

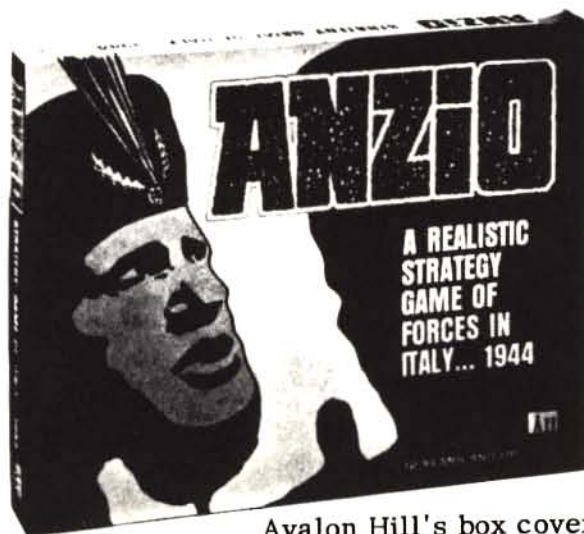
If Looks Could Kill Dept.

Redmond Simonsen, a graduate of Cooper Union and an artist and illustrator by profession, has done some recent work on Avalon Hill game packaging. He did not, obviously, have anything to do with ANZIO's.

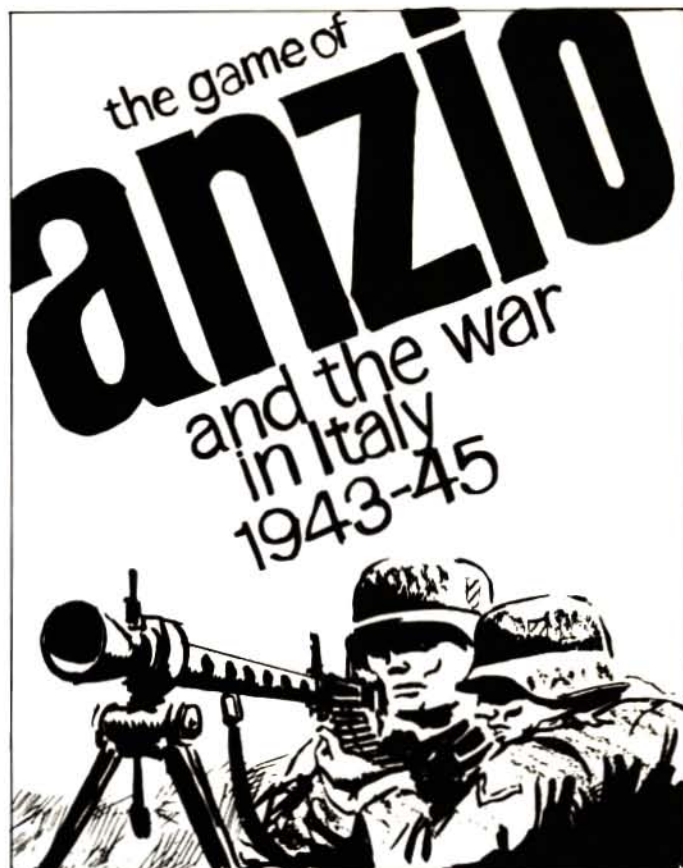
There's one thing every wargamer can do to improve the box-cover art on his copy of ANZIO: spray it with three or four coats of white paint and do it over. Don't let the fact that you may not be a professional artist stop you — it didn't stop Avalon Hill. One of the sure things in life, along with death and taxes, is the sheer mind-bending awfulness of the box-art in question. Avalon Hill has graced its packages with losing designs before this (e.g., BLITZ, Battle of the Bulge) but without a doubt this latest abortion is a shining triumph of vulgarity without peer.

Not only are the colors ghastly, the design crude and the treatment heavy-handed but the "concept" is so irrelevant as to be laughable. Whatever possessed AH to use Mussolini as the primary image will forever be beyond our understanding. (Historical Aside to Avalon Hill: Mussolini was out of power almost two months before the Allies invaded.)

Of course you can't tell a game by its cover, but you can and do sell a game by its cover. AH will never know the full sales potential of this not-so-bad game because its package will be such a negative influence. Accompanying this article is a rough sketch of an alternate cover for ANZIO. It is simply an "off-the-top-of-my-head" idea. But the elements of impact and clean design are there. Wouldn't you rather look at that than at the original ANZIO cover everytime you take the game out



Avalon Hill's box cover for their ANZIO game. They won't admit who did it...



Proposed alternative box cover design for Avalon Hill's game of ANZIO (finished design would be in color, the above is only a preliminary sketch).

to play? Wouldn't someone new to wargaming rather buy a game that looks like that as opposed to one with a sloppy portrait of Mussolini inanely conforming to a dubious map of Italy? Really!

Alas, once one opens the horrible box all his visual trials are not over! The mapboard has to have been drawn with only one possible implement: a banana dipped in diesel-oil. French curves, mapping pens and draftsmen's tapes do exist Avalon Hill! Really! Other hints: select your map and counter colors in a room with the lights on so you'll be able to see that distinguishably different colors are possible with four-color process. Also, when you say "terrain-changes never coincide with hex-sides" let your mapmaker in on it.

Of course, the OA cards are visual delights and models of graphic organization (Ho Ho!). After several thousand years of reading left-to-right, Western Man is presented with the ANZIO TRC cleverly designed to read right-to-left just to keep us on our toes — and what history fan wouldn't be charmed by the backward swastikas on said TRC.

We don't actually expect The Avalon Hill Company to commission Andrew Wyeth to execute their box-art or employ professional cartographers for their map-work. We just expect a little sensitivity, a little common-sense organization and a little taste.