Sandhurst Kriegsspiel

2-Sided, double-blind adversarial free Kriegsspiel to support training at the Royal Military Academy

SANDHURST - FREE KRIEGSSPIEL

What is a "Kriegsspiel"?

Kriegsspiel is the German word for "Wargame" and the technique has been used for training officers since 1824, originally in the Prussian and German armies, but later worldwide. The British version was published in 1884.

So, Wargames aren't new – they have just been buried for a while. Recently, the DEPSECDEF in the USA issued a Memo[1] to all branches of the US Military about "Wargaming and Innovation". ***The idea is to encourage manoeuvrist thinking and original thought***. The Commandant agrees, so the idea is to get the students to do a wargame at the end of a TEWT.

Aren't "Wargames" really complicated games where fat guys with beards and sandals play with toy soldiers?

Some are (among civilians) – but some military ones had no rules, just the military judgement of the Umpire (and the laws of physics!). They should be so simple to run they are really just military common sense.

How did they used to run "Wargames"?

General Von Moltke, Chief of the Prussian General Staff, used to take his staff officers out in the field to look at a tactical problem (very much like TEWTs are run today). He used run them in a standard way:

- Set out the ***General Idea*** (the overall background) and the specific ***Special Idea*** (the scenario).
- Get the Staff to offer their ideas – ***but always starting with the most junior officer*** – so you get an honest answer (if the Senior Officer gives his opinion first, some spineless junior might just agree with the senior because he is trying to curry favour and it saves him the effort of actually thinking).
- Discuss the ideas and reach an ***agreement of the best course of action***.
- Split the Staff into two groups evenly (in numbers and by rank / experience) – you want the teams to be ***intellectually equal*** even if the force ratios in the scenario might not be.
- ***Wargame the scenario***.
- ***Validate the assumptions*** that came out (so if you assumed you could move troops from A to B in a certain time, turn out the local garrison and test the assumption by marching them over the ground).

Do we need lots of equipment to run a wargame?

No – all you need is a map and some markers for the troops involved. You can use a photo-enlarged paper map and some counters with standard military map marking symbols on them – or you can use whatever your students would use if they were making a model of the plan as part of their orders process (the only problem is that you need two copies of the map where one set of students can't see the other set of students' map).

What are the rules?

There aren't any "rules" per se, just military common sense and a few guidelines. If the students want to know weapon ranges, tell them to look them up in their TAMs. If they want to know how fast troops move, ask them how fast they think they can move (a rule of thumb is that infantry in body armour moving along a track will move about 50m in a minute, if they know where they are going and nobody is shooting at them). If they want to
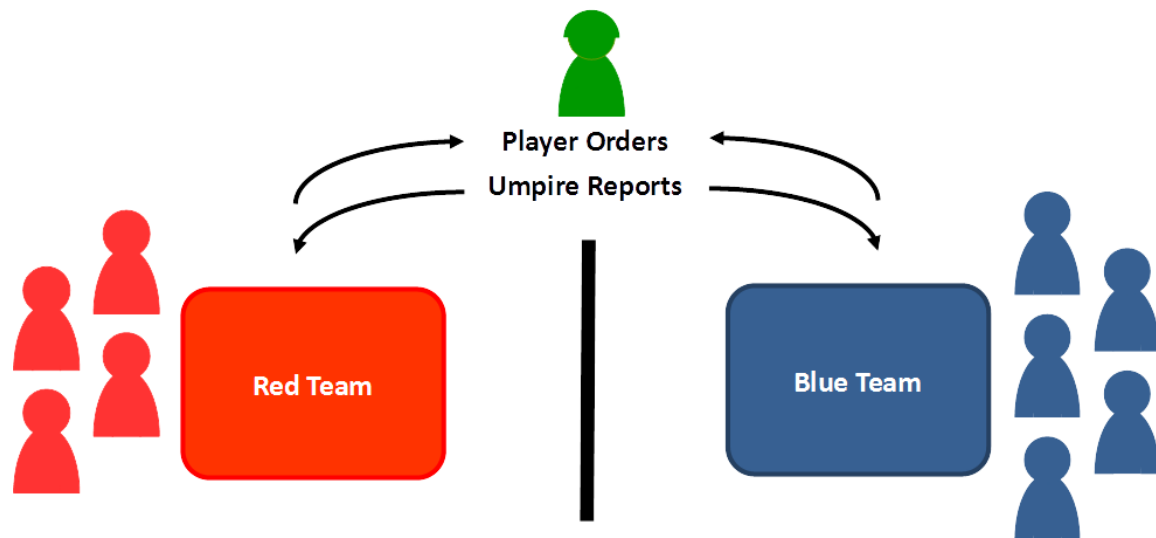
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[1] Wargaming and Innovation, DEPSECDEF Memo, The Pentagon, Washington DC, 09 Feb 2015.

know "where the mortar fire is coming from?" ask them "how do you think you could tell where it was coming from?" (You can have a discussion about artillery locating radar, crater analysis and sound ranging when the explosions have stopped…).

