

## ARGENTINA

The first conventional war to touch South America since W.W.II occurred during the rule of Argentine military dictator, Lieutenant General Leopoldo Galtieri. Most informed observers are convinced that the primary cause of the conflict was to draw attention away from the abuses of his dictatorship and an ailing economy at home. He broke off the ongoing talks concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) and Argentine forces invaded that remote archipelago in April 1982. The British government of Margaret Thatcher was taken by surprise but began to mobilize supplies, ships, and men to "liberate" the islands almost immediately.

This operation involved enormous logistic difficulties and stretched the shrunken military establishment of the United Kingdom to the absolute limit. Projecting an expeditionary force some 8,000 miles across the treacherous North and South Atlantic from the nearest full-service port facilities (with a possible stopover at Ascension Island), the Royal Navy performed miracles of improvisation. These included using a container ship as an aircraft carrier and "Channel Ferries" as troop transports. The United States was torn between loyalty to its NATO ally (Mrs. Thatcher was a personal friend of President Reagan) and the fear of antagonizing South Americans by siding with the "imperialists." When U.S. diplomacy failed to resolve the dispute, however, the United States supplied Britain with intelligence data from American reconnaissance satellites.

The Royal Navy and ground forces began operations in May. It was the furious battle waged between Argentine Air Force pilots and British sailors and "Harrier" pilots that grabbed most of the early headlines. The Argentines displayed considerable skill and courage as they swept in at wavetop level, to avoid radar, and pressed home bomb and missile attacks with devastating effect, destroying three British warships and damaging several others. Once the British successfully put the land forces ashore, however, the inferiority of Argentine Army training and tactics soon became evident. There was even a language barrier between officers (who generally spoke Italian or Castilian Spanish) and enlisted conscripts (whose command of Spanish was sketchy and most spoke various native Indian dialects). After substantive British victories at "Goose Green" and "Tumbledown Mountain", the last Argentine defenders surrendered the Falklands capital "Port Stanley" on June 14. The severe defeat inflicted on the Argentines discredited Galtieri's regime. The military junta in Buenos Aires eventually gave way to democratization.

### FOREIGN WEAPONS

81mm Brandt, 105mm LGB42, "Alouette III", AML-H90, SA330 Puma - FR; 105mm M56, A-109 "Agusta" - IT; SA-7 - RU; 30mm HS-831, 35mm/2 Oerlikon - SZ; 20mm Bofors, Blowpipe - UK; 105mm M2, 4.2" M84, LARC-5, LVTP-7, 155mm M44, 155mm M114, UH-1/1B "Huey" - US

### TABLES OF ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT

#### ARGENTINE MARINES (FALKLANDS): 1982

**Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 40, Class: Conscripts, Base Determination Factor: 25%**

Marine Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(B), 1xTL2 81mm "Brandt" Mortar(1)  
Support Company: 1x4.2" M84 Mortar(3), 1x105mm LGB42 RcR, 1-3x50cal. AAMG  
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer Infantry/Truck

Marine Battalion: 1xTL3 Infantry (B) HQ, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Company, 1xTL3 Infantry(R)/Jeep

Marine Brigade: 1xTL3 Infantry (C) GHQ, 2xMarine Battalion, 1xMarine Company, 1x TL3 Infantry(B), 1xTL3 Engineer Company

Available Support Units: (One or more of these units may appear in a particular action at your discretion.)

Commando Company: 2xTL3 Infantry(S)  
Machine Gun Company: 6x50cal. AAMG  
Anti-Aircraft Battery: 3x30mm HS-831/Truck  
Transport Battalion: 4xLARC-5, 5xLVTP-7  
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer Infantry/Truck  
Marine Artillery Battalion: 2x105mm M56(3)/Truck

Note: One stand in each Marine Battalion may contain an attached "Blowpipe"(MP) or SA-7 team(MP).

#### ARGENTINE ARMY (FALKLANDS): 1982

**Generation: II, Air Superiority Rating: 35, Class: Conscripts, Base Determination Factor: 15%**

Infantry Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(C), 1x105mm LGB42 RcR/Jeep, 1xTL2 81mm "Brandt" Mortar(1+)  
Support Company: 1x120mm "Brandt" Mortar(2)/Truck, 1x105mm LGB42 RcR/Jeep, 1x50cal. AAMG  
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer Infantry/Truck  
Infantry Regiment (Battalion): 1xTL3 Infantry (B) HQ, 3xInfantry Company, 1xSupport Company, 1xTL3 Infantry(R)

Brigade HQ: 1xTL3 Infantry (C) GHQ, 1xTL3 Infantry(C), 1xEngineer Company

Available Support Units: (One or more of these units may appear in a particular action at your discretion.)

