

Norway

ULTRA

Free

Reprinted from the pages of ULTRA, a quarterly newsletter devoted to *A WORLD AT WAR*, GMT Games' strategic simulation of World War II.

To order AWAW, go to www.gmtgames.com or phone 1-800-523-6111.

NORWAY

Getting the Germans in and Keeping the British Out

by Ken Cruz, Dave Hanson, Markus Kässbohrer and Donald Stanley

Editor's Note: This article is a compilation of submissions from a number of people who often attack Norway. Bruce Harper has attempted to combine these into a coherent analysis.

Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister notorious for appeasing Hitler in 1938, stood up to the German dictator by guaranteeing the integrity of Poland and, perhaps unexpectedly, declared war on Germany on the basis of that guarantee. On April 4, 1940, Chamberlain famously declared that Hitler had "missed the bus" by failing to follow up on the German conquest of Poland with further offensives.

Less than a week later, Germany attacked Norway and soon after, following one of the first and still one of the boldest air-naval operations ever, German troops were in control of all the major ports in Norway. Within a month, Chamberlain lost office over Britain's utterly shambolic intervention in Norway and was replaced by Winston Churchill, although Churchill also played a considerable role in bringing about the British disaster in Norway.

While there is no British Prime Minister to remove in *A WORLD AT WAR*, the Germans still want to get the victory. Conquering Norway is a fairly straight forward exercise, but precise execution is necessary to discourage the British from mucking it all up.

The Defenders

The Norwegians have two one-factor infantry units. One must be placed in Oslo:

82.54 MANDATORY DEPLOYMENT IN CAPITAL: At least one minor country ground unit must be deployed in an attacked minor country's capital. This deployment requirement applies only to the initial setup of the minor country.

The other Norwegian 1-3 infantry unit usually goes on the beach hex southeast of Oslo (D35), in Oslo or occasionally in Bergen.

The common set up of one Norwegian 1-3 infantry unit in Oslo and the second Norwegian 1-3 infantry unit in the beach hex southeast of Oslo (D35, referred to as "the Norwegian beach hex" in this article) is depicted below. Hex G32, the normal location of a German airbase, is also shown:



Preparation

To be ready to deal with all possible Norwegian setups and stop any mischief the British may try to cause, Germany should have the following units in position at the end of its Winter 1939 player turn:

- A 2-6 armor unit, 1-3 infantry unit and a 1-3 airborne unit (in addition to the German navy) in Kiel.
- Two 3-3 infantry units in Rostock.
- A 2-6 armor unit in Stettin.
- Three AAF and an air transport within eight hexes of G32 (in northern Denmark).

This may seem like a lot of force, but the Axis won't need it all. Which units are actually used in the attack on Norway will depend on the Norwegian set up. If the armor units are not used, they are within range of the Low Countries and France and can help out with Germany's spring offensive in the west. The two German 3-3 infantry units will not be missed in France.

Declaring War

Germany should declare war on both Denmark and Norway together. This counts as only one declaration of war for BRP and USAT purposes:

50.22 DECLARATIONS OF WAR ON MINOR COUNTRIES: A declaration of war against a minor country costs 10 BRPs, subject to the following exceptions:

...

B. DENMARK AND NORWAY: Any major power may declare war on Denmark and Norway as a unit by making a single declaration of war at a cost of 10 BRPs. If a declaration of war is made against only one of Denmark or Norway, the other remains neutral and a second declaration of war, requiring another 10 BRPs, must be made before it can be attacked.

50.53 USAT EFFECTS:

...

C. If Belgium and Luxembourg, or Denmark and Norway, are subject to a single declaration of war, the USAT effect is either +1 (for an Axis declaration of war) or -2 (for a Western Allied declaration of war). If Belgium and Luxembourg, or Denmark and Norway, are subject to separate declarations of war, USAT are affected by both declarations of war.

A German declaration of war gives Germany control of Denmark at the start of the Axis player turn, which is very important.

