

Operation Battleaxe 15-17 June 1941

Background

Following Rommel's drive across the desert in March and April 1941 the Commonwealth army retreated leaving a force of largely Australian troops besieged in Tobruk. A series of operations were launched to break the siege. Operation Battleaxe was the second of these attempts. Rommel had been taken by surprise by the first attempt, Operation Brevity in May 1941 and had lost some key positions, which he later recovered through his own Operation Scorpion. He now kept some Panzer forces in readiness to counter further attempts.

This scenario utilises all of the forces which were potentially available to the two sides. Historically some of these were never committed.

Scenario Specific Rules

The Commonwealth moves one of its units first.

Night Recovery

Both sides receive 2 Strength Points and one support units per regiments/brigade in recovery points at the end of each day. The Allies receive points for 6 Brigades. The Italians receive points for 2 Regiments both days. The Germans count as 2 regiments at the end of day 1 and 3 regiments at the end of day 2. The defenders of Halfaya Pass can recover 2 strength points and 1 support point maximum for the unit at the end of day one. They get no further recovery points.

Artillery

All artillery receives 3 shots per round.

British Tanks

British tanks only get the +1 Tank core stand addition when in close combat not for distant firing.

Halfaya Pass

The Halfaya defenders are in Dug In status and stay that way. They cannot leave Halfaya Pass. They cannot be forced to retreat and do not lose extra strength points if beaten in close combat and unable to retreat. They will stand until eliminated by SP losses. They can get night reinforcements. Despite the lack of a dedicated HQ stand they can call in support from artillery and air.

Minefields

When entering a minefield throw 4D6 causing hits on a throw of 6 or double five. A maximum of 2 hits. If you take losses you fall back to the hex you entered the minefield from, ending that stands move. You cannot halt in a minefield. An engineer platoon that commences adjacent to a minefield hex can clear the minefield if the engineers do not leave the hex during the turn. The core stand that the engineers are attached to must stay in the hex with them. The core stand can fire but cannot initiate close combat if you want to clear the minefield. At the end of that regiments turn the minefield hex is cleared.

Move Status

Hold is the best defensive order that can be adopted, no unit can dig in with the exception of the original defenders of Halfaya Pass. Towns are defensive terrain as are the Halfaya Pass hexes. These defensive terrain hexes are not open ground for tank attacks.

Reinforcements

The 5th Panzer Regiment appears at the start of turn 3 in the reinforcement hexes marked R1. It can move normally that turn. The 8th Panzer and the 15th Rifle Regiments arrive over night at the end of day one. They are placed in the reinforcement hexes [R2] and are ready to be issued orders and move on day 2.

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Air Support

Both sides have 1 Air Support attack per round. If not used during the round the air attack can be used like unfired artillery shots to attack an enemy hex. This can be against any hex on the board, not just ones which can be spotted by ground troops. Only 1 strength point of damage can be caused by this attack.

