

Sedan, 1940

by Michael Coughlan

On 10th May 1940 German armies crossed the Dutch and Belgian frontiers. The thrust into Belgium was in two parts, the diversion in the north and the main attack in the south, through the supposedly impassable Ardennes forest.

The French reacted by sending their forces north, dismissing reports of German advances in the Ardennes. It was not until the 11th that the French High Command realised that the attack in the south presented a real threat. The French thought that they could still counter this thrust and stop the Germans at the first major water feature, the river Meuse. The most southerly of the German attacks was led by the great panzer general Heinz Guderian. His 19th Panzer Corp, consisting of three panzer divisions (1st, 2nd & 10th) was heading for the city of Sedan. The French High Command correctly identified Guderian's target and ordered eleven divisions from the army reserve to move there. In the early hours of 13th May the Germans reached Sedan on the Meuse. A few hours after reaching Sedan at 7:00 hours, the first of the air attacks were made on the French positions on the heights on the other side of the river. Throughout the day the French were subjected to a never ending stream of air attacks and then at 15:00 hrs the German assault was launched. 1st Panzer division fought its way across the river just north of Sedan whilst 10th Panzer Division battled through the marshy ground to the south. 2nd Panzer Division was delayed in the Ardennes and did not arrive until late in the day and crossed the following day. Once the initial resistance was overcome the German infantry advanced rapidly to expand their bridgehead. The local French commanders now reported to High Command that German tanks had penetrated their defences. The French High Command panicked, French units started to retreat the French lines were split open. Not a German tank had crossed the river yet. During the night of 13th/14th a bridge was constructed capable of supporting armour, the first German tanks crossing at dawn. Also 2nd Panzer Division pushed across the river at the village of Donchery, this was the boundary between the 55th & 102nd (reservists) divisions whom were under control of different Army Groups. As a result of the lack of coordination between the two the French defence was torn asunder. Guderian pushed through and proceeded to the coast.

The game will involve elements of 2nd panzer division crossing the Meuse at Donchery and actually meeting some resistance from the French forces. I have chosen scenario 14 Bridgehead. The Germans have 1000pts and may have air support. The French have 1500pts. All the conditions for the bridgehead scenario apply. The following battle groups may be used they were created using Petes battle group program.

Germans(May 1940) elements of 2nd panzer division

1 CO(cv10)

1 HQ(cv9)

1 FAC(cv8)

1 recce unit(motorcycles), 6 inf units, 1 MG Support, 1 ATG 37mm Support, 1 Mortar Support, 6 panzer units Pz II, 3 panzer units Pz III 37mm, 1 Panzer unit Pz IV short, 2 Dive Bombers, 6 Halftracks 1000pts Breakpoint 10

French(May 1940) elements of 55th and 102nd Divisions

1 CO(cv8)

2 HQs(cv7)

1 FAO(cv6)

18 inf units

3 MG Support

3 Mortar Support
6 tank units H-35/39
2 tank units s-35
1 tank unit Char B1 bis
3 ATG units 25mm
6 Artillery units 75mm
3 Transport units (Lorraine carriers)

French special rules apply

Assets
6 Arty
2 Smoke

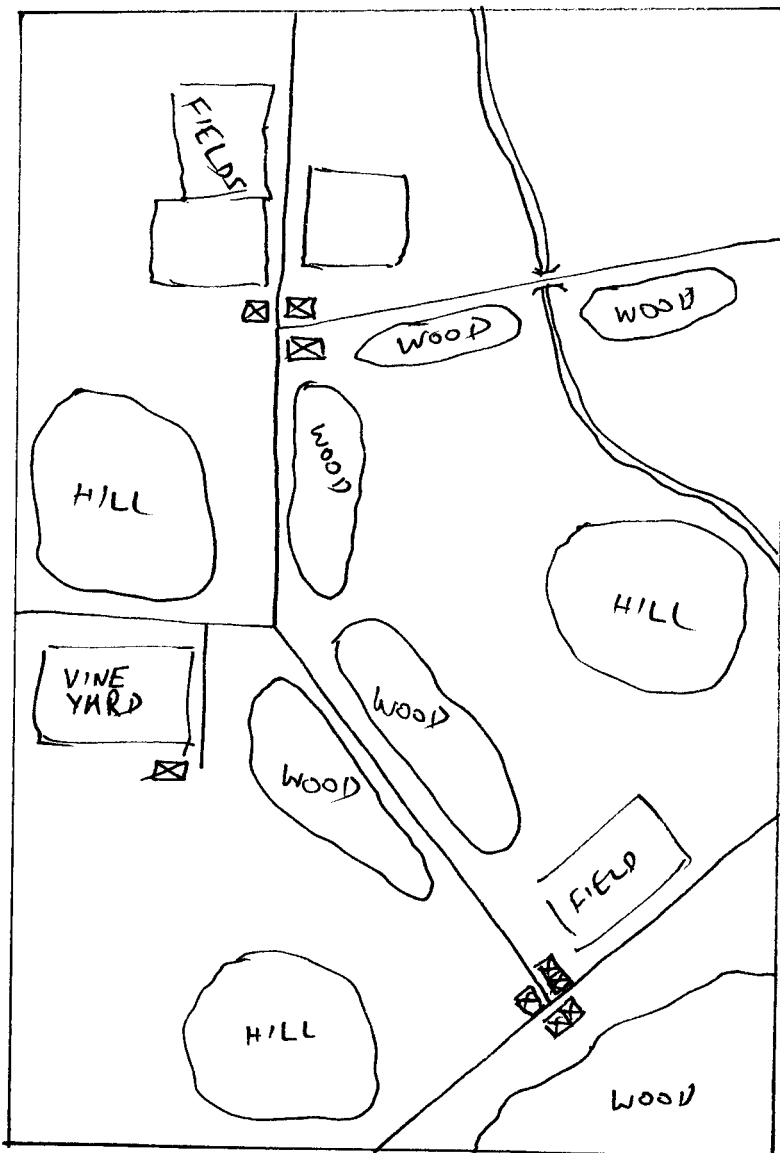
Field Defences
6 wire sections
6 minefield, dummy

Breakpoint 18
1485pts deduct 15pts from the VPs awarded to your opponent

I have supplied a battlefield map, the table is 6 ft by 4 ft.

Feel free to use it or use your own
Enjoy!

GERMANS ENTER



FRENCH BASELINE