

Scenario Overview

This first scenario of the Kokoda campaign simulates the first clash between the advancing Japanese forces and the Australian forces who were sent to delay them.

In response to the Japanese landing at Gona, Captain Sam Templeton, commander of 'B' Company, 39th Australian Militia Infantry, ordered 11 Platoon and native PIB (Papuan Infantry Battalion) troops to leave Kokoda and move down to Awala. He ordered 12 Platoon to move down from Kokoda to the village of Gorari, which was situated about half way between Awala and Kokoda. 10 Platoon was to remain at Kokoda and guard the airstrip. Having deployed his small force between Gona and Kokoda, Templeton left Major W.T. Watson of the Papuan Infantry Battalion in command at Awala and returned to Kokoda to meet his Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Owen, who was expected to arrive by air from Port Moresby on 24 July. On 23 July, the approach of Japanese troops unnerved a PIB patrol at Awala, and many of the native troops disappeared into the bush. As the Japanese continued to advance towards Kokoda, 11 Platoon fell back to the southern bank of the Kumusi River at Wairope (pidgin English for the wire-rope cables of the narrow foot bridge), and it was joined by Major Watson with his officers, NCOs and a handful of Papuan Infantry Battalion (PIB) troops. The wire bridge across the river was then cut, but the Japanese engineers soon erected a crossing of their own.

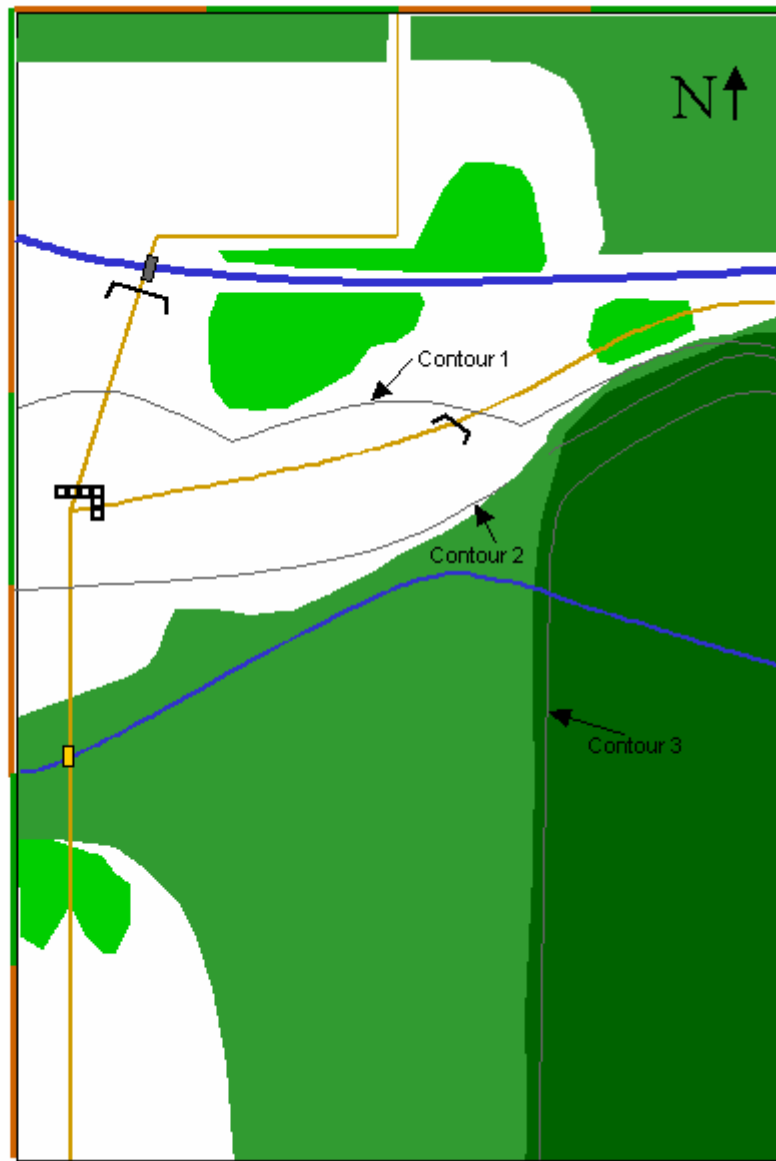
Having been informed that between 1,500 and 2,000 Japanese troops had landed at Gona, Templeton ordered 11 Platoon to fall back to Gorari if contact was made with Japanese troops. On the afternoon of 24 July, Japanese troops appeared on the Gona side of the Kumusi River and fire was exchanged across the river. 11 Platoon and Major Watson's PIB troops then withdrew and joined 12 Platoon at Gorari. A sharp skirmish developed over the Oivi creek.

