

TAC NEWS

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Wermacht Division 250

The Spanish "Blue" Division

Wermacht Infantry Division 250 was also known as the "Spanish Legion" or the "Blue" division. This latter cognomen deriving from the uniform of the *"Falange"*, the Spanish Fascist Party, with its distinctive blue shirt. The division was authorized to wear the standard *Wermacht* infantry uniform with a red and gold shoulder patch bearing the word *"España"*. Party members and supporters generally took it upon themselves to wear the *"Falange"* blue shirt under their German tunics.

The Division consisted of the following units:

- Division Headquarters and Signals Bttm.
- Infantry Regiment 262 *"Pimentel"*
- Infantry Regiment 263 *"Vierna"*
- Infantry Regiment 269 *"Esparza"*
- Replacement Battalion 250
- Artillery Regiment 250
- Reconnaissance Battalion 250
- Sapper Battalion 250
- Anti-Tank Battalion 250

The component units of division were generally identified verbally by their exact numerical designations, such as: Regiment Two-Six-Two or Two-Six-Three, Sapper Battalion

Two-Five-Zero, etc. The Infantry Regiments also used the names of their commanders as identification.

The "Replacement" battalion was a special unit, which bears close examination. When the division was formed in Spain, it was organized on the standard Spanish model of four infantry regiments. When the division was reorganized in Germany, it became a standard *Wermacht* division composed of three such regiments. After parceling out the extra personnel there were enough left over to form a pool of replacements which would travel along with the division to the front.

This battalion became something completely different in practice. As the division moved deeper and deeper into Soviet Russia, the *"Guripas"* (The Spanish equivalent of "Dogfaces" or "Grunts") displayed their usual skill at battlefield improvisation. They began picking up any Soviet weapons that weren't nailed down (and prying up those that were). They were especially fond of the robust Russian submachineguns they called *"Naranjeros"* (or "Orange Throwers" because of the heavy 9mm bullets they fired). The

unit became known affectionately as *"Tia Bernarda"* or "Aunt Bernadine" probably as a corruption of the initials of its official designation. It became the division "Shock" battalion and was used as a "fire brigade". As such, it was rushed to danger points in emergency situations and was often called upon to perform desperate counter attacks.

As to the division's fighting qualities, its performance in the late fall and winter of 1941 south of Leningrad was nothing less than superb. The *"Guripas"* fought off repeated Soviet infantry and armored attacks suffering crippling casualties but inflicting far greater punishment on the enemy. The Russians admitted a healthy respect for the Spanish tendency toward brutal hand-to-hand combat and use of the bayonet as well as their skill at night fighting. But it was Spanish *"Machismo"* that impressed the Russians most. After the sixth failed Russian attack in one day on a Spanish position, *"Guripas"* were heard by the Russians chanting *"Otro toro! Otro toro!"* or "Send in another bull!" (a sort of "Encore!" from the Bull Ring). The Russians declined the invitation.

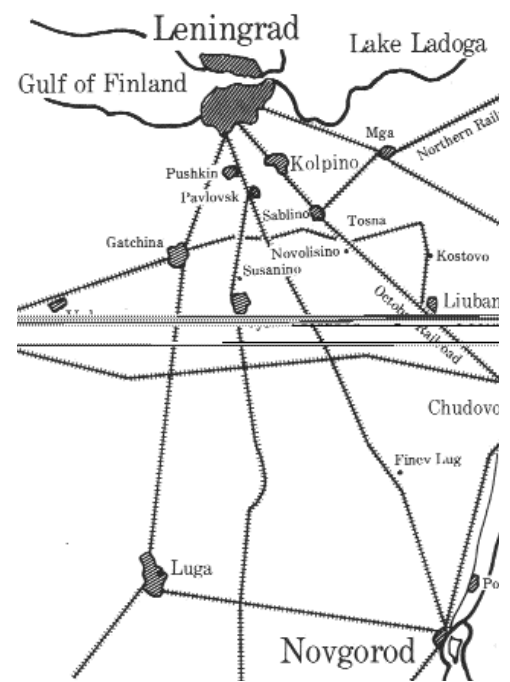
Spanish casualties in the fighting around Leningrad were appalling. By the spring of 1942, the original personnel were due to be rotated home and were replaced by a second wave. The quality of these troops was not up to the standard of the earlier "all volunteer" force and the unit again suffered heavy casualties but failed to display the brilliance it had shown the previous year. The unit was returned to Spain in 1942 and disbanded. It was replaced by a "Spanish Legion"; a brigade sized unit based on a Spanish Foreign Legion *Bandera* of approximately 1,500 men. This remnant soldiered on along the Eastern Front until 1944.

