

# THE BATTLE

## THE OPENING HAND

Remember: the cards are all displayed from your point of view, which is also the Allied point of view. Therefore, the Axis' left- and right-flank Section cards are reversed in order to make it easier to read the map and follow the game. When the Axis player plays a "right-flank card," it's actually his left flank, which is the right flank from the reader's perspective.



According to the rules in the upgraded (balanced) scenario as it appears in the *Air Pack*, the US player receives two *Air Sortie* cards.

Antoine (Allies) shared his initial impressions with his reporter.

- My opening hand is acceptable (he's being modest—"it was amazing!" Tutux confessed at the end of the game). Here's my plan: quickly weaken the right flank by combining ground and air strikes. After that I'll be able to maintain a center assault. There's really no hope for the left flank: my hand won't even get me across the minefields, let alone support an assault there.
- Are you going to beat Praxeo?
- Yes!



My reporter had the same reaction to my hand as I did: silence, a grimace, a sigh—serious concerns.

– I’m expecting the Americans to make a very strong main assault against the caves on the center or the left, and this hand will not be able to hold them off.

- ★ If he attacks early in the game, I’ll get blown to bits because I can barely return fire.
- ★ If he starts off on the right, on the other hand, I’m well-armed: a one in three chance.

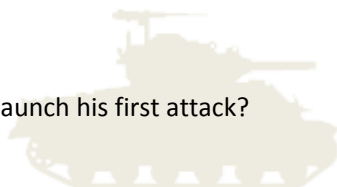
However this hand has one advantage: I’ll be able to maintain an effective anti-aircraft defense using the *diversion* method (see Chapter 18); no matter where he sends his plane, I’ll counter-attack immediately on the right section (my left flank). With my Armor activated, I’ll be able to strike back five times in a row if I need to without having to worry about what’s going on elsewhere.

After all, there are five medals to harvest in this flank! Antoine will have to stir up serious trouble for me elsewhere if he doesn’t want his right flank to be totally decimated. I’m not expecting to gain a significant advantage with this strategy (maybe no advantage at all, in fact), but it’s the least passive way to play this completely mediocre hand.

– How are you feeling about the game?

– I’m very worried about the first few turns because they could be catastrophic for me. I need to build my hand, but without playing passively in the meantime. I’m still going to destroy his Plane at the start of the game because it’s a huge threat to me right now.

So, where will Antoine launch his first attack?



## 1) AERIAL COMBAT



### Turn 1

#### Move

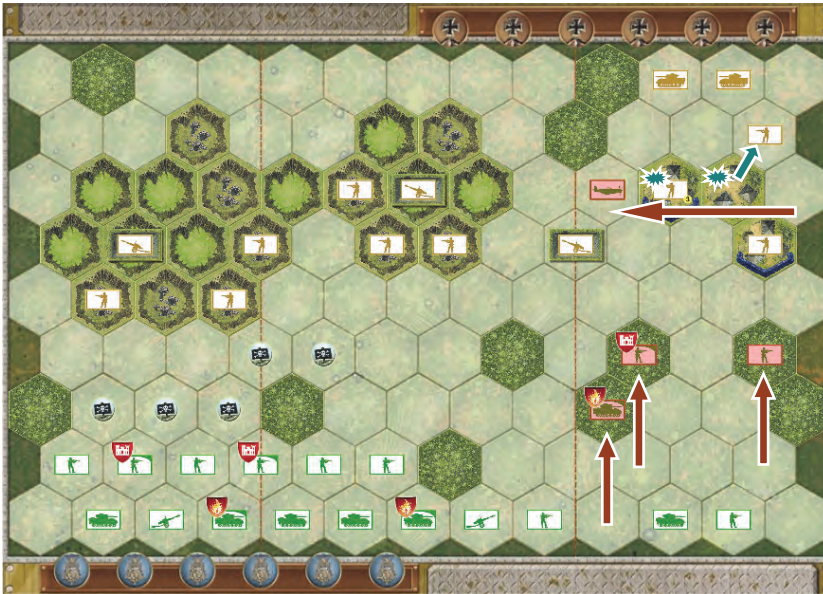
Right-flank *Attack* + *Air Sortie*

- ★ 1x ARM + 2x INF
- ★ 1x Plane

### Allies

Hits: 1      Score: 0-0

Draw: *Direct from HQ*



**Antoine** – I’ve decided to be cautious. Following the standard practice when confronting the Japanese Imperial Army, I’ll weaken the enemy Infantry before coming into close range, destroying at least one figure in each of the complete Infantry units and therefore neutralizing Praxeo’s *Seishin Kyoiku* ability.

