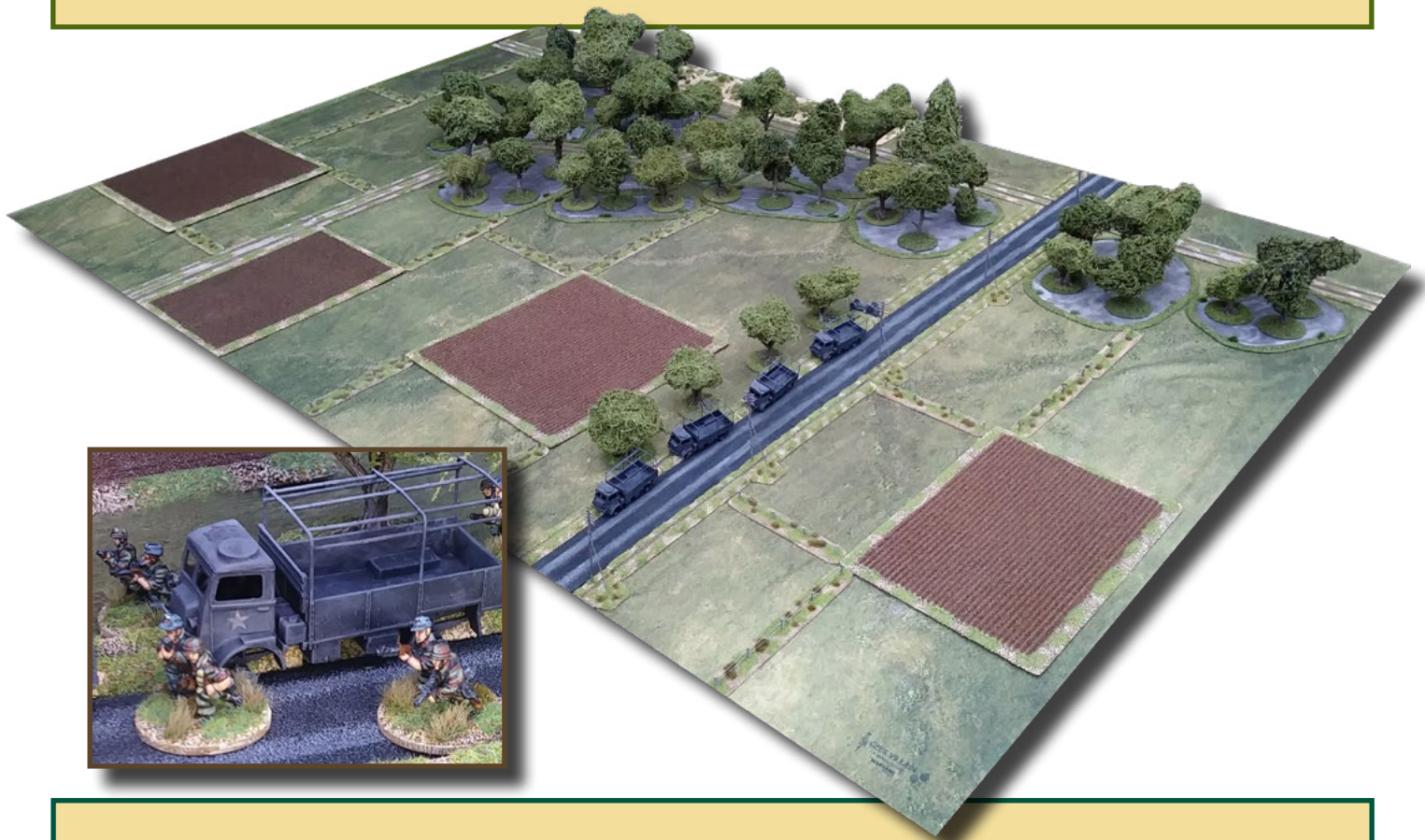


# **RAPID FIRE!**

**Hell's Highway**

**The Germans Cut the Corridor**

**by Don McHugh**



**A Market Garden Scenario**

**25<sup>th</sup> September 1944**

**For use with Rapid Fire! fast play WWII wargaming rules**

# HELL'S HIGHWAY - THE GERMANS CUT THE CORRIDOR

## 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 1944

### BACKGROUND NOTES

After the failed attack on Eerde during 24th September, later in the afternoon the Germans found an unguarded gap between Saint Oedenrode and Eerde, just north of Koevering. As the German force under Major Hans Jungwirth moved towards the road, they were joined by the Jagdpanthers of 1st Company, 559 Panzerjäger Battalion and together they destroyed several Allied trucks on the road and halted all movement north.

The first the Allies knew of this action was when the 907th Glider Field Artillery, positioned south of Veghel realised the traffic from the south had stopped. With the aid of some glider pilots who were attempting to move to Eindhoven, they formed a defensive line facing south.

A hastily organised Allied attack from the north to clear the road was easily halted, with the loss of three tanks from C Squadron 44th RTR.

During the night of 24th Major Huber took over command of the Kampfgruppe and expanded the positions in the Logtenbury Forest either side of the road. Reinforcements arrived undercover of darkness and included three 88mm AA guns and two Panzerjäger 35R. The infantry element included Fallschirmjäger from Jungwirth's own battalion and the 9th and 10th company of 6th Fallschirmjäger Regiment.

With no immediate Allied reserves at hand, the 502nd PIR was ordered to march through the night from their positions north of Veghel to join up with B squadron 44th RTR and attack as early as possible on 25th to clear the road.

Lieutenant General Brian Horrocks had gone south to consult with General Dempsey over the increasingly bleak prospects of Operation Market Garden, only to find himself cut off from his Corps. He was taken cross-country by the carrier platoon of the Durham Light Infantry, arriving back at his HQ by late morning

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for their help, Colin Rumford, Alan McCoubrey, Rob Beswick, Will Morriss and Ian Willer. Thanks also to Colin and Richard Marsh for the rules.

All the American para figures are from the collection of Rob Beswick, formally owned by Steve Hacker, my wargaming best friend until he left us in 2020. All the others and the terrain is from the author's collection.

### WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

The 1st 506th with 2nd troop 44th RTR attacked down the main highway. The 3rd 506th with 4th troop of 44th RTR attacked on the eastern side of the main road, the tanks utilising narrow tracks to get forward. The Germans had taken up positions in the woods that flanked the road just to the north of Koevering. The approaches to the wood from the north were completely open with very little cover. The Allied attack soon got into trouble and was pinned down under heavy small arms fire.

With the attack stalled the 2nd 506th with 5th troop of 44th RTR were sent further south to go around the German right flank and attack from the east. This attack was a little more successful and managed to capture some of the wood on the Germans eastern flank. The fighting was very confused, as the Germans had pressed the two Sherman tanks they had captured the previous day, into action. They had painted black swastikas on the turret sides to identify their new owners. The American paras, assuming they were friendly, allowed them to get very close before realising their true ownership. With Allied forces attacking from the north and south it was deemed unsafe to use their many artillery batteries.

Having held the road throughout the 25th the German force was in danger of being completely cut-off. Under the cover of heavy rain and artillery fire they slipped away to Wijbosch towards the north west, towing the 88mm guns away with the help of the Jagdpanthers. Before they left, they mined and booby-trapped the road. It took 24 hours for the road to be cleared and the traffic to commence again, by this time the British 1st Airborne had been evacuated and the operation had come to an end.

Below: One of the Jagdpanthers that wreaked havoc on the Allied trucks parked on the highway.



## THE GAME

- This represents the attempts to re-open Hell's Highway on 25th September.
- The game is played over 14 moves and the Allied forces move first.
- The Germans cannot perform reserve fire on an Allied unit during its initial move on table.

## ORDERS

Allied: Clear the Germans from the woods to the south and re-open Hell's Highway.

German: Maintain your blocking position and prevent the use of Hell's Highway by the Allies.

## VICTORY CONDITIONS

Allied to win: Clear all the German forces from the woods and Hell's Highway by the end of move 12.

German to win: Still have a minimum of 8 figures in the woods to the east of the main highway.



Above: Major Huber organizing his forces blocking positions in the woods.

Below: Fallschirmjäger inspecting the damaged caused by the Jagdpanthers the evening before.



## SPECIAL RULES

### Battlegroup Morale for Mixed Forces

- +1 if the whole battlegroup is elite.
- +1 if more than 50% of the surviving figures are in hard cover. AFV crew count as if in hardcover.
- 1 if the battlegroup CO has been lost
- 1 for each consecutive morale test.
- 1 if the battlegroup is under artillery fire.
- 1 if the battlegroup is classed as poor.

