
About My Blog (So Far)

Description



I attend a lot of ASL tournaments. I also take part in a lot of on-line ASL forums. Attendance allows me to meet and greet ASL players from all over the world. These meetings invariably reach a point where people recognize I am the author of this blog. Eventually the conversation gets around to when did I start my blog, why don't I publish this in some ASL publication, and what are my goals? I will try to answer these questions here.

I started my blog in September, 2021. It began out of a desire to write timely articles in a short, digestible format. I began by trying to focus my articles on a single passage of the rules or a single concept. In doing so, I hoped people would find them much easier to read and comprehend. There is no sense in writing a large article, which is too difficult for people to ingest into their own game play. Most of my rules-based articles stick to this format. These are usually well received.

I also envision my target audience as newer players or players who haven't played widely. In my experience, folks who fall into these categories often struggle with sections of the rules. In online discussion forums and at tournaments, I watch the streams of questions



being asked by these guys and try to distinguish themes and patterns that might make fodder for a good article. I also solicit ideas for articles on my blog. Articles covering topics people struggle with are very successful.

I published the articles myself for three, maybe four, reasons. First, by placing the articles on my blog, I control the content and the publishing date. Mostly, working with ASL vendors is a very smooth experience. Sadly, I have very little patience for the publication process. Submitting an article for publication and then waiting to see it hit print is hard for me. I waited 3 months for FTC 12 to be published and the anticipation was nearly more than I could bear. I want you to see what I have done.

Second, I write rule-based articles. As the rules change, or Q&A clarify rule passages, or I just get it wrong, I need to correct the articles. Mistakes are inevitable. I have some of the best proofreaders in the business and mistakes still creep in. Not being able to correct a mistake is a hard reality for me to live with in a print publication. My blog lets me fix issues as soon as they are discovered. That's very satisfying.

Over time, I branched out to longer and more in depth articles covering tactics, guidelines for offensive and defensive game play, scenario analysis and other topics related to ASL. I personally find these articles very helpful. These articles force me to think about how I play the game. They become a form of deliberate practice for me and I think my own play has sharpened as a result.

By posting articles on my blog and advertising about them on social media, I create a place to talk about my articles. This gives me instant feedback, something I thrive on. From this discussion, I can clarify points and clear up misconceptions, and identify new topics for future articles. These things bring more people into the discussion and from that, we all learn to be better ASL players.

Regarding publishing my work in the Journal or some other publication, it is not that I am unwilling to publish articles in print medium. Clearly, my articles in FTC 12 and Banzai! show my willingness to do just that. For me, it comes down to the timeliness of the publication and the publisher's willingness to allow me to publish the article on my site at some point. By doing so, I can update and correct errors, making sure the article remains relevant and fresh.

Finally, I hope that my articles eventually form a cohesive collection of topics related to good ASL play. The more articles I write, the more I see a framework around which my articles hang. The attacking article in [FTC 12](#) (in which this article first appeared) stems



from this observation, which began when I wrote my ASL Maxims article. By codifying my approach (at least for myself), I saw how these articles work together. It wasn't a big leap from there to thinking about things in a game phase by game phase way.

This article marks the one year anniversary of my blog. In that time I have published more than 60 articles. This is not counting three others published in LFT's FTC, Banzai!, and Hazardous Movement. I have hosted guest authors and appeared on both [Illuminating Rounds](#) and [The Two Half Squads](#). In spite of all I have done, I feel like I am just getting started on this.

Based simply on page views, it feels like articles discussing tactics, observations, and my general thoughts on how to play ASL are received the best. These types of articles generate the most discussion and have the highest "hit counts" on my blog. I think these are very appealing to mid- and entry-level players so I will try to publish a few more of these in the coming year.

I won't abandon rules dives for this however. Good ASL play is still a steep hill to climb. New players need some help in overcoming the ASL rule book. There are times when the rule book simply isn't clear enough and presenting additional examples and discussion on those passages are important to helping new players get over the learning hump. I will continue to do these types of articles.

It feels like scenario analysis is the least liked topic. I can understand this. I probably won't do this too much in the coming year unless someone specifically asks. In its place, I am going to try to branch out to examples of my attacks using VASL. Some will be examples of what to do (when I win) and what not to do (when I lose). I am also looking for a way to share these VASL files seamlessly. I am also looking for a regular foil if you're interested in being ASL famous. These attacking articles will likely start with examining my opponent's setup and detail how I plan to attack it. More to come on this as it develops.

I would also like to invite aspiring ASL authors to join me. If you have an article you would like to publish, reach out to me and we will see if I can accommodate you. I warn you up front, there is no money in it. My site is and always will be free. You will retain the copyright and ownership of your own work and if you can monetize it elsewhere, you can do so with my blessing (and maybe an intro so I can make some too). I would love for my site to be a hub for great ASL content that is top of mind for aspiring ASL players. Wanna help me make it that?



In the end, I hope you enjoy my work. If you like my content, there is more available on my blog. I cover everything from rules dives, strategy, and scenario analysis to ancillary topics like storage of your ASL kit. I am always open to suggestions and ideas. Come join me in my [Discord channel at Discord's ASL Central](#). Drop in and leave a comment.

Thanks to everyone who has joined me on this ride. A special thanks to everyone who has ever proofread an article or helped me focus a messy piece into something passable. This include people providing feedback and topic ideas through my blog, social media, or the contact forms on my site.

I have really enjoyed writing these and hearing from people all over the world about my work. It is especially thrilling to walk into an ASL gathering and seeing someone sharing my work with a friend at the table top. I can't tell you how happy this makes me. – jim