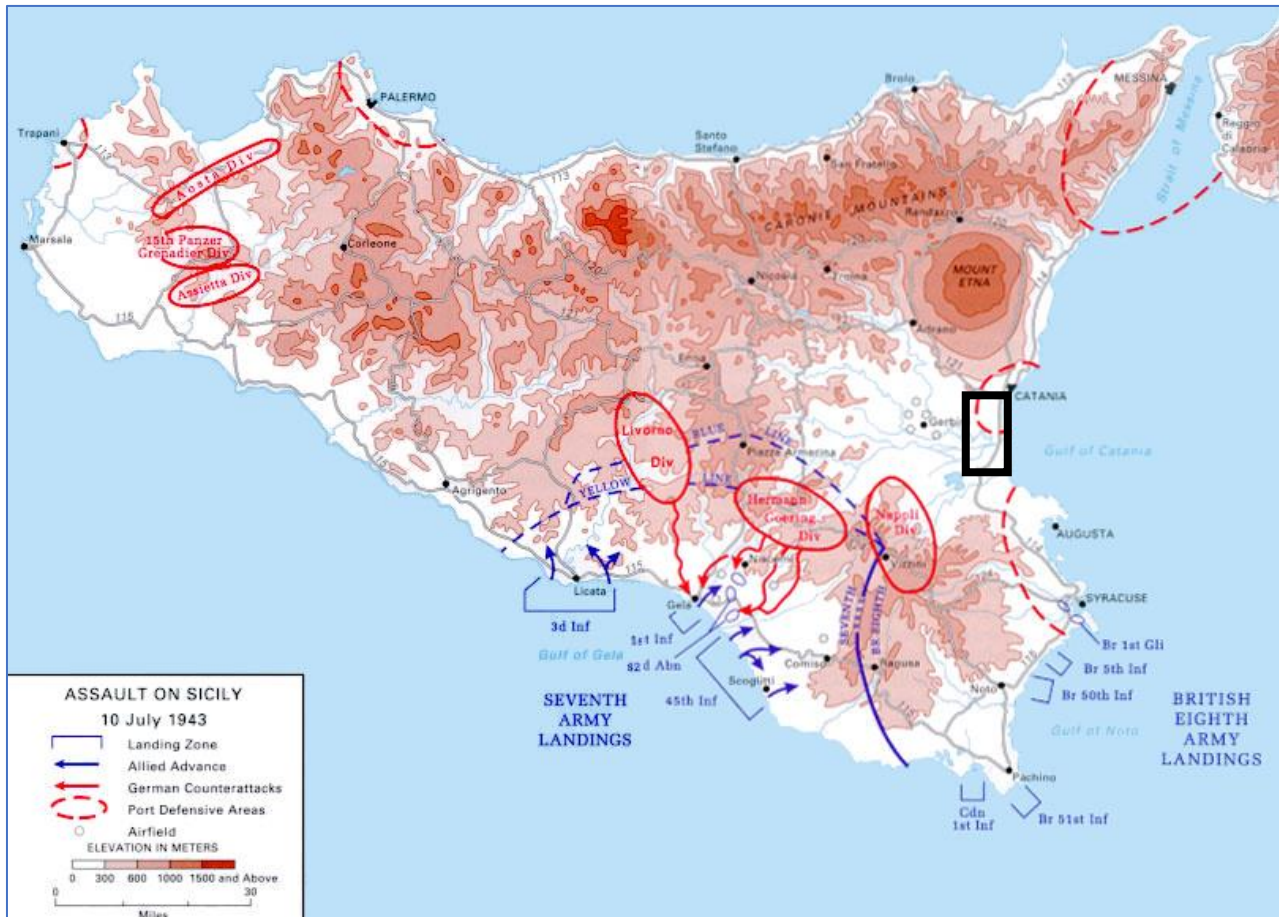


Operation 'Fustian' 15th July 1943

British 1st Parachute Brigade defends Primosole Bridge against attacks from 1st Fallschirmjäger & Herman Goring Panzer Grenadier Divisions

