

Play by Play Guide for the Advanced/Campaign Game

of A Forgotten Sideshow

Introduction

The following is an example of one turn of the Advanced/Campaign game of A Forgotten Sideshow. A Forgotten Sideshow allows the player to command a Marine Corps squadron while striking targets on Bougainville, New Ireland and New Britain from June 1944 to December 1944. It is based on the book “Photo Recon Became Fighter Duty”, published by McFarland Books written by yours truly. Official war diaries, as well as mission reports and aircraft action reports were consulted in compiling the target list. The squadron depicted in the game is VMO-251. If the game does well enough, and expansion pack is planned covering the squadron’s missions in the Philippines from January 1945 to May 1945.

VMO-251 was activated on December 1, 1941. While not the Marines’ first observation squadron, it was the first to be equipped with a plane specific for its mission. It would not be until early 1942 that the squadron received its modified Grumman F4F Wildcats (F4F-3P). Less than two dozen were modified and the squadron ended up with most of them. The planes retained their four machine guns while modified to carry cameras. Ironically, none of its F4F-3P’s flew a recon mission.

The squadron was slated to fight out of Guadalcanal, but a last minute change had it going to Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides. They arrived there in early August 1942, after a short stay in New Caledonia. While at Espiritu Santo, the squadron supplied pilots and ground crew to the Cactus Air Force, serviced other squadrons and planes passing through the area, supported Army 11th Bomb Group operations and provided air defense for the New Hebrides. The pilots fought in numerous engagements during the Guadalcanal campaign. VMO-251 finally made it to Guadalcanal in January 1943 and left in May 1943.

VMO-251 was reconstituted in the US, and received the F4U Corsair. By the summer of 1944 the squadron was back in the South Pacific, flying many missions out of Piva North Airfield, Bougainville, in conjunction with the reduction and isolation of the Japanese strongholds on Bougainville, New Britain and New Ireland. In January 1945, the squadron was flying out Guiuan Airfield, Samar, in the Philippines. It was also re-designated as VMF-251. The squadron was deactivated in June 1945. Its planes and personnel were transferred to other squadrons or sent back to the states.

The squadron was reactivated in 1946 as a Marine reserve unit and today flies F-18 Hornets as VMFA-251, home-based at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina.

Pre-Game Set Up

I will be playing the game without any optional rules. I lay my map on a playing table and set the Squadron Assignment Board nearby. It will be used to place Corsairs and assigned

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pilot counters during missions. I also separate my counters and make them handy by placing them nearby. I shuffle the weather cards and place them face down in their placement box on the map, and do the same for the Japanese AA fire cards.

I fill out my Pilot Roster, and I choose to play as the commanding officer of the squadron (see example), flying plane number 1 and using pilot counter number 1.

Using the Advanced Game Target Booklet, I roll 2D10. In this instance, the first roll is multiplied by 10, and the second roll by 1. The result is a 25. I cross reference the result and these are my missions for the demonstration:

25	M: Rabaul A: Tobera	Supply Airfield	New Britain New Britain	1x1,000 lbs. 1x1,000 lbs.	4 4	
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I must fly two missions for the day. The morning mission is a strike on a supply facility near Rabaul on New Britain. The afternoon strike is on Tobera Airfield on New Britain.

Four divisions will be participating in the first strike (that's 16 Corsairs), each carrying a 1,000 pound bomb. I now place the Target Marker on the supply icon in the New Britain zone as seen below:



Figure 1

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Next I place the division fuel marker on the 8 space of the fuel track, place the 1,000 pound bomb marker on the Corsair on the map. No marker is placed on the ammo belt since the Corsair is considered to always be armed with this ammo. If ammo is expended, the empty marker is placed on the space. I place four division markers in the Piva Zone on the strike symbol. Here is what I have:

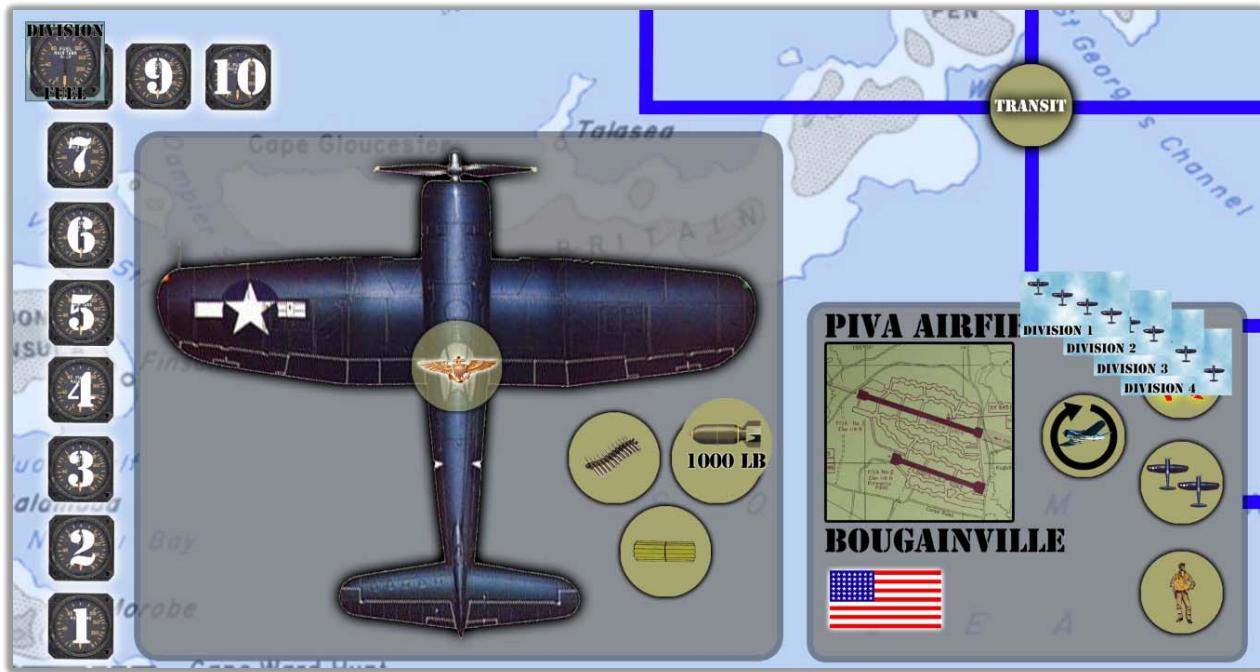


Figure 2

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Notice that I have picked divisions 1 through 4. Division 1 must always fly in a strike mission since the Mission Lead always occupies the number 1 slot. As for the others I could have chosen divisions 4, 5 or 6. In other words, it's up to the player as to which divisions fly as long as Division 1 is one of them. Now I assign which pilots and planes will fly by placing markers on the Squadron Assignment Board. I fill out the Mission Assignment Sheet and assign the following to the Rabaul strike (see Mission Log Sheet):

