FOR UMPIRES ONLY!
IF YOU INTEND TO PLAY THIS SCENARIO,
DO NOT READ THESE PAGES!

INTRODUCTORY SCENARIO: PUSHING IN A GERMAN OUTPOST

The first scenario is a small introductory one, so that you can walk through the rules with 1 to 4 new Mission Command players. The players will take the British side, and you will run the Germans – remember that you're the umpire, not the German player, so the most important thing for the players to learn is how to play the game. Play the Germans fairly, without taking undue advantage of any British mistakes. The British have enough forces so that they will normally be able to accomplish the mission.

We've presented the scenario in a form that you can use by directly reading out to players the text in the boxes. It should take 2 to 3 hours, depending on the previous wargame experience of the group, including the time it takes to explain. Printed material for players is also available on our website.

Materials

You will need British and German miniatures and vehicles in accordance with the orders of battle given below.

Make sure players have:

- The terrain laid out on the table (1.5km x 2km makes roughly 75cm x 100cm)
- British forces laid out off-table
- British Reference Cards for the following troops:
  - » Jeep
  - » Carriers
  - » British infantry
  - » British infantry heavy support
  - » 6-pounder AT gun
  - » Sherman tank
  - » Sherman Firefly
  - » Stuart light tank
  - » 25-pounder gun / howitzer
  - » Sexton SP gun / howitzer
- British Command Card for the scenario
- Measuring sticks or rulers
- Sketch map per player

You will also need:

- This Reference Manual
- Chits for Reaction Test, Halt / Cover, Retire, Overwatch / Fired, Retreat / Rout
- Markers for suppression and casualties
- Spare small elements for full-sized infantry elements that are reduced by casualties (for both sides)
- Smoke for destroyed vehicles (we use black- and red-painted cotton wool), and smoke for concealment (we use white cotton wool)
- Templates for area fire
- A few d20 dice and a deviation dice
- Rubble or template to show damaged buildings
- German forces handy but not visible to players
- German Command Card
- German Reference Cards (see page 82)

Troops

Feel free to vary the forces on either side, if you haven't got exactly what's specified here. Bear in mind that this is a short introductory scenario, so you should ensure that the players are very likely to accomplish the mission.

Prior to the game sort the British forces out by group and make sure the Reference Cards and British Command Card are handy. This makes it convenient when you and the players refer to them. The British forces are listed in the section for players and on the Command Cards.

The German forces you need are listed on the German Command Card. Gather them together and print out the German Reference Cards and Command Card, but keep them out of sight of the players.

Players' organisation

With 2 players, each player commands a battalion, and the infantry battalion commander is the overall C-in-C of the regimental group. The tank commander also commands the artillery.

With 3 players, 1 player is nominated the C-in-C and also directly commands the artillery. The other 2 players command a battalion each.

With 4 players, 1 player is nominated the C-in-C. A second player controls the artillery. The other 2 players command a battalion each.

Note that we've listed the available radio nets for your players, and that you should make sure that everyone observes any time delays in delivering orders.

BACKGROUND

The date is some time during the summer of 1944 in Normandy. You are the commander of a British motorised battalion, part of an armoured division closing up to a German defensive position to the south. The armoured division is the spearhead of an Allied offensive that intends to open the way towards Paris. Reconnaissance has found a major German position some 3 miles (5 kilometres) ahead. There are some German outposts in advance of their main position, one of which is in a small village to your immediate front [point at village on map].

It is now 2 hours before dusk, and your division commander has given you the task of clearing the German outpost from the village.

The purpose of this scenario is for me to walk you through the main parts of the Mission Command rules. I don't expect you to know the rules at this stage, and, in order to avoid overwhelming you with detail, I will explain the parts that you need to understand as they come up. I will control the German side and will also give you advice and guidance as to the possible courses of action that you might take. However, you will make the decisions for the British troops.

The focus of the Mission Command rules is on helping you to learn more about the effectiveness (or otherwise) of a national army's operational doctrine – its way of fighting – during World War Two. A Mission Command game is founded on realistic, historically accurate or pseudo-historical scenarios that present background information and occasionally some pre-game activity. This scenario is not historical. It's a small one, but probably fairly typical of a Normandy skirmish prior to a major Allied offensive. It has some challenges for the British, but the main purpose is to introduce the rules. Each of your units has to be given orders at the start of the game which can be modified later, but orders are brief. Communications and changes of orders are carried out by command elements, but as units are restricted by the necessities of combat, you will find that you have to make difficult choices about what they do.

Ground scale is 1 millimetre = 2 metres, so 5 centimetres is 100 metres. Each figure represents from 5 to 10 real men. Each vehicle, support or heavy weapon model represents from 2 to 5 actual vehicles, support or heavy weapons. The smallest component is the 'element' [point at an element]. Military structures, like battalions and divisions, are called 'units' and must be given separate orders. Elements are collected together into groups, which have a command element, usually with a figure to show an officer [point]. A group is normally the smallest unit that can have its own orders.

