

Once More Into the Breach

This third scenario of the Kokoda campaign simulates a hasty counterattack launched against the Japanese who had just captured the Kokoda Airfield.

The fight for Kokoda did not last long. The Australians of 'B' Company, and other elements of the 39th Battalion were driven from their defensive positions after a brief, though fierce, fire fight. One of the casualties of the fight was yet another leader of the militia force, Lieutenant Colonel Owen, who received a shot to the head while moving from position to position to boost the morale of his troops. Once again, the command fell to Major Watson, who ordered a retreat to Deniki through the fog and rubber trees.

The Japanese Advance Assault Force under Lieutenant Colonel Tsukamoto had achieved their objective of taking the Kokoda airstrip. Believing they had beaten veteran Australian units from North Africa (the 39th Infantry Battalion militia were provided khaki, desert uniforms to fight in the jungles of New Guinea) they now awaited supplies and reinforcements from the rest of the Advance force commanded by Colonel Yosuke Yokoyama, and reported back that the overland route to Port Moresby was practical. The trail to Kokoda from Gona/Buna had been a relatively easy one, and had only reached into the foothills of the Owen Stanley Range, and now with an airstrip to support them, the Japanese were very confident. Little did they know that the trail ahead of them would be one of the most impractical places to fight a war ever imagined.

During the first week of August, the rest of the 39th battalion had crossed the Owen Stanley Range, and arrived at Deniki. Unfortunately, General Morris did not believe mortars could be used in the jungle or along the trail, and did not send any with the militia troops. The Japanese did not suffer from this deficiency in thinking. With the battalion was the new commanding officer for the 39th, Major Allan Cameron. Major Cameron was an Australian Imperial Force (AIF) officer (as were all the previous officers of the 39th) who believed the misperception that the militia forces were "chocos" (a derogative term used by the AIF to describe the militia units as melting like chocolate at the first sign of combat). He immediately shamed 'B' company for not putting up a stronger fight and holding the airfield, and sent them back down the trail in a reserve position, and planned an attack to retake Kokoda with his remaining companies.

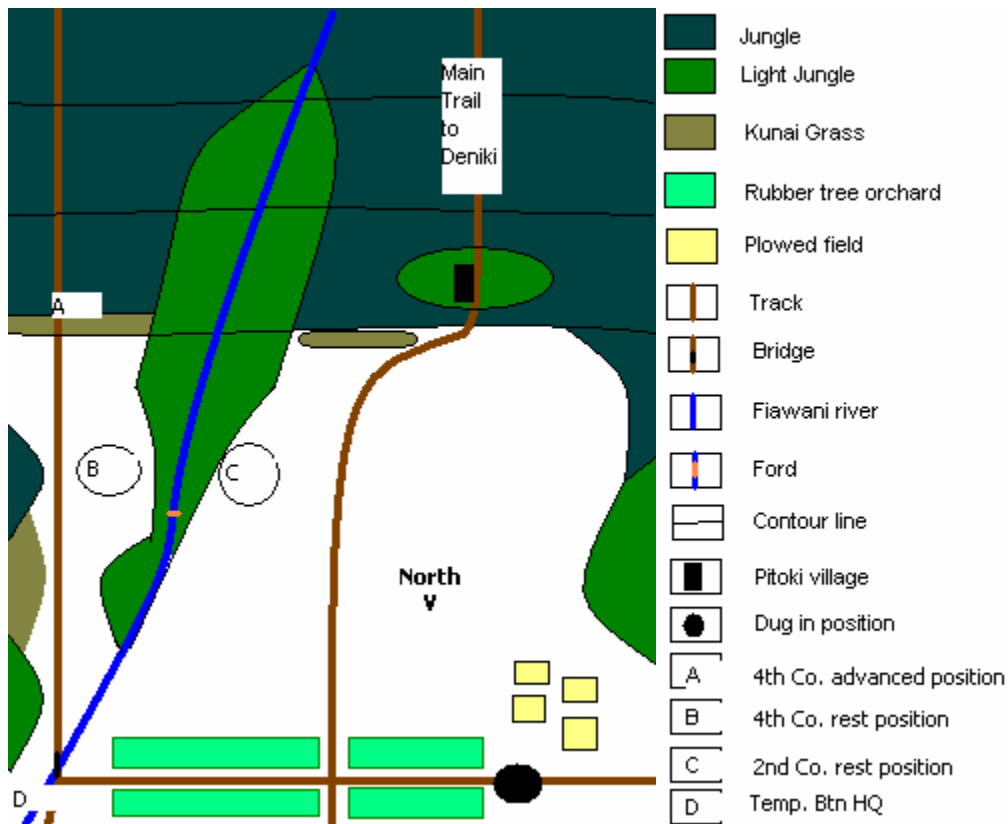
Though Major Cameron had no intelligence on the Japanese positions, he planned an attack and advised General Morris of his intentions. General Morris in Port Moresby promised reinforcements as soon as the airstrip was taken. Even with the loss of Kokoda, it seems that the command in Port Moresby and Generals MacArthur and Blamey in Australia still did not believe the Japanese intended anything more than an advanced base in northern Papua, or that they could even cross the mountain range. MacArthur did take the precautionary measure of starting to send over the 7th AIF division to Port Moresby recently arrived back to Australia from Africa. On August 6th, two battalions of the 21st Brigade boarded ship and headed to Port Moresby.

