

### **Only the Enemy in Front (every other b\*gger behind)**

Rece units are generally not a good wargaming subject. They tend to be relatively small and lightly armed, with a limited life expectancy in most games. This is a shame because they play such a vital role in setting the scene for the big hitters in their tanks and other neat toys, and I like all those armoured cars and motorbikes.

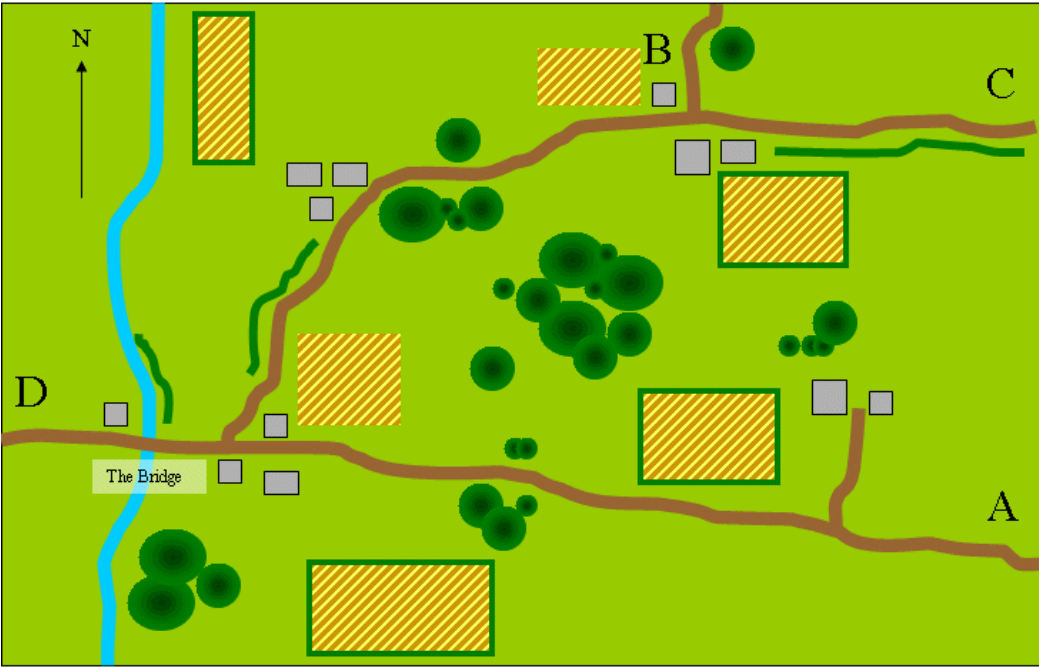
This is a generic scenario rather than a strictly historical one, although it is based loosely on an historical incident (A bit like a Hollywood WW2 film). The scenario is designed to allow players to get those Rece units they bought because the armoured cars and motorcycles looked cute, but have been resting in a box since.

The setting is up to the players and their available models. It can be France 1940, with the Germans harrying the French or BEF, or Russia in 41-2, or the Germans defending against the Red Army in 44-5, the Great Swan through France and Belgium of 44 after the collapse of the Falaise Pocket, or US troops falling back in the snow of the Ardennes. The actual choice is up to the players and their available troops.

The game is designed for 3 players, if only 2 then merge the two defending commands. If you have more than 3 give any extra players attacking M Es. Each defender has his own victory conditions.

**Game length** – 10 turns. It is assumed that if neither side has achieved their victory conditions by the end of turn 10 follow up forces arrive and a major engagement takes place outside the scope of the scenario. If automatic victory does not occur by turn 10, the game is officially a draw although counting VPs per the rules will give an idea who "won" the draw.

# Only the Enemy in Front



- Road
- River
- Crops with hedge
- Crops
- Built Up
- Light woods
- Hedgerow (not bocage)

## **DEFENDER 1**

Yesterday was a bad day, one of many recently. Your battalion was heavily engaged all day, but you held on despite heavy casualties. Unfortunately the enemy broke through further down the line. News reached you that the front was collapsing and your position became untenable. The only chance you have to save the remnants of your Battalion is to withdraw behind the river and reorganise.

You have withdrawn covered by nightfall, and reorganised your battered troops on the march. Much of the heavy equipment has had to be discarded, along with most of your transports due to a combination of lack of fuel and blocked roads. Ahead is the last bridge to safety. If you can cross you will be able to gain a breathing space.

Then a message reaches you – unknown vehicles are moving down a parallel road – it may be you will have to fight for that bridge.

### **Forces**

Depleted Infantry Battalion (Exp)

Battalion Command

1 x Commander (transported in Jeep\ Kubel or similar as appropriate)

2 x Infantry stands – HQ staff in light truck.

assets available as attachments

3 heavy weapons (MG\Mortar\ATR) teams or 1 towed gun transported in a medium truck taken from your available battalion assets.

You also have 3 truckloads of wounded that must be taken to safety. These are treated as attachment and can be attached out in whole or part to ME s.

2 Infantry Companies (on foot).

Deploy on road at “A” in march column, all units in base to base contact, lead unit no closer than 24” to bridge. Due to the exhausted state of the troops they can not claim the “no loss” modifier on the manoeuvre table. Those armies with Bazookas \ Panzerfausts etc will have used or lost many of them during the preceding day, so no more than 2 stands per Company can have them.

### **Victory Conditions**

Major Victory - Retire both companies plus wounded in good order over the bridge

Moral Victory – Save the wounded

## **DEFENDER 2**

Not a step backwards!

