed on his horse, his response is indicative of the spirit of the Army of 1876: "It is nothing. For this, we are soldiers."

*This article has attempted to give you some idea of the life of the cavalryman 100 years ago. They lived life fully...working hard and playing hard. Rank was hard to come by and a soldier with a clean disciplinary record was even harder to come by. The long days spent moving in column through the desert were hard on both the horses and men and when they reached garrison once again...they took what little money they had and spent a wild night on the town. The next morning they were sore, penniless, and up for punishment. BUT...they were soldiers of the first rate and their duty and courage could not be questioned. This article is dedicated to those men and the soldiers of today's modern Army. Especially to the men of the 2d Squadron of the 3d Armored Cavalry. Of those men, there is one especially hard-working and hard-living bunch that I dedicate this to...the men of "E" Troop. When they move into the field... they know how to "soldier". They move day and night with very little rest for either the men or vehicles and they carry on the role of the Cavalry...to move fast, hit hard, and carry the fight to the enemy. To those men I can give no greater accolade than to say that they are first rate Cavalrymen. ■*

**AVALANCHE**...to put it mildly...is a "massive" game. It's not quite the same thing as SPI's TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD in size...but it is "massive" when compared to other amphibious warfare games. GDW has spared no expense in making AVALANCHE a truly impressive game.

This game is one of GDW's "third generation" presentations and definitely shows their growth and increasing expertise. All of the components demonstrate the fact that a great deal of effort has gone into the design of this game and the map (in particular) shows a lot of imagination and innovation.

I have been waiting for the best part of 17 years for a good amphibious landing game to come along. D-DAY was much too simple as a game and showed only the strategic aspects of the operation (and very little of that). SPI's NORMANDY wasn't done well at all and still left a great deal to be desired in realism. ANZIO was another case of being in much too large a scale for my taste...so AVALANCHE seemed to fit the bill just perfectly.

AVALANCHE is a very vivid recreation of the Anglo-American Salerno landings in German-occupied Italy in September of 1943. The counters are basically company/platoon level (though battalion and brigade sizes are used) and the hexes are approximately 1,300 yards across. The two-player turns are only 8 hours in "real" time with one day being 3 turns long. The 27-turn game (or less) is truly a tactical level simulation.

The map is really the most impressive physical feature of the whole game. When you remove it from the zip-lock container it will immediately draw your attention. Once you have examined the map carefully, you will not rest until you have played the game. The map is done in blue, black, white, light green, dark green, light brown, medium brown, and dark brown. All in all, the colors are very well combined to represent the very rugged terrain of the beachhead and the surrounding hills. The Bay of Salerno resembles the right half of a cupid's heart and the suitable landing areas are shaped like a triangle hanging off its right side. Surrounding the triangle are the heavily wooded, steep sided hills common to the Italian Peninsula. The various shades of white, browns, and greens are used to indicate the variations in height. For example; 0-49 meters, 50-199, 200-599, 600-999, 1,000-1,399, and 1,400 meters and up. The various features shown on the map include buildings, villages, airfields, cliffs, highways, improved roads, roads (usually dirt), bridges, rivers, harbors, and the ocean. One of the most striking things about the map is that it comes in two 14 X 22" sections (44 X 28" overall). This, personally speaking, is one of the best maps I have seen in a long time. This map is more than large enough for any and all maneuvering that you might wish to undertake. The only two items that might have been placed elsewhere are the terrain explanation chart and the naval attrition/tactical air chart. But these are not serious drawbacks to maneuver and they do not detract unduly from the looks.

ART BY: Joe Martinez



# AVALANCHE

## The Salerno Landings

Four 8½ X 11" charts are also included with the game components. One shows the Allied Initial Order of Battle/Order of Appearance on one side and the Combat Results Table, Artillery Table, Terrain Effects Chart, Terrain Column Modifiers, Vehicle Column Modifiers, and the Defense Value of Terrain on the reverse side. Another card shows the German Initial Order of Battle/Order of Appearance with duplicate charts on the reverse. Two further cards give the Additional Indirect Fire Charts, Unit Identification Chart, Unit Sizes, color codes, abbreviations, special function codes, counter code information, platoon breakdown charts, ship types, and the airborne scatter table. All in all, a huge amount of information on just four sheets.

The counters are most impressive. There are four sheets of 960 counters (380 of them printed on the reverse side) printed in 11 colors. The reverse-printed counters are part of the platoon breakdown system used in AVALANCHE. The size of the map and the sheer numbers of counters makes AVALANCHE a massive game, but one that is more than worth the price of the package. The counters are professionally done and very, very, attractive. The unit types represented include: infantry, glider, parachute, motorized, lorried infantry, commando, engineer, reconnaissance weapons, cannon, antitank, field artillery, antiaircraft, glider antitank, parachute weapons, glider weapons, Shermans, M-10 tank destroyers, half tracks, M-8 motor howitzers, armored cars, Tigers, railway artillery, Panthers, Panzers, MK IVF2's, MK IVE's, MK IIIJ's, MK IIIM's, assault guns, Hornisses, and Marders. The counter mix also includes pieces for bridges, demolition, "pinned", individual ship counters for naval gunfire support, and the turn record chart.

The rule book is 8½ X 5½" in size and only 20 pages in length with a lot less than a page of errata enclosed. This indicates that the game will be better tested and have fewer "loopholes" than most of the products on the market today. The average game today appears in June and by August the company is offering an "up-dated and new and improved" version of the rule book for "just 50¢ or one dollar". GDW never has those kinds of offers because their games are tested before they are sold to the gamer. BUT, those are just the physical attributes of the game. Impressive though they may be...AVALANCHE has a combination of old and new game systems that make it easy to play, realistic, very interesting, and quite educational...in its own way.

The rules use some new systems that really present a situation closer to a realistic amphibious landing than any game that has yet come along. The game turns are broken down into movement, artillery fire, and combat. AVALANCHE has a SIMOV combat system that further divides the combat segments into a defender's first-fire and the simultaneous fire segments. The reverse printed counters are used for step reduction once the going gets tough.

The movement system is another unique feature of AVALANCHE. All land units are given 10 movement factors, but they expend them in varying rates according to what type of unit classification they have; leg, wheel, or track. Changing from one terrain elevation to another also costs movement points and the rivers are passable

only across bridges (something every good wargame should use).

The combat rules and systems produce a quite realistic system of intrinsic hex defensive values, combat ratios, and terrain-produced advantages. It is one of the more playable, realism oriented, systems that I have seen in a long time.

The Allied player finds the going surprisingly easy in the first few days, as a rule of thumb...while the Germans must retreat slowly, but wisely. Their key to success will be to hold onto as much of the road net as possible as they attempt to contain the Allied beachheads in preparation for counter-attack. The terrain will give you fits...but the challenge of AVALANCHE will make it that much more interesting.

AVALANCHE, RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR, and MANASSAS, have gone far to show the ever-improving abilities of GDW as a game design team and AVALANCHE...especially...has proven their art and playable realism capabilities. We look forward to many more superb games from the GDW folk. ■

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