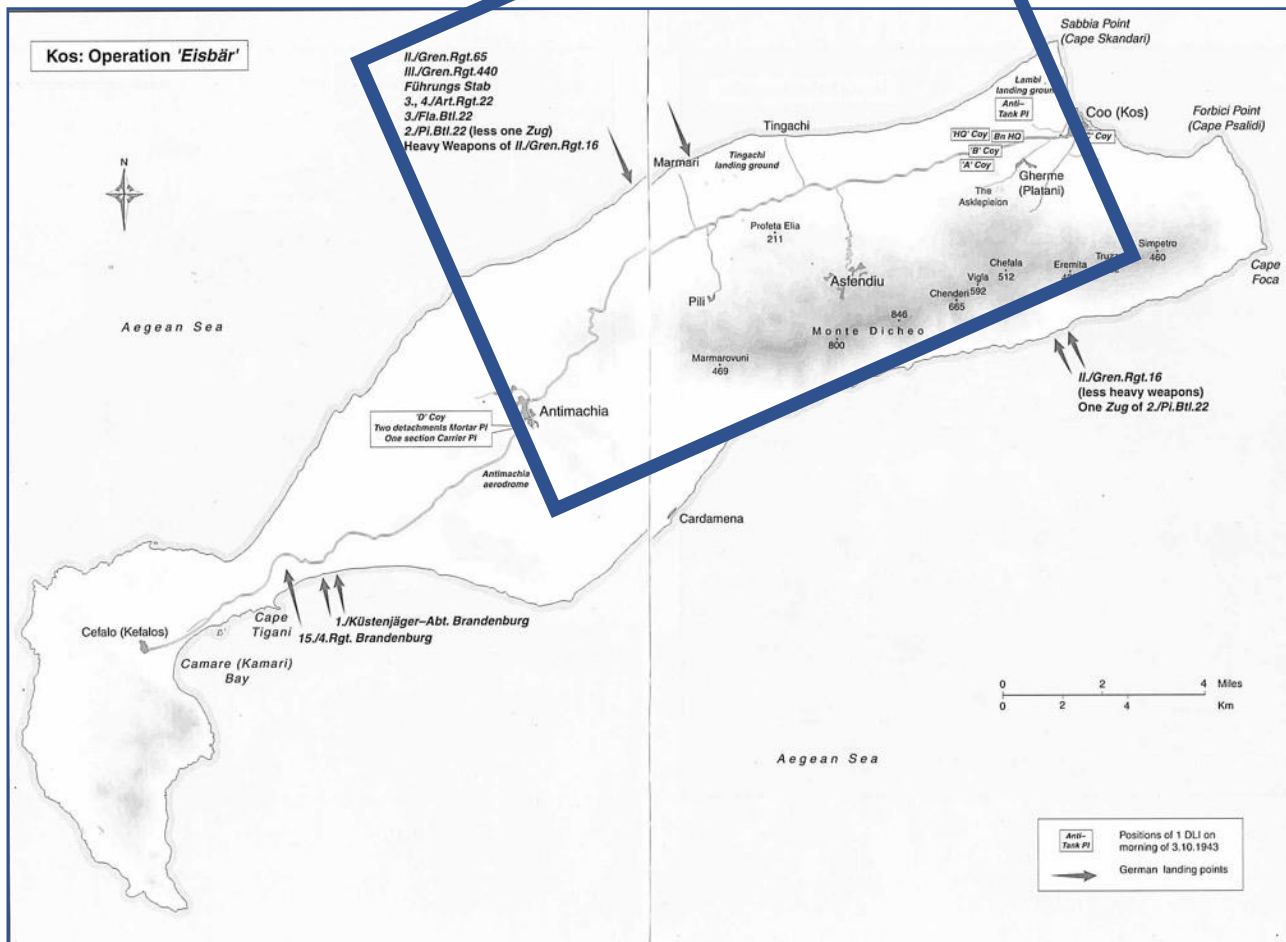


Operation 'Eisbar' (Polar Bear) Defence of Kos Town

Kos, Aegean - 3rd October 1943

Revised & Updated for Rapid Fire Reloaded



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

What Really Happened

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 of 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 of 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.



Above: 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).



Above: 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 of October.

