

HOLDING CARENTAN

DONVILLE AND THE ROAD TO BAUPTE

SITUATION REPORT

The town of Carentan fell to the US 101st Airborne Division on June 12th, after its final defenders, a rear-guard of 6th Fallschirmjäger Regiment was overrun. The town had been one of the US division's objectives on D-Day, but the scattered drop meant that it had taken six days to gather the men and equipment, organise the attack and gradually drive the German defenders south. The town was an important objective. It formed the link-up point between the two US Corps coming ashore at Utah and Omaha, thus presenting the Germans with a unified US front, rather than two separate beachheads. The German commanders could also see this, retaining Carentan would drive a wedge between the two US Corps, from which further attacks could be launched. In order to hold the town 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, 'Gotz von Berlichingen' was ordered the defenders. Delays due to lack of trucks and Allied air attacks meant the division was just unable to reach Carentan before it fell. On the night of June 12th, the division's troops and armour were still south of the town, but they had been given orders to launch a rapid attack to retake it, before the Americans could be reinforced.

These German orders had been intercepted by Ultra, and the US General Omar Bradley knew an attack was imminent. He had a reserve force in place; Task Force A, 2nd Armoured Division, stationed 15km away at Isigny. Having cleared the town, the US paratroopers were ordered to quickly push south-west and west to secure a wider perimeter around it, with the 501st Regiment moving to the west, and 506th further south. On the evening of June 12th their advance had pushed in a German outpost line, some 2km from Carentan, and they were to renew their advance at dawn on the 13th.

As the paratroopers prepared to move out again, the SS attack began. Artillery and mortar fire preceded an attack by 17th SS Panzer Regiment's armour (mostly StuGs) supported by 37th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment (on foot) and elements of the 6th Fallschirmjäger Regiment. Throughout the morning the paratroopers fought amongst the rain soaked fields and hedgerows, south and west of Carentan. The Germans' main assault along the Perriers-Carentan highway made some progress, and by midday, they were within 500m of the edge of the town. Further west, 501st had held its lines better (against less odds), but was still under pressure to give ground.

With Carentan under artillery fire and threatened with falling back to the Germans, Task Force A's tanks, armoured infantry and artillery had been dispatched from Isigny at 1000.

The US armour moved through Carentan, and in the early afternoon attacked the German Spearheads. Splitting into two groups, the US tankers thrust south along the main Perriers highway, and along a western side road towards the village of Baupte. Here they relieved the hard-pressed men of E Company, 501st PIR, holding the line in the area of small farm called Donville (marked Douville on the maps). The Shermans led armoured infantry directly into the attack smashing into the SS lines. The fighting continued all afternoon, eventually driving the Germans back 2km from Carentan.

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Game Size: Company

THE BATTLE

This battle takes place as part of the US counter-attack, west of Carentan on the road to Baupte, at Donville.

Play the game on a 6'x6' table.

Close to the centre of the table is the Donville farm, surrounded by cow pastures, most edged with large hedgerows.

Deploy the US airborne defenders first, elements of E Company, 501st.

These have been fighting all morning, holding this position under StuG, mortar and artillery fire. A D6 US paratrooper units may start the game on Ambush Fire. The initial German attackers are placed within 5" of the western table edge, with their reinforcements arriving on that table edge and via the southern side road, on the turn given.

The US reinforcements arrive on the eastern table edge on the turn given.

The Germans are attacking and take the first turn.

OBJECTIVES

There are three objectives on the battlefield.

The Donville farm (its largest building), a road junction on the Baupte road and another small farm building south of the Baupte road.

ALTERNATIVE FORCES

You may wish to select your own forces from your miniature collection with which to refight the battle.

In this case the American player can select 200 points from the US Airborne lists, and these all start the game deployed on the table top. He can also select 750 points from the US Armoured Division lists, and these are his reinforcements.

The German player can select 650 points from the German Panzer Division, or Germany Erastz Panzer Division lists. In addition, he can select 200 point from the Fallschirmjäger list, to represent the 6th Fallschirmjäger's men. ,

SPECIAL RULES

Ammo Low: After hard fighting all morning, the US paras are now running low on ammo. If the German player pulls a battle counter numbered 1, or an air attack counter, he can choose to play this as an Ammo Low counter instead. It must be played on a US airborne unit.

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US FORCES	GERMAN FORCES
<p><i>elements of E Company, 501st PIR</i> US Airborne Platoon with a combat medic</p> <p>Turn 5 - eastern table edge M4 Sherman Platoon 5x Sherman Tanks</p> <p>Turn 6 - eastern table edge M4 Sherman Platoon 5x Sherman Tanks</p> <p>Turn 7 - eastern table edge Armoured Infantry Platoon OP Team in M5 halftrack</p> <p>Off-Table Battery 2x batteries of 2x 105mm Howitzers (M7 Priests of 14th Armoured Field Artillery)</p> <p>Officers: 5</p> <p>Battle Rating Total: 59</p>	<p>Initial Attackers Fallschirmjäger Platoon HMG-42 team Panzerschreck team Combat medic</p> <p>Turn 2 - along southern road 3x StuG III Gs OP team in Kubelwagen</p> <p>Turn 3 - western table edge 3x StuG IVs - Panzer Grenadier Platoon (<i>may be riding the StuGs</i>)</p> <p>Turn 4 - western table edge Panzer Grenadier Platoon Pak40 auf 39(H)</p> <p>Turn 4 - western table edge Panzer IV</p> <p>Off-Table Battery 2x 80mm mortars 2x 105mm field guns</p> <p>Officers: 5</p> <p>Battle Rating Total: 61</p>

