

Scenario Overview -THE KOKODA TRAIL - Eora Creek - on the flip side

For further information leading up to this scenario, see the campaign overview, and the preludes to the nine previous scenarios.

During the advance to Templeton's Crossing, the Australians came across the mutilated remains of Australian soldiers that had been captured. Tied to tree trunks and bayoneted to death, with arms and/or legs chopped off as well as decapitation. Needless to say, this did not endear the Diggers to their enemy, and there were very few prisoners taken on the march back. As they got closer to the Crossing, another gruesome discovery was made. Muscle tissue and flesh rolled in leaves and fried was discovered. The Japanese of the South Seas Detachment had resorted to cannibalism. With no rice left and the village gardens all plundered during the march up, they were literally starving to death. At one camp the flesh was still cooking, and the poor soul that it was taken from was found. The Japanese, some believe were even schooled in how to prepare human flesh. The skin and meat was rolled up along the limbs, fried and wrapped in leaves, some saying it reminded them of sushi.

Other ghastly sights and smells greeted the Australians as they advanced. Bodies and bones lay along the track. Many were from the starving and decaying Japanese forces retreating. Those wounded or diseased too far along to make it, were shot in their stretchers by their comrades. Other skeletal remains pointed to the defense of the withdrawal, where ambushes were conducted, and how intense and close the fighting was. One night the advancing Australians camped atop a hill south of Efogi. The overwhelming smell of death nearly suffocated them. In the morning they realized they were atop Brigade Hill, where one of the larger battles took place. Again, skeletons told the story of the battle. None of the dead were disturbed. They remained at their positions with bony fingers on rusty triggers, still with their packs and kit on.

On the 12th of October the 2/33rd battalion encountered the first positions held by the Japanese. These were dug in positions, fortified by logs only a grenade through the narrow slit would take these out. They were supported by narrow slit trenches. The fighting lasted for three days before the 2/25th finally broke through. The Japanese positions were protected by supporting fires, and the Australians had to attack up such steep slopes, that at times they had to crawl up them, using vines or roots as ropes to keep from sliding down. It was nasty and hard fighting. Once one position was taken, another one a little further up the hill would open up, or hidden Japanese would burst out at close range.

Even after these positions were taken, and the Japanese withdrew, only a few hundred meters further up the track, more Japanese positions waited. It wasn't until the 20th of October did the Australians break through. The 25th Brigade, who had been doing the fighting up until the 18th, were in bad shape. They had suffered 68 killed, 135 wounded, and, a testament to the horrific conditions of the terrain/climate, 771 seriously ill.

The 16th Brigade relieved the 25th, and started the advance on Eora Creek. The 16th Brigade had the benefit of actually having some jungle training at Ceylon before being sent to New Guinea. As they came down into the Eora Creek valley, it was as if they had entered some type of foreign world. The jungle canopy was so thick that sunlight didn't shine through. It was so damp, and dark it seemed as if the place were under water. They encountered more of the bones and corpses of prior fights, and many of the arriving Australians gathered on an open area above the creek crossings. There they were bombarded and machine gunned by the Japanese waiting on the ridges opposite them and overlooking the crossing. The Aussies struggled back up the slippery slope and made their plans to assault the Japanese positions, after taking a number of casualties.

Horii's forces had been receiving reinforcements at Eora Creek during the fighting at Templeton's Crossing. Their positions were strengthened, some


supplies had made it up, and the long lines of wounded had started making their way back to the beaches. Here, the Japanese had a strong defensive position. Here the Australians would suffer more casualties than anywhere, other than Isurava, along the Kokoda Trail.


Referee's Notes


It is recommended that neither side be allowed to read the other's operation orders before the game. There are some special surprises for both sides.


Scenario Map





 Dug in position

 Log bridge

 Contour Level

 Kokoda Trail

 Light Jungle

 Kunai Grass

 Open

 Creek

← N

NOTE:NORTH IS TO THE LEFT

Terrain Notes

The map is meant to be played on a 72" by 48" area as indicated on the map above(6' by 4' table). Each division on the side of the map represents 12"

- Precipice: The Eora creek runs along a valley that is bordered by hills rising to the East and West (top and bottom of the map). The N and NW area (bottom left of the map) is a plateau at the top of a very steep hill called the precipice which is designated by the 4 close-together contour lines at the left of the map that runs EW. Units conformed to the edge of the precipice can see out over lower terrain and the valley floor. Units can see enemy in see all open areas with a +1 modifier, and can also see units climbing the precipice itself, even if they are in jungle. Movement is allowed on the precipice at 1/4 movement up on its face and 1/2 movement on the trail.
- Darkness: The battle starts in the early morning hours. Apply a -2 spotting modifier for turns 1 through 3 and a -1 spotting modifier for turns 4 and 5. On turns 6 and thereafter, spotting is normal.
- Dug in Positions: Per rules.
- Improved positions: Per rules. (Note that in soft cover, they do not give an additional -1 modifier in shooting. They do affect the spotting table however, so that even when shooting the enemy must be no more than 1" away to spot). Note that if the Japanese move, even if when hidden, they lose the improved position.
- Jungle: Soft cover; dense terrain; troops 3/4 move; small guns 1/2 move with bog down check.
- Tracks/Paths: no road bonus, but negate terrain effects. Troops on the trail count as being in sparse/edge (unless in open), no cover.
- Creek: Swift running creek. Crossing at logs -2" movement. Otherwise, 1 action to align, 2 actions to breach with bog down check each action, and 1 action to exit and be on other side (i.e. no movement afterwards)
- Stream: 1 action to align. 1 action to breach and end up on the other side.
- Open Hill: This is the hill in the Australian deployment area. Can see the precipice and all open areas edges along opposite side of creek.
- Kunai grass: no cover; dense terrain; 3/4 move all; level 1 terrain (i.e. cannot be seen over).

Scenario Specifics and Victory Conditions

- North is the LEFT of the Map.
- The game lasts 14 turns.
- Japanese deploy first according to their operation orders.
- Australians deploy second and move first.



The Japanese can use the MG grazing rules for their MGs set up in improved or dug in positions. Note that this rule cannot be used by MGs firing through dense terrain. Once an MG moves, it loses this ability.

Use the template to the left (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 win if they occupy all five of the rear dug in positions (blue circle) at the end of the game.

It is a minor victory if the Japanese occupy any of the positions at the end of the game, and caused a 3:2 or greater ratio of knocked out Aussie stands to Japanese stands.

The Japanese lose if all five of the rear dug in positions are unoccupied at the end of the game (even if on the last game of the turn and they roll a panic result).

Scenario Notes

Scenario Notes: This scenario represents actions that took place over a week as the Australians tried to pry the Japanese from their positions at Eora Creek. This was done to provide action for both sides, and to allow for more players at the convention, and allow them to be involved in the game vs. sitting around as reserves or in defensive positions.

The thing that I liked about this scenario is all of the "surprises". The Aussies' flank march, their likelihood of becoming "lost", and their possible problems with their mortars. The Japanese ability to rain in death from the precipice with some guns, the possibility they'll be caught sleeping, or the possibility they'll be caught eating.

The movement through the jungle should be much harsher based on the historical information, but it really slows the game down, and as it is, it's very difficult for the Aussies to accomplish their objective of driving the Japanese out of those last defenses. I have added an additional two turns to the scenario, because the Aussies did not come close in either test play or at the convention game.

Credits:

Kokoda - Paul Ham, 2004

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

A Bastard of a Place - The Australians in Papua - Peter Brune, 2003

[- Australian War Memorial site.](#)

