VULCAN

The Tunisian Campaign



SPECTRUM 48K/128K BY R. T. SMITH.

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Designer's Notes inside back cover.

1. LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

The procedure for loading a program into your computer is given in your manual. Please follow these instructions for loading the program.

Spectrum owners should type LOAD ""

2. INTRODUCTION

Although the rules for "Vulcan", are quite complex, it has been designed to be easy to play. It is the computer's task to resolve the intricacies of the rules, allowing the player to concentrate on the strategy.

"Vulcan", is a 1 or 2 player wargame, depicting the campaign in Tunisia in 1942/43.

Players may choose to fight the whole campaign, or one of the major battles. One player commands the British, American and French (Allied) forces and the other the German and Italian (Axis) forces. If playing alone the computer may control either side.

3. MENUS

Upon loading "Vulcan" you will be presented with the main menu. There are several options available here although not all are available at once. These are:

3:1 The Main Menu

Begin New Game.

Continue Play.

Load Old Game.

This loads a previously saved game from tape.

Save Game.

This saves the current state of play to tape so that the game may be continued later.

Abandon Game.

This abandons the current game and allows a new one to be started.

Set up.

This leads to the set up menu described below.

Reload Data.

This loads the setting up data for the scenarios into memory. Unless the game has just been loaded this must be done when you wish to start a new game.

The data is recorded near the beginning of the tape so rewind it before selecting this option.

It is not necessary to reload the data if you wish to continue with a previously saved game.

3:2 The Set Up Menu.

This allows the player(s) to set up some features of the game to their own liking. The options are:

Joystick.

Either the keyboard or the joystick may be used to control the game.

The types of joystick supported are Kempston, Sinclair interface 2 (either port) and Protek (or other cursor type sticks). When using a joystick use fire as the "enter" key. Select interface 2 with the Spectrum +2.

If using the keyboard then the cursor is moved with the arrow keys.

Sound.

Normally the cursor emits a beep when moved. This may be turned off if you find it irritating.

Movement.

Movement may be either open or hidden. If open then all units are displayed on the map. If hidden then only those that are adjacent to an enemy unit are shown.

Movement is always hidden when playing the computer but for convenience the player's units are all shown.

Players.

This selects whether one or two players are playing.

The number of players may be changed in the middle of a game so the computer can take over from a human, or vice versa.

3:3 Computer to Play

If one player is selected, then this option selects which side the computer is to play. Like the number of players, this may be altered in mid game.

4. SCENARIOS

When you begin a new game, you must choose a scenario to play. There are a total of five.

The winner is determined by adding up the victory points scored. These are awarded for controlling important strategic objectives which vary according to the scenario being played. In addition, one point is scored for every enemy unit destroyed.

Towns and airfields are controlled by the last player to move a unit over them unless that unit was travelling by road. At the start of each scenario players control those towns and airfields behind their lines.

(1) The Race for Tunis. (25-45 minutes).

This scenario covers the initial Allied attempt to capture Tunis in the autumn of 1942. It lasts 19 turns from 12th November 1942 to 30th November.

Victory points.

Tunis	8		
Bizerta	6		
Medjez	2	Points to win	
Tabarka	2	Allies	17
Bone airfield	2	Axis	18
Souk Arba airfield	2		
Algeria entry (where allied units appear)	8		

At the start all towns and airfields are controlled by the Axis player, except for Bone and the airfields on the left map edge.

(2) Kasserine. (25-45 minutes).

This covers Rommel's spring offensive against the Americans in central Tunisia. It lasts 12 turns from 14th February 1943 to 25th February.

Victory points.

Tebessa	4		
Thala	4		
Sbiba	4	Points to win	
Kasserine	2	Allies	15
Pichon	2	Axis	13
Maknassy airfield	2		
Gafsa airfield	2		
Thelepte airfield	2		

Gafsa and Thelepte airfields are initially controlled by the Allies.

(3) Eighth Army. (1-2 hours).

This covers the operations of the 8th Army in southern Tunisia. It begins with Rommel's attack against Medenine and continues with Montgomery's assault on the Mareth line and also includes the American offensive against Maknassy. It lasts 22 turns from 6th March 1943 to 27th March.

Victory points.

Gabes	6		
Medenine	2		
Mareth airfield	6	Points to win	
Gafsa airfield	2	Allies	20
Maknassy airfield	2	Axis	15
Lybia entry point (where allied units appear)	6		

(4) Operation Vulcan. (2-4 hours).

This covers the final Allied offensive culminating in the destruction of all Axis forces in Africa. It lasts 23 turns from 21st April 1943 to 13th May.

Victory points.		Points to win	
Tunis	32	Allies	60
Bizerta	16	Axis	32

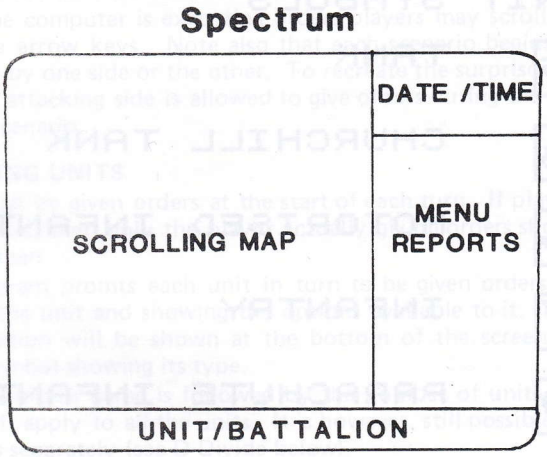
(5) The Tunisian Campaign. (8-16 hours).

This covers all the fighting in Tunisia from the first clashes in November 1942, until the destruction of the Axis armies in May 1943. It lasts 183 turns from 12th November 1942 until 13th May 1943. Victory points are not awarded. Instead the game ends when the Allied player captures both Bizerta and Tunis. He wins if he achieves this before the end of April. The Axis player wins if he still controls either city at the end of the game.

At the start all towns and airfields are controlled by the Axis player except for Bone and the airfields on the left map edge.

5. THE DISPLAY

When in play the screen display consists of four sections (see diagram). Section 1 is a window onto the map over which the game is played, Section 2 gives the date of the current turn or the current weather and Section 3 gives the identity of the unit being ordered. Section 4 is the "menu window", it is used to give options available when giving orders and for reports, etc.



6. UNITS

The various military formations that took part in the campaign are termed units. The colours of the various nationalities are as follows, British units are shown in yellow, American units white, French units blue, German units black and Italian units magenta.

The presence of a unit is indicated either by a symbol showing its type, or by an "unidentified unit" symbol, showing that it has not been identified by the other side. If the hidden movement option is used, then unidentified units are not shown.

For the convenience of those playing in "black and white", Axis units are shown in white on a dark background and facing left. Allied units have a light background and face right.

Units come in four sizes: divisions, brigades, battalions and HQs. Brigades, battalions and HQs may belong to a division, if so, then the division name is given with the unit name when the unit is being given orders. Which division a unit belongs to is important for supply purposes and when giving orders.