How is the Wargame laid out?

Sit them on the ground in groups facing away from each other, or you can use two separate rooms.

How do we actually run the Wargame?

They tell you what their plan is and what they want to do for the next few minutes (placing their unit markers on the map). You discuss if their plan is sensible and reasonable and then move to the other team. You listen to their plan and if, when they move their unit markers, they might see a unit from the other team, you place it on their map. The game is played "**blind**" which means *they can only see the enemy if they would realistically be expected to, given the ground and the circumstances*. You then move between the two maps, moving the markers, adjudicating what happens, until you reach a natural conclusion.

What is the main aim of the Wargame?

The idea is to *encourage original thought and a manoeuvrist approach*. Students should propose ideas and different approaches to the problem and come to a consensus as to the viability of their ideas. *The time for experimentation is in a wargame where they can fail and learn in a safe environment*. If you dismiss some wild idea too early, it can have a lasting negative effect on original thought, whereas students coming to their own conclusions whether a novel idea is practical or not, will have lasting benefit.

When considering student actions there are a few guidelines that may be useful:

Time and Space.   Students frequently believe that actions can be carried out more quickly than is possible – particularly communicating instructions, or designating targets. Their understanding about how quickly personnel cover distance in a combat situation and recover from suppressive fire, it also frequently underestimated.

Risk and Evidence.   When a student is about to carry out an action that has a chance of failure they should be encouraged to consider the risk and the consequences – and then ways they could mitigate that risk such as using smoke or suppressive fire. When they elect an action with a number of unstated assumptions, such as a section engaging the enemy effectively at 600m, they should be challenged as to on what they base their evidence. Have they ever fired at that distance? If so, how good were they? How often will their men have engaged at that range?

Realities of War.   Finally, students should be reminded of the myriad of smaller things that go wrong with a plan. You are an experience military DS and you can draw analogies from your own experience.

DS Guidance

Order of Play

Blue decides on its order of march to enter the map. Red decides on its initial laydown.

Spotting

Target \ Terrain	Open	Woods	Behind Wall or at Wood Edge.
Infantry moving erect.	600m	50m	100m
Infantry moving prone. **Heavy weapon position.**	200m	50m	50m
Stationary Infantry, prone, dug in or in buildings.	100m	25m	25m
Firing small arms	600m	50m	500m
Moving Vehicle	600m+	50m	600m+
Stationary Vehicle	600m+	50m	100m
Vehicle or heavy weapon firing.	600m+	100m	600m+

Movement

- Movement erect is about 100m per 2 minutes on a track, once orders have been given and the route is clear.
- Movement prone may be anything from 10min to 30min to cover 100m depending on the degree of stealth needed. Movement with a Vallon is 100m in 5 minutes.
- Running for short distances can be up to 200m in a minute, but sub-units will be supressed for a time afterwards.

Firing

- A sub-unit may only fire at one target sub-unit or vehicle, but more than one sub-unit may fire at the same target.
- To fire, a sub-unit must be in range with its weapon system and have a clear Line of Sight (LOS) to the target.

Ranges (from TAM):

Small Arms	600m
Sniper	1,000m
GPMG SF	1,800m
Javelin	2,500m (but not closer than 200m).
VAB 14.5mm HMG	2,000m
Artillery and Mortars	Anywhere on the map.
NLAW	600m

Effects

- A single sub-unit firing will generally cause the target sub-unit to become suppressed, taking cover and stopping movement.
- Targets in the open (not dug-in) may be destroyed if fired on by several sub-units. Dug-In targets may not be destroyed other than by a close assault.
- Vehicles can only be fired upon by Javelin or NLAW. One Javelin detachment will destroy a vehicle. NLAWs operate as described above (one sub-unit firing to 'suppress', two to destroy).
- Leaders can argue for removing suppression, encouraging extra movement or other effects.

Line of Sight (LOS):

Contour intervals are 2m. Wooded areas are assumed to be mature and will block line of sight unless observer is 8-10m higher.

DISCUSSION

Running the Game

Students should be encouraged to work out any questions they have as to "the rules of the game" among themselves. A Kriegsspiel is simple military common sense and students should feel confident that they could be able to run them themselves unsupervised. If they don't know things like weapon ranges, they should look them up in their TAM. If they are unfamiliar with enemy weapon systems, they should be encouraged to research them on-line using Wikipedia and other sources (and discuss the reliability and accuracy of such sources).

In some cases students will want to try something that has a significant chance of failure, such as trying to "shoot down a UAV". A discussion of these types of actions is often very useful. How likely is it that they will succeed? What evidence do they have for that assumption? What is the likely penalty for failure? Attempting to shoot down a competently handled UAV is extremely unlikely and attempting it is likely to give away your position. Alternatively, if you are certain the UAV has spotted you, what have you got to lose?

As a DS you should decide the outcome that best meets the training objectives of the session, but in some cases it will not materially affect the overall result. In which case you should suggest that the students "flip a coin" or even "roll a dice" to obtain a result based on their assessment of the likely chance of success – but before you do, ask them if they are comfortable in doing so. If they are happy, they are gambling with their men's lives – if they are not, they don't understand the nature of risk. They should be looking at the risk of failure and doing everything in their power to mitigate it – only then should they take the chance.

It is useful for students to gain an understanding of risk at an early stage. Nothing is ever certain in war and if their plan is unable to cope with any setbacks, it is not a robust plan.

The student plans

Following the Kriegsspiel it is always worth asking the Blue Force students how closely their plan in the Kreigsspiel followed the plan they had decided was the best course of action following the TEWT. In almost all cases it is completely different.

When challenged on this, students will normally point to the enemy players and explain it is because they "know our plan". You should point out that all the students playing the enemy have done is consider the tactical situation from *the opposing point of view* – so that if the students modified their plan because of this, they had made the assumption that the enemy were incapable of doing so. They are assuming the enemy is stupid.

If all the Kriegsspiel does is highlight the value of "turning the map around" and considering the problem from the enemy's point of view, it will be an invaluable lesson.
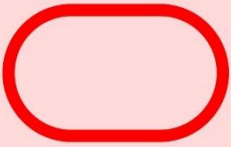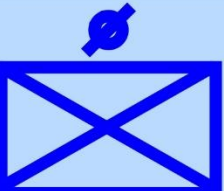
Evidence

The concept of providing "evidence" for student assumptions has been mentioned several times. In many cases there are implicit assumptions about Friendly Force superiority made by students that, at best are a naive patriotic belief in their own abilities and at worst represent nothing less than ignorant racism. Neither has a place in modern warfighting. A good example is the assumption that a close-assault on an enemy trench with one-to-one odds has any chance in succeeding without evidence of a massive training, experience and morale advantage.

If a student makes an assumption such as this, they should be challenged to give evidence as to why they should succeed. A useful technique is to invite them to make a series of points in support of their argument, counting those that are good and reasonable off on your fingers. Then invite the rest of the squad to add additional points, either in support or against. For each good point hold up another finger – for each point against, lower a finger. If at the end, there are few fingers left up, invite the student to assess the probability of success – the risk of this course of action. Then invite the squad to suggest ways in which the risk can be reduced and the chance of success increased.

SNIPER			**DF4**
FIRETEAM	**MFC**	**LEADER**	**DF3**
SECTION	**APC**	**LEADER**	**DF2**
SECTION	**APC**	**HMG**	**DF1**
SECTION			**SNIPER**
SECTION	**FST**	**LEADER**	**UAV**
SECTION	**GPMG SF**	**LEADER**	**JAVELIN**
SECTION	**GPMG SF**	**FIRETEAM**	**JAVELIN**

Other Counters

ARMOUR	FIRETEAM	IED	IED
(dark green blank)	RANGING	SECTION	DUG IN
IMPACT	RANGING	FIRETEAM	DUG IN
SMOKE	IMPACT	DETECTION ?	SUPPRESSED ✕
SMOKE	IMPACT	DETECTION ?	SUPPRESSED ✕
SMOKE	OBSERVE ⊕	DETECTION ?	SUPPRESSED ✕
SMOKE	OBSERVE ⊕	DETECTION ?	SUPPRESSED ✕

