OPERATION BATTLEAXE:
Wavell vs. Rommel, 1941

ADVANCED RULES of PLAY

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LEARNING TO PLAY THE GAME
Begin by familiarizing yourself with all of the components listed for this game. Then skim through the charts and rules, reading all of the titles and subtitles.

Set up the game and play a trial game against yourself. During this trial game try referring to the rules only when you have a question and remember the numbering system it employs makes it easy to look up rules when you do. While a trial game may take you an hour or two, it is the quickest and most pleasant way to learn how to play (short of having an experienced friend teach you).

Learning all of the rules, word for word, is not recommended - learning all the details of any game is an effort few can achieve. The rules have been written so as to be as comprehensive as possible but are not meant to be memorized. Gradually absorbing the rules in the process of playing is the best approach to mastering this game.

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If any of the supplied parts are missing or damaged, write to:

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Should you have any difficulty interpreting the rules you have several options. Go to the TAKE AIM DESIGNS and OPERATION BATTLEAXE discussion folders at www.consimworld.com and ask your question there. Or send an email to the electronic mail address above. A last option would be to send a letter by ground mail to the street address above. Questions sent by ground mail should include a self-addressed stamped envelope to receive a reply.

Regardless of how you forward your questions please phrase them so as to be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" or at most a single sentence. Questions about historical interpretations, design theory or design intent will be answered at the designer's discretion.

"Choose your battles . . ."™

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Operation Battleaxe: Wavell vs. Rommel, 1941 is a two-player game that simulates the Allied attempt to lift the Axis siege of the Libyan port of Tobruk, June 15 to 17, 1941. One player commands the attacking Allied forces and the other player commands the defending Axis forces.

In reading these rules, if any capitalized term or abbreviation confuses you, refer to the Index and Glossary at the end of this rulebook. The numerical references found therein and throughout these rules should be ignored during first reading and used only later to refer to related sections for greater clarity.

2.0 COMPONENTS

OPERATION BATTLEAXE includes the following components:
- One 17" by 22" map
- One sheet of 5/8" die-cut counters
- This rule booklet

3.0 THE MAP

The map sheet depicts the portions of the Libyan/Egyptian border where the *Battleaxe* campaign took place between June 15 and 17, 1941. The scale is approximately 1 inch = 2 miles.

3.1 Map Areas
The map is divided into 23 numbered locations hereafter called Areas. Two Areas are adjacent to each other if they share a common boundary and units could move directly from one to another. The map also contains Zones labeled from "A" to "I". *Zones are considered the equivalent of Areas in every respect unless stated otherwise (15.0). All other rules pertaining to Areas apply equally to Zones.*

3.1.1 Identifiers. Each Area or Zone on the map contains an Identifier divided into two halves. The top half of the Identifier in an Area contains a number (from 1 to 23). The top half of the Identifier in a Zone contains a letter (from A to I). Zone letters printed in red are Allied-controlled at the beginning of the game, while those printed in black are Axis-controlled.

3.1.2 Terrain. Areas have one of two terrain types: Clear or *Stützpunkt* (strongpoint). Clear Areas have a circle Identifier. *Stützpunkt* Areas have a hexagon identifier.

3.1.3 Area TEM. The bottom half of each identifier contains that Area's Terrain Effects Modifier (TEM, from +1 to +3). This modifier is used in resolving attacks against units in that Area (11.4.3C).

3.1.4 Boundaries. Areas are separated from each other by one of two types of boundary lines:

- Thin: Open Desert
- Thick: Escarpment

Design Note: The coastal escarpments were major changes of elevation that could not be crossed except in a few places. The border between Egypt and Libya is not an area boundary and is included only for historical purposes.

3.1.5 Victory Point Area. An Area name that is printed in red (see 17.2).

3.2 Turn Track
The Turn Track printed on the map is used to note the current Game Turn. At the end of each Turn, advance the Turn marker one space to the next sequential number on the Turn Track.

3.3 Impulse Track

The Impulse Track is printed on the map and is used to record the current Impulse of a Turn. The Impulse marker is placed in the space corresponding to the current Impulse.

3.4 Victory Point Track

The Victory Point Track is used to record the number of Victory Points (VPs) controlled by the Allied player.

3.5 Holding Boxes

The map contains boxes to hold the Advantage marker and both players' Air and Artillery Support markers.

4.0 PLAYING PIECES

Included with the game are die-cut playing pieces called units, representing the various military formations that fought in the campaign, as well as several markers that assist in game play. See the back of the cover art for descriptions of each of the playing pieces.

5.0 PREPARE FOR PLAY

5.1 Marker Placement

Place the Turn marker in the "June 15" space on the Turn Track, "Attack" side up (to show the Axis begin the game with sufficient fuel to conduct Combined Operations; see 9.1.2).

Place the Impulse marker in the "1" space of the Impulse track.

Place the Advantage marker in its holding box printed on the map, Allied side up (to show Allied possession of the Advantage).

Place both Victory Point markers in the "0" space of the Victory Point Track.

Place Air and Artillery Support markers in their holding boxes printed on the map.

Place Control markers Allied side up in Zones whose reference letter (3.1.1) is printed in red. Place Control markers Axis side up in Areas and Zones whose reference letter/number is printed in black.

Design Note: To reduce map clutter the players may if they wish only place a Control marker in Allied-controlled Areas and Zones and treat Areas and Zones without a control marker as Axis-controlled.

5.2 Unit Setup

Each player places his initial units in the Areas/Zones listed below. All units begin play with their Full-Strength side face-up.

