



## **RAM'S HEADBUTT**

**Bir El Gobi - Libya, November 19th 1941**

**22<sup>nd</sup> Armored Brigade tries to clear the crossroad at Bir-El-Gobi**

### **Overview**

In the morning of November 19<sup>th</sup>, General W.H.E. Gott, commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Division, ordered the 22<sup>nd</sup> Armored Brigade to head to Bir El Gobi.

Under Gott's pressure, General Scott-Cockburn, Commander of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, without making any reconnaissance of the field and without the support of his only infantry unit, launched his Armoured Regiments in an attempt to dislodge the Ariete Division from Bir El Gobi. His command consisted of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Gloucestershire Hussar Regiment, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> County of London Yeomanry, all equipped with Crusader tanks, and one battery of 4<sup>th</sup> Royal Horse Artillery Regiment (8 x 25pdr guns).

He wasn't aware that Generale Ballotta, Commander of 132<sup>nd</sup> Ariete (Ram) Armored Division had time to prepare a strong defensive position that was almost complete by the time of the attack.

At Bir El Gobi, the crossroads of three trails, were deployed the 8<sup>th</sup> Bersaglieri Regiment with 3 battalions (V, VIII and XII) supported by a 75/27 Gun Battery from the Pavia Infantry Division. A support Weapons Company from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion / 132<sup>nd</sup> Artillery Regiment was moving into position when the attack started.

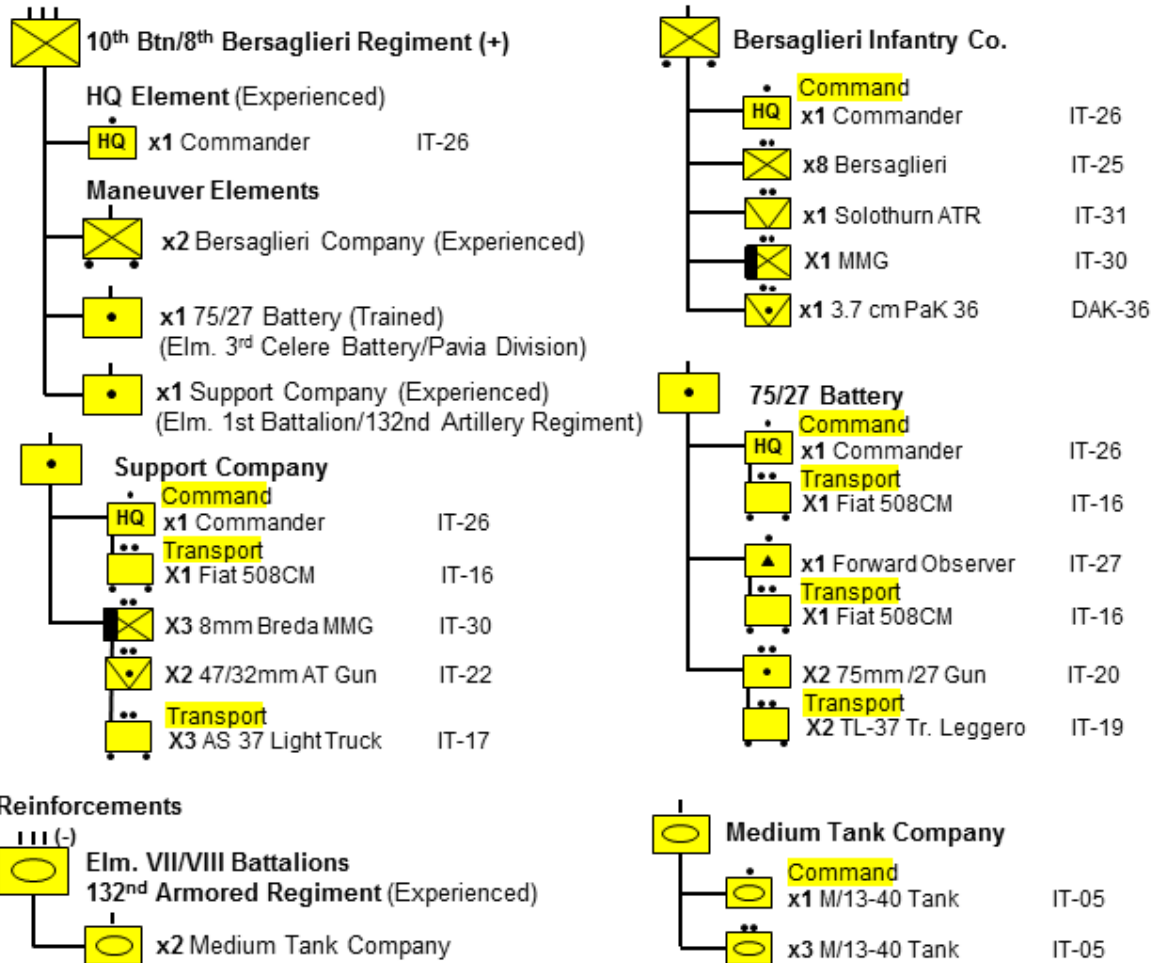
To the North of this position, the Italian 132<sup>nd</sup> Armored Regiment was in reserve with its 3 Armored battalions (VII, VIII and XII) and 9 Autocannone 102/35 Mounted Naval Guns of the MilMart Battery (Milizia Artiglieria Marittima).

