

## AAR: ASL Scenario T1 – Gavin Take



AKA Scenario 181 and originally presented in “The General”, issue 24.2 in 1987. This Scenario was the first of what became “Tournament” class Scenarios – as originally presented at the ASL Origins ’87 tournament. These scenarios were designed to be fairly small (maximum 25 counters per side), and short (no more than 6 turns).

*“Through the hedgerows we could hear voices. I couldn’t tell if they were German or American voices. “Flash” had been designated as our password. From behind a tree came a challenge - Flash! The immediate reply was “Flash, Hell! This is Col. Maloney the Executive Officer of the Regiment.” Instantly we knew we were among friends.*

*Troopers kept drifting in and our force was growing. Men came from all units of the 82<sup>nd</sup> airborne Division and some from the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. Nothing of consequence happened and soon it was dawn. We know nothing of what had happened to anyone outside our own small group. There was not tactical unity, no supporting weapons, just a group of invaders who were wondering what had happened to all of their thorough planning. Just before daybreak, the first gliders began to come in. One landed in a flooded area about 150 yards from where we had our perimeter set up. As the men started to come out of the glider, enemy machine gunfire opened up from the hedgerow on the other side. Men coming out of the glider were being hit. Fire was placed in the general vicinity of the machine gun and this enabled a few men to make the hedgerow behind which we had cover.” – Roy Creek, 507<sup>th</sup> PIR.*

**Location:** Chef-Du-Pont, France

**Date:** June 6, 1944. That date seems familiar.

### Participants:

- German Grenadier Regiment #1057 Outpost
- American 507<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment, part of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne.

**ROAR:** At time of writing, US wins 50.4% of the time. How’s that for balance?

**Special Rules:** 0 SAN. Rubble placed in M2. No Bore Sighting (we haven't done that yet, anyway).

**Victory Conditions:**

US win by exiting at least 1 squad equivalent and 1 leader via Q10. For every German HS equivalent that does the same, the US exit requirements increase in tit for tat manner.

**Introduced This Scenario:**

- Rubble (B24). Falling Rubble (B24.12) is NA. This hex (and feature) don't seem to play a role in anyone's strategy. We won't spend much time on this.
- Shellholes (B2) – inherent on Mapboard 3. +1 Infantry TEM in hex, no LOS hindrance. No FFMO if unit expended 2MF to "get in".
- German Panzerfausts (C13.3). This Scenario takes place after 09/43 and so this rule is in effect. There are no vehicles in this Scenario, so all attacks will be against infantry in buildings. We didn't really want to get into the whole TH/TK mechanics just yet, but in the end we decided, "why not?". +1 DRM against squads, +1 if CX. Can't use in SFF or FPF. PF check counts as use of a SW. Only affects 1 target, unless random selection says otherwise, but can pick your target if he's KEU and has Gun/SW. Range is 2 hexes for this Scenario. Original DR '6-6' on TH results in CR of firing unit.
- Bore sighting of 1 allowed, Defender SW (only MMG, HMG, light mortars) per (C6.41) is not allowed in this Scenario. We hadn't used this in previous scenario's yet; it will have to be something we keep in mind in the future, even if it doesn't apply to today's gameplay.
- Entrenchment (B27) and subsequent Foxholes.
- Walls and Hedges (B9) – inherent on Mapboard 3.

**Study Aids:**

- "1987 ASL Tournament" from The General, Vol 24.2, page 16.

This article presents several offensive strategies for the Americans (see below) but reminds one to keep moving relentlessly (only 6 turns) and make sure you have enough squads and 2 leaders in position to escape through Q10 by Turn 5.



- James Lowry AAR on BGG: <https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/816155/t1-gavin-take> with some good tips such as
  - Try to use spraying fire with the American -2 and -3 leaders.
  - They do make a Foxhole in Q10.
  - Move that MMG down to Q7 in the late half of the game to form a firelane to the exit.
  - Pick off squads that don't have immediate leader support. This is a short scenario and with everyone off to the races, there isn't time to go back and attend to them.

### Other suggested Tactics

- German goal to control northern area of Rows I and Y. The SW upstairs in R3 and S3 should take care of this.
- Germans should sent an LMG up to W6 as soon as possible to deter the US from getting their first.
- Later, plan to fall back to cover near Q10 to hit Americans trying to exit.

## Setup:

We followed Mishcon's advice to set up the Germans in forward positions to "inflict maximum delay". Both MMGs with the two best leaders are put upstairs in R3.1 and S3.1. The article strongly urges moving one 4-4-7 to final hex Q10 and attempting entrenchment. We may try this just to see how things play out.

A VASL .vsav of our setup for this AAR is presented here:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1KjQfC\\_YWT8E8AfJUeMA3x0EozsTCUqiP](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1KjQfC_YWT8E8AfJUeMA3x0EozsTCUqiP)



## Turn 1

### American Turn 1

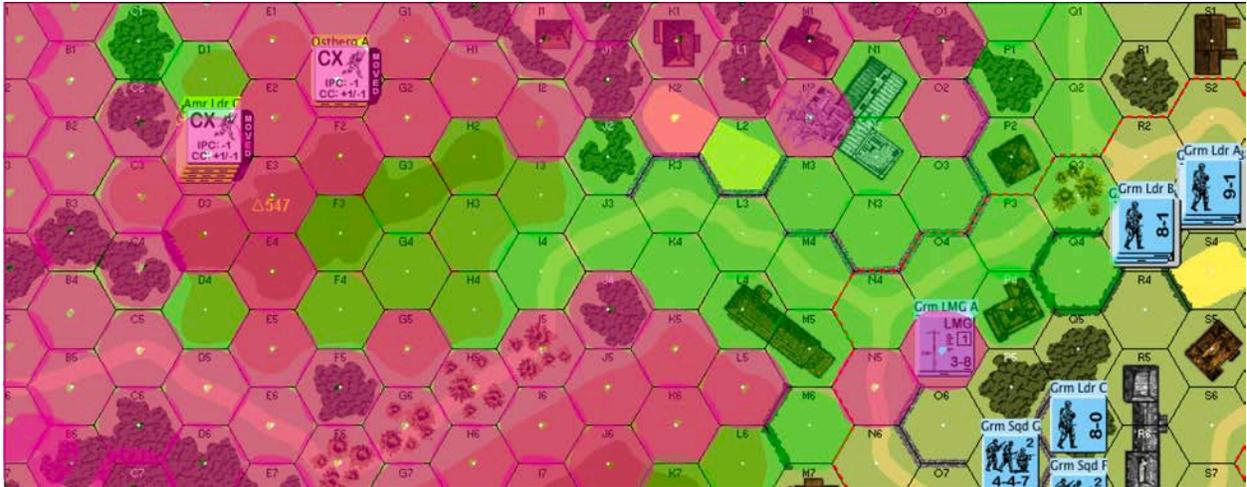
MPh: The Ostberg force goes CX and gets moving toward the D hex row. The Germans are immediately forced to decide if they will (can?) take a shot with their MMG. Game stops while we consider LOS options. This serves as a good exercise to see if we're finally starting to get a handle on LOS, blind hexes and targets at different levels. Using the handy (no, really!) formula as presented by ASL'er IDJESTER

$$\left[1 + \left(\frac{R}{5}\right)\right] - ((H - O) - 1) \pm T$$

R= Range to Obstacle

H-O = Full level elevation advantage between attacker and target

T = Elevation distance (if any) between target and obstacle.



LOS options for the Germans in R3.1, facing west. The buildings in N2 and L4 are LVL1.5 obstacles. This gives the Americans the safe “avenue” from G1 to C3 to move around the back of Hill 547. This is a one-off exercise both parties agreed to create/analyze so that we could better understand blind hexes on hills.

Two of Maloney’s squads rush forward, one managing to put smoke into Y2. Gavin, with his 3 squads enters Y2 and draws DFF from S3.1. Unbelievably, Gavin breaks along with one of this squads. The remaining two units continue out of the field of fire.

DFPh: Checking LOS from R3.1 to Y3 shows this is a valid shot – and this pin one American squad and breaks the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Gavin’s units are already in complete disarray.



End of American Turn 1. So far, so good with Ostberg. Gavin’s advance has already fallen apart. He broke along with 2 of his 3 squads. The 3<sup>rd</sup> is pinned in the street.

About 0900 hours, Lt. Col. Ostberg, Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 507 Parachute Infantry Regiment, returned from the command post of Gen. Gavin, Assistant Division Commander, and informed us that General Gavin was moving toward La Fiere and that we were to follow. This meant fording the flooded area that we had already struggled through earlier in the day. We pulled out of our position, leaving the wounded marked and as comfortable as possible and started across the marsh. As we waded in water sometimes chest deep, we were fired on by snipers, who appeared to be firing from long range because of the inaccuracy of their fire. But one couldn't help being concerned about the shots splashing water in his face. All that could be done was to keep on walking and hoping. – Roy Creek.

## German Turn 1

RPh: Americans miss their rally attempts.

MPh: The Germans pass up all PF shot attempts to move into better defensive position now that they better understand what the Americans are up to. All of their movement takes place out of the LOF of the Americans.

Very fast half turn. No one can see each other. Concealment is gained for a number of Germans in concealment terrain.



End of Game Turn 1 – round goes to the Germans. They're sweeping SE and SW to better defend against the American end-around attempts.

## **Game Turn 2**

### **American Turn 2**

RPh: Not under DM, Gavin and 2 American units rally.

PFPh: Y3&Y4(fg)-W6, 14FP/+1, Pins the Germans.

MPh: Maloney heads south through the wheatfields of AA4 and AA5 and takes fire from the PINNED LMG in W6 – who still gets off a good shot and breaks Maloney.

RtPh: Maloney routs to BB5.

*We made it to the other side without mishap. We marched south until we reached high ground overlooking the La Fiere Bridge. When we arrived, Gen. Gavin told us we should proceed south along the railroad to Chef-du-Pont where we were to seize the town and bridge across the Merderet west of the center of town. A few men who had been able to get some automatic weapons from some of the bundles dropped as we jumped, were attached for this mission and under the command of Col. Ostberg, proceeded down the railroad toward Chef-du-Pont. There were about 100 men altogether equipped only with what they could carry. Rifles, submachine guns, three machine guns and grenades of various types including the British gammon grenade which packed a terrific wallop. At about 1000 6 June Col. Ostberg and his force, comprised of men of all units of the 507<sup>th</sup> and some from the 508<sup>th</sup> had reached the railroad station of Chef-du-Pont without any opposition. The railroad station was in the center of town and the small but important bridge was a short distance southwest. A squad was sent to clear the section of town northeast of the station, which they did without incident. The remainder of the force led by Col. Ostberg started to race through the part of the town leading to the bridge. This group was fired upon from several buildings simultaneously. Four of the men were hit and the remainder was forced to hold until the town could be systematically cleared. This took about two hours. By that time, most of the Germans had withdrawn ahead of us, apparently headed for the bridge. Speed seemed to be the answer. We knew the bridge must be taken before the Germans could organize their defense so we made a semi-organized dash for it. We were too late. Two officers reached the bridge and were both shot - one toppling off the bridge and into the water. The other officer falling on the eastern approach. The officer toppling into the river was Col. Ostberg. He was rescued shortly afterward by two soldiers of the 507 and lived to fight again. The other officer was dead. A short time later, Col. Maloney arrived with about 75 more men and we set about dislodging the stubborn enemy. – Roy Creek.*

### **German Turn 2**

RPh: Maloney, under DM, still manages to self rally.

PFPh: The German unit in Q10 attempts ENTRENCHMENT and rolls a '5-4'. NE and he's TI.





Near the end of Game Turn 2. Both Turns have run by rather quickly. The Germans lost 2 squads (w/ LMG) after blowing high ground opportunities and then suffering brutal defensive fire. This yields both hills to the Americans. The Germans do not have all that many squads in the Scenario to just brush off the quick elimination of these units.

**Turn 3**  
**American Turn 3**

MPh: Ostberg’s squads make a couple of SMOKE attempts, but fail. One squad draws long distance fire from R6-I9 and is both broken and CR’d. Ostberg, himself, assault moves to I8 and takes fire from M8 but makes their Task Checks.

Gavin and Maloney’s groups continue to the south of the board, using first the hill, then the copse of trees in rows W and X as cover.



End of American Turn 3 – not much activity other than the Americans continued moves out of LOS of the enemy.

*The railroad split the town and the bridge lay to the south and west of the railroad station. Houses lined both sides of the road leading to the bridge. A short distance from the bridge on the left side of the road leading to the bridge was a large creamery which was two stories high and afforded good observation from an upstairs window. South of the creamery and on three sides of the bridge, there were obstacles, flooded areas. For practical purposes, the only approach to the bridge was the one we had chosen through Chef-du-Pont. The approaches from the west were causeways, long and straight and completely flooded on both sides. Germans were dug in on the shoulders on both sides of the road occupying foxholes dispersed at intervals of about ten yards for a long stretch leading to the bridge and beyond. No one could hope to attack successfully or withdraw along these causeways without a preponderance of supporting fires. Something we did not have. Nevertheless, we were on the outskirts of Chef-du-Pont with 175 men. What are we waiting for? Let's take the bridge. Two attempts to storm the bridge proved unsuccessful. There had to be a better way. We did succeed in clearing the eastern side of the bridge, however, by over running the positions along the shoulders of the road. – Roy Creek.*

### German Turn 3

PFPPh: Another Entrenchment attempt in Q10, DR '1-1' for success. A 1S Foxhole counter is placed in Q10. We assume that the German 4-4-7 who made the Foxhole doesn't actually go "IN" the foxhole until his MPh.

The Germans in R6.1 now have a clean shot at Gavin in W10, 7FP/+0, but a DR of '4-6' has NE. Germans in U7 come out of Concealment and attack U7-W8, 9FP/+0 for 2MC, breaking the Americans.

DFPh: J9-M8, 7FP/+1, NE

W10 (Gavin)-R6.1, 7FP/+0, gets a 2MC! The German 8-1 passes but the squad manning the MMG upstairs breaks. The Germans will need to recover quickly; the path to Q10 just opened up considerably if there isn't a firelane that can be set coming from either R6.1 or Q7.

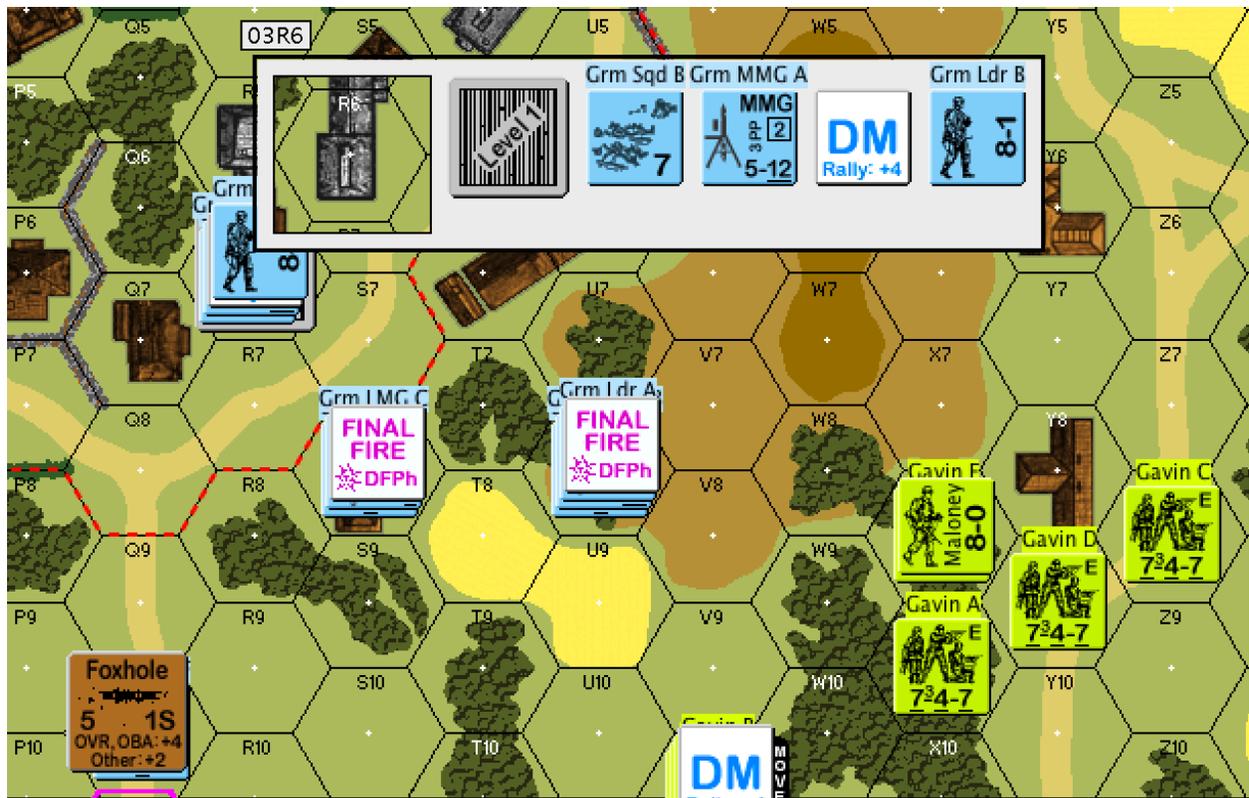
#### **Turn 4**

##### **American Turn 4**

RtPh: The American HS in H10 self rallies. More importantly, the Germans in R6.1 fail to rally.

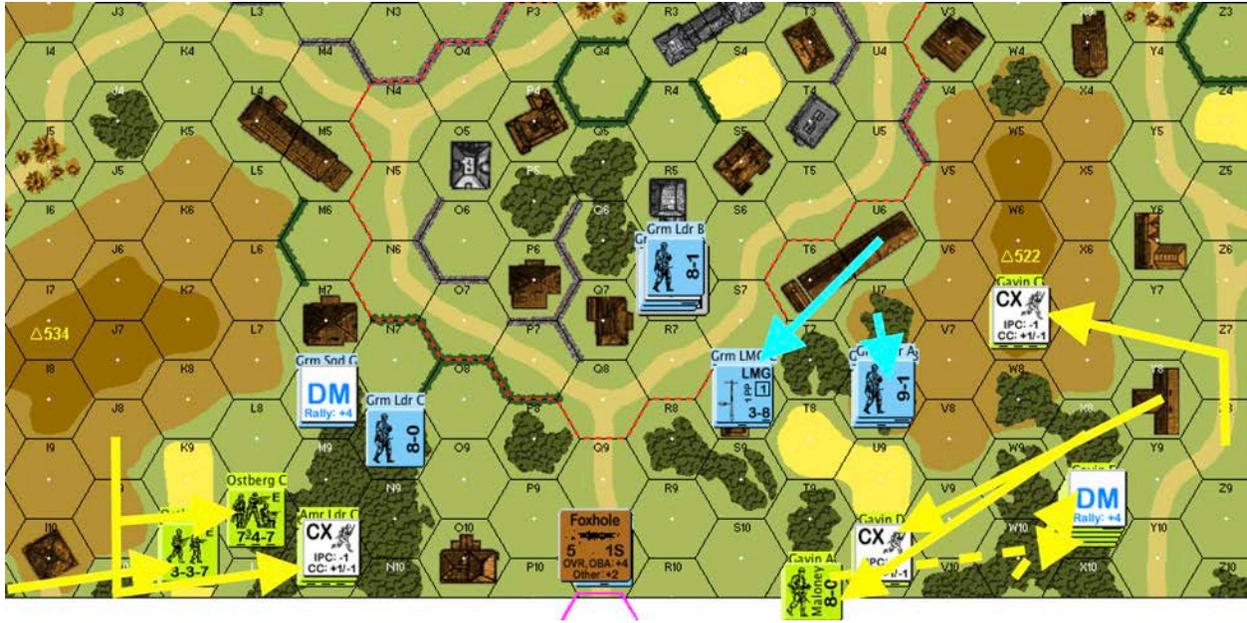
MPh: Americans in J9 successfully lay SMOKE in K9. Ostberg (and squad) in J8 go CX and use the Smokescreen to head south and east. The Germans in M8 have no choice but to try and shoot at them through the smoke. M8-J9, 4FP/+2 (+2 SMOKE, +0 Wheat not a hindrance because J9 is at LVL 1, -0 FFMO not in the open, +1 height advantage, -1 FFNAM). Germans DR '1-1' for COWER but also 1MC. Ostberg and squad make their MC. No residual FP is left in J9 due to the +2 SMOKE in K9. Ostberg continues to

Gavin has two squads in W10. Both attempt to lay SMOKE in V9 and dr are '4' and '4' for misses. 2MF. DFF S8-W10, 7FP/+3 for NE. 3.5FP/+3 for NE. Again, no residual FP is left in W10 due to the two wheatfield hexes. Gavin continues to V10 and now draws DFF from the units in U8-V10. Per Rules (B15.2), the Grain in U9 is only a hindrance to same level LOS. 9FP/-1, DR '6-3' for NMC. Gavin and squads pass MC. Germans fire again with SFF, 4.5FP/-1, DR '1-4' for 1MC and ROF. Per (A8.3) a multiple ROF weapon cannot retain ROF in SFF. (We have been playing that wrong in ASLSK for some time...). This time, Gavin BREAKS! The two squads with him, now with only 7 Morale, also break.



The rest of the American units, now facing Germans who are either broken or have already Final Fired, can race to take up better positions in the forest along T9 and T10.

AFPPh: Fire from J9 to M8 breaks the German unit.



End of American Turn 4. Gavin's charge from the east is repulsed; they retreat to the woods. Ostberg is having more success in the west – he's broken the only German unit that stands in his way – save the one German unit in the foxhole in Q10.

*Our own position along the edge of the road east of the bridge had become almost untenable because rifle and direct artillery fire coming from our right flank. Just as it was beginning to look as though we might have a stalemate, Col. Maloney was called back to La Fiere with all men available, leaving only about 34 men at Chef-du-Pont. Concurrent with his departure three things happened:*

*One, direct artillery fire on our positions around the creamery reduced our strength to 20 men; two, an observation point in the creamery noted what was estimated to be a company of Germans moving around to our left rear. This threat never materialized for they by-passed us in route to Ste. Mere Eglise where, though not known to us at the time, a battle was being waged by elements of the 505<sup>th</sup> for that important objective; three, an officer delivered a message from Gen. Gavin, "hold at all costs." It was pretty obvious that it couldn't cost much more, but at the same time, it was doubtful we could hold something we didn't have. Reinforcements were requested, and as from heaven, C-47s began to appear, dropping bundles of weapons and ammunition. One bundle of 60mm mortar ammunition dropped right in our laps. Within 30 minutes, the officer who had previously delivered the "hold at all costs" message returned with 100 men and a 57mm gun which was pulled into position on our side of the bridge. We started firing at the enemy field piece. I'm sure we didn't hit it, but we stopped the firing and that is what we had to do in order to survive. – Roy Creek.*

## German Turn 4

RPh: Germans with the MMG in R6.1 are rallied. That was a big DR for the Germans! Gavin fails to Self Rally in X9.

PFPPh: Q10-T10, 4FP/+1, DR '1-6' for PTC, Maloney and 7-4-7 units pass.

U8-U10, 9FP/-1, DR '2-4' for 2MC and ROF. American 7-4-7 passes. 5FP/-1, DR '2-4' for 1MC and ROF. Americans PINNED. 5FP/-1, DR '2-5' for NMC and ROF, Americans Pass. 5FP/-1, DR '6-5' for NE.

MPh: Germans AM S8-R8, squad moves R6.1 to Q7 (LVLO).

DFPh: L9-M8, 7FP/+1, for PTC – NE since already broken. Put back into DM.

T10-Q10, 7FP/+2 (Foxhole), NE

U10-U8, 3.5FP/+2, NE

W7-U8, 7FP/+2, NE

The rest of the turn plays out uneventfully.



End of Game Turn 4: Both sides trade shots but do no damage. The Germans shift a bit to the left to better position themselves for the American rush toward the center of the board.

It's now moving to Game Turn 5 – the Americans need to watch the clock. They only have 2 remaining phases to move at least 1 squad and leader through Q10 and into Q11. They also

need to think about leaving some forces behind to prevent the Germans from following. Garvin needs to quick breaking, get rallied, and get moving.

## Turn 5

### American Turn 5

RPh: Gavin (in X9) Self Rallies and understandably rallies all 3 units under his command.

MPh: Unit in L9 goes CX and moves to O10. DFF R8-O10, 7FP/+0, DR '6-6' and Germans get NE along with Mal's LMG.

K10(CX)-N9

M10(Ostberg)-P9. He has to charge this Foxhole and draw the fire to give Maloney or Gavin a chance to come at them from the other side. DFF Q10-P9, 8FP/-2, DR '6-5' for PTC. Oh, that really hurt. Ostberg and squad both pass PTC.

The squad in Q10 can't risk Final Protective Fire – if he breaks in the attempt, the hex will be abandoned. He opts to take his chances and perhaps tie up the Americans in CC.

U10-R9, PPF R8-R9, 4FP/-2, DR '3-1' for K/2. American squad is CR and breaks.

W7-U7, DFF T7-U7(pbf), 18FP/-1, DR '3-3' for 3MC. American squad breaks. The Americans threw this unit at the Germans to draw off their fire in another direction and tie them up to keep them from shooting at Gavin. The Germans could have chosen to ignore them, but a rush up to them at point blank range was too much to pass up.

Gavin, X9-T9.

AFPh: Ostberg, P9-Q10(pbf), 8FP/+0, DR '6-5' for NE

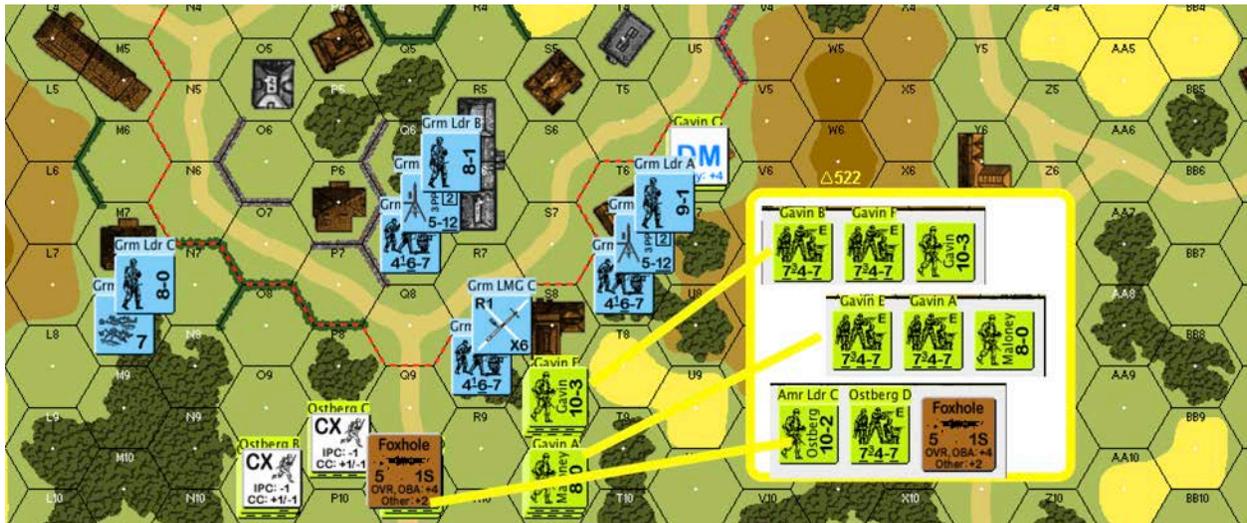
N9&O10(fg)-Q10, 10.5FP/+3, DR '2-4' for PTC. Germans PINNED.