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

Where to Find Out More

'Operation Nostalgia' Part I & II - Richard Marsh

Wargames Illustrated #74 (November 1993) & #75 (December 1993)

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

'Swastika over the Aegean' - Anthony Rogers

'War in the Aegean' - Peter Smith & Edwin Walker

'Events on Cos' - Pietro Giovanni Liuzzo

'Fighters over the Aegean' - Brian Cull

'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' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC_iJgIRpwA



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

The Game

Operation 'Eisbar' (Defence of Kos Town) is based on the sea assault on the Aegean Island of Kos on the morning of the 3rd of 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.

This is a revised and updated version of a similar but different scenario written for RF2. In that version (available on the RF website), the game was played at 'one third' scale i.e. an element of 8 figures represented a platoon instead of a company. It also covered the action in the centre of the island around Antimachia airfield as well. For this version I have reverted to 'normal' RF troop ratios and confined the fighting to the troops defending the approach to Kos town. In this respect both scenarios are similar but different. The game is played on a 6' x 6' table over 12 turns.

Victory Conditions (both sides)

To Win - control two out of three objectives at the end of 12 moves:

- Platani village
- Tingachi Landing Ground
- Ammunition dump west of Platani

To Draw - more than one objective is contested or unoccupied at the end of the game.

An objective 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 Deployment - Allied forces start the game as indicated in the order of battle. Infantry, Bofors AA gun, AT Platoon and Italian artillery crews start dug in or in buildings. All other elements are in the open.

Bofors, Hispano and AAMG guns may engage ground targets.

Allied reinforcements arrive along the Eastern edge on turn 4 Allies move first.

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.



Area of Tingachi Landing Ground
Kos 2014

German Special Rules

Kampfgruppe Von Saldern starts afloat and arrives as indicated.

II Bataillon, Grenadier Regiment 16 (less heavy weapons) arrives anywhere along the southern edge of the table at **G2** on turn 7.

German Infantry Kompanien (Reloaded p11) - all German infantry companies add 1 X D6 to fire effect D6 throws.

Marinefährrprämie 'F-lighter' (Reloaded Extra p12-13) - the first wave starts one move out from the beach at Marmari and lands on German turn 2. Subsequent waves arrive the turn indicated on the order of battle i.e. F-lighter appears on German turn 3 and lands troops on German turn 4.

Beaches are not mined. German 'F-lighters' can only be targeted by British aircraft and Italian artillery. Each F-lighter is armed with a single AA HMG. AA from an F-lighter may not fire at ground targets but counts as an AA gun even when moving. Remove table at the start of the following German turn after troops and vehicles have disembarked.



Naval Gunfire Support - The Naval Gunfire Support (NGS) OP team attached to the HQ of II Battalion, 65th Grenadier Regiment may attempt to establish contact with the off-board naval gunfire support. 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 (once deployed) 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 NGS 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 Support OR Aircraft) each move.

Above: 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 movement') - infantry that move up to 3" count as being in 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.

Aircraft and Artillery 'Friendly Fire' (OPTIONAL)

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 'nearest' 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.

