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# 1. Introduction by martin

Welcome to a magazine called "The 15 Mill" (The Mill).  
The magazine will be published quarterly (4 times a year).

The Mill is dedicated to matters relating to 15mm wargaming.  
All scales and sizes of figures can be used to great effect in gaming. No size is intrinsically better or worse. That is the stated policy of the Mill.

Any wargaming product listed as "15mm" has a home here at the Mill.  
**The Mill's mission is to promote 15mm.**

Another aspect of the Mill is that all 15mm focused contributions are welcome. There is no requirement to be "the best", "professional" or "awesome". The Mill is for ordinary gamers, who enjoy using 15mm figures et al and are happy to share their interest with others. In fact, the Mill would rather have articles based upon a normal table set up with normal figures. Gamers trying to impress others with their "table size" might find the Mill not to their liking.

If any gamer has an article or pictures, then please send them to  
[martinraegoddard@gmail.com](mailto:martinraegoddard@gmail.com)

There are no article "size" limitations. Each article will be credited by a first name only.

- The Mill does not publish for profit.
- The Mill does not accept advertising.
- The Mill can be downloaded free of charge from the PP website. Just search for "Peter Pig".
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- The Mill will change format issue by issue, due to evolution.
- The Mill has no pretensions about challenging other magazines.
- If you can help with articles and ideas, please do so.
- Articles can be in non-English language too.
- There are no regular articles with strange names. Thus, a review will be called "a review"

Hope you enjoy this magazine.

martin Goddard **January 2026**

## 2. Ideas for Enhanced Weapons in AK47 by Miles

### Background and Rationale

When we were looking at the forces needed for our latest game (The Wild Geese, using AK47 rules) for last year's (2025) Newbury Colours show, we realised that the Mercenaries had brought a Carl Gustaf with them. This makes an appearance right at the end of the film, during the dash to the plane.

This led to thoughts on how best to deal with this weapon, and others, which were of necessity simplified within the latest version of AK47 that was published in 2025: AK 47 Republic: People's Edition.

Before we go too far: Martin set out to make the AK47 rules a lot more accessible, slicker to use and within reason a lot simpler to use and understandable in an ever-increasingly more complex warfare environment. Also, with this edition he has added squares! Some people do "dread" the idea, but fear not - it does add to the game! You could possibly play this game without the squares, using the "old tape measure" but that will be down to the individual. However, I would highly discourage gamers from doing so as these new rules work very well with squares.

So, drawing on the success and general mechanisms of the earlier rules of the past few years with SCW and WW2, Martin and the RFCM play testers put these factors into this new edition of the AK47. With that in mind, what I was originally going to discuss and what I am actually writing about has changed in that I am not trying to be critical but more to help people add things that some gamers feel might have been overlooked. Specifically, in the weapons department, to help to fit them into the game system. One of these factors was to keep the weapon categories very simple, basic and to a minimum. Which has been achieved very well I think, perhaps making this version the best of the 3? I think so anyway!

I wanted to help introduce some specific weapon types and talk about those that were available and used within the time frames of the basic rules without making it all too complicated. Simplicity remains the key theme! My aim was to put these into categories that already exist within the rules, or else make very minimal adjustments for them to fit without having to create more shooting and weapon tables than those already existing on the play sheet (section 42. Shooting). Also, most gamers these days have a very expanded choice of vehicles and figures with FoW and Team Yankee, Clash of Steel and Checkpoint Charlie to name just a few. As well as 3D prints, which seem to be popping up everywhere and getting better every year.

Obviously, these are my own thoughts and findings. Please add or adjust as you see fit – and talk about them on the RFCM Forum and AK47 Facebook groups!

## Proposed Approach

I am going to set a baseline from which to categorise the different weapons. The problem with any ruleset is that you can go too deep into some things, which then makes them over-complicated to use in practice. I know people will likely still ask “*where’s this?*” and “*shall we add that?*”. But we need to start from somewhere.

So, let’s quickly talk about Versions 1 and 2 of these rules. A lot of magazine articles were published on Version 1 over the years, which included and increased many weapon capabilities, including modernising them which was great and worked very well. A lot of these things were addressed in the core rule within Version 2, but unfortunately to make them work made the rules very clunky. You had situations where armed APCs were ruling the table, which is good for some games but ruins what RFCM tabletop games are really all about.

So yes, let’s take the basics of these rules and make WW2-type weapons from the 1950s into the ‘60s and ‘70s, then through to the late 1980s. But stop there! Once you go into the 1990s, things change dramatically. This was projected into the Version 2 way of thinking, using the terms of “Old Gun”, “Normal gun” and “New Gun”. These were very good but arguably caused more problems than they solved. The rules were always a compromise, and since all the factors were so complicated they just made the game get too bogged down. So, you now have to make a choice: do we keep within the frame of this game system? Or do we play a different game? The “modern” wargame is a very complex place to be, so you either decrease the scale of the figures and tanks - allowing for all of the modern weapons to be included – or else change the way of going about the game.

Martin used the experience of developing SCW and the newer PBI games to put this into practice within AK47’s Version 3 - “The Peoples Edition”. This game system is good and plays very well as it is, but if you increase the gun sizes and other factors too far, the balance of the game will go sideways and drastic changes will have to be made accordingly.

I will refer to WW2 gun calibration, which includes both Imperial and Metric measurements since the AK47 rules do cover the 1950s to the 1990s. After any war, loads of weapons that have become old, obsolete and surplus to requirements need replacement. Many of these old weapons are sold on (“recycled”, perhaps?) to other countries and organisations. So, after WW2 there was a lot of surplus, and this was carried on across the decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Examples include T34s and even American M18 and M36s turning up in the old Yugoslavia.

Also, weapon technology never stays still but keeps developing in leaps and bounds, so we need to remain with weapons capabilities that stay within the overall scope of the AK47 rules.

## Dealing with the Bazooka

That all said, and with the Wild Geese Carl Gustaf in mind, where and how does the “Bazooka” fit into the AK47 shooting table? Well, a Bazooka is actually an RCL. As it



was developed as a man-portable weapon, it is effectively an anti-tank launcher as well as a mini-howitzer (since the weapon itself usually fires a HEAT or HESH round). Anyway, back to the 84mm Carl Gustaf RCL, as we are talking about British Mercenaries in Wild Geese. This is a man-carried weapon, so like most other bases these should have 3 figures on the base (30 x 30mm, but I would suggest 30 x 40mm base). Since this is a man-portable weapon, you will have a firing figure, a loader figure, and usually a commander (although I suggest a rifle/SMG/LMG figure is used instead), and then the base labelled as an RCL. The reason I've included an armed infantry man rather than a commanding-looking figure is that this base should be included as part of the Infantry Company/Platoon organisation, rather than a support element. This might be right or wrong, but I will leave it to your discretion.

Obviously, this is bought as a normal RCL, so 2 bases for 2 points as part of your normal forces. The only difference is that if a Vehicle / Towed gun appears it will be able to engage it at battle ranges rather than just in Proximity? But remember, if this is done then the base can't fire twice, as it would have fired as an RCL! This is announced by the player when firing: it is either a Foot (small arms) base or an RCL but cannot be both in the paid turn - or indeed in any other circumstance!

