

THE SOLID SOUTH

Defending the Confederacy in CIVIL WAR

By Sam Mustafa

I'm a picky wargamer. Although I've been in the hobby for some 13 years, my game collection still numbers under 50 titles, and the few games I've purchased impulsively have usually found their way into the hands of friends. Within my somewhat exclusive collection are a half-dozen which never fail to entertain and challenge me, regardless of the circumstances and whichever side or situation I am playing. At the time of its publication, I was stunned by the originality and innovations of *CIVIL WAR*. Almost seven years later, it is still unrivalled in its field. I have long regarded its many unique features as game-design breakthroughs. For someone such as myself, who conscientiously studies and writes game rules, *CIVIL WAR* is a masterpiece.

The genesis of this article lies in a recent challenge I received to play a game. My opponent, who is an experienced and competent player, had lain before me the gauntlet by declaring that the Union, properly played, could consistently demolish the Confederacy and achieve a decisive victory in little time. His contention, in his own words, was that, "there is no way for the South to win against a good Northern player." Although I too prefer the Union side, I accepted his challenge, determined to preserve freedom in the Confederacy at all costs.

I'd like to share my thoughts on the strategies available for the Southern player in *CIVIL WAR*. The comments and outline presented here are meant to apply to the entire Campaign Game, or to any scenario that begins with the 1861 set-up—not including the Far West option.

PERSPECTIVE

An absolute pre-requisite for competent Confederate play. A Southern player must place his mission in proper perspective before formulating the details of his grand-strategy. His position is actually more complicated than that of his Northern enemy. The North has simply one clear-cut objective: to conquer the South in the shortest possible time. The Federals *must* come south. But the Confederacy is presented with various possibilities and options, and the nuances of these differing alternatives can often cloud the judgement of a Southern player.

But there should be no confusion as to the ultimate goal of your enemy. It is the annihilation of your forces. The Union player possesses the power to accomplish this. If you allow him to use it on his terms, the South will surely be defeated. There should likewise be no delusions about the limits of Confederate power. While the South possesses adequate means with which to defend its territory, it is highly questionable whether it has the resources to carry out an assault upon the North. The early portion of the game can deceive unwary Southern players; they see that they have available almost as many troops as the North, with better leaders, and the temptation to use them becomes overwhelming. But this strained parity evaporates altogether after 1862. While Lincoln can continue to call upon fresh manpower reserves, Davis finds his resources severely curtailed by turns 8 and 9—and virtually non-existent thereafter. Thus, every Southern body is precious and irreplaceable.

Prolonged survival must be the goal of the Confederate player. It is certainly not a glorious goal, and it demands patience that many players lack, but it is the best and most reliable way to defeat the North. Confederate grand strategy should be postulated with an eye towards keeping the Confederacy pro-

tected. While this may seem a superfluous statement to the casual player, it is actually a very serious admonishment. Failure to care enough about the trees often costs a fledgling Jeff Davis the forest.

With their many early-game advantages—better leaders, inability of the Northern forces to concentrate, no blockade or Union navy, etc.—too many Confederates are sorely tempted to go adventuring north of the Mason-Dixon line, hoping to steal "easy" VPs, or perhaps even land the knock-out punch itself (the capture of Washington). I have witnessed a Southern player who was so obsessed with this goal that he sacrificed the entire Western Theater simply to get a decent stab at Washington. He got lucky; while his out-of-supply army descended upon the White House, the Army of the Potomac missed a +2 Reaction attempt (rolled a "1") and thus could not block the Confederate occupation of the capital of the United States. The rest of the Confederacy was a wreck—Richmond had fallen, the West was gone, the Gulf Coast occupied. But he had finally managed to do it: he took Washington! I think the absurdity of this story speaks for itself. Against any Northern player who can avoid rolling ones, the capture of Washington is a pipe dream.

I have never liked the idea of allowing my enemy to retain the initiative throughout, but that is precisely the gamble the Confederates must take in *CIVIL WAR*. The game system rewards inertia; things remain motionless unless energy is applied to move them. And once the energy (in this analogy, Command Points) is expended, immobility quickly sets in again. The Northern forces must continuously remain in motion, for the South will not simply give up. But too many players are willing to play the Northern player's preferred game by coming out to meet him. A brief historical note, by way of justification: throughout the American Civil War, the South was defeated in every single major offensive they undertook against the North. Lee's two invasions of the Union, Bragg's invasion of Kentucky, Hood's invasion of Tennessee, Price's assault into Missouri—all ended in failure and retreat. The South expended irreplaceable manpower in these futile endeavors, leaving it weakened when attempting to defend itself against Yankee thrusts; even so, most of its defensive campaigns were victories.