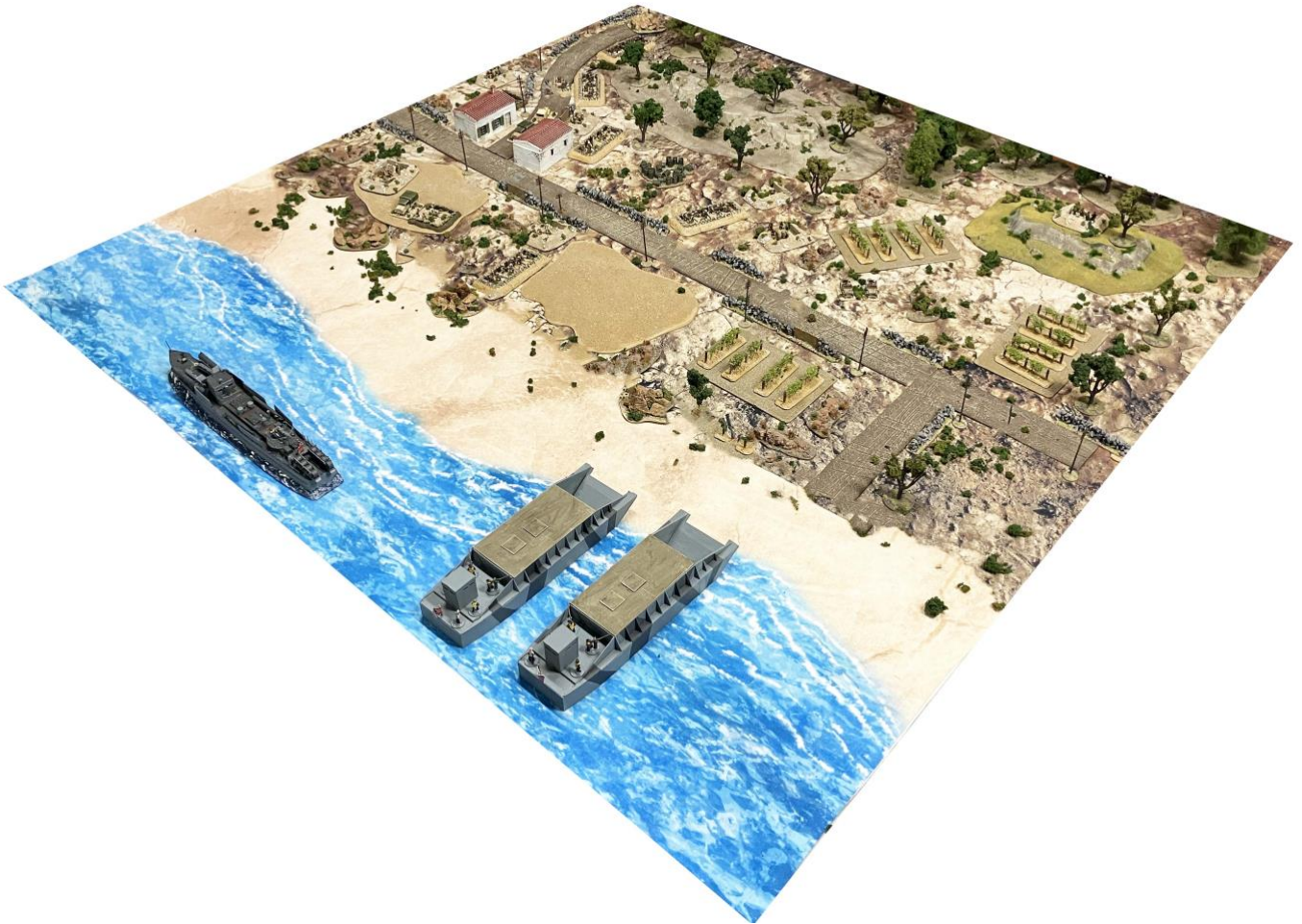
German - you have superiority of numbers, but it will take most of the day to get these forces ashore. Advance quickly from the beachhead at Marmari and push the British and Italian forces towards Kos Town. Be ready for the inevitable Allied counterattacks.



Above: German landing at Marmari beach

Operation 'Eisbar'