Obviously, this can cause confusion, and some people may try and do both with this base. I'd say - try and play fair! Otherwise, people would not want to allow this base to be used in a game.

Also, I've been putting on RPGs and LAWs with my "Rifle" bases - not on every base, but enough to remind you that if there are vehicles about, the Infantry can take them out at Proximity ranges? They also look good, especially with any Arab or African tribe forces.

The reason for the above is to help you put a good-looking force onto the table, with some good-looking models using all the possibilities that are available these days to buy from anywhere. Also to put modern-day weapons onto the table without either side feeling outgunned by their opponent.

So, to help with this I am writing this guide to help with your own judgment and requirements to hopefully assist you in adding these weapons into your game. But remember: the more powerful your weapon is, the more you will pay for it. It's the game rules!

Development in the 1940's through to the '60s was very fluid: as armour thickened, the requirements to overcome it also developed. Gun requirements and capabilities did grow, and how to best reflect this could be talked about further, but that's another later discussion!

Another big factor that keeps to the theme of simplicity is Armour - on the playsheet (section 44. 'Saves'). There are saving factors for: No Armour (0); Partial cover/Taking cover/Light Armour (1); Buildings/Jungles and Tank Armour (2). Obviously, you could add extra armour, spaced armour, Chobham armour, reactive armour, etc., but that again goes way beyond what these rules and this discussion are about.

Even though you might have a 1950-60s-based army while your opponent has a late 1980s or early 1990s force against you, if you stick to the rules and the Army types, you will be able to put a rather nice-looking force on the table with a variety of weapons, but

without having to spend too much. Trust me, your imagination can be let loose! I've wanted to do a 1980s Berlin-based British force for years. Now I can, as I've only got to paint 2 of every vehicle in that nice but complicated camo that I need, while the force guides give me with the limitations on what vehicle types I have to buy and use. But that's not necessarily a bad thing, as it keeps the costs down and tells you what you need rather than buy this, this and this. The nice thing is that your opponent might field a mainly Raw Warlord or Religious African army against this, but in no way will this be outclassed if you set the scenery and game play up in the right way. At the same time, this might be able to guide you as to how to put some of those armies with seemingly war-winning weapons on the table fairly, and where and how to fit them in:

## Shooting principles

The following is a summary of the game facts and rules, to help you create your force and what they represent:

- Foot Base: these are normal weapons that you would expect the infantry rank and file to carry: rifles (bolt action, semi- and fully-automatic), SMGs, assault rifles and LMGs.
- MG: quick-firing weapon - usually mounted, so is accurate over a long distance and with a high rate of fire.
- Foot AT: these would be man-portable and so quick to bring to bear and use, either by firing, throwing or onto a vehicle. Short range only, within the opportunity or return fire phase. This makes any Foot base capable of taking on any vehicle in 'proximity' to its square, with multiple AT weapon types given to them (not available to command bases, though).
- Technical: vehicles used to mount support weapon systems to make them mobile - jeeps, pick-ups and lorries of all sizes. They can mount any weapon that could be used on the back of a moving vehicle, from MGs through to bigger guns. But not huge ("game-winning") weapons, which would be classed under Towed/Tank gun. The vehicle is Unarmoured.
- Light Armour MG: weapons that are quick firing and can be mounted in a turret, usually on a light armoured vehicle. But to not to make or class it as a 'Tank gun', so this would include the smaller-calibre weapons. The Vehicle is Light Armoured.
- Recoilless: weapons that are bigger than an MG/cannon and relatively small and portable. Small calibre field guns - 37mm guns come to mind - weapons that might be too small to be in the Towed Gun class. This is where I see Bazooka and Carl Gustaf type weapons should be: being capable of killing, but not dominating, Armoured vehicles. Technically the rules don't give specific calibres, but this is where I would place the "up to 3-inch" calibre (of "Old Gun" in Version 2 terminology).

- Mortar: these are small- to medium-sized tubed weapons that are used in support of Companies and Platoons. They can fire over a friendly unit but not in Proximity to themselves or any friendly units. They cannot target moving vehicles. Also, any targets must be visible.
- Towed/Tank guns: I've classed these together as they fire in the same way, but according to whether the target types are Unarmoured or Armoured, results will be different. The main difference is the way these weapons affect "Foot" and "Tank" targets, respectively. Both these types of weapons would come into the "4 inch" calibre and be placed into the Version 2 Normal gun category but could also include the New Gun category; these Version 3 rules are a lot simpler!
- In the rules, Towed guns are weapons that generally fire HE-based shells. This would include infantry weapons like howitzers and other HE-firing infantry support weapons, so they would follow the Towed Gun table.  
Tanks Guns would generally fire AP-based shells. These include weapons that are used specifically against armoured targets and include HEAT and HESH ammunition. This would also include vehicle-mounted as well as towed variants. So these would follow the Tank Gun table.

The above is to open the possibility of any type of vehicle carrying any type of weapon. The rules as written only offer certain permutations, for obvious reasons of simplicity. But some people might want to tweak this to allow for more nuance, while remaining within the overall framework of the rules.

## Missiles

The other weapon type that isn't covered as such in the rules is Missiles. These could be aligned with the "Towed guns" category, but that causes a problem as they only get one shooting dice against an Armoured target (not 3, like a Tank Gun).

So, I would class them instead as a Tank Gun as the missile itself is usually HEAT/HESH. I would argue that they *can* be fired at groups of men or buildings but that armoured units (tanks) are their main target. But here is the main difference: I would mix the ability to use 3 dice at all targets rather than Foot / Towed Guns / Tanks being dealt with separately on the table. As for range, I would argue to either keep it at 5 or maybe increase it to 6, but not to go any further. As this would, as I have said before, change the dynamics of the game too far.

Like a mortar, missiles should not be able to fire into a Proximity square - mainly because as they fire, they have to arm themselves over a specific distance while in flight. This 'not in Proximity' rule would then cover that factor without going into specific distances, etc.

As with guns of all types, missiles shouldn't be able to fire into a square that requires a line of sight going through friendly infantry units, which includes two corner-touching own-side squares.

Missiles: Range: 5/6 squares maximum 2-square minimum. Foot 3. Towed guns 3. Vehicle 3.

## Rockets

Rockets need a quick mention. Personally, I agree with Martin on this: they would generally be included in the off-table artillery, as per large-calibre guns and rocket artillery. People will argue that some of these vehicles may get caught up in the fighting: pictures of Technicals with aircraft rocket pods come to mind. I would suggest that, if you wanted to include them, then fire them like a Mortar?

Rockets: Range: 5-square maximum / 2-square minimum; Foot 3. Towed Guns 2.

Yes, they can fire overhead. But are out of control so they will have deviations: 1 Under, 6 Over? 2 and 5 maybe left and right? (2,5) 3,4 On Target. I will leave this up to you.

## Big models

When setting up the forces, if you want to include “big” models on the table, there is nothing in AK47 stopping you (particularly now that everything is gridded). Except the points cost! An example: in the SCW rules I put the Russian T35 and T28 tanks on the table for the Republicans. These were both classed as Medium tanks - so that’s exactly what they are. They do look good!

