This is the “Living Playbook” document for the game. It includes errata and clarifications to the original Playbook. To aid readability, errata is indicated in blue text.
COMBINED TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCENARIOS (The North African Front) ....................... 2
   A.  Operation Compass & the Campaign Game .......... 3
   B.  Operation Sunflower .................................. 4
   C.  Operation Crusader .................................... 6
   D.  Operation Venezia ...................................... 7
   E.  Operation Lightfoot .................................... 8
   F.  Tournament Scenario .................................. 9
DESIGNER’S MUSINGS ......................................... 10
PLAY NOTES (N. Africa) ...................................... 11
NOTES ON GAME RULES ...................................... 14
EXAMPLES OF PLAY (N. Africa) .............................. 15
SCENARIOS (The Invasion of Crete) .......................... 19
   A.  Historical Scenario .................................... 19
   B.  Free Setup Scenario ................................... 20
   C.  Tournament Scenario ................................... 20
PLAY NOTES (Crete) .......................................... 21
EXAMPLE OF PLAY (Crete) ................................... 23

SCENARIOS
Refer to rule section 3.0, Setting Up the Game.

Each scenario includes an illustration showing where to place the active units. If units arrive early via event, place them stacked with any other friendly units on the map, or in the Reserve box.

Campaign Games: Each scenario can be used as the starting point for a Campaign Game played to the end of Game Turn 18 using the standard Victory Conditions.

Crete Event Card Errata
Crete Event Card #C04
The text to this card should read (changed text shown in bold):
“Play during the Strategic Phase to move to any Zone Holding Box the round Tank marker (even if eliminated), or play anytime to draw a new card, or play to flip (to front) two Allied detachments in the Reserves Box.”

Counter Errata: The British “22nd Tank” unit has an “8” turn entry on both sides of its counter. It should have an “8” turn entry number only on its front side.

© 2013 GMT Games, LLC
A. Operation Compass & the Campaign Game

This is the British surprise offensive against the unprepared Italians in Libya, pushing them back over 300 miles and capturing 115,000 prisoners. This scenario makes an excellent tutorial due to its low unit density. It is essentially a race game, with the Allies rushing to reach map 2 and win the game.

1. Set up the units as shown in the Operation Compass illustration (above), with the Axis player setting up first. Allied units cannot be set-up adjacent to Italian units.

If playing the first scenario of the game (Operation Compass), you get the same reinforcements/withdrawals on Turn #2 and #3 as if playing the regular Campaign game.

The British 7th Armored unit should be setup on its single-step reverse (“3-5”) side. The counter is correct, as that side has the Turn “1” setup information.

2. The Axis player begins with four and the Allied player eight Supply Points. Unused Supply markers are placed in the Used Supplies Box on the Player Aid Mat. The Allies start with four Target markers. One is added on Turn 8 (look at the back of the markers, on their “Counterblow” sides for each marker’s entry turn). The Axis starts with three Target markers. One is added on Turn 4, and one on Turn 11 (look at the back of the markers, on their “Counterblow” sides).

3. Unused Box/Minefield units are set aside in the stock of available units and markers.

4. The Axis and Allied Map Control markers are both placed in the Map 4 box on the Strategic Map Control Display. Hence, Map 4 is Contested (see 15.1.2).

5. Flip the Game Turn marker to its Allied Initiative (roundel) side and place it in the Game Turn 1 box of the Turn Track.

6. The remaining square units and markers are turned to their sides with the lowest turn entry number and placed in the corresponding numbered Game Turn box on the Turn Track.

7. Shuffle the Event card deck and place it face-down to form the Draw Pile. The Axis player then draws five cards from the top of the Draw Pile, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Axis Event (e.g., MARE NOSTRUM). Reshuffle the deck and discards. Then, the Allied player draws seven cards, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Allied
Event (e.g., War Without Hate). Again, reshuffle the deck with any discards.

**Scenario Special Rules**

8. Start with the Game Turn 1 Strategic Phase. On this first Game Turn, the Organization and Deployment Phases are skipped (barring new units arriving by Event cards) since all units are already deployed on the map.

9. **Operation Compass Scenario Victory Conditions:** At the end of Game Turn 3, the Allied player wins if he controls Benghazi and Beda Fomm, (on map 2), or if he eliminates all Italian square units on map 2. Otherwise, the Axis player wins.

**Campaign Special Rules:**

10. **Inflexible Italian Command:** In the game turns before the Rommel marker comes into play, when losing or giving up control of a map, the Axis player can only set up his square units on the half of the map closer to the previous map, indicated by the new map’s centerfold (hexes touching the fold included). On Map 2 (Benghazi) this means the north part of the map; on other maps the east part of the map.

11. **Slower German Panzer Deployment:** The 15th and 21st Panzers Divisions can only be improved to their second counter on the Turn 6. The 15th Panzer enters the game on Turn 5, but on its 1-step side only.

**Note:** The Italians were not prepared for the kind of mobile warfare of the North African Desert and were slow to move their ponderous armies.

The 15th Panzer started arriving in late April, but was not put on the line, near Bardia, until the end of May (so the middle of Turn 5). It took a long time to get a lot of good tanks shipped to North Africa—thus the change in the turn when the Panzers can be improved.

---

**B. Operation Sunflower**

Rommel arrives in Africa with the 21st Panzer Division and begins operations to roll back the recent Allied advances, thanks to the withdrawal of their best troops to fight in Greece. As the Axis player, can you capture the important Port/Fortress of Tobruk, or will you too be stopped by the tenacious Australians?

1. Set up the units as shown in the Operation Sunflower illustration (at right), with the Allied Player setting up first.

2. The Axis player begins with eight and the Allied player four Supply Points. Unused Supply markers are placed in the Used Supplies Box on the Player Aid Mat.

3. Unused Box/Minefield units are set aside in the stock of available units and markers.

4. The Axis map control marker is placed in the Map 1 box, and the Allied map control marker is placed in the map 2 box on the Strategic Map Control Display of the Player Aid Mat. Hence, no map is Contested (15.1.2).

5. Place the Malta marker on its Inactive side in the Malta Status Box on the Player Aid mat.

6. Flip the Game Turn marker to its Allied Initiative (Balkan Cross) side and place it in the Game Turn 4 box of the Turn Track.

7. In addition to the units shown to arrive on the scenario set-up sheet as Turn 5 and 6 reinforcements, the other counters in the game marked with a 5 or 6 reinforcement turn also arrive during that scenario. Some might be affected by the “invasion of crete” event on Turn 5: Turn 5 = 70th British, 10th Corps (Italian), 15th Panzer (1-step side).

Turn 6 = 1st Tank (British), 1st and 2ns South African, 59th British, 5th indian, 90th Light (German), the 15th and 21st Panzer upgrade counters.

8. Shuffle the Event card deck and place it face-down to form the Draw Pile. The Axis player then draws six cards from the top of the Draw Pile, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Axis Event (e.g., Mare Nostrum). Reshuffle the deck and discards. Then, the Allied player draws six cards, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Allied Event (e.g., War Without Hate). Again, reshuffle the deck with any discards.
Scenario Special Rules

9. Commence play with the Game Turn 4 Strategic Phase. On this first Game Turn, the Organization and Deployment Phases are skipped (barring new units arriving via Event cards) since all units are already deployed on the map.