The game is played in a series of rounds, each consisting of 1 turn per side, the same side always having the first turn of the round. In this game you get to go first each round. The game continues with successive rounds until the end-game conditions specified by the scenario have been fulfilled. This game lasts up to 2 hours of game time, which is 12 turns, or it can end sooner if you achieve the victory conditions.

VICTORY

You win this scenario either by taking the village or by preventing the Germans from re-supplying it. Re-supply can only be effected between the road and the stream on the south edge of the board [point].

BRITISH FORCES

You have a small British regimental group: an infantry regiment plus the support of a Sherman tank regiment and some artillery. British regiments are actually battalion sized. This force consists of several groups. Each company forms 1 group of elements, which would normally fight together. The infantry elements don't have radios, so should be within at most 5cm of another element in the group. This does not mean that you cannot deploy some elements separately. They will follow the orders they've been given, but changing orders will take longer, and the elements will suffer a morale penalty if they get in a fight.

Your command elements all have radios, so can communicate with each other readily. All your vehicles also have radios, but your non-command infantry elements don't, so the latter will have to communicate by runner if they're too far away for normal communication (5cm). Your tanks use their short-range radios for communications, so you can have 15cm between your tanks.

To help you manage your forces, I've printed off a Command Card that lists each of your groups and how they relate to each other, both in a command sense and for communications. Feel free to take a look at this now. The Command Card has a list of radio nets that your groups use. You might want to bear in mind that, as the Germans are in a defensive position, they might also have field telephone lines as well as radios.

Brigade headquarters, acting as HQ of the regimental group

Regimental group HQ
- 1x large command element
- 1x jeep

Infantry Regiment

Battalion HQ
- 1x large command element
- 1x jeep

Support Company (reduced)
- 1x small command element with carrier
- 2x 3" mortar elements with 2 carriers
- 2x PIAT elements with 2 carriers
- 2x 6-pounder AT guns with 2 Loyd carriers

Rifle Company (x4) each comprising:
- 1x small command element with jeep
- 1x 2" mortar element
- 1x PIAT element
- 1x LMG element
- 2x integrated infantry elements

Tank Regiment

HQ (reduced)
- 1x 75mm Sherman V tank (command)
- 2x Stuart light tanks

A, B and C Squadrons, each:
- 3x 75mm Sherman V, 1 with command
- 1x Sherman Firefly

Artillery assets

25-pounder battery
- 1x FOO with carrier
- 2x 25-pounders (off-table)

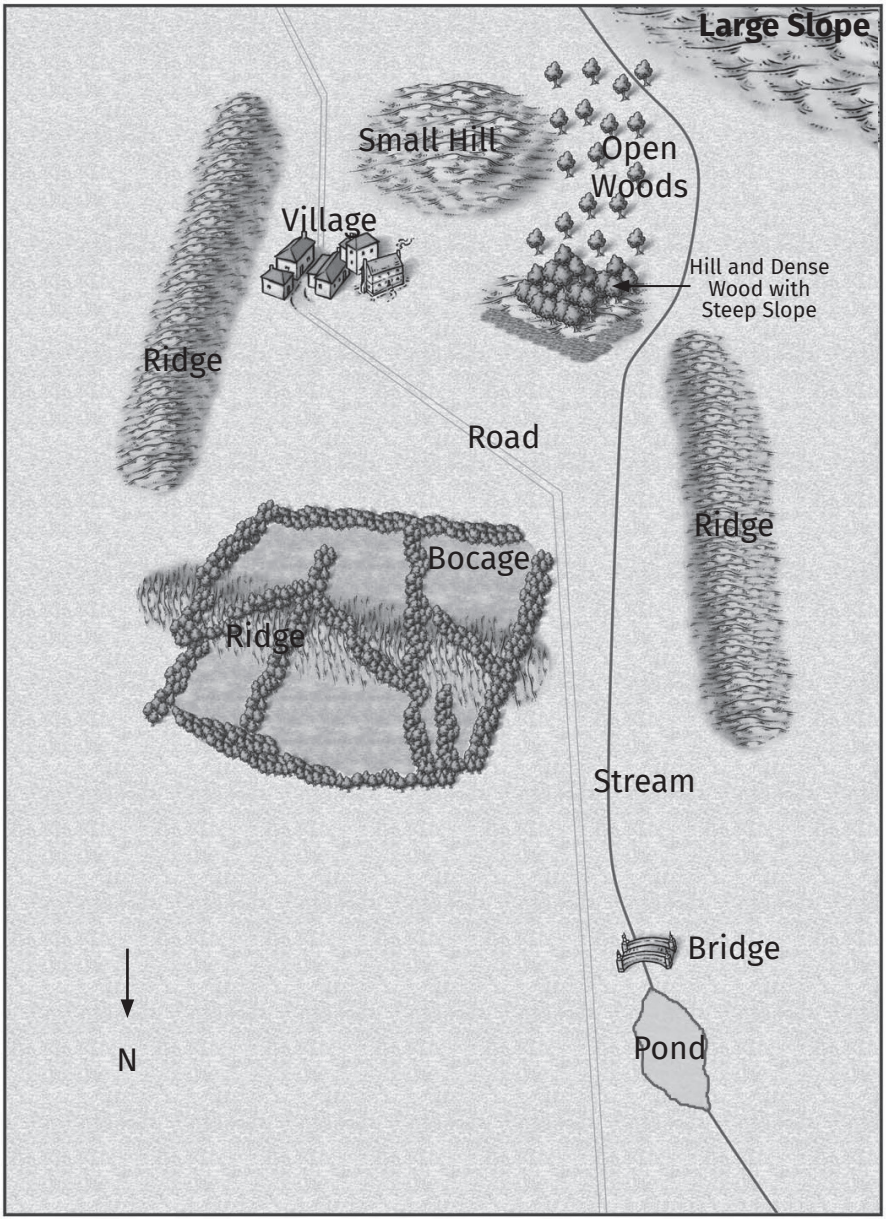
Sexton battery
- 1x FOO in Sherman tank
- 2x Sexton SP gun/howitzers (off-table)

