

# **RAPID FIRE!**

**Rearguard Action at Stilos  
28th May 1941**



**SCENARIO FOR CRETE 1941  
By Mark Piper**

**FOR USE WITH RAPID FIRE! FAST PLAY WWII WARGAMING RULES**

# REARGUARD ACTION AT STILOS

## 28TH MAY 1941

### WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

After a week of hard fighting the decision was made to evacuate as many Commonwealth troops as possible from the southern coast of Crete. To do so a rearguard was set up on the main southern road from Megalia Khoratia crossroads via Stilos to Babali Hani.

The elite troops of the 5th Gebirgsjäger Division, well suited to fighting in the rugged terrain of the interior of Crete, took over from the exhausted Fallschirmjäger. The Gebirgsjäger were well equipped and mobile. Kampfgruppe 'Whittman' was formed to advance quickly along the main road on the northern coast of Crete.

German forces, unaware of the withdrawal, were tasked with pushing east to the area of Retimo and Heraklion. As they did so they encountered the first elements of the rearguard dug in on the high ground above the Megalia Khoratia. The Germans swept south of the main Hania - Retimo road and having hit the retreating Commonwealth forces causing casualties, they moved east.

Commonwealth forces had delivered a 'bloody nose' to the German forces advancing from Maleme and Galatos, at the 'Battle of 42nd Street' on the 26th May. Despite having momentarily halted the German advance the remnants of the 5th (New Zealand) and 19th (Australian) Infantry Brigades were tasked to form a rearguard to allow surviving forces, on the northern coast of Crete, to withdraw to evacuation points on the south coast. The only reinforcements were the lightly armed, but elite, Middle East Commandos of 'Layforce'. Commonwealth forces made strong stands at the villages of Stilos and Babali Hani before withdrawing to the south. The Germans continued to the east.

Therefore both Commonwealth and German forces had different objectives. The Commonwealth to withdraw to Sphakia on the south coast and the Germans to advance to Retimo and Heraklion on the north coast. The fight for the north-south road was brutal and exhausting for both sides.

### THE GAME

This represents the Commonwealth rearguard action against elements of the German 5th Gebirgsjäger Division. The game is played on a 7' x 4' table. We suggest a maximum of 12 moves.

### GERMAN ARRIVALS

- German forces arrive along the western edge of the table within 6" of the location and on the move indicated.
- Gebirgsjäger Aufklärungs Bataillon / Panzerjäger Bataillon 95 Group, Gebirgsjäger Artillerie Abteilung / Gebirgsjäger Pionier Bataillon 95 Group enter at **G1** on moves 1 and 3.
- Stabs / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85 and I Bataillon / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85 enter at **G2** on move 3.
- II Bataillon / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85 enters at **G3** on move 5.
- III Bataillon / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85 enters at **G4** on move 7.
- Maximum 6" move on turn they arrive.

### ALLIED DEPLOYMENT

- Commonwealth troops deploy in or around buildings or dug-in (hard cover) as shown on the battle map.

