

Debacle on Elsenborn Ridge

Tac News Scenario

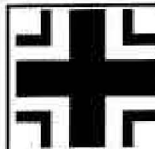
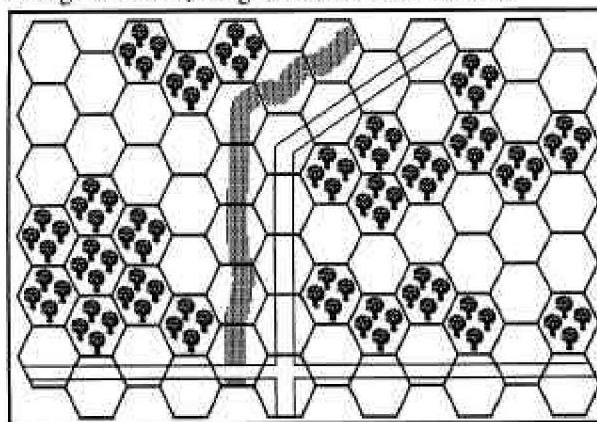


SET-UP AND SUGGESTED VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Germans enter the board any where along the northern edge.
 The Americans set-up entrenched within four hexes of the southern board edge.
 To win the Germans must clear the board of American infantry and vehicular stands.
 The Americans win by keeping at least one functioning stand on the board.
 Specific victory conditions are left to player or referee discretion.

TIME CHART

Battle runs from 10:30AM to 3:30PM

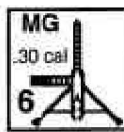
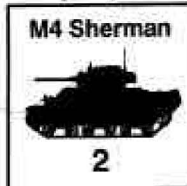


A Battalion of the 277th Volks-Grenadier Division

(reinforced with two five-vehicle platoons of Jagdpanzers IV/70s from SS-Panzerjäger Abteilung 12)



Company I of the 3rd Battalion, 23rd Infantry (reinforced)



SUGGESTED SPECIAL RULES

1. The Germans are inferior troops with regular commanders.
2. The Americans are veteran troops with superior commanders.
3. There was no effective indirect artillery support from either side during the battle. Limit it accordingly.
4. Although the Shermans were attached to Company I, the thought of facing Panthers (the jagdpanzers were misidentified) was too much for them. They withdrew beyond the crossroads, where they later fought and died. Allow some sort of random element to determine American command cohesion between the infantry and armored elements.

Elsenborn Ridge December 17th, 1944: At dawn a reinforced infantry battalion from the 277 Volks-Grenadier Division, supported by two platoons from SS-Panzerjäger Abteilung 12, hit the northern sector of Elsenborn Ridge. This surprise attack pushed the Americans back to a secondary line manned by 3rd Battalion of the 23rd Infantry. Capt. Charles MacDonald, commander Company I, questioned survivors as they filtered past him. They said, "The Germans are right behind us."

MacDonald was anxious. He was relatively green and fretted about his lack of combat experience. When the Germans struck again at 10:30AM, Lt. Thomas Brock, commander 2nd Platoon, requested artillery. MacDonald relayed the coordinates to headquarters and three rounds whistled in over the treetops. Brock confirmed a dead center hit and called, "Fire for effect!" No barrage followed; the guns were on short ration.

AFTERMATH: Without artillery support, mortar fire alone could not keep the Germans at bay. Rifle fire soon crackled up and down the line. The entire battalion front was probed, but Company I's sector was the *schwerpunkt* (focal point of attack). Lt. Long Goffigon, commander 1st Platoon, radioed MacDonald asking if he authorized the two attached Shermans to withdraw. MacDonald had not, but could not get battalion HQs to order them back. Luckily, German artillery concentrated on the road junction and Company I managed to repulse seven successive assaults with just one fatality. But, after five hours of pitched battle, the GIs were spent. Out of ammunition, with jagdpanzers targeting individual foxholes, they began a spontaneous retreat that MacDonald could not stop.