

Patrol Interception

Background

It is summer of 1942 in a Pacific Theater Campaign game. Japan is sending a patrol consisting of two task forces into the south Pacific within three hexes of Noumea. They have already lost 2 eNAS and a NAS counterairing U.S. air in the New Hebrides.

The US decides to intercept the patrol. They doubt that they can actually stop the patrol but they hope to inflict enough losses to make it a strategic loss for Japan. And they don't want to let Japan just counterair their 3 NAS in Noumea.

Interception

With Japan having two task forces and the U.S. having three NAS in range, the base interception is five dice. A task force in Noumea has to roll a '5' or better on five dice, so it intercepts automatically. A task force in Suva has to roll an '11' or better and rolls '18', so it intercepts. Finally, a sub in Suva has to roll an '11' or better on four dice (since subs have -1 interception dice) and rolls a '16' so it also intercepts.

Naval Combat - Setup

Both sides have two task forces that become two combat groups and need to decide where to allocate them.

Naval Combat Chart				
Axis		Combat Groups	Allies	
Hidden	Found		Found	Hidden
		1		
		2		
		3		
		4		
		5		
		6		

The contents of the combat groups are not known to the players, but are shown here for the observer. There is also some land-based air in range.

Japan

	       
	           
<p>Other Forces</p>	  Guadalcanal San Cristobal

U.S.

	      
	            
<p>Other Forces</p>	  Noumea

Naval Combat – Round 1

Both sides start the round by eliminating the enemy land-based NAS. The U.S. flies one NAS to each of Guadalcanal and San Cristobal to counterair the NAS on each island. All of the NAS on both sides is eliminated.

Japan flies four eNAS over Noumea to counterair the three U.S NAS; two U.S. NAS are eliminated and one eNAS is lost.

The U.S. plays a Tactical MAGIC card for search. That gives the U.S four search dice (combat round 1, 1 active combat group, 1 carrier combat group, MAGIC); Japan has three search dice (combat round 1, 1 active combat group, 2 carrier combat groups, -1 die for the U.S. MAGIC).

The U.S. rolls ‘3’, ‘1’, ‘2’, ‘3’ and Japan rolls ‘1’, ‘6’, ‘3’.

Naval Combat Chart				
Axis		Combat Groups	Allies	
Hidden	Found		Found	Hidden
		1		
		2		
		3		
		4		
		5		
		6		

Japanese CG1 is found and revealed to be fast with three carriers.

Japanese CG2 is found and revealed to be fast with four carriers.

U.S. CG1 is found and revealed to be fast with no carriers.

Because both sides found at least one combat group, no surprise air strikes are possible.

The U.S. makes an air strike on Japanese CG1 with 8 NAS. Japan has 2 eNAS on CAP and rolls a ‘12’, which eliminates 2 NAS and aborts 2 more NAS. The U.S. eliminates 1 Japanese eNAS. Japan then makes an Air Defense roll on the ‘5’ row (Japan has an Air Defense result) and rolls an ‘8’ to eliminate 2 more NAS and abort another NAS. 1 NAS gets through to attack.

The lone NAS attacks the *Ryujo* at +3 (+2 for NDRM, +1 for naval air attacking ships at sea) and rolls a ‘10’ which sinking the *Ryujo*.

Japan makes an air strike on U.S. CG1 with 8 eNAS. The U.S. makes an Air Defense roll on the '3' row and rolls a '6', which eliminates an eNAS and aborts a second eNAS. 6 eNAS get through to attack.

Japan attacks the *Prince of Wales* with 3 eNAS at +2 and rolls a '7', which damages the ship. Japan attacks the *Repulse* with 3 eNAS and rolls another '7', which sinks it.

The two active combat groups now engage in fleet combat. The *Yamato* and the *Massachusetts* square off. The *Krishima* has no heavy ship to fire at and decides to shoot at the U.S. lights. The *Yamato* takes 1 hit, the *Massachusetts* takes two hits, and the *Krishima* misses the U.S. lights.

Now the light ships fire at each other. The U.S. sinks Japanese CA4 and Japan sinks U.S. CA2.

Finally, the U.S. sub attacks Japanese CG2. Aided by a Sub MAGIC card, the sub targets the *Soryu* at +1 and rolls a '5' and only does 1 hit.

Round 1 Losses

Japanese losses:

- 2 NAS (Guadalcanal and San Cristobal)
- 3 eNAS
- *Ryujo* (CVL)
- CA4

U.S. and British losses:

- 2 NAS (Noumea)
- 6 NAS
- *Repulse* (BC3)
- *Prince of Wales* (BB4) [damaged]
- CA2

Aftermath

The U.S. withdraws from combat. With half of their carrier-based air gone and their battleship combat group decimated, there is no other option.