
BLITZKRIEG COMMANDER

Fast-Play Tabletop Wargame Rules For Combined-Arms Operations, 1936-45

Race for the Reichstag, 1945

by Chris Leach

Scenario General Notes

This scenario involves two Russian infantry companies in a race to plant the red flag on the roof of the German parliament building, the Reichstag. The race is, of course, complicated by the presence of dispersed but determined German defenders manning the last positions in the ruins of Berlin. None of the players, not even the German commander, know exactly where these German troops are located except that every piece of cover might be defended.

Note that this scenario was originally developed for Crossfire and so might need further changing than what is noted below to fully suit BKC. Pictures of the game can be seen on the Crossfire site.

Terrain Interpretation

The terrain represents the city blocks, gardens, rubble, and ruined vehicles in the area around the Reichstag including the prominent Brandenburg Gate. Each of these features provides cover and affects line-of-sight. The original game was played on a 120cm square surface covered in buildings, small parks, rubble spills and wrecked vehicles. At the opposite end from the Russian entry point was the front face of the Reichstag made of three adjoining modules, each of three floors. Each Russian 'zone' was 60cm wide.

Line-of Sight

All the terrain features block line-of-sight (LOS). The only exception is that the rubble-spills and ruined vehicles do not block the LOS to and from building modules. From a building, troops can fire over one such feature to the open or to a subsequent occupied feature.

Rubble Spills

With the exception of the aforementioned LOS rules, the rubble spills are treated like a regular BUA.

Troop Capacity of Terrain Features

The ruined vehicle modules can not be occupied, but are treated like linear obstacles; units are placed behind the modules and are deemed in cover only if the enemy line of fire/sight passes through the module. Base-to-base contact with the module equals being in amongst the vehicles and thus visible to troops who have LOS to the module.

Shifting Turns

There are three players in this game and the turns shift from Russian player A to Russian Player B and finally to the German player. Russian player A is determined by having the two Russian players roll a D6 each at the start of the game; the high roller is player A.

Troop Quality

For simplicity, assume all the troops are regulars.

Russians

The Russians must attack. Each Russian player commands an infantry battalion with a high proportion of SMGs:

1 CO

1 MG Unit

3 Formations, each with:

- 1 HQ

- 1 Rifle Unit

- 3 SMG Units

Russian Combat Zones

Each Russian commander is given a combat zone out from which his troops may not move. The combat zones divide the table in two and include an equal number of terrain features through which the Russians must fight to arrive at the Reichstag. Although movement from one zone to another is prohibited, there are no restrictions on firing into the neighbouring zone. Ignore zonal rules inside the Reichstag which is located at the end of the table astride the two zones.

Russian Redeployment

Although each Russian player is limited to commanding a single battalion at a time, he has an unlimited number of replacement battalions to commit at his discretion. Hence, the Russian commander has the option to use his initiative to replace his deployed forces with a completely new battalion including all the assets of the original force. This act of replacement uses the player's entire turn which shifts to the next player immediately after the Russian has completed his redeployment.

To deploy this new battalion the owning player first removes all the original stands remaining in the streets of Berlin and reorganizes the battalion into its constituent platoons/stands. Then, the Russian declares the path that each platoon will travel from the Russian table edge to an advanced position in his combat zone. As soon as the German player declares LOS to the deploying Russian platoon, their movement stops. The Russian player must deploy his platoons short of this terrain feature or piece of open ground to which the Germans have LOS.

Russian Tanks

The Russian players are each allowed 2 tanks which they can use at any time during the game during their turn. Unlike the infantry, the tanks are not recycled; if they are knocked-out, they are permanently lost to the owning player. IS-2 or ISU-152 tanks are recommended for this scenario. The Russian tanks must stay on the roads. They may move to a rubble spill or ruined vehicle and, on the following command, cross it and move.

