

The Battle for Hill 159 - Operation "Tractable"
15th August, 1944
(EAST OF FALAISE, NORMANDY)

A Rapid Fire 2 Scenario V1.1.1 (1/12/07)
By Mark Piper

Background

After the failure of Operation "Totalise" early in August to break through the German front line, the First Canadian Army was to dominate the Falaise Area by not allowing enemy forces to escape by the roads that passed through, or near it. Operation "Tractable" was an assault by two armoured columns on a narrow frontage preceded by a massive preliminary bombardment and followed up by infantry mounted in improvised armoured personnel carriers. The 4th Canadian Armoured Brigade was to capture the strategically important Hill 159. Various German forces were deployed in a defensive line around the town of Falaise in an effort to cover the withdrawal of other forces from the closing jaws of the Allied "pincer" movement from both north and south.

The Wargame Scenario

The game is played on a 8' X 6' table. *Elevations* are not a continuous obstacle for movement. *Standing crops* provide soft cover to infantry only but are not an obstacle to movement nor restrict visibility. *Buildings* start intact. *Woods* are open. The game length is 9 turns.

The objective for both sides is to hold two out of the three objectives (Hill 168, Hill 159 & the "Farm") at the end of 9 turns. An objective is considered held if only one side has combat elements (not OP teams, abandoned AFVs or crews and empty transports) deployed within 9" of the centre of the objective. The game is a draw if more than one objective is contested or unoccupied or both sides are forced to retire.

Sources

No Holding Back - Brian Reid
Steel Inferno - Michael Reynolds
Falaise 1944 (Osprey Campaign) - Ken Ford
Road to Falaise (Battle Zone Normandy) - Stephen Hart
The Killing Ground - The Battle of the Falaise Gap August 1944 - James Lucas & James Baker

German Order of Battle all regular except AFV units which are elite elements of 12th SS Panzer and 85th Infantry Divisions

[between A-B & C-D]

2nd Company, 102nd Heavy SS Panzer Battalion Panzer VI Tiger I (88mm)^ **

2nd Battalion (-), 25th Panzer Grenadier Regiment (motorised) test @ 15 casualties

HQ	CO + 4, P/shrecke, personnel carrier
2 x companies	each 8 figs, P/faust, medium truck
Heavy company	6 figures, 2 x MMGs, P/faust, medium truck
	3 figures, 81mm mortar, light truck

[south of C-D]

Kampfgruppe HQ* 3 figures, staff car, 3 figures, Sdkfz 251/3 * higher level HQ

3rd Company (-), 1st Battalion, 12th SS Panzer Regiment 2 x Panzer V Panther (75mm)^

8th Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th SS Panzer Regiment 3 x Panzer IV (long 75mm)

1st Company, 12th SS Sturmgeschutz Battalion Jagdpanzer IV L/48 (75mm)^ **

battery, 12th SS Flak Battalion

4 figures, 88mm Flak 36/41 dual purpose^, towing vehicle

1st Battalion (-), 26th Regiment, 85th Infantry Division test @ 16 casualties

HQ	CO + 5 figures
1 st & 2nd companies	each 8 figures, P/faust
Heavy Company	9 figures, 2 x MMG, 81mm Mortar

Recon Company "Wienecke" (recon) 7 figures, P/faust, Sdkfz 251/1

Barbed Wire 6 sections each 4" x 1" lengths

[Off-board artillery]

12th SS Panzer Artillery Regiment (-)

2 x artillery battalions	each 2 x 105mm Howitzer
2 x OP teams	each 2 figures, Kubelwagen

^ AT ranges = short 12", medium 36", long 60" HE = 6 x 10"

** test as independent AFV

German forces set-up first. The Panzer Grenadier Battalion, 1 x OP team and the Tiger company can be deployed anywhere between lines A-B and C-D. Remaining German forces are deployed anywhere south of the line C-D as shown on the scenario map. Infantry start dug-in to prepared defences. AFVs on elevations may not start hull down. Rule 13.1 German LMGs applies (+1 firing only) to Panzer Grenadier only. German artillery battalions are controlled by individual OP teams only. The German player moves first.

Canadian Order of Battle all regular

elements of 4th Canadian Armoured and 7th Canadian Infantry Brigades

22nd Armoured (Canadian Grenadier Guards) Regiment (less C squadron)

HQ	Humber s/car, Sherman (75mm), Crusader AA (2 x 20mm), Sherman ARV
Recce Troop	2 x Stuarts (37mm)
A & B Squadrons	each 2 x Sherman (75mm), Sherman Firefly (17pdr)

28th Armoured (British Columbia Regiment) Regiment (less C squadron)

as per 22nd Armoured Regiment

1st Battalion, the Canadian Scottish Regiment (mounted in "unfrocked priest" APCs)

HQ	CO + 5, PIAT, 2" mortar, "unfrocked priest" APC (VMG)
A company	each 8 figures, 2 x Bren carriers
B, C & D companies	each 8 figures, "unfrocked priest" APC (VMG)
Support company	6 figures, 6pdr ATG, 3" mortar, universal carrier (LMG)

[pre-ordered turn 4]

Typhoon from 2nd Tactical Air Force (multiple 20mm autocannon, 8 X rocket)

*** test for arrival D6. 4,5, or 6 = one turn later

[Off board artillery]

3 x batteries, 15th Field Artillery Regiment each 2 x 25 pdr field guns
2 x OP tanks (Direct Support Fire)

3 x batteries, 23rd Field Artillery Regiment each 2 x 25 pdr
2 x Bren carrier OP teams (Direct Support Fire)

may fire up to two AT class 2 rounds per game (representing APDS ammunition). No HE.

^17pdr AT ranges = short 12", medium 36", long 60" / no HE or hull MG

* test as independent AFV

Canadian forces start north of line E-F. The Canadians have one turn of pre-game bombardment by both artillery regiments. For each bombardment place the IDF template over a suitable tactical feature i.e. Farm, spot height, wood, crossroads and roll 6 x D10 to determine the fall of shells. If desired one bombardment can be replaced by smoke. From Canadian turn 1 all Canadian artillery fire must be observed and rolled for as per normal. OP teams control batteries from their regiment only ("Mike Target").

When a Canadian element is within 12" (measured centre to centre) of a German element being targeted by a Typhoon, roll a D6. On a 5 or 6 switch the target to the nearest Canadian element and carry out the attack. The Typhoon can be requested from Canadian turn 1 as described in the aircraft section of the rules. The Canadian player moves second.

Deployments and arrivals