All your forces are regulars, which means they're not particularly vulnerable to sudden collapse, but not likely to be heroic either. Most of your troops have small arms [point to integrated element] – these are effective up to about 15cm, but can fire out to 25cm. Your normal infantry are 'integrated' elements, which means they have integral LMGs – LMGs have a similar effective range to rifles; however, integrated elements can shoot twice – small arms and MGs. The PIAT can be used against German medium tanks, armoured cars and strong points, preferably from the side of tanks; it's pretty useless against the front of Panthers and Tigers. The 2" mortar has a range of only 25cm, can be used to fire HE or smoke and can use direct or indirect fire. It shoots at only 1 target element. The 3" mortar has 130cm range, uses area fire, and the team also has a radio that links to all the company commanders. Area fire uses these templates [point], so it can hit more than 1 target – note that it represents more than 1 tube, so the template is not circular. The light tanks cannot stand against German tanks, but can take out armoured cars and half-tracked vehicles. The tanks are the most common Allied tank, moderately armoured at the front, and with a not great 75mm gun that can fire HE at non-armoured targets (including buildings) and AT rounds at armoured vehicles, but you don't want to take on a Panther or Tiger tank with those. They can also fire smoke rounds. You also have a smattering of very effective 17-pounder anti-tank guns in some of the Shermans [point]. You have a lot of artillery support for this operation, which could be used for smoke, HE of various types, counter-battery fire and so on. It's all off-table and has the range to fire anywhere you can see. Your Forward Observation Officers for each battery can be attached to any command element (normal British practice), and used either concentrated or separately. As the FOOs command the battery, there will normally be no delay in calling in fire (radio for fire in 1 turn, response on the next turn). You can have planned fire (specify turn of fire and the target) or on-call (wait for the FOO to call the shoot) – but not pre-plotted map fire (immediately accurate fire at a target that the gunners can't see), as your gunners haven't had time to register the guns. This means your artillery fire will be subject to deviation from its targets, and the FOOs may have to adjust the fire onto the target.

TERRAIN

You can be as sophisticated or unsophisticated as you like with the terrain. We use cut polystyrene tiles covered with a green cloth for the hills and ridges, carpet patches of various colours for the larger terrain types, some self-standing tree models for the woods (dense being simply close together), and cut-out card for the roads and stream (for the stream we use blue for added realism!). For bocage we use commercially purchased wargame hedges or a carpet patch to show 'generic bocage'. The village should be a built-up area of 10cm x 5cm. For all terrain types it's helpful to know where the boundaries are as it avoids arguments.

The size of the table is fairly small, only 75cm (1.5km) x 100cm (2km).



Let's have a look at the terrain. For this scenario you have a clear idea of what's in front of you. Your troops are at the northern edge of the board, which is at the bottom of the sketch map [point]. There's a road running roughly south to north through the village. Travel on the road is slightly quicker than on open ground for vehicles but not for unencumbered infantry; your infantry is all unencumbered, except for the 3" mortar crews. To the east there are some ridges – these mean you can't see over them from level ground, and tanks can be hull-down if immediately behind them. There's an area of bocage to the N of the village – bocage counts as rough terrain and crossing an obstacle for each Move action, so it slows everyone up. Command and communications are not easy in bocage. To the west of the village is a low hilly area covered with dense woods – difficult to get through, impassable to vehicles in fact, plus it has a steep slope on this side, so getting through there with infantry will be very difficult (only 2cm per turn). These hills are not very large, but in

the mostly flat ground of Normandy any raised area acts as hills. There's an area of open woods behind the densely wooded hill. Open woods are traversable by vehicles and give some cover to troops in it. A stream – a relatively simple obstacle for any troops, entirely fordable – runs through the valley from the slope to the S towards where the main German position lies. The pond is impassable to all troops. The large slope right in the SW corner of the sketch map leads to the main German position. It dominates the SW quadrant, but both small hills effectively restrict any line of sight from there into the valley. The small outlying hill overshadows the valley to the south of the village and would cover any exit up the road.

