

AVANTI SAVOIA

INTELLIGENCE HANDBOOK ON ITALIAN ARMoured AND INFANTRY FORCES



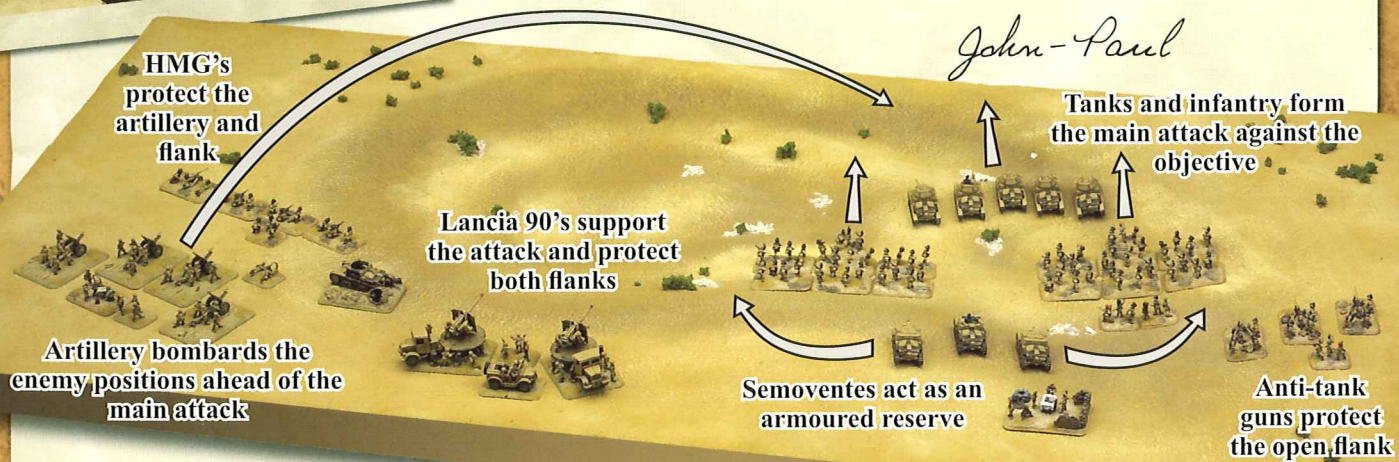
FLAMES OF WAR®
THE WORLD WAR II MINIATURES GAME

TACTICS

The Mighty Bersaglieri are Italy's elite infantry. They wear distinctive black cockerel feathers on their helmets so the enemy can recognise them and be afraid. They seek out the enemy and defeat them, as well as provide their tanks with determined infantry support.

The main strength of this army lies in the confident veteran Bersaglieri. They form the core of the attack, they are skilled enough to avoid most enemy fire, and when led by their stoic commanders, they will never flee the battle. The Carri Platoon screens ahead of the infantry, softening up the enemy for the Bersaglieri's attack, while the Semovente 75/18's follow up the attack, taking care of any nasty surprises and harder armour that the Allies may have. The Anti-tank platoon holds the flank against any sneaky attacks by the enemy.

The other flank is protected by the Italian's fine Artillery, which provides indirect support for the infantry attack, as well as deterring enemy tank attacks. Dug in, the Machine-gun and Anti-tank Platoons halt enemy infantry from attacking the valuable position. The Central fire alley is held by the Lancia da 90/53's, which provide support to whichever flank that is under pressure, as well as destroying any pesky aircraft that happen to be in the area.



The brave Bersaglieri Rifle Platoons form the core of the attack, heroically assaulting enemy positions, and using their vast experience to beat them.



The Carri Platoon spearheads the attack, softening up the enemy in advance of the Rifle Platoons, and flushing out any surprises that the enemy may have in store.



The Artillery hold an objective while providing covering fire for the advancing infantry and tanks. They are also deadly enough to stop anything that tries to come against them.



Lancia da 90/53 guns deploy in the middle of the battle, to provide air cover for the entire company. From this position they can also provide cover from marauding tanks.



The Semovente 75/18 platoon brings up the rear of the advance, taking care of anything that is causing the Bersaglieri or Carri Platoons difficulty.

John-Paul's Compagnia Bersaglieri

CHQ 65 points

Add 1 Solothurn Anti-tank Rifle
Arm command teams with Passaglia bombs

Bersaglieri Rifle Platoon 150 points

Bersaglieri Rifle Platoon 150 points

Bersaglieri machine-gun Platoon 105 points

Bersaglieri Anti-tank Platoon 125 points

75/27 Artillery Battery 220 points

Heavy Anti-aircraft Platoon 235 points

Carri Platoon 270 points

Self-propelled 75/18 Platoon 180 points

Total 1500 points

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Written by: Phil Yates

Editors: Peter Simunovich, John-Paul Brisigotti

Photography: Battlefront Studios

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Stories: Fabio Degli Esposti, Steven Ross

Cover/Internal Art: Warren Mahy

Assistant Writers: Jason Farley, Jonathon Forsey, Alun Gallie, Tom Robertson, Richard Steer

Proof Reader: Paul Beach

Book Title Competition Winner: Vittorio Artom Celli

Graphic Design: Dion Holswich, Casey Davies

Miniatures Design: Evan Allen, Karl Cederman

Terrain Modelling: Richard Carlisle

Miniatures Painting: Jeremy Painter, Glen Tibbles

Lead Playtesters: Kim Alberto, Mike Allen, Jon Cleaves, Giandomenico Cuoghi, Andrea Gaddi, Massimo Guido,

Mark Hazell, Philip Hutchinson, Nicolò Da Lio,

Simon McBeth, Juergen Parks, Ernest Payton,

Damian 'Avanti' Reid, Rob Saddler,

Andrew 'Lumpy' Salisbury, Todd Schneider,

Karl Shanstrom, Chris Townley, Mike Turner, Dan Wade

Playtesters: Tony Armstrong, Raymond Dick, Tim Ederer,

Dale Leno, Simon McBeth, Alex Phoon, Reid Pittams,

Martin Priest, Mark Scaletti, Pete Turner

And thanks to all the other playtesters!

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This is a supplement for *Flames Of War, the World War II Miniatures Game*.

A copy of the rulebook for *Flames Of War* is necessary to fully use the contents of this book.

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ARIETE IN BATTLE



Origins

132^o *divisione corazzata 'Ariete'*, the 132nd 'Ram' Armoured Division dated back to early 1939 when it was formed as Italy's first armoured division. Its equipment at the time was limited to the tiny 3-ton L3/35 tankette, but it was soon equipped with Italy's first medium tank, the 11-ton M11/39.

War Breaks Out

When war broke out in 1939, Italy watched their German allies with interest. When the Germans attacked France in May 1940, the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini declared war as well, planning on piggy-backing on the German Army's stunning successes. Attacks against the French defending the alpine border and British forces in Egypt resulted in few gains, although the French surrender to the Germans gave the Italians the opportunity to confiscate some French territory.

Libyan Disaster

The Italian army that invaded Egypt was largely composed of marching infantry making it totally unsuitable for desert warfare. When the British counter-attacked with an armoured force in December 1940, they could pick and choose their battles and quickly threw the Italian invaders

back into Libya. Even a Special Brigade of tanks detached from *Ariete* couldn't make a real difference. Despite winning a battle against the advancing British tanks at Mechili in mid-January, the Italian tanks were overwhelmed at Beda Fomm in early February 1941 and the entire Italian invasion force captured or destroyed.

To Tobruk

All that stood between the British and the loss of Libya was the newly arrived *Ariete* division (now equipped with small numbers of the new 13-ton M13/40 tank) and 27^o *divisione fanteria 'Brescia'*, the 27th 'Brescia' Infantry Division. These were soon joined by a German force, the *Deutsches Afrikakorps* or DAK (German Africa Corps), under General Erwin Rommel.

With this meagre force, the 'Desert Fox', as Rommel quickly became known as, swept the disorganised British before him. *Ariete* earned its first victory, beating the British 3 Indian Motor Brigade at Mechili on 8 April 1941, before sweeping on to surround the vital port of Tobruk.

Unable to break through the staunch defence of the 7th Australian Division, Rommel regrouped his forces and prepared to take the port in a new

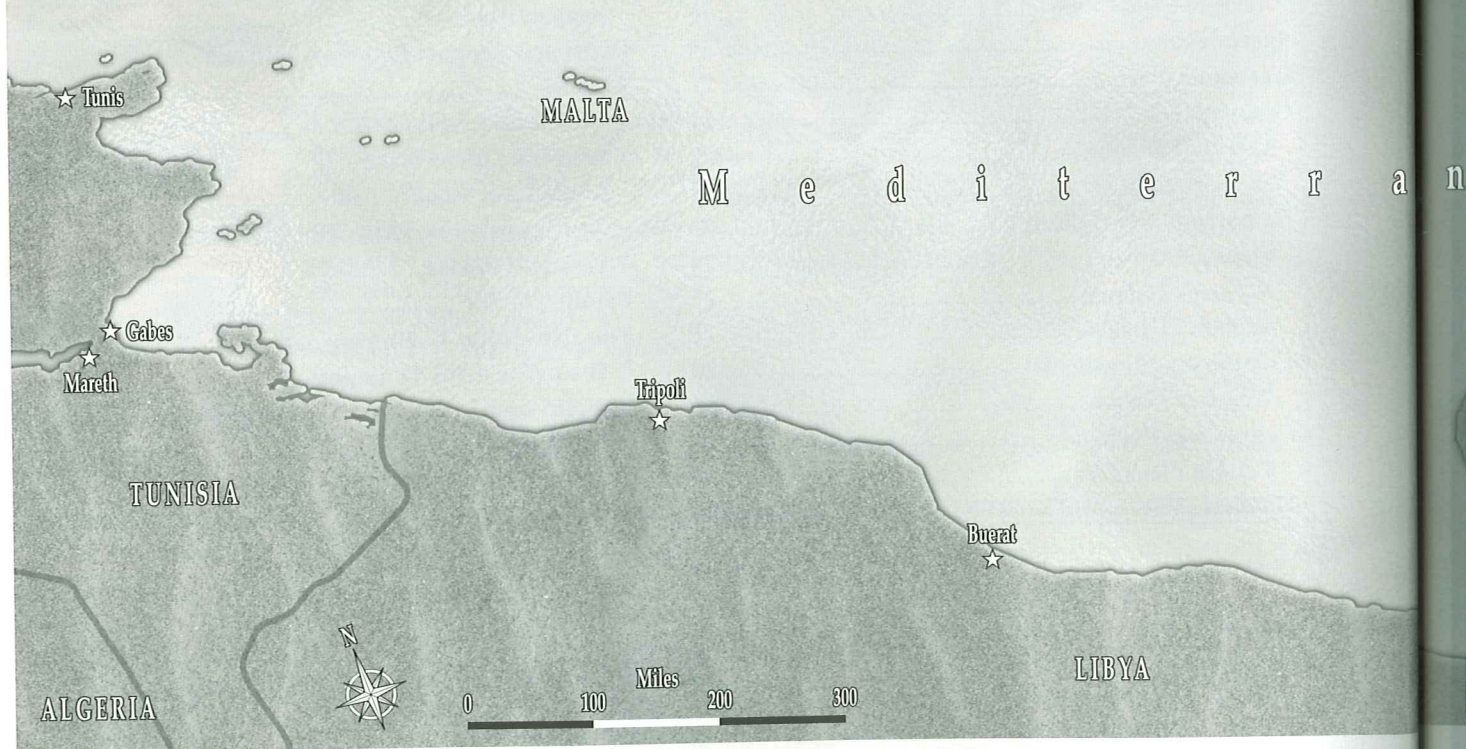
offensive planned for November 1941. *Ariete* took advantage of the lull to entirely re-equip with M13/40 medium tanks and complete its training. The Division was joined by 101^o *divisione motorizzata 'Trieste'*, the 101st 'Trieste' Motorised Division, to form the *Corpo d'Armata di Manovra (CAM)*, the Manoeuvre Corps.

Operation Crusader

In Rommel's plan to take Tobruk, *CAM* was tasked with protecting the rear of *DAK* against an anticipated British offensive. *Trieste* held the deep flank at Bir Hacheim, while *Ariete* was forward at Bir el Gubi.

The British attack, codenamed Operation Crusader, preempted Rommel's attack. Their 7th Armoured Division, the famous 'Desert Rats', were tasked with taking Bir el Gubi. 158 British Crusader tanks faced 146 Italian M13/40 tanks supported by the infantry and guns of *Ariete* who emerged victorious from the fierce fighting, putting the Desert Rats out of the battle for several days for the loss of less than 40 of its own tanks.

Ariete then joined DAK to destroy 5 South African Brigade and maul 2nd New Zealand Division, clashing repeatedly with British armoured



brigades before taking part in Rommel's failed 'dash to the wire' aimed at cutting off the British forces. By this time however, the battle was lost. *Ariete* (down to just 30 tanks) covered the withdrawal in heavy fighting with 5 Indian Brigade around Alam Hamza.

As 1941 drew to a close, *Ariete* took stock. Despite its successes, the Division was badly depleted and withdrew with the rest of the Axis forces to El Agheila before returning to positions facing the British defensive line at Gazala.

Gazala

Both sides spent the first five months of 1942 preparing for the next round. *CAM* was redesignated as *XX CAM* (20 Manoeuvre Corps). *Ariete* gained heavier artillery support in the form of *Semovente* 75/18 self-propelled guns, heavy 88/56 anti-aircraft guns, and self-propelled *Lancia da 90/53* anti-aircraft guns, but still fielded its old M13/40 tanks, despite the arrival of 26-ton Grant tanks on the British side.

On 27 May 1942, Rommel attacked. While the Italian infantry divisions launched frontal assaults on the Gazala Line and *DAK* swung south to outflank the line, *XX CAM* was to go wider to protect their eastern flank. In the event, *Trieste* became separated from *Ariete* and collided with the Free French Brigade holding Bir Hacheim

while *Ariete* found its way blocked by its old adversary, 3 Indian Motor Brigade at Point 171. *Ariete* pressed home its attack with great élan and broke the poorly positioned Indian Brigade, causing nearly 500 casualties and taking 600 prisoners.

Ariete then turned back to help *Trieste* at Bir Hacheim, but here the gallant attacks that had proved successful against the Indians foundered on the dense minefields and massed guns of the Free French position. *Colonnello Prestisimone* commanding *IX battaglione corazzato* (9th Armoured Battalion) had several 'mounts' shot from under him leading repeated attacks, but the well-fortified French position proved too tough. *Ariete* had lost 31 tanks and a *Semovente* self-propelled gun and 124 men captured or killed by the time they were ordered to bypass the stubborn French.

The following two days saw scattered fighting between *Ariete* and the British 1 Army Tank and 2 Armoured Brigades, where the inferiority of the M13/40 tank to the new Grant was evident, though the latter were roughly handled by the 88/56 and 90/53 anti-aircraft guns and divisional artillery.

Aslagh Ridge

During this time *Ariete* occupied positions on Aslagh ridge facing westward to cover Rommel's attempts to break back through the Gazala Line to relieve his now surrounded force. It

took the British five days to decide what to do before they finally attacked the Italo-German forces who by this time had opened their supply line again. Despite the delay, the attacks when they came were disjointed and *Ariete* had no difficulty in repulsing 9 and 10 Indian Brigades. They then combined with *DAK* to complete their destruction. Within days the British forces were in full retreat. Rommel noted that *Ariete* had played a vital role in holding the eastern face of the 'Cauldron'.

Back To Tobruk

With the British on the run, *Ariete* found itself once again outside Tobruk. It was quickly brought up to strength at the expense of the latest arrival in *XX CAM*, 133^o *divisione corazzata* 'Littorio', the 133rd 'Executor' Armoured Division. Thus reinforced, *Ariete* took the left-flank position in the successful assault on Tobruk.

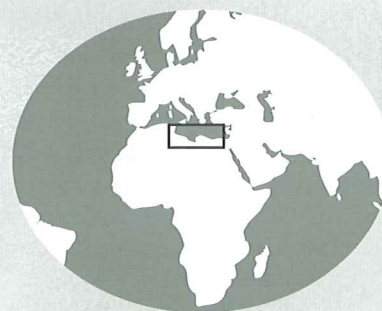
On To Egypt

With Tobruk safely in the bag, Rommel had a choice. Stop and wait for the invasion of the British-held island of Malta to clear his supply lines across the Mediterranean, or press on into Egypt hoping to win before his supplies ran out. Ever the gambler and with large stocks captured at Tobruk, Rommel rolled into Egypt, striking for the Nile.

By late June *XX CAM* had advanced to Mersa Matruh where it played a



a n e a n S e a





key role in bouncing the British from their new defensive line. The British fell back to El Alamein. The Italo-German forces had been advancing and fighting non-stop for over a month, but despite their exhaustion, they pushed on with the Nile only 60 miles away.

July was occupied by confused fighting on the Alamein Line as first one side attacked, then the other. Rommel brought up the Italian infantry divisions to assist the mechanised corps, but to no avail. Both sides took heavy casualties and by the end of the month both sides had worn themselves out and the fighting died down.

August was spent rebuilding the strength of both sides. Large numbers of new tanks arrived and those tanks damaged and broken down in the previous two months of fighting were repaired. The forces that were to have attacked Malta arrived to reinforce the desert push instead, amongst them *185^a divisione paracadutisti 'Folgore'*, the 185th 'Folgore' Parachute Division.

One Last Push

Having failed to take either Egypt or Malta, Rommel was now in trouble. His ammunition and petrol supplies were low with little prospect of improvement. Meanwhile the British were growing stronger at an alarming rate. To Rommel there was only one possible solution, to attack.

Once again *XX CAM* was assigned the

role of protecting the flanks of the main push by *DAK* aimed at the Alam Halfa Ridge. Unfortunately British deception measures lead the Italo-German forces onto previously unsuspected minefields. A well-prepared British defensive position and continuous heavy air attacks quickly ended Rommel's last desert offensive and the Italo-German forces retired to their starting positions to await their fate.

El Alamein

Rommel now had to hold the forty-mile long Alamein Line against the coming British offensive. He reorganised his forces to intermingle Italian and German infantry divisions along the entire front to give the Italian forces the benefit of the heavier German armament. *XX CAM* swapped *Littorio* with *DAK* for the German *21. Panzerdivision* taking position behind *Folgore* at the south of the line. *DAK* was in reserve in the north.

The British attack finally came on the night of 23 October 1942 with attacks in both the north and the south. *Folgore* held the attacks in the south at bay, but the stronger attacks in the north broke through the front. Only strong counterattacks by the Italo-German armoured divisions prevented a complete rupture of the line.

Over the next week *Littorio* and *Trieste* were virtually wiped out in the face of almost continuous British attacks. Their sacrifice was to no avail. The stronger British forces eventually

broke through the weakened front. By 3 November 1942, the Italo-German forces were retreating.

Rearguard

The only force left to cover the Axis retreat was *Ariete*, hurriedly brought north to stem the British tide. Moving toward Tel el Aqqaqir on 4 November, *Ariete* became locked in an unequal struggle with the British 22 Armoured Brigade. The crews of its M14/41 tanks watching fatalistically as their projectiles bounced off the thick hulls of the heavier British Grant and Sherman tanks.

The Division managed a day-long stand against overwhelming odds, and fought again the next day to prevent the withdrawing Axis forces from being surrounded and cut off. Their gallant stand allowed the surviving Axis mobile units the chance to escape, although the Italian infantry divisions, left behind without transport, had little alternative but to surrender.

Ariete had been destroyed as a division. Rommel noted in his diary that 'In the *Ariete* we lost our oldest Italian comrades.' He was perhaps a little premature with his obituary as the remnants of *XX CAM* joined forces with the newly arrived *131^a divisione corazzata 'Centauro'*, the 131st 'Centaur' Armoured Division to fight on as the rearguard during the long retreat to Tunisia and the eventual destruction of all Axis forces in Africa in May 1943.



WHY COLLECT AN AVANTI SAVOIA FORCE

'The German soldier impressed the world, the Italian Bersaglieri impressed the German soldier!'

'The men of the Folgore are equal to our very best.'

—German General Rommel, 'The Desert Fox'

'I wish to say that in all my life I have never encountered soldiers like these.'

—British General Hughes, after being defeated by Folgore at Haret el Himeimat.

It was the bravery and dedication of the *carristi* and *bersaglieri*, the Italian tank crews and light infantry, that made many of Rommel's desert victories possible. It was the steadfast defiance of the *artiglieri* and *paracadutisti*, the Italian artillery men and parachutists, that saved Rommel from defeat time and again. It was the endurance of the *fucilieri*, the Italian riflemen, that held the line for the Germans in the desert and in Africa when their own resources proved insufficient.

Italian armoured companies may not have heavy tanks, but they have courage, and with that and the support of their comrades, they can defeat any foe. Infantry they storm in a hail of bullets. Tanks they charge under cover of their heavy

artillery, destroying them at close range.

While the tank crews must rely on bravery, Italian infantry need not. With proper artillery support, they are capable to taking on any enemy on even terms. For the *bersaglieri* and *paracadutisti*, their courage does not even the odds, it gives them an edge over their foes.

Fielding an Italian force is not for the faint hearted. You can't hide behind thick armour and big guns. But if you have the guts to go for glory, your men will follow you anywhere and you can defeat any foe.

For the glory of Italy, 'Avanti Savoia!'

... Ruweisat Ridge, 1942...

'It's just my bad luck,' Bersagliere Angelo Bruschi decided, 'wandering about in the middle of a mine-field with a bunch of *crucchi*!' He glanced across at the Germans. He didn't trust them. They turned up demanding two 'volunteers' for a mixed German-Italian patrol, 'as if we need them to make sure we do our job,' he thought, and now he and Luca were out here testing their luck with a bunch of strangers.

The night is cool and quiet, but Angelo sweats. 'Calm down,' Angelo tells himself, 'You've been out here many times. Tonight's no different.' Still he wished he knew what the Germans were whispering about. Lying on the rocky ground close to the British lines, he nervously watched the German Leutnant inching forward to inspect the concertina wire. Angelo looked back at Luca who smiled and saluted. Angelo was about to respond accordingly when the world exploded around them. Whatever booby trap the German officer set off had alerted the British! Their machine-guns were barking glowing tracers overhead, their mortar shells crumping loudly around them.

He hugged the ground and looked ahead clutching his rifle. Luca sprinted up and threw himself flat on the ground beside Angelo. 'This is great, now what the hell do we do?' Luca asked, just as another German behind them barked something incomprehensible. Looking back Angelo saw them crawling away, retreating into the darkness. 'Follow them I guess,' he replied.

As he cautiously made his way back into the now silent dark after them, Angelo heard the Leutnant moaning behind him. Reaching out, he stopped Luca with an outstretched hand. 'Let the *crucchi* run away, I'm going back.' Luca swore softly, then followed him back towards the British lines, back towards their wounded ally.

Shortly before first light a hand shook Angelo awake. 'We've been ordered to report to the Capitano.' Luca explained. 'Merda,' he thought, coming to attention as he saw a German officer talking to the Capitano, 'Now we are for it. We should have found those damned *crucchi* again after we dragged their Leutnant in.'

The German turned to them and reached out his hand. 'Danke Kameraden' he said, 'Grazie, Thank you,' he stumbled in Italian, two Iron Crosses shining briefly in the dim light of a lantern.



DEATH RIDE

Extracts from the diary of Sottotenente Delfino, a second lieutenant of IX battaglione corazzato (9th Armoured Battalion), found on the field of battle near Fuka.

2 November 1942

06:00. The desert is still vibrating under my boots (quite nice ones too, British ones I got in Tobruk!) It's been like this for a week, though that seems like months now. The sky to our north is full of thunder and dust. Their artillery never stops. You can even read by it at night sometimes! The Inglesi must really want to hang on to Egypt, though God knows why, this place is hell on earth.