In the older versions of these AK47 rules, I’ve got a C130 with all the guns down the side Obviously a 1/200<sup>th</sup> scale model, as anything bigger would look stupid! In Version 2 of the AK47 rules, this was a Tank Gun Helicopter. But it always seemingly frightened the opponent to think something bigger was coming on! Again, it looked good. So, you might want to bring a large self-propelled gun or modern-day tank onto the table? But at the end of the day, it’s just a tank. That’s it! I know I will be including Challenger and Leopard 2 tanks in some of my forces for the look of my army, but they will not be any more powerful in games terms than a humble T 34 or Sherman tank.

The above at the moment are only my thoughts that I have put down as a discussion to be debated and played about with. I hope it will get gamers thinking and help get a debate going: how to include these weapons without changing the rules too far?

How to point up some of these weapons? It depends on how far you go in their capabilities: if you keep them in with certain weapon systems then point them up as those systems? But if you wish to increase their capabilities then you will have to make them cost more. So, you won’t be able to have too many on the table. You are also restricted to two of any one thing on the table, as per normal.

Miles

# 3. Dropping into Arnhem by Simon

*(photos and thoughts from a day trip to Arnhem and Oosterbeek)*

## Introduction

The October half-term holidays saw us heading as a family to Amsterdam. Art museums, shopping and windmills are all very well and good, but I was also able to spend a day visiting some of the sights around the Arnhem battlefield, which was certainly the highlight of my trip.

## Arnhem

I'll start with Arnhem itself, as we found less to see here. But felt that we had to visit anyway.

The famous bridge was actually only completed in August 1944 (the previous crossing having been destroyed to slow down the German advance in 1940), just before the Allied airborne assault in September of that year. It was in turn destroyed by US bombers on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1944 to thwart the German counter-offensive. The current bridge was completed in 1948, in the same style as the 1944 version. In December 1977, it was renamed the "John Fost Bridge".

There is a very small, modern museum on the waterfront near the bridge, focusing on three individuals (Dutch, German and British) who lost their lives during the fighting, together with a section on the airborne chaplains. A short film runs in the basement, giving a summary overview of the battle.





**The John Frost Bridge today, seen from the Airborne Museum at the Bridge**

The museum is free to enter and offers a good view of the bridge. More details at:  
<https://www.airbornemuseum.nl/en/airborne-museum-at-the-bridge>

### **Oosterbeek and the Hartenstein Airborne Museum**

The main thing to see at Oosterbeek is the Airborne Museum, now housed in the very same Hartenstein Hotel that was used as the HQ of the British 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division:  
<https://www.airbornemuseum.nl/en/home>

This has been extended with a modern lobby and basement. The latter includes a very well-executed series of life-size dioramas – as you start by “flying in” by glider and then progress from forming up to fighting through the streets. I found it a bit like a combination of the helicopter experience at the Fleet Air Arm museum and the Bovington Tank Museum dioramas, for those that know these UK museums.





**Rear of the Hartenstein Hotel**



**The imposing front of the Hartenstein hotel, with the new lobby building on the left**  
In the grounds of the museum are a Sherman M4A4 bearing the name “Argyll”, which seems actually to be the “Argyll Roger”, of unknown provenance. There are also a couple of airborne 17-pdr anti-tank guns, one of which has had its shield apparently penetrated by an incoming round:





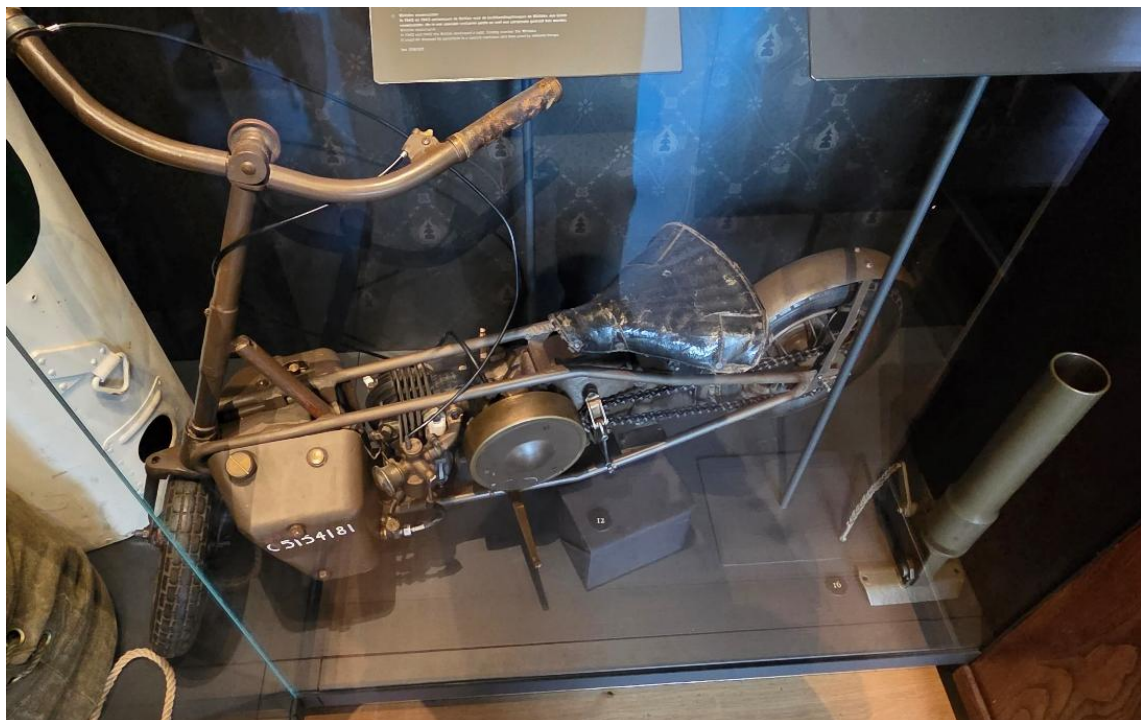
### **Damaged 17-pdr anti-tank gun**

Inside the museum are a number of displays in various rooms – of photographs, medals (often with a brief history of their recipients), weapons and uniforms. There are also audio guides (included in the entrance fee) that provide a brief summary in each room. The English version is narrated by none other than Antony Beevor.