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Pavilion
Hill

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Bourley Road

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Skirmishing
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Cheese
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Brown Loaf
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Windy Gap
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Burn's
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Caesar's
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Reservoir
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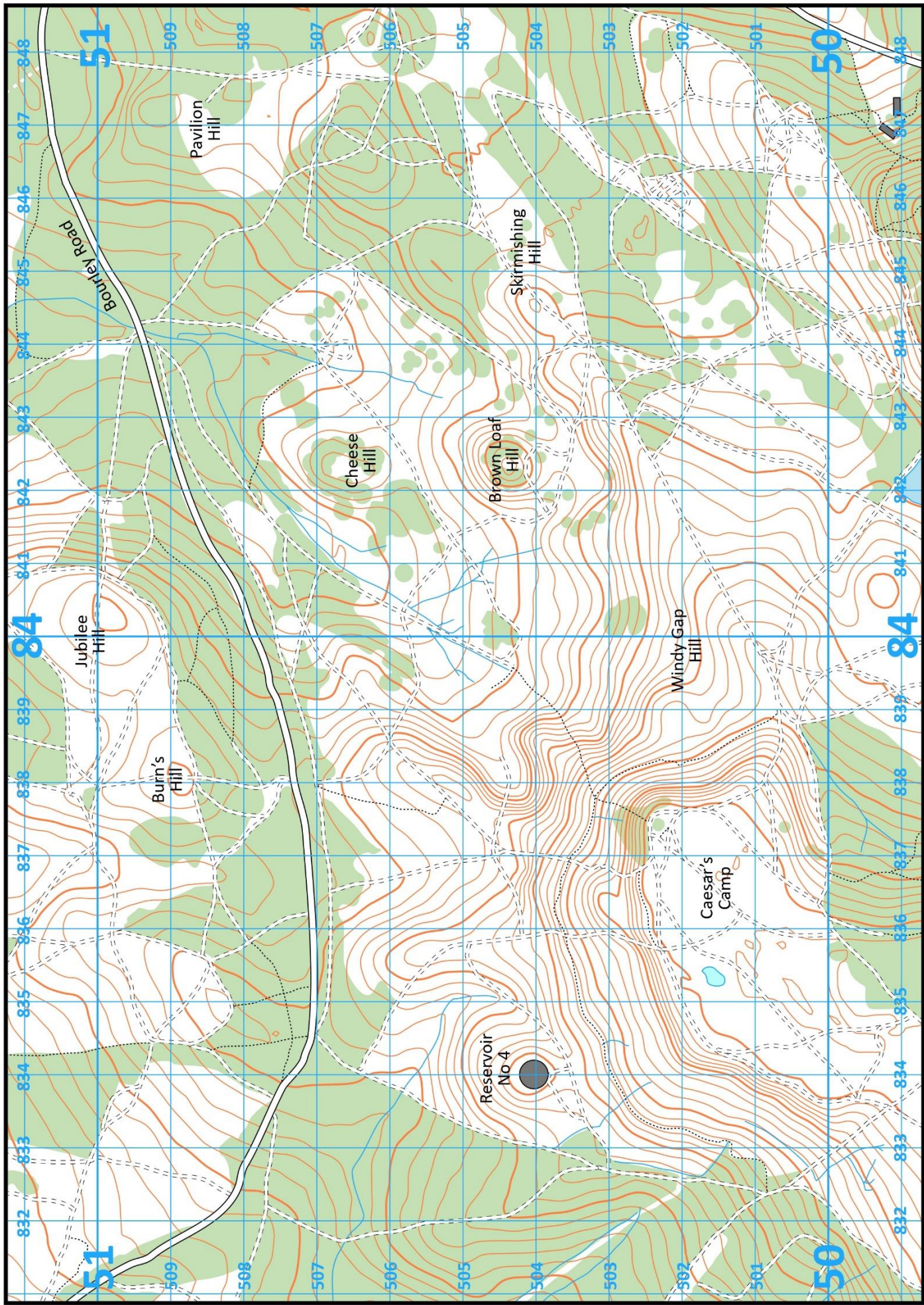
Ex ALDERSHOT SKIRMISH - OPENING NARRATIVE

Ref:

A.   Map series GSGS 6500 Sheet Aldershot, Edition 1-GSGS, 1:25,000.

Map Folds.   Are detailed below and must be used in conjunction with Ref A.
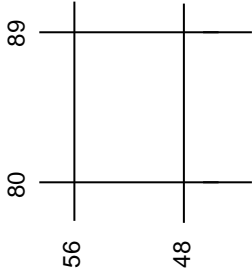
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  56  ──┼───────┼──
        │       │
  48  ──┼───────┼──
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Introduction

1.   Having SECURED the construction of the Patrol Bases on THETSHOT PLAIN and DEFEATED the en offensive during Op FIRST ENCOUNTER, Comd 20X is keen to seize the initiative and discourage a significant c-attack by ATF forces. The bde has been re-tasked to CLEAR remaining en ivo ALDERSHOT.

