

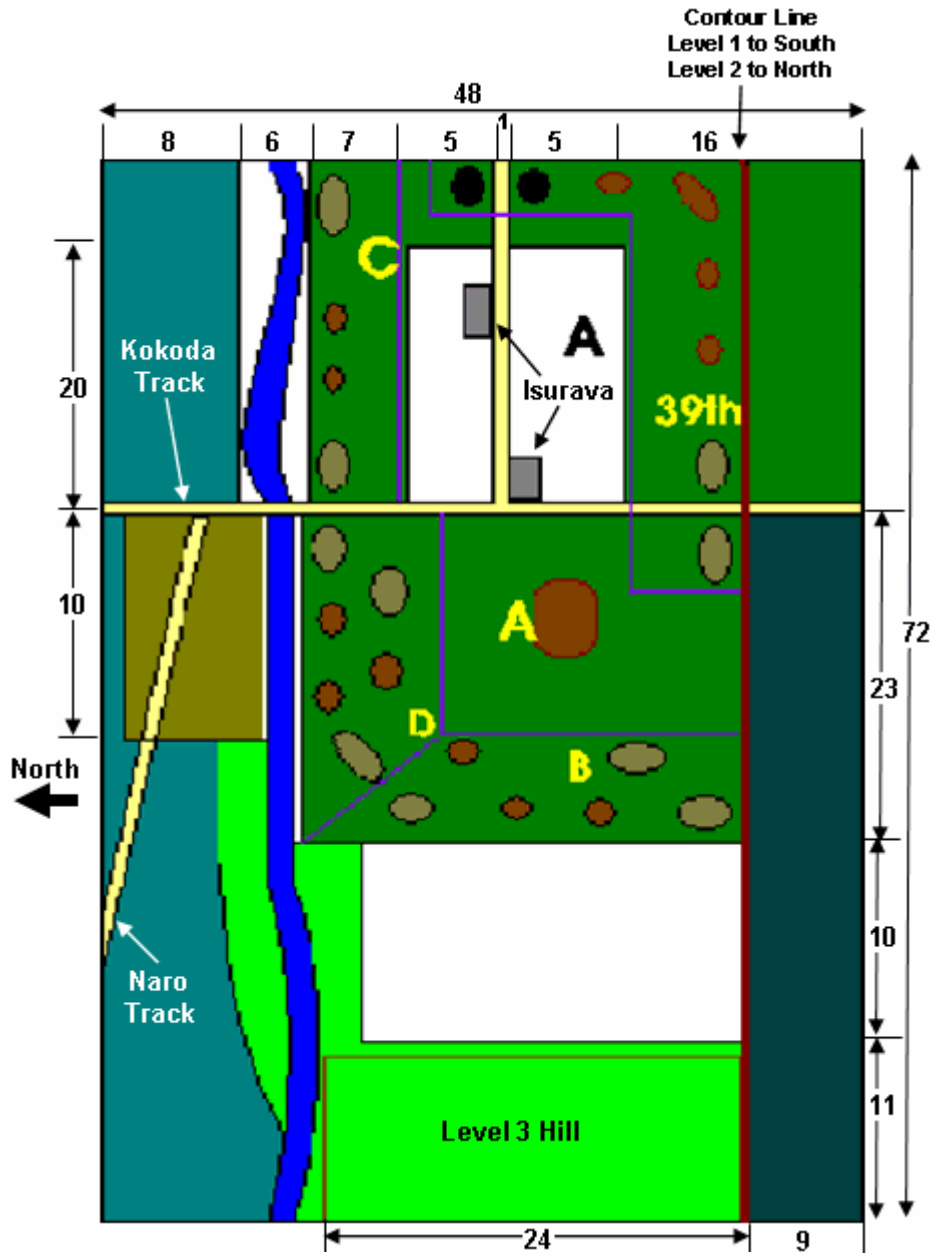
Scenario Overview -THE KOKODA TRAIL - Australia's Thermopylae








