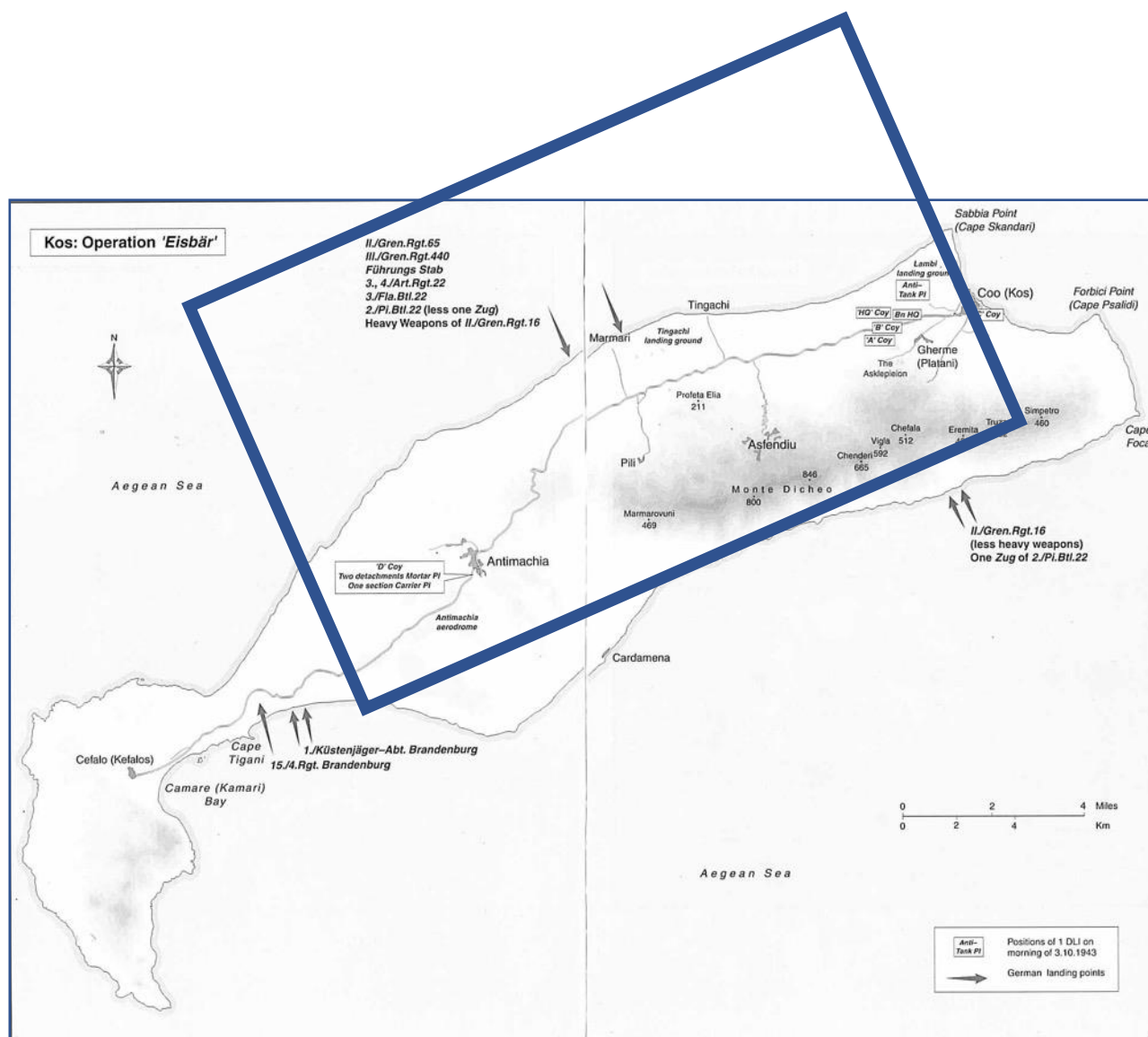


Operation 'Eisbar' (Polar Bear)

British Durham Light Infantry vs German Kampfgruppe "Von Saldern"

Kos, Greece - 3rd October, 1943



Kos 1943 - "Churchill's Folly" by Anthony Rogers

The Battle

The Battle of Kos was a brief battle between British, Italian and German forces for the control of the Greek island of Kos, in the then Italian-held Dodecanese islands in the Aegean Sea. On the 1st October, 1943 a concentration of shipping was observed in the ports of Crete and early on the following morning a convoy steaming in a north-north-easterly direction south-east of Melos was sighted by British aircraft.

Urgent supplies were landed on Kos by five Dakotas, and during their unloading the news came that a small German invasion fleet of ten vessels was at sea. This flotilla carried a task force composed of a battle group ("Kampfgruppe") from the 22nd Infantry Division in Crete, as well as "Brandenburg" special forces from the mainland, all under the command of Lieutenant General Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller.

At 04.30 hours on the 3rd October the invasion of Kos began. By mid-day 1,200 Germans, well-armed with light artillery and armoured cars, were ashore and in action. Dive-bombing by Junker 87s added to the difficulties of the defence, and in the afternoon Antimachia was overrun.



German forces land by "F-lighter" on the beach at Marmari
"Swastika over the Aegean" - Anthony Rogers

The main German convoy, which had been attacked from air was estimated to have consisted of seven transports, seven landing craft, three destroyers and numerous caiques (fishing craft) and other small craft. The principal landings took place at Marmari and Tingachi (in the north central part of the island) and at Camare Bay (south-west) with subsidiary landings at Forbici and Capo Foco (on the north-east and south-east tips of the island).



German Stuka over Kos

Paratroopers were dropped west and south of Antimachia. By 12.00 hours the Germans were reported as having landed 1,500 men by sea and air. At about 13.30 hours a further small German paratrooper landing of a company from the Brandenburg Division was made in the centre of the island, and more troops arrived by sea.

For the British forces the situation was reported as confused, but by 18.00 hours it was further reported as critical. The Durham Light Infantry and Italians fought gallantly but in the face of superior numbers and heavier equipment were forced to withdraw to positions covering the town and port of Kos and the airfield.

That evening the Germans attacked the British positions in strength reducing the British position to a small area around the town of Kos. The German strength had been reinforced to an estimated 4,000 men by the evening of the 3rd October.

"Battle of Kos" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Kos

Sources

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"Churchill's Folly" (2017 Edition) - Anthony Rogers

"Swastika over the Aegean" - Anthony Rogers

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"Events on Cos" - Pietro Giovanni Liuzzo

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Durham Light Infantry - Kos 1943 <https://durhamlightinfantry1920-46.weebly.com/kos-1943.html>

"Through Adversity - The History of the RAF Regiment" - Kingsley Oliver

WW2 Battle of Kos Island October 1943 SD https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC_iJgIRpwA



British Beaufighter attacking German "F-lighters" at Marmari Beach
Markings for aircraft flown by Australian F/Sgt M.W. Jackson (227 Squadron)

Operation 'Eisbar' - The Game

Operation 'Eisbar' is based on the sea and airborne assault on the Aegean island of Kos on the morning of the 3rd October, 1943. As the Allied (British & Italian) forces were significantly outnumbered, the scenario concentrates on the initial defence before the Germans had landed more troops.

Allied forces on Kos were also smaller than in the later defence of Leros - a scenario for this battle can be found in the downloads section of the Rapid Fire website www.rapid-fire-uk.com - so an alternate figure scale to normal Rapid Fire has been used (approximately 1 figure = 3 men, 1 gun or vehicle model = 1-2 guns, vehicles or aircraft). It is a medium sized game played on an 8' x 6' table over 12 moves i.e. 12 Allied and 12 German player turns.

Objective (both sides)

To win - control two out of three key positions at the end of 12 moves:

- Antimachia Airfield
- Tingachi Landing Ground
- Ammunition dump west of Platani

To draw - more than one key position is contested or unoccupied.

