



Scenario Analysis: Try at Trentlehof

Description

In this post, we will examine **DB164 Try at Trentlehof**. Jeffery D. Meyers designed this scenario, and it is available from the Dispatches from the Bunker folks. I cannot speak highly enough of the Dispatches products and I encourage you to check more of them out. In my opinion, DftB represents the best value in all of ASL.

Once again, I will use my [ASL Tactical Maxims](#) to devise a defense. I am doing this in response to Dave Ramsey's request for suggestions in [Illuminating Rounds 59](#).

Maxim 1: Victory Conditions

As VC go, this scenario is straightforward. The American must capture greater than or equal to 4 Building/Rubble hexes within five hexes of 17R4. They must accomplish this while losing less than 25 CVP.

First, the VC are in terms of hex control. The attacker gains control of a hex by occupying the Ground level of the hex with an MMC Infantry unit without the presence of an enemy unit in the same hex. For example, an American 6-6-6 in the ground level of 17P4 would not gain control of the hex if a broken enemy unit is on level 1. As the last turn is a half turn, voluntarily breaking units on the ground level to avoid CC is a viable option to deny American control on the penultimate turn.

Keep in mind, Riders are not Infantry. An AFV entering a Location with Riders cannot capture a hex. In such a situation, the AFV/Riders temporarily control the hex, but control reverts to its previous status when the AFV/Riders move on. Only Infantry can gain permanent control.

Maxim 2: Terrain

The terrain here is not too much of a factor. It is flat but for a small hill on board 44. A wood mass on board 44 dominates the western side of the map, continuing on board 17. Another smaller wood mass dominates the eastern side of the board. Obviously, these are No-Go terrain for the American AFVs and Slow-Go terrain for the American Infantry. Still, these wood masses represent the best cover the American units are likely to find and are



Ground Snow is in effect and all roads are plowed. This will add 1MF to Infantry movement gaining or descending a level. Given the size and placement of the board 44 hill, this is not likely to affect the game.

Neither side possesses Winter Camouflage.





Figure 1

Influences on Movement:

The wood hexes will slow Infantry movement while AFV movement through the same is VERY slow with an added Bog risk.

Otherwise, the terrain is Open ground. The six morale Americans will not fare well crossing Open ground.

There are no real chokepoints in the terrain to build a defense in depth around. The Open ground forces us to make some hard decisions early and to live with those decisions for the duration of the scenario. Once set, our defenders won't use much movement. It is essential for the defenders to quickly get where they want to be or they may never make it. This need has to be balanced against a need to delay the American attack enough that the German armor can get on unopposed.

Visualizing the Terrain's Influence on the Battle

As noted above, there are no real choke points in this scenario. The American AFVs are limited to the middle third of the board unless they want to take a slow route up the western edge of the board. While possible, this isn't a practical option.

Fortunately for the Americans, the German possesses limited AT options. Although quite punchy, the limited range on *Panzerfausts* and the *Panzerschrecks* present little threat to the American movement. Any German Infantry trying such a shot is likely to be blown away by American firepower. The risk of losing an AFV is mitigated by the relatively high CVP cap. Still, the American does not want to throw away his AFVs needlessly.

The terrain in the VC area is all open ground. Couple the low American morale with a lack of reliable Smoke and attacking across this ground will be extremely difficult. The Americans will have to be very deliberate in their attack and pay particular attention to rout paths to keep the attack's momentum.

Maxim Three: Time

An unopposed American attack could reach the VC area in three turns, giving the Americans plenty of time to attack the village. The American must also account for the verticality of the VC and allot time for it. Any attack on a two-story house must begin no



later than turn 4 to ensure enough time remains for the attack to succeed. Fortunately for the Americans, they do not have to capture any two-story houses to win.

Sadly for the Americans, they will not be unopposed.

Maxim 4: Order of Battle

Assessing the American OB

The bulk of the American Infantry are 1st line troops with unbroken 6 morale. American troops exposed to fire do not stand up well. Look for these troops to be broken early and often. The Americans must carefully plan their routing to ensure his troops cycle back into the action. As 1st liners, the American Infantry also have Assault Fire capability. A multi-hex firegroup can generate tremendous firepower even in AFPh.

The American OB contains a 9-2 and 4 MMGs. It would be very easy for them to marry two 6-6-6s manning MMGs for a 20 flat (or better) shot wherever they need. A follow up 8 flat (or better) on a ROF 2 is cause for even more concern. Weighted against the kill stack is the need to have a rally engine cycling troops back into the battle. Still, with plenty of leaders laying about, the 9-2 is better off in the attack.