A 'Rapid Fire' scenario by Mark Piper



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Fustian#/media/File:Map_operation_husky_landing.jpg

What Really Happened

For British paratroopers the assault on the Primosole Bridge in Sicily, as part of Operation Husky, foreshadowed the later disaster at Arnhem in 1944. For the German Fallschirmjäger it was a perfect example of what the capability to react, swiftness, boldness and good luck could accomplish. The bridge was a key objective in Montgomery's 'Race to Messina' and the plan was to seize it using elements of the 1st British Parachute Brigade, which were to be relieved by 50th British Infantry Division, advancing from the South. The British airborne troops were scattered and immediately attacked by elements of the Fallschirmjäger, having landed only hours before themselves.

Where to Find Out More

'German Airborne Divisions: Mediterranean Theatre 1942-45' - Bruce Quarrie

'The Red Beret' - Hilary St. George Sanders

'German Airborne Troops' - Roger Edwards

'Ready for Anything' - Major General Julian Thompson

'Storming Eagles' - James Lucas

'The Glider Soldiers' - Alan Wood

'Bitter Victory - The Battle for Sicily' - Carlo D'Este

Command Post Quarterly #10 'Race for Messina' - Greg Novak

'Great Airborne Assaults', World at War magazine #72 June - July 2020

'Operation Fustian', Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Fustian

'Focke-Wulf FW 190 in the Battle for Sicily' - Morton Jessen & Andrew Arthy

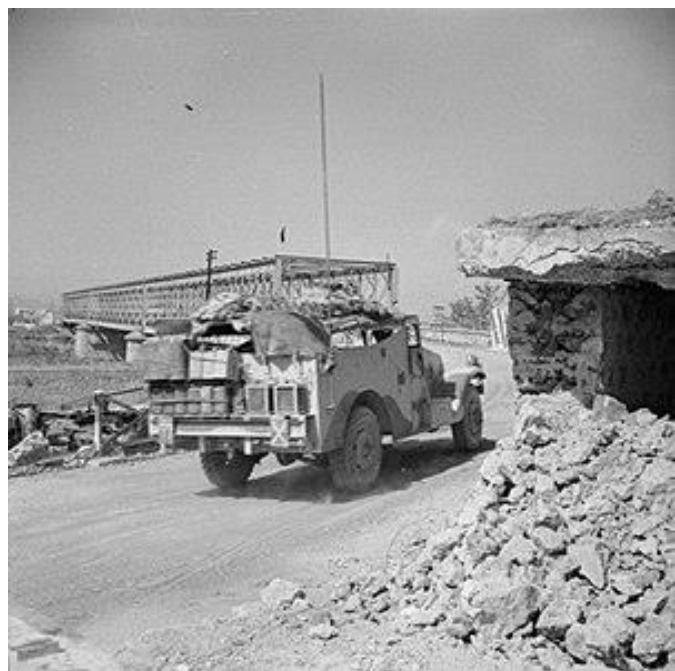
Historical War Museum of the Landings in Sicily (Catania, Sicily) - visited October 2019

'Sicily 43' - James Holland

'British Paratrooper versus Fallschirmjäger' - David GreenTree (Osprey Combat Series #1)

'Sicily 1943 - the Debut of Allied Joint Operations' - Steven Zaloga (Osprey Campaign #251)

Primosole Bridge
1943
Imperial War
Museum



The Game

The game represents that action on the morning and afternoon of the 15th July 1943 with elements of 1st Airborne Brigade, dug in north and south of Primosole Bridge, awaiting reinforcements from the south. It is played lengthways down an 8' x 6' table with a suggested game limit of a maximum of 16 moves. Due to the scattered nature of the airborne drop and the piecemeal response from the Germans the figure scale has been adjusted to approximately 1:5 for troops and 1:2 for weapons.

Victory Conditions (both sides)

To Win - hold two out of three objectives (Primosole Bridge, Sunken Road and 'Johnny' Feature) at the end of 16 moves or force the opposing infantry from the table.

To Draw - more than one objective is contested or unoccupied or both sides are forced from the table.