A key position is considered controlled if one side has troops (not vehicles) deployed (i.e. not in transports) on the position AND there are no enemy troops within 6".

Allied Special Rules

Allied forces start the game as indicated in the order of battle. HQ and D Company, Durham Light Infantry as well as the Bofors AA guns, AT Platoon and Italian artillery are in prepared positions or buildings (but not on reserved fire). All other elements are in the open. Bofors AA guns may engage ground targets. Allies move first.

Reinforcements - the Italian 12th Company arrives along the western edge, as shown on the scenario layout, on allied turn 7.

Allied Aircraft - roll a D6 at the beginning of each Allied turn: 1 = no aircraft, 2-4 = Bristol Beaufighter OR 5-6 = Spitfire this turn.

A Spitfire is not an option for the remainder of the game if Tingachi Landing Ground is captured by the Germans. Allied aircraft may only target German landing craft in turns 1-6.



Area of Tingachi Landing Ground
Kos 2014

German Special Rules

German forces start with the HQ, 5th and 6th companies of II Battalion, 65th Grenadier Regiment landed within 12" of Marmari Beach. They are counted as moving (not crawled) in Allied turn 1.

The remainder of II Battalion, 65th Grenadier Regiment and supporting arms are afloat and arrive as indicated. Brandenburger & Küstenjäger forces start off board and also arrive as indicated. German forces move second.

German LMGs (p88) - all German infantry elements (except Brandenburger or Küstenjäger elements) add 1 to fire effect D6 throws.

Küstenjägers (p88) - are treated as a SMG group i.e. + 1 to short range value and no long-range fire.

Marinefährräme "F-lighter" (p104-106) - the first wave starts one move out from the beach at Marmari and lands on German turn 1. Subsequent waves arrive the turn before indicated on the order of battle i.e. 8th Company's F-lighter appears on German turn 2 and lands troops on German turn 3.

"On the Beach" rules apply but beaches are not mined. German "F-lighters" can only be targeted by British aircraft and Italian artillery. Treat as a LCT (p104) with single AA HMG. May be placed on reserved fire.

Reinforcements - German Brandenburger and Küstenjäger reinforcements arrive within 18" of the south-west corner as indicated on the scenario layout:



Naval Gunfire (p107) - The Naval Gunfire OP team attached to the HQ of II Battalion, 65th Grenadier Regiment may attempt to establish contact with the off-board naval gunfire. Throw a 3D6. Any throw of a 1 means no contact can be made. Otherwise the OP team can direct two shots of 105mm observed IDF per move.

German Aircraft - roll a D6 at the beginning of each German turn: 1 = no aircraft, 2-4 = Stuka OR 5-6 = Arado AR 196 Seaplane available this turn.

The OP can also act as an "air link" OP team taking the same test to contact but can only control one type of fire (naval gunfire OR Aircraft) each move.

Beach at Marmari
Kos 2014

Movement and Cover

Roads - provide a benefit to troops and vehicles moving along them. Vehicles moving off road use cross country movement distances.

Crawling ("tactical move") - infantry that move up to 3" count as being in cover for observation and soft cover for targeting purposes.

Buildings - are hard cover and start intact.

Olive Groves - do not restrict visibility or movement but provide soft cover.

High Ground - does not affect movement but provides soft cover.

Stone Walls - are not linear obstacles to movement but provide hard cover to the front for figures lined directly behind.

Prepared Defences - do not affect movement but are hard cover to small arms (deduct 2 from the D6 throw for HE effect rather than the usual deduction of 1).

Aircraft & Artillery "Friendly Fire"

If the target of an aircraft is within 12" of a friendly element, roll for "friendly fire". On a 5 or 6 the target switches to the nearest friendly element instead. The same rule applies for IDF artillery fire if the target element is within 6" of a friendly element. If more than one element is "closest" then roll a D6 to see which one.

