

BATTLEGROUP

ISSUE 2

DISPATCHES



An irregular e-zine for the Battlegroup WWII wargames rules

Slovak Fast Division

- Army lists and data for Slovakian forces in Russia, '41

Q and A compiled rules Q and A

Step by Step guides for Reserve Orders

Stoumont Halt, Ardennes scenario for Kampfgruppe Peiper

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Welcome to the second irregular fanzine for players of the Battlegroup series of rules and supplements. Here we have continued to feature an eclectic mix of articles such as, the bits left out of books (Slovak Rapid Brigade army lists as promised) and contributions from Battlegroup gamers too.

This second issue has again taken a little while longer than expected to produce, but such is life, and we did warn that as a freebie 'extra' Dispatches would always get shunted down the 'to do' list, but we hope we can still find time to produce the fanzine as its a great way for us to get extra content out to the players.

The 'biggy' in this issue is the compiled Q and A, a real monster to get together in one place, but hopefully a very useful reference and clarification for players. I've included all the questions from previous Q and As as well as trawled the forums for the questions I've been asked over the past two years on them. Many players are happy to make up their own 'house rules' when it comes to awkward rules questions, but it is best to have a definitive answer to issues when playing against opponents you don't know so well, or if a game is quiet competitive. We will continue to keep a list of new questions and no doubt include it when it's big enough to be worth it.

Contributions to Dispatches from readers and gamers are welcome and hopefully will form a ever increasing portion of each issue. Thanks to Dux Homunculum (sorry real name not revealed) for sending his step-by-step guides. He has done more of these and I'll be including them in future issues.

Regards and happy gaming,

Warwick and Piers
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THE SLOVAK RAPID BRIGADE by Warwick Kinrade

The small Slovakian contribution to the invasion of Russia was not included in Battlegroup Barbarossa – but it hasn't been entirely ignored. Here is the promised army list for anybody wishing to recreate the battles of Slovak Rapid Brigade in the Ukraine and southern Russia in 1941.

Background

Slovakia, a nation created in the wake of the German invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 under the rule of Governor Josef Tiso, was a client state of Germany and its military forces participated in the German invasion of Poland in 1939. A small nation, with a small military, it committed 45,000 men of the Slovak Army Group (about two divisions) to Operation Barbarossa. This force crossed the border into Russia on June 25th and moved east towards Lvov. It soon found itself unable to keep up with the pace of the German advance, being largely a foot-bound army. In order to speed up the advance a new formation was created by combining all the army group's mobile units into a single brigade, the Slovak Rapid Brigade. Commanded by General Rudolf Pilsfousek (and also known as the Pilsfousek Brigade), the tanks and truck or bicycle-borne infantry of

the brigade joined the German 17th Army in its advance through Lvov and towards Vinnitsa, then on to Lipovets. En-route to Lipovets the brigade was engaged in heavy fighting and lost a lot of its light tanks, before advancing on to Zhitomir and then the Kiev area.

In August, the brigade was pulled out of the front lines to be re-organised and reinforced and was re-titled the 1st Slovak Mobile Division, more commonly known as the 'Slovak Fast Division'. It was back in the line in September and took part in the fighting to eliminate the Kiev pocket before transferring south. After more fighting in eastern Ukraine along the Dneipr river near Golubowka, as part of 1st Panzer Army the division was sent further south still, spending the winter of 1941-42 defending the line of the Mius river. The following year they would participate in the advance into the Caucasus.

On June 25th, the Slovak's armoured force consisted of approximately 20 LT Vz 35 light tanks (Panzer 35(t) in its German designation)

and 30 Panzer 38(t)s, supported by a few captured Polish tankettes gifted to them after Poland's surrender and Czech OA vz 30 armour cars. The vehicles were painted in a distinctive three tone camouflage pattern, whilst the infantry (in all khaki uniforms) had a unique blue ring painted around the rim of their helmets and often a white cross design on the side too.

The division's anti-tank units were equipped with 37mm Vz 34 anti-tank guns whilst infantry support weapons included the Vz 26 light machine gun (a precursor to the Bren), the Vz 37 heavy machine gun (the Besa) and the Vz 36 80mm mortar. Artillery support was provided by old Skoda mountain guns, the 75mm Vz 15 and 100mm Vz14/19, both WWI vintage weapons.



Order of Battle

(for September 1941)

Divisional HQ
Luftwaffe Artillery Observation Squadron
Divisional Administration
2nd Signals Battalion

20th Motorised Rifle Regiment
1st Battalion
2nd Battalion

21st Motorised Rifle Regiment
1st Battalion
2nd Battalion

11th Reconnaissance Battalion

12th Tank Battalion

11th Artillery Regiment

8th Flak Battery
13th Flak Battery

11th Pioneer Battalion

2 Heavy Supply Columns

Divisional Headquarters included the staff company, mapping detachment, a motorcycle messenger platoon and light supply column.

Observation squadron was an attached German unit for air support liaison.

Divisional Admin included medical, ambulance, field post and field police detachments.

Each Rifle Battalion was composed of 3 Rifle Companies of 4 platoons each, a heavy weapons company, a light mountain gun battery and an anti-tank platoon.

The Reconnaissance Battalion included signal platoon, a bicycle mounted company, armoured car company, an anti-tank platoon, infantry gun platoon and pioneer platoon.

The Tank Battalion contained two tank companies of 25 tanks each and a supporting anti-tank gun company.

The Artillery Regiment was two battalions, each of three batteries of 100mm guns, supported by signals troops.

Both Flak Batteries were equipped with towed Vz 36 Oerlikon 20mm flak guns.

The Pioneer Battalion comprised of two pioneer companies and a bridging column.

Supply Columns of fuel and maintenance platoons, as well as a bakery and butchery company.

- EASTERN FRONT, 1941 -

SLOVAK RAPID BRIGADE BATTLEGROUP

FORWARD HEADQUARTERS UNITS

Each unit taken from Forward Headquarters allows a support choice from either: **Logistics** or **Additional Fire Support**

Forward Headquarters 22 pts 3-r BR
Unit Composition: 3 men
Transport: Heavy Car
Special Rules: Senior Officer, Unique

Options: Replace 3 men and heavy car with:
 Pz 35(t) +8 pts
 Pz 38(t) +24 pts

Forward Signals Unit 18 pts 1-i BR
Unit Composition: 3 men
Transport: Medium Radio Truck
Special Rules: Communications, Unique

Comms Relay Team 14 pts 0-i BR
Unit Composition: 2 men
Special Rules: Communications

Motorcycle Dispatch Rider 12 pts 0-i BR
Unit Composition: 1 man
Transport: Motorcycle
Special Rule: Dispatches

Luftwaffe Air Control Officer . . . 26 pts 1-r BR
Unit Composition: 3 men
Transport: Staff Car
Special Rules: Officer, Air Spotter 4+, Unique

Options: Upgrade Staff Car to:
 Medium radio truck +2 pts

Wire Team 7 pts 0-i BR
Unit Composition: 2 men
Special Rules: Wire Communications

TANK UNITS

Each unit taken from Tanks allows a support choice from: **Reconnaissance**, **Engineers**, **Logistics** or **Specialist** units.

Panzer 38(t) Platoon 95 pts 9-i BR
Squad Composition: 3 Panzer 38(t)s
 1 Panzer 38(t) (Officer)
 2 Panzer 38(t)

Special Rules: Unique

Panzer 35(t) Platoon 55 pts 6-i BR
Squad Composition: 3 Panzer 35(t)s
 1 Panzer 35(t) (Officer)
 2 Panzer 35(t)

Special Rules: Unique

Additional Tank
Unit Composition: 1 Tank
 Panzer 35(t) 20 pts 2-i BR
 Panzer 38(t) 36 pts 3-i BR

INFANTRY UNITS

Each unit taken from Infantry allows a support choice from: **Reconnaissance**, **Engineers** or **Specialist** units.