10. Operation Sunflower Scenario Victory Conditions: At the end of Game Turn 7, the Axis player wins if he controls all of the Cities and Towns on Map 3. Otherwise, the Allied player wins.
C. Operation Crusader

The importance of Tobruk and pressure from Malta on the Axis convoy routes to Africa caused both sides to fully commit to winning the war in the western desert during the British all-out attack to relieve the siege of the embattled Fortress. It’s a wild free-for-all battle, where speed of manoeuvre is all-important.

1. Set up the units as shown in the Operation Crusader illustration (above), with the Axis player setting up first. Then the Allied player sets up (and note the Tobruk Fortification Level of “3”).

2. The Axis player begin with six and the Allied player eleven Supply Points. Unused Supply markers are placed in the Used Supplies Box on the Player Aid Mat.

3. Unused Box/Minefield units are set aside in the stock of available units and markers.

4. The Axis Map Control marker is placed in the map 3 box, and the Allied map control marker is placed in the map 4 box on the Strategic Map Control Display of the Player Aid Mat. Hence, no map is Contested (15.1.2).

5. Place the Malta marker on its Active side in the Malta Status Box on the Player Aid Mat.

6. Flip the Game Turn marker to its Allied Initiative (roundel) side and place it in the Game Turn 8 box of the Turn Track.

7. The remaining square units and markers are turned to their sides with the lowest turn entry number and placed in the corresponding numbered Game Turn box.

8. Shuffle the Event card deck and place it face-down to form the Draw Pile. The Axis player then draws six cards from the top of the Draw Pile, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Axis Event (e.g., MARE Nostrum). Reshuffle the deck and discards. Then, the Allied player draws seven cards, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Allied Event (e.g., WAR WITHOUT HATE). Again, reshuffle the deck with any discards.

Scenario Special Rules

9. Commence play with the Game Turn 8 Strategic Phase. On this first Game Turn, the Organization and Deployment Phases are skipped (barring new units arriving via Event cards) since all units are already deployed on the map.

10. Operation Crusader Scenario Victory Conditions: At the end of Game Turn 11, the Allied player wins if he controls the three Ports on map 3. Otherwise, the Axis player wins.
D. Operation Venezia

After capturing Tobruk in this operation and routing the Allied forces in the desert (and the cancellation of the Malta Invasion), the German High Command sends resources to help Rommel’s exhausted forces race to Egypt.

Can the forces of the Commonwealth hold the line at El-Alamein, or will the Afrika Korps reach Alexandria and the Suez Canal?

1. Set up the units as shown in the Operation Venezia illustration (above), with the Allied player setting up first (and note the Tobruk Fortification Level of “1”). Then the Axis player sets up.

2. The Axis player begins with ten and the Allied player seven Supply Points. Unused Supply markers are placed in the Used Supplies Box on the Player Aid Mat.

3. Unused Box/Minefield units are set aside in the stock of available units and markers.

4. The Axis and Allied map control markers are both placed in the map 3 box on the Strategic Map Control Display of the Player Aid Mat. Hence, map 3 is Contested (15.1.2).

5. Place the Malta marker on its Inactive side in the Malta Status Box on the Player Aid mat.

6. Flip the Game Turn marker to its Axis Initiative (Balkan cross) side and place it in the Game Turn 12 box of the Turn Track.

7. The remaining square units and markers are turned to their sides with the lowest turn entry number and placed in the corresponding numbered Game Turn box on the Turn Track, with any exceptions noted on the Operation Venezia set up illustration.

8. Shuffle the Event card deck and place it face-down to form the Draw Pile. The Axis Player then draws six cards from the top of the Draw Pile, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Axis Event (e.g., MARE NOSTRUM). Reshuffle the deck and discards. Then, the Allied Player draws six cards, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Allied Event (e.g., WAR WITHOUT HATE). Again, reshuffle the deck with any discards.

(continued on next page)
Scenario Special Rules

9. Commence play with the Game Turn 12 Strategic Phase. On this first Game Turn, the Organization and Deployment Phases are skipped (barring new units arriving via Event cards) since all units are already deployed on the map. Ignore the Game Turn event “14b: No Offensive” in this scenario.

10. Operation Venezia Scenario Victory Conditions:
At the end of Game Turn 14, the Axis Player wins if he controls El Alamein on Map 5. Otherwise, the Allied Player wins.

E. Operation Lightfoot

The last-ditch defence of Egypt and the resulting stalemate at El Alamein was finally turned to victory for the Allies as Monty’s overwhelming force pushed back the depleted and badly-supplied Axis Divisions. Or maybe Rommel will be able again to outmanoeuvre the British foe, and turn this battle of attrition into another of his famous victories?

1. Set up the units as shown in the Operation Lightfoot illustration, with the Axis player setting up first.

2. The Axis player begins with four and the Allied player twelve Supply Points. Unused Supply markers are placed in the Used Supplies Box on the Player Aid Mat.

3. Unused Box/Minefield markers are set aside in the stock of available units and markers.

4. The Axis and Allied map control markers are both placed in the map 5 box on the Strategic Map Control Display of the Player Aid Mat. Hence, map 5 is Contested (15.1.2).

5. Place the Malta marker (on its Active side) and a Target marker in the Malta Status Box on the Player Aid Mat. The Malta Invasion has been Permanently Cancelled as per case 16.1.

6. Flip the Game Turn marker to its Allied Initiative (roundel) side and place it in the Game Turn 15 box of the Turn Track.

7. The remaining square units and markers are turned to their sides with the lowest turn entry number and placed in the corresponding numbered Game Turn box on the Turn Track, with any exceptions noted on the Operation Lightfoot set up illustration.

8. Shuffle the Event card deck and place it face-down to form the Draw Pile. The Axis player then draws six cards from the top of the Draw Pile, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Axis Event (e.g., MARE NOSTRUM). Reshuffle the deck and discards. Then, the Allied player draws eight cards, discarding and replacing any card with an “Immediately” Allied Event (e.g., WAR WITHOUT HATE). Again, reshuffle the deck with any discards.
Scenario Special Rules

9. Commence play with the Game Turn 15 Strategic Phase. On this first Game Turn, the Organization and Deployment Phases are skipped (barring new units arriving via Event cards) since all units are already deployed on the map.

10. Operation Lightfoot Scenario Victory Conditions: The standard Victory Conditions apply (see 15.7.4).

F. Tournament Scenario

This is recommended for players that have time to play more than a scenario, but not enough for the full-fledged campaign game. Action starts with Rommel’s first attack of Operation Sunflower, and continues until Operation Crusader the end of 1941. Can the British keep Tobruk and Benghazi, or will the scenario end in an historical stalemate around Gazala?

1. Set up is as per the Operation Sunflower scenario; use the same instructions and rules.

2. Tournament Scenario Victory Conditions: At the end of Game Turn 11, the Allied player wins if he controls two of the three Ports on Map 3. Otherwise, the Axis player wins.
DESIGNER’S MUSINGS

Once Upon a Time…

Vroooarr!!! In a blinding cloud of sand, the small liaison airplane takes off, leaving its passenger, you, under the blistering desert sun in front of your new divisional headquarters. A white-gloved Indian batman, seemingly unaffected by the heat, advances toward you from the nearest tent.

“Good morning, sir! Welcome to Division.” His smile and handshake accompanied a question, “Would you care for a nice cup of Italian coffee?”

“Coffee, by Jove!,” you reply, taken aback. “Don’t you have any tea?”

“Sorry General. Our supply lorries have been avoiding us it seems. We have also captured an excellent Chianti wine, and some pasta if…”

“Pasta now, you say?” Smiling back, you finally answer, “All right, coffee it is. Would you be good enough to point out the Operations Officer’s tent?”

