SCENARIO ALPHA(zero)   Version 1.3
Design by Alan Yngve, 1996 (copyright 1997)   [1/11/00]
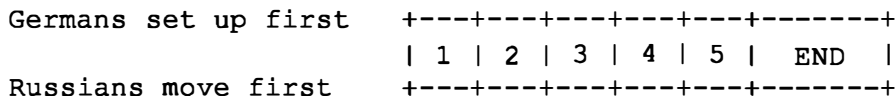
F O R C E D   M A R C H

One of the toughest challenges in learning Squad Leader well is the art of infantry
maneuver. This scenario assigns a maneuver order (victory condition) to the
Russians and challenges the Germans to block its successful execution, also through
the use of maneuver. Most Squad Leader scenarios will have one force on the
tactical offensive, this will be the force that must achieve an active victory
condition objective, as is the Russian situation in this case.

[Introducing: SEQUENCE OF PLAY (of course), BASIC TERRAIN (woods, buildings, walls
and hedges, roads, shellholes), INFANTRY MOVEMENT (maneuver), INFANTRY FIREPOWER
(interdiction), EFFECTS OF RANGE, LEADERSHIP, ROUTING, RALLYING, BOARD ENTRY, BOARD
EXIT]

BOARD CONFIGURATION:

```
        +--------------------------+
    ^   |                        4 |
    |   |                          |
    N   |                          |
        +--------------------------+
```
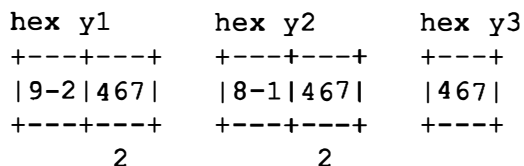
VICTORY CONDITIONS: To win the Russians must exit 5 squads off the south board edge
between rows j and p (both inclusive) [see BOARD EXIT]. Germans win by preventing
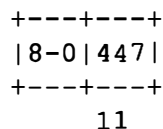the Soviet victory conditions.

```
Germans set up first    +---+---+---+---+---+-------+
                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |  END  |
Russians move first     +---+---+---+---+---+-------+
```

RULES: 1-2.6, 3.2-3.5, 3.7-5.6, 6-7.3, 7.8, 8-15.2, 15.4-16.6, 18.3-20.4, 20.6-
20.83, 20.9-21.3, 44.3-44.32.

GERMANS: Reinforced Platoon on Patrol

```
    hex y1        hex y2        hex y3
    +---+---+     +---+---+     +---+
    |9-2|467|     |8-1|467|     |467|
    +---+---+     +---+---+     +---+
         2            2
```

RUSSIANS: Rifle Company on Approach March [see BOARD ENTRY]
Enter turn one on north board edge east of row j (inclusive).
[Note: this is equivalent to edge hexes a10 through j10.]

```
    +---+---+
    |8-0|447|
    +---+---+
        11
```

GENERAL SL PLAY NOTES:

[BOARD ENTRY] Must enter at the specified location(s) on the specified scenario
turn, either during the movement and/or the advance phase. The normal terrain cost
of the first (whole or half) hex of entry must be paid.

[BOARD EXIT] Units may only exit the mapboard area at specified locations during a

friendly movement or advance phase. A unit is not considered to have exited until it expends one movement factor to leave a board edge whole or half hex. Broken units may not exit. Units may not exit unless specified by the scenario rules or victory conditions and once exited they may not return.

[HALF HEXES] See rule 3.7. Un-labeled half hexes are referenced as either 0 (as in j0) or 10 (as in j10). Numbering on all boards is similar.

Scenario augmentation elements:

ALPHA(one):

Russian: [OFFENSIVE MASS]   German: [MG's and penetration]

```
        +---+---+                        hex y1      hex y2  hex y3
add:    |9-1|447|                        +---+---+   +---+   +---+
        +---+---+                 add:   |MMG|LMG|   |HMG|   |LMG|
            6                            +---+---+   +---+   +---+
```

RULES: 2.7-2.9, 5.7, 17, 18.1, 18.2, 20.5, 20.84.