<p>Motorised Infantry Platoon 73 pts</p> <p><i>For each Platoon you may choose 4 Support units</i></p> <p>Platoon Composition: 1 Platoon Command squad, 3 Rifle Sections and 3 LMG Sections and up to 4 Platoon Support Options.</p> <div style="background-color: #f0f0f0; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Platoon Command Squad</p> <p>Unit Composition: 4 men Transport: Heavy car +4 pts Special Rules: Officer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3 Rifle Sections</p> <p>Unit Composition: 7 men Transport: mount in a medium truck. +4 pts</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3 LMG Sections</p> <p>Unit Composition: 6 men with Vz-26 LMG Transport: Transported in Platoon's other vehicles</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center; color: #800000;">Platoon Support Options</p> <p>If no trucks are taken, then the entire platoon may be mounted upon bicycles for +20 pts</p> <p>The Platoon may include up to four of the following additional units. No unit may be taken more than once.</p> <p>Heavy Machine Gun team 16 pts 1-i BR Unit Composition: 3 men with a tripod Vz-37 HMG Include a 3 man loader team +10 pts</p>	<p>Combat Medic 7 pts 0-i BR Unit Composition: 1 man Special Rule: Medic</p> <p>Light Mortar team 11 pts 1-i BR Unit Composition: 2 men with 50mm mortar Include a 3 man loader team +10 pts</p> <p>Medium Mortar team 22 pts 1-i BR Unit Composition: 3 men with 80mm mortar Include a 3 man loader team +10 pts</p> <p>Anti-tank Gun 18 pts 2-i BR Unit Composition: 37mm Vz 34 gun with 3 crew Include a 3 man loader team +10 pts Horse and limber tow +2 pts Medium Truck tow +4 pts</p>
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<p>Motorised Infantry Squad 21 pts 2-i BR Squad Composition: 1 Rifle Section and 1 LMG Section.</p> <p>Rifle Section Unit Composition: 7 men Transport : mount in a medium truck +4 pts</p> <p>LMG Section Unit Composition: 6 men with Vz-26 LMG Transport: Transported in Squad's vehicle.</p> <p>Options: If no truck is taken, mount the entire squad on bicycles for +6 pts</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Game Size Infantry Restrictions</p> <p>In a Squad-level game you must include at least 1 Infantry squad. You cannot include more than 1 Infantry Platoon.</p> <p>In Platoon-level game you must take at least 1 Infantry Platoon. You cannot include more than 2 Infantry Platoons.</p> <p>In Company-level games you must take at least 2 Infantry Platoons. You cannot include more than 3 Infantry Platoons.</p> <p>In Battalion-level games you must take at least 3 Infantry Platoons. You cannot include more than 6 Infantry Platoons.</p>
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ARTILLERY UNITS

Each unit taken from Artillery allows a support choice from: **Additional Fire Support.**

Forward Observer Team 16 pts 1-i BR
Unit Composition: 2 men
Transport: Heavy car
Special Rules: Artillery Spotter+

Off-Table Mortar Fire
Unit Composition: 1 Battery
 2 80mm mortars. 60 pts 0 BR

Light Artillery Battery
 46 pts 2-r BR
Unit Composition: 2 75mm Vz 15 guns and 3 crew each
Options:
 Horse and limber tows. +2 pts each
 Medium Truck tows +4 pts each

Timed 75mm Barrage 10 pts 0 BR
 Fired by a battery of four 75mm guns. Before the game, write down which turn the guns will fire on. The points cost includes a pre-registered target as the target point of the barrage.

DEFENCES

Each unit taken from Defences allows no support choices.
 May only be taken if your battlegroup is the Defender in an Attack-Defence scenario.

Improvised Barricades 5 pts 0 BR
 10" of improvised barricades made of earth filled boxes, rubble, furniture, destroyed vehicles etc. Counts as hard cover for infantry behind it.

Machine Gun Dug-out 34 pts 1-r BR
 3 men and a tripod mounted Vz-27 HMG in reinforced cover. The cover is lost if the MG team move.

Mortar Pit 34 pts 1-r BR
 3 men and an 80mm mortar in reinforced cover. The cover is lost if the mortar team moves.

Fortified Building 30 pts 0 BR
 A single, chosen building, anywhere on the table, counts as reinforced cover rather than hard cover.

Foxholes 10 pts 0 BR
 Deploy up to 10 infantry in foxholes; they count as in reinforced cover until they move.

Sniper Hideout 15 pts 0-v BR
 A single sniper in reinforced cover. It can be placed anywhere outside of the opponent's deployment zone. The cover is lost if the sniper moves.

Booby Trapped Building 25 pts 0 BR
 Any building on the table has been wired with booby traps. The first time an enemy unit enters the building roll a D6. On a 2+ it detonates and the unit takes a 3/3+ HE hit. On a 1 there is a fault and the booby trap fails to go off!

Improvised Road Block 5 pts 0 BR
 Something large and heavy across a road. Place on any road or track anywhere on the table. It counts as an obstacle.

RECONNAISSANCE SUPPORT UNITS

Sniper 10 pts 1-v BR
Unit Composition: 1 man
Special Rules: Sniper Scout

Options:
 Add a spotter +5 pts

Spotter: A sniper with a spotter increases its maximum range from 30" to 40", hitting on a 6.

Infantry Foot Patrol 26 pts 2-i BR
Squad Composition: 1 Rifle Section Squad and 1 LMG Section.
Special Rules: Scout

Rifle Section
Unit Composition: 7 men

LMG Section
Unit Composition: 6 men with Vz-26 LMG

Mounted Infantry Patrol 18 pts 1-i BR
Squad Composition: 1 Mounted Patrol
Transport: Bicycles
Special Rules: Scout

Mounted Patrol
Unit Composition: 6 men with a Vz-26 LMG

Options: Replace bicycles with:
 Heavy car +2 pts

Armoured Car
Unit Composition: 1 Armoured Car
Special Rules: Scout
 OA vz 30 18 pts 1-i BR

Captured Tankette
Unit Composition: 1 Tankette
Special Rules: Scout
 TKS 15 pts 1-i BR (*Restricted*)

Reconnaissance Command . . . 23 pts 2-i BR
Squad Composition: 1 Command squad
Transport: Heavy Car
Special Rules: Scout, Officer, Mortar Spotter, Unique

Command Squad
Unit Composition: 4 men

Motorcycle Reconnaissance Team
 12 pts 1-i BR
Unit Composition: 3 men with Vz-26 LMG
Transport: Motorcycle and sidecar
Special Rules: Scout

ENGINEER SUPPORT UNITS

Pioneer Squad 24 pts 2-i BR
Squad Composition: 1 Pioneer Squad
Special Rules: Engineers

Pioneer Squad
Unit Composition: 8 men with a Vz-26 LMG and 2 demolition charges

Options:
 Squad may have a flamethrower +20 pts
 Squad may take anti-tank grenades +10 pts

Light Bridging Unit 15 pts 2-i BR
Unit Composition: 6 men
Transport: Heavy Truck with a Bridge
Special Rules: Bridging

Recovery Vehicle
Unit Composition: 1 Vehicle
Special Rules: Vehicle Repair
 Repair Truck 10 pts 1-i BR

LOGISTICS SUPPORT UNITS

Supply Column 8 pts 1-r BR
Unit Composition: 1 horse drawn wagon
Special Rules: Resupply, Unique

Options:
 Add up to 2 horse drawn wagons +4 pts each
 Replace a single wagon with a medium truck
 +6 pts

Stretcher Party 12 pts 1-r BR
Unit Composition: 2 men
Special Rules: Medic

Ambulance 16 pts 2-i BR (*Restricted*)
Unit Composition: 1 Ambulance medium truck
Special Rules: Medic

Forward Aid Post 20 pts 5-i BR (*Restricted*)
Unit Composition: 4 men with a tent
Special Rules: Unique

SPECIALIST SUPPORT UNITS

Anti-Aircraft Gun
Unit Composition: 1 anti-aircraft gun with crew

20mm AA gun with 3 crew 26 pts 2-i BR
 Medium Truck tow +4 pts

ADDITIONAL FIRE SUPPORT

Off-Table Artillery Support Request

3rd Target Priority (5+) 5 pts 0 BR
 2nd Target Priority (4+) 10 pts 0 BR
 1st Target Priority (3+) 20 pts 0 BR

Pre-Registered Target Point 10 pts 0 BR

Counter-Battery Fire Mission . . . 10 pts 0 BR
 The counter-battery fire mission is effective on a 5+.