“It is the big one, just to the left of the AA gun, sir; Major Cunningham is waiting for you.”

After a short walk and some official salutes, several presentations later you are, at last, in your element—poring over a huge map of the Libyan desert and appraising the situation.

“All right, major, what is the situation here?” you ask, pointing to a nexus of desert tracks on the map. “Where are your tank regiments, and what of the supporting New Zealand infantry?”

A glancing scowl from you brings the answer to your question, “Ah, yes, well… It’s hard to say about the infantry sir; they’re probably 10 miles north of there. The land here is huge and nearly featureless—very easy to lose one’s bearings.”

“Right! Today I want to inspect the men and their equipment. Tell me, you did get those 50 new American M3 ‘Honey’ tanks?”

“Indeed, sir, but we’ve lost a score of them to German 88s only last week. Sorry, sir.”

Leaving the tent for the desert, you approach the Morris staff car that awaits you, officers in tow.

“Gentlemen, let’s visit the front lines!”

Why This Game?

You hold in your hands the second game in my “No Retreat!” series, which premiered with the Russian Front, my favorite WWII topic. Here, you have my next-favorite topic. I have tried to make it the WWII North African front wargame that I had long waited for, changing some of the things that bothered me in the older, even “classic,” products.

Too Many Flies!

Most simulation games of scale/topic employ an inordinate number of Game-Turns, taking forever to play. I tackled this by using relatively few turns, each of a variable length, some will see a lot of action, while some not and will be played in a few minutes, thus also neatly taking care of the inevitable lulls in the campaign. The counter count—being very low—also speeds up play, and makes each decision critical.

The combat system is pretty similar to that of my very first game “No Retreat! The Russian Front: 1941-45,” but with notable differences in some of the combat results, especially the Event card play, to better represent the more tactical, small-scale battles taking place in North Africa.; e.g., you have a 50% chance of keeping active from player turn to player turn a played combat Event card or Blitz!/Shock! counter. You also have a set of alternate events that every card can be used for, and these are never tagged to who has the Strategic Advantage; thus you’ll almost always find a useful battle purpose even for your strategic Event cards!

In NR1 there are two-months turns, huge Front/Armies and 100km hexes; here it’s sub-turns of a few days/weeks, divisions/brigades and 15-km hexes! The card discards you traded for replacements, counterblows, strategic moves, are now mostly represented by separate Supply Points. So the game feel will be entirely different, even with a very common rule set.
The Land is Huge!

I dislike those looong North Africa wargames maps! It is hard to find a place to set them up and they mainly consist of ground that will never see play. Historically, battles happened within 50 miles of the coast at specific chokepoints for a reason. I have tried to show this, giving the smallest form possible to the maps, while still allowing those fascinating tactical desert battles to unfold. Compared to Russia, you won’t see those continuous frontlines and big weather variations—it’ll be a fluid, see-saw conflict, but also with some desperate set-piece attrition battles around chokepoints, minefields and the ever-important Tobruk Fortress.

Not Enough Tea!

I also wished to illustrate the important logistical and strategic aspects of the campaign (especially the battle for Malta), without burdening players with time-consuming, bean-counting mechanics and rules—to provide simulation without pain for the “War of the Quartermasters.” The lesson being, never start an offensive without stockpiling tea, corned beef, fuel, and ammo (not necessarily in that order).

Have Fun, Sir!

Hopefully, you will enjoy playing this small titan of a game as much as I had have enjoyed designing it, yet I probably did not need to work at it nearly as much as Alan Emrich, Tim Allen, GMT’s staff, and playtesters have! They are a great team, and I owe them very much for the quality of this finished effort.

Finally, I am truly honored that you have purchased my game. Keep your dice handy, and good luck in your desert campaigning!

But Wait—There is More!

Since I kept the North Africa game’s “form factor” essentially the same as the Victory Point Games’ version, I had one full map and half of the counters unused compared to the first game in the series (NR1 The Russian Front). I thus decided to add in a mini-game about the fascinating airborne invasion of Crete. Little did I know that it would take me as much time to do as the “main event”! Even though both games share the same core rules, the play dynamics of Crete are quite different—the game plays faster, mechanics are simpler, combat bloodier, with less maneuvering but for the initial paratroops. Be ready for a gritty “no holds barred” pure infantry fight! I also hopefully show the important impact the valiant Greek defenders had on this epic battle. This is a desperate situation for both sides, with little room for retreat!

PLAY NOTES (N. Africa)

Fuel, Shells, Water, Food.

Compared to the more “traditional” turn-based No Retreat! 1 game, this title will force players to make far more advanced planning and ponder what they want to accomplish during future turns. You cannot really just attack and push your pieces around “just for the heck of it” if you want to be a successful commander. You have to first decide on what objective you want to attain in the turn, and what means (supply & cards) you need to accomplish your goals. When you start an offensive on a map, you’d better have enough resources on the ready, as the clock (Player Turns) will continue ticking for as long as one side or the other has enough supplies to continue combat operations. Spend too much too fast, and you might very well end up on the receiving end of an enemy counter-attack! Even with depleted forces, a foe with a near-full supply allotment will make you pay dearly if you do not have the “fuel and ammo” to continue the fight, capturing the game initiative and possibly moving/attacking twice in a row (last during your own player-turn, then first as the new initiative player)! In this eventuality, the only possible solution for you is probably a quick escape towards your controlled mapboard…

Rare will be the times where you’ll be able to conduct large offensives turn after turn; you’ll need to rest, recuperate and build up your supply depots for the next push, unless your opponent beats you to it, of course! If you study the map, you’ll quickly realize that the farther away you move from your main base of operations (Alexandria or Tripoli), the less supplies you get—and the more your opponent receives! Unless you are able to decisively beat him on your own turf, chances are that he will be able to get back on his feet and throw you back to your starting line, or even farther away. Map #3 is of importance to help in this quandary; there are three ports that’ll give you extra supplies, so it’s a great jumping point if you can control them all.
An Island & the Sea.

And here is where Malta (global control of the Mediterranean) takes its critical importance in the game: with the island active the Axis player will be hard-pressed to get all the Supply Points he needs to make large and decisive offensives. His best bet is often to wait for the Allies to attack, and when they have (hopefully) exhausted themselves, to strike back at the weakened foe. Don’t count on a successful invasion to happen very often (don’t forget that it cannot happen before Turn 6, since the island is not “in play” before Turn 4), but if it does, and you are in an advanced position with lots of extra supplies, then it can be a game-winning event. At least it will help you hold the line with extra resources when that annoying Montgomery fellow comes in to take command of the British 8th Army. You’ll also have to wrestle with a whole sub-game deciding when to play the Malta Event cards and when to hoard cards for later turns, or perhaps you prefer keeping it tactical by reserving Combat cards and using the rest for their “alternate events” instead of going for the “strategic”? And what exactly is your opponent planning to do in that regard??