On August 8, Major Cameron initiated his attack on Kokoda, sending out relatively fresh, untested militia troops to drive out Lieutenant Colonel Tsukamoto's veterans. Being of like mind with Generals Morris, Blamey, and MacArthur in his opinion of the 39th, and following their leadership example, Major Cameron led from the rear, and stayed at Deniki, while his command headed towards the Japanese.

Scenario Notes

This scenario is the third in a series on the Kokoda Trail campaign in New Guinea. The Japanese companies are reduced significantly, in part to represent battle casualties, but mainly to have a playable game. With the Australians moving through the jungle the Japanese are most likely to get the first shots off, and with a +1 for veteran, and a +1 for ambush, they can put a lot of hurt on the Aussies real fast. Through adjustment during multiple test runs, the number and quality of troops worked out well in the convention game. The battle quickly turns into three separate actions between one Japanese and one Australian ME each. The Japanese battalion ME should probably be assigned to an experienced player running an infantry ME, as it does not get involved until later in the game, if at all.

Scenario Map



Terrain Notes

- The map is meant to be played on a 6' by 5' table. North is to the bottom of the map.
- **Fiawani Creek:** Unfordable except at the designated point. Bridges cannot be destroyed.
- **Dug in position:** Breach to cross/assault coming in. Can exit without breaching. Represents having control of the airstrip. Large enough to accommodate two platoons (6 stands).
- **Lt jungle:** Soft cover; dense terrain; troops $\frac{3}{4}$ move; tracked vehicles $\frac{1}{2}$ move; wheeled vehicles $\frac{1}{2}$ move with bog down check
- **Jungle:** Soft cover; dense terrain; troops $\frac{1}{2}$ move; tracked vehicles $\frac{1}{2}$ move with bog down check. No wheeled vehicles.
- **Rubber Tree Plantation (Orchard):** Soft cover; sparse terrain; troops full move; vehicles $\frac{1}{2}$ move.
- **Kunai grass:** no cover; dense terrain; $\frac{3}{4}$ move all; level 1 terrain (i.e. cannot be seen over).
- **Tracks/Paths:** no road bonus, but negate terrain effects. Through the jungle in the hills, troops on the trail count as being in sparse/edge, no cover. Otherwise open.

- **Hill:** Continuous slope, no dead zone. Rises towards the south.
- **Pitoki village:** soft cover BUA; 3-sectors.
- North of the northwest corner of the battlefield is the airstrip.

Scenario Specifics and Victory Conditions

The game lasts 14 turns.
The Australians move first.

Total victory points are calculated by each side according to the schedule below. Subtract the lesser of the two point totals from the greater. If the differential between the two totals is:

0-20 Draw	Neither side can claim victory
21-35 Minor Victory	The side with the higher total has won the battle, but the campaign will continue.
36+ Major	The side with the higher total has won a significant victory that may have strategic implications for the outcome of the campaign.

Victory Points:

- **Dug in Position by airstrip:** 25pts to whoever holds it at the end of the game.
- **Pitoki:** 15pts.
- **Ford:** 10pts.
- **Per Enemy stand knocked out:** 3 pts for each Aussie; 5pts for each Japanese. Units routed off the board do not count for this total
- **Crossroads in orchard:** 5pts to the Aussies only.
- **Bridge:** 10pts to the Aussies only.



Briefing for Major Cameron **Commanding 39th Australian Militia Battalion**

Situation

Enemy forces - At least a battalion-sized force has taken the Kokoda airstrip and surrounding positions. They have mortar, heavy machine gun, and infantry gun supports.

Friendly forces - 'A', 'C', & 'D' Companies will make up the attacking forces. 'B' Company will remain in Deniki to provide a rear guard. The Battalion Commander will also be at Deniki.

Attachments - Attachments - (1) 3in Mortar, and (1) MMG has been attached to 'D' Company.