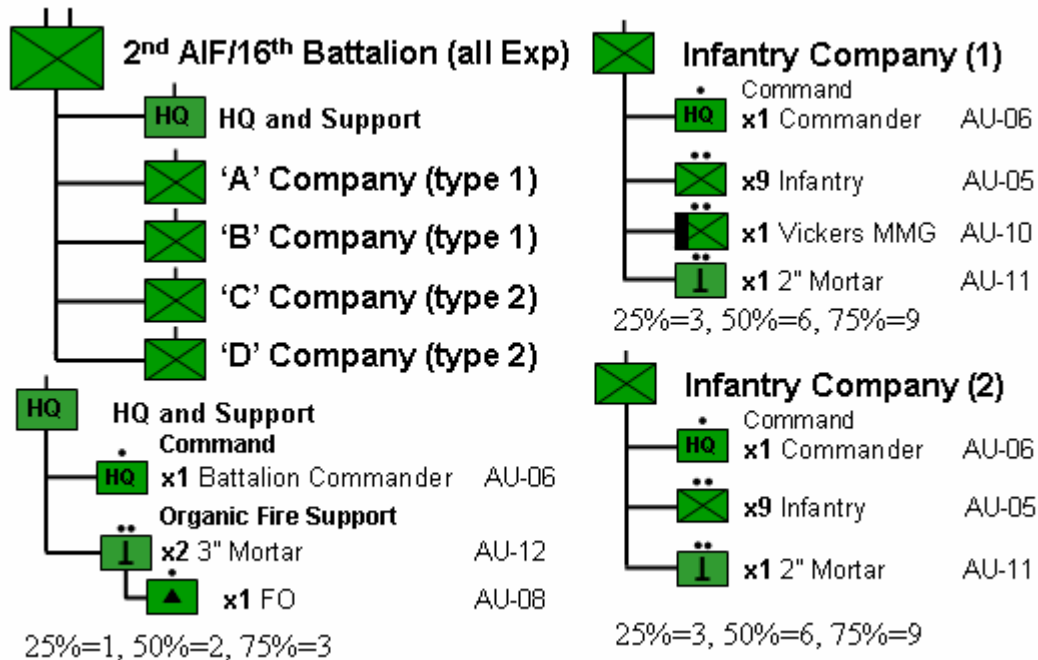
[- Oral Histories collected from Kokoda Veterans](#)

Briefing for Commander 2/16 Battalion/2 AIF

Situation

Enemy forces - At least one, possibly two battalions with support weapons. Worn and weary, but as was seen at Templeton's Crossing, still capable to put up significant resistance.

Friendly forces - Balance of 16th Brigade coming up the Trail



Attachments - none.

Mission

Drive the enemy from the crossing, and secure the precipice opening up the Trail.

Execution

'A' and 'B' Companies will attack across the ford, and drive up the Trail to assault the Precipice.

'C' and 'D' Companies will cross the creek upstream and move west to the ridgeline. They will move through the jungle to outflank the positions on the precipice.



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|---|---|---|--|
|  Dug in position |  Log bridge |  Contour Level |  Kokoda Trail |
|  Light Jungle |  Kunai Grass |  Open |  Creek |

← N

NOTE:NORTH IS AT THE LEFT OF THE MAP

Administration & logistics

Not relevant in game terms.

Command and signal

Not relevant in game terms.

Setup and Scenario Rules

The game lasts 14 turns. The Australians setup second and move first.

See the [Scenario Overview](#) for terrain rules.

Company 'A' will deploy in the orange area. Battalion 3" mortars will also deploy in this area. Company 'B' can deploy along the Trail and up the hill up to the white dotted line.

Company 'C' and 'D' will move on the first turn out of the north edge of the kunai grass on the west end of the board. The companies will exit by platoon (i.e. three abreast can cover a 5" frontage.). So, the first three stands can move up to 6". The next three will be behind them (spacing front to back is up to the player), etc.

The Australians ('C' & 'D' Companies) performing the flank attack became scattered and lost during this engagement. To represent this, on turn 3 movement will be by scatter die for each platoon and CO's. Roll a scatter die for direction, and a d10 for distance. That is where the platoon or CO is actually at. They will be facing the direction of the scatter die. They must stop 1" from any Japanese, if they should end by a Japanese stand. Units that move off the board are lost.

As the Australians made it up the mountain range, they were supplied by air drops at Myola. During this process, mortar rounds were prematurely primed and had a tendency to explode in the tubes. To represent this, whenever a mortar fires IDF, and an unmodified 1 is rolled on the damage roll, the shell explodes in the tube. Instead of resolving an attack against the intended target, an unmodified +2 IDF attack is rolled against the firing mortar unit. If firing as a battery, randomly choose one of the two firing mortar units to be the subject of this attack. If the mortar unit survives, it can continue to function on subsequent turns.

Victory Conditions

Japanese win if they occupy all five of the rear dug in positions at the end of the game.

It is a minor victory for the Japanese if the Japanese occupy any of the positions at the end of the game, and caused a 3:2 or greater ratio of knocked out Aussie stands to Japanese stands.

The Japanese lose if all five of the rear dug in positions are unoccupied at the end of the game (even if on the last game of the turn and they roll a panic result).