The village itself consists of sturdy 2-storey houses, a mixture of wood, brick and stone, with narrow streets. There are no particularly tall or very strong buildings. The village could hold up to 4 full-sized infantry elements (2 in the top level, 2 in the ground floor level), or theoretically a vehicle element or 2 (your recce reports suggest no vehicles in the village).

THE GERMANS

It's important to be clear to the players about what's known about the enemy, and to stress that reconnaissance isn't 100% accurate. In some scenarios the players may not be informed about flank or rear, or might be given misleading information. In this scenario the commander knows that the flank and rear are covered by other British units.

The players don't know the precise detail of the German force, but of course you do, as umpire. Suggested German starting locations and initial orders are given below. Feel free to amend them if desired.

Use the following German Reference Cards: infantry, infantry heavy support, Wespe, Sturmgeschütz IIIG.

Kampfgruppe Klein

Kampfgruppe HQ
- 1x large command element

5th Kompanie, II Battalion, Panzergrenadier Regiment
- 1x coherent infantry element with command
- 1x coherent infantry element
- 4x LMG light support elements
- 1x HMG heavy support element

2nd Batterie, Panzer Assault Gun Battalion
- 1x Sturmgeschütz IIIG with command
- 1x Sturmgeschütz IIIG

1st Batterie, Panzer Artillery Battalion
- 1x Forward Observer specialist support
- 1x Wespe (off-table)

All are veterans.

You have no worries about either flank or rear. There is no possibility of any major German counter-attack, because other units are protecting these spots. Local counter-attacks are a possibility (they always are with the Germans).

Reconnaissance reports have indicated that you have German Panzergrenadiers from a Panzer division in front of you at not more than company strength. Beware, because a full strength German Panzergrenadier company can be up to twice as strong as 1 of your companies and can have an annoying number of machine guns. However, you also know that the enemy has taken casualties, so they're not at full strength. It's unlikely that the Germans will have left this outpost isolated, so you can expect them to support it with mortar fire, anti-tank weapons (at least Panzerfausts), possibly artillery and even assault guns or tanks.

The Germans haven't had time to construct bunkers, fortunately, but probably have simple field fortifications with trenches, covered and concealed positions.

PLAYING THE GAME

You don't need to confront the players with lots of detail about how to handle the mechanics of the game at this point. Save that until the start of deployment.

Give the players time to make a plan. Encourage them to write on the Command Card, or use a *Mission Commander's Board*, and maybe on the sketch map, but not too much detail. It should be enough so that they understand the plan and can execute it. Some of it can be verbal; the key is that they know their plan!

There are 4 main parts to a Mission Command game: planning, deployment, fighting and assessing victory. Although the fighting part will normally take up most of the time, in some scenarios the other bits will be just as important. It's useful to get to grips with all of these parts of the game. We'll get on to moving the figures around in a little while.

PLANNING

We're already into the planning stage now. You've had a briefing about your mission, you know what troops you've got, something about the opposition and the terrain over which you'll be fighting. Now you need a plan, so that you can give your troops orders and accomplish the mission. Planning in Mission Command isn't necessarily onerous, and we don't expect players to carry out the military analysis of a general staff. However, your plan should be cast within the bounds of possibilities outlined by the national doctrine of your army. For this introductory scenario, you have a lot of freedom of action, and British higher echelons are not concerned – the war won't be lost if you fail! Your plan should, pretty obviously, be a plan of attack in this case.

To help you make your plan, you might well ask yourself the following questions, bearing in mind all you know about your forces, the enemy and the terrain:

1. What is our primary tactical objective for the mission? Where should we end up?
2. What are the intermediate (phase) objectives?
3. How will we make the best use of the supporting arms (artillery and AT guns) that we've been allocated?

We have copies of the sketch map of the terrain for you to use, if you like. In a bigger game, you might use these for a fire plan, initial deployment, likely enemy locations, and probable movements of friendly forces. For this game, you may want to sketch your routes of attack, and phase lines, and you should consider whether your artillery should have a fire plan.

Each of your commands has to have its own starting orders, which can be written on the Command Card, or put on the sketch map as an annotation. Generally these will be couched in simple terms, as follows:

- The unit's stance, such as 'advance', 'hold', 'attack', 'move to', 'support',
- An indication of a relevant geographical location, enemy position, friendly unit and/or direction to which the stance applies,
- And the intensity of the operation, if relevant, such as 'at all costs', 'cautiously', 'rapidly'.

The purpose of the orders is to enable your units to carry out your plan. A unit must not carry out activities that are at variance from its orders (with the exception of self-preservation). For example, if ordered to defend a position, it can't launch an attack that would take it out of its position. Of course, a higher echelon unit could give it new orders.

