

DESIGN NOTES FOR OPERATION KADESH (REVISED)

By
Alan R. Arvold

Operation Kadesh is one of the regular scenarios that is in the game Divided Ground. It was designed by Kurt Miller and it shows. Kurt was part of the Divided Ground design team and was largely responsible for the artwork. As it is usual for his scenarios, his order of battle files and make ups for both sides are inaccurate. However they are not as chaotic as are those for his other scenarios. Thus it was an easier scenario to revise.

The Mapboard

Miller used a larger scale than 250 meters per hex on his mapsheet. My guess is 500 meters per hex. Thus all units now have twice their normal range for movement and ranges. The original map is very good, but a lot of the terrain features one is used to seeing on the other Rafah maps in the game are either very compressed or missing entirely, again due to the increased scale. The big error on the map was the height of each elevation level. Kurt put the height of each level at 20 meters. But looking at the various elevation levels on the mapboard I could see that Kurt was basing them on the contour levels on a topographic map of the Rafah area. However he forgot that the height between each contour line on a topographic map is 20 feet, not 20 meters. All the terrain on the mapboard is too high. So I changed the height on each elevation level to 6 meters, which is approximately 20 feet. Now all the terrain more or less fits those on the topographic maps. One good thing is that the resulting smaller map will cause the game to reach a faster conclusion.

The Orders of Battle

The original orders of battle were generally accurate in force size for both sides, but Miller, as his wont, tends to add additional units to the companies and battalions and he does not assign an overall headquarters and commander for each side. So I scrapped the order of battle for both sides and started fresh using the historical composition of each side's forces.

The Israelis have two brigades, the 1st "Golani" Infantry and the 27th Armored. The 1st Brigade had four infantry battalions instead of the usual three, the four one being attached from the 12th Infantry Brigade. The 27th Brigade had three combined arms teams and one pure armored company. One team was attached to the 1st Brigade and the armored company was held back from the brigade for attachment to another but only ended up joining its parent unit a few days after the offensive began. Both brigades were supported by a battalion of artillery and a battalion of mortars each (the 27th Brigade's artillery was split up among its three combined arms teams). In addition, there was an engineer battalion assigned to this force as well. All of this was under control of the 77th Ugdah,

the Israeli version of the division. However, the ugdah was more of an administrative units than an actual command level at this time and each brigade maneuvered as it saw fit.

The Egyptians had two different commands in the area. One was the 5th Infantry Brigade, of the 3rd Infantry Division. The other was the 8th “Palestinian” Infantry Division which had elements of two of its brigades present at Rafah. The 5th Infantry Brigade was complete and was reinforced by a tank company. The 8th “Palestinian” Division had the 26th National Guard Brigade (minus one of its line battalions which was up in the Gaza Strip) and the 259th Frontier Infantry Battalion (of the 87th Brigade) present. Because the units present were under two overall commands, coordination between the battalions of different commands was almost non-existent. All of the units were equipped with British WWII vehicles and guns. This is in contrast to other scenarios which show the Egyptians equipped partially, if not totally, with Soviet equipment. While the Egyptian Army was indeed undergoing a transition from the British to the Soviet military systems at the time, the units of the 3rd and 8th Divisions had yet to go through it. One thing that I did was to give each branch of the Egyptian force a different morale level, the regular Army at 60%, the National Guard at 40% and the Palestinians at 20%. Each branch also had its own artillery battery, each consisting of two four-gun 25 pounder howitzer troops.

The Scenario

I largely kept the scenario exactly as Miller created it. All defensive positions and minefields are present and in the same position where Miller placed them as well as all of the objective hexes, which includes the Israeli exit hex in 0,21. I did have to change the victory point levels to reflect the new composition of forces. I also had to change the Egyptians AI level to 40% to reflect their defensive status. The air strikes remain the same in both games with one exception. The Israeli Mystere IV in Divided Ground was replaced by a Mosquito Mk VI in Middle East as the Mystere IV apparently does not exist in 1956. The Israeli reinforcements were changed to reflect the newer order of battle, but the Egyptian reinforcements were eliminated as all Egyptian units start the game set up on the board. I had a hard time deciding how to classify this scenario in Middle East, but finally after much thought I decided on HISB. Overall, the new version of the scenario plays the same as the original. Enjoy the scenario.