

VARIATIONS ON A RAID

Options for RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE

By Mark Hunter

Players of *RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE* are already aware of the game's excellent playability and historical accuracy. Indeed, after numerous playings, I have been pleasantly surprised at how closely the course of the game usually follows the actual raid. But further research into the history of the commando raid (which the game spurred me to) revealed that the final assault plan was the result of numerous compromises. One of the original options considered was for the raid to take place during a major bombing raid. The first following scenario is my proposal for simulating that major raid, rather than the mere diversion that historically took place. Too, there was also the proposal that a second destroyer carry in half the commando force, which was rejected by the British naval command. To give the players even more control of planning, another scenario details how to simulate that plan.

And, for variation, we can consider the possibility of French civilian involvement, the possibility of lock gates or caissons being open, the documented fire of German troops on their own, and the role of leadership in the British forces ashore. The strength of any good design is the willingness to play it numerous times. And the historicity of any good design is indicated by the number of legitimately based optional rules it can bear. *RAID ON ST. NAZAIRE* succeeds on all levels.

OPTIONAL SCENARIOS

16.3 SEA ASSAULT DURING BOMBING RAID: During the early planning stages of the raid on St. Nazaire the intent was to have an RAF raid begin before the sea assault and continue *during* the land demolitions. Though the commandos would certainly have been subject to casualties from their own air force, it was felt that the boats would have been much more successful in reaching their landing zones unscathed and then withdrawing the surviving commandos. This scenario recreates that possibility.

16.31 Each game turn begins prior to the Gun/Searchlight Restoration and Searchlight Illumination Phase (4.1) with a die roll to determine if the British boats are detected by the Germans. A die roll less than the current game turn number results in their being detected; any other result means they are undetected.

16.311 *If undetected*, the Gun/Searchlight Restoration and Searchlight Illumination Phase (4.1) and the Naval Attack Phase (4.2) are skipped in the order of play.

16.312 *If detected*, the game turn proceeds normally. Once detected, the British are considered detected for the course of the game and play proceeds normally.

16.32 Each turn, after all Commando units ashore have moved, a Triad is thrown to determine if any have been affected by the bombardment. If the first die of the

Triad is less than or equal to "3", a commando unit may have been hit. The remaining two dice of the Triad determines the affected unit; the ID number of each Commando unit is that of the boat which brought it ashore -even though they may no longer be upon it. Should a passenger of the *Campbeltown* be the affected unit, make a subsequent die roll (1-6, starting with Roy and proceeding in order through Purdon) to determine exactly which is hit. If the Triad indicates that there were no commandos aboard the boat or that commando unit has been eliminated or is aboard a boat, there is no effect for this turn.

16.321 After a commando unit has been determined as being hit, an effect die roll is made to find the number of Strength Points lost.

16.33 At the conclusion of each game turn, a dice roll is made to determine if the bombing raid continues. On a dice roll less than the current turn number, the air raid ends and 16.32 is no longer in effect.

16.34 During the bombing raid, all German Activation (4.5) die rolls are modified by -1 and all German Movement (4.62) die rolls are modified by +1.

16.35 French citizen rules (Optional Rule A) cannot be put into effect until after the bombing raid ends.

16.4 SECOND DESTROYER: Original planners hoped for a second destroyer to accompany the *Campbeltown* and carry half the commandos to the Old Entrance. Certainly, in light of the casualties among the small boats and the greater protection of steel plate, more troops would have likely made it ashore. In this scenario, it is assumed that the British Admiralty released a second Lend Lease destroyer, lightened as was the *Campbeltown* to cross over the mud flats but without the explosive charges. Remove all small boats from the game, and add a second destroyer with the same "Game Log" statistics as the *Campbeltown*. In addition, this ship carries eight torpedoes. Each destroyer may now carry up to seven commando units, the player must select which from among the 19 in the game and assign them to each destroyer. This second destroyer must land its troops at Area 366. Note that the *Campbeltown* ID# is now 11-26; that of the second destroyer is 31-46. Hits on ID numbers above 51 are ignored, but do count as a shot taken.

OPTIONAL RULES

A. The French Citizens: The following rules are to reflect the small, but potentially influential, impact of the French citizenry in the St. Nazaire area. All actions of the French people occur within the region bounded by 429-439-344-309-308-408-418 inclusive. The numbered areas within this region are referred to as the "French Zone".