Division 1 #1 Dixon (Mission Leader) Plane #1 #31 Lawrence Plane #2 #9 Fonda (Section Leader) Plane #3 #33 Watson Plane #4	Division 2 #6 McAllister (Division Leader) Plane #5 #38 Santos Plane #6 #25 Lynch (Section Leader) Plane #7 #45 Miller Plane #8
Division 3 #11 Cummings (Division Leader) Plane #9 #47 Irwin Plane #10 #20 Stanley (Section Leader) Plane #11 #48 Steele Plane #12	Division 4 #22 Mann (Division Leader) Plane #13 #34 Fox Plane #14 #30 Day (Section Leader) Plane #15 #35 Neal Plane #16

Raben / Supply Strategy HD

Mission Log Sheet

Mission No.	Plane No.	Pilot Name	Location	Target Type	Notes/Result
1	1	DIXON #1	Rabaul	Supply	DIVISION 1 MISSION LDR HEAVY
1	2	AUERME #31	"		DIVISION 1
1	3	FONDA #9	"		DIVISION 1 Section LDR DAMAGE
1	4	WATSON #33	"	↓	DIVISION 1
1	5	McAllister #6	Rabaul	Supply	DIVISION 2 DIVISION LDR
1	6	Santos #38	"		DIVISION 2
1	7	Lynch #25	"		DIVISION 2 Sect LDR
1	8	McMILLION #45	"	↓	DIVISION 2
R1	9	Cummings #11	Rabaul	Supply	DIVISION 3 DIV LDR
1	10	IRWIN #47	"		DIVISION 3
1	11	Stanley #20	"		DIVISION 3 SEC LDR
1	12	Steerle #48	"	↓	DIVISION 3
R1	13	MANN #22	Rabaul	Supply	DIVISION 4 DIV LDR
1	14	FOX #34	"		DIVISION 4
1	15	DAG #30	"		DIVISION 4 SEC LDR
1	16	MAJ #35	"	↓	DIVISION 4

Players are urged to make copies of this sheet

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What my Squadron Assignment Board looks like:

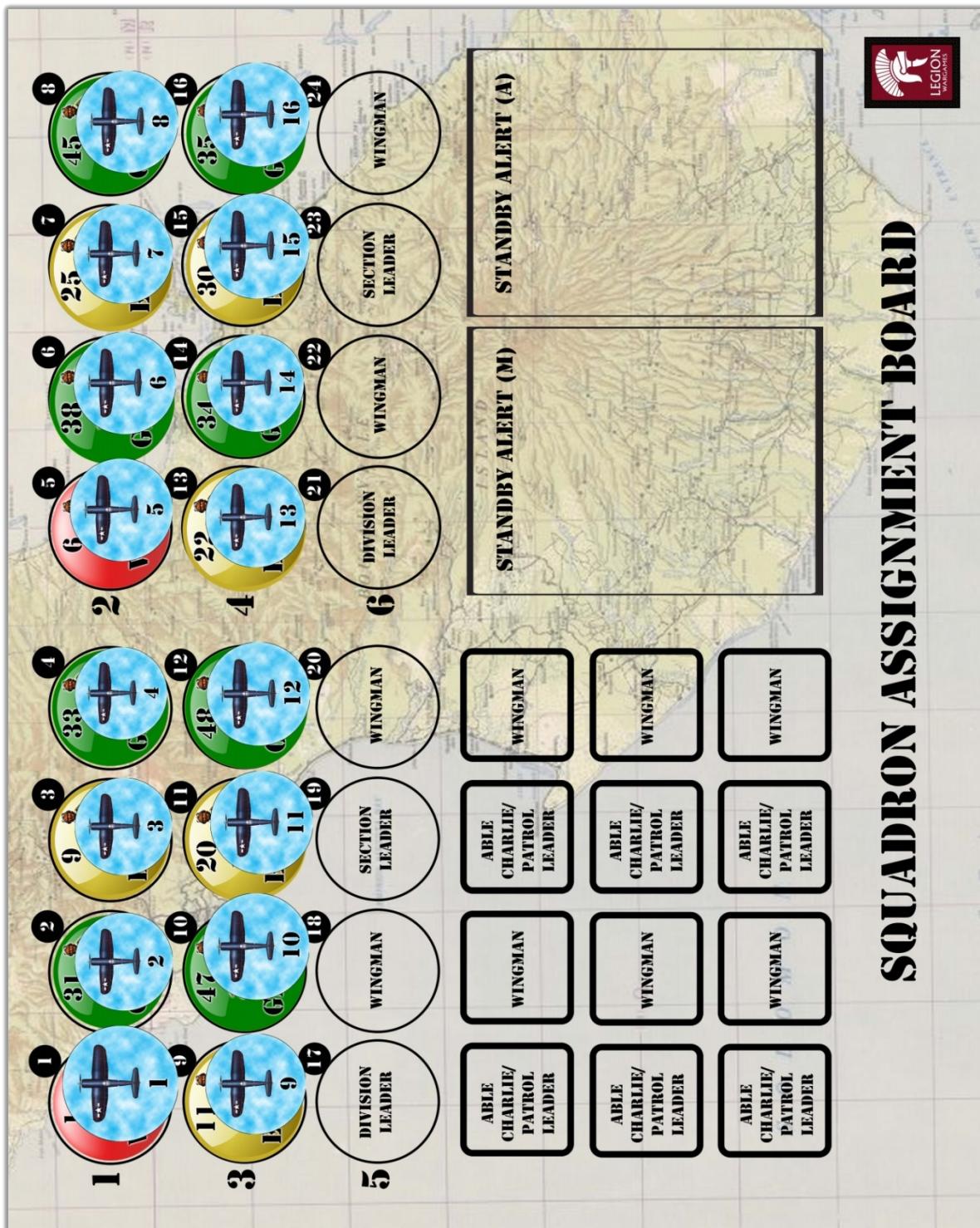


Figure 3

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Taking Off

First I draw a weather card to determine the weather for takeoff. I look at the Take Off Icon and I get clear, sunny weather! I roll on Table A-1.1 and get an “8”. Well crap.

So, since four divisions are flying this mission, I roll 2D10 four times on Table A-1 to see which planes may not take off. Each space on the Squadron Assignment Board has a position number in a small solid black-filled circle. The numbers on the Table refer to these position numbers. If a plane occupies a position rolled on Table A-1, it may or may not take off. So here go my rolls: first - 0 (left) ,6 (top) – cross referencing the two rolls yields position number 24. Since no plane occupy that space, no plane is affected. My second roll: 5 (left), 0 (top) yields position number 11. That space is occupied by plane number 11, piloted by Stanley, who is a section leader. Third roll: 6 (left), 7 (top) results in position number 13. This affects plane #13, piloted by Mann, a division leader. My last roll is a 0, 6 which is unoccupied and thus has no effect.