### Speculative Fire

Speculative firing against buildings is available to HE firing only, but if the occupants have not been observed. Any damage caused (ie casualties) is against the building only.

### Observation

Infantry and support weapons cannot be observed over more than one hedge.

### High Explosive Firing (or HE)

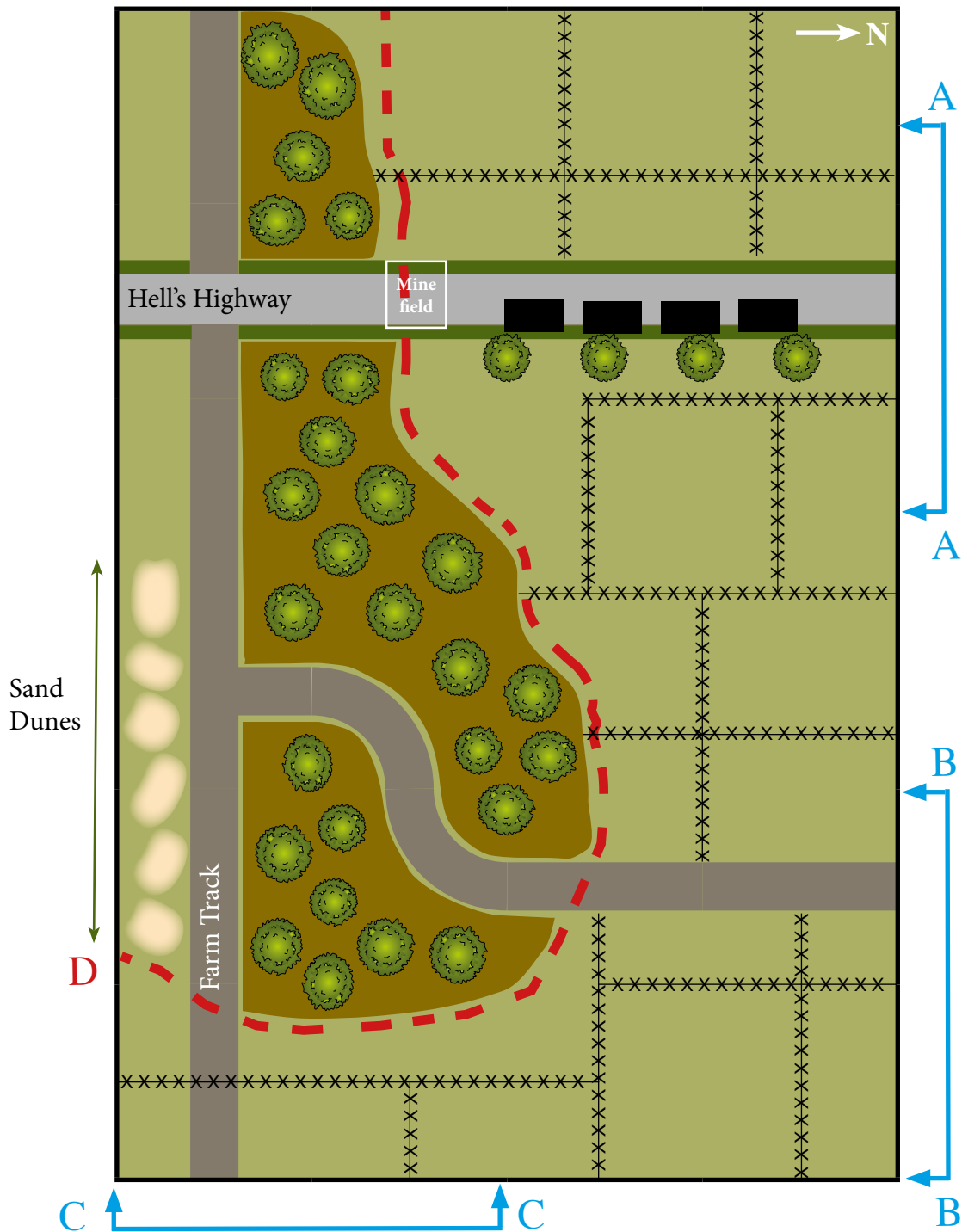
- Indirect HE cannot be fired at targets that have friendly units within 6".
- The fire of mortars and infantry guns that are part of or attached to a unit may only be 'called in' by the CO element or one of the unit's infantry companies. The CO does not need to dice for the message to get through, but any infantry company needs to throw higher than a two on a D6 to get the message through.
- On larger tables it is suggested that artillery be limited to 120" maximum range.

