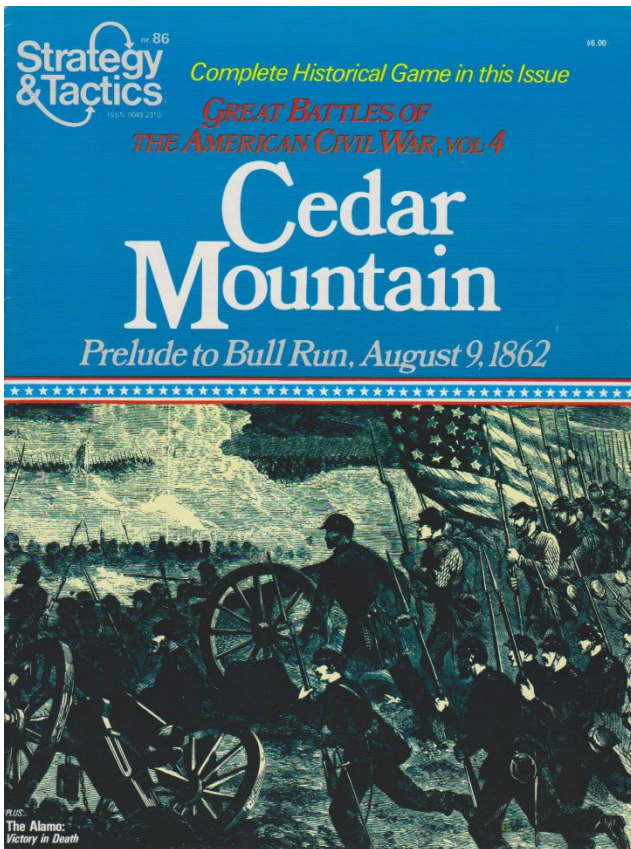# Cedar Mountain
GBACW Volume 4, SPI Games, 1980
Defining Union Strategy for Victory

Cedar Mountain – August 9, 1862

(Background comments provided by Russ Gifford)

This is the fourth volume of the *Great Battles of the American Civil War* series, and the second one to appear in S&T. Third, if you count the very popular effort with **Stonewall: Battle of Kernstown** as the first. (**Stonewall** was the experiment, and the rules were more akin to **TSS** – but not enough to cause any difficulties in play.)

Cedar Mountain offers an equally action-packed game to the **Kernstown** battle -- and it offers a rematch between Banks and Stonewall from that game. (Co-designer David Bush says their working subtitle was *"Sequel to Kernstown"* as they purposely wanted the same feel to the action. Also they started work on **Cedar Mountain** BEFORE the concept or the Basic rule set for the "Great Battles" series started!)

A nice touch is that at **Cedar Mountain,** these old enemies find their situation reversed! **Cedar Mountain** begins with the Union racing forward to attack the Rebel columns as they march onto the board. The play will devolve to pitched battles for the top of the hill for most of the game. The pace is fast and exciting!

The early part of the battle is with the speedy Union brigades under Williams and Auger, who surge forward to attack (and with the intention to rout) Early's luckless lead brigade. But while the surprise might undo Early and the other two CSA front-line Brigades who are relatively weak, all that will change quickly. Stonewall sends a message to AP Hill who had recently taken charge of the 'Stonewall brigade.' Closer to a 'flying division' these veterans change everything when they reach the field. The Union brigades will have already taken losses in their early efforts, and they have no reinforcements coming.

The question of victory in this game will greatly depend on how much damage the Union does early on, and how much they sustain before these crack veterans reach the field. Can the Union hold on long enough to win the game when their well-used brigades see these fresh troops arrive? Do they have enough left to fight a successful fighting withdrawal?

Add to that the reality that Ewell is leading two large, but poorly armed brigades into the draw between the two hills. Where the Confederate player places them, and how well they fare will decide if the Union is cut off before they can retreat!

Essentially, from almost the start of Cedar Mountain, the shooting never stops! And with the Victory Point hexes that loom large in the game, melees are almost a given, even when the odds are not optimal!

Below is a look at the focus of the battle, without the troops, so you can see the situation and where the battle gets its name.

