

[HOME](#) [COMMUNITY](#) [STORES](#) [NEWS](#) [SPOTLIGHT](#) **HOBBY** [LOGIN](#) [ONLINE STORE](#)

Hobby

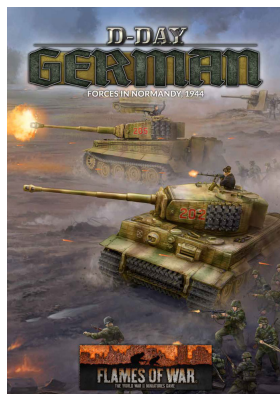
Your Cart: Empty

Purchase these Items

Products mentioned in this Article

--None--

Recent Articles

[Painting Sumpfmuster 43](#)[New Year, New Projects](#)[Painting a Katzchen with Brush Only](#)[Assembling the ZB53 Machine-gun Platoon \(RO704\)](#)[Assembling the 44M Buzoganyveto Rocket Launcher Platoon \(HU707\)](#)[Assembling the Rifle Platoon \(HU702\)](#)[Painting Paper Panzers - Part 1](#)[Painting Paper Panzers - Part 2](#)[Exploring Clash of Steel in a Desert Setting](#)[Raising Roads](#)

Crossroads: St. Lambert-sur-Dives

An Axis of Attack Campaign

By David Hyttenrauch

History: [Falaise Pocket](#)[Download the Axis of Attack campaign rules...](#)

Background

Following the Normandy break-out and the capture of Caen by Allied forces, a huge envelopment of German forces in Normandy began. The major phase of the battle to complete the envelopment lasted from 16-22 August 1944. American forces in the south began to swing northward as one pincer, while Canadian, Polish and British forces began to swing south as the other pincer to meet and close the trap.

German forces caught in this *Kessel*, or cauldron, had been in combat continuously for several months.

During the break-out, many combat units were destroyed in detail, while others were shattered, subject to continuous artillery bombardments from all sides and aerial bombardment by Allied aircraft. Armour and transport units were attacked as key targets, leaving a confused mass of infantry mingled with a whole range of dismounted troops retreating eastwards. The cauldron came to be known as the Falaise Pocket.

The Allied left pincer was made up of two elements. The Polish Armoured Division drove east and then south, meeting fierce resistance from German units still outside the pocket trying to hold open a line of retreat.

The Canadian 4th Armoured Division (on the Polish right), driving more directly south into what would be called the Falaise Gap.

At the very tip of the Canadian advance were two companies of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada and one squadron of the 29th Armoured Reconnaissance (South Alberta) Regiment; these units found themselves trying to move south down Highway D13 towards the village of Chambois to close the gap.

At the same moment, the Germans launched their last organized break-out attempt. The Canadians' movement south crossed paths with the retreating Germans east of the river Dives. In a confused and desperate three-day battle, the Canadians and Germans collided at St. Lambert-sur-Dives.





Allied Briefing

On 16 August, Montgomery insistently demanded that First Canadian Army drive south and east to close the Falaise Gap and link up with the Americans moving north. Closing the gap would allow the destruction in detail or force the surrender of the remaining German forces in Normandy, and weaken the formation of a new defensive line further east in the direction of the river Seine.

The American drive led by the 90th Infantry Division has been stopped at Argentan by confused orders and a change of command.

From 17-20 August, the Canadians and Poles have little additional support despite the local availability of British armoured divisions, and they are the only forces actively driving a wedge into the retreating stream of Germans.

The Canadians' goal is to cut off the German retreat by seizing and holding the line of the D13 highway behind the river Dives towards Chambois, and particularly to secure the bridges at St. Lambert-sur-Dives. Second, to establish a blocking position along this line to contain the German retreat until sufficient forces arrive to annihilate the pocket.

German Briefing

While Rommel's goal of containing the Allies in their beach-heads and destroying them before they could break out has failed, a layered defensive position leading back to the river Seine is still in place, strongly held by German forces including the 12. SS-Panzer Division and the Tigers of the 101. SS-Heavy Tank Battalion.

Amid the retreat from Normandy, continuous Allied armoured attacks, artillery bombardment, and air attacks from fighters and bombers have shattered unit cohesion, but individual officers are still able to enforce discipline amid the developing rout, reassembling some effective units on the kampfguppe model, with infantry forces of platoon-size supported by the surviving tanks and assault guns.



Fallschirmjäger units are almost untroubled in their own movement east. Moving by night with discipline and stealth, paratroopers and scratch battle groups prepare to fight their way out of the pocket and secure a line of retreat for the remainder.

On 16 August, the Germans' goal is to secure the bridges at St. Lambert-sur-Dives to allow surviving armour and transport to retreat north-east toward Vimoutiers and link up with the 12th SS-Panzer Division.

Situation Report

At the start of the campaign, Canadian forces are driving from Trun almost perpendicular to the German line of retreat and have moved into the village of St. Lambert-sur-Dives. They are about to launch a probing attack south on the D13 towards Chambois. The German forces moving towards St. Lambert are mixed, many lacking in any cohesion and having abandoned their heavy weapons, but some still retain their discipline and fighting spirit. They all have the same goal: to retreat out of the Falaise Pocket and escape to the east.

Scenario 1: South on the D13

Mission

Encounter. The Canadian player is the attacker and take the first turn.

Forces

The Canadians are probing south along the D13 highway towards Chambois with C Company of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (900-point British Rifle company upgraded to Canadians). Resistance so far has been light. Suddenly, as the advance moves south it runs into a well-prepared Grenadier company (900-point German Grenadier Company).



Suggested Canadian force: (D-Day: British Rifle Company with Canadian Divisions Relentless Command Card)

Rifle HQ (2x Sten SMG team)
 3 Rifle Platoons (each 7x Bren Gun & SMLE rifle team, 1x PIAT anti-tank team, 1x 2-inch mortar team)
 1 Universal Carrier Patrol (with 3x Universal Carriers (MG))
 1 3-inch Mortar Platoon (with 6x 3-inch mortar)
 Typhoon Fighter-bomber Flight (2x Typhoon)

Suggested German force: (D-Day: German Beach Defence Grenadier Rifle Company)

Grenadier HQ (2x MP40 SMG teams with Panzerfaust)
 3 Grenadier Platoons (7x MG42 & K98 rifle team with Panzerfaust)
 1 sMG34 Machine-gun Platoon (4x sMG34 HMG team)
 1 8cm Mortar Platoon (4x 8cm mortar)

Terrain

The D13 highway runs quite straight from the northwest of the map to exit at the southeast. The highway is lined with hedges, walls and small copses of trees. The river Dives winds north-south down the west edge of the map, lined unevenly with trees on both banks. There is one ford at the hamlet of Moissy near the north edge of the map, but otherwise the river is Difficult Terrain for all teams. Teams may not stop in the water. Teams in contact with either bank are considered Concealed. The surrounding countryside is dotted with scattered farms, standing crops and orchards separated by low walls and hedges.



Results

- If the Canadians win, they secure the ford at Moissy and the whole of the east bank of the Dives river, narrowing the Falaise Gap significantly and preventing the retreat of German armour and transport. Proceed to play Scenario 2, The Falaise Gap.
- If the Germans win, they hold both banks of the Dives river and push the Canadians back into the village of St. Lambert-sur-Dives, leaving the ford at Moissy available and making it possible to contest the bridges at St. Lambert. Proceed to play Scenario 4, St. Lambert-sur-Dives.

Scenario 2: The Falaise Gap

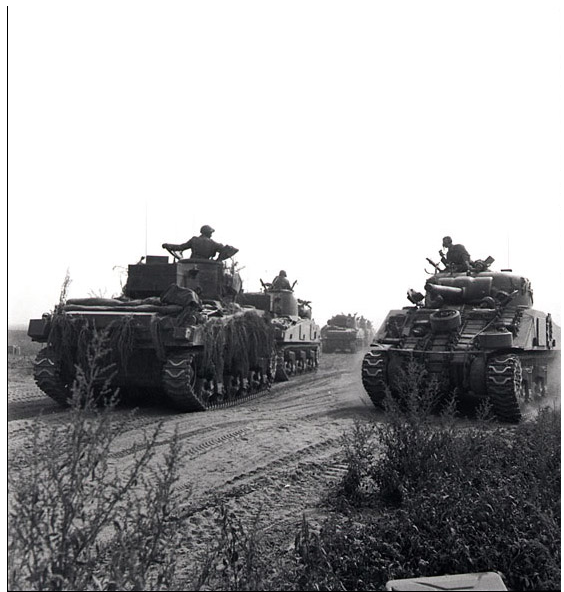
Mission

Use Bridgehead (rulebook), Outflanked or Breakout (D-Day: German) with the Canadian player as the Attacker.