An objective is considered held if only one side has troops (not vehicles) deployed (i.e., not in transports) on the objective.

British deployment & special rules

British parachute forces setup as indicated, dug-in to slit trenches and weapon positions (not prepared positions). British reinforcements arrive along the southern edge of the table at **E** on the turns indicated. Airborne morale applies to 1st Parachute Brigade units. The Field Ambulance attached to Brigade HQ operates as an advanced dressing station (ADS) as per rule 11.7. The British player moves first.

Naval Gunfire Support (rule 18.27) - The Naval Gunfire Support observer team may attempt to establish contact with the off-board naval gunfire. Throw 3D6. Any throw of a 1 means no contact can be made. Otherwise, the OP team can direct two shots of observed IDF per move.

German Deployment & Special Rules

Initial forces deploy (not dug in) at **A** or **B** as indicated. German reinforcements arrive at the location (**C** or **D**) and turn indicated. Airborne morale applies to Fallschirmjäger infantry units. The German player moves second.

German LMGs (rule 13.1) - all German infantry elements add 1 to fire effect D6 throws.

German Aircraft - roll a D6 at the beginning of each German turn starting with turn 2: 1-4 = no aircraft, 5 or 6 = Fw 190 available this turn. Air OP uses rules 15.22 - 15.24 and is available each turn. Remove any aircraft from the table at the end of the turn.

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.

Airborne Forces Morale

Normal 'battalion' morale tests do not apply. Instead, they test by 'group'. Any group of less than 16 figures that is further than 12" from friendly troops at the beginning of their turn must make a morale test (and at the beginning of any subsequent turn if any further casualties are caused to the group). For this test the results are as per the rules but the only modifiers that apply are:

+1	If all the group are elite
+1	If over 50% of the troops are in hard cover
-1	For each consecutive test
-1	If there isn't a CO figure in the group

Terrain

The high ground south of the bridge is a continuous obstacle for movement. The **Simeto River** (6" wide) is a continuous obstacle for movement for infantry and tracked vehicles but cannot be crossed by wheeled vehicles except at the bridge or ford as shown on the map. Buildings start intact. **Olive Groves** are treated as Open Woods. **Vineyards** are soft cover but do not restrict movement or visibility. The **sunken road** and the **irrigation canal** are treated as slit trenches and foxholes. Both **bridges** can be destroyed as per the rules. The **pillbox** holds up to 3 figures and 1 MMG.

Tactical Tips

British - Your initial forces are less than expected due to the scattered nature of the airborne drop. You have good positions, and your troops are dug in. You will need to hold on until relieved.

German - The meagre but elite British Airborne have captured the vital Primosole Bridge. You will need to act quickly with the forces available to recapture the bridge before British reinforcements arrive.

British Forces

Elements of 1st Parachute Brigade & 50th Infantry Division

1st Parachute Brigade = elite, 50th Infantry Division = regular

[On-board]

- 1st Parachute Brigade HQ *** Brigadier Lathbury
CO + 2 figures, 16th Parachute Field Ambulance detachment (ADS) - no vehicle
* higher order HQ for airborne units only
- 1st Parachute Battalion (-)** Lt. Col. Yeldham
HQ CO + 7 figures, 2" mortar, PIAT
A Company 8 figures
B Company 8 figures
Support Company 6 figures, Vickers MMG, 3" mortar
1st Airlanding AT Battery 3 figures, 6pdr AT gun, jeep tow
- 2nd Parachute Battalion (-)** Lt. Col. Frost
HQ CO + 7 figures, 2" mortar
A Company 8 figures
B Company 8 figures
C Company 8 figures
Support company 3 figures, 100mm captured Italian gun
- 3rd Parachute Battalion (-)** Lt. Col. Pearson
HQ CO + 7 figures, 2" mortar
A Company 8 figures
B Company 8 figures
- [Reinforcements]**
- 9th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry (-)** test @ 19 casualties [turn 3 @ E]
HQ CO + 3 figures, 2" mortar, PIAT
Carrier Platoon 3 figures, PIAT, Bren Carrier
3 x companies each 8 figures
Support Company 6 figures, 81mm mortar, 6pdr AT gun, 2 x Bren Carriers
- 44th Royal Tank Regiment (-)** [turn 5 @E]
HQ Sherman (75mm) **
Reconnaissance troop Stuart (no turret, HMG) **
A & B Squadrons each 2 x Sherman III (75mm)
** independent AFV
- [Off Board Support]**
- HMS Newfoundland** - 2 shots observed IDF each turn (as per special rules)
Naval Gunfire Support observer team with 2nd Parachute Battalion HQ
- 56th Battery, 24th Field Regiment, Royal Artillery**
2 x 25pdr guns, observer team - jeep with HQ 9th Durham Light Infantry