5.2.1 Allied Setup

Allied units are set up as directed in the following locations:

Coastal Force	**Setup In:**
1/11 (2nd Mahrattas Infantry Battalion)	Zone A

2/11 (1st Rajputana Rifles Infantry Battalion)	Zone A
Squadron "A" (Matildas from 4th RTR)	Zone A
3/11 (2nd Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders)	Zone B
Squadron "B" (Matildas from 4th RTR)	Zone B

Escarpment Force	
4RTR(-) (4th Royal Tank Regiment)	Zone C
7RTR (7th Royal Tank Regiment)	Zone C
22 Guards Brigade	Zone C
65th AT (Anti-Tank)	Zone C

7th Armored Division	
2RTR (2nd Royal Tank Regiment)	Zone D
6RTR (6th Royal Tank Regiment)	Zone D
1/KRR (1st Battalion, King's Royal Rifles)	Zone D
2/RB (2nd Battalion, Rifle Brigade)	Zone D
12AT (12th Australian Anti-Tank)	Zone D

Tobruk Garrison	
9th Australian Division	Zone H
18th Brigade (7th Australian Division)	Zone H
3rd Armored Brigade	Zone H

Free Setup	**Setup in:**
11H (11th Hussars Reconnaissance Regiment)	Zone A-D
CIH (Central India Horse)	Zone A-D

Design Note: Players wishing a strictly historical Allied setup should place the 11H in Zone D and the CIH in Zone B.

5.2.2 Axis Setup

Axis units are set up as directed in the following locations:

Stützpunkt **Halfaya**	
1/104 Infantry Battalion	Area 6
1/33A (Battery 88mm FLAK, 33rd FLAK Regiment)	Area 6
deFR (Italian Battalion de Francesco)	Area 6

Fort Capuzzo	
1/62 (1st Battalion/62nd Regiment, Trento Division)	Area 15

Musaid	
2/62 (2nd Battalion/62nd Regiment, Trento Division)	Area 16

Sollum Barracks	
3/62 (3rd Battalion/62nd Regiment, Trento Division)	Area 17

Stützpunkt **206**	
15MC(-) (15th Motorcycle Battalion)	Area 9
33PAK (33rd Anti-Tank Battalion)	Area 9
6th Oasis Company	Area 9

Stützpunkt **208**	
15MG (Machine Gun Company, 15th MC)	Area 13
1/33B (Battery 88mm FLAK, 33rd FLAK Regiment)	Area 13

15th Panzer Division*	
1/8 Panzer Battalion	Area 18

2/8 Panzer Battalion	Area 18
1/33C (Battery 88mm FLAK, 33rd FLAK Regiment)	Area 18
33 RECCE (33rd Reconnaissance Battalion)	Area 18

Bardia Harbor
| Bardia 1 (Troops from the Trento Division) | Area 21 |

***Stützpunkt* Bardia**
| Bardia 2 (Troops from the Trento Division) | Area 22 |

5th Light Division*
1/5 Panzer Battalion	Zone G
2/5 Panzer Battalion	Zone G
3 RECCE (3rd Reconnaissance Battalion)	Zone G

Tobruk Siege
XX Motorized Corps (Italian)	Zone H
XXI Infantry Corps (Italian)	Zone H
15th Infantry Brigade	Zone H

* The 15th Panzer Division and 5th Light Division may not move or attack during the June 15 Turn until certain conditions have been met (June 15 Special Rules, see 16.0).

6.0 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

A game has three Turns. Each Turn represents one full day of combat and comprises four Phases and a number of "mini-turns" or Impulses. **Note:** *If playing the Extended Game (20) the game will have one additional Turn. Throughout the rules "dr" signifies the roll of a single die, while "DR" signifies the sum of two dice rolled together.*

6.1 Phases
The Phases of a Turn are conducted as follows: Maneuvers Phase, Refit Phase, and End Phase.

6.2 Maneuvers Phase
Each player may take one action during each Impulse (8.0) and then the Impulse marker is advanced to the next space on the Impulse Track. The Allied player always goes first, followed by the Axis player.

6.2.1 Sunset DR. During the Axis half of each Impulse the first Axis DR made for any purpose also serves as the Sunset DR (if the Axis player does not make a DR during his Impulse, he makes a Sunset DR at the end of his Impulse). The Allied player never makes a Sunset DR.

If the Sunset DR is *equal to or greater than* the Impulse number the Impulse marker always advances to the next space on the Impulse Track (see 3.3).

If the Sunset DR is *less than* the current Impulse number the Maneuvers Phase ends. If the Impulse marker moves off the Impulse Track the Maneuvers Phase ends.

6.3 Refit Phase
The Allied player spends their available Replacement Points (RPs – see 13.2). The Axis player then spends their available RPs.

6.4 End Phase
Determine if the Allied player has won an Automatic Victory (17.1).

In the absence of an Automatic Victory return the Impulse marker to the "1" space on the Impulse Track. Advance the Game Turn marker to the next space on the Game Turn Track, "Attack" side up.

Air and Artillery markers that were "Used" side up in the player's holding box at the end of the Maneuvers Phase are flipped so as to be available again.

If the game has reached the End Phase of June 17 determine if the Allied player has won an Operational Victory (17.2). The game is now over unless playing the Extended Game (20.0).

7.0 STACKING AND CONTROL

7.1 Stacking
Each player may have a maximum of four units per Area. Control and other markers do not count against stacking limits.

Units may not move into, attack into, or end a retreat in an Area already stacked to the maximum.

Although most areas are large enough to display all of the units therein, stacking all of a player's Full-Strength and Reduced-Strength units in separate piles may be done to conserve space. A player may freely examine stacks of enemy units at any time.

7.2 Control
Each Area is always controlled by either the Allied player or the Axis player. Control changes when one side has a unit in a Vacant (7.4) Area that is controlled by the enemy. Control of an Area may be gained during movement without stopping to end an Impulse in that Area. In addition, control of an area may change at the end of the Maneuvers Phase as a result of an Area being Out of Supply (14.2.4). Control is shown by flipping the control marker to either its Allied or Axis-Controlled side as is appropriate.

7.3 Contested
An Area is considered Contested if it contains units of both sides. Contesting an Area that is controlled by the enemy does not alter control of that Area.

7.4 Vacant
An Area is Vacant if it contains no enemy units, regardless of the presence of friendly units or who currently controls it.

7.5 Free
An Area is Free if it is Vacant and under friendly control.

8.0 IMPULSES

The majority of the game is played during the Maneuvers Phase, consisting of an unknown number of "mini-turns" called Impulses. The Allied player performs one Impulse and then the Axis player performs one Impulse. After each player has performed one Impulse the Impulse marker is advanced one space on the Impulse Track printed on the map.