2.   The en have withdrawn the bulk of their forces to the NORTH towards the NDF border. It is assessed that they have left a covering force to SCREEN their wdr with the purpose of DELAYING and DISRUPTING any friendly force fol up action against them and to buy them time so that they can consolidate effectively.

3.   You comd 5 Pl, B Coy Gp, 2 SR BG, under command of 20X.

4.   **B Coy Gp, 2 SR BG Task Org.**   FST from 17 Bty, 26 RA (c/s V12A), incl an MFC pair (c/s T12A & T12B).

5.   **5 Pl Task Org.** 1 x MFC B (c/s T12B).

6.   **Locs.**   The coy is in an Assy Area ivo water tower at SU 829 491. You and the other pl comds are with the OC ivo SU 838 502.

7.   **Action required**. You are to conduct a map study of the area prior to deployment and ensure your map is marked up correctly. On arrival be prep to give your ground brief, explain your time constraints (ex time now is 1030), deliver your initial WngO and summarise the assets aval to you.

Appx:

1.   B Coy FragO.

Encl:

1. 2 SR BG Task Org: **(See counter mix provided).**

Total pages 5

B Coy Main HQ (SU 829 491)

020900FEB15

B COY FRAGO

Time Used Throughout the Order: LOCAL.

1. **PRELIMS**

a. **Task Org.**

   (1) 4 and 5 Pls to det GPMG(SF) dets to Coy FSG.

   (2) 6 Pl to det a sect to mov ammo for FSG.

   (3) FSG will consist of 4 x GPMG(SF) and FST.

2. **SITUATION**

a. **En Forces.** Elms of a mech inf regt have been tasked to DELAY and DISRUPT friendly force fol up action to the S and W of CAMBERLEY, IOT allow the en time to wdr successfully to the NDF border. Their forces are est to be at 70% CE (due to log problems) with little rft expected in the near future. Atk and indirect fire sp is ltd and CSS is extremely ltd. En forces have been ident by 20X recce elms in the area of BAGSHOT, FARNBOROUGH and ALDERSHOT. The disruption force consists of widely dispersed inf militia sects and pls equipped with VABs. En aim is to SCREEN, DISRUPT and DELAY mov of friendly forces IOT allow main elms to consolidate on NDF border in order to prep for further offensive action. It is assessed that the disruption force was inserted 6 hrs ago. Morale is assessed as high. We have air superiority. Our Recce Pl have sighted 1 x sect posn with Toophan 2/5 and at least 1 x VAB in the vicinity of SU 842 507. Also a poss en posn at SU 841 512, probably with 82mm mor sp.

b. **Friendly Forces:**

   (1) **Comd 20X's Intent.** SECURE 20X AO by rapidly CLEARING NE and DEFEATING en disruption force within bdrys.

   (2) **CO 2 SR.**

   (a) **Msn.** ATTACK.

   (i) DEFEAT en within bdrys.

   (ii) CLEAR a corridor on axis WARREN CORNER 8149 – COVE 8456 – HAWLEY 8558.

   In order to allow 20X to adv NE and DEFEAT en disruption force.

   Be prep to become 20X's res.

   (b) **Concept of Ops:**

   (i) **Intent.** Rapidly CLEAR a corridor, DEFEATING en disruption force, to enable the adv of 20X.

   (ii) **SoM.** 2 SR will adv 2 coys up, C Coy left and B Coy right, clearing en within bdrys, with A Coy in res. BG recce screen fwd. There is to be no bypassing of en. Indirect fire will be aval on call.

   (iii) **ME.** Rapid defeat of en within bdrys and lies with B Coy.

   (3) **Locs and Intents of Neighbouring Forces Affecting the Op:**

   (a) 1 YORKS are NW of C Coy.

   (b) 2 PWRR are SE of B Coy.

   (4) **Outline FSp Plan.** 26 RA are in dir sp to bde. On call to prov FSp to 2 SR adv. BG mors will estb mor line at SU 825 485 by 1200.

3. **MISSON.** ATTACK.

B Coy is to DEFEAT en within bdrys.

In order to enable BG adv.

Be prep to reinforce A or C Coy.

4. **EXECUTION**

   a. **Concept of Ops:**

(1) **Intent.** DEFEAT ident en posns within bdrys by conducting a deliberate coy attack thereby PREVENTING en delaying BG offensive ops.

(2) **SoM.** From Assy Area, 4 and 6 Pls will provide flank protection as far N and E as CAESAR'S CAMP, 5 Pl will mov independently to an FUP. It will then be a 3 phase op:

(a) **Phase 1**. 5 Pl asslt en sect on CHEESE HILL (SU 842 507) with FSp from the FSG on CAESAR'S CAMP. Once 5 Pl have crossed their LD, 4 Pl will conduct a flanking mov to NW of 5 Pl and cont coy adv ASAP.