Defence of Kos Town

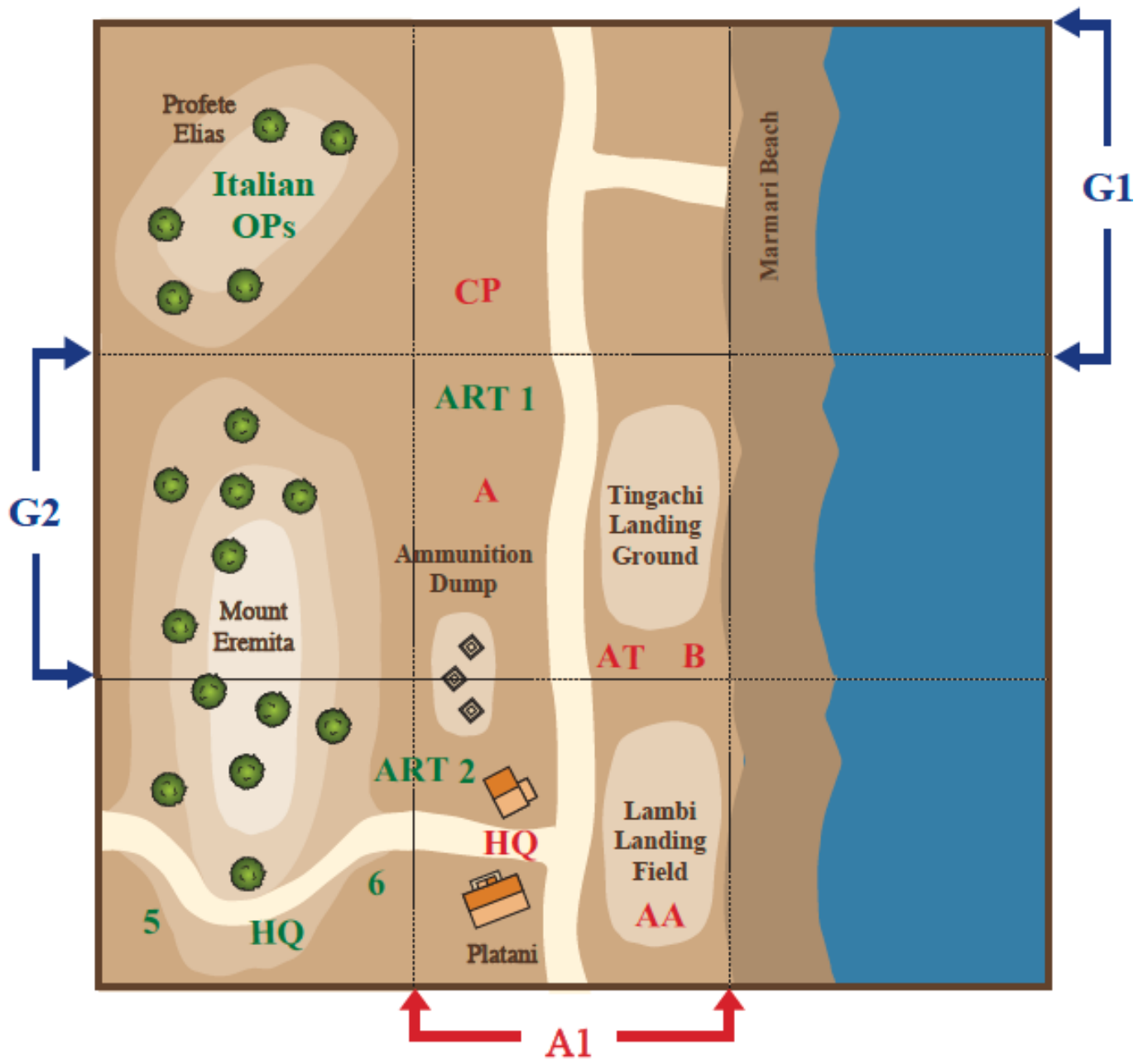


Right: British A and B companies defend Tingachi Landing Ground



DEFENCE OF KOS TOWN

BATTLE MAP



Allied Forces

Elements Kos Garrison

(all regular)

1st Battalion, Durham Light Infantry - Lieutenant Colonel Robert Kirby
Morale: CO + 47 figures

HQ [deployed at **HQ**]
CO + 10 figures, 2" mortar, 3" mortar, AAMG, car, truck

A Company, DLI (Captain Jim Grey) [deployed at **A**]
9 figures, Vickers MMG

B Company, DLI (Captain Stafford) [deployed at **B**]
9 figures, 20mm Hispano AA gun ⁽¹⁾

Carrier Platoon, DLI (Captain George Sivewright) [deployed at **CP**]
6 figures, 2 x jeeps (VMG)

Anti-Tank Platoon, DLI [deployed at **AT**]
3 figures, 2 pdr ATG, tow

4th Light Battery (-), 1st LAA Regt RAA ⁽²⁾ [deployed at **AA**]
4 figures, 40mm Bofors AA

[Reinforcements]

C Company, DLI (Captain J.E. Stafford) [turn 4 at **A1**]
6 figures

II Battaglione, 10 Regimento di Infanteria - Lieutenant Colonel Bonserio Francesco
Morale: CO + 33 figures

HQ [Deployed at **HQ**]
CO + 5 figures, MMG

5th Company - Capitano Carlo Orlandi [Deployed at **5**]
8 figures

6th Company - Capitano Piazza [Deployed at **6**]
8 figures

I Battalion Gruppo Artigliera

62 nd Battery	4 figures, 75mm 75/27 field gun	[Deployed at ART 1]
64 th Battery	4 figures, 75mm 75/27 field gun	[Deployed at ART 2]
2 x OP teams ⁽³⁾	4 figures on foot	[Deployed at OPs]

Air Support - roll a D6 at the beginning of each Allied turn
1 = no aircraft, 2-4 = Bristol Beaufighter ⁽⁴⁾ OR 5-6 = Spitfire ⁽⁵⁾

(1) elements No 2901 / 2909 Squadron RAF Regiment
(3) can coordinate fire from both batteries if required
(5) aircraft from 74 Squadron (SAAF)