The front is collapsing. You command a small traffic control point over an important river crossing. Headquarters have ordered you to hold the bridge secure. They have dispatched a platoon of engineers to demolish the bridge to deny it to the enemy. Until they arrive you must try and organise a scratch defence from your own forces and any other stragglers you can rally. Whatever happens the bridge must not fall into enemy hands intact.

### **Forces**

Security Unit (Trn)

1 x Commander

1 x HMG

1 x SMG (or rifle squad as appropriate, in any case armed with a suitable AT weapon – Bazooka, Pfaust, PIAT, ATR)

The HMG and Commander may be entrenched in an improved position.

Deploy on the “hostile” river-bank no more than 10 inches from the bridge.

Engineer Platoon (Vet)

1 x Commander

3 x Engineers (no F\T)

Transported in 2 trucks

The Engineers become available on turn 3, randomly dice for entry point using points A-D. Use [Paul Bernardino's Engineering rules](#) to prep and blow the bridge. The bridge requires 2 engineering actions to prepare, after which a demolition action can attempt to destroy it. If the demolition action is unsuccessful, it will take only one engineering action to prepare for a subsequent attempt (the charges are in place).

### **Victory Conditions**

Major Victory - Deny the bridge to the enemy while keeping it intact.

Victory – Destroy the bridge to prevent it falling into enemy hands.

## **ATTACKER**

This is more like it! After what seems like an age of inaction you have finally broken through and the enemy is in retreat. You command a light recce unit that has been shadowing a column of enemy troops on a parallel road all morning. HQ has notified you that all bridges over the river ahead are down, so it should simply be a case of keeping the enemy under observation until they reach the river, then pointing out the hopelessness of their situation and accepting their surrender.

Or at least that was the plan, until you noticed from the roof of your command car, that the bridge is still up! An intact bridge is vital to continuing the advance. You quickly call the rest of your units, explain the situation and order them to rendezvous at the bridge as soon as possible.

### **Forces (all VET)**

Light Recce Unit \ Squadron (use the appropriate organisation – for example a UK Armoured Car Recce Sq or Recce Squadron, US Armoured Cavalry Squadron). Initially only one ME is deployed on table, on the road at point “C”. Any attachments should be allocated before the game begins and may not be allocated to the initial on table ME.

### **Reinforcements**

The remains of the Recce unit become available from turn 3 (see Balance). Dice for each ME – D6 result of 6 is a success, + 1 to arrival roll if overall HQ is attached. On turns 3-5 randomly dice for entry point using roads A-C. From turn 6 include road D

### **Air Support.....or something like that**

The only universal thing you see on recce vehicles are BIG air recognition symbols. These seem to have little effect beyond attracting friendly fire (even today). On turns 4, 5 and 8 a pair of attacking aircraft over-fly the table and perform a +2 straf attack against the first visible target of either side – dice for entry and exit points by splitting the two long table edges into 6 and rolling a D6 for each, the aircraft will fly a path between these two points until they see a target. The attacker (Recce player) has a 50\50 chance of waving them off in the AA phase of the turn, or of course you could just shoot at them. These aircraft will not make a second pass if driven off – they are low on fuel and ammo and are simply strafing targets of opportunity on their way home. (Flyboys, don'tcha just love em?) Determine the most visible target by taking the normal spotting distance and deducting the distance from the entry point to each possible target.

Major Victory – Seize the bridge intact and destroy the enemy forces.

Minor Victory – destroy the retreating infantry battalion OR seize and hold the bridge until turn 10.

## **Other stuff**

### **Balance**

The scenario works best with the attacker having small, motivated and mobile units, so some care needs to be taken when deciding what to use. Good choices would be USME11 Armoured Cav Troop deployed as platoons, BRBG12 Recce Squadron, again deployed by troops, RME 22 Motorcycle Recce Company or GEBRB04. Some units will inevitably unbalance the scenario. The first that comes to mind is the UK Div Armoured Recce Squadron, (BRME01) with its horde of Cromwell. I would strongly recommend not using them. If you do, then deploy the Squadron by Troop sized M Es. The other problem unit is the German Armoured Recce Companies GE9 & 22. The standard armoured infantry ME is a bit overpowering. In this case I would suggest the following options:

- Only allow one “Company” sized ME be available, either as the initial on table force or as reinforcements, and prune the higher attachments appropriately.
- Increase the transport capacity of Sdkfz 251\1 to 3T, reducing the number of 251\1s in the company to 3 appropriately.

(a similar approach could be taken with the Soviet Armoured Infantry Company). I would also recommend in late war games that the frontal armour on the 251s be reduced to 1 to reflect the change in operational use.

If you are playing the Ardennes in 1944 and have an umpire, here's a comedy option. Tell both defending players that there may be enemy infiltrators in the area disguised as Americans. When the US Defender no1 gets 5” from the traffic control point, the umpire should ask the US Defender 2 player a sports question – “who won the World Series \ FA Cup” (or whatever is appropriate to your player's nationality) – if they answer incorrectly, or fail to answer within 5 seconds, they MUST fire on each other during the offensive fire phase. Repeat the process each turn until they get it right or you become bored.

## **Terrain**

The terrain is somewhat flexible and depends pretty much on what you have available, however the following should be borne in mind. There should be some sort of cover or blocking terrain between the two main East – West roads, otherwise the defender will be mown down quickly. I would strongly advise not to have terrain that slows down infantry too much - ie no deep snow, as in playtest this totally crippled the defender.

The nominal map size is 5' x 8', but you can modify this to fit your playing area.

In the end, enjoy

KLN