Aside from exacting a terrible revenge on the "*Rojos*" (the Reds) for atrocities committed during the Spanish Civil War, the "Blue" divi-

sion's main accomplishment was to convince the Germans of the folly and futility of invading Spain. Hitler had toyed with the idea since 1940 and the ferocity of the Spanish "*Guripas*" in Russia convinced the Wehrmacht that an invasion of Spain would be a serious and costly mistake.

The Title "Nailed to the Ground!" comes from a speech made by General Munoz-Grandes to his men during the Soviet "Winter Offensive" of 1941. On December 27th, division headquarters issued the following statement:

"Soldiers! It is impossible to retreat; you have to stand as if you were nailed to the ground." No one retreated. In a later statement he praised the courage of his men, "The barbaric Russians, during the brief



time they occupied our position, used it to nail our dead and wounded to the ground with picks...Red bestiality has served to make even more sublime the gallantry of our soldiers. What pride to be Spaniards!"

by John Fernandes

Wermacht Division 250 (Spanish "Blue" Division)

"Nailed to the Ground!"

A WWII Micro Armour®: The Game Scenario

Cohesion

16

Command Center:	1xGHQ, 1xEngineer Infantry
Infantry Company:	3xInfantry, 1xInfantry Support
"Reserve" Company:	3xSubmachinegun Infantry, 1xInfantry Support
Reconnaissance Company[R]	:3xBicycle Infantry*, 1xBicycle Support*
Sapper Company:	3xEngineer Infantry
Machinegun Company:	3xInfantry Support, 1x8cm Mortar[3]
Infantry Gun Section:	1x75mm IG[1], 1xCart
Infantry Gun Company:	3x75mm IG[1], 1x150mm sIG[1], 1x Limber, 3xCart
Anti-Tank Company:	4x37mm ATG, 4xCart

Infantry Battalion:	1xHQ, 1xLight Truck, 3xInfantry Company, 1xMachinegun Company
Infantry Regiment:	1xGHQ, 3xInfantry Battalion, 1xInfantry Gun Company, 1xAnti-Tank Company, 1xReconnaissance Company

* Recon Company left its bicycles on the West bank due to muddy conditions.

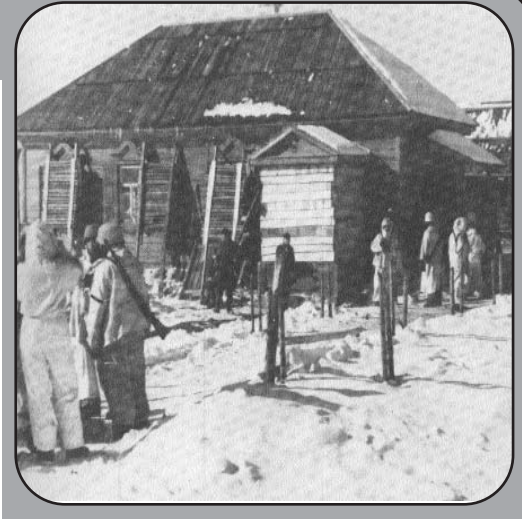
The above represents a standard TO&E for the regiments of the "Blue Division" in the autumn and winter of 1941 and is included to encourage you to build scenarios of your own.

The scenario "Nailed to the Ground!" was produced using the "Scenario Generator" included in "WWII Micro Armour (The Game)"

Nailed to the Ground

Leningrad Campaign: October 1941

Wermacht Division 250 (The Spanish Blue Division) had been stretched out over a sixty kilometer front extending from the middle of Lake Ilmen in the South and running North along the Volkhov to Lubkovo. As part of the "Tikhvin Offensive" which commenced on October 16th. Division 250 was to cross the Volkhov in three places to draw enemy attention away from 16th Army whose goal it was to link up with the Finns along the Svir River. The More Soviet troops Munoz Grandes and his division could draw onto themselves (and kill!), the better 16th Army's chances.



At "Zero Hour", 1300 hrs of 16 October, Colonel Esparza's Regiment 169 crossed the Volkhov by boat led by Lt. Galiana and his assault section near Udarnik. At first there was no news from the opposite bank. Then, without warning, heavy fire broke out to the North on the "Spanish" side of the river! A battalion of General Selenkov's Soviet 267th Rifle division had stormed across the Volkhov right into the laps of Capitan Roman's Andalucians. By dawn the next morning both banks of the Volkhov were littered with broken bodies and the shattered shells of Russian skiffs. The battle for the Volkhov had begun!

That morning, once the bridgehead had been truly established, German Sappers of 514 company had thrown a pontoon bridge across the Volkhov near Plotishno. At this point the rest of Regiment "Esparza" (269), Recon Company 11 / 269, 13 Company / 269 (4 75mm IG's), 3 companies of regiment 263, and 2 Company / Anti-Tanks had all crossed (though without any motor transport). It was then that the Soviets of regiment 848 / 267th Rifle Division struck in strength.



