reviewed by George Chrestensen

During May and June of 1862, Major General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson and his Confederate Army of the Shenandoah Valley were involved in a cat and mouse game with three separate armies commanded by Generals Banks, Fremont and MacDowell. Playing the part of the aggressive mouse, Jackson led his 16,000 strong force against Banks’ contingent of 9,000 men at Winchester, Pennsylvania. After soundly thrashing Banks’ forces, Jackson made plans to attack Harper’s Ferry, cross the Potomac River and threaten an invasion of Maryland. President Lincoln, instead of rerouting Fremont or MacDowell north to counter the threat, had Fremont and MacDowell go into the valley to hunt down Jackson and destroy his forces once and for all.

Upon learning of Fremont’s and MacDowell’s intentions, Jackson had his forces turn south, travel along the Valley Pike, and with the help of Brigadier General Turner Ashby’s cavalry, narrowly escaped the Union forces when they passed through Strasburg on June 1st, 1862. Reaching New Market on June 3rd, Jackson thought he had reached a temporary haven, ensuring this by burning the bridge across the north fork of the Shenandoah River behind him. Jackson’s hopes were shattered, however, when Fremont’s forces constructed a pontoon bridge across the river.

Jackson moved his forces toward Port Republic, a small town at the confluence of the north and south forks of the Shenandoah River. If he could outdistance Fremont and the spearhead of MacDowell’s forces, which had joined in the chase, he could secure an eastern escape route across the Blue Ridge Mountains via the bridge at Port Republic. Despite heavy rains and the loss of Ashby, he was able to reach Port Republic on June 7th, where his forces encamped and rested. The next morning began with elements of Shields division fording the Shenandoah and entering Port Republic...

*Jackson at the Crossroads*, designed by Joseph Reiser, is volume five of SPI’s *Great Battles of the Civil War* series. All six volumes share the same set of standard rules covering such areas as melee and fire combat, movement, formations and facing. These rules were covered in detail in the review of *The Battle of Corinth* in issue #4.

The game map, scaled at 210 yards per hex, depicts the terrain around Cross Keys and Port Republic with impressive detail and esthetic appeal. Mill Creek and its accompanying ravine, running from east to west across the map, dominates the northern half of the battle area and provides an excellent initial position for Ewell’s command at the start of the game. His division is the smaller of the two that the Confederates have, comprised of three brigades and seven artillery batteries, the latter divided into sixteen sections. Jackson’s division, encamped initially north of Port Republic, between Mill Creek and the Shenandoah River, has four brigades and three artillery batteries, the latter divided into eleven sections. An artillery reserve of four sections accompanies them. Only through one ford and a bridge across the North River can Jackson’s men reach the town.

The remainder of Jackson’s forces, the supply train, some rather weak cavalry, and three sections of