

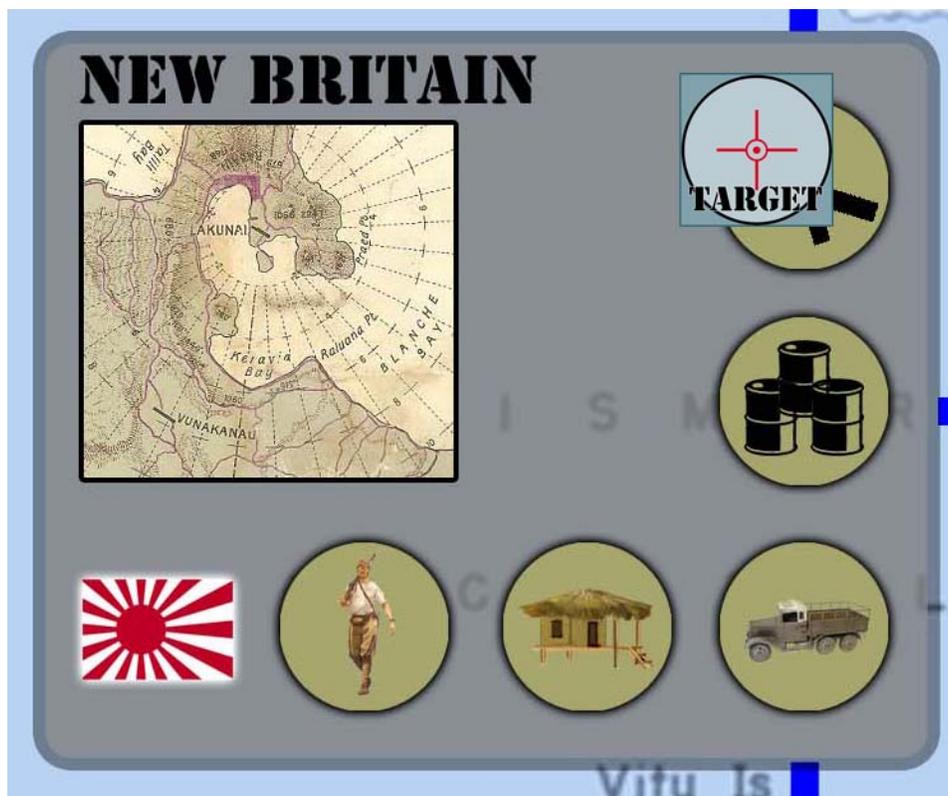
Flying a Mission in “A Forgotten Sideshow”
Designed by Steven K. Dixon

“A Forgotten Sideshow” is a solitaire game that covers the exploits of VMO-251 during a six month period from July 1944 through December 1944. It is based on the book “A Squadron Born in War” that I have written and will be published next year through McFarland Publishers. Flying out of Piva Airfield on Bougainville, the squadron participated in numerous missions to New Britain, New Ireland and Japanese held portions of Bougainville. You will be flying a Chance F4U Corsair.

The game comes with basic rules, advance rules and campaign rules. In the campaign game, the player becomes the squadron commander and must keep his squadron in an operational state to meet the demands of Commander Air Northern Solomons (ComAirNorSols). This means having enough fresh pilots on hand as well as aircraft to successfully complete your missions.

The Basic Game introduces the player to the mechanics of the game while flying a single plane on a strike mission. The Advance Game builds on the Basic Game while introducing the player to the concept of the Division -- two sections of two Corsairs each for a total of four Corsairs. The Division is the basic movement unit of the Campaign Game in which you the player will be one of the Corsairs in a division.

For the purposes of this example, I will be hitting the Vunakanau Airfield on New Britain. This is determined using the Basic Game Mission Assignment Table. I place any experienced pilot counter on the cockpit of the Corsair printed on the map. I also place a 500 pound bomb counter on the bomb icon near the Corsair. Underneath the Corsair is the fuel track and I place the Fuel Gauge counter in the “7” space. I place a Corsair Counter on the strike icon (the explosion) in the zone marked Piva Airfield (see illustrations below). I place a target marker on the airfield icon in the zone labeled New Britain. On the Mission Log Sheet I note the mission number, pilot’s name, target location, and type. I will note the results as I complete the mission.