This is a look at the map and counters at the end of turn two. The six Union brigades started in the numbered flagged areas at the top of the map;
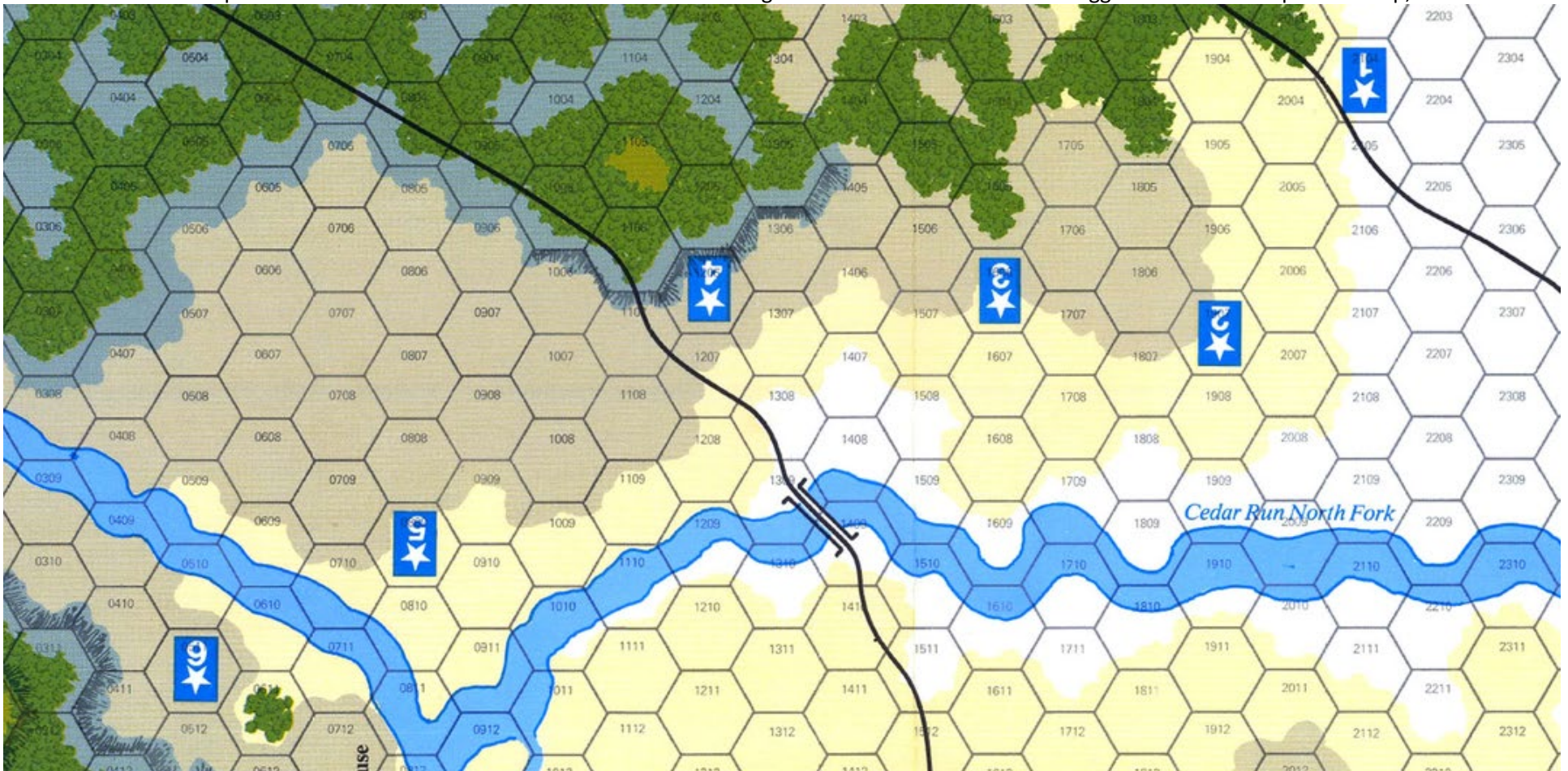
The Union Player can set up the brigades in their assigned location. The Regiments are free to set up in any formation they choose, as long as they are adjacent to the marked hex location.

The CSA starts entirely off board, and marches on, as per the reinforcement schedule. While the CSA is the second player, there is no Union Player Turn 1, so the CSA moves on board, then Turn two starts, and the Union makes their first move. Then the Rebels. The rest of the turns unfold normally!