Slovak Fast Division Fire Mission Requests

Regimental Battery (3+ comms test)
 1-4 2 80mm mortars
 5-6 2 75mm howitzers

Divisional Battery (4+ comms test)
 1-2 2 75mm howitzers
 3-6 2 100mm howitzers

Corps Battery (5+ comms test)
 Roll on German Corps Battery table

Army Battery (6+ comms test)
 Roll on German Army Battery table

Timed 100mm Barrage 15 pts 0 BR
 Fired by a battery of four 100mm howitzers. Before the game, write down which turn the guns will fire on. The points cost includes a pre-registered target as the target point of the barrage.

Timed Avia B-534 Airstrike 10 pts 0 BR
 An air strike by an Avia B-534 carrying 4 small bombs. Before the game write down which turn the aircraft will arrive on. The points cost includes a pre-registered target as the target point of the air strike.

Off-Table Artillery Fire
Unit Composition: 1 Battery

2 75mm guns 70 pts 0 BR
 2 100mm guns 90 pts 0 BR

Slovak Close Air Support Table 1941

- 1-3 Avia B-534 Fighter**
1-4 no bombs
5-6 4 small bombs

- 4-6 German Aircraft**
*This air support is provided by the Luftwaffe.
Roll on the German Air Support Table 1941,
see Battlegroup Barbarossa.*

NEW VEHICLE PROFILES

VEHICLE	MOVEMENT			ARMOUR			ARMAMENT		
	Off-Road	Road	Special	Front	Side	Rear	Weapon	Mount	Ammo
OA vz 30	8"	24"	-	O	O	O	MG MG	Turret Hull	- -

VEHICLE	MOVEMENT			ARMOUR			ARMAMENT		
	Off-Road	Road	Special	Front	Side	Rear	Weapon	Mount	Ammo
TKS tankette	9"	12"	-	O	O	O	MG	Hull	-

Aircraft	Role	Hits	Weaponry
Avia B-534	Bi-plane Fighter	2	4 MGs 4 small bombs

The Slovakian Army inherited much of the Czech military industry's production for the Czech national army (now defunct). After their annexation of the country, the Germans would take the lion's share of the industrial output for themselves, but in 1941 the Slovaks could boast some good equipment, especially in tanks. Unfortunately, this equipment would rapidly become obsolete and their would be no modern replacements.

OA vz 30 Armoured Car

Produced from 1933 by Tatra, the six-wheeled OA vz 30 was armed with two machine guns, one in the turret and one in the hull. In all, just 18 vehicles served with the Slovak Rapid Brigade. After the Rapid Brigade was withdrawn from frontline service in late 1941, the surviving armoured cars were redeployed for anti-partisan duties.

TKS Tankette

Slovakia's small contribution to the German invasion of Poland, to recover land previously ceded to Poland, was rewarded by the gifting of 30 TKS tankettes from captured stocks. A small, lightly armoured vehicle armed with single ball-mounted machine gun, even in 1939 (when they had fought against the German invasion) the TKS had little military value, by 1941, it was a relic.

Avia B-534

A bi-plane fighter operated by the Czech air force, the Slovaks inherited 70 aircraft which then flew in support of operations in Poland and later in the Ukraine, sometimes operating as fighter cover to German bombers. The Avia B-534 was soon outclassed by more modern Russian aircraft and withdrawn from combat duties, to become a training aircraft. A few fell into rebel hands during the Slovak National Uprising in 1944. These now flew against the Germans, when one scored the last confirmed kill by a bi-plane aircraft, downing a JU-52 over Poland. The Avia B-534 mounted four machine guns, two on either side of the fuselage, firing through the propellers.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

These are general rules questions and enquiries that have been compiled since the game was released in 2012. Following them are question specific to each of the four books currently available. Much thanks must go the Guild forum here, as the principal online source for rules questions.

ARTILLERY AND MORTARS

1. Can light mortars (50mm etc) use the Indirect Fire Rules?

Yes, but with a maximum range of 20" I can't see this being very practical, especially give the deviation of IDF. Better to use them for Direct Fire with HE up to 20", or for Area Fire as Very Light HE (probably their best role). They are the only mortars that can do this.

2. If I take individual medium mortars (80mm etc) as Platoon Support choices, can I deploy them all together and use them as battery, for communications tests etc?

No. They were bought separately so act separately. If a mortar battery is bought, then they will all fire together, but single mortars can't 'gang-up' into ad-hoc batteries. They can be deployed together, but each would still need its own spotter.

3. Do gun shields provide any protection to the gun crew?

No. You could make the argument for cover against small arms only, but for ease they count as in the open (unless they are in some other cover – which would be best).

4. Is there a minimum gun crew to allow the gun to keep firing?

Yes, 1 man, but remember 'last man pinned' is removed, and this applies to gun crews too.

5. How does the mortar's minimum and maximum range work, given the range bands given in gun stats?

Don't be confused by the range bands, mortars have their own minimum and maximum ranges (see page 29). The gun stats just give its AP effect for a direct hit against an armoured vehicle, which is the same regardless of range. The bombs don't get any larger or smaller, no matter the distance they travel.

6. How far can mortar teams move?

Light and medium mortar teams are infantry, and move as such. Heavy mortars should be light guns (so best not to move them without transport).

7. Is it possible for off-table mortars or of-table artillery to be out of range? This applies mostly to mortars, as they have limited ranges given.

Off-table artillery is always assumed to be within the weapon's range, regardless of table size and any ranges given for on-table weapons.

8. In 1 Open Fire! order a single multiple rocket launcher fires 6 shots. This uses up all its ammo in one go. It then takes 2 turns to reload. Do they have to have a supply truck in contact to reload for two turns?

No supply truck required, as a soft skin vehicle or towed 'gun', multiple rocket launchers are assumed to have ammunition stacked nearby (like any gun). Resupply is assumed to happen in that 2 turn delay. Only armoured vehicles with an ammo rating would need a supply vehicle.

9. If a gun on ambush fire is hitched up by its towing vehicle and moved (and thus the gun itself has not been given an order), does it retain its

ambush fire marker for later?

No. A gun that is moved loses its marker. You are effectively choosing to remove the ambush marker when you hitch up the gun.

10. In Defences, the anti-tank gun dug-out entry says it is for a single anti-tank gun. Does this have to be an anti-tank gun, or could be an artillery gun, or an anti-aircraft gun? How do you buy the gun?

It could be any gun. You buy the gun as part of your normal force, with the normal restrictions of support options etc.

11. Can on-table artillery use pre-registered target points or is it only for off-table assets?

Yes they can.

12. Is an Order required to fire on a pre-registered target point?

Yes. An order is required to command the guns to fire, so two guns would still mean two orders.

13. For the Artillery Spotter+ special rule, he "may re-roll the distance dice when rolling D6s for the distance of the scatter". What is meant by "the distance dice"?

It is the dice used to get the distance from the target point. So you may re-roll the 2D6 on a result of 2 to 5, or the 4D6 distance on a wild shot.

14. Can light and medium mortars move and fire in the same turn? This also applies to MMGs and HMGs.

Yes, they all can move and fire.

15. Can the crew of a 120mm mortar use the Fallback! rule to avoid casualties?

No, they are gun crew and thus can't use the Fallback! rule. If they did, they would be abandoning the mortar tube.