(b) **Phase 2**. 4 Pl DEFEAT poss en posn at SU 841 512, again with FSp from CAESAR'S CAMP.

(c) **Phase 3**. On Os, coy clear within bdrys to BG LOE (Line CADBURY).

(3) **ME.** Defeat of en on CHEESE HILL.

b. **Msns:**

(1) **4 Pl.** ATTACK. 2nd asslt pl:

(a) PROTECT 5 Pl's NW flank for their asslt.

(b) DEFEAT poss en posn at SU 841 512.

IOT enable rapid clearance of en within bdrys.

(2) **5 Pl.** ATTACK. Initial asslt pl:

DEFEAT en at SU 842 507 (CHEESE HILL).

IOT enable rapid clearance of en within bdrys.

BPT provide addl FSp for 4 Pl's asslt on suspected en posn.

(3) **6 Pl.** RESERVE.

PROTECT 5 Pl's SE flank for their asslt.

IOT enable rapid clearance of en within bdrys.

BPT:

(a) Reinforce the asslt pls.

(b) DEFEAT poss en ident in depth.

(c) Cont to CLEAR NE within bdrys.

(4) **FSG.** Provide FSp to 4 and 5 Pls' attacks from SU 838 502.

IOT enable the rapid clearance of en within bdrys.

(5) **MFC/FST**. Provide indirect FSp. Pris:

(a) NEUTRALISE en at SU 842 507.

(b) On Os SUPPRESS any further en ident.

(c) DISRUPT en wdr.

(d) DISRUPT en rft.

BPT NEUTRALISE any en ident at SU 841 512.

c. **Coord Instrs:**

(1) **Timings:**

(a) 021200: 4 & 6 Pls mov to sec flanks.

(b) 021450: FSG in posn.

(c) 021500: 5 Pl's H Hr.

(d) 021530: 5 Pl's obj sec.

(e) 021630: 4 Pl's obj sec.

(2) **Mov**.

(a) **Assy Area**:

(i) **Loc.** SU 829 491.

(ii) **Sy.** 5 Pl to sec.

(b) **FUP/LD**:

   (i) **Loc.** Pl comds to ident their own LDs.

   (ii) **Routes.** Pl comds to ident and deconflict. Flank protection provided by 4 and 6 Pl to line SU 8347 5054 – 8405 4987. Beyond this 5 Pl have freedom of manoeuvre.

   (iii) **OOM.** 4Pl, 6 Pl, FSG, Coy HQ then 5 Pl.

   (iv) **Sy.** Pls to provide own sy.

(3) **Con Measures:**

   (a) **Report Lines:**

      (i) ROWNTREES: line of A287 through SU 800 503 to 840 490.

      (ii) CADBURY: line of A323 through SU 828 535 to 859 518.

   (b) **Axis.** Pl comds to ident own axis and info Coy Tac.

   (c) **LOE.** BG – Line CADBURY. Coy - 200m beyond en posn.

   (d) **Bdrys:**

      (i) **B Coy:**

         Left. SU 800 502 to 820 507 to 833 520 to 833 537 to 853 548.

         Right. SU 850 480 to 848 500 to 860 518 (follows A325) to 868 535.

      (ii) **C Coy:**

         Left. SU 800 501 to 814 523 to 823 538 to 825 550.

         Right. SU 800 502 to 820 507 to 833 520 to 833 537 to 853 548.

   (iii) **4 and 5 Pl inter-pl bdry.** SU 820 492 (straight line) to 835 507 (following B road) to 844 510 to 850 525 (Claycart bottom). Inclusive to 5 Pl.

(4) **Fire Plan:**

   (a) **Indirect.** 17 Bty, 26 RA are in dir sp. All fire msns on call. BG Mors will provide 2 min HE and smk at H-5 to H-3 at rate 4. All guns and mors are not adjusted onto tgts, but mors are bedded in.

   (b) **Direct.** FSG will be estb by H-10 and will provide suppressing fire for 5 Pl from H-3 to H+4.

(5) **Flank Prot.** 4 and 6 Pls will prov flank pro for 5 Pl.

5. **SERVICE SP**

a. **SOP Variations.** Nil.

b. **Log Sp:**

   (1) **Replen Plan.** All pers will be replen'd in the Assy Area.

   (2) **Ammo.** 1st line scales.

   (3) **Rats.** 48 hrs ORP in asslt order.

   (4) **Water.** 2lt per man.