Your C-in-C is the regimental group commander, and he commands all the forces. You can give orders to all your commands via the battalion structures (in other words not directly to companies), and, if you keep the regimental group and infantry battalion HQs adjacent to each other, you can change the infantry battalion's orders directly in this scenario. In Mission Command, orders are transmitted from a command element [point] to each element under its command [point] via other elements. As long as each element is within command range of another element in the group, and the group has a command element, everyone will do what you want.

You have a lot of radios, so the command ranges of your command elements are large (150cm or 3km for those with radios), but your infantry elements themselves only have 5cm range to the next element. So you can put your companies like this [demonstrate], with up to 5cm between each element. Usually you'd put the HQ to the rear – not actually necessary in Mission Command, because losses are taken from the whole commanded group, not usually an individual element, so there's not a direct risk to the command element – it's representative of the whole command function of the company, rather than actually where the commander is. A purely command infantry element cannot shoot.

Most of your elements with radios can communicate with each other anywhere on the board. However, your Sherman commander can't communicate directly by radio with the infantry commander – they're in a different unit, so aren't netted-in. They could talk if they're next to each other. This does mean that if you give the Stuarts 'recce' orders, they can operate virtually anywhere in the area, report to tank battalion HQ, and then the report can go back to regimental HQ.

You are allowed to have elements outside command range; for example, this happens in bocage. This has 2 effects: (1) orders take longer to transmit; (2) they're more likely to react badly if they have to take a Reaction Test. It's a good idea to maintain your front-line elements in command range of each other, if possible.

Your support elements (mortars for example) might get left behind, so you might want to give them a fire plan to stick to, or give them new orders as and when via the support HQ radio net. Your company HQs can operate as forward observers for the 3" mortars. This takes 2 Communicate actions if the 3" mortars are ready and waiting – 1 to communicate from the company HQ to support HQ, and another from support HQ to the mortars.

You could of course use carriers to drive around with new orders if elements in an individual company get dispersed.

DEPLOYMENT

Allow some space off the northern table edge, so that British troops can be deployed off-table, ready to move on in turn 1.

Okay, now you have your plan, it's time to confirm your orders and deploy your troops. For this game, you start by entering the board anywhere along the northern table edge up to the eastern edge of the bocage; some elements can stay off-table if you want and come on whenever you order them to. In fact, it's probably best to leave the artillery off-table, as they can hit anywhere on the table through indirect fire.

Don't forget that orders can be changed during the game, but will take time to do so.

RUNNING THE FIGHTING

At this point, you should explain the sequence of play, especially the concept of the hot and cold situation and how that affects movement. Refer players to Play Aid 1, which lists most of the actions they'll need during the game. You will have to judge how much guidance your players need before they start.

The Germans are likely to be very overmatched in this scenario, so they'll need to be deployed carefully. Deployment should illustrate the capability of small, well-organised and experienced forces. We suggest the following deployment, but feel free to vary it.

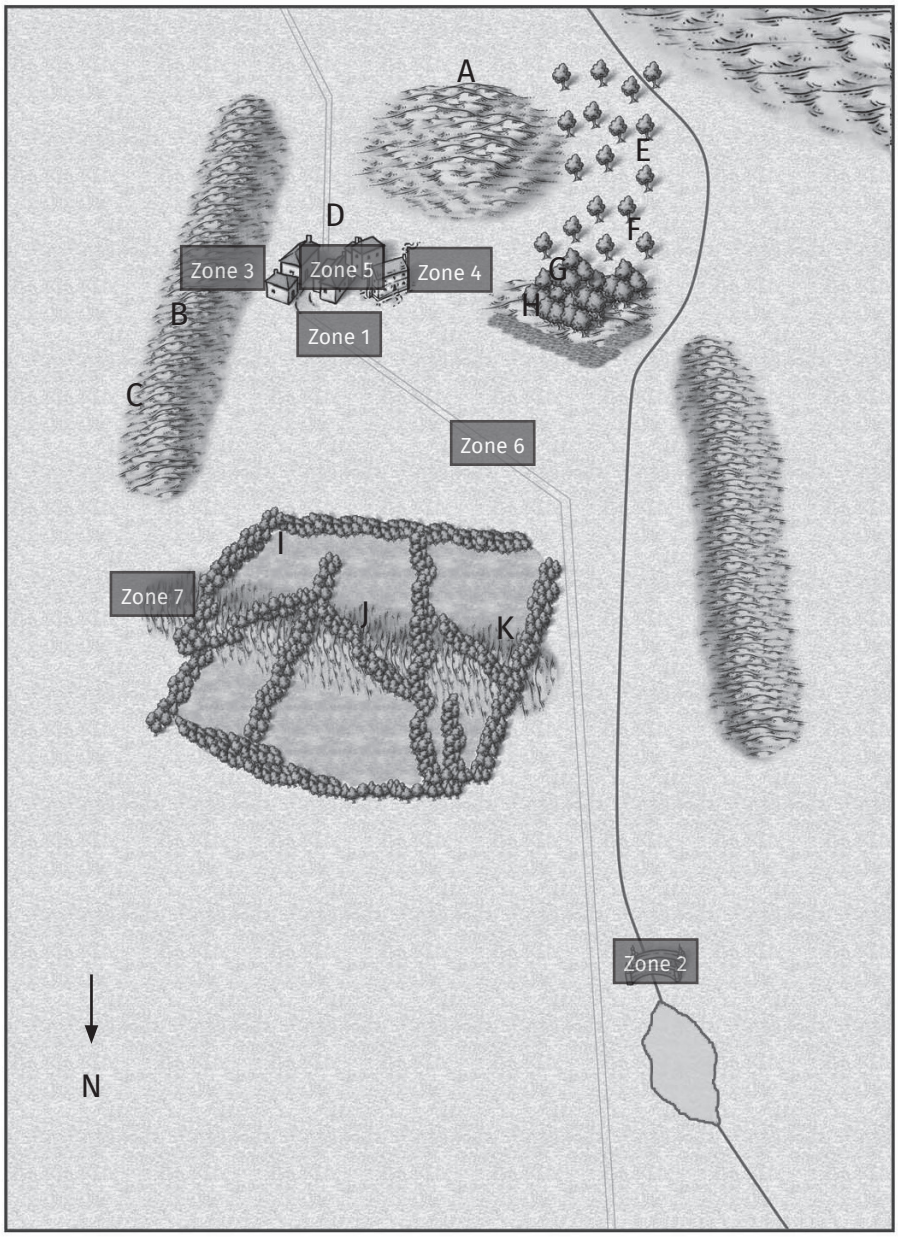
The German troops are all veterans, so they will have +2 modifier on Reaction Test rolls. Their orders are to hold till nightfall, then withdraw to the main position – they can withdraw successfully off any part of the south edge of the map.