Turn 1 – Union Set up: Note Command Control: Auger must be within 5 hexes of each of his leaders or they will be out of command.

The OOB designates which troops set up at which position.

Below – NOTE a BIG mistake – Flip Bayard's troops to Mounted Cavalry before this starts!!!

Also note, *Williams is within 6 hexes of his two leaders.*

And in both pictures, each Brigade leader, (Gordon, Crawford, Bayard in this one and Greene, Prince, and Geary in the previous one) is within their Brigade Leadership Radius as well.

Thus, when the Command Control phase starts, all Brigade Leaders will be in command of their Leaders, and all troops will be in Brigade Command. Everyone will be able to move! (But this is just the setup phase. The Union has to skip their turn 1 completely according to the **Cedar Mountain** Exclusive rules.)
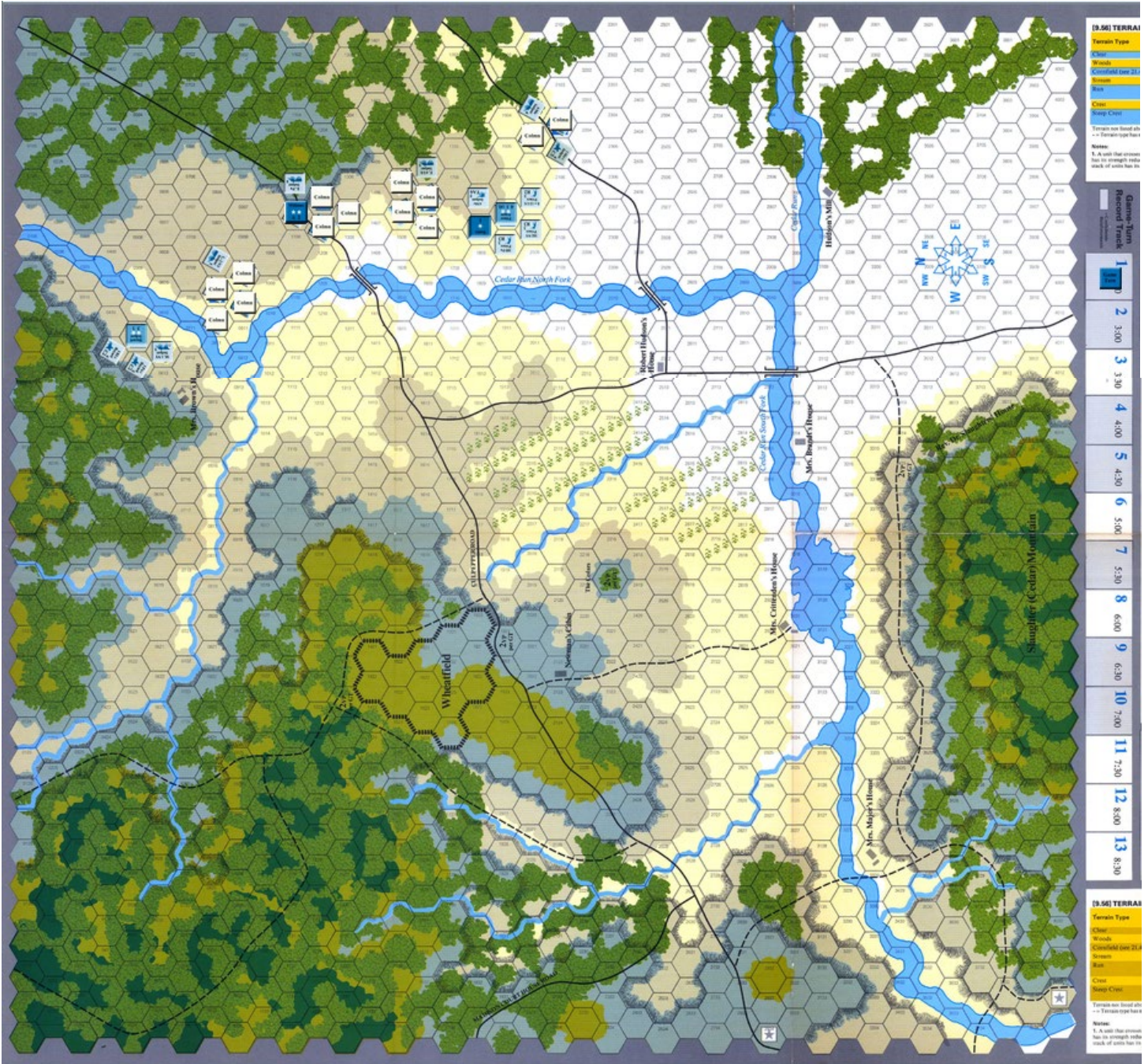
Above – Union set up for this game. Players can set up the brigades in their assigned location, in any formation they choose. Thus, the cavalry is mounted, the artillery are all limbered and on a road if possible, and the other regiments are in column if they see a road movement in their future, or in line to save the later formation change cost.