I have already noted the dearth of precious manpower on the Confederate side, and the disparity of material strength between North and South. Command Points, however, are often distributed equally (with the exception, of course, that the North receives Naval Command Points as well). The Southern player thus has his only opportunity for strategic parity with the North, through the careful manipulation of his CP resources. If the Northern player is forced to come south and assault prepared positions, his casualties and his expenditures of CPs will be heavy. If the Southern player, however, is willing to oblige him by sending rebel armies northwards, then the federals are spared half of their effort.

There is, however, an interesting problem with CPs for the Southern player which the North does not suffer. Because the North *always* possesses more reinforcements, that player may choose to expend his Dice Difference by entering fresh troops, rather than expending his CPs. The Southerner rapidly runs out of reinforcements, and thus is forced to expend his CPs before he may wish to do so. In essence, the Northern player can stall, forcing his opponent to waste CPs. He can then strike, when

it is difficult or impossible for the South to rally its armies after pitched battles. Naturally, such stalling has its risks for the North. If he waits too long, he may find that "doubles" are rolled, and the turn ends, thus wasting all his precious hoarded CPs.

I roundly condemn southern invasions of the North on the grounds that they expend valuable Confederate manpower which cannot be replaced, as well as for making the opponent's task of pinning down rebel armies easier. I would not even condone an attempt to conquer the border states, although occupation of Springfield (Missouri) and Bowling Green (Kentucky) can be useful merely to frustrate the Northerner in his inability to double VPs by taking the entire state. Every little Confederate VP helps, but none of them are worth sacrificing an army for. And remember, time is on your side. You get VPs from the CP Total Table; so long as the South remains alive, the better.

The Northern player *must* be allowed to bear full responsibility for initiating action—all at his expense. While his CPs are spent to mobilize armies, yours should be spent to fortify cities. While his manpower is used to build mighty field armies (in the expectation of losing heavily in pitched battles), yours is measured out carefully, reacting to his every move, making sure that he does not achieve 2-1 odds or better over any local area.

This type of Southern strategy in *CIVIL WAR* requires an ocean of patience. It demands the constant reminder that you, as the South, need only to defend yourself in order to win, nothing more. You do not need to conquer Kentucky or Missouri at the risk of losing something else. The energy that could be expended on the usually futile attempt to conquer the Bluegrass State is much better spent on defending Tennessee, an infinitely more valuable piece of real estate, and far more vital to the Southern war effort. After all, if you lose Tennessee, then any gains in Kentucky count as naught, and will have to be abandoned in short order. The stress-inducing patience required of the Southern player is ultimately rewarded by witnessing the mounting frustration of his opponent, who becomes increasingly angered by his inability to penetrate the defenses, and soon begins to make rash mistake after rash mistake, desperate to achieve some kind of breakthrough.

FORTIFICATION

The cornerstones of Confederate survival, fortifications can be somewhat overrated in the game, giving as they do only the same benefit one would achieve from favorable terrain. But their inestimable advantage for the Confederate player lies in the *impression* of impregnability they often suggest. All wargamers (all knowledgeable ones, at any rate) are haunted by visions of futile frontal assaults, ala Verdun and Petersburg. They will usually commit a substantial amount of thought to how to *avoid* having to attack an entrenched enemy. When the forts become fortresses, the impression of invulnerability becomes far more real. Since a supplied fortress is immune to retreats, it truly does take on a formidable character.

Static fortifications, and the men which will occupy them, are the single most important element in Confederate strategy in *CIVIL WAR*. Despite all the historical derision leveled at the ostensible foolhardiness of hiding behind walls, the Confederate player needs to begin digging fast and furiously, and shouldn't stop until he's used up every fort and

fortress counter in the box.