The Poor Bloody Infantry

Yes, it’s the desert. Yes, this is where the German Desert Foxes and the British Desert Rats battle aboard their armored vehicles on an endless sea of sand, like the knights of old, jousting in fast and deadly combat. Well, yeah… But it’s also a battle of fixed positions, of sieges, barbed wire, minefields, booby-traps, bunkers, trenches, gun-pits, artillery concentrations! El-Alamein had more in common with the WWI battle of the Somme than the big encirclements of the Russian steppes. And this is where your infantry will play a critical role. They are slow; tanks will run circles around them. Their zones of control are porous and will not stop those steel monsters. Yet, put your infantry in prepared positions and difficult terrain, and they can hold their own against any comers. Boxes, forts and mines will stop the tanks dead in their tracks (90% of all mines in the desert were of the anti-tank kind). And if you can get the lads to work together with the tanks (something the British were not able to do easily), then they’ll prove their worth. Even the Italians can sometimes get the upper hand against unsupported British armor! Given an anti-tank counter the Axis soldiers can take on the enemy all by themselves under the right conditions.

United We Stand

Combined arms are very helpful in conducting a successful offensive. Alas, it’s not easy to achieve for either player.

The Axis player will be hard-pressed to find enough infantry to directly support his armor, as most of these are slow—and Italian—and thus cannot operate easily or often with the German *Panzers*. Even the *Carro Armato* (Italian armor) are not allowed to attack/stack with the *Panzers*. The brunt of the losses in a fast offensive battle will thus most probably be suffered by your strong, but few, mobile German units. A couple of serious reverses and your attack capability will be all but depleted for the turn, so try not to play into the Allied hands and engage in a frontal battle of attrition if you can help it. Emulate Erwin Rommel and keep the *Afrika Korps* three divisions concentrated if at all possible; two of these and an anti-tank unit all in one hex is an incredibly potent force that the Allies will be hard-pressed to match until the late game. You also have a few extra aces up your sleeve: minefields and boxes will make even the lowly Italians a tough nut for the enemy to crack, and your deadly anti-tank units will allow you to inflict a heavy toll upon the British Tanks. Don’t hesitate to use them even when attacking!

The Allies have, during most of the game, an embarrassment of riches—lots of supplies, strong Infantry, numerous Tank units, plus the Tobruk “fortress” of course, and a very good “last stand” defensive position on map 5 around El Alamein. Yet, like your foe, you’ll have difficulty coordinating the different parts of your army. The tanks, while numerous and sporting many potent “heavy” brigades, are somewhat more brittle than their German equivalents, and often cannot stack or attack with your strong ANZAC infantry units. Usually you’ll be able to deal with the Italians, but the large German units will be far more difficult to beat, especially when their two anti-tanks are on the board. More often than not, unless you have a large counter-count advantage, your best bet will be to try to draw your enemy into an attrition battle, which you are well equipped to win. Against an Axis “choke-point” mine/box multi-layered defense, be prepared to have to wage a horrific set-piece battle. But again, this is one type of operation you are favored to win, especially when the Axis supply situation is bad.

The Early Game

As most already know from history, the Axis player will be fighting an uphill battle for the first few turns, before the German troops of the *Afrika Korps* come to the rescue, and veteran Allied units are diverted to fight in Greece. Yet the situation is not absolutely desperate; just try to set realistic goals. O’Connor and his small army will beat you in any mobile battle you decide to fight; there is not much you can do against the Allied heavy tanks either.
But there is the possibility of holding part of map 3 for a few turns. The Italians need to build as many “boxes” as possible, this will give them some depth and absorb a surprisingly high amount of step losses; the trade here is that you have to carefully chose the ground where you want to fight, as these positions are not mobile. Let the Brits come at you! Hopefully they will run out of supplies before they can conquer this map and map 4. Still, most of your troops will probably die (bravely); don’t forget that troops surrounded in your ports will not be able to draw supply from these if Malta is not Inactive, and this cannot happen before Turn 4 at the earliest, so don’t get bottled up for too long in these! If you are able to still control Benghazi when the Germans enter, you have done a good job; or perhaps you can dispense from most of their help if playing with the 18.3 optional rule. At the very least try to save as many supply points as possible—Rommel will need lots when he starts his offensive operations!

If playing the Allies, well after reading the last paragraph you should know what to and not to do… As long as you have supplies you can concentrate your troops and deal with the Italians piecemeal, but watch out for those “EX” battle results—you have a small army and could be attritioned to death! Your window of opportunity is small, as you’ll soon start losing troops to the fight in Greece and Crete. With good play, however, you should be able to have a nice blocking position at the western tip of map 2 when the Afrika Korps comes charging in. Careful use of your leader unit is of critical importance here; enjoy while you can! Oh, and you did save some supplies to be able to build up Tobruk fortifications, right?

The Middle Game

Barring any sudden changes in Malta’s status, the invasion/capture of which could dramatically affect the game’s dynamics (the card play and supply situation will be totally different), you’ll be looking at a lot of historical see-saw action centering on Tobruk and map 3. The fortress is very hard and time-consuming to take for the Axis, unless a complacent enemy just stays put and watches the defenders being relentlessly pounded to dust by Stukas and repeated offensives. If this starts to happen a spoiling counterattack will have to be launched, even at unfavorable odds. But as long as Malta is “active” the supply situation of Rommel will most probably be tenuous, so keep the Royal Navy busy projecting power over the Mediterranean Sea, even if it means keeping in your hand more of the strategic Event cards, while discarding the Combat cards more useful in tactical situations. You don’t want to face an opponent with a full supply allotment and an Inactive Malta! If the Germans are still relatively strong and with a good supply situation, with a front line hovering on the middle of maps 2 and 3 (i.e., the Axis holds Benghazi) at the start of Turn 10, when the improved Panzer units and their second anti-tank come into play, then be ready for a few turns of pure terror, even Boxed/Mined lines of defense might not be able to stand against this assault! When in doubt—attack! Don’t let your foe amass a full supply complement (a garrisoned Tobruk is a great “supply magnet”).

As the Allied player, if you keep the fortress, then chances are good that you’ll eventually be able to get the upper hand in the desert “War of Attrition” and push back the depleted Afrika Korps to the west, and—who knows—maybe even all the way to Tripoli! If not, then it’s probably time to withdraw back to your own supply bases near the Nile delta (map 4 is notoriously hard to hold for both sides), trading space for time. You’ll most probably be able to rebuild your army to fight another day, but you’ll have a hard task ahead of you for the win; good thing that Montgomery usually appears at the critical time to give the 8th Army some much needed help!

The End Game

Unless the game ended in “Sudden Death” victory, you’ll probably have three possible situations in the critical last 6 turns.

First: The Allies are already past map 3. If this happens and Malta is still British, then the writing is on the wall for Rommel’s boys! Hold on for dear life, but with the Italians melting away (they cannot be replaced late in the game), some of your best German troops departing for Tunisia and no possibility of trading space for time, You’ll have to hunker down behind your minefields and hope for the best.

Second: The Axis is near the British bases of Alexandria and Cairo. In this case the Axis ploy is the same, but you can also “leapfrog” away one turn out of two, back to a new fortification line westwards, using your saved supplies to build as many mines and boxes hindrances as you can; with good play you can prevail, most especially if Malta fell earlier in the game.

Third: The frontline is around Tobruk; in that case anything goes! The terrain is pretty open; neither side can afford to retreat very far. This will be a close-fought battle, probably decided by who attacks first, and how the first series of tactical player-turns go. No Retreat!
NOTES ON GAME RULES

Counterblows

What does the “counterblow” rule represent? We wanted players to have some say in when it is their opponent’s turn and to reward the careful management of precious Event cards and supply points. Players need to plan their “counterblows” use for local spoiling counterattacks/moves launched in reaction to the enemy offensives. We did not go as far as to allow an actual attack by the defender (this is what players should do on their own turns), but it’s close. And because your troops are leaving their positions to engage the enemy, they lose their defensive terrain benefits—thus, some risk is involved in launching a counterblow.

