

Scenario Overview -THE KOKODA TRAIL - Eora Creek

In the early morning of the 29th of August the Japanese started their final assault on the Australian defenders at Isurava with mountain gun and mortar fire. At dawn the Japanese wave attacks started. Major General Horii had committed all of his considerable reserves to this fight, and the weight of numbers was pushing the Australians out of their defenses. The Australians kept fighting back, though. The men of 2nd AIF/14th Battalion made the Japanese pay dearly through pure unit doggedness, and individual tenacity. Such as the case of Corporal Charlie MacCallum. As 12 platoon of 'B' Company pulled out, MacCallum provided covering fire with a Bren in his right hand until it ran out of ammunition, and as the Japanese rushed him, he blazed away with a Tommy gun that he had in the left, while he reloaded the Bren with the right hand. There were over forty Japanese bodies around his position in the end, and this he accomplished after already being wounded three times.

Additional Australian forces arrived in the form of the cut off patrols and ambush units from the 39th CMF. Lt. Sword's and Lt. Petland's units had been cut off in the early days of the battle for Isurava, and avoided the Japanese through the thick jungles. Though they were exhausted and hungry, when they arrived they headed straight for the fight. There was also the last batch of the wounded from the 39th that had been sent down the trail before the fighting started. Upon hearing about the fighting back at Isurava, twenty-seven of the thirty returned to join their unit. The three that didn't go back were missing a foot, a forearm, and a bullet through the throat. Even with these men, the Australians couldn't hold off the massive numbers of Japanese. As darkness fell, the order to withdraw was given.

As the Australians withdrew to the Rest House south of Isurava, elements of 2/16 and the 53rd CMF advanced along the Missima trail on the 30th. The elements of the 53rd were taken by surprise and the majority of them were killed or ended up missing, the rest joining with 2/16. The position at the Rest House was becoming untenable, and a further withdrawal was ordered to Eora Creek. This now meant that 2/16 and the 53rd would have to halt their advance and begin withdrawing as well, since Alola would now be given up (see trail map in the Overview to the 300 Australians scenario). As the lead elements of 2/16 broke contact with the enemy, they received word that Alola was in enemy hands, they were cut off, and would have to cut across the jungle to rejoin Major General Potts and the rest of Maroubra Force.

