

Day Two at Sidi Rezegh

A desert battle based on the events of November 22, 1941.

A WWII scenario for Hail of Lead adapted directly from the Desert Battle scenario 10 from Frank Chadwick's *Benghazi Handicap* campaign book for the *Command Decision* rule set.

Played on Saturday, July 19, 2008, by the Gourmet Wargaming Club in El Cerrito, California.

Number of Players

3-4 Commonwealth players, 3-5 German players.

Situation

On November 21st, 7th Armoured Brigade and 7th Support Group secured Sidi Rezegh and then launched their attack north, to break the German siege lines around Tobruk. But as the attack north gained ground, the armored strength of *Afrika Korps* slammed into the two brigades from the south. In a long day of touch-and-go fighting, the British managed to hold on, but lost most of 7th Armoured Brigade's tanks, and some of the Support Group's guns, in the process.

During the night, 21st Panzer Division, organized in two battle groups (Knabe for the infantry and Stephan for the tanks), shifted to the north, to launch a renewed attack from that direction the next day. In the morning, the somewhat battered 22nd Armoured Brigade races north to reinforce the defenders, but 21st Panzer's attack starts first.

Sides

The Germans attack as Side 1, the Commonwealth are Side 2.

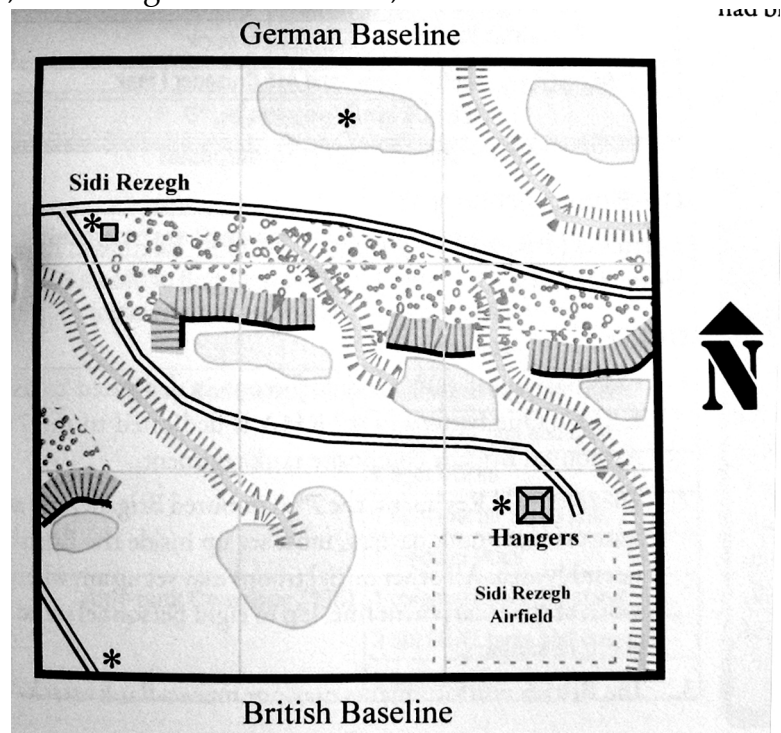
Weather and Spotting

Historic weather was clear. Spotting in the desert is the same as in Europe, with two notable exceptions: All stationary personnel stands, including ordnance crews, are treated as if concealed. All entrenchments are spotted as if they were concealed personnel.

In the hot, dry weather of the desert, treat LOS as being obscured by mist/dust when two Units are on the same level open terrain. (The effects of heat shimmer and dust effectively reduce LOS to half of normal.) However, a Unit at a higher elevation (rise, hill, or escarpment) will be able to trace LOS using normal spotting distances because it can see over the heat shimmer.

Battlefield

The map assumes a 6 x 6 foot table; each grid on the map represents 2 feet on the table. Roads are represented by close double lines. The main east-west road is paved; the road to the airfield from Sidi Rezegh is unpaved, although this will have no effect in this scenario. The



centipede-like lines with legs on both sides are shallow wadis. The escarpment is represented by dark lines with shaded slope lines on one side. Broken ground to the north of the escarpment is represented by dotted, rock-strewn fields. The light grey patches with outlines are rises (small hills). The area surrounded by a dashed line is the airport runways. Urban terrain such as Sidi Rezegh and the airport hangars is represented by dark boxes.

Terrain

Wadis: Shallow, dry stream beds with steep banks. Units must make a Double Move using their Difficult terrain movement to enter or exit a wadi, and will use all their movement allowance doing so. Where wadis have broken banks (every 25 to 50cm), Units may move freely across the wadi using their Difficult terrain movement.