It is a good idea to use this rule to quickly wipe out pockets of surrounded enemy units, and to allow your units a chance to advance during your opponent’s turn (if a “CA” result is rolled, and followed up with a successful counterattack of your own). You can also use it to put pressure on unsupported fortifications, lowering their defensive advantages, or even as an end-run advance. This result can also happen by a CRT result, to be resolved next turn, representing a drawn-out engagement.

There are myriad possibilities for a well-timed counterblow, but alas all of this fancy footwork has a cost in precious supplies or Event cards, and you never have enough of those!

The Combat Results Tables

The Combat Results Tables are a bit unusual. As an attacker, even at lower odds, you do not suffer many losses (save for the occasional “EX” result), but you could get a “CA” or “CR” result, and that opens some interesting possibilities. It gives your opponent the option/obligation of counterattacking and possibly upsetting your position—thus making it easier for them to charge at you during your opponent’s upcoming Player Turn, or on a CA your opponent might simply “pass” the opportunity to counterattack and opt to simply play it safe and stay on the defensive. The Combat Results Tables are also tailored for the counterblow rule. Upon study of the three different CRTs, you will notice subtle differences between them that have a substantial impact on how to play each nationality.

The Event Cards

Together with the supply points, the Event card “engine” is the very heart of the game. Players simply never know what sneaky card their opponent might play on them. Consequently, perfect planning of moves or attacks is never entirely possible. For example, can you afford to temporarily leave a hole in your line, or will your adversary be able to play a card allowing him to move a unit there during your own turn, thus creating an unexpected breakthrough?

Event cards are an excellent indicator of the tactical and strategic resources a player still has at his disposal; if you start your Player Turn with a large card hand, and your opponent has none, then things are potentially very good for you! The cards you have in reserve represent energy you can spend, not only using the main card Events, but also the all-important “alternate events”, that are always playable at all times (some Events can only be played during certain times because of the roundel/cross strategic advantage limitations). With a low card count, your options are limited; sure, a player can still get by holding only a card or two, but the game’s battle initiative is probably being held by the opponent who is holding more!
**EXAMPLES OF PLAY (N. Africa)**

**Movement Example**

It is the first Allied Movement Phase during Game Turn 1 of the *Operation Compass* scenario. The Allies have the Initiative, so the Allied player pays the required one Supply Point to initiate an Offensive. He is now ready to get at the Italians entrenched in their desert Boxes! In the below illustration, the colored movement arrows mark hexes entered by moving Allied units, and the numbers indicate the amount of MPs spent to enter the noted hex.

The Combe group moves along the coast, past an entrenched Italian infantry unit. It costs one additional (+1) MP to enter an EZOC (12.3.1). Since the Combe unit is mechanized, it can continue moving through the infantry unit’s ZOC (12.3.3). It has to stop after three hexes, as it does not have enough MPs to enter the Minefield’s ZOC (i.e., into the hex east of Sidi Barrani). If that Minefield were not in Sidi Barrani, the Allied unit could have continued moving one hex, as the Box units do not have ZOCs (hence their parenthesized Combat Strength).

Next, the 32nd Tank and 4th Indian advance together next to the Libya infantry unit. The Italian unit has to stop as it is not mechanized, as does the 32nd Tank, as it does not have enough MPs to move further. Note that the faster Combe unit could not have stacked with the 4th Indian, as it is not of the same color type (12.2.2).

Finally, the 7th Armored, 4th Tank, and O’Connor (note that leaders must remain stacked with units at all times; 12.2.3) opt to stay together, moving to engage the Maletti unit. They must stop when entering the Italian unit’s ZOC and cannot continue further, since Maletti is a mechanized unit.

**Combat Examples**

After the Movement Phase, the Allied player attacks two of the Italian units in fortified Boxes.

The Libya unit and its Box are being attacked by the Combe, 32nd Tank and 4th Indian units. The Initial ratio is 9:3, which is the 3-1 odds column on the Allied Combat Table. This column is shifted one left (3 1) for the Box terrain defense shift, and two to the right (2 4) for the Allied Heavy Tank unit (the 32nd). The net result is a 4-1 Battle Odds attack. No Combat Event cards are played.

A die roll of 5 results in a “DS” result. The defender retreats three hexes to Sidi Barrani and is placed in the Surrendered Units box as it’s an Irreplaceable unit (8.2.3).

**Note:** The Italian player cannot place a “Counterblow” marker on the Box unit, as it has a white Combat Strength. Also the Allies can attack together, even if different color types, because the O’Connor leader is on the map (see 13.1.1).

A die roll of 5 results in a “DS” result. The defender retreats three hexes to Sidi Barrani and is placed in the Surrendered Units box as it’s an Irreplaceable unit (8.2.3).

**Important:** Despite being surrounded by EZOCs, the Libya unit has a path of retreat because of the Box unit west of it. The defending Box unit is eliminated since it has no Movement Allowance and cannot retreat. The attackers can then advance into the defender’s vacated hex and—thanks to the attacking armor—beyond (as shown in the next figure).
Next, the 7th Armored and the 4th Tank attack the Maletti and Box units. The initial ratio is 6:3, which is 2-1 odds. The odds are shifted two left (\(\frac{3}{2}\)) for the Box plus the defensive mechanized unit bonus; then shifted one right (1 \(\rightarrow\)) for the attacking tanks.

The Allied player decides to also commit one Shock! marker for an additional right shift (1 \(\rightarrow\)), returning the odds to 2-1. A die roll of 4 yields a “DR” result. The defender retreats due west and the Box unit is eliminated when the enemy advances into its hex (see below). Note that he could have chosen to take a step loss (most probably losing the Box) and not retreat. Note that the even die roll allows the British to keep the Shock! marker in play for use next turn (13.5.8).

The Italians must now attack the two Allied units under the Counterblow markers!

First, the Maletti and Mine units attack the 4th Tank at 4:3 which is 1:1 Odds. The attacker’s and defender’s Mech. unit bonuses cancel each other out. Note that the Mine can attack despite its white Combat Strength, as this is a mandatory battle caused by a Counterblow (see 13.6.5). The Allied player decides to play Event card #27, British Royal Artillery, which gives him a +6 Combat Strength in this battle, but the Axis player counters with Event card #6, Allied SNAFU, effectively canceling the Allied card. A die roll of 4 produces a “CB” result, so a Counterblow marker is put on the Phasing Maletti/Mine stack to be resolved on the next Player Turn. Note that if the defending Allied card had not been cancelled it would not stay in play for future a Player Turn as the die roll was even (13.5.7).

Next, the 21st Corps must attack the 7th Armored. The initial ratio is 2:4, which is 1-2 odds on the Italian Combat Table. This column is shifted one to the left (\(\frac{3}{1}\) for the defending Allied mechanized unit, for 1:3 odds. Although the Allied player has two Shock! markers remaining, he cannot use them since he is not the attacker. A die roll of 3 provides a “CA” result, and the Allied player may launch an immediate Counterattack; he does so and—now attacking—he adds a Shock! marker!