Now I refer to Table 1-1, rolling two 2D6 for each pilot and. Since it's sunny there is no weather modifier, and since both pilots are experienced, no modifier for that. My roll for Plane #11 results in a 3; a successful take off! My roll for Plane #13 is a 5, resulting in another safe take off. All my divisions move to the transit zone expending a fuel point as they do so.

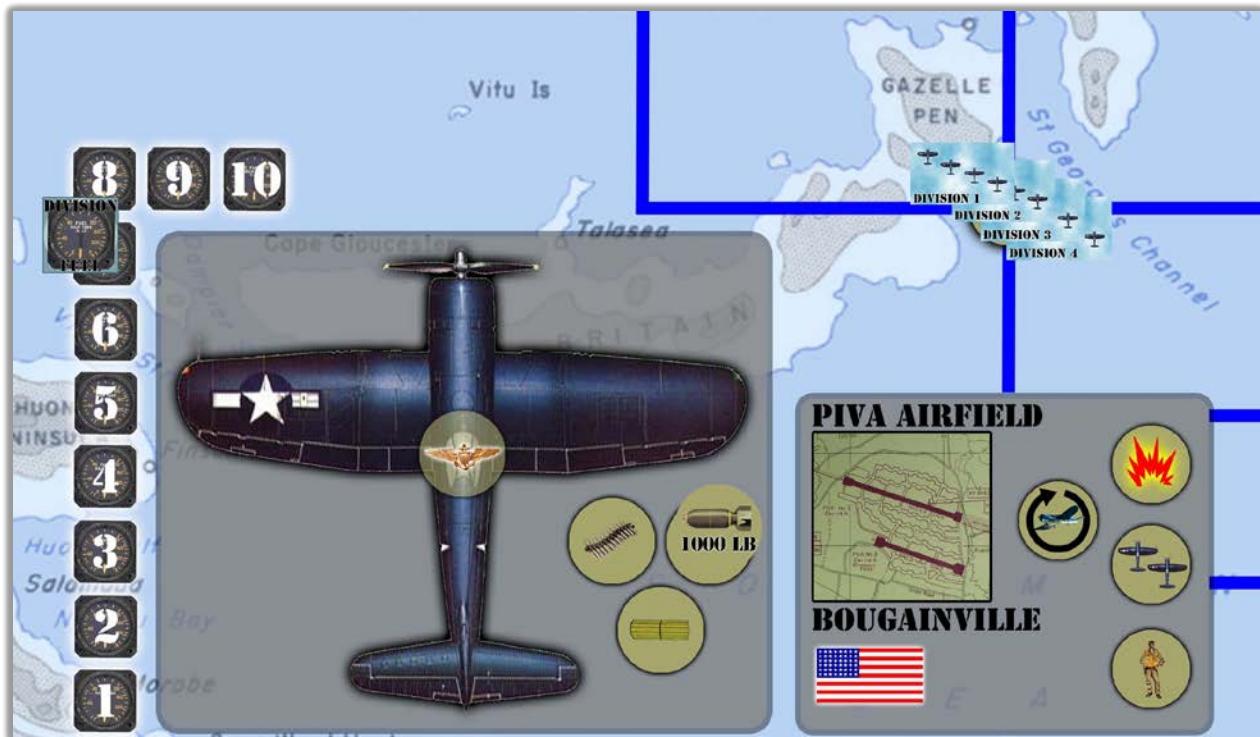


Figure 4

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Transit Zone

As I do when entering any zone, I draw a weather card and look for the transit zone icon. Once again I get clear weather. No checks are needed; I advance to the target zone and consume a fuel point, moving the marker from 7 to 6.



Figure 5

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Target Zone

I draw a weather card and look for the target icon. It shows that the target area is cloudy, which will result in a -1 on my roll when I attempt to spot the target. Before I attack the target, Japanese fire is resolved. I draw a Japanese AA fire card and I am met with moderate AA fire. Unlike the basic game, I do not use the table printed on the card. Instead, I consult Table A-3 and

roll 1D10 and cross reference the result under the moderate column. I roll a 5 resulting in one plane that could receive 1 hit. I now go to Table A-1 and roll 2D10 to determine which position is affected. I roll a 9 (left) and 4 (top) which is position number 23. Since no plane occupies that position, none are hit and I proceed to spot the target. I roll on Table A-4, it's cloudy so there is a -1 on the roll. My Mission leader is a veteran so I get a plus +1 on the roll. The two cancel each other out. I roll a one, just barely spotting the target. I now attack the target, cross referencing my die roll on the 1,000 pound bomb column under the Supply Column. My mission leader is a veteran so I have a +1 modifier. I am going to fire guns during the attack so that's another +1 and it's a strike attack and that's another +1 to my roll, resulting in a +3 modifier. My roll was a 2, +3 for the modifier for a total of 5. That results in an HD result or heavy

damage. I now roll to see if my machine guns have run out of ammo since I used them on the bomb run. I roll a

1D6, resulting in a 4. I still have ammo. I note the result of the mission on my Mission log sheet and move my divisions to the transit zone, expending a fuel point. My fuel is now at 5. See Figure 7.