I am generally uneasy about flaunting any "fool-proof" course of action, as there are an infinite range of variables that might render one man's coup another's fiasco. I think, however, I am safe in asserting that the West is the most vulnerable section of the Confederacy, and as such should be the Primary Theater for the first several turns. I shall also venture the opinion that the first few rebel fortifications should be placed in the Western Theater, as there are several navigable rivers and such a huge crop of valuable VP cities for the Northern player to cheaply assault.

Nashville and Memphis should be fortified almost immediately. New Orleans should follow, and factors should be placed in Forts Wagner and Pulaski. Pensacola should be fortified, and should receive one factor each turn until it has crept inconspicuously up to four factors. At that point, if the yankees still only have one factor in Fort Pickens, it is time to attempt to assault Pickens (an undertaking which will be described in greater detail later). Fort Gadsden is a useful place for a single factor, as it deters any annoying little incursions up the Chattahoochee River. In the Trans-Mississippi, Galveston, Madison, Little Rock and Fayetteville are all logical places for forts with one or two factors. In the East, Richmond should be fortified fairly soon—although it is not usually in immediate danger. Norfolk should eventually receive a fort, as should New Bern, Morehead City, Wilmington, and the city of Charleston. I've heard some players advocating a fort in Fredericksburg where the Army of Northern Virginia would bivouac; but with limited fort counters, I would prefer to use mine to cover VP cities. Also, Fredericksburg can be outflanked; the Yankees can build a string of powerfully-garrisoned depots in the Shenandoah Valley and march on Richmond from the West.

So, while the Union player is having to expend CPs in both creating armies and then moving them, you have the advantage that you need merely to create them, and can divert most of your CPs to digging. There rapidly comes a point when certain of these forts will need to be upgraded to fortresses. Since the Confederates are severely constrained by having only five fortress counters available, these must be used judiciously, to cover absolutely vital crossing points where the yankees will be forced to assault them in order to press further into the Confederacy. I recommend placing the following four fortresses, in more or less this order: Memphis, Nashville, Richmond, New Orleans. The fifth is left to your discretion, to be used in the event of an unexpected threat. I have used it at Savannah, for example, when a Union amphibious invasion on the coast has threatened that city with landward attack.

Placing fortresses in Memphis and Nashville frustrates and limits the degree to which the Northern river-borne fleet (and its uninvited passengers) can penetrate your territory. Fortress Nashville serves as a superb base for the Army of Tennessee, while Fortress Memphis serves likewise for the Army of the Mississippi. It is absolutely essential to remember that each fortress should have its own depot. A favorite Yankee tactic (at least when I play the North) is to use small raiding forces to cut off supply from the fortresses; then, when the assault comes, an unsupplied fortress is no longer immune to retreat.

Fortresses, as we have observed, are exempted from retreats as long as they remain in supply. In most cases during the early game, however, supply should not be a problem, and the most strength any fortress should ever need would be four factors, enabling it to repel any single assault no matter how massive. But the Union rapidly increases its naval strength, and this makes supply a tenuous proposition for places like Nashville. "Front-line" fortresses, such as those at Memphis or Nashville, maybe should even have five or six factors (if they are avail-

able) enabling them to withstand two assaults before needing relief or reinforcement. It is generally not necessary to place leaders within fortress walls, since the fortress doesn't really need them and their abilities (and risk of death) would be better used in a field army. Leaders in forts, however, are often justifiable.

At the beginning of the game, there are two Union-held fortresses which would be marvelous coups if they were to fall into Confederate hands. The first is Fort Pickens, outside Pensacola—usually ignored by the Union player, making its capture a real possibility. The second is Fortress Monroe, at the tip of the Virginia peninsula, a dagger poised at the throat of the Confederate capital. The Army of Northern Virginia should be rushed to this scene as soon as possible, preferably on Turn 1. It will take at least two impulses to get there, because of the swampy terrain and the distance from Northern Virginia. But the lack of Federal seapower on the first turn, and the weak, scattered and poorly-led Union forces around Washington should give you at least a gambler's chance of taking it. In fact, if Ben Butler is not sacked immediately by the North, your chances are considerably improved.

If you can indeed seize it, garrison it with four factors and return to cover Richmond as soon as possible. Fortress Monroe in Confederate hands not only liberates the harbors of Petersburg and Norfolk, but forces the Union navy to re-deploy out of the Chesapeake Bay, running past your growling guns in the process. Finally, it makes a McClellan-esque attempt to take Richmond by amphibious assault up the James River sheer suicide, freeing you from worries about your right flank. The attempt to seize Fortress Monroe is well worth the risk involved.