The initial positions of all the infantry elements are covered entrenchments with fixed field telephones, so they're in command range automatically, if they stay put. If they move or are forced to retire, retreat or rout, then the furthest flung elements will be out of command range and will likely run off. The covered entrenchments are medium structures for area fire effects, and troops in them benefit from good cover. All the infantry are concealed, so they can't be seen till range is 0. All the Germans have overwatch at the start, so can use opportunity fire; infantry will generally wait till the enemy is at < 5cm before opening fire. Flanking MGs will not fire (and reveal their location), until the enemy has passed and engaged troops to their front.

As the German main position is to the SW, you might optionally call in 15cm artillery support if the British approach the large slope from due north. This fire support might be harassing fire to start, but get heavier if troops reach the large slope, reflecting German sensitivity about their main position.

Suggested German starting locations and initial orders

- **A - Kampfgruppe HQ:** behind southern Small Hill. Withdraw if Small Hill under small arms fire.
- **B - Sturmgeschütz IIIG + command:** hull-down behind ridge facing NW. Engage any enemy vehicles approaching the village. Be prepared to support C if C is attacked.
- **C - Sturmgeschütz IIIG:** behind ridge facing N. Protect flank of B from attack round the ridge.
- **D - 5 Kompanie coherent element + command:** 3cm to S of village. Occupy village once any enemy artillery has lifted, or when informed that enemy infantry is attacking village.
- **E and F - 2 LMG elements:** in open woods covering the stream. Engage any enemy infantry crossing the stream within 5cm.
- **G - 1 LMG element:** in dense woods covering approaches to the village. Engage enemy attacking village only when they have reached in front of the village. Otherwise do not reveal your position.
- **H - FOO element:** dug in and concealed in NE corner of dense woods. Call in the Wespe to engage soft targets as they show up. The following zones are registered, so will hit first shot.
  - » Zone 1: immediately N of village
  - » Zone 2: bridge over stream
  - » Zone 3: immediately E of village
  - » Zone 4: immediately W of village
  - » Zone 5: village
  - » Zone 6: road mid-way between steep hill and corner of bocage
  - » Zone 7: ridge line next to E of bocage
- **FOO orders are:** if enemy is sighted, use harassing fire along the road (to conserve ammunition). Zone 1: if threatened, prepare bombardment and bombard for 2 rounds, then cease fire and recover. 2-4, 6: normal fire on targets as they arise prioritising infantry and transports. Only engage Zone 5 if the village falls.
- **I - 1 HMG element:** in corner of S edge of bocage facing S. Engage any enemy attacking village. Otherwise do not reveal your position.
- **J - 1 coherent infantry element:** centre of bocage behind crest. Engage infantry approaching within 5cm of position. Otherwise do not reveal your position.
- **K - 1 LMG element:** West side of bocage behind crest. Engage infantry approaching within 5cm of position. Otherwise do not reveal your position.



As the players seek to move their troops, explain the movement allowances of each troop type as they traverse each terrain type. As the tanks have a much larger potential movement than the infantry, it's worth mentioning that if the tanks charge forward, then they will be unsupported. Players can elect to move whole groups together, or can move 1 element at a time, reserving other elements to fire in response to finding anything.

Also mention that the players will only spot concealed troops when they are on top of them, or the concealed troops open fire or move.

