

DESIGN NOTES FOR SCENARIOS IN ODE TO PANZER LEADER VI

By
Alan R. Arvold

And now we come to the end of the conversion of Panzer Leader scenarios to the West Front computer game. In this set are various scenarios from the General Magazine. There is no central theme to them as they come from various articles. These articles were “The Battle of Arracourt; New Scenarios for Panzer Leader” by myself in the General Vol.28, #4; “Operation Rescue: Panzer Leader Situation 31-6” by F. Pierce Eichelberger in the General Vol.31, #6; “Tournament Scenarios for Panzer Leader” by Bill Scott in the General Vol.31, #4; “The Red Ball Express: Logistics in Panzer Leader” by Elwood Carlson in the General Vol.14, #1, and “Situation 207” by Roy Easton in the General Vol.9, #3. Note that there is a break in the numbering sequence of the scenarios. This is due to the missing scenarios being in another set that were created at a later time after this set was posted. The two higher numbered scenarios are ones which were created later and more properly belong to this set than the later one.

As with the previous articles in this series, all original Panzer Leader scenarios were converted to the same standards as set forth in the Design Notes for the “Ode to Panzer Leader” series.

Scenario #47

This scenario, named Lezey: The Germans Attack, is the first scenario of the Battle of Arracourt article. It depicts the German attack on the first day of the battle and the subsequent American counterattack. In the General it is listed as Situation #28-4/1. The scenario mapboard matches the mapboard orientation in the article. Note that there are two Mapboard D's in the original setup and so the towns on each Board D in West Front are either labeled as North or South. The game is twenty turns long.

The Americans are set up with part of CCA, 4th Armored Division placed on the board, in the same general locations as the Panzer Leader version, and the rest of the force arrives as reinforcements on Turns 1, 4, and 6 at various points along the western edge of the board. There were some changes to the Panzer Leader US Forces, namely that an 81mm Mortar and one halftrack unit was removed, to be replaced by an M-21 SPM and an M-8 AG. These were easily convertible to the West Front version although I had to split the six-vehicle M-21 SPM counter into two three-vehicle M-4 SPM units, assigning one to the Armored Infantry Battalion and the other to the Armored Battalion as these would be their assigned places in real life. Being initially on the defensive, the Americans get Improved Positions.

The German 113th Panzer Brigade is divided into two groups, the main group entering the board on Turn 1 along the roads at Hexes 33,8 and 33,13 on the eastern side of the board, and their only reinforcements which enter on a road at Hex 16, 30 on the southern

edge of the board on Turn 6. There were no changes to their forces from the original scenario.

The original scenario's victory condition required the Germans to establish and maintain a road from the east edge to the west edge of the board, free of Allied units on or adjacent to it. This proved impractical in West Front so I changed it to each town receiving a 50 point objective hex with Grancelles receiving two of them, one on each side of the stream, as this town represents the town of Arracourt in real life. Of course both sides receive victory points for eliminating enemy units as well.

The only possible variation is the entry hexes of both side's reinforcements, as long as they enter on the same edge of the board as they normally would.

Scenario #48

This scenario, which is named Ommerey: Duel of Commanders is the second scenario of the Arracourt article. It depicts the American attack on the second day of the Arracourt battle through the area around Ommerey and the German defense against it. In the General it is listed as Situation #28-4/2. The scenario mapboard matches the mapboard orientation in the article. Note that there are two Board D's in the original set up and so the towns in each Board D in West Front are labeled as either East or West. The scenario is twenty turns long.

The Americans, which are part of CCA, 4th Armored Division, enter along the road at Hex 16,0 or on the hexes on either side of it on Turn 1. There are no further reinforcements for them. There were no changes to the American forces from the original scenario, it was a straight forward conversion.

The Germans, which are part of the 111th Panzer Brigade, are set up on the board in various locations on the mapboard. The Germans receive no reinforcements in this scenario. Being on the defensive they are set up in Improved Positions.

The Victory Conditions are based on the ones from the original scenario, naming possession of the towns of St Athan, Artain-West, and Artain-East. In each one I placed an objective hex worth 100 victory points. As usual in West Front victory points for eliminated enemy units also count.

There is a lot of room for variation. For the Germans they can set up anywhere east of Hexrow 20,0. The reason that they can not be set up any further west is because of the presence of American units in that area which were not involved in the battle depicted, and thus are not part of the scenario. The Americans can enter anywhere along the northern edge of the board.

