

TONKIN

The two forces fight in a very different way. FEF has high quality troops, more supply and a lot of firepower in their artillery and airforce. VM moves quickly in bad terrain, can ambush, infiltrate and fight hard with their "Bolshevik spirit". The trick is to use what you are good at and to lure your opponent into deathtraps.

VM has a bit more sticky ZOC (+1 mp to enter VM ZOC) and combined with the fact that terrain costs are worse for the FEF means that FEF can never outrun VM in bad terrain. Motorized FEF units in the delta or on roads are fast indeed, though. If you, as French, want to fight in the hinterland keep close to the roads and airfields. Remember that units and supply can be transported by truck out from the delta area into the bush but they can't return in the same way. I would say that FEF has three special troops; the paras, which are tough men, and the GCMA and DNA which both have special capabilities. If you airdrop the paras somewhere, see to it that they can either walk home or be airlifted from an airfield. GCMA are in supply anywhere in the Montagnard area and they, as VM-groups, can retreat before combat. This actually makes it hard for the VM to catch them and to keep them away from the major supply artery. Another important task for the GCMA is to be the "within 3 hexes" friend in the jungle. This, so that FEF losses don't become permanent dead and much more expensive to rebuild. DNA can carry troops, fight and keep someone, far off, in supply even there are a couple of VM-groups blocking the route.

VM move quickly and can ambush attacking FEF troops in bad terrain. But if you venture out into the plain you will soon realize what a stack of FEF artillery units can do, and if they are occupied with something else there is always the French airforce and navy which are happy to fry you. Stay away from the coast and keep to the forest and mountains (it halves the barrage). If you do invade the delta, don't stack too much in each hex since this makes it easier to get good barrage results and to fry a lot of units in one hit. You can only barrage one hex at a time and if you spread out your units in a few more hexes, the effect of barrage will be less. VM has the possibility to get, by paying a step in a "bolshevik spirit", a positive combat die roll modification of 1 to 6. With some luck it will hurt the French.

VM can infiltrate into the delta, and combined with the forces which often can attack from two directions, you can put pressure in a way so that the FEF doesn't know where to spend his coming operation point (it's spelled panic). In the same way, FEF can decide to suddenly drop some paras behind VM lines. That can create interesting reactions. VM-groups can retreat before combat which makes them excellent speedbumps who can run away.

If FEF decides to attack out of the delta they will succeed in taking villages and towns like Hoa Binh, Thanh Hoa or Thai Nguyen but will they be able to hold them over time?

VM artillery have two functions, basically. One is to pound FEF battalions somewhere and one is to stand beside an airstrip. FEF may always airdrop into such a hex (unless there is forest or mountains there) but FEF may not use normal airtransport. In other words, place some canons within sight and FEF are stuck (Dien Bien Phu, anybody?).

If you decide to stay and fight somewhere, construct a trench. It will give you better defence and keep you in supply. If you want to attack, it's worth waiting for those occasions when you may spend 2-3 operation points in a row. If you get only one, remove a "desorg", construct some trenches or move a stack somewhere. If you get 2, barrage a stack first to make it "desorg" which will lower the morale and strength of the defender. Then attack with the second point. You could also decide to remove all your own "desorg" before you attack. If you get three points, move that strong stack into position first. Keep in mind though, if you spend all your ten points faster than your opponent he might have a lot points to spend in a row when yours are gone (not very fun).