

Army Expansion Firefight 5 - Narrow Corridor

January 28th, 1943 - The Mbonehe

General Situation: After the defeat of the Japanese at Mount Austen, the Marines kept up their drive westwards to eradicate all Japanese resistance on Guadalcanal. General Hyakutake, however, was expecting 50,000 reinforcements and with these he planned to retake Henderson Airfield and drive the Americans off of the island. But before any relief came, the Americans began their own offensive. In mid-January a Composite Army-Marine (CAM) Division was formed, which included the 147th and 182d Infantry joining the 6th Marines along the coast. Their orders were to push Westwards along the narrowing coastal corridor formed by the inland mountains and the coast.

Local guides report a concentration of Japanese troops occupying a grouping of huts along the northern shore of the Mbonehe River. Check these reports and clear the area if Japanese forces are encountered.

Aftermath: The withdrawing Japanese forces continued to contest every step the Americans took as they withdrew westwards towards Cape Esperance. Orders were sent in the name of Emperor Hirohito for the commanders at Guadalcanal to withdraw their men from Guadalcanal so that they could fight another day. The Japanese Navy was sent to evacuate the garrisons and transfer them to the Solomons.

Receiving intelligence that the Japanese navy was concentrating to the northwest, General Patch took steps to guard against overextending his forces in the face of what appeared to be a large enemy reinforcement. He pulled the 25th Division back to bolster the main American perimeter defenses, but ordered the CAM Division to continue its drive to the west. By January 30th, the sole frontline force in the American advance was the 147th Infantry.

The Japanese destroyer transports made their first run to the island on the night of February 1-2. Not to bring further reinforcements, but instead to save as many Japanese soldiers as possible. That first night they picked up over 2,300 men from evacuation positions near Cape Esperance. On the night of February 4-5, they returned and saved most of the Sendai survivors and General Hyakutake and his 17th Army staff. The final evacuation was carried out on the night of February 7-8, when a 3,000-man rear guard was embarked, withdrawing over 11,000 men in three nights!

References for this Firefight: Guadalcanal-Starvation Island, Into the Valley, ibiblio.org, Marine! - The Life of Chesty Puller.

Commanders: 2 **Initiative:** U.S. on Round 1 **VP:** U.S. 1

CAP Allocation per Round: **U.S. Army:** 4 CAPS **Japanese:** 4 Caps +/- Bushido Value

Action Cards: Shuffle all Action and Bonus Cards 2-13. Each commander receives 1 card in Round 1 and 1 card each Round thereafter.

Hit Counter Piles: Mix 2 'No Hit' Counters into the Japanese Hit Counter pile.

Map Setup: Half of Map 14

Overlays: Place Village 1 so that hex V1-1 is on hex L08 and hex V1-2 is on hex M08.



U.S. Army: 147th Infantry Regiment

Setup: Set up anywhere along the eastern edge of Map 14.



2x Army Regts. **2x National Guard** **1x M3 GMC** **2x Melanesian Police**

Orders: Raid the Japanese camp for supplies and move the M3 Halftrack through the village safely.

Victory Points:

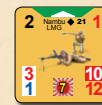
1 VP: At the end of each Round, gain 1VP for each Control Marker under U.S. control.

3 VP: Immediately, gain 3VP when the M3 Halftrack exits the western map edge.



Japanese Encampment

Defensive Line: Place on the map as listed.



1x Gren Dis
V1-17

2x Infantry
R08, V1-02

1x LMG
K10

Reactionary Force: May enter along the eastern edge of Map 14 on Round 2 or later.



2x Conscripts

Landmine: You may place one Landmine anywhere on the map.



Orders: Destroy the M3 Halftrack and attempt to capture enemy soldiers.

Victory Points:

1 VP: At the end of each Round, gain 1VP for each Control Marker under Japanese control.

1 VP: At the end of the game, gain 1 VP for each U.S. Unit on the map. **This does not include the Melanesian Police.**

Bushido Points:

+1 BP: Immediately, gain 1 BP when an Army Unit is hit. **This does not include the Melanesian Police.**

-1 BP: Immediately, lose 1 BP for each destroyed Japanese Unit.