08:00. Another squadrone bianco, a 'white squadrow', flies overhead. Their aircraft look so clean and white up there, always in perfect formation. I have lost count of them over the last few days and don't think I've seen the same ones twice. I suppose I should be grateful that things are quiet down here in the south—a bit of bombing but that is it. Can't expect that to last though. Radio scarpa, the 'shoe radio', reckons that we are for it this time and even that volpe Rommel won't be able to turn this one around. The English have learned their lessons and they don't seem to be short of anything, especially not artillery shells!

With us on the other hand, it is the usual story—calling my bare d'acciaio, this 'Steel Coffin' of mine a 'runner' is an insult. The sardine can scarcely stagger along! I see Stefano has stuffed an old cap into the penetration hole the recovery boys left in the turret, so we won't see daylight through it. The South African cap badge is poking out, so at least he still has his sense of humour!

16:00. My God, it's over. We've lost. Orders just came to move north to cover a general retreat. We're headed for some place called 'Tel el Aqqaqir'. Che sia maledetto, damned, if I can find it on my maps! Bet it's another bump in the desert you wouldn't notice if there wasn't a war on! The plan is for us to join Littorio and Trieste covering the infantry moving back to the Rahman Track. The infantry have little hope. They've got no trucks. They'll have to march faster than the British tanks to get away! Word has it that Littorio was smashed up this morning, so it will be up to us. Again.



3 November

10:30. The bombing and shelling is worse now. We are to move north with all speed—not much in our case! La Bologna have already gone or surrendered. Can hardly blame them—who would fight on foot in the desert? Either way, some of our boys have to cover for them now.

11:00. Meant to link up with Trieste, but there is no Trieste to link up with according to the messengers. This is worse than I thought. Can't see us getting back to Tripoli this time.

12:00. Orders session from Generale Arena's staff in between the bombings. That little Austrian caporale, Adolph, has ordered all withdrawing troops to stop where they are—in the middle of the desert! Madness! The volpe, the fox, can't be pleased, but he is too 'good' a German.

to disobey. Our boys will pay the price though, that's for sure! Stefano, my driver, has his suitcase ready, I notice, but he is a bravo camerata and will stay with me till the end. Nicolò hasn't spoken for days now and Bruno hasn't stopped praying, so they cancel each other out.

4 November

06:00. Got to our spot on the Rahman Track last night and had to dig in. We've got about 100 runners for the battle from the looks of it, for whatever they are worth, but nothing much left of Littorio and Trieste to help out.

10:30. Can see English tanks now—must have taken them a while to get past the mines, or maybe their tea was late! Papà fought alongside them in the first war and they never did anything without tea. He can't understand why we are fighting against them now and I must admit I struggle with that myself. Nice to see they are wary of our artillery, but that won't last. Those American tanks they have are huge. What I wouldn't give for even one of the new 'Special' Panzers our beloved allies are hoarding. Then we'd make the Inglesi dance! Like we say 'Carro Americano, Equipaggio Inglese, Pillola Italiana', hey, 'American tank, English crew, and an Italian pill' to cure it!

12:30. The English are closer—I can see over sixty tanks in front of me alone. Risked a peek outside and it feels like we are alone in a world of smoke and flying steel. Some of the rest of my platoon have already been wrecked by the big guns on those monsters. We cannot properly reply as our rounds simply bounce off. We have shot off most of our ammunition. We have to get in first and try and put off their aim. I'm not a bad shot, but it is no good. Luckily they are being cautious, though I can't imagine why. Would dearly love to catch one in the flank but they are keeping their distance and not rushing about like in the old days. I can see one or two English tanks burning, but there are so many. I am so proud of my crew. We have been together since '41 and they know the score.

14:00. More English behind us now. Our artiglieria is falling silent. I can only see a few of our tanks left and we ourselves are nearly out of ammunition. It is raining heavily now and with all the smoke, the poor visibility has saved us more than once. This cannot last. We are firing so seldom they perhaps think we are dead already. I have given up trying to move far, it only causes trouble. Tornelli's tank got hit in front of us and the turret went straight up in the air to land behind us. I told him those sandbags were a waste of time. At least it will have been quick.

18:00. Incredible—still alive. We have not abandoned our positions and it looks like this is it for Ariete. The light is fading and a messenger has told us at last we are to fall back. To where? We are surrounded.

18:30. We took a hit on the nose, sounded like Inferno, the fires of hell. This ferro da stiro, this moving heap of scrap, has collapsed around us. Saints be praised, my boys have all survived, which is the main thing, luckier than most. All I can see is fires and smoke—the English tanks have gone past. Stefano will need his suitcase now. We are going to try and walk back to Fuka in the dark. Hopefully the Inglesi still stop fighting at night. If so, we might make it back. I wish our tanks were bigger. Then we would have shown them a thing or too. Still, I reckon we did all right. Most of the mobile troops must have gotten away. Oh well, better start walking, it's a long way to go!

THE ITALIAN ARMY IN NORTH AFRICA 1942-1943

Italian divisions are usually named for their city of origin (Pistoia, Pavia, Trieste, etc). Specialist divisions like armoured or parachute divisions usually take a name suited to their role instead, like *Ariete* or *Ram* for the 132nd Armoured Division or *Folgore*, Thunderbolt, for the 185th Parachute Division.

Regiments are shown in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc). Battalions are shown in Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc). Unless noted a regiment bears the same name as its parent division. Most infantry regiments have two battalions (I and II) and a weapons battalion (III) unless otherwise noted.

battaglione = battalion, *reggimento* = regiment, *brigata* = brigade, *divisione* = division, *autotrasportabile* = truck transportable, *aviotrasportata* = air transportable, *bersaglieri* = light infantry, *corazzata* = armoured, *d'assalto* = assault, *fanteria* = infantry, *guastatori* = assault engineers, *motorizzata* = motorised, *paracadutisti* = parachute



Armata Italo-tedesca (Italian-German Army), 1942

Unit	Battalions and Regiments
16 ^a Divisione Fanteria 'Pistoia' ¹	35, 36, 3 'Fossalta' Artillery

X Corpo d'Armata (part of XXI CA until August 1942)

XXXI Battaglione Guastatori	XXVIII, XXX
9 ^o Reggimento Bersaglieri	27, 28, 26 'Rubicone' Artillery
17 ^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Pavia'	19, 20, 55 Artillery
27 ^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Brescia'	186 (V, VI, VII), 187 (II, IV, IX, X), 185 Artillery, VIII Guastatori
185 ^a Divisione Paracadutisti 'Folgore' ²	
Fallschirmbrigade Ramcke (German)	

XX Corpo d'Armata di Manovra (CAM)

XXXII Battaglione Guastatori ³	XI Armoured, 65 & 66 'Valtellina', 21 'Po' Artillery, VIII Armoured Bersaglieri (AB41)
101 ^a Divisione Motorizzata 'Trieste'	132 Armoured (IX, X, XIII), 8 Bersaglieri (V, XII), 132 Artillery, DLI Semovente, DLII Semovente, III Armoured Car 'Nizza Cavaleria' (AB41)
132 ^a Divisione Corazzata 'Ariete'	133 Armoured (IV, XII, LI), 12 Bersaglieri (XXIII, XXXVI), 3 Artillery, DLIV Semovente, DLVI Semovente, III Armoured 'Lancieri di Novara' (L6/40)
133 ^a Divisione Corazzata 'Littorio' ^{4,5}	

164. leichte Afrikadivision (German)²

XXI Corpo d'Armata

7 ^o Reggimento Bersaglieri	VIII, X
25 ^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Bologna'	39, 40, 205 Artillery
60 ^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Sabratha' ^{3,6}	85 & 86 'Verona', 42 Artillery
102 ^a Divisione Motorizzata 'Trento'	61, 62, 46 Artillery
Deutsches Afrikakorps (DAK)	
136 ^a Divisione Motorizzata 'GGFF' ¹	136, IX, 136 Artillery, III Armoured Car 'Cavalleggeri di Montferrato' (AB41)
15. & 21. ⁷ Panzerdivision (German)	

The situation in 1943 is quite confused as the Italians and their German allies threw together any battleworthy units to hand to stop each successive Allied thrust. Most Italian units fought under the 1st Italian-German Army in the south of Tunisia, but some units also operated as part of the German 5th Panzer Army in the north.

1^a Armata Italo-tedesca (1st Italian-German Army), 1943

Unit	Battalions and Regiments
183 ^o Reggimento Paracadutisti 'Nembo'	X bis, XV, XVI

XX Corpo d'Armata

16 ^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Pistoia'	as for 1942
80 ^a Divisione Aviotrasportata 'la Spezia'	125, 126, XXXIX Bersaglieri, 80 Artillery
101 ^a Divisione Motorizzata 'Trieste'	as for 1942 with a composite battalion from Folgore
90. leichte Afrikadivision (German)	

XXI Corpo d'Armata

131 ^a Divisione Corazzata 'Centauro'	XVII Armoured, 5 Bersaglieri (XIV, XXIV), 131 Artillery, DLVIII Semovente, XV
'Cavalleggeri di Lodi' (L6/40)	
136 ^a Divisione Motorizzata 'GGFF'	as for 1942 plus 8 Bersaglieri
164. leichte Afrikadivision (German)	

Panzerarmeeoberkommando 5. (German 5th Panzer Army)

XXX Corpo d'Armata

50 ^a Brigata Speciale 'Imperiali'	XV Armoured, 6 Bersaglieri (VI, XIII), DLVII Semovente
1 ^a Divisione d'Assalto 'Superga'	91 'Basilicata', 92 'Basilicata', 5 Artillery

XC Armeekorps (German)

Division von Broich (German)	included 10 ^o Reggimento Bersaglieri (XVI, XXXIV)
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¹ From November 1942 ³ Disbanded August 1942

⁵ From July 1942

⁷ With CAM from September 1942

² From September 1942 ⁴ Joined DAK in September 1942

⁶ With CAM until July 1942



WHERE TO BEGIN

The first step in collecting an Avanti Savoia force is to choose the type of company you wish to field. There is something for everybody, from the brave *Carristi* with their light tanks in the *Compagnia Carri*, the infantry of the elite *Bersaglieri* and stoic *Fucilieri*, to Italy's finest, the *Paracadutisti*, hard as nails and among the best soldiers in the world.

Once you have chosen your company type, you should field a Company HQ and two Combat Platoons. This will give you a solid core to your army, allowing you to play small games and learn

about the strengths and weaknesses of your troops.

As you grow in experience, you can add more platoons to support your company from Semovente assault guns to the mighty heavy anti-aircraft weapons, capable of defeating any enemy tank. You may even draw on the resources of your German allies to increase the capability of your force. Very soon you will have a brave and capable force, willing to fight to the end for you and the glory of Italy.

Avanti Savoia!



Your officers wait for your battle orders.



The Lancia da 90/53 is capable of defeating any tank.



The Italian Compagnia Bersaglieri 1500 Point starter army, a flexible and powerful combined arms force.

GAZALA



Sweeping around the Gazala Line, tanks of the Ariete armoured division smash into the Allied defences.



The lighter Italian tanks falter facing the heavier British tanks, forcing them to rely on the heavier guns of the Semovente's.



Armoured support in the form of Autoblindo armoured cars reinforce the attack at Bir Hacheim.

Libya, North Africa.
May 27 ~ June 20, 1942

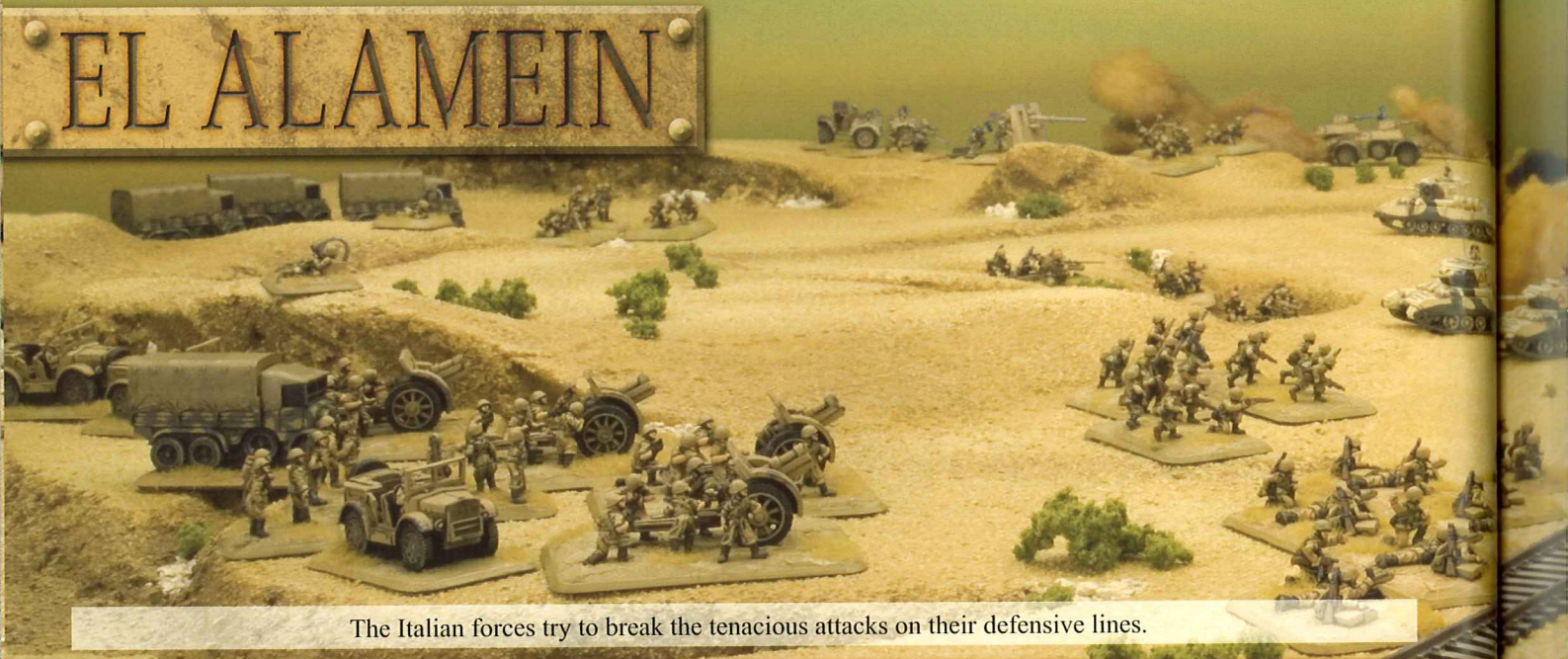


Elements of the *Divisione Motorizzata 'Trieste'* assault the stubborn Free French at Bir Hacheim.



The Italians push on to Tobruk, right on the heels of the retreating Allied forces.

EL ALAMEIN



The Italian forces try to break the tenacious attacks on their defensive lines.



Artillery breaks up infantry formations and blinds the enemy with smoke.



Light, fast vehicles get around the flanks of the enemy...



...pushing a gap through to the train station...

Libya, North Africa.
October 23 ~ November 04, 1942



The Allied forces defend against a vicious counterattack from the Italians.



...where the Allies are prepared for the ensuing assault.

RUSSIA



Positioned between the Hungarians and the Rumanians, the Italian forces help push the Soviet forces back to the Don river.



The brave Italians defeat several Soviet diversionary attacks...



The Soviet forces kicked off Operation Little Saturn in December to smash through the Italian defences.

July ~ December, 1942



...while the Rumanian forces on the right flank are overwhelmed, and the German army at Stalingrad is surrounded, the Italians fight on.



With the lines stretched thin the under-equipped Italian forces disintegrate and the survivors head back to Italy.

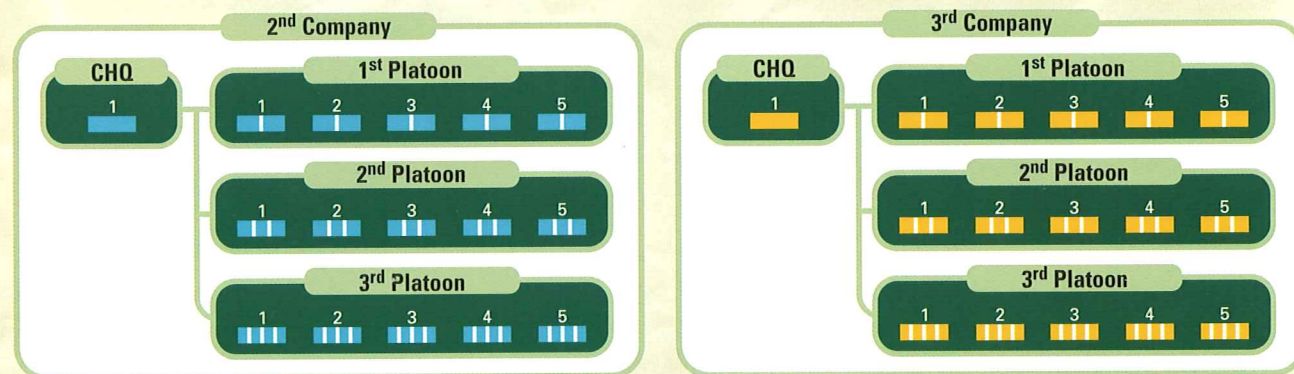
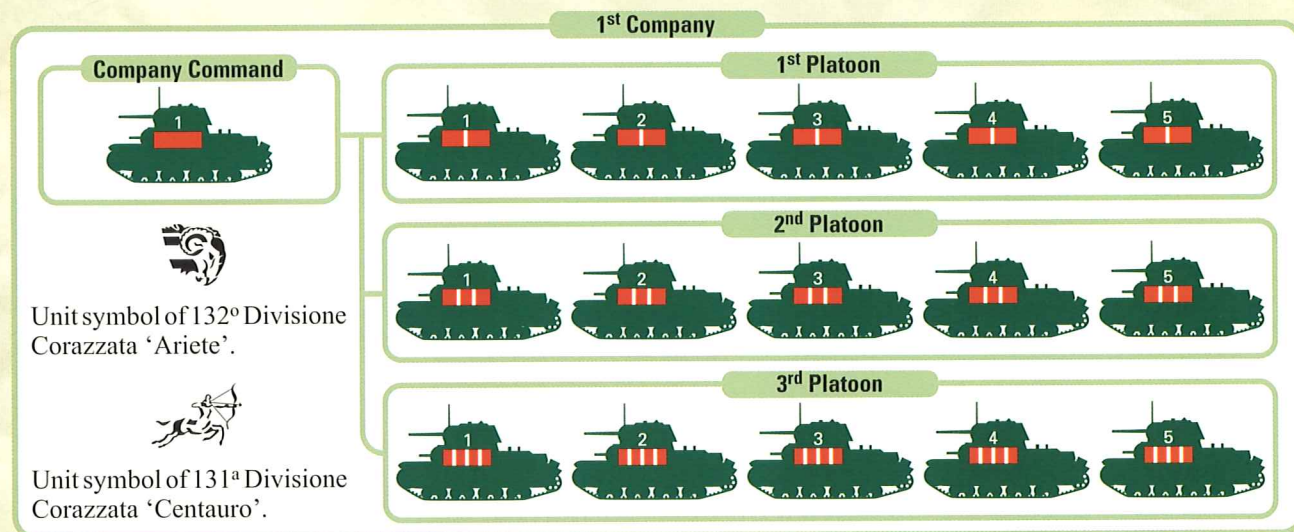
MARKINGS

The Italians used a simple method of coloured rectangles to identify the three different companies of an Armoured Battalion. Red= 1st Company, Sky Blue= 2nd Company, Yellow= 3rd Company.

White vertical bars within the coloured rectangles denotes the platoon number in the company. The Company Command tank would have a solid rectangle, the first platoon would have a single white bar, the second platoon would have two white bars and the third platoon would have three.

Numbers carried above the coloured rectangles distinguish individual tanks within the platoons. The first tank of the platoon would carry a number '1' through to the fifth tank carrying the number '5'.

This marking system was common on Italian armoured vehicles throughout the war and on all fronts and was usually displayed on both sides and the rear of the turret.



The Semovente 90/53 used a silhouette of itself as a unit symbol. This was usually painted on both sides of the gun shield.



This M14/41 bears the red rectangle of the 1st Company of the Battalion. A single white bar and the number '3' indicates this is the 3rd tank of 1st platoon.

Sometimes unit symbols like Ariete's 'Ram' and Centauro's 'Centaur archer' were painted on the hull sides.



Semovente 47/32 and 75/18 self-propelled guns used a triangle split in half vertically, with either the top half black and the bottom yellow or vice-versa. Different platoons were distinguished by rotating the triangle 180° and/or swapping the yellow and black colours allowing for a variety of combinations.

ORGANISATION AND EQUIPMENT

*This section describes the organisation and equipment of a Compagnia Carri (tank company), a Compagnia Bersaglieri (motorised infantry company), a Compagnia Fucilieri (infantry company), or a Compagnia Paracadutisti (parachute infantry company) in the mid-war period. It gives you all the information you need to fight **Flames Of War** battles leading your troops with the cry 'Avanti Savoia!'*

Leading an Italian force, you have four types of company to choose between. Your first task is to pick the one that matches your playing style.

Compagnia Carri

The *carristi*, or tankers, of the Compagnia Carri, the tank company, are undoubtedly the most dashing Italian troops. With their small tanks, they have little choice but to close with the enemy and destroy them at short range. Fortunately they are backed by heavy guns to cover their advance.

Compagnia Bersaglieri

The *bersaglieri* are Italy's equivalent of Britain's Rifle Brigade. They are superbly trained light infantrymen. Although they have fewer trucks than they would like, a Compagnia Bersaglieri is the closest thing Italy has to motorised infantry—every heavy weapon has motorised transport. Organised with 'few men, many weapons', they have the firepower to see off any attack and the skill to finish off the enemy with a counterattack.

The Compagnia Motociclisti, or motorcycle company, provides petrol heads with a fully motorised variant on the Compagnia Bersaglieri. Every rifleman rides his own motorcycle for maximum mobility!

Compagnia Fucilieri

While the *carristi* and *bersaglieri* are the glamour boys, it is the *fucilieri*, the riflemen, who spend their days in the frontline trenches, boiling in the desert heat and freezing in Russian snow. A Compagnia Fucilieri, a rifle company, may not be glamorous, but it can still fight. Dig these boys in and they are hard to move. Meanwhile their artillery is pounding away at the enemy, whittling them down for a massed counterattack.

Compagnia Paracadutisti

If you want to lead the best of the best, then a Compagnia Paracadutisti, a parachute company, is for you. Every one of these soldiers is the fearless survivor of at least three low-level parachute jumps. The *paracadutisti* don't have a

lot of heavy equipment, but their skill and bravery more than make up for it.

Choosing Your Force

Before fighting a battle, you need to choose your force. To make sure that you and your opponent choose forces that will give a fair fight and an interesting game, every unit has a points value. Agree with your opponent on the maximum points value that you may spend on your armies. The limit for a typical game is 1500 points. Now look through the Intelligence Briefing for the type of company that you have chosen. Select the platoons you want in your force and subtract their points value from your total. Continue until you have no more points left. Your force is now complete and ready for battle. Avanti!

PLATOON DESCRIPTIONS

The organisation charts describe each platoon in the following parts:

Unit Name: The title of the platoon and the number you can have in each company.

Organisation Diagram: Showing the composition and internal organisation of the platoon.

Platoon: A list of the basic platoon choices available and the points cost of each.

Options: Some platoons are shown with part of the diagram in grey indicating additional options. These are not part of the basic price for the platoon, but must be paid for separately if you wish to include them in your platoon.

Restrictions: In some cases there are additional restrictions on the availability of weapons and how many platoons of the same type your force may have.

This book entirely replaces the Intelligence Briefing on the Italian Army in the *Flames Of War* rule-book.

