

FLYING SIMULATORS

NEWSLETTER OF THE AF/D SOCIETY

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4

In case you haven't noticed, I've got a new typewriter. One of those fancy electric jobs (that way I can make more, faster, and better errors). It writes with the carbon ribbons which should print better.

This issue will complete the random combat charts from Mike Rowles and Glenn Larson. Hope you've enjoyed them. Andy Johnson continues his column. I have a new a/c card for the next installment of his column (Do-335A-1). Len Mumbower will begin a column on tactics and all kinds of other interesting stuff. I'll let him introduce himself in his premier article. John Ratznerberger continues his Wild Blue Yonder column and Roger Pittiglio will continue his column in the next issue.

OK. Now I'm going to drag out my old dusty soap box and stand on it to hold forth on Avalon Hill's revision of Air Force. To sum up my feelings, if you want another copy of AF/D or the Expansion Kit get it. now before the "new improved" version is foisted on the gaming public. I got a "play test kit for the new AF (as did some other Society members). The first thing that I noticed was that the data cards had been radically altered. Instead of being nice neat cards like we are all familiar with, the cards looked like refugees from a Walt Disney nightmare. They are arrayed in three multi-colored semi-circles. One each for altitude change, maneuvers and speed changes. They are very confusing. It took me several hours and a Philadelphia lawyer to sort of figure them out. A little more time and effort and I was able to grasp the cards. That accomplished, I started reading the rules. What a disappointment. Gone were the rules that smacked of the flavor of flying and fighting miles above earth. They had been replaced with the SPI legalese of Kevin Zucker. Totally devoid of life and flavor. OK, I've figured out the cards and struggled through the rules. After all the play is the thing, right. Well if the play of this revision is the thing, the thing ain't worth having. The simultaneous movement is gone. It has been replaced with a sequential movement system ala Air War. That would be fine as an option but the si-move system is completely gone. PBM and large multiplayer games would be impractical with the new system. FTF it would work fine with a couple of . a/c per side. As an option, it would be great but not as the only "sanctioned" option. I proceeded to write massive amounts of comments. I know there was approximately 100 pages of comments from John Ratznerberger, Roger Pittiglio and myself. I got a call from Zucker. After an initially heated confrontation, he convinced me that the comments would be carefully considered. Roger got a call as well and John got a letter from Don Greenwood that looked like it had been typed by an unskilled chimp with a handscrawled note apologizing for the new secretary in training. I'm beginning to wonder what kind of amateur outfit AH really is. Since that time, some two months ago, I have had no further communication with them. The most recent information I have from several sources indicate that Avalon Hill is going to print the game as it stands in Zucker's initial design. He has never even played the game. That he has the audacity to work on something he has no knowledge of is astounding. I have requested that all reference to the AF/D Society be removed from any play test credits as well as my name. I refuse to allow the name of the Society or my own to lend any credence to the revised game. I would also urge you to pick up a copy of AF/D now while you can still get the original. You should also urge your friends who may be interested in aerial warfare to get their copies now before the new, ruined version appears. Kevin Zucker has taken a silk purse and made a sow's ear out of it.

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WHAT THE HELL IS A BLOCK NUMBER ??

John Ratzenberger

This is a supplement to my Wild Blue Yonder series and gives a brief look at the aircraft designation scheme of the USAAF. As we shall see, consistent application wasn't one of its stronger points.

The basic scheme, prior to WW2, consisted of a 3-part identification - Type, Model Number, Model Letter. Type, for our purposes, was: P= pursuit, B= bombardment, A= attack and F= photo/recon. The Model Number reflected a sequential assignment within the Type, and the Model Letter was to reflect a major change in engine, propeller, armament, structure or equipment. Gaps in the Model Number & Letter sequences reflect basic a/c or models that never got past the idea/prototype stage. The beginnings of the Block Number scheme were already present as is shown by the P-39D-1 and D-2, reflecting an armament and an engine change respectively. However, when a change in propeller was made, the designations became F and G, respectively.

A prefix letter was possible. The prototype had an "X" prefix (ie, XP-18 or XP-47J). Prior to WW2 the usual sequence was to put out a specification to which manufacturers would supply paper or actual prototype aircraft. Those that got a tentative go-ahead, usually in the form of an order for i) service-test aircraft, got a "Y" designation (ie, YB-17). Although the "X" designation survived WW2, the "Y" disappeared quickly as many aircraft were ordered right off the drawing boards without any extended service tests prior.

