

ST. KILIAN'S BLOODY SWORD

ASL SCENARIO 301 (continued)



Elements of Grenadier-Regiment 689, Volksgrenadier-Division 246, Grenadier-Regiment 223, Volksgrenadier-Division 16, and Grenadier-Regiment 1121, Volksgrenadier-Division 553, *Kampfgruppe Bodendorfer* [ELR: 2]
enter on Turn 1 as noted (see SSR 3): {SAN: 3}



Enter along the north/east edge(s) on/between 16aA15 and 16aF1:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|---|
| 5-4-8 | 5-3-7 | 4-4-7 | 3-3-7 | 3-3-7 | 3-3-7 | 5-12 | 3/5/2 | 3/5/2 | |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | | | | | | | 9 |

Enter along the east/south edge(s) on/between 18aI1 and 18aQ10:

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|---|
| 5-4-8 | 5-3-7 | 4-4-7 | 3-3-7 | 3-3-7 | 3-8 | 3/5/2 | 3/5/2 | |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | | | | | 8 |

| German WFP Table (SSR TotR3; Purchase Point cost in RED) | | | |
|---|---------|-----------|----------|
| DC 1 | LMG 1.5 | PSK 2 | MMG 3 |
| HMG 6 | FT 6 | 4 x ? 0.5 | +1 SAN 2 |

SPECIAL RULES:

- See TotR SSR. EC are Moderate, with no wind at start. Place overlay X32 on 18aM12-M13. All multi-hex buildings on overlay X32 are Factories (B23.74). Bore Sighting (C6.4) is NA.
- Prior to setup, make a Rubble Generation Check (SSR TotR4.3) for buildings 16aH7, 16aI15, 16aO9, 18aH11, and 18aO10.
- Prior to American setup, the Germans may use their SSR TotR2.2 HIP allocation of \leq one squad-equivalent (and any SMC/SW stacked with it) for onboard setup. These unit(s) are taken from any *one* OB group and must be set up outside of the two American setup areas.
- All eligible German AFV have Schuerzen (D11.2).
- Crew Survival (D5.6) is NA.

AFTERMATH: Impeding the 100th Division from a swift entry into Heilbronn from the west was the fact that all bridges across the Neckar River leading into the city had been destroyed. This would necessitate the use of assault boats to cross over the Neckar, a process that began north of the city in the pre-dawn light of 4 April, when elements of 398th Regiment crossed against little enemy opposition. This situation did not last for long, as lead elements of 3rd Battalion were suddenly stymied in their advance by approximately 1,000 German troops launching a well-coordinated counterattack from the railyards, factories, and houses of the northern part of the outskirts of the city. The men of the 398th were halted in their tracks, with multiple squads and platoons cut off and suffering heavy casualties. The defending Germans had accessed a series of interconnecting underground tunnels between various parts of the city to infiltrate and surround the American units. Fearing the total destruction of the 3rd Battalion, Burrell ordered elements of 397th Regiment, under the command of Colonel Gordon Singles, to cross the Neckar and support the beleaguered 3rd Battalion, the majority of which had now retreated to a bridgehead up against the eastern edge of the Neckar. Under cover of a smoke screen provided by 163rd Chemical Smoke Generator Company, 2nd Battalion of the 397th successfully crossed the Neckar around 2pm. While this helped stem the tide of the German counterattack, it was clear that the capture of Heilbronn was going to be a long, difficult struggle. By 6 April, the men of Company A, 397th Regiment found themselves fighting around the *Kilianskirche* (Church of St. Kilian), a 500-year-old Gothic church that was at the core of the German defense. Positioned along the central east-west city connector—the *Kaiserstraße*, the main street on the north side of the church—the Germans had constructed a series of interlocking machine gun nests supported by panzerfaust-armed infantry. For two days, the men of Company A were pinned down as they struggled to hold the area around the church against repeated German infantry counterattacks, supported by a self-propelled gun that would make repeated runs at the men ensconced in the church. The close quarter nature of the fighting was best exemplified by the men of Lieutenant Walter Vaughan's 1st Platoon and of Lieutenant John A. Strom's 3rd Platoon, who brought down sustained fire and dropped hand grenades out of St. Kilian's stained-glass windows onto the German units attempting to infiltrate the nave of the church. At one point, the situation around the church became dire as the Germans succeeded in cutting off contact with Company C to the south. On the morning of 8 April, some amount of relief finally came to the beleaguered men of Company A after the combat engineers of the 31st Engineers had spent the night successfully constructing a trestle bridge across the Neckar that could support U.S. armor elements. By 8am, 24 M4A3 and M4A3E8 "Easy Eight" Sherman tanks from Company C, 781st Tank Battalion and nine M-18 Hellcats of the 824th Tank Destroyer Battalion would cross over the river to provide direct fire support to the infantry. The lead tank, commanded by Corporal Vincent J. Neratke, which had dashed forward to support Company A, was destroyed by a panzerfaust as it approached the church. Fortunately, another Sherman and a Hellcat that took a more circuitous route to the church arrived safely. After three hours of continuous HE fire support, the majority of the German guns were silenced, and the men of Company A were finally able to continue their advance northward. For their gallant actions in performance of duty in Heilbronn, the tankers of Company C would be awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation.