

Blood & Honour - Hitlerjugend in Normandy

A Walk in the Park

June 17th – 18th 1944

Scenario written by Richard de Ferrars and Paddy Green

Historical Overview

The small village of Cristot is sited on a spur of high ground at the eastern edge of the Normandy bocage. Cristot found itself at the centre of some of the bitterest fighting in the first days after D-Day, as 50th (Tyne-Tees) Infantry Division & 8th Armoured Brigade fought a series of battles with Panzer Lehr and Hitlerjugend. Both sides suffered heavy losses but the German line held-fast. (See Blood and Honour scenarios: Finding the Front Line, Cristot & Le Mesnil Patry) Exhausted, the British passed the baton to the newly arrived 49th (West-Riding) Division. Better known by as the *Polar Bears*, this was a pre-war territorial division that, by 1944, included units from most of Britain. They had earned their unusual nickname by spending the preceding 18 months as the garrison force for Iceland. The Germans did not have any new divisions to throw into the battle and therefore the over-stretched 12SS Hitlerjugend remained responsible for defense of this area.

As a prelude to *Operation Epsom*, Monty's big assault to the west of Caen, the *Polar Bears* were to strike south towards Tessel Wood and the high ground around Rauray. The first step along the way was Cristot. On June 16th, Cristot was flattened by a terrifying display of artillery, involving AGRA's and naval gun-fire. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry took possession of the rubble remains with minimal losses. Soon afterwards, the woods around Point 102 were also secured. But barely 24 hours beforehand, the Germans had finally "straightened the front-line". They had withdrawn from the salient around Cristot & Le Mesnil Patry and had established a new defensive line few hundred yards to the south. Cristot held only a few small outposts when the attack had struck. The next objective was Fontenay-le-Pesnel, but blocking the path down the slopes into this village was the imposing feature of Parc de Boislande. The task of securing the parkland and Chateau was allocated to the 6th Battalion, Duke of Wellington's Regiment (6DWR). With confidence high after the successful seizure of Cristot, the British were further encouraged by air reconnaissance and ground patrols failing to detect strong defensive positions in the parkland and around the Chateau.

Scenario Design

This is an attack & counter-attack scenario taking place on a very compact board.

For the British player, this is a standard battalion assault. But the challenge? This is the first proper battle for your infantry and the opposition is dug-in SS-Panzer-Grenadiers.... You do have very powerful artillery and you will need to co-ordinate your infantry, artillery & armour properly to avoid heavy losses. You then have to move over to defense to repel the inevitable counter-attack.

For the German player, you must decide how to split your limited resources between defense and counter-attack. Defending forces will suffer heavily under the artillery but those that survive will surely extract a high price from the attackers and improve the odds for the counter-attack? For the counter-attack, you have limited artillery but you do have the opportunity to attack with Panzer-grenadiers mounted in their armoured half-tracks.

Historical Outcome

The battle started late on June 17th and, once again, British artillery hammered hard into the German defensive positions. As the barrage moved forward, the tanks gradually started to pull ahead of the infantry who, in turn, were suffering increasingly from "snipers" who had survived the artillery onslaught. Stiffened by the follow-up rifle companies, eventually the woodland and Chateau were cleared. As night fell over the ruined Chateau and the shattered parkland, the armour withdrew leaving the 6DWR to consolidate their positions. But inexperience showed and preparation for the inevitable counter-attack was not as thorough as it should have been. Soon after dawn on the 18th, a fresh squadron from the 24th Lancers arrived in support. An increasing tempo of German artillery and mortar fire announced the arrival of the anticipated counter-attack. Fresh companies of Panzer-grenadiers and Pioneers, supported by Panzer IV's, moved up the slopes from Fontenay-le-Pesnel. Once again the woodland became a killing ground. The 6DWR Carrier Platoon was surrounded and "fought to the last man". Large numbers fell back from the woods in disorder. The heart had been torn out of the 6DWR - they had lost over 250 men in their first battle. Losses for the Hitlerjugend were over 150 men – troops and tanks that they would struggle to replace. Parc de Boislande became a ghostly no-man's land until re-occupied by the British on June 20th.

