

Air War Series

Game Title: Cactus Air Force

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SCENARIO: CACTUS AIR FORCE

25.0 INTRODUCTION

Cactus Air Force is a two-player wargame of the air campaign that was fought over the Solomon Islands in 1942-43. The centerpiece of the campaign was the island of Guadalcanal, codenamed "Cactus" by the US command. Allied forces set up an airbase at Henderson Field that turned out to be pivotal in the campaign; the air units stationed there were known as the Cactus Air Force. In this scenario, the Intruder player commands the Japanese; the Interceptor player commands the Allies. However, both players can conduct bombing missions. The objective of the Japanese is to gain air superiority over the Solomons. The objective of the Allies is to prevent this and also to cause sufficient Japanese aircraft losses to cripple them in future campaigns.

26.0 FORCES

Intruder: Controls Japanese forces.

Interceptor: Controls Allied forces.

27.0 GAME LENGTH

The game lasts five turns (each turn representing one month of operations). Each month turn has 10 hours of operations.

28.0 HOW TO WIN THE GAME

Each player gains Victory Points (VP) for certain game actions. At the end of the game, each player totals their VP. Then, the Allied player subtracts his VP from the Japanese. This gives the level of victory.

Players will need to keep track of VP by using the roster on the back of this sheet.

28.1 Levels of Victory

13 or more Japanese Strategic

0 to 12 Japanese Operational

-1 to -12 Allied Operational

-13 or less Allied Strategic

28.2 Acquiring Japanese VP

One for each Allied air unit in the Damage Box at the end of the game.

Four for each Allied ground force target bombed.

Four for each Allied naval force target bombed.

Four for each Mutual Naval action target bombed.

28.3 Acquiring Allied VP

Two for each Japanese air unit in the Damage Box at the end of the game.

Three for each Japanese ground force target bombed.

Three for each Japanese naval force target bombed.

Four for each Mutual Naval action target bombed.

29.0 HOW TO SET UP THE GAME

Japanese sets up first, then the Allies. Place the Month marker on August 1942.

29.1 Japanese

Japanese Command Level. Start at three; maximum is four.

Japanese Territory. New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, New Georgia.

Japanese Deployment. On Rabaul: 2 x A6M Zero, 2 x G4M Betty, 1 x D3A Val.

Reinforcement Boxes. All remaining Japanese air units. Certain cards will generate reinforcements.

Place reinforcements on any Japanese airbases to a maximum capacity of each airbase.

Campaign Cards. Shuffle the Japanese deck.

29.2 Allied

Allied Command Level. Start at two; maximum is four.

Allied Territory. Guadalcanal, New Hebrides, Australia.

Deploy.

On Henderson Field (Guadalcanal): 1 x F4F, 1 x SBD

On New Hebrides or Australia:

1 x P39, 1 x B17, 1 x B26, 1 x SBD, 1 x PBV

Reinforcement Boxes. All remaining Allied air units. Certain cards will generate reinforcements. Place reinforcements on any Allied airbase to the capacity.

Campaign Cards. Shuffle the Allied deck.

30.0 SPECIAL RULES

30.1 Command Levels

Command levels change due to cards. A player's command level may never be reduced to zero or less, however.

30.2 Henderson Field Capacity

Only the Allied player may use Henderson Field. Henderson Field starts at a capacity of two. Its capacity thereafter is per the numbers on the Turn Record Chart. This is both the number of air units that can be based on it and the AA value.

30.3 Antiaircraft

All functioning airbases have an AA value equal to their aircraft capacity. There are no actual AA pieces in the game.

30.4 Australia & New Hebrides

Only Allied air units may enter these grids. Japanese units may not.

30.5 Radar

The Allied player [only] has a radar line. He may examine all Japanese units that are within the interior of that radar line.

Designer's Note: This also represents coastwatchers.

30.6 CRT

The Allied player has a different CRT from the Japanese; this reflects the vulnerability of Japanese aircraft.

30.7 Targets

The Japanese can bomb Allied ground and naval force grids and Allied airbases. The Allies can bomb Japanese ground and naval force grids and Japanese airbases. Both players can bomb the Mutual Naval Action target grid, but only if a card permits it.

30.8 Airfield Attacks

A player can attack enemy airfields and each successful hit will affect one enemy air unit on that airfield. However, the airfield itself will not be affected (its capacity is not reduced).

30.9 Seaplanes

Units marked "SP" are seaplanes. They may base on a grid containing a friendly ground or naval force symbol. Each such grid may base one friendly seaplane unit, even if the target has been bombed.

30.10 Fighter-Bombers

Units marked "FB" are fighter-bombers. They function as fighters and can bomb ground targets, although they can bomb only one target per month.

30.11 Wild Cards

If a player has two Wild Cards in his hand, he can play them at the start of any turn. Instead of the effects on the cards the following occurs.

Japanese. Raise the Japanese command level by one for the rest of the game.

Allied. Raise the Allied command level by one for the rest of the game.

30.12 Naval Battle cards

Certain cards will generate a target on the map (such as *Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands*). That grid will be a target for only as long as that card is face up. The card is discarded at the end of the next player's turn (so each player has a chance to bomb it). The card is discarded, the target does not appear again. Both players can bomb that grid and gain points.

30.13 Reinforcement cards

Reinforcement cards will provide additional air units the first time they are picked. The second and subsequent times they are picked, they provide the number of refits listed.

Errata: Japanese G3M counters should be G4M. R Area Force map box should refer to A6M2, not A6M. Battle of Eastern Solomons card should indicate Eastern Solomons, not Santa Cruz.

Japanese Target Roster	VP	Bombed
Ground Targets		
Beach Red	+4	
Naval Targets		
Iron Bottom Sound		+4
US-Australia Convoys	+4	
Naval Actions		
Eastern Solomons		+4
Santa Cruz Islands		+4
Naval Battle of Guadalcanal		+4
+1 VP for each Allied unit in the Damage Box		
Allied Target Roster	VP	Bombed
Ground Targets		
Cape Esperance	+3	
Munda	+3	
Naval Targets		
Tokyo Express	+3	
Southeast Fleet	+3	
Naval Actions		
Eastern Solomons		+4
Santa Cruz Islands		+4

Naval Battle of Guadalcanal +4
 +2 VP for each Japanese air unit in the Damage Box

Air Superiority Combat Results Table

Die roll	Allied fighters firing on Japanese aircraft Allied or Japanese bombers firing defensively	Japanese fighters firing on Allied aircraft
1-3	-	-
4	Abort	-
5	Abort	Abort
6	Kill	Kill

Anti-Aircraft Combat Results Table

Die roll	Outcome
1-5	No effect
6	Abort

Bombing Combat Results Table

Die roll	Target is an enemy Ground Force	Target is an enemy Naval Force	Target is a based air unit
1-3	No effect.	No effect.	No effect.
4	No effect.	Target bombed.	Target bombed.
5-6	Target bombed.	Target bombed.	Target bombed.

Place the based air unit in the Abort Box.
 Place the based air unit in the Damage Box.

21.2 Explanation of Combat Results

Abort. One enemy air unit is placed in the Abort Box. An aborted unit is out of play for the remainder of the turn. It is automatically received as a reinforcement on the turn following.

Kill. One enemy air unit is shot down (destroyed). Place it in the Damage Box. It may be redeployed only via a card that allows Refit.