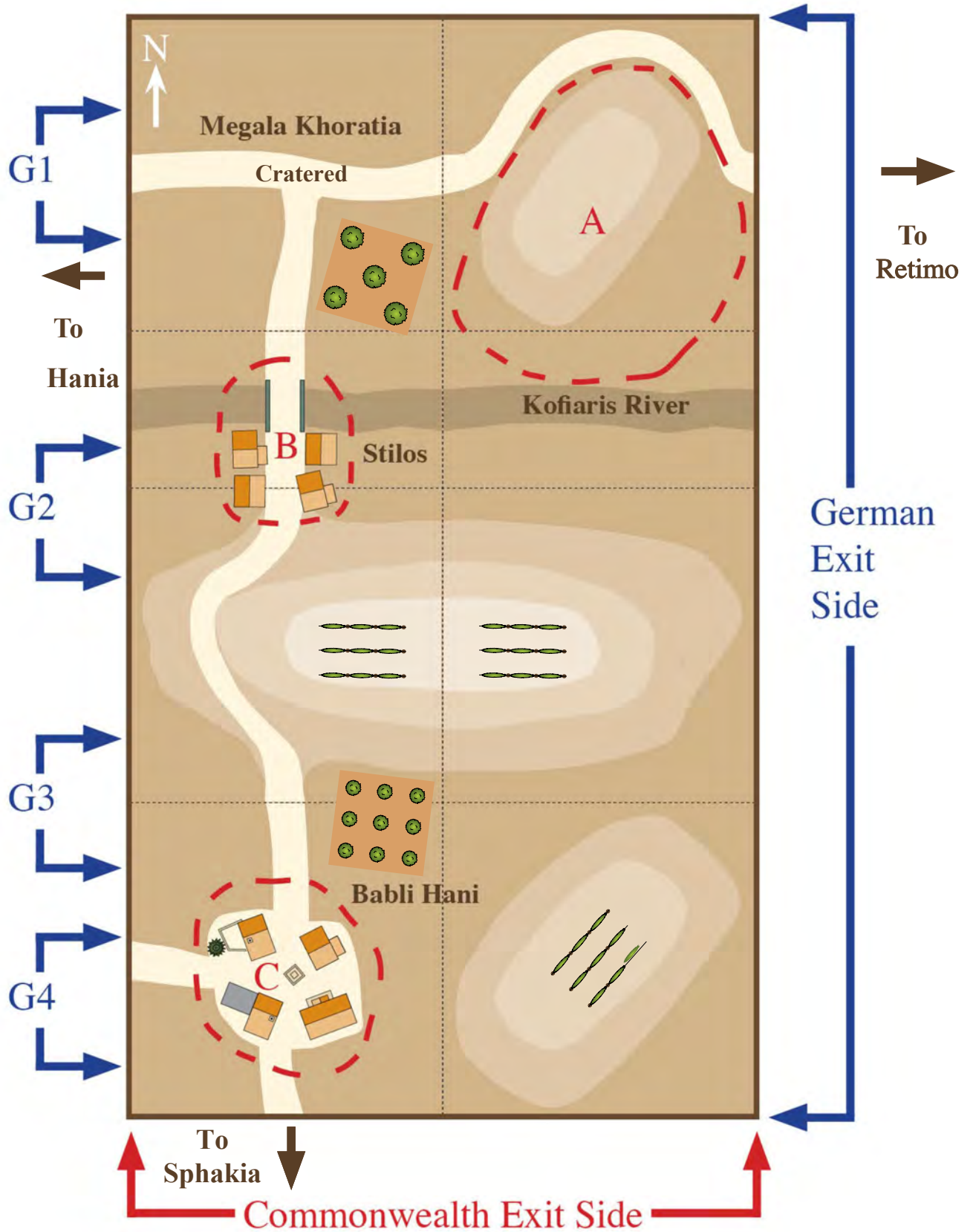
### GERMAN VICTORY CONDITIONS TO WIN

Exit at least 75 figures of German troops off the Eastern edge of the table **AND** less than 60 figures of Commonwealth troops have exited off the southern edge of the table, at the end of 12 moves.

### ALLIED VICTORY CONDITIONS TO WIN

Prevent the German player from achieving both objectives. The result is a draw if the Germans only achieve one objective.

# REARGUARD AT STILOS BATTLE MAP



## TERRAIN

- **High Ground** is a continuous obstacle for troops and vehicles (impassable to wheeled vehicles) and provides soft cover to infantry.
- **Olive Groves** provide soft cover, are a continuous obstacle for movement and block LOS (4" shadow from higher ground).
- **Walls** (18" to 24") provide hard cover to troops and partial concealment to vehicles immediately behind and on the same level.
- **Kofiaris River** is a linear obstacle to movement except when using the bridge.
- **Megala Khoratia 'T' Junction** is a cratered road. All troops and vehicles treat as cross country for movement. Vehicles treat as a linear obstacle to cross and continuous obstacle to travel along.
- **Bridge at Stilos** has been set up with demolitions. From move 2 if there is a stationary Commonwealth infantry unit within 6" roll a D6. On anything but a 1 or 2 the bridge is demolished and becomes a damaged bridge for the remainder of the game. If unsuccessful can be rolled for again in subsequent moves. Any troops or vehicles on the bridge when destroyed are lost.
- **Buildings** start intact and may hold up to 11 figures.
- **Roads** provide benefit for troops and vehicles moving along them.
- **Rocky 'Sangars'** provide hard cover to Commonwealth troops. Once they move out of the position, for whatever reason, remove and they cannot be occupied or reoccupied by either side.

