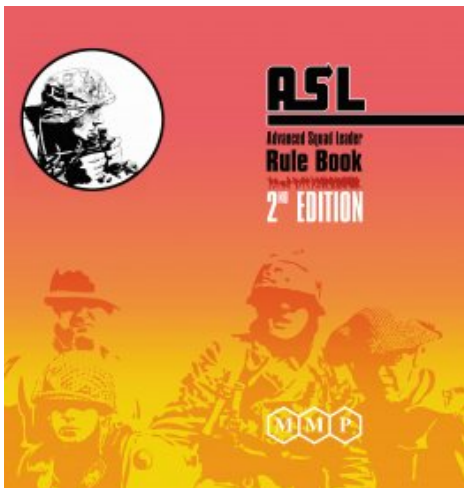

Control Freaks

Description



Today we examine A26.1x, Gaining Control. For a concept so essential to victory, it is alarming how many questions there are surrounding this topic. Sadly, I think much of the confusion lies in the rules' language itself. Trying to be pithy made the rule more confusing than it should be. In this article, I will sort this out and hopefully leave you with a better sense of how to gain Control in ASL. Let's get started.

Rules Dive





The first relevant rule is A26.11. It states a side gains Control of all Locations, hexes, and buildings within its setup area. If one side sets up on a mapboard at start, and the other side does not, that side setting up gains Control of all Locations, hexes, and buildings on that board. Even those Locations, hexes, and buildings outside of its setup area are Controlled on that board.

Once play begins, a side gains Control of a Location, hex, or building by occupying that Location, hex, or building with an **armed**, Good Order Infantry Multi-Man Counter (MMC) **WITHOUT** the presence of an armed enemy ground unit. Much of the confusion for Control lies within A26.11. The rule says *“a side gains Control of a Location/hex/building by occupying it with an armed Good Order Infantry MMC without the presence of an armed enemy ground unit ... in that same Location/hex/building.”* This attempt to be pithy has essentially compacted three separate sentences into one. Unpacking this sentence can be tough for players.

It helps to read this sentence as *“a side gains Control of a **X** by occupying it with an armed Good Order Infantry MMC without the presence of an armed enemy ground unit ... in that same **X**,”* where **X** is Location, hex, or building. For example, *“a side gains Control of a **building** by occupying it with an armed Good Order Infantry MMC without the presence of an armed enemy ground unit ... in that same **building**.”* Now the intent of the rule concerning building Control is crystal clear. This is the first key to understanding the Control rules.

To permanently gain Control over something, it must be occupied by armed MMC. This is the second key to understanding the Control rules.

Gaining Control With Vehicles and PRC

Gaining Control with vehicles and any Passengers, Riders, Crew (PRC) is restricted in ASL. Per A26.11, a vehicle cannot **gain** Control of a building. An armed vehicle not in bypass may gain Control of its Location if it is the sole occupant of its Location (A26.12). Such Control is temporary however. **As soon as the vehicle leaves the Location, Control of that Location reverts to the previous Control state, either un-Controlled or enemy-Controlled.** This is the third key to understanding the Control rules.

Now that we know the three keys to understanding, let's look at some examples.

Example 1

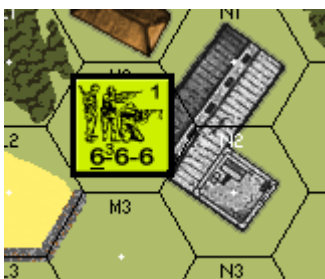


It is the American turn. The enemy Controls the N1 building. The American squad Assault Moves into the ground floor of M2. Upon entry, the Americans gain Control of the N1 building since there are no enemy ground units in the building. This is true even if the American MMC subsequently breaks during Defensive First Fire (including if it breaks due to a Snap Shot taken vs it along the M2-L2 hexside). If the Victory Conditions concern building Control, the Americans have just gained Control of one building.

The Americans also gain Control of hex M2 since there are no enemy ground units in hex M2. If the Victory Conditions concern hex Control, the Americans have gained Control of one hex. If the scenario Victory Conditions concern Control of building Locations, the Americans have just gained Control of one building Location.

