

Operation "Fustian"

15-17th July, 1943 (Primosole Bridge, Sicily)

A Rapid Fire 2 scenario V 1.5.7 (7/4/08)

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Background

For the British paratroopers, the assault on the Primosole Bridge foreshadowed the later disaster at Arnhem. For the German Fallschirmjager, it was a perfect example of what the capability to react, swiftness, boldness and good luck could accomplish. The bridge was a key objective in Montgomery's race to Messina and the plan was to seize it using elements of 1st British Parachute Brigade, which were to be relieved by 50th British Infantry Division advancing from the south. The British airborne troops were scattered and immediately attacked by the elements of the Fallschirmjager landed only hours before.

The Wargame Scenario

The game table is approximately 8' X 6'. The high ground south of the bridge is a continuous feature for movement. The Simeto River (6" wide) is a continuous obstacle for movement for infantry and AFVs, but cannot be crossed by wheeled vehicles except at the bridge or ford shown on the map. Buildings start intact. Olive Groves are treated as open woods. Vineyards are soft cover but don't restrict movement or visibility. The sunken road and the irrigation canal are also treated as slit trenches and foxholes. Both bridges can be destroyed as per the rules. The pillbox holds up to 1 x MMG & 3 figures.

The objective for both sides is to hold two out of the three objectives (Primosole Bridge, Sunken road and "Johnny" feature) at the end of 9 moves. An objective is considered held if only one side has infantry 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. The German player moves first.

Sources

German Airborne Divisions: Mediterranean Theatre 1942 - 45 - Bruce Quarrie

The Red Beret - Hilary St. George Sanders

German Airborne Troops - Roger Edwards

Ready for Anything - Major General Julian Thompson

Storming Eagles - Jame Lucas

The Glider Soldiers - Alan Wood

Bitter Victory - The Battle for Sicily - Carlo D'Este

Command Post Quarterly # 10 "Race for Messina" - Greg Novak

Axis Order of Battle - all elite

elements of 1st Fallschirmjager Division & Herman Goring Panzer Grenadier Division

On-board

[south-west of A]

1st Fallschirmjager MG battalion (Major Schmidt) test @ 20 casualties

HQ	CO + 5 figures, grenade launcher, Panzerschreck,
3 X companies	each 8 figures, Panzerfaust
MG company	9 figures, 2 x MMG, 1 x 81mm mortar, 2 x trucks
Support company	3 figures, 1 x 105mm recoilless rifle, Kettenkraftrad
	3 figures, 1 x 75mm PAK, truck

[within 6" of culvert B]

"Kampfgruppe Stangenberg" (Captain Stangenberg) test @ 12 casualties

HQ	CO + 5 figures, observer team
2 X companies	each 8 figures, Panzerfaust

Reinforcements

[turn 3 @ C]

Heavy Flak Battery, Herman Goring Flak Battalion

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

Assault Gun Company, Herman Goring Panzer Battalion

Stug III (75mm)

[turn 4 @ C]

1st Fallschirmjager Pioneer battalion

as per 1st FJ MG Battalion but with 4 additional trucks

[turn 5 @ D]

1st Fallschirmjager Anti-tank Company

3 figures, 75mm Pak 40 anti-tank gun, towing vehicle

[air support - preordered turn 3]

Fockewulfe 190 2 x HMG + multiple 20mm autocannon / 2 light bombs

[Off-board artillery]

1st Battalion, Fallschirmjager Artillery Regiment,

2 x 105mm guns, OP team with KG Stagenberg

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

German reinforcements arrive at the location and on the turn indicated.

British Order of Battle - all regular except paratroops who are elite
Elements of 1st Parachute Brigade and 50th Infantry Division

On-board

1st Parachute "Brigade" * (Brigadier Lathbury) test @ 20 casualties

* widely scattered - approximately 1/3 found their way to the area of the bridge

"Brigade" HQ	CO + 9 figures, 2" mortar, 2 x PIAT, Naval observer team
1 st Parachute "Battalion"	8 figures
2 nd Parachute "Battalion"	8 figures
3 rd Parachute "Battalion"	8 figures
1 st Air landed AT "Battery"	9 figures, Vickers MMG, 81mm mortar, 6 pdr, jeep

Reinforcements

[turn 3 @ E] 9th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry test at 20 casualties

HQ	CO + 3 figures, 2" mortar, PIAT, 15 cwt truck
Carrier Platoon	3 figures, PIAT, Bren Carrier
4 X companies	8 figures
Spt company	6 figures, 81mm mortar, 6pdr ATG, 2 x Bren carriers
Transport Platoon	2 x trucks (each capacity of 16 figures)

[turn 5 @ E] 44th Royal Tank Regiment (-)

HQ	Sherman 75mm
Reconnaissance troop	1 x Humber AC (37mm)
A & B Squadrons	each 2 x 75mm Shermans

[off-board artillery]

56th Battery, 24th Field Regiment Royal Artillery 2 x 25pdr guns
OP team (2 figures), jeep with HQ 9 DLI

[Naval support] HMS Newfoundland 4 x 6" guns
Naval OP team (2 figures on foot) with 1st Parachute "Brigade" HQ

British paratroop forces setup as indicated, dug-in to slit trenches and weapon positions and on reserve fire. British reinforcements arrive along the southern edge (E) of the board on the turn indicated.

Deployment & arrivals