### Anti-Tank Firing

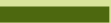
Panzerschrecks and Bazookas cannot be fired from within an intact building.

# BATTLE MAP

**D**  = Destroyed British Lorry **xxxxxx** = Wire Fence



## TERRAIN

- All vehicle movement is restricted to the road and farm tracks
- The main road is lined with ditches that provide soft cover to infantry figures and heavy weapons teams. 
- The grey road is Hell's Highway and benefits from all the standard road rules.
- Moving past the destroyed Allied trucks is counted as overtaking, so movement of vehicles is reduced to cross-country speed
- Destroyed trucks do not block line of sight or line of fire. They offer soft cover to troops in contact with them.
- The dark grey roads represent farm tracks and all movement on it is at cross-country rates less the score of 1 x D6
- No overtaking is allowed on the farm tracks, except to pass a destroyed AFV.
- The sand dunes count as a continuous obstacle to infantry, minus 1 x D6 from movement. They are impassable to vehicles.
- Targets in the sand dunes deduct 1 x D6 from the number of rolled dice for HE effect.
- Troops moving along the ditch count it as a continuous obstacle and reduce their movement by 1 D6.
- The wire fences represent the many ditches crisscrossing the battlefield. They do not slow movement, but they do give infantry lining them the benefit of soft cover.

# ALLIED FORCES

## ALLIED DEPLOYMENT

The following arrive on move one in the assigned positions:

- 1st Battalion 506th PIR battlegroup at A-A
- 3rd Battalion 506th PIR battlegroup at B-B
- 506th PIR Regimental HQ at A-A or B-B

Allied reinforcement – move 6

- 2nd Battalion 506th PIR battlegroup at C-C

Battalion mortars can fire from off-table, but their position must be marked on the table edge and all ranges are measured from this mark.

### 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment HQ (Colonel Robert F. Sink)

CO + 2 figures



Morale: Higher level HQ

### 1st Battalion / 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (Major James L. Prade)

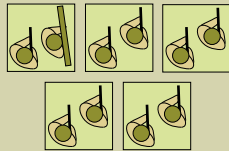
#### Able Company (HQ)

CO + 5 figures, 81mm mortar,  
2 figure artillery OP team



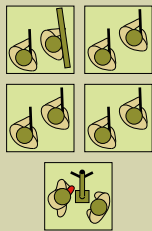
#### Baker Company

10 figures, Bazooka



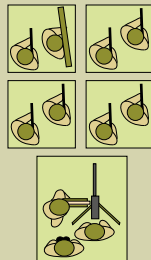
#### Charlie Company

10 figures, Bazooka,  
60mm mortar,



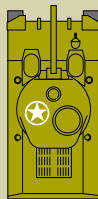
#### Dog Company

11 figures, Bazooka,  
30 cal MMG



#### Troop / 44 RTR

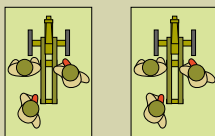
Sherman 75mm



Morale: CO + 41 figures (Elite) including 1 AFV (Regular)

### Battery / 907th Glider Field Artillery Battalion

2 x 75mm pack howitzer (off table at Veghel)



### 2nd Battalion / 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (Lt Colonel Robert L. Strayer)

#### Easy Company (HQ)

CO + 5 figures, 81mm mortar,  
2 figure artillery OP team



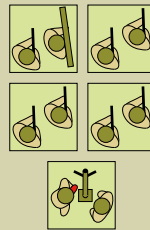
#### Fox Company

10 figures, Bazooka



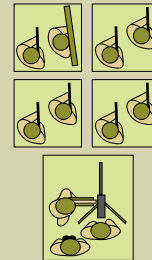
#### George Company

10 figures, Bazooka,  
60mm mortar,



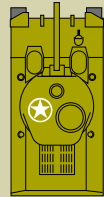
#### How Company

11 figures, Bazooka,  
30 cal MMG



#### Troop / 44 RTR

Sherman 75mm

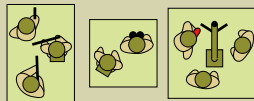


Morale: CO + 41 figures (Elite) including 1 AFV (Regular)