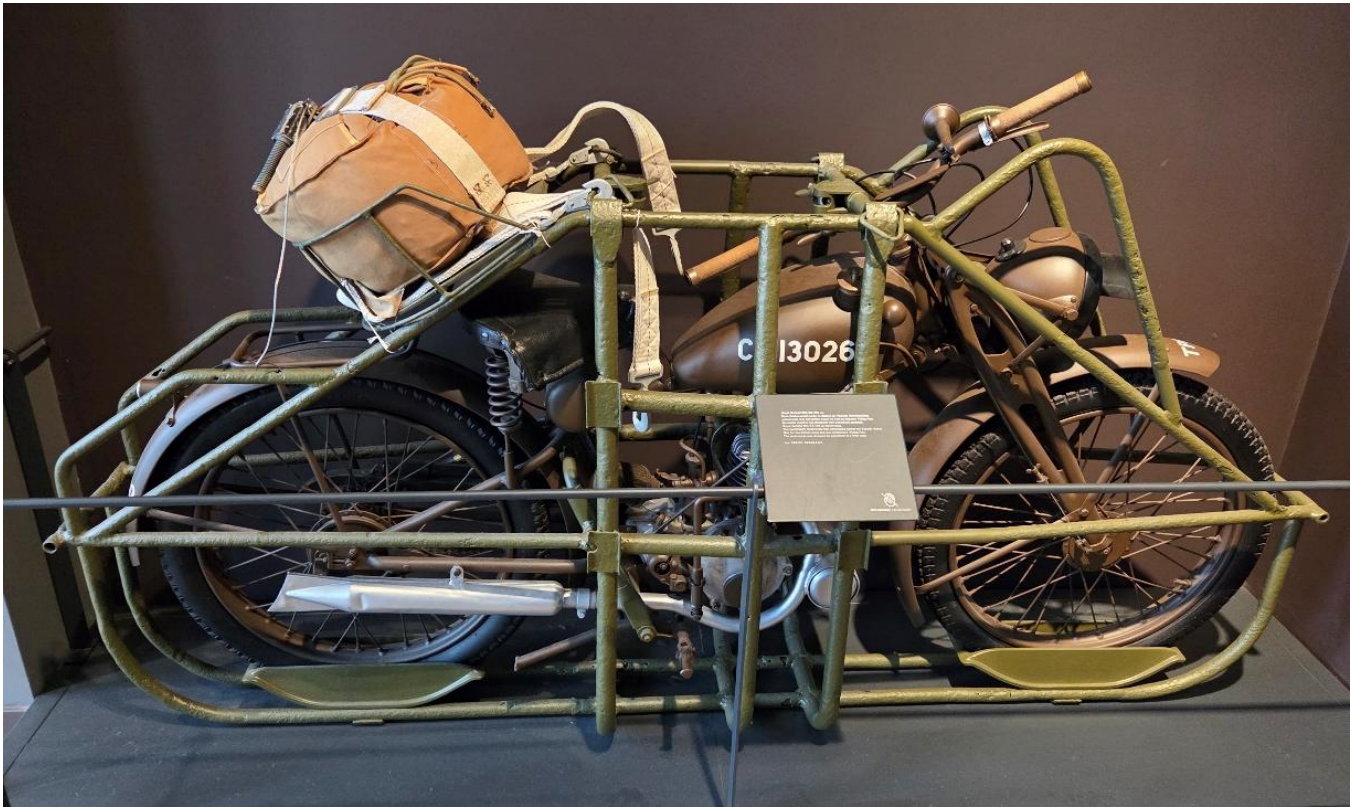


**A display case of German weaponry – here a tripod-mounted MG42 and MP40**



**A folding Excelsior Welbike, originally developed for the SOE**





**A Royal Enfield WD/RE "Flying Flea" motorcycle**



**MG34 with camouflaged magazine**





**German 81mm mortar**



I hadn't appreciated quite how small the PIAT was until seeing it up close



Comparison of different models of Sten gun





Some of the many uniforms on display from both sides



**Life-size diorama of the divisional command post, set up in the cellar of this same building**





**Part of one of the basement dioramas**

There is also a series of rooms (also in the basement) devoted to the work of the small but dedicated team of the Recovery and Identification Service of the Royal Netherlands Army (“BIKD”), which forensically seeks to identify human wartime remains. The individual detective stories are fascinating, but bizarrely this part of the museum doesn’t appear on the English version of the museum website, only in the Dutch one. Notwithstanding this anomaly, all the material throughout the museum is presented bilingually in both Dutch and English.

You do need to book entrance tickets in advance (it can seemingly get busy at certain times of year; visitor numbers are restricted at many Dutch attractions in order to guarantee a good viewing experience for all), but we found it well worth the entrance price and the slight effort (about 90 minutes by train from the centre of Amsterdam) to get there.



## **Final thoughts**

We found it very easy to get around The Netherlands by public transport, which in our experience was regular, clean and on time. We were always (on trains, metro and trams – I believe the buses are the same) able to simply “tap in and out” with our UK debit or credit card, which saved time and hassle in buying tickets. Who needs more than a plastic card and Google Maps on a phone nowadays?

When we returned, I (belatedly) discovered the Al Murray and James Holland’s World War Two YouTube “walking tour” videos, which include Oosterbeek. I found these to be good, gentle watching and was pleasantly surprised by how well Al Murray clearly knows his stuff. These videos aren’t as polished as a TV programme, but just follow a couple of blokes walking the ground, conjecturing, and sometimes correcting each other when they get things a bit wrong. Signing up (for free) to their website (which includes some merchandise, as well as material from “Jim’s Archive” - that will no doubt be monetised at some point), allows you to watch their YouTube videos without the annoying adverts: [www.ww2headquarters.com](http://www.ww2headquarters.com)

## 4. AK Generals by Sean

Here is a “command” of generals.

They are all for the AK47 2025 People’s Edition.

Each army has a single general, mounted on a 4x4 cm base.

The General effects morale and action points. **Religious leader**





People's popular(?) front





## Mercenary



### A nice unit of professionals

In AK professionals shoot better, fight better and have better morale (happy face). Their units are smaller and they cost more points (sad face).

# 5. Scenery Top Tips by Miles

## Introduction

I was asked a few questions about making scenery for 15mm gaming the other week. So I thought I would put some of the answers together and make a small article for The Mill. Hopefully you like it!

### Question 1 – Moving back to 15mm

*“I’m moving back to 15mm, so trying to start to make some scenery, make buildings, roads, fields etc., so will be starting from scratch again”*

Old railway buildings are a good source. I have found on eBay that people buy up old railway layouts from people’s lofts and hobby rooms. They then divide it all up to make good and bad piles, top and bottom money-makers, etc. Trains, rolling stock, railway track and buildings are then sold either as individual lots or, in the case of some buildings, in bundles.

Model railway fairs and exhibitions, as well as bring-and-buys, are good sources for both new and old models, as well as scratch-building and terrain-making materials. Both brand new and second-hand sources are always worth looking at. Kids’ toys are always a good source of items, while charity shops can prove essential to our hobby! When using railway options, don’t forget that there is a good choice of scales, sizes and manufacturers to choose from. Railway modellers’ TT and HO/OO equate to 1/120<sup>th</sup>, 1/87<sup>th</sup> and of course 1/76<sup>th</sup> and 1/72<sup>nd</sup> scales. The 1/87<sup>th</sup> scale is mainly produced by German and Polish manufacturers, but their buildings are brilliant and not too far away scale wise from 15mm / 1/100<sup>th</sup>. You have to look mainly at door and window sizes, though, as sometimes these can look too big or too small.

While you are looking around, Amazon is a good way to get a feel for prices, as well as being a good source for some of these items. Faller is a German manufacturer (a bit like Hornby) but some of their buildings and accessories are very expensive. Looking at their “new” prices will give you an idea of what sort of prices you should be looking to pay. Solely using eBay can sometimes be misleading on prices.

European model railway manufacturers’ buildings are mainly European in style, which is great for a good many Peter Pig games. But obviously there are limitations. Britain and other European countries did occupy and run a lot of countries and territories across the old world, so some European influences in buildings did follow. However, this will only go so far for our wargaming needs. Other sources for scenery these days are laser-cut MDF buildings and 3D-printed ones. These are both becoming very good sources, since there are now a lot of choices and styles out there.