Units that do not belong to any division are termed "independent units". Independent HQs are termed "corps HQs".

The unit symbols are as follows:

UNIT SYMBOLS


TANK


CHURCHILL TANK


MOTORISED INFANTRY


INFANTRY


PARACHUTE INFANTRY


HQ


MOTORISED HQ


UNIDENTIFIED UNIT


ENTRENCHED UNIT


FORTIFIED UNIT

7. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The game is played in a series of turns. Each turn represents one day. The order in which activities occur during each turn is as follows:

(a) Firstly, each player gives orders to his units and allocates his air attacks. The Allied player goes first.

(b) All units then move simultaneously to carry out their orders.

(c) After units have moved combat occurs between adjacent units Those units forced to retreat as a result of combat are then moved and units that they were blocking may continue to move towards their objective.

(d) The next turn then begins.

Whilst the computer is executing orders players may scroll the map using the arrow keys. Note also that each scenario begins with an offensive by one side or the other. To recreate the surprise achieved, only the attacking side is allowed to give orders during the first turn of each scenario.

8. ORDERING UNITS

Units must be given orders at the start of each turn. If playing with two players, then only the player actually giving orders should look at the screen.

The program promts each unit in turn to be given orders by high-lighting the unit and showing the options available to it. The unit's identification will be shown at the bottom of the screen together with a symbol showing its type.

If the division's name is followed by the number of units in it, the order will apply to all the units. It is however, still possible to order the units separately (see D Divide below).

When satisfied that a units orders are correct key 'ENTER' to move on to the next unit. (Note that the program moves on automatically if some orders are selected). If you key "ENTER" without changing the order or moving the cursor, then the unit will continue with its old orders. Thus it is possible to give an order that will take several turns to complete and doing so will save time when giving orders. If you move the cursor accidentally or change your mind, then moving the cursor back over the unit, will enable the unit to continue with its old orders.

The following orders may be given:

M MOVE. This order instructs a unit to move to another location. Use the arrow keys to move the flashing cursor to the desired destination and press "ENTER". If a unit already has "Move" orders then moving the cursor will redefine its destination. If a unit has "Hold" or "Fortify" orders then it will automatically be given "Move" orders if the cursor is not over the unit when "ENTER" is pressed.

It is possible to have more than one unit in a square. This is referred to as **stacking.** Divisions count as 7 stacking points, brigades and HQs as 3 and battalions as 1. It is possible to have up to 12 stacking points in one square.

As a rule of thumb, players should assume that they can stack all the units of one division together.

A ASSAULT. This is similar to "Move" and the order is given in the same way. However, "Assault" instructs a unit to be more aggressive in trying to get to its objective. Thus if it meets an enemy unit, it will inflict more damage in combat than a unit with "move" orders, although it will suffer more itself.

H HOLD. This order instructs a unit to stay where it is. The unit will "dig in" which will protect it in combat particularly against armour. Units with "Hold" orders also recover from fatigue (Efficiency).

T TRAVEL. This order instructs a unit to move along the road at two times normal speed. It may only be given if the unit is on the road and not next to an enemy unit. Units travelling are very vulnerable to attack, and may not themselves attack. To give the order, press "T", then move the cursor to a destination on the road. If a unit already has "Travel" orders, and you wish to change its destination, then you must select the "Travel" order again by pressing "T".

F FORTIFY. This order instucts a unit to strengthen its position by digging fox holes, laying mines, etc. The longer a unit is at this task the more effective will be the result. Units may only fortify if they are alreay "dug in", i.e. have selected "Hold" the previous turn. Tank units may not fortify. If a unit moves then it loses all benefits from its fortifications.

The following four actions may also be selected at this stage, but **do not** count as orders.

D DIVIDE. This causes a unit that is stacked with other units of its division to be split off (temporarily), so that it may be ordered separately.

R REPORT. This gives a report on the current unit. See below for details.

I INSPECT. This allows inspection of the terrain underneath units. Whilst the "I" key is held down, the terrain at the cursor position is shown. When it is released the usual display is reinstated.

P PASS. This temporarily passes over the current unit which will be returned to later and goes onto another nearby unit. This allows several units in a stack to be examined before deciding what to do with them.

The **Zones of Control** are the 8 squares surrounding a unit. When a unit moves into an enemy zone of control it must stop. Note also that supply may not be traced through an enemy zone of control.

9. REPORTS.

When a report is requested, the following information is given.

STR Strength. This gives an indication of the units strength either in men or in tanks.

MPS Moves per Turn. This gives an indication of how far a unit may move. The number given is the number of squares it may move in one turn, over clear terrain. It will go slower over rough terrain.

SUP Supplies. This gives an indication of the supply level of the unit. Units with very low supply may not attack, and units with none suffer double damage when attacked. When a ✓ is shown the unit is able to receive supplies.

MOR Morale. This gives the morale of a unit. The higher it is, the less likely it is to retreat after combat.

A/M Attack Modifier. This is the unit's attack modifier. The higher it is, the more effective the unit is at attacking.

EFF Efficiency. This is the unit's efficiency level. It is reduced due to fatigue, when a unit is in combat. Some units enter the game with low efficiency level, to reflect lack of training. A unit may recover from fatigue when it has "Hold" orders (i.e. it is resting or training).

Some units (mainly American) had had no combat experience prior to the Tunisian campaign. To reflect this, these units' efficiency may not rise above 70% until they have been in combat.

FRT Fortification. The number given, is the number of days that a unit has been "Fortifying" for, i.e. the effectiveness of its defences.

10. HIDDEN MOVEMENT

If the hidden movement option is used, then only those units adjacent to an enemy will be displayed. However, when giving orders all the units of that side will be shown.

All units are shown during the first turn of the game.

11. AIR ATTACKS.

Air attacks are allocated immediately after all of a player's units have been ordered.

The player is informed of the number of air units on standby (i.e. the number that may be used to make attacks) and the number that are unserviceable (U/S). Units become unserviceable after making an attack and take an average of 4 days to recover. In any turn a player may use all, some, or none, of his units on standby, to make attacks.

To make an attack simply move the cursor over the target and press ENTER. The result of the mission will then be shown.

Air attacks may be made anywhere but if made more than 35 squares from a friendly airfield, they will receive no fighter escort and will thus be more likely to be shot down.

A successful air strike has two effects on the units hit. Their movement is slowed and attacks upon them will be more effective. There is no advantage in hitting one unit with more than one airstrike. However, an airstrike affects all units in the target stack.

If using hidden movement then it is also possible to use aircraft for reconnaissance. Select this mission by pressing "R" and any nearby enemy units will become visible.

12. COMBAT

Combat occurs between units that end their movement adjacent to each other. For each attacking unit, the computer flashes the attacked units and makes a sound the length of which is related to the greatest damage done to any of the attacked units. However, if a unit is dug in it will not attack the enemy units which are also dug in.

The effectiveness of an attack is determined by a number of factors.

(a) The unit types of the defender and attacker.
(b) Their strengths.
(c) Their orders (e.g. assault, hold, etc.).
(d) The terrain being attacked.
(e) Whether the attack is from a river or wadi.
(f) The defender's level of fortification.
(g) Other units stacked with the defending units.
(h) The attacker's efficiency and attack modifier.
(i) Whether the defender has exhausted its supply.
(j) The weather.
(k) Any air attacks on the defender.

If sufficient damage is inflicted on a unit in combat, it will have to retreat.

13. SUPPLY.

Supply plays an important part in all military activity. Victory can often be assured if an enemy can be cut off from his supply base and the level of activity an army can sustain is determined by the amount of supplies available. The supply rules in "Vulcan", reflect both these aspects.

Each unit carries supplies with it and these are used up when a unit moves, fortifies or attacks. These need to be replenished in order for the unit to continue to function. Replenishment of supplies is handled automatically by the computer, subject to the rules below.

There are two separate sets of rules for replenishing supplies. One for battalion and brigade sized units and another for HQ units and division sized units (which contain their own divisional HQs).

Brigades and Battalions.

These units can only draw supply if they are next to or overlapping an HQ unit. Any unit may draw supply from a corps HQ unit. In addition, independent units may draw supply from any HQ. Otherwise units may only draw supply from their own divisional HQ.

Supplies are drawn from those possessed by the HQ unit.

Divisions and HQs.

The above rules do not apply to HQs and Divisions.

These units draw supply by being near a road that leads back to a friendly supply source. Axis units draw supply from either Tunis or Bizerta. Allied units draw supply from roads leading off the map. Supply may not be drawn from sources last occupied by the enemy.

The road route leading back to the supply source must be along roads all the way and may not pass either through, or adjacent to, an enemy unit. A unit must be within seven squares of a road in order to receive supply from it.

Only a limited amount of supplies are available to each side each turn, so if too many units need supply some may remain unsupplied.

The amount of supplies used by a unit are dependent on its size and its actions. A division uses more supply than a brigade, which in turn, uses more than a battalion or HQ. Units use supplies when they move, fortify or engage in combat. When in combat, units with "Assault" orders use twice as much supply as those with "Move" orders. Units with "Hold" orders use very little supply in combat. Units with insufficient supply may not attack.

Players may ascertain whether a unit is in a position to receive supply by looking at a report on that unit. If a tick appears after the supply rating, the unit is correctly positioned to receive supply. This only shows that a unit could receive supplies if any were available, not that they are receiving supplies (i.e. a unit could be stationed with its division HQ, but will not receive any supplies if that HQ has none).

14. REINFORCEMENTS, WITHDRAWALS and REPLACEMENTS.

From time to time, players will receive new units, and old ones will be withdrawn. This will happen automatically, although warning will be given of an impending withdrawal.

Replacements are used to replace losses suffered in combat. They are distributed automatically to understrength units, but only units with "Hold" orders may receive them.

15. TERRAIN

There are many different types of terrain in "Vulcan". Any symbols not shown on the terrain chart are purely decorative.

Sea, and salt marsh squares, are impassable, whilst rough, mountain, woods, river and wadi squares slow down movement and also give some protection in combat. Mountains give better protection than rough or woods but also slow down movement more.

Units attacking from a river or wadi square are penalised in combat, so it is necessary for a unit to be behind, rather than on, these features in order to gain protection.

The best protection is provided by fortification squares. A unit must be actually on the square, rather than behind it, to get the benefit .

Fortifications provide different benefits to the "fortify" order.

Note that moving across narrow sea straits, such as the one near Bizerta is allowed. The airfield in the top right hand corner of the map represents the Axis airfields in Sicily and Sardinia.

The terrain symbols are displayed below:

TERRAIN SYMBOLS



16. UNIT TYPES.

The following is a brief synopsis of the types of unit in the game.

Tanks. These are very powerful both against other tanks and particularly against infantry. They are however much less effective against units that are dug in. Tanks are vulnerable to HQs and are fairly useless in mountains.

Churchill Tanks. The Churchill tank was found to be better than other tanks in rough terrain, but it is less good in open combat due to its slow speed.

Motorised Infantry. These are not particularly powerful when attacking and if not dug in, are very vulnerable to tanks. They can however, fortify their positions, making them difficult to capture. They are better than tanks at attacking fortified positions or in difficult terrain.

Foot Infantry. These are similar to motorised infantry, but move more slowly. They suffer less penalty though, when moving in difficult terrain.

Parachutists. Similar to foot infantry but are usually of better calibre.

HQs. These represent not only administration units but also a division's artillery and other attached troops. They are thus, particularly useful against tanks, although generally more vulnerable in combat than other units.

Motorised HQs. Similar to other HQs but belong to motorised divisions.

17. PLAYER'S NOTES.

This section gives some general tips on playing Vulcan.

Perhaps the most important aspect when playing Vulcan is to conserve your forces. After combat use reports to check damage. This will enable costly assaults to be broken off and timely withdrawals to be made. Weak units should be withdrawn and used as garrisons. Your opponent will not know that they are not full strength.

It is also important to have a good idea of the enemy strength, particularly when attacking. It is wise not to attack with lone units unless you are sure that the enemy that they are attacking, are very weak. Therefore, use as many units as possible when you decide to attack. If unsure of enemy strength, then again move up with as many units as you can. Rain and mud turns are useful for probing enemy positions since much less damage is taken in bad weather.

When under attack it is best not to move, unless to withdraw, since dug in and fortified units take less damage. This is particularly important when being attacked by tanks.