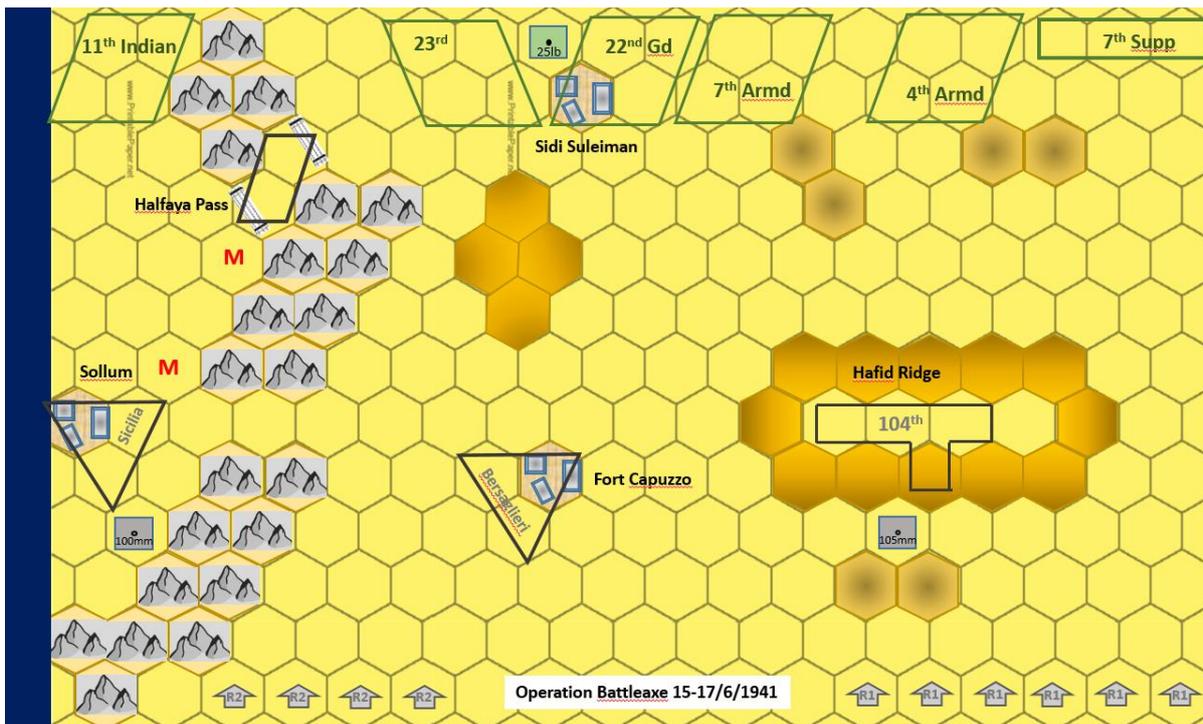
Victory Conditions

The Commonwealth need to capture 4 Victory Points to win and 3 VPs to draw.

Commonwealth Forces	Core Stands	Strength Points	Fighting Strength 1&2 Hex range.	Support Stands
4th Indian Division				
23 rd British Brigade	3 x Infantry 1 x HQ	5 6	3 1	1 x Fire Support 1 x AT
11 th Indian Brigade	3 x Infantry 1 x HQ	5 6	3 1	1 x Fire Support 1 x Tank [Matilda]
22 nd Guards Brigade	3 x Infantry 1 x HQ	5 6	3 1	1 x Fire Support 1 x AT
7th Armoured Division				
4 th Armoured Brigade	2 x Matilda [slow] 1 x Light Tanks 1 x HQ	5 3 6	3 2 1	
7 th Armoured Brigade	2 x Cruiser 1 x Armd Car 1 x HQ	3 3 6	3 2 1	
Support Group	2 x Motorised Inf 1 x HQ	5 6	3 1	1 x Fire Support 1 x AT 1 x AA
Artillery Support	2 x Medium	4	2	
Axis Forces.				
15 th Panzer				
8 th Panzer Regiment	2 x Panzer III 1 x Panzer IV 1 x HQ	4 5 6	3 4 1	1 x AT
15 th Rifle Regiment	2 x Motorised Inf 1 x HQ	5 6	3 1	1 x AT 1 x FS
5th Light Division				
5 th Panzer Regiment	2 x Panzer III 1 x HQ	4 6	3 1	1 x AT
104 th Rifle Regiment	2 x Motorised Inf 1 x AT [88mm] 1 x HQ	5 3 6	3 3 [+2 vs Armour] 1	1 x AT 1 x FS 1 x AA
Trento Division				
Bersaglieri	2 x Motorised Inf 1 x HQ	4 6	3 1	1 x Fire Support 1 x AT
Sicilia Infantry Regiment	2 x Infantry 1 x HQ	3 6	3 1	1 x Fire Support
Halfaya defenders	2 x Infantry	5	3	1 x AA 1 x FS
Artillery Support	2 x Medium	4	2	

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16/6/1941	4	5	6	7	Night
17/6/1941	8	9	10		

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Units cannot enter the half hexes next to the sea.

Standard Map Symbols

	Hillside Hexes		Town
	Hilltop or plateau hexes.		Airfield
	Small hill or sand dunes. [Block visibility to stands behind them]		Victory Hex
	Impassable Cliffs		Reinforcements
	Impassable Mountains		Artillery Battery
			Minefield
			Defensive Works