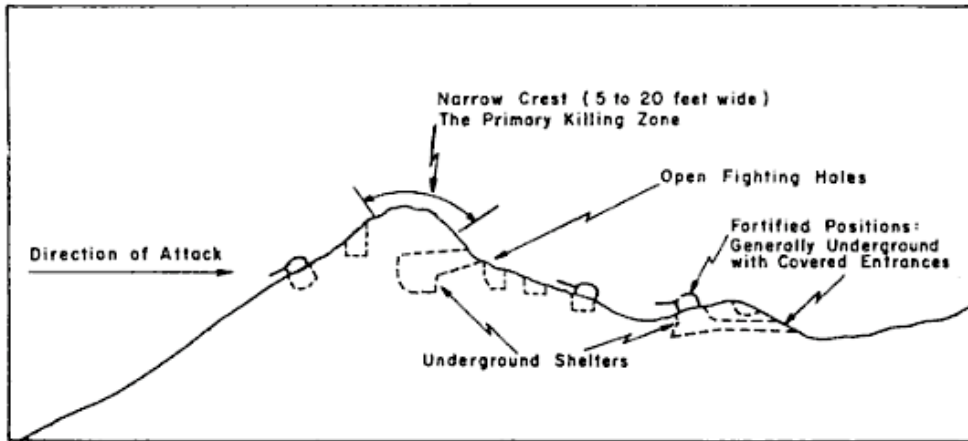


Caves in the Pacific War

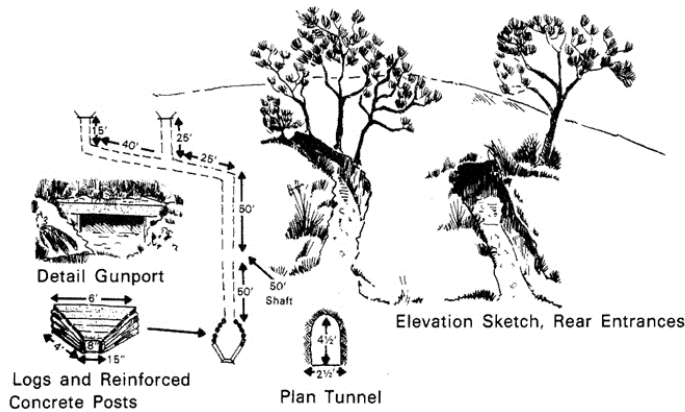
Optional Playtest Rules for Battlefront WWII by Bill Slavin

This set of rules is meant to model the unique circumstances created by the use of extensive cave systems and reverse slope tactics by the Japanese in the Pacific War. These rules do not deal with the more extensive fortress positions (typified by the Shuri Castle positions on Okinawa or the Pinnacle on Ie Shima) but rather the mostly man-made small unit fighting positions.



A Japanese Reverse Slope Position (Hypothetical)

From "The Second World War: Asia and the Pacific" by John H. Bradley, Thomas E. Griess, Jack W. Dice



A fighting position cave with rear exit on reverse slope, from "The Leanvenworth Papers #18"

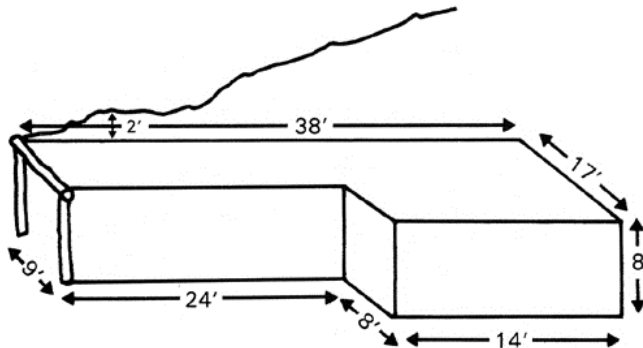
These caves are divided into two categories.

Fighting Positions.

Caves that only have firing ports with no immediate exit, usually accessed through a hidden entrance, either a vertical shaft to the rear of the position or from an exit on the opposite side of a ridgeline or hill (see "Exits and Connecting Tunnels" below.)

Barracks caves.

No fighting ports, merely a location that troops can retreat to that gives immunity to shellfire. For Battlefront purposes each of these positions is considered to house five infantry or infantry weapons stands (artillery excluded) and the exit is 1" from the front facing of the cave. They may only be attacked by close combat and entrances are spotted as other cave entrances.



Barracks or storage cave, from "The Leanvenworth Papers #18"