86.122 EFFECT OF GERMAN DECLARATION OF WAR: If Germany declares war on Denmark, Denmark does not resist German occupation and all Danish hexes are deemed to have been controlled and fully supplied by Germany from the start of the Axis player turn in which it declared war. Germany may thus operate air units out of Copenhagen and construct and use an airbase in a Danish hex in the turn in which it declares war on Denmark.



Timing

Germany may not declare war on Denmark and

Norway in Fall 1939:

50.33 DECLARATIONS OF WAR ON MINOR COUNTRIES:

A. GERMANY: Germany may not declare war on any minor countries in Fall 1939.

Winter invasions of Norway are prohibited:

21.5151 WEATHER:

A. Seaborne invasions which involve naval movement through western and eastern front sea hexes are prohibited during winter turns, regardless of the location of the invasion hex.

This means the earliest turn Germany may attack Denmark and Norway is Spring 1940, and that's when they normally should do so. See, however, the boxed comment at the end of this article for an interesting alternative which defers the invasion of Norway until Fall 1940.



Execution

The execution of the Spring 1940 German attack depends on how the Norwegians set up. Since one Norwegian 1-3 infantry unit must be in Oslo, the variable is the location of the other 1-3 Norwegian infantry unit.

On the Beach

This is the usual setup, as depicted in the illustration on the previous page. The Germans should invade the Norwegian beach hex with a 2-6 armor unit and a 1-3 infantry unit, supported by at least two AAF flying from a German airbase in G32 and fleet factors for shore bombardment. This will give the Germans at least a 3:1 attack. Any losses are first taken from the 1-3 infantry unit, then from the AAF (the worst the Germans can do in this attack is roll a "1" and get an "Ex", for a maximum German loss of three factors).

The purpose of the armor unit on the beach adjacent to Oslo is that its ZoC prevents Norway from

rebuilding its 1-3 infantry unit in Oslo:

84.47 UNIT CONSTRUCTION:

...

B. Associated minor country units must be rebuilt in a controlled, supplied hex in the minor country which is not in an enemy ZoC (27.44).

This means that at the end of the Allied Spring 1940 player turn Oslo will contain only one Norwegian 1-3 infantry unit. Even if the German 1-3 infantry unit was taken as a loss in the German invasion, Germany will be guaranteed at least at 2.5:1 attack on Oslo in Summer 1940 unless British units can get to Oslo in Spring 1940.

In Oslo

If both Norwegian 1-3 infantry units set up in Oslo, the Germans are able to invade the Norwegian beach hex (D35) with twice as many ground factors as they can if the Norwegians defend it:

21.513 DESTROYER AND TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS:

A. UNDEFENDED HEXES: One destroyer factor is required to carry each invading ground factor if the invasion hex is not occupied by an enemy ground unit.

B. DEFENDED HEXES: Two destroyer factors are required to carry each invading ground factor, including ground units which do not participate in the initial invasion combat, if the invasion hex is occupied by an enemy ground unit.

Rather than use a 2-6 armor unit, the Germans invade the Norwegian beach with the two 3-3 infantry units in Rostock. In Summer 1940 Oslo will be defended by two Norwegian 1-3 infantry units, but the two German 3-3 infantry units in the Norwegian beach will be able to attack Oslo, so again Germany is guaranteed at least a 2.5:1 attack on Oslo in Summer 1940 unless British units can get to Oslo in Spring 1940. It is even possible for Germany to invade the Norwegian beach with another two 3-3 infantry units in Summer 1940 in order to attack Oslo with 12 infantry factors in Fall 1940. This works best when Germany intends to conduct a full offensive on the western front in Fall 1940 by bombing or invading Britain.

An alternative worth mentioning, but which cannot be recommended, is for Germany to invade the vacant Norwegian beach with two 2-6 armor units, and attack Oslo during Spring 1940 exploitation with a 2-6 armor unit and five AAF based in G32 (or a 1-3 airborne unit and four AAF). The problem facing Germany is that it can only build one airbase in Denmark in time for a Spring 1940 attack, and Italian AAF can't reach northern Denmark from Italy. The exploitation attack

would therefore be a risky 1:1 (7:4), and it is too early in the game for the Germans to resort to such desperate tactics. In any case, the attack would divert two 2-6 armor units and five AAF from the attack on France, as opposed to two 3-3 infantry units, which won't be missed.