Scenario #49

This scenario, which is named Juevelize: The Finale, is the third scenario of the Arracourt article. It depicts the German attack on the fourth day of the Battle of Arracourt and the subsequent American counterattack. In the General it is listed as Situation #28-4/3. The scenario mapboard matches the mapboard orientation in the article. Note that there are two Board D's in the original set up and so the towns in each Board D in West Front are labeled either East or West. The game is twenty turns long.

The American CCA, 4th Armored Division, is set up on the board in whole. There are no reinforcements. There were some changes to the American force in the original scenario. One 81mm Mortar and one halftrack unit were removed, to be replaced by one M-21 SPM and one M-8 AG. These were easily convertible into West Front, although as in Scenario #47, I had to split the six-vehicle M-21 SPM counter into two three-vehicle M-4 SPM units, again assigning one to the Armored Infantry Battalion and the other to the Armored Battalion. The Americans get ten P-47D airstrikes, just as they do in the original scenario. Being on the defensive, the Americans receive Improved Positions.

The German force, a combined kampfguppe consisting of remnants of the 111th and 113th Panzer Brigades, is set up on the board. There are no reinforcements coming during the course of the game. There was one change to the German force in the original scenario. Two 75mm How were replaced by two 75mm IG. There were no other changes.

The victory conditions of the original scenario was point based, with victory points gained for destroying enemy units and for the Germans, exiting units off of the western side of the board. This was easy to duplicate as West Front already provides victory points for destroying enemy units and I set up four German exit objective hexes, one on each road, on the four roads going off the west side of the board.

There is a wide amount of variation available, as long as the Germans set up east of Hexrow 32,xx and the Americans set up west of that same hexrow.

Scenarios #50 and #60

This scenario, which is named "Raid on Hammelburg", is actually two scenarios in one, an historical scenario (#50) and a hypothetical scenario (#60). It depicts the American raid on the Hammelburg P.O.W. Camp in 1945 and the German reaction to it. In the General it is listed as Situation #31-6. The mapboard has an unusual configuration but it was not a problem duplicating it in West Front. The original scenario is ten turns long but I lengthened it to twelve for reasons that will explained later.

The American force is divided into two parts, the historical Force Baum and the hypothetical CCA, 4th Armored Division to which Force Baum is added to give the complete force. There was a third force in the original scenario, namely the POW group that Force Baum had to rescue but POW units do not exist in West Front so I deleted that force. There were changes made in the original forces. In Force Baum the M-7 SPA unit

was changed to a M-4/105mm unit. In CCA the three M-4/105mm AG units were changed to three M-7 SPA units. In the original scenario these forces were set up in Hex 28,13 but this was impractical so I had them entering the board on the southern edge. Force Baum enters at Hex 00,12 and CCA enters along the three roads at Hexes 00,07; 00,12; and 00,17. Because they now had to go a further distance to their ultimate objective, I increased the game length to twelve turns.

The German force is set up on the board in both scenarios. It represents various local units reacting to the American incursion. These would include armored units from a nearby panzer gunnery school. There were some changes made to the original forces. An SS Pz IV unit was added to the armored group in Artain and one of the Rifle units on Board D was changed to an Engineer unit. The German force converted easily over the West Front but I had to make an additional change to the armored group in Artain. The SS Pz IV unit I broke down into two Pz IV units, one of two strength points and the other of three. The original Ferdinand unit from Panzer Leader which equals six vehicles I broke up into a four strength point Ferdinand unit and a two strength point Jgd Pz 38t unit to keep with historical references to the composition of the force.

The original victory conditions required the Americans to exit at least one POW unit off of the southern edge of Board A by the end of the game. This was impractical as there are no POW units in West Front so I had to change the victory conditions. In both West Front scenarios I made the victory conditions to be that the Americans must capture the POW Camp in Hex 46,12. This was the location of the POW units in the original scenario so I made it into a block hex and placed the camp garrison inside of it instead of adjacent to it in the original scenario. As added incentive I made it an objective hex worth 300 victory points. As usual the destruction of enemy units also gives victory points to both sides.

I really do not encourage variation on these scenarios other than how the German player sets up his units within each town. If I gave a free set up for the Germans than they would just deploy everything near the southern edge and prevent the Americans from having any chance of reaching the POW camp by the end of the game.

Scenario #51

This scenario, named “Recon Surprise”, is the first of three tournament scenarios from Bill Scott’s article. It depicts a meeting engagement between opposing armored divisions, first by their recon units, then by the lead elements of their respective armored units. In the General it is listed as Situation #31-4/1. Because the scenario is hypothetical I gave it an historical backdrop with historical unit designations for each side. The mapboard matches the mapboard orientation in the article. The game length is twelve turns.

