



Scenario Analysis: HazMo3 — Seaside Retreat

Description

This post originally appeared in the [Red Banner](#), the news letter of my home ASL Group, [The DC Conscripts](#). If you're ever in the DC area and looking for some ASL reach out. Members of our group stretch across Maryland, Virginia, and DC. I am sure someone can get you sorted.

In this post, we are going to take an in-depth look at HazMo 3, *Seaside Retreat*, using my [ASL Tactical Maxims](#). Unlike my earlier articles in this scenario, I am going to examine a defense and how to carry an attack against that defense to achieve victory. For those who don't have this pack, I cannot recommend it enough. It is available on the [Hazardous Movement Gaming](#) website or from one of the ASL retailers listed there. Let's get started.

Maxim 1: Victory Conditions

As VC go, these are easy to understand: control three factories by game end without losing 60 or more CVP. To gain control of a factory, the French side must occupy a non-rooftop, non-subterranean Location and be the sole occupant of that factory building. The 60 CVP limit is not likely to be too much of a challenge. Mounting half-track losses are probably the biggest threat. That threat is mitigated by recalling unarmed half tracks as soon as they unload.

Maxim 2: Terrain

This southern half of this map is very urban, filled with long open corridors and +3 Building TEM. Besides stone buildings, there are random stone rubble hexes created by SSR. These stone rubble Locations are rout, rally, ambush, and Street Fighting Locations, also by SSR. Many buildings are two-story and some are multi-story. This will help to create open shots over stone rubble Locations. Rooftops are also in play.

To the north, there is a level 2 hill mass dominating the entire map. The hill brush covered creating some opportunities for hidden Guns and such. There are several opportunities to set up on this hill mass to cut off German units falling back in a fighting withdrawal.