16. How are multiple rocket launchers supplied. What about armoured multiple rocket launchers like the Stuka-zu-Fuss or Panzerwerfer?

If it a soft-skinned vehicle or ground mounted 'gun', then they don't need to resupply, they just miss two turns between firing. If they are an armoured vehicle, mobile, with an ammo rating, then they need to resupply as per an armoured vehicle. Each Open Fire order is 3 ammo for a multiple rocket launcher.

17. If I fail a comms test, then re-roll for a forward signals unit and fail again, can I re-roll again if I have a comms relay unit as well?

No, one re-roll per attempt.

18. Does a comms test re-roll cost an Order for the team doing the re-rolling?

No, it's just free re-roll.

ARMOURED VEHICLES

19. When an armoured vehicle carrying passengers is destroyed, what happens to the passengers?

This is an omission. It is the same as for tank-riders, so a D3 men are killed (no save) and the squad (or squads) are placed within 4" of the wreck and marked as pinned. They must take a morale test for the casualties.

20. Some vehicles have LMGs listed as armament rather than a MG. The Small Arms Rate of Fire Table has a stat for 'Tank MG'. Do vehicle LMGs count as a Tank MG or is there a different ROF?

All LMGs have RoF 2, not the tank MG's 3.

21. Do the tanks that get the benefit of skirt protection from mortars and bombs?

They do, dependant on the AP value. Think of it as a very close hit, rather

than actually on the vehicle's deck.

INFANTRY, CLOSE ASSAULTS AND FALLBACK!

22. If an infantry unit is pinned when it is attacked by a close assault, can it still shoot back?

No, they are in deep trouble. Pinned units don't shoot back, I guess mostly they surrender.

23. Do infantry squads have to have all rifles or all SMGs, or can they mix them?

They can freely mix, but only as the models show. Only Russians should have all SMG armed squads. Many players find it easier and faster to stick to one or the other, but some players like to have their NCOs with SMGs, which is fine. Just remember he can't fire more than 10" - but he'll be better in a close assault. 2 members with an SMG per squad should be the maximum for mixed squads.

24. What is squad coherency? How far apart can I position my infantry models?

Roughly 1", maybe 2" at a push, but I can't see that spreading squads out would make any difference, except leave lots of men at longer range bands (where majority rules).

25. If an infantry unit is pinned, can it still elect to Fallback!?

No, a pinned unit can't Fallback! It can only take the damage inflicted as they duck for cover.

26. Can a unit Fallback! off the table?

Yes it can, and that would probably be routing! So take a counter for a destroyed unit. As it's the player's choice, I suggest you don't do it!

27. How many infantry models can enter a building?

How many people could you get in your house? A lot, practically maybe a hundred or more at a squeeze? It is not really going to be an issue unless you try to get an entire company in a small cottage. As many as you can

reasonable fit in is what we say - 20 to 30 even in a smallish building.

28. If I give an infantry squad a close assault order, they pass the required unit experience test and move up 5", what happens if they still aren't within 5" of an enemy unit.

Nothing, they can't close assault, so they just moved up and that ends their order. Probably best to be sure you're in range before ordering close assaults. Remember, only the majority would have to be within 5", not all of them.

29. How does adding a D6 for 'Grenade!' to the attackers in a close assault work?

Add up the attacker's ROF as normal (remember SMGs now count as 2), then roll a D6 and add the result to the total. So, if an attacking unit had a ROF of 6, then rolled a 6 for Grenade!, they would have a total of 12. Now roll to hit with 12 dice.

30. From the army lists, to meet the minimum infantry requirement, can you take individual squads, or does it have to be the full platoon? So, instead of a platoon, I could just take 3 squads instead?

No, it has to be the platoon. There is the Ad Hoc Platoons special rule in 'Fall of the Reich', which allows the Germans to do this, but most of the time, a platoon means an actual platoon.

31. Can an infantry unit close assault tank riders and not the tank they are on? And can a unit close assault a tank with tank riders on it?

Yes, just as normal, the tank riders are a separate unit and can be targeted by a close assault. In reverse, yes. The attacker can attempt to throw his anti-tank grenades (Molotovs, whatever) to try to get the tank instead of the tank riders. Roll as normal, just assume if the attack fails, the tank riders got him!

32. When falling back, if there are several pieces of cover to the rear of

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the falling back unit, all within 10", does the unit have to be placed in/behind the nearest or can it be any? For example, if behind the falling back unit there is a wall 3" to the rear and a wood 8" to the rear.

The firing player moves the falling back unit, and he can choose, but he must use cover where available. In the above example, it could be either.

33. Can an infantry unit fallback to avoid losses in a close assault?

No, they can't fallback from a close assault.

34. Is a combat medic a single man unit? If so, does the 'last man running' rule apply if he is pinned? Does his loss cost a morale chit?

A combat medic can operate as single man on his own, and all the normal rules apply. He can also be added to a squad, move with them and is only lost when the squad are lost.

35. Can pinned tank riders disembark from the vehicle they are on? What if the vehicle is pinned?

Yes, because the vehicle they are on is given the disembark order, not the squad. They are just placed within 4" and still pinned.

If the vehicle is pinned then it can't be given an order, so the squad can't disembark. Of course, if the vehicle was hit then the tank riders are automatically disembarked anyway, so it's unlikely they'll be stuck on a pinned vehicle (but it can happen).

36. If infantry close assault a vehicle that is pinned (using anti-tank grenades), do they still have to roll on the anti-tank grenade attack table?

Yes they do. The 'defensive fire' isn't just the target vehicle, it's everything else as well, or maybe the crew of the vehicle with their small arms.

SOFTSKINS

37. When units in (or being towed by) transport vehicles arrive from reserve, does this count as 2 unit, the vehicle and passengers, or just 1?

1 unit. Only the transport or tow counts. Otherwise, German squads in transport count as 3, which is too harsh (and oddly transported infantry would arrive far slower than foot infantry). Same for tank riders, they come with the tank as one.

38. Are there any consequences for the passengers of a soft skin that is destroyed by an AP shell?

The passengers take casualties as per other destroyed vehicles.

FIRING

39. When can I use Ambush Fire, can it interrupt midway through an enemy fire order?

No, do it before or after the fire order. You can interrupt between two fire orders though, or midway through a move, say if a target would appear then disappear from view again, that's what the order is for.

40. If a unit waiting on ambush fire opens fire and uses aimed fire, does it have to roll to spot?

Yes. It uses the same firing sequence as all aimed fire, of which step 1 is 'observe the target'.

41. Can you roll to spot tank riders (for aimed fire at them) separately from the tanks they are riding. If so, what cover are they in?

Yes, the tank riders are a separate unit and can be spotted and fired at just like any other. Spot them in the open (unless the tank itself is in some form of cover, in which case so are the tank riders on it). They count as in soft cover for covers saves from the fire.

42. Multiple autocannons and multiple MG mounts have their ROF increased to 10 and can roll twice for Area Fire. What is the exact definition of weapons that qualify for this up-rating?

Yes, anything with more than one barrel counts.

43. A quad flak can roll twice to pin per area fire shot, can this be 4 different targets, thus allowing 4

targets to be fired at in a turn?

No, 2 targets max, just 2 rolls to pin per target.

AIRCRAFT

44. If an aircraft arrives and wishes to drop its bombs, how is this resolved exactly?

First give the FAC the 'Request Artillery Fire' order. If no FAC is present then skip this stage.

No Priority check is required, the aircraft is already on the table. Roll a communications check for the FAC to talk to the pilot. Failure means no bomb run this turn. If there is no FAC then skip this, the pilot is acting on his own initiative.

Then mark the spotter round's target point as per the IDF fire sequence, but the spotter is the FAC unit, not an artillery observer (this isn't literally a spotter round in this case, just a grid reference). If there is no FAC then the aircraft can do this itself (effectively anywhere on the table).