Round 1

Initiative:

VP:

Round 2

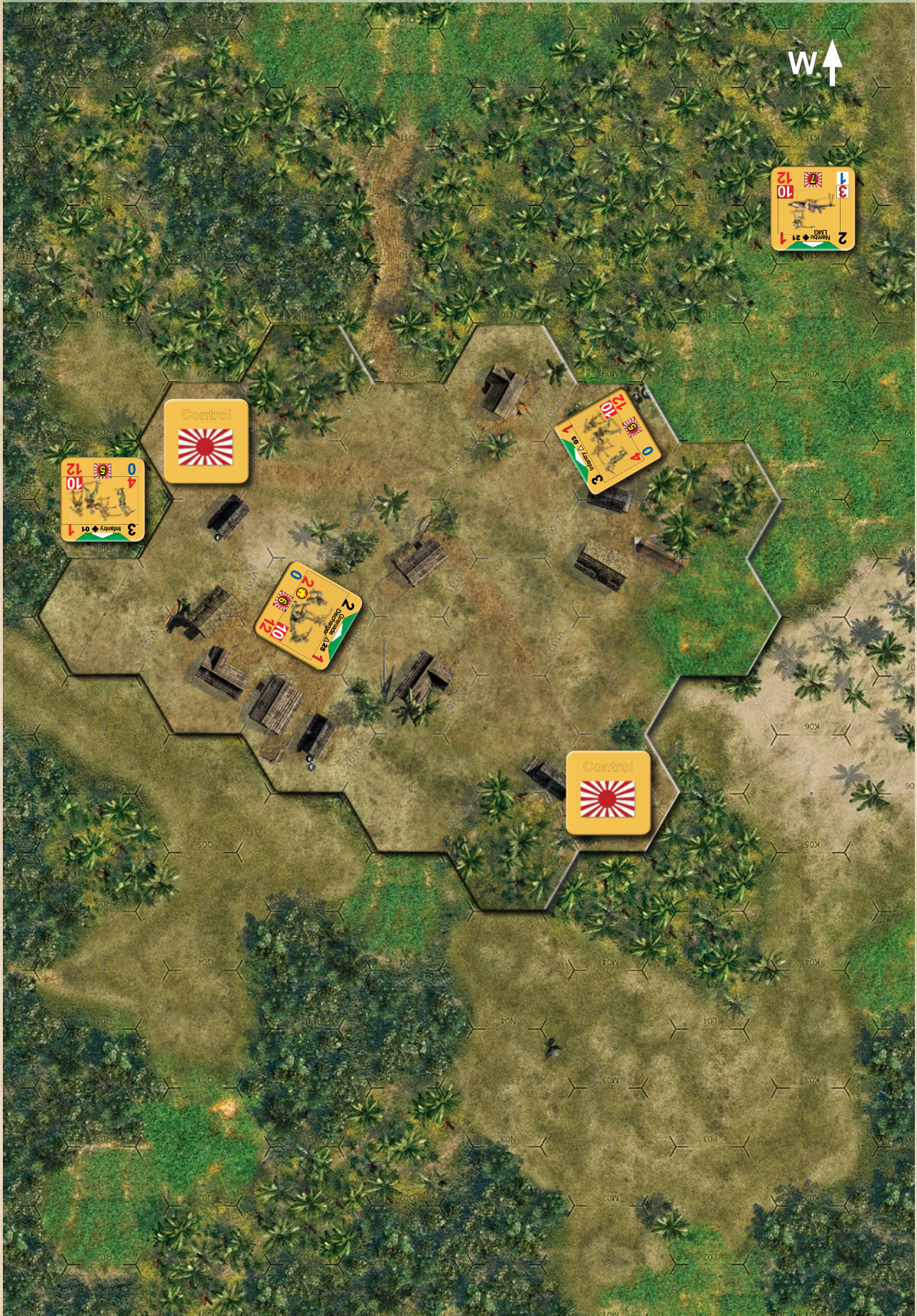
VP:

Round 3

VP:

Firefight Ends

U.S. Army may exit here.



Japanese Reactionary Units may enter from this direction beginning on Round 2.

147th may set up along first full hexes of this row during Setup.