Map Overview

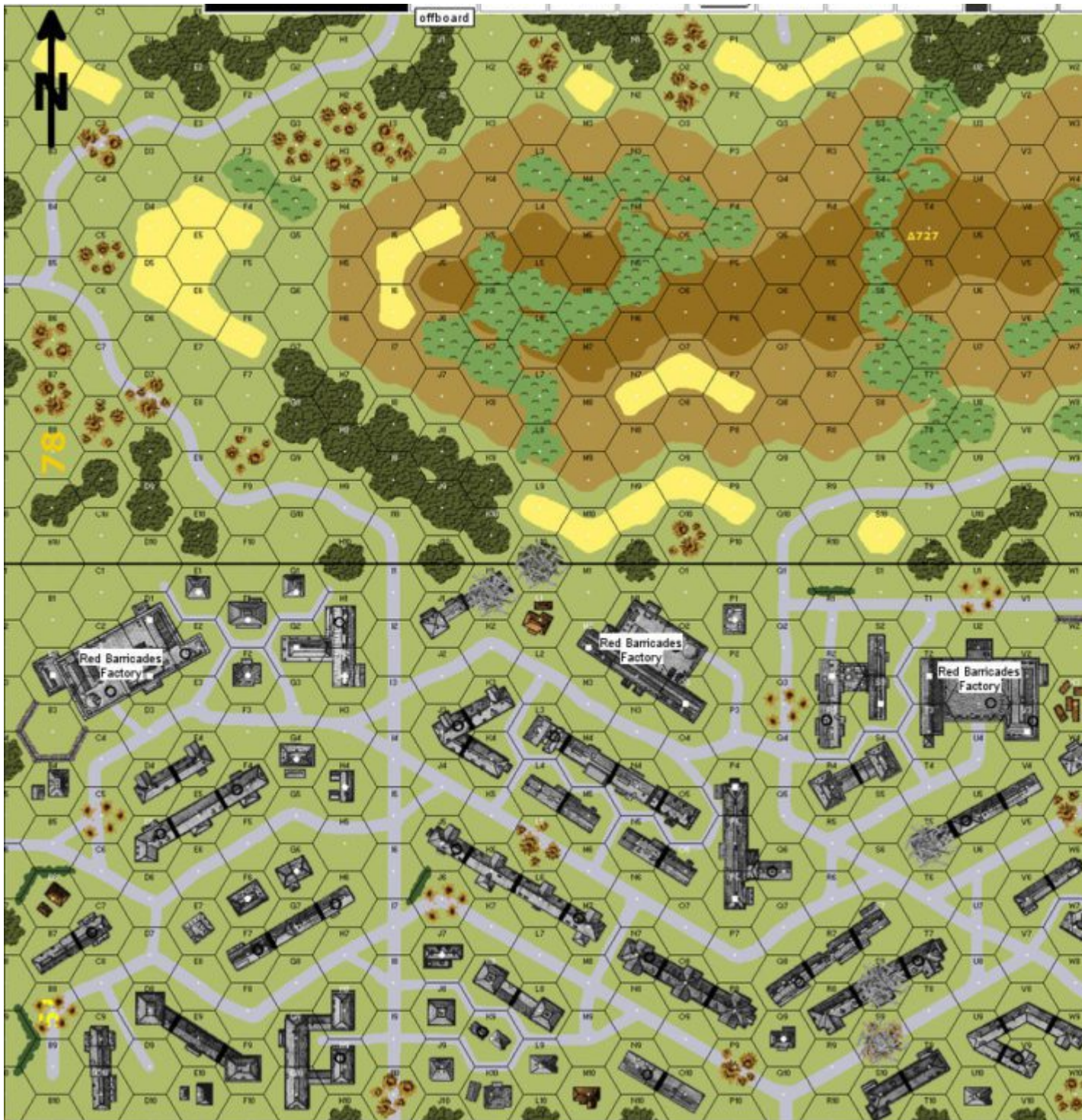


Figure 1

In this image, we can see the three factories clearly labeled. The red line on board 51 limits the German set up. The blue line limits the French set up area. Also note rubble placement is completed in this image.

Influence on Infantry Movement

The buildings will slow movement some, but there are plenty of opportunities to get forward using bypass movement. The closed spaces mean German shots should be rare, but it also follows that the Germans will contest every road. To combat this, the French will need to use smoke to cover road crossings and the threat of AFVs to shoo away Infantry trying to slow down the advance.

In the north, the wide open spaces will be OK, particularly the Level 1 Locations. The French player will have to pay close attention to German units on level 1 or higher Locations but if he isn't covering the space, level 1 is easily pushed.

Influence on Vehicular Movement

In the southern half of the map, movement corridors threaten to lock the French in. There are also two roadblocks to be dealt with. There are enough passages to allow the roadblocks to be bypassed, but this will slow the forward pace of movement for the AFVs. Still, with 8.5 turns, there is more than enough time for the AFVs to get forward.

In the northern half of the map, the terrain is wide-open AFV country. The Germans possess little in the way of AT assets and those they do have are of limited use against the French lend-lease armor. As noted for the Infantry section, there are some excellent positions on level 1 and 2 which can cut off German forces falling back in their defense. We'll have to see what the defender gives us.

Visualizing the Terrains Influence on the Battle



US Army Lieutenant Ralph Vernon and men of his unit study a map of their objective in a briefing tent in one of the assembly areas on the south coast of England, May 1944. EA 25411 Part of FOREIGN OFFICE POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT (PID) SECOND WORLD WAR PHOTOGRAPH LIBRARY

For the attacker, the defender's forces will exert more influence on the attack than terrain does. The terrain's biggest impact will be the distance to the last building. Taking the straight attack down the length of board 51, it is 25 hexes from the French setup area to the furthest factory. The French realistically need to be at this last building by the end of turn 7 to have a realistic chance to clear this building. Given this time constraint, the French need to cover nearly 4 hexes a turn towards this building to realistically clear it by game end.

One wild card on this timeline is the FFI partisans which can enter anywhere along the north, south, or eastern edge. Note also the [scenario errata](#), which changes the setup instructions for the FFI slightly. If the FFI enters from the south on turn 2, they can enter within 7 hexes of the last factory. Not only that, but doing so also allows them to cut off retreat paths, and if in upper level locations, they could pose routing problems for the German forces.