Rules: the Marines are *Gung-Ho!*, which means that Antoine activates three units + 1 when he plays *Attack*. The fourth unit is a Corsair (possible missions: *Strafing* + *Ground Support*), which successfully lifts off with the help of *Air Sortie*. He strafes...

**Praxeo** – Whew, he started on the right! He was being cautious by not attacking immediately in his two strong sections. That’s good news! Still, it makes sense for him to strafe my whole Infantry units. I expected as much, but that doesn’t make it any less annoying—now I’m going to have to launch my anti-aircraft strategy right away and I won’t be able to think about the dangerous sections (left and center). Being forced to Retreat from the village was a tough blow.

### **Tactical note**

During the post-game debrief of the match, Treize suggested advancing the other American right-flank Infantry unit first—the one that stayed put when Antoine played—in order to allow the other two Infantry units in that section to break into the Jungle (Terrain Card 57) later. If played this way, they would advance one hex simultaneously and be able to fight immediately. Antoine’s deployment was more aggressive, but he did leave one unit out of the action for a short time.



Antoine – Photo Mathieu « Treize » Latourrette



## Turn 2

### Move

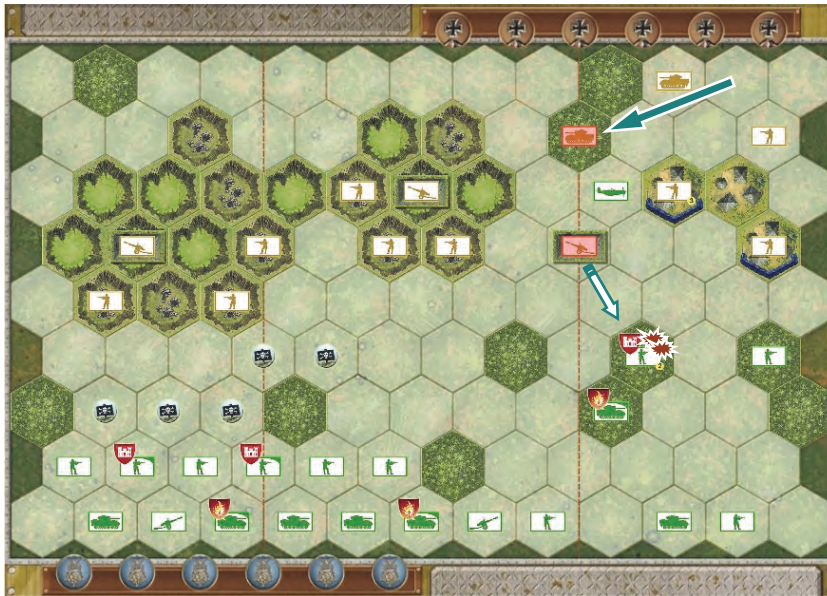
Right-flank *Probe*

- ★ 1x ARM
- ★ 1x ART

Axis

Hits: 2      Score: 0-0

Draw: *Attack*  
3 right-flank units

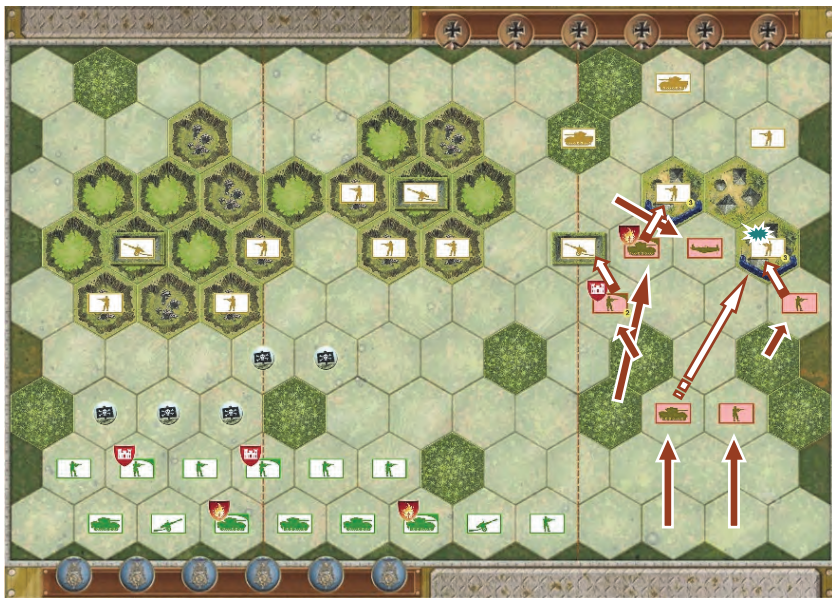


**Praxeo** – I bring the assault over to my strong flank, where my cards can back it up. If it takes place here, I'll be able to do something the whole game! I can also apply my anti-aircraft strategy from here: I send three units after the Corsair to force a dangerous Air Check. Still, I can't shake the feeling that Antoine might be bluffing. Maybe he's planning a massive center attack, in which case his Plane will be able to carry out its mission against my Artillery. He'll attack at close range with Flame Throwers and Infantry and, eventually, help from *Ground Support* or *Strafing*. Only time will tell; I'll know more on the next turn.