Fort Pickens is not so much a calculated risk, and the gains, while nice, are not as decisive. When you have quietly massed four or more factors in Pensacola, wait for an impulse with a "Dice Difference" of at least "4", then rail a leader there (a two-star Jackson is ideal for this mission) and assault the fortress. If it still contains only a single Union SP, it should readily fall into your hands—whereupon you leave behind as the garrison the forces that took it, and rail Jackson (or whoever) back to his army.

By way of summary, it is cogent to note that forts and fortresses, while serving as excellent insurance policies for your field armies, need not necessarily serve as their homes. It is often better to have an army posted one impulse's march from a fort or fortress. This provides the army with a sanctuary, if need be, as well as providing the fort with available relief in time of threat. Furthermore, more ground is covered defensively by this arrangement, making an unopposed Northern penetration virtually impossible.

FIELD ARMIES

Fortifications alone, important as they are, are insufficient to halt the Union onslaught. To combat the massive Federal armies, Confederate armies must likewise take the field. To describe the role I intend for my Confederate armies, I have borrowed from the lexicon of NATO jargon: "flexible response".

Rebel armies do not (or should not) exist to attempt conquest of the North. They exist to defend the South, and as we have so copiously noted above, far less action is required in defense than on offense. Confederate armies should indeed only be built as a response to the formation of a Union army in their area. (The one exception would be the Army of Northern Virginia which, if it wants to carry out the above-mentioned gambit against Fort Monroe, must be constituted as soon as possible.)

From their inception until the victorious conclusion of the war, Confederate armies should mirror the motions of their enemy counterparts. If a Northern army moves to threaten an area, seem-

ingly leaving his supply lines exposed, the Confederate player should resist the temptation and move to parry his thrust. A small detachment might be sent to parry the rear area, but the task of the Confederate field army is to prevent Northern armies from obtaining their goals. This is the lesson that John Bell Hood never quite learned. On the other hand, Robert E. Lee was the absolute master of this stratagem, and the two occasions when he lapsed from this policy were his only two failures from 1862-1864.

It is necessary for the Confederate player to accept the unpleasant task of handing the initiative completely to his opponent. This is a dire necessity if, for no other reason, than because of numbers. It is virtually impossible for a Confederate army to outnumber a Union army it is facing. It is likewise virtually impossible for an outnumbered army to score a clear victory in *CIVIL WAR* when on the attack—that is, without paying in blood more than it can afford. It is, however, easy for an outnumbered army to score a decisive victory on the defensive, particularly if terrain and leadership modifiers play a positive role. In both of these, the Confederates often have the advantage. Your armies need therefore be composed of only enough factors to prevent the opposing Union force from having 2-1 odds (after three factors have been lost). In that way, a Confederate army which suffers heavily and (due to poor luck in the Dice Difference) cannot rally in time before it is hit again, will still be able to survive and extract a heavy price from the enemy.

The Confederate armies should not hoard vital SPs that are needed to protect the ports and fortifications. An equilibrium must exist, for without one, the other is likewise lost. Again, the value of keeping to the strategic defensive is seen. While the North must pay to move an army into battle, rally it, and then move it in again (nine CPs spent if they have a leader with an initiative of "3"), the Southern player must expend only to rally the army in preparation for the next assault. With the inherently better leadership modifiers in Confederate armies, the North will be paying three times as much in men and CPs as will the South. This is an exchange rate which even the strained resources of the South can win.

Confederate leaders should, therefore, be distributed carefully. I generally recommend demanding the "Lyon-Jackson" optional rule. The Northern player is often overjoyed to hear this, thinking he's getting the better bargain. In reality, Jackson is far more valuable to the South—which has only one other initiative "2" leader (Lee; van Dorn and Hood don't count)—than Lyon is to the North. Poor leaders should be sacked immediately and sent somewhere where they can't hurt anybody; I usually reserve Bonham (Texas) for this purpose and my "Bonham Army" ultimately will be commanded by Earl van Dorn, Leonidas Polk and Ben Huger—all in command of one depot.

