

Feint in the North

West Africans on the northern frontier of Kenya

March, 1941

Situation

In early March 1941 the first attempt by the British 11th East African Division to cross the Juba River in southwestern Somalia had failed. While they regrouped General Cunningham in Kenya ordered a reconnaissance in force to the border post of Moyale on the Mega Escarpment to draw the attention of the Italian commander away from the Juba River front. The only unit free was the 24th Gold Coast Brigade of the 12th West African Division. With some units detached, the brigade with attached transport was sent north along the Wajir Moyale track.

The Duke of Aosta was not a happy man. His frontier posts on the border with Kenya had fallen too easily to the Commonwealth Forces. He detached the Bersaglieri Battalion from the Savoy Grenadier Division at Addis Ababa and sent it south, hoping it would be a rallying force for the native Askari units. To regain some prestige and seize the initiative in the south a raid was planned on the forward airstrip and district HQ at Wajir in northern Kenya.

Scenario Notes

Benghazi Handicap's "Gaming the Desert War" rules are in force.

Duration of battle: 0800 to 1400 (13 Turns)

Number of players: 2 - 4

Weather: clear and hot

Visibility: 60"

Battlefield

Village: The Native village (including walls or other features) block LOS and counts as concealing terrain for spotting purposes, but provides no cover for morale or direct/indirect fire; stationary stands still get -1 cover from direct fire.

Shallow Wadi: Stands must be on a hasty move order and pay the base movement allowance to enter or exit the shallow wadi. The wadi provides concealment and medium cover for personnel against direct fire and HE attacks.

Roads: All roads are unsealed dirt tracks.

Salt Marsh: Treat as moderate mud (x2 movement for personnel, x4 movement for vehicles). Chance of miring; tracked (1), wheeled (2).

Woods: The woods in this scenario are located on mountainous terrain; x4 movement for personnel and impassable to all vehicles.

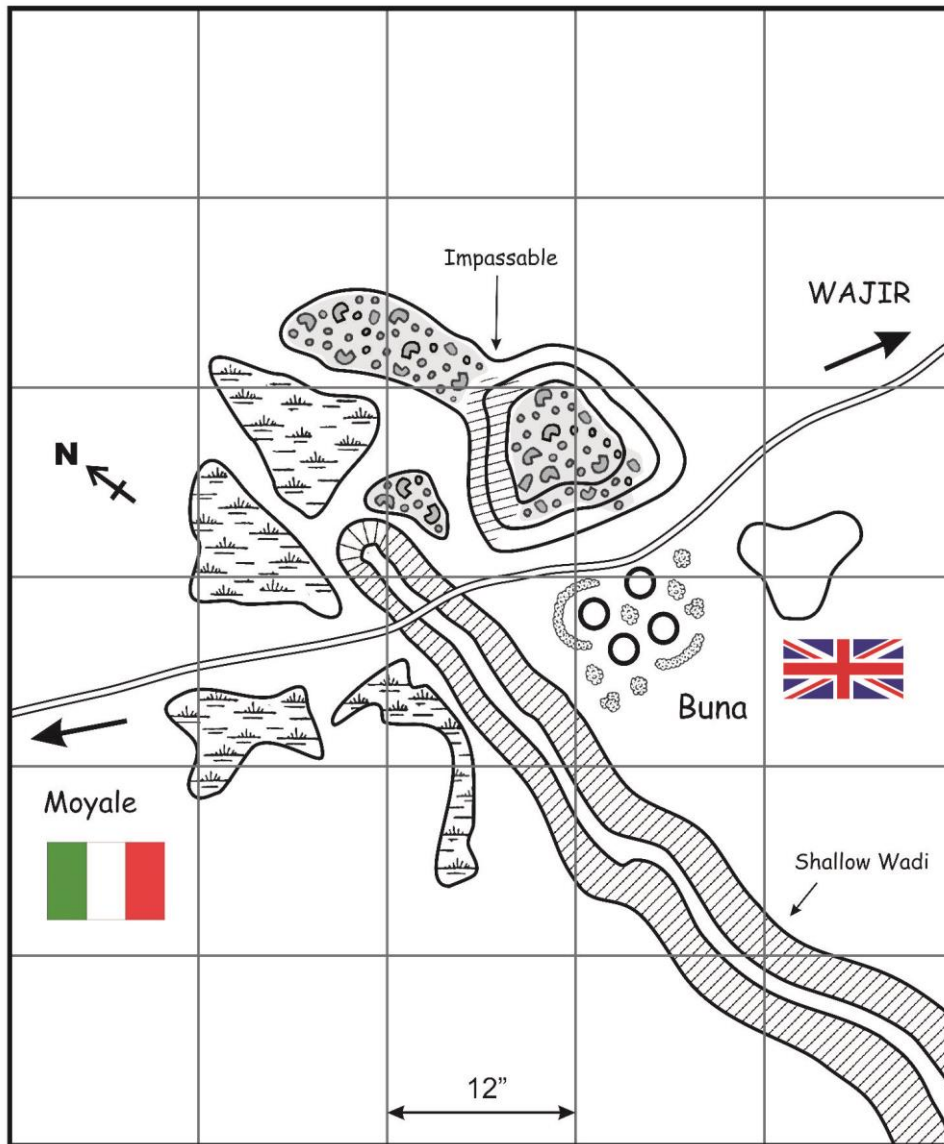
Mountain Cliffs: Shaded areas on hills are impassable to personnel and vehicles

The Italian forces enter on turn 1 on the northern table edge on the road from Moyale. The 24th Gold Coast Brigade start east of the wadi along the road to Wajir.