Now I am sure this last statement confuses some of you. The Americans Control the N1 building but only one Location. How is that possible? Recall what A26.11 says and what I consider the proper way to read it. The American unit is the sole occupant of the building and thus gains Control of the N1 building. It has not solely occupied ANY OTHER LOCATION of this building, hence it only Controls the one Location.

Example 2



It is the next American turn. At present, the Americans Control building N1, hex M2, and

one building Location (M2 ground level). How do they gain Control over ALL the building Locations?

One way is to solely occupy those Locations at some point. The American unit could double time and enter N1, N2, and back into M2. This would gain Control of two more building Locations (N1 and N2 ground floor). In the Advance Phase (APh), the unit advances up the stairwell and gains Control of M2 level 1. It moves into N1 level 1 and N2 level 1 in the next turn, gaining full Control level 1. In the APh, it moves back into the stairwell hex. In the next Movement Phase, it again double-times to enter every Location of the N1 building on level 2, finally gaining Control of all nine building Locations.

A better way is to use Mopping Up (A12.153) instead. In the Prep Fire Phase (PFPh), the American unit becomes Temporarily Immobilized (TI) and declares its intent to Mop Up. As long as it is within two hexes of all ground level Locations of that building, it gains Control over all Locations in that building. There are limitations on this, particularly if there are Hidden enemy units in the building. Broken units in the building Surrender to the unit Mopping Up so be prepared to take Prisoners. I encourage you to read A12.153 for all the details since I won't delve into them here.

One thing I will mention is Mopping Up is no longer available to you once your side declares No Quarter. I know many view invoking No Quarter as a knee-jerk response to Surrender, but if the VC are around building or building Location Control, I highly recommend you give some thought to this reflex.

Example 3



It is the American turn. The Germans Control the N1 building. The American unit Assault Moves into M2. Does it Control the N1 building now? Does it Control the M2 hex? What about the M2 ground level building Location?

Since the broken German unit is in N1 level one, an armed enemy ground unit occupies

the building. The Germans keep Control of the N1 building. Hex M2—and the M2 ground-level building Location—are free from enemy ground units so the Americans gain Control over those.

In a subsequent PFP, the American unit could go TI and declare Mopping Up. This would force the broken leader to Surrender to the American unit. The Americans would then gain Control of the building and all the Locations of that building.

What about hexes N1 and N2? Does Mopping Up also provide hex Control? Intuitively, you may think no since the reading I prescribe for A26.11 says no American unit has entered N1 or N2, the Control of those hexes remain with the Germans. This is incorrect. Per A26.13, Mopping Up is an exception to the requirement to solely occupy the hex for Control. Control of N1 and N2 also passes to the Americans when Mopping Up successfully.

Example 4



It is the American MPh. The Y9 hex and all of its Locations are enemy-Controlled. The American tank enters the Location and manages not to Bog or fall into the cellar. Who Controls what?

As long as the vehicle remains in the hex the Americans Control the Y9 Location and the Y9 hex (A26.12). Since the Y9 Location is in a building hex, the Americans now Control a building Location.

What is more interesting is that the Americans do not Control the building. Recall, A26.11 says a vehicle and its PRC may never gain Control of a building. This is an interesting nuance that escapes many. If the Victory Conditions reads “capture building Locations”, a vehicle can help fulfill those. Alternatively, if the Victory Conditions instead read “capture buildings”, a vehicle cannot help gain Control, although it may help deny Control for the other side.

If the AFV leaves the Location, Control reverts to the other side. This includes eliminating the AFV in this Location. Should the AFV be eliminated, and the Crew manages to escape (D5.6), then an armed MMC will have been in Y9 and the Americans now have permanent Control over the building too, at least until the opposing side comes to wrest Control back.