Tactical Tips

Allied - you are significantly outnumbered but must attempt to impose delay on the initial German sea and air landings. Holding your original positions only will not work. You will need to counter-attack to slow the German advance and then steadily withdraw towards Platani. Where possible make good use of your limited air and artillery assets to harass the German landing at Marmari.

German - you have superiority of numbers but it will take most of the day to get these forces ashore. Advance quickly from the beachhead at Marmari and push the British and Italian forces towards Kos. Use your Brandenburger and Küstenjäger forces to capture the airfield at Antimachia. Be ready for the inevitable Allied counter-attacks.



German landing at Marmari beach



Spitfires over the German Landing at Marmari and Tingachi Landing Ground



German fleet off Marmari beach

British defenders of Antimachia airfield



German infantry advance from Marmari

Durham Light Infantry HQ



Marmari Beach - Kos 2014



Road leading from Marmari Beach - Kos 2014



Road to Kos Town from Platani - Kos 2014

Allied Forces

Elements Kos Garrison

(all regular except Italians which are poor)

HQ, 1 st Battalion, Durham Light Infantry ⁽¹⁾ (Lieutenant Colonel Kirby) 6 figures, car		[Platani]
A Company, DLI (Capt. Grey) 36 figures - test @ 18 casualties		[west of Platani]
HQ	CO + 5 figures, 2" mortar	
3 x platoons	each 8 figures	
Mortar detachment	3 figures, 3" mortar	
MG detachment	3 figures, Vickers MMG	
B Company, DLI (Capt. Stafford) as per A Company except replace Vickers MMG with 20mm Hispano AA gun ⁽²⁾		[west of Platani]
D Company, DLI (Capt. Thorpe) as per B Company		[Antimachia]
Carrier Platoon, DLI ⁽³⁾ (Capt. Sivewright) 6 figures, 2 x jeeps		[south of Marmari]
Anti-Tank Platoon, DLI ⁽³⁾ 8 figures, 2 x 2pdr ATG 2 x trucks		[north of Platani]
Detachment, 1 st LAA Regt RAA ⁽⁴⁾ 4 figures, 40mm Bofors AA		[Antimachia]
Detachment, 1 st LAA Regt RAA ⁽⁴⁾ 4 figures, 40mm Bofors AA		[Lambi landing ground]
Italian Artillery positions	OP Team ⁽⁵⁾	
62 nd Battery	4 figures, 75mm 75/27 field gun	[east of Antimachia]
64 th Battery	4 figures, 75mm 75/27 field gun	[east of Antimachia]
OP Team	2 figures on foot	[east of Antimachia]

Italian 12 th Company, 10 th Division 36 figures - test at 18 casualties (Lt. Giovanni)		[turn 6 - western edge]
HQ	CO + 6	
3 x platoons	each 8 figures	
MG platoon	7 figures, MMG	

Air Support	[roll a D6 at the beginning of each Allied turn] 1 = no aircraft, 2-4 = Bristol Beaufighter ⁽⁶⁾ OR 5-6 = Spitfire ⁽⁷⁾
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(1) higher order HQ for all British & Italian forces
(3) no morale test required
(5) can coordinate fire from both batteries if required
(7) aircraft from 74 Squadron (SAAF)

(2) elements No 2901 / 2909 Squadron RAF Regiment
(4) no transport but can be manhandled
(6) aircraft from 46 / 227 / 252 / 89 Squadrons

German Forces

Elements German 22nd Luftlande & Brandenburg Divisions

(all regular except Brandenburgers and Küstenjäger which are elite)

HQ, II Battalion, 65th Grenadier Regiment ⁽¹⁾

Major Von Saldern

6 figures

[within 12" of Marmari]

5th Company / II Battalion / 65th Grenadier Regiment

[within 12" of Marmari]

40 figures - test @ 20 casualties

HQ

CO + 6 figures, 50mm mortar

3 x platoons

each 8 figures

MG section

6 figures, 2 x MMG

Mortar Section

3 figures, 80mm mortar

6th Company / II / 65 - as per 5th Company

[within 12" of Marmari]