**Antoine** – The Japanese Artillery destroys two precious Marine Combat Engineers. "I'm pretty annoyed."

**Turn 3****Move**Right-fl. *Assault + Air Sortie*

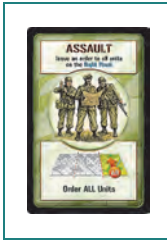
- ★ 3x INF + 2x ARM
- ★ 1x Plane

**Allies****Hits: 1**      **Score: 0-0**Draw: *Center Assault*

**Antoine** (via Tutux) – In order to avoid a dangerous 3-dice Air Check (after Praxeo’s arrogant but dissuasive comment: “that’s 42% chance of giving me a medal”), Antoine throws down his final *Air Sortie*. He is still playing cautiously, and inquires, “How and where can we have a little fun?”

He decides to play *Ground Support* on the most heavily protected units, moving the Flame Throwers in for close combat while the Marine Combat Engineers work on rooting out the Artillery. The first shot against the cannons fails. “Lame! It really is a game of luck!” he jokes. Antoine’s rotten luck continues with zero for three Flame Thrower attacks—as if tanks were out of gas.

It was a good move, but a huge disappointment: 10 dice and only 1 hit!



### Turn 4

#### Move

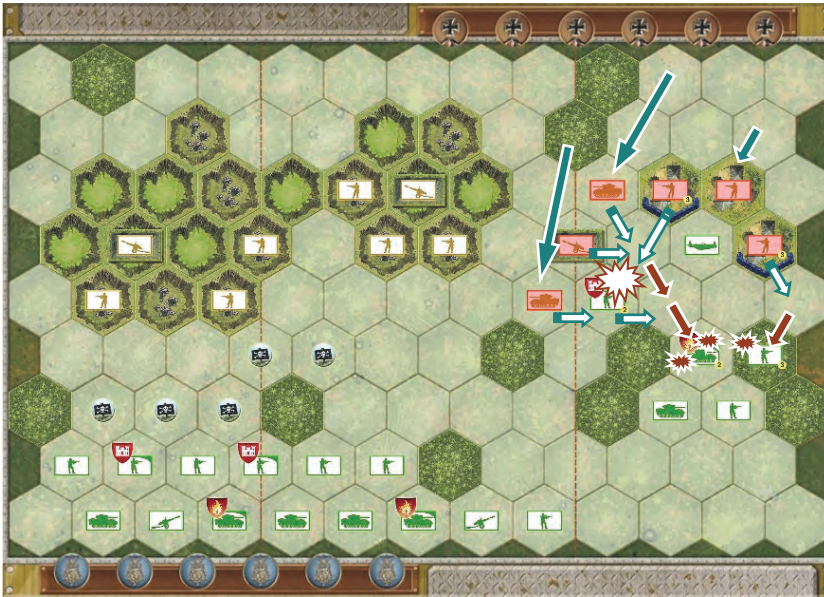
Right-flank *Assault*

- ★ 3x INF + 2x ARM
- ★ 1x ART

Axis

Hits: 4      Score: 0-1

Draw: *Firefight*



**Antoine** – Praxeo plays a right-flank *Assault*! His counter-attack is going to be gory: he pounds me with 15 dice. Flags kept the damage to a minimum on the Flame Throwers, but the Combat Engineers didn't survive the Artillery bombard and the subsequent *Armor Overrun*.

**Praxeo** – I'm trying to increase my chances of *Overrun* by executing my tactical maneuvers and my shots in the right order. It works, for the unit on the left, at least. In addition to my medal, I did a lot of damage to the enemy ranks.