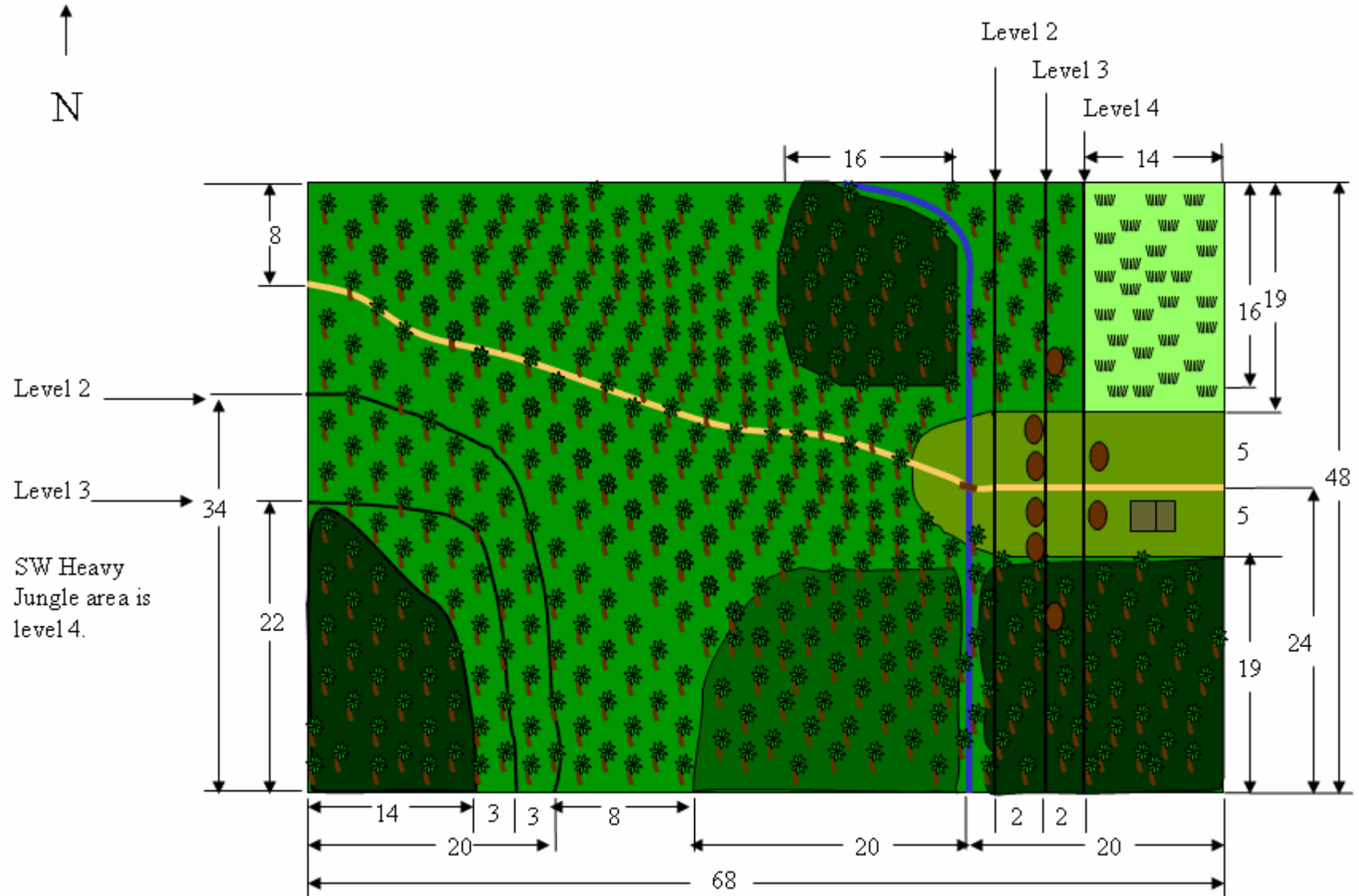
On the 31st, 'A' & 'B' companies of 2/16 had rejoined Maroubra Force, and held positions north of Eora Creek, while 2/14 (now not much larger than a company) crossed the creek, and took up positions south of the 39th, who covered the three log crossing. 'C' & 'D' companies of 2/16 were leap-frogging back along the trail to the Eora Creek crossing.

Both sides are now suffering from being constantly soaked from the rains, the trudging through knee deep mud, the lack of food and sleep, and the debilitating effects of disease. The Japanese, however, were not about to let the Diggers escape without a fight, and were putting on pressure.

Now one of the greatest fighting withdrawal stories of all time is in full swing, along the Kokoda Trail.