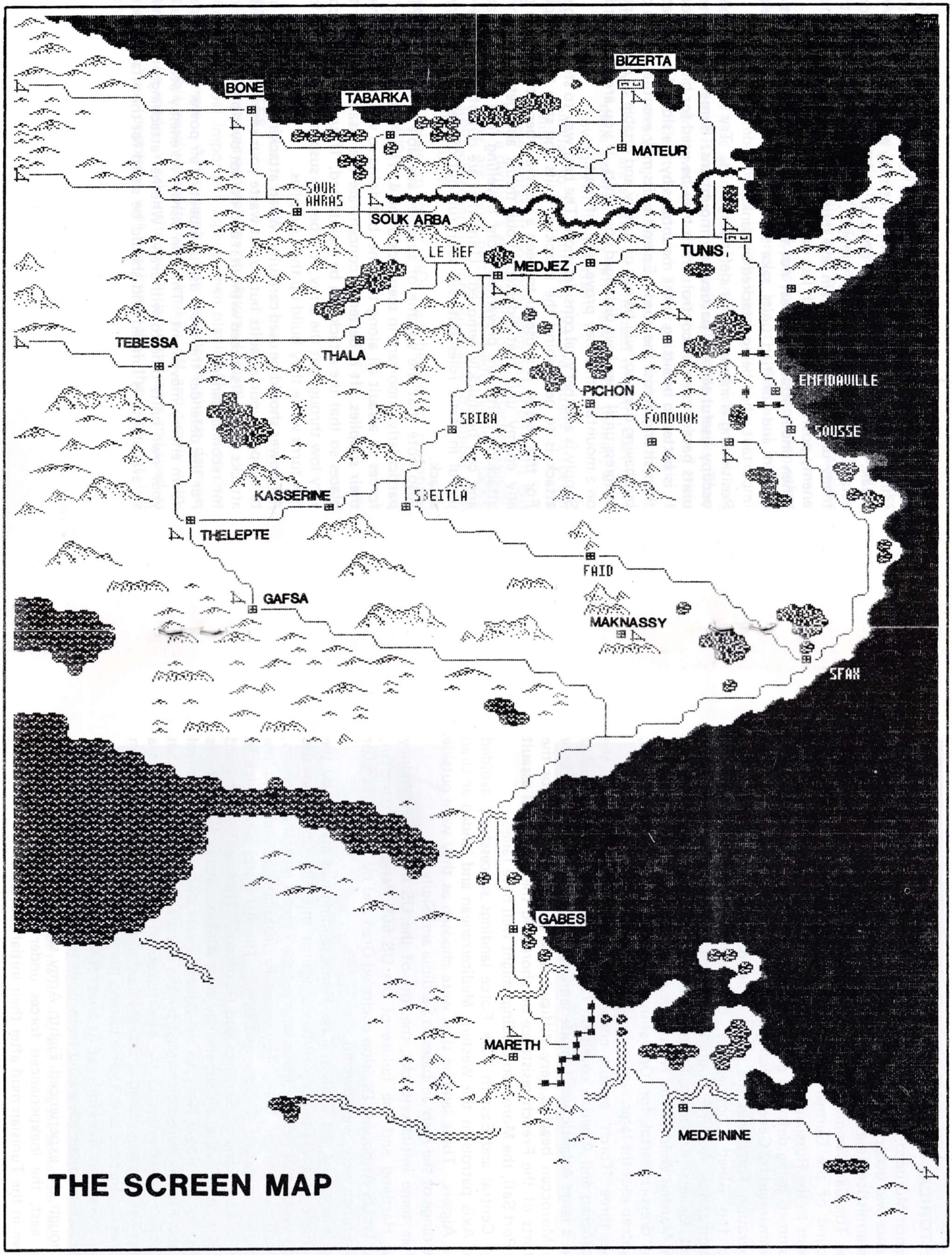
Positioning is important for defending units. Try where possible to occupy useful terrain, particularly mountains. Remember that your units have a zone of control which may be used for blocking roads. It is better to be sitting in the mountains by the side of a road rather than sitting across the road. Enemy units may eventually push past but having done so, will be out of supply and unable to make further progress until they have dislodged your units. If you are well fortified on a mountain, this may prove very difficult.

Supply is another vital consideration. The best way to stop an enemy attack is to get behind the attacking units and stop their supplies. For this reason it is useful to keep a reserve when attacking so that any enemy unit that sidesteps your thrust and gets behind your attacking units, are prevented from travelling into your rear areas and can be quickly removed. Units that are out of supply may be useful in static roles but will soon run out of steam if they try to attack.

Also note that the volume of supplies available is limited. This is particularly important in scenarios 3 and 4. The Allies have sufficient forces to assault all along the line, but doing so will quickly exhaust their supplies. It is better to concentrate the assault in one or two places so that the attack can be maintained. If supply levels become very low throughout the army, it is best to suspend all activities for a few turns while they build up their supplies.

Air power should be used carefully. When attacking it should be used to support your assaults but do not waste your resources supporting attacks that will succeed without it and do not overlook its usefulness for reconnaissance.

For the defender the most useful aspect of air power is that it slows down enemy movement. This can disrupt an enemy attack or allow your own units time to withdraw. Whether attacking or defending air availability is limited and should be saved for the vital moments.



THE SCREEN MAP

18. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

French Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia were French colonies and when France was occupied by the Germans in 1940 they elected to honour the armistice treaty which Petain had made with the Germans.

The Tunisian Campaign started with Operation Torch against a background of the German Sixth Army losing ground on the Eastern Front to the Russian forces and the German Panzerarmies of General Rommel, being defeated at El Alamein by the British Eighth Army commanded by General Montgomery.

Operation Torch was the result of months of planning by four of the top Allied Commanders, General Eisenhower the Supreme Commander, Admiral Cunningham, C in C of the Mediterranean fleet, General Anderson, Commander of the British First Army and Air Marshal Welsh. The North Africa landings were to prove to be the dress-rehearsal for Operation Overlord, the D-Day landings, eighteen months later.

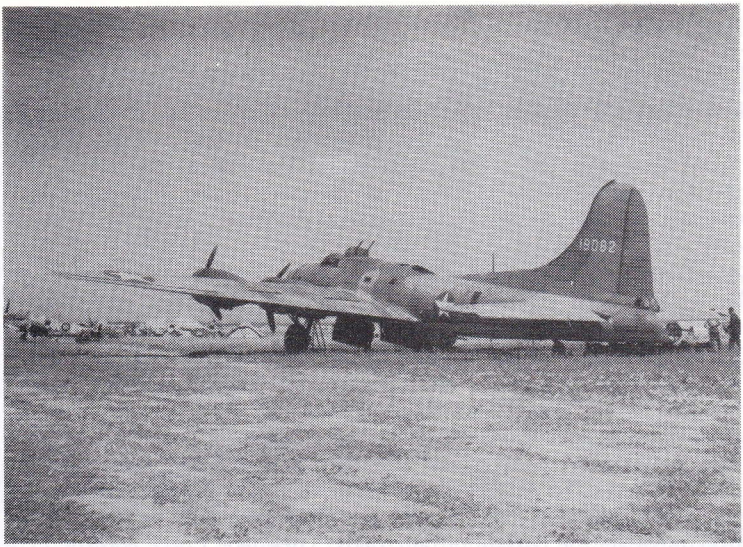
The three 'Torch' assault convoys started embarkation off the Moroccan and Algerian coasts on 7th November 1942. Bad weather and a large Atlantic swell, made landings of the Western Task Force on Moroccan beaches very difficult and had it not been for the efforts of the French resistance on shore and the successful assault on Port Safi, the Moroccan landings might well have failed.

The Central and Eastern Task Force landings successfully avoided the Axis patrols in the Western Mediterranean and landed at Oran and Algiers. These landing sites were choosen as they were outside the range of the Axis air bases in Sardinia and Sicily.

After some initial setbacks, the loss of the US destroyers Walney and Hartland and the failure of the US 509 Parachute regiment, the 1st US Armoured Division encircled Oran and by 11th November the French were overpowered.

