

Cartwheel: Breaking the Bismarck Barrier

Introduction: After the Japanese defeats at Coral Sea and Midway Moresby, Japan attempted to solidify its defensive perimeter as the Allies began a dual offensive across the central Pacific and through the south west Pacific. The latter began with the struggle at Guadalcanal and then became the ambitious *Operation Cartwheel* that sought to break through the Japanese defences in the Solomon Islands, Eastern New Guinea and in the Bismarck Archipelago.

Duration: Summer 1942 – Spring 44

Situation: Japan has taken a full offensive on the Pacific front (see: Special Rule 7). All controlled areas are considered fully supplied during the Japanese Su42 player turn.

Controlled Areas:

Japan controls New Britain, New Ireland, Manus, the East Caroline Island group, Eastern New Guinea (hexes GG25 – 26, HH26 – 27), and the Solomon Island group. Although controlled by Japan, no units may be based in the Gilbert Island group, including Nauru.

The Allies control Australia, New Caledonia, Eastern New Guinea (hexes II24 – 26), the New Hebrides Island group, Santa Cruz and the Australia box.

Special Rules:

1. Area of Play. Play is restricted to the Controlled Areas.
2. Repairs. Naval units may be withdrawn from the Controlled Areas for repair.
3. Reinforcements. Japanese reinforcements are considered to SR/NR to Truk where they then can continue to be redeployed. US reinforcements are considered to SR/NR to Noumea where they then can continue to be redeployed. Australian reinforcements are considered to be constructed in Townsville where they then can continue to be redeployed.
4. Replacements. BRPs worth of air and ground replacements are received each Unit Construction Phase. These Replacements may be used each turn to replace eliminated NAF, AFF and ground units (specialized units may not be replaced on the turn they were eliminated) or in the case of Air Replacements, to build additional AAF up to the limits set out in 5 below. No more than two factors of Australian infantry and one Australian AAF may be replaced in a turn. Replacements may *not* be accumulated.
5. AAF Limits: Japan, 10; Allied (US), 15; Allied (Aus), 2.
6. Forts. During each Unit Construction Phase Japan may roll one die and on a “6” Japan may build a fort at no cost.
7. Offensives. Both Japan and the Allies are considered to be able to undertake a Full Offensive option in *all* turns.
8. Supply. Truk is considered an unlimited supply source for Japan. Noumea and Australia are considered unlimited supply sources for the Allies.

Magic Capability: Japan, 8; Western Allies, 9 (1942) and 10 (1943 on).

Force Pools:

Japanese Forces

Truk: 1AAF, 6NAF(e), 2NAF, *Shokaku* (CV3), *Zuikaku* (CV3), *Ryujo* (CVL2), *Mutsu* (BB4), *Hiei* (BB3), *Kirishima* (BB3), 10CA, 7DD, 1SS, 1-2

Rabaul: 1AAF, 6CA, 1DD, 1n2, 1-2

Lae: 1AAF, 1-2

Buna: 1n2, 1-2

Guadalcanal: 1NAF, 1-2

Japanese Reinforcements

Summer 1942: 3AAF, 4NAF, *Hiyo* (CVL2), *Junyo* (CVL2), *Haruna* (BB3), *Kongo* (BB3), 1DD, 1-2

Fall 1942: 1AAF, *Yamato* (BB5), 4DD, 3-2

Winter 1942: 2-2

Spring 1943: None

Summer 1943: 2DD

Fall 1943: 2CA, 2-2

Winter 1943: 1-2

Sp44: None

Japanese Replacements

Su42: Air, 3BRPs; Ground, 1BRP

Fa42: Air, 6BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Wi42: Air, 6BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Sp43: Air, 6BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Su43: Air, 6BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Fa43: Air, 6BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Wi43: Air, 6BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Sp44: Air, 3BRPs; Ground, 3BRPs

Allied Forces

Noumea: 1AAF, 10NAF, *Enterprise* (CV3), *Saratoga* (CV3), *Wasp* (CV3), *North Carolina* (BB4), 8CA, 6DD, 1n2

Efate: 1NAF

Port Moresby: 1-2 (Aus)

II24: 1-2 (Aus)

Townsville: 2-2, 1-2 (Aus)

Port Moresby or Townsville: 2AAF, 1AAF (Aus)

Townsville: 2CA, 2CA (Aus), 1DD (Aus), 1SS

Allied Reinforcements

Su42: 3NAF, *Hornet* (CV3), *Washington* (BB4), 2CA, 1n2

Fa42: 1AAF (Aus), *South Dakota* (BB4), 6CA, 5DD, 1n2, 1-2

Wi42: 1CVE, 6CA, 2-2

Sp43: 1CA, 3DD

Su43: 1DD, 2-2 (Aus)

Fa43: 12NAF, *Bunker Hill* (CV3), *Essex* (CV), *Independence* (CVL2), *Monterey* (CVL2), *Princeton* (CVL2), 5DD

Wi43: *Idaho* (BB3), *Mississippi* (BB3), *New Mexico* (BB3), *Tennessee* (BB3), 1-2

Allied Replacements

Su42: Air, 3BRPs; Ground, 1BRP

Fa42: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Wi42: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Sp43: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Su43: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Fa43: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Wi43: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Sp44: Air, 9BRPs; Ground, 4BRPs

Victory Conditions:

Victory is determined by the control of Guadalcanal and the casualties suffered by each side. Whichever side has more Victory points at the end of the scenario is the winner. The difference in Victory Points determines the level of victory: decisive, 10; tactical, 7; marginal, 3; pyrrhic, 1; draw, 0.

Victory Points:

+3 Control of Guadalcanal

+1 Each enemy surface factor sunk