2xCommando Company: 3xTL3 Infantry(S)  
2xRecon Company: 3xAML-H90  
Machinegun Squadron: 2xTL3 Infantry Support  
Engineer Company: 3xTL3 Engineer Infantry/Truck  
Anti-Aircraft Battery: 1x35mm/2 "Oerlikon" or 2x20mm "Bofors"  
OR: 2x30mm HS-831, 2x50cal. AAMG  
Airborne Artillery Battalion: 3x105mm M2 "Pack" Howitzer(2)

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| Artillery Battalion:    | 3x105mm M56(2)/Truck                           |
| Artillery Battery:      | 1x155mm M44(3) <u>or</u> 1x155mm M114(3)/Truck |
| Air Transport Squadron: | 3xSA330 "Puma", 1xCH-47                        |
| Air Attack Squadron:    | 1xA-109 "Agusta", 2x"Alouette III", 1xUH-1B    |
| Air Transport Squadron: | 2xUH-1   |

**Notes:**

- 1) Stands without organic transport may use "commandeered" civilian cars, trucks, and "Land Rovers" at double point cost.
- 2) One stand in each infantry regiment may contain an attached "Blowpipe" or SA-7 team(MP).
- 3) Independent Formations should be parceled out between the three brigades.
- 4) Infantry formations were generally at 50-75% of full strength.
- 5) The "Argentine Expeditionary Force" consisted of three Brigade headquarters sharing a total of eight Infantry Regiments (actually battalion size units) and one Infantry Company between them.

#### **TACTICAL NOTES: FALKLANDS WAR**

The Argentine army was seriously outclassed in the "Falklands" war. It did have advantages, however. The Royal Navy was unable to project much power inland and their landing force lacked heavy fire support. Argentine artillery firepower may be decisive. But, generally the sheer weight of Argentine numbers should make "Set Piece" battles costly for the English. Their victories in the Falklands came as much from their superior "mobility", physical stamina, and skillful use of maneuver as from superior fighting power. Time and again, Argentine forces were forced to retreat without a fight as the British outflanked and out-marched them. You should also not forget the appalling weather that predominated in this war. It should act as a leveling factor, sapping the Cohesion of the British attackers through exhaustion and exposure.

#### **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

At present, the Argentine army is a professional, "all volunteer" force. The disastrous defeat in the "Malvinas" forced many reforms. In addition, the Argentines have volunteered to take part in various UN and NATO peacekeeping missions. Their expressed belief is that there should be many advantages for Argentina in these missions. Light combat missions will provide an experienced "cadre" for emergency expansions. Serving with foreign armed forces should provide their army with confidence building comparisons and friendly familiarity. Finally, this same experience will verify the validity of their training regimen. The Argentine army knows it has a long way to go to put a nagging sense of inferiority behind it.

**Note:** At this time, Argentina is struggling with the worst economic crisis in its history. Further "Peacekeeping" commitments, weapons purchases, and ongoing reforms and reorganizations may, very well, be delayed until this serious situation improves.

#### **2002 ARGENTINE ARSENAL**

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| Vehicles:        | 340xTAM, 56xAMX-13, 130xSK-105, 47xMowag "Grenadier", 48xAML-90, 266xM113A2, 160xTAM VCTP, 30xAMX VCI, 126x[US]Half-Tracks, 18x[US]M-577 |
| AT Weapons:      | 1200xRcR(75mm <u>or</u> 90mm <u>or</u> 105mm)  |
| Artillery:       | 70x[IT]105mm/M56, 81+x155mm Howitzer(Towed), 41x155mm (SP), 50xMRL(105mm or 127mm)   |
| Anti-Aircraft:   | 21x30mm AAG, 15x35mm (Twin), 76x40mm L70 "Bofors", 6x"Roland" AAGM, Blowpipes, SA-7's  |
| Combat Aircraft: | 9x"Agusta" A-109, 3x"Super Puma", 30xUH-1, 12xAH-1, 17CH-47, 14xC-130, 36x"Pucara", 8xSu-29, 32xA-4 "Skyhawk", 15xMirage III, 8xMirage-5 |
| Small Arms:      | FN FAL and Steyr AUG rifles, FN and Browning MG's, Various combinations of Western small arms.   |

#### **POINTS OF CONTACT**

Defense Ministry - Tel: ++54-11-346-8800, Joint Chiefs of Staff - Tel: ++54-11-4346-8623