STRATEGIES

From Steve Kives (kives@ruhr.engin.umich.edu)

I think most anyone can take a lone pb within a half-minute if they are not worried about: 1) running their armor down to zero, and 2) lurkers in the woods nearby. My standard strategy is this: Shoot two spaces near the pb for buildings. These spaces are usually spaces #2 and #3 in a straight line away from the pb. But don't build yet. Rush in and pile on the shots. Plan on receiving one hit, and circle away with no more damage. The pb is 1/3 damaged and angry. Build your buildings and line yourself up, not on the same straight axis with pb/buildings, but just one lane over. This allows careful placement of the crosshairs on the pb, while the pb must shoot through the buildings before any shots hit you. If you have a pb, use a pb in space #3. Keep the cursor on the pb after building. Saddle up the lane after a few seconds, when the pb is only slightly mad, and pour in the glancing blows. If you just built buildings, some shots still get through, and you must tirade after about 2 seconds. If you built a pb, then don't move! When enemy pb is dead, charge forward, simultaneously clicking the mouse button. Man fixes your pb, which is irate. If a vulture comes out of the woods, he is meat. This is a good and realistic strategy in a game crowded with cunning players and many tricks-up-the-sleeves. The whole move takes 30 seconds. Shoot for mines, and shoot the pb in one quick movement. Build obstructions and clear defending mines when waiting for pb to cool a little. Then move in for coup-de-grace and fix your pb in a deft stroke (when shots are not hitting you -- don't get your man killed). This strategy generally deals with problems 1 and 2 mentioned previously. Also, lay a minefield several spaces behind you, and right outside the margins of nearby forests. This helps punish the vultures. As far as base-defenses go, I think the most successful strategy is to lay scattered mines (not chain-reactable) throughout the entire firing rage of your pbs, and a little beyond. Especially lay mines right next to pbs and your bases, though it can make refueling a little delicate. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing an enemy spiker blow his man up. Time to bum-rush his pillboxes! A very important element of pb-defenses is adverse terrain. A swamp is great, otherwise use lots of craters. This severely inhibits enemy builders doing bad things to you, and road-building into your base shows up like a beacon on the pillbox-view function. For the devious, a proven strategy is to sneak up directly behind the enemy attacking your base/pbs. This means, of course, a very wide circle flanking movement, because you cannot let him see you. When sneaking up behind, just charge right in and shoot! Why does this work? Because auto-scroll has a number of failings, and this is one of them. His autoscroll will continue to view your pbs at 10 spaces away, while you sneak up to within a couple of spaces on the other side. This tactic is lethal every time. Of course, nothing beats the pb-gathering tactics of a couple of old- pros who can decoy-kill at light speed. One game, I hooked up with "Stranger" and we did this without any verbal(typing) communication of any kind. Wasn't necessary. Took a pb every 20 seconds for a few minutes (refueling when we had to) and the game was a joke. The other team evaporated to other games when they saw the pbs disappearing that quickly from the status window. If the other team doesn't have similar tacticians, they haven't a chance. A wonderful example of this tactic occurs when you find an enemy(uninhabited) base with two pbs flanking. Draw an imaginary line from one pb, through the other pb, and extended on out several spaces. Shoot for mines first! Put a building on this line (space #1 away from enemy pb). Put a pb on this line next (space #2). Your friend gets behind friendly pb just as you shoot (from furthest possible distance) the farthest pb from your

friendly pb. If you do this right, this pb will start blowing away the other enemy pb, which consequently starts to blow away the building, then the friendly pb. But both enemy pbs are dead before anyone is scratched! And your friend should instantly repair friendly pb to help ward off well-armed vultures. This tactic fails when the enemies return too soon and start bickering. But this tactic works WAY too often when the maps are huge. If you like to lurk, find a well-traveled road through the woods. Check for mines in the ambush site, then lay 3-4 mines in a row right next to the road(in the trees). Wait precisely on the opposite side, in the trees. When sucker comes through (even if going slowly for mine-caution) you start shooting first, damaging him and pushing him into opposite row of mines. A few more shots and it's over. AS far as safe-guarding your man goes (dead man is several times worse than dead tank) many players on the Internet need some serious help! I see the same mistakes made time and time again, by players that should have seen the light much sooner. Lesson #1: mines abound! Especially around enemy bases. Doing something with the man? Shoot the prospective location(s) first. It's worth the ammo. By far. Lesson #2: people love to shoot little defenseless enemy builders. I know I do! When sending the man out, and there are enemy tanks around, the man should NEVER cross anything but pavement and grass (or trees, but only if you're being sneaky). Some players are so anxious torpor a pb, that they spuriously send the man over 6 craters and 4 swamp spaces. Gun fodder.