By Turn 4, my Confederate armies have usually obtained the configuration they will keep until victory is won: Jackson in command of the Northern Virginia; Lee in command of the Tennessee; and Joe Johnston in command of the Mississippi. If the Army of the West is built, I place it under Albert Sydney Johnston. Braxton Bragg and ol' Pierre Beauregard are useful to have at large fortresses, where they can move more than two SPs in and out, if need be. The armies of Northern Virginia and Tennessee should each have the full six leadership factors to modify the die as much as possible in your favor. The Army of the Mississippi can usually scrape together about four, depending upon who has been promoted. The "Peter Principle" wreaks havoc with Confederate major generals.

Nathan Bedford Forrest should be placed in Joe Johnston's army, while Wheeler and Stuart should go to Lee and Jackson. That way, all Confederate armies will be able to react on any roll other than

"1". The leadership of the Southern armies will be so vastly superior to that of the North, that without 2-1 odds, there is literally *no* way for a Federal army to win a victory over a Rebel army in the field.

Placement of these armies is the all-important question. Each should be placed astride the path of invasion of its Yankee counterpart, ready to be able to react (hopefully, into favorable terrain). Jackson's army could be based at Fredericksburg or in the wilderness (5007). Lee's should be based from Nashville (a depot at Nashville is a good idea, just in case of Federal riverborne raiders), but should ultimately be operating in southern Kentucky—preferably around Bowling Green. Johnston's army should cover the approaches from the Mississippi and eastern Tennessee. Being the smallest, it should take care to remain within the protective radius of Fortress Memphis.

Why Lee in Tennessee? Again, my predilection towards the Western Theater shows. The West is a huge area, with many possibilities for maneuver and many avenues for Union approach. Northern Virginia (particularly if you have taken Fort Monroe) is a restricted defile through which the Yankees will have to pass. The best leadership in the army should be placed in the hottest trouble-spot. If the Federals do not appear to be making any serious attempts towards Richmond, but rather seem to be directing all their energies to the West, then I might even suggest sending the Johnston-Forrest team to command Northern Virginia, while Jackson and Stuart move West to defend the Mississippi. However, this "switching of horses in mid-stream" has its risks, and burns up CPs for little real gain. Once the armies are in place, minimal adjustments should be made, other than to reinforce them and replace fallen leaders.

The Southern armies can actually carry out a subtle form of advance, particularly in the West, without even having to expend CPs. The Northern player will often make attacks he knows he will lose, simply to train his better potential officers and kill some Rebels. The Confederate army should try to position itself directly in the path of the Federal army, leaving a one-hex no-man's land between. When the Yankees advance, the Rebels react into that hex, win the combat, and then force the Northerners back out. In this manner, a Southern army can actually manage to gain ground on the defensive.

PINPRICKS

Any VP is a good VP. While it would be needlessly expensive and risky to send an entire army chasing after a single VP city, there are numerous instances where a small detachment might prove suitable for just this sort of task. The Confederate leader pool is blessed with a plethora of superb low-ranking commanders, many of whom have an initiative of "2". Unfortunately, cavalry is not as useful as infantry for this task, since it can't claim control of enemy territory and requires two MP to demolish a rail hex.

But plentiful opportunities for snatching quick (and painless) VP are provided on Turn 3, when the Union usually attempts to overrun Kentucky by rail. Bowling Green and Mill Springs are impossible to reach by rail, and are easy to occupy by foresightfully-placed Confederate raiders. Once there, these "flying columns" can play havoc with the Federal attempt to occupy the Bluegrass State, forcing the enemy to expend a number of CPs to control when he thought he already had.

The best thing about raiders is the fact that they are expendable. A single SP can be used to gain several VPs before it is caught and destroyed. The leader sent with it will return to fight again another day. The Federals will not only have to track down and eliminate the grey menace, but will then have

to repair all the damage he has done. The results are never spectacular, although they do cause delay and waste on the Union side—which is precisely what you want.

The sad fact of the matter is that it is virtually impossible for the Confederates to get any long-term advantage from occupying Northern real estate—no matter how valuable. A raider which manages to slip into southern Pennsylvania, Ohio or Illinois will grab a few quick VPs. But the Northerners can retake those VP with great ease, since they don't need a leader to move and attack in friendly territory. An intelligent Yankee will send a single VP to its death in a useless battle just to exhaust the supplies of the Rebel raiding force. Once unsupplied, the Rebels move only three hexes per turn, meaning they can be hunted down and destroyed by even the most incompetent of Lincoln's generals.