Campaign

In our campaign the battle was a defeat for the West Africans. They were unable to withstand the Italian artillery and tanks and retreated to Wajir. There was no pursuit as the Italian commander had received word of Commonwealth Forces crossing the Juba River and were closing in on Mogadishu; all forces, especially motorised units, were needed on the road to Mogadishu.





	Condition
British Victory	Italian forces have been denied the high ground east of Buna. In addition, at least six stands of Italian troops have been eliminated. A CV 33 tankette counts as one stand.
Draw	Italian forces have captured the mountain slope high ground but have lost six or more stands.
Italian Victory	The Italian has taken the high ground east of Buna with less than 6 bases lost or the British player leaves the table before turn 13.



British Army

Mission: Defend

Prevent the Italians capturing the high ground east of Buna.

12th West African Division

Troop Quality: Trained
Morale: 8

Set up dismounted on or within 2" of the track east of the wadi.

24 th Gold Coast Brigade Headquarters	
Headquarters Company	1 command stand & car
	1 medium supply truck
	1 staff radio truck
Mountain Gun Battery	1 command infantry stand
	1 3.7" mountain howitzer and crew
	2 light trucks

24 th Gold Coast Brigade, 2 Battalions each with:	
Battalion HQ	1 command stand
Support Company	1 AA LMG stand 1 pioneer stand 1 support stand
3 Infantry Companies, each	1 command infantry stand (<i>integral A/T rifle</i>)
	2 infantry stands

2 nd Transport Battalion	
Battalion HQ	1 command stand & car
	1 light repair truck
	1 medium supply truck
3 Transport Companies each with:	6 medium trucks
	1 light truck

Off-board Artillery: nil

Air support

2nd RAAF Army Co-op Sqn (Experienced 9)
(1xHartebeest)

Hawker Hartebeest Attack 1937 - - 1(5)1" (2)

Arrive on the eastern road on Turn 1

12 th West African Divisional Support Company	
HQ	1 command infantry stand 1 light truck
Mortar platoon	1 3" stokes mortar 1 light truck
3 M.G. platoons, each with:	1 MMG stand 1 light truck

24 th Gold Coast Brigade, 1 Battalion with:	
Battalion HQ	1 command stand
Support Company	1 AA LMG stand 1 pioneer stand 1 support stand
2 Infantry Companies, each	1 command infantry stand (<i>integral A/T rifle</i>)
	2 infantry stands

Notes

1. The Gold Coast Brigade is minus several company sized units due to losses and detachments.
2. The Gold Coast Brigade has just arrived in Buna; all stands in LOS of the Italian entry point must be placed on table at the start of the game.
4. Using the "Transport to the rear" rules in "Benghazi Handicap" trucks need not be represented.
5. Air support is available as General Support with one mission only in the AM from Turn 6 and one mission in the PM from Turn 9.
6. The Brigade is at the end of a very long supply chain; ammunition depletion on a roll of 2.

Italian Army

Mission: Breakthrough.

Capture the high ground east of Buna or force the retreat of the British garrison of Buna.

Arrive on western track entry point on Turn 1

Troop Quality: Regular
Morale: 8

Gondar PAI Company	
	Command motorcycle SMG stand 2 motorcycle SMG stands

Gimma PAI Company	
	Command motorcycle SMG stand 2 motorcycle SMG stands

Bersaglieri Infantry Battalion	
Headquarters	1 command stand & car
Weapons Company	2 MMG stands 2 light trucks
	1 45mm mortar stand 1 light truck
2 Infantry Companies, each	1 command infantry stand (<i>integral A/T rifle</i>) 1 light truck
	2 infantry stands 1 medium truck

Grenadiers of Savoy Mortar Battalion	
2nd Company	1 command infantry stand 2 81mm mortar stands 3 light trucks

Arrive on western track entry point on Turn 2

Troop Quality: Trained
Morale: 7

Group Wajir	
Headquarters	1 command stand & car Light radio truck 1 Recon Lancia Armoured Car

3 rd Colonial Tankette Battalion	
1st Company	1 command CV33 tankette 2 CV 33

Off board artillery (available from Turn 3)

3x100mm M14 howitzers

Ammunition depletion on Red 2

Air support

Southern Front Bomber Squadron (Regular 8)
(1 x Ca.133 Colonial bomber)

Ca 133 MdB 1934 - - 1(5)1.5" (2)

Notes

1. The Lancia armoured car in the Group Headquarters is self-ordering.
2. The PAI (Polizia dell'Africa Italiana) are native troops highly trained and serve as military police officers.
3. Air support is available as General Support for one mission only from Turn 9.
4. Bersaglieri Battalion has one company detached on other duties.