As the CSA lines up and comes in from off-board, one of the draws to **Cedar Mountain** is the fast setup and quick early moves. Those first few moves might be similar from game to game – but early choices of where the Union sends his troops, or which way the CSA decides to send Ewell's forces on turn 2 gives it the feeling that you can 'choose' different strategies and see the differences that makes as the game unfolds. In that, it has a chess-like feel, and one can play the game many many times, hoping to solve the puzzle of this tricky situation!

Whole map follows:

TERRAIN KEY

Level 1–0 Feet	Level 2–25 Feet	Level 3–50 Feet
Level 4–75 Feet	Level 5–100 Feet	Level 6–125 Feet
Road	Trail	
Woods	Cornfield	US Deployment
CSA Entry Hex	Stream	Run
Bridge	Lake	
Building	2VP per GT	Fence
Crest	Steep Crest	A unit in a hex with two types of terrain occupies the lower elevation.

The Order of Battle shows us which troops enter on which turns and which hexes.

NTAIN EXCLUSIVE RULES, PAGE 4

CONFEDERATE OB ROSTER
INFANTRY BRIGADES

Designation	Game-Turn/ Hex of Entry	Brigade Combat Effectiveness Limit
Jackson ☐	2/2934	
Winder ☐	2/2934	
Ronald ☐	5/2934	6 of 10
Repl ☐		☐☐☐☐☐ = 16 VP's
		☐☐☐☐
Garnett ☐	2/2934	4 of 7
Repl ☐		☐☐☐☐ = 10 VP's
		☐☐☐
Taliaferro ☐	2/2934	7 of 13
Repl ☐		☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 14 VP's
		☐☐☐☐☐

VP's (left margin)

Designation	Game-Turn/ Hex of Entry
Early ☐	1/2934
Repl ☐	

This shows that Early's troops will enter on game turn 1 on hex 2934. You can put them in any order you wish – and yes, that includes cannons at the front – if you want to lose them. Historically, artillery brought up the rear of the columns, but you are in command. *Remember they are not tanks.*

Off Board Entry

Units must enter on the designated hex.

Colmn

52 Va

Early Indpnt
6 2 (5)

12 Ga Early
5
R4

13 Va Early
5
R4

58 Va Early
5
M2
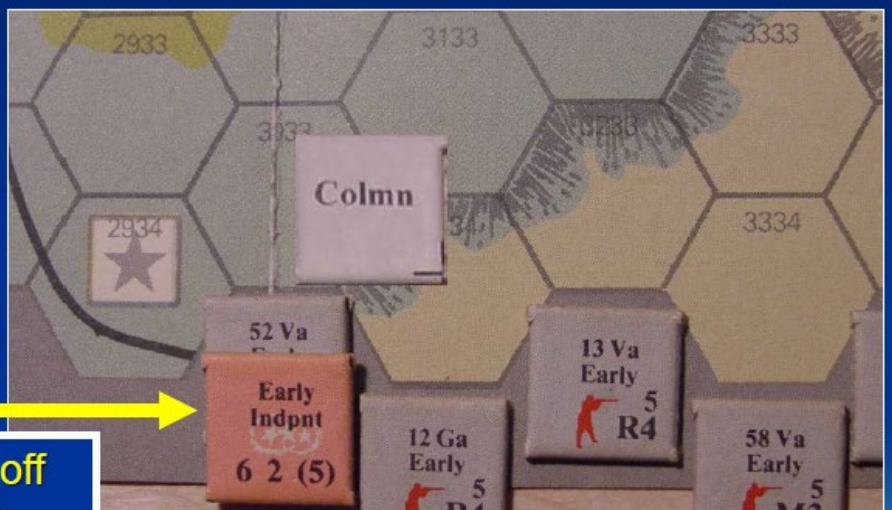
These troops are off board, in column, preparing to enter on hex 2934