The Japanese on the second day of the battle for Isurava, 27th of August, unleashed the strongest attacks of the campaign to date (See The Kokoda Trail - 300 Australians). After a short attack against the men of 'C' Company 2nd AIF/14th Battalion, the attack picked up along the line with the Japanese pushing into the overgrown garden and cutting off the patrols of the Australians. Then they overran Capt. Merritt's 'E' Company, of the 39th Battalion, holding a position with little visibility. The balance of the Battalion's reserves quickly repulsed this break in. Along the west, out of the thick brush and elevated terrain came the heaviest of the attacks. Beating down on Lt. French's 'B' Company 39th CMF. They held gallantly, but it was just a matter of time before the Japanese numbers would be too much for them. 'B' Company 14th Battalion led by Captain Nye had arrived, but was under orders to cut through the jungle south of French's position, and head to the village of Naro. Lt. Col. Honner knew that Lt. French couldn't hold, and there was nothing behind him, but the Battalion HQ. He dispatched a runner to find Capt. Nye, and request that he come to their aide. As it was 'B' Company 14th Battalion had hardly made it off the track after a half day of hacking at the thick jungle, and was able to pull out, and head up the Kokoda Trail to arrive just in time to throw back the final Japanese assaults of the day.

Surviving the onslaught of the Japanese on the second day, the 39th Battalion was finally relieved with the arrival of the balance of the 14th Battalion. Though officially relieved, Lt. Col. Honner requested permission to keep the 39th at Isurava, knowing that the Japanese still greatly outnumbered the Australians. The 39th Battalion (the 150 men that were left) took up positions guarding the southern and eastern perimeters. The positions on the east are atop a steep, wooded ridgeline. The 39th's positions were not likely to be attacked, but it allowed 'A' Company 14th Battalion to move up and serve as a reserve for the front line units.

There was finally some strength to the Australian positions, and the Japanese paid a heavy price with their relentless frontal attacks on the 28th of August, the 3rd day of the battle at Isurava. Though the Australian line bent, it never broke, and with timely counter attacks by 'A' Company they were able to regain their perimeter by the end of the day.

After 3 days of heavy fighting at Isurava, the Japanese of General Horii's South Seas Detachment are significantly behind their time table of crossing the Owen Stanley range, and taking Port Moresby. Starting out with only 11 days of rations, the Japanese have suffered excessive losses in casualties, and supplies. Even so, they still have a significant advantage in numbers and heavy weaponry, and expect to replenish on the supplies of the defeated Australians once they take the position. The fourth day of battle, the 29th of August, finds the full Japanese force, less one battalion, aligned for another push on the defenders of Isurava.



- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
|  | Single Stand Entrenchment |  | Overgrown Garden |
|  | Double Stand Entrenchment |  | Front Creek |
|  | Dug In Position |  | Trail |
|  | Thick Brush |  | Contour |
|  | Light Jungle |  | Improved Position |
|  | Jungle |  | Open Ground |
|  | Heavy Jungle | | |

Terrain Notes

- The map is meant to be played on a 48" by 72" area as indicated on the map above (4' by 6' table). North is to the left of the map. Note that the picture is not exactly to scale-use the measurements along the side as your guide.
- Front Creek: Shallow streams. Troops 1/2 speed.
- Overgrown garden: Sparse terrain; no cover.
- Entrenchments: Per rules. -2 vs DF, -1 vs IDF
- Improved position: Breach to cross into/assault. Can hold up to six stands. -1 vs DF, 0 vs IDF
- Isurava: BUAs offer Soft cover, dense terrain. These can be two or three sector BUAs.
- 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.
- 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. Troops on the trail count as being in sparse/edge, no cover.
- Hill: Continuous slope, no dead zone. Those uphill receive spotting bonus.

Scenario Specifics and Victory Conditions

- The game lasts 14 turns.
- The Japanese move first.
- The outer entrenchments are known positions, and therefore indirect fire can be directed against them as suspected targets instead of using random shelling.



The Australians can use the optional MG grazing rules for their MMGs setup in defensive positions.

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 Conditions

Victory is evaluated at the end of the game. If either side achieves their automatic victory conditions, they will automatically win a decisive victory, otherwise, victory is evaluated by determining positional objectives and casualties for both sides and comparing them.

Automatic Victory

The Japanese achieve automatic victory if at the end of the game:

- On the west side of the trail they take and hold:
 1. two adjacent inner entrenchments in deployment areas B and/or D
 2. the three outer entrenchments leading up to the two inner entrenchments taken in condition 1
 3. the large improved position
 4. both of the entrenchments straddling the Kokoda Trail exit off the south edge.