## Tactical Tips

### ALLIED

Delay the German force long enough to allow Allied forces to escape to the embarkation point at Sphakia on the south coast.

Use what resources you have to inflict casualties on the Germans. Once each position becomes untenable be prepared to withdraw south before you are surrounded and destroyed.

'Layforce' can provide a firm base for the withdrawal or as a counter-attack force to assist other troops to withdraw.

Hold your tank detachment in reserve and be prepared to throw them against any German breakthrough. Cross country movement is slow so make use of the roads where possible.

### GERMAN

You have the numeric and troop quality advantage but remember the bloody nose German forces received when the Allied forces counter-attacked at 'Battle of 42nd Street'.

You also have the twin challenges of moving the bulk of your force to the east and destroying as much of the Commonwealth forces retreating to the south as possible.

Off-road movement is slow so where possible to use the roads for swift movement. Bypass and cut off their troops before destroying them. Expect that the Commonwealth forces will put a fight for each defended position before they are forced to withdraw.

You have the added advantage of some light motorised troops but be wary of a limited Allied tank attack.

Use the OP to seek out their positions and pound them with your limited artillery assets.





# German Forces at Stilos

## MOVE 1 - ENTERS AT G1

### Gebirgsjäger Aufklärungs Bataillon 95 Group Major Graf Castell zu Castell

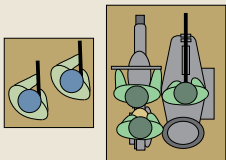
#### Stabs Kompanie

CO + 6 figures, captured truck



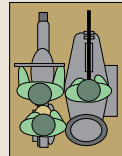
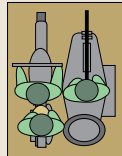
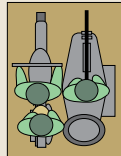
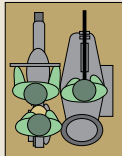
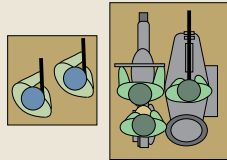
#### 1. Kompanie

6 figures,  
3 x m/cycle combos



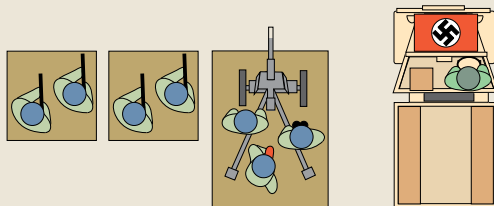
#### 2. Kompanie

6 figures,  
3 x m/cycle combos



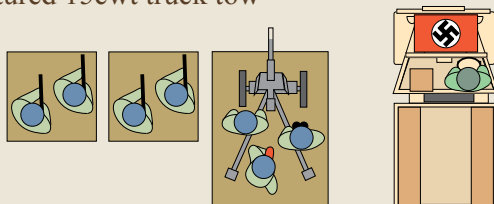
#### 1. Kompanie / Panzerjäger Bataillon 95

7 figures, 37mm anti-tank gun,  
captured 15cwt truck tow



#### 2. Kompanie / Panzerjäger Bataillon 95

7 figures, 37mm anti-tank gun,  
captured 15cwt truck tow



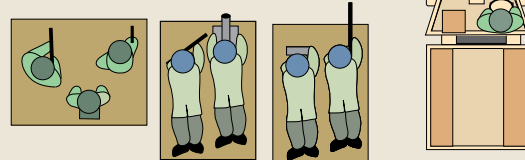
Morale: CO + 32 figures (Elite)