The Allied force, which is the British 11th Armoured Division, had a pretty conventional set up that was convertible to West Front. The exception to this was the recon battalion whose order of battle matched nothing in the West Front unit data base.

So I had to make up an order battle to match the units given me in the original scenario. I had to make some unit conversions, like for example, the US M-20 Armored Cars I converted into Daimler Scout Cars and the Recon HQ unit I actually made into a HQ Squadron of the Recon Battalion in the scenario. The Bren carrier units in Panzer Leader I converted into either halftracks for the infantry or artillery tractors for the artillery. The four groups enter either on the western or southern edge of the board in designated hexes on Turns 1, 2, and 7.

The Germans force, which is the 19th Panzer Division, also had pretty much conventional conversion to West Front. The force is divided into two groups, the Recon Battalion and the main armored force. The Recon Battalion, which was the old generic one from Panzerblitz/Panzer Leader, I had to make some changes to. The Sd Kfz 234/4 Armored Car unit had to be changed to Sd Kfz 234/3 Armored Car units in West Front and the infantry rides on Motorcycles, not in Trucks. The two forces enter on the east edge of the board on Turns 1 and 3, both on the road at Hex 16,00.

The victory conditions in the original scenario were based on possession of two towns at the end of the game, namely Kuhn and Caverge. Each were given objective hexes, one in Kuhn and two in Caverge, with a point value commensurate with their value in the original scenario. Also as usual, unit elimination also gives victory points.

There is a lot variation possible in the entrance hexes as long as each respective group enters on the same side. The British Recon group has to option of entering on the northern side of the board, as per the original scenario, instead of the southern edge as in the West Front version.

Scenario #52

This scenario, named “Hit and Run” is the second of three tournament scenarios from Bill Scott’s article. It depicts a breakthrough of the German defensive line by a small American force and the subsequent exploitation. In the General it is listed as Situation #34-4/2. Again, because the scenario is hypothetical, I gave it a historical backdrop, with historical unit designations for each side. The mapboard is a single game board (Board C) and matches the mapboard orientation the original scenario. The game length is 17 turns.

The American force, which is a reduced CCA of the 6th Armored Division, is a rather conventional force with no special counters and is easily convertible to West Front. It enters the board on the southern edge of the board on the two road hexes on Turn 1.

The German force, which is a reduced 2nd Battalion, 367th Grenadier Regiment, is also a rather conventional force which is set up north of the Hexrow 8,xx. Being on the defensive it is set up in Improved Positions.

The victory conditions of the original scenario are rather simple, victory points for eliminating enemy unit and for the Americans, victory points for exiting units off of the

northern edge of the board. Both of these conditions exist in West Front so it was directly convertible.

There is a lot of room for variation, especially the Germans who have the entire mapboard north of Hexrow 8,xx to set up in. The Americans can alter where they enter on the southern edge and the order of appearance.

Scenario #53

This scenario, named “Death Valley”, is the third of the three tournament scenarios from Bill Scott’s article. It depicts what can be described as nothing more than a knock-down, drag-out tank battle. In the General it is listed as Situation #34-4/3. Again, as this is a hypothetical scenario I gave it a historical backdrop with historical unit designations for both sides. The mapboard is a single board (Board D) and matches the mapboard orientation of the original scenario. The game length is ten turns.

The American force, which is CCR of the 5th Armored Division, is a straight forward armored force composed of armor, tank destroyers, and reconnaissance vehicles. Most of the units were in West Front so the force was easily convertible. However the M-20 Armored Car units were not in West Front so I had to substitute the Recon Squadron from the Tank Destroyer Battalion for the M-20s as these were where the M-20s were historically. It enters the mapboard along the northern edge on the two road hexes plus a third open terrain hex.

The German force, which is a small kampfguppe from the 11th Panzer Division, was also a pure armored force consisting of tanks and reconnaissance vehicles. These are set up south of Hexrow 5,xx. Again most of the units were easily convertible to West Front. However the Sd Kfz 234/4 Armored Car unit I had to replace with Sd Kfz 2343/3 vehicles as the former was not yet available. Since the Germans are on the defensive, they receive Improved Positions in their set up.