Map & Terrain



Three board options are shown:

1. 15mm ground-scale, board 4x4 – use top and right side scales
2. 20mm ground-scale, board 6x6 – use bottom and left scales
3. 20mm ground-scale, board 4x5 – use smaller marked section

We strongly recommend that you use 20mm ground-scale if playing with 15mm figures – there is lot of forces to fit within a small area. Note that any reference to distance in the scenario refers to **game inches** and therefore the actual distance will vary according to the ground-scale being used (example – 12” of minefield markers)

The map is centred on the Chateau de Boislande with its surrounding woodland, orchards and network of hedges. Cristot and Point 103 lie to the north and west; Fontenay-le-Pesnel lies at the south edge.

The term “Park Boundaries” refers to the obvious wood & orchard areas within the hedge-lines and also the complex of bocage hedges and fields *east of the minor road* and NW of the park itself (enclosed by the thin brown line)

- North is at the top edge of the map.
- The purple line marks the British start line
- The blue line marks the northern limit of the German deployment
- The parkland is a mix of orchard, cleared wood & wood with underbrush, hedges, tracks and open avenues
- The parkland hedges are tall hedges
- The farmland hedges to the north of the parkland are bocage hedges
- Wheat fields are treated as tall crops. Positions on the map are indicative only but there should be a large number of small wheat fields, but not in the gaps between woods & orchards around the chateau.
- All buildings are stone. BUS marked “1C” represent large Chateau buildings and movement between the second levels is allowed.

British Player Briefing

“At 4pm, by the Chateau, two of our tanks were shot up by 88mm guns. Five Tigers were reported on the right flank. Lt. Frank Fuller hit and brewed up one at 100 yards. Three more were shot up by our SP 17-pdrs. At 6.45pm, seven Tigers were spotted on the left flank. Our own A/Tk guns had difficulty getting into position and two of our tanks were shot up with HE and Sgt Sidney Norton was killed. By skillful manoeuvring of our tanks, the enemy was prevented from entering the position.”

Trooper Leonard Willis, B Squadron, 24th Lancers

Situation

Lt Col. R K Exham, MC, CO 6th Btn Duke of Wellington's Regt, 17:00 June 17th 1944, Les Hauts Vents

Five days ago, your battalion disembarked dry-shod onto Gold Beach, but soon you were passing the debris of battle – blasted buildings, bodies and discarded, wrecked vehicles. The continuous rumble of artillery fire was enough to dispel any memories of tranquility back home – you were here to do the job that you had spent years preparing for. The briefings have told you of your Division's role in securing the flank for the major offensive that everyone knows Monty is planning. But you've also learnt that the enemy in this area are fanatical SS Panzer-grenadiers backed up by armour including Tigers. It's well-known that they are not taking prisoners and unconfirmed rumours that bodies of executed Canadian prisoners have been found nearby. One by one, the Battalions within the Division have been blooded. First into the line was 146th Brigade. June 14th, 15th and 16th saw the Hallam's in action at Audrieu, then the Lincoln's in a fierce skirmish at St Pierre and finally the KOYLI clearing Cristot.

That action yesterday has left even the veterans in your battalion stunned. The ferocity of the artillery barrage was unbelievable. You've heard that seven field regiments, four medium regiments and the Royal Navy all combined in an awesome display of the power of artillery. The KOYLI had moved through the rubble of Cristot rounding up the dazed survivors. Yes, they had suffered casualties from German artillery zeroed in on the centre of the village; but the defenders had been stunned and routed and even the expected counterattack had failed to materialize.