## MOVE 3 - ENTERS AT G1

### Gebirgsjäger Artillerie Abteilung 95 Group Oberleutnant August Whittman

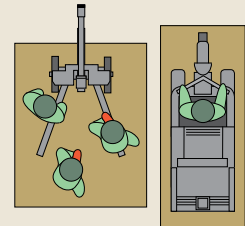
#### Stabs Kompanie

CO + 6 figures, 50mm  
mortar, AT rifle,  
captured 15cwt truck



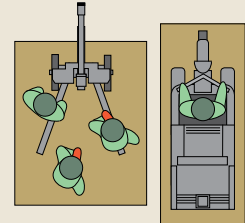
#### 4th Batterie / Mountain Artillerie Regiment 95

3 figures, 75mm mountain  
gun, Kettenkrad



#### 1 (Schwere) Gun Zug / Mountain Artillerie Regiment 100

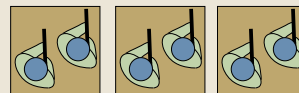
3 figures, 75mm mountain  
gun, Kettenkrad tow



### Gebirgsjäger-Pioneer Bataillon 95 Major Schaette (with Whittman above)

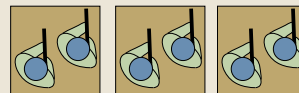
#### 1. Kompanie

6 figures, flamethrower



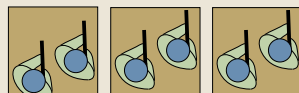
#### 2. Kompanie

6 figures



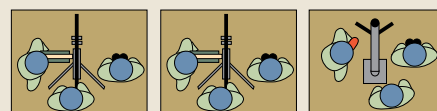
#### 3. Kompanie

6 figures



#### 4. Kompanie

9 figures, 2 x MMG, 81mm mortar

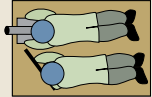
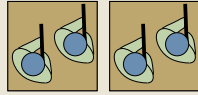
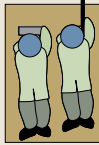
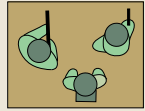


Morale: CO + 39 figures (Elite)

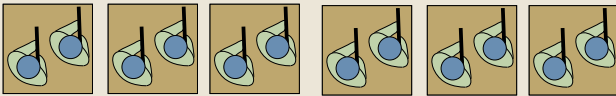
### MOVE 3 - ENTERS AT G2

I Bataillon / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85  
Major Dr Albin Treck

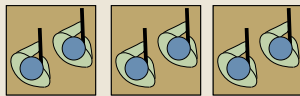
**Stabs Kompanie**  
CO + 6 figures,  
50mm mortar, AT rifle



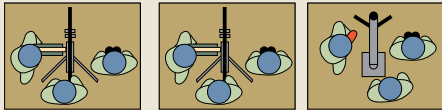
**2. Kompanie**  
6 figures



**3. Kompanie**  
6 figures



**4. Kompanie**  
9 figures, 2 x MMGs, 81mm mortar

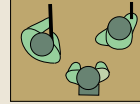


Morale: CO + 33 figures (Elite)

### MOVE 3 - ENTERS AT G2

Stabs / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85  
Oberst August Krakau

**Regimental Stabs**  
7 figures + 2 figure observer team



Morale: Higher level CO + 8 figures

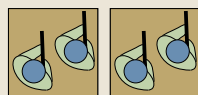
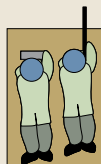
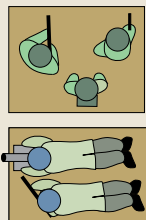
**Below:** Matilda Tank drives through Babli Hani as part of a local counter-attack to slow the advancing German Mountain troops



## MOVE 5 - ENTERS AT G3

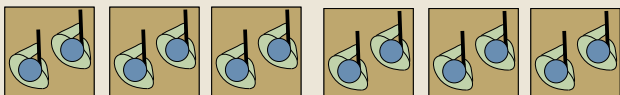
### II Bataillon / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85 Major Albin Esch

