ORIGINS OF THIRD REICH

By Robert Ott

In the olden days, say around 1964-72, before the existence of 300+ games on every conceivable subject, it was popular to devise ways of blending your favorites AH games together to arrive at a more strategic viewpoint in fighting World War II. Success in your AFRIKA KORPS game improved your chances in a follow-up game of D-DAY and so on. Not much of that is done nowadays due to the availability of games utilizing a much larger scale— grand strategic monsters like THIRD REICH for example. But as Robert Ott demonstrates below, the concept of combining games to alter all too familiar circumstances is far from dead and still offers some intriguing variations of our old favorites.

On September 1st, 1939, the Germans launched their blitzkrieg through Poland. Sixteen days later, the Russians invaded Poland from the east. When Poland capitulated at the end of the month, the western half of the country, including most of her mines and factories, went to Germany. The other half, along with her oil resources, went to the Russians. This is the situation at the beginning of a *THIRD REICH* game, but does it always have to be that way? In *ORIGINS OF WORLD WAR II*, the above is an example of a shared control of Poland between Germany and Russia. It has also set some rusty gears turning in this mind for a new *THIRD REICH* variant.

The basis of this variant is to play a game of *ORIGINS* before your game of *THIRD REICH*. Some rather interesting situations can be determined by following the suggestions below. Positioning of Control and Understanding counters could greatly influence your play in *THIRD REICH*. For each area in *ORIGINS*, the effects of Control and Understanding counters are as follows:

Alsace-Lorraine—If France alone has a Control counter, there is no effect. If France and Germany share control, France loses 10 BRP from her Base level. If Germany alone has control, France loses 20 BRP from her Base level. If there is no control. France loses 20 BRP from her BRP level for 1939 only.

Austria—If the German does not have a Control counter, he loses 20 BRP from his Base BRP level, and may not set up in Austria (see the amended map). Austria

becomes a minor neutral worth 20 BRP, with its capital at Vienna, and an army of three 1-3's.

Baltic States—if the Russian alone has a Control counter, there is no effect. If the German has sole control, he may set up in the Baltic States at the beginning of the game, and has 10 BRP added to his Base BRP level. If Germany and Russia share control. Russia may invade as usual, splitting the 10 BRP with Germany. If there is no control, the Baltic States are a minor neutral and may not be entered without a Declaration of War (*DoW*) separate (for Russia) from the DoW for east Poland and Bessarabia (Rumania).

Britain—If the French player has no Understanding with Britain, France loses 15 BRP from its Base BRP level.

Czechoslovakia—If the German player has no Control, he loses one 4-6 armor unit from his 'At Start' forces, and 20 BRP from his Base BRP level. He may not set up in Czechoslovakia (see map). Czechoslovakia becomes a minor neutral with its capital at Prague, an army of one 2-5 armor and two 2-3 infantry units, and is worth 20 BRP.

France—If the British player has no Understanding counter here, he loses 15 BRP from his Base level.

Germany—If the Russian player has no Understanding counter here, he loses 15 BRP from his Base level.

Italy—If Germany has no Understanding with Italy, Italy may not declare war on the Allies before Fall 1940, and the German loses 10 Base BRP.

Poland—If Germany has sole control, or if there is no control, the German does not have to "share" Poland with the Russian. Poland is then worth 30 BRP. If the Russian has sole control, the German may invade as usual, but all restrictions of a Russian DoW on Germany are lifted. Thus. Russia may declare war on Germany at any time. The German may avoid this however, by invading another minor neutral to start the war, Yugoslavia, for example. If Germany and Russia share control, there is no effect.

Rhineland—If the German does not control the Rhineland, he loses 25 BRP from his Base level.

Romania—If Germany has sole control, Russian units may not enter Bessarabia (territory between front dividing line and

Romanian-Russian border). If the Russian has sole control, Romania is no longer a German minor ally, and thus the German cannot prevent a Russian invasion simply by placing a unit there. In either of the above cases. Romania is worth 20 BRP as a whole country. If there is no control, or if Germany and Russia share control, there is no effect.

Russia—If Germany has no Understanding counter there, he loses 15 BRP from his Base figure.

United States—if Britain has no Understanding counter there, he loses 20 Base BRP's as the elimination of options 5, 7 and 8 on the Allied Minor Variation Chart.

As stated in the *ORIGINS* rules, the Second World War starts if Germany or Russia has over 15 points at the end of the Origins game. If neither country has the necessary points, the war begins as usual, except that Germany must pay for both the DoW and the Offensive Option. The rest of the situation is determined by the counter placements in the *ORIGINS* game.

The following is an explanation for the results and effects of the placement of the ORIGINS counters, area by area:

Alsace-Lorraine—In A-L, France would have to exert a lot of pressure to keep the largely *German* population quiet. The outcomes represent varying amounts of German pressur and covert activities, and the French response to them.

Austria—These outcomes represent whether or not the Germans can successfully achieve union with Austria, and, if not, the loss of the Austrian work force and industry.

Baltic States—This represents the battle for control (political) between Germany and Russia.

Britain—While perhaps there is no historical reason for the French loss of BRP, it prevents the unrealistic tactic of "ganging-up" on Germany by the Allies.

Czechoslovakia—The German loss of BRP represents the lack of control of the Czech industry and the Skoda arsenal, and the loss of the 4-6 armor unit represents the lack of the Czech T-38 tanks should the German not occupy the country.

Russia—This result is to prevent the German from concentrating solely on Control counters.

United States—This result shows the loss of
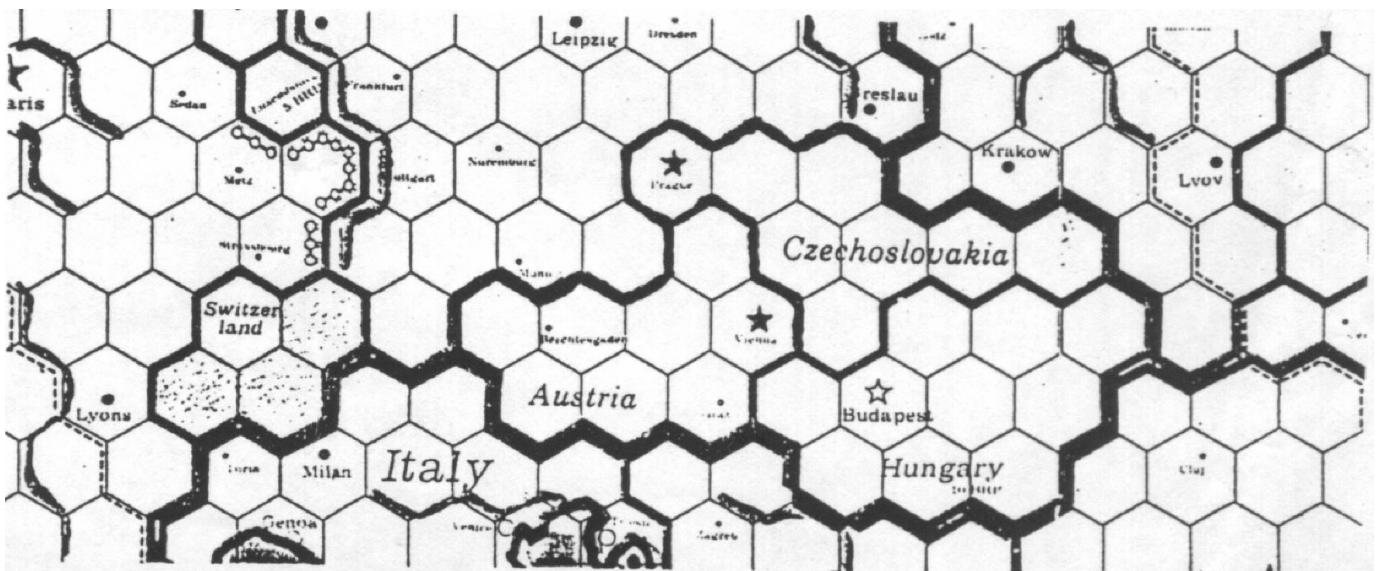
British support in the United States, and also prevents "ganging-up" on the German.

Now, let us take an example. The results of the Origins game are thus:

United States—2 points, for Britain.

France—8 points, for a Control in Alsace-Lorraine, and an Understanding with Germany.

Britain— 14 points. Understanding in France, Germany, and the United States.

Russia— 13 points, for an Understanding in Germany; and Controls in Poland and Romania.

Germany—17 points, for Understandings in Russia and Italy, and for Controls in Austria, the Baltic States, Czechoslovakia, and the Rhineland.

The initial set would be this:

United States—No change

France—Starts the game with 70 BRP.

Britain—No change

Russia—No BRP change, but notice that the Russian may not enter the Baltic States (because of sole German control), but may take all of Poland if the German does not invade, and he may take all of Romania.

Germany—The German starts the game with 160 BRP, but may not invade Poland at the beginning of the game without risking Russian intervention. He may, if he wishes, attack another minor neutral to start the war.

Notice that the possibilities are endless, making for a very unique and enjoyable game (as if normal 3R wasn't good enough!) each time it is played. True, Italy has to sit out of the Origins game, but to those who find that distasteful, Italy may be included, given PFs and objectives by mutual consent of the players. But that is beyond the scope of this article. The purpose of this article is not to offer a definitive set of rules, but to give suggestions that may be changed to suit what each individual feels is enjoyable, playable, and. within reason, historically accurate.