

Breaking the San Fratello Line

Sicily August 1943

This **20mm Flames of War (FOW)** scenario has the German 29th Panzer Grenadier Division with the Italian 26th *Assietta* Division alongside, defending the San Fratello line. Their opponents are U.S. 3rd Division pushing eastward to Messina, supported by Admiral Davidson's naval group offshore.

Information web link reading from the U.S. Army WWII Sicily reports:

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-MTO-Sicily/USA-MTO-Sicily-18.html>



View over San Fratello ridge to Cesano road going south.

After several days and repulsed battalion level assaults, the American 3rd Division barely has a toe hold position across the Furiano river (off map west end). With the recently arrived U.S. 7th Infantry regiment, the battered American infantry, with some armor support, try again to storm the San Fratello ridge position. Meanwhile, Patton, Bradley and Truscott mind group have created a battalion sized amphibious group, supported by Admiral Davidson's task force, to try a rear area landing to the German-Italian front line. Once again, the assault starts with failures, but the German forces start to retire towards their next defensive line. The Italians defend San Fratello, along with some German rearguard units, while the bulk of 29th Pz. Grenadiers retire eastward. In the middle of this operation, the Americans beach land behind the German lines. This sets up a wild multi-fronted battle along the northern coast of Sicily.



View north. Furiano river crossing with rocky ground and old vineyards below San Fratello ridge position.



San Marco ridge and town position located on eastern end of the battlefield.

Weather is clear and light winds for the tabletop action. No issue for airpower operations.

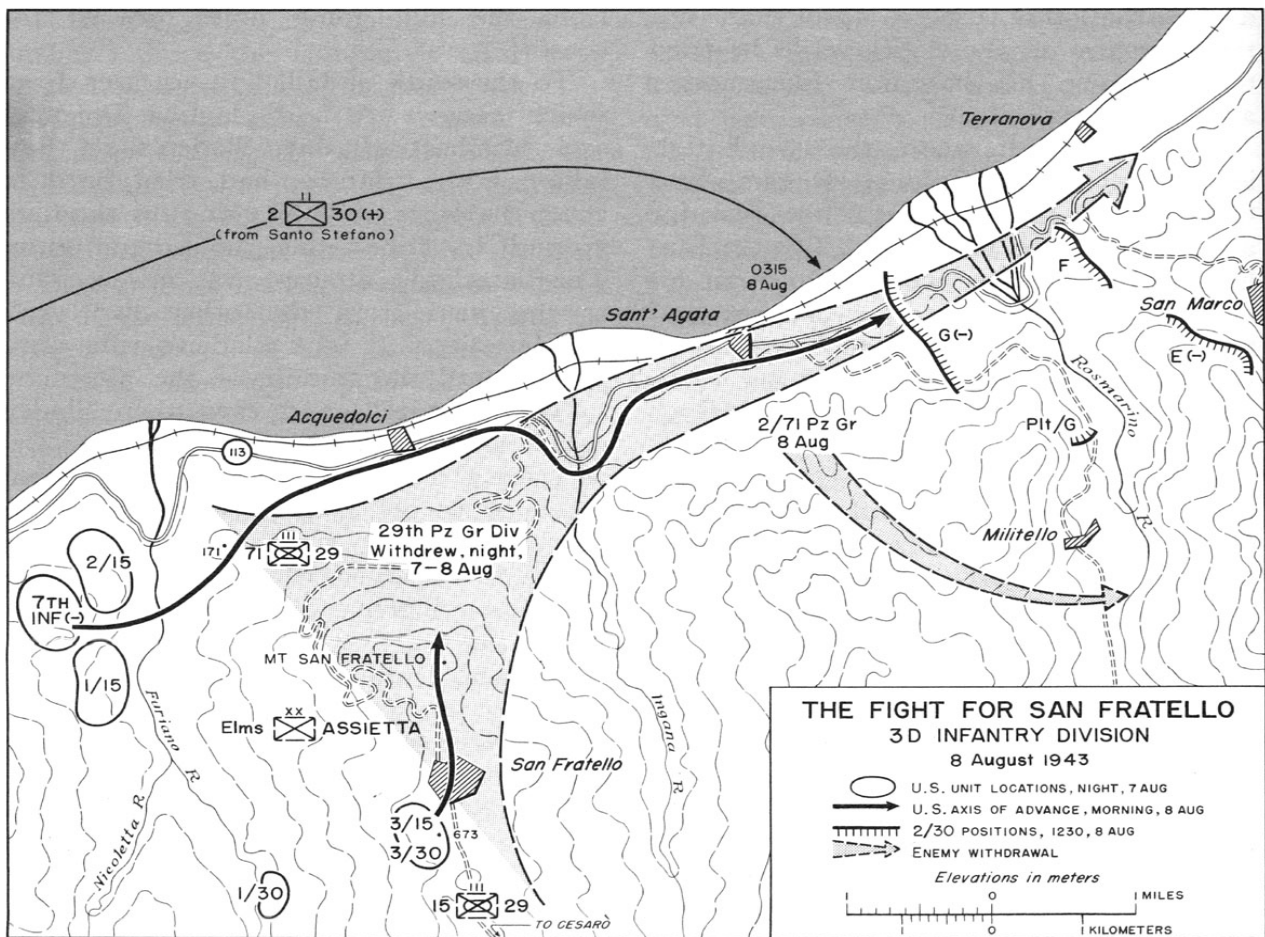
Terrain notes:

Each hill slope level is sufficiently tall to provide cover from direct observation unless the observer is on a higher position. Hull down armor is permitted but bog rolls are required. Vehicle movement on the level hills, hill slopes, town and town ruins, and across riverbeds is very difficult going (VDG, skill test rolled). The other terrain is normal per the FOW rules (rated as DG in most cases). Infantry and man-packed gun teams can double march if on clear hill terrain and don't cross a hill slope.

Rocky ground doesn't prevent LOS across. Just provides bulletproof (BP) cover while positioned within.

River beds provide soft cover (not BP) only. Beach sand difficult going (DG) for all vehicles.

Buildings can hold up to team base surface area. In most cases this is four infantry teams or less. San Fratello ruins can hold equal to their surface area (about a platoon).



MAP 6

Game Mission Victory and Turn limit:

There is a 16-turn limit to the game. The U.S. 7th Infantry platoons (infantry or armored) **must link up** with the beachhead position for the Americans to claim any level of positive victory. If the link up is not completed by game **turn 10**, reduce the American victory by one level. Linking up is having any platoon from each force touch their opposite's bases. *Remember you can double march, if possible, to cover ground faster....hint...hint*

American Victory Conditions:

Major Victory....Patton in the front-page newspapers!

Remove all German platoons from 1st level (flat lands) tabletop areas and suffer less platoon total loss count than the German-Italians. Patton beating Monty to Messina is a sure thing.

Minor Victory....back paper news as Patton fumes.

Germans are removed from 1st level (flat lands) tabletop area by American action or just them leaving (retire march off) but the American losses in platoons is greater than the German-Italians. Patton has the inside track to beat Monty to Messina.

German-Italian Victory Conditions:

Glorious Victory....Trip to see Hitler soon and write up in *Der Berliner*.

German-Italians have an active (still fighting) platoon west of the Ingano riverbed position (on flatland) and the American beach-landing group suffers three more platoons loss *on shore*. Monty will beat Patton to Messina for sure.

Survival Victory....write up in the *El Duce* magazine.

German-Italians have an active (still fighting) on table platoon west of the Rosmarino riverbed (on flatland). Patton may come in second place for the race to Messina even after some serious butt kicking.

Draw... Historical outcome.

Germans only have to retire from the table with more active (still fighting) platoons than lost German platoons by turn 16. The Italians don't count as historically they surrendered after the Germans left them behind. Patton still has outside chance to beat Monty to Messina...but more American soldiers must fight the same Germans at the next hillside position.



Town of Saint Agata and beaches, from San Fratello northern ridge position, looking eastward.

American briefing: **Only AMERICAN EYES or German spies**

Turn One:

Americans start the game with their renewed assault on the San Fratello position. On **turn one**, your platoons labeled “**E**” can enter the tabletop anywhere on the western map edge (A-F). You can elect to delay the entrance movement till turn three if you wish but the German-Italians may “retire away”.

Turn Two:

Your beach amphibious group labeled “**A**” will start landing on **turn two**. Per the beach landing rules, position the landing craft on any beach terrain and roll for tidal drift. Tidal drift is westward. Remember the area beach terrain is difficult going for vehicles and no double-timing. Any delayed landing craft will try again on next turn. Enemy aircraft has been noted and bombed your last pre-invasion arrangements.