NAMING YOUR COMPANY

The Royal Army has a system for designating its units that is essentially simple, but difficult to master. The basic concept is that each regiment has a number of battalions designated with Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc). Within the regiment the companies are numbered across the battalions (I battalion could have companies 1 to 4, while II battalion has companies 5 to 8 for example). All simple so far and easy enough to use for most infantry regiments.

The tricky bit is that specialist troops like tanks and *bersaglieri* numbered their battalions in a single sequence, so the battalions in a regiment could have almost any combination of numbers (9^o *reggimento bersaglieri* had XXVIII and XXX battalions, the 28th and 30th). Worse still specialist companies often had a single series of numbers as well, so XXX *battaglione guastatori* had the 5[^], 6[^] and 9[^] companies!) but these company numbers are largely lost in the mists of time.

The saving grace is that like many armies, the Italians often just referred to units by the name of their commander, so *capitano Corelli's* company would be known simply as *compagnia Corelli*.



...Fuka, 1942...

'I saw it with my own eyes,' recounts Fabio Bergomi. 'There were so few of us, barely eleven tanks I think, but we were aware of just what was required of...required of our tanks. Tenente Pascucci made sure of that.'

A comrade hands Bergomi a canteen of water. He nods, taking the canteen in his shaking hands. 'Grazie.'

'Tenente Pascucci led the way. We followed behind. The heat was stifling in our sardine cans. It was so hard to breathe, you just wanted out, out, out! But we couldn't. Poggi was gunning the engine hard, and we thundered on. The enemy was shelling us heavily, a relentless barrage that bashed and bashed against your temples. We kept thinking that we'd be ordered back at any minute.....but we kept going. On and on.....no order came. Tenente Pascucci kept steaming ahead, we had to follow.'

'Even when the tank directly behind him, Corradi's tank, took a direct hit, Pascucci drove on. It was terrible. Poor Corradi, nobody deserves that. There were so many enemy tanks, so damn frightening, we felt like we were protected by mere paper compared to those beasts. What were we to do?'

Bergomi pauses for a moment; steadies himself. 'There were so many.....so many. Tenente Pascucci didn't cease, didn't hesitate, didn't back down, he led us into the enemy without fear. The noise was frightful and it was always on our mind.....we'll be next.....we'll be the next! But we seemed to be unstoppable! Everywhere we fired, something was hit, and something died. Soon, there were burning tanks everywhere. Their crews were.....were trying to escape. Onwards and onwards we kept going, Tenente Pascucci ahead of us always, gun constantly hammering, so we kept following and firing. The enemy were in full flight. We were cheering. Not that we had won, but that we would see tomorrow, we had lived for today!'

'Then we were hit. A short shuddering shock. We poured out from the tank; the track was thrashing about wildly. Then Poggi pointed out Tenente Pascucci.....he didn't stop, we saw his tank vanish into a thick black cloud. And that was it. Who knows how many he managed to take out before he.....we were angry that we had been hit, we wanted to follow him...to follow Pascucci.'

Shaking his head, then taking a swig of water, 'I've never seen the like before,' he finished.

WARRIORS IN FLAMES OF WAR

Outstanding individual soldiers often performed amazing feats. Whether their actions were heroic fights against the odds or inspiring leadership in desperate situations, these warriors changed the outcome of battles by their strength of will and personal courage.

Flames Of War recognises these heroes and their contribution by representing them as Warrior teams with their own special rules. A Warrior team can be included as part of an appropriate force. Of course, Warriors are unique and your force can only have one of any Warrior.

They do not count as a platoon and must usually be attached to a platoon at the start of the game and remain with it for the game's duration.

Company Command Teams

A Warrior team that is a Company Command team must be assigned to a company at the start of the game, replacing the normal Company Command team. Warrior teams that are Company Command or 2iC Command teams can move between platoons and use the Take Over Command rules on page 44 of the rulebook.

Higher Command Teams

Some Warrior teams are described as Higher Command teams. These represent senior commanders, such as battalion or regimental commanders, taking personal control of a critical part of the battle.

If the Higher Command team is not Pinned Down, any platoon whose command team is within 6"/15cm re-rolls failed platoon Motivation checks. The Higher Command team does not re-roll failed Company Morale Checks.

A Higher Command team can move about and take over command of any platoon like a Company Command team, except that they can take over any platoon in the entire force, not just from their own company. If a company in the force has to take a Company Morale Check, the Higher Command team may take the Motivation test, whether or not the Company Command team is present.

Higher Command teams deploy at the same time as Company Command teams. They may deploy with any platoon or on their own.





Characteristics

Tenente Pascucci is a Warrior and a Company Command team rated as **Fearless Veteran**.

Pascucci can join any Compagnia Carri for +50 points. He becomes the Company command team retaining the previous commander's tank.

Special Rules

Iron Heart: Pascucci and any platoon led by Pascucci always pass Motivation tests on a roll of 3+.

Aim For The Tracks: Pascucci makes excellent use of his tank's cannon, aiming for the weak spots of enemy tanks. When an enemy tank makes an Armour Save at a range of up to 16"/40cm and the save result is exactly 7, Pascucci may treat his 47mm gun as having an Anti-tank rating of 8.

Never Surrender!: If Pascucci fails a Company Morale Check, he doesn't count as having failed it this turn, but automatically fails the Company Morale Check next turn. However, every platoon in the Italian force must take an immediate Platoon Morale Check. If they pass the Platoon Morale Check, they fight on, otherwise they are immediately removed from the game counting as Destroyed.

Bail Out: If Pascucci's tank is destroyed, roll a special 3+ save. If the save is successful, Pascucci may transfer to any other tank in his company that is within 4"/10cm. If no suitable tank is within 4"/10cm, Pascucci is out of the battle and removed from the game.

Sottotenente (Second Lieutenant) Luigi Pascucci fought as a *Tenente Capo Compagnia* (Lieutenant in charge of a company) in the 132° *reggimento fanteria carrista* of the famed *Ariete* Armoured Division, during the Second Battle of El Alamein. His company took part in the bitter fighting against the British 22 Armoured Brigade around Bir El Abd just west of El Alamein on November 4, 1942.

The next day his company was assigned to hold the left flank of the Regiment against the British 8 Armoured Brigade during *Ariete's* fighting withdrawal to Fuka. Despite being outnumbered and outgunned by the superior allied armour, he succeeded in holding the flank long enough to allow the rest of the regiment to fall back in good order.

Knowing that he was cut off and the main body of the Italian force still needed time to regroup, Pascucci bravely ignored heavy enemy fire to lead the remaining eleven tanks of his company in a charge straight at the centre of the British armoured formation.

The unexpected ferocity of this attack buckled the British line, then broke it in disorder. Leading from the front he continued the pursuit of the fleeing British.

Pascucci was found after the battle lying in his burnt out tank. His supreme sacrifice a demonstration of his fighting spirit. In recognition of his heroic actions he was awarded the *Medaglia D'Oro Al Valore Militare*, the Gold Medal for Military Valor, Italy's highest award.



AVANTI SAVOIA SPECIAL RULES

The Regio Esercito, the Royal Army, was unprepared for war in 1940, despite Mussolini's call for an army of '8 million bayonets'. The resulting force is very uneven—some officers are excellent, while others are simply abysmal, and the training of their soldiers and these special rules reflect this.

Avanti!

The Italian Army learned many lessons from the First World War. From the Germans they took the concept of speed and mobility in breakthrough operations. From the French they gained the techniques of methodical destruction of the enemy defences. The resulting doctrine emphasised mobile warfare and demanded rapid movement into contact with the enemy before bringing massive firepower to bear to open a gap and allow manoeuvre once more.

Any Italian platoon with a Command team may attempt an Avanti move in its Shooting step instead of shooting. If a platoon attempts to make an Avanti move, it may not shoot even if fails to make an Avanti move.

Roll a Skill test for each platoon:

- If the test is successful, the platoon may move another 4"/10cm,
- Otherwise the platoon cannot move this step.

All of the normal rules apply for this movement. Platoons cannot make Avanti moves if they are Pinned Down or moved At the Double. Bugged Down or Bailed Out vehicles cannot make Avanti moves.

8 Million Bayonets

Mussolini demanded an army eight million strong to create his new Roman Empire. The rapid expansion needed for this led to reservist officers being recalled to the colours with little extra training. After 20 years of civilian life, some were still good soldiers, however most were not!

To reflect the variable quality of Italian officers, Italian platoons are rated as Regular, Elite, or Artillery. After deployment, but before the first turn, roll a die for each platoon and its attached teams and consult the 8 Million Bayonets table to determine their Training and Motivation characteristics.

German Allies

Italian forces can have German allies. These do not count as support platoons, but are additional to the normal support choices. You are not limited in the number of German platoons you may take, merely in the type of platoons the Germans choose to make available.

Allied troops like these retain their own Motivation and Experience ratings. However, German Platoons in an Italian Company do not re-roll Motivation tests when within 6"/15cm of the Italian Company Command team—they do not respect the Italians enough to benefit from their leadership.

Heroism

The Italian Army's lack of modern equipment gave its officers plenty of opportunities to display extreme eroismo, heroism, usually in extremis. Because these great deeds were usually fatal to the hero, it was impossible to know in advance who the heroes were, though if their comrades survived, their deeds would be enshrined in heroic prose and a medal sent to their dearest.

When your company first has a Command team Destroyed by the enemy, roll a Motivation test for that Command team. This test can never be re-rolled for any reason.

- If they pass the Motivation test, the officer shrugs off his wounds, shouts encouragement to his men and a challenge to the enemy and fights on as an Unknown Hero.
- On any other roll, the Command team is Destroyed as normal and you roll again to discover your hero the next time a Command team is Destroyed.

Once you have found your Unknown Hero, stop rolling. There can only be one Unknown Hero in your company in each game.

If the Unknown Hero is an Infantry team, bring the team back into play. If the Unknown Hero was a Tank team, the hero transfers to any other tank in his platoon that is within 4"/10cm making that the Platoon Command team. If no suitable tank is within 4"/10cm, the Unknown Hero is out of the battle and removed from the game.

An Unknown Hero and any platoon led by him always passes all Motivation tests on a roll of 2+. If the Unknown Hero is Destroyed while leading a platoon, the platoon will continue to take Motivation tests as if led by the Unknown Hero, although all other penalties for being Out Of Command still apply.

8 Million Bayonets

Roll	Regular	Elite	Artillery	Parachutist
1	Reluctant Trained	Confident Trained	Confident Trained	Fearless Veteran
2	Reluctant Trained	Confident Trained	Confident Veteran	Fearless Veteran
3	Reluctant Trained	Confident Veteran	Confident Veteran	Fearless Veteran
4	Confident Trained	Confident Veteran	Confident Veteran	Fearless Veteran
5	Confident Trained	Confident Veteran	Confident Veteran	Fearless Veteran
6	Fearless Conscript	Fearless Veteran	Fearless Veteran	Fearless Veteran



COMPAGNIA CARRI

(Tank Company)

It looks like that German Rommel is a real ardito, a real fire eater! Well he'll find us carristi more than willing to fight, no matter what the odds. We'll never let him down. Not that he's that concerned about Italia mind you. He seems happy enough to run off and leave good Italian soldiers behind when it suits him! Still, we'll take him on to Alexandria and beyond—'Ferrea Mole, Ferreo Cuore', 'Iron Hulls, Iron Hearts', that's us.

—Capitano Ernesto Alberto

A force based around a Compagnia Carri must contain:

- a Company HQ, and
- two or three Carri Platoons.

There are no Weapons Platoons available to a Compagnia Carri.

Support Platoons for a Compagnia Carri can be:

- a Self-propelled 75/18 Platoon,
- Bersaglieri Platoons,
- Motociclisti Platoons,
- Armoured Car Platoons,
- Light Tank Platoons, and
- Divisional Support Platoons.

You may have up to **two** Support Platoons attached to your company for each Carri Platoon you field.

Motivation And Experience

Italian tankers have been fighting the British in the desert for years. Their equipment may not be the best, but the soldiers are some of the best that Italy has to offer. The platoons of a Compagnia Carri are rated as **Elite**.

German Allies

You may also field the following platoons from *Desert Fox*: Panzer Platoons equipped with Panzer III or Panzer IV tanks, Panzergrenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries.



'Centauro' Division

HEADQUARTERS PLATOON

1 Company HQ

Platoon

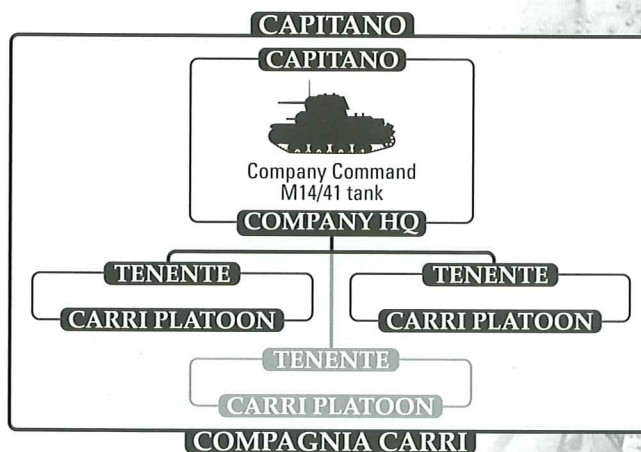
Company HQ

55 points

Option

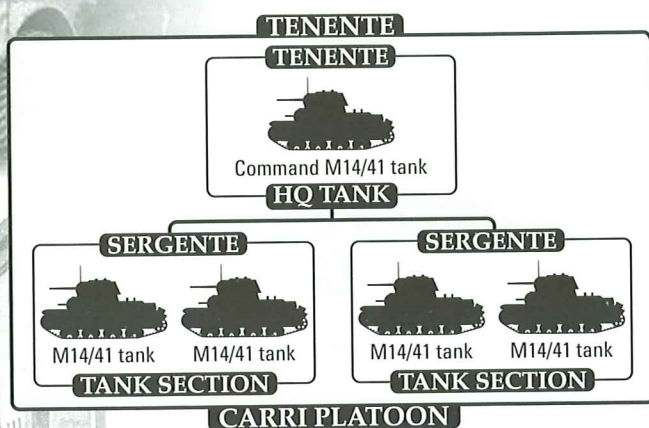
- Arm Command tank with an AA MG for +5 points.

The Capitano leading the carristi, the tankers, of a Compagnia Carri is the bravest of the brave. Every day he leads his men into battle against overwhelming odds, and every day he must triumph.



COMBAT PLATOONS

2 or 3 Carri Platoons



Platoon

5 M14/41	270 points
4 M14/41	215 points
3 M14/41	160 points

Option

- Arm any or all tanks with an AA MG for +5 points per tank.

The armoured divisions rely on the M14/41 tanks (and the older but visually identical M13/40) in the Carri Platoons. Although their armour is thin and their guns small, their crews are brave and overcome the odds to win fight after fight.

SUPPORT PLATOONS

0 to 1 Self-propelled 75/18 Platoon



Platoon

1 Carro Comando with:

4 Semovente 75/18	330 points
3 Semovente 75/18	255 points
2 Semovente 75/18	180 points

Option

- Arm any or all Carro Comando tanks and Semovente 75/18 assault guns with an AA MG for +5 points per vehicle.

Seeing the success of the German StuG assault guns, the Italian High Command decided to build a self-propelled gun along the same lines. Thus was born the Semovente 75/18, based on the M14/41 hull and armed with a 75mm artillery piece.

Semoventi or self-propelled guns give the Carri Platoons support using their bigger guns to destroy the enemy Grant and Sherman heavy tanks allowing the carristi to destroy the enemy infantry and artillery.

THE TEN POINTS OF A BERSAGLIERE

In 1836 General Lamarmora, creator and mentor of the Bersaglieri, defined the core character of his men in the Decalogo del Bersagliere as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Obbedienza | 1. Obedience |
| 2. Rispetto | 2. Respect |
| 3. Conoscenza assoluta della propria carabina | 3. Absolute knowledge of one's weapon |
| 4. Molto esercizio di tiro | 4. Lots of target practice |
| 5. Ginnastica di ogni genere fino alla frenesia | 5. Fanatical devotion to physical fitness |
| 6. Cameratismo | 6. Camaraderie |
| 7. Sentimento della famiglia | 7. Family values |
| 8. Amore al re | 8. Devotion to the King |
| 9. Amore alla patria | 9. Love of one's country |
| 10. Fiducia in se' fino alla presunzione | 10. Self-esteem to the point of conceit |



COMPAGNIA BERSAGLIERI

(Mechanised Infantry Company)

Up men up...to the front. Just as Il Duce was willing to give his blood for his country in the First World War, we shall do the same now. For we are the elite of the Italian Army, chosen by Comando Supremo as the best of the best. With the aid of our well built motorcycles and trucks we are able to strike fast and hard wherever we are needed.

—Bersagliere Gianpaolo Brisigotti

A force based around a Compagnia Bersaglieri must contain:

- a Company HQ,
- one Bersaglieri Platoon, and
- one to three Bersaglieri, Bersaglieri Machine-gun, or Bersaglieri Anti-tank Platoons.

Weapons Platoons available to a Compagnia Bersaglieri are:

- a Bersaglieri Anti-aircraft Platoon.

Support Platoons for a Compagnia Bersaglieri can be:

- a Bersaglieri Mortar Platoon,
- two Motorised Anti-tank Platoons,
- Carri Platoons,
- a Self-propelled 75/18 Platoon,
- Motociclisti Platoons,
- Armoured Car Platoons,
- Light Tank Platoons, and
- Divisional Support Platoons.

You may have up to **two** Support Platoons attached to your company for each Combat Platoon you field.

Motivation And Experience

The bersaglieri are Italy's elite infantry. They train hard and fight hard, and have been doing so for more than two years. The platoons of a Compagnia Bersaglieri are rated as **Elite**.

German Allies

You may also field either the following platoons from *Desert Fox*: Panzer Platoons equipped with Panzer III or Panzer IV tanks, Panzergrenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries, or the following platoons from *Stalingrad*: Grenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries.

HEADQUARTERS PLATOON

1 Company HQ

Platoon

Company HQ 35 points

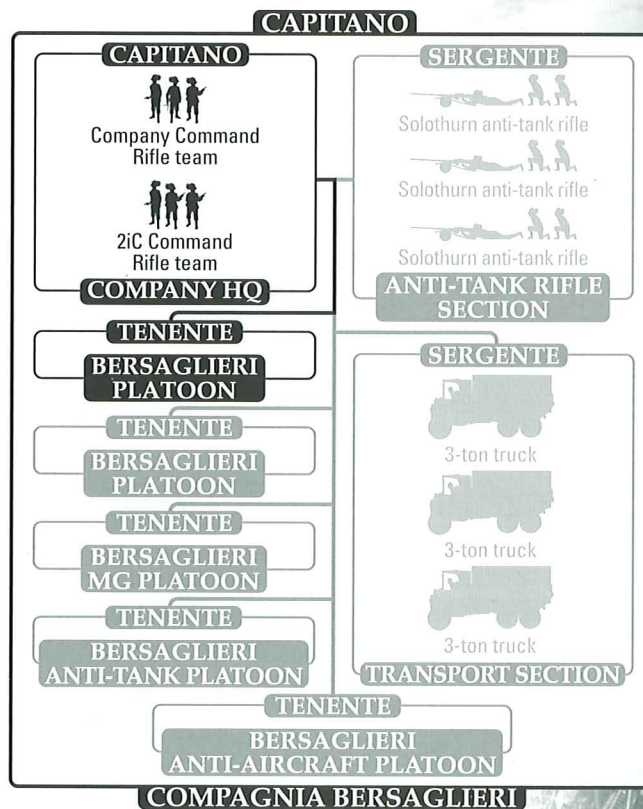
Options

- Arm any or all Rifle teams with Passaglia bombs for +5 points per team.
- Add Solothurn anti-tank rifles for +20 points per team.
- Add Transport Section for +5 points per vehicle.

The philosophy of 'few men, many weapons' is the heart of the AS42 organisation. Each company has plenty of weapons with just enough soldiers to man and defend them. In the desert, attacks are made by tanks, not infantry.

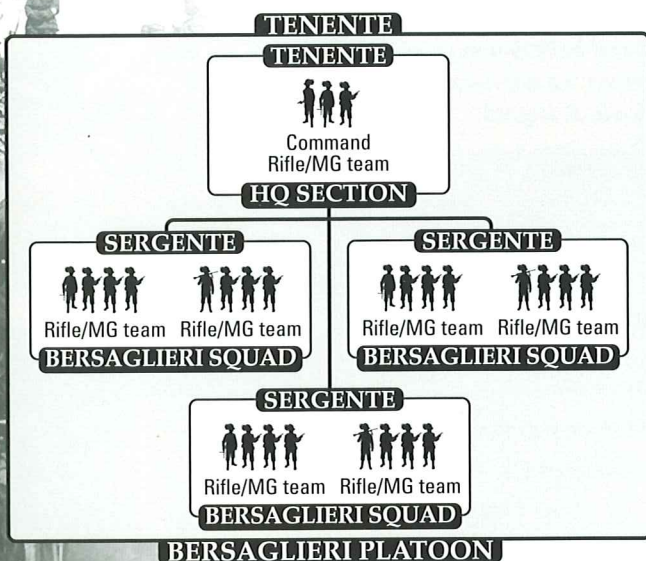
101st Divisione Motorizzata Trieste

The Trieste motorised infantry division was the best infantry division in North Africa. Not only was it fully motorised, but it had a regiment of *bersaglieri* as well. Even the *fucilieri*, the infantry, of the division were noted for their excellent performance and used the bersaglieri organisation.



COMBAT PLATOONS

1 or 2 Bersaglieri Platoons



Platoon

HQ Section with:

3 Bersaglieri Squads	150 points
2 Bersaglieri Squads	105 points

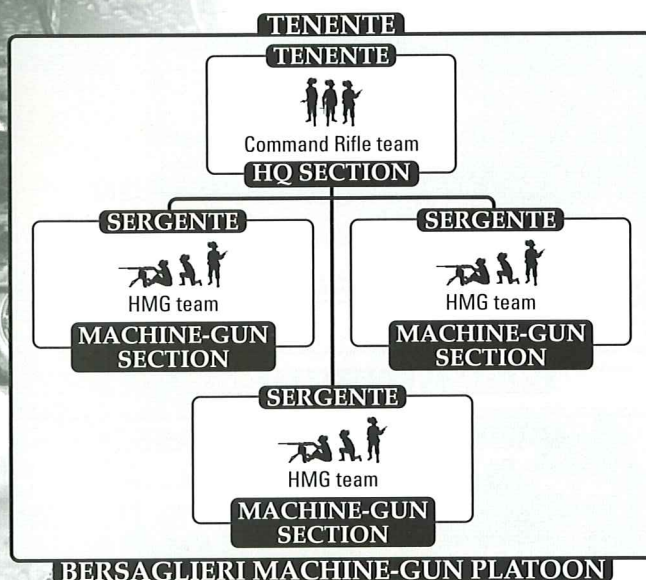
Options

- Arm all Rifle/MG teams with Passaglia bombs for +5 points per team.

General Rommel said 'The German soldier impressed the world, the Italian bersaglieri impressed the German soldier!'

The platoon is armed with Breda machine-guns, *bombe Passaglia*, and *bottiglia incendiaria*, Molotov Cocktails, but the absolute dedication of his men is a greater asset to the Tenente.