If the players commit to planned artillery fire, go through the area fire procedure step by step the first time. You might need to remind players to use smoke if they need to block potential enemies' view.

Once the British have come under small arms fire, remind them that the situation is then 'hot' within 25cm, and movement actions are adjusted to 'Move Once', rather than 'Move Twice'. Use Reaction Test markers if a trigger happens. This will allow you to show the whole turn sequence.

As German troops and positions are spotted (usually when they fire), put the German elements on the table, telling players whether or not they are entrenched. Make sure to go step-by-step through the point-to-point fire procedure slowly the first couple of times. It's worth explaining the relatively high numbers for causing casualties, even if suppression is relatively common – this is because the rules assume that infantry will always go flat when under fire and take advantage of small irregularities even in open ground.

Things to remember about the German troops:

- All are veteran, so have +2 on Reaction Tests (roll the German tests secretly as necessary). In their entrenchments they will have another +2 for good cover and +1 for concealment. However, their orders do permit withdrawal (-3).
- They may take suppressions or casualties from British artillery without British knowledge – complete accuracy is not necessary; it's better to keep the game flowing than to be precise.
- In their initial positions, they have field telephones, so are not separated.

The British may take initial casualties and even fail Reaction Tests. However, remind them that they do have a lot of groups, and should support with fresh infantry groups or with tanks where possible. They should have plenty of time and don't have to hurry.