Cave Fighting Positions and Rear Exits

General Rules

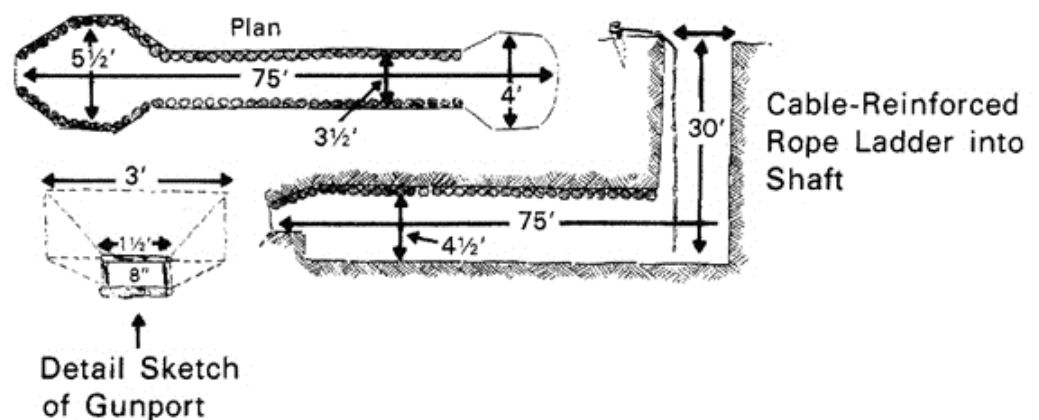
1. Treat as concrete pillboxes for direct fire, indirect fire and CC purposes.
2. Regardless of the modifiers on an IDF attack, treat all results (other than a natural 10) as disordered at best.
1. If a natural ten is rolled, with sufficient modifiers for a KO, then the position and unit are destroyed and the position may not be reoccupied.
2. All reverse slope positions (those down slope and within 3" from an intervening ridgeline or hilltop) are considered immune to IDF attack other than mortar attacks.
3. All cave fighting positions are considered to have a 180° arc of fire from front facing. These positions are immune from attacks by enemy units to the rear of the position but may be subjected to close combat from this quarter.

Spotting

1. All cave positions and exits are spotted as “troops dug in” in the same terrain, with a further “Down 1” modifier. The automatic *spotted at 1*” rule also does not apply, so it is conceivable that these positions are only discovered when units come in base to base contact with the position.
2. If possible it is recommended that all cave units be digitally photographed and removed from the board prior to play. Alternatively players can use hidden markers, liberally sowing the playing area with dummy markers at a rate of one for every actual position.

Exits and connecting tunnels

1. Caves were often constructed at the top of ridgelines and hills. Any cave fighting position located within 1” of a ridgeline or top of a dome-shaped hill is considered to have a corresponding exit position the same distance on the reverse side of the ridgeline or hill (see chart). This only applies to cave fighting positions on the non-reverse (attack side) slope.
3. Cave fighting positions on the reverse slope or further than 1” from a ridgeline or dome-shaped hilltop will have a dog-legged vertical exit that would take the occupants to the surface. Therefore all exits from these positions will be considered 1” back from the front-facing of the position.

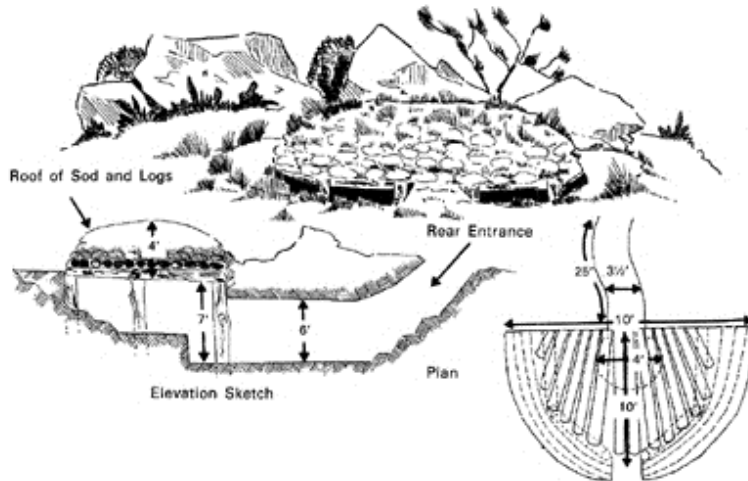


Cave fighting position with vertical shaft, from “The Leanvenworth Papers #18”

4. Any cave fighting position within 2” of an adjacent fighting position is considered to have an adjoining tunnel. This allows free movement from one position to the next without having to exit the cave, and requires the expenditure of one action. It is the only action allowed for that turn.
5. Moving from a cave fighting position to a reverse slope exit (or vice versa) requires the expenditure of one action and is the only action allowed for that turn.

Heavy Weapons Use in Caves

Mortars, antitank guns and even heavy artillery were often housed in and fired from caves. However if forced to abandon position any artillery pieces cannot be removed from caves and the unit is lost.



An excavated mortar position, from "The Leanvenworth Papers #18"

Caves and Close Combat

The rules governing Close Combat are the same as the rulebook with the following exceptions or additions.

1. Units cannot CC *from* a cave fighting position. They can, however CC *from* an exit.
2. Artillery that is forced to abandon a cave position as a result of CC is considered KO'd.
3. Outflanked cave positions receive a -2 (rather than -1) when attacked by close combat.
4. Units forced to abandon a cave fighting position must retreat either:
 - (a) 1" back from the position if it has a vertical shaft exit (see above), or
 - (b) from the rear exit if the position has a reverse slope exit.
5. Attacking units that seize a cave fighting position do not actually inhabit the cave but are considered on the surface of that position.
6. Attacking units that discover a rear entrance may enter the position and CC units in the connected fighting cave (or an adjacent cave – see "Connecting tunnels above). They will need to expend an action in order to do so and that will be the only action for that turn. In this case there is no negative defender CC modifier for being outflanked.

Caves and Engineers

Engineering units may successfully seal either a cave fighting position or a cave exit by performing one successful engineering action followed by a successful demolition action (see playtest Engineering Rules). Sealed cave fighting positions may no longer be fired from and units in caves with sealed exits may not exit from their position. (If CC'd and forced to abandon position they are considered destroyed.) Likewise if both exit and fighting position are sealed the unit is considered destroyed.

Image credits: All images other than "A Japanese reverse slope position" are from "The Leanvenworth Papers #18"

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