Roll for target deviation, as for artillery, moving the target point. If the aircraft is not using the FAC to spot then add an extra D6 to the distance it misses by (so up to 5D6 if the bombs are Wild!). The bomb run cannot be cancelled now. You could allow pilots to pull out, but it's more entertaining this way (perhaps American pilots should not be allowed to, but others can!).

Fire for Effect, think of it more as 'Bombs Away!'. Roll for Accuracy as per artillery, once per bomb. Dive bombers get to re-roll one dice. Then allocate direct hits and pinning results to the closest targets as per artillery.

*Resolve direct hits first.
Resolve pinning hits.*

45. Which units can and can't use anti-aircraft fire?

As all anti-aircraft fire is Area Fire, those that have the chance of doing it are listed on the Area Fire table. This is basically small arms (and

MGs), with RoF 5 or more, needing 6s, and very light HE, needing 5+. Now, technically RoF would include tank MGs, but these would not have the elevation, and so cannot be used for AA fire (only the most desperate player would attempt to claim it). Very Light HE represents autocannons only. Non-autocannon HE rounds from other guns (anti-tank guns, tank main guns etc) cannot be used either.

46. When under air attack, do you take a counter when an aircraft appears on the table, or when it actually attacks (given that AA fire might pin it or shoot it down)?

The counter is taken the first time an aircraft actually attacks, ie rolls dice to shoot a target or drop bombs. Just overflying the table isn't enough. That attacks includes any type of weapon in any type of firing.

47. If, before the game, I'm out scouted by the enemy and draw a morale chit and get an aircraft. When do I roll for this?

At the start of your next turn, that would be turn 1. Happy days!

48. If a scenario has bad weather, does that mean all timed airstrikes are cancelled and any aerial observers taken can't be used, as well as no aircraft arriving from counter?

No, timed strikes and other aircraft are unaffected by bad weather, just the counters don't bring any further air support.

OTHER GAME RULES

49. In the Rally phase, if I want to draw multiple counters to rally 2D6 or 3D6 units, do I have to declare this first, or can I do it one after the other and see how it goes first before drawing a second counter?

Declare it first, ie; 'I'll take two counters'. We play nice though, and if a player rolls badly and then wants another counter, I let them take it - who I am to stop them taking counters? That's our house rule though. Literally, declare it.

50. If a unit freely leaves the tabletop, does it count as destroyed?

No, it counts as nothing, except it can't comeback. Sometimes it's worth just bugging out.

51. How many 'Beyond the Call of Duty' tests can a unit take, and pass, in a turn?

As many as it is lucky enough to pass. Our record is 2 for one very heroic T-34 crew.

52. Does it count as a move to bring reinforcements onto the tabletop?

No, they are placed on the table edge (obviously they moved to get there, but it doesn't count as any of your Orders for that) and can be given an order from their first position on the tabletop.

53. When starting a game what is the point at which you note a Pre-Registered Target Point? Is it after deployment as noted for a Timed Barrage?

Mark PRTPs before any deployment.

54. In scenario descriptions it details 'x' units being deployed or D6 units arriving as reinforcements. If I have bought a battery of 2 guns or 3 mortars, does that battery count as one unit in the context of the statement above, or multiple units?

Multiple units. Each gun is a unit. If they pulled by a tow, they still count as 1 each. So a battery of 2 guns is 2 units arriving.

55. Are the AT guns purchased as part of an AT dug-out or bunker part of that defence and thus can be placed on the board regardless of the 2D6 roll for forces (or whatever the roll happens to be for that scenario)?

Yes, they are part of the defences and automatically in the dug-out.

56. When engineers are clearing a minefield, do you roll to see if they set off the mines as well?

No, they are being careful and they are trained for the job.

57. Is barbed wire an obstacle or dangerous ground, and how does it affect infantry, given that infantry movement isn't affected by terrain?

Barbed wire is an obstacle for everything (including infantry, which is exception the normal infantry movement rules).

58. How can you destroy barbed wire?

With a demo-charge.

59. In the Defence Line scenario units bought from the Defences section must be placed in the Front Line Zone. If the defender has purchased items like Improved Barricades and Trenches that do not come with defenders, are these placed on the battlefield empty? Does the defender get to automatically man them with troops he has bought? Or can they only be manned with items from his 2D6 die roll?

The defences are placed and manned with troops from the 2D6 roll, not extra troops, so there is a possibility that some may start unoccupied - I guess the defenders got caught napping or the guys that were occupying the defences already ran off (or got killed)!

60. If a Platoon is listed as Restricted in the army list, is this 1 restricted unit or 1 per unit in the platoon?

It is 1 for the entire platoon, regardless of its size.

61. How do the army lists support option and platoon support options work?

Support Options are those that allow extra units from the army list support assets (Reconnaissance, Engineers, Logistics, Specialist and Additional Fire Support). Usually 1 unit allows 1 support choice, although for platoons and larger units this can vary, as noted with the entry.

Dispatches 2

Platoon Support Options are separate from the above. They are extra units attached to an infantry platoon. A platoon can have these and Support options as well, the two don't affect each other in anyway.

62. In some scenarios, if there is bad weather, all aircraft counters now count as 1's instead. If the enemy has Unreliable vehicles, do these new 1's then become extra breakdown chits?

No, they just count as 1 for the total, they aren't actually 1s. Nice try though!

63. Can a resupply vehicle resupply German infantry with Panzerfausts?

No. But if both players agree, then I don't see why not. It might make for endless Panzerfausts though.

64. If, in an Attack/Defence scenario, an objective starts the game in possession of the defender, does the attacker still have to take a counter.

Yes, in turn 1 the attacker takes the counter for any objectives held by the enemy. This is a deliberate advantage for being the defender.

BATTLEGROUP KURSK QUESTIONS AND ERRATA

1. To avoid confusion, is the 152mm ML20 Gun Howitzer (as described on page 134) the 152mm L29 and the 152mm Howitzer Model 38 (as described on page 134) the 152mm L24?

The ML20 is 152mmL29. The model 38 is 152mmL24

2. There are no stats for the German AT rifle, but it's in the army list as a platoon support option?

This is an omission from the gun stats. It's the standard issue PzB39 rifle, and they are the same as the Russian PTRD. Not many anti-tank rifles were left by 1943, most had been relegated to second line units, and even they didn't use them much, but a few survived.

3. What are the gun sizes for the Russian lend-lease guns?

37mmL53 is very light. 75mmL30 is light. 2 pdr is very light, but without any HE this won't really matter. The 6 pdr is very light. The clue is in the HE stats; 5+ very light, 4+ light, 3+ medium, 2+ heavy.

4. There is no option for better Russian infantry. What about Guards units?

Deliberately so. 'Guards' was a unit citation, for past service, more akin to calling a British Regiment 'Royal'. But the men were not trained or equipped any differently and didn't fight any better. Thinking of Guards as somehow 'elite' units is a mistake, and rather a hang-over from previous wargaming conventions.

All Russian infantry are inexperienced, to characterise them against their German enemy. Of course some individuals would have had lots of experience (not many survived that long though), but we are talking in general terms, and the point is to keep the points cost very low when balancing the two sides against each other, and for that mass-effect.

5. What is the minimum distance I can move using the Stal! Stal! Stal! rule?

The tanks must make two normal moves towards the enemy or the enemy board edge. The first normal move, for a T-34 would be the full 12". The second is up to 12" again, with a practical minimum of 1", so that's between 13" and 24". Remember to reduce this for crossing terrain. This should avoid situations with tanks having to go too far forwards, right passed targets for their MGs.

6. The BA-10's weapon is wrong. It has a 37mm gun listed, shouldn't this be a 45mm gun?

Yes, typo. It has a 45mmL46 gun, not a 37mmL45 gun.

7. Katyusha BM-8-13, what is it?

82mm rocket rails mounted on a turretless T-60 chassis. An armoured Katyusha.

8. The Marder II is listed as having a turret mounted weapon, hence 360 arc of fire. Is this correct?

No, straight typo, it's hull mounted.