The success of the Eastern Task Force landing was assisted by the strength of the French resistance against the Algerian authorities who supported Petain. Mast, who led the French resistance fighters, gained control of many key military installations including the airfields at Maison Blanche and Blida. The Air Force were quick to fly in squadrons of Spitfires and Hurricans. These airfields proved vital in establishing air superiority over Algiers. Strong support was given by the Royal Navy to the Allies. Forts still under the control of the French were bombarded by the ships and naval aircraft from Gibralter and carriers in the Mediterranean. By 10th November a cease fire was negotiated which resulted in the French North African forces in Morocco and Algeria joining the Allies.

The scene was therefore set to crush Rommel's forces between the two Allied forces advancing from both the east and west. However, although the experienced Eighth Army successfully advanced from the east, the inexperienced forces under Eisenhower got bogged down in the Tunisian mud after their initial successes.



General Montgomery's Flying fortress.



Laying the foundation of the runway and fixing the Somerfeld track.

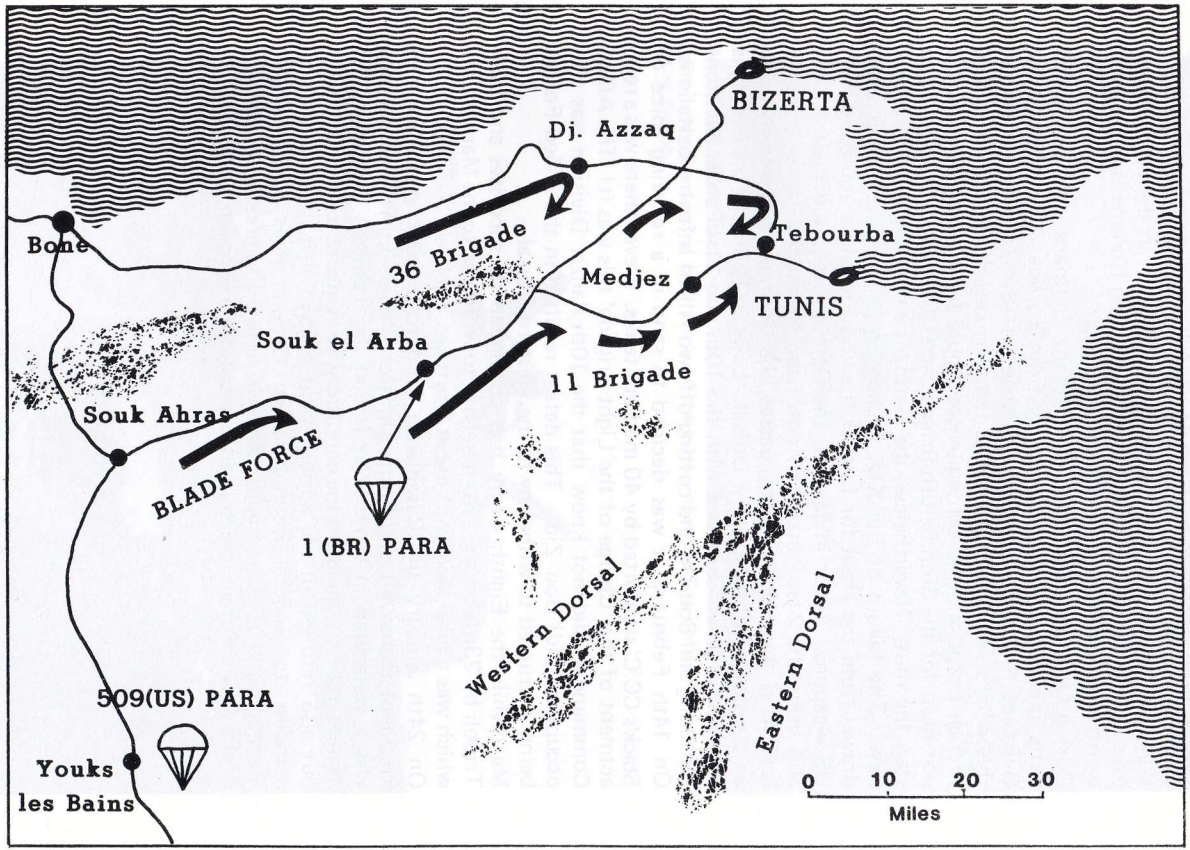
19. RACE FOR TUNIS.

The Allies first objective was to capture Tunis, which had only a nominal occupational Axis force, by 10th November. The Allies knew they had to act quickly because the Germans had the resources to transfer troops to Tunis from Southern Europe and the Eastern Front at very short notice. The Allies also had to win substantial territory before the rains came in December. The rains affected both the roads and the airstrips, sometimes preventing aircraft from taking off.

The build up of Axis forces in Tunis reached 15,000 by the end of November with 50 medium tanks and 20 new Tiger tanks. The task before the Allies was formidable. Algiers is 450 miles west of Tunis and access would have to be by sea or by two mountain roads running the length of the Atlas mountains. There was also a railway but this would take weeks to get it into operation. The only forces close enough were those of the Eastern Task force consisting of 78th British Division made up of the 11th and 36th Brigades and the Blade Force. The Allies used amphibious craft to make landings and established beachheads at Bougie and Bone and then made their way to Tunis over the two mountain roads. The Blade Force and the 11th Brigade took the southern road and the 36th Brigade pushed forward along the north coast road. On 16th November the first British Parachute Battalion landed at Souk el Arba to reinforce the 11th Brigade and the 509 (US) Parachute Regiment landed further south at Youks-les-Bains to reinforce the French forces there who had joined the Allies. The 36th Brigade met very strong resistance at Djebel Azzaq and could not progress any further. The 11th Brigade and the Blade Force had more success after fierce fighting, took Medjez and moved on to take Tebourea by 27th November. Meanwhile the Blade Forces advanced towards Tebourba via the Chouigui Pass. However, the Allies could not capture Djedeida because of very strong German opposition supported by the Luftwaffe from airfields in Tunisia and Sicily.

On 1st December the Germans counter attacked with Group Luder attacking the Blade Force from the north and the Group Djedeida and Group Koch attacking the 11th Brigade from the east. Fierce fighting continued until 3rd December when the 10th Panzer Division's 86th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, which had landed at Tunis the previous day, were pitched into the battle with Group Hudel. The Allies defences were overcome and they had to withdraw to Medjez-el-Bab.

RACE FOR TUNIS



20. WINTER FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

By the end of December it was evident that 'due to continual rain there will be no hope of immediate attack on Tunis'. The Allies were therefore faced with two months of holding on in the mud. However, in the east the Eighth Army was pushing Rommel's army westwards through Tripolitania towards Tunisia.