Mission

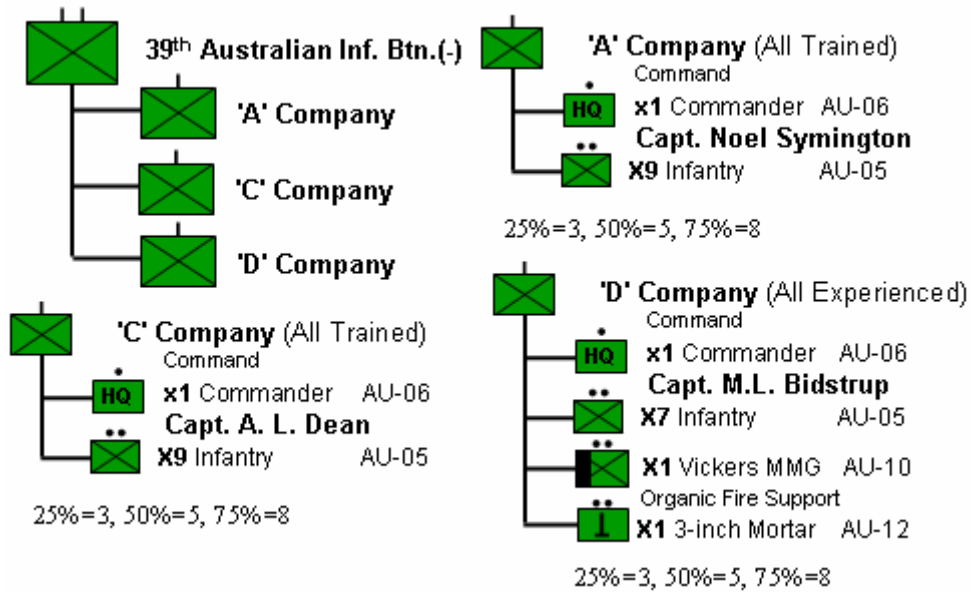
To retake the Kokoda airstrip, and hold it until reinforcements are flown in.

Execution

'D' Company will move along the main trail from Deniki to Kokoda, and attack along its axis through to Kokoda.

'C' Company will move along the secondary trail from Deniki to Kokoda, and provide flank security for 'D' Company, then take positions along the crossing points of Fiawani Creek.

'A' Company will be guided by LCpl Sanopa of the PIB along a round about and little used trail that comes in from the West just South of the airstrip. It will then secure positions to take control of the airstrip.



Setup and Scenario Rules

- The Game lasts 14 turns, the Australians move first.
- See the Scenario Overview for terrain rules and victory conditions
- 'D' Company starts on board along the main trail from Deniki to Kokoda.
- 'C' Company starts on board along the secondary trail from Deniki to Kokoda.
- 'A' Company has a 10% chance on turn 1, 50% chance on turn 2, and 100% chance on turn 3 to come on board at the trail entering from the West. They can come on in any formation, but must be centered on the trail.
- The Dug-in position represents having control of the airstrip and is the objective of 'A' company directly and the other two companies indirectly.
- The Mortar can only fire shelling or random shelling missions, no smoke. It is organic fire support for 'D' Company. Because of ammunition shortages, and lack of communication it is direct fire support for 'A' & 'C' companies. Use the British Call For Fire Table.



Briefing for Lieutenant Colonel Tsukamoto Commanding Yokoyama Advance Force - 1st Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment & 5th Sasebo SNLF

Situation

After routing the defenders of the airfield, only light patrols or native irregular forces are expected to be in the area. There is no expectation of enemy activity and most of your forces are resting.

Friendly forces - 1st Btn., 144th Inf. Regt. Consisting of (3) Infantry companies, (1) Mortar platoon providing organic support, (1) Infantry Gun platoon, and (1) MG company (the MG company has been attached to the individual infantry companies). The 1st Infantry Company and 5th Sasebo have moved back along the trail towards Oivi to assist in bringing up supplies.

Attachments - There are no attachments.

Mission

To provide security along the trails leading to Deniki from Kokoda, and hold the airstrip.

Execution

3rd Company will provide security along the main trail to Deniki near the village of Pitoki.