(2) no towing vehicle but can be manhandled
(4) aircraft from 46 / 227 / 252 / 89 Squadrons

German Forces

Elements German Luftlande Division 22

(all regular)

'Kampfgruppe Von Saldern'

II Bataillon, Grenadier Regiment 65⁽¹⁾ - Major Sylvester Von Saldern [arrive turn 1 @ G1]
Morale: CO + 40 figures

1st Wave - Marinefährprähme 'F-lighter' # 1

Stabs Kompanie CO + 4 figures, 50mm mortar, 2 figure Naval Gunfire OP team
5. Kompanie 8 figures
6. Kompanie 8 figures

1st Wave - Marinefährprähme 'F-lighter' # 2

7. Kompanie 8 figures
8. Kompanie 9 figures, 2 x MMG, 80mm mortar
3. Batterie, Flak Bataillon 22 3 figures, Sdkfz 10/4⁽²⁾

III Bataillon, Grenadier Regiment 440 - Hauptmann Helmut Dörr [arrive turn 3 @ G1]
Morale: CO + 33 figures

2nd Wave - Marinefährprähme 'F-lighter' # 1

Stabs Kompanie CO + 4 figures, 50mm mortar, 2 figure OP team
5. Kompanie 11 figures, MMG
2. Kompanie, Pioneer Bataillon 22 8 figures

2nd Wave - Marinefährprähme 'F-lighter' # 2

3. & 4. Batterie, Artillerie Bataillon 22
8 figures, 2 x 105mm guns, 2 x truck tows

'Kampfgruppe Aschoff'

II Bataillon, Grenadier Regiment 16 - Hauptmann Phillip Aschoff [arrive turn 7 @ G2]
Morale: CO + 28 figures
as per II Bataillon, Grenadier Regiment 65 (less NGS OP team & flak battery)

Off Board Naval Gunfire Support

2 x 102mm guns (IDF) [off-board - available from turn 2]
Naval Gunfire Support OP team (with Stabs Kompanie II Bataillon, Grenadier Regiment 65)

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 'Kampfgruppe Von Saldern' only

(2) independent AFV unit for morale purposes

Allied Vehicle and Gun Chart

GUNS

Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
2" mortar	2 x D6	Minimum range 6", maximum range 18"
3" mortar	4 x D6	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
2 pdr Anti-tank	Gun Class 4, 2 x D6	HE available
20mm Hispano AA	Gun Class 5 / Autocannon	May fire at ground targets
40mm Bofors AA	Gun Class 4 / Autocannon	May fire at ground targets
Italian 75mm 75/27 field	Gun Class 4 / 4 x D6	

VEHICLES

Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Jeep	30/18	5	Jeep (VMG) - if figures mounted

AIRCRAFT

Description	Type	Ground Attack Armament (p95)
Supermarine Spitfire V	Superior Fighter	Bombing: 1 x Light bomb AT Capability: Gun Class 5 Strafing Capability: 6 x D6
Bristol Beaufighter*	Fighter Bomber	Bombing: 1 x Medium bomb AT Capability: Gun Class 5 Strafing Capability: 6 x D6

* Treat as dive bomber but hit for D6 throw of 5 or 6 (stationary target) or 6 (moving target).



Above: Allied defence of Kos Town

German Vehicle and Gun Chart

GUNS

Description	AT / HE Value	Notes
50mm mortar	2 x D6	Minimum range 3", maximum range 18"
80mm mortar	4 x D6	Minimum range 6", maximum range 48"
105mm FH 18 howitzer	AT 3 / 5 x D6	
Italian 102mm NGS	5 X D6	Off board

VEHICLES

Vehicle (Main Weapon)	Speed	Armour	Hull Weapons / Turret Weapons
Sdkfz 10	30/15	6	None
Sdkfz 10/4 SP 20mm AA	30/15	6	Autocannon
Marinefährprähme (MFP)	-	-	Treat as landing craft (Reloaded Extra p12) Single AA HMG - 1 x D6 AA throw moving

AIRCRAFT

Description	Type	Ground Attack Armament (p95)
Arado AR 196 Seaplane	Light Bomber	Bombing: 1 x Light bomb AT Capability: Bombs only Strafing Capability: 3 X D6
JU 87 Stuka	Dive Bomber (light bomber)	Bombing: 1 x Heavy bomb AT Capability: Bombs only Strafing Capability: -



Above: German landing at Marmari Beach