The M10 GMCs are simply devastating here. At a range of ≤ 6 with a -2 Acq, the MA scores a hit on the ITT on an Original 8 (72%). Such a hit generates a NMC on an Original 9 (83%). Each MA shot with a -2 Acq has roughly a 60% chance of generating a NMC. Assuming a 7 morale, a unit fails an NMC roughly 40% of the time. Putting all of this together, each MA shot with a -2 Acq has roughly a 1 in 5 chance to break a German MMC. With a ROF of 2 and 4 AFVs shooting, it is not unreasonable to expect 5 shots a turn, meaning if all MAs are laid on one target, the unit is likely to break. If one of these goes on a ROF tear, it will likely tip the balance dramatically.

Fortunately for the Germans, the American crews only have 7 morale and the American AFVs are all Open Topped. If the American wishes to shoot the MA, he must be CE. This will give the German Sniper and Infantry a chance to Stun the M10s. The German artillery can also wreak havoc on these AFVs, so the American player must be careful not to bunch up and present a juicy target. Still, if the German is focusing on the M10s, then the American Infantry is left unmolested.

Assessing the German OB



The Germans have one Fortified Building Location to place. Also, all Trenches connect directly to buildings per Red Factories SSR RF6. These Trenches will allow limited movement between VC buildings and give the German forces some ability to move as needed.

Also per SSR, the Germans use *panzerfausts* as if 1944 (two hex range, no +1 availability drm). This gives the Germans some additional AT assets, but at the risk of hurting your fragile Infantry if Desperation penalties apply. Throw in two *panzerschrecks* and the German Infantry have more AT punch.

The German Infantry is primarily second-line troops and Conscripts. The German Infantry ELR of 2 can quickly see your force eroding to a Disrupted mess. German leadership is average, but having two -1 leaders and 2 MMGs against American 6-6-6s attacking over open ground will be nice if they can survive all that American firepower.

The German AFVs are decent, but not your typical late war vehicles. Each side's AFVs can handle the others, but the 2 ROF MA on the American M10s gives them an advantage. As the German, you better be shooting first or you might not get a chance to, particularly against the 9-1 Armor Leader's AFV.

The Germans receive 80mm OBA (HE only) and one pre-registered hex. For the first three turns, this is likely best left unconverted to force the Americans to spread out. When feeling sorely pressed on either flank, convert the SR to a Harassing Fire OBA attack and force the Americans to go the long way around. The OBA can be very effective against the M10s. If the American clumps the 9-2 with one or more AFVs, drop an OBA Concentration on the 9-2's head and hope to keep in the OBA's center.

