

THE BATTLE FOR TERMOLI

5TH October, 1943

(East Coast Italy)

A Rapid Fire Scenario V 1.0 (28/12/08) by Paul D. Stevenson

Background

After the Battle of Salerno, Kesselring, commanding the German forces in Italy, rushed the battle damaged 16th Panzer Division across country to the east coast where Montgomery, commanding the British forces in Italy, was attempting to turn the German defence line near Termoli with a combined inland and seaborne offensive.

The Wargame Scenario

The game depicts the crucial fighting from about 10.00 hours on the 5th October, after the Special Service Brigade had captured the port of Termoli, but before the British could re-establish a bridgehead across the swollen Biferno to reinforce their forward infantry positions with armour from the County of London Yeomanry. It does not cover the British counter-attack led by the armour of the Canadian Three Rivers Regiment and ultimate defeat the Germans on the following day.

The German forces arrive in a piecemeal fashion but nevertheless catch the British off-guard as they attempt to establish a forward defensive zone on the Coccia Ridge.



**German Armoured infantry supported by tanks assault a farm
(from the collection of Paul Stevenson)**

Ideally a 6' x 10' table is needed. If the table is marginally longer it is possible to depict the actual bridge building attempt and use the bridge construction rules on pages 84 and 85 of the Rapid Fire rulebook (Option 1) or consider the bridge construction in a more abstract way (Option 2). See below for details. Game length is 15 Turns. The German player has the first Turn.

Victory Conditions

The British win if they have one or more infantry units of at least 50% strength on one of the three spurs of the Coccia Ridge (between points B and C) and prevent the German victory conditions (see below).

The Germans win if they hold both road junctions: from route A to B and from route C to D; or if they can exit a infantry unit of at least 50% strength from the table at Point E on or between the roads leading to Termoli.

If both sides attain their victory conditions, or if neither side achieves their victory conditions, the result is a draw.

Special Rules and Terrain

The River Biferno is high after continual rain and cannot be crossed except at point D where engineering operations are underway. Two options for bridge building are considered. For the British, the first option involves the use of an AA gun, engineers, a bulldozer and Bailey bridge models. To counter this, the Germans may make use of an additional battery of 2 x 105mm howitzers and 1 x FW190. The bridge building operation is represented on table. The second option is more abstract and should be used where space is limited.

If using Bridge-building Option 1, then construction commences in British Turn 2. Turns 2 onwards may also include further ford filling operations with the bulldozer. Roll a D10. If the score is less than the number of turns played a ford has been filled and one Sherman can cross during that same movement phase. When half-way across the ford roll a d6: a score of 1 means that the Sherman is stuck and has to be abandoned as lost. Further work cannot be carried out. The bulldozer can also be used to shift knocked out tanks on the Bailey bridge in both option 1 & 2.

If using Bridge-building Option 2, then during the British Observation Phase, starting with Turn 6, roll a d6 for completion:

- Turn 6 - score 6: the bridge is ready and the armour can cross.
- Turn 7 - score of 4,5 or 6: the bridge is ready and the armour can cross.
- Turn 8 onwards - score 2+: the bridge is ready and the armour can cross.

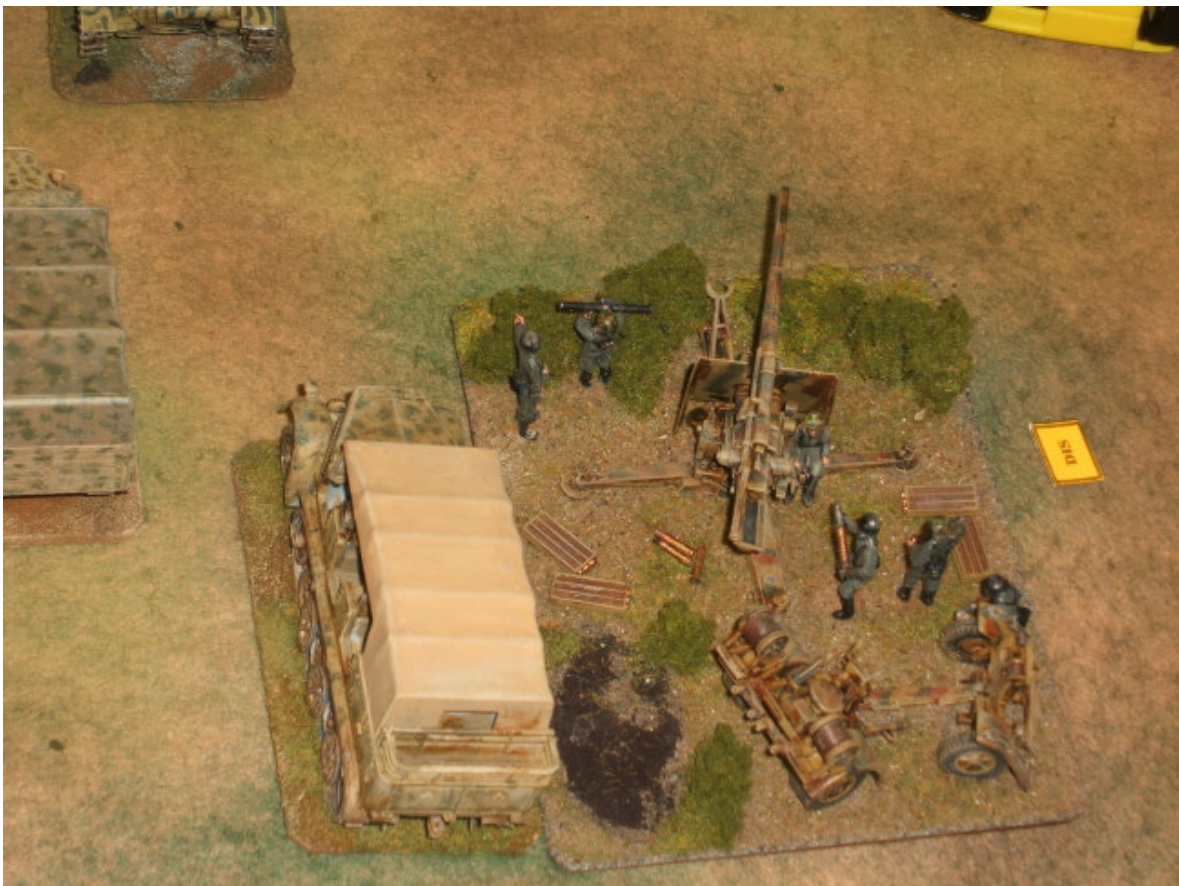
Tanks can cross the bridge on the turn in which the roll for bridge completion is made, entering the table at Point D. Tanks move on one behind another. (Remember to make the half move reduction for the soggy ground as stated below.)