Today it is the turn of 147th Brigade and your Battalion is the first into action. The objective is Parc de Boislande – an area of woodland and orchards about 500 yards across with a Chateau in the middle. It dominates the approaches to the village of Fontenay-le-Pesnel and must be secured before the Brigade continues its assault into this village. Patrols have established that it is only lightly defended by the SS Panzer-grenadiers and that their main defensive positions and armour probably lie to the south at Fontenay-le-Pesnel. They have also identified minefields around the edge of the woodland. You have just returned from your final O-Group with your company commanders and the squadron leader from the 24th Lancers. You know that this is a tough baptism of fire and that the woodland, hedges and buildings have been prepared for defence. Once again, it is expected that artillery will walk your boys in, but will it be a “walk in the park?”

Mission

You must clear Parc de Boislande of any organised defenders. Your Battalion will have the support of a single squadron from the 24th Lancers and also some SP 17pdrs from the Divisional ATR. You will advance with 2 Rifle Companies up front. The other 2 Rifle Companies will leave the start line once it is clear that the first line of hedgerows has been secured. You may use Support Company elements at any stage.

Deployment

Initial Force

You will lead off with A & B companies 6DWR, supported by B Squadron 24th Lancers, a battery of SP 17-pdrs from 234th AT Regt and Vickers MG's from the 2nd Kensingtons. Pioneer & Carrier Platoons may be used at any time.

Follow-up Force

Your follow-up force consists of the balance 6DWR. They should be deployed anywhere north of the start line. They may not cross the start-line until at least 75% of each ME from 6DWR and 24L in the initial force have crossed into the German deployment area.

HQ & Support Company

All of HQ/ Support Company should also be deployed north of the start-line but may move forwards at any time.

Notes & Special Rules

24th Lancers are rated as *veteran*. All other British forces are rated *experienced*

The scenario is in 2 distinct phases each lasting up to 15 turns

The British player moves first in phase 1, the German player moves first in phase 2

Phase 1 - The British attack on Parc de Boislande on the evening of June 17th

This phase ends on turn 15 or sooner if there no undisordered German units remain in the extended Park boundaries (see note by scenario map). German units that have stayed hidden at this late stage are ignored! Disordered German units at the end of phase 1 are removed from play and count as losses for ME purposes

Phase 2 - The German counterattack early on June 18th

This phase ends after 15 turns, when the final victory conditions apply

British forces can re-deploy freely within the northern half of the board **and** the Park boundaries.

- remove any disorder/ suppression markers

- panicking units are removed from play and count as losses for ME purposes

Undisordered German Forces surviving Phase 1 may participate in Phase 2.

Preparation of defensive positions was poor. British troops/ guns only use basic improved position

German bunkers & trenches may be used but the orientation/ field of fire may not be altered

At the start of phase 2, the Shermans and Achilles had only just returned to the battle area. Therefore vehicles may not start the game in hull-down positions.

24th Lancers had rotated B and C squadrons and for phase 2 are back at full-strength

Losses to 234th AT Regt are carried forward to phase 2

German Defences and Minefields

Patrols report that the Germans have prepared the woodland, hedges and buildings. You should expect to encounter minefields – which if marked, will be automatically spotted at 1”.

British Artillery

Unless otherwise specified, off-board artillery originates from the centre of the north board edge

2” Mortars may fire unlimited dissipated smoke. 3” mortars are limited to two rounds of smoke

Pre-registered Fire

Each player may mark up to 5 pre-registered fire points on the map. Examples - centre of wooded areas, road junctions, Chateau complex. A FOO may call-for-fire here without a LOS. But the player must have a good reason to call in fire e.g. has received fire from these areas, has seen vehicles moving into the area.

Initial Barrage

The barrage is by four Field Regiments and lasts for 5 turns.

9 templates wide, one template deep, resolved at +1/+2

1 template depth of automatic danger-close, resolved at -2/-1

Each turn, the barrage either holds position or advances by one template

The final turn may be mixed barrage and smoke

Prior to the start of play, the British player must specify:

Start point - centre of central template

Orientation - (and therefore direction of movement) within 45° of north-south line on the map (90° arc)

Progression - whether the barrage will advance or hold on each of turns 1-5

Note: this large barrage might extend into the British deployment area, so place the initial forces with care!