Turn Three:

Your beach amphibious group labeled “**B**” will start landing on **turn three**. Per the beach landing rules, position the landing craft on any beach terrain and roll for tidal drift. Tidal drift is westward. Any delayed landing craft will try again on next turn.

Turn Four:

Your beach amphibious group labeled “**C**” will start landing on **turn four**. Per the beach landing rules, position the landing craft on any beach terrain and roll for tidal drift. Tidal drift is westward. Any delayed landing craft will try again on next turn. Elements of the U.S. 7th Regiment can enter the tabletop battle. Group label “**D**” can enter on A or B rows of western map edge (along road). Player can delay entrance if desired to prevent overcrowding. Group label “**F**” can enter tabletop on the San Fratello ridge from the southern table edge at map squares F3 or F4 (road from Casaro)

American Order of Battle and starting positions:

All American platoons are **Confident Trained**.

Group A Landing Beachhead (1st Wave)

1st Boat Landing section: (Cmd., boat section)

2nd Boat Landing section: (Cmd., boat section)

Group B (2nd Wave)

Tank Platoon: (5x M4 Sherman)

Engineer combat platoon: (Cmd., 2 operating squads, weapons squad, 3 bazooka)

Boat Landing Infantry Assault HQ: (Cmd)

Group C (3rd Wave)

Armored Field Artillery battery (Cmd., OP Sherman, 3x Priests (1gun section))

3rd Boat Landing section: (Cmd., boat section)

4th Boat Landing section: (Cmd., boat section)

Group D; Advance elements of U.S. 7th Infantry Regiment (30th Division)

Armored Rifle Infantry HQ: Cmd w/ transport)

1st Armored Rifle platoon: (Cmd., 2 rifle squads, 60mm mtr., 2 lmg + all bazooka)

2nd Armored Rifle platoon: (Cmd., 2 rifle squads, 60mm mtr., 2 lmg + all bazooka)

Tank platoon: (5x M4 Sherman)

Tank platoon: (5x M4 Sherman)

Armored Mortar platoon: (Cmd., 3x sections M4 81mm MMC)

Assault Gun platoon: (3x T30 75mm HMC)

Group E; Regrouped U.S. 15th & 30th Regiments (3rd Division):

Infantry HQ: (Cmd. only)

1st Rifle platoon: (Cmd., 3 rifle squads + Bazooka)

2nd Rifle platoon: (Cmd., 3 rifle squads + Bazooka)

3rd Rifle platoon: (Cmd., 3 rifle squads + Bazooka)

Machine Gun platoon: (Cmd., 2 MG sections, no bazooka)

Mortar platoon: (Cmd., 3 mortar sections M1 81mm)

Engineer Combat platoon: (Cmd., 2 operating squads, weapon squad, 3 bazooka)

105mm Field Artillery battery: (Cmd., 2 gun sections of M2a1 105mm guns), all except the independent artillery observers remain off western map edge during game. Observers are free to enter tabletop during game or declare they are observing from off board.

Bombardments are measured from western map / table edge for ranging.

105mm Field Artillery battery: (Cmd., 2 gun sections of M2a1 105mm guns). Battery is off tabletop like above 105mm field battery.

Group F; This converged “platoon” are remains of several platoons which successfully assaulted the southern Italian lines and came northward to assist in the San Fratello assault

Converged Rifle platoon: (Cmd., 3 rifle squads + Bazooka).

Naval Support

Admiral Davidson’s naval task force (of 2 cruisers and 6 destroyers) is escorting the landing group and available for naval gunfire support. One naval gunfire support (NGFS) template available every turn with following special rules:

Naval gunfire support:

You have automatic naval gunfire support (NGFS) within the dashed black line perimeter (all beach squares and adjacent map squares to beach). No summoning NGFS is required... automatic template placement. Outside of the beach area, the NGFS is rolled for availability and normal targeting. One NGFS template bombardment per American turn.

Air force Support

Limited air support of P40 Warhawks available. Can be used for air ground support or counter-air operations over tabletop battlefield and the naval task landing force. Hint....Hint.