0 to 1 Bersaglieri Machine-gun Platoon



Platoon

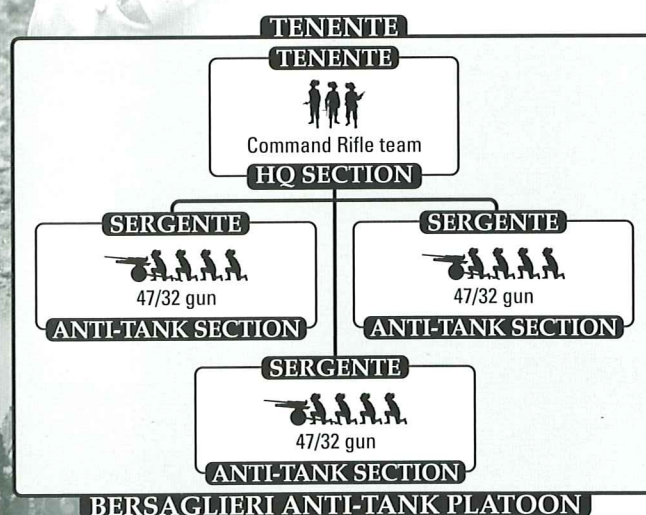
HQ Section with:

3 Machine-gun Sections	105 points
2 Machine-gun Sections	75 points

The machine-gun crews gathered around their Breda *modello 37* heavy machine-guns form strongpoints in the Italian battle line. From there they support the bersaglieri in their typical flank attacks and break up enemy counter-attacks.

The Breda uses an unusual feed mechanism of twenty-round strips rather than a continuous belt, but a good crew can keep up a good rate of sustained fire.

0 to 1 Bersaglieri Anti-tank Platoon



Platoon

HQ Section with:

3 Anti-tank Sections	125 points
2 Anti-tank Sections	90 points

The *Cannone da 47/32 modello 35* gun, is known as the *Elefantino*, or little elephant. With the wheels removed, it is only 20"/50cm tall enabling it to take cover in any terrain.

To overcome its limited penetration when shooting at tanks, crews tend to hold their fire until extremely short range where they can hit the flanks, belly, or tracks of enemy tanks.

WEAPONS PLATOONS

0 to 1 Bersaglieri Anti-aircraft Platoon

Platoon

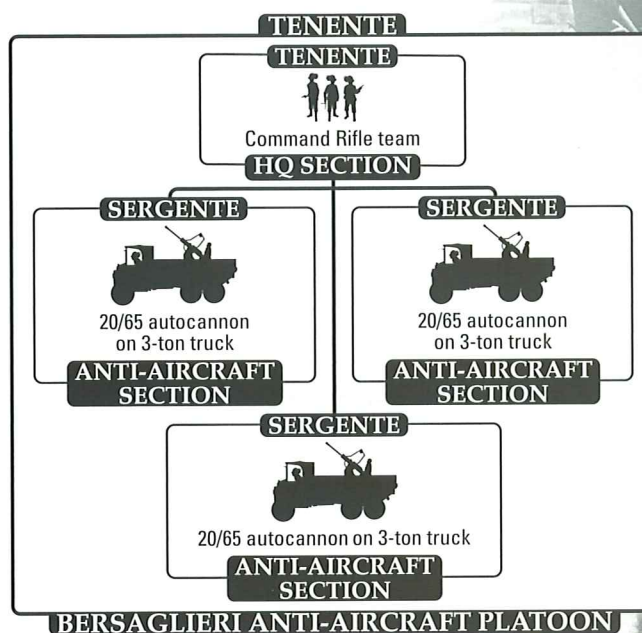
HQ Section with:

3 Anti-aircraft Sections	100 points
2 Anti-aircraft Sections	75 points

The *Cannone-Mitragliera Breda da 20/65 modello 35* is the most common anti-aircraft gun in the *Regio Esercito*, the Royal Army. It is a dual-purpose weapon for use against ground and air targets.

It was normally mounted on a truck, but was light enough to be broken down into four pack loads for man or mule carriage. In action the gun required a three-man crew.

As is common in many Italian units, the command team ride in one of the trucks with the guns rather than having their own transport.



SUPPORT PLATOONS

0 to 1 Bersaglieri Mortar Platoon

Platoon

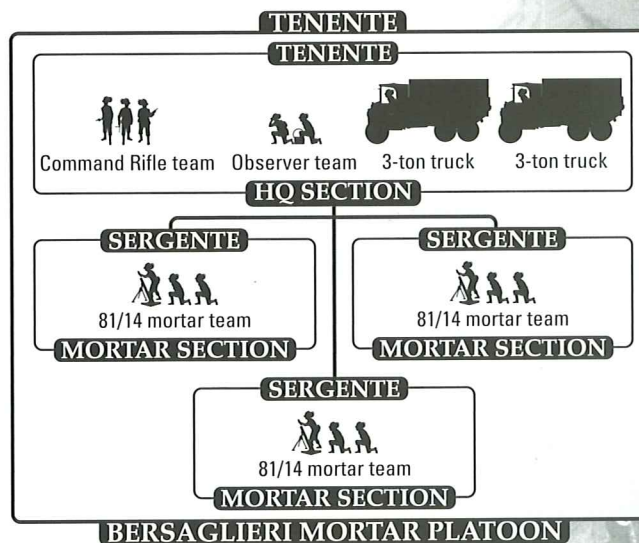
HQ Section with:

3 Mortar Sections	120 points
2 Mortar Sections	95 points

Rated As Elite

Like the rest of the *Regio Esercito*, the bersaglieri use the 81/14 mortar. Although similar to most other mortars of its size, Italian technology gave it a greater range making it the envy of its foes.

The *bersaglieri* use their Mortar Platoons to pin down distant targets as they manoeuvre to assault them.



0 to 2 Motorised Anti-tank Platoons

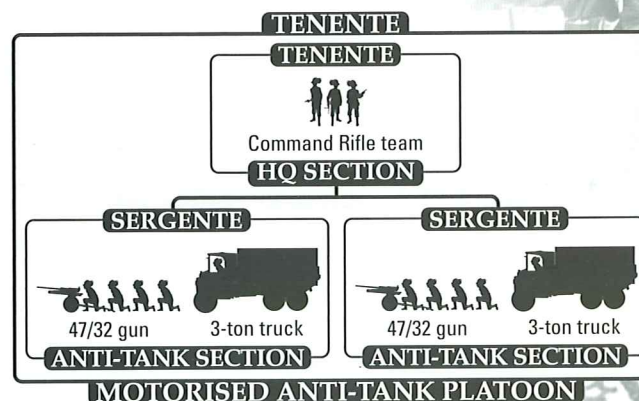
Platoon

HQ Section with:

2 Anti-tank Sections	100 points
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Rated As Elite

A *Plotone Anticarro Motorizzato*, or Motorised Anti-tank Platoon, is always ready to quickly redeploy to cover dangerous gaps opening in the line. Preventing enemy tanks from breaking through is critical to allow the counterattacks for which the *bersaglieri* have won renown.



COMPAGNIA MOTOCICLISTI

(Mechanised Infantry Company)

At the start of 1942, each bersaglieri regiment and reconnaissance battalion had a Compagnia Motociclisti (pronounced kom-pah-nee-ah moh-toh-cheek-lee-stee, meaning motorcyclist company). These were organised much like the motorised bersaglieri, but with everything in fours rather than threes.

A force based around a Compagnia Motociclisti must contain:

- a Company HQ,
- one Motociclisti Platoon, and
- one to three Motociclisti, Motociclisti Machine-gun, or Motociclisti Anti-tank Platoons.

Weapons Platoons available to a Compagnia Motociclisti are:

- a Motociclisti Anti-aircraft Platoon,
- Armoured Car Platoons, and
- Light Tank Platoons.

Support Platoons for a Compagnia Motociclisti can be:

- Bersaglieri Platoons,
- a Bersaglieri Mortar Platoon,
- two Motorised Anti-tank Platoons,
- Carri Platoons,
- a Self-propelled 75/18 Platoon,
- Divisional Support Platoons.

You may have up to **two** Support Platoons attached to your company for each Combat Platoon you field.

Motivation And Experience

The Motociclisti are exceptionally well trained in every aspect of motorcycling. Their combat performance is equally noteworthy. The platoons of a Compagnia Motociclisti are rated as **Elite**.

German Allies

You may also field either the following platoons from *Desert Fox*: Panzer Platoons equipped with Panzer III or Panzer IV tanks, Panzergrenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries, or the following platoons from *Stalingrad*: Grenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries.

HEADQUARTERS PLATOON

1 Company HQ

The Company HQ is organised like that of the Compagnia Bersaglieri on page 23, but with the addition of an optional fourth Solothurn anti-tank rifle for +20 points.

You must equip each Rifle team with Motorcycles for + 5 points and each Solothurn anti-tank rifle with a TL37 truck for +5 points per weapon.

COMBAT PLATOONS

1 or 2 Motociclisti Platoons

A *Plotone Motociclisti* (motorcyclist platoon) is organised as a Bersaglieri Platoon (see page 24) with an optional fourth Bersaglieri Squad for +40 points.

You must equip each Rifle/MG team with Motorcycles for +5 points per team.

0 to 1 Motociclisti Machine-gun Platoon

The machine-gun platoon is organised as a Bersaglieri Machine-gun Platoon (see page 24) with an optional fourth Machine-gun Section for +30 points.

You must equip each HMG team with Motorcycles for +5 points for the HQ Section and +5 points per Machine-gun Section.



0 to 1 Motociclisti Anti-tank Platoon

The anti-tank platoon is organised as a Bersaglieri Anti-tank Platoon (see page 24) with an optional fourth Anti-tank Section for +45 points.

You must equip the HQ and each Anti-tank Section with a TL37 truck for +5 points per section

WEAPONS PLATOONS

0 to 1 Motociclisti Anti-aircraft Platoon

A Compagnia Motociclisti may have an anti-aircraft platoon organised like the Bersaglieri Anti-aircraft Platoon (see page 25) as a Weapons Platoon.

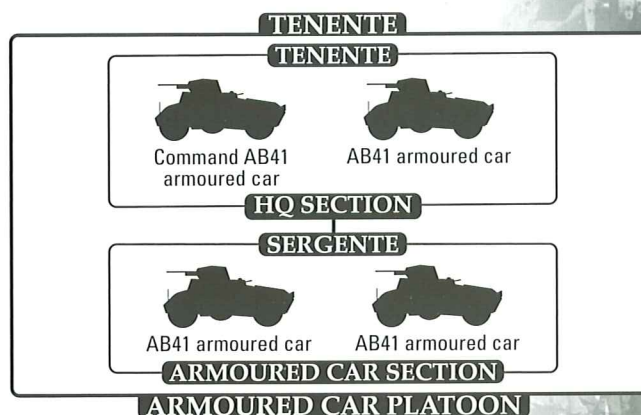
0 to 4 Armoured Car Platoons

Platoon

4 AB41	115 points
3 AB41	85 points
2 AB41	55 points

The *Autoblindo* AB41 armoured cars cover the advance, locate the enemy, and work around their flanks to keep the advance moving.

Armoured Car Platoons are reconnaissance platoons and use the Reconnaissance rules in the *Flames Of War* rulebook, or those in *Stars and Stripes* (also available on our website).

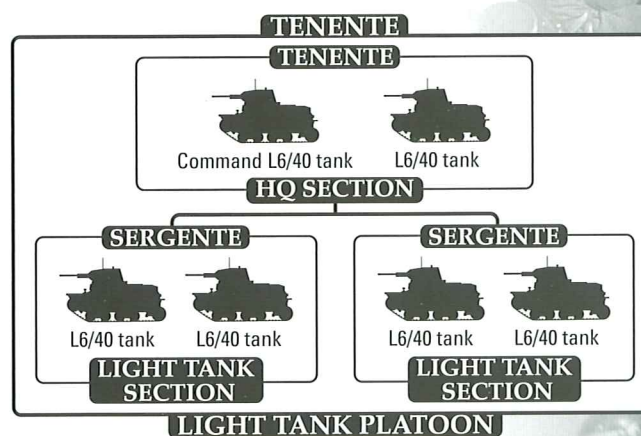


0 to 3 Light Tank Platoons

Platoon

6 L6/40	145 points
5 L6/40	120 points
4 L6/40	95 points
3 L6/40	70 points

The 6-ton L6/40 light tank was produced in 1940 as the successor to the old L3/35 tankette. The small L6/40 was armed with a 20mm gun with a coaxial 8mm gun making it ideal for cavalry regiments and *bersaglieri* reconnaissance groups where mobility matters more than firepower.



MOTORCYCLES

The *bersaglieri motociclisti* rode the legendary Moto Guzzi *Alce* (pronounced al-keh), or Elk, introduced in 1938 for military use in reconnaissance and convoy escort. It featured a handlebar-mounting for the squad's Breda 30 light machine-gun. Obviously this machine gun could only be operated when the motorcycle was stationary!

Adding Motorcycles to a team allows it to move as a Jeep team until it dismounts. Once it dismounts the motorcycles are removed and the team becomes a normal team. Officially each Squad or Section has one motorcycle with a sidecar for two of the soldiers and one motorcycle each for the rest. Most units were short of motorcycles and doubled up with two men on each motorcycle and many did without sidecars.

Rifle and Rifle/MG teams can fire their weapons while mounted with the normal penalty for moving. HMG teams can fire as Rifle/MG teams while mounted.



COMPAGNIA FUCILIERI

(Infantry Company)

Mussolini has called for 8 Million Bayonets and my countrymen you have answered. The strength and traditions of the fucilieri run in your veins as well as the admiration of your country. The eyes of the world are upon you. Sons of Italy make us proud!

—Colonello Carlo Stormo

A force based around a Compagnia Fucilieri must contain:

- a Company HQ,
- one to three Fucilieri Platoons.

Weapons Platoons available to a Compagnia Fucilieri are:

- a Machine-gun Platoon, and
- a Light Mortar Platoon.

Support Platoons for a Compagnia Fucilieri can be:

- two Mortar Platoons,
- a Regimental Gun Platoon,
- an Anti-tank Platoon,
- a Self-propelled 90/53 Platoon,
- two Renault Tank Platoons,
- Bersaglieri Platoons,
- Motociclisti Platoons,
- a Light Tank Platoon,
- Paracadutisti Platoons, and
- Divisional Support Platoons.

You may have up to **two** Support Platoons attached to your company for each Fucilieri Platoon you field.

Motivation And Experience

The *fucilieri*, the riflemen, are the backbone of the Royal Army. They are not volunteers. They don't want to be heroes. They just want to win this war and return to their farms and villages. The platoons of a Compagnia Fucilieri are rated as **Regular**.

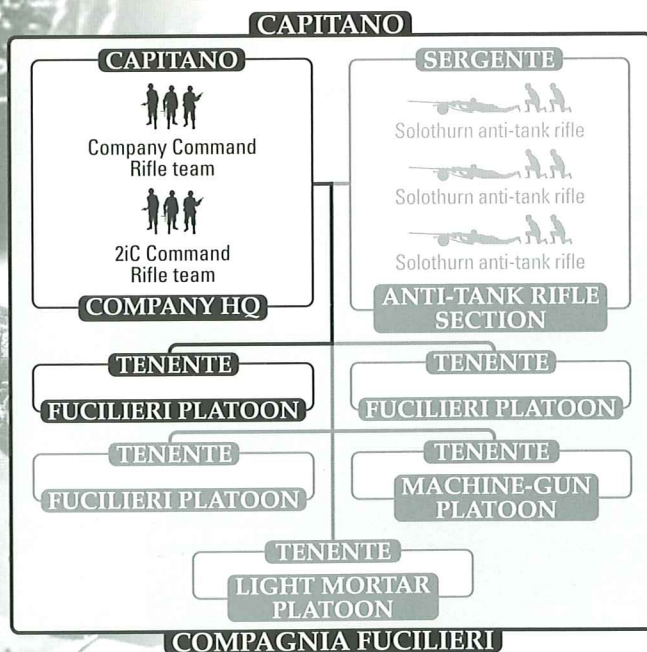
German Allies

You may also field either the following platoons from *Desert Fox*: Panzergrenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries, or the following platoons from *Stalingrad*: Grenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries.

In addition, you may also field Fallschirmjäger Platoons from *Diving Eagles*.

HEADQUARTERS PLATOON

1 Company HQ



Platoon

Company HQ **25 points**

Option

- Add Solothurn anti-tank rifles for +15 points per team.

A *capitano dei fucilieri* has a strong role to play in commanding his company-sized portion of the 8 million bayonets demanded by Mussolini.

As the leader of your company it is up to you to show your men the way. To lead them into danger and out the other side to victory. Your courage and leadership at the critical point on the battlefield makes the difference between glorious victory and ignoble defeat.



COMBAT PLATOONS

1 to 3 Fucilieri Platoons

Platoon

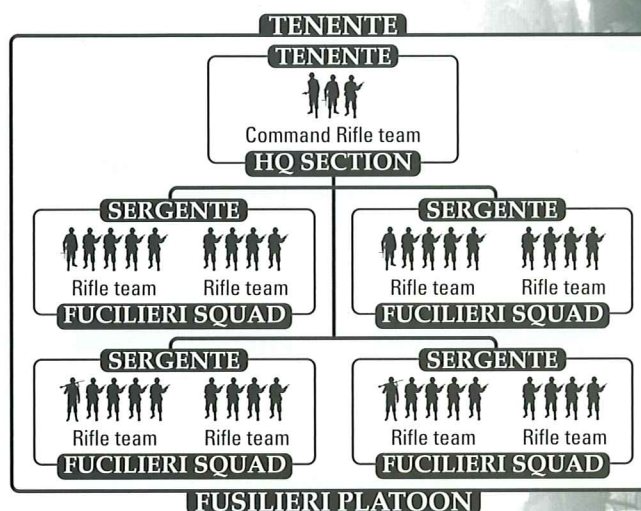
HQ Section with:

4 Fucilieri Squads	120 points
3 Fucilieri Squads	95 points
2 Fucilieri Squads	70 points

Options

- Arm all Rifle teams with Passaglia bombs for +5 points per team.
- Upgrade all Rifle teams to Rifle/MG teams for +5 points per Fucilieri Squad.

Armed with the old Carcano 91 rifle and a few new Breda 30 machine-guns, the *fucilieri* must rely on their courage more than on technology.



WEAPONS PLATOONS

0 to 1 Machine-gun Platoon

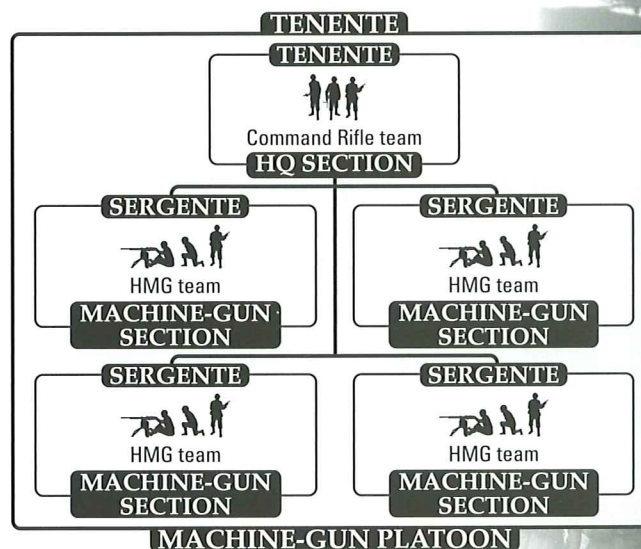
Platoon

HQ Section with:

4 Machine-gun Sections	95 points
3 Machine-gun Sections	75 points
2 Machine-gun Sections	55 points

The 8mm Breda modello 37 machine gun laid down an impressive 450 rounds a minute, a big improvement over the old unreliable FIAT-Revelli modello 35 (nicknamed the 'knuckle-buster' for its exposed recoil mechanism!)

In the hands of an adept gunner, a withering hail of fire could be maintained to support the advancing *fucilieri*.



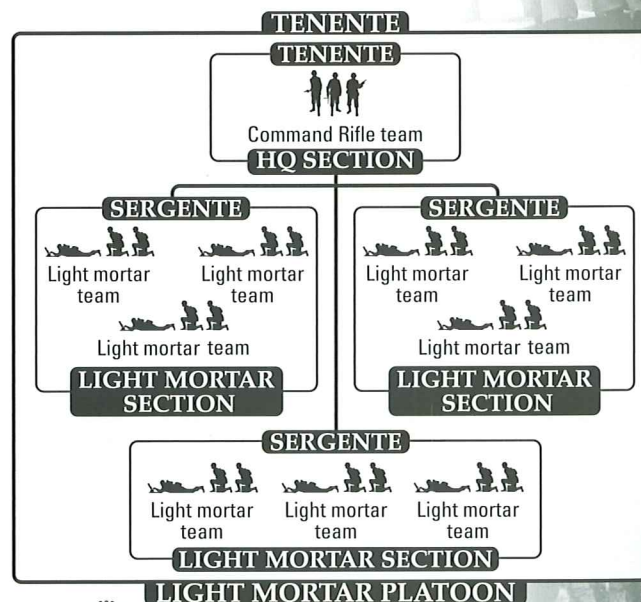
0 to 1 Light Mortar Platoon

Platoon

HQ Section with:

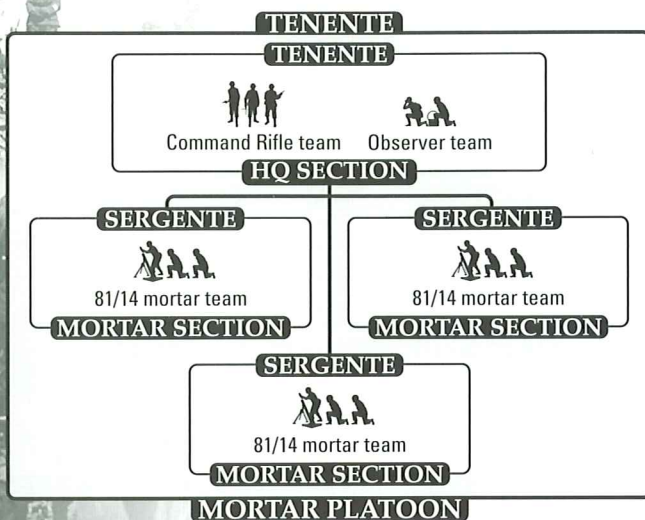
3 Mortar Sections	175 points
2 Mortar Sections	120 points
1 Mortar Section	65 points

The 45mm Brixia modello 35 light mortar is designed to provide covering fire for the *fucilieri* right up to the point of assault. Unlike machine-guns and medium mortars that have to cease firing early to avoid hitting their own troops, the Brixia fires its small grenades over the attacking infantry allowing it to keep firing until the last few seconds before the assault. This makes the Brixia perfect for supporting infantry assaults.



SUPPORT PLATOONS

0 to 2 Mortar Platoons



Platoon

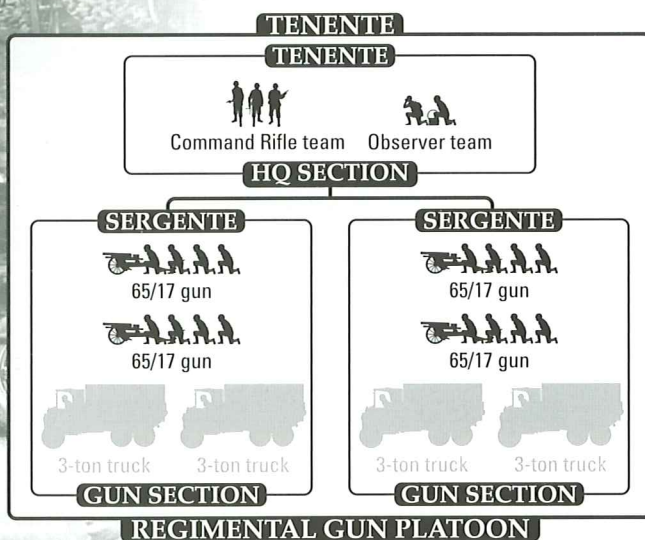
HQ Section with:

3 Mortar Sections	80 points
2 Mortar Sections	60 points

Rated As Regular

The long-ranged *Mortaio da 81/14 modello 35* is available in sufficient numbers to give the *fucilieri* excellent close artillery support. This mortar is great at breaking up attacks and pinning down enemy defenders making them welcomed by all *fucilieri* company commanders.

