

ASLOK IX 1994

Aslok '94 began for me on Saturday Oct 1st when Tim Wilson and his buddy Brian flew in from Wyoming. Nothing like getting started early (like 5 days early) and Bill Hayward and Pete Shelling were in my basement setting up Intimate War with me while we awaited the arrival of the out-of-towners. Their flight had been cancelled but they managed to shame the airline into getting them onboard the next flight and in 1st class, so their short delay was not too terribly intolerable for them. When they arrived I departed the Intimate War and jumped into The Predators with the new arrivals. This touched-off an 8-day game-athon which saw us whip through so many scenarios we lost all concept of time and sanity. By Tuesday morning we were finally loading up to head over to Youngstown for the Aslok event itself and of course we arrived there well ahead of everyone else and began playing in the motel room. After awhile the expected early arrival of Jim Turpin and Kevin Myers showed there was ASL life other than us. We played several games in the motel room on Tuesday and on Wednesday morning moved out to the main gaming rooms.

Throughout Wednesday more and more players were arriving so that by the evening there was a good sized crowd onhand, although not as many players as had been present on Wed evening in '93. The '94 crowd was down a bit from the '94 high of 150 or so, but Aslok '94 would still have a good crowd of about 125 players. By my count I played 15 scenarios from 10/1 (midnight) through 10/5. Not a bad start although a bit lower than expected. I realized playing at 41 is not what it was at 31; I cannot stay awake forever anymore.

Thursday morning was the official start of Aslok with the eight mini-Theme Tournaments. These are limited to 8 players each and were 3-round single elimination. The 64 spots filled immediately for events of: DYO, 1944, KGP, Partisan, Deluxe, Night plus two others I don't recall. I ran the DYO and played in the Deluxe. Steve Pleva won my DYO tournament and I managed to win the Deluxe. The 8 winners each received a nice Aslok plaque as well as credit for 2 wins towards the big weekend tournament. Friday I was Germans against Perry Cocke (who had won the Night Theme) in Blocking Action at Lipki and figured this would end any chance I had to go anywhere in the win column, but I managed to nail two of his tanks (the BT's) and Immobilized the KV with my 28LL (it's a 15 TK# adjacent with that APCR and I think Perry was not aware it was so lethal when he tooled-up adjacent). Then the T-34 MA rolled "12" and the Russian infantry had to try to run across the open of board #4 in the face of fire from all 4 of my Panzers as well as my 9-2 boys. Not a pretty sight and I was quickly 3-0. Then I played John McDairmid who was a new opponent for me but who was also sporting a 3-0 record. I had British in Royal Marines and my dice wasted his defense. Next up was 3-0 Louis Tokarz with me as Germans in Lash Out. I had never played Louis and he played a very good game here but in the end my 12 (+5) shot through grain nailed his 9-2 leader (Greenwood) and I was able to exit for the win.

I was sitting at 5-0 and noone else was up to 4-0 yet so Fish (Grofaz) wanted me

to stop playing for "real" so I played Les Cramer a game for fun. Les is from Australia and the game of Shatterling The Line we played was the most fun game I played during all of Oktoberfest week. The dice were absolutely insane. What made it even more humorous was that we were playing alongside John McDairmid who had suffered so horribly by my dice earlier. This time, however, Les was rolling my dice too and in my own dice tower! Yikes, we were both rolling numbers which were flaming. This scenario, like so many others played there that weekend, was from the new publication Backblast, which has eight good-looking scenarios in it. Of course the CH scenarios were also getting play and even Kurt Martin showed up late Saturday with a Rout Report and eight scenarios printed on hard card stock. The scenarios from these publications were getting the majority of play but the one scenario everyone seemed to be playing was The T-Patchers, one of those last few printed by ASLUG but which never appeared in an issue.

I got the impression Fortenberry will be putting some of the better scenarios into The Annual and The General so anyone getting all of the ASL publications is headed for some duplication, but having these things in hand is certainly a wise choice over waiting to see if the Annual/General will ever print them or any other ASL material. Backblast looks very good - I encourage everyone to get it. At \$5 it can't be beat.

On to Saturday in the tournament I was up against Steve Flicker and had Germans in Shootout At Singling pairing two 5-0 records. I thought death was coming for sure when my first two PF shots at Shermans both failed to hit by "1" pip each and my PzV MA rolled "12" followed by Steve's BAZ TH DR of "2". But the Panther crew bailed out, ran around to find a PF and flamed a Sherman. Then my ATG flamed one. Then my 2nd Panther entered and flamed one. The U.S. infantry were scared to cross the street even though they had me way outgunned and when a Sherman MA rolled "12" even my JgPz got brave and drove up to flame that one as well. What should have been a solid U.S. win turned into a rout and I had made it to 6-0. Once again noone else was up to 6-0 yet so I spent the rest of the day waiting for someone to catch-up. McGrath eventually scored a couple quick wins against players who had taken some losses while I was waiting to play undefeated players (go figure), and made it to 7-0 past both Steve Pleva and me. So Sunday morning Steve and I squared-off at 6-0 to play The Sledgehammer with me as US. We both had picked Germans (both wanted those tanks!!) and for losing the DR I got one extra squad. It didn't matter though for Steve's guys skated through all my fire for what turned out to be an easy win for him. I couldn't hurt his stuff; one kill on a Tiger from a frontal BAZ shot was my only highlight. So Steve and McGrath played Hill 621 for about 13 hours for the championship and McGrath won.

Oktoberfest was a lot of fun and I was surprised to get sucked-up in the idea once again of trying to win the thing. But once a few wins roll in I guess it's just too tempting to not try for it. The real fun is just in being there amongst all the others who love the game. After my "quest" was ended I played a couple more games with some of the regulars I seem to play every year, Jim Collier, Dirk Heinz, Russ Hall and so on. I'm getting older and sleeping more so my total # played was down a bit, but from 10/2 through 10/9 I played 26 games. I hope you'll all be there in 1995 for ASLOK #10.