## Question 2 – Sourcing materials

Another question that I have answered is “*What and where would you buy or source a lot of your materials from?*”.

Mediterranean buildings are also very good for other of parts of the world. Spanish and Italian models can be used for Mexico and Central America, as well as some Asian countries. And even some Arabic ones.

I am mentioning this because it's worth looking into all sorts of sources. Sometimes you never have as much time as you would wish to build everything. The answer is of course to cheat! You can buy a ready-made piece of scenery – either old or new – and then apply a light paint job, wash with ink and do a quick drybrush to suit your terrain colours. A couple of days touching up and maybe repairing or replacing bits is a better use of time than a week or so making something up from scratch!

There are a lot of ways to obtain many things - from basic items for scratch-building right up to fully made-up and decked-out objects. The main concern is knowing what price you should have to pay.

Good old Google is great for this, as well as eBay and Amazon. Use all three to compare prices, and never take the first price you see! Eventually you will start to find out the “right price” for many things. This then allows you to make your mind up on where and when, and which source you need to use for the best deal. Sometimes just replacing a flat roof with a moulded plastic card one can change the building's appearance and massively upgrade it.

These days, the only two shows that Peter Pig attends each year are Beachhead in Bournemouth (February) and Colours at Newbury (September). So Simon “Colonel Kilgore” and I - along with a few others - like to put on a table and showcase either a brand new or relatively new game that Peter Pig have recently brought out. At Colours, Martin invites us to put our game on next to the Peter Pig trade stand, alongside which Martin also runs one of his introductory games. This year we put on The Wild Geese - the film version! People showed a lot of interest in our “race for the plane” [more details about which are in another article in this issue of The Mill], which complemented what Martin was doing with his shortened game system to show off the basic mechanisms. I mention all this as lot of the games we have put on in the past few years include a lot of the above sourcing techniques to make the scenery and features.

I am also quite lucky, as I can source a lot of materials through my job. I am a council worker and drive a refuse/recycling collection lorry. So over the years I have had plenty of opportunities to obtain many things that have been “thrown away”.

Over the years I have picked up discarded boxes of kits, broken kits, toy cars, lorries, workable materials, books and magazines. One of my best finds was someone wanting to get rid of a hand-made, 4-foot model of a WW1 small tug/fishing boat that some



friends of mine playing the 54mm / 1/32<sup>nd</sup> scale then used several times at various Wargames shows. As well as things for the house, "one man's trash is another man's gold" is an old saying that is so true!

The above are just some examples of things you can pick up from anywhere. Pretty much anytime if you look with a degree of imagination - sometimes for free, sometimes for very little and sometimes for quite a lot!

### **Question 3 – Biting the bullet and actually getting started**

*This question started with "I've been collecting tubes, plastic containers, etc. but just need to start a project. I've just made a load of hedges and started on some rustic fences."*

Most hills for Rules for the Common Man are 12"x6", with some different smaller shapes. I've also cut out some bases for lakes and marshes using the 12"x6" format. *"Can you use 6"x6" for field bases - I have some MDF pieces with rounded edges, so need to find a use for them?"*

Obviously, you will need two 6"x6" templates to make each full 12"x6" scenery template. However, with the likes of PBI, Bayonet & Ideology, Square Bashing and Fighting for Mexico you also need objectives templates (which are actually 6"x6), to make them different from the rest of the scenery.

Having rounder corners is fine, especially for "natural" templates such as woods, jungles, rough ground, marshes and both rough and smooth hills. Square-cornered templates can be more suitable for man-made features such as buildings, villages, shanty towns and small farms.

Martin always includes example pictures of scenery within his rules, while you will also see templates within the photos of the sample games we put up on the Forum. The trick is that, once you look through several rule sets, you will notice that many of the same templates can be used for various different rules.

However, I like to have things organised for each type of game, and now have separate boxes for European games, winter games, Russian games, city games, Mediterranean / Mexico / some African settings, Desert, Western, Asian jungle and now for the red soil found in some parts of Africa and Asia! But I've been playing Peter Pig games for some 25 years now, and have had the time to collect a lot of scenery.

Of course, we now have the latest sci-fi game of TCR ("The Company Rules"), with its multi-coloured templates that have no real limits on what can be done. Just as long as the three scenery types are identifiably different. But this can actually be said for most

RFCM templates. As long as they look like what they are supposed to represent, and they are all consistent overall, then just go ahead and do it!

I'll share a trick that I find helps when I do terrain pieces. After I've made a piece, especially a "natural" one, I paint on the base colour with some sand mixed in, coating everything with this mix. It seals your materials and gives you a basic texture to ink and dry brush over. The sand grains will always catch the highlighted tones of a dry brush. This approach also helps capture the "ink stains" to give you a slightly more varied and realistic ground colour.

If you look at a patch of normal grass, the soil is very much made of several different shades. I am not talking of a made-up and well-managed lawn (or "snooker table effect" as someone described it to me years ago). But it's a patchwork of different blends and shades and patches of grass. Even two or three different types of grass flock can easily be combined on a single piece of terrain.

When it comes to inks used, I go for black, sepia and brown – all very much watered down, as ink can destroy the look of a piece if overdone.

## **My next terrain article**

In my next article for "The Mill", I'll provide a few pictures to expand on this text for those wanting to start making their own terrain. Got a load of cut tree branches, coasters for mugs or house number back-plates? I've cut up and stuck on brown doormat material, dry-brushed it and now made long-grass templates for our AK 47 games. I will do the same with green astroturf squares for long grass in the jungle!

These small pieces cover a good third of a 6-inch square, giving the impression that most of that square is covered once you have 3 or 4 figure bases in there too, without losing sight of the square while still allowing space for the figure bases. Because the "grass" is tall and up-standing, it gives the impression that it is thick and hard to see through, making the square "Partial" cover. 2-, 3- or 4-inch squares or rectangles MDF with the corners clipped achieve the same effect. You will see this in the photos of our latest Wild Geese game.

I hope you like this article, and that it inspires you to think about what can easily be achieved relatively cheaply, with a bit of thought and imagination.



## 6. A visit to the York Army Museum by Jimmy

Visiting York earlier in the year, I had a little unexpected free time so took myself over to the York Army Museum, a museum I've been past many times but never managed to actually visit.

The museum holds collections from the Royal Dragoon Guards and the Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire, and from the modern Royal Yorkshire Regiment, and there's lots to see in quite a compact space. A really welcoming, friendly museum, which gives time and space to absorb and reflect – if you're like me and like to linger a bit in a museum that's not over-crowded or too busy, then you'd enjoy this one. By its nature there's a lot of interesting and pretty diverse stuff making up the exhibitions, and it really does make for a fascinating hour or so's pottering.

It was £8 on the door, but that's for a year-entry ticket which I thought would be really good if you lived maybe that bit nearer and could return now and then. All in all, well worth a visit (right across the way from the museum is Clifford's Tower which again is worth stopping and exploring too).





