

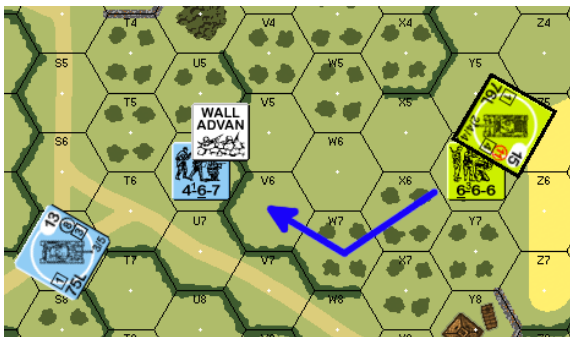
Subtleties Of Bocage

Description



I believe bocage terrain favors the attacker. I am not shy sharing this belief and some of you may have heard me say this personally. In a recent discussion with George Hiotis on a [Strum Front](#) video, George and I wandered into a Bocage discussion. Listening back, my discussion with George lacked focus. This article sums up that discussion, providing rule citations. I also hope this is a little more clear.

Rules Dive



I will explore B9.323 Mandatory Wall Advantage and B9.521 Hexside LOS in this article. Consider the situation on the left. The German 4-6-7 is Unconcealed and in an Open Ground hex. The 4-6-7 has Mandatory Wall Advantage (WA, B9.323).

Per B9.521, the Sherman and the American Squad can see not only the U6 hex but also the squad in the hex BECAUSE the German unit has WA.

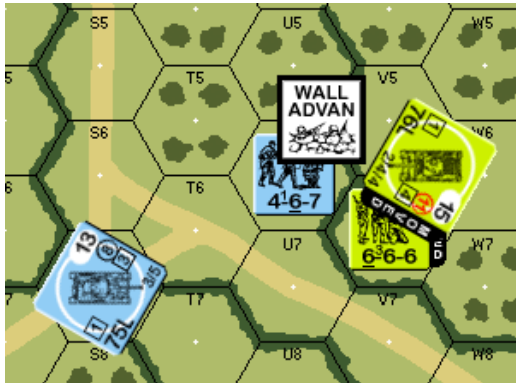
Take a moment to consider this section of B9.521:

- *A viewer not in a hex formed by the bocage hexside:* can see through the bocage hexside, to the hex forming that hexside, but not beyond that hex. It cannot see

units without WA nor their possessed equipment, but it can see everything else in that hex.

It is this what I want to focus on.

The Americans Move

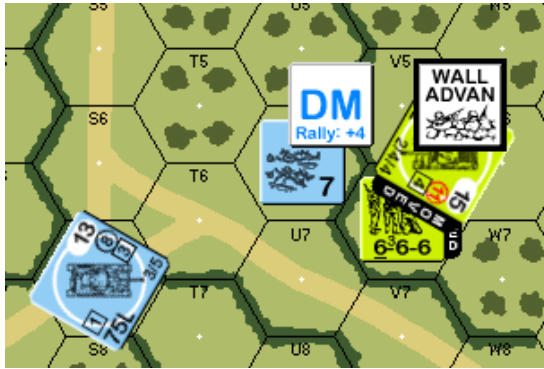


The American units use Armored Assault to attack along the blue path. The German 4-6-7 fails its *Panzerfaust* dr and gets no effect on the American squad. Pictured at left is the situation at the end of the American MPh.

Let us take a moment to examine the LOS again. The German squad has WA and can see the American units in V6 but what about the MkIV? Refer again to the portion of B9.521 I excerpted earlier.

The MkIV is in a hex NOT formed by the bocage hexside. By rule, the MkIV can see through the bocage hexside to the hex forming that hexside. That is a lot of words to say the MkIV can see the V6 hex. But keep reading and you notice the MkIV cannot see units without WA in that hex. The MkIV could fire SMOKE into the Location since it can see the hex. But since it cannot see the units, it cannot fire HE at them. Even ATT will not score a hit against units out of LOS (C3.4).

The Americans Attack Back



In the Advancing Fire Phase, the Americans fire back. Either the Infantry or AFV machine guns break the German squad. Per B9.2, only unbroken units can claim WA. Per B9.322, units may claim WA whenever all enemy units lose WA over a shared hexside. V6 has no TEM so all units in V6 must claim Mandatory WA. Keep in mind AFV are not “in hex TEM” for Mandatory WA purposes.

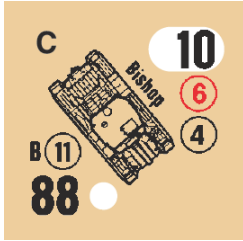
Remember the MkIV had no LOS to the Sherman? That is no longer a problem for the Sherman. The Americans acquired LOS when WA transferred to the American side.

What Can The Germans Do Better

Sadly, the only practical thing the German player can do better is not get into this situation. Since the American units never entered the MkIV’s LOS, the MkIV can not make a Motion attempt. It could fire Area Target Type to place an Acquisition and use that in its upcoming PFPh. That will increase its odds some, but it will shoot at a Hull Down Sherman. To get to PFPh though, it will have to survive the American AFPPh which is not a given.

The MkIV could fire SMOKE into V6 during Final Fire to improve its survivability, but the SMOKE is Dispersed and removed in the upcoming PFPh. And again, the MkIV is squaring off against a Hull Down Sherman. The MkIV can win this engagement, but it is going to lose it at more than a 2:1 ratio. As an American player, I would take those odds.

Conclusion



I am trying to think about other bocage related situations where I think the attacker comes off better. I am not sure bocage could be modeled any better in ASL. Still, if I am attacking into bocage terrain, I do not find myself overly worried about bocage. And to me, that makes bocage feel ahistorical. As always though, that is just my opinion. Yours may vary. Until next time. – jim