Spanish Elements
Regiment 269 /
Infantry Division 250

Cohesion
16

Regimental HQ - - 1xGHQ(+1)(FO),
1xEngineer Infantry
2nd Bttn / Rgt. 269 - 1xInfantry HQ(FO)
Infantry Co: 3xInfantry, 1xInfantry Support
Infantry Co: 3xInfantry, 1xInfantry Support
Infantry Co: 3xInfantry, 1xInfantry Support
Machinegun Co: 3xInf. Support, 1x8cm Mortar[3]
Bicycle Recon Co 11 / Recon 250:
3xInfantry[R], 1xInfantry
Support[R] (Without Bicycles)
Infantry Gun Company 13(-) / 269:
2x75mm IG[1], 2xCart
Artillery Support - 3x105mm Howitzer[2] OFF MAP
1xForward Observer
(assigned to a stand of the player's choice)



Soviet Element:
848th Infantry Regiment
of 267th Rifle Division

Cohesion
13

Regimental HQ - 1xGHQ(+1)(FO)
Infantry Battalion - 1xHQ(FO), 7xInfantry,
1xSupport, 1x82mm Mortar[1]
Infantry Battalion - 1xHQ, 7xInfantry, 2xSupport,
1x82mm Mortar[2]
Infantry Battalion - 1xHQ, 7xInfantry, 2xSupport,
1x82mm Mortar(3)
Submachinegun Co. - 3xSubmachinegun Infantry,
1xInfantry Support
Artillery Support - 1x76mm Div. Gun(3) OFF MAP,
1x122mm Howitzer(3) OFF MAP
1xForward Observer
(assigned to a stand of the player's choice)

SCENARIO LENGTH: 15 TURNS

INITIAL DEPLOYMENT:

The Spanish player deploys his forces first, placing them East of the river, facing East:

Deploy one Infantry Company within five (5) inches of Point "Capitan Navarro".

Deploy one Infantry Company within five (5) inches of point "Alcazar".

Deploy the third Infantry Company within five (5) inches of "Plotishno".

Other stands may be placed as the Spanish player desires but no stand may be placed more than eight (8) inches from the East bank of the Volkhov.

Place a marker (use your creativity) indicating a pontoon bridge across the river somewhere between "Plotishno" and "Udamnik".

The Soviet player deploys second. He may place his forces anywhere on the map East of the Volkhov, five (5) inches or more from the nearest Spanish stand. If the Spanish player is foolish enough to make it possible, Soviet stands may be placed "behind Spanish lines" if he is otherwise in compliance with the above conditions.

SPECIAL RULES:

- 1. The Volkhov is not fordable.
- 2. Ground is soft and muddy. All clear terrain is "Rough Terrain I"
- 3. Spanish may not move or fire on turn 1. Their cohesion level for turn 2 only is 10. This reflects poor Spanish discipline regarding the posting of sentries (Or making them stay awake!).

VICTORY CONDITIONS:

The Soviet player receives five (5) points each for occupying:

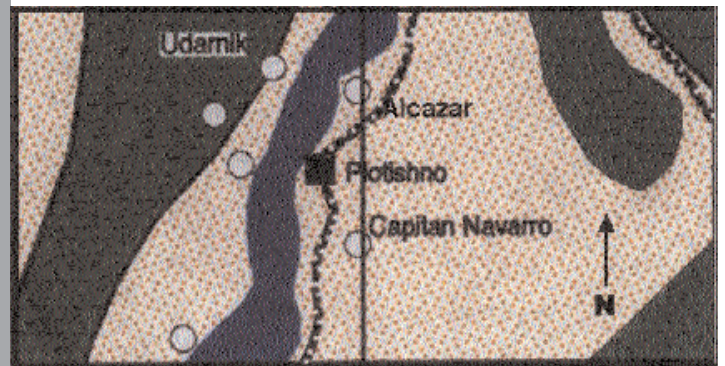
- point "Capitan Navarro"
- Point "Alcazar"
- "Plotishno"

at the end of turn 15.

They also receive ten (10) points for occupying the East end of the pontoon bridge at the end of turn 15.

5 Soviet points or less = Substantial Spanish Victory
 6 - 10 points = Tactical Spanish Victory
 11 - 15 points = Tactical Soviet Victory
 20 - 25 points = Decisive Soviet Victory and disgrace for Munoz-Grandes and Esparza.

TERRAIN SUGGESTIONS:



Map is 24" X 48". 1" = 100 Meters.

○ Light Improved Positions
 ■ Village: Light Buildings

- The map should be approximately 24"x 48".
- Terrain is "Open": Maximum sighting distance - 40"
- The right (eastern) bank of the Volkhov is steep and muddy with no firm ground along the water.
- Any stand forced to retreat into the river is destroyed instead.
- Dark areas of the map are woods.
- Ground is soft with wet snow.
Treat all "clear" terrain as "Rough Terrain 1."
- All roads are Poor Roads.