In Bergen

A third, and very rare, possibility for the Norwegians is to set up their second 1-3 infantry unit in Bergen, in the hope of securing British intervention. This fails because the Germans can invade the Norwegian beach with one 2-6 armor unit and attack Oslo with the other 2-6 armor unit during exploitation, with three AAF as ground support. This 2.5:1 attack guarantees the conquest of Norway in a single turn, giving German control of Bergen before Britain can react.

If the Germans want to use their 2-6 armor units in France, they can also invade the Norwegian beach with two 3-3 infantry units and prevent British intervention by an airdrop.



The Essential Airdrop

In conjunction with the invasions described above, the German airborne unit should move to G32, along with the German air transport. The Germans then can airdrop on either Bergen or the mountain hex between

Bergen and Oslo (C34).

An airdrop of Bergen forces the British to invade Bergen during their turn in order to get units into Norway. This is a difficult operation, because the British will have no land-based air units within range of Bergen to intercept German defensive air support from G32, which will be tripled in its effect against a seaborne invasion:

18.611 During the combat phase of an enemy player turn, after the attacker has announced his ground support air missions, uninverted defending army air units and land-based naval air units may provide defensive air support to any ground units within range which the defender thinks may be subject to ground attack, including by seaborne invasion and as yet unannounced airdrops (EXCEPTION: Defensive air support against low-odds attacks is deferred - 18.619).

...

C. INVASION ATTACKS: Each AAF which flies defensive air support adds three factors to the strength of ground units defending against seaborne invasion; each NAS which flies defensive air support adds one factor to the strength of ground units defending against seaborne invasion.

Alternatively, the Germans can airdrop in the mountain hex east of Bergen. This allows the British to sea transport into Bergen, but unless the British have a 2-5 armor unit in port at the start of their turn, they can't move a unit into Oslo (it takes five movement factors to sea transport into Bergen and move to Oslo if the direct path is blocked) and redeployment to Oslo is prevented because there are German units adjacent to Oslo.

Even if the British have a 2-5 armor unit in reserve in a port, the Germans may want to allow it into Oslo, reasoning it might benefit the Allies more in France or Egypt, but this is up to the German player and will depend on the situation elsewhere on the board.

British Intervention

While a German airdrop will prevent Britain from saving Norway, it is impossible to prevent the British from occupying Bergen, if they wish to do so.

The airdrop into Bergen more or less prevents a Spring 1940 British invasion of Bergen, but in Summer 1940 the German airborne unit will be eliminated due to isolation.

There are several ways the Germans can save the airborne unit in Bergen, but none are likely. One is to sea supply Bergen, but the British will intercept and the Germans are unlikely to win the ensuing naval battle. Another is to use the German air transport to air supply the German airborne unit, but this means the Germans must be willing to forego an airdrop in France in Summer 1940 (when they normally airdrop

into Paris to negate the French river defense) unless the Germans have produced a second air transport in 1940 (which will almost certainly cost two RPs). Finally, if Germany somehow invaded in Spring 1940 with two armor units, they might be able to exploit out of Oslo in Summer 1940, but it's difficult to see how this could ever be possible.

If the German airborne unit in Bergen is eliminated, Germany will be unable to redeploy into Bergen because, while it will control Oslo and Bergen, it won't control the hex in between the two; and any German attempt to NR into Bergen will be intercepted by the Royal Navy.

This means the British will have the option of invading an undefended Bergen in Summer 1940, provided they are prepared to fight the German navy and the German AAF based in G32.

Alternatively, if the Germans airdrop into the hex east of Bergen, they won't control Bergen and the British can sea transport units into Bergen in Summer 1940 if they are so inclined.

Either way, the British can intervene in Norway with ground units in Summer 1940, but this is hardly the end of the world for the Axis. The British must maintain this force by tracing a sea supply line to Bergen, because Oslo will be firmly in German hands. If sea supply fails, the British ground units will be eliminated.