Maloney, T10-Q10, 4FP/+2, NE

Gavin, T9-Q10, 15FP/-1, DR '5-3' for 1MC. Germans roll '4-6' and are broken and ELR'd.

RtPh: US U7-U6. Broken unit in R9 is forced to surrender to Germans in R8. Germans reciprocate with NO QUARTER and the American unit is eliminated.

For the Germans – is a Foxhole a legal rout destination? No, but it doesn't matter anyway, they're ADJACENT to the US in P9. They have nowhere to rout and are eliminated as well.



End of American Turn 5. They've taken over (and are now hunkered down in) the original German foxhole. It will come down to the German Prep Fire Phase and if they can break and then maneuver to prevent routing.

*At the beginning of this period of heavy shelling, I found myself exposed with no place to go. I spotted a very small brick sentry house just short of the bridge on our side. I made a dash for it and went inside and found a still burning enemy soldier, victim of a white phosphorous grenade, which apparently had been tossed in on him during earlier fighting. The house only had room for one man standing. So it became crowded with my arrival and the other guy in there wasn't going anywhere. This coupled with the fact that the smoke and stench from the burning man caused me to make a quick decision that I would rather take my chances out in the open than risk the consequences of smoke inhalation and besides I reasoned that this lone house was surely an aiming point for the artillery. With our reinforcements, strong positions were organized to our rear and along the flooded area on either side of the road and east of the bridge. The defenses were tied in with natural obstacles on three sides of us. We opened fire with every weapon we could get into position, including our 60mm mortar. On a prearranged signal, all fires lifted and ten men and one officer stormed the bridge and went into position on the western approach to guard the causeway. Five Germans made a run for it down the deathtrap causeway and were immediately shot down. That did it. The battle was over. The bridge was ours and we knew we could hold it. Bust as with all victories in war, we shared a let down feeling. We knew it was still a long way to Berlin. We began to organize and improve our position and tended to such pressing things as first aid to wounded, 25 in number who could not be evacuated because of a lack of any place to evacuate them. We gathered the bodies of the dead, Americans and Germans, and covered them with parachutes. D-DAY was almost over and it had gone fast and in a little while, it would be D+1. When would the beach forces come? They should have already done so. Maybe the whole invasion had failed. After all, we knew nothing of the situation except as it existed in Chef-du-Pont and Chef-du-Pont is a very small town. – Roy Creek.*

## **German Turn 5**

PFP: Q7-Q10, 9FP/+1, DR '4-6' for NE.

T7-S9, 9FP/+0, DR '2-4' for 1MC. Gavin passes as do his squads.

R8-Q10, 4FP/+2, NE

That's all the Germans can do – they threw everything they have at the Americans to no avail.

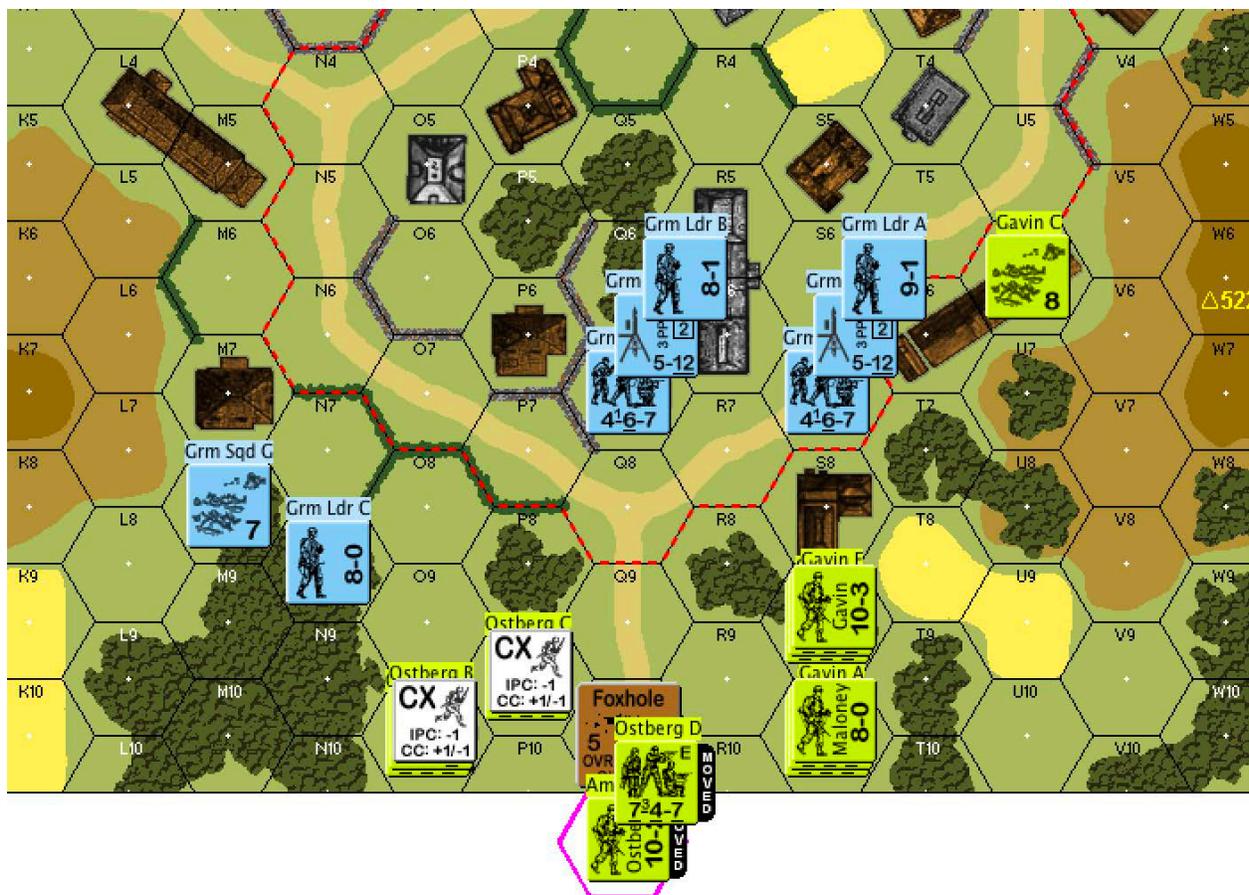
DFPh: Gavin KIA's the Germans next to him.

The Germans are out of options now. The game goes into the 6<sup>th</sup> Turn and the Americans have enough forces to exit the board AND defend the exit from advancing Germans

## **Turn 6**

### **American Turn 6**

American leader Ostberg and one 7-4-7 exit the board in the American MPh. There are enough other units defending the "gauntlet" down the Q hexrow road that the Germans cede the Scenario and the victory to the Americans.



Positions at the end of the game.

*At 2400 hours, our fears were dispelled. Reconnaissance elements of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division wheeled into our creamery yard complete with a few rations that they shared with us. As we dug in, and made ourselves comfortable for a turn at short naps, the smell of death, which was to be with us for a long time to come, had begun to permeate the night air. It was D+1 in Normandy. As I sat pondering the day's events, having been in command subsequent to Col. Ostberg's injury, I reflected upon the details of the fighting and the bravery of every man participating in it. Some had lost their lives, some others had been seriously wounded and lay inside the creamery, perhaps wondering if they would ever be evacuated. We had done some things badly, but overall with a hodgepodge of troops from several units who had never trained together as a unit, didn't even know one another, and were engaged in their first combat, we had done okay. We captured our bridge and held it.\* We knew we faced D+1 with confidence and anticipation.*  
 – Roy Creek.

**Result:** American Victory

### **Observations**

This was the closest ASL match we've yet to play – it came down to the final turn. The Germans just couldn't get decent rolls in the latter half of the match and their firepower wasn't enough to stop the Americans with leaders.

We regretfully didn't ever employ the German Panzerfausts. There were several opportunities near the end of the game – but with all of the excitement – my opponent forgot that this was a (hidden) tool at their disposal. It won't happen again.