Medium Regiment Concentrations

121 (West Riding) Medium Regiment, 5AGRA may fire concentrations on turns 1-4

Each concentration is 2x2 large templates and is resolved at +2/+3

These may be placed anywhere within the German deployment area, orientated north-south

They do not require FOO or call-for-fire

Other Fire Support

Turns 1-5 no other fire is available from the Field Regiments as they are firing the barrage

Turn 6 no fire is available from the Field Regiments to reflect reorganisation after the barrage.

Turn 7 on 70th Field Regiment provides fire support

Each FOO from 70th Field Regiment has his own designated troop:

FOO may call his own troop as Organic FS

FOO may call the battery as Direct FS

FOO may call for MIKE target (Regiment) as General FS

MIKE targets should typically include at least 1 armoured vehicle or at least 3 troop stands

Forward Observers

You have are 2 FOO's from 70th Field and these may be attached to any ME.

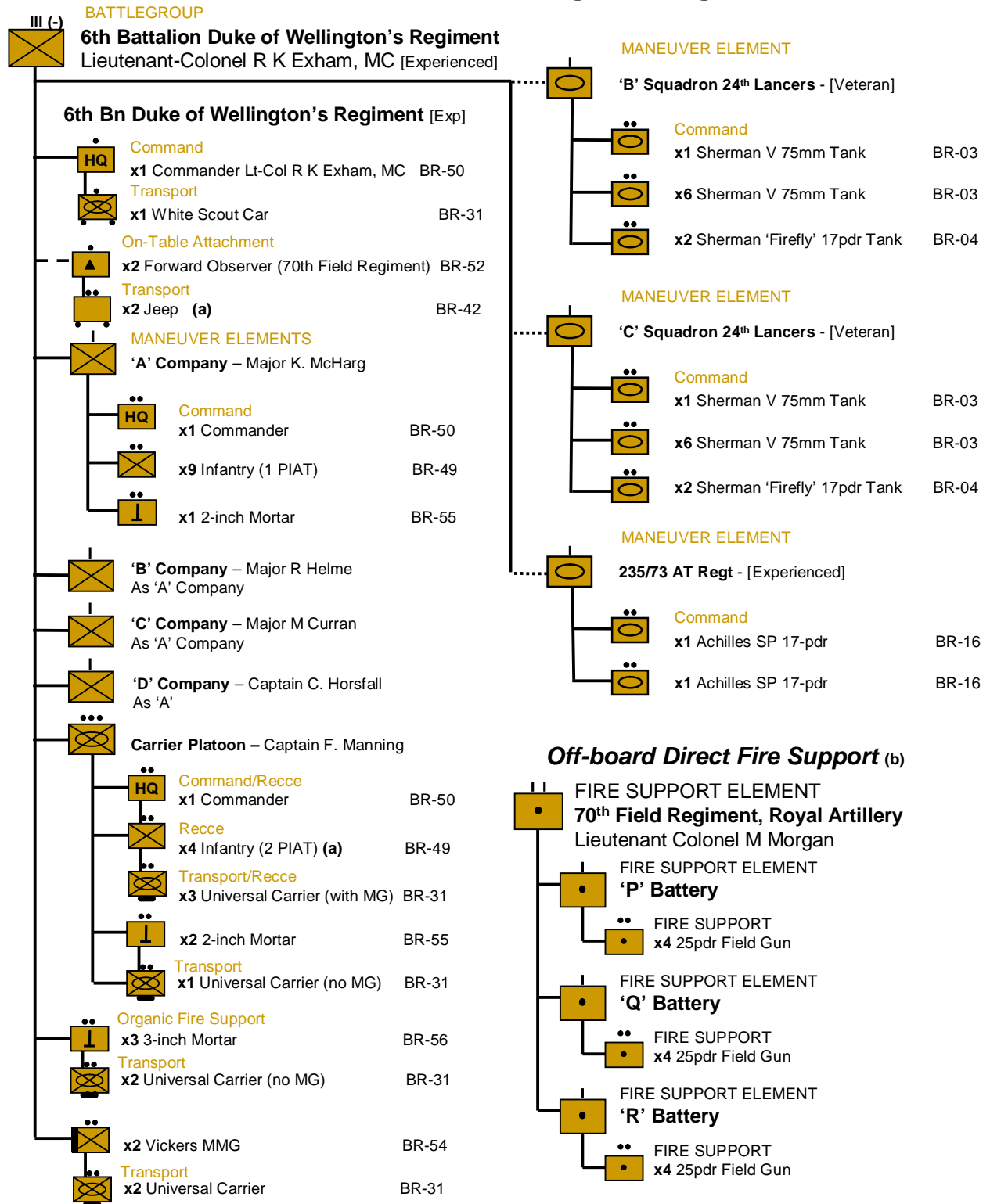
If a FOO is attached to 24th Lancers, then they may deploy in a Sherman OP.