Scenario Map

Action at Gorari Kokoda Track 26 July 1942

Terrain Legend

	Oivi Creek
	Creek
	Trail
	Contour Line
	Bridge
	Ford
	Entrenchments
	Defensive Positions
	Kunai Grass
	Light Jungle
	Dense Jungle



General Map/Terrain Notes

- Each division along the side of the map represents 1 foot (12")
- The roads are unpaved trails. They are treated as clear terrain paths 1 stand wide through the terrain they traverse, but otherwise give no movement benefits. Units may conform their movement to the trail to avoid movement penalties from surrounding terrain.
- Dense jungle: Foot troops 1/2 move & bog down check each move action (i.e. two times for rapid advance). Dense area terrain. No vehicles. Soft cover.
- Light jungle: Foot troops 3/4 move. Dense area terrain. No wheeled vehicles. Tracked vehicles bog down check each move. Soft cover.

- Kunai grass. 3/4 move for foot & wheeled vehicles. Dense area terrain. No cover.
- The Oivi creek is swollen and unfordable. The only means of crossing it in the battlefield area is by the bridge.
- To the east of the battlefield is dense jungle, but there is a possible crossing point a few miles down the trail leading in that direction which was lightly defended by PIB troops (i.e. it is not defended at the time of the battle). The trail from the east converges on the eastern defensive position from that crossing point.
- To the west of the battlefield is another branch of the creek that is also unfordable, and covered with dense jungle. No crossing point is known to exist in this direction.

Australian Defenses

The Australian defensive position consists of one set of Entrenchments and two lesser Improved Defensive Positions.

Entrenchments

Entrenchments are an L-shaped area consisting of 6 sections. 3 sections face North, 2 face East, and one is a corner whose occupant must choose to face North or East. Think of the entrenchments as a below ground trench system which has some entanglements facing toward the enemy.

- Entrenchments must be breached to enter/exit, even by Australian units.
- Trails do not negate the movement penalties.
- Units entering the entrenchments from the front (Japanese side) must roll for bog-down when entering. This includes Australian units.
- Entrenchments provide a +2 defensive bonus against all fire (direct and indirect) directed against units inside them unless the attacker is in an entrenchment section adjacent to the defender, in which case there is no bonus.
- Units in Entrenchments cannot be enfiladed by fire combat, even if the attacker is also in the entrenchment.
- Units in entrenchments may not be outflanked in close-combat.
- Entrenchments do not block LOS or provide any defensive bonus to units which do not actually occupy them.

Improved Defensive Positions

Treat these as linear obstacles with a distinct facing. Think of them as an above-ground barricade with an abatis pointing towards the enemy. They provide protection to units that are on the side away from the initial Japanese deployment area (generally to the North, but the positions do curve a bit). The defensive positions provide the following benefits:

- Units on the protected side of the positions receive a +2 defensive bonus to all direct fire directed at them from the same contour level that crosses the defenses whether they are conformed to the defenses or not.
- Units on the unprotected side of the positions receive no defensive benefit when fired at by units conformed to the defenses, but receive a +2 against fire by non-conformed units on the same contour level that crosses the defenses (note that the Australian entrenchments are on a higher contour level and will not be effected by this).
- Units conformed to the protected side of the entrenchments receive a +1 defensive bonus against indirect fire. Units which are not conformed receive no benefit.
- Units conformed to the protected side of the defenses may not be enfiladed by fire from outside the defenses.
- Units conformed to the protected side of the defenses MAY be outflanked by close-combat.
- Units on the protected side of the defenses receive no benefit against enemy units which are also on the protected side of the same position.
- Defensive Positions must be breached to cross. If moving from the non-protected to the protected side, a bog-down check must also be made. If a unit attempting to enter close-combat fails a bog-down check, it is stuck in the position and will not resolve CC until it succeeds in escaping its bog-down status.
- Trails do not negate the movement penalties.
- The North defensive position can contain up to 6 stands, 4 facing North and one on each flank.
- The East defensive position can contain up to 4 stands, 2 facing North-East and one on each flank.

