
Newsletter №5

Dear Gamers!

I'm preparing for the upcoming Beta-test starting in April/May 2008 with the following news:

Countersheets: 90% of all unit-counters are ready. Some silhouettes on air & naval units are still missing (they are not so important for the Beta-test at this point and have therefore a low priority right now).

Mapboard: The mapboard needs more work and the Beta-testing will definitely reveal if the size of the mapboard is enough. I hope so, because even if I like large maps, it will certainly slow down the project to make it, let's say 40% larger. That's the highest I can go without the need of changing values on units. I have decided to use the same map for the vol.3 Lapland War as for the vol.2 Continuation War, due to the fact that I have to cut down some expenses. The map will include all necessary info for both games.

Order of Battle: The Winter War OOB is pretty much ready for Beta-testing. Continuation War & Lapland War needs an additional month. Continuation War OOB are ridiculously huge and therefore takes a lot of time and effort. Many front-units of all nationalities are constantly changing their names and values.

Rules: I need to re-write all the rule ideas from various Post-it notes (and what not) into a nice understandable rules manual. I also have to decide what rules will be optional (advanced) and what should include in the basic rule mechanism.

Other: Front cover for vol.2 is slowly evolving to a nice picture and should be ready within a month.

I have decided to form five Beta-test groups (one of them being in Finland). Each group with four gamers, with a total of twenty testers, which I find enough. After I have made contact with each group, I will send the Winter War unit-counters and OOB's to each of them at the end of April. Unfortunately they will come uncut (maybe not even on cardboard). So while the test groups are busy with the unit-counters, I will have additional time to prepare both the mapboard and rules. These will be send at the end of May. Even the mapboard will come in small pieces (A4). All this to make it easier to send them per mail.

The Alpha-testing has advanced slowly recently for various reasons. Only one meeting per week and sometimes even none. This has put us behind the schedule a great deal. I will change this in the next week, or so by adding one or two additional gamers who feel they have time with maybe two meetings every week. Alpha testing will continue until the start of Beta-testing. All rules are not properly tested yet.

When I started this game-project back in 2003, I had a clear vision on how I wanted these games to be. Even though this game-project has grown a lot since then, the main objective and goal still remains. I want to make these games as best as I can, based on what I believe is important in a good wargame: Good design, historically correct, accuracy in all game components, interesting-, well balanced rules with a good mix of what is already available, added with your own ideas as a personal touch and finally last but not least, a good feeling. That is for me created by incorporating many small things, interesting details if you will. There are quite many of these in my games to come. Many unit-counters for example, will have a background image. When I decided how I wanted these background images to be, it never really occurred to me that there would be any problems. -"Hey, I'm only following the history here". It turned out that a few gamers and publishers didn't really think it was a good idea to include images of swastikas in the games. I should have waited a little longer before removing them, to see further reactions, but my uncertainty took over. I removed them, but was not happy about it because in this way we deny them. It has come to my understanding that all swastikas, despite color, shape or background, are treated equally in communities where they are illegal, even though they had nothing to do with Nazism. The example is of course the Finnish blue (no Nazi) swastika used by their airforce 1918-1945. Since the removal of the Finnish swastika is out of question, I might as well put back the German counterparts as well. My games are illegal in some countries and communities anyway. Sorry for my rather confusing behaviour :-).

If you have any comments or questions of the news on this newsletter, please mail me at:
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Until next time.

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