Scenario Notes-Steven Lee

Scenario Map



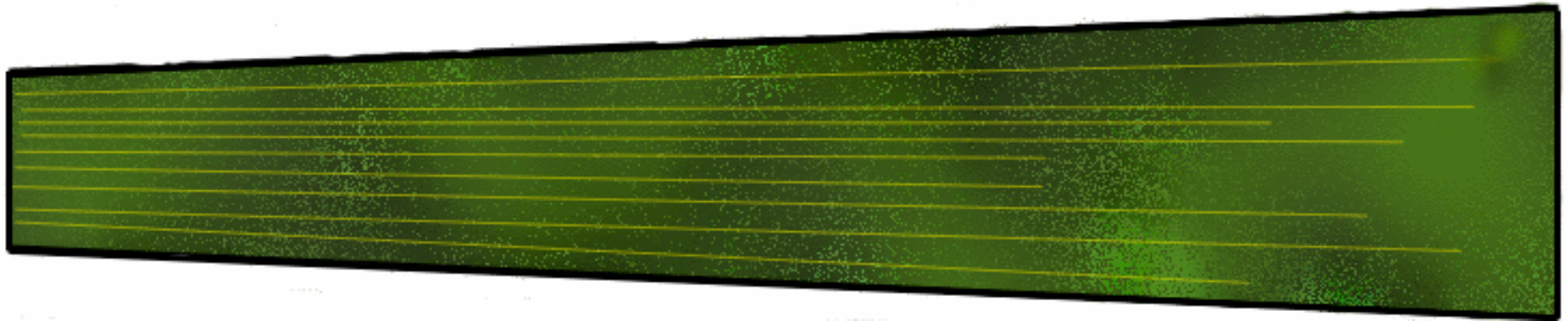
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|---|---------------|---|--------------|---|--------------------|---|-----------------|
|  | Heavy Jungle |  | Kunai Grass |  | Eora Creek |  | Dug in position |
|  | Medium Jungle |  | Open |  | Log Bridge | | |
|  | Light Jungle |  | Kokoda Trail |  | Eora Creek Village | | |

Terrain Notes

- The map is meant to be played on a 48" by 68" area as indicated on the map above (approximately a 4' by 6' table). North is to the top of the map. Note that the picture is not exactly to scale-use the measurements along the side as your guide.
- Eora Creek: Swift running creek varying between knee and chest height with many boulders strewn throughout. At anywhere but the log bridge, it can be crossed by using the following sequence:
 1. Move to the edge of the creek.
 2. Use one movement action to conform to the edge of the creek
 3. Use one action to breach, moving into the creek. Take a bog-down check.
 4. If not bogged down, move out of the creek in the next movement action. If bogged down, the unit must roll until no longer bogged down.
- Log bridge crossing: 1 stand wide crossing, 4" long. Units move at 1/2 speed.
- Dug in Positions: Per rules. Each position can hold 1 stand.
- Eora Creek Village-Soft cover. Two sector built up area.
- Improved positions: Per rules. (Note that in soft cover, they do not give an additional -1 modifier in shooting. However, they do affect the spotting table, so that even when shooting from an I.P. the enemy must be no more than 1" away to spot)
- Lt jungle: Soft cover; dense terrain; troops 3/4 move; tracked vehicles and small guns 1/2 move; wheeled vehicles and other guns 1/2 move with bog down check.
- Medium Jungle: Soft cover; dense terrain; troops 1/2 move; tracked vehicles and small guns 1/2 move with bog down check. No wheeled vehicles or other guns.
- Hvy jungle: Soft cover; dense terrain; troops move 1/2 move with bog down check each movement (i.e. twice if conducting a rapid advance). No vehicles or guns.
- Kunai grass/Thick scrub: no cover; dense terrain; 3/4 move all; level 1 terrain (i.e. cannot be seen over).
- Tracks/Paths: no road bonus, but negate terrain effects. In non-open areas, troops on the trail count as being at the edge of sparse terrain with no cover.

Scenario Specifics and Victory Conditions

- The game lasts 14 turns.
- The Japanese move first.



The Australians can use the optional MG grazing rules for their MMGs per their Operations orders.

Use the template above (print it out and make a copy). To make your own, it is a trapezoid one base wide at the bottom to 2 bases wide at the top and extends 10" in 15mm.

If the template is placed during:

Offensive fire phase: all stands attacked immediately

Defensive fire phase: all stands attacked immediately

Opportunity fire: stands attacked if and when they move, stationary stands attacked during the defensive fire phase.

Beginning of the enemy maneuver phase: stands attacked if and when they move, stationary stands attacked during the defensive fire phase.