During December and early January the Germans were reinforced with four new divisions transferred from Europe. This enabled the Germans to launch Operation Eilbote on 18th January. Although this offensive was not successful the Germans did overrun the XIX French Corps and the consequences would have been serious had it not been for the 36th British Brigade and CC'B' being despatched to stop the rout. Nevertheless, the Germans were able to take Fouduk Pass. The failure of the XIX French Corps resulted in their withdrawal from the front for further training and to be equipped with US weapons. Later in January the Germans renewed their attacks and using the 21st Panzer Division from Rommel's Panzer army to spearhead the attacks on the passes, the Germans successfully took all the passes in the Eastern Dorsal. Later in February the Germans followed up their successes with the 10th and 21st Panzer Divisions capturing Sidi Bou Zid and cutting off two Allied Infantry battalions. On 14th February it was decided to send in a relieving force of Stack's CC'C' supported by 40 medium tanks. If ever there was a reinactment of the 'Charge of the Light Brigade' this was it! The Allied Commanders did not know that the 10th Panzer Division was also occupying Sidi Bou Zid. This defeat resulted in the Allied Forces being instructed to withdraw to the Western Dorsal.

Meanwhile the Eighth Army had continued its successes and took Tripoli by 23rd January. Rommel had to withdraw to the Mareth Line which was a mini Maginot Line in Southern Tunisia.

On 24th January the Casablanca Conference took place between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. This conference was a watershed in World War II and the Tunisian Campaign. Its agenda not only included the conditions for Unconditional Surrender but also resulted in the appointment of two British Deputy commanders to General Eisenhower of General Alexander and Air Marshal Tedder. These appointments resulted in greater integration of the Allied Forces which in turn produced a winning team.



Bren carriers passing down one of the numerous Waddies encountered during the Recce.



Valentine tank used by the Germans showing the Panzer Lion and other German markings.

21. KASSERINE (The Axis counter attack).

Kasserine is the principal pass in the Western Dorsal and stands at the head of the 20 mile wide Foussana Basin. It therefore became one of the main objectives of General Kesselring C in C Axis Forces. At 04.50 hrs. on 19th February, Rommel launched his attack with the 10th and 21st Panzer Divisions, the Centauro Division and the Afrika Korps. The 21st Panzer Division was directed to take the Sbiba Pass. However, they found this heavily defended by the 1st Guards Brigade and the 18th Regiment of the US 1st Division and three battalions of the US 34th Division. After two unsuccessful attempts Rommel decided not to commit the 10th Panzer Division to the Sbiba Pass but instead redeployed them to reinforce the Afrika Korps which was attacking the Kasserine Pass.

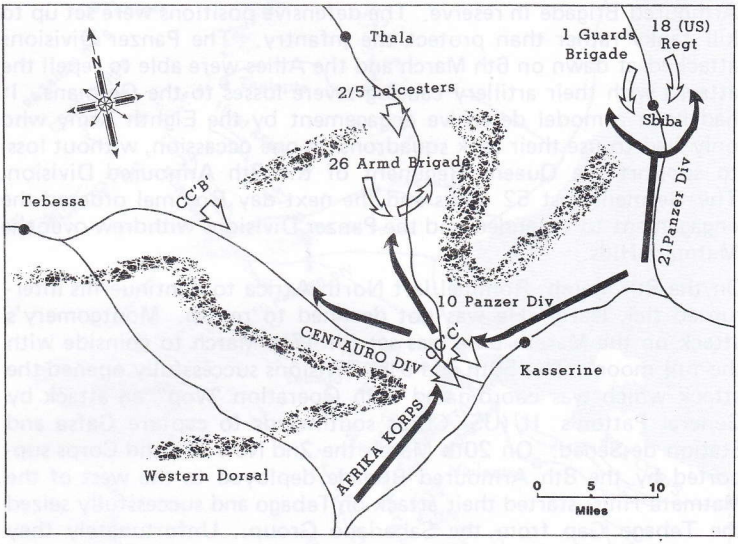
The Kasserine Pass, a mile wide, was being defended by the 26th US Infantry and the 19th Combat Engineer Regiment. At daylight the Afrika Korps attacked the Pass with orders to push their attack to Thala. The 26th US Infantry held up the advance long enough to enable an orderly withdrawal and a defensive position to be set up half way between Thala and Kasserine by the 26th Armoured Brigade. Although the Allies had lost the Kasserine Pass, the battle was far from over.

During the 20th the Allies were able to hold the attacks of the Axis forces but on the 21st the 10th Panzer Division drove the 26th Armoured Brigade back towards Thala where the 2/5th Leicesters had set up a defensive position. Although the Leicesters suffered large losses when a column of 10th Panzer Division tanks led by a captured Valentine tank, broke through their lines, the day was saved by the 26th Armoured Brigade tanks. During the night the Allies made numerous counter attacks on the 10th Panzer Division which made the Germans believe that Thala was being defended by a large force. The Germans therefore decided to go on the defensive.

On 22nd February, Rommel and Kesselring had a meeting and decided that as there had not been a quick result in the Kasserine offensive, it should be abandonded particularly as the Eighth Army was building up its forces near Medenine. The Axis Forces subsequently withdrew to the Eastern Dorsal and transferred the 10th and 21st Panzer Divisions to the coast to refit before their next offensive which was scheduled against the Eighth Army.

It took the Allies 48 hours to find out that the Axis Forces had gone! However, by the 24th February the Allies had reoccupied the Kasserine Pass.

BATTLE OF KASSERINE



22. THE EIGHTH ARMY.

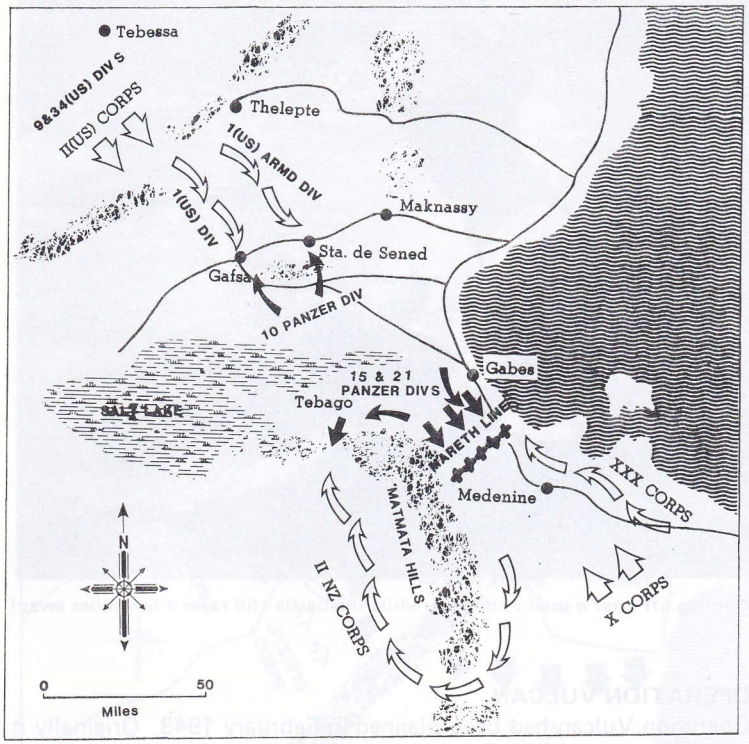
The Eighth Army having captured Tripoli on 23rd January 1943, used February to build up its supplies ready for an offensive on Medenine in March. During the battle of Kasserine they had attacked outposts of the Mareth Line but these attacks were only diversionary. Montgomery, through radio interceptions, was warned that the Germans were going to deploy the 10th, 15th and 21st Panzer Divisiions southward through the Matmata Hills to attack Medenine. The Allies therefore built up a strong defensive screen around Medenine. The northern section was held by the 51st Highland Division with the 8th Armoured Brigade held in reserve..The middle