The active player during an Impulse is called the **Attacker**; his opponent is called the **Defender**. No enemy unit may move during a friendly Impulse except to retreat as a result of Combat Resolution (11.4).

8.1 Types of Impulses

There are three types of Impulse:

- Assault
- Non-Assault
- Pass

8.1.1 The Assault Impulse

The Attacker selects an Area or Zone of his choice as the Active Area. Units in the selected Area or Zone may move and/or attack during that Assault Impulse.

8.1.2 The Non-Assault Impulse

There are two types of Non-Assault Impulse. Only **one** of the two may be chosen each Impulse.

▶**a) Regroup.** The Attacker may activate **every** friendly unit on the map and move them one Area. Units beginning the Impulse in the same Area do not have to move to the same destination, i.e. units may split up and move to different destinations. Units that Regroup may not enter any enemy-controlled or enemy-occupied Area. Units within a Contested Area may not Regroup into another Contested Area, even if friendly-controlled. Axis units without a printed Movement Factor may not Regroup. Allied units in an Axis-Controlled Halfaya Pass (Area 6) may not Regroup to Musaid (Area 17) even if Musaid is Allied-Controlled.

Design Note: This restriction on Allied units in Halfaya reflects the presence of minefields the Axis had placed along the coastal road. It would have been impossible to clear them until Halfaya Pass itself was in Allied hands.

▶**b) Consolidation**. The player may flip one reduced armored or infantry unit to its Full-Strength side while either reducing another Full-Strength unit or eliminating another Reduced-Strength unit of the same type present in the same Area. The two units performing the Consolidation must both be in supply (14.0) to perform the Consolidation. German and Italian units may not consolidate with each other. Anti-Tank and armored car units may not consolidate. *Note: the armored car units in the game are the Allied CIH and 11H counters and the Axis 3 and 33 counters.*

8.1.3 The Pass Impulse.
The attacker may elect to take no action at all during the Impulse (the Axis player must still make a Sunset DR if it is possible to end the Maneuvers Phase).

8.2 Legalities and Errors

A player may not change his move once a DR/dr has been made, or his opponent has declared any action (including a Pass Impulse) he will take during his Impulse.

An illegal move/attack's results are valid if the opposing player does not challenge them prior to completing his own next impulse.

9.0 MOVEMENT

9.1 Mechanics of Movement

During an Assault Impulse the attacker chooses one Area to be the Active Area. *Exception: Combined Operations (9.1.2).*

Units move one at a time. A unit may move from an Area to an adjacent Area, the number of Areas entered during movement being limited by printed Movement Factor (MF) on the moving unit. At any point in the Assault Impulse (only) units that began this impulse in the Active Area, or enter an Area with enemy units, may attack (11.0) those enemy units within the same Area.

▶**9.1.1 Area Activation.** All of the units in an Area may move/attack if the attacker has chosen that Area to be his Active Area. Units in the activated Area may move and/or attack until there are no units left to perform an action. *Exception: Combined Operations (9.1.2).*

▶**9.1.2 Combined Operations.** The Axis player may activate *two* Areas instead of one each Assault Impulse unless suffering from a Fuel Shortage (14.1.1). The same units may not activate twice. *Note: Area activation during Combined Operations may be either simultaneous or sequential. If activation is simultaneous units from different Areas may combine to participate in the same Combat Resolution. If sequential the player may activate one Area, conduct their Impulse, and then activate a second Area after observing the results of the first activation.*

9.2 Movement Costs

Movement requires the expenditure of Movement Factors (MF) during an Impulse. A unit may continue to move into adjacent areas until it either lacks enough MF to enter another Area or it enters an Area occupied by an enemy unit, where it must stop. Movement into an Area incurs the following MF costs (use only the one that applies):

1 MF	Enter a Vacant Area
2 MF	Enter a Vacant Area adjacent to an enemy unit
3 MF	Enter an Area containing only Reduced-Strength enemy units
4 MF	Enter an Area containing a Full-Strength enemy unit
ALL MF	Enter a Zone from an Area or another Zone (15.0)

If the Active Area is Contested friendly units may exit the Area at normal MF costs, so long as the first Area they enter is Free.

If a unit has not yet expended MF in the Impulse, and lacks sufficient MF to enter an adjacent Area that it is not otherwise prohibited from entering, it may enter that Area by expending all its MF.

If a player wishes to resolve combat within a Contested Area *no movement takes place* within the Contested Area. The attacker simply announces his intention to attack and performs the steps listed under Combat Resolution (11.4). An Overrun (11.4.4) is allowed within a Contested Area. During Combined Operations Axis units *may* enter the Contested Area and combine with units already in the Contested Area to make a single attack.

9.2.1 Multiple Area Destinations. Units starting in an Active Area may move to and/or attack into different areas during the same Assault Impulse. Attacks made into different Areas do not have to be designated in advance. The attacker may wait for the results of a move/attack before announcing a later move/attack into another Area in the same Impulse by other units starting in the Active Area.

Once an Area is attacked, additional units may not move into that Area during the same Impulse. Units that begin movement in the same Area do not have to end their movement in the same Area. Nor do all units moving during an impulse have to move simultaneously.

9.3 Movement Restrictions

▶The following four situations restrict movement:

9.3.1 Overstacking. Units may not move into a fully stacked Area (7.1).

9.3.2 Escarpment. Units may not cross Escarpment boundaries at any time, including retreat as a result of combat (11.6.4).

9.3.3 Zones. Movement into and out of Zones is restricted to the connection lines printed on the map – no other options exist.

9.3.4 Exiting a Contested Area. Units within a Contested Area must first move to a Free Area before entering either another Contested Area or an enemy-controlled Vacant Area.

10.0 SUPPORT UNITS
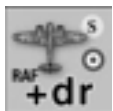
10.1 Air Support

Allied air superiority during Operation *Battleaxe* is represented by the Allied player's Air Support marker.