ALPHA(two):

Russian: [MG's (range/firebases)]   German: [VARIABLE DEPLOYMENT]

```
        +---+---+
add:    |MMG|LMG|
        +---+---+
            3
```

The German player must deploy all the specified forces in any three hexes, each of which must BE NO MORE THAN TWO HEXES FROM the initially specified set up hexes (y1, y2, and y3) and each must contain at least one squad.

ALPHA(three):

Russian: [SEASONAL TERRAIN]   German: [TEMPO and INITIATIVE]

add: Wheatfields (June-October)   German player moves first.

RULES: 44.2-44.24.

Scenario Playtest Credits: Jason Alexander, Cliff Bekar, Pete Belford, Lars Clausen, Stefan Eriksson, Joakim Fredriksson, Andy Friedmann, Jonathan Kenny, Soeren Koch, Mike Noel, Dave Ratynski, Eddy M. del Rio, Gary Robinson, Ken Rutsky, Kevin Wilson, Alan Yngve.

[Commentary on Alpha](#)   [Alpha Tips](#)

Alpha Scenario Play Notes and Rules Commentary

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COMMENTARY ON SELECTED RULES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION:

LINES OF SIGHT (LOS), comment by Alan Yngve: [9/23/96]

A number of precautionary notes are worthwhile on the issues that often arise over line of sight (LOS) in Squad Leader. Squad Leader was one of the earliest hex-based games that used terrain features to determine the blockage of vision, rather than always defining the entire area of a hex as entirely containing a terrain feature. There are a number of useful guidelines within the rules that are helpful to bring to special attention.

(Rule 7.1): LOS follows a straight line measured between the center marks of the firing and the target hexes. Two options for measurement are mentioned; (1) rubber band or string, or (2) transparent straight edge (or thread). Finally note the last sentence: DISAGREEMENTS ARE TO BE RESOLVED WITH A FRIENDLY ROLL OF THE DIE! With face-to-face (ftf) play, usually both players will use the device of the owner of the game, and the LOS is determined upon the board in use. Be prepared for both different devices AND differently printed boards if playing a scenario by play-by-mail (PBM) or play-by- email (PBeM).

(Rule 7.2): LOS is present if unobstructed by a building or woods SYMBOL. And for the LOS to be obstructed the obstruction must be visible on _both_sides_ of the measurement device in use.

(Rule 19.3): Neither side may make LOS checks before declaring an intention of firing along a specified LOS. This has expanded implications when playing via PBeM. Clarify a "house rule" if you wish to play differently with your opponent!

WALLS/HEDGES and LOS/DRM, comment by Alan Yngve: [9/23/96]

Rule 11.5 introduces Walls and Hedges, but is often a source of confusion among Squad Leader players. Perhaps because these rules are not actually used in the original scenarios until #4, a considerable time after their introduction. Two interpretations exist: that the wall or hedge SYMBOL dictates LOS presence or blockage (consistent with rule 7.2) or the alternative, that the Wall or Hedge HEXSIDE dictates LOS presence or blockage (consistent with rules 5.51, 11.5, and 11.51). Please be aware of this disagreement and be prepared to agree with your opponent on an interpretation prior to play. If, after examining the rules, you are looking for a recommendation, I would encourage you to use the HEXSIDE definition.

The LOS course (page 24): This course is quite helpful but incomplete due to its limited sample of hexes. One of the Wall/Hedge difficulties is that L4<->N7 is listed as blocked while L2<->N5 is listed as clear. Even using the symbol definition, I have never seen a Board 3 that did not have the wall extend past the M3/M4/L3 intersection.

(Rule 11.53): Wall/Hedge confusion arises between LOS determination and terrain effects modifier application. In Appendix rule 11.5 (page 22), the LOS course on page 24, and Q&A all indicate that an LOS exists if the firing or target hex has a Wall or Hedge along one of its hexspines (see page 9 for hexspine definition). However, rule 11.53 states that the target unit only receives a terrain modifier if the LOS is traced "across a ... hexside into the hex _formed_ by that hexside ...." Examining the 11.5 example on page 22, it states that fire from A (3t4) to B (3u3) would be modified by a +2 drm due to the wall, as is consistent with this rule because there is a wall along the hexside of 3u3. What the example fails to mention, however, is that fire from B (3u3) to A (3t4) would _only_ receive the +3 drm for the stone building, since no wall extends along the target hex in this reverse case. Note that not all players will agree with this interpretation.