The basic identification scheme didn't last long either, as the number of USAAF-requested or manufacturer induced changes and improvements threatened to exhaust the alphabet in no time. At that time, Block Numbers were introduced. At the same time, an additional 2-letter code was added to show who produced the aircraft. Thus the model Letter was to reflect major changes and the Block Number minor ones, although the P-47D was produced in both "turtle-deck" and "bubbletop" versions - surely a significant change. Block Numbers were to be issued by 5's, with the space in between to be used for field or depot modifications. This didn't always hold true (again, the P-47 Block Numbers). The problem of variant identification can be best illustrated by the following:

B17G-45-DL, B17G-55-VE, B1.7G-80-BO -- this reflects the same model of the B17G (introduction of staggered, enclosed waist-gun positions).

Further problems are caused by changes within a block - the USAAF might order 100 of a certain version, then request changes halfway thru - thus the last half of one block might be identical to the next block. The same can be said for Model Letters - ie, the last B17F's already had the B17G chin turret.

Serial numbers aren't much help as they were assigned by contract and earlier versions/blocks might have higher serial numbers than later ones simply bp. reason of who got the contract & when.

R.L.M.
by
ANDY JOHNSON

The variant, experimental, and prototype aircraft produced by the Third Reich offer the AF/D/X fan a wide variety of unusual (and sometimes masochistic) flying opportunities.

The FW-190A series was used to test many different armament packages. The A-8 types offered in the game provide just a few of those packages. Earlier A series offered many different payloads in an effort to make the FW-190 even more versatile.

The FW-190A-5/U14 and U15 were designated Torpedo Fighters. Only three of these aircraft were produced (2 U14, 1 U15) and their point value should reflect this rarity. The primary differences between the two were the type torpedo used. The U14 carried an LTF 5b, while the U15 carried the B&V LT 950 guided torpedo. There are many technical differences between the A-8 series offered in the game and the A-5 series. However, the only significant differences, in game terms, are the rate of climb and armament. The loaded modifiers for an A-8 apply to the A-5.

RATE OF CLIMB: .6 up to 14.9, .5 up to 24.9, above 25.0 use as printed.

ARMAMENT: This is what makes the U14 & U15 dangerous - to fly. These planes were stripped of all wing armament to reduce weight/wing loading. The only remaining armament was the fuselage mounted guns. These consisted of two MG 17, 7.9mm machine guns, with 1,000 rounds per gun. The MG 17 had a slightly higher rate of fire than the MG 131 found on the games' A-8 series, but the MG 131 was a 13mm gun with significantly more hitting power. To reflect this "powerhouse", delete all cannon and associated ammo, raise mg ammo to 7, and you should reduce the total gun factors from 4 to 3.

I've used this variant and it provides the German player a capability he lacked. It necessitates a change in tactics for old FW-190 pilots. You can't stay and fight because you can't really defend yourself against anyone.

In the near future I hope to provide data tables on the Do-335A-6 night fighter. This push/pull fighter had some outstanding characteristics and some unusual quirks. Enough for now, Cheers.

GAMES IN PROGRESS: The second mission of the Campaign Game that I am running. The first mission is over. There will be a report on that in the next issue or so. Virgil is still running his Demo Derby and Son of Demo Derby. John is still running a nightfighter scenario that anyone can get in on at any time. Write for details if you are interested. Chris Wendel is running a team dogfight that may have some openings. You can find his address and details on the game in a past issue. I don't know if there are any other games getting under way. If you are running one, thinking about running one or getting one under way let me know. I'll pass the word along and will be glad to print reports of action. Let me hear.

Pacific Theatre American

	12 1941	1-3 1942	4-6	7-9	10-12	1-3 1943	4-6	7-9	
USAAF	1-60	1-60	1-40	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	USAAF
USN / USMC	61-00	61-00	41-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	USN / USMC

USAAF									
P-36	1-40	1-30	1-22	-	-	-	-	-	Mohawk
P-40C	41-60	31-55	23-50	1-25	1-23	1-11	-	-	Tomahawk
P-40E	-	56-60	51-60	26-48	24-45	12-45	1-45	1-50	P-40E Warhawk
P-400	61-85	61-85	61-75	49-63	46-55	46-50	-	-	P-400 Airacobra
P-39D	86-00	86-00	76-95	64-85	56-72	51-65	46-53	-	P-39D Airacobra
P-39D-1	-	-	96-00	86-90	73-85	66-77	54-65	-	P-39D-1 Airacobra
P-38G	-	-	-	91-00	86-00	78-00	66-00	51-00	P-38G Lightning

USN/USMC									
F2A	1-30	1-30	1-25	-	-	-	-	-	F2A Buffalo
F4F	31-00	31-00	26-00	1-00	1-00	1-85	1-75	1-65	F4F Wildcat
F6F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66-75	F6F Hellcat
F4U-1	-	-	-	-	-	86-00	76-00	76-00	F4U Corsair