section was held by the 7th Armoured Division (The Desert Rats) with the 22nd Armoured Brigade held in reserve and the southern sector was held by the 2nd New Zealand Division with the 4th Light Armoured Brigade in reserve. The defensive positions were set up to kill tanks rather than protect the infantry. The Panzer Divisions attacked at dawn on 6th March and the Allies were able to repell the attacks with their artillery causing severe losses to the Germans. It had been a model defensive engagement by the Eighth Army who only had to use their tank squadrons on one occassion, without loss, to support the Queens Regiment of the 7th Armoured Division. The Germans lost 52 tanks and the next day Rommel ordered the engagement to be ended and the Panzer Divisions withdrew over the Matmata Hills.

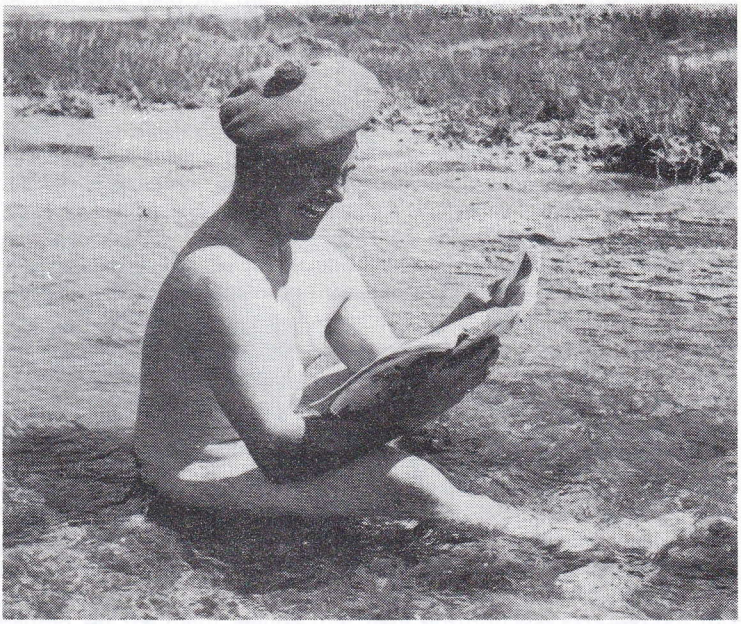
On the 9th March, Rommel left North Africa to continue his interrupted sick leave. He was not destined to return. Montgomery's attack on the Mareth Line was set for 17th March to coinside with the full moon. The 50th and 51st Divisions successfully opened the attack which was coordinated with Operation 'Wop', an attack by General Patton's II (US) Corps southwards to capture Gafsa and Station de Sened. On 20th March the 2nd New Zealand Corps supported by the 8th Armoured Brigade deployed to the west of the Matmata Hills, started their attack on Tebago and successfully seized the Tebago Gap from the Sahariano Group. Unfortunately they paused for the night feeling that their position was exposed but this gave the Axis forces time to plug the gap with the 164th Division and 21st Panzer Division.

Meanwhile the Eighth Army seized its objective, held the bridgehead and made a causeway to enable 42 Valentine tanks of the 50th Royal Tank Regiment to cross the Wadi. However, the tanks with their light 2 pounder guns made little impression on the enemy and Montgomery asked Alexander for Patton's help suggesting that the II (US) Corps advanced through Maknassy to cut the Gabes road. The Germans reacted and sent the 15th Panzer Division to check the Eighth Army's advance and the 10th Panzer Division to stop Patton's advance. On 22nd March the 15th Panzer Division outgunned the Valentine tanks of the 50th Royal Tank Regiment and the bridgehead was all but lost.

BATTLE OF MARETH AND TEBAGO



Montgomery reacted by swithching his main attack to the 2nd New Zealand Corps reinforcing them with the X Corps and 1st Armoured Division. The II (US) Corps faired better and repelled the 10th Panzer Division's attacks. D-Day was set for 26th March when Freyberg's 2nd New Zealand Corps with Horrocks. X corps, advanced through the Tebago Gap. The attack was to be proceeded with air bombardment and full air cover. The attack went as planned and the German defence of the Valley collapsed. Horrocks' advance was temporarily stopped on 27th March by a well organised anti-tank screen but by 29th March the objectives had been won and the Battles of Mareth and Tebago were over.



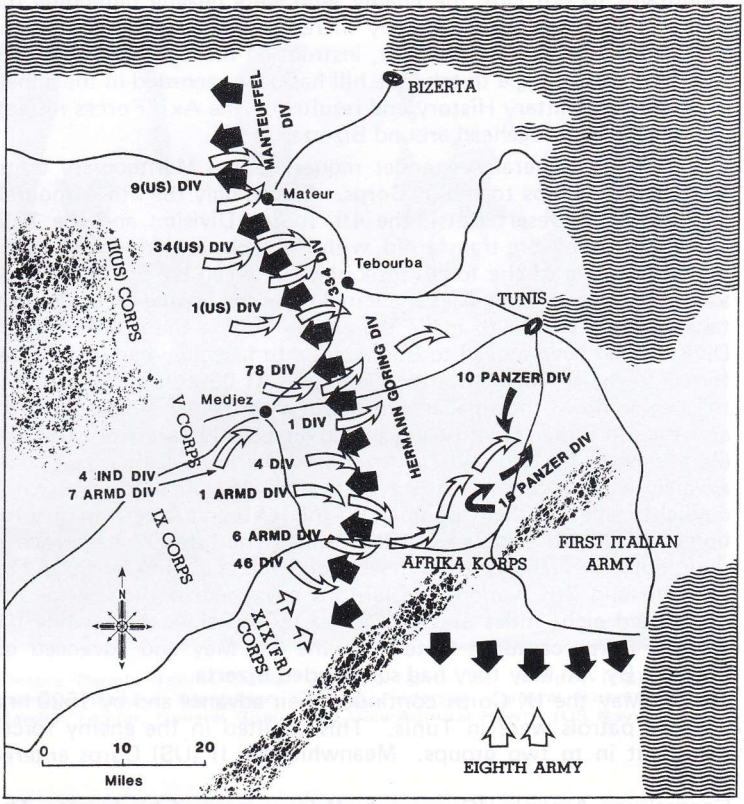
Cooling off after a spell in the line while the battle still rages a few miles away!