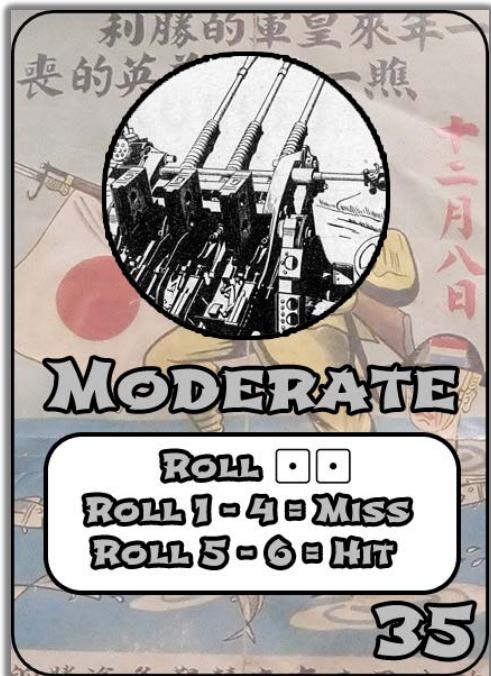


Figure 6

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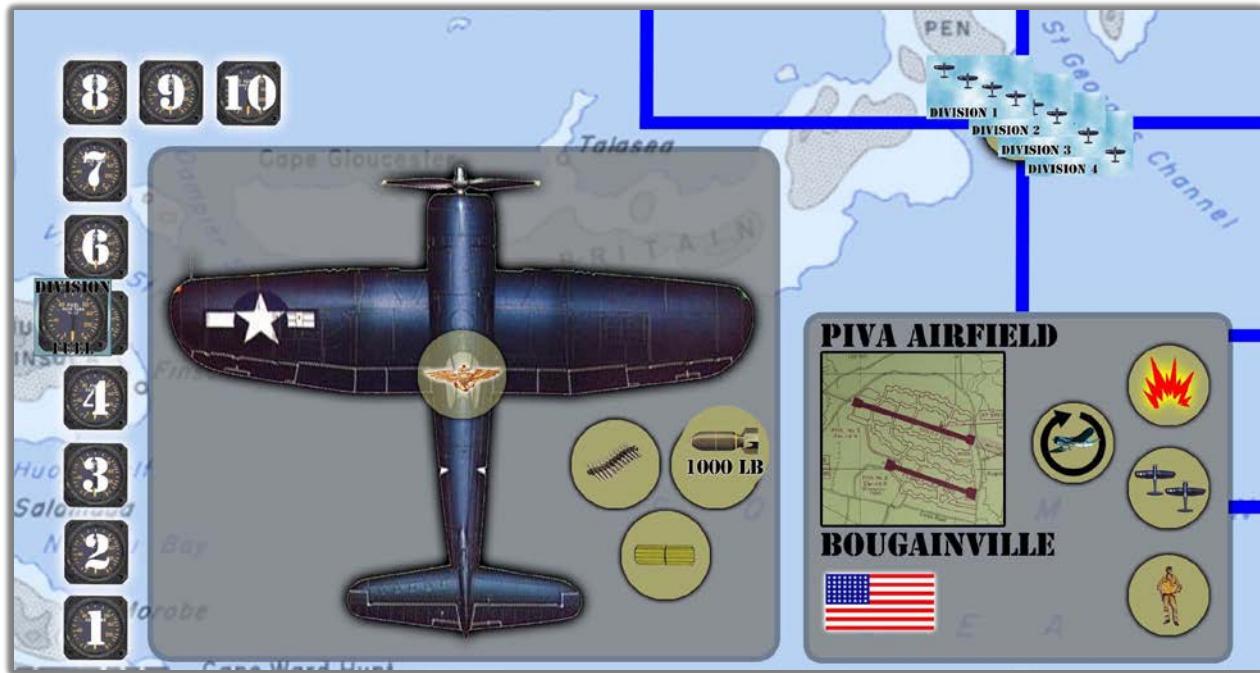


Figure 7



Figure 8

My weather card draw shows it's raining in the transit zone. There is the possibility I could lose some aircraft. I roll 1D10 under Table A-2 and subtract 1 from the dice roll. For the final result I will look under the rain column. I roll a 4 and subtracting one leaves me with three, thus making it through the front. I now check on Table A-1 to see if any aircraft may have been lost. I roll two D10 dice four times, once for each division.

My rolls:

1. 1 (left), 1 (top) – Position 15 which is plane #15
2. 8 (left), 2 (top) – Position 2 which is plane #2
3. 7 (left), 2 (top) – Position 16 which is plane #16
4. 0 (left), 0 (top) – Position 4 which is plane #4

For each plane affected I now roll on Table A-2.1 and determine the fate of the four aircraft:

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Neal in plane #16 – Modifiers: -1 for rain and -1 for green. Roll: 9 -2 gives me a 7. Neal makes it!

Lawrence in plane #2 -- Modifiers: -1 for rain and -1 for green. Roll: 3 -2 gives me a 1. Lawrence is lost.

Day in plane #15 – Modifiers: -1 for rain. Roll: 2 -1 gives me a 1. Day is lost.

Watson in plane #4 – Modifiers: Modifiers: -1 for rain and -1 for green. Roll: 6 -2 gives me a 4. Watson has made it.

I lose two planes due to the weather. The front was a lot stronger than I thought! This leaves my squadron assignment board looking like this:

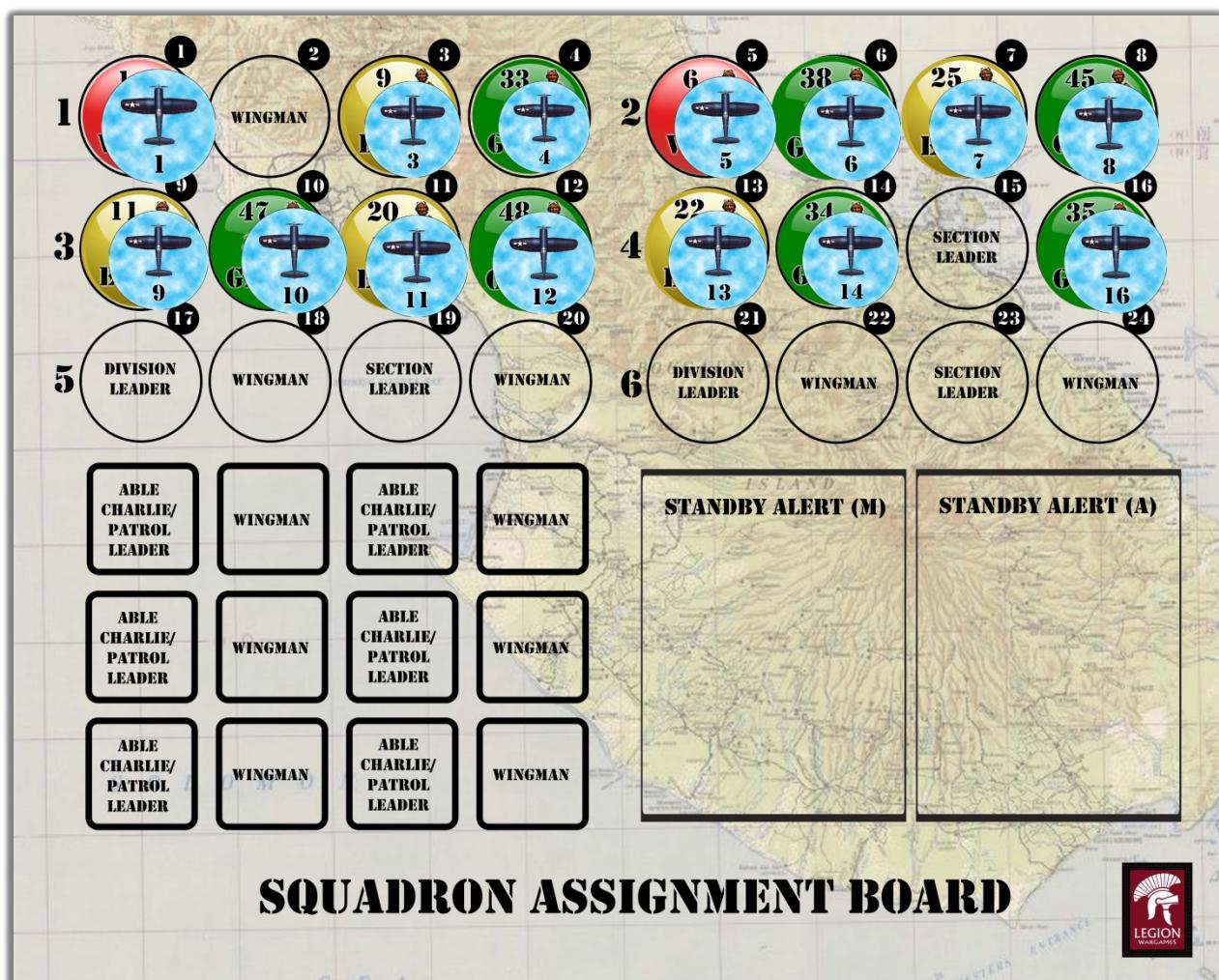
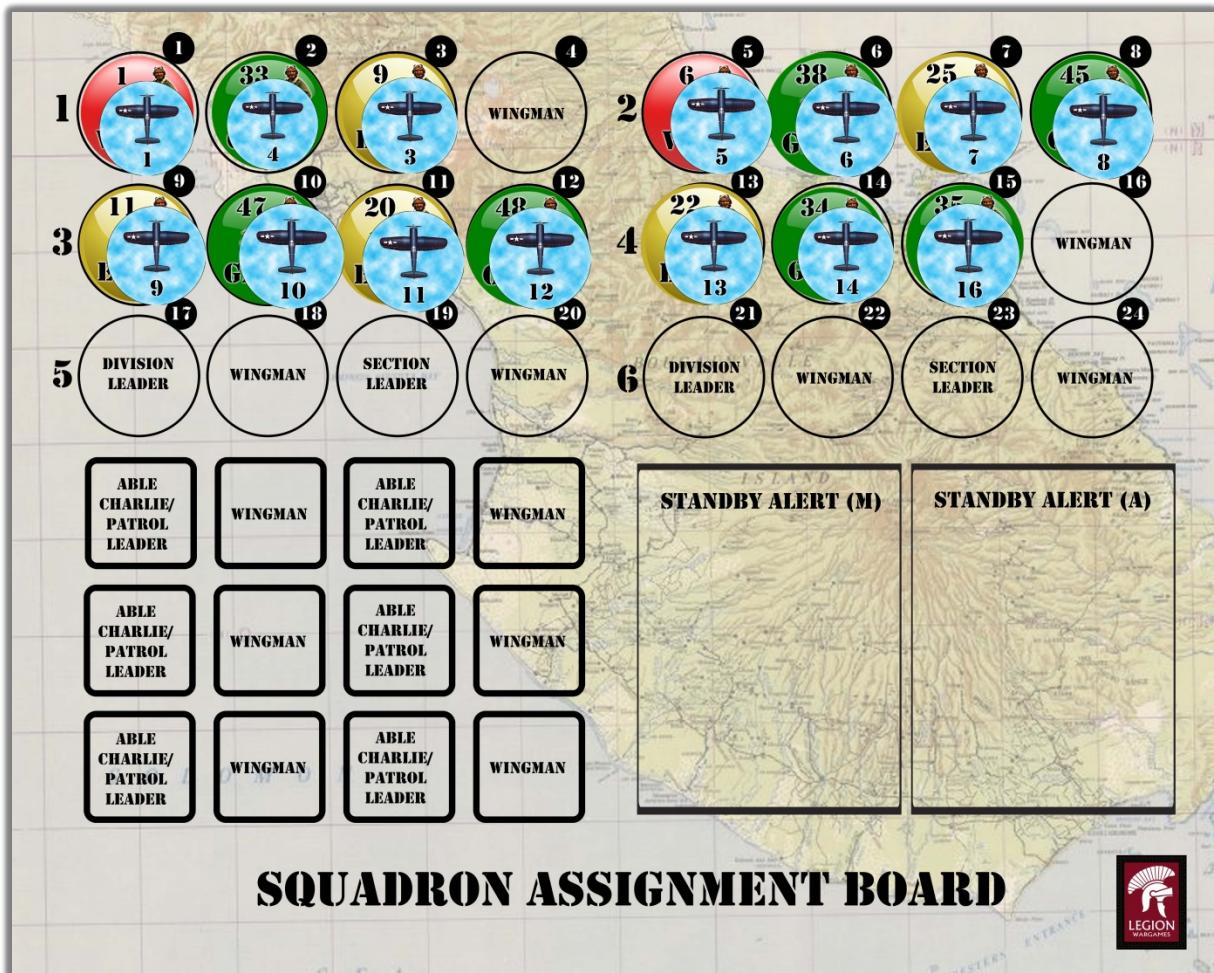


Figure 9

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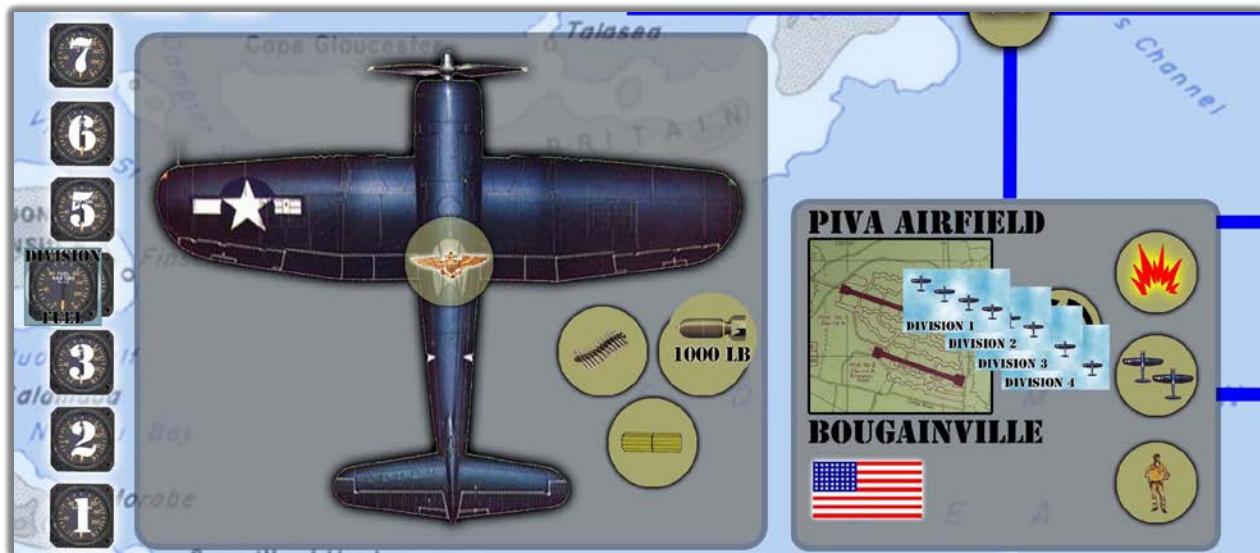
Now to tighten up the formation. I have two empty slots to fill so plane number 4 will move to position 2 and become the mission lead's wingman. Plane 16 takes over as section leader in division 4. I move these two planes to their new positions:



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I now move the divisions to Piva, expending a fuel point. My fuel is now at 4.