There is an exception to the above rule: on Turn 1, one model Sherman (from C /3 CLY) can be placed at point D, up to six inches onto the table. This model represents those tanks that were able to cross over the river by a constructed ford before it was finally churned up by their passage. To allow for the narrow possibility of more tanks getting across the ford on Turn 1, the British player may make one dice roll attempt and needs to score a 6 to place another Sherman from C/3 CLY at point D.

The River Sinarca can be negotiated by infantry at any point above the bridge (south of it) but with a -d6" from their movement allowance. Each vehicle wishing to do so, can also cross the river above the bridge but only if it can roll a 6 when it approaches it, otherwise it must use the bridge at Point A to get across. (Remember to minus d6" from half its move rate).

Apart from movement on the hills all vehicle movement is restricted by the soggy ground and muddy roads to half speed.

The olive groves on the hillsides are treated as open woods. All buildings begin the game intact and provide hard cover. Vehicles crossing the railway lines must deduct a further d6" from their movement.



**German 88mm battery in action
(from the collection of Paul Stevenson)**

**British Order of Battle and Deployment
elements of 78th Division (Maj.Gen. Eveleigh)**

(NB Use the Command and Control rules on page 77/78 of the rule book)

Elements of 11th Infantry Brigade: *(deployed within 12" of the railway junction)*

2nd Battalion, the Lancashire Fusiliers

Machine Gun Company, 1st Battalion, the Kensington Regiment (see page 9 RF rule book)

36th Infantry Brigade (Brig. Howlett)

Brigade HQ *(deployed on the outskirts of Termoli)*

6th Battalion, the Royal West Kents Regiment *(deployed between the road from point C and the centre spur but no closer than 12" to the table edge)*

5th Battalion, Buffs *(within 12" of the table centre)*

8th Battalion, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders *(east of and within 12" of the Brickworks)*

(The above four infantry battalions are all organised as described for infantry battalions on page 8 of the Rapid Fire rule book.)

Attached to 36th Bde: 40 Commando *(the brickworks area within a radius of 6")*

HQ Company: CO + 4 figures, PIAT, 2" mortar

2 x Companies: each of 5 figures

(test morale on loss of 8 figures)

Force Chavasse (Lt Col. Chavasse) *(deployed within 6" of the road from Termoli to the brickworks)*

56th Reconnaissance Regiment:

RHQ: Armoured Car (Humber MkII)

B Squadron: 8 figures in 2 Universal Carriers

3 Commando:

HQ Company: CO + 4 figures, PIAT, 2" mortar

3 x Companies: each of 5 figures

Support Company: 3 figures, 6-pdr ATG and tow.

SRS Troop:

6 figures in two jeeps with multiple MMGs

(Force Chavasse tests Morale at 20 casualties. NB destroyed armoured vehicles count as 3 casualties each)

On-table artillery *(deployed within 12" of the suburbs from point E)*

Battery, 138th Field Regiment R.A (see "R" Battery page 9 RF)

Battery, 64th Anti-Tank Regiment R.A. 5 gunners, 17-pdr ATG and tow

NB: Limited ammunition. A maximum of six turns of shooting per on-table battery is allowed.