Allied Vehicle & Gun Statistics

VEHICLE			
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Jeep tow	24/12	F	
15cwt truck	24/12	F	
Stuart (turretless)	30/15	D	VMG
Bren carrier	30/15	E	VMG*
Sherman III (75mm)	24/12	C	VMG / AT class 3 / HE 10 pts table 4 (or VMG)
Sexton SPG (25pdr)	24/12	E	- / AT class 3 / HE 12 pts table 4

* can only fire a weapon if carrying infantry figures

GUN		
Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
2" mortar	HE 6pts table 4	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
PIAT	AT class 2 / HE 8 pts table 4	Maximum range 6"
Vickers MMG	-	8pts
3" Mortar	- / HE 8pts table 4	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
6pdr AT gun	AT class 3 / -	-
Italian 100mm howitzer	AT class 3 / 12pts table 4	-
25pdr artillery	HE 12 pts table 4	Off board
Naval guns	HE 12 pts table 5	Off board



**British
reinforcements
Imperial War
Museum**

Allied Vehicle & Gun Statistics

Rapid Fire Reloaded

VEHICLE			
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Jeep tow	24/12	6	
15cwt truck	24/12	6	
Stuart (turretless)	30/15	4	VMG
Bren carrier	30/15	5	VMG*
Sherman III (75mm)	24/12	3	VMG / AT class 3 / HE 4 x D6 (or VMG)

* can only fire a weapon if carrying infantry figures

GUN		
Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
2" mortar	- / HE 2 x D6	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
PIAT	AT class 2 / HE 4 x D6	Maximum range 6"
Vickers MMG	-	8pts
3" Mortar	HE 4 x D6	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
6pdr AT gun	AT class 3 / -	-
Italian 100mm howitzer	AT class 3 / 4 X D6	-
25pdr artillery	HE 4 x D6	Off board
Naval guns	HE 6 x D6	Off board

British infantry in village

Historical War Museum of
the Landings in Sicily -
October 2019



German Forces

elements 1st Fallschirmjäger & Herman Goring Panzer Grenadier Divisions

All units = elite

[On Board]

I Fallschirmjäger MG Battalion Major Schmidt [south-west of A]
 HQ CO + 5 figures, 50mm mortar
 2 x companies each 8 figures, Panzerfaust
 MG Company 9 figures, 2 x MMG, 80mm mortar, 2 x trucks
 HW Company 3 figures, 105mm RCL gun, 1 x Kettenkraftrad tow

Kampfgruppe 'Stangenberg' Captain Stangenberg [within 6" of Culvert B]
 HQ CO + 5 figures, observer team
 3 x companies each 8 figures, Panzerfaust

[Reinforcements]

Heavy Flak Battery, Herman Goring Flak Battalion [turn 3 @ C]
 4 figures, 88mm Flak 36/41 dual purpose AT gun, towing vehicle

Assault Gun Company, Herman Goring Panzer Battalion [turn 3 @ C]
 Stug III (75mm) - independent AFV

I Fallschirmjäger Pioneer Battalion Captain Adolff [turn 4 @ C]
 as per 1st FJ MG Battalion but with 3 additional trucks

1st Platoon, I Fallschirmjäger Anti-Tank Company [turn 5 @ D]
 3 figures, 75mm Pak 40 AT gun

[Air Support]

Fockewulfe 190 as per special rules [available from turn 2]

[Off-Board Artillery]