Replacement FOO optional rule should apply. Any FOO lost in phase 1 may be replaced for phase 2.

FOO may change the ME that they are attached to at the start of Phase 2.

British ORBAT

Allied Forces 6th Battalion Duke of Wellington's Regiment



(a) One FOO may be transported in may be in Sherman OP Tank

(b) 121 (West Riding) Medium Regiment On Call for AGRA support as detailed under British Artillery Section of the scenario

German Player Briefing

“An enemy artillery observation aircraft flew in from the north. It spotted our attack and directed heavy concentrated artillery fire on us. The spearheads of the Kompanie had already reached the wood and were in hand-to-hand combat with the British who were dug in there, spades against machetes. The commander of 9 Kompanie, Ostuf. Zantop, was also killed during this carnage. The enemy artillery fire intensified, our attack stalled. We were ordered to return to our assembly areas.”

Oberscharfuhrer Kessler, 10 Kompanie Pz-Gren Regt 26

Situation

Stubaf Olboeter. III Bataillon, Panzer-Grenadier 26. 15:00 June 17th 1944, Fontenay-le-Pesnel

Your frustration has mounted steadily over the last 10 days. Your boys are the spearhead of an elite Division. Mounted in half-tracks, for months they have trained to move forwards with the Panzers and smash the British invaders. But none of that has happened. From the day after the invasion when you arrived at Le Mesnil Patry, you have been on the defensive. The incessant circling Jabo's have forced you to hold the half-tracks camouflaged in the rear whilst your troops have become moles – dig, dig, dig and only come out at night. For seven days you had held the area around Brouay and smashed two battalions that had dared to try and force you out. You'll always remember June 11th – did their fathers teach them none of the lessons they learned from the trenches? All afternoon, a British battalion struggled to cross the open fields to the west of Brouay, eventually pulling back leaving dozens of dark heaps in the cornfields.

However, your Division has been trying to achieve the impossible – holding a line at least twice as long as recommended whilst also preparing for counterattack. Straightening the line would finally allow some battalions to rest and refit in preparation for the offensive. Eventually on the night of June 14th, you withdrew a couple of kilometers, past the scattered outposts left behind in Cristot, down the slope into Fontenay-le-Pesnel. Your task was to turn this village into a fortress that the British would smash themselves against – and break.

As you planned your defences, you had a fierce argument with your Regimental Commander SS Ostubaf. Mohnke. Parc de Boislande – was it a key defensive feature or an unnecessary diversion of scant resources? You insisted it was the former. The British artillery would chew into any positions ahead of any attack. You insisted that by placing your main line of resistance in the park, you could ensure the safety of your counter-attack force. The dense terrain would negate artillery and airpower advantages. In an infantry battle, you had no doubt that your boys would prove their worth. Yesterday, having seen the fate that befell the men of the Divisional Escort Company manning the remaining scattered outposts in Cristot, you feel vindicated. You cannot help but smile - the British are bound to think that they smashed the main defenses in the area. Do they realise that all that artillery was wasted on outposts of a mere couple of platoons? You hope that they cannot have the resources to plan the same for your boys in the park. At least they have had the time to construct proper bunkers in the woodland. You even managed to get the Regimental Pioneers to lay defensive minefields around your forward positions. Not a moment too soon. This morning, dust clouds on the ridgeline ahead announced new arrivals and your forward positions now report the sound of tank engines gunning into action.