I would suggest that one avoid carrying the raider tactic too far. It is usually successful only because of its unexpectedness; if repeated time and again, it will soon be countered by Northern measures. And raiders are a Pandora's box; once you strike at the opposing player, the thought will occur to him as well. Union cavalry will soon begin to attempt raids into your territory. A favorite Yankee target is Madison (Arkansas), where a successful Northern raid can sever the supply line of depots to the Trans-Mississippi West. But, used judiciously, Confederate raiding forces can be another effective tool in your arsenal of replies to Northern pressure.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE

The penalties inflicted upon any Northern player who loses Washington inevitably costs him the game. For that reason, many Confederate players are fixated with the Federal capital, seeking a "quick kill". It seemingly gives meaning and definition to the Confederate forces in the East, who otherwise must be content with the rather unglorious job of just defending their country. By this point, all should be well aware of how I stand on this issue. The CPs and men which are expended in any attempt to take Washington are ultimately spent at the cost of ignoring your real mission: defending the South. By forcing Rebel armies over onto the attack, you condemn them to a vicious cycle of bloodbath, demoralization, rally, and bloodbath again. The "quick kill" of Washington evaporates, and the South is left with only several dozen lost SP and an undefended coast. Fort Monroe remains in Federal hands because your army has been blasting away at Washington. And as a result, Richmond is threatened and the supply line for the Army of Northern Virginia is in serious jeopardy.

Still, there are those inveterate players who would prefer to gamble everything on a single blow and so decide the game then and there. In that case, I can at least offer some time-tested advice.

The only chance the Confederates have of capturing Washington involves virtually ignoring the West and Trans-Mississippi theaters. Virginia must be the recipient of all possible Southern strength and CPs. If you are going to gamble, then at least do it right. Put everything possible into the Army of Northern Virginia, and attack as soon as possible.

Turn 1 is the best time. The army will go under Joe Johnston. You will have a rough time of it scraping together the generals to give you a "+6", but it can be done. The Federals will likely have no positive leadership modifiers, and likely an army commander who will grant you a re-roll. The issue is Washington itself. A smart Union player will fortify it as soon as possible. That fort will then become a fortress at his first opportunity. He will initially place four SP in the city, then seven, and finally as many as 13 to make it a "large" force. Finally, he will probably build a depot (for the same reasons I advised building depots in your fortresses).

Your first mission must be to cut off Washing-

ton's supply, followed by an assault on the fortress. This is virtually impossible, since it means leaving Confederate detachments at various points around the city, as well as cutting all rail lines and ensuring that no sea supply is possible. Even more problematic is the fact that your own army must somehow remain in supply at the same time. If you can manage these mapboard gymnastics, however, then you must exhaust the fortress supplies by attacking him. Your second attack will then be able to force him to retreat out of the capital. Of course, if he is a reasonably intelligent player, he will simply rebuild a depot in Washington after he expends the first one.

This is the series of unlikely events which must occur in order for a Confederate army to seize the Union capital. A smart enemy player will never allow it to happen. The Army of the Potomac, although poorly led, is still able to thwart the attempt by simply fighting the Rebels, thus demoralizing them. Six CPs must be spent to rally the Southern army (assuming it is in supply) and getting it in motion again. As one can see, this sort of behaviour is simply playing into the North's hands. All this simply points to the soundness of the original thesis: the South must stay in the South!

IRONCLADS

There is a certain amount of irony in this concept of "flexible response" for the Southerner. As you enter the mid-game (late 1862 through late 1863), you will begin to find that you have run out of things to do with your CPs. All Rebel forts and fortresses are built. You have no great need to move armies, and no desire to do so since they cover the areas you wish to defend. In short, you are bored with your own success.

But, the small Confederate navy is an interesting addition to the strategic defensive strategy. It combines elements of the fortification mentality, as well as the flexible response doctrine. On one hand, the ironclads can be used as corks in a bottle, denying river crossings to enemy troops and defying Federal gunboats who want to risk slipping past your fortresses. On the other hand, they are mobile; any ironclad placed on the Mississippi will no doubt find gainful employment in a number of places.