Forces

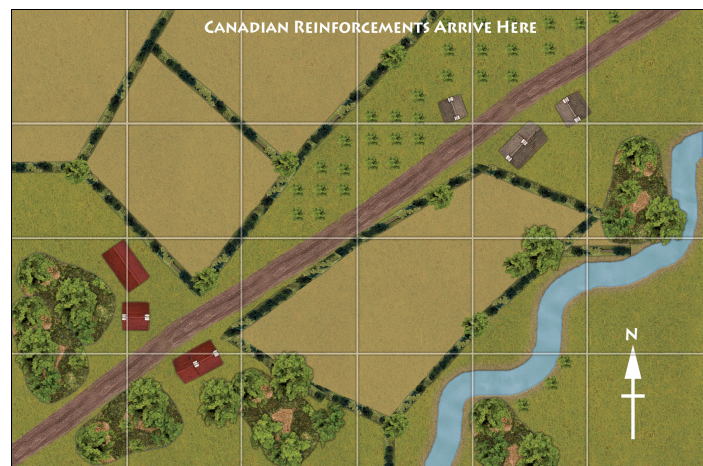
August 17, 1944. The Canadians are conducting a reconnaissance in strength, driving to complete the encirclement of the German forces. The Canadian force is B Company of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada, supported by armour from the South Alberta Regiment and anti-tank guns from the 5th Anti-tank Regiment. Use a 100-point British Rifle Company upgraded to Canadians to recreate this force. The force should include one Sherman DD Armoured Troop.

The German force is a scratch Panzer IV Tank Company from the 116th (Windhund) Division (use 116th Panzer Division Greyhound Command Card) attempting to withdraw towards the Seine. Use a 100 point German Panzer IV Tank Company.



Suggested Canadian Force:

Rifle Company HQ (2x Sten SMG team)
 3 Rifle Platoons (each 7x Bren Gun & SMLE rifle team, 1x PIAT anti-tank team, 1x 2-inch mortar team)
 2 Universal Carrier Patrols (each with 3 Universal Carriers (MG))
 1 3-inch Mortar Platoon (6x 3-inch mortar)
 1 Vickers Machine-gun Platoon (4x Vickers MMG)
 1 Sherman DD Armoured Troop (3x Sherman)
 1 M10 SP Anti-tank Troop (4x M10 (3-inch))



Suggested German Force:

Panzer IV Tank Company HQ (2x Panzer IV)
 1 Panzer IV Tank Platoon (3x Panzer IV)
 1 Panther Tank Platoon (3x Panther)
 1 Marder Tank-Hunter Platoon (2x Marder) (Fortress Europe)
 1 Panzergrenadier Platoon (7 MG42 team with Panzerfaust, Softskin Transport Command Card 4x Kfz 70 truck)

Terrain

The road between St. Lambert-sur-Dives and Argentan winds southwest-northeast across the table. The road is lined with hedges, walls and small copses of trees.

The Canadians deliver their ambush and receive reinforcements from the north side of the map. The surrounding countryside is dotted with scattered farms, standing crops and orchards separated by low walls and hedges, and larger woods. There are no significant hills.

Results

- If the Canadians win, they narrow the Falaise Gap from 18 miles to 6 and allow a link-up with the Americans. Move on to play Scenario 3, Falaise Pocket.

- If the Germans win, they push the Canadians back to St. Lambert and launch an attack there to secure the bridges. Proceed to Scenario 4, St. Lambert-sur-Dives.

Scenario 3. The Falaise Pocket

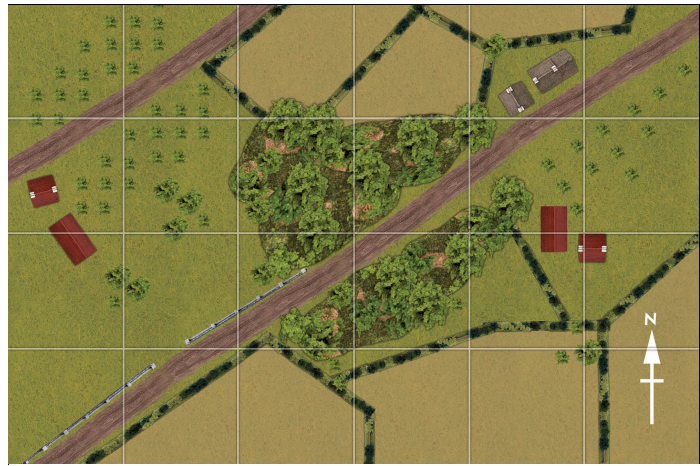
Mission

Bridgehead. The Canadians are the attacker and take the first turn.

Forces

18 August 1944. The Canadians of 4th Armoured Division are tightening the circle. A Company, of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, supported by armour from the South Albertas, has been ordered to scout a large wood believed to be a night-time rally point for German tanks of the 116th Panzer Division.

Use a 60 point British Rifle Company upgraded to Canadians against a 60 point Panzer IV Tank Company. The Canadians may conduct the battle as a night attack.



Special Circumstances

If this battle is being fought for a second time, the Canadians may conduct a Preliminary Bombardment before the game begins, and the German forces are changed to a 90-point Beach Defence Grenadier Company. This attack may not be at night.