Artillery – how you wish you could have just a fraction of the British resources. 12th SS Artillery Battalion II remains allocated as Fire Support to your Regiment. But wasteful use of ammunition – never! Worryingly, Stubaf. Schöps says that they have ammunition for a minor defensive battle only. He is desperately trying to source further ammunition from the other artillery battalions to back-up your counterattack.

Mission

Parc de Boislande forms an important bastion for the defence of Fontenay-le-Pesnel. You have taken the risk of insisting that it should be defended in strength and you cannot afford to be proved wrong. You must maintain control of the feature, or at the very least make the enemy pay dearly for forcing you out.

Deployment

Phase 1 deployment area is south of the blue line

Phase 2 forces enter on south board edge

To summarise, the German player defends the Parc de Boislande with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 2 Panzer-grenadier companies together with any elements attached from the heavy weapons company.

Panzer-grenadier Kompanie 9

Off table for phase 1, enter south board edge for phase 2

Panzer-grenadier Kompanie 10

Defend the park - at least 75% must deploy within the Park boundaries (see definition by map)

Panzer-grenadier Kompanie 11

Either deploy as per 9 Komp. (off table for phase 1) or as per 10 Komp. (defend the park)

Heavy Weapons Kompanie 12

Either deploy as per 9 Komp. (off table for phase 1) or as per 10 Komp. (defend the park) or a combination

Panzer Pioneers Kompanie 16

Off table for phase 1, enter south board edge for phase 2

Panzer Regiment 12, Kompanie 8

Off table for phase 1, enter south board edge for phase 2

Notes & Special Rules

Panzer Regiment 12 is rated as *Elite*

All other German forces are rated *Veteran*

The scenario is in 2 distinct phases each lasting up to 15 turns

The British player moves first in phase 1, the German player moves first in phase 2

Phase 1 - The British attack on Parc de Boislande on the evening of June 17th

This phase ends on turn 15 or sooner if there no undisordered German units remain in the extended Park boundaries (see note by scenario map). German units that have stayed hidden at this late stage are ignored! Disordered German units at the end of phase 1 are removed from play and count as losses for ME purposes.

Phase 2 - The German counterattack early on June 18th

This phase ends after 15 turns, when the final victory conditions apply

British forces can re-deploy freely within the northern half of the board **and** the Park boundaries.

- remove any disorder/ suppression markers

- panicking units are removed from play and count as losses for ME purposes

Undisordered German Forces surviving Phase 1 may participate in Phase 2 and may be reunited with their Sdkfz 251/1 transport. If the German Kompanies defending the Parc de Boislande have 50% casualties or greater they may be split up and attached to the assaulting companies as desired.

Preparation of defensive positions was poor. British troops/ guns may only use basic IP.

German bunkers & trenches may be used but the orientation/ field of fire may not be altered

German Artillery

Off-board artillery originates from the centre of the north board edge

Mortars may fire unlimited dissipated smoke and/or 2 rounds of full smoke.

Concentrations are allowed but there are no options to thicken fire

Pre-registered Fire

Each player may mark up to 5 pre-registered fire points on the map. Examples - centre of wooded areas, road junctions, Chateau complex. A FOO may call-for-fire here without a LOS. But the player must have a good reason to call in fire e.g. has received fire from these areas, has seen vehicles moving into the area.

Organisation of Off-board Fire Support

In support, you have all three 105mm batteries Artillery Battalion II (3 templates per battery). Once the battalion has started to fire as individual batteries, it may not fire again as a battalion during the scenario.

