

Army Expansion Firefight 4 - Mount Austen

Japanese Player Firefight Sheet

General Situation: Mount Austen is composed of a cluster of hills in a jungle area known as “The Gifu”. Japanese forces control this area and have built well hidden bunkers and fortifications throughout the area to ambush any American incursions into the area. Mount Austen offers the dominance over the surrounding area and is an important Japanese observation post for operations at Lunga.

December 1942 - Your brave men have been conducting night infiltration raids against Henderson Field. On December 15, a team led by Lieutenant Oho, again passed through American lines and destroyed several P-39 fighters! Since then, the Baijo have been probing the Gifu area and we anticipate the enemy initiating attacks in strength soon.

Your will deploy your men to hold the hills of Mount Austen at all costs. We cannot allow the Americans control of this critical high ground.

Aftermath: The area surrounding Mount Austen consists of thick jungle terrain with exposed hills and peaks. Aerial photography of the region did not produce clear images of the landscape. The Japanese primarily defended the area with well camouflaged pillboxes hidden in the dense jungle. Because of these factors, the Americans were not even aware of the Japanese positions at Mount Austen for quite some time. After American patrols ran into Japanese defenders on the slopes near the base of the mountain, they still underestimated the strength of the Japanese forces stationed there.

Dec 17th, after intense area artillery bombardment and airstrikes, Colonel William Wright led the 3rd Battalion of the 132nd Infantry Regiment against several hills leading to Mount Austen. From concealed positions, a Japanese machine gun team surprised the Battalion, killing Colonel Wright and many soldiers. As more hills came under U.S. control, ammunition and supplies ran low. Japanese counter attacks put great pressure on the American positions. They were unable to dig foxholes on these mountains, because of the hard coral directly below the covering sod. Supplies being brought to them had to be hand carried along hacked out jungle paths up steep wooded slopes, and supply carriers were often attacked by Japanese patrols and riflemen hiding within the jungles. American artillery was often ineffective against the Japanese forces manning dug-in pillboxes surrounded by the dense jungle canopy. There are also many reports of artillery spotters that needed to be within a hundred yards from their target just to be able to confirm their hits through the hilly and wooded landscape.

Despite these difficulties, the Americans were eventually able to find a weak point into The Gifu from the west, surrounding Mount Austen and defeating the Japanese defenders. Even after being cut off and surrounded, the Japanese continued to hold sections of the Gifu for several weeks before eventually being overrun. The Japanese remaining within the Gifu did not surrender, but could not conduct an effective defense due to lack of supplies, starvation, and disease. With the Gifu reduced, Japanese command ceased active attacks to reclaim the island and instead attempted to evacuate Guadalcanal with as many men as possible.



Japanese Force: Gifu Defensive Perimeter

Hill 1: Setup anywhere on Hill Overlay 1.



1x Infantry



1x Gren Dis

Hill 2: Setup anywhere on Hill Overlay 2.



1x LMG



1x Infantry

Hill 3: Setup anywhere on Hill Overlay 3.



1x Gren Dis



1x Infantry

Map 14: Set up anywhere on Map 14 where no Overlay will be placed. These Units may only move during Round 1.



4x Conscripts



2x 81mm Mortar



1x Gren Dis

Special Rules: Units cannot make Hasty Defenses.

Orders: Defend the hills near the Gifu at all cost. Prevent the Americans from resupplying and digging in.

Victory Points:

1 VP - At the end of each Round, score 1 VP for each Control Marker under Japanese control.

1 VP - Immediately, score 1 VP for each destroyed American Unit.

Bushido Points:

+1 BP - Immediately, gain 1 BP for each destroyed American Unit.

-2 BP - At the end of each Round, lose 2 BP for each Control Marker under U.S. control

Japanese Firefight Sheet

This firefight uses a separate U.S. and Japanese Firefight Sheet. Place your starting Units on Map 14 and the Overlays, then plot your artillery. You need not read your Special Rules or your Orders to your opponent. Only read the relevant Victory or Bushido point text when those points are gained or lost.

You need not read the text concerning the Control Markers until the beginning of Round 2. Only read the text concerning a Control Marker if the relevant Control Marker is under Japanese Control.

Commanders: 2 **Initiative:** U.S. on Round 1 **VP:** U.S. 1

CAP Allocation per Round: Japanese 3 CAPs +/- Bushido

Action Cards: All Action and Bonus Cards except 13 and 30.

Hit Counter Piles: Mix 2 “No Hit” markers into the Japanese Hit Counter Pile.

Map Setup: Map 14 **Overlays:** See next page

Control Points under Japanese Control

H1-06 Control Marker: As long as the Japanese control this marker, all Conscripts have the “**Emboldened**” Capability Card.

H2-06 Control Marker: If the Americans control this Marker, Army Units will not have Low Ammunition as of Round 2. Read this at the beginning of Round 2, so that the Americans are aware of this critical supply line.

H3-12 Control Marker: Whichever side controls this Marker at the beginning of Round 2 may plot artillery in the pre-round sequence. Japanese plot artillery before Round 1.

Event Cards - An Event Draw Deck with Event Cards 1-4 is created and will be used by both sides.

If the **Japanese have fewer VPs** than the Americans at the end of a Round, turn over a random Event Card. Read the effect aloud and resolve it.

Event Card 1: Place 2 mines anywhere that is not occupied by a Unit or Control Marker.

Event Card 2: A heavy rain begins to fall. LOS is reduced to 2 hexes for all Units.

Event Card 3: Place a hidden Sniper anywhere on the map. The US gain 1 VP if they destroy this Unit.

Event Card 4: Rearrange the Hit Markers between hit Japanese Units however you like, placing the markers face down.



Hill 3 Location A

Hill 3 Location B

Hill 2 Location A

Hill 1 Location A

Hill 1 Location B

Hill 2 Location B

Round 1
Plot Art: 

Round 2
Reinforcements:

Plot Art:
 or 

Round 3
Firefight Ends