**1. Part of the side armour from the turret of a Chieftain tank which has been used as a target for gunnery practice.**

It has been holed by the penetrating 'dart' from 120mm armour piercing rounds. The side of the Chieftain turret used rolled steel armour plate whereas the front was made from cast metal with a much greater thickness of 195mm.

**2. Fragments of steel blown off the inner face of a tank's armour by the shock waves created by the explosion of a High Explosive Squash Head (HESH) round.**

These are known as 'scabs'. Similar smaller pieces of metal are known as 'spalls'.

**3. Remains of a practice High Explosive Squash Head (HESH) round.**







## **Moose head presented to The West Yorkshire Regiment by the Royal Montreal Regiment to mark the alliance formed between the two regiments in 1921.**

The Royal Montreal Regiment had served on the Western Front during the First World War. The moose used to hang in the Officers' Mess of the Regimental Depot at Fulford Barracks in York, now Imphal Barracks. In 1937, 'an enthusiastic Officer gave him a top hat to wear and a cigar, which the moose wore throughout the Second World War in defiance of the threat from Germany.' At mess dinners, it then became customary for the moose to be given a cigar to smoke. This occasionally resulted in its mouth getting singed.







**39. Map showing the 'Red' sector of 'King Beach', where the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards and the 5th Battalion The East Yorkshire Regiment landed on D-Day, 6th June 1944.**

'King' was the left part of 'Gold Beach', one of the two landing areas on the Normandy coast attacked by British forces. The 4th/7th DG landed in support of the 50th Division, which included the 5th Bn East Yorks.



I have a lot of years of making music behind me with the band and on parades, and now I am enjoying having a rest here in the museum.

Please don't touch me today.

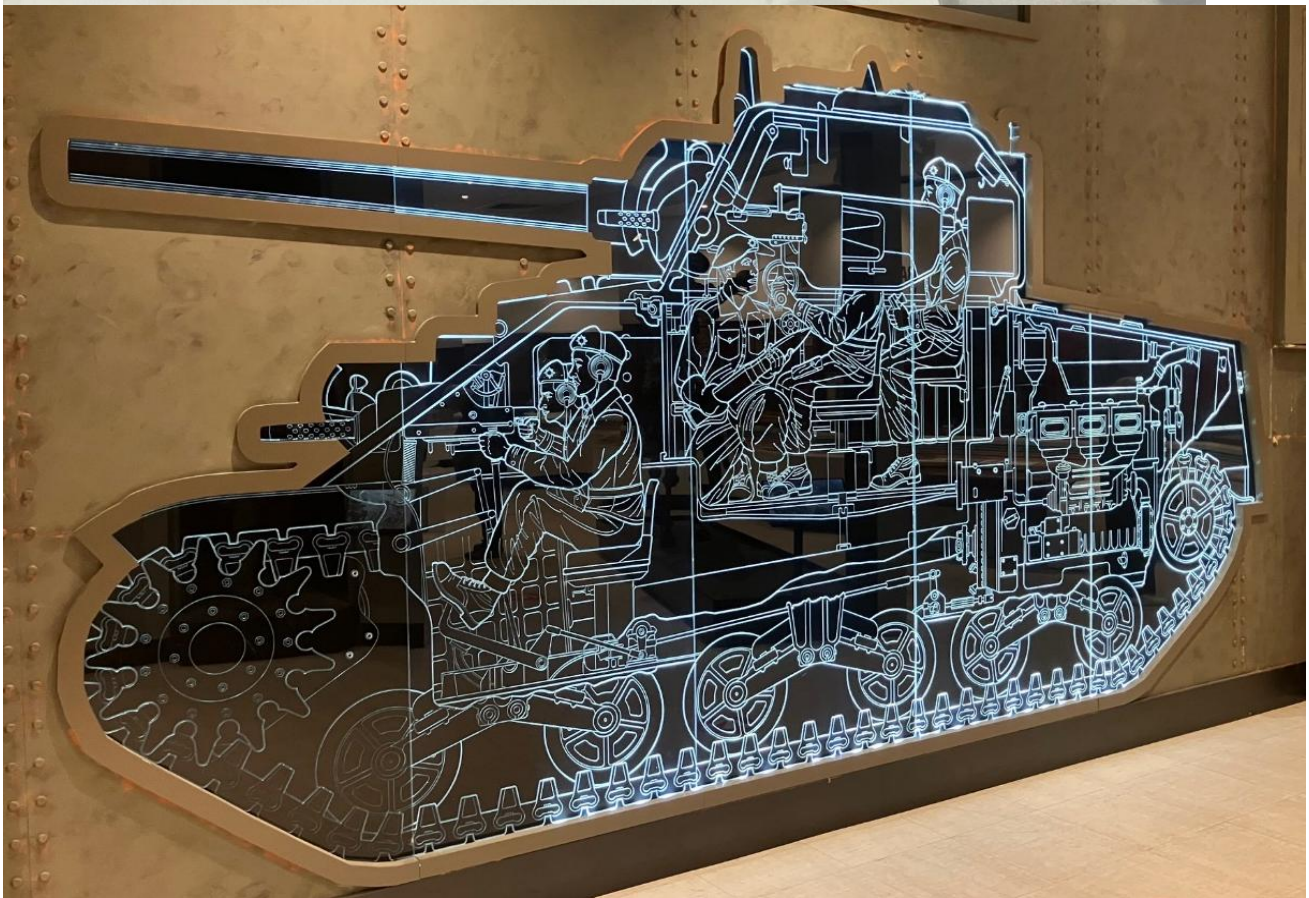
Thank-you.





*In 2014, to mark the 70th anniversary of the Allied landings in Normandy, President Hollande honoured all surviving veterans with an award of the Légion d'honneur, in recognition of their "acknowledged military engagement and steadfast involvement in the liberation of France."*

*A surviving veteran of the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards, proud to receive this honour, was ever mindful of the comrades killed in action and those who survived but died before the award was made. He donated his award to the Museum, asking that it might be displayed in perpetuity as an enduring tribute to those comrades who could not receive it personally. The donor asked not to be named.*











# 7. Siege of Jadotville by Miles and Simon

## Introduction

After we completed Colours in 2025, two questions come up: what games to put on for Beachhead and the next Colours?

We decided to take “The Wild Geese” to Beachhead 2026. But those who were involved in The Wild Geese game won’t be attending the Sunday of this two-day show, and so the Siege of Jadotville was suggested.

I sat down and watched the film, soon deciding that it would be doable as a scenario since it is in principle very much what a game of AK47 is: Defenders in defence of a town/ facility and the Attackers trying to take it.