10.1.1 Air Support Availability. The Allied Air Support marker may be committed once per Allied Assault Impulse. The Air Support marker may not attack on its own. The decision to assign the Air Support Marker is made before an Allied Artillery Call (10.2.1) is made.

10.1.2 Air Support Placement. The Allied Air Support marker may be placed in any *one* Area where combat resolution (11.4) is taking place. After combat resolution remove the Air Support marker from the map and place it to the Allied Support Units Box with its "Used" side facing up to indicate the marker has been committed and is unavailable until next Impulse.

10.1.3 Air Support During Overruns. If combat results in an Overrun (11.4.4) the Air Support marker may be assigned to an *additional* combat before being returned to the Allied Support Units Box.

▶**10.1.4 Attack Value.** The Allied player makes a dr and adds that result to his total Attack Value (11.4.2C) when resolving combat. If the Area where combat resolution is taking place was contested at the beginning of the Impulse subtract one from the result. Results of less than "1" are treated as "1".

Design Note: This reduction of the Allied player's Air Support represents the immense dust and confusion of the desert battlefield.

10.2 Artillery Support

Each player receives a number of Artillery Support markers. The Allied player receives three and the Axis player receives two.

▶**10.2.1 Artillery Placement.** Both the Attacker and the Defender have the option to make one Artillery Call in any Area where combat resolution (11.4) is taking place. Artillery Support markers may not attack on their own. The player makes a dr.

ARTILLERY CALL

1-3 Artillery Support is not available
4-6 Artillery Support is available

Modifiers:
+1 Artillery Call made by Axis *Stützpunkt* Areas*
+1 Artillery Call made by Allied Tobruk garrison**
* Area must be Axis-Controlled.
** Zone H must be Allied-Controlled.

Design Note: the +1 Axis modifier represents both the fortified nature of stützpunkt *positions and Italian artillery batteries, and the +1 Allied modifier represents the Allied Tobruk defenses.*

If the Artillery Call is not successful nothing happens. If the Artillery Call is successful move an Artillery marker from the player's Support Units Box and place it in the Area where combat is being resolved. After combat resolution remove any Artillery Support markers from the map and place them in the appropriate Support Units Box with their "Used" side facing upward to indicate the markers have been committed and are unavailable until next Turn.

▶**10.2.2 Artillery Support During Overruns.** Neither player may make an Artillery Call during Overrun combat.

10.2.3 Combat Value. A successful call adds +2 to the total Attack Value (11.4.2D) or Defense Value (11.4.3D) when resolving combat.
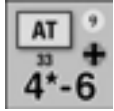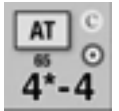
▶10.3 AT/FLAK units

Allied AT and Axis AT/FLAK units have an asterisk (*) next to their Combat Value. These units may not act as the Lead Attacking Unit, but may be the first unit to enter a Vacant, enemy-controlled Area. They may act as the Lead Defending Unit at their full Combat Value during combat resolution so long as there is at least one additional Infantry or Armored unit present in the same attack or defense. If attacking or defending on their own their Combat Value is one (1) if Full-Strength and zero (0) if Reduced-Strength. ***Note:*** *additional AT/FLAK units still modify combat under rules 11.4.2B and 11.4.3B.*

11.0 COMBAT

Only units that begin an impulse in the Active Area may attack. An attack incurs no additional MF cost beyond that for entering an enemy-occupied Area. If the Active Area was already contested at the beginning of the Impulse the units may either exit the Area or attack.

All defending units in an Area being attacked can potentially be affected by the combat results of that attack. An attack is resolved only after all units have entered the attacked Area in that Impulse. Other units starting in the Active Area not involved in the attack may move, but no additional units may enter the Area being attacked during the current Impulse once the attack is resolved.

11.1 Mandatory Attacks

Friendly units must make a Mandatory Attack whenever they enter an enemy-occupied Area that was not Contested at the beginning of the current Impulse. If a Mandatory Attack results in a Repulse (11.4.4) all participating units must retreat (11.6).

11.2 Optional Attacks

Unless required to conduct a Mandatory Attack the attacker may attack with some, all, or none of his units that entered the Area. If he chooses to attack at least one unit must attack.

11.3 Contested Area

If the Active Area is already Contested at the start of the Impulse, all, some or none of the units starting in that Area may attack. If the attacker loses the attack the attacking units do not retreat and must remain within the Active Area.

▶11.4 Combat Resolution

Attacks are resolved by comparing the Attack Value of the attacking unit(s) plus a DR (the Attack Total or AT) against the Defense Value of the defending units(s) plus a DR (the Defense Total or DT). Combat is resolved in the following order:

A. Attacker designates the Lead Attacking Unit
B. Defender designates the Lead Defending Unit
C. Air Support marker assigned; die roll made
D. Attacker Artillery Call (if Attacker wishes)
E. Defender Artillery Call (if Defender wishes)

F. Tabulate final Attack Value and Defense Value
G. Roll dice (11.4.1) and compute results (11.4.4)

11.4.1 Dice. When resolving combat each player simultaneously rolls two dice (a DR).

11.4.2 Attack Value (AV). The Attack Value is equal to the sum of:

A. The Combat Value of any one attacking unit of the attacker's choice (**Lead Attacking Unit**),

B. +1 Each additional unit participating in the attack,

C. +? Air Support (Allied only; 10.1.3) or Rommel (Axis only; 12.1E) assigned,

D. +2 Successful Artillery Call (10.2.1) by the Attacker,

E. +1 Combined Arms Bonus (Armor, Infantry, and AT/FLAK all participating in the same Combat Resolution).

11.4.3 Defense Value (DV). The DV is equal to the sum of:

A. The Combat Value of any one unit of the defender's choice (**Lead Defending Unit**),

B. +1 Each unit in addition to the Lead Defending Unit in the defending Area,

C. +? for the TEM (+1 to +3) of the Area being attacked,

D. +2 Successful Artillery Call (10.2.1) by the Defender,

E. +2 Allied defense if Axis attack made while suffering from a Fuel Shortage (14.1.1).

11.4.4 Computing Results. The result of the attack depends on the difference between the Attack Total (AT) and the Defense Total (DT).