The initial odds are 2-1 on the Allied CRT, with two shifts to the right (2 \(\rightarrow\))—one for the Shock! marker and one for the Tank bonus—making the final odds 4-1. A die roll of 1 shows an “EX+DR” result. Not wanting to lose the armor unit, the Allied player plays Event card #7, Victoria Cross Recipients, for a reroll—this time getting a 3 for a “DR” result. The Italians must retreat and the 7th Armored occupies the hex, although the hill terrain halves any further advance. He also loses the use of his Shock! marker for the rest of the Game Turn, as the final die roll was odd (13.5.8).
“Fortress Tobruk” Combat Example

The German *Afrika Korps* is assaulting Tobruk’s defenses in late 1941. Since Italian and German units cannot attack together (different colors), the Ariete and 21st Corps stay put and watch the action.

The four Axis units obtain an initial ratio of 14:9, reduced down to 3-2 odds before modifiers. This is not very promising since Tobruk is an active fortress and the defenders are unaffected by many combat results. Thus, the Axis player uses one Event card (#21, *Stuka Attack!*), which gives him a +6 combat strength (raising the odds to 2-1) and one *Blitz!* marker (1 4). Both sides’ mechanized units have no bonuses since the defender’s terrain includes a Minefield (4 1), and a Fort (4 1), thus bringing the odds back down to 3-2 again.

A die roll of 3 indicates a “CR” result (the German loses the *Blitz!* marker and the *Stuka Attack!* card for the rest of the Game Turn as the die roll was odd (see 13.5.7 and 13.5.8). The defender must immediately Counterattack or accept a DR result. Not wanting to risk a Counterattack, the Allied player opts for the DR, which has no effect against the Tobruk Fortress. However, this does reduce the Fort Level from 2 to 1 (see 13.6.1).

Now, the Axis player desperately wants to free the 15th Panzer to help the crumbling situation to the east near Sidi Omar, so he tries a new gambit: he pays 1 SP to put a *Counterblow* marker on the Italian stack of Ariete and 21st Corps, forcing the Tobruk Garrison to attack them! The British player may use any or all his adjacent units, and opts to go all-out, throwing the 70th, 32nd and the Mines into the fray. The initial ratio is 9:9, thus 1-1 odds. The attacker plays Event card #5, *Allied Naval Missions* (2 4), and has Heavy Tanks (2 4); the defender plays Event card #20, *Inexperienced Troops* (4 1), and has a mechanized unit (4 1). The net shift is (2 4), so the final odds are raised to 2-1. A die roll of 3 produces an “EX+CR” result (odd die roll: the attacker’s Event card is lost, the defender keeps his card for use next Player Turn). The Allies take a step loss from the Mines unit, flipping it to its (reduced) Box side. The Italians take their loss by flipping the 21st Corps and consider their decision—to either immediately launch a Counterattack, or to Retreat. They decide to fight!

During his turn, the Allied player orders the lads in Tobruk to sit tight. There is a relief force attacking Rommel’s troops near Sidi Omar and they are in the process of breaking through to Tobruk.

The ratio is 7:8, for 2:3 odds. There are no terrain modifiers in a CA attack, which is a great benefit for the Axis. Combat shifts include Italian mechanized (1 4) vs. Allied Heavy Tanks (4 2), for 1-2 final odds. A die roll of 2 yields another CA result! This time, the Allied player wisely declines to attack back.

As you can see, successfully attacking a properly garrisoned “Fortress Tobruk” is a long, hard and expensive proposition. Make your plans accordingly!
Deployment Phase Example

It is Turn 3 of the campaign game; the Allied player gained complete control of Map #3 last turn and has the Initiative. The Allied control marker on the Strategic Map Control Display is thus in the Map #3 square, while the Axis marker is in the Map #2 square.

The Allied player decides to start a new offensive at the start of this turn, aiming to gain control of Map #2 this time. He has the initiative so declares first if he wants to do an Offensive this turn. He does and pays the 1SP to do so (see 9.0).

Had he not declared an offensive, the Axis player could have:

- **Done nothing**: Proceed to the End of Turn Housekeeping Phase (see 15.0)
- **Declared an Offensive**: The Axis becomes the new initiative player, and must attack the Allies on Map #3, and suffer adverse consequences if not minimally successful (see 15.2.2).

But the Allied player has declared an offensive, so those options are not open.

**Segment A of the Deployment Phase**: The Map used will be #2, controlled by the Non-initiative Axis Player.

**Segment B**: The Axis deploys all of his Square units (see map Below), the round “Box” markers will be deployed later. Having precious little units, he bought as many Boxes as he could spare to help shore up his frontline during the Organization Phase, alas they cannot be deployed just now.

The defender’s Mines & Boxes are not deployed right away to stop players from using “gimmicky” tactics where they could deploy unmanned fortifications forward just to delay the attacker.

Given the low number of remaining Italian units, the Axis player is tempted to leave most of the map empty, putting his troops near the easy to defend narrow west part of the map—but this would mean that the opposing forces could set up almost right next to the Italians, grabbing automatic control of the towns between the Allied starting lines and the Axis main line of defense, saving precious supply markers by not having to move/battle to get there (see rule 10.2, Capturing Towns & Cities During Deployment). The Axis player will instead try a compromise defense: stopping the foes before the all-important port of Benghazi using two units to block the roads leading to the Allied deployment map edge, while keeping his stronger unit back, hoping to give enough opposition as to make the British “burn out” most of their supply points before gaining complete control of the map; and next turn Rommel and his boys are coming to the rescue!

Note that the Italians cannot deploy within two hexes of the Allied Tan-colored deployment map edge.

**Segment C**: Alas for the Axis player, he forgot to take into account that the British can deploy their troops within three full hexes of their colored map edge! The Allied player is thus able to set-up some of his tanks dangerously close to the rear of the Italian lines, while using his infantry to take control of Marawa and Barce, that moved right along the road when deploying.

**Important**: The three-hex range discussed above is to a map edge, **not** a map edge hex.

**Segment D**: Desperately trying to correct his mistake, the Axis player now deploys his three boxes around the 20th Corps, trying to protect it from being surrounded, and delay the British cruiser tanks a bit—but the situation is grim as there is little he can do to stop them from taking the town of Beda Fomm on the first turn of the game.

The Initiative player (Allied) now starts his turn.
The Historical Scenario for The Invasion of Crete includes two setup sheets detailing where to place the active units. The “what-if” Free Setup Scenario uses only text instructions. Both scenarios utilize the Box Camouflage Display player aid card for the Allied setup.

### A. Historical Scenario

The battle of Crete began on the morning of May 20, 1941, under the Nazi code word “Operation Merkur”. It was the first-ever pure airborne invasion in history. The German attackers badly underestimated the defender’s strength. Worse still for the Germans, the Allies were aware of the coming attack, thanks to British “Ultra” intelligence reading the German “Enigma” cipher machines’ transmissions. The Commonwealth troops thus had time to prepare their defenses, albeit the main threat was still believed to be coming from the sea. Despite all this, after 10 days of battle, and after sustaining very heavy casualties on the first day, the 14,000 German paratroopers and 15,000 air-landed mountain troops were able to prevail against the 40,000 defenders (including 10,000 administrative troops and 11,000 Greek soldiers). The invaders also encountered heavy resistance from the local population. The paratroopers’ high training and initiative, the Allied commander’s failure to fully comprehend the tactical situation, and especially the complete German air superiority allowed the attackers to finally prevail. Because of the horrendous losses suffered by the Fallschirmjägers, Hitler forbade any more large-scale paratroop attacks for the rest of the war, while the Allies decided instead to fully develop their own airborne arm.

### Scenario Rules

1. The units are placed on the three maps, as described on the two set-up sheets.

The German player’s set up sheet for this Historical Scenario is located on the back of this Scenario Booklet; the Allied player’s set up sheet is on the flip-side of the Box Camouflage Display player aid card.