0 to 1 Regimental Gun Platoon



Platoon

HQ Section with:

2 Gun Sections	125 points
1 Gun Section	75 points

Option

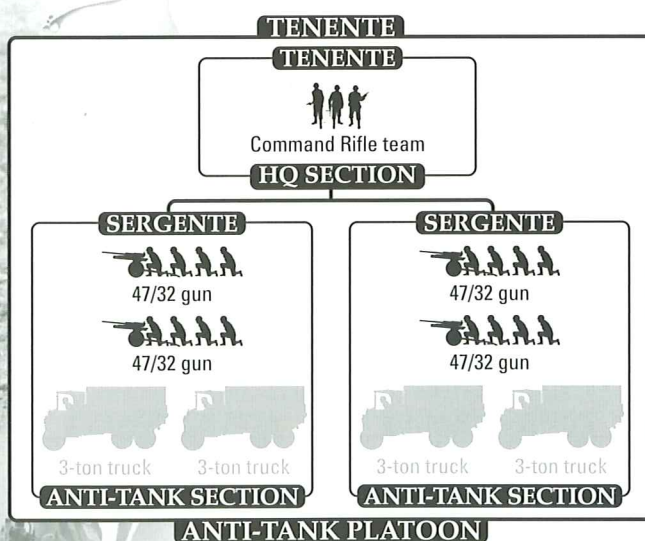
- Add 3-ton trucks for +10 points per Gun Section.

Rated As Regular

The *Cannone da 65/17 modello 13* was originally a mountain gun, able to be broken into small loads for transport. Now it is issued as an infantry gun to give the *fucilieri* close-up fire support.

It is a small gun, but with its *effetto pronto* anti-tank round, it is still a threat to enemy tanks.

0 to 1 Anti-tank Platoon



Platoon

HQ Section with:

2 Gun Sections	115 points
1 Gun Section	65 points

Options

- Replace all 47/32 guns with 37/45 (German 3.7cm PaK36) guns for -15 points per Gun Section, or with 75/39 (German 7.5cm PaK38/97) guns for +10 points per Gun Section.

- Add 3-ton trucks for +10 points per Gun Section.

You may not field more than one Anti-tank Platoon equipped with 75/39 guns in any force.

Rated As Regular

While most units had the Italian 47/32 gun, less fortunate ones made do with the German 37/45 guns. On the Russian front these were backed by heavier German 75/39 anti-tank guns.



0 to 1 Self-propelled 90/53 Platoon

Platoon

1 Carro Comando with:

4 Semovente 90/53	365 points
3 Semovente 90/53	280 points
2 Semovente 90/53	195 points

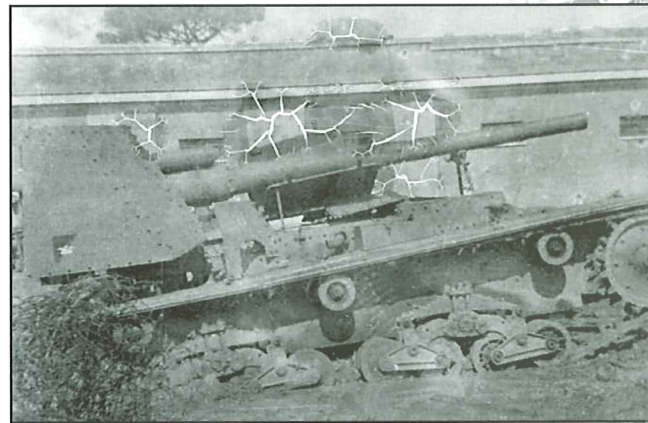
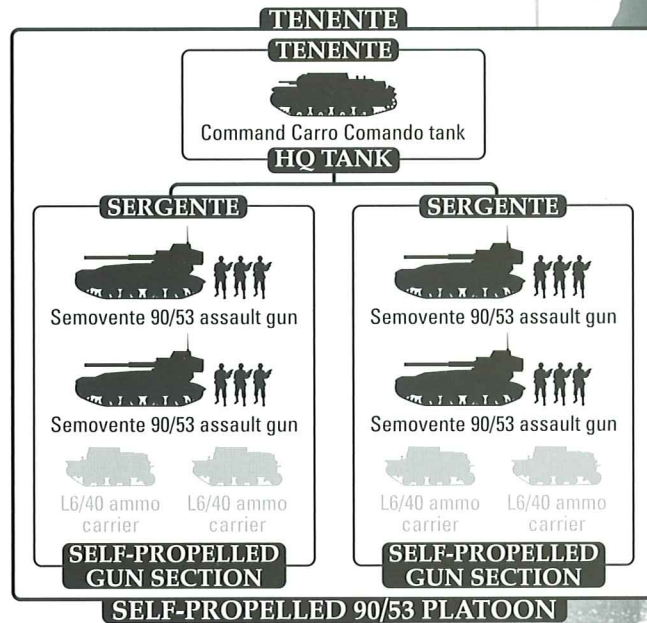
Options

- Add L6/40 ammo carriers for +10 points per vehicle.
- Arm any or all Carro Comando tanks and L6/40 ammo carriers with an AA MG for +5 points per vehicle.

Rated As Regular

In 1942, the Italian Generals realised that they would need a heavy self-propelled gun to deal with the Soviet T-34 tanks. The result was the *Semovente da 90/53 M41* mounting a 90/53 anti-aircraft gun on a lengthened M14/41 tank chassis. With this armament, few enemy tanks can stand in its way. The only drawback is that a mere 6 rounds could be carried, so the *L6/40 trasporto munizioni* ammo carriers provide the main ammunition supply.

Few of these powerful weapons were produced, and when the Italian Army in Russia collapsed before they were ready, all were used to defend Sicily and Italy.



0 to 2 Renault Tank Platoons

Platoon

5 R.35	125 points
4 R.35	100 points
3 R.35	75 points

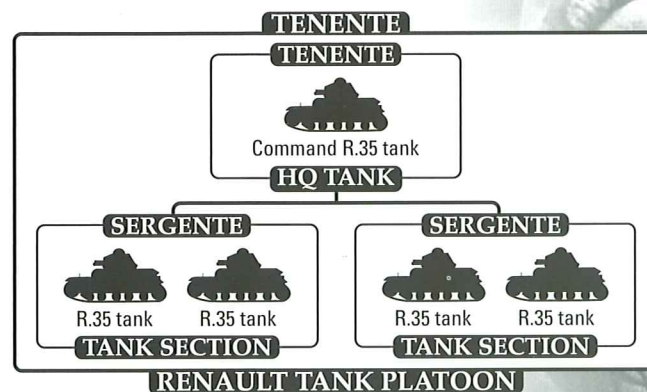
You may not field both Light Tank Platoons and Renault Tank Platoons.

Rated As Regular

Italy received over a hundred Renault R.35 light tanks when France surrendered in 1940. They briefly considered sending them to fight in the desert, but sensibly decided to issue them to CI (101st) and CII (102nd) tank battalions garrisoning Sicily instead.

Unfortunately, when the Allies invaded Sicily, these were the only Italian tanks on the island, so they had to fight on, despite their obvious obsolescence.

Sporting a 37mm gun and a co-axial 7.5mm machine gun, and with a front armor of 45mm, the Renault R.35 was well armed and protected when built, but ridiculously under-gunned compared to the Allied tanks it had to fight.



COMPAGNIA PARACADUTISTI

(Infantry Company)

Italy pioneered military parachuting when it resupplied divisions by air way back in 1918. The Regio Esercito, the Royal Army, was amongst the first to create a parachute force. Now these veteran parachutists have created two parachute divisions Folgore and Nembo. Only the best of the best survive the hard training and the three combat-ready practice jumps needed to become a paracadutista, a paratrooper. These few men become a perfect combat team, ready to win victory in many battles.

—Sergente Maggiore Nicolò Da Lio

A force based around a Compagnia Paracadutisti must contain:

- a Company HQ,
- two or three Paracadutisti Platoons.

Weapons Platoons available to a Compagnia Paracadutisti are:

- a Paracadutisti Machine-gun Platoon, and
- two Paracadutisti Mortar Platoons.

Support Platoons for a Compagnia Paracadutisti can be:

- Paracadutisti Anti-tank Platoons,
- a Paracadutisti Demolisher Platoon,
- Bersaglieri Platoons,
- Fucilieri Platoons, and
- Divisional Support Platoons.

You may have up to **two** Support Platoons attached to your company for each Paracadutisti Platoon you field.

Motivation And Experience

The parachutists of the Folgore Division are all volunteers. Every one of them has jumped out of a plane from heights as low as 100m. They trained hard and now they fight hard. In such a unit there is no room for cowardice or failure. A Compagnia Paracadutisti does not need to roll on the 8 Million Bayonets table as every platoon in a Compagnia Paracadutisti is rated as **Fearless Veteran**.

German Allies

You may also field either the following platoons from *Desert Fox*: Panzergrenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries, or the following platoons from *Stalingrad*: Grenadier Platoons, Anti-tank Platoons, and Artillery Batteries.

In addition, you may also field Fallschirmjäger Platoons from *Diving Eagles*.

HEADQUARTERS PLATOON

1 Company HQ



Platoon

Company HQ **45 points**

Option

- Arm any or all SMG teams with Passaglia bombs for +5 points per team.

There is no room for bad officers in the *paracadutisti*. Every officer has passed jump training, just like their men. Officers are respected by their soldiers because unlike many, they stick by their men, never abandoning them, no matter how bad the situation.

It is an unwritten rule among paratroopers that the officers always lead attacks from the front. That is where you should be in battle, leading the assault.



COMBAT PLATOONS

2 to 3 Paracadutisti Platoons

Platoon

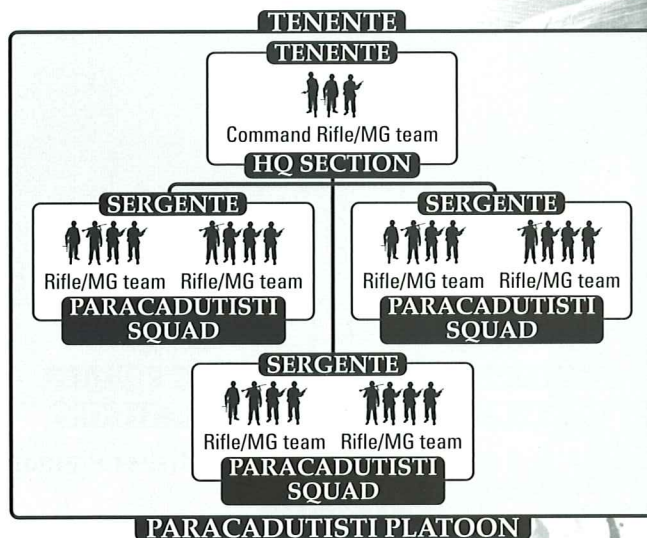
HQ Section with:

3 Paracadutisti Squads	185 points
2 Paracadutisti Squads	135 points

Options

- Upgrade Command Rifle/MG team to a Command SMG team at no cost.
- Arm all Rifle/MG and SMG teams with Passaglia bombs for +5 points per team.

The *paracadutisti* were supposed to be armed with *Beretta modello 38* submachine-guns, but there aren't enough so only sergeants and officers have them. Even so, the British shudder when they hear the battle cry '*Folgore!*'.



WEAPONS PLATOONS

0 to 1 Paracadutisti Machine-gun Platoon

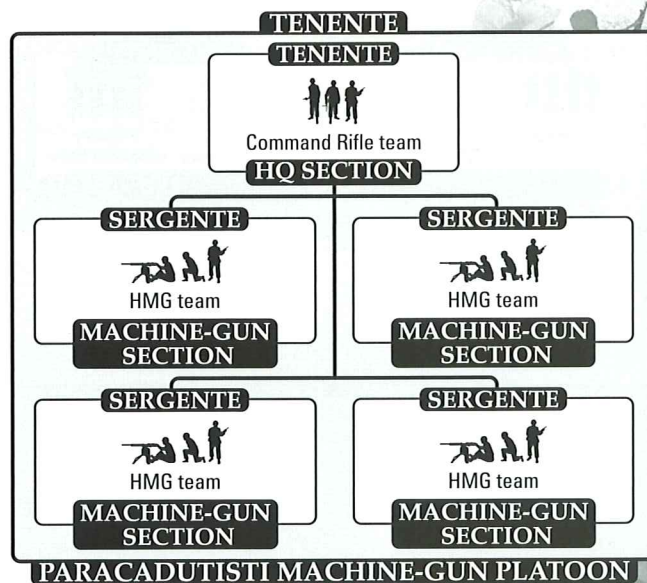
Platoon

HQ Section with:

4 Machine-gun Sections	165 points
3 Machine-gun Sections	130 points
2 Machine-gun Sections	95 points

The machine-guns wait until short range to open fire, keeping hidden until then as the *paracadutisti* sneak around the flanks to counterattack.

This technique is very effective and allows the *paracadutisti* to beat many times their numbers. This '*Folgore* tactic' has helped create the myth that the *Folgore* Division will never be overrun.



0 to 2 Paracadutisti Mortar Platoons

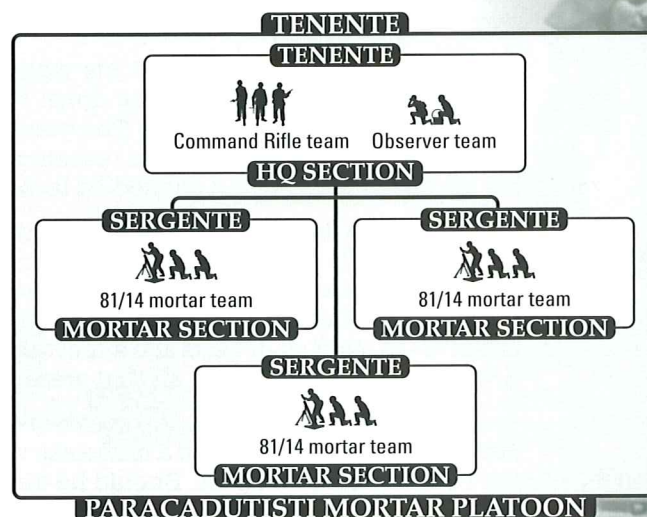
Platoon

HQ Section with:

3 Mortar Sections	130 points
2 Mortar Sections	100 points

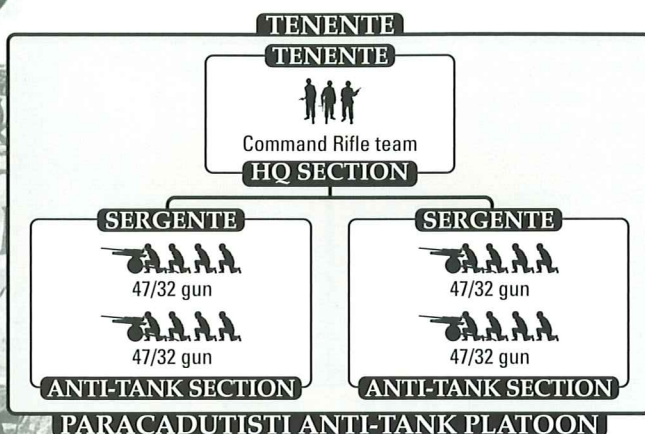
Mortars are the perfect weapon for parachutists. They are light enough to parachute into battle, but still deliver a heavy punch at long range.

Every battalion has its own mortar platoon, reinforced by the divisional mortar company as needed. These operate well forward to give the *paracadutisti* the ability to break up enemy attacks and destroy enemy guns.

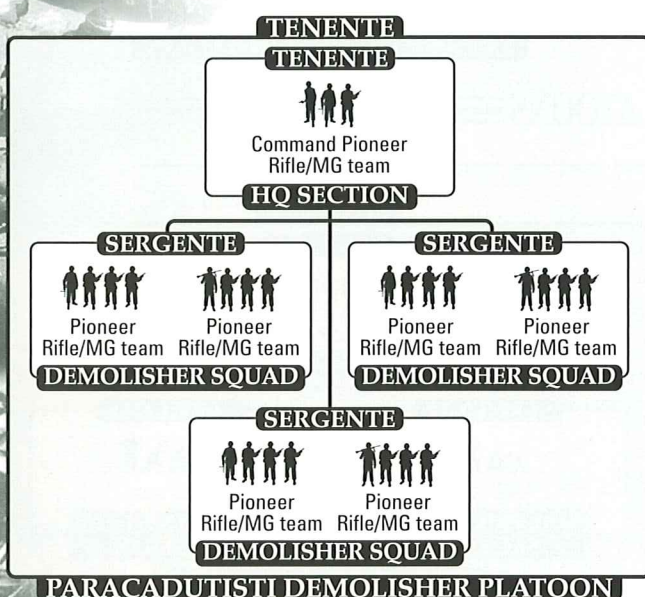


SUPPORT PLATOONS

Paracadutisti Anti-tank Platoons



0 to 1 Paracadutisti Demolisher Platoon



Platoon

HQ Section with:

2 Anti-tank Sections	220 points
1 Anti-tank Section	120 points

Rated As Fearless Veteran

The only artillery available to the paratroopers was the little 47/32 'Elefantino', not very powerful, but dangerous if used well. The *paracadutisti* 'acquired' extra guns from nearby formations to form their 7th 'Fantasma' or 'Ghost' battery.

Platoon

HQ Section with:

3 Demolisher Squads	240 points
2 Demolisher Squads	170 points
1 Demolisher Squad	100 points

Options

- Upgrade Command Rifle/MG team to Command SMG team at no cost.
- Equip up to one Pioneer Rifle/MG team per Demolisher Squad with a flame-thrower in addition to its normal weapons for +30 points per team.

Rated As Fearless Veteran

Folgore's VIII Battalion was its *guastatori*, its demolition engineers. With satchel charges and flamethrowers they were especially dangerous to marauding allied tanks.

... Haret El Himeimat, 1942...

Soft African sand seeped like water into his uniform. It was everywhere and seemed to have been there forever, like the explosions of British shells all around. Paolo Bettin, caporale, VII battaglione guastatori paracadutisti, pressed his helmet tighter on his head, clenched his teeth and huddled deeper in his buca, his fox-hole. The earth shook so violently his heart missed a beat.

He jumped as a hand touched his right shoulder. Paolo looked up to see capitano Lorenzi in the darkness looking down from the edge of his buca, a sad smile on his face. Paolo couldn't believe it! The young captain was walking around in the maelstrom checking his soldiers and reassuring them with his presence. Lorenzi squeezed his shoulder, winked and dashed on towards the next hole.

Suddenly, like death came silence. The shelling had stopped and the night swallowed all sound. Paolo raised his head to see paratroopers, like ghosts in the darkness, pop up from their buce, fewer than ever. Like his brothers in arms, he checked his trusty 'ninety-one' rifle and arranged the few grenades left to him before daring one last look at the stars overhead. Days ago a mortar round had silenced their last elefantino gun. Grenades and bullets were all that were left, they would have to suffice.

Out in the darkness ahead the creak of tank tracks and the rumble of engines grew nearer. 'FOLGORE!' shouted a nameless voice beside him. Despite the odds, Paolo knew the British would not pass. Should he die, his brothers would fight on to the last.



DIVISIONAL SUPPORT PLATOONS

Italian Companies may have the following support platoons:

- a Self-propelled 47/32 Platoon,
- a Light Anti-aircraft Platoon,
- a Heavy Anti-aircraft Platoon,
- a Heavy Anti-tank Platoon,
- Transport Platoons,
- Artillery Batteries, and
- Demolisher Platoons.



Air Support

You may request Sporadic air support at a cost of 50 points. Sporadic air support will provide supporting ground-attack aircraft and fighters on a roll of 6.

You may request Limited air support at a cost of 100 points. Limited air support will provide supporting ground-attack aircraft and fighters on a roll of 5+.

Motivation And Experience

Divisional support platoons are rated as **Regular**, **Elite** or **Artillery** as indicated in the entry.

0 to 1 Self-propelled 47/32 Platoon

Platoon

4 Semovente 47/32	155 points
3 Semovente 47/32	115 points
2 Semovente 47/32	75 points

Option

- Arm any or all Semovente 47/32 assault guns with an AA MG for +5 points per assault gun.

Rated as Elite

The *Semovente da 47/32* is a mobile infantry-support weapon, perfect for knocking out machine-gun nests holding up the infantry advance. The semovente is also useful as an anti-tank weapon against light tanks, although this isn't recommended because of its light armour.



0 to 1 Light Anti-aircraft Platoon

Platoon

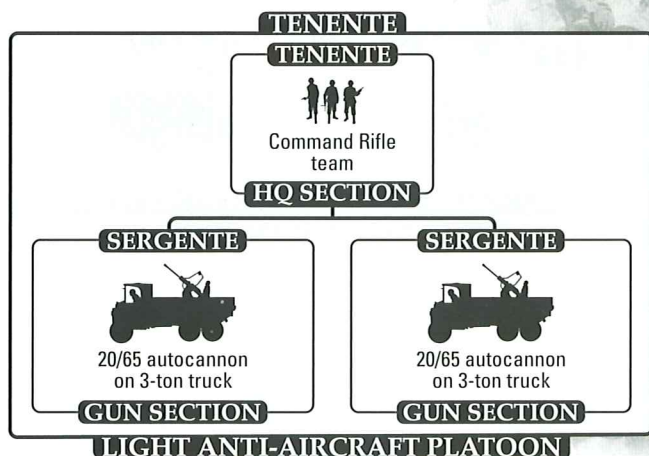
HQ Section with:

2 Gun Sections	75 points
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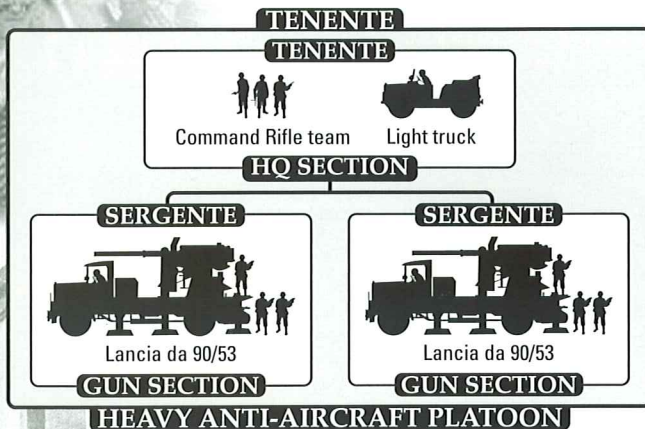
Rated as Artillery

The anti-aircraft company keeps enemy aircraft at bay, protecting the vulnerable artillery and tanks, allowing them to destroy the enemy undisturbed.

In mobile operations the guns fire from the back of their trucks, but dismount in static battles.



0 to 1 Heavy Anti-aircraft Platoon



Platoon

HQ Section with:

2 Gun Sections	235 points
1 Gun Section	130 points

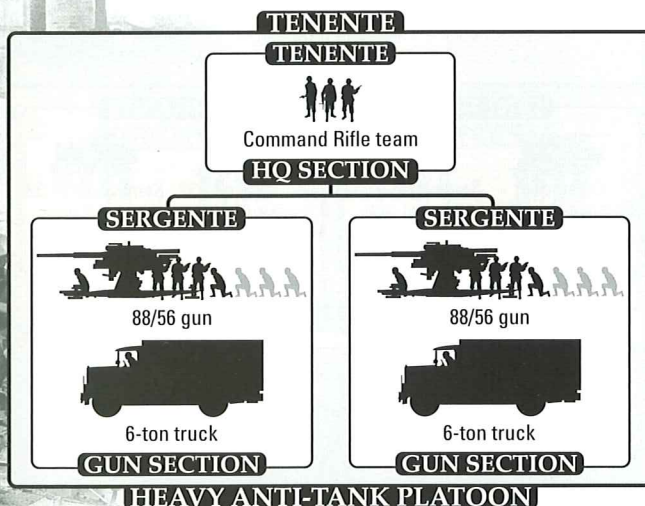
Options

- Replace each Lancia da 90/53 with a towed 90/53 gun and 6-ton truck for -35 points per gun.
- Model towed 90/53 guns with eight or more crew and increase their ROF to 3 for +10 points per gun.