I now draw a weather card and get clear weather. My roll on Table A-1.1 is a 3 “No incidents”! No need to roll for any possible plane losses. This concludes my morning mission. It was a bit costly due to losing two planes and two pilots while trying to penetrate a weather front.

The Afternoon Mission

I will be heading back to New Britain to strike the airfield near Tobera. Once again four divisions will be used and 1,000 pounders will be dropped. I will be using the same pilots as my last mission except for the Mission Leader – that will be the XO – Major Williams. Replacing Lawrence will be 1Lt. Barrymore flying plane #17 and replacing Day will be Brooks in plane #18. I will also use division slots 4, 5 and 6 instead of division 2, 3, and 4.

Division 1 #2 Williams (Mission Leader) Plane #1 #13 Barrymore Plane #17 #9 Fonda (Section Leader) Plane #3 #33 Watson Plane #4	Division 4 #6 McAllister (Division Leader) Plane #5 #38 Santos Plane #6 #25 Lynch (Section Leader) Plane #7 #45 Miller Plane #8
Division 5 #11 Cummings (Division Leader) Plane #9 #47 Irwin Plane #10 #20 Stanley (Section Leader) Plane #11 #48 Steele Plane #12	Division 6 #22 Mann (Division Leader) Plane #13 #34 Fox Plane #14 #28 Brooks (Section Leader) Plane #18 #35 Neal Plane #16

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This is how my assignment board looks.

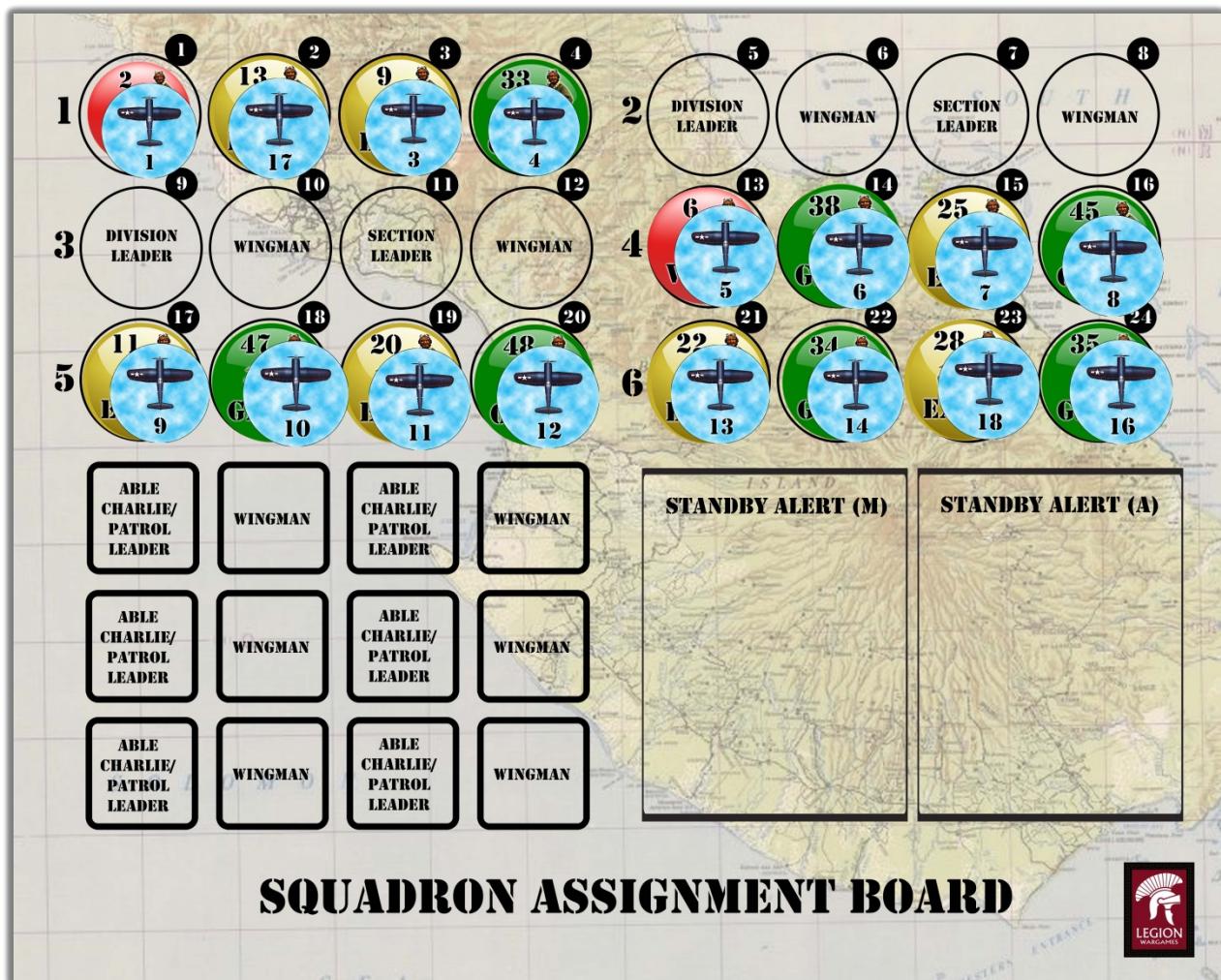


Figure 10

I place my fuel marker on the “8” space of the fuel track, place the 1,000 pound bomb marker on space below the Corsair, place division markers 1,4,5, and 6 on the strike symbol on Piva and I place the target marker on the airfield icon in the New Britain zone. See the illustrations on page 14.