The original victory conditions were based on the number of victory point the Americans earned by either destroying enemy units or exiting friendly units of the southern edge of the board, not both. (An optional rule raised the victory point totals by allowing the Americans to perform both conditions for a combined total of victory points.) For the West Front version I used enemy unit elimination for both sides and placed two American exit objective hexes on the southern edge of the mapboard to supply all of the victory points.

The German have a lot of variation in their set up possibilities as long as they are set up south of Hexrow 5,xx. The Americans only have variation in where they come in on the northern edge and the order of appearance.

Scenario #54

This scenario, named “The Red Ball Express”, was a stand alone scenario that was presented in the General 14, #1. The original scenario depicted are pursuit operation by the British who run out of fuel and so need re-supply which comes in the form of a convoy of trucks (the Red Ball Express), and the German reaction to the changing situation. In the General it was listed as Situation 27 (this was over a year before Panzer Leader 1940 came out). Again it was a hypothetical scenario so I had to give it a historical backdrop with historical unit designations for both sides. The mapboard is an unusual shape and uses all four mapboards, but it was easily convertible to West Front. The game length is fifteen turns.

The British force, which belongs to the 11th Armoured Division, consists of three groups. The first group is a reduced armored brigade consisting of a mix of unit types, the second is a reduced recon battalion, and the third is the Red Ball Express. In the original scenario, Bren Carriers were the primary transport units. I converted these into halftracks in West Front. The Red Ball Express consists of empty trucks and halftracks. This is because they are supposed to be carrying supplies. However in West Front re-supplying is not a function covered in the game so these end up being some easy victory points as destroyed units for the Germans. All groups start the game set up on the board.

The German force, which belongs to the 48th Infantry Division, also consists of three groups. The main group which is set up in Grancelles is an infantry force reinforced by some anti-tank guns and a various self-propelled AA units. In the original scenario one of these AA units was a Wirbelwind but since this unit is not available during the time period of the scenario I replaced it with an Sd Kfz 7/1 unit. The other unit was a 37mm AA unit but I combined it with a truck unit to make two LKW 37mm units. The recon group is set up in Merden and is ready to pounce on the Red Ball Express as it drives through the area. The last group is the reinforcements which enter the game on Turns 1, 2, 3, 4, and 12. As the Germans are on the defensive in this scenario, they receive Improved Positions in their initial set up.

The original victory conditions required the Allied Player to possess five of the seven bridges that cross the river that runs through Grancelles. I duplicated this by placing objective hexes on the German side of the river behind each of the seven bridges. As usual in West Front, unit elimination also adds victory points to a player’s total.

There is not much variation possible as the original scenario was very restrictive on where the units set up or entered the board. The best that one can do is change the arrangement of the units within their setup locations.

Scenario #61

This scenario, named “Commando Raids on German Coastal Defenses” was originally a Panzerblitz scenario published in the General Vol. 9-3. However because of its Western Front character, I considered it to be more of a Panzer Leader scenario, so I made it into a

West Front scenario. It depicts a hypothetical British Commando raid along the coast of occupied France during the years 1941-43. It is a night scenario so visibility will be limited. The mapboard was based on the Panzerblitz Board #2. However the top row of hexes were changed into beach hexes to comply with the original scenario's special instructions. The original instructions said that either long edge of the board could be the beach hexes but I chose the north edge to keep it simple.

The British force originally consisted of seven commando troops in the No.4 Commando Group. I gave the British the standard Commando Group with two extra commando troops. I left the mortars out of the British order of battle as they do not have one in the original scenario. The Germans had a hodge podge of units in their order of battle representing different organizations located within the confines of the map. I put them under one command for reasons of simplicity. One note, in the original scenario the Germans had Tiger II units. I changed them in the West Front version to Tiger I units as the Tiger II was not in service at the time of the scenario.

In the original scenario the British had a variety of missions to accomplish. However they would secretly choose one of them before the beginning of the game. This forced the Germans to defend everywhere until it became obvious what the British mission was. One mission though was a mass raid on the entire area and that is the mission that I am duplicating in this West Front version. This mission gave the British certain victory points for accomplishing particular missions. In the West Front version this consists of certain objective hexes. In addition unit elimination also generates victory points. Finally the British have certain exit hexes on the beach in which units can exit from the game for victory points, these represent amphibious pick ups at the end of the raid.

There is a wide variety of set ups for the Germans to use, the one in the scenario is just the standard one used in the boardgame version. The British for their part can change which hexes they will land in and also change the location of their exit hexes.

Conclusion

This concludes this series of Panzer Leader scenarios converted to West Front. I hope that you all enjoy them.