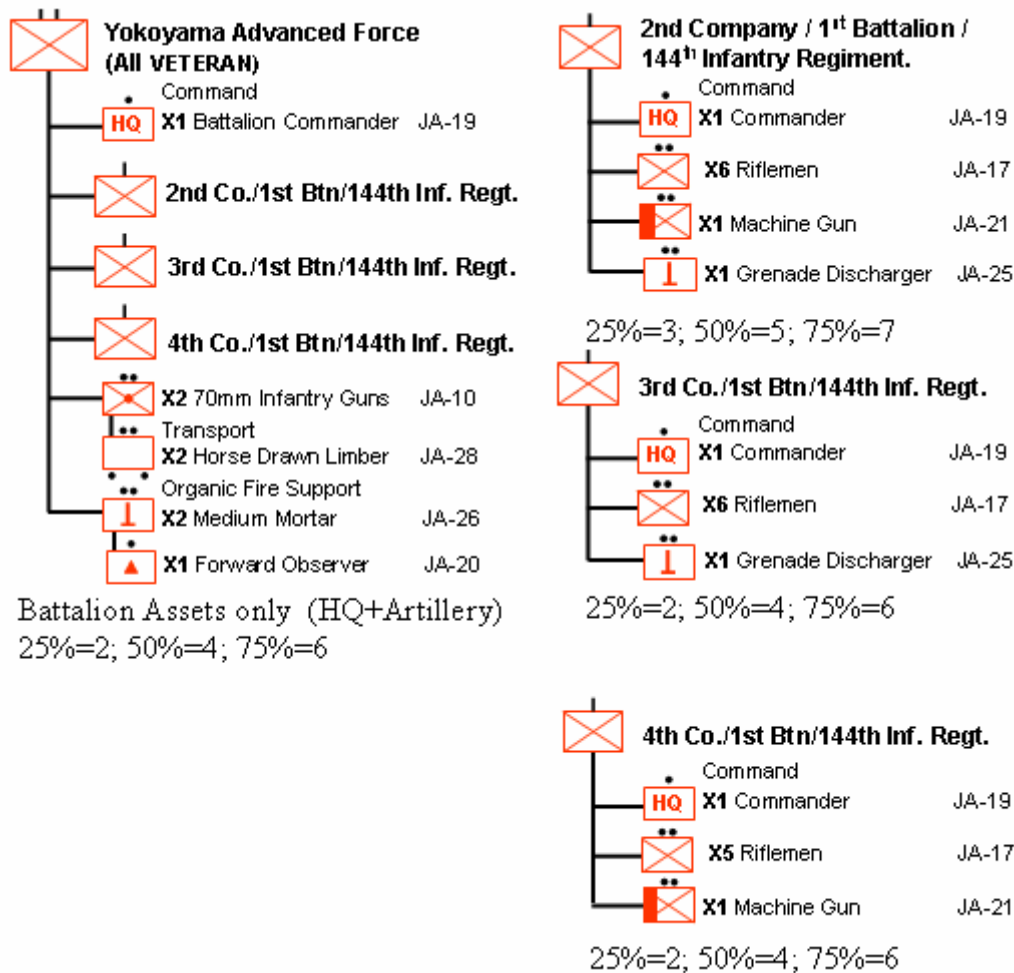
4th Company will provide security along the secondary trail, near the edge of the jungle.

2nd Company will provide one platoon as a reaction force in support of 3rd or 4th Company. One squad and a grenade discharger squad will occupy the dug in position as security for the airstrip. One squad will be posted at the crossroads, and one at the bridge. The rest of the command will be at ford in a position to support either of the other companies.

Battalion assets will be in the temporary Battalion CP with the exception of one infantry gun, which will be setup in the light jungle near the ford to support 4th Company.

The Battalion CO will be located at the Battalion CP, and will retain command of all battalion assets.

2nd Company is to react to the heaviest fighting, and provide support to the threatened company.



Setup and Scenario Rules

- The game lasts 14 turns. The Australians move first. See the Scenario Overview for terrain rules and victory conditions
- 3rd Company is deployed in the area of the village of Pitoki.
- 2 infantry and 1 HMG stand of 4th company are deployed in the jungle near the bottom of the hill by the kunai grass in an advance position (Location A).
- The rest of 4th company is in the clearing below the kunai grass, close to where the battalion gun is deployed, and should be setup in a random manner. These stands are not activated, and cannot move until there has been combat with the other elements of their company listed above.
- 1 infantry and 1 grenade discharger stand from 2nd Company are deployed in the dug-in position.
- 1 infantry stand from 2nd Company will be deployed at the crossroads.
- 1 infantry stand from 2nd Company will be deployed at the bridge.
- The above stands of 2nd Company cannot leave their post unless their command is activated (see below), and they are within sight of the company or battalion commander (spot).
- The rest of 2nd Company is to the west of the ford. These stands are not activated, and cannot leave this area until after the second turn of recurring combat along one of the trails leading to Deniki (i.e. reacting to the sound of the guns). They should be set up in random manner.
- The Battalion Commander, and the rest of the battalion assets are gathered in the Battalion CP area, and should be setup in a random manner. The mortar stands are not emplaced. One battalion gun is limbered. One battalion gun is emplaced at the edge of the light jungle near the ford in support of 4th company.
- The Battalion assets will be activated after the third turn of recurring combat.
- See the [Japanese Artillery Tutorial](#) for the knee mortar rules