At 11.00 A.M., after a preliminary bombardment from 4<sup>th</sup> RHA Battery, the British attacked with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gloucestershire on the right, the 4<sup>th</sup> C.L.Y. on the left while and the 3<sup>rd</sup> C.L.Y. in reserve.

This time the Italians were ready and willing to fight.

# RAM'S HEADBUTT

## Italian Forces



## Italian Briefing

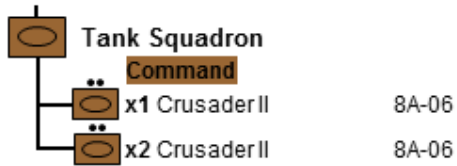
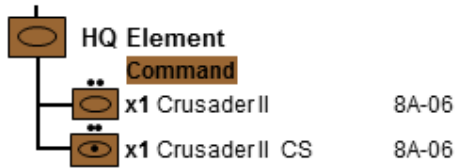
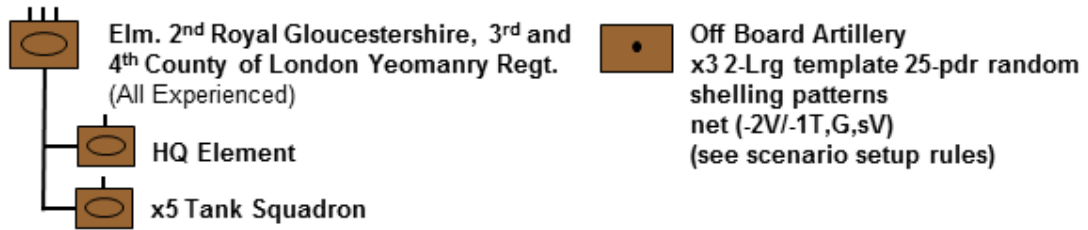
- Italian Objective: Prevent the British from achieving their victory conditions. Casualties are not a factor in determining victory, but do effect maneuver rolls normally.
- Italians deploy first on the western side of the table in the marked on the map.
- Both Bersaglieri Companies and the 75/27 Gun Battery may start in Improved Positions with guns emplaced; Vehicles may be Hull Down.
- The Bersaglieri overall commander starts in an Improved Position that is considered to be his Command Post giving him a command radius of 10" as long as he does not move.
- Although on the board, the Support Weapons Company starts the game mounted in their vehicles with the guns being towed. They will need to dismount and the guns will need to emplace.
- The Italian may deploy the Pak 3.7cm and 75/27 guns in semi-hidden positions. Each gun may deploy using one real and two dummy markers. Remove the dummies when the gun is spotted or suspected and place the gun on table. Note that the 75/27 guns are not revealed if they fire IDF but are not in the LOS of a British unit.
- The Italians receive two tank companies as reinforcements on a random schedule. They enter as marked on the map on the Western and Northern edges of the map.