**Stabs Kompanie**  
CO + 6 figures,  
50mm mortar, AT rifle

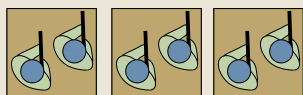


**5. Kompanie**  
6 figures

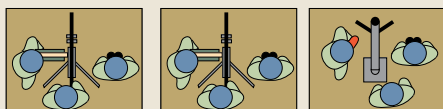
**6. Kompanie**  
6 figures



**7. Kompanie**  
6 figures



**8. Kompanie**  
9 figures, 2 x MMGs, 81mm mortar



Morale: CO + 33 figures (Elite)

"Kampfgruppe Wittman, also known as the 'Wittman Advanced Guard' was spearheading the main German advance east/ this force was sent along the coast road to Heraklion to relieve the pockets of Fallschirmjäger that had held out all this time, a number having been reinforced by the drips on the 21st and 24th may 1941.

Once it reached Heraklion itself it would combine with the Fallschirmjäger and capture the airfield.

Kapfgruppe Wittman managed to advance some three miles beyond Souda but was stopped near Megala Khorafia by a party from 'A' Battalion of 'Layforce' and some Maoris from the 28th Battalion.

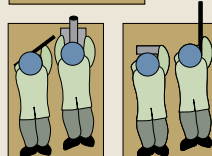
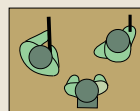
The Allied troops were soon forced to retreat to Babali Hani, where the remainder of 'A' Battalion was trying to form another stop line. The other battalion ('D' Battalion), which had suffered heavy casualties after two confused engagements, and was in a state of disarray"

Crete 1941 - Peter D Antill

## MOVE 7 - ENTERS AT G4

### III Bataillon / Gebirgsjäger Regiment 85 Major Hans Fett

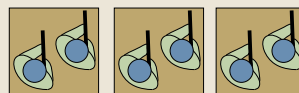
**Stabs Kompanie**  
CO + 6 figures,  
50mm mortar, AT rifle



**9. Kompanie**  
6 figures



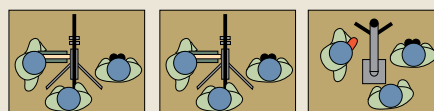
**10. Kompanie**  
6 figures



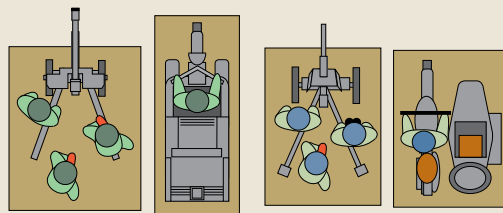
**11. Kompanie**  
6 figures



**12. Kompanie**  
9 figures, 2 x MMGs, 81mm mortar



**elements of 13. and 14. Kompanien**  
6 figures, 75mm infantry gun, Kettenkrad tow,  
37mm AT gun, motorcycle combo tow



Morale: CO + 39 figures (Elite)

### According to the New Zealand Official History:

"... the pursuit was now on and Ringel determined at once to exploit the day's successes and hasten to the relief of Rethymno and Iraklio. He does not yet seem to have realised that these two objects were not identical. For his orders for 28 May were: 'Ringel Gp will pursue the enemy eastwards through Rethymno to Iraklio without a pause. First objective Rethymno and the relief of the paratroops fighting there.'"



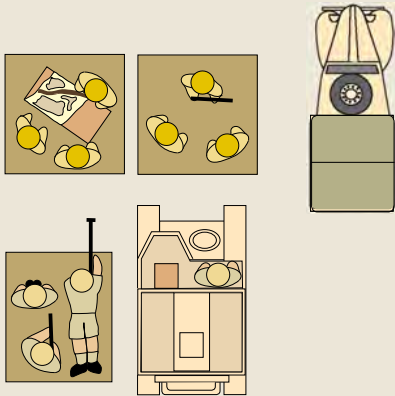


## Allied Forces at Stilos

### Deployed at Stilos - B

Rear Guard HQ  
Brigadier James Hargest

HQ  
9 figures, AT rifle, Car, Bren Carrier \*



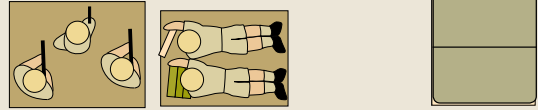
\* If the crew is in the Bren Carrier the vehicle can use a vehicle machine gun (VMG)