### 3rd Battalion / 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment (Lt Colonel Oliver M. Horton)

#### Item Company (HQ)

CO + 5 figures, 81mm mortar,  
2 figure artillery OP team



#### King Company

8 figures, Bazooka



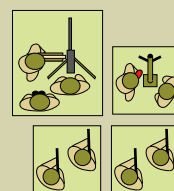
#### Love Company

8 figures, Bazooka



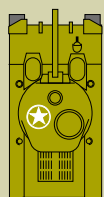
#### Mike Company

9 figs, 30 cal MMG,  
60mm mortar



#### Troop / 44 RTR

Sherman 75mm



Morale: CO + 35 figures (Elite) including 1 AFV (Regular)

# GERMAN FORCES

## GERMAN DEPLOYMENT

Both units south of the line D-D

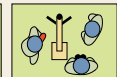
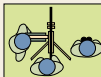
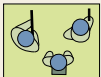
All can be 'dug in' and deployed on markers.

AFV's are not covered by the normal marker rules, so will be revealed if a clear line of sight can be traced to them.

## Elements of 6th Fallschirmjäger Regiment

### HQ

CO + 8 figures



### Company

6 figures, Panzerfaust



### Company

6 figures, Panzerfaust



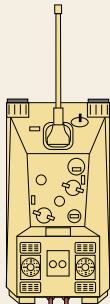
### Company

6 figures, Panzerfaust



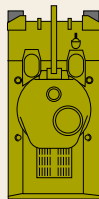
### AT Platoon

Jagdpanther (88mm)



### Tank Platoon

Captured Sherman (75mm)



CO + 32 figures (Elite) including 2 AFVs (Regular)

## Kampfgruppe Huber

Major Hans Huber

3 figures



Morale: Higher level CO + 2 figures

## SPECIAL RULE CAPTURED SHERMAN

The captured Sherman has the same stats as a normal Sherman.

It can only be shot at by Allied troops if it has been observed as German by one of the following circumstances:

1. They are within 6" of any part of the model.
2. They have passed a successful chance test within 12" of any part of the model.
3. They have seen it fire at Allied troops and are within 12" of any part of the model.

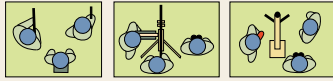
Below: The captured sherman tank that caused confusion in the Allied forces. Supported by the Panzerjager 35R.



## Elements of 6th Fallschirmjäger Regiment

### HQ

CO + 8 figures



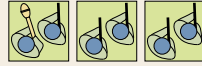
### Company

6 figures, Panzerfaust



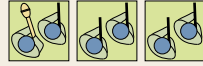
### Company

6 figures, Panzerfaust



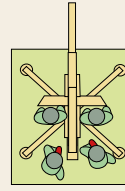
### Company

6 figures, Panzerfaust



### AA Platoon

4 figures, 88mm AA gun\*



### AT Platoon

35R (47mm)



\* Can fire indirect, controlled by the CO element

CO + 33 figures (Elite) including 1 AFV (Regular)



Above: Above Fallschirmjäger 81mm mortar and 88mm AA gun giving the Kampfgruppe valuable HE support.

Below: 3rd Battalion 506th PIR advancing on the track to the east of the highway.



## Allied Vehicle and Gun Data

Vehicles				
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Vehicle Class	Main Weapon	Second Weapon
Sherman tank (75mm)	24 / 12	3	AT class 3 / HE 4 x D6 (or VMG)	VMG

Guns		
Weapon	AT Value	HE Value
Bazooka	2	-
60mm (light) mortar	-	HE 2 x D6
81mm (medium) mortar	-	HE 4 x D6
75mm pack howitzer	-	HE 4 x D6

3 shots per game

## German Vehicle and Gun Data

Vehicles				
Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Vehicle Class	Main Weapon	Second Weapon
Jagdpanther (88mm)	30 / 15	2	AT class 1 / HE 5 x D6 (or VMG)	-
Panzerjäger 35R (47mm)	18 / 9	5	AT class 4 / HE 3 x D6	-

Guns		
Weapon	AT Value	HE Value
Panzerfaust	2	4 x D6
81mm (medium) mortar	-	4 x D6
88mm Flak 41 anti-aircraft gun	2	5 x D6

Single shot weapon

Below: 1st Battalion 506th PIR advance down the highway support by a sherman of 44th RTR.