   (5) **Btys.** Radio bty resup to be completed in Assy Area.

c. **Med**:

   (1) **Locs:**

      (a) **CAP.** Water tower at SU 829 491.

      (b) **RAP.** DARE'S LANE at SU 805 505.

   (2) **Med Packs.** Sects to carry 1 per fire team.

   (3) **Stretchers.** 1 per sect.

OBJECTIVE SKETCH

(4) **CASEVAC Plan.** First Aid. Send RV for Coy amb in CASEVACREQ, CAP will mov to RV. Coy amb will then mov cas to RAP.

(5) **Morphine.** 1 per man.

6. **COMD & SIGNAL**

a. **HQs**:

(1) **Locs**:

(a) **Coy Tac HQ.** With FSG on CAESAR'S CAMP.

(b) **Coy Main HQ.** SU 829 491.

(c) **BG Main HQ.** DARE's LANE at SU 806 505.

(2) **Altn Comd.** OC 6 until 2IC, then OC 5, OC4.

b. **Codes**:

(1) **Passwords**:

(a) 011200 – 021159: PP QQ.

(b) 021200 – 031159: RR TT.
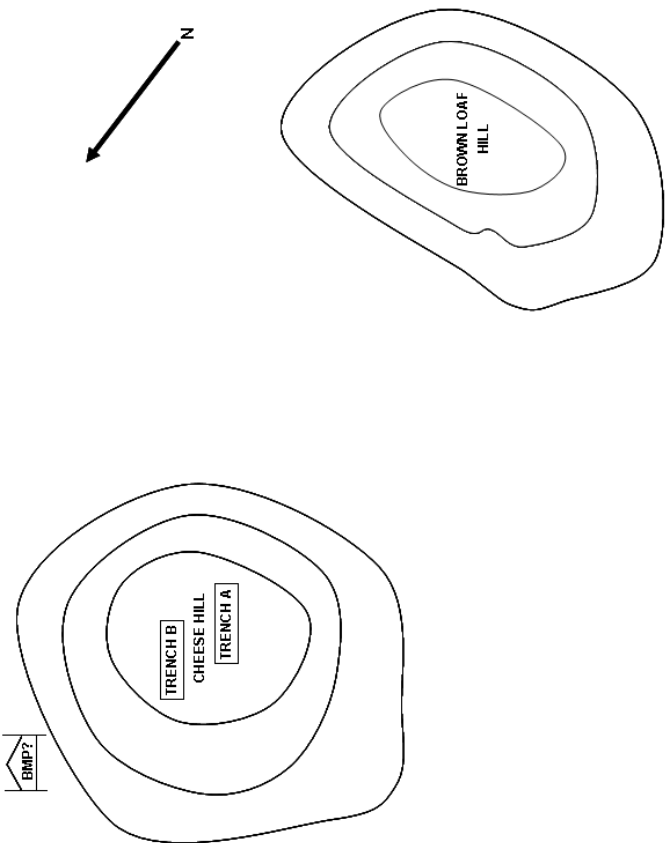
SYNC WATCHES