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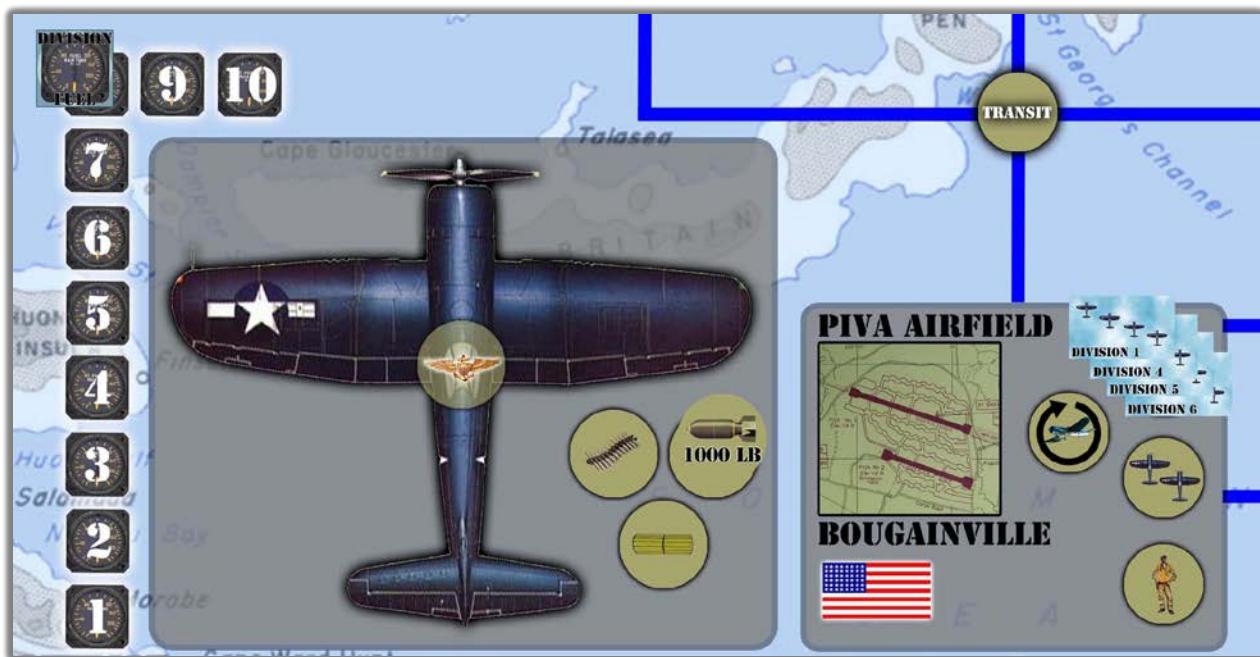


Figure 11

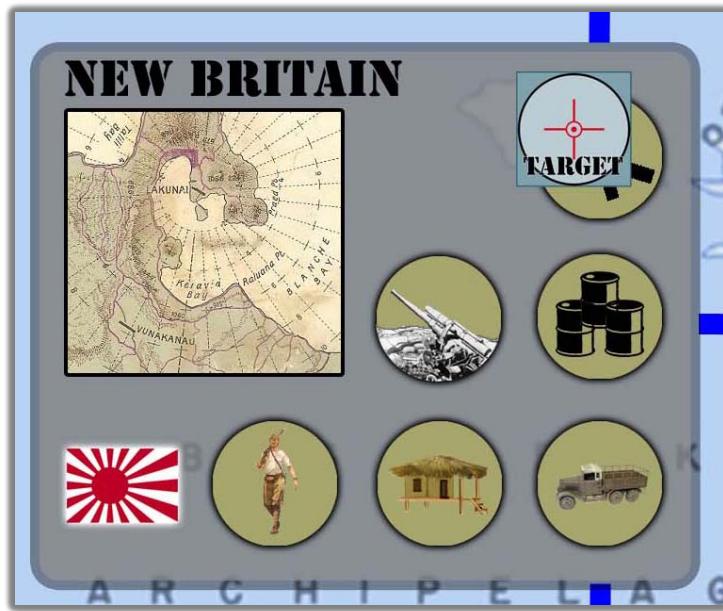


Figure 12

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Take Off

I draw a weather card and get clear weather. All planes take off safely as my roll on Table A-1.1 was a 5 – no incident so I advance the division markers to the transit zone, reducing my fuel from 8 to 7.

Transit Zone



Figure 13

I draw a weather card and I get rain in the zone. I have two options: I can attempt to press ahead or abort and head back home. I opt to press ahead. However, if my fuel drops to 5 and I still have not punched through, I will abort the mission. I roll 1D10 on Table A-2. Modifiers are -1 for rain and +1 for the mission leader rating of veteran. I roll a "7" and look under the rain column. I make it through. Now I must see if any planes became lost by rolling on Table A-1. I roll four times, once for each division.

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Roll 1: 6 left, 5 top: Position 12. I have no plane in that position so no effect.

Roll 2: 7 left, 1 top: Position 10. I have no plane in that position so no effect.

Roll 3: 6 left, 2 top: Position 23: Plane number 18 piloted by Brooks.

Roll 4: 3 left, 9 top: Position 2: Plane number 17 piloted by Barrymore.

I roll 1d10 on Table A-2.1 for each plane affected to see if they have been lost. Only the -1 modifier is in effect. Brooks rolls a 1, -1 for the modifier leaves me with 0. Brooks is lost. I roll a 2, -1 for the rain leaves me with a 1 and Barrymore is lost. I am not having any luck on the rolls. I now tighten up the formation by repositioning two aircraft. See illustration below.