	TURN	ROLL 1D6 ARRIVE ON
<b>1st Armored Company ME</b> (West)	8	6
	9	5-6
	10	2-6
	11	Automatic
<b>2nd Armored Company ME</b> (North)	11	6
	12	2-6
	13	Automatic

- Scenario conditions: British move first. The game continues until the British win or can no longer achieve their victory conditions due to losses.

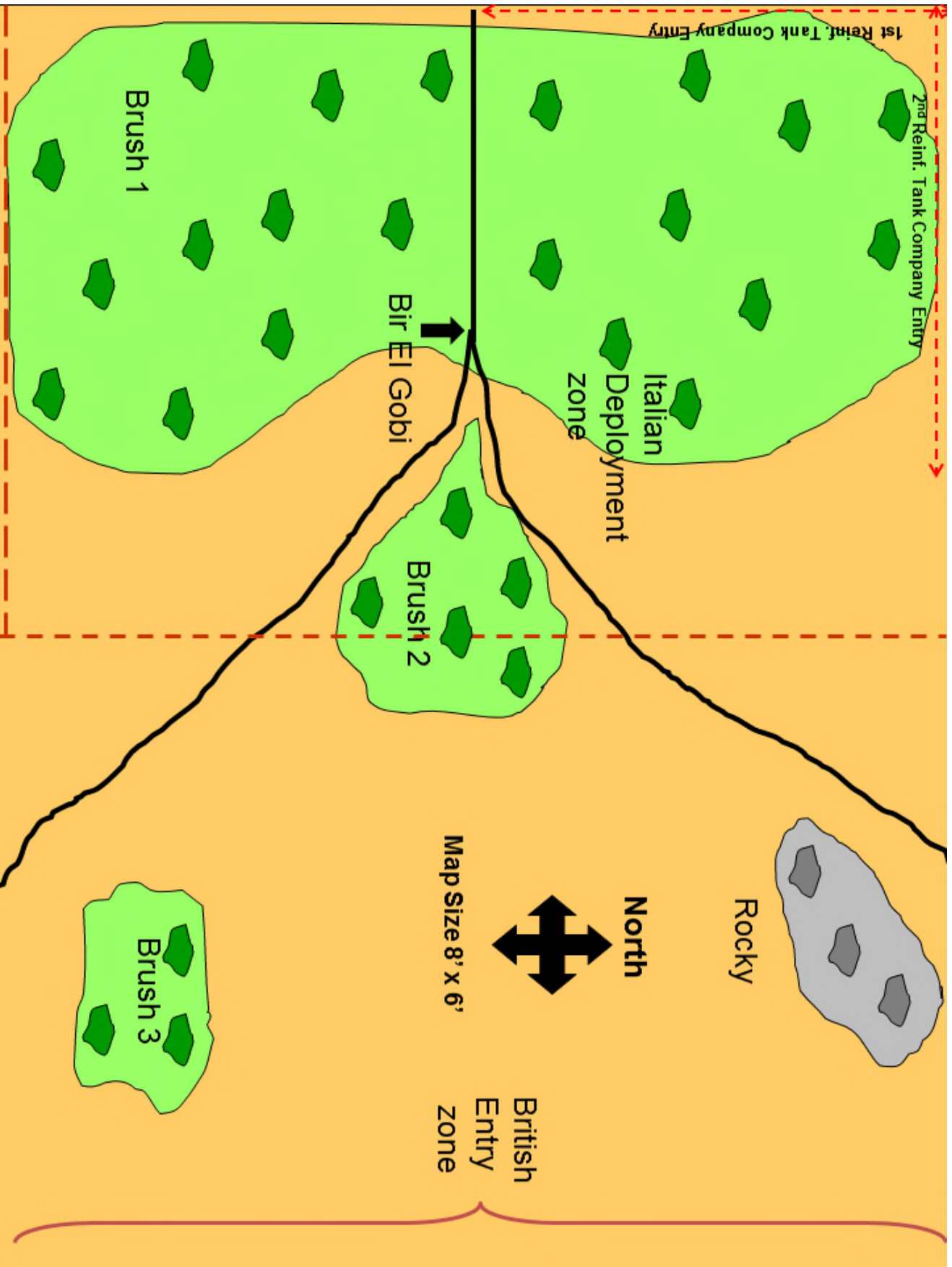
# RAM'S HEADBUTT

## British Forces



## British Briefing

- British objective: Exit at least 9 or more (50%+) of your vehicles from the Western side of the table. Casualties are not a factor in determining victory but effect maneuver rolls normally.
- British troops enter from East side of the table.
- Before they see the Italian deployment, the British player must specify the movement of each ME for the first two turns. Each ME must move along its route using Rapid Advance and may not deviate from the plotted movement unless it comes under Direct Fire from an Italian unit (IDF from hidden units does not count). On turn 3 and after, British units may move normally.
- The British player has an one time off-board bombardment consisting of 3x(2-large template) random shelling patterns (no smoke) of 25-pdr IDF (6 templates total). They have attack values of (-2V/-1 T,G,sV) instead of the normal 25-pdr values because of the random shelling. This bombardment may be used once on turn 1-4 at the British player's request and arrives automatically during the IDF phase. All templates must arrive on the same turn. However, the British player must specify the location of the patterns before the game begins and before the Italian deploys. The bombardment may be targeted at the crossroads or the edge of a terrain features. The patterns may each target a separate area. If not used by turn 4, the bombardment is lost.
- Scenario length: British move first. The game lasts until the British win or can no longer win due to losses.