Off-table artillery:

Elements of 17th and 138th Field Regiments

(see Artillery Regiment, Page 9, Rapid Fire rule book)

Use Direct Support Fire. Deploy up to 3 OPS (one per battery on table)

3rd County of London Yeomanry

(See Armoured Regiment organisation, page 6, RF rule book, except that each squadron is equipped with three Sherman III - there are no Fireflies)

1 or possibly 2 (on roll of 6) Shermans deployed at Point D. The remainder of the regiment arrives when the Bailey Bridge is completed.

Low Altitude Air-Strike:

AOP Vehicle (deployed on outskirts of Termoli with 36 Bde HQ)

Typhoon (use the air support request rules as per 15.3 b and Ground Attack rules on page 94)

Bridge-Building and Defence Units: Option 1 only

Elements of 49th Light A.A. Regiment, R.A. (single-barrel 40mm AA gun)

214th Field Company, R.E. (see page 85 of rule book, add bulldozer)

Troop Quality

The British are classed as regulars, except for the Special Service (Commandos and SRS) units which are elite.

Main Sources

"History of the Second World War - Vol. V - The Mediterranean and Middle East"

"Tug of War", Graham & Bidwell, 2004

"Eighth Army in Italy", Doherty, 2007

"The Regiment", Asher, 2007

I would like to thank Roberto Bagna of Italy, for his assistance.

German Order of Battle

elements 16th Panzer Division (General Sieckenius)

(Use the Command and Control rules on page 77/78 of the rule book)

Kampfgruppe Stempel

(Enters the table between points A and B. Note that not all units can enter at once or they can arrive in subsequent turns. Exception: the 2/64 PZ Gren arrives on the roll of 6 starting from Turn 1. Add one to the score for each attempt to arrive.

(Use the Panzer Grenadier organisation chart on page 12 of the Rapid Fire rule book)

HQ (armoured 250 command SPW)

1/64th Panzer Grenadiers (motorised)

2/64th Panzer Grenadiers (armoured 250 SPWs)

Support Company: StuG III

Armoured Pioneer Company: 8 figures, flamethrower, 251/7/16 SPW

1/16th Artillery (can be on or off-table - OP always on table)

(See Self-propelled Artillery Battalion on page 14, RF rule book)

16th Reconnaissance Battalion:

HQ 2x Schwimmwagen, CO and five figures, panzerfaust

2x 250/9 Armoured Cars

3x 250/1 APC each with six figures

250/8 75mm gun with three crew

3 figures, Pak 40 and tow

(Recon tests Morale at 20 casualties. NB destroyed vehicles count as 3 casualties each)



German Kampfgruppe advances
(from the collection of Paul Stevenson)

Kampfgruppe Von Doering (*enters the table between points B and C*)

(Use the Panzer Grenadier organisation chart on page 12 of the Rapid Fire rule book)

HQ (CO + 2 figures, light car)

Consolidated 79th Panzer Grenadiers

(represented as one dismounted battalion with each rifle company consisting of ten [not 8] figures - they took heavy losses at Salerno)

Independent Support Companies:

Grille 150 SRG

StuG III

Armoured Pioneer Company: 8 figures, flamethrower, 251/7/16 SPW

2/16th Artillery (Can be on or off-table, OP always on table.)

Important: *If Bridge-building Option 2 is used for the scenario, the 2/16th artillery is not represented in the game although its effect is considered in possible delays to bridge construction.*

(See Artillery Battalion organisation on page 11, RF rule book [but motorised])

Kampfgruppe Stenckhoff

(Enter table from Turn 1 onwards between Points B and C on the d6 score of 6 per company; +1 for each attempt made)

2nd Panzer Regiment

HQ Company

Panzer IV G

37 mm SP Flak

1st Company

2 x Panzer IV G

2nd Company

2 x Panzer IV G

Attached Support (*may be off-table direct fire support or roll to be placed on table*)

Flak/AT Artillery: 5 crew, 88 mm Flak/ATG plus tow

(can fire as Anti-tank weapon if on table)

Attached Nebelwerfers: 8 crew, 2 Multiple Rocket Launchers, OP in SPW

Kampfgruppe Schultz

(Enter table from Turn 1 onwards within 6" of Point C on the score of 6; +1 for each attempt)

1st Parachute Regiment (Elite)

HQ CO, 5 figures, panzerschreck, kettenkrad

1st Company 8 figures

2nd Company 8 figures

Support Company 3 figures 81mm mortar, 3 figures MMG, light truck

(test at 14 figures)

Low Altitude Air-Strike:

FW 190

Use only if Bridge Building Option 1 is being used.

(Use the planned/pre-ordered attack as per 15.3 a and Ground Attack rules on page 94)

Troop Quality

The Germans are all classed as Regular, apart from the paratroops who rate as Elite.

Note: all German Parachute Infantry, Panzer Grenadiers and Pioneer companies benefit from additional LMGs +2 dice roll modifier (see 13.1, page 88 in the Rapid fire rule book). Also note that Panzerfausts are not available.

Termoli : Battle Map