Above: Turn 1, CSA forces line up OFF BOARD (13 VA I, 25 VA, 52 VA and 4 MD are NOT on the map, but like the others, on the gray area off the map edge.)
Early's column, all infantry units in column, and the arty limbered, enters on the marked (starred) hex in 2934. SPI rules traditionally have reinforcements enter this way, where the off-board units will pay a cost off the board as if they were in a column stretching down the road. So the lead unit under the column marker, is paying a half point, and thus will reach 2326, with all the additional units continuing along behind.

Ewell's Division, with Trimble and Forno's Brigades in the lead, enter nearby on hex 4032. This is a different trail, and if followed will take them along the edge of Cedar Mountain. All infantry units are in column – *and infantry units in column cannot stack.* The artillery are limbered, and Ewell is still down the trail behind them. As the trail costs for Infantry in column are 1 MP, only 6 units from this group will be able to enter the board this turn!

Victory in Cedar Mountain:

In Cedar Mountain, each side earns victory points by:

- Causing Casualties
- Capturing troops/guns/leaders
- Capturing and holding terrain

VICTORY POINT HEX POSSESSION

Victory Point Hex

GAME-TURN	2319	1921	1323	3415
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

HOW TO
The OB Rost
fered by each
federate unit
time an infan
equal to the
section of

The majority of half the battle will revolve around this area in the middle of the map, because of these victory point hexes. The enemy forces will approach each other near this center area of the board, and the first half of the game will be the contest between the momentary advantage of the Union in terms of forces on the board, vs. the continually growing strength of the Confederate forces. Much will depend on the Union forces inflicting damage on the Rebel brigades while avoiding similar damage to their own troops. By turn 10 - and perhaps earlier if they do not badly damage the early CSA brigades - the Union will be forced to defend as the original Stonewall Brigade arrives under AP Hill. They cannot stand their ground against this force.

Victory Point Hexes

The Terrain Victory Point (VP) hexes award 2 VPs per hex to whichever side controls them at the end of the CSA player turn. Neither side has them at the start, and it takes a few turns to reach them. After that, the points accrue to the player that last passed though or occupied the hex.

The positioning of the VP hexes force both sides to contest the center. To cede the victory point hexes too early to the CSA would be the end of the Union's chances. The same is true for the Rebels – they have to try to get the hexes or they allow the Union to mount an enormous lead in points!

There are also casualty victory points (CVPs), 1 per infantry strength point lost, 2 for cavalry or gun, and doubled if captured. But of more importance is the Victory Points awarded for wrecking brigades! Each side also gets a big VP bonus if they inflict enough casualty losses on a brigade that it loses Brigade Combat Effectiveness. (It is BCE'd). In fact, a KEY to the Union victory chances is to close early and inflict a loss of Brigade Combat Effectiveness on the first CSA brigades to reach the battlefield.

Early's Brigade, if it loses BCE, is worth 30 VPs to the Union! Out of Winder's troops, Garnett's small Brigade only needs to lose 400 men to net an added 10 VPs for BCE loss. Ronald needs only 600, and Taliaferro 700. Should the Union manage to hit all of the "early arrivals" hard - ESPECIALLY Early, who needs to lose 800 men – that would be a threefold gain for the Union. (As you are awarded the CVPs and the BCE bonus VPs together.)

Causing BCE loss to enemy brigades!

Designation	Game-Turn/ Hex of Entry	Brigade Combat Effectiveness Limit
Early ☐	1/2934	8 of 16
Repl ☐		☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 30 VP's
		☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

But remember, in GBACW games, you can rarely avoid 'trading losses.' Unless you are able to breakthrough and surround a unit, forcing a major surrender if it has to retreat, it is hard NOT to trade CVPs when you exchange shots and engage in Melee.

For the Union, only Gordon and Crawford are strong enough to trade and not become BCE'd themselves.