This represents a large break in the defensive position, and the cutoff of the most orderly escape route.

- **OR** On the East side of the trail they take and hold:
 1. two of the entrenchments in deployment area C
 2. both BUA of Isurava
 3. both of the entrenchments straddling the Kokoda Trail exit off the south edge.

This also represents a large break in the defensive position, and the cutoff of the most orderly escape route.

The Australians achieve an automatic victory if they:

1. hold three of the inner entrenchments in deployment areas B and D.
2. one of the BUA of Isurava
3. both of the entrenchments straddling the Kokoda Trail exit off the south edge

If neither side can claim an automatic Victory, count the victory points achieved by both sides and then subtract the lower total from the higher. The side with the higher total may achieve a victory according to the chart below

Differential Victory Level

0-35	Draw
36-74	Minor Victory
75+	Major Victory

Victory Points:

Victory points for positions are awarded to the side which last occupied them. The Australians are

considered to have last occupied all positions at the beginning of the game. If units from both sides occupy a position, neither receives points for it.

Objective

Outer Entrenchments

Inner Entrenchments

Final Southern Entrenchments

Improved Position in the center in support of B & D companies

Isurava BUA

Australian stand knocked out

Japanese stand knocked out

Per Japanese Company below 50%

Victory Points

5 pts each

10pts each

30pts each

5 pts

10 pts each

5 pts to the Japanese

3 pts to the Australian

5 pts to the Australian

At the end of the game, calculate the victory points for each side and subtract the lower total from the higher. If not a draw, the side with the higher total is the winner.

Scenario Notes-Steven Lee

Scenario Notes: The first thing you will notice when looking at the OOB is that there are 5 Japanese battalions. I don't personally have 5 battalions, and in reality 5 battalions will most likely not be needed. I only had enough figures to put out the initial companies at deployment. During the fighting once a company lost over 50% casualties, I would bring on the "dead" figures as a new "company" of the same or following battalion. The remaining figures in the forward position being considered part of the new company coming on, casualties now counting toward the new company. Another approach could be to have casualties from the forward position join the oncoming "new" company until it reaches the forward positions.

Obviously, if you have enough toys to bring on full companies, the more the merrier. A replacement company's starting positions will reflect the success of the company they are replacing. For example, if the 1st Company/1st Battalion/41st Regiment (leading the column that starts along the Naro track in the overgrown garden) exceeds 50% after it has cleared the outer and inner entrenchments, its follow-on company (3rd Company/1st Battalion/41st Regiment) would then start at the outer entrenchments (several inches behind the front line) as opposed to the original column starting position back at the Naro track.

As is typical in my games, I did not run separate ME s for the Japanese battalion HQs. Instead I attached the FO s and Battalion commanders to rifle companies, and would use that ME's die roll. Neither a FO nor a Battalion commander would count towards a rifle company's losses if knocked out. Since I had 5 Japanese players, I had each one run a battalion with a one company wide frontage, vs. the setup in the scenario as presented.

If possible, either by map or some other means, the Australians should start the game without their troops deployed. This is to keep the Japanese honest, so they don't see where any potential weak spots may be at the start of the game. Once the Japanese reach the outer entrenchments, and start breaking through, the Aussies should start deploying units nearby, whether they can be seen or not, to keep the pace of the game moving. For the same reason, if any Aussies move, no matter where on the board, go ahead and deploy them.

The entrenchments don't have to be single/double element ones as shown on the map, obviously use what you have available. I would suggest having the stand capacity of the entrenchments in each deployment area the same as shown on the map, as that is what the scenario was tested with. Note that the inner entrenchments should be no more than 3" behind the outer ones, so they provide supporting fire to the rear of the outer entrenchments (1" enemy stand width; 2" moving enemy in dense terrain).

In the test game, the Japanese actually made it all the way through, and took one of the southern entrenchments as time ran out. The con game didn't quite get that far. In fact it was the first con game I've run that didn't complete all of the turns. There were a lot of new players, but I think the biggest lesson learned was that when the game gets up to the 6+ player size, a second GM is needed (at least I need some help, unless everyone is a Battlefront vet).

The scenario is tough on the Japanese to start, but with each Japanese player having multiple companies as reserves, they don't have to worry about the heavy initial casualties taking them out of the game. The Australians have to be a bit more careful, and determine when is a good time to send up reinforcements to keep the outer entrenchments, and when is a good time to fall back.

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.

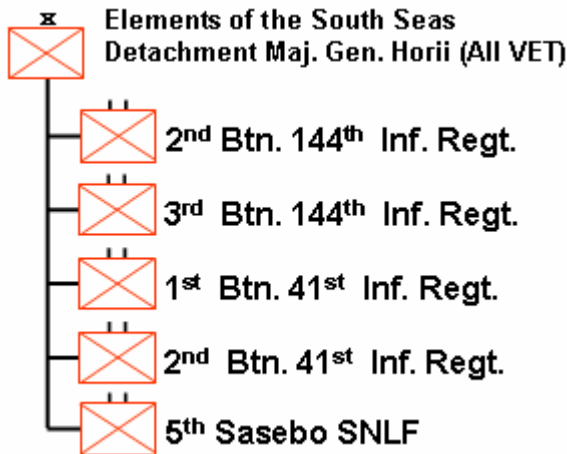
Wargaming the New Guinea Campaign, 1942-1945 Part One: The Kokoda Track - Miniature Wargames, issue no. 233, October 2002.



Briefing for South Seas Detachment, Major General Horii commanding.

Situation

Enemy forces - Two infantry battalions with little mortar support dug in perimeter defenses.



Friendly forces - 2nd & 3rd Battalions, 144th Infantry Regiment, 1st & 2nd Battalions 41st Infantry Regiment, 1st & 2nd Companies 5th Sasebo SNLF

Attachments - 1st Battery 55th Mountain Regiment, providing support to the SNLF.

Mission

Break through the Australian defensive positions, and drive through to capture the positions overlooking the Kokoda trail south of Isurava, thus cutting off the Australian escape route.

Execution

2nd & 3rd Battalions of the 144th will attack from the thick brush in the west with a 2 company frontage. 2nd Battalion will be the lead battalion. They are to destroy the perimeter defensive positions of the enemy, drive to and take the positions overlooking the trail south of the village.

1st and 2nd Battalions of the 41st will attack from the north, west of the trail, through the overgrown garden, and across the North Stream. 1st Battalion will be the lead battalion with a 1 company frontage attacking across the garden, and a 1 company frontage attacking through the jungle hitting the corner of the enemy defensive positions in the light jungle across the stream. They are to destroy the perimeter defensive positions of the enemy, drive to and take the positions overlooking the trail south of the village.

1st Company 5th Sasebo will attack from the north, east of the trail, and drive through the village of Isurava to the positions overlooking the trail south of the village. 2nd Company will be in reserve.

A forward observer for each battalion's mortars and infantry guns will be attached to the lead companies of each battalion. A forward observer for the mountain howitzers will be attached to 1st Company 5th Sasebo.

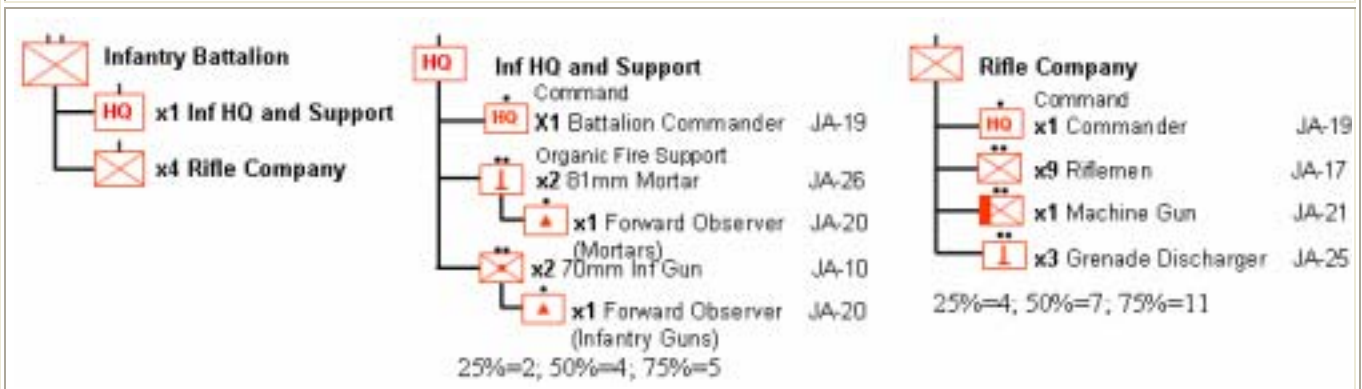
Setup and Scenario Rules

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. Battalion Commanders can observe for both the mortars and artillery in their battalion. The two forward observers may only observe for their own artillery assets.

Standard Japanese Infantry Battalion organization-used for all but the SNLF battalions



Although the Japanese have 18 companies (16 infantry and 2 SNLF), generally only 5 full companies will be deployed on the map at any one time. The battalions of the 144th Infantry Regiment and the battalions of the 41st Infantry Regiment each will attack with two companies forward and the rest in reserve. The Sasebo SNLF attacks on a 1 company front with 1 company in reserve. Think of each company of the Japanese troops as being the head of a column extending to the rear, with fresh troops following up the leading elements. The order of the columns is defined below. As a company exceeds 50% casualties, it will be replaced with a fresh company from the column (if any remain). Units may only switch columns within the same regiment and only if the column to which they are switching has no more companies in reserve. Switching columns also involves a one-turn delay in arrival. See the scenario notes in the Scenario Overview for ideas on the mechanics of replacement. Fire support elements and forward observers are only replaced when elements of the following battalion arrive. When replacement occurs within the same battalion, FOs are attached to the new company. When a new battalion comes on, the FO is replaced (i.e., you never get more artillery support than one battery of mortars and one battery of infantry guns for each battalion front).

Notation Example: 1/2/144 means 1st Company/2nd Battalion/144th Regiment

1st and 2nd Companies of 2nd Battalion/144th Regiment (2/144) will deploy on the west side of the map in the thick brush side by side, up to 11" in from the edge (i.e. to the edge of the thick brush).

Each is followed by specific companies of their own regiment as follows:

Column 1: 1/2/144 + 2/144 Mortar FO, 3/2/144 + Battalion Cmdr, 1/3/144 + 3/144 Mortar FO, 3/3/144 + Battalion Cmdr.

Column 2: 2/2/144 + 2/144 Inf Gun FO, 4/2/144, 2/3/144 + 3/144 Inf Gun FO, 4/3/144.

Fire support (Battalion mortars and infantry guns) will be coming in off board from the west.

1st Company of 1/41 will deploy along the Naro track in the overgrown garden. 2nd Company will deploy to the edge of the thick brush and jungle west of the garden.

Each is followed by specific companies of their own regiment as follows:

Column 1: 1/1/41 + 1/41 Mortar FO, 3/1/41 + Battalion Cmdr, 1/2/41 + 2/41 Mortar FO, 3/2/41 + Battalion Cmdr.

Column 2: 2/1/41 + 1/41 Inf Gun FO, 4/1/41, 1/2/41 + 2/41 Inf Gun FO, 4/2/41.

Fire support (Battalion mortars and infantry guns) will be coming in off board from the north.

SNLF organization



The SNLF is attacking on a one company frontage. 1st/5th Sasebo will deploy from the north, east of the trail, 6" in from the edge. 2nd/5th Sasebo is in column behind it and will replace 1st Company when it exceeds 50% casualties.

Column: 1/5th Sasebo + 75mm FO, 2/5th Sasebo + Battalion Cmdr

Fire support will be coming in from off board from the north. Column: 1/5th Sasebo + 75mm FO, 2/5th Sasebo + Battalion Cmdr

Fire support (1st Bty/55th Mtn. Regt.) will be coming in from off board from the north.

SNLF Battalion Commander will come on with the 2nd Company. All other Battalion Commanders will come on with the 3rd Company of each battalion.

No smoke rounds for any units.

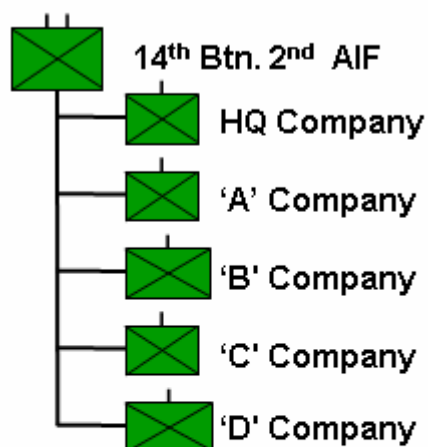


Briefing for Brigadier General Arnold Potts Commanding Maroubra Force

Situation

Enemy forces - At least one battalion to the west on the high ground in the thick scrub, and two battalions to the north across the creek. They have mortar, heavy machine gun, and artillery support.

Initial Forces



Reinforcements



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.

Attachments - none.

Mission

Hold the Japanese here while offensive operations by 16th Battalion, 2nd AIF are conducted on the trail to Missima.

Execution

14th Battalion - 'B' Company will hold the defensive positions to the west.

'D' Company will hold the defensive positions to the north that lie on the west side of the trail.

'C' Company will hold the defensive positions to the north that lie on the east side of the trail.

'A' Company will be in reserve in the village of Isurava, and the improved position supporting 'B' & 'D' Company.

39th Battalion - holding the southern and eastern defensive positions.

The forward observer will be placed with 'B' Company to take advantage of the open terrain the Japanese have to cross.

The mortars themselves will be setup in Isurava, along with the 14th Battalion Commander.

Setup and Scenario Rules

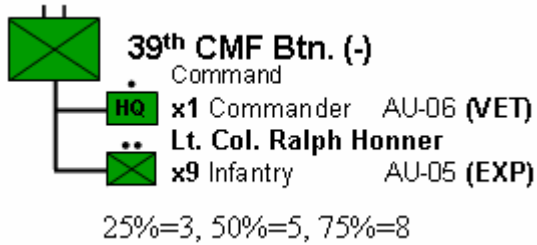
The game lasts 14 turns. The Japanese move first.

See the Scenario Overview for terrain rules and victory conditions. MG Grazing fire is available for the Australians.

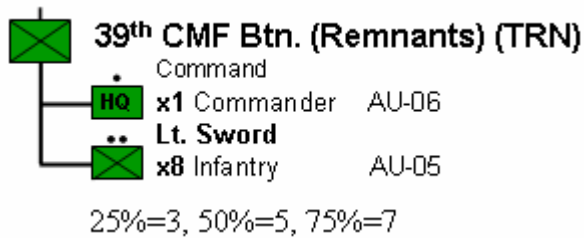
A breakthrough occurs when the Japanese take a contiguous outer and inner entrenchment on the west side of the trail, or the loss of an entrenchment on the east side of the trail.

The mortars have no smoke.

<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> HQ Company 2/14th Btn. Command x1 Commander AU-06 Lt. Col Ralph Arthur Stanley x2 3-inch Mortar AU-12 x1 Fwd. Observer AU-08 25%=1; 50%=2; 75%=3 </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> 'A' Co. 2/14th AIF Btn. Command x1 Commander AU-06 Capt. Buckler x8 Infantry AU-05 25%=3, 50%=5, 75%=7 </div> <div> 'C' Co. 2/14th AIF Btn Command x1 Commander AU-06 Capt. Dickenson x8 Infantry AU-05 x1 Vickers MMG AU-10 25%=3, 50%=5, 75%=8 </div>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> (All VET) </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> 'B' Co. 2/14th AIF Btn. Command x1 Commander AU-06 Capt. Nye x6 Infantry AU-05 x2 Vickers MMG AU-10 25%=3, 50%=5, 75%=7 </div> <div> 'D' Co. 2/14th AIF Btn. Command x1 Commander AU-06 Capt. Cameron x7 Infantry AU-05 x1 Vickers MMG AU-10 25%=3, 50%=5, 75%=7 </div>
<p style="text-align: right;">14th Battalion: Each company starts in its appropriately marked sector on the map ('A' Company has two areas). The FO deploys in 'B' Company's sector, but moves during the HQ ME movement. The Battalion CO and mortars deploy in the 'A' Company sector encompassing the village of Isurava.</p>	



39th Battalion sets up in its appropriately marked sector.
 39th Battalion stands cannot move until a breakthrough has occurred.



Lt. Sword's remnants are lost patrols, ambush units, and returning walking wounded from the 39th.
 They arrive on the Kokoda Trail entering from the south edge on turn 7.
 They are rated as trained from being exhausted after being separated from the battalion for a number of days.