Units within a wadi must deploy in column when moving along the wadi. They are concealed, and are in soft cover from Direct Fire which crosses a wadi side before hitting the Unit. AFVs with turrets are considered hull-down in a wadi. Wadis also provide soft cover for personnel stands under IDF attacks. LOS is not blocked by wadis, nor are Units in wadis invisible to outside Units.

Escarpmnts: These are steep slopes broken by passes and wadis. Only personnel may cross escarpments, not vehicles or manhandled towed ordnance. Personnel may move across escarpments by a Double Move with their entire movement allowance using Very Difficult movement. All Units may cross an escarpment through a wadi by a Double Move with their entire movement allowance using Difficult movement. All Units may cross an escarpment at a pass using the normal terrain movement rates (Road or Open).

LOS does not cross escarpments. A Unit at the top (touching the edge) of an escarpment may trace LOS to any Units below. Rises on an escarpment that are within 6 inches of the edge also provide LOS to Units below.

Pass: The escarpment is cut by a pass to the west, where the airport road runs south from Sidi Rezegh. The pass is gently-sloping open ground; normal LOS applies.

Broken Ground: This rugged ground is considered Difficult for movement, and provides soft cover to personnel stands only.

Rises: These low hills block LOS between Units, but not if one stand is on top of the rise. AFVs on a rise may take hull-down positions.

Runways: The airport area is broad, flat, paved, and completely devoid of cover or concealment. Any Units in this terrain will never receive cover saving throws against any sort of attacks, including direct fire and IDF attacks.

Sangars: Not pictured on the map, sangars are foxholes that have been bolstered with piles (walls) of rocks. They are spotted as concealed personnel. Sangars provide hard cover to personnel stands.

Time

The battle begins at 0900 hours, and will end at or before 1800 hours, with a possible duration of 18 turns.

Victory Conditions

The German forces must secure either the hangar at the airport, or the high ground in the southwest corner of the map. They cannot allow the enemy to occupy Sidi Rezegh or the rise in the top north of the battlefield (the location of their supply dump). Failure to meet these conditions will result in a Commonwealth victory.

Historic Result = German Victory

Frank Chadwick writes:

“Crushing, overwhelming victory might be a better term for it. The initial attack from the north by *Kampfgruppe* Knabe went in well, supported by the weight of the German artillery reserve

further to the north, but firing with excellent observation. Knabe's infantry pushed the British infantry of the Support Group back off the escarpment and clambered up after them. 7th Armoured brigade counter-attacked, but was caught by the flank attack from the west by *Kampfgruppe* Stephan, which knocked out most of its remaining tanks. As Stephan was about to complete the destruction of the Support Group, 22nd Armoured Brigade appeared from the south, almost like the cavalry arriving in the nick of time. Unfortunately, Stephan's heavy AA battery was in position by this time, and shot the approaching British armor up at long range, and, as it closed in, Knabe's anti-tank gun joined in and finished the work. By the end of the day, 7th Armoured Brigade had only 10 tanks left, and 22nd Armoured Brigade was down to only 24. 7th Support Group had been overrun and had lost many of its guns, while German losses had been remarkably light. It was fair to say that the Germans had broken the back of the British armored force."

Commonwealth Order of Battle

INITIAL TROOPS

Deploy the 60th Field Regiment and 7th Armoured Brigade and at least 1 anti-tank battery of the 3rd Regiment in the Commonwealth assembly area, up to 25cm from south board edge. Other initial forces may set up anywhere south of the escarpment line. Up to 9 personnel stands may emplace in Sangars (rocks piled around foxholes—hard cover).

7th Support Group

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)

1 car

1 staff radio truck (2 rolls/100cm)

1st Battalion, The King's Royal Rifle Corps (-) (dismounted)

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)

Motor Company A

(1 command roll/25cm)

2 rifle stands (integral Boys antitank rifles)

1 recon LMG stand (1 self-roll)

1 recon carrier (crewed by LMG stand)

Motor Company C

(1 command roll/25cm)

2 rifle stands (integral Boys antitank rifles)

1 recon LMG stand (1 self-roll)

1 recon carrier (crewed by LMG stand)

Motor Company D

(1 command roll/25cm)

- 2 rifle stands (integral Boys antitank rifles)
- 1 recon LMG stand (1 self-roll)
- 1 recce carrier (crewed by LMG stand)

Motor Company A/2nd Rifle Brigade (attached)

- (1 command roll/25cm)
- 2 rifle stands (integral Boys antitank rifles)
- 1 recon LMG stand (1 self-roll)
- 1 recce carrier (crewed by LMG stand)

60th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery (-)

This Unit may provide IDF support to all friendly units.
Any Unit with command capability may attempt to call fire from one or both batteries.