Next I determine the weather for takeoff by drawing a weather card and check the takeoff icon on the card (see below) and if necessary, check the weather table. As players become familiar with the game consulting the weather table will not be necessary.



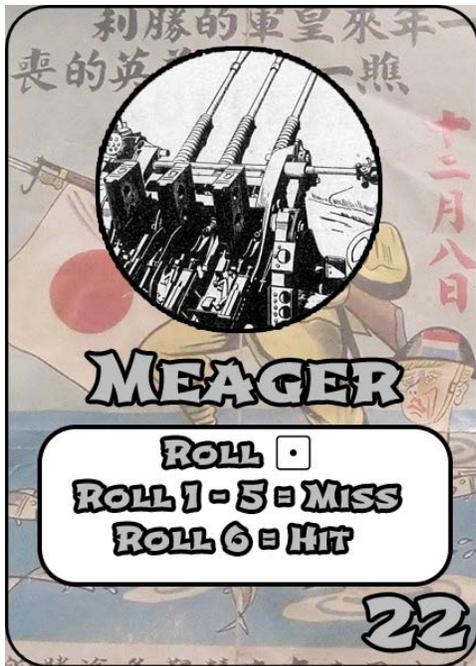
The takeoff icon on the card shows a sun, so no negative modifiers due to weather. I roll two dice on the Take Off Table 1-1, getting an "8". It's a successful take off! I move my Counter to the Transit Zone and move my Fuel Counter to the space marked "6".

Next, I draw another weather card to determine the weather. Weather is checked each time a player enters a zone to simulate the fickle nature of weather conditions in the area. It was not uncommon to take off in great weather only to run into a solid weather front within a half hour of taking off.

The weather card I draw indicates rain in the zone, with a -1 modifier on a dice roll. The player now has an option. He can either find a hole in the clouds or he may abort the mission. Each attempt to find a break in the weather costs one fuel point so the player will have to keep an eye on his fuel situation. In this case I decide to do so. I move the fuel counter to "5" and roll two dice on Table 2-1: Navigation. I check the modifiers for any I need to include besides the -1 for rain. None apply so the rain modifier is all I have. I roll a 10, subtracting one from the die roll for a total of "9". I am successful and make it through.

I now move my Corsair counter to the target marker in the New Britain zone, and move my fuel gauge to "4". Unless I suffer some damage that impacts my fuel situation, it appears I will have enough fuel to get home safely. Since this is the target zone, a few extra steps are required.

First I draw a weather card, getting nice sunshine over the target so no adverse modifiers for that. Next, I draw a card to determine if there is any Japanese AA fire. The card I picked up is below:



As indicated on the card, it's meager AA fire so I roll only one die. If it is a 6, a hit is scored. I roll the die and wouldn't you know it, a six is rolled. To determine which area of my Corsair is hit I roll one die on Table 4-1, Affected Hit Areas. I roll a 4 getting a hit in the cockpit area. I proceed to Table 4-4 to determine what if anything may have been hit. Rolling two dice, I roll a 5 receiving a hit on the canopy. I can take one more hit there before I see any bad side effects. I note the damage on the Corsair Damage Sheet.

Next I attempt to spot my target for a more accurate drop. Under Table 3-1 Target Spotted I roll a 7, spotting the target.

Now I attempt to hit the airfield with my 500 pounder. I consult Table 6-1 Attack Table and cross reference my weapon with the Airfield column. I roll a 6, scoring an area hit. For purposes of the basic game, scoring an area or direct hit is good enough, now all I have to do is make it back safely to Piva. In the basic game, scoring any type of hit and making it back safely to Piva is a victory. Otherwise it is a Japanese victory. I remove the target marker, move my plane back to the transit zone and move the fuel marker to "3" on the fuel track. Drawing a weather card, the transit zone is sunny so no worries about working my way through bad weather.

I move my plane to the Piva Zone, and move the fuel counter to the "2" space. Next I determine the weather conditions for landing by drawing a weather card. It's cloudy but that has no bearing on landing. Since no modifiers are in play, anything I roll is a safe landing on Table 7-1. My Corsair makes it back and a victory is earned.

I hope you enjoyed this sneak peak at A Forgotten Sideshow. The rules are currently being written and I hope to undergo playtesting in the next few months. There is still some editing to do with my book and that takes precedence over everything else.

Stay tuned!