9. What are the transport capacities for armoured transport vehicles?

These are missing. In general they carry the squad they were bought with in the army list, but players might want to squeeze other teams in, or pick up other infantry as they move around the table. So here is a list:

*SdKfz 251/1 10 men
SdKfz 251/3 6 men
SdKfz 251/10 6 men
SdKfz 251/16 8 men
SdKfz 250/1 4 men
SdKfz 250/3 3 men
SdKfz 250/10 4 men
SdKfz 250/11 4 men
Bren Carrier 3 men
M5 Halftrack 10 men
M3A1 White Scout Car 6 men*

10. Is the 'Stuka Zu Fuss' (SdKfz 251 Wurfrahmen 40) stat line missing?

Yes it is. It is an SdKfz 251/1, but also has 280mm Nebelwerfer rocket launcher with an ammo capacity of 3 (enough for one Open Fire! order before needing to re-supply)

11. The KV-2s main gun is listed as the 152mmL29, shouldn't it be the 152mmL24?

Yes, straight typo. It's the L24 gun.

12. Valentines have the same stats as the Matilda, but less ammo, yet cost more points, why?

Ammunition capacity isn't factored in points costs, unless it's very low. Valentines didn't feature much at Kursk, mostly reaching the front in later 1943, so they a slight points increase to represent scarcity in this period. Other vehicles also have their points tweaked for this – mostly German ones.

13. On the QRS it says an immobilised vehicle must take a morale counter, in the book it says test, which is right?

No such thing as morale counter, it's a typo. It should be Morale test.

14. The Bergpanther isn't unreliable. Is there any reason for this as basically it is the turretless version of the same tank?

Historically they don't seem to have had problems with the Bergepanther breaking down anyway, at least it's not mentioned.

15. The 37mm 81-K anti-aircraft gun, is this actually a 61-K?

Yep, typo.

16. The 85mmL53 anti-aircraft gun is listed as having a Komosomolyets tractor option, but this can only pull a light gun. The 85mmL53 is a medium gun, is this correct?

Typo, it should be a Komintern tractor, a far larger vehicle for a far larger gun.

17. What is the 105mmL42 gun listed for the Germans in their gun data?

Nothing, it shouldn't be listed, as it's an obscure captured weapon used for coastal defence only. Its inclusion is a mistake.

18. In a Soviet Rifle Division battlegroup, can a command bunker be bought in addition to a forward HQ (this would also apply to a German infantry battlegroup)? Can an artillery observation bunker be bought in addition to a regular forward observer?

Yes, they can be additional HQ and OPs to the ones from the rest of the list.

BATTLEGROUP OVERLORD QUESTIONS AND ERRATA

1. The Challenger's armour seems rather good, really?

No, it has the Comet's stats, a mistake in transcribing. It's armour should be;

Front: K Side: L Rear: M

It's points and BR values are correct though.

2. There is no gun data for the British 3" Close Support howitzer, what are they?

It is the same as the 75mmL16 howitzer.

3. What is the transport capacity of the M3 and M5 half tracks, it says 10, but a US Armoured Infantry Squad has 13 men ?

10 men as standard. But the US squad is an exception, they are very squeezed in!

4. The US Infantry Division can take a 90mm anti-aircraft gun as specialist support, but there are no stats listed in the gun data. What are they?

Missed from the Allied Gun Data. It is the 90mmL53 gun.

Ammo	HE	HE	AP	Effect
10-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	0-10
50-70				
HE		4/3+		3
3	3	3	3	
3				
AP		-		10
10	9	8	7	6

It is included in Fall of the Reich.

5. If I buy extra support units for an Armoured Panzer Grenadier Platoon (HMG, Panzerschrek team, etc) how are they transported, because the platoon's half tracks are already pretty full? Can I get extra half tracks for the other support units?

There is space for 2 men in each of the Rifle Squads 3 251/1s, so a light mortar team, combat medic or a Panzerschrek team can fit in. The HMG team should have the option to be mounted in 251/1 for +16 pts +1-v BR.

6. If a man in an infantry squad

is carrying a PIAT, Bazooka or Panzerfaust, does he also have a rifle to use when not using the AT weapon?

Yes, all men have a rifle.

7. Are there any hedgerow cutter devices available to US tanks for Normandy?

The rules for them are on page 135, in Rules for Bocage Fighting. In this case, if the model tank has one, then it can use it, they don't cost any points. Only US tanks can have them.

8. When firing Panzerfausts, can a squad fire more than 1 on the same order or is each Panzerfaust a different order?

Yes, as long as it's at the same target. Different targets would require two orders.

9. In British carrier mounted teams, can the infantry in the Bren Carriers fire their weapons from the carrier?

No. But it's a little more complex than that.

The HMG team did have a mount for the Vickers, so in this case treat the Vickers as a pintle-mounted MG, until the unit disembark and thus take the MG with them.

The Rifle Team in the Bren Carrier Section has a Bren gun, this is the same weapon as would have been mounted in the carrier, so when they disembark, the carrier no longer has a weapon, so can't fire.

10. Can units inside a landing craft be given orders i.e. Senior Officer? Does this differ if the Landing Craft is Pinned or Not?

No, passengers in transport vehicles don't get orders until they disembark.

11. If a landing craft is sunk once it has reached the beach are the infantry and vehicles lost as normal i.e. 2D6 drown?

No, they are lost as per a destroyed transport vehicle. The 2D6 is for all the drowning men as well as those

Dispatches 2

killed by the incoming fire. At the beach, they aren't drowning.

12. We have been treating landing craft as soft-skin vehicles - which makes them easy to pin (is this correct)?

No, landing craft are treated as open-topped armoured vehicles for pinning (page 27). Also, remember, a pinned landing craft can still use the Top Speed order.

13. Can units be put on reserve move within a landing craft - so they could be disembarked and then move?

They can disembark and then move. The landing craft's order disembarks them, then the squad's order can move them. But no, you can't have an order whilst being transported.

14. How wide a gap does a tank with a dozer blade make when clearing beach obstacles? Can other vehicles move through the gap in the same turn?

Any gap is as wide as the vehicle itself. Yes, they can just follow on immediately.

15. If a bridging unit lays a bridge, can vehicles and infantry move over it in the same turn?

Yes.

BATTLEGROUP FALL OF THE REICH QUESTIONS AND ERRATA

1. The British Commando Assault Section is a Specialist Support choice, but it says it can have 4 Support choices. What would these be (as a support choice itself how does it select support)?

This line should read 'Each Section counts as 4 support choices'.

2. If, in a scenario description, it gives special rules (say for deployment) does this override a unit's own special rules, or do they still get their special rule as well?

No, a unit still gets to use its special rules as well.

3. The Russian 'Ravzedka' long

range patrol is described as 2 3 man units in 2 Jeeps. Is this 1 unit or 2 for Orders?

It is 2 units for orders, they can operate separately etc, they are just bought in pairs.

4. A British Airborne Infantry Platoon is rated as veteran, but doesn't have the War Weary special rules, is this an oversight?

No, it is a small advantage for airborne troops over other veteran infantry in 1945.

5. The US Infantry platoon has the option for a light mortar team, but it is listed as 2 men with 50mm mortar, 60mm surely?

Typo. Yep, 2 men with a 60mm mortar.

6. British Cromwell troops don't have an option for Fireflies, instead they come with a Challenger, but many still had their Sherman Fireflies as well. How can we take these?

Use the Sherman tank troop, but replace the two M4A4 Shermans with Cromwell IVs. The Troops points value is increased to 212 points. BR remains the same. The option to upgrade the Shermans is lost as well.

7. How can I include US Airborne troops in Fall of the Reich games?

Treat them as a US Infantry Platoon with the Veterans and War Weary upgrade.

8. The Russian lend-lease M5 halftrack has different speed to the British and US versions, why?

The British and US speed is wrong, it should be 12" and 16", as per all half tracks.