So – The Strategy for the Union:

Focus on knocking out Early, Garnett, and Ronald. And get the hell out of there!
The Bonus: Once a unit is BCE'd in **Cedar Mountain**, he may NOT purposely enter an enemy ZOC. So IF you focus on causing the brigade to LOSE BCE, it becomes a paper tiger. Better you can threaten to bag the whole unit if they are not careful! If a BCE unit in a Rout / Retreat is forced to enter a ZOC, he surrenders – which is double victory points per strength point surrendered!

But do not think this will be easy. It isn't.

But it is also the reason so many think it is completely out of the Union's hands to win.

Point two on the strategy is – you have to hold Ewell's Division, with Trimble and Forno's Brigades, as far back as possible.**
In my experience, if Ewell's troops can go where they want, you lose. It is that simple. But holding them back is not painless. It will cost men and points. Because you will have to bring the fight to them to keep them back down the board. And they are FAR TOO STRONG to mix it up with for long.

The picture below is the suggestion of Eric Lee Smith, Developer of **Cedar Mountain**, and of the GBACW series.

But realize this blue line is the likely high water mark for the Union!

You really want the CSA behind this line until turn 9 or 10. And that is not easy to do!

6 ME – 3217

4 ME – 2319

M, 1NY – 1520

F, 4 US – 2818

L, 2 NY - 2719

E PA – 1105
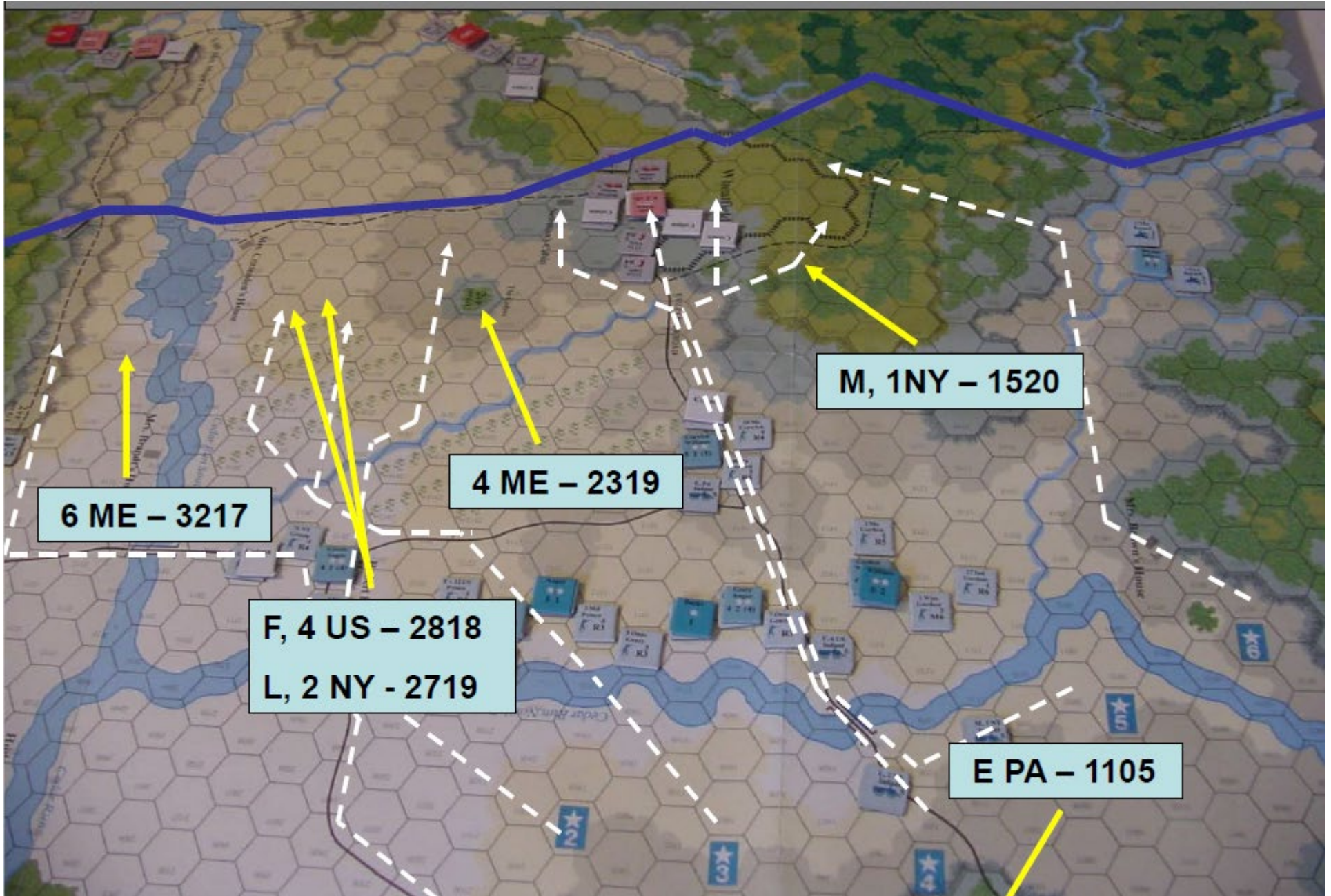
Eric Lee Smith sees these locations with Guns as one way to do that. Clearly, he is a better player than I am. I see his point, but boy, it is TOUGH to get guns away from troops when they close to engagement range! However, if your shooting is good, and you push the enemy brigades toward BCE, then it is worth it!