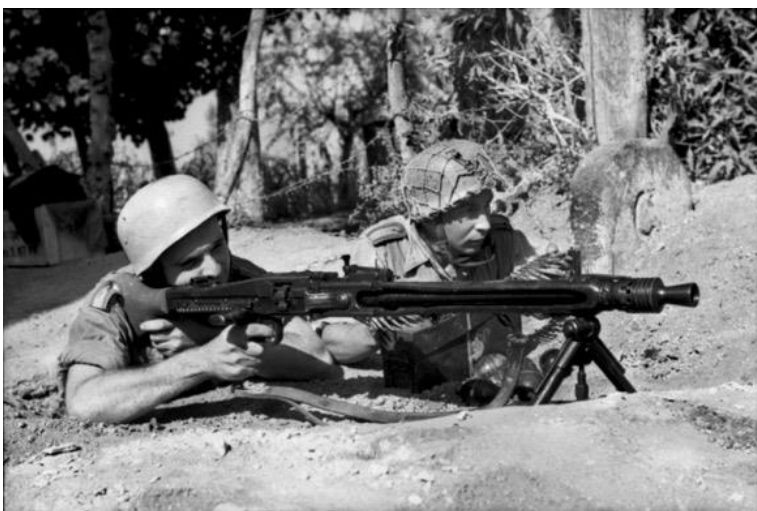
I Battalion, Fallschirmjäger Artillery Regiment
 2 x 105mm Guns, observer team with Kampfgruppe Stagenberg
 Fiesler Storch Air OP

German Vehicle, Gun & Aircraft Statistics

VEHICLE			
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Towing Vehicle, truck	24/12	F	
Kettenkraftrad	30/15	E	
StuG III (long 75mm)	24/12	C	AT class 4 / HE 10 pts table 4

GUN		
Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
50mm mortar	- / HE 6pts table 4	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
Panzerfaust	AT class 2 / HE 4 pts table 4	Maximum range 6", one shot weapon
MMG	-	8 pts
80mm mortar	HE 8 pts table 4	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
105 LG40 recoilless gun	AT class 3 / HE 12 pts table 4	Paratroop artillery. Maximum range for IDF is 72"
75mm Pak 40 AT gun	AT class 2 / HE 10 pts table 4	-
88mm Flak 36/41*	AT class 2 / HE 12 pts table 4	AT ranges 0-12", 12"-36"36-60". HE bands 6 x 10".
105mm Howitzer	AT class 3 / HE 12 pts table 4	Off board.

Aircraft		
Description (Main Weapon)	Type	Ground Attack Armament
FW 190	Superior fighter bomber	2 x HMG & multiple 20mm autocannon, 2 x medium bomb (or 1 x heavy bomb)



**German
Fallschirmjäger
Imperial War
Museum**

German Vehicle, Gun & Aircraft Statistics

Rapid Fire Reloaded

VEHICLE			
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Towing Vehicle, truck	24/12	6	
Kettenkraftrad	30/15	5	
StuG III (long 75mm)	24/12	3	AT class 4 / HE 4 x D6

GUN		
Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
50mm mortar	HE 2 x D6	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
Panzerfaust	AT launcher	Maximum range 6", one shot weapon
MMG	-	8 pts
80mm mortar	HE 4 x D6	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
105 LG40 recoilless gun	AT class 3 / HE 5 x D6	Paratroop artillery. Maximum range for IDF is 72"
75mm Pak 40 AT gun	AT class 2 / HE 4 x D6	-
88mm Flak 36/41*	AT class 2 / HE 5 x D6	AT ranges 0-12", 12"-36"36-60". HE bands 6 x 10".
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German Fallschirmjäger

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Simeto River looking north west (with Mt Etna in the distance)
October 2019



From Primosole Bridge looking south ('Johnny' Hills in the distance)
October 2019



From Primosole Bridge looking north (Catania & Mt Etna in distance)
October 2019



British 6pdr anti-tank gun
Historical War Museum of the Landings in Sicily - October 2019



British 25pdr artillery and ammunition trailer
Historical War Museum of the Landings in Sicily - October 2019