2. The Allied player places all his Box markers on the map, with the square and round units that are stacked or adjacent to the Boxes in the corresponding spaces on the “Box Camouflage Display” card (these are revealed when the German players air drops on the same map); then he puts the remainder of his units on the three maps.

3. Flip the Game Turn marker to its Allied Initiative (roundel) side and place it in the Turn 1 box of the Game Turn Track, then start the turn normally.

4. The German player places on the board all the units scheduled to land on Turn 1, one unit per hex (except for the Artillery marker, see C8.6.2, case 10). No unit may be set up in any of the two southernmost hex-rows.

---

On Turn 1 in this scenario units will land in the Maleme/Galatas/Canea sector.

5. The German player places on the board all the units scheduled to be landed on Turn 2, in the “Sector Holding Boxes” of the maps of those drops. No unit may be set up in any of the two southernmost hex-rows.

---

On Turn 2 in this scenario units will land in the Rethymnon and Heraklion sector.

6. The Allied player puts on the map(s) where the Enemy player is dropping units all his square and round units hidden in the “Box Camouflage Display” sheet. Units on maps where no drops happen stay hidden until next turn, when the revealing process is repeated during next turn’s Air Move Phase.

7. The German player rolls for each of his units attempting to land on the “Paradrop table” following rule C8.6.2.

8. Continue the game normally (it will be the Initiative Player’s turn (the Allied player in this case).

### Scenario Special Rules

9. The Allied “RF/1A&SH” (3-3) square infantry unit initially set up in the Heraklion sector holding box cannot move out of that box until Turn 5 (it’s coming from the south of the island).
B. Free Setup Scenario

In this scenario both players will have the hindsight of history and will be able to make their own custom plans of defense and invasion. Can you do better in planning than your historical counterpart?

Scenario Rules

1. All the rules of the Historical Scenario are followed, except for the setup. Do not use the setup information on the historical setup sheets; instead use the special instructions below, using the same units.

2. Using the Historical Scenario setup sheet for the location, the Allied player deploys his units as he wishes, with the following limitations:
   - Maximum one unit—plus one Box unit—per hex. A Box unit may not set up in a City hex.
   - One brigade (see C2.3) must be deployed in each of the five Zones (4NZ, 5NZ, 14, 19A, CR), within two hexes of a coastal hex.
   - The three round Allied “M” and “C” Detachment units may be set up in any of the five zones, within two hexes of a coastal hex.
   - The nine round Greek units may be set up in any of the five Zones, three units per zone maximum, anywhere in the zone.
   - The “19/7+8A” unit may be set up on any crossing arrow, or with the other two units of its brigade, within two hexes of a coastal hex.
   - The “RF/1A&SH” unit and the tank support marker are set up in any holding box. The “RF/1A&SH” unit may not move prior to Turn 5.
   - The “10 NZ Brig” unit may be set up in any Zone, within two hexes of a coastal hex.
   - The five “4BG” to “8BG” Allied round Detachment counters are placed in the “Reserves & Greeks” holding box.
   - Box markers “A” through “G” must be set up in or adjacent to a coastal hex, maximum of two such markers per zone.
   - Box markers “H” through “L” may be set up anywhere.

3. Using the Historical Scenario setup sheet for the location, the German player deploys his units as he wishes, with the following limitations:
   - Paradrop a maximum one unit per hex, plus the round Artillery counter.
   - The drops are spread over a two-turn period: Paradrops are made in two different Zones on Turn 1, then in two other Zones on turn two.
   - One regiment (see C2.3) may be Paradrpopped per Zone (Sturm, 1FJ, 2FJ, 3FJ), anywhere in the zone.
   - The five round German “C/G”, “R” and “H” Detachment units may be dropped with any of the regiments, two per regiment maximum.
   - The “7 Eng(+)” unit, together with its round Artillery marker, may be dropped with any of the regiments.
   - The “Sturm/I(+)” Glider unit may be dropped with any of the regiments as one full-strength counter or separated in its three elements.
   - The “85GJ/I” and “85GJ/II(+)” Mountain units, the round Artillery support markers, and the Air Support markers are set up as per the Historical Scenario.
   - The six “6KG” to “11KG” German round Detachment markers are set up in the “Reserves & Air Landing” box and/or the “Invasion Convoy” box.

4. Follow the rest of the rules/steps of the Historical Scenario instructions, starting with #2.

C. Tournament Scenario

This is a shorter version of the previous two scenarios and ends on Turn 9. It centers on the capture of Crete’s all-important airfields and ports.

Scenario Rules

1. All the rules of the Historical or Free Setup scenarios are followed, but for one set-up exception below:
   - The German “Sturm/I(+)” Glider unit can be dropped with any of the German regiments, as one full-strength counter, or separated in its three elements.

Special Victory Conditions

2. The victory conditions are different for this scenario:
   - The German player wins if he controls one Airfield plus one other Airfield/Port hex.
   - If the German player controls two or more Port hexes, it is a draw.
   - Otherwise, the Allied player wins.
PLAY NOTES (Crete)

A Jump Into the Unknown

The bonus Invasion of Crete game gives players a completely different game feel than The North African Front; you’ll have far more units on the board fighting at start, and after a few turns you have three battles to manage, on separate maps. Make no mistake, every one of them is important! You cannot just take the chance to be complacent and concentrate all your efforts and resources on the larger Maleme/Galatas/Canea map. All sectors are critical, as is the initial setup phase of the scenarios. In many games final victory will be much influenced by the good (or bad) deployment of the defender’s troops on the ground, as well as by the descending German paratroopers.

Allied “Preparedness”

Thanks to “Ultra” deciphers, you as the Allied player know the invasion is coming, but you do not have lots of resources at your disposal, and the sea invasion is believed to be the main threat. Most units will be frozen in place during Turn 1 awaiting it, so surprise is your main advantage. A canny Allied player will make sure that most of his units start the game hidden on the Box Camouflage Display so to keep the Fallschirmjäger commander guessing about troop deployment. You want him to make bad mistakes so you can eliminate paratroopers while they are dangling on their chutes or trying desperately to recover their arms canisters on the ground! There are many gambles to be made: do you defend right on the airfields, or on the surrounding heights? Do you concentrate your anti-air assets (the Box counters) or spread them out? And you must keep an eye on your ports—they must be defended too—as you may have to evacuate the island sooner than expected. Oh, and did I mention that your southern evacuation routes have to be kept open, for the end game reckoning?

Ah yes, almost forgot: don’t belittle your brave Greek troops. In good holding positions (city and mountain terrain) they can be quite resilient against an equal number of enemies. They are as effective as anyone vs. descending paratroopers, and a fun nuisance as “irregulars”.

Allied Advantages

You have the numbers. Bleed the paratroopers to death! Don’t be shy about attacking if you can—an “EX” result is a very good thing for you. Losses are hard to replace in this game, especially for isolated Fallschirmjägers. Plus the Germans have a lower “end of game” loss threshold than you do (six paratroopers vs. eight Allied units)—and your Greek units do not count. Yet, on a map where the airfield is lost and a stream of Mountain troops start to land, the best strategy is probably to “abandon all hope”; go on the defensive, and slowly pull back, keeping an eye on the Game Turn Track and the inevitable start of the evacuation process. Your commando reinforcements will be a great help in this eventuality, as they make excellent rear-guard troops (round markers do not counts for the end-game losses).