Rated As Artillery

The *Autocannone Lancia 3 RO da 90/53* combines mobility with the hitting power of a 90mm anti-aircraft gun.

0 to 1 Heavy Anti-tank Platoon



Platoon

HQ Section with:

2 Gun Sections	165 points
1 Gun Section	95 points

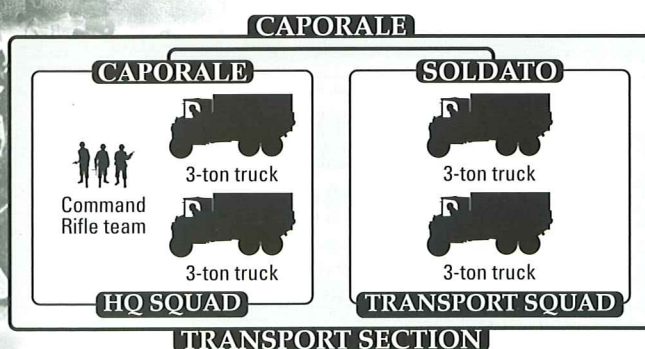
Options

- Equip 88/56 (German 8.8cm FlaK36) guns with gun shields for +30 points per gun.
- Model 88/56 (German 8.8cm FlaK36) guns with eight or more crew and increase their ROF to 3 for +10 points per gun.

Rated As Artillery

Italy used the excellent German 88/56 anti-aircraft gun as a stopgap anti-tank/anti-aircraft gun until their own 90/53 entered service.

Transport Section



Platoon

HQ Squad with:

1 Transport Squad	25 points
No Transport Squads	15 points

Rated As Regular

The *Regio Esercito*, the Royal Army, was always short of trucks. The few available were pooled to bring ammunition, food and water to the front. Occasionally they were also allocated to move troops on long marches.

A Transport Section can carry teams from other platoons as passengers.

Transport Sections must deploy with the platoon (or platoons) that they are transporting. They do not count as a separate platoon for deployment, but are counted with their passengers as a single platoon for the Ambush and Reserves and similar special rules.

Ignore Transport Sections when calculating whether your company is below half strength for Company Morale Checks.



Artillery Batteries

Platoon

HQ Section with:

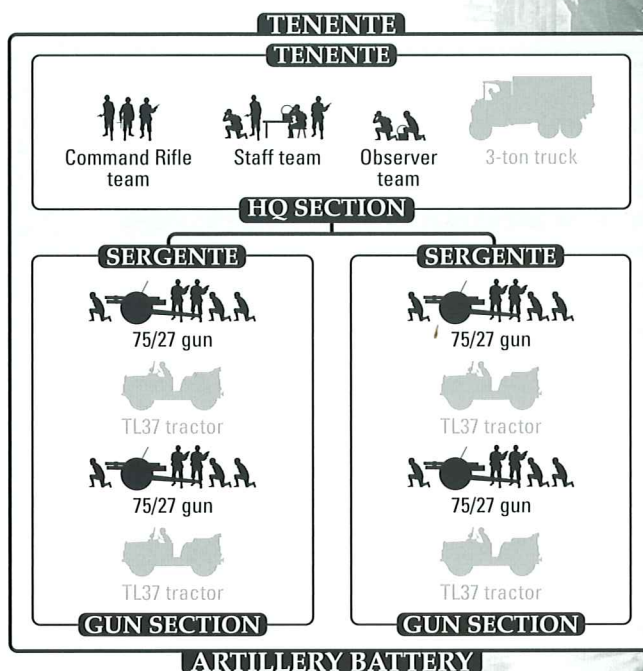
2 Gun Sections	220 points
1 Gun Section	130 points

Options

- Replace all 75/27 guns with 100/17 howitzers for +25 points per Gun Section or with captured 25 pdr guns for +15 points per Gun Section.
- Add TL37 tractors to Gun Sections for +10 points per Gun Section and add a 3-ton truck to the HQ Section for +5 points.

Rated As Artillery

The *artiglieria*, artillery, of the Second World War used the guns that their fathers fired in the First World War. These guns are still the equal of any artillery in the world. The Italian *artigliere* tenaciously fights to the last to preserve the good name of Italy.



Demolisher Platoon

Platoon

HQ Section with:

3 Demolisher Squads	250 points
2 Demolisher Squads	175 points
1 Demolisher Squad	100 points

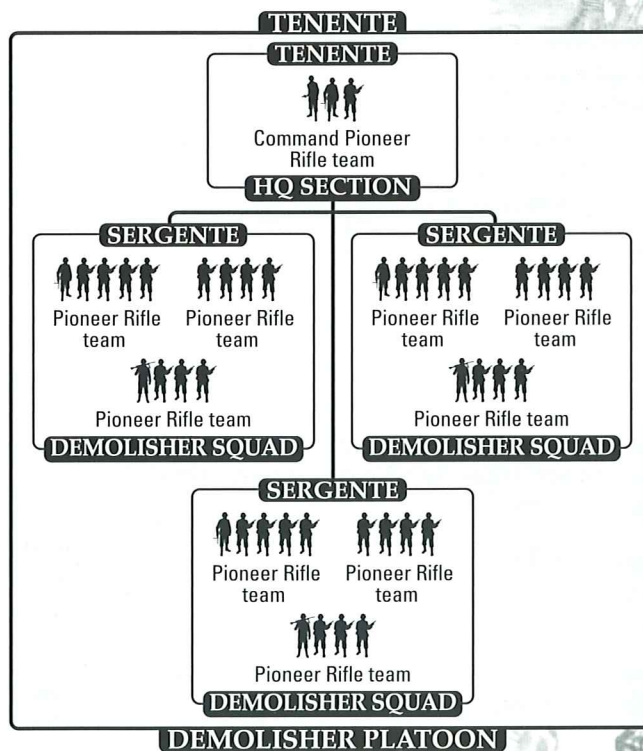
Options

- Upgrade all Rifle teams to Rifle/MG teams for +5 points for the HQ Section and +10 points per Demolisher Squad.
- Equip up to one Pioneer Rifle or Rifle/MG team per Demolisher Squad with a flame-thrower in addition to its normal weapons for +30 points per team.

Rated As Elite

The traditions of the *Arditi del Genio*, the assault engineers of the First World War, were resurrected in the Second World War under the honoured name *Guastatori*, demolishers, used since the time of Napoleon.

Organised into companies with names like *Giaguaro* (jee-ahg-wah-roh, Jaguar), *Tigre* (tee-greh, Tiger), *Leone* (leh-oh-neh, Lion), *Folgore* (fohl-gorr-eh, Thunderbolt), *Uragano* (oo-rah-gah-noh, Hurricane), *Tormenta* (torr-mehn-tah, Tormentor), and *Valanga* (vah-lahn-gah, Avalanche), the *Guastatori* led assaults against fortified positions in every theatre. Their battle cry was 'Varco!', 'Passage!'.



AVANTI SAVOIA ARSENAL

VEHICLES

Ammo Carriers

The Semovente 90/53 self-propelled gun is an amazing piece of engineering. They managed to squeeze a 90mm gun on to a 14-ton tank chassis! The price though was high. The Semovente doesn't have much space for ammunition and the loaders stand on the ground behind it in action.

In order to keep up a high rate of fire, the Semovente 90/53 needs another vehicle to bring up its ammunition—the L6/40 ammo carrier.

A Semovente 90/53 has its basic ROF increased to 3 if it has an L6/40 ammo carrier adjacent to it. Unlike the loaders standing behind the gun, the L6/40 ammo carrier is a separate team and can be hit and destroyed separately.

Autocannon

The Italian artillery arm has a long history of increasing its mobility by mounting its guns on the back of trucks. In the desert they formed units of artiglieria celere—fast artillery equipped with autocannoni, autocannons or truck-mounted guns, to give their infantry some mobile firepower.

When a gun is mounted on a truck as an Autocannon the combination becomes an unarmoured Tank team. While the 20/65 and 65/17 guns can rotate through 360 degrees, the 75/27 and 100/17 guns are hull-mounted weapons.

Only the 20/65 gun can be dismounted by removing the autocannon and replacing it with the ground-mounted version of the gun taking an entire turn (the team cannot move, shoot, or assault this turn), becoming a Gun team in the process. The Gun team is ready to shoot next turn. With a large truck and a small gun, any 20/65 autocannon can carry the Platoon Command team as well as the gun.

The 65/17, 75/27, and 100/17 guns are permanently mounted on their trucks.

Awkward Layout

The Semovente 90/53 and Lancia da 90/53 take some time to set up before shooting.

Self-propelled guns with awkward layouts cannot shoot their main weapon in the Shooting step if they move more than 2"/5cm in the Movement step.

Cumbersome Vehicles

The big 6-ton Lancia 3 RO is somewhat under-powered for its size reducing its mobility, especially cross-country.

Cumbersome vehicles only move 12"/30cm on Roads and 6"/15cm in Cross-country terrain.

When required to make a bogging roll, a cumbersome vehicle becomes Bugged Down on a roll of 1 or 2, rather than the usual 1.

Limited Traverse

The Semovente 90/53 has a form of turret giving it a greater field of fire than most self-propelled guns, but the traverse is still limited compared with a tank.

Semovente 90/53 have a field of fire of 45 degrees to either side of straight ahead.

One-man Turrets

Captured French tanks like the R.35 had cramped one-man turrets making it almost impossible for the tank commander to guide the driver, locate targets, load the gun, and still fire!

A tank with a one-man turret may not fire its main gun while moving and may not fire both the main gun and the machine-gun in the same turn.

Slow Tanks

Some tanks cram a lot of gun and armour into a very small package. The result is usually a slow and underpowered vehicle.

Slow tanks only move 8"/20cm on Roads and Cross-country.

Stabiliser Jacks

The Autocannone Lancia da 90/53 mounts a huge 90mm anti-aircraft gun with a huge gun shield and all-round traverse on a heavy truck. To stop the vehicle tipping over when it fires it has six large stabiliser jacks that must be lowered before firing.

Once the jacks are lowered, it is much harder to put the gun out of action as most hits to the truck have little effect on the gun's ability to keep shooting and the extremely large gun shield protects the gun and its crew.

If a Lancia da 90/53 moved 2"/5cm or less in its previous turn it is protected by its gun shield and counts as having Bulletproof Cover against all shots coming from in front of the line of the gun shield in the enemy turn.

WEAPONS

Flame-throwers

Flame-throwers are offensive weapons. They take time to prepare and cannot react quickly when surprised.

Flame-throwers cannot fire in Defensive Fire.

Heavy Anti-aircraft Guns

Heavy anti-aircraft guns like the 88/56 gun have large crews and fast reloading systems to keep up an extraordinary rate of fire.

Heavy Anti-aircraft Guns can have ROF 3 for +10 points if they are modelled with 8 or more crew.

Passaglia Bombs

An engineering officer named Passaglia designed the grenade bearing his name as a method to stop British tanks



overrunning Italian infantry in the desert. Passaglia bombs were ignited by the notoriously unreliable Italian 'Red Devil' grenades, making their use rather dangerous for both parties!

Infantry teams using Passaglia Bombs have an Anti-tank rating of 3 in assault combat against tanks. However, if a team using Passaglia Bombs rolls a 1 to hit in an assault combat, the team scores an 'own goal' and is destroyed.

A team armed with Passaglia Bombs may choose not to use them if the target does not justify the risk involved.

Because they are not usually visible on the models, a player must tell their opponent at the start of the game which platoons, if any, have Passaglia Bombs.

Pioneers

Pioneers don't have the skills of specialist tank hunters, but they do have lots of demolition charges and other explosives.

Pioneer teams have an Anti-tank rating of 4 in assaults against tanks.

Self-defence Anti-aircraft Guns

Some vehicles carry machine-guns that can fire at aircraft, even though that isn't their main role. However, these vehicles are too busy with their primary tasks to protect other platoons from aircraft.

Self-defence Anti-aircraft Guns can only shoot at an aircraft if the aircraft is attacking their own platoon.

Small Guns

Small anti-tank guns have a low profile and are easily concealed even in open terrain.

Small Guns that are Entrenched (see page 47 of the *Flames Of War* rulebook) and neither moved nor shot in their turn count as being Concealed and Gone to Ground, even if they are in the open.

75/39 anti-tank guns are rated as small guns despite their calibre. These guns have low-slung mountings and are easy to conceal.

Trench Guns

In the First World War the Italian Army found their 37mm trench guns extremely handy. They were light enough to be carried right into the front lines, small enough to operate with the infantry without difficulty, but still deadly enough to knock out machine-gun nests with accurate fire.

Between the wars they designed and acquired better trench guns firing heavier projectiles, but still with the same mobility and low profile. They used these to good effect in the Second World War.

The Solothurn anti-tank rifle, 47/32 gun, and 65/17 gun are Trench Guns. As such they are rated as Infantry teams.

However, the weight of the weapons and ammunition make them slower than normal riflemen. They can only move 4"/10cm instead of the normal 6"/15cm.

As Infantry teams, they are not hindered by Difficult or Very Difficult Going.

Trench Guns are usually carried in vehicles rather than towed behind them. A transport vehicle can carry Trench Guns as normal passengers.

Trench Guns cannot move to launch an assault, counterattack, or consolidate. The crews stick with their weapons and defend them where they stand. However, having a 4"/10cm movement, they can usually Break Off or Flee to safety if they choose to do so.

AIRCRAFT

Name	Weapon	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower
FIAT CR.42 Falco	Bombs	4"/10cm	-	4	1+
FIAT G.50 Freccia	Bombs	4"/10cm	-	4	1+
Macchi C.200 Saetta	Bombs	4"/10cm	-	4	1+
Junkers Ju87 Picchiatello	Bombs	4"/10cm	-	4	1+

INFANTRY TEAMS

Name	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	Notes
Rifle team	16"/40cm	1	2	6	Mannlicher-Carcano modello 1891 rifles.
Rifle/MG team	16"/40cm	2	2	6	Breda mod. 30 machine-gun and mod. 1938 rifles.
SMG team	4"/10cm	3	1	6	Beretta modello 38 submachine-guns.
Light mortar team	16"/40cm	2	1	5+	Brixia modello 35 light mortar.
HMG team	24"/60cm	4	2	6	Breda modello 37 machine-gun.
Solothurn anti-tank rifle	16"/40cm	3	5	5+	Solothurn S18-1000 anti-tank rifle, Trench gun.
47/32 gun	24"/60cm	3	7	4+	Cannone da 47/32 mod. 35, Trench gun.
65/17 gun	16"/40cm	2	8/2	3+/6	Cannone da 65/17 mod. 13, Artillery, Trench gun.
Observer team	cannot shoot				
Staff team	cannot shoot				Moves as Gun team.

Additional Training and Equipment

Passaglia bombs	as infantry team			Passaglia bombs.
Pioneer	as infantry team			Pioneers.
Flame-thrower	4"/10cm	2	-	6 Flame-thrower.



GUN TEAMS

Name	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	Notes
81/14 mortar	48"/120cm	-	-/1	3+/6	Man-packed, Mortar, Smoke, Small gun.
20/65 gun	24"/60cm	4	5	5+	Turntable, Anti-aircraft.
37/45 (German 3.7cm PaK36) gun	24"/60cm	3	6	5+	Gun shield, Small gun.
75/27 gun	24"/60cm	2	9/2	3+/6	Gun shield, Artillery, Smoke.
75/39 (German 7.5cm PaK38/97) gun	24"/60cm	2	10	3+	Gun shield, Small gun.
Captured 25 pdr gun	24"/60cm	2	9/3	3+/6	Gun shield, Turntable, Artillery, Smoke.
88/56 (German 8.8cm FlaK36) gun	40"/100cm	2	13	3+	Turntable, Heavy anti-aircraft, Immobile.
90/53 gun	40"/100cm	2	13	3+	Turntable, Heavy anti-aircraft, Immobile.
100/17 howitzer	24"/60cm	1	10/3	2+/4+	Gun shield, Artillery, Immobile.

TANK TEAMS

Name	Mobility	Armour			Notes
		Front	Side	Top	
Light Tanks					
L6/40	Half-track	1	0	1	20mm gun, co-ax MG.
R.35	Fully-tracked	3	2	1	37mm gun, co-ax MG, Slow tank, One-man turret.
Medium Tanks					
M13/40 or M14/41	Fully-tracked	3	2	1	47mm gun, co-ax MG, twin hull MG.
Self-propelled Guns					
Lancia da 90/53	Wheeled	-	-	-	90mm truck gun, Cumbersome, Stabiliser jacks, Awkward layout.
Carro Comando	Fully-tracked	4	2	1	Hull 13.2mm MG.
Semovente 47/32	Fully-tracked	3	2	1	47mm gun.
Semovente 75/18	Fully-tracked	4	2	1	75mm gun.
Semovente 90/53	Fully-tracked	2	0	0	90mm semovente gun, Ammo carriers, Limited traverse, Awkward layout. Slow tank.

Armoured Cars

AB41	Wheeled	1	0	1	20mm tank gun, co-ax MG, hull rear MG.
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TRANSPORT TEAMS

Name	Mobility	Armour			Notes
		Front	Side	Top	
Motorcycles					
Motoguzzi motorcycle	Jeep	-	-	-	1 passenger. Remove when passengers dismount.
Trucks					
SPA TL-37 truck	Wheeled	-	-	-	2 passengers.
SPA Dovunque 35 3-ton truck	Wheeled	-	-	-	4 passengers.
Lancia 3 RO 6-ton truck	Wheeled	-	-	-	5 passengers, Cumbersome.
Tractors					
SPA TL-37 tractor	Wheeled	-	-	-	2 passengers.
Munitions Transports					
L6/40 ammo carrier	Half-tracked	1	0	1	Ammo carrier.

VEHICLE WEAPONS

Weapon	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	Notes
Vehicle MG	16"/40cm	3	2	6	ROF 1 if other weapons fire.
Twin MG	16"/40cm	4	2	6	ROF 2 if other weapons fire.
AA MG	16"/40cm	3	2	6	Self-defence anti-aircraft.
13.2 MG	16"/40cm	3	3	6	ROF 1 if other weapons fire.
20mm gun	16"/40cm	2	5	5+	
37mm gun	24"/60cm	2	4	5+	
47mm gun	24"/60cm	2	7	4+	
75mm gun	32"/80cm	2	9	3+	
90mm truck gun	40"/100cm	3	13	3+	Anti-aircraft.
90mm semovente gun	40"/100cm	2	13	3+	

Anti-aircraft: Anti-aircraft weapons can fire at aircraft.

Artillery: Artillery can fire artillery bombardments at up to three times their normal range.

Close-support artillery: Close-support artillery can fire artillery bombardments at up to twice their normal range.

Gun shield: Teams crewing weapons with a gun shield are in Bulletproof Cover when fired at from the front.

Immobile: Immobile guns cannot be manhandled. They can only move if towed or carried on a vehicle.

Man-packed: Man-packed weapons are carried on the backs of their crew. They ignore Rough Terrain like infantry.

Mortar: Mortars can only fire artillery bombardments. Re-roll first failed roll to range in.

Smoke: Weapons with smoke ammunition can fire smoke rather than their normal shooting.

Turntable: Weapons mounted on a turntable can rotate to fire in any direction without penalty.

RECOGNITION

RECOGNISING ITALIAN ARMoured VEHICLES



Carro Camando

Visually similar to the Semovente 75, it commands, the distinguishing features of the Carro Camando is the 13.2mm machine-gun in place of the 75mm gun, and the artillery range-finder in front of the hatch.



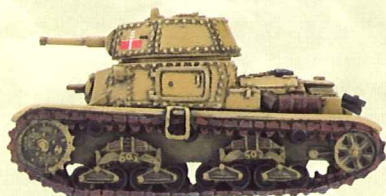
L6/40

The L6/40 is smaller than most other Italian vehicles. It has 4 road wheels on canter-levered suspension and is armed with a 20mm main gun and co-ax machine gun. The Semovente 47 is built on the same chassis, with a hull mounted 47mm gun and no turret.



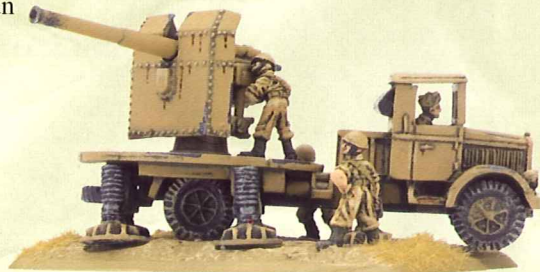
AB41

The Autoblindo is a reconnaissance vehicle that features the same turret as the L6/40 fitted to an armoured car. This armoured car also features an 8mm machine-gun fitted to the rear of the drivers compartment.



M13/40 or M14/41

The M13/40 and M14/41 are virtually indistinguishable from each other. The M14/41 features a larger engine and different radiator arrangement, but has the same armourment and armour as the M13/40. The M13/40 and M14/41 retained the 4 double-wheeled bogie suspension of its predecessor, the M11/39.



Lancia da 90/53

Mounting the huge 90/53 (90mm) gun on the back of a Lancia 3 RO 6-ton truck makes this beast hard to miss on the battlefield. It is easily distinguished by the 6 massive supporting legs that keep the gun stable during combat.



Semovente 75/18

Using the M14/41 hull to mount a 75mm gun gives the Semovente 75/18 a very low silhouette. It is easily recognised by the lack of turret and flared muzzle break of the 75mm gun.



Semovente 90/53

A lengthened and heavily modified M14/41 hull and the huge 90mm gun makes the Semovente 90/53 an easy vehicle to recognise and fear on the battlefield.

RECOGNISING YOUR BROTHERS IN BATTLE



Fucilieri

The backbone of the Royal Army, the Fucilieri shown wear their desert-coloured uniforms.



Bersaglieri

Italy's elite forces are the Bersaglieri, recognised by the plume of feathers adorning their helmets.



Folgore

The fearless paratroopers fight with unequalled tenacity. Their green or camouflaged helmets are easy to spot and feared by Allied forces.

PAINTING GUIDE



	Vallejo Acrylic	Games Workshop
Desert Vehicles		
Yellow Sand	Green Ochre (914)	Desert Yellow
Camouflage		
Grey Green	German Fieldgrey (830)	Catachan Green
Sicily, Italy & Eastern Front Vehicles		
Grey Green	German Fieldgrey (830)	Catachan Green
Camouflage		
Yellow Sand	Green Ochre (914)	Desert Yellow
Sicily Semovente 90/53		
Grey Green	German Fieldgrey (830)	Catachan Green
Camouflage		
Red Brown	Beige Brown (875)	Scorched Brown
Dark Green	Olive Grey (888)	Dark Angels Green
Infantry		
Uniform	Desert Yellow (977)	Desert Yellow
Puttees	Olive Grey (888)	Dark Angels Green
Helmets, Artillery	Green Ochre (914)	Desert Yellow
Sicily, Italy & Eastern Front Infantry		
Uniform, Puttees	Olive Grey (888)	Dark Angels Green
Helmets, Artillery	German Fieldgrey (830)	Catachan Green
Common		
Webbing	Yellow Green (881)	Desert Yellow
Boots, Rifle butt	Beige Brown (875)	Scorched Brown
Faces and hands	Flat Flesh (955)	Dwarf Flesh
Officers Sahariana jackets	Khaki (988)	Kommando Khaki
Vehicle tracks and gun barrels	Gunmetal Grey (863)	Boltgun Metal

STAGE BY STAGE: ITALIAN INFANTRY

1



After preparing your figures for painting, undercoat them with a black spray-can primer or thinned primer paint. Paint a basecoat of **Desert Yellow** on the uniforms and a basecoat of **Green Ochre** on their helmets.

