



FLANKING MANEUVER AT BIR HAKEIM

MAY 27, 1942



Setup order

- 1 x8
- 2 x2
- 3 x1
- 4 x5
- 5 x5
- 6 x8
- 7 x2
- 8 x2

Historical Background

Following on the success of Operation Crusader, the British Eighth Army had driven Rommel's forces out of Cyrenaica before over-stretching its own supply lines again. Eighth Army had then settled along the "Gazala line" in the desert, west of Tobruk, in a series of brigade-strength occupied "boxes" protected by minefields and wire. The southernmost tip of the line was the fortified box at Bir Hakeim, held by the 1st Free French Brigade of General Pierre-Marie Koenig.

At midday on May 26, Rommel launched a feint frontal attack on the central positions of the Gazala line, using small elements of the XX Motorized Corps and truck-mounted propellers to blow dust and reinforce the deception, before pulling all his armored elements back under cover of darkness. His real objective: a daring flanking maneuver to neutralize the Bir Hakeim box at the southern tip of the line, using the enemy's own minefields to protect his flank and rear!

Unfortunately, elements of the 21st Panzer were held up for more than three hours when they ran into the 7th Armoured Division's 3rd Indian Motorized Brigade, some four miles south east of Bir Hakeim. They took heavy losses from their guns before over-running them. Meanwhile the Italian Ariete division was failing to take the box at Bir Hakeim, suffering heavy losses from the 75 mm guns of the 1st Free French Brigade.

The stage is set, the battle lines drawn, and you are in command. The rest is history.

Briefing

Axis Player
[Germany/Italy]
Take 6 Command cards.
You move first.

Allied Player
[Great Britain]
Take 5 Command cards.

Conditions of Victory

5 Medals.

Each Field Bunker is a Temporary Medal Objective for the Axis forces.

Exit markers are in effect on the portion of the Allied baseline in between the 2 Exit markers, for the Axis forces.

Special Rules

North African Desert Rules are in effect (Actions 9 - North African Desert Rules). In addition, Allied Armor units may only move 2 hexes and battle, not the normal 3 hexes.

British Commonwealth Forces and Italian Royal Army command rules are in effect.

Oasis Recovery rules are in effect (Actions 10 - Oasis Recovery).

Place a badge on the German elite infantry units (Troops 2 - Specialized Units) and another badge on the German engineer unit (Troops 4 - Combat Engineers).

Special Weapon Asset rules are in effect for the units equipped with Anti-Tank weapons.

The British player lays out the Minefields (Terrain 29 -

Minefields).

Air rules are not in effect. The
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