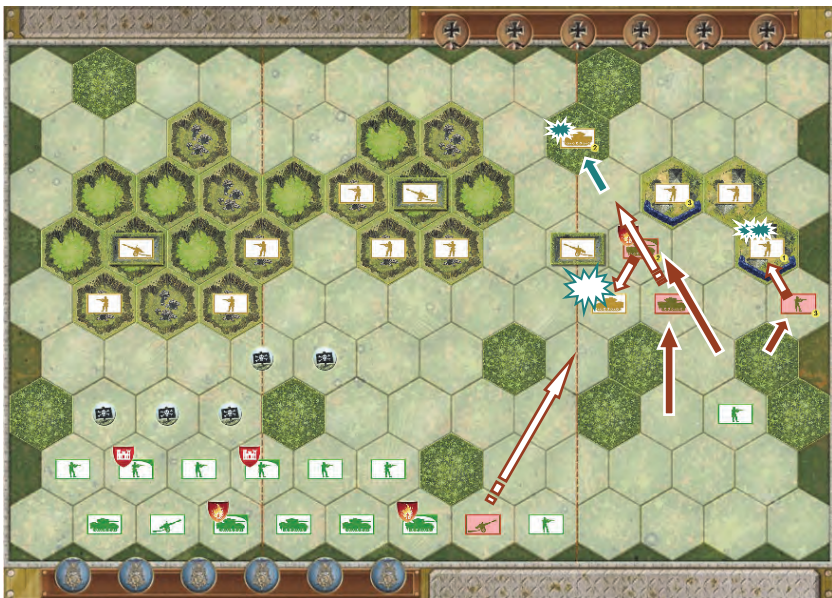
The enemy's Flame Throwers survived, but his morale took a heavy hit.

**Turn 5****Move***Direct from HQ*

- ★ 2x INF, 1x ARM
- ★ 1x ART, 1x Plane

**Allies****Hits: 6+1    Score: 1-2**

Draw: *Recon*  
 1 right-flank unit



Antoine is hesitating between taking a gamble in order to catch up and sticking with his cautious approach. Finally he decides that aviation is necessary: a deadly 3-dice Air Check with a 58% chance of success... which fails!

Praxeo starts trash-talking Antoine about his plane: “Grenade! No Sir, it’s not luck. I planned this the minute I saw my starting hand.”

Antoine is visibly shaken, but comes up with the optimal tactical combination (a very complex one) by firing with the Artillery first, which is rare, then sending in the Flame Throwers to mop-up. The result: 6 Japanese losses and the first medal for the US player.





### Turn 6

#### Move

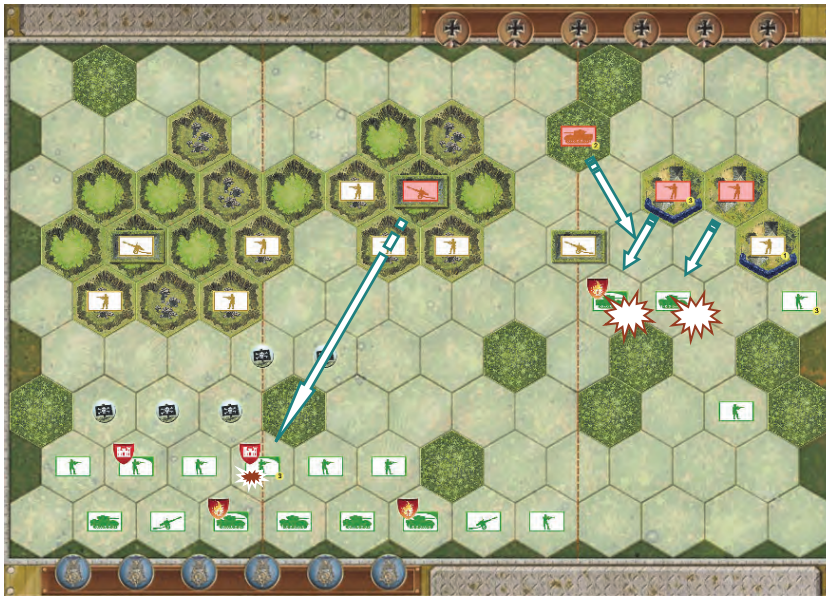
#### Firefight

- ★ 2x INF + 1x ARM
- ★ 1x ART

#### Axis

Hits: 6      Score: 1-4

Draw: *Recon*  
1 left-flank unit



**Antoine** – after a productive Japanese *Firefight*, the right flank is now bereft of US tanks. This is a serious problem.

**Praxeo** – Awesome card, awesome move, awesome dice! 6 hits and two medals. I destroyed my enemy's Plane and pretty much annihilated the entire section. I couldn't have asked for more.

At this point, I'm pretty sure I've got it made, and that no one would bet on an Allied victory. However, we'll see soon enough that Antoine was able to tap into unknown resources and orchestrate a violent comeback. He has built a deadly hand for a center attack, but I don't know it yet.