23. OPERATION VULCAN.

Operation Vulcan had been planned in February 1943. Originally it excluded the II (US) Corps due to their lack of training and the difficulty of supplying them over the poor Tunisian roads. General Bradley protested to Eisenhower saying that it was important for the Corps to get battle experience and for American national morale to be seen to be part of the Operation that would remove the Axis Forces from North African soil. The II (US) Corps were therefore given the northern sector with Bizerta as its objective. General Alexander therefore transferred the II (US) Corps from one end of the line to the other. He also transferred the 1st British Armoured Division from the Eighth Army to the First Army. The regrouping of the forces took place between the 16th and 20th April.

As a preliminary to Vulcan the Eighth Army attacked at Enfidaville and although the 2nd New Zealand Division and the 4th Indian Division did make advances, they were not strong enough to hold the ground against German counter attacks. The attack was broken off until 28th April although Montgomery did maintain pressure on the line .

OPERATION VULCAN



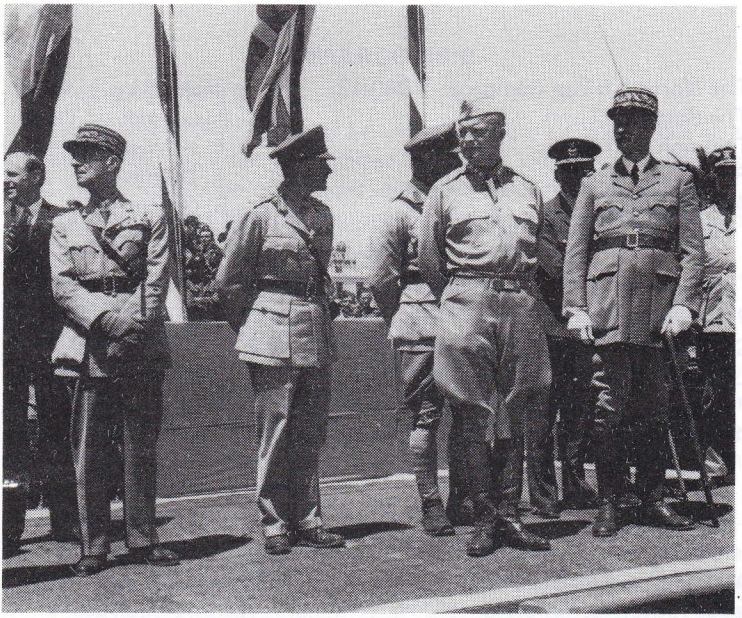
General Alexander's plan for Vulcan was to coordinate the attacks along the entire front so that the Germans would be pinned down and could not move reserves from one part of the front to another to counter-attack. Even so when the IX Corps opened the attack of Operation Vulcan on 22nd April, General von Arnim did move the HQ of the Afrika Korps and three armoured divisions from the Eighth Army front to counter the attack of the IX Corps. Resistance was strong and although the IX Corps had made a 12 mile deep breach in the German front, they were being held. The V Corps was fairing a little better although it did take 'Long Stop' hill, the North Irish Horse driving their Churchill tanks up the djebel to support the infantry. However, although the Allies had made modest gains by 28th April, the German loss of tanks and guns were costly, particularly as they could not be replaced.

Meanwhile General Bradley's II (US) Corps also made little progress for the first three days. His plan was to move his troops along the mountains to outflank the enemy who were heavily defending the valleys. On 26th April, Bradley increased his attack and brought the 34th Division into the fray, instructing them to take Hill 609. The four day struggle to take the hill has been recorded in the annals of American Military History and resulted in the Axis Forces retreating to a closer bridgehead around Bizerta.

On 1st May, General Alexander requested that Montgomery transferred more troops to the IX Corps. Accordingly the 7th Armoured Division (The Desert Rats), the 4th Indian Division and the 20th Guards Brigade were transferred, with Horrocks as their commander. The regrouping of the forces took place between 1st-5th may. Much subterfuge was used by Alexander including the setting up of dummy tanks at Bou Arada to make the enemy believe the 6th Armoured Division had been moved to Bou Arada. In fact they had been transferred to the V Corps to attack Medjez. At 0300 hrs. on 6th May, the beginning of the final assault began with the 4th British Division and the 4th Indian Division advancing on a 3,000 yard front towards Medjez with the 6th and 7th Armoured Divisions at their rear. The advance was proceeded with a barrage of 16,000 shells and when daylight came, the light bombers of the RAF and American airforce bombed selected targets until 0700 hrs. The infantry had reached their objectives about 2½ miles beyond the start line by 0900 hrs. The 6th and 7th Armoured Divisions advanced in their wake and penetrated eight miles east of Medjez by nightfall. Meanwhile the III (US) Corps captured Mateur on the 3rd May and advanced on Bizerta. By 7th May they had surrounded Bizerta.

On 8th May the IX Corps continued their advance and by 1520 hrs. advance patrols were in Tunis. This resulted in the enemy forces being cut in to two groups. Meanwhile the II (US) Corps entered Bizerta.

General von Arnim's HQ was cut off from most of his forces. The General therefore lost control of the battle and the Axis resistance snapped. During the next four days the Allies quelled pockets of resistance. The IX Corps pushed eastwards and joined up with the Eighth Army cutting off the Afrika Korps. Over 250,000 men surrendered over the four days. The North Africa Campaign was over. The British had brought time to build up their resources, the Americans had gained valuable battle experience for the European theatre and the commanders had had a dress rehearsal for Operation 'Overlord' the Normandy landings.



Victory Parade dais in Tunis. Left to right:- Mr. Murphy (US), General Catroux, General Alexander, General Anderson, General Eisenhower, Air Marshal Tedder, General Giraud and Vice-Admiral Hewitt (US Navy).

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DESIGNER'S NOTES.

Tunisia is not one of the best known campaigns of WWII, but it is an interesting one from a wargamer's point of view since it includes both sweeping mobile operations and more static positional warfare. Morover both sides had the opportunity of taking the offensive and each scenario allows for many different strategies.

The game system used is broadly similar to that in "Desert Rats" albeit with a number of changes and improvements. It has, however, been substantially rewritten to allow for better use of memory. Most of the memory saved has been used for the map which is very big. This not only allows for better graphics but also allows the mountain valleys of Tunisia that shaped the fighting so much, to be better depicted. It also makes clear the shortage of troops that both sides suffered from at times.

The main additions to the rules are hidden movement, zones of control and air attacks. Hidden movement substantially increases the tension and excitement of the game. It forces players to adopt a more cautious strategy than they would otherwise, but also gives great opportunities for surprising and outmanoeuvring your opponent. However, for those of you with weak hearts, you can choose to have units in full view. The air rules have been deliberately kept simple. Whilst I felt that air power made a great enough contribution to the campaign to justify their inclusion, I didn't want players to have to spend too much time marshalling their aircraft. The rules were designed to give players a choice of how to employ their airpower, without having to worry about how it is organised.

R. T. SMITH.



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