Behold the Screaming Stukas

Yet all is not rosy, you have one big handicap: the German air superiority... Hermann Göring’s boys will keep you pinned, interdict your troop’s movements (except at night), and bomb you incessantly. There is little you can do about it, as your few AA guns are not that effective against the Luftwaffe’s swarms. But there is hope, as the Germans cannot be everywhere at once and the Royal Navy might draw some away. Still, if the German player desperately wants to take a position, expect lots of planes to appear, and try to keep the issue in doubt at the very least.

To Evacuate or Not to Evacuate, that is the Question

OK, the Germans have captured an airfield and their Mountain troops are being air-landed in droves. Maybe even worse, the German sea invasion convoys landed successfully... What are you as the “Creteforce” commander to do? Well, if your losses are still low and the enemy’s have been high, you could try to hold your ground, and launch a major
counter-attack, even in the face of adverse air superiority. It might work, if not, pray! Or you could decide to slowly withdraw, trading ground for time while keeping your ports open, and perhaps even crushing the opposition on one of the smaller maps. Try not to have the game end on Turn 17, as a daylight evacuation will probably result in very heavy losses; Turn 18 is much preferred for evacuating, as it’s a night turn. Note that the game ends on May 26th, but the actual battle ended on June 1st. I did not have the map space nor counters to go all the way to the end in what became after the 26th mainly a rearguard/pursuing action. The end of game “evacuation rules” simulate the actions of the last few days (Allied units will either be destroyed or evacuated). Just make sure your troops are in position to reach the south map edge by game’s end!

“God save the King!”

**German Fog of War**

As the German commander, many hard choices must be made. You will probably not have that many clues about the Allied deployment before choosing your Drop Zones. Do you do a drop close to your objectives, as the German doctrine recommends, even in the face of high losses? Or do you drop farther away, aiming for lower losses, but losing that “window of opportunity” when then Allied defenders are pretty much immobile in their trenches? One thing is sure: you need to capture and secure at least one airfield, and fast! In the Historical Scenario some zones, like Heraklion, are almost lost causes; the defenders are way too strong. You could conceivably prevail with some luck, a good initial drop, and sending all your reinforcements there. Who knows? One of your naval convoys might even get through! This would certainly surprise the Allied player, and allow you to use troops in the other zones to mainly bottle up the defenders to stop them from evacuating successfully. Or you could try to capture a port in those zones—something the Allied needs to guard against. Rethymnon is a good candidate for that ploy as the port is far from the main airfield that is sure to be defended in force.

**German Power**

You are outnumbered (at first), and must watch out not to lose too many paratroopers, as you will be penalized in the End-of-Game victory conditions. Once the “expendable” Mountain troops start to land, bringing in lots of artillery, you will be able to take a breather. So, again: take that damn airfield fast! Once you have it secured and functioning, the victory train will be going your way.

“And what about my other advantages” you ask?

Well, you have your “invasion convoys” (don’t laugh!). With air superiority and a bit of luck, these might actually land somewhere where they will have the potential to turn the tide in a contested sector. But don’t put too much hope on them. So, yes, the keystone to victory (besides not having too many paratroopers eliminated on the first turn of the game) is your air support. The *Luftwaffe* can do pretty much everything you want, everywhere, and should be only slightly annoyed by the somewhat weak enemy anti-aircraft guns. But as you have most probably deducted (at least if you read the Allied tips above) you don’t nearly have enough to do all that you need. Prioritize! Don’t be shy about using two air markers in a critical battle, but always put one on the Interdiction roundel or a critical sector to impede the enemy road and counterblow moves, plus their supporting artillery.

“Gott Mit Uns!”
EXAMPLE OF PLAY (Crete)

Sample Paratroop

It is Turn 2 of the Crete Historical Scenario; the German player is poised to drop his troops on the Rethymnon Sector. He wisely put in a Stuka air support unit in the “Interdiction Box” during the Organization Phase to impede enemy movement during the critical paratroop turn (the defenders cannot move normally during that turn, but still can use “counterblow” movement; this will be denied by the air unit; see C13.0.2).

Available units to the German player are:

![Map of Crete showing available units to the German player.]

This is not much, but these can be reinforced if needed by some or all of the four detachment counters coming in two turns (see Turn 4 “Reserve Wave” event, page 37).

The Allied player had already set up his units on the map, some hidden on the Box Camouflage Display card, adding in one “dummy” and one “real” Box from the free-setup counters, making an extra effort to help that isolated garrison. The attackers have a total of 16 attack factors, the defenders now have 17 factors counting the two Boxes. It promises to be a very close fight.

Now the Allied player reveals the Box counters and the hidden units from the Camouflage Display. To the Fallschirmjägers’ commander horror, his main force is dropping right next to two Anti-Air counters (with a three-hex range; C2.3 Allied Boxes), and the 2FJ/I Battalion right on top of the Greek 5th Regiment! The dummy Box counter is now removed from the map. Note that the Greek units cannot stack/setup with the Box counters (see 12.2.2).

The German player now rolls for Drift for each unit on the Paratroop Table.

- **A 4KG**: Dice roll = “4”, –1 no adjacent enemy. Result = 3. Safe drop!
- **B 5KG**: Dice roll = “5”, +2 for the two AA Boxes, +1 for the Orchard hex, –1 no adjacent enemy. Result = 7. The unit drifts off map and is placed in the Sector Holding box.
- **C 2FJ/III(+)**: Dice roll = “1”, +2 for the two AA boxes. Result = 3. The unit drops at the junction between

As you can see, most of the landing zones close to the objectives are covered/adjacent to hidden markers and possible Anti-Air units, but to the west. Dropping units too far to the east runs the chance of having them drift off the map and out of the action for a while. The Axis player still decides to take some risks—planning to later dispatch some of the seaborne invasion units to help—and tries for a drop mostly in the middle of the map with his larger units, and detachments on the flanks (note that units cannot drop in Mountains/Cities, as indicated by the Terrain Effects charts).
Perivolia, water, and the 4Gk detachment. Since an enemy unit or water occupies one of the three vertex hexes, the parachutists must suffer a one-step loss. They then land in the town—the only empty hex available.

Yellow Arrows: Note that if the die result had been a “5” the unit would also have taken a loss, but could not land on the Box unit (and eliminate it). You can only do this if there are no other empty landing hexes available or if landing right in the Box hex (see C8.6.2 cases 4 & 5).

D 2FJ/I: Dice roll = “2”, +2 for the two AA boxes, +1 for dropping on an enemy unit. Result = 5. It drops in the vertex between three empty hexes, but cannot be put in the mountain hex if any there is another choice. The player wisely puts it away from the fortified Australian battalion (these cannot normally move the turn of the drop; see Turn 2 event, “Limited Moves,” page 36).

The German player gamble has not succeeded, thanks to the extra AA Box on the map. Without it the drop would have been much tighter. But only one step was lost during the descent—it could have been much worse! Alas, the paratroopers are badly scattered over the sector and the two battalions separated by the main Allied force. Good thing that the enemy cannot react at all during their movement phase, who comes next in the turn: it will give the Germans time to get into better attack positions.

Below is the situation at the end of the organization Phase, just before the Allied Movement phase:

The airfield looks far away, well defended and certainly won’t be taken fast. Another option would be to go after the Port objective right away, as it is only defended by the Greek “Gendarmes” (police) force. Perhaps the scattered detachment in the Rethymnon Holding Box will appear on the west map edge (see C12.7.6). This would help the attack on the Port.