Skill: veteran 3-6
Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

- 1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)
- 1 FO stand (1 self-roll)
- 2 car

Battery A

- (1 command roll/25cm)
- 2 25-pounder field guns
- 1 gun crew stand oOOOO (special = smoke, HE, or IDF)
- 1 gun crew stand oOOOO (special = smoke, HE, or IDF)
- 2 Quad prime movers

Battery B

- (1 command roll/25cm)
- 2 25-pounder field guns
- 1 gun crew stand oOOOO (special = smoke, HE, or IDF)
- 1 gun crew stand oOOOO (special = smoke, HE, or IDF)
- 2 Quad prime movers

3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery (Anti-tank) (-)

Skill: veteran 3-6
Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

- 1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)
- 1 car

Battery A

- (1 command roll/25cm)
- 2 2-pounder anti-tank guns
- 1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO
- 1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO
- 2 light trucks

Battery B

- (1 command roll/25cm)
- 2 2-pounder anti-tank guns
- 1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO
- 1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO
- 2 light trucks

Battery C

(1 command roll/25cm)

2 2-pounder anti-tank guns

1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO

1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO

2 light trucks

7th Armoured Brigade

Skill: regular 4-6

Rally: steady 4-6

Headquarters Squadron

1 command A10 cruiser tank (2 rolls/25cm) OOOOOOOO

1 A9 CS cruiser tank OOOO

7th Hussars, Composite Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 A13 cruiser tank OOOOOO

1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOOO

2nd/6th Royal Tanks, Composite Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 A13 cruiser tank OOOOOO

1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOOO

Elements, 4th Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery

This Unit may provide IDF support to all friendly units.

Any Unit with command capability may attempt to call fire from one or both batteries.

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Forward Observer

1 FO stand (2 rolls/25cm)

1 car

Off-Board Elements:

Battery A

1 25-pounder field gun oOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

1 25-pounder field gun oOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

Battery B

1 25-pounder field gun oOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

1 25-pounder field gun oOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

REINFORCEMENTS

Arrive on Turn 5, entering anywhere along the south board edge.

22nd Armoured Brigade

Skill: regular 4-6

Rally: steady 4-6

Headquarters Squadron

1 command A15 Crusader I (2 rolls/25cm) OOOOOOO
1 staff radio truck (2 rolls/100cm)

2nd Gloucestershire Hussars Tank Regiment

Skill: regular 4-6

Rally: steady 4-6

Headquarters Squadron

1 command A15 Crusader I (2 rolls/25cm) OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I CS tank OOOOO

A Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO

B Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO

3rd County of London Yeomanry Tank Regiment

Skill: regular 4-6

Rally: steady 4-6

Headquarters Squadron

1 command A15 Crusader I (2 rolls/25cm) OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I CS tank OOOOO

A Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO

B Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO

4th County of London Yeomanry Tank Regiment

Skill: regular 4-6

Rally: steady 4-6

Headquarters Squadron

1 command A15 Crusader I (2 rolls/25cm) OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I CS tank OOOOO

A Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO

B Squadron

(1 command roll/25cm)
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO
1 A15 Crusader I OOOOOOO

German Order of Battle

INITIAL TROOPS

Deploy all initial forces anywhere up to 25cm from the north board edge.

Kampfgruppe Knabe (104th Schützen Regiment), 21st Panzer Division

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)

1 car

1 staff radio truck (2 rolls/100cm)

1 recon motorcycle rifle stand (1 self-roll)

1 rifle stand (regimental band)

1 engineer rifle stand

1 50L60 anti-tank gun

1 gun crew OOOOO

3 light trucks

II Schützen Battalion

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters

1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)

1 kübelwagen

1st Infantry Company (dismounted)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 rifle stand (integral PzBchs 39 anti-tank rifles)

2 rifle stands

1 MMG/mortar stand

2nd Infantry Company (dismounted)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 rifle stand (integral PzBchs 39 anti-tank rifles)

2 rifle stands

1 MMG/mortar stand

3rd Infantry Company (dismounted)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 rifle stand (integral PzBchs 39 anti-tank rifles)

2 rifle stands

1 MMG/mortar stand

4th Heavy Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 engineer rifle stand

1 37L45 anti-tank gun

1 gun crew stand OOOOOOOO

1 50L60 anti-tank gun

1 gun crew stand OOOOO

3 light trucks

8th Machine-gun Battalion

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command stand (2 rolls/25cm)