The Reichstag and Russian Victory Conditions

When Russians attack the Reichstag they must ensure that they clear the building floor by floor. Hence, before the Russians can move up to the second story, they must clear all the Germans/Markers from the first. The Russian player that clears the third floor of the central portion of the building wins the game. Unfurl the Red flag for Stalin, your unit, and Mother Russia.

Germans

The Germans were defeated. What remained of the defenders of Berlin were small pockets of fanatic and/or frightened soldiers lacking command, control and the ability to coordinate their efforts. Consequently, the German player does not know the quantity and location of his forces until they enter combat.

Each terrain feature holds a marker placed face down. Most markers are blank. Some markers represent small groups of German soldiers. A number on the marker indicates that it is active and its troop composition is indicated on a list held by the Umpire (see below). All German soldiers defending the streets and gardens of Berlin are equipped with panzerfausts; those inside the Reichstag are not. Only when Russian troops move into the LOS of the marker is its identity revealed at the discretion of the German player. If a Russian stand assaults the marker it is also revealed.

Until a German HQ is discovered, the Germans have to rely on opportunity fire or initiative actions. When an HQ is revealed, this can be used to coordinate the actions of the Germans.

The Reichstag

Unlike the troops defending the streets of Berlin, the garrison of the Reichstag is deployed and controlled by the German player from the beginning of the game. The Reichstag is composed of three modules; the wings are two stories and the centre is three stories. Each story can hold a maximum of three stands. When the Russians fire at a module, the German player may select which stand(s) is affected. The Russians do not need to fire at a specific story only a specific module. For simplicity, use markers for the deployment of the garrison; some markers can be dummies and some active. If an active marker fires, its identity is exposed and remains so for the duration of the game.

The Reichstag garrison is composed of the following:

- 1 CO (CV 9)
- 2 MG Units
- 2 Rifle Units
- 2 SMG Units

None of the garrison is armed with panzerfausts and any troops that enter the Reichstag from the streets lose their ability to use their panzerfausts.

German Movement

Once German troops are revealed, they may be moved as desired by the German player without zonal restrictions. Those defending the Reichstag may also be moved at the discretion of their commander.

German Victory Conditions

There is no possibility of a German victory. The Reichstag will fall and the last vestiges of the Third Reich will disappear. An individual who likes seeing others' competitive frustrations is best suited to this role of martyrdom.

Umpire

The Umpire is responsible for distributing the markers that might indicate the presence of German troops. A number of markers equal to all the terrain features on the table except the Reichstag is required. Number sequentially 12 of the markers; these are the active markers indicating German troops. Randomly divide the 12 markers into two groups of 6 and add half the remaining dummies to each of the groups. Mix the markers in each group and place one marker in each terrain feature face down. The terrain features include all building modules, garden/park sectors, rubble spills, the Brandenburg Gate, and ruined vehicle/debris modules. Ensure that the markers of one group are all placed in one Russian Combat Zone and those of the other group in the other Russian Zone. Once all the markers are placed there should be 6 active German markers in each Russian Combat Zone, although their composition will be unknown to all participants, including the Umpire, until revealed during the course of play.

The following is the list of German troops randomly deployed with markers in the ruins of Berlin. The numbers correspond to those specified on the markers and indicate the composition of the German pocket of resistance.

- 1) 2 SMG Units
- 2) 2 SMG Units
- 3) 2 SMG Units
- 4) 1 Rifle Unit; 1 SMG Unit
- 5) 1 Rifle Unit; 1 SMG Unit
- 6) 1 Rifle Unit; 1 SMG Unit
- 7) 2 SMG Units
- 8) 2 SMG Units
- 9) 1 MG Unit; 1 Rifle Unit
- 10) 1 MG Unit; 1 Rifle Unit
- 11) 2 SMG Units
- 12) 2 SMG Units

Each 'zone' is allocated 2 HQ (CV 7) markers as well. These markers are mixed into the marker piles for each Zone and randomly placed. All German troops outside the Reichstag are armed with panzerfausts.