Still from the film, with the iconic Fina garage in the centre

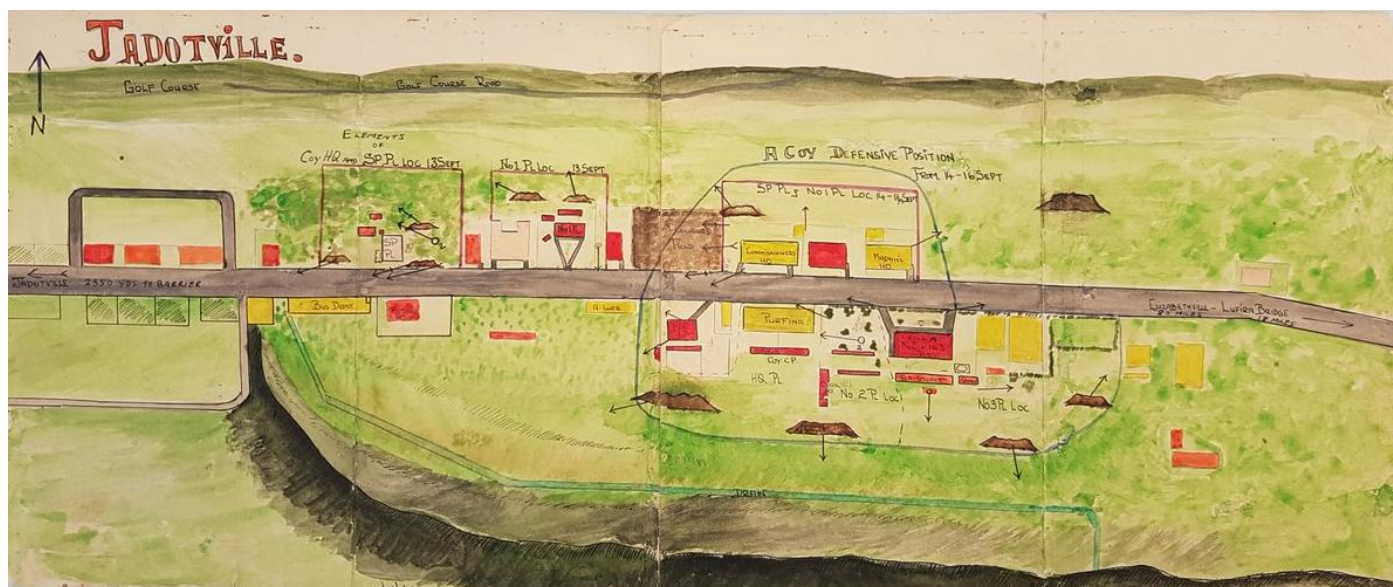
## Table Design

After finding out as much as I could: watching the film several times, reading the book, scouring the internet for information, etc., I started putting this knowledge onto a table. There is one obvious thing: in the film, the fighting comes down the road, but the AK table is 5ft x 3 ft so it would be silly coming down from one end?

I therefore re-oriented the Attacker by 90 degrees, so they came in along the normal “long” edge. I took the film set (when the Irish first arrive at the “compound” there is a wide shot of the whole battlefield) as my basis for the game set-up.

As people who play these games regularly, we only have so many buildings on Building Template! There are only 8 actual buildings and a half-built one on the “film” set, with a schoolhouse or golf house over to one side> This seemed to be a good starting point for how many actual buildings should appear on the table. The most obvious one is the big Purfina (“Fina”) garage in the centre: as this is the Irish company HQ, it’s a good candidate for the Defenders’ “special piece”. We then set out the rest of the town/table set up around that.

Using the film set as a guide, along with a couple of nicely-drawn maps of the town, I designed the rest of the table. In the latest (“People’s Edition”) version of the AK47 rules, there are “scattered buildings”, which cover shanty towns and farmsteads. These only provide Partial cover but cannot be seen through. Trenches are also deployed in this game, since the Irish company after they arrived “dug in” to make their compound a better defensive position. I represented these trenches on 6-inch squares, counting them towards the total of 16 Partial squares that are deployed after the initial table set up has concluded.



**Sketch map of the Irish deployment**

The “schoolhouse”, which is seen on the Attackers base edge, is also included but this is again based on the scattered buildings principle. However, as the maximum 12 templates are already used up, I cheated and nicked 2 of the Partial squares for this purpose. All of this gives the Attackers a clear focal point on the table, as we see in the film. However, this has already used up 6 of the permitted 16 Partial squares.



Jungle	Jungle	Jungle	Jungle	Jungle		Partial Cover	Partial Cover		Jungle
Jungle									Jungle
					Scattered Buildings				
Solid Buildings	Partial Cover		Solid Buildings	Partial Cover	Scattered Buildings	Partial Cover	Solid Buildings	Scattered Buildings	Scattered Buildings
Solid Buildings		Solid Buildings	Solid Buildings				Solid Buildings		
Solid Buildings		Solid Buildings	Solid Buildings				Solid Buildings		
Scattered Buildings	Scattered Buildings	Solid Buildings		Special Piece	Special Piece		Partial Cover		

**Key to table plan:**

- Solid Buildings
- Partial Cover
- Scattered Buildings
- Special Piece
- Jungle
- Road

**Table layout in wargames terms**

The table layout is as above. The Attacker places an additional 6 Partials, and the Defender 4 additional Partials, in any open square that they choose.

I must thank Matt Hay for being a second pair of eyes and another brain to make the map/table more usable.

## Brief Historical Background

For those that are not familiar with the history of “The Siege of Jadotville”, it was a major battle during the Congo Crisis that began on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1961 and lasted for five days. A small contingent of the Irish Army’s A Company, 35<sup>th</sup> Battalion serving under the *Opération des Nations Unies au Congo* (ONUC), was besieged at the UN base near the mining town of Jadotville (modern-day Likasi) by Katangese Forces loyal to the secessionist State of Katanga. This included many Mercenaries drafted in from Belgium and France, ostensibly there to defend the mining rights and companies of Belgium and France, as well as UK interests.

The siege took place during the seven-day escalation of hostilities between ONUC and Katangese forces during Operation Morthor, an offensive created by the UN hierarchy to try and blunt the Katanga Forces in and around Elizabethville. This initiative unfortunately isolated the Irish, left some 80 miles from the capital. Effectively, the mining companies (through their proxies) struck out against the UN force at Jadotville. Although the contingent of 156 Irish soldiers repelled several attacks by a much larger force, they eventually surrendered to the Katangese forces after running out of ammunition and water.

While sources vary on the number of casualties, some sources suggest that the Irish company inflicted several hundred casualties on the Katangese force, with no deaths amongst the Irish "A" Company. A relief column of approximately 500 Indian, Irish, and Swedish UN troops, sent to break the siege, was unsuccessful and suffered a number of casualties itself (including at least five killed).

The captured Irish company was held as prisoners of war for approximately one month, before being released on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1961 as part of a prisoner exchange.



**Playtest of the table layout, with the buildings still a work in progress**

## **Thoughts on Gaming the Battle**

Although this is a specific scenario for a games show, I am trying to design it so that anyone can either play the actual battle or similar to it using the correct forces or else whatever they happen to have in the “soldiers box”. So you can either follow the map above, or use the templates suggested and put them down as you wish.

But for those following the history of the battle, here are some suggestions on forces to use and extras to their respective forces and table as desired.



You can either bring your own armies and play as per the book with whichever army you have chosen - or you can follow the history but still play as per the book. Obviously, the Gendarmes would be the Attackers and the Irish would be the Defenders, but the troop distribution would depend on the “scenario events” pre-game sequence. Initially, we played the Irish as Army #3 - Colonial Settlers, with 2 Regulars and 1 Professional and 2 armoured cars (Light Armour) with MG. Plus a pair of MGs, a pair of Mortars and extra 3 Regular bases. I then decided to swap the Professional unit for another Regular unit, as all the Irish were the same level in the Company. The armoured cars are meant to be ex-WW2 Fords, but these are hard to source in 15mm. I am using Ferrets for now, but any WW2 or early Cold War MG-armed armoured cars will do.