"You really don't want to know what happens if Monty beats me to Messina"

**** End of American briefing, German-Italian briefing is on next page....****

German briefing: **For German Eyes Only....not even the Italians.**

Your German forces are about to retire to the next defensive hillside position behind the Rosmarino river and the San Marco heights. For the last week you have bloodied the Americans with your active defense of the San Fratello position. Even with the American naval gunfire and artillery, your well dug in infantry has held against several direct American infantry assaults.

Several of your platoons have already moved from the front lines during the night and are in transit eastward behind your San Fratello position. Your "loyal" Italian allies are holding the San Fratello heights along with some rearguard German platoons. Once the transiting platoons are in position to cover the final rearguard platoons, you will summon them to retire rapidly eastward and rejoin.

That is your plans from the evening officer conference...but reports of enemy naval assets near Saint Agata are coming over the radio net.....

Germans Order of Battle and starting map location in blue text:

All German platoons are **Confident Veterans**.

29th Panzer Grenadier Division elements:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Pz. Grenadier HQ: (Cmd. team with Panzerknacker (Pzkr)) w/ transport | Acquedoici |
| 1 st Pz. Grenadier platoon: (Cmd+Pzkr, 3x squads with 3 Italian transport) | Acquedoici |
| 2 nd Pz. Grenadier platoon: (Cmd+Pzkr, 3x squads with 3 Italian transport) | Hill 171 |
| 3 rd Pz. Grenadier platoon: (Cmd+Pzkr, 3x squads with 3 Italian transport) | Saint Agata |
| Attached Pioneer platoon: (Cmd., 3x pioneer squads w/Sd Kfz HT) | A5 square |
| Motorized HMG platoon: (Cmd., 2 MG sections w/ transport) | Hill 171 |

Light Anti-Tank gun platoon: (Cmd., 3x 7.62cm Pak36(r) with SdKfz11 HT) Hill 171

Motorized Mortar platoon: (Cmd., 3x Mortar sections w/ Italian transport) Between Ingano and Saint Agata

Panzer platoon: (4x Panzer IV G late) Between Ingano and Saint Agata

Light AA platoon: (3x Sd Kfz 10/5 (2cm)) Between Ingano and Saint Agata

Off board artillery: (2 gun sections of 10.5cm leFH18). This platoon moved last night and is set up just off the east table edge (behind a ridge). Measure all bombardments from eastern table edge. Battery observers are positioned in San Marco or along the San Marco ridge. Battery is blocked by hills, therefore from performing any direct firing on tabletop.

Limited German JU87G air support during game.

Special air rule. IF enemy landing craft are sighted, the German player can bomb the landing craft *before* they touch down on shore. One landing craft can be targeted per air support phase. Allied player can counter air mission and the targeted craft has AAMG self defense. Treat just like a normal land air support mission...but if the craft is hit then that entire craft and contents is lost and removed from play. Counts as an American platoon lost. Otherwise, the German air support can be used in the normal FOW tabletop fashion.

German units at Hill 171 start dug in and concealed. They have two 8” trench work with barbwire and one 8” minefield for pre-game placement within 6” of Hill 171.

German platoons may only exit the table off the eastern table edge or the Militello southern exit square. Exiting the tabletop at any other location means the platoon is considered destroyed for victory determination.

Italian Order of Battle (Psst...Germans already know) and starting positions in blue text:

All Italian platoons are **Reluctant trained**.

Remnants of 26th Assietta Division):

Italian Fucilieri HQ: (Cmd. team)

San Fratello (D3)

1st Fucilieri platoon: (Cmd., 4x Fucilieri squads with R/MG)

San Fratello (D3)

2nd Fucilieri platoon: (Cmd., 4x Fucilieri squads with R/MG)

Hill 673 (E3 & F3)

3rd Fucilieri platoon: (Cmd., 4x Fucilieri squads with R/MG)

San Marco ridge (Column 12)

Machine-gun platoon (Cmd., 2x MG sections)

Either San Fratello or hill 673

Anti-Tank platoon: (Cmd., 2x AT sections with 47/32 gun)

Either San Fratello or hill 673

SP 47/32 platoon: (4x Semovente 47/32 assault guns)

Along the Ingano riverbed

Artillery battery: (Cmd., 2x 100/17 gun sections w/transport)

Set up between Ingano &

Rosmarino riverbeds

Two 8” trench work sections with barbwire and two 8” minefields (deployed facing westward) are available for pre-game placement on San Fratello ridge.

No Italian air support available.