Options are:

1. Battery normal fire 3x1 templates at -1/0
2. Battery concentration 1 template at 0/+1
3. Battalion concentration 3x1 templates at 0/+1

Forward Observers

The FOO's are from Artillery Battalion II and can only be used to call-for-fire from this artillery

One FOO from the battalion may be attached to one a forward (park defence) company

One further FOO becomes available with the counterattack force and *may* be placed in a PzBeob III.

Ammunition Shortages

At this stage, the German artillery was facing marked ammunition shortages

In phase 1, you are limited to a total of 9 battery-turns of fire (for example, two turns of battalion fire, followed by 3 turns of fire by one battery). A further 9 battery-turns ammunition becomes available for phase 2. Unused ammunition may be carried over. On-board mortar and IG ammunition is not limited

German Defenses in the Park

- Minefields** The German player may place up to 12 mixed, medium density, surface-laid minefield markers. These should be marked on a map and deployed at the start of the scenario. Each minefield marker (typically 2" x 1") is 'spotted' at 1" and then placed on the board. Minefield markers must be touching to create a continuous minefield. If gaps have been left to spread the markers, then each and every gap counts a 1" crossable gap between minefields. At the end of phase 1, minefields should be removed
- Bunkers** The German player may place up to 3 wooden bunkers, each holding up to 2 units (troops or guns)
- Trenches** German units are in enhanced improved positions. This means dug-in (-2) modifier and may be represented either by individual markers or by placing trenches connecting pill-boxes. At the end of phase 1, individual dug-in markers are removed but trenches & bunkers are left

Armoured Halftracks

III/26 was armoured and equipped with Sdkfz251 half-tracks. However, these were rarely deployed in forward defensive positions and generally were kept back for Panzer-grenadier assaults. Therefore the majority of the battalion's halftracks had been withdrawn into Fontenay-le-Pesnel.

In phase 1, remove the SdKfz 251/1s from the Orbat for any company deployed within the park boundaries.

Other half-tracks, with heavier support weapons, **may** be used in phase 1 (mortar, close support, command etc)

The carrying capacity for all vehicles has been increased by one unit

When deployed, the halftracks count towards ME casualties but not towards ME strength. (e.g.: consider a ME that started with 13 troop stands and HTs. Losing 5 troop stands and 2 HTs, equals $7/13 = 54\%$ losses)

If by mutual agreement the "Stuka zu Fuss" does make an appearance, it **does not** get the +1 discipline rating modifier for on-board veteran indirect fire units as this makes it far too powerful.