Repulse: If the AT < DT the attacker has been repulsed and there is no effect on the defender's units. All of the attacking units are flipped to their Reduced-Strength side if currently Full-Strength; if already Reduced-Strength they are eliminated. Retreat is required in cases of Mandatory Assault (11.1).

Stalemate: If the AT = DT both the Lead Attacking Unit and the Lead Defending Unit are flipped to their Reduced-Strength side if currently Full-Strength; if already Reduced-Strength they are eliminated.

▶Success: If the AT > DT the Lead Attacking Unit is flipped to its Reduced-Strength side. The defender must absorb Attrition Points (11.5) equal to the difference between the AT and DT. The first Attrition Point must be absorbed by the Lead Defending Unit. ***Note:*** *if the Attacker inflicts just 1 AP and the Lead Defending Unit is either a Reduced-Strength Allied or Italian unit or any German unit the point may be absorbed by a retreat.*

▶**Overrun:** If an attack requires the defender to take more Attrition Points than can be absorbed by the defending units in the Area, the Lead Attacking Unit is *not* flipped to its Reduced-Strength side. In addition, units that participated in the attack may immediately activate a second time and move/attack into ONE additional adjacent Area. An Air Support marker or Rommel (12.1E) used to resolve the first combat may be assigned by the Attacker a second time to this additional combat (make a new dr). There is no additional Overrun after this second combat.

Allied units that overrun an Axis-Controlled Stützpunkt Area are not reduced but may not activate a second time.

11.5 Attrition Points (AP)

In order to satisfy losses the defender removes AP from his units in the defending Area.

AP may be taken in any combination, except that the Lead Defending Unit must suffer the first AP and that exact losses must be applied whenever possible *(i.e. a player cannot eliminate a Full-Strength unit in order to save a Reduced-Strength unit if only 2 Aps have to be applied).*

The defender removes AP from an attack as follows:

A. Each Full-Strength unit eliminated: 3 AP
B. Each Full-Strength unit that flips to Reduced-Strength: 1 AP
C. Each Reduced-Strength unit eliminated: 2 AP
D. Each Reduced-Strength unit that retreats (see 11.6): 1 AP

▶**11.5.1 German Operational Flexibility.** Full-Strength German units may retreat. They absorb 1 AP just like Reduced-Strength retreating units. *Exception: Full-Strength German units in Axis-Controlled Stützpunkt Areas may not retreat*.

11.6 Retreats

The attacker or defender may be called upon to retreat as a result of combat. Attacking units may only retreat into the Area from which they entered the attacked Area (Exception: Fully-stacked Areas; see 11.6.2 to determine which Area they retreat to).

11.6.1 Retreat Procedure. Units must retreat one at a time to determine if the Area becomes fully-stacked. If it does, subsequent units must continue their retreat to another Area that is not fully-stacked. In this event, both the attacker and defender must follow the Retreat Priorities to determine the second (or more) Areas to which they must retreat.

11.6.2 Retreat Priorities. If there is more than one Area to which units may retreat the units must retreat based on the following set of priorities:

A. A Free Area adjacent to the least number of enemy-controlled Areas.
B. A friendly-controlled, Contested Area.
C. An enemy-controlled, Contested Area.
D. Fully-stacked Area.

11.6.3 Voluntary Retreat. Some or all of the defenders in an Area being attacked may voluntarily retreat after Combat Resolution, even if the attacker suffered a Stalemate or Repulse result. The Lead Defending Unit does not have to be among the units that retreat. Full-Strength Allied units may not voluntarily retreat.

11.6.4 Retreat Elimination. If for any reason a unit is unable to retreat per the Retreat Priorities (11.6.2), such as having to retreat off the map, across an Escarpment boundary, into the Mediterranean Sea, or ending in a fully stacked Area, it is eliminated.

12.0 THE ADVANTAGE

At the start of each Impulse one player always has possession of the Advantage. This is indicated by the Advantage marker with the side of the controlling player face-up in its holding box printed on the map. The Allied player starts the game controlling the Advantage. Control of the Advantage can change through voluntary use by the player who possesses it.

12.1 Voluntary Use

During the Maneuvers Phase the Advantage may be used to declare:

A. Fanatical Defense. The defender may turn an attack that is a Success into a Stalemate. They may not turn an Overrun into a Stalemate.

B. Maximum Attack. The attacker may turn an attack that is a Repulse into a Stalemate.

C. Prolonged Daylight. Either player may spend the Advantage to ignore the results of a Sunset DR. The dice are not re-rolled. The Impulse marker simply advances to the next Impulse on the Impulse Track and play continues.

D. Axis Fuel Shortage (Allied player only). Flip the Turn marker so that its "Fuel Low" side is face up. The German player may not conduct combined operations (9.1.2) so long as the Fuel Shortage is in effect. Allied Defense Values are increased by +2 (11.4.3E). An Axis Fuel Shortage is canceled by either a German Sunset DR = current Impulse or the end of the Maneuvers Phase.

E. *Rommel an der spitz!* (Axis player only). During each impulse of the Maneuvers Phase one Axis attack may add an additional dr to the Axis Attack Value. The decision to assign Rommel is made before an Axis Artillery Call (11.4.D) is made. This benefit is canceled by the end of the Maneuvers Phase.

During the Refit Phase the Advantage may also be used to declare:

F. Increased Replacements. The player receives one additional Replacement Point (13.2).

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12.2 Advantage Shift
After the Advantage is used it belongs to neither player until the end of the current Phase or Impulse, at which time it becomes the property of the player who did not use it.

13.0 REFIT

Units can suffer attrition and elimination through Combat Resolution during the Maneuvers Phase. During the Refit Phase they may recover.

13.1 Refit Phase
The Allied player conducts his Refit Phase first, followed by the Axis player.

13.2 Replacement Points (RP)
Both players receive one (1) RP each Refit Phase. Either player may receive 1 extra RP during his Refit Phase by spending the Advantage (12.1F).

13.3 Replacement Costs
Replacement Points may be spent in the following manner.

13.3.1 Eligibility. Allied and Axis units must be able to trace a supply line (14.2.1) to be eligible to take replacements.