## **RAM'S HEADBUTT: Terrain and special rules**

- Scrub: as Brush
- Rocky: as Terrain Chart
- The trails negate the effects of the terrain.
- Increase the transport capacity to 3 infantry stands for each Truck stand (instead of normal 2)
- Advanced Rules:
  - Sneak manouvre Action
  - Grazing fire
  - Knocked Out Vehicle Table
- Map size: cm 240 x 180 (8 feet x 6 feet)

## **Historical outcome**

For the first hours of the clash, the attack seemed to smile on the British; the Support Company was overrun and the XII Bersaglieri Battalion badly damaged.

Nevertheless the V Battalion was still firmly in place. The three British Regiments charged almost in line springing up out of the blue from a large cloud of sand.

The men of the Rifle Brigade, incorrectly left in reserve by Scott-Cockburn, said that the attack was like an old cavalry charge.

All Ariete guns opened fire at point blank taking heavy toll from the British tanks.

At 15.00 P.M. Scott-Cockburn was still confident to achieve victory when suddenly the 132<sup>nd</sup> Armored Battalion appeared on the front and on the flank of the British with all of its 100 M 13/40 tanks and the support of MilMart Battery fire.

British casualties started to mount and after an hour of indecisive fighting the British Commander ordered a retreat that was successful because of the greater speed of the British tanks.

For the British this fight meant that Operation Crusader in this sector came to an unexpected halt. General Scott-Cockburn was challenged for his conduct of the assault and for the losses (57 to 82 tanks according to different sources).

The Italians, even with heavy losses both in vehicles (40 to 50 M13/40) and in troops (the 132<sup>nd</sup> Armored Regiment lost 12 Officers and 193 troops KIA, Wounded or MIA), discovered that, even without German support, the British could be defeated.

## **Bibliography**

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