Defensive Position LOS

The Australian entrenchments and eastern defensive positions are on a hill that rises from the Oivi creek toward the South. It is possible to fire over lower positions as follows:

- LOS from entrenchments: can see/shoot across river and onto bridge over improved positions and into the kunai grass. Units in the entrenchments cannot shoot over the defensive position at enemy units on the South side of the river.
- Units can shoot from the entrenchments at units on the Australian side of the defensive positions without penalties.
- LOS against units behind (south) of the entrenchments is resolved using the normal rules.
- LOS from Eastern improved position: can see/shoot across river over and into the kunai grass on south side of river.
- All other LOS are resolved using the normal rules.

Game Length

The Game lasts 10 turns.
The Japanese move first.

Victory

Victory points are accrued for inflicting casualties, taking and holding various geographic positions, and some miscellaneous conditions. The victory point calculations are specified in the player orders. The Australian points are subtracted from the Japanese points and the total is used to determine victory as follows:

- Major Japanese Victory = +31pt or more
- Minor Japanese Victory = +16 to +30
- Draw = -15 to +15
- Minor Australian Victory = -16 to -30
- Major Australian Victory = -31 or more

Scenario Notes:

This scenario is designed as the first in a series on the Kokoda Trail campaign in New Guinea. Although the forces favor the Japanese in both numbers and quality, the terrain definitely favors the Australians and the Japanese have "a long way to go and a short time to get there". They can't maneuver carefully from hidden positions and must expose themselves to cross the river. However, the poor morale rating of the Australian troops can quickly turn the tide and the game can quickly become a bloody mess for the Australian troops.

Through the multiple test runs, and games played the battles have almost always resulted in a major win or loss for one side and the other in spite of all the tinkering done with the points awarded, and schedule of reinforcements. There just doesn't seem to be any middle ground (though the results I've seen would justify the major win/loss).

The main thing, of course, is to have fun. Every time I've run this the players have commented on how well they've enjoyed, a) the game system, and b) the scenario (at least until we totaled up the victory points). It is action packed, even for the defending Australians. If you find the victory conditions/points lacking, adjust them as you see fit, make your own, or even through them out all together

If the Japanese are having too much trouble, add a grenade discharger (JA-29 "knee mortar") to each Japanese infantry company. These were commonly issued as short range support weapons.

Briefing for Lieutenant Colonel Tsukamoto **Commanding Yokoyama Advance Force - 1st** **Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment**

Situation

You are leading the advance guard of the Japanese overland attack against Port Moresby. As you move up the Kokoda Track, your patrols dispersed local irregular forces, and have spotted a company-sized force of Australians taking up positions on the other side of the swollen Oivi creek. This is approximately a company-sized force. Your forces consist of the 1st Btn. of the 144th Inf. Regiment with organic support as listed below. The remainder of the Japanese forces are following behind on the track and will not be able to join you in this battle.

Mission

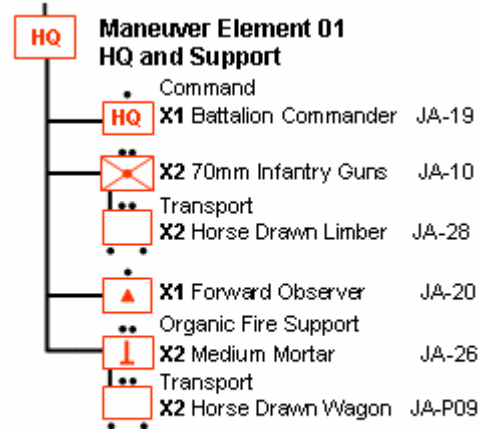
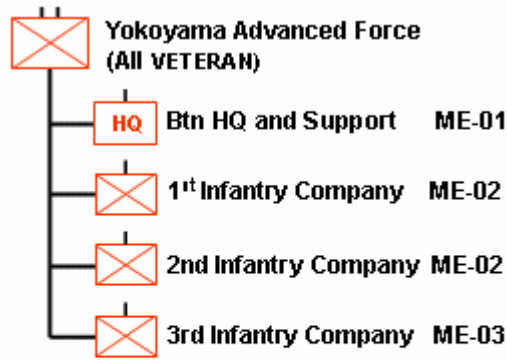
As the vanguard of the Advance Force, you are to press the attack, and destroy all enemy forces that attempt to block the way to Kokoda and its airstrip.