Also note the mobility afforded by all the M5 half tracks. Fully loaded with Infantry the half tracks can carry 9 total squads to anywhere on the map. Take care not to fall on some AT asset, as a herd of full-loaded M5s is a CVP disaster waiting to happen.

Maxim Three: Time

As noted earlier, the French need to be near the final factory by turn 7. The need to clear all of this factory and also be the sole occupant of this factory is going to take two turns. It would be even better if some fully loaded half tracks can disembark passengers somewhere along the line 78J7 to 78C8 by the end of turn 5/6. In fact, I think any attack that doesn't give proper thought to capturing the third factory at the outset is doomed to failure. There is not enough time to attack each of these factories serially. The attack on the third factory has to be simultaneously under way at the same times as the attacks on the front two are.

Maxim 4: Order of Battle

Assessing the German OB

The German Infantry has some hitting power, but it is not particularly potent. With an ELR of 2, the German army could seriously melt away quickly. Eight Conscript squads with an ELR of 2 are little more than speed bumps on their way to Disruption.

The German AT assets are a mixed bag for the Shermans and Stuarts. The 105 has H4 (HEAT) which has a 15 TK. Otherwise, it has no AP and its HE TK is 10. The 37L has a TK of 9. It has A3 which bumps up to a 10. The lend-lease armor does need to be concerned about Deliberate Immobilization but even those attacks are fairly low odds. The PSK and *panzerfausts* are real threats which come with desperation penalties or a +2 TH DRM. They are definitely a two-edged sword.



<https://www.armedconflicts.com/3-7-cm-PaK-35-36-3-7-cm-anti-tank-gun-t13028>

Also, don't sleep on the *stielgranate* HEAT round from the 37L. This bad-boy has 26TK. The To Hit rules are different, so look them up. The depletion number is a 6, so getting two or more is a blessing. Hitting and bagging 2 Shermans could be game changing.

The Germans have 24 factors of minefields, some wire, a couple of roadblocks, and some fortified Locations. These things will slow down the French attack some, but depending on placement, there aren't really enough of them to make things too rough.

The Germans may HIP one squad-equivalent and any SW/leader stacked with them. I suspect this will be the PSK and perhaps the HMG hidden somewhere around the third factory.

Assessing the French OB

The biggest thing the French have going for them is all the AFVs and half tracks. The AFVs are basically unopposed. Sure, the Germans have some AT assets, but what they have is not effective against the lend-lease armor. The half tracks provide the French some much-needed mobility at the risk of potential CVP for the German player.

The broken side morale of 6/7 is not good. In fact, it is bad enough that it's worth considering the 9-2 on rally duties to keep the attack going. At the very least, French leaders will run around behind the lines, shuffling units back into the attack. Proper planning of rally positions is key to maintaining the attack's momentum.

