

## **British 1st Armored Division**



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In the buildup to Gazala, the 1st Armored Division was brought up to strength and partially equipped with the new American built Grant tank, with the rest of its tanks being Crusader II's. The division began the battle stationed behind the center of the front, with the 201st Guards Infantry Brigade dug into a fortified box at Knightsbridge. Within the first few days of the offensive, the division found itself in a fight with Rommel's panzers, where the Grants gave a shock to the Germans with their heavy 75mm hull mounted gun and improved armor. The two armored brigades continued to be heavily engaged with the Panzer divisions and saw heavy fighting in the area known as the "Cauldron". On June 12th, the 201st Guards Brigade was forced out of its box by the 15th Panzer and 90th Light Divisions and retreated back to Tobruk, where it was eventually surrendered when the port fell. Meanwhile, the 2nd and 22nd Armored Brigades lost most of their tanks in combat with German tanks and anti-tank guns, being forced to abandon their damaged tanks as they retreated. The division did however survive to fight another day and had an important role to play at the Battle of El Alamein.