ALL Italian platoons, except SP 47/32 assault guns, start game dug in and concealed.



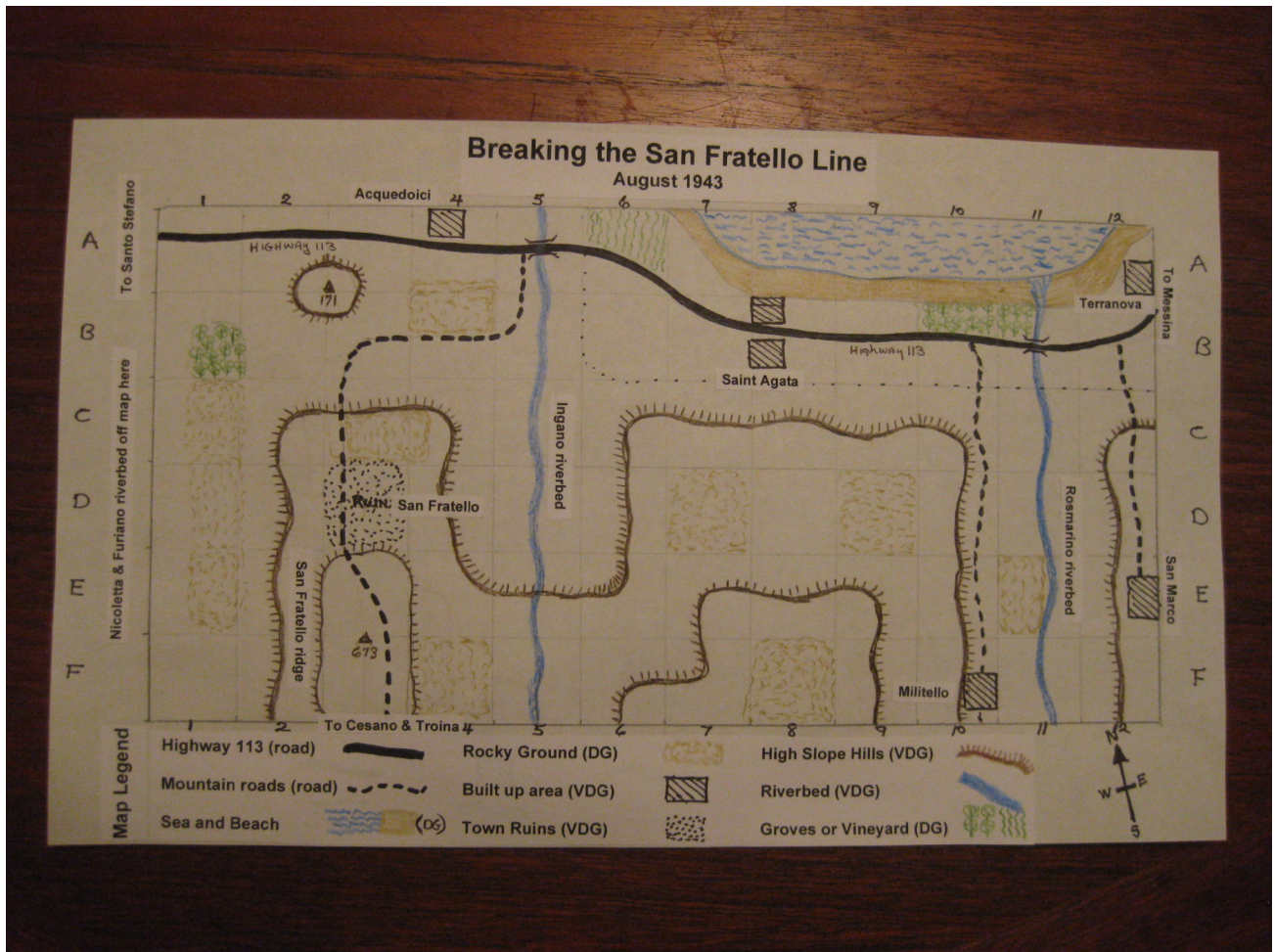
29th Panzer Grenadier Division



Assietta Division



General Walter Fries, 29th Panzer Grenadier Division.



Breaking the San Fratello line game map. Each square is 12" by 12". Total table is 12' wide and 6' deep.

Notes:

It is possible for both sides to win victory conditions... but that is war and the newspapers. I will leave it to the players how the history books will read.