Recommended Optional Rules

Grazing fire

Sneak manoeuvre action

Engineer / improved position rules

British artillery – replacement of FOO casualties

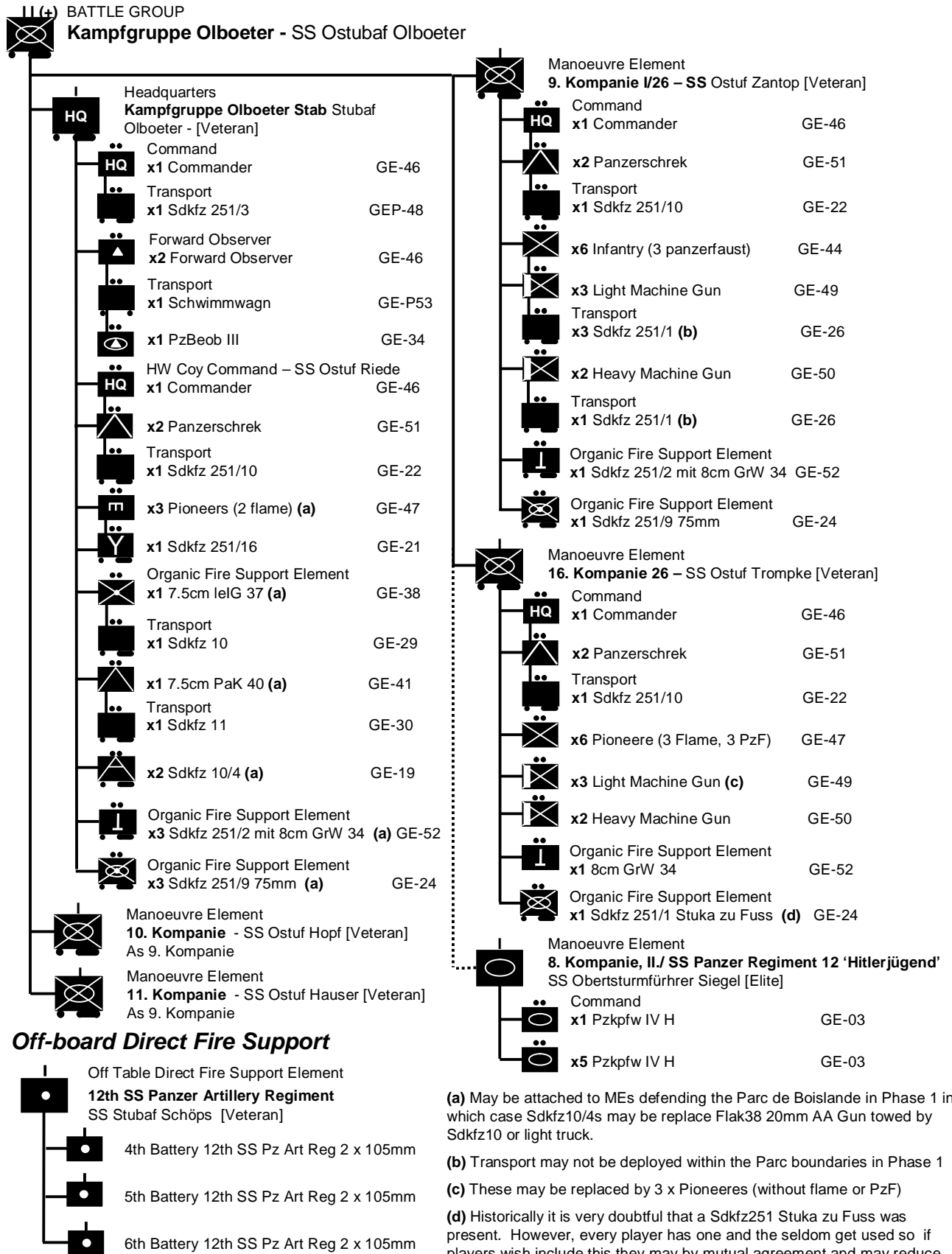
Multi-level BUS

Vehicle carrying capacity increased by 1

Not all tanks burn

German ORBAT

Kampfgruppe Olboeter – Elements 12. SS Pz Division ‘Hitlerjugend’



(a) May be attached to MEs defending the Parc de Boislande in Phase 1 in which case Sdkfz10/4s may be replace Flak38 20mm AA Gun towed by Sdkfz10 or light truck.

(b) Transport may not be deployed within the Parc boundaries in Phase 1

(c) These may be replaced by 3 x Pioneeress (without flame or PzF)

(d) Historically it is very doubtful that a Sdkfz251 Stuka zu Fuss was present. However, every player has one and the seldom get used so if players wish include this they may by mutual agreement and may reduce Artillery ammunition to compensate.

Victory Conditions

To fully control Parc de Boislande:

No undisordered enemy units within the Park boundary hedges at the end of your final player turn

To partly control Parc de Boislande:

Currently occupy the Chateau with an undisordered unit

More undisordered units within the Park boundary hedges than the enemy (all unit types count equally)

	British Player	German Player
Total Victory	Full control of Parc de Boislande German player has at least 3 non-HQ ME's with over 50% losses	Full control of Parc de Boislande German player has no more than 1 non-HQ ME with over 50% losses
Major Victory	Full control of Parc de Boislande	Full control of Parc de Boislande
Minor Victory	Part control of Parc de Boislande	Part control of Parc de Boislande

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