SHELLHOLES, comment by Alan Yngve: [9/23/96]

Movement through shellhole hexes (example, 4s3) that are also road hexes is a source on contention among Squad Leader players. Two interpretations exist; that road movement is unhindered by shellholes due to rule 44.3 "Shellholes have no special effect upon infantry movement ..." and rule 5.52 "... moving into a road hex is 1/2 MF only if the hex is entered through a hexside crossed by the road" OR that entering a shellhole hex, even if along a road, costs 1 MF, an interpretation derived primarily from the inclusion of shellhole hexes with "open ground and wheatfields" on the movement chart (rule 5.5). If, after examining these rules, you are looking for a recommendation, I would encourage you to use the later 1 MF in all cases definition.

SQUAD LEADER PLAYING TIPS:

TIPS: Desperation Morale (rule 14.6): Alan Yngve [10/14/96]

The SL rule, "Desperation Morale" is both a very important rule and one that is sometimes misunderstood by first-time SL'ers. This is an attempt to add some meaning and understanding of this rule.

> In practice, every time a unit breaks due to fire, one places a "DM" marker on the unit. This marker remains until _after_ the next rally phase. If a rally attempt is made when the unit has a "DM" marker on it, it is subject to the +4 drm.

> The wording of the rule is a little complex, but in essence it says that any firepower directed at a unit "since the prior rally phase" causes the application of this drm on any rally attempts. Of course, good order units don't need to be rallied, but any broken unit could attempt to rally (if a leader is present) and this is where the rule applies. It is a little unusual in the SL-system in that it _only_ affects the rally attempt roll. If no rally attempt is made, the marker will be removed without having had an affect.

What does desperation morale attempt to reflect? Two things: One is the shock of being disorganized/broken/routed by enemy fire and the command disorganization reflected by such a state (refusal to obey "orders"). Second, it makes it harder to "rally" when in a location that is under continued fire. A type of suppression, of sorts, that encourages the player to "rout" his broken squads back out of the line of fire ...

WHAT? GEOMETRY IS USEFUL IN SQUAD LEADER? Alan Yngve [10/6/97] Lines of Sight, hints for improving your battlefield vision

This discussion is presented as an assist to all Squad Leader (SL) players. The concepts here are far from original, but not all players look at the SL boards in this manner so a description of these methods may be helpful to a broad audience. This is a demonstration of Lines of Sight (LOS) and how you can use the regular geometry of the hex grid on the boards to help you estimate clear and/or blocked LOS. Using this technique can be quite valuable, since rule 19.3 says that you are not permitted to check a potential LOS before declaring a shot.

From this game system starting point, a general approach for looking at LOS can be invaluable as a basic assist to our movement and deployment decisions. As we always search for those LOS that might "skirt" one of the many terrain obstructions that we see.

Most SL'ers understand how statistics can sometimes help us understand the SL combat system, but here is how another type of mathematics can be helpful. Regardless of your skill at geometry, please read on, you should find that this is not at all difficult! For ease of presentation, lets pull out our Board 4 and start with a relatively central hex, like o5 (or hex 4o5). Lets assume an intrepid squad has deployed in this hex and one wonders what they can see? We will approach this question by applying a basic "geometry" LOS review. Lets start by examining the easier potential LOS at ranges 1, 2, and 4 hexes.

RANGE OF 1 HEX: Per rule 7.8, units always have an LOS to every adjacent hex (note: some weapons will be prohibited from some types of adjacent fire, but the lack of an LOS will never be the cause of the restriction). So in our case here, all of the hexes at a range of 1 (n4, n5, o4, o6, p4, and p5) are in LOS.