Infantry in column have 6 MP, and spend a half point per road hex.

Limbered Artillery have 12 MP, and spent 1 MP per hex.

Roads and trails allow you to IGNORE all other terrain costs – INCLUDING elevation change costs!

So these troops will move 6 hexes down the road, as each enters as though it was lined up off board, and pays the points for off board hexes, too.

Confederate Turn 1

At a half-point per hex on the road for column movement, the lead unit makes it to hex 2326. All the units make it on board.

Note with units in column on a road, we can use one counter to designate ALL the Infantry in that road group are in column.

The trail on the other side is a different story. It is only 1 point per hex, still ignoring terrain if the unit is infantry in column or limbered arty or mounted cavalry.

However, since mounted cavalry has 12 MP, and it started this column, so they are hexes ahead now. As an independent units, this unit does not have to stay in range of Forno or Trimble, both of whom have to be within 6 of Ewell at the end of the turn so they can START the next turn in command!

End of CSA EndTurn 1 movement, no Defensive Fire, no Victory hexes, turn passes to USA Turn 2.

The Union checks that everyone is in command, decides to Detach Greene, meaning he can operate as an independent command. The troops moves ahead. 9See the ending positions below. After the move, no Defensive Fire, no Offensive Fire, no Victory hexes controlled. It is the end of Union Turn two, and the Player turn passes to CSA Turn 2.

Cedar Mountain

Blue is Williams, Red is Auger. White means independent or detached.

Bayard (Independent)

Crawford (Williams)

Gordon (Williams)

Greene (detached)

Prince (Auger)

Geary (Auger)

End of Union Turn 2

CSA Turn two. All units in the column are in command. They all move up the road or trial, and the Turn two reinforcements enter as the first turn did.

Cedar Mountain

In Confederate turn two, after checking for command, Early moves up to the first Victory hex.

End of Confederate Turn 2

Cedar Mountain

Garnett and Taliaferro entered on turn 2 at 2934, the same as Early had on turn 1.

End of Confederate Turn 2

Cedar Mountain

Forno and Trimble continue their advance up the trail.

And as we reach the end of CSA turn two, we see that lead regiments of Early's troops have reached the center Victory hexes, and gets two points.

We can see the view below, from the CSA point of view!

Cedar Mountain

End of Confederate Turn 2 –
Reverse angle

Next turn, fireworks!

Start of Union Turn 3 – is everyone in command?

Remember Greene is detached, and Bayard is Independent. The arrows show the Auger is in range of his two Brigade Leaders, and Williams is stacked with one Brigade Leader, and within 5 of the other. Banks did not have to use his command point to augment either Williams or Auger's command range.

And clearly, almost every regiment is adjacent to their brigade commander, so all the troops are in command. Prince and Geary have units two hexes away, but they both have a Brigade Leadership Range of 4, so lots of room!

Crawford's troops are all in Column, as are Greene's, so their troops can get road movement rates. Everyone else is in line, or limbered arty.

So the question now – what are your orders, sir?