Morale: Higher level CO + 8 figures

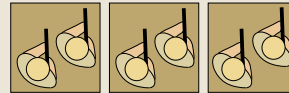
### Deployed at Megala Khorafia - A

Detachment 28th (Maori) Battalion  
Captain Rangī Royal

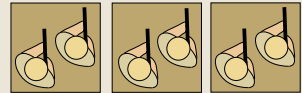
HQ  
CO + 4 figures, 2" mor, 15wt truck



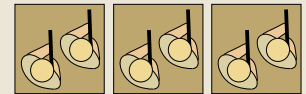
A Company  
6 figures



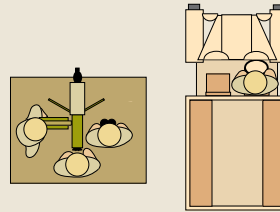
B Company  
6 figures



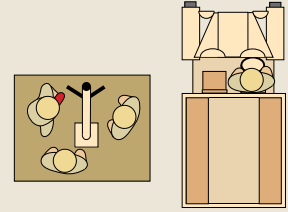
E Company, 'Layforce'  
6 figures



Attached MG Pl  
3 figures, MMG



Attached Mortar Pl  
3 figures, 3" mortar



Morale: CO + 28 figures (Elite)



Above: 19th (New Zealand) Infantry Brigade holds the bridge at Stilos





**Above:** 5th (New Zealand) Infantry Brigade deploys south of Stilos.

**Deployed at Stilos - B**

remnants 19th (Australian) Infantry Brigade  
Brigadier George Vasey

---

**HQ**  
CO + 5 figures, MMG, 15cwt truck

**A Company**  
8 figures

**B Company**  
8 figures

**C Company**  
8 figures

Morale: CO + 29 figures (Regular)

**Deployed at Stilos - B**

remnants 5th (New Zealand) Infantry Brigade  
Lt Colonel Leslie Andrew

---

**HQ**  
CO + 5 figures, MMG, 15cwt truck

**A Company**  
8 figures

**B Company**  
8 figures

**C Company**  
8 figures

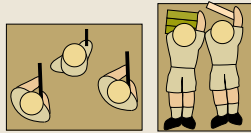
Morale: CO + 29 figures (Regular)

## Deployed at Babli Hani - C

**D Battalion, 'Layforce' (less E company)**  
Lt Colonel George Young

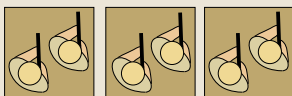
### HQ

CO + 4 figures, 2" mortar  
15cwt truck



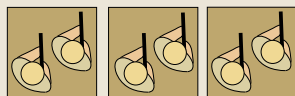
### A Company

6 figures



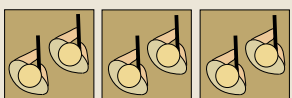
### B Company

6 figures



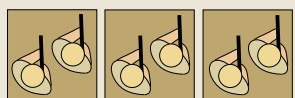
### C Company

6 figures



### D Company

6 figures



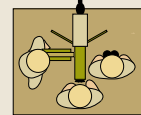
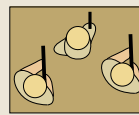
Morale: CO + 28 figures (Elite)