Example 5

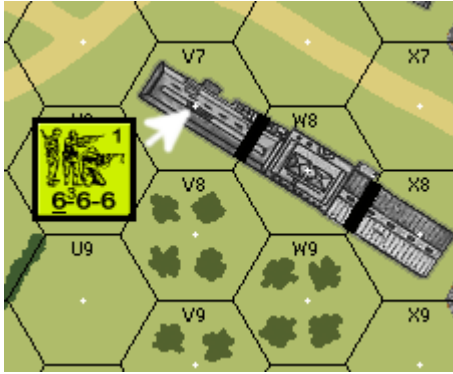


Building P6 is in the American setup area and thus Controlled by the Americans. It is the German MPH. The 5-4-8 enters P6. What are the implications for Control?

The Germans now Control the P6 ground level building Location. They also Control the P6 hex.

The Germans do not yet Control the P6 level one building Location but could gain Control by moving into P6 level one either during the APh or MPh. The Germans also do not Control the P6 building yet. While a vehicle cannot capture a building, it is still an armed Good Order ground unit capable of denying Control to the opposing side. If the 5-4-8 advances into the AFV’s Location and eliminates it in Close Combat, the Germans would gain Control of the P6 building, the ground level building Location in O6, and the O6 hex.

Example 6



It is the American MPh. The enemy Controls the V7 building. The American Assault Moves into V7. What Control do the Americans gain?

Per A26.14, the different hexes of a Rowhouse are one building for Control purposes. When the Americans enter V7, they gain Control of the ground level building Location in V7 and Control of the V7 hex. They also gain Control of one building.

How do the Americans gain Control of all the Locations in the V7 building? Per A12.153, each hex of a Rowhouse must be Mopped Up separately. A unit in the ground level of V7/W8/X8 would gain Control over all the Locations in each of these hexes. Given the time required to Mop Up, it is probably quicker for the Americans to enter each Location of the Rowhouse with an MMC if the VC requires Control of building Locations.

Example 7



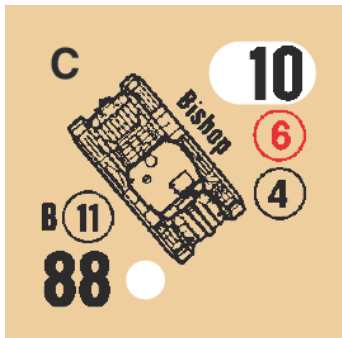
The broken German unit is in the Pillbox. The Germans Control the Pillbox. The American unit advances on top of the Pillbox. What is the Control situation?

Per A26.132, to gain Control of a hex containing a Pillbox, the Americans must also gain Control of the Pillbox. The K7 hex and Pillbox are still in German Control.

What's worse, the American problems are compounded by B30.5 which states a broken

unit is never forced to rout from inside a Pillbox. For the Americans to claim this hex, they must first eliminate the broken unit inside. Then they must enter the Pillbox to gain Control of the Pillbox. Once they have Control of that, they gain Control of the hex. When Victory Conditions require capture of an enemy Pillbox or Pillbox hex, keep this dual requirement in mind. Keep the time requirements in mind so you arrive with enough time to accomplish the mission.

Conclusion



There are more Control concepts than I have provided here but these examples should help you sort out those issues. Things like Rooftops, Cellars, and subterranean Locations will seek to confound you but the rules on those are pretty clear. When in doubt, check the rule book. Even after years of play, I still have to check the Control rules when these situations arise.

I have also purposely not considered the implications of A26.16x. I can't recall ever intentionally kindling something in all of my own ASL play. As such, the implications of A26.16x are not relevant to me. I do know that once stuff starts burning, whoever intentionally sets the fire has to be concerned with Control of the terrain. When a fire is set and it approaches the VC hexes, I pull out my rule book and reread the section to make sure I know the implications. I find it best not to start fires but that's my own personal conclusion. I am sure there are times when it is smart. When stuff starts to burn—or you want to start the conflagration yourself—I suggest you read A26.16x before you do.

As I have said in other forums, my postings may be a little sporadic for a bit. I recently became a grandfather. My wife and I are spending time with our growing family so my writing time will be limited for a while. I hope you can forgive my absence. I will be back soon. Until then. — jim