13.3.2 One (1) Replacement Point may be spent to do the following:

- Flip up to two Reduced-Strength units on the map to Full-Strength
- Rebuild an eliminated unit at Reduced-Strength

13.3.3 Rebuilt Allied Units. Eliminated Allied units may be placed in any supplied Allied-Controlled, uncontested Area. *Exception: only units that originally set up in Zone H may be rebuilt in Zone H, and if eliminated these units may not be rebuilt anywhere except Zone H.*

13.3.4 Rebuilt Axis Units. Eliminated Axis units may be placed in any supplied Axis-Controlled, uncontested Area.

▶**13.3.5 German Battlefield Recovery.** One in-supply Reduced-Strength German Armored unit may flip to its Full-Strength side at the end of each Axis Refit Phase without spending any RP.

13.4 Accumulation
Any RP remaining at the end of the Refit Phase are lost. They do not accumulate from turn to turn.

14.0 LOGISTICS

14.1 Triggering a Fuel Shortage
The Allied player may spend the Advantage to declare an Axis Fuel Shortage (12.1D).

14.1.1 Effects of a Fuel Shortage
If the Turn marker has its "Fuel Low" side face up the Axis player may not perform Combined Operations (9.1.2) until the shortage is ended. Defending Allied units also receive a +2 to their Defense Value (11.4.3E).

14.1.2 Ending a Fuel Shortage. If the next Axis Sunset DR *equals* the current Impulse number flip the Turn marker from its "Fuel Low" side back to its "Attack" side; otherwise it remains "Fuel Low" side up. The Turn marker remains "Fuel Low" side up until an Axis Sunset DR is equal to the current Impulse, or the end of the Maneuvers Phase.

14.2 Out of Supply
At the end of the Maneuvers Phase units must be able to trace a supply line to a friendly-controlled Supply Source. Zones with red letters are Allied Supply Sources and Zones with black letters are Axis Supply sources. Units unable to trace supply are Out of Supply and are marked with an Out of Supply marker.

14.2.1 Tracing Supply. The supply line path may not enter an enemy-controlled Area, or cross an Escarpment boundary. It may pass through a friendly-controlled Area contested by enemy units. A Vacant Area under enemy-control still blocks supply. Allied units in Tobruk are in supply so long as Tobruk is Allied-controlled.

14.2.2 Movement. Out of Supply units suffer a -1 penalty to their movement rate and Combat Value so long as they remain Out of Supply. *Note: this includes Out of Supply AT/PAK/FLAK units. An Out of Supply AT/PAK/FLAK units defending without other unit types would have an AV/DV of "0" if Full-Strength and "-1" if Reduced-Strength.*

14.2.3 Surrender. Units unable to trace supply must check for Surrender at the end of the Refit Phase.

The controlling player makes a dr for each Out of Supply unit. There are three possible results:

SURRENDER DIE ROLL

1-3 The unit is reduced if Full-Strength, eliminated if Reduced-Strength.

4-6 No effect.

Modifiers:
+1 Player possesses the Advantage

14.2.4 Area Control. A Vacant Area that is enemy-controlled becomes friendly-controlled at the end of the Maneuvers Phase if it is Out of Supply.

9

15.0 ZONES

15.1 Movement
Zones are located around the edges of the map. Each Zone is connected to other Zones and certain Areas on the map by connection lines. Friendly units moving between Zones may ignore the presence of enemy units in adjacent Areas, and friendly units moving between Areas may ignore the presence of enemy units in adjacent Zones, when calculating movement costs (9.2).

15.2 Occupation Limits
An unlimited number of units may stack in any Zone.

16.0 JUNE 15 SPECIAL RULES

The 15th Panzer Division and 5th Light Division begin play set up on the map, but may not move/attack until certain conditions are met.

16.1 The 15th Panzer Division
The 15th Panzer Division sets up in Area 18. It is released if any of the following conditions are met:

- Halfaya (Area 6) becomes Allied-Controlled
- Any Area adjacent to Area 18 becomes Allied-Controlled
- An Allied unit enters Zones E, F, or G
- The June 15 Turn is finished

16.2 The 5th Light Division
The 5th Light Division sets up in Zone G. It is released if any of the following conditions are met:

- An Allied unit enters Zones E, F, or G
- Allied units in Zone H conduct an Assault Impulse
- The June 15 Turn is finished

16.3 Allied First Activation
During Impulse 1 of the June 15 Turn the Allied player may activate Zones A, B, C, and D simultaneously.

17.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

There are two ways to win the game: an Automatic Victory and an Operational Victory.

▶17.1 Automatic Victory
The Allied player wins an Automatic Victory if during the End Phase of any Turn an Allied-controlled Zone H (Tobruk) is capable of tracing a supply line to an Allied-controlled Zone A (Buq-Buq). Zone H must be Free of Axis units to qualify for Automatic Victory.

17.2 Allied Operational Victory
At the end of every turn count the number of VP Areas (3.1.5) controlled by the Allied player and add that amount to the Allied Victory Point total on the Victory Point Track.

Axis Areas have the following Victory Point value:

- 2 Victory Points: Areas 6 (Halfaya Pass); 13 (Point 208); 19 (Sidi Azeiz); and 23 (Menastir II)
- 1 Victory Point: Areas 9 (Point 206); 11 (Sidi Omar); 15 (Fort Capuzzo); 16 (Sollum Barracks); 21 (Bardia Harbor); and 22 (Bardia).

Each Area must be able to trace supply to Zone A, B, C, or D to count for Victory Point purposes.

At the end of the June 17 Turn count the number of eliminated and Reduced-Strength German units:

- +1 Victory Points: Each Eliminated German Unit
- +1 Victory Points: Each Reduced-Strength German Armored Unit

If at the end of the June 17 Turn the Allied Player has 10 VP or more he wins. If he has 9 VP or less he loses.

The Axis do not receive Victory Points. Victory depends solely on the Allied Victory Point total unless the Allies achieve an Automatic Victory (17.1).

18.0 SIDE DETERMINATION

If both players wish to play the same side this rule is used to decide which side each player commands and to compensate for either player's perceptions regarding the relative chances of each side.