## Deployed at Babli Hani - C

**2/7th (Australian) Infantry Battalion**  
Lt Colonel Theodore Walker

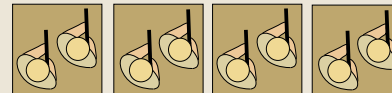
### HQ

CO + 5 figures, MMG,  
15cwt truck



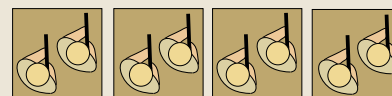
### A Company

8 figures



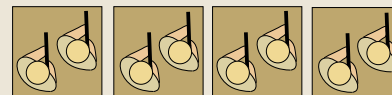
### B Company

8 figures



### C Company

8 figures

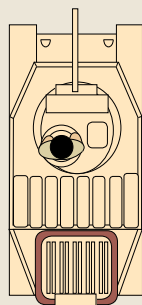


Morale: CO + 29 figures (Regular)

## Deployed at Babali Hani - C

### Tank detachment

**7th Royal Tank Regiment**  
Matilda (2 pdr) \*



Morale: AFV (Regular)

### 'Timbakion' Matildas \*

Three Matilda tanks had been moved by lighter from Timbakion and Heraklion to Souda Bay. By the end of the battle the surviving tanks had traveled the length and breadth of the island of Crete. These tanks were more mechanically reliable than those at Maleme or Heraklion so are treated as normal.

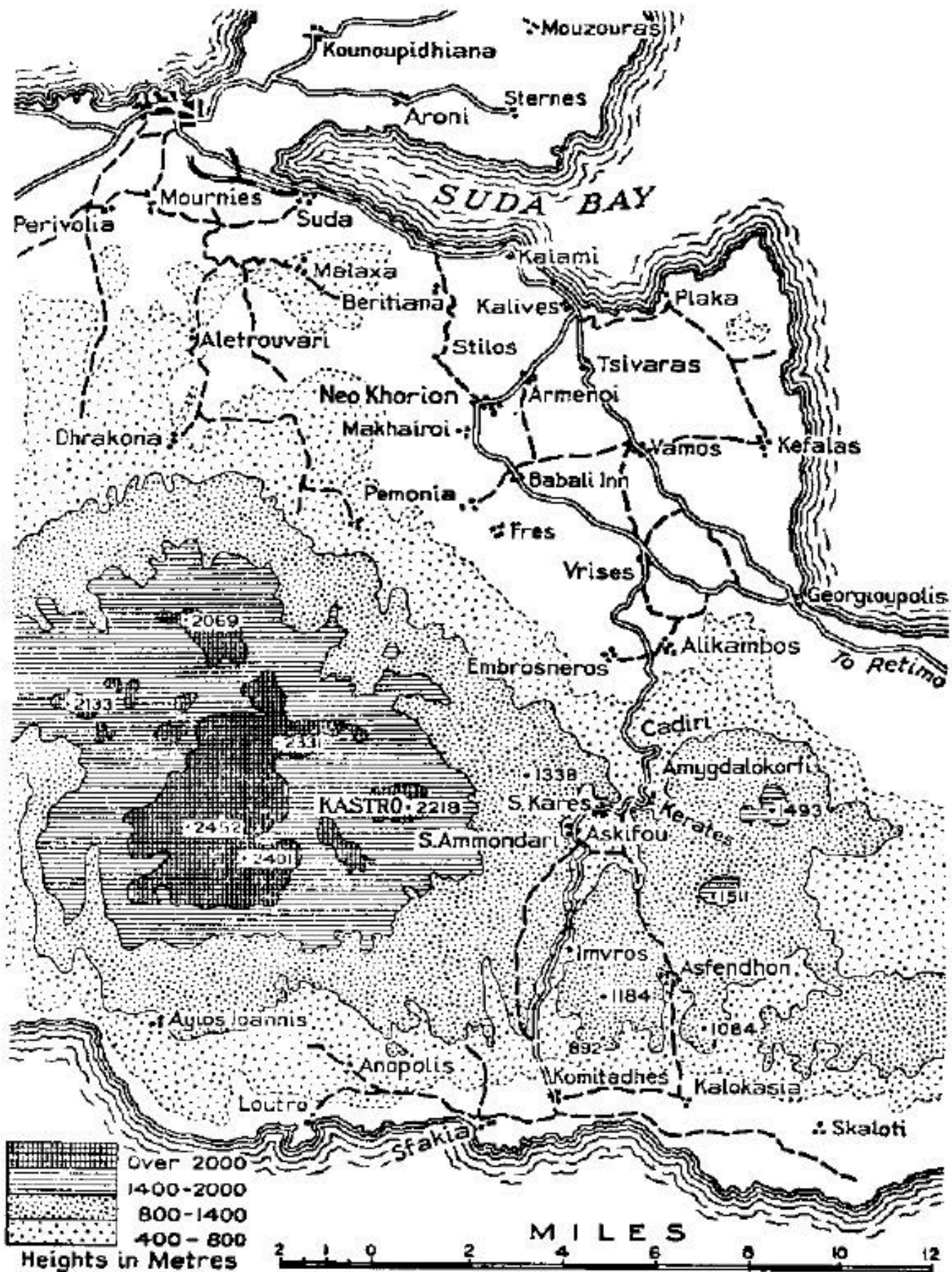
After a gruelling night march, the remnants of five New Zealand battalions and an Australian battalion arrived at Stilos. 23 NZ Battalion's historian commented:

*"All were feeling the lack of sleep and of regular meals, to say nothing of the strain imposed by frequent attacks from the air. The road grew steeper and rougher the farther south it went. At daybreak the battalion reached Stylos. Major Thomason established his headquarters in a cave and ordered A and D Companies to occupy a ridge to the west of the road, covering the northern approaches to Stylos."*

23 NZ Battalion were to cover the area of the bridge north of Stilos.

*"As they reached a stone wall at the top of the ridge, they saw Germans coming out of a creek bed about 400 yards away. Machine-gun fire whizzed over the ridge. In great haste the men of the two companies, many of whom had already dropped off to sleep, were summoned to the ridge. Major Thomason ordered those near him to join A and D Companies, shouting, "Sergeant Hulme! Get men on top of that hill! Whoever gets men there first wins!"*





Map of Suda Bay to Sfakia - Crete 1941  
 (Greece, Crete and Syria - Gavin Long)



# VEHICLE AND GUN AND STATISTICS

## GERMAN

Vehicle	Speed	Target Class	Weapon
Motorcycle* combination	30 / 15	6	special rule below
M/C* combination towing	24 / 12	6	-
Guns			
100mm gun	HE 5 x D6		
75mm mountain gun	Gun class 5 / HE 4 x D6		
37mm AT gun	Gun class 5 / HE 2 x D6		
50mm mortar	HE 2 x D6		
81mm mortar	HE 4 x D6		
MMG	4 x D6		
Autocannon	4 x D6 (1 x D6)		
AT rifle	Gun class 6		

\* Motorcycle or Kettenrad

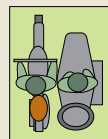
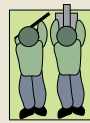
## ALLIED

Guns			
Italian 75mm	HE 4 x D6		
Bofors 40mm AA gun	Gun class 5 / autocannon		
3" mortar	HE 4 x D6		
Boys AT rifle	Gun class 6		
Vehicle	Speed	Target Class	Weapon
Matilda	18 / 9	2	Gun class 4 or VMG
Vickers MkVIB	30 / 15	5	HMG / VMG**
Bren Carrier	30 / 15	5	Gun class 6 or VMG
15 cwt truck	30 / 15	6	-

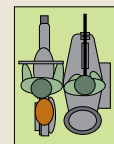
\*\* AT class 6 / Stationary HMG (5 x D6) **OR** moving VMG (1 x D6)

### Motorcycles (including Kettenrad):

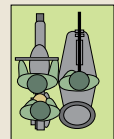
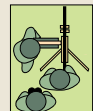
- are soft-skin transports
- treated as individual targets for firing
- first 2 casualties will destroy the motorcycle and the passengers must dismount
- if carrying infantry passengers throw 1 x D6 per motorcycle model moving **or** stationary.
- If carrying a MMG & crew as passengers throw 1 x D6 per motorcycle model moving **or** 3 x D6 per motorcycle model stationary.



Must dismount  
to fire



1 x D6 moving  
**OR** stationary



1 x D6 moving  
3 x D6 stationary