2



Next highlight the uniforms. Mix a little white paint with the **Desert Yellow** and dry brush this onto the raised parts of the uniform to add depth to the figures. See page 27 of the *Flames Of War* rule book or the *Quartermasters Painting Guide* for dry brushing techniques.

3



Finish the figures by painting the details with a fine brush. Paint faces and hands in **Flat Flesh**, rifles and boots in **Beige Brown**, machine-guns in **Gun Metal**, webbing and pouches in **Yellow Green**. Now your troops are ready for battle. All you need to do now is to mount them on their bases.

EXPERT



Once you have painted your army you may want to go back and add more details to your figures. Only do this if you wish to put a lot more time into your painting. You can paint the water bottles and puttees in **Olive Grey** and paint the metal parts of the rifles. Highlight the cockerel feathers with **Olive Grey** for a final touch.

STAGE BY STAGE: ITALIAN TANKS

1



Assemble your tanks using the diagram in the pack. Undercoat them with a black spray-can primer or thinned primer paint. Basecoat your tanks with basecoat of **Green Ochre**.

2



Mix a little white into the basecoat of **Green Ochre**. Dry brush this on the top surfaces and raised details of the tank to highlight them. Miniatures benefit from accentuating detail in this way that would otherwise be lost to the eye.

3



Paint any camouflage at this stage. See below for some camouflage ideas. Highlight the camouflage with a dry brushed coat of lightened camouflaged colour. Finish off your tanks by painting your wheels **Black** and tracks **Gunmetal**.

EXPERT



To take your tank to the expert level you can paint the tool handles **Beige Brown** and their heads **Gunmetal**. Paint the tracks with a rusty red brown and highlight again with metal. Adding Decals for divisional symbols and tank flashes gives your tank its final touches.

ITALIANS ON OTHER FRONTS



RUSSIAN FRONT INFANTRY

Infantry serving on the vast expanse of the Eastern Front wore standard green uniforms. Paint your infantry as described, using **Olive Grey** instead of **Desert Yellow**.



NORTH AFRICA

Due to a shortage in paint, transport vehicles in Africa were generally left green (**German Fieldgrey**). Crews often painted patches of **Green Ochre** for camouflage.



RUSSIAN FRONT GUNS AND VEHICLES

As with the infantry, vehicles and guns sent to the Eastern Front remained the standard Italian green. Paint your Russian-front equipment in the manner described above, changing from **Green Ochre** to **German Fieldgrey**.



SICILY

Varied camouflage schemes were applied to Italian tanks during the Sicily campaign. This three-tone Semovente 90/53 uses a **German Fieldgrey** basecoat with **Beige Brown** and **Green Ochre** blotches painted over the top.

TUNISIA

Tunis, North Africa.
October 23 ~ November 04, 1942



Hitting the enemy in the flanks helps turn the favour towards the smaller and lighter armed M14/41 tanks.



The battle stagnates into stationary fire, the Italian tanks suffer...



...and the Allies push through to the dug-in defences.



Semovente 75's turn up just at the right moment to surprise the Allied forces and push them back to regroup.

HIMEIMAT

Egypt, North Africa.
August 30/31, 1942



Folgore and Bersaglieri counterattack into a British assault.



The 88/56 gun makes short work of the attacking armour.



The Fucilieri join the battle to bolster the counterattack.



Pushing past the burning British armour the Italian infantry forces hold off the assault for now...

SICILY LANDING

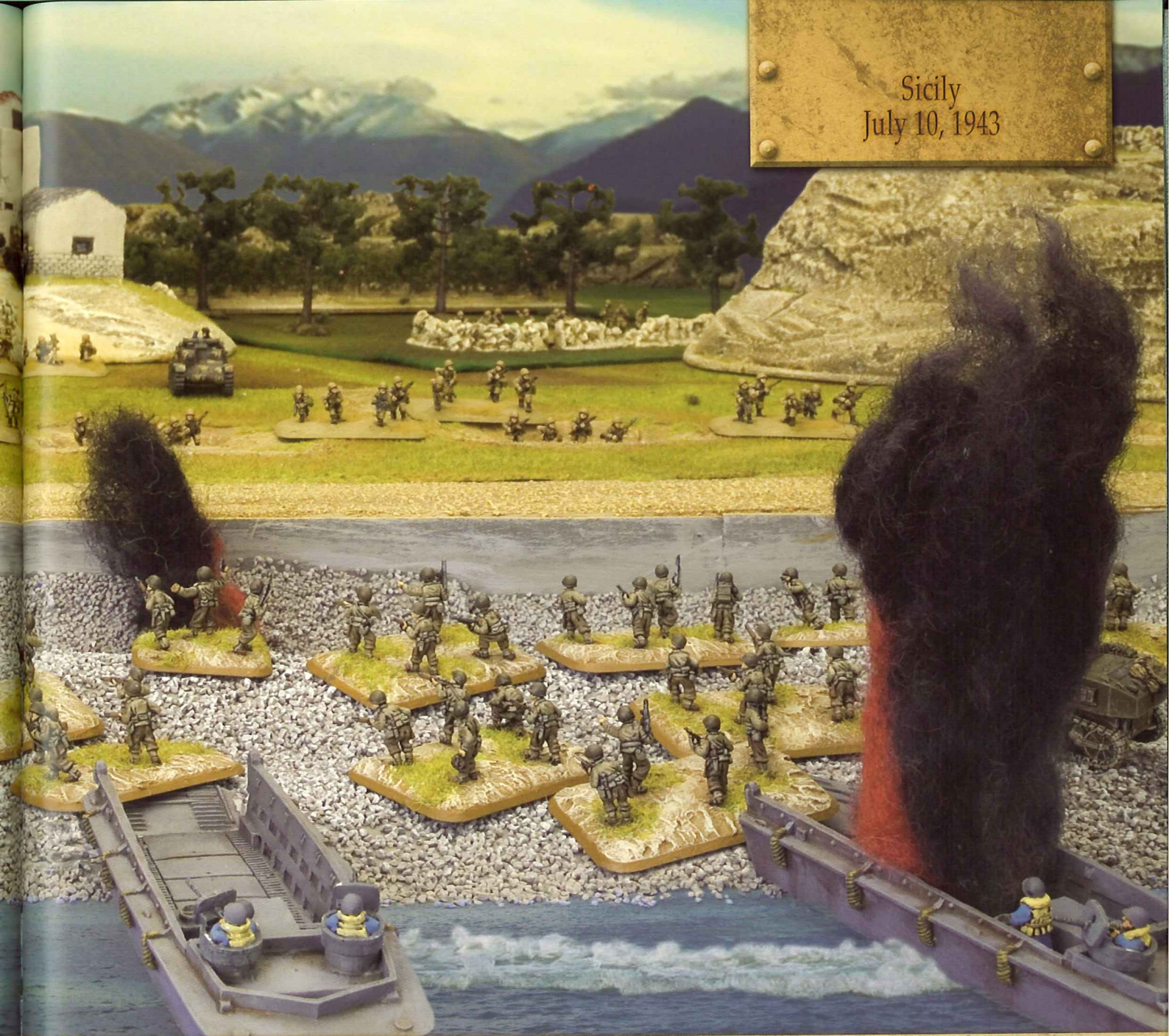


The American landing parties swarm up the beach-head away from their burning landing craft.



The 100/17 howitzers of the Fucilieri attempt to slow the beach assault.

Sicily
July 10, 1943



Semovente 90/53's and Fucilieri defend the village from the impending assault.

ROME

Central Italy.
September 09, 1943



With the surrender of the Italian government, the Italian army must choose to fight against the Germans or the Allies.



The German forces battle their old comrades to try and claim Rome for the Fatherland.



Narrow, winding streets benefit the defenders against armour.



Italian forces ambush the retreating Germans army.

THE EXPEDITION TO RUSSIA

When Mussolini learned of the German attack on the Soviet Union, he quickly pledged Italian help in Hitler's 'crusade against Communism'. This aid took the form of the *Corpo di Spedizone Italiano in Russia (CSIR)*, the Italian Expeditionary Corps in Russia, of three divisions.

This force took part in numerous battles in 1941 and generally acquitted itself well. However, the winter of 1941/42 was bitterly cold and the Italians were as ill-prepared for it as their German allies. Soviet attacks combined with the sub-zero temperatures to cause heavy casualties.

By the Spring of 1942, it was obvious that the war in Russia would not be as easy a victory as the dictators had hoped, and that more troops would be needed. Italy reinforced the CSIR to form its Eighth Army, the *Armata Italiana in Russia (ARMIR)* in the Ukraine in June 1942. ARMIR took part in the victorious drive to the Don River north of Stalingrad, defeating numerous Soviet forces en route.

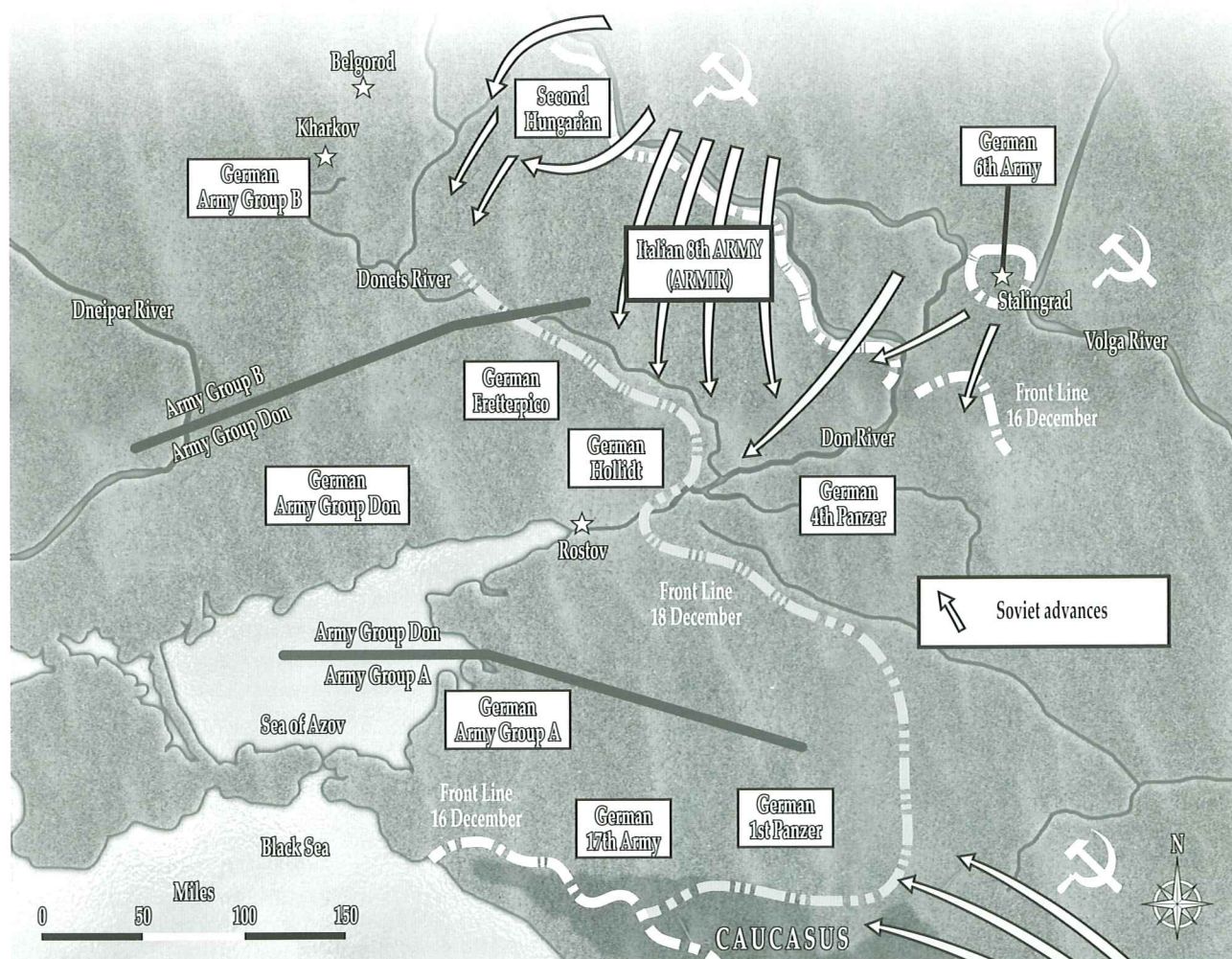
As the German Sixth Army bogged down in Stalingrad, ARMIR went on the defensive covering a huge front between the Third Rumanian and Second Hungarian Armies. Divisional frontages were far too wide, but the lack of German forces to aid them meant that they had to be held with fewer men. On the Don River ARMIR faced

and defeated several strong Soviet diversionary attacks as the weather worsened to another winter.

Disaster struck in late November 1942, when the Soviet Operation Uranus broke through the Rumanian lines to surround the German Sixth Army in Stalingrad. The gaping hole left in the German front line could only be filled by abandoning the Sixth Army and pulling Army Group B out of the Caucasus before the Soviets cut them off completely.

The Soviets had no intention of letting this happen and launched their follow-up Operation Little Saturn on 16 December 1942, smashing against the thinly-stretched Italian Army with waves of massed tank and infantry forces. Within days the Italian defence was broken through as lightly-equipped and immobile infantry divisions faced off against massed Soviet tanks. With no German Panzer divisions available to restore the line, there was little alternative but retreat.

Marching through deep snow in sub-zero temperatures, pursued by tanks, ARMIR disintegrated. By the time the lines stabilised in March, ARMIR had ceased to exist and the survivors returned to Italy. The needs of the war in North Africa and the subsequent invasion of Italy itself prevented any further Italian commitment to the Eastern Front.



DISASTER ON THE DON

Excerpt from the diary of sottotenente Eugenio Braida, LXI gruppo artiglieria, 30o raggruppamento artiglieria di corpo d'armata, la Pasubio.

14 December 1942

It is coming soon. The Generals say that the Communists don't have enough men for another offensive, that the worst is past, but they said that before too. This storm which has engulfed the Germans at Stalingrad and swept away the Rumanians to the south is coming for us. Antonini lead a raid against the Communists opposite our positions here at Abrosimono. The Byelorussians who we had become acquainted with have been replaced by Uzbeks and Tartars. Fresh divisions, descendants of the Golden Horde of Mongolia. I do not think this will be like our little diversion in Yugoslavia. Oh for the bright days of Summer.

15 December 1942

A quiet day today. Maybe I was wrong. Very cold but sun shining weakly. Back on duty. Must go.

16 December 1942

Only time for a brief note, they came today, little warning. We are holding, flinging shell after shell from our old cannoni into the swarms of tanks and floods of men. We are not firing now, but I can hear the locomotive rumble as the army's cannoni da 149/40 and obici da 210/22 fire over us. Il signor maggiore Bellini tells us that things are bad, but that ARMIR is holding on, that we are doing Italia proud.

19 December 1942

Three days! Orders came today for la Pasubio, along with the rest of XXXV corpo d'armata, to pull back to Meshkov. We have held with honour, but the Hungarians to the north have failed, as did the Rumanians before them. Niente benzina, no diesel for the Fiats. We will have to leave many of the guns.

21 December 1942

We were joined by white-clad Germans today. Many trucks and sleighs, lots half-empty, but I could not get a ride. Even wounded Italians could not get rides. Nothing to eat and water is from sucking snow, my socks are wet and I'm cold.

22 December 1942

We have finally stopped in Arbuzov and the vecchi, the veterans, are already calling this the valley of Death. We have been hemmed in by the Communists and are freezing to death. If only we hadn't left behind all of the guns, we could return some of the fire. I have heard that Manstein is coming for us with his Panzers, I am sure they will come soon.

23 December 1942

With a cry of 'Savoia' we charged the Russians with our bayonets. Each man had only a few bullets, many less than a full charge for their musket, but the Communists fell back before us! The Germans

fell behind as we took the fore yelling 'avanti!' We broke through their lines, and out of that valley of suffering. Now we continue the retreat, past the shattered hulks of the Communist tanks.

26 December 1942

We arrived in Chertkovo today. The German 298th Division have taken up positions around the perimeter. The town is surrounded on three sides, but is open to the west, but we cannot go on. Today I saw the wings of our planes, the wings of the Patria, the wings of home. Our pilots risk everything, flying low to drop us supplies. I hear la Julia are coming. The alpini will get us out of here.

1 January 1943

Happy New Year! Sleep was difficult at 20 degrees below zero. My blanket was stiff as corrugated steel. We keep hay for the wounded. The cold is atrocious. Today I covered my head with my blanket and my balaclava was covered in ice, so all I could see was the beaten snow at my feet. Nearly hit by a katyusha. I dived to the ground and prayed to Madonna as 16 shells landed in a straight line like hail.

4 January 1943

They came in waves again today. Their cries of 'Urrah' were met by the cries of 'Savoia!'. The chatter of our old Revelli 'knucklebuster', our only machine-gun, kept time for us as we fired into their mass and drove them off. Afterwards one of the men asked me 'Signor tenente, how much longer must we wait to break through them?' I found some potatoes. Put them in my pocket for later.

16 January 1943

I do not write as there is nothing to write. Cold, Communists, marching, death and dying. I had delirium on the march. I thought I was at a Swiss hotel and was about to lie down on the shiny white floor and sleep. We fought a battle against tanks today. The T-34's came out of a balka and the Katyushas dropped their presents among us. We fought back, our arditi cracking their tanks with grenades until a wave of picchiatelli arrived, the Germans call them Stuka. How we cheered! The picchiatelli dive-bombers swarmed in the sky, diving down and smashing the Communists, one after another they nose-dived down. We must be near our lines!

17 January 1943

We have made it! Broken out of the Russian encirclement! I hear that no-one made it out of the German pockets, but there were no Italians in those! I am waiting here at Streltsovka waiting for the trucks which will take us to Belvodsk and then to Starobelsk. Then home on warm trains, back to the Patria, back to Italia!

THE ITALIAN ARMY IN RUSSIA, 1942-1943

ARMIR—Armata Italiana In Russia (Italian Army In Russia)

Unit

Raggruppamento Truppe Cavallo
27. Panzerdivision (German)

Battalions and Regiments

3 Cavalry 'Savoia Cavalleria', 5 Cavalry 'Lancieri di Novara', 3 Horse Artillery

Corpo d'Armata Alpino (Alpine Corps)

2^a Divisione Alpina 'Tridentina'

5 ('Morbegno', 'Tirano', 'Edolo'), 6 ('Verona', 'Vestone', 'Valchiese'), 2 Artillery ('Bergamo', 'Vicenza', 'Valcamonica')

3^a Divisione Alpina 'Julia'

8 ('Tolmezzo', 'Gemona', 'Cividale'), 9 ('L'Aquila', 'Vicenza', 'Val Cismon'), 3 Artillery ('Conegliano', 'Udine', 'Val Piave')

4^a Divisione Alpina 'Cuneense'

1 ('Ceva', 'Pieve di Teco', 'Mondovì'), 2 ('Borgo San Dalmazzo', 'Dronero', 'Saluzzo'), 4 Artillery ('Pinerolo', 'Mondovì', 'Val Po')

Il Corpo d'Armata

Raggruppamento CCNN '23 Marzo'

'Leonessa' (XIV, XV), 'Valle Scrivia' (V, XXXIV)

3^a Divisione da Montagna 'Ravenna'

37, 38, 11 Artillery

5^a Divisione Fanteria 'Cosseria'

89 & 90 'Salerno', 37 Artillery

XXXV Corpo d'Armata

Raggruppamento CCNN '3 Gennaio'

'Montebello' (VI, XXX), 'Tagliamento' (LXIII, LXXIX)

9^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Pasubio'*

79 & 80 'Roma', 8 Artillery

298. Infanteriedivision (German)

XXIX Armeekorps (German)

3^a Divisione Celere

5 Bersaglieri (XIV, XXII), 6 Bersaglieri (VI, XIII), XLVII Motociclisti, LXVII Armoured Bersaglieri (L6/40), XIII 'Cavalleggeri di Alessandria' (Semovente 47/32), 120 Artillery, Croat Legion

'Principe Amedeo Duca d'Aosta'*

53 & 54 'Umbria', 17 Artillery

2^a Divisione da Montagna 'Sforzesca'

81, 82, 52 Artillery

52^a Divisione Autotrasportabile 'Torino'*

* Originally part of CSIR.

Regiments are shown in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc). Battalions are shown in Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc). Unless noted a regiment bears the same name as its parent division. Most infantry regiments have two battalions (I and II) and a weapons battalion (III) unless otherwise noted.

raggruppamento = regiment, *divisione* = division, *alpini* = alpine, *autotrasportabile* = truck transportable, *bersaglieri* = light infantry, *celere* = fast, *fanteria* = infantry, *montagna* = mountain, *truppe cavallo* = cavalry troops, *CCNN*, *camice nere* = black shirts, fascist militia

FIELDING THE ITALIAN ARMY IN RUSSIA

The forces sent to Russia with *ARMIR* were largely infantry. The core of the force were the five infantry divisions. These were organised as normal with three rifle platoons per company and comparatively well supplied with motorised transport and artillery.

Unfortunately the absence of an Italian armoured division in the composition of *ARMIR* limited their direct tank support to the fifty-odd L6/40 light tanks of *LXVII battaglione corazzato* and the nineteen Semovente 47/32 self-propelled guns of the *Cavalleggeri di Alessandria*. The German 27. Panzerdivision, equipped with a single battalion of out-dated Panzer 38(t) tanks, could do little to remedy this deficiency.

However, at least one T-34 was captured in an operational state by the Italians and may have been used in combat. You could field this as part of a Compagnia Fucilieri by taking a Looted Panzer Platoon from page 86 of *Stalingrad*.

In the field of anti-tank guns, the forces in Russia were actually better supplied than their comrades in the desert. Each division in Russia was issued six ex-German 7.5cm PaK38/97 anti-tank guns to protect them from Soviet tanks. In addition, several German anti-tank companies were assigned to the Italian divisions to increase their anti-tank power even further.

What they gained here, they lost out in heavy anti-aircraft weapons though. The entire anti-aircraft arsenal of *ARMIR* was older 75mm guns, unsuitable for anti-tank work, and kept in the rear areas. None of the towed or self-propelled 88mm and 90mm guns that proved so devastating for anti-tank work in the desert were provided to the forces on the Eastern Front.

Despite its limitations in equipment, *ARMIR* proved itself capable of taking on and repeatedly beating Soviet infantry forces. Its anti-tank guns and artillery were enough to stop limited Soviet tank attacks. However no army lacking in medium and heavy tanks could reasonably be expected to halt an entire Soviet Tank Army, and such a force will prove a challenge on the tabletop as well.



The American Invasion is Halted on the Beaches!

Messina, 10 July, 1943

Today I witnessed the Royal Army in action against the Americans. It was a glorious sight!

It all began in the early hours of this morning when it began raining thousands of American parachutists across the whole island. Our brave soldiers responded immediately, rushing out to take them prisoner as they landed or machine-gunning them from their bunkers as they stumbled about in the dark. By morning there were dead parachutists everywhere, and little dejected clusters of them with their hands up being marched away by a grinning Antonio from Torino or a cheerful Massimo from Taranto.

By daybreak, news was coming in of enemy assault divisions landing all along the coast from Licata to Siracusa. Our brave coastal divisions were in grave danger of being swamped under the sheer numbers coming ashore. Their guns roared incessantly, sinking battleships and landing craft indiscriminately.

The slaughter was horrific, yet the enemy kept coming. The Napoli and Livorno Divisions were the first to race to the aid of their brave comrades. Led by their tanks and supported by a deadly new weapon that I saw in action today, the Semovente da 90/53, they smashed into the enemy beachheads supported by small numbers of German troops.