From Tobin C. Anthony, tca712@rs710.gsfc.nasa.gov

My pb strategy is somewhat different on UDP than AppleTalk. On AppleTalk, I just sidled up to a box, move my crosshairs to full range and rest them on the opposite edge of the pb and blast away. The pb depletes a lot of your armor but it pushes you away with each shot. Finally, you are out of range but with little armor. You just wait a minute and gather wood and wait for the pb to chill. Then you can blast it straight on again providing you waited long enough. This method all but depletes your armor but even with the chill-out time it is the fastest way to get a pb. I found that there are no prizes for getting pb's retaining most amount of armor. The thing you want to minimize is the time spent grabbing the pb before your enemy does a pb check and comes blasting away. If one of my bases is close enough, I will even take that cool-down time to replenish my armor. I am not proud. On UDP, I find that netlag usually works against you. You might end up killing the pb but you will get blown to bits as well. It's frustrating to blast a pb and wait there anxiously as the net grinds to a halt. You only see a few shots changing hands but you end up materializing somewhere else far away from the pb with a tantalizing but short- lived 'x' on the statusboard. You can use a lot of the other methods mentioned previously to attack a pb under UDP but there is no substitute for having an ally to act as a decoy(Bolo raison d'être??). Two allies can start out near a friendly base and end up mowing down a swath of enemy pbs in no time.---
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From Eric Hiris (hirisej@ctrvax.vanderbilt.edu)

Using Pillboxes (offensively): 1) spiking the enemy base(s) - that is, placing a pillbox next to the enemies base (for you novices out there, this works best if you place your pb right next to the enemy base - watch out for mines though). 2) attacking enemy pbs. That is using your pb as a superwall to shoot around when attacking a pb. Just be forewarned: there are vultures out there waiting to capture both your pb and the one you are attacking. 3)shooting your own pb when other are near - kablooie! (or is this defense?)Bases: Despite what you might think from discussions in this newsgroup, bases are how the game is won

or lost. If one team has all the bases, then everyone else has lost. Period. Therefore, take as many as you can early in the game and defend them to the best of your ability. If you are satisfied with two early in the game, well, uh, good luck. If you take 10 bases right away, you will lose some of them, but so what? You got 8 more. :) Base placement during map making: Personal Opinion: If you are making a map, please please, please do not put bases adjacent to each other. Forests: The importance obviously depends on the map. If there is forest everywhere, trees are almost a non-issue. If there are few forests, by all means, go hide in the enemies for a bit and when no one is around take the forest or destroy it. In some sense, it is like killing all your enemies' men if the remaining forests are guarded well. Another thing to be aware of is that water, walls, roads, and swamp adjacent to forest will eliminate or greatly reduce the regrowth of forest. Use this to your benefit or against your enemies to the best you can. As stated recently in this newsgroup, forest grows back most rapidly on grass when it is surrounded by other trees. Harvesting trees in a checkerboard pattern will result in the fastest regrowth of trees if you are concerned about ecology :) Walls: Some people like them, some people don't. They are mostly used offensively - to hide behind when attacking a pb. Others try to use them defensively, but my experience suggests that except for special situations, walls are generally not effective in defense. The best use for the walltool is to make boats. Roads: Nice, but if you make them, people have a tendency to mine them right away. Roads are best used to cover up gravel and mine blasts in your 'home' area, a place where people will get pb'd to death if they try a mining run. Also two roads will block a waterway that the enemy has been using (or a road and a wall)Mines: I don't know if I want to start this again, but: 1) the most effective use of a mine (I think) is to one mine on squares that share a border with your pb. Therefore, when people try decoy tricks, the man will die trying to build wall if they are not careful. If they do manage to kill the pb, your enemy will hit the mine(s) before and or after the pb and be weakened and slowed down, allowing you time to return for easy revenge. Another note is that placing a pb on or within an area of slow terrain(swamp, mine blasts, rubble) makes it a real pain for a pb to be retrieved after it has been killed - again allowing you time to return for revenge. 2)making water ways. This keeps enemy men with devious plans away from your bases. Also, in regards to the 'big mine controversy' that raged in this group recently: make waterways with mines. As of yet there are no sea mines, so you are perfectly safe going through mined enemy territory on a boat. Let them spend all their time mining! 3) Mine randomly. Yes, this counts as a strategy, I hate it, others love it, but until further notice this is a strategy, like it or not. This strategy allows you to slow the pace of the game down to almost 0. Be warned that your enemy will do the same and the enemy may just circumvent all your mines by making a waterway. Personal Opinion: use in desperation only.

From Robert Fullmer (fullmer@owlnet.rice.edu)

If you can't take a pillbox without dying, 9 times out of 10, or don't know how to run a two man, or are generally not quite an expert at the game yet, spike only after careful consideration and approval from teammates. Clearly, there are cases where this rule doesn't apply (when you're not an expert but your allies are even greener, for example), but I've had problems in the past with allies that pick up two or three pills from one of my heavily fortified bases and spike them deeper than we're ready to take. We lose the pills, and if they repeat the exercise for long enough, the game. Spiking is an art. It can make the difference when used properly, but can lose the game when misapplied. So this is a

call to newbies: If you're thinking about spiking with a pillbox you didn't just capture yourself, check it out with your allies first.