The Irish can never have an Air Strike, as they never had any air support. So I suggest that they could instead use the Sniper Asset from PBI if they were to get the required Communication points. Even better if they have a nominated Sniper type base, as in the film.

The Gendarmes are backed by the Belgian and French Governments, so they had access to a lot of men and equipment, both old and new.

The Gendarmes are Army #10 - Mercenary Cored, with 2 Regulars units and a Militia unit. A French 75mm towed gun, a pair of Mortars and a pair of MGs, with 3 extra Regular bases and 4 Militia bases.

The Gendarmes can have an Air Strike, but this should be rare. I was also going to suggest, if they were Gendarmes can get to an Air Strike with difficulty. The Gendarmes would alternatively sacrifice both their communications for that turn and have an Airstrike, but only once?

These are of course only suggestions to match up with history and the film. That said, both the Armies I have suggested seem to fit well with the forces in the film.

## Reinforcements

Reinforcements come on at their usual places.

However, both Irish and Gendarmes can only use the sides reinforcement zones (as per the AK47 rules) if they have friendly troops in that area (let's say, within 2 squares of the deployment square).

Reinforcements of either side cannot be deployed behind the enemy - that would be very unfair!

## Defenders

### *Army list and composition:*

- Irish UNOC
- Army no.3 - Colonial Settlers.
- 3 x Regular Platoons.
- 11 points in total for Additions:
  - 3) Light Armour MG. 4 points.
  - 6) Pair of Mortars. 2 points.
  - 7) 2 MG Bases. 2 points.
  - 9) 3 Extra Regular Bases. 2 points.
  - 13) Bodyguard. 1 Point.

### *Communications Level:*

- Basic 4
- Plus Regular foot = +1
- Plus Light Armour = +1 = 6
- Final Communications level: 6.

### *Special Defender Rules:*

- All of the Special notes as per Army list.
- For this scenario, I've replaced one of the other platoons with Regular, as all the troops in the company were the same quality and experience.
- Communications Level score of 9, 10:
  - will cause an Artillery Strike:
  - but they only have light mortars, so only 2 squares are affected, instead of the usual 3
- Communications score of 11, 12:
  - note that the Defender probably doesn't want to aim for such a high Communications score very often, as they will need reinforcements and extra bases to replace losses!
  - the Irish cannot have an Air Strike, since the UN had no attack planes at this time.



- since there is a company sniper in the film, I have borrowed the use of the PBI Sniper Asset.
- Sniper use:
  - Designate one normal infantry base at the start of the game to also have Sniper characteristics.
  - Range = 8 squares
  - Shoots at end of own turn, in the Communications part of the turn
  - Shoots once per turn
  - Only shoots at foot bases (not deployed guns)
  - Not allowed opportunity shooting
  - May kill the CC (obviously, the Bodyguard will die first!)
  - Chooses which square to shoot at (normal line of sight rules apply):
  - Roll D6:
    - 1 = No effect
    - 2, 3, 4 = 2 bases hit. Target chooses. If only 1 base is available, then it is hit twice. No attempt at pinning allowed. Normal saving rolls from foot shooting apply.
    - 5, 6 = Target square pinned.

# Attackers:

## *Army list and composition*

- Gendarmes, Mercenaries.
- Army no.10 - Mercenary-Cored.
- 2 x Regular platoon.
- 1 x Militia Platoon.
- 14 points in total for Additions:
  - 6) Pair of Mortars. 2 points.
  - 7) 2 MG bases. 2 points.
  - 8) 4 Extra Militia Bases. 2 points.
  - 9) 3 Extra Regular Bases. 2 points.
  - 11) Pair of Technicals. 2 points.
  - 12) Second Pair of Technicals. 2 points.
  - 13) General's Bodyguard. 1 point.
  - Extra (for the scenario): 4) 75mm Towed gun. 1 point.

## *Communications Level:*

- Basic 3
- Plus Regular Foot = +1
- Plus Attackers = +1
- Final Communications level: 5.

The Gendarmes can thus score an Air Strike, but with difficulty. As a special scenario rule (since they do have air force support), if the Attackers gives up both Communications for one turn, they will automatically get one - and only one - Air Strike. Once they have gained an Air Strike by whatever means, they cannot have another during the game. So use it wisely!

## *Special Attacker Rules:*

All of the Special Notes for the respective army list in the AK47 Rules apply, except that:

- Professionals and Regulars never take morale (as these are WW2 veterans and have likely seen many wars since). They are still removed at 2 bases, though.
- The General has no influence on AP (i.e. as per army list #10), but still helps with morale for the Militia.
- As a special rule, I am adding for the Technicals:
  - the player should label his technical units as A, B, as appropriate.
  - units A and B can each come back to the game once.
  - place the first dead unit in each case in the reinforcement area as a new unit.
  - there are no victory points for killing any technical from either unit the first time they are each destroyed.



- This option to bring back Technical can be swapped for instead bringing back a whole unit of (destroyed) infantry.
  - Either the Technicals or a whole unit (as the Gendarmes have plenty of troops and weapons) - but not both!
  - If infantry are brought back, then their initial destroyed does not count as having been destroyed, but all destroyed Technicals do count.

## 8. PBI in the snow by martin

Christmas 2025.

A group of players turned up at the Entoyment game store (Poole).

The venue was quite cold too. Very atmospheric.

This pictured game featured a Russian raw company attacking a German average company.



Top half of picture is filled with Russian raw infantry advancing.

Two destroyed JSII tanks after failed assault on the left hand German strong point.

Killed by German AT weapons.

Prowling Tiger on extreme right of picture.





(above) German infantry holding the central objective looking towards the Russian advance (concerned face).









# 9. Some photos of making a master mould by martin

Martin has been making 15mm figures for 45 years.

These methods will eventually (not soon) die out as 3D et al replaces them.

Each 15mm company uses different methods, some vastly different and some similar to what follows.

However, the methods used still produces lovely figures with character and hand craft.

Here is an insight into how it is done.

# Some random thoughts and some random pictures.

Twice a month martin makes master mould.

A master mould holds 9 master figures.

The mould is made from black vulcanised rubber.

It has diameter of 6" as opposed to production moulds which have diameters of 9,11 and 12" diameter.



Log book of mould contents. Small drawers hold components for some PP products.



Small tray at back has the parts of the master figures after they are moved from the master mould. Green bins contain newest packs in production.



The spare sprue bin for master moulds castings used for the last 35 years. Lovley tin.





A shot of some yellow (WW2) and blue (AK) bins.



More WW2 bins. There are 700 of them.





**Mould press.** Master moulds are made within a 6" steel can. The two mould halves are compressed using very high pressure. This is called vulcanising. It takes about 45 minutes.

Two of the melting pots used. Bars of metal have been added to the rear pot.





The extractor fan to take away the talcum dust used for lubricating moulds.





Head torch used to find bits of master figures left in the master mould. A long process.

From arrival in the workshop with 9 master figures it takes 4 hours until there is a small tub of cast master figures ready for production moulds.