7th Company / II / 65 - as per 5th Company, 2 x "F-lighters

[turn 1 - land @ Marmari]

15th Company (Fällschirmjäger), 4th Brandenburger Battalion

[turn 1 - 18" of SW corner]

40 figures test @ 20 casualties ⁽²⁾ (Lt. Oschovitz)

HQ

CO + 6 figures, 50mm mortar

3 x platoons

each 8 figures

MG Section

6 figures, 2 x MMG

Mortar Section

3 figures, 80mm mortar

1st Company, Küstenjäger "Brandenburg" Battalion

[turn 3 - 18" of SW corner]

As per 15th Company ⁽²⁾ (Capt. Kuhlman)

8th Company/ II / 65th Grenadier Regiment ⁽³⁾

[turn 3 - land @ Marmari]

IG Platoon

3 figures, 75mm IG, Sdkfz 10, "F-lighter"

AT Platoon

3 figures, 75mm Pak 40, Sdkfz 10, "F-lighter"

Gun Section, 3rd Battery, 22nd Flak Battalion

[turn 5 - land @ Marmari]

Sdkfz 10/4 ⁽⁴⁾, "F-lighter"

Gun Section, 22nd Artillery Battalion

[turn 5 - land @ Marmari]

8 figures, 2 x 105mm guns, 2 x trucks, "F-lighter"

Off Board Naval Gunfire

2 x 102mm guns (IDF)

[off-board]

Naval Gunfire OP Team (with HQ II/65 Grenadier Regiment)

Air Support

[roll a D6 at the beginning of each German turn]

1 = no aircraft, 2-4 = Stuka OR 5-6 = Arado AR 196

(1) higher order HQ for all German forces

(3) no morale test required

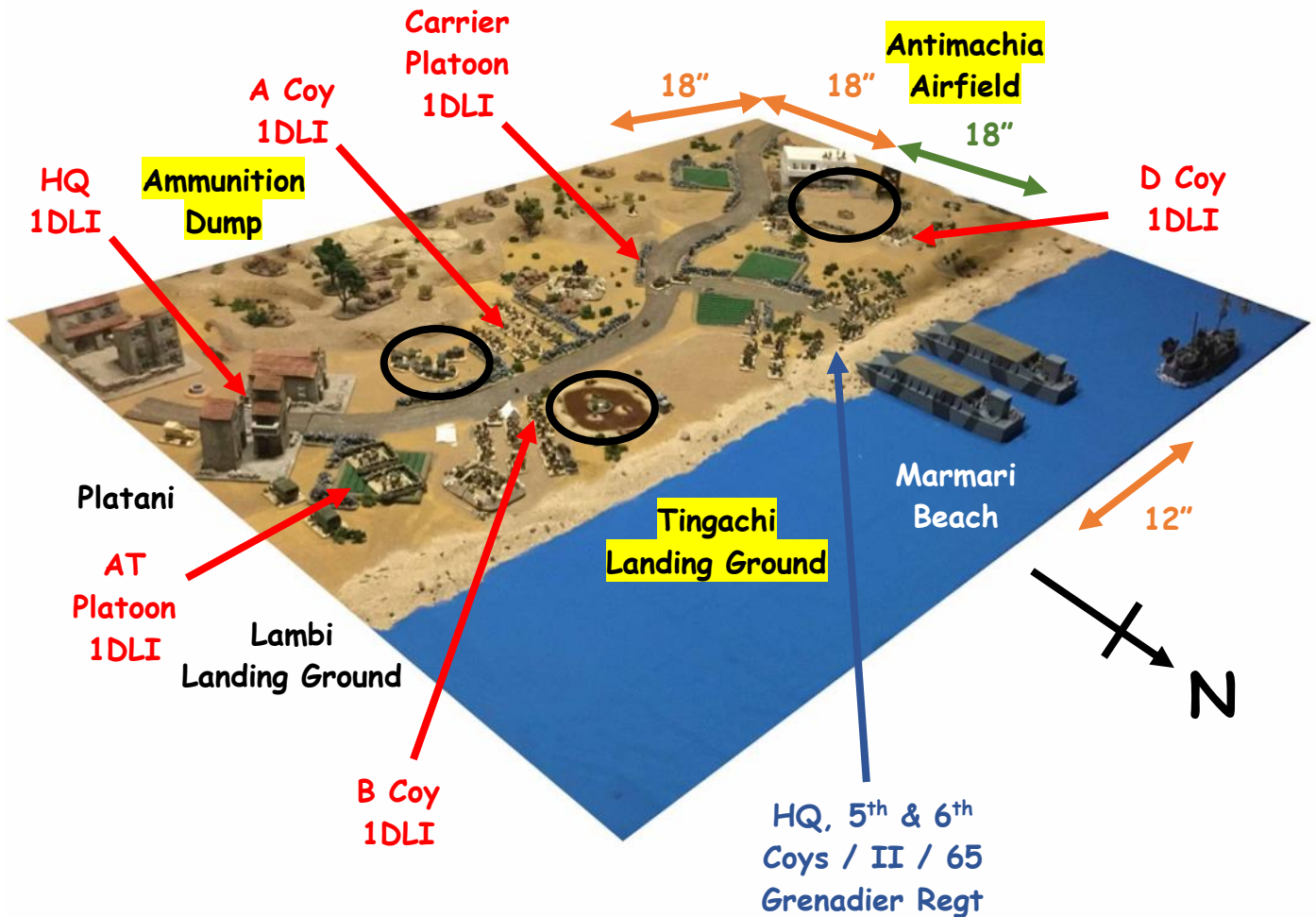
(2) elite units do not count unsupported for morale tests.