Suggested Canadian force:

Rifle HQ
 1 Rifle Platoon (7x Bren Gun & SMLE rifle team, 1x PIAT anti-tank team, 1x 2-inch mortar team)
 1 Rifle Platoon (5x Bren Gun & SMLE rifle team, 1x PIAT anti-tank team, 1x 2-inch mortar team)
 1 25 pdr Field Troop (4x 25 pdr gun)
 1 6 pdr Anti-tank Platoon (2x 6 pdr gun)
 1 Sherman DD Armoured Troop (3x Sherman)
 1 M10 SP Anti-Tank Platoon (2x M10 (3-inch))

Suggested German force:

Panzer IV Tank Company HQ (2x Panzer IV)
 1 Panzer IV Tank Platoon (3x Panzer IV)
 1 StuG Tank Platoon (3x StuG)
 1 Panzergrenadier Platoon (5x MG42 team with Panzerfaust, Softskin Transport Command Card 3x Kfz 70 truck)



Terrain

The map centre is dominated by a very large wood (at least 2'/60cm by 2'/60cm) with some clearings. The surrounding countryside is dotted with scattered farms, standing crops and orchards separated by low walls and hedges, and smaller woods. There are no significant hills.

Results

- If the Canadians win, they continue to squeeze the Falaise Pocket leading to the collapse of remaining resistance. If the Canadians have won this scenario for the first time, re-fight Scenario 3, The Falaise Pocket, using the new rules and forces.

If the Canadians have won for a second time, the campaign ends. The Canadians have closed the Pocket and the Allies have captured of all remaining German forces.

- If the Germans win, they again pry open an escape route eastwards and push the fight into St. Lambert. Play Scenario 4, St. Lambert-sur-Dives.

Scenario 4: St. Lambert-sur-Dives

Mission

No Retreat. The German player is the attacker.

Forces

18 - 22 August, 1944. Major Dave Currie, commanding C-Squadron of the South Albertas and two companies of the Argylls, has been charged with holding the village of St. Lambert against increasing German pressure to secure the bridges at the south end of the village.

Use 100 point armies to represent the opposing armies.

Special Circumstances: The Canadians may deploy up to 6"/15cm further forward than normal. The Germans are even more unusual by this stage in the retreat. All teams are rated to Reluctant Motivation to reflect wavering morale.

Suggested Canadian Forces

Rifle Company HQ (2x Sten SMG team)
3 Rifle Platoons (each 7x Bren Gun & SMLE rifle team, 1x PIAT anti-tank team, 1x 2-inch mortar team)
1 Vickers Machine-gun Platoon (4x Vickers MMG)

Sherman DD Armoured Squadron (2x Sherman)
2 Sherman DD Armoured Troop (each 3x Sherman)
1 Crusader AA Troop (2x Crusader AA)

1 17 pdr Anti-tank Platoon (4x 17 pdr gun)
2 25 pdr Field Troop (each 4x 25 pdr gun)

Suggested German Forces:

Panzer Grenadier Company HQ (2x MP40 SMG team with Panzerfaust)
3 Panzer Grenadier Platoons (each 7x MG42 with Panzerfaust)
1 sMG34 Machine-gun Platoon (4x sMG34 HMG)
1 8cm Mortar Platoon (4x 8cm mortar)
1 Panzer IV Tank Platoon (4x Panzer IV)
2 Tiger Tank Platoon (2x Tiger)



The Germans may only deploy one tank platoon east of the Dives river during setup; the others must be deployed west of the river.



Terrain

The D13 highway winds through the village of St. Lambert, roughly parallel to and on the east side of the river Dives. Both run from the northwest to the southeast. The village sits on the east side of the river, and is mostly strung out along the road, stretching the whole length of the map. Single houses and high walls line the road. A second watercourse, the Foulbec stream, flows from the northeast corner of the map, running west-southwest to flow into the Dives; there is a stone bridge where it crosses the D13. A secondary road runs from south to north, crossing first the Dives in the south and then the Foulbec Stream in the north on stone bridges. In a curve of the river Dives, on the east bank, are nestled the village church and the mairie or town hall.

Except at the bridges, the river and the stream are both Impassable to vehicles and Very Difficult Going for other teams. Teams may not stop in the water. Teams in contact with either bank are considered Concealed. The surrounding countryside is dotted with scattered farms, standing crops and orchards, each separated by low walls and hedges, and larger woods.

Results

• If the Canadians win, they manage to secure the village, but the fight is not over. They are facing increasing pressure from German infantry crossing the river north of their position, threatening their lines of supply and retreat. Proceed to play Scenario 5: Hill 117.

• If the Germans win, they hold both banks of the Dives river and secure the vital bridges to allow a break-out attempt by their remaining forces in the pocket. Short of infantry, the Canadians are infiltrated by units slipping through the opening. Proceed to play Scenario 6: Infiltrated!

Continue on: [Part II of the Falaise Axis of Attack Campaign...](#)

Last Updated On **Tuesday, May 26, 2020** by Wayne at Battlefront