- The template can be placed parallel to the front edge, so that the template can be placed anywhere within its front 180 degree field of fire.
- The template can be placed in offensive, defensive, or during opportunity fire against any target that lies within the template. It also may be placed at the beginning of the enemy maneuver phase instead of defensive fire even if no targets are available. Once placed, it remains in place until the end of the current player turn and may not be moved. Note that any designated target must lie within the template.
- The effect of the template does not pass through dense area terrain. It will affect units on the edge of dense area terrain, but not deep or behind it.
- All units, enemy and friendly, which have an aiming point within the template, are attacked with an additional -1 modifier.

Victory

Japanese Automatic Victory

Control the log bridge and the two closest dug-in positions protecting the log bridge.

Control of the bridge is defined as being the last ones to cross, and no undisordered Australians within 2".

Control of a dug-in position consists of being the last to pass through an empty position or having a friendly unit as in the position.

Australian Automatic Victory

The Australians can automatically win if they get 50% of the 16th Btn. Troops across the Eora Creek, exit the wounded via the Kokoda Trail to the east, and keep the Japanese from forcing a crossing of Eora Creek. This is accomplished by controlling the two dug in positions near the bridge, and not allowing the Japanese to have an undisordered stand on the east bank within an inch of the bridge.

Otherwise, refer to the points breakdown below.

0-15	Draw
16-30	Minor Victory
31+	Major Victory

Condition	Victory Points
Wounded stand exits the board	10 pts to the Australians
Wounded stand knocked out	20 pts to the Japanese
Log Bridge held by Japanese	10 pts to the Japanese.
Each Australian stand west of the creek.	2 pts to the Japanese.
Each Enemy stand knocked out.	3 pts
Each Enemy ME 75% casualties or over.	5 pts

Scenario Notes

This scenario is one of the most difficult for the Australians in the campaign to date. They definitely will not be able to stop the Japanese before the creek, in fact they're not supposed to. The decisions made on what to do at the beginning of the game will weigh heavily on the outcome. I will emphasize strongly that it is a withdrawing action, and there is a long ways to go, but they can't forget about that Wounded stand. The results of games played to date are three Japanese automatic wins, one Japanese favored draw, and one Australian favored draw.

I have made one change that is reflected in the scenario submitted vs. how it was played to try to compensate for the apparent Japanese advantage. The area of medium jungle along the center of the southern edge of the board used to have a fairly large area of kunai grass. The kunai grass allowed 3/4 movement, where the medium jungle is at 1/2 movement. My intent for the scenario is that if the flanking Japanese skirt around the medium Jungle and are not delayed by the Australians, they should arrive at the bridge at the same time as the Wounded stand starts to cross. Keep this in mind when laying out the terrain.

I wanted this scenario to reflect what was the majority of the fighting along the Kokoda Trail, lots of small delaying actions. I wanted to reflect the fighting withdrawals that had to take place to allow units that have just passed through the lines enough time to setup new defensive positions. I also wanted to incorporate the ability of the Japanese to show up in force from directions unexpected. Lastly, a major debilitating factor in the Australian withdrawal, were the wounded, so I wanted this to be a factor in the game. By having a slow moving stand to protect, the Australians cannot just make a mad dash to the creek. I think this scenario does capture a small sliver of the desperate feeling they had in their withdrawal along the trail.

The victory conditions for the Australians may not be attainable. Honestly, I think they are, but I have yet been able to accomplish them. It will take some good planning, and a few 10s at critical times would help (or better yet, some bad maneuver rolls for the Japanese). Of course, an ideal scenario would come down to victory points as long as both sides put in place a good plan, execute it, and the die rolls were average. I would encourage players to look at the "big picture" objectives if the victory conditions/points are not working for them. For the Australians, protect and get the wounded across the creek and to safety. Get as much of the 16th Battalion troops across the creek as possible, and hold the crossing. For the Japanese, cut off and destroy the 16th Battalion, force and secure the creek crossing, and demoralize the Diggers by using their wounded for bayonet practice.

Credits: Those Ragged Bloody Heroes - From the Kokoda Trail to Gona Beach 1942 - Peter Brune, 1991.

[Into Hell's Mouth](#)

[The Battle for Australia](#)

Island Fighting - WWII Time Life Books series, 1978.

The Readers Digest Illustrated History of World War II - The World At Arms series, 1989.

Wargaming the New Guinea Campaign, 1942-1945 Part One: The Kokoda Track - Miniature Wargames, issue no. 233, October 2002.

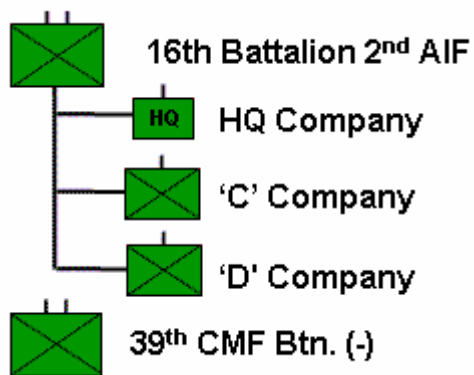
Briefing for Brigadier General Arnold Potts Commanding Maroubra Force

Situation

Enemy forces - Being pursued by at least a battalion sized force with supporting fire.

Friendly forces - 'C' & 'D' companies 16th Battalion, 2nd Australian Imperial Force (AIF), are fighting a delaying action to the east of Eora Creek. Lt. Gerke's platoon of 'B' Company 2/16 is still missing since the 29th. Captain Sublet's command of 'A', and the remainder of, 'B' companies 2/16 are guarding approaches from the north of Eora Creek Village (off board not involved in this scenario). The 39th Battalion (now approximately company strength) is holding positions overlooking the creek. 2/14 is along the trail to the south (off board not involved in this scenario) of the 39th holding the next rise.

Attachments - none.



Friendly forces - 14th Battalion, 2nd Australian Imperial Force (AIF), are holding the main positions, and what is left of the 39th Australian Militia Battalion (approximately 150 men) are holding the rear positions. Remnants of the 39th Australian Militia who escaped the earlier fighting continue to make their way into the position. Casualties are being evacuated by stretcher.

Attachments - none.

Mission

'C' & 'D' companies 2/16 are to delay the enemy long enough to allow the stretcher cases to get across the creek, and to safety behind the 39th Battalion, without getting cut off themselves.

Execution

'C' & 'D' companies will perform a series of fighting withdrawals to the creek crossing to maximize the amount of time the stretcher cases have to get across the creek, and to safety.

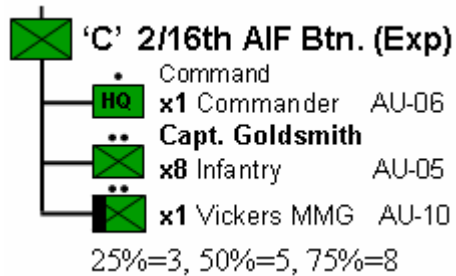
39th Battalion is to cover the crossing from the ridges to the east.

Battalion command & Mortars are located between 'C' & 'D' companies and the creek.

Setup and Scenario Rules

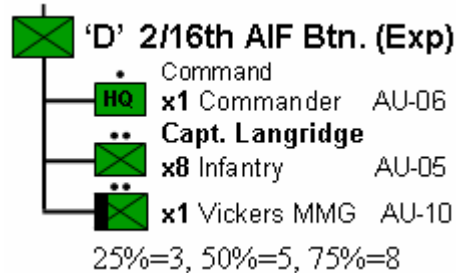
The game lasts 14 turns. The Japanese move first.

See the Scenario Overview for terrain rules and victory conditions.

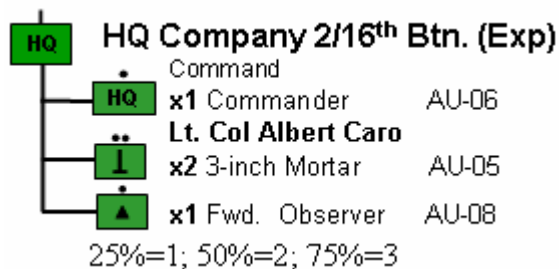


'C' company/16th Battalion starts in improved positions 13 1/2" - 18" in from the West and up to 18" in from the North.

If the MMG is placed in an improved position in such a way as to fire down the trail, it can use the grazing fire template and rules found in the Scenario Overview until it moves.

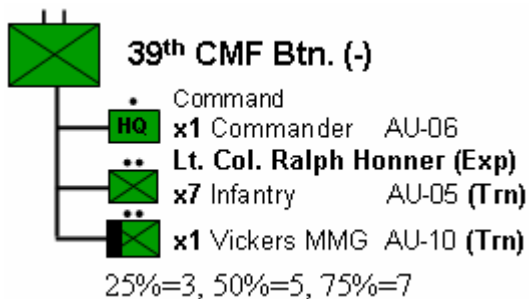


'D' company/16th Battalion has just passed through 'C' company and starts 18" - 24" in from the West and up to 18" in from the North.



Battalion Command and mortars can be any where from 24" - 30" in from the West and up to 18" in from the North.

Mortars must declare if emplaced or not at the beginning of the game.
The FO can start with any unit, but moves with the HQ ME.



The remnants of the 39th Battalion sets up in the dug in positions and Eora Creek village.

39th Battalion stands cannot move until the Japanese cross the creek.

39th Battalion stands may not cross the creek.

The 39th Battalion MMG may use the grazing fire rules found in the Scenario Overview if it is located in an improved or dug-in position.

A stand will have to be provided to represent the wounded and stretcher bearers.


- The wounded stand starts along the Kokoda Trail 28" west of the log bridge.
- The wounded stand moves 2" each movement action, cannot fire, and can only move or regroup.
- The wounded stand cannot initiate Close Combat. It has a CC value of 0 if assaulted.
- The wounded stand does not roll on the Maneuver chart. It either moves for two actions (4"), or if suppressed or disordered, regroups and moves for one action (2").

The mortars have no smoke.


3rd Battalion/41st Regiment Imperial Japanese Army of the South Seas Detachment

Situation

Enemy forces - Broken enemy battalion retreating, elements of which fighting a delaying action.

 **3rd Battalion 41st Regiment
South Seas Detachment (All Exp)**

Friendly forces - Balance of South Seas Detachment are mopping up, and following along the Kokoda Trail.

 **HQ** HQ and Support

Attachments - None.

 **1st Rifle Company**

 **2nd Rifle Company**

 **3rd Rifle Company**

 **4th Rifle Company**

Mission

Continue to pursue broken Australian units, and try to cut them off at Eora Creek.

Execution

1st and 2nd companies along with HQ units are pursuing down the Kokoda Trail, maintaining contact and applying pressure on the enemy to try to force them to deploy.

3rd and 4th companies are moving around the right flank to get to the creek crossing before the Australians and cut them off.

The Battalion Commander is attached to the 1st Rifle Company.

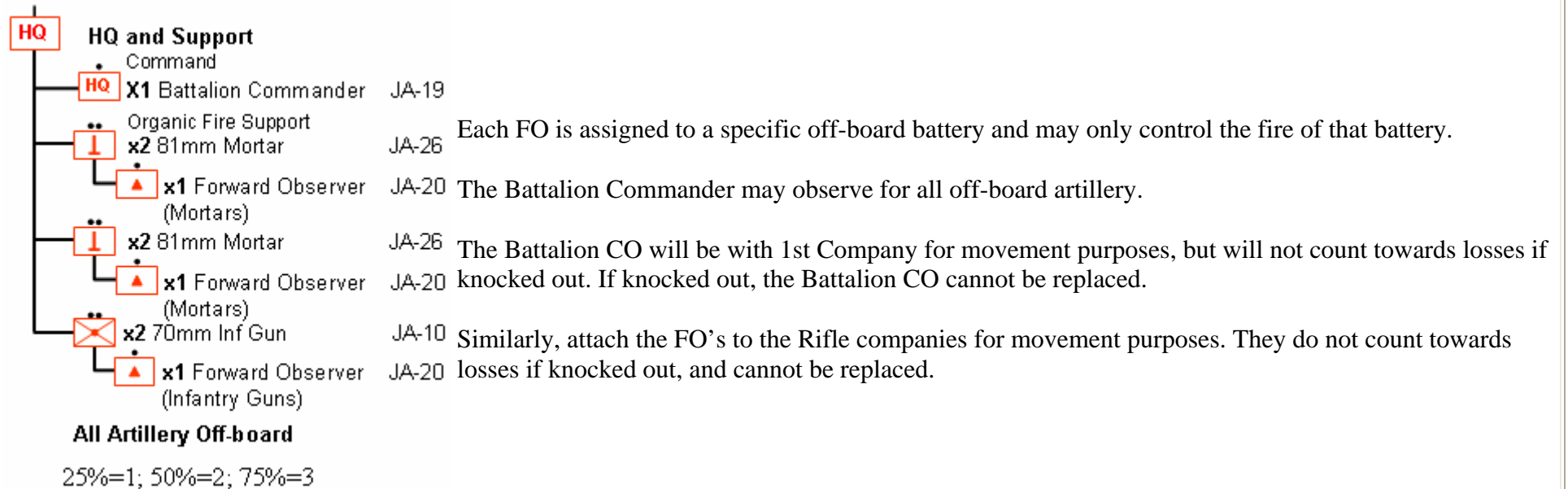
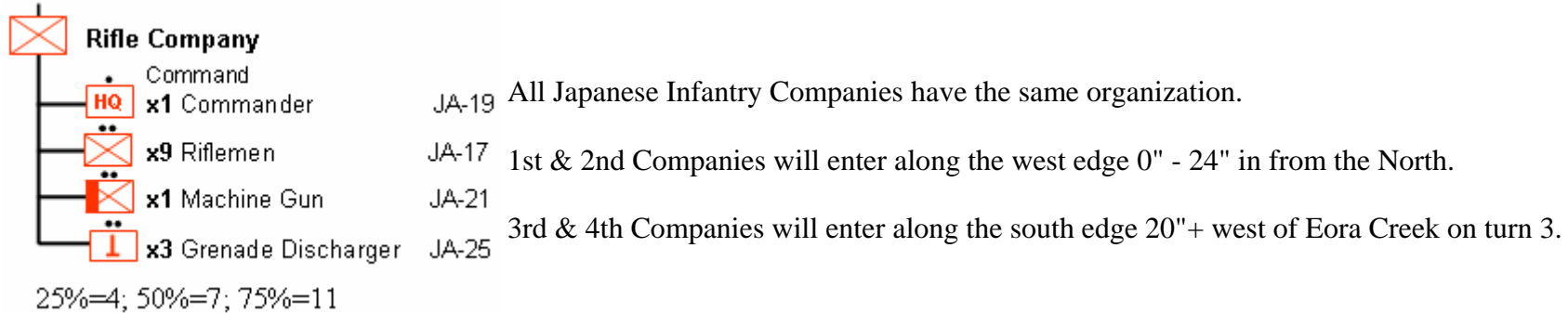
Artillery FO's are attached to the Rifle companies

Setup and Scenario Rules

The game lasts 14 turns. The Japanese move first.

See the Scenario Overview for terrain rules and victory conditions.

See the [Japanese Artillery Tutorial](#) for the knee mortar rules and Japanese call-for-fire table.



Japanese Indirect is all off-board originating from the West edge of the map.

The Japanese have no smoke rounds.