END OF THE SCENARIO

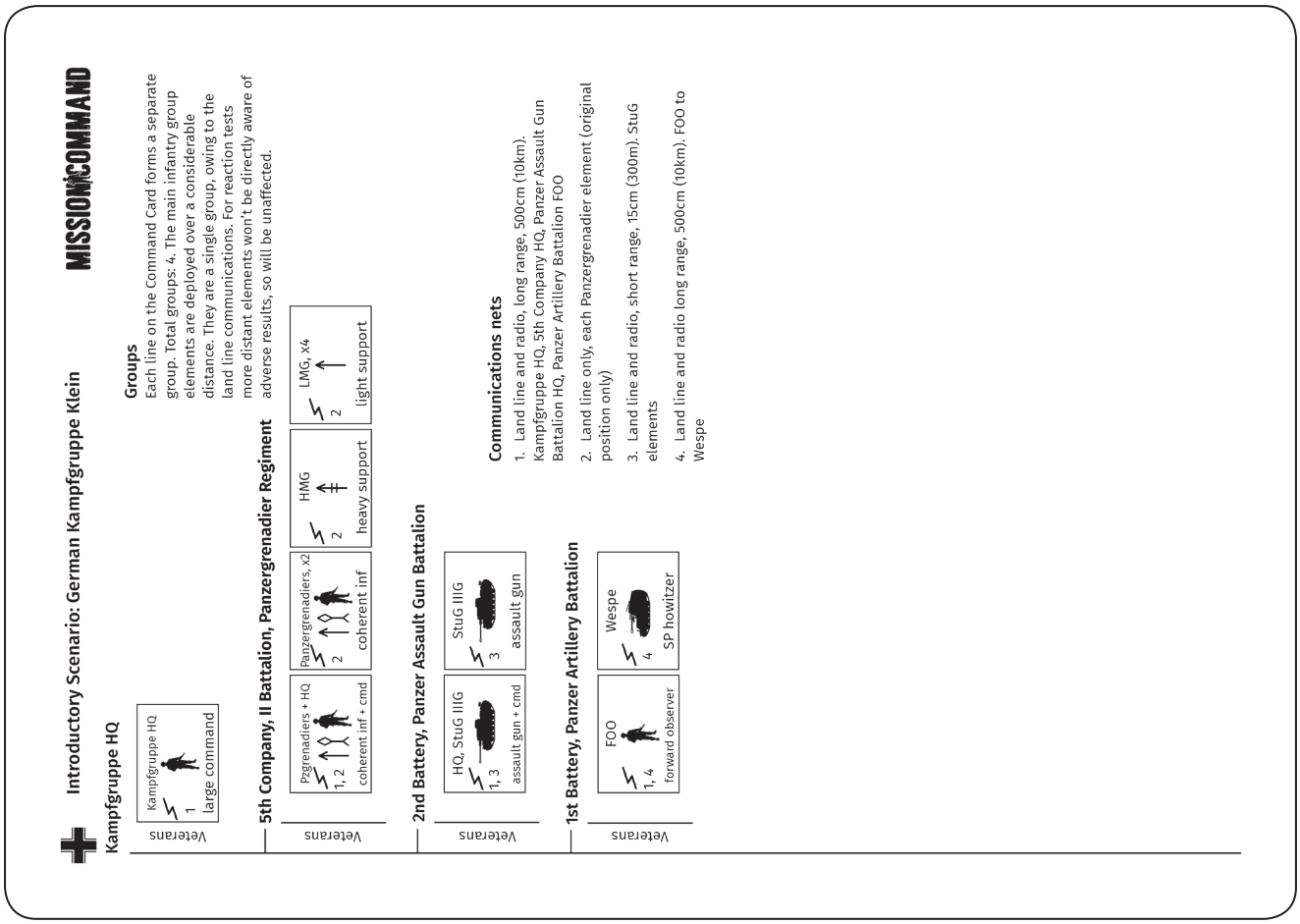
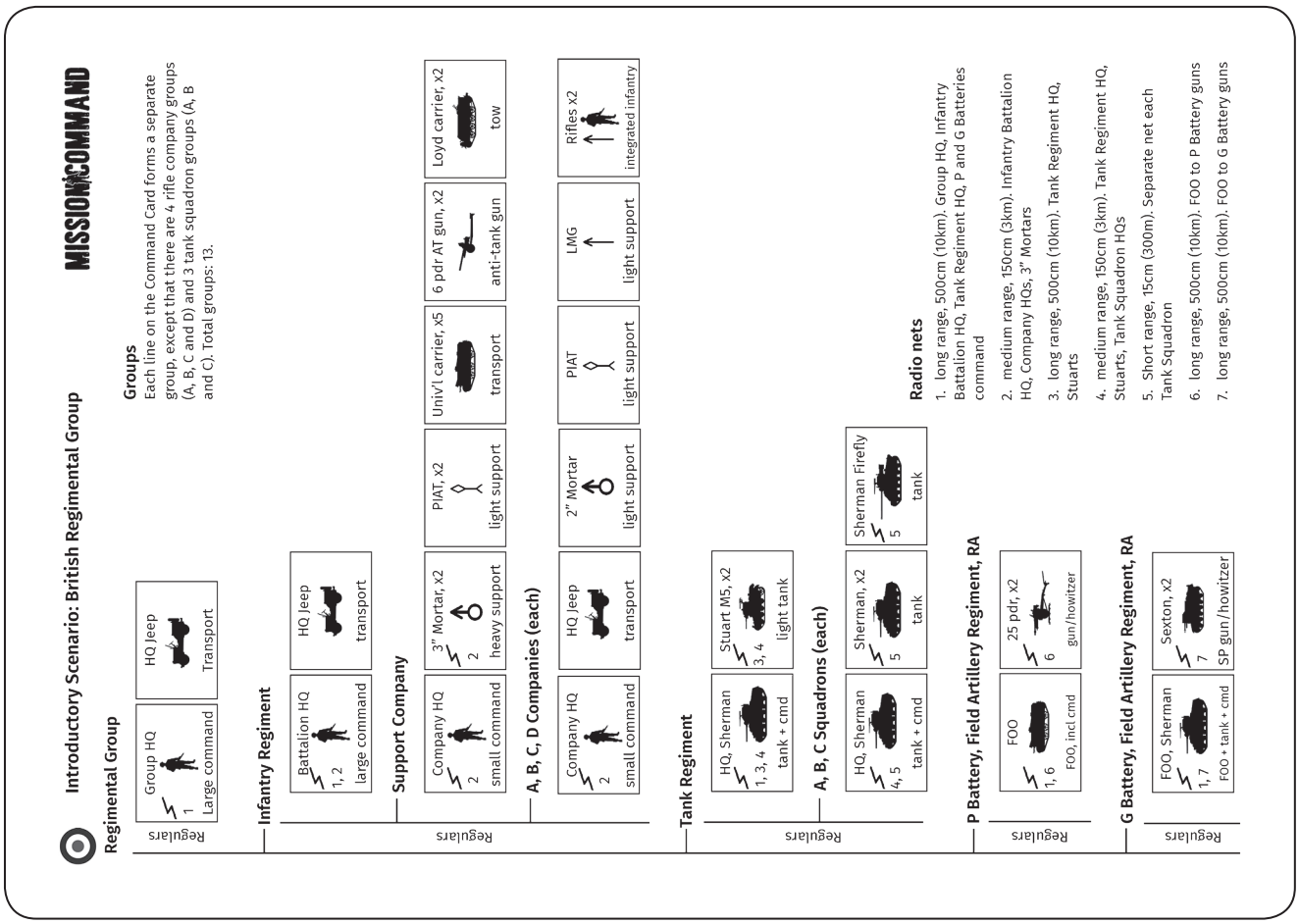
If the British can push the Germans out of the village and get their own forces in it, the scenario ends. Alternatively, the British can win by bringing the space between the road and stream at the south edge of the board under constant direct fire.

Discuss with the players how well they think they have played. Take into account the British and German comparative casualties. Were they able to make effective use of all the capabilities of their troops? Did they place themselves unnecessarily under effective German fire? Did the British win and how close was the result?

ASSESSING VICTORY

As mentioned at the start, you win this scenario either by taking the village by the end of the game or by preventing the Germans from re-supplying it. Re-supply can only be effected between the road and the stream on the south edge of the board.

It's probably worth noting that 'assessing victory' may be somewhat subjective. You may feel you've done very well or very badly or somewhere in between – After Action Reports are always unreliable!



Command Cards for the Introductory Scenario