RANGE OF 2 HEXES: The 12 hexes at a range of 2 represent the twelve primary (and also easiest) LOS lines of any hex. LOS determination is fairly simple at a range of 2 and can be divided into two different types of sight-line. The first type of LOS is along the six hex-grain directions that are a continuation of the LOS into the six adjacent hexes. These hex-grain LOS would (in this case) trace clear LOS to m4, o3, q4, and q6. The other two hex-grains have clearly blocked LOS: the LOS to o7 is blocked by the building in o6 and the LOS to m6 is blocked by the woods in n5.

The other six directions are traced through the six _hexspines_ of the occupied hex. This hexspine concept will be important in later rules, and is well defined in the small chart on page 9 and in rule 29.4. Each of these hexspine LOS are exactly between two hex-grains and are demonstrated by the fairly obvious clear LOS to m5, n3, p3, q5, and p6. Here we see the first interesting (although fairly obvious) LOS through a "terrain gap," the LOS to n6 that is traced between the woods in n5 and the building in o6. >From this particular (o5) location, this is the first demonstration of a terrain gap and just the tip of the iceberg!

RANGE OF 4 HEXES: There are 24 hexes that are at a range of 4. The continuation of the 12 LOS directions that

we identified through the hexes at a range of 2 are the easiest to examine. Starting with those LOS directions that were clear at a range of 2, we have clear LOS to k5, k3, m2, (but o1 is blocked by the o3 woods), q2, s3, s5 (skirting the r5 woods), and s7. The LOS to q8 is blocked by the building in p6, the LOS to o9 is blocked by the building in o6, the LOS to k7 is blocked by the woods in n5, but the LOS through the terrain gap to n6 is also clear to m8! But what about those 12 hexes we skipped over? This starts to get interesting! Starting with the LOS to k4, if one measures this LOS on the board you will notice that the LOS exactly bisects the m4/m5 hexside, the two hexes that are equidistant between o5 and k4. Observing this geometric fact will help you immensely in many other situations. The clear LOS to k4 and L2 are pretty easy to see, but what about n1? This LOS will bisect the n3/o3 hexside and even though it looks like the o3 woods will be in the way, it is not. Check it out for yourself, this is a clear LOS! Next is p1, also a clear LOS as it just skirts the other side of the woods in o3. The LOS to r2 is and looks clear, although fire from o5 to r2 would get the +1 hedge drm on the IFT. The LOS to s4 is "clearly clear," but maybe not if wheatfields are present due to that wheatfield edge in hex o5, remembering that this LOS would bisect the o4/o5 hexside! Hex s6 is an exception to the common situation that if there is a clear LOS on the hexgrain and the hexspine at range 4, the intervening hex at range 4 is also likely to be clear, here the LOS to s6 is quite clearly blocked by the woods in hex r5. Again, one can eyeball this by observing that this LOS would bisect the o5/o6 hexside. What about r7? This LOS bisects the p6/q6 hexside and is clear, as long as there are no wheatfields, that is. Finishing the circle around o5, the LOS to hexes p8 and n8 are blocked by the intervening building and the LOS to hexes L7 and k6 are blocked by the adjacent woods in n5.

EXPANDING THE SYSTEM: Just like looking at the LOS to hexes/hexsides at a range of 2 helped when doubling the range to 4, looking at the 18 hexes at a range of 3 will help when doubling the range to 6. At a range of 3, the hex grain hexes have already been covered, but the other 12 are completely new! There are few surprises at a range of 3, but at a range of 6 things again can be quite surprising. The LOS from o5 to r4 is easily clear, but how about from o5 to u4 (a range of 6 and the same direction as r4)? And as the ranges are slowly increased, how about o5 to v3? As the list of possible hexes grows long it is not reasonable to try to include them here, but how about something like an LOS from o5 to b2 (a range of 13)? Yes, admitting that no squad could fire its inherent firepower that far .... Understanding that many more LOS than expected will actually exist and having access to a tool to help you evaluate whether the LOS might be clear or blocked can be an important ingredient for being both cautious and prudent on our SL battlefields!