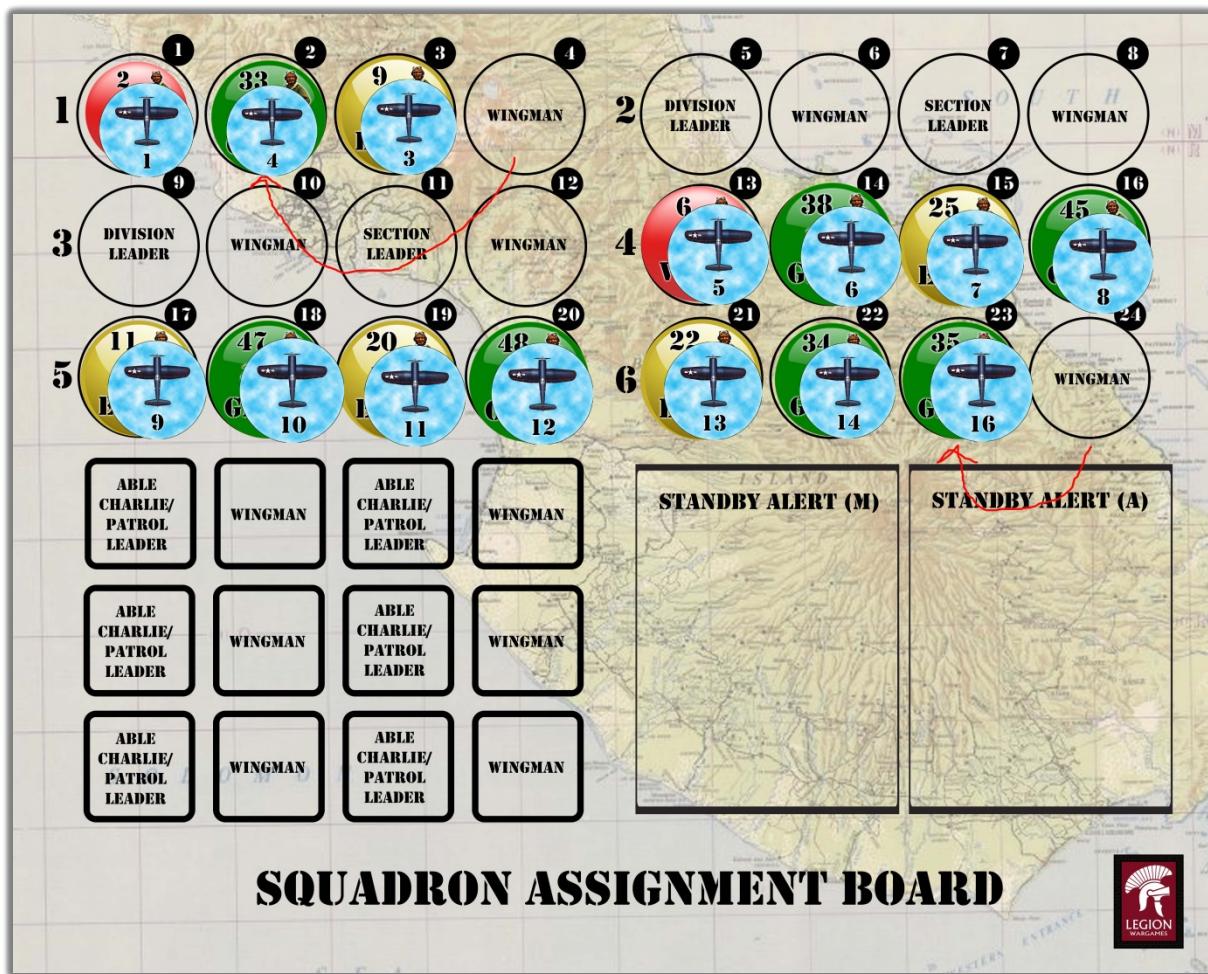


Figure 14

I move the divisions to New Britain and expend a fuel point. My fuel stands at “6” as I attempt to hit my target.

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The Target Zone

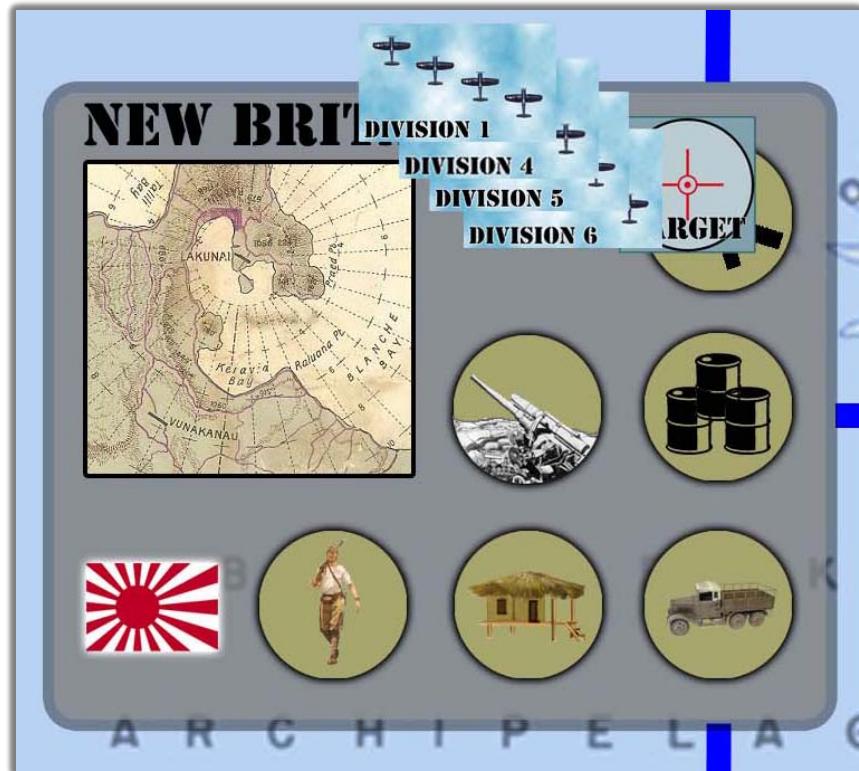


Figure 15

As always when entering a zone, I draw a weather card. It's clear over the target. I draw a Japanese AA card and once again the result is "Moderate". I now roll 1D10 under Table A-3 and look under the "Moderate" column. I roll a 5 – one plane may be affected, suffering a possible hit. I now roll on Table A-1 to see which plane could be hit. I roll a 5 and a 5 – position 19. Plane #11, piloted by Stanley is hit. I now roll 1D6 on Table 4-1 to determine which section of the plane is hit. My roll is a 6 – a tail hit. I now go to Table 4-6 to see what damage may have been done. I roll 2d6, getting a 5 – superficial damage. Stanley is shaken up but otherwise is ok.

I now attempt to spot the target. I roll 1D10 on Table A-4, adding 1 to the die roll because my mission leader is a veteran. I roll a 3 and because of the modifier it becomes a 4. The target is spotted!

Now to drop my 1,000 pounders on the target. I roll a 1D10 on Table A-5 and look for the 1K under the Airfield column, I have several modifiers working for me: +1 for mission lead veteran, I opt to fire my machine guns +1 and +1 for the strike attack. So I will add +3 to my roll.

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I roll an 8 and with three added I have an 11: Destroyed! I now to see if I have expended my machine gun ammo. I roll a 3 so still carrying ammo.

With no other targets to hit, I turn back and head for Piva, entering the transit zone. I consume one fuel. I am now on 5 on the track.

Transit Zone

I draw a weather card, getting clear weather. No need to roll for plane losses since it's clear. I now move the divisions to Piva, expending a fuel point.

Landing

I draw a weather card and get clear weather. I now roll on Table A-1.1, getting a 7. All planes land safely.

With both missions flown for the turn it is now time for the End of Turn Maintenance Phase. The phase consists of several sub-phases.

End of Turn Maintenance

Hospital/Maintenance Track -- Since I have no pilots or men on the Hospital/Maintenance Track, this sub-phase is skipped.

Hospitalization – since I have no men in the Hospital Box, the sub-phase is skipped.

Escape and Evasion – since I have no men in the Escape and Evasion Box, the sub-phase is skipped.

Aircraft Replacement – since I lost four aircraft due to getting lost I get a chance to replace a few of them. I roll 1D10 on Table A-9. I roll a 9, getting three planes. This leaves me 1 aircraft short of my allowed number of 25 so all is good.

Pilot Replacement – I lost four pilots so I roll 1D10 on Table A-10. I roll a 4 getting 1 pilot as a replacement. I now roll 1D6 to determine the pilot's rating. I get a 5, a veteran. I note the addition of the pilot to my pilot roster.

Target Assessment – I now see what my final result is for the day. Since I got one DE result, it adds 1 to my dice roll on Table A-12. I roll 2D10 – a 3 and a 2 or 32. A +1 for the DE result makes it a 33. That results in a below average rating for the day.

If the game were to continue, I would repeat the process. However if the game ended at this point, the Japanese would have earned a moral victory.