Execution

The only way across the Oivi creek in the battle area is the bridge. Get across as quickly as possible, and push the attack, destroying and cutting off as much of the enemy as possible. The mortars and infantry guns are taking too long coming up the trail. The attack will commence without them. After dispersing the defenders, continue on down the trail to Kokoda, assembling 1/2 mile outside the village along the trail.

Japanese scouts discovered another crossing point several miles to the East and you sent two platoons in that direction with orders to cross and rapidly attack the enemy flank.

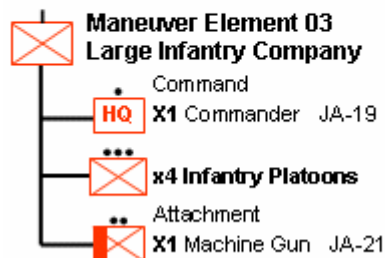
It is not known if the southern creek is crossable except at the ford along the trail.



25%=3; 50%=5; 75%=8



25%=3; 50%=6; 75%=9



25%=4; 50%=7; 75%=11



(a) Although Platoons are used for setup and organization purposes, they are not independent entities for maneuver rolls and casualty calculation.

Setup and Reinforcement Schedule

- The Japanese may begin with the first two companies, the Battalion CO, and the Mortar FO deployed in the Area of light jungle along the Northern edge, or they may enter on turn 1 on the trail from the north edge. The first rank in the light jungle may start at the edge and move full in the open the first turn. Units behind them must pay light Jungle Movement penalties. Although the FO is present on turn 1, the mortars may not use IDF until they arrive and emplace (as the earliest they can arrive is on turn 6, the Japanese will not have IDF support until turn 7 or later).
- Turn 2: The commander, attached HMG, and two (2) platoons of the third company will enter along the trail at the north edge.
- Turn 5: The remaining two (2) platoons of the third company come in on the road on the eastern edge South of the Oivi creek. The infantry guns arrive along the trail at the north edge. In this scenario, the Japanese Infantry guns may only use direct fire and may not fire smoke.

- Turn 6: The mortar sections have a 50% chance of arriving on this turn at the north edge, and each turn thereafter until they make it or the game ends.
 - They may move onto the board by foot in the jungle, or they may move onto the board along the trail in their wagon.
 - They may not fire IDF until they emplace.
 - Resolve call-for-fire rolls using the German Call-for-Fire table as Organic support.
 - They can only perform shelling, random shelling, and smoke missions.
 - The Mortars may place 2 templates of smoke (one for each mortar).

Japanese Victory Points

- Australian Mortar KO: 20pts
- Australian Infantry KO: 3pts per stand
- Australian MG or CO KO: 4pts
- Australian Company reaches 25%-49% casualties: 10pts.
- Australian Company reaches 50%-74% casualties: 20pts.
- Australian Company reaches 75% or greater casualties: 30pts.
- The Northern improved position is held at the end of the game: 10 pts. Held is defined as a) there are no Australians within 1" of them, and b) the Japanese are adjacent to them or were the last ones adjacent to them.
- Entrenchments: 10pts if held at the end of the game + 5pts per turn held consecutively up to the end of the game. (i.e. if you take them on turn 5, but lose them on turn 7, then take them back on turn 9 AND hold them at the end of the game you will receive points for turns 9+ only). To hold the entrenchments, there can be no Australian units in them, and the Japanese must have been the last to occupy them.
- Ford: 10pts if held at the end of the game. Held is defined as; no undisordered Australians within 1" of the ford and the Japanese were the last to move within 1" of the ford.