9. The US have access to a special rules called Time on Target barrages, but the rule isn't included. What is it?

The rule is in BG Overlord, but should have been repeated. Here it is if you

haven't got Overlord.

Time on Target barrages can be purchased from the Additional Fire Support section of the American army lists, but they do not count as an Additional Fire Support choice. Any US artillery (but not mortar) barrage can be declared as ToT, including timed barrages. Resolve them as normal, but when rolling for Artillery Barrage Accuracy, any results a of a 1 (which would normally miss) can be re-rolled, with the second result standing.

BATTLEGROUP BARBAROSSA QUESTIONS AND ERRATA

1. When rolling the dice for Command Chaos, do you roll once for the entire game or at the start of each turn?

You roll the dice at the start of each turn.

2. In the Russian Rifle Division lists, the T-28 is listed as 10 pts and 1-i BR. The T-35 is listed as 8 pts and 1-i BR, this can't be right?

No, typos.

The T-28 should be 26 pts and 3-i BR. The T-35 should be 46 pts and 3-i BR.

3. German Assault Pioneers have an option to upgrade their HMG-34 to an MG-42, is this a typo?

Yes, you can't have an MG-42 in 1941 without access to a time machine. The line should have been removed.

4. Finnish Long Range Patrols have a demo-charge, but they aren't Engineers. Can they still use it?

Yes, they should be Engineers as well. As a general rule, any unit that comes with a demo-charge can use it, assume they have the training required.

5. Is the Russian IL-16 listed actually the I-16 Polikarpov?

Wrong denomination. It is the I-16, not the IL-16, which is a late war aircraft. It is right in the description on page 102.

STOUMONT HALT

by Warwick Kinrade

A scenario for the Ardennes, December 19th, 1944

This historical re-fight compressed two engagements on the same day, near Stoumont Station, into one game. The first is Lt Kent's defence of the station, the second is Lt Power's bold attack along the road when the two tank columns encountered each other. Battlegroup Overlord contains everything you'll need to play a game set during the Battle of the Bulge.

BACKGROUND

On its way to the Meuse River, Kampfgruppe Pieper had reached Stoumont, a small hilltop village in the Ambleve river valley. Having ejected the American defenders from the village in a morning assault, the vanguard of 1st SS Panzer Division's battlegroup had instructions to push on westwards, along the river valley road, through the next small village of Targnon and beyond, to seize a useful bridge over the Ambleve river. The battlegroup was already very short of fuel and it was racing against time to reach the distant Meuse bridges before the Americans could organize their defences and block Pieper's route.

The leading Panthers pushed on west, down the road which descended steeply from Stoumont, through switchbacks towards the valley floor. At Targnon the road joined the single railway line, following the river through the valley. Here, the railway went through a tunnel under the hillside and then emerged to run close to the river's bank. After 1km the railway passed the tiny goods halt of Stoumont Station. North and south where steep hills covered in forests.

As the Germans organised for their next push, the Americans were reacting as best they could. To block the valley road west of Targnon, Lt Leon Kent of C Battery, 143rd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Regiment quickly towed his 90mm M2 anti-aircraft gun into place by the station buildings with orders to hold the road. With him he had 15 gunners and an M4 tractor, equipped with a pintle-mounted .50 machine gun. It was all that was available. Behind him, at Remouchamps, where an ad-hoc armoured unit of 740th Tank Battalion, old Shermans (two were DD tanks - without their skirts, one was an M10 and another an M36 tank destroyer), rounded up from repaired vehicles held at an ordnance depot. The US tanks were commanded by Lieutenant Charles Powers and once fuelled-up and armed, they quickly headed east. The two tank forces would run into each other on the road just west of Stoumont Station.

Meanwhile, at Stoumont Station, first around the bend in the road, coming directly into the M2 gun's waiting sites, was Oberscharführer Ropeter's Panther.

It was immediately hit, tearing off its muzzle break and disabling its main gun. The US gun crew reloaded and fired again and again, repeatedly hammering the Panther until it started to burn. Ropeter and two others tumbled out, badly burnt, two of his crew died inside.

Behind Ropeter came Krüger, Kauffman and Brauschke's Panthers and they slewed around the first tank and returned fire. Several rounds glanced off the Panthers in an exchange of shells but the anti-aircraft gun was knocked out.

Meanwhile, Panzer Grenadiers advancing through the railway tunnel moved along the railway line and soon came under fire from small arms and the US .50 calibre heavy machine gun, the M4 tractor had been driven down the slope onto the railway lines. The SS grenadiers disembarked and returned fire, but were pinned down in the firefight. Their half-track was hit and knocked out trying to reach the road. But, with the AA gun gone and big tanks advancing up the road, the US troops abandoned their tractor and withdrew.

Krüger led the other Panthers passed the station, whilst at the rear Hauptscharführer Knappich halted his tank, gathered the wounded Ropeter from the roadside, laid him on his engine deck and returned up the hill to the aid station in Stoumont with his severely wounded comrade. As the others advanced, coming along the other way were the US tanks, the M10 was in the lead. In the misty afternoon it saw the lead Panther first, stopped and opened fire. Krüger returned fire before his tank was knocked out by a shell that glanced off the road and into the underside of the tank. It started to burn, but the M10 had also been disabled. Power's Sherman passed the M10 and raced on, meeting Kauffman's Panther just west of the station buildings.

With Power's first shot Kauffman's tank was hit (at less than 200 yards) the 75mm shell glancing off the gun mantlet and ricocheting down through the thinner top armour. Ammunition cooked off inside and it too started to burn. Kauffman died within.

Powers then opened fire on the next tank on the left side of the road, Brauschke's, but a shell jammed in his main gun. He waved the next tank, actually the M36 under Sergeant Looney, passed to take the lead. Looney's fire hit the Panther's cupola, penetrated and killed the tank commander outright. The driver reversed away, but hit the roadside ditch and got stuck. The surviving crew bailed out and fled. Four Panthers had been lost and the road from Stoumont was blocked. Here Powers halted, holding the road and waited for infantry support to catch up. By nightfall men of C Company, 1st Battalion, 119th Infantry Regiment were digging in close to Stoumont Station.



Krüger's burnt out Panther marked the most westerly point of Pieper's race to Meuse, a race which was now stalled and would never get started again. The following morning the US troops would advance on Targnon and begin the battle to retake Stoumont.

THE BATTLE

Size: This is a squad-sized game.

Terrain

This game is played on a thin table, following the course of the road and railway line. As the steep forested hill is to the north and Ambleve river to the south, these act as useful natural boundaries. A 6' x 2' table is recommended.

The Ambleve valley is heavily wooded. The station has two small brick buildings and small goods yard between them (where the AA gun was in place). The road is slightly higher than the railway line, but the scrub and tree lined slope is gentle so doesn't need to be represented.

The wooded hill to the north of the road is impassable to all vehicles and difficult ground for infantry (it is steep). South of the railway line are more woods, beyond which lines the Ambleve river.

The road is wide enough for 2 tanks abreast, but becomes blocked if two vehicles are destroyed next to each other. Otherwise, any wrecks on the road count as obstacles for moving passed and around them.

Deployment

The AA gun, tractor and spare gunners should all be placed with 10" of the Stoumont station. The anti-aircraft gun starts the game on Ambush Fire. Ropeter's

Above: The Ambleve valley road, just west of Stoumont Station (round the bend), a couple of days after the encounter. US forces have pushed the wrecks off the road to clear the way for troops moving up to attack Stoumont. This is the closest Kampfgruppe Pieper got to its objective.

Panther should be placed on the German board edge on the road.

First Turn: The Germans take the first turn.

Victory: The first side to lose all its BR breaks and must withdraw, the other side is the winner.

Special Rules

US Reinforcements: The tanks are on the way, and Lt Kent and his men need to hang-on. From turn 3, start rolling for the arrival of the first US armour. It arrives on the road on a dice roll of 4+. From then on one vehicle arrives via the road in each subsequent turn, in the order given.