A-1 During the raid, particularly toward the end, the commandos occasionally sought French help in trying to elude capture. During the Commando Movement Phase of any turn, but prior to expenditure of any movement factors, a commando unit may -while in the "French Zone"- attempt to obtain French help. It is successful on a die roll less than "4". If the unit is unsuccessful it may not try again this game turn but continue movement, less one movement factor. Any number of British units may attempt to locate French help, but each must check separately and only once per turn. Should the unit be successful in obtaining French aid, all movement lines for that unit within the "French Zone" are considered single lines (i.e., requiring only one movement factor) for that game turn only.

A-2 After the raid, the Germans made accusations that some French citizens, thinking that an Allied invasion had begun, attacked German troops. To reflect this possibility, add a chit labeled "French Partisans" to the German counters of each Alarm Level from "2" onward. During the German Activation Phase, there is a chance that such a counter may be drawn.

A-21 When the French counter is drawn from the cup, it is temporarily put aside until all required German Stosstrupp are drawn. When making Triad dice rolls for placement of the German counters, the first area in the "French Zone" indicated is instead filled with the French Partisan counter. If no "French Zone" location is rolled, the Partisan counter is returned to the cup. All remaining German counters drawn are placed normally thereafter.

A-22 The strength of the French Partisan unit is equal to one-half of a single die roll (fractions rounded down).

A-23 French Partisan units move after all possible German units have moved and fire after all possible German units have fired. French Partisan units move in the same manner as the Germans except that they always have a movement factor of "3" (regardless of the German Movement die roll) and always move toward German units. Finally, French Partisan units may only move adjacent to, never *into*, German occupied areas -though Stosstrupp in any adjacent into french occupied areas.

A-24 When considering equidistant areas or fire options between British and French Partisan units, the German unit always moves/fires at the British.

B. Locks and Caissons: British planners realized that there would be a slight chance that the Southern Caisson and/or the Old Entrance Lock may have been open upon their arrival. The first British boat to enter Zone C triggers a die roll to determine the status of the lock and caisson. On a die roll less than "6", both are closed. On a die roll of "6", make a subsequent die roll: on a roll less than or equal to "4", the Southern Caisson is open; on roll of "5", the Old Entrance lock is open; on a roll of "6", both are open.

B-1 *Open Southern Caisson:* The ships *Passat* and *Schledtstadt* are considered withdrawn and areas 233/234 and 251/252 may not be entered. The Southern Caisson (111) is still a permissible landing zone, but it may not be rammed. Victory Points for its destruction must be by set demolition charges, *but against area 203* (not 111).

B-11 Wynn only (MTB 74, 65-66) may enter the Normandie dock (expending all movement points) if he begins in Zone C in an attempt to destroy the Northern Caisson by delayed action torpedoes; there is a +2 modifier to the Effects Die Roll. While in the Normandie dock, Wynn is immune to Harbor Defensive Fire and Dockside Defensive Fire, but may be fired upon by Stosstrupp in any adjacent area (e.g., 207 or 115). If a hit is secured, roll for damage on the Harbor Defensive Fire Table with a +1 modifier. German firing choice between adjacent commando units or Wynn's boat is determined at random.

B-2 *Open Lock Gate:* Only Wynn's boat (MTB 74, 65-66) may enter the St. Nazaire Basin (expending all movement points) if he begins in Zone C. Wynn may attack the German vessels there normally, or attack the U-Boat Pens (441, 443 or 444) with delayed action torpedoes; then is a +1 modifier to the Effects Die Roll against the completed pens (441 and 443). While in the Basin, Wynn is immune to Harbor Defensive Fire but not to Dockside Defensive Fire by the green and orange flak guns.

C. *German Jitter Fire:* During the commando raid, the Germans were confused and there were reports of German troops firing upon their own (especially on German troops from other units). If an unmodified "6" results from German fire which does not secure a hit on a British unit, the German unit has inflicted casualties upon itself. Reduce its strength by one.

D. *Commando Leadership:* Though all the commando parties were highly trained for the operation, there is no substitute for a leader who can gather remnants into an effective fighting force. When a commando unit loses one or more Strength Points, there is a chance its leader has been killed. After determining the ammo loss (11.8), make a subsequent dice roll. If this dice roll is greater than twice the remaining strength points, the leader has been killed. Place an "X" next to the leader's name on the Log Pad to signify KIA. (Example: Four strength points remain in Roy; a dice roll greater than "8" signifies that Roy himself has been killed.)

D-1 Units with leaders may consolidate with remnant units of the same type (demolition or assault) that are currently without a leader. Such consolidation must occur during the End of Turn Phase (4.9), at the same time that German units consolidate. Remnants must be absorbed in total, and no commando force may ever total more than six strength points.