Elements 1st Battalion/144th Regiment & 3rd Company/2nd Battalion/41st Regiment

Situation

Enemy forces - At least a 3 battalions, but probably only able to throw 1 battalion at a time.

Friendly forces - Elements of 1/144 & 3rd Company/2/41

Attachments - (1) Battalion mortar battery. (1) Section 75mm Mtn. guns from 155 Mtn. Btn.

Mission

Hold the trail and deny the enemy its use.

Execution

Elements of 1/144 will defend near the creek and its log crossings. 3/2/41 will setup defensive positions on precipice.

Administration & Logistics

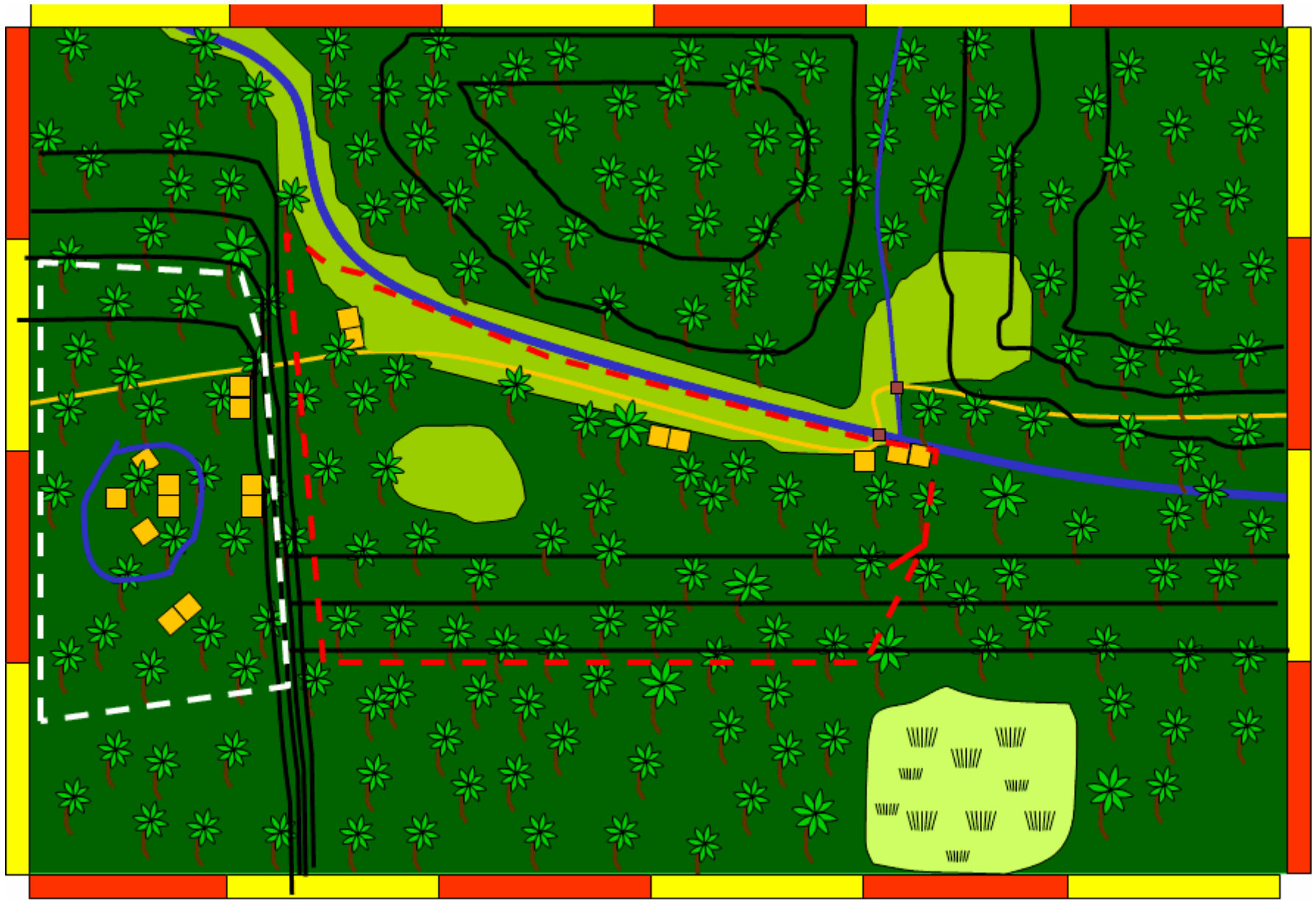
Not relevant in game terms.