Examining the German Set Up

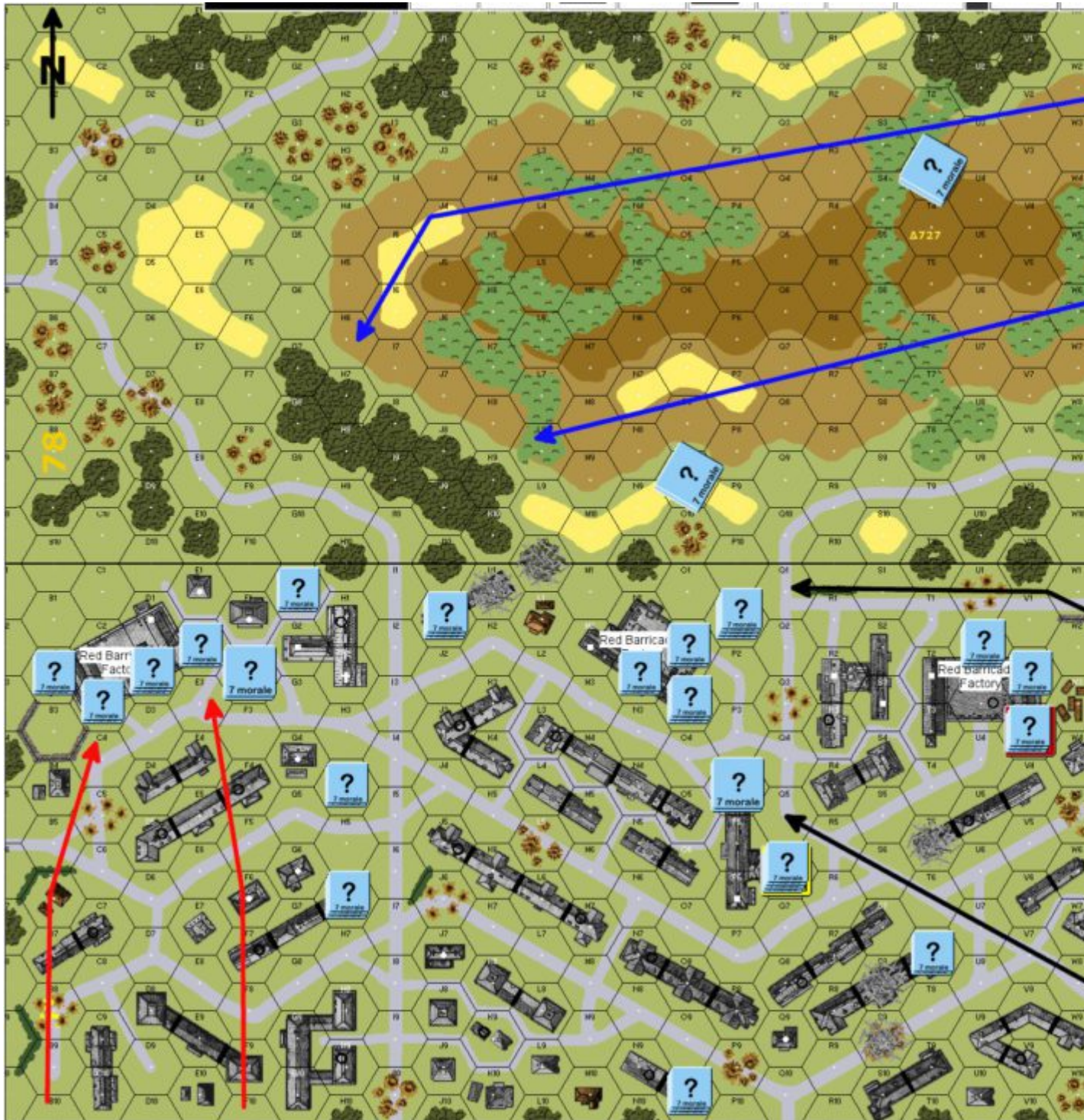


Figure 2

The above map shows the German setup offered. The different arrows represent the differing axis of approach to the VC areas (Maxim 1). We will examine them one at a time in part. First, let's see what we can gather from the German setup that might help us.

Before we start that, note that Rooftops are not in play. My opponent's original setup included them, but we fixed that during play.

The concealed unit in 51F2 must be real since dummies cannot set up in non-Concealment terrain. With three other sets of counters representing vehicles, one of them is clearly a dummy stack. The unit at 51Q7 level 2 is likely a leader/MG combo. It is a little threatening to anything running along level 1 on the hilltop, so it must be driven off. The Germans seem to put an emphasis on stopping a board seam attack.

Other than that, there is not that much more to determine. Push hard, try to get to the third factory by turn 6, and collect the lot.

Making a Plan



<http://tanksprozacdrugs.blogspot.com/2013/08/british-sherman-v.html>

Refer to figure 2.