18.1 Bids
Each player submits a secret, written VP bid to command the Allies. The high bid receives the Allied side with the winning bid becoming the number of VP required for an Operational Victory. Automatic Victory rules remain unchanged.

19.0 OPTIONAL RULES

19.1 The Advantage (Additional Uses)

G. Additional Tiger Cubs. One Reduced-Strength Allied Armored unit may flip to its Full-Strength side during each Allied Refit Phase without spending any RP.

H. Wireless Intercepts. During the Maneuvers Phase the Axis player may, during the same Axis Impulse, either (a) perform a Regroup Impulse and then spend the Advantage to perform an Assault Impulse or (b) perform an Assault Impulse and then spend the Advantage to perform a Regroup Impulse.
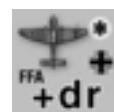
▶19.2 Greater Luftwaffe Intervention
The Axis player places the "FFA" Air Support marker (marked with a "*" because it is an optional unit) in the Axis Support Units box at the start of Turn 2. Axis Air Support functions in a manner identical to the Allied Air Support

(see 10.1) but may not be used during a fuel shortage (14.1.1). Axis Air Support is assigned before Rommel (12.1E). Allied Air Support die rolls receive a +1 drm (treat rolls higher than a "6" as a "6" when using this optional rule).

Design note: The Allies decided to use their Hurricane fighters to provide air cover over their ground forces. While it kept the Luftwaffe at bay throughout the battle it cost the Allies the use of one of their most effective ground-attack aircraft. Using this optional rule assumes the Allies chose to weaken their air cover to provide more support to their forces advancing on the ground.

19.3 Consolidated 4th Royal Tank Regiment
Remove the following units from the Allied opening setup: 4RTR(-) in Zone C, SQ-A in Zone A, and SQ-B in Zone B. The 4RTR unit (marked with a "*" because it is an optional unit) may set up in either Zone A, B, or C.

▶19.4 Allied Reserves
One in-supply Reduced-Strength Allied unit may refit for free in both Zone A and Zone H each Refit Phase.

Design note: this additional refit capacity reflects Allied units that were present in Tobruk and Buq Buq but not depicted in the game.

▶19.5 Italian Infantry Reliability
If the Lead Attacking Unit is an Allied Armored unit and the Lead Defending Unit is an Italian Infantry unit the Allied Attack Value (11.4.2) is increased by two (+2). Italian Infantry units, furthermore, do not count towards an Axis Combined Arms Bonus (11.4.2E).

Design note: this rule reflects the overall weakness of Italian infantry formations in the North African desert both in terms of their equipment and in terms of their tactical doctrine.

▶19.6 Tobruk Bonus VP
If at any time there are more Allied units in Zone H (Tobruk) than Axis units the Allied player is awarded a Victory Point, which is added immediately to the total on the Victory Point Track. This bonus VP may be applied only once per game.

Design note: the purpose of this rule is to depict the unlikelihood that Rommel would strip off units maintaining the siege of Tobruk to use as "reinforcements" for the frontier area.

20.0 THE EXTENDED GAME

Those wishing to extend play beyond the June 17 Turn may agree beforehand to the following variations.

20.1 June 17 Victory Check
Check the Allied Victory Point total at the end of June 17. If he has 11 or more VP he wins an Operational Victory. If he has 8 or less VP he loses. If he has 9 or 10 VP the game continues for an additional Turn.

If the Allied player fails to achieve an Operational Victory by June 17 he can only win by attaining an Automatic Victory (17.1). Any other result is an Axis victory.

21.0 SUGGESTED READING

Anonymous. "The Development of German Defensive Tactics in Cyrenaica – 1941." *Military Intelligence Service, Special Series No. 5* (October 16, 1942).

Bechthold, Mike. "A Stepping Stone to Success: Operation *Battleaxe* (June 1941) and the Development of British Tactical Air Doctrine." *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, 14, no. 1 (2011): 1-21.

Latimer, Jon. *Tobruk 1941: Rommel's Opening Move*. Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2001.

Liddell-Hart, B. H., ed. *The Rommel Papers*. New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1953.

Pitt, Barrie. *The Crucible of War. Volume 1 – Wavell's Command.* London: Cassell & Company, 1986.

22.0 INDEX AND GLOSSARY

Active Area: The Area or Zone which the attacker has selected to conduct either an Assault or Non-Assault Impulse.

Adjacent: Areas that share a common boundary are adjacent.

Advantage: The temporary edge one side has over the other, yielding certain benefits to the owner when spent; 12. Additional uses: 19.1.

▶Air Support: 10.1. During an Overrun: 10.1.3.

Allied First Activation: 16.3

Anti-Tank: A type of unit equipped with either anti-tank or FLAK guns.

Area: Any of the 23 irregularly shaped spaces on the map, used to regulate movement and combat; 3.1.

Area Boundaries: 3.1.4.

Armor: A type of unit equipped with tanks and other armored vehicles.

▶Artillery Support: 10.2. During an Overrun: 10.2.2.

Assault Impulse: A declared Impulse during which the attacker may move and attack.

Attacker: The active player resolving the current Impulse, whether carrying out Combat Resolution or not.

Attack Total: The sum of the Attack Value and a DR.

Attack Value (AV): 11.4.2.

Attrition Points (AP): The difference between the Attack Total and the Defense Total in an Attack, which must be absorbed by Full-Strength units flipping to their Reduced- Strength side, retreating, or elimination.

Bids: 18.1.

Boundaries: 3.1.4.

Clear: Any Area containing a circle Identifier (Terrain: 3.1.2).

Combined Arms Bonus: 11.4.2E.

Combined Operations: 9.1.2, 12.1D

Consolidation: A type of Non-Assault movement; 8.1.2b.

Contested: An Area containing both friendly and enemy units; 7.3

Controlled: The last side to be the sole occupant of an Area controls that Area. At the start of play the Allies control any Area whose number is red, and the Axis player controls any Area whose number is black.

Defense Total: The sum of the Defense Value

dr (die roll): A roll of a single six-sided die.