Command & Signal

Not relevant in game terms.

Setup and Scenario Rules

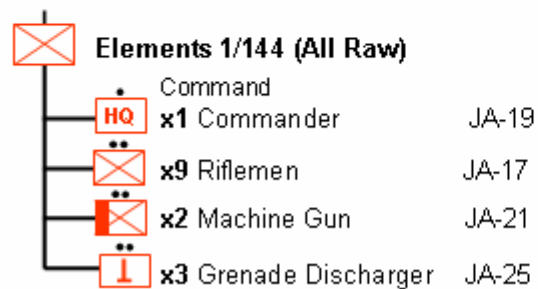
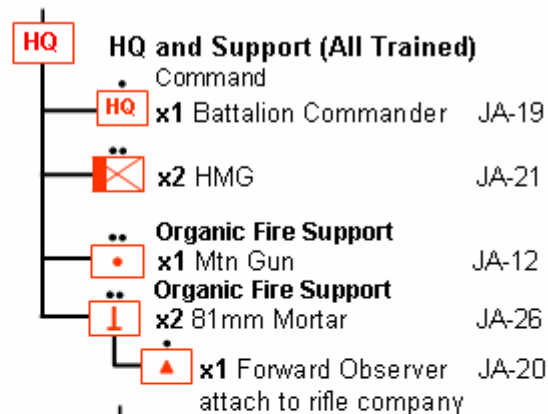
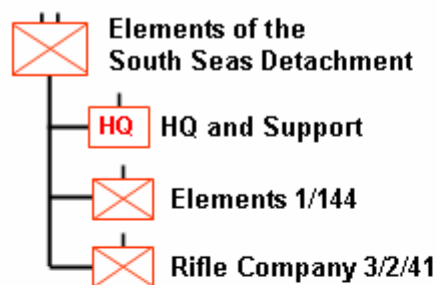
North is to the Left of the Map.
The game lasts 14 turns. The Australians move first.
See the Scenario Overview for terrain rules
See the Japanese Artillery Tutorial for the knee mortar rules and Japanese call-for-fire table.



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|---|---|---|--|
|  Dug in position |  Log bridge |  Contour Level |  Kokoda Trail |
|  Light Jungle |  Kunai Grass |  Open |  Creek |

← N

NOTE:SOUTH IS AT THE LEFT OF THE MAP



25%=4; 50%=8; 75%=12



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

1/144 sets up in the area designated by the red dotted line. At least one Japanese MG must be in a dug in position by the log crossing and placed on the board at the beginning of play.

4 stands are to be deployed in the circle clearing in their deployment area. These stands must be facing inboard in a circle/square and represent troops preparing a meal. They cannot move until they are directly attacked or there are Aussies in the 2/41 area and shooting takes place.

The rest of the unit should be deployed using hidden markers or per map deployment. Note the center dug in position by the log crossings should be within 5" of the furthest crossing and within 2" of the closest one.

3rd Co 2/41 deploys in the area designated by the white dotted line using hidden deployment, and should also be deployed using hidden markers or per map deployment. Note once shooting starts at the crossing that units (Mountain Gun/MGs/Mortars) deployed at the edge of the precipice can fire at units crossing Eora Creek as suspected targets even if their ME cannot see them. This is to represent that their guns were trained on this crossing.

Any unit (1/144 or 2/41) that does not start in a dug in position, may be in a improved position, which can be placed on the board when the unit is. If the unit moves, even if initially hidden, it loses the improved position.

Unless the Australians shoot, Japanese only have a 30% chance of noticing crossing the first turn the Aussies start to cross the log bridges. They have a 50% chance the 2nd turn the Aussies are crossing. This is to represent the effects of darkness, and the possibility that the Japanese are literally sleeping.

Mortars are on board in organic support, no smoke.

Victory

Japanese win if they occupy all five of the rear dug in positions (blue circle) at the end of the game.

It is a minor victory if the Japanese occupy any of the positions at the end of the game, and caused a 3:2 or greater ratio of knocked out Aussie stands to Japanese stands.

The Japanese lose if all five of the rear dug in positions are unoccupied at the end of the game (even if on the last game of the turn and they roll a panic result).