(4) independent AFV unit for morale purposes

Operation 'Eisbar' Kos 1943

Scenario Layout (8' x 6')

British deployment, German deployment
German entry point, Italian entry point and key positions.



Allied Vehicle and Gun Chart

GUNS		
Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
2" mortar	HE 6 pts table 4	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
3" mortar	HE 8 pts table 4	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
2pdr Anti-tank	AT 4	48" direct
20mm Hispano AA	AT 6 / Autocannon	6"/16"/30" direct
40mm Bofors AA	AT 4 / Autocannon	6"/16"/30" direct (AA = 36")
Italian 75mm 75/27 field	AT 4 / HE 10 pts table 4	48" direct / 72" IDF

VEHICLES			
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Jeep	30/18	F	Jeep (VMG) - if figures mounted

AIRCRAFT		
Description	Type	Ground Attack Armament (p95)
Supermarine Spitfire V	Superior Fighter	4 x MMG AND Multiple 20mm autocannon
Bristol Beaufighter*	Fighter Bomber	6 x MMGs AND multiple 20mm autocannon OR 2 x light bombs (8pts table 4 each)

* May bomb at low altitude. Treat as dive bomber, but hit for D6 throw of 5 or 6. Can be driven off by anti-aircraft fire.

German Vehicle and Gun Chart

GUNS		
Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
50mm mortar	HE 6 pts table 4	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
80mm mortar	HE 8 pts table 4	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
75mm Pak 40	AT 2 / HE 10 pts table 4	48" direct
75mm infantry gun	AT 5 / HE 10 pts table 4	48" direct / 72" IDF
Italian 102mm	12 pts table 4	Off board (always in range)

VEHICLES			
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Sdkfz 10	30/15	F	None
Sdkfz 10/4 SP 20mm AA	30/15	F	Autocannon 6"/16"/30" direct - 8 pts
Marinefährprähme (MFP)	-	-	Treat as LCT (p104) - single AA HMG (AA=36")

AIRCRAFT		
Description	Type	Ground Attack Armament (p95)
Arado AR 196 Seaplane	Light Bomber	Multiple 20mm autocannon OR 2 x small bombs (8 pts table 4 each)
JU 87 Stuka	Dive Bomber (light bomber)	2 x MMGs (8 pts) OR 1 x heavy bomb (15 pts table 5)