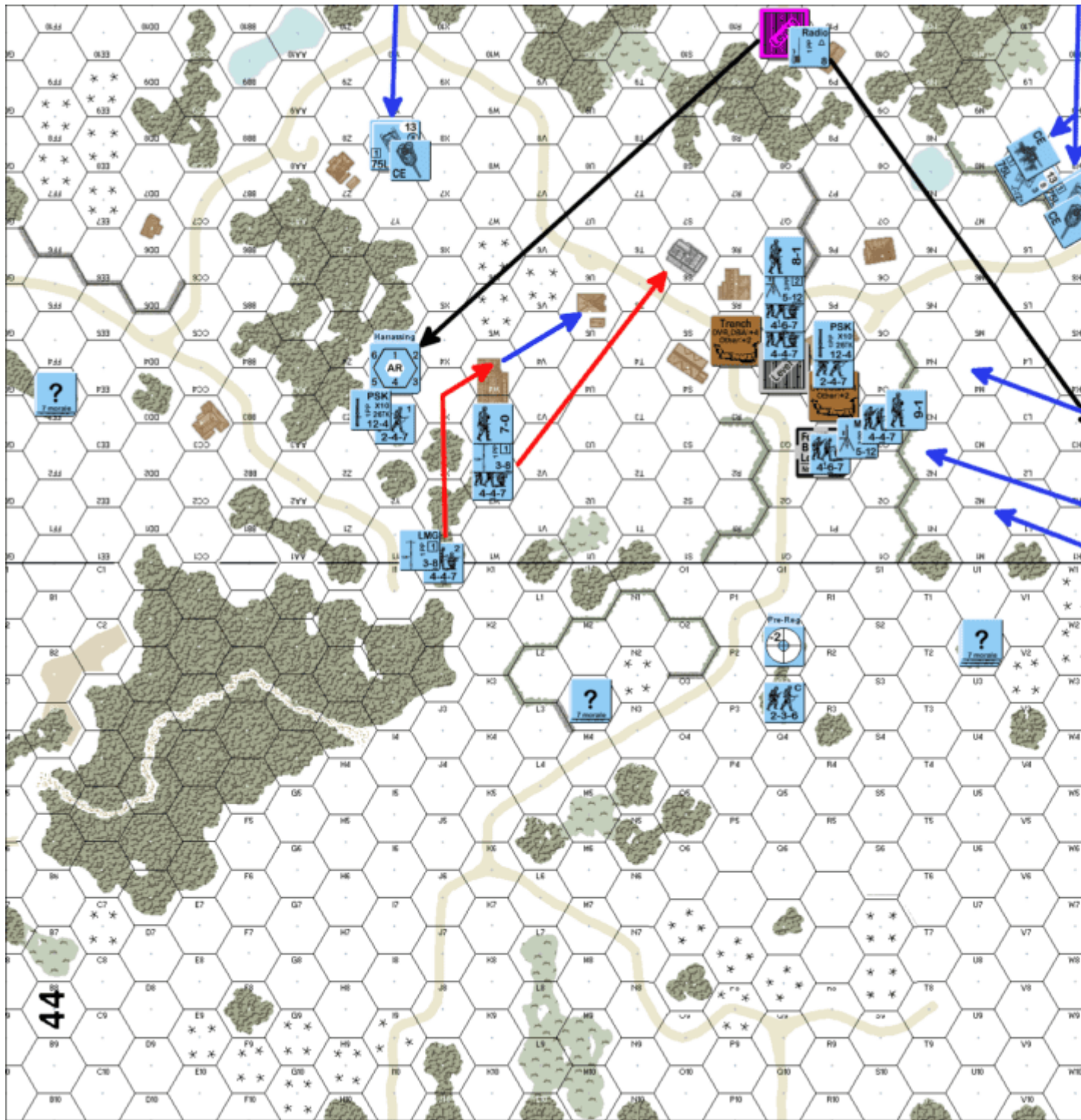


Figure 2

Making a Plan

As the German, we hope to create two kill zones. To do so, we must bring as much firepower to bear as we can in these zones. I don't expect the American to attack from both sides, but if he does, it will split our firepower. Our setup invites an attack through



the western woods mass. Let's hope the Americans take the bait.

Our secondary goal is to delay the Americans enough to allow our AFVs to enter unopposed. The positions occupied in the image above are rudimentary ideas. The American attack will dictate the final positioning. Hex 17Q7 threatens the hedge in the west central portion of the map if the Americans gather up behind it.

The Germans will deploy like crazy when the opportunity presents itself. Spreading out will limit the effect of the American firepower. In an ideal world, three German squads deploy on turn one.

Falling Back

The red lines above represent turn 1 moves for the Germans. The forward deployment slows the Americans down, but with all that firepower and open ground, the Germans must scoot to their final defensive positions quickly. All of that open ground works against the Germans as much as it does the Americans, so waiting too long to get into position will probably mean they never make it.

The blue lines show a slow, fighting withdrawal, trying to buy some time. Truthfully, any German Conscript falling back into the VC area is a bonus. I would expect none of these to survive.

Where possible, the Germans should skulk first, and fire only when skulking is not an option.

German OBA

The OBA observer is centrally located. The pre-reg hex is in the middle, just in case the Americans opt for a direct assault. Our goal for the OBA is to get an SR down safely on turn 1 and then use the SR to influence the American attack. Putting the SR down on the eastern portion of the map some place the Americans can reach in their turn 2 MPH should influence the Americans to move west. The ARs depicted on the map show alternate possibilities to place the FFE depending on the American attack.

Conclusion

This is my take on this scenario and on the German side. I think the Germans would be BORING to play. They will primarily be everywhere they need to be on Turn 1 or 2,



creating a *sitzkrieg* from then on.

The American leadership coupled with MMGs is going to be a tough pill for the Germans to swallow, especially the 9-2. Two 6-6-6s manning 2 MMGs with the 9-2 marked Opportunity Fire to cover the American advance threatens anything that stands up to shoot the Americans.

Lastly, I think the M10s are simply more than the Germans can take. As I noted above, with a -2 Acq, these beasts stand to create an NMC or better roughly 60% of the time. The German Infantry will find that very challenging. If any of these go on a ROF tear, it will probably be game deciding.

I think the scenario will be fairly pro-American over time. I think it is super fun for the American player and the German will need a strong Personal Morale to have a chance.