Despite delays caused by the need to round up bands of disoriented parachutists en route to the beaches, the enemy were still on the beaches when our gallant counterattack arrived. Without waiting, they threw themselves at the massed enemy. The tanks poured into Gela massacring the elite American Rangers attempting to take the town. Livorno attacked with parade-ground precision. It was magnificent. Despite

overwhelming artillery fire and even broadsides from battleships off shore, these brave soldiers kept attacking.

All of the advantages were with the invaders. They knew when and where the attack would be and massed everything they had there and then. Our boys could only wait for the attack, covering every beach until the enemy revealed their intentions. Then, and only then, could they race to the fire to put it out.

Today our brave soldiers showed what Italians can do. Despite overwhelming odds, they halted all forward progress by the enemy, confining them to the beaches they landed on. The enemy is now trapped and all that is left to do is bring up more troops to crush them entirely!



One of the many tanks knocked out by our gallant troops!

ITALY INVADED!

After the surrender of the Axis forces in Tunisia in May 1943, the big question on the minds of the Generals at *Comando Supremo* was 'Where will the Allies strike next?'

The answer wasn't at all obvious. The British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was known to favour the liberation of Greece as the next step, while the island of Sardinia would put Allied aircraft in the perfect position to cover landings in southern France or northern Italy. Sicily was another possibility favoured by the ability of fighters based on the island of Malta to protect the landings. Even a direct assault on the Italian mainland could not be ruled out.

To make matters worse, Italy had lost its best-equipped divisions with the 1st Army in Tunisia, not to mention the recent loss of the 8th Army in Russia. Every effort was being made to build two new armoured divisions, but meanwhile the defence would rest on a few overstretched and under-equipped infantry divisions and the poorly-trained and over-age reservists of the coastal divisions. Even the Germans would be of little help with their attention firmly focused on Operation Citadel, their big attack on Kursk in Russia.

This suspense did not last long. Less than two months after the defeat in Tunisia the Allies struck, landing in south-eastern Sicily on 10 July, 1943. The landings were the biggest amphibious operation ever attempted at the time. Two US and three British divisions stormed ashore preceded by parts of two airborne divisions and two brigades of Rangers and Commandos. Five more divisions waited in transport ships for their turn to land.

Facing this onslaught, the Italian coastal divisions simply ceased to exist. The four Italian and two German divisions on the island immediately counterattacked, but with the Allies controlling the skies and using broadsides from battleships as artillery support, it was hopeless. The invasion of Italy was Mussolini's downfall and

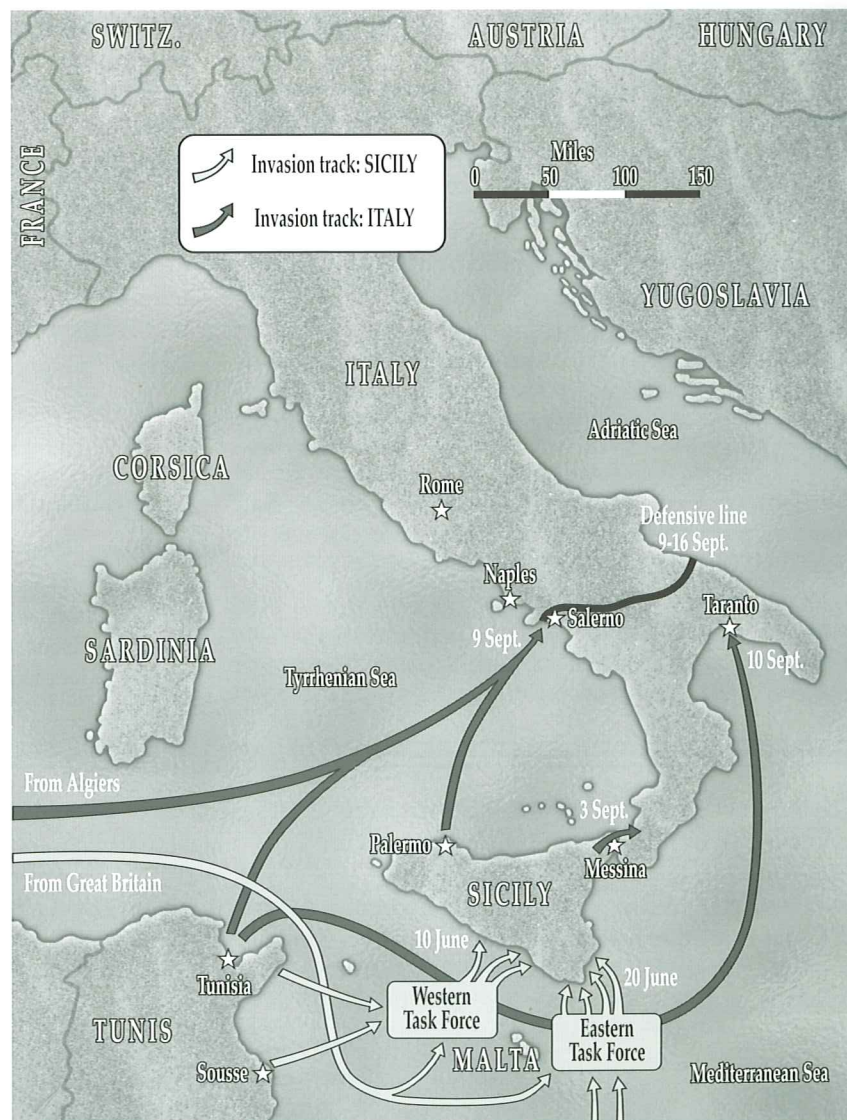
the King asked him to resign on 25 July.

Even reinforced by both German and Italian paratroops, all the defenders could do was make the Allies fight for every inch of ground they gained, then at the last moment, on 17 August, slip across the Straits of Messina to continue the fight on the mainland.

The British crossed the Straits on 3 September, only to find their advance slowed to a crawl by endless ambushes and blown bridges. Six days later Allied forces landed at Salerno, south of Naples, and at Taranto prompting the new Italian government to surrender.

This threw the Italian army into chaos. No one knew whether they should change sides and fight the Germans now occupying the country, or fight on against the Allies. Each unit chose its own path. Some like 135^a *Divisione Corazzata 'Ariete II'* fought the Germans in Rome. Others like 184^a *Divisione Paracadutisti 'Nembo'* joined the Germans. Most were rounded up by the Germans or simply disbanded and went home.

Italy was out of the war, but the war was not out of Italy. The Germans and Allies fought many bloody battles over the length of Italy over the next year and a half before Germany's final defeat.



THE ITALIAN ARMY IN SICILY, 1943

6^a Armata (6th Army)

Unit

131^o Reggimento Corazzata
10^o Reggimento Bersaglieri
177^o Reggimento Bersaglieri Territoriale
185^o Reggimento Paracadutisti 'Nembo'
10^o Raggruppamento Semovente da 90/53

Battalions and Regiments

CI, CII
XXXV, LXXIII
DXXV, DXXVI
III, VIII, XII
CLXI, CLXII, CLXIII

XII Corpo d'Armata

26^a Divisione da Montagna 'Assietta'
28^a Divisione Fanteria 'Aosta'

29, 30, XVII CCNN, 25 Artillery
5, 6, CLXXI CCNN, 22 'Vespri' Artillery

XVI Corpo d'Armata

4^a Divisione d'Assalto 'Livorno'
54^a Divisione Fanteria 'Napoli'

33, 34, 28 'Monvisio' Artillery
75, 76, CLXXIII CCNN, 54 Artillery

XIV Panzerkorps (German)

15. & 29.¹ Panzergrenadierdivision (German)
Hermann Goring Panzergrenadierdivision (German)
1. Fallschirmjagerdivision¹ (German)

¹ Arrived during the campaign as reinforcements.

Regiments are shown in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc). Battalions are shown in Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc). Unless noted a regiment bears the same name as its parent division. Most infantry regiments have two battalions (I and II) and a weapons battalion (III) unless otherwise noted.

raggruppamento = regiment, *reggimento* = regiment, *divisione* = division, *bersaglieri* = light infantry, *corazzata* = armoured, *d'assalto* = assault, *fanteria* = infantry, *montagna* = mountain, *paracadutisti* = parachute, *territoriale* = territorial militia



FIELDING THE ITALIAN ARMY IN SICILY

The forces defending Sicily were varied, representing almost every type of regiment in the Royal Army and were equipped with some unique equipment. If you want to capture the flavour of this unique campaign, you will find the following guidelines helpful.

The campaign in Sicily was characterised by the scarcity of equipment available to the defenders and the measures taken to remedy this. The most obvious scarcity is modern tanks. Every available Italian tank was being used to form new armoured divisions, so the defenders of Sicily had to make do with old French Renault R.35 tanks as their only tank support.

Recognising this deficiency, *Comando Supremo* had, however, sent the most powerful anti-tank force in its arsenal to compensate. Every single Semovente 90/53 self-propelled anti-tank gun in service fought in the three battalions of 10^o *Raggruppamento Semovente* supporting the infantry right from the start of the battle. These were

backed up by the light Semovente 47/32 in considerable numbers as well.

Aside from this limited, although extremely potent, armoured support, the infantry were pretty much reliant on their own equipment. Artillery was in short supply and ammunition even scarcer, and transport of any sort almost non-existent. There were no trained Guastatori demolisher assault engineers or Lancia da 90/53 *autocannoni* available at all.

What was available in reasonable quantities was riflemen, and these should make up the core of any force. Enough 47/32 and 65/17 guns were available for essential tasks, but few anti-tank rifles were available.

Defeating lavishly-equipped Allied forces with this bare-bones assortment certainly presents challenges. However, well handled, with perhaps a few judicious attachments from the German forces, the defenders of Sicily will definitely win battles against any Allied force.

ROMAN NUMERALS

The Italians commonly used Roman numerals to designate their units, particularly battalions. Although they look unintelligible at first glance, Roman numerals are fairly simple to decipher. There are seven commonly used elements each corresponding to a particular value, I = 1, V = 5, X = 10, L = 50, C = 100, D = 500, and M = 1000. These are combined as needed to produce the required value, so I = 1, II = 2, and III = 3. The tricky bit comes next. Rather than using IIII, four is represented by IV, one less than five. Nine (IX) and ninety (XC) are similar. So continuing our count, IV = 4, V = 5, VI = 6, VII = 7, VIII = 8, IX = 9, X = 10 and XI = 11. For a complex example, DXLIV = 544 (D = 500, XL = 10 before 50 or 40, and IV = 1 before 5 or 4, the total is 544!)



ITALIAN ARMY TERMINOLOGY

- AM, Asino Morto (ah-see-noh morr-toh): Dead ass. Nickname for Italian canned beef.
- Alpini (ahl-pee-nee): Mountain troops.
- Armata Italo-tedesca (ahrr-mah-tah ee-tah-loh teh-deh-skah): Italian-German Army. The combined Italian and German army in Libya and Tunisia.
- ARMIR, Armata Italiana In Russia (ahrr-meerr): Italian Army in Russia, the Italian 8th Army.
- Ariete (ah-ree-eh-eh): Ram. 132nd Armoured Division.
- Artiglieria (ahr-tee-year-ee-ah): Artillery.
- Artiglieria Celere (ahr-tee-year-ee-ah cheh-leh-reh): Fast artillery. Units of truck-mounted artillery.
- AS, Africa Settentrionale (ahf-rec-kah sayt-tehn-tree-oh-nah-leh): North Africa.
- Autoblindo (ow-toh-bleen-doh): Armoured car.
- Autocannone (ow-toh-kahn-noh-neh): Truck-mounted gun.
- Avanti Savoia (ah-vahn-tee sah-voi-ah): Forward Savoy! Savoy is the royal house of Italy.
- Bare d'Acciaio (bahrr-eh dahk-chee-ai-oh): Steel coffin. Nickname for Italian tanks.
- Battaglione (baht-tah-yee-oh-neh): Battalion.
- Batteria (baht-teh-ree-ah): Battery.
- Bersaglieri (bearr-sah-year-ee): Elite light infantry renowned for marching at the run.
- Bombe Passaglia (bohm-beh pahs-sah-yee-ah): Anti-tank grenade designed by Passaglia, an engineer officer. Basically a mine-strone tin full of explosives ignited by a hand grenade.
- Buca (boo-kah): Hole. Slit trench.
- CA, Corpo d'Armata (korr-poh dahrr-mah-tah): Army corps.
- CAM, Corpo d'Armata di Manovra (korr-poh dahrr-mah-tee dee mahn-oh-vrah): Mobile corps. The corps containing the armoured divisions.
- Camionetta (kah-mee-oh-neht-tah): Truck.
- Cannone (kahn-noh-neh): Gun.
- Caporale (kah-poh-rah-leh): Corporal.
- Carabinieri (kah-rah-bee-nee-ehrr-ee): Military Police.
- Carri (kar-ree): Tanks.
- Carristi (kar-ree-stee): Tank crewmen.
- ca, Contraerea (kohn-trah-eh-reh-ah): Anti-aircraft.
- cc, Controcarro (kohn-troh karr-roh): Anti-tank.
- CCNN, Camice Nere: (kah-mee-cheh neh-reh): Black Shirts, the armed forces of the Fascist Party.
- Centaurio (chen-tau-roh): Centaur. 131st Armoured Division.
- Capitano (kah-pee-tah-noh): Captain.
- Carro Comando (kar-roh koh-mahn-doh): Command tank.
- Compagnia (kom-pan-yee-ah): Company.
- Corazzato (koh-raht-tsah-toh): Armoured.
- Crucchi (kroo-kee): Slang for Germans.
- CSIR, Corpo Spedizione In Russia (chee-seerr): Expeditionary Corps In Russia in 1941.
- Divisione d'Assalto (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh dahs-sahl-toh): Assault division.
- Divisione Autotrasportabile (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh ow-toh-trahs-porr-tah-bee-leh): Infantry division ready for truck transport.
- Divisione Aviotrasportata (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh ah-vee-oh-trahs-porr-tah-tah): Air transported division.
- Divisione Celere (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh cheh-leh-reh): Fast or cavalry division.
- Divisione Corazzata (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh koh-raht-tsah-tah): Armoured division.
- Divisione Fanteria (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh fahn-teh-ree-ah): Infantry division.
- Divisione da Montagna (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh dah mohn-tah-nyah): Mountain division.
- Divisione Motorizzata (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh moh-toh-reet-tsah-tah): Motorised infantry division.
- Divisione Paracadutisti (dee-vee-see-ohn-eh pah-rah-kah-doo-tee-tee): Parachute division.
- Dovunque (doh-voon-kweh): Anywhere. All-terrain truck.
- Elefantino (el-eh-fahn-tee-noh): Little elephant. Nickname for 47/32 gun.
- EP, Effetto Pronto (ehf-feht-toh prohn-toh): Rapid effect. Italian name for High Explosive Anti-tank (HEAT) round.
- Fantaccino (fahn-tah-chee-noh): Nickname for rifleman.
- Fascio (fah-shoh): Fasces. Bundle of sticks and an axe. Symbol of Italian Fascist Party. Previously symbol of the power of a Roman senator carried by his lictor.
- Ferrea Mole, Ferreo Cuore (fehr-reh-ah moh-leh fehr-reh-oh koo-ohrr-eh): Iron Hulls, Iron Hearts. Motto of Italian tankers.
- Folgore (fohl-gorr-eh): Thunderbolt. 185th Parachute Division.
- Fucile (foo-chee-leh): Rifle.
- Fucilieri (foo-chee-lyear-ee): Riflemen.
- GGFF, Giovani Fascisti (jee-oh-vahn-nee fah-sheest-ee): Young Fascists. Fascist youth organisation.
- Greche (greh-keh): Greeks. Nickname for generals from the Greek lace on their collars.
- Guastatori (gwah-stah-torr-ee): Demolishers. Assault engineers.
- I Mussolini (ee moos-soh-lee-nee): The Mussolinis. Disparaging name for CCNN 'M' battalions.
- Il novantuno (eel noh-vahn-too-noh) The Ninety-one. Nickname for standard Carcano model 1891 rifle.
- Inglese (een-gleh-see): British.
- Italia (Ee-tah-lee-ah): Italy.
- Lancia (lahn-chee-ah): Spear. Italian vehicle manufacturer.
- Lanciafiamme (lahn-chee-ah-fee-ahm-meh): Flame-thrower.
- L'ottantotto (loht-tahn-toh-oht-toh): The eighty eight. Nickname of the British 25 pdr (an 88mm gun).
- Littorio (lee-tor-ree-oh): Lictor. Official who holds a senator's fasces and executes sentences. 133rd Armoured Division.
- Mitraglieri (mee-trah-year-ee): Machine-gun.
- Modello (moh-dehl-loh): Model.
- Mortaio (morr-tai-oh): Mortar.
- Moto Guzzi (moh-toh goot-tsee): Italian motorcycle manufacturer.
- Motocicletta (moh-toh-cheek-leht-tah): Motorcycle.
- Motociclisti (moh-toh-cheek-leest-ee): Motorcyclists.
- Motorizzati ai piè (moh-toh-reet-tsah-tee ah-ee pee-eh): Motorised on foot. A cynical reference to the actual state of most Italian 'motorised' divisions.
- Multiplo di quattro (mool-tee-ploh dee kwaht-troh): Multiple of four. British bombardments as they arrived in fours.
- Nastrini (nah-stree-nee): Ribbons. Nickname for senior officers.
- Nembo (nehm-boh): Cloud. 184th Parachute Division.
- Obice (oh-bee-cheh): Howitzer.
- Paracadutisti (pah-rah-kah-doo-teest-ee): Parachutists.
- Piumetto (pee-oo-meht-toh): Plumes. Black cockerel feathers worn by bersaglieri to celebrate their origin as 'hunters'.
- Picchiatello (peek-kee-ah-tehl-loh): Nutter. Nickname for Ju87 dive bomber playing on the Italian word for diver.
- Plotone (ploht-toh-neh): Platoon.
- Radio Scarpa (rah-dee-oh skahr-pah): Shoe Radio. Word of mouth.
- RA, Regia Aeronautica (reh-jee-ah eh-roh-now-tee-kah): Royal Air Force
- Raggruppamento (rahg-groop-pah-mehn-toh): Artillery group.
- RE, Regio Esercito (reh-jee-oh eh-sehrr-chee-toh): Royal Army.
- RECo, Raggruppamento Esplorante Corazzato (rahg-groop-pah-mehn-toh ehs-ploh-rah-n-teh koh-raht-tsah-toh): Armoured reconnaissance battalion.
- Reggimento (reh-jee-mehn-toh): Regiment.
- Semovente (say-moh-ven-teh): Self-propelled gun.
- Sergente (sehr-jehn-teh): Sergeant.
- Solothurn (soh-loh-toornn): Maker of anti-tank rifle.
- Tedeschi (teh-deh-skee): Germans.
- Tenente (teh-nehn-teh): Lieutenant.
- Trattore (traht-torr-eh): Tractor.



...Don River, 1943...

Russian troops advanced on the frozen ground, some even venturing on the ice surface of the River Don as Italian mortar shells fell with steady, deadly precision among them. 'Bravo Francesco,' thought Sergente Beltrame, 'he measures his shells like he does his words.'

Beltrame looked at his men waiting in their snow holes and grimaced. The men looked as cold, tired, and hungry as they undoubtedly were. For weeks the alpini of Julia had endured the bitter Russian winter in thin clothes and summer boots. Food and ammunition were scarce. The German tanks, long promised, would never arrive. He was as sure of that as of the cold gun in his hand. They had been abandoned once again and it was a long and dangerous way home!

He shrugged and shifted his attention back to the assault. 'They keep coming,' Beltrame noted, impressed by the courage of the Russian soldiers. Italian machine gunners steadily pounded the open ground from the base of the ridge up to the river bank. The Russians scattered and slowed their advance, but a second wave was pouring out of their lines and a third one was gathering behind it. 'Like my alpini, they are tough as their weather,' he muttered to himself.

Bullets flew around him as the Russians came closer. The sergeant leveled his MAB sub-machinegun and let off a short burst. The Russians were still out of range but it gave them something to think about. The alpini were firing all along the line now. Russians started to fall in greater numbers.

'Keep it up!' Beltrame yelled to his men. 'Keep firing, don't stop! Make every shot count!' A whistling sound drowned out his last words as the river ice erupted. The alpini cheered as another salvo landed amongst the Russians, breaking the momentum of the attack. 'L'artiglieria!', 'The artillery!', they shout, 'they finally remembered us!'



CATALOGUE



IT880 Tenente Pascucci



IT702 Fucilieri Platoon



IT303 Autoblindo AB41



IT010 L6/40 (x2)



IT722 Bersaglieri Platoon



IT111 Semovente 75/18



IT570 75/27 gun



The Unknown Hero



IT110 Carro Comando M41



IT431 Dovunque 35 3-ton truck



IT743 Folgore HQ & Platoon



IT120 Semovente 90/53



IT551 88/56 gun



IT162 Lancia da 90/53

WD109	Avanti Savoia	IT120	Semovente 90/53 with	IT560	47/32 gun (x2)	IT710	Light Mortar Platoon
ITAB01	Italian 1500pt Army Box		L40 ammo carrier	IT561	65/17 gun (x2)	IT722	Bersaglieri Platoon
IPS01	Italian Paint Set	IT160	20/65 Autocannon	IT562	47/32 gun (Bersaglieri x2)	IT725	Mortar Platoon (Bersaglieri)
ITBX01	Compagnia Bersaglieri	IT162	Lancia da 90/53	IT563	47/32 gun (Folgore x2)	IT727	Motociclisti Platoon
IBX02	M14/41 Platoon	IT240	Sahariana (MG)	IT570	75/27 gun (x2)	IT743	Folgore HQ and Platoon
IBX03	Raggruppamento Artiglieria	IT241	Sahariana (ATR/47/20)	IT580	100/17 howitzer (x2)	IT744	Machine-gun Platoon (Folgore)
IT010	L6/40 (x2)	IT271	Fiat SPA TL-37 tractor (x2 resin)	IT701	Company HQ	IT745	Mortar Platoon (Folgore)
IT040	M14/41	IT303	Autoblindo AB41	IT702	Fucilieri Platoon	IT880	Tenente Pascucci
IT060	R.35	IT431	Dovunque 35 3-ton truck (x2 resin)	IT704	Machine-gun Platoon	IT940	Italian Decals
IT101	Semovente 47/32 (x2)	IT440	Lancia 6-ton truck (x2 resin)	IT705	Mortar Platoon	DD006	Italian Dice
IT110	Carro Comando M41	IT550	90/53 gun	IT706	Demolisher Platoon	AT526	Italian Token Set
IT111	Semovente 75/18	IT551	88/56 gun	IT709	Artillery HQ	AT527	Italian 8 Million Bayonet Tokens

This is a supplement for *Flames Of War* the World War II Miniatures game.
A copy of the rule book for *Flames Of War* is necessary to fully use the contents of this book.



AVANTI SAVOIA



It was the bravery and dedication of the *carristi* and *bersaglieri*, the Italian tank crews and light infantry, that made many of Rommel's desert victories possible. It was the steadfast defiance of the *artiglieri* and *paracadutisti*, the Italian artillery men and parachutists, that saved Rommel from defeat time and again. It was the endurance of the *fucilieri*, the Italian riflemen, that held the line for the Germans in the desert and in Africa when their own resources proved insufficient.

For the glory of Italy, 'Avanti Savoia!'

INSIDE YOU WILL FIND:

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- Rules for adding German Allies
- Variants for the ARMIR—*Armata Italiana In Russia* (Italian Army In Russia)
- Variants for the 6^a *Armata* (6th Army) in Sicily
- History of the 132^o *divisione corazzata 'Ariete'*, the 132nd 'Ram' Armoured Division
- Inspiring colour photos
- Tactics guide
- Comprehensive painting guide
- Exploits of Tenente Capo Compagnia Luigi Pascucci, winner of Italy's highest award, the Gold Medal for Military Valour.

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