The bulk of the French attack will push along the axis between the black arrows. Shermans will support this attack initially, providing SMOKE to create opportunities to

push into the attack. This group will seek to capture the first two factories (Maxim 1). Any units remaining after capture of the factories will seek to support the attack on the third factory. It will all come down to momentum and shuffling broken units back into the attack. This provides a lot of cover and rally terrain to keep up the momentum of the attack (Maxims 2/3). Based purely on distance from the jump off area, it is not unreasonable to expect capture of the first 2 factories by turn 5, although no later than turn 6 is acceptable. This leaves some time to move to support the attack on the third factory if needed.

The blue arrows cover the half tracks attack. They are seeking to get a point somewhere between 78 C8- 78 K8 and unload. If they can get there no later than turn 5, they will have plenty of time to clean out the 3rd factory. Some Shermans need to reinforce this attack and cover the approach with SMOKE if possible.



Fully loaded, the half tracks can carry 9 squads into this attack. The Stuarts will enter with the half tracks to help cover them against aggressive German AFV play (Maxim 4). Remember, if the French are pushed over 60 CVP, they lose (Maxim 1). The Stuarts here will help guard against that. The half tracks should delay entry until turn 2 or 3 as they have plenty of movement to get where they need to be (Maxim 3). They just need to make sure their path is clear from destruction (Maxim 1).

The FFI supports the attack on the third factory along the axis of the red arrows. These units can put pressure on the third factory (Maxim 1) and can also simultaneously cause problems for units seeking to fall back on the 3rd factory (Maxims 2/3). These units can use sewer movement (Maxim 4). You would expect the Germans to have all of their

fortified building Locations in this building (Maxims 2/4). There are two sewer entrances into the 3rd factory, which FFI units can come boiling out of if the Germans aren't careful (Maxim 2/3/4). Having these units in the factory while the French units are falling down on them could be a disaster for the Germans.

Initial French Set Up



Figure 3

Here we see my solution. The black arrows represent SMOKE shots I will take with the

Shermans. Shrouding those units in SMOKE will enable the French to get forward using bypass movement (Maxim 3).

The blue arrows highlight two cases of movement which are pre-planned: the first is the 9-1, 2X MMG, HMG, and 4-5-7s manning them all. This will set up a kill stack to run off the German leader/MG combo in Q6 level 2 (Maxim 3). The other represents the 2 Stuarts going to the top of the hill and securing a path for the hts across this hill. Both will remain CE at turn end to increase the odds of fending off any frisky German AFV (Maxims 1/3).

The FFI are in position to come on in turn 2. The half tracks are near where they will probably enter but that could change depending on the situation.

At some point, one or two of the Shermans will need to push the AFV out of 7809 to clear that corridor for approach to the third factory (Maxim 1/3).

A Glimpse of My Game



Figure 3

Here is a glimpse of my game at the beginning of the French turn 3. In it, a couple of things should be apparent.

For starters, I didn't pair my Stuarts with my half tracks. That's a mistake I corrected here in my write up. You can see my Shermans are moving to cover the half tracks but I ended up delaying them until turn 3.

Three of the four German minefields are on board, as are both Trenches (one is just off map) and three wire obstacles. I am glad to see those here where I can easily bypass them as opposed to back near the third factory, where getting past them so late in the game would be difficult.

We can also see one of the German roadblocks. Not a terrible place to put one, but bypassing it was easy once I drove off the German Infantry.

Mostly, my attack is progressing well. I have lost one squad to this point, and I have captured or eliminated 3 in return. I am getting into position to cross the first road and I am expecting to take some more casualties doing so. Time will tell how that works out.

Conclusion

This is my take on the French attack here. I hope I have clarified that a lot of the attacker's options are based on what the defender gives him. As the attacker, our goal is to take what they give us, then take the next thing, and the next thing, until we have taken all there is to take and victory is ours. When considering what I have written here, I implore you to spend a few moments examining your opponents setup and taking the principles I offer here and apply them to what is being offered to you. Also, keep in mind that flexibility is the key. Many games are won when one side recognizes an opportunity their opponent or the dice gives them. Best of luck! Until next time. — jim