

# BOLT ACTION – HISTORICAL SCENARIO

## La Papillonnière, Normandy – August the 3<sup>rd</sup> 1944

The operation Bluecoat began on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July, 1944. After a rough start, the next day, elements of the VIII corps managed to capture a bridge over the river Souleuvre allowing the 11th armoured division and the Guards Armoured division to advance between two German army groups. In order to stop this progression, Marshall Von Kluge ordered the II SS Panzer-Korps with the 9 and 10 SS Panzer Divisions and the 102 SS Schwere Panzer Abteilung to move west from the Caen sector towards Vire.

The Gruppe Weiss reached Vire on the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August. SS-Sturmbannführer Hans Weiss is the commander of the Schwere SS-Panzer-Abteilung 102. On the next day, he sent a reconnaissance force with elements of the SS Aufklärungs Abteilung 9 under command of ss-hauptsturmführer Gräbner and Tigers from the 2 Kompanie of his battalion towards the hamlet of La Bistière which was the planned meeting point with the gepanzer Gruppe Meyer (from SS-Sturmbannführer Otto Meyer commanding the SS-Panzer Regiment 9.)

When the German units reached the crossroads of La Papillonnière, north of Vire, they faced up the Cromwell tanks of the B squadron of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Northamptonshire Yeomanry moving towards Vire. The unit was the armoured recce regiment of the 11<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division. The unit was already in La Bistière while the gepanzer Gruppe Meyer was blocked around Montchamp by the Guards Armoured Division.

### OPPOSING FORCES

This scenario is played between a British force and a German force.

The British platoons shall be taken from the **Armoured Platoon** selector in *the Tank War* book.

Historically, these units are Cromwell tanks from the B Squadron 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Northamptonshire Yeomanry

The German platoons **Armoured Platoon** selector in *the Tank War* book.

Historically, these units are from Tigers from the 2 Kompanie / Schwere SS-Panzer-Abteilung 102 with armoured vehicles from the SS Aufklärungs Abteilung 9.

### SET-UP

This scenario requires a 6' x4' table with the historical terrain on it. No units are set up on the table as the battle commences. Both sides must nominate at least half their forces to form their first waves. This can be the entire army if desired. Any units not included in the first wave are left in reserve.

### SPECIAL RULES

#### The hedgerows

These block LOS unless either the shooter or the target unit is in base contact with them, or on top of elevated terrain like a

hillock. Since these hedgerows were on top of large earth mounds, they also provide hard cover.

Hedgerows count as obstacles. Furthermore, units passing through them under an "Advance" order cannot fire after they move because of the extra effort it takes to get through thick vegetation.

Tanks have an especially hard time bursting through the hedgerows. Whenever a tracked vehicle tries to move through a hedgerow, roll a die. On a 1 or 2, the vehicle gets stuck and does not break through at all (as if the terrain was impassable) – it moves ends. Vehicles with a damage value of 10 or greater get a +1 to this roll. One a tank has passed through a hedgerow; it makes a hole the width of the tank that no longer counts as an obstacle.



### Sunken lanes

The dirt roads (brown colour on the map) are very narrow sunken roads. Vehicles with a damage value of 10 or greater can get stuck using them, roll a die. On a 1, the vehicle gets stuck – it moves ends for this turn.

### FIRST TURN

The battle begins. During turn 1, the German player must bring his first wave on the blue area of the table. Note that no order test is required to move units onto the table as part of the first wave. Then the British player does the same, his first wave enters on the red area of the table.

### GAME DURATION

After the end of turn 7, roll a die. On a result of 1, 2 or 3 the game ends; on a roll of 4, 5 or 6, play one further turn.

### VICTORY!

At the end of the game, calculate which side has won by adding the attrition values of the enemy units that were destroyed. If one side scores at 200 more points than the other, then that side has won a clear victory. Otherwise the result is a draw!

### AFTERMATH

A fierce battle was engaged. Three Cromwell tanks were destroyed by the Tigers. Followed by the German tanks and infantry on sdkfz250, the B Squadron withdrew carefully towards La Bistière where the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Northamptonshire Yeomanry was entrenched.

In two days, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion lost forty-seven Cromwell tanks while holding the position before the German finally withdrew. With only fourteen tanks in fighting condition, the 2nd Battalion Northamptonshire Yeomanry was disbanded after this action and its members were drafted to other regiments