QUESTIONSWLEDGE   AUTHENTICATE
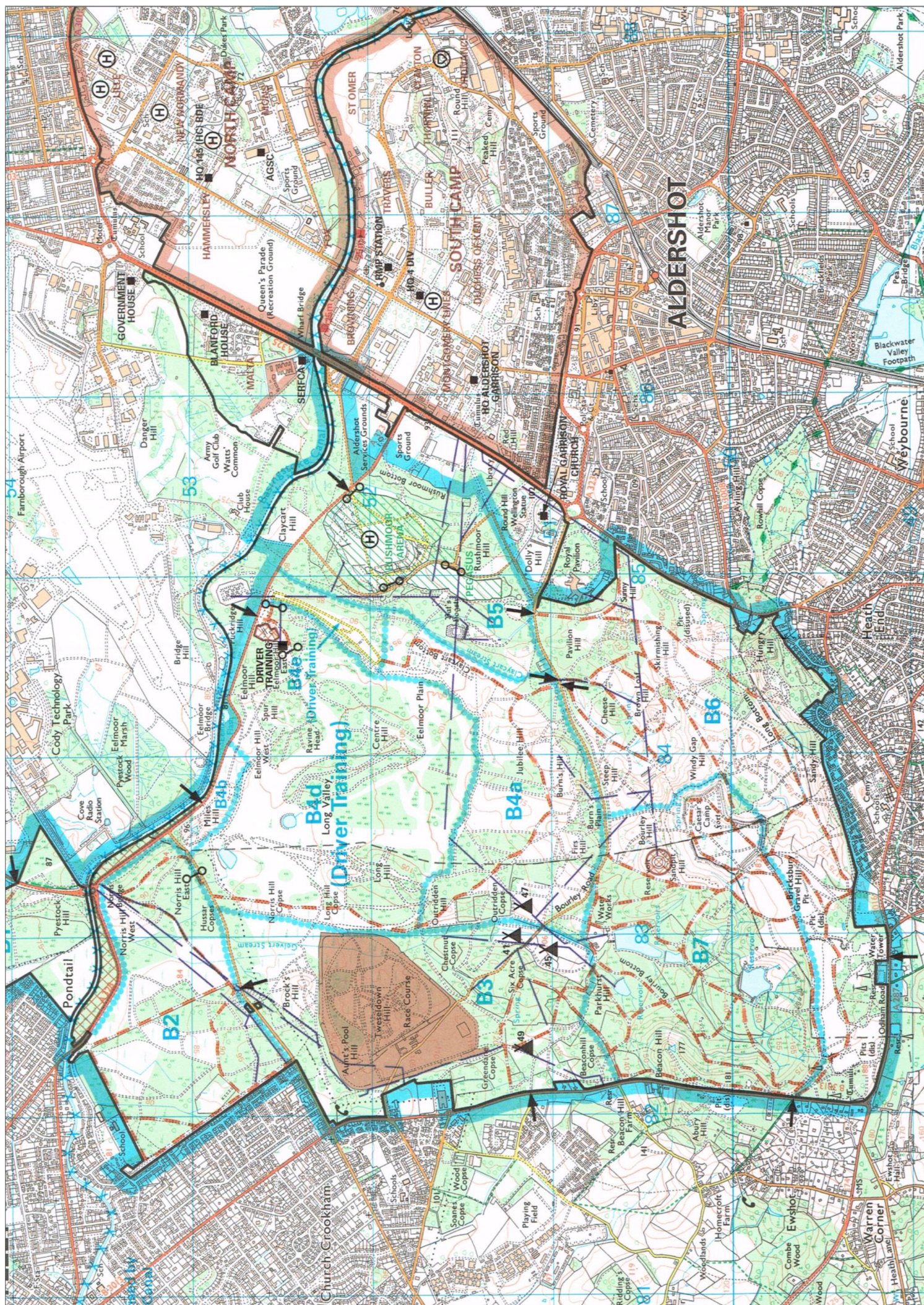
D Nuttall
Maj
OC

A Bull
Fl Lt
Coy Ops Offr

Encl:

1.   Objective Sketch.

Ex ALDERSHOT SKIRMISH

Enemy Detachment Commander Brief

Introduction

The enemy have DEFEATED our offensive during OP FIRST ENCOUNTER, and is expected to follow up aggressively.

We have withdrawn the bulk of our forces to the NORTH towards the NDF border. We have left a covering force to SCREEN our withdrawal with the purpose of DELAYING and DISRUPTING and friendly force follow up action against us so we can consolidate effectively.

Detachment Organisation

1 x Rifle Platoon of 2 x Sections, each consisting of:

- 4 x AK74.
- 2 x AK74 with UGL.
- 2 x PKM.
- 1 x Vehicle Driver (in VAB) with AK74.
- 1 x Vehicle Close Protection Sentry (in VAB) with AK74.
- 1 x VAB with 1 x 14.7mm HMG and 2 x RPGs.

In addition, you have assigned:

- 1 x MFC.

You have restricted mortar ammunition, and you have lost a lot of personal equipment in an enemy airstrike, but morale is high and you have the confidence of your men.

You have radios in each vehicle but only enough batteries for dismounted radios for each Section – but you have plenty of flares.

You have managed to pre-register 4 x target locations for your mortars. Firing at these locations will be immediate. Firing at other locations will require adjusting on to the target.

Enemy Forces

Enemy is assessed to be a light infantry Bn with artillery and mortar support. Their morale is high following on from successful operations earlier and they have air superiority. They have portable anti-tank weapons and sustained fire MGs. Our recce has spotted elements SOUTH of CAESAR'S CAMP and assess that they are likely to attempt to advance quickly in a Coy sized operation in your area.

Albion Detachment Mission

SCREEN, DISRUPT and DELAY enemy movement N of BOURLEY ROAD in order to provide time for main force to consolidate. You have section positions dug in at SU 842 506 and SU 840 509.

Flanking Formation

To your left flank in the northern edges of ALDERSHOT are 3 x T-90S, equipped with 125mm HE-FRAG ammunition with a range of 2km and AT-11 Sniper missiles with a range of 6km. If a high value target is identified, you can request support.