1 car

2 recon motorcycle rifle stands (each 1 self-roll)

1st Machine-gun Company (dismounted)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 MMG stand (integral PzBchs 39 anti-tank rifles)

2 MMG stands

2nd Machine-gun Company (dismounted)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 MMG stand (integral PzBchs 39 anti-tank rifles)

2 MMG stands

3rd Machine-gun Company (dismounted)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 MMG stand (integral PzBchs 39 anti-tank rifles)

2 MMG stands

4th Heavy Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 engineer rifle stand

1 50L60 anti-tank gun

1 gun crew stand OOOOO

2 light trucks

1 8cm mortar stand oOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

1 medium truck

5th Anti-tank Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

2 50L60 anti-tank guns

1 gun crew stand OOOOO

1 gun crew stand OOOOO

2 light trucks

Elements, II/155th Artillery Battalion

This Unit may provide IDF support to all friendly units.

Any Unit with command capability may attempt to call fire from one battery (one tube).

The forward observer (FO), or a battalion-level or higher command stand, may attempt to call fire from one or both batteries, but cannot combine the fire with that of other artillery units.

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Forward Observer

1 FO stand (1 self-roll)

1 car

Off-board elements:

1 105L28 howtizer oOOOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

1 105L28 howtizer oOOOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

Elements, 408th Heavy Artillery Battalion

This Unit may provide IDF support to all friendly units.

Any Unit with command capability may attempt to call fire from one battery (one tube).

The forward observer (FO), or a battalion-level or higher command stand, may attempt to call fire from one or both batteries, but cannot combine the fire with that of other artillery units.

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Forward Observer

1 FO stand (1 self-roll)

1 car

Off-board elements:

1 105L52 gun oOOOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

1 105L52 gun oOOOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

1 105L52 gun oOOOOOO (special = smoke or IDF)

Elements, II/115th Artillery Battalion

This Unit may provide IDF support to all friendly units.

Any Unit with command capability may attempt to call fire from one battery (one tube).

The forward observer (FO), or a battalion-level or higher command stand, may attempt to call fire from one or both batteries, but cannot combine the fire with that of other artillery units.

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Forward Observer

1 FO stand (1 self-roll)

1 car

Off-board elements:

1 210L31 howitzer OOOO

1 210L31 howitzer OOOO

1 210L31 howitzer OOOO

REINFORCEMENTS

Arrive on Turn 3. May enter along the north board edge using a regular move or Double Move. Or may enter anywhere north of the escarpment and along the east or west board edges using a Double Move only.

Kampfgruppe Stephan (5th Panzer Regiment), 21st Panzer Division

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command Panzer III BefWg (2 rolls/25cm)

1 staff radio SdKfz 251 / 1 halftrack (2 rolls/100cm)

1 recon SdKfz 222 armored car (1 self-roll) OOOOOOO

1 rifle stand (regimental band)

1 light truck

3rd Battery, 1/18 Flak Battalion (attached)

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 88L56 AA gun

1 gun crew stand OOOOO

1 SdKfz 7 tractor

3rd Battery, III/115 Artillery Battalion (attached)

This Unit may provide IDF support to *Kampfgruppe* Stephan only.

Any Unit with command capability may attempt to call fire from the battery.

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 105L28 howitzer

1 gun crew stand oOOOO (special = smoke, HE, or IDF)

1 SdKfz 10 tractor

1st Company, 200th Engineer Battalion (attached)

(1 command roll/25cm)

3 engineer stands

1 light truck

1 medium truck

I Panzer Battalion

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command Panzer III BefWg (2 rolls/25cm)

1 recon Panzer II F (1 self-roll) OOOOOOO

1st Light Panzer Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 Panzer III G OOOOOOO

1 Panzer III H OOOOOOO

2nd Light Panzer Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 Panzer III G OOOOOOO

1 Panzer III H OOOOOOO

4th Medium Panzer Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 Panzer II F OOOOOOO

1 Panzer IV F1 OOOOOOOO

II Panzer Battalion

Skill: veteran 3-6

Rally: bold 3-6

Headquarters Company

1 command Panzer III BefWg (2 rolls/25cm)

1 recon Panzer II F (1 self-roll) OOOOOOO

5th Light Panzer Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 Panzer III G OOOOOOO

1 Panzer III H OOOOOOO

6th Light Panzer Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 Panzer III G OOOOOOO

1 Panzer III H OOOOOOO

8th Medium Panzer Company

(1 command roll/25cm)

1 Panzer II F OOOOOOO

1 Panzer IV F1 OOOOOOOO