Briefing for Captain Sam Templeton **Commanding 'B' Company, 39th Australian Militia** **Battalion**

Situation

Enemy forces - At least a battalion-sized Japanese force is marching down the trail, and will be attacking at any minute. They are likely to have mortar and infantry gun support.

Friendly forces - 'B' Company is it. The other companies of the battalion are receiving training at Port Moresby. Elements of the Papuan Infantry Battalion (PIB) (natives) have provided the above information, but have "gone to bush" upon initial contact with the Japanese. While permanent defensive positions were previously prepared in this area, they were not occupied in force by Australian troops, and your troops have just arrived in the area.

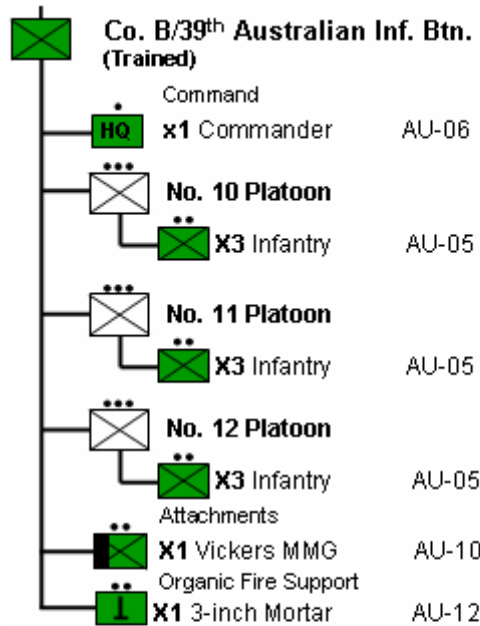
Attachments - (1) 3in Mortar has been attached (the only thing larger than a MG that will be available in the area for quite some time) providing organic fire support. Mortar ammunition is limited. Only use it as necessary.

Mission

The Company is to perform a delaying action to allow the rest of the battalion to receive additional training and supply, and move units up to join you in the defense of Kokoda village and its airstrip.

Execution

You are to occupy the defensive positions and entrenchments on the south bank of the swollen Oivi creek, and provide a vigorous defense. The ford across the smaller creek south of these positions must be held to provide an avenue of escape. Do not allow yourself to be flanked or mauled, as the Company will be needed for the defense of Kokoda village. Your company is listed below.



Although divided into 3 platoons for setup purposes, the Australian force consists of only one Maneuver Element.

Maneuver Element Casualty limits:

25%=3; 50%=6; 75%=9

Setup: The Australians have just arrived at this location and have not had time to fully deploy.

- 1 platoon and the mortar start at the ford along the trail. The mortar may start emplaced.
- 1 platoon must be deployed in any of the three defensive positions.
- The last platoon, company commander, and MG must be deployed in or around the entrenchments.

The smaller, southern creek is fordable along its entire length. At anywhere other than the ford, the unit must breach to cross.

The Mortar can only fire shelling or random shelling missions, no smoke. Use the British Call For Fire Table.

Australian Victory Points

- Japanese Infantry or Company CO KO: 5pts per stand
- Japanese MG KO: 6pts per stand

- Japanese FO KO: 5pts per stand
- Japanese 70mm Inf. Gun KO: 10pts per stand
- Japanese Mortar KO: 10pts per stand
- Japanese Btn.Commander KO: 10pts. Note that if the Btn. CO is KO but then replaced and KO again, you only receive 10pts, not 20
- Inflict 20-29 stand losses on the Japanese Force: 10pts
- Inflict 30+ stand losses on the Japanese Force: 20pts.
- At the end of the Australian player turn 6 and every turn thereafter, the Australian player receives 5VP if he holds the entrenchments (not the Improved Postions). Once accrued, these VPs are never lost, even if the Japanese player captures the entrenchments. Holding the entrenchments is defined as:
 - If there is an Australian stand in them, they are held by the Australians, regardless of the position of other units.
 - If no units are in the entrenchments and the Australian player was the last to occupy them, they are considered held by the Australians.
- Ford-Add 5pts if held at the end of the game (Australian turn 10). Held is defined as; no undisordered Japanese within 1" of the ford.
- Scarce Mortar Ammo-deduct 5pts for the 6th and every subsequent IDF mission fired by the mortar.