The Confederate ironclads are the finishing touch on your "Fortress Dixie". They are somewhat over-rated, but like fortresses they convey a certain aura of dread for the Union and thus serve as an effective deterrent by merely being present and looking mean. The Northern player will soon realize, of course, that he can mass mighty fleets under his naval leaders and blast your poor ironclads out of the water. This is inevitable, although it again expends Union CPs without concrete gain. Try to keep one ironclad unbuilt so that it can be deployed for any special need that might arise.

An excellent example of this principle came in the game which inspired this article. My opponent had landed a large amphibious force on the coast between Charleston and Savannah. He then built the Army of the James (rather poor nomenclature considering its current location) and stood ready at his next opportunity to march upon either city with six factors. To be completely safe, I would have to commit enough forces to protect both—an expense I couldn't afford. I thus fortified and reinforced Charleston . . . and built the *CSS Virginia* in hex 4223, blocking the Savannah River. Since he could no longer cross the river to attack Savannah, I had defended that VP without even having to send troops or build fortifications there.

CONCLUSIONS

Sin Tzu coined the perfect phrase to describe one of the hardest truths in defensive warfare: "To strengthen a point, another must be weakened."

Such is the perennial dilemma of the Confederacy, and the sad inevitability is that you won't be able to hold out everywhere forever. Something is going to snap under the continuous blows of a vastly superior enemy force. Actually, in a masochistic way, that is the real thrill of playing the Rebels in *CIVIL WAR*. You have to pride yourself on your defiance and tenacity, and the knowledge that you shouldn't be winning. It's against all the odds, but yet you are!

The time will come, usually in late 1863 when you've simply run out of new manpower, that you will have to begin to surrender some places. If the choice is afforded you, then I recommend trimming the sails first in the Trans-Mississippi West. The loss of it is tolerable. Even undefended, the miserable terrain will still require Herculean Federal efforts to conquer it in under a year. Losing the Trans-Mississippi, of course, now means that your left flank is wide open. Vigilance on the Mississippi River thus becomes all the more attractive. Memphis and New Orleans take on all new importance in keeping the Federals out of the South.

The Confederate endgame is usually very strange unfolding if the Rebels have adopted this strategy. The presence of the Union four-star generals means that there are two Yankee forces moving around in the Confederacy which cannot be opposed adequately by anything in the Southern inventory. With between 30 and 40 SPs blasting their way south, all the Confederate armies can do is get out of the way. As a result, the last six or seven turns of the game become very fluid as the armies of both sides finally cut losses from the fixed attack-defend patterns they had hitherto held and go off in search of VPs to win the war.

The Confederate armies, in fact, almost lose their reason to exist once they can no longer avoid 2-1 battles. The Union by this time can field at least one army with a "+6" tactical modifier. As a result, the Confederates simply can't win any major battles. I would recommend at this point draining off the strength of at least one of the armies to bolster important fortresses and cities, to prevent the Yankees from getting any VPs before they have earned them. The problem, of course, is that the Rebel rail network is by this time a shambles, so transferring SPs around is usually easier said than done.

In mid-1864, the situation becomes quite desperate—but the South is now in the home-stretch. On Turn 17, the crucial point is reached. The Federals must have a lead of 50 VPs, or Lincoln loses his reelection bid and the Confederacy wins. This was, in fact, the historical "victory condition" the Southern strategists were hoping for.

The mathematics look promising. I have calculated the CP Table Use Totals turn-by-turn for several games, and have found that each turn nets the Confederates an average of 2.3 VP from the CP Table. Thus, in 13 turns, this average should amount to 30 VP. Add to this the likely number of Confederate VP that will have been won during play—let us say, ten—as well as the calculated average VPs from Confederate Commerce Raiders (five). The result is 45 Confederate VPs, meaning that the Union will have to have scored at least 95 of his own to keep Lincoln in the White House.

The Federal player will amass 14 from Kentucky and 12 from Missouri. If we also concede the entire Trans-Mississippi West to him (and he manages to actually take it), he will have scored another 16. Thus far, the Union has only 52 of the 95 needed in this hypothetical calculation. That means he will have to take 43 VPs in addition to the border states and the entire Trans-Mississippi West. If your opponent can be prevented from amassing 43, which I believe is entirely feasible, then he can be decisively defeated on Turn 17. If not, his Turn 19 Victory Conditions are 25 VP more difficult to attain.

Virginia is worth 28 VP and Tennessee worth 27. These two states hold victory, or defeat, in their lands. A tenacious defense of Tennessee, in particular, is a tall order after 1863. Virginia, with the narrow approach to Richmond, is easier to hold. For that reason, I venture the sacrilege that more of your precious energy should be spent preserving Tennessee than Virginia. Neither can fall to the Union. You are not afforded the luxury of choosing one over the other; should either slip from your grasp, the war is lost. It is infinitely preferable to lose the extremities of the Confederacy rather than its heart.

The Confederate path to victory in *CIVIL WAR* is torturous but tenable. It requires patience, a conservative approach to forces and missions, and a certain amount of skill in being able to read your opponent's mind. I thought it might be appropriate, by way of closure, to point out that the game to which I was challenged and which inspired this piece ended somewhat prematurely on Turn 16. On that turn, with Lincoln facing imminent defeat and with no way to accumulate enough VP to stay in office, my opponent resigned. Southern independence was won.



Coming Attractions

BULGE and D-DAY '91

Once again I must enter into my annual verbal combat with the crafty editor. "I need a listing of your works in progress," says the evil Rex-thang, blowing smoke from one of those foul ropes that he smokes, and sounding much like a bad country-n'western song. "Oh, spare me this grueling ordeal," I beg. "Every year I type one of these up, and then my schedule gets revised before it sees print. Oh, woe! Oh, woe! Oh, #&%#@!!!"

So, with a gun aimed at my head, here goes my latest installment. As usual, I'm busier than a one-armed paper-hanger in a tornado. The new *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* is in the final stages of playtesting, and should be out by early summer. My rules for the new *D-DAY* are now being finalized and written, so this game could be in print by late summer (unless something else gets dumped on me in the meantime).

Both of these are my own designs that, like our latest version of *GETTYSBURG*, are aimed at introducing new players to the wargaming hobby. They will each have a two-page "Basic Game" rules, and a "Battle Manual" with additional optional rules and historical material. Novices can get into the play with a minimum of effort, while use of the numerous optional rules converts the design to a game of roughly moderate complexity, fit for play by more experienced wargamers. The combat units in *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* are divisions, while the units in *D-DAY* are corps.

Turning to *BULGE* as the closest to completion, the mapboard will be the same size as that of *GETTYSBURG '88*, but the panels will be hinged. Each hex represents an area somewhat under five miles across, and for simplicity's sake terrain is limited to "clear", "forest" and "rough" (along with various towns, roads and rivers). As usual, Charlie Kibler will work his magic in rendering the Ardennes map eye-appealing as well as functional. The counters, including the system markers and a few used for various options, number but 222 or so. Each game turn represents one day of action.

The Basic Rules cover movement, stacking (normally one ground unit per hex), supply and combat resolution (along with the marking of losses). Optional rules add such things as special German units, variable weather, air operations, supply depots, task force organization, and other odd bits meant to more fully simulate the campaign. As with other introductory designs, these can be incorporated by novices as they look to increase the challenges faced in planning strategy. For

experienced gamers, these options should not prove difficult to understand, and add flavor to the play. Three scenarios, along with some hints on and examples of play, round out the "Battle Manual". Of course, the full campaign can be played out, but playing time for that will generally be under four hours even with all optional rules in force.

The mechanics for *D-DAY* will be similar, and once a gamer is familiar with one he should have no trouble playing the other. Rounding out my dance-card are new designs for *MIDWAY*, *GUADALCANAL*, and a World War II air game (no title yet). These will all use the two-page "Basic Game" introductory wargame format. These three new titles, plus *BATTLE OF THE BULGE* and *D-DAY*, are all earmarked to form the initial releases in our new "American History" line, published in association with the Smithsonian Institute.

On another topic, just recently reaching me is Mo Morgan's *Jihad*. This effort uses his popular *TAC AIR* system, with battalion-sized combat units, but the game is structured to allow the organization of opposing forces to represent those of virtually any desired country. I'm just starting to review this one, and as usual Mo seems to have left all the serious playtesting to me (aaargh!); but it looks good, so I'm eager to give it a whirl. Since this is disturbing the dust on my desk in a whole new spot, I can't even hazard a guess as to when it will see publication.

S. Craig Taylor
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