German Reinforcements: The German reinforcements arrive from the beginning of turn 2, on the turn given in the lists. The Panther tanks all arrive along the road. The infantry all arrive along the railway line.

Mine Strike Counter: There have been no mines placed, so the Mine Strike counter is not used, remove both the counters from the pot before the start of the game.

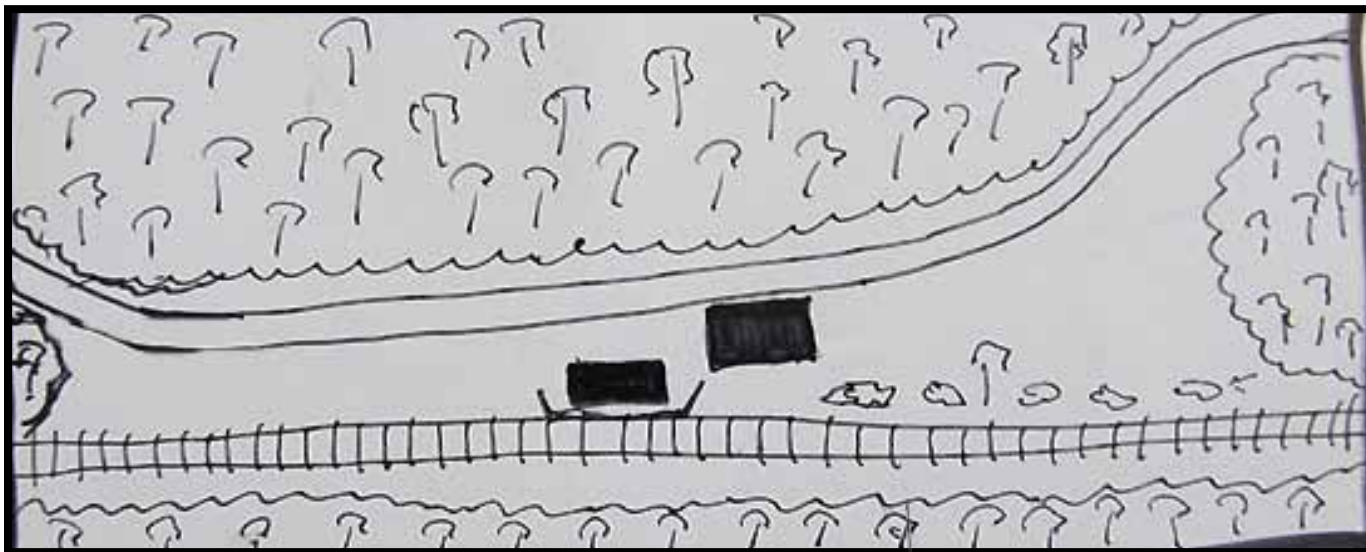
Air Attack: It is an overcast, misty day, no air support is available for either side. Any aircraft counter drawn count as 1 instead of being an aircraft.

Railway Line as Cover: The railway line is in slight dip and lined by bushes and scrub. Any infantry squad

on the railway line is in soft cover, except for fire from another unit also on the line, in which case they are in the open.

Restricted 90mm AP Ammo: Not much armour piercing ammunition was issued to anti-aircraft units. Roll a D3. This is the number of AP shots Kent's 90mm gun has in the game, after that, it must use HE shells.

MAP



GERMAN FORCES
(all German forces are Veteran)

Initial Deployment
Panther G (Ropeter)

Reinforcements

Turn 2: Panther G (Krüger)
SS Panzer Grenadier squad: 5 men with a Panzerfaust
SS MMG team: 3 men with MG42
Mounted in SdKfz 251/1

Turn 3: Panther G (Kauffman) (Officer)

Turn 4: Panther G (Brauschke)
SS Panzer Grenadier squad: 5 men with a Panzerfaust
SS MMG team: 3 men with MG42
Mounted in SdKfz 251/1

1 Officer, 20 BR

Note:

Hauptscharführer Knappich's Panther (actually commanding the platoon) was not involved in the engagement, except to save Ropeter, so isn't included above. It was in the column (it seems at the back), so could be included. An extra Panther might make the scenario very tough for the Americans though! In which case add:

Turn 5: Panther G (Knappich) (Officer)
Add +1 Officer and +3 BR to the German side.



US FORCES
(all US forces are Inexperienced)

Initial Deployment

M2 90mm anti-aircraft gun with 4 crew and a 3 man loader team
M4 HS tractor with pintle-mounted .50 cal MG
Infantry squad (Lt Kent and spare gunners): 3 men with rifles. (Officer)
Infantry squad (spare gunners): 3 men with rifles

Reinforcements

M10 Tank Destroyer
M4 Sherman (Lt Powers) (Officer)
M36 Tank Destroyer (Looney)
M4 Sherman
M4 Sherman

2 Officers, 20 BR

STEP-BY-STEP

AMBUSH FIRE and RESERVE MOVE

The cunning use of Ambush Fire and Reserve Move orders provide a great opportunity for clever tactics in Battlegroup. The aim of this little tutorial is to explain exactly how these orders work, and how they interact with each other. This explanation is based on the rules themselves (p. 15 of Battlegroup: Kursk and the mini rulebook), but also some clarifications that have appeared on this forum from Warwick and Piers.

The Situation

Two Panzer IVs have advanced towards a Soviet village. Behind a house skulk a T-34 and a SU-76. None of the enemy vehicles are able to see each other. Standoff.



Turn 1: German Player

First and Second Orders

The German player spends two orders to place each of his Panzer IVs on Ambush Fire. They are marked accordingly with counters, and cannot perform any other actions during the remainder of the German player's turn.



Turn 1: Soviet Player

First Order

The Soviet player hopes to attack the German Panzers. He spends one order to give his T34 a Manoeuvre and Fire order, so the T34 moves from behind the house to see the enemy. However, the German player declares that his Panzer IV on the left interrupts the Soviet move with Ambush Fire. He then follows the usual procedure for an Open Fire order. He is required to identify the targets for both his shots in advance, so potentially could fire once at the T34 and once at any other available enemy target. However, he really, really wants to kill the T34, so declares that both shots are aimed at it. He rolls to spot the T34, rolls to hit, and then rolls to see whether the hit penetrated the T34s armour. All these rolls are successful on the first shot, so the T34 erupts in flames and the second shot is wasted. The Panzer IV on the left is now no longer on Ambush Fire.



Second Order

Somewhat unnerved, the Soviet player now uses his second order to place his SU-76 on Reserve Move, in the hope that this will help him react to whatever the Germans have planned.



Turn 2: German Player

First Order

The German player is considering issuing a Manoeuvre and Fire order to his Panzer IV on the left. Before he can do so, the Soviet player interrupts the German player's turn by declaring a Reserve Move, as he is hoping to move his SU76 to safety. He removes the Reserve Move marker and the SU76 takes a Top Speed order, allowing it to move twice.

However, the SU76 moves into the line of sight of the Panzer IV on the right, which is still on Ambush Fire. The German player then interrupts the Soviet player's Top Speed order and Opens Fire on the SU76, with predictable results.



If the Panzer IV had missed the SU76, the SU76 would have completed its Top Speed Order, then the German player's turn would have continued.

Note that if a Soviet unit had used a Reserve Move to move into the line of sight of the Panzer IVs during the German player's Turn 1 after they had been placed on Ambush Fire, they would not have been able to react. Ambush Fire cannot be used during the same turn when the order is issued.

I hope this little tutorial helps, despite the lack of impressive terrain! The counters that appear in the photos are made by Commission Figurines.

Important Points to Remember

Ambush Fire can interrupt an enemy Order.

Reserve Move can interrupt an enemy turn, but not order. Although this was not made entirely clear in Battle Group Kursk, this rule is made explicit in the mini rulebook (p. 15). In other words, Reserve Move cannot be used to do things like move after an artillery spotting round lands near it, or to move away from an enemy tank that approaches to close range as part of a Manoeuvre and Fire order.