DR (dice roll): A roll of two six-sided dice added together to form one combined result.

Defense Value (DV): 11.4.3.

DRM (Die Roll Modifier): A number applied to an original die roll to alter the final result.

End Phase: 6.4.

Errors: 8.2.

Escarpment: An Area boundary printed in a thick wavy line; 3.1.4 (Movement across: 9.3.2; retreat restriction 11.6.4).

Extended Game: 20.

FLAK: an Axis anti-aircraft guns being used in an anti-tank role; 10.3

Free: An uncontested, friendly-Controlled Area; 7.5.

Fuel Shortage: 14.1.

Full-Strength: The fully-colored (non-striped) side of a unit.

Identifier: 3.1.1.

Impulse: One of the alternating "mini-turns" that make up the Maneuvers Phase. Players always choose to conduct an Assault, Non-Assault or Pass Impulse.

Impulse Track: 3.3.

Infantry: In game terms all of the units not otherwise defined as Armor or Anti-Tank.

Lead Attacking Unit: 11.4.2A.

Lead Defending Unit: 11.4.3A.

Mandatory Attack: 11.1.

Maneuvers Phase: The portion of each Turn when players may perform Impulses; 6.2.

Movement: 9.

Movement Factor (MF): The second (rightmost) number printed at the bottom of each unit. It is the number of movement points a unit may expend in one Impulse.

▶**Optional Rules**: 19.0.

Out of Supply: 14.2.

Overrun: An Attack that generates more Attrition Points than the defending units can absorb, allowing the attacker to move/attack one additional Area; 11.4.4. Allied units may not overrun Axis-Controlled *Stützpunkt* Areas.

Parent Organization: The first of the two numbers/letters underneath either symbol of a unit; 4.3.2.

Pass Impulse: An Impulse during which the Attacker performs no action; 8.1.3.

Reduced-Strength: The striped side of a unit.

Refit Phase: The phase immediately following the Maneuvers Phase when each player may spend Replacement Points; 6.3, 13.

Replacement Points: 13.2.

Regroup: A type of Non-Assault movement; 8.1.2a.

Stützpunkt: Axis strongpoint; 3.1.2. Modifies Axis Artillery Call; 10.2.1. Prevents Allied overruns; 11.4.4.

Sunset Die Roll: 6.2.1.

Supply Source: 14.2.

Support Units: Air and Artillery; 10.

Surrender: 14.2.3.

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Terrain: The circles and hexagons within each Area or Zone; 3.1.2.

Terrain Effects Modifier (TEM): The black number with a value ranging between +1 and +3 within each Identifier.

Turn: All the phases and impulses of one of the ten numbers on the Game Turn Track

Turn Track: 3.2.

Victory Point Area: Any Area whose name is printed in red; 3.1.5. Control of Victory Point Areas determines Allied Operational Victory; 17.2.

Vacant: 7.4.

Victory Conditions: 17.0 (Automatic: 17.1; Operational 17.2; and Extended Game; 20.1).

Victory Point Track: 3.4.

Zones: 15 (Stacking in: 15.2).

STRATEGY TIPS

Operation Battleaxe is a game of punch and counter punch. It is also a very short game—just three turns. A typical game turn will end after seven impulses meaning both players will have, on average, just twenty-one opportunities to place themselves in a winning position. With moves at such a premium you need to make the most out of every decision you make. The following tips are by no means a "perfect plan" for either side. The chaos of the desert battlefield is well-represented in the design. Turn length, air and artillery support, Axis fuel, Rommel's leadership—uncertainty abounds. Making the most of what you *can* control, while keeping your opponent off-balance, is one of the keys to winning.

ALLIED PLAYER

As the Allied player you begin the game with more tanks, more artillery, and air support. You hold the tactical edge, as represented in the game by the Advantage marker. Your best units are, however, slower, and lack the operational flexibility of your opponent. The coastal escarpment running from Halfaya Pass to Halfway House works against the Allies, as do Axis strongpoints. Allied strategy over the course of the game should follow a pattern of "smash, grab, hold and release." You must be aggressive at the start and press home your attack while you can. The June 15 turn is also a bit of a cat and mouse game. You want to control as many VP areas as possible when the turn is over—this will help decide your course of action on the second and third turns—but you also want to avoid Rommel hitting the panic button too quickly and releasing either of his mobile divisions. In most games you will find yourself at a point during June 16 where you will want to convert to a defensive posture and retain control of what you have already captured—or at least surrender ground as slowly as possible without being outmaneuvered by the Axis and placed out of supply.

June 17 will probably see an accelerating deterioration of the Allied position. Remember, though, that there are no penalties for eliminated Allied units at the end of the game—if it means retaining control of a VP area by all means sacrifice them.

AXIS PLAYER

As the Axis player your initial position is one of a waiting game. Until the Allied player triggers the release of your panzers your options are limited. You have less artillery, and no air support. Your Italian units have little value other than in a static defensive role. Axis strategy over the course of the game will to a greater or lesser extent be a mirror opposite of Allied strategy. You must be cautious at the start, as bad decisions could lose you the game on June 15. You do have a trump card in your powerful FLAK units. Aim to defend areas within reach of Allied units with three or four units at all times. Losing units, especially German units, will rapidly lose you the game. Retreat if necessary and live to fight another day. In most contests you will find yourself at a point during June 16 where you will want to convert to an offensive posture and attempt to regain control of Areas the Allied player has captured. Without air support direct assaults should avoided if possible in favor of maneuver: try to get around and behind the Allies and threaten to cut off their supply. Your panzers do have better staying power thanks to your battlefield recovery capability. The final turn may well see the Allied player seriously off-balance as he both tries to hold enough victory point areas to win, while trying to disengage his battered forces to safety. This is when the Axis player can deliver a potentially fatal blow.

THE ADVANTAGE

Possession of the advantage presents both players with interesting options. Riskier attacks may be made, since a loss may be turned into a stalemate. Either player may opt to receive additional replacements. The Allied player can hamper the Axis considerably with fuel shortages, while the Axis player can significantly bolster their attacks by declaring Rommel is leading from the front.