Unless the British are prepared to either write off their Norwegian intervention, which makes it pointless to begin with, or accept naval losses due to German air and fleet attacks, they must raise the stakes in Norway in one of two ways.

Raising the Stakes

The first option the British have to sustain their Norwegian adventure is to commit air units to Norway. If the British can maintain even air parity over Bergen, they will have little difficulty in getting supply to their troops in Norway. The problem with this idea, of course, is that Germany has more AAF and more BRPs than Britain, and Britain will lose this air battle if the Germans want to commit the resources to win it.

The second option for the British is to construct a fort in Bergen. This is only possible if the British have committed an RP to fort production in 1940 and if Bergen is not in the ZoC of a German armor unit. This option is expensive, both in terms of BRPs and in terms of the opportunity cost, since the fort won't be

in London, Suez or any one of a number of other important hexes, depending on the course of the war. On the other hand, the British units in Bergen would be immune from attrition and would survive a turn or two without sea supply if necessary.

The Allied goal in Norway is not to reconquer Oslo, which is impossible until after the U.S. is in the war. Nor will the interruption of iron ore shipments from Sweden have much of an effect on the German war effort. Instead the Allies hope to maintain the potential of opening a Scandinavian front. But even a limited British intervention in Norway has a cost. The British have so few ground units in 1940 and 1941 that any British forces committed to Norway may well be missed in Malta, the Middle East, Gibraltar or even in Britain itself.

Epilogue

The key to Norway is to prevent British meddling. While an airdrop into or east of Bergen usually does the job, if the British are intent on saving Norway then they might invade Bergen with a 2-5 armor unit and a 3-4 infantry unit, overpower the German airborne unit and its defensive air support, and exploit into Oslo with a second 2-5 armor unit.

The Germans shouldn't even try to stop this operation and shouldn't panic if the British decide to invest BRPs and units in a Norwegian adventure. The British may well find they miss these BRPs and units by the end of 1940. The Germans should just take care of France in Summer 1940 and then either evict the British from Norway in Fall 1940 using their air superiority or, more ambitiously, firestorm London or invade southern England, to teach the English not to meddle in the Reich's affairs!



The Brophy Option

An interesting alternative to the standard Spring 1940 German attack on Denmark and Norway suggested by Joe Brophy is for Germany to defer the attack and launch an additional DD in Spring and Summer 1940. This may slow the full construction of the German submarine force slightly, but it also threatens a stronger invasion of Britain.

If Germany invades Britain in Fall 1940, the Axis focus on *Sea Lion* and ignore Denmark and Norway indefinitely. If Germany does not invade Britain, Germany declares war on Denmark and Norway in Fall 1940.

If the Norwegian beach is defended by a 1-3 Norwegian infantry unit, the Germans invade with two 2-6 armor units. The initial attack against the Norwegian beach consists of one 2-6 German armor unit plus three Italian AAF plus four factors of shore bombardment, for an attack of 9:3 (3:1). In exploitation, the other 2-6 German armor unit plus two Italian AAF and two German AAF attack Oslo, for an attack of 6:2 (3:1).

If the Norwegian beach is undefended, the Germans invade with two 2-6 armor units and a 4-6 armor unit. The initial attack is a 2-6 German armor unit against an undefended beach. In exploitation, the 4-6 German armor unit and the other 2-6 German armor unit plus four Italian AAF and two German AAF attack Oslo, for an attack of 12:4 (3:1).

In either case, Oslo falls in Fall 1940 and the German airborne unit airdrops into Bergen to prevent the British from invading. The airborne unit is then supplied in Winter 1940.

This attack works because both the Germans and Italians can build airbases in Denmark in the turn of the attack and because the Germans can land more armor because they have built an additional two DDs. If the Axis wish, they can save one or two AAF by risking 2.5:1, rather than 3:1, attacks.

While deferring the attack on Denmark and Norway costs the Germans BRPs, because the value of their conquests will be pro-rated, and may save the Western Allies a transport or two in Summer and Fall 1940, this approach preserves the option of not attacking Denmark and Norway at all and rules out any real chance of British intervention in Norway.

There is always something new to try in A WORLD AT WAR!