	10-12 1943	1-3 1944	4-6	7-9	10-12	1-3 1945	4-6	7-9	
USAAF	1-50	1-45	1-40	1-40	1-45	1-50	1-50	1-50	
USN / USMC	51-00	46-00	41-00	41-00	46-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	

USAAF									
P-40E	1-45	1-20	-	-	-	-	-	-	
P-40N	-	21-45	1-25	1-20	1-15	1-5	1-5	-	
P-38G	46-00	46-95	26-60	21-37	-	-	-	-	
P-38L	-	-	61-70	38-60	16-55	6-40	6-35	1-30	
P-47D	-	-	71-80	61-75	56-75	41-65	36-60	31-55	
P-51	-	96-97	81-82	76-77	-	-	-	-	
P-51A	-	98-00	83-85	78-80	-	-	-	-	
P-51B	-	-	86-00	81-00	76-00	66-90	61-75	56-70	
P-51D	-	-	-	-	-	91-00	76-00	71-00	

USN/USMC									
F4F	1-40	1-20	1-10	1-5	1-5	1-5	-	-	
F6F	41-60	21-55	11-55	6-55	6-50	6-50	1-50	1-47	
F4U-1	61-00	56-00	56-00	56-00	51-95	51-95	51-91	48-90	
F4U-1C	-	-	-	-	-	-	92-93	91-93	
F4U-4	-	-	-	-	96-00	96-00	94-00	94-00	

Pacific Theatre Japanese

	12 1941	1-3 1942	4-6	7-9	10-12	1-3 1943	4-6	7-9	
JAAF	-	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	JAAF
IJNAF	1-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	IJNAF

JAAF									
Ki-43	-	1-00	1-00	1-65	1-65	1-50	1-50	1-30	Oscar
Ki-44 -11b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31-50	Tojo -11b
Ki-45	-	-	-	66-00	66-00	51-90	51-90	51-70	Nick
Ki-61 -1a	-	-	-	-	-	91-00	91-00	71-95	Tony -1a
Ki-61 -1b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	96-00	Tony -1b

IJNAF									
A5M4	1-20	1-15	1-15	-	-	-	-	-	Claude
A6M2-21	21-00	16-00	16-60	1-90	1-90	1-90	1-95	01-55	Zeke
A6M2-21N	-	-	-	91-00	91-00	91-00	96-00	56-60	Rufe
A6M2-52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61-00	Zeke

	10-12 1943	1-3 1944	4-6	7-9	10-12	1-3 1945	4-6	7-9	
JAAF	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	1-50	JAAF
IJNAF	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	51-00	IJNAF

JAAF									
Ki-43	1-30	1-15	-	-	-	-	-	-	Oscar
Ki-44 -11b	31-50	16-40	1-30	1-25	1-20	1-15	1-10	1-10	Tojo - 11b
Ki-44 -11c		41-45	31-45	26-35	21-25	16-20	11-15	11-15	Tojo - 11c
Ki-45	51-70	46-60	36-40	26-29	21-24	16-19	16-19	16-17	Nick
Ki-61 -1a	71-95	61-80	-	-	-	-	-	-	Tony - 1a
Ki-61 -1b	96-00	81-95	56-75	-	-	-	-	-	Tony - 1b
Ki-61 -1ab		96-00	76-90	41-55	30-45	25-35	20-25	18-20	Tony - 1ab
Ki-61 -1c			91-95	56-65	46-60	36-45	26-35	21-30	Tony - 1c
Ki-61 -1d				66-70	61-65	46-55	36-60	31-55	Tony - 1d
Ki-84 -1a			96-00	71-90	66-85	56-70	61-70	56-65	Frank - 1a
Ki-84 -1b				91-00	86-95	71-85	71-85	66-85	Frank - 1b
Ki-84 -1c					96-00	86-00	86-00	86-00	Frank - 1c

IJNAF									
A6M2-21	1-55	1-15	-	-	-	-	-	-	Zeke - 21
A6M2-21N	56-60	16-20	-	-	-	-	-	-	Rufe - 21N
A6M2-52	61-00	21-70	1-40	-	-	-	-	-	Zeke - 52
A6M2-52a	-	71-90	41-70	1-45	1-35	1-26	1-20	1-15	Zeke - 52a
A6M2-52b	-	-	71-85	46-70	36-60	27-50	21-45	16-25	Zeke - 52b
A6M2-53c	-	-	-	-	61-65	51-60	46-60	26-55	Zeke - 53c
N1K1-11b	-	91-00	86-00	71-00	66-00	61-00	61-00	56-00	George

