Beda Fomm, 1941
A *Flames of War* Mega-Game Scenario

Operation Compass, originally designed as a glorified raid on the Italian positions in Egypt, turned into a rout as the British and Commonwealth forces were able to inflict heavy defeat after defeat on the large, but low mobility and poorly equipped Italian forces. After pushing forward and seizing Bardia, Tobruk and Derna, the remnants of the Italian 10th Army were no longer able to defend Cyrenaica and began to fall back down the Via Balbia, or coastal highway. The Allies raced the 7th Armored Division through the desert to cut them off, while pursuing their rearguard with the 6th Australian Division.

The British succeeded in cutting the coastal road near Beda Fomm, trapping the Italian column. A fierce action ensued, with the Italians showing incredible bravery in attempting to break through before their forces were destroyed.

This scenario uses a large tabletop to show a scaled down version of the area. It is split to reflect both the action near Beda Fomm, plus the fighting between the Australians and the Italian rearguard. Although a decisive Axis defeat, the battle saw intense fighting and could easily have gone the other way. It also offers the opportunity to field a wide variety of interesting and unique Early War desert units.

Special Terrain rules:
- Buildings – the few buildings present in the area were used by both sides for defensive cover. Any stand touching a building should be treated as in concealing terrain and bulletproof cover.
- Escarpment – the escarpment areas dominated the areas near the coast. Escarpment vertical areas are impassable to vehicles, except at gaps (passes and wadis). The area above the escarpment (within 4") provides concealment to any team on them, and no team may see or be seen from the other side of the escarpment unless it is touching the edge. Stands touching the edge may see and be seen from the lower level.
- The "Pimple" – a critical feature as it was the only significant high ground in the Beda Fomm area. Line of sight may not be traced through it unless one of the teams in question is on the pimple. It is treated as slow going, and provides concealment to any team on it.
- Soft Sand – the area close to the coast was covered with areas of soft sand and coastal dunes. This is impassable to wheeled vehicles and jeeps, and counts as difficult going for tracked and half-tracked vehicles. The rest of the tables not occupied by other terrain is hard smooth desert, which is treated as road.
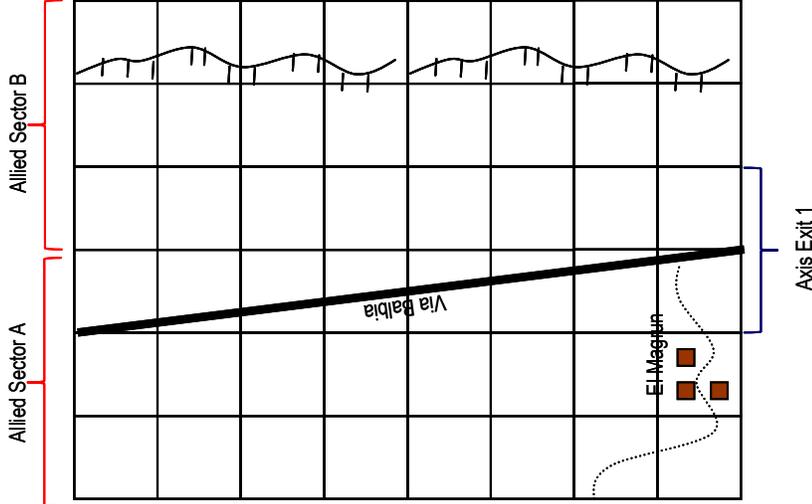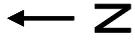
Deployment:
As the game starts with the British and Commonwealth forces have just reached the coastal road ahead of the retiring Italian forces near Beda Fomm, and are starting to dig in. The 6th Australian Division, at the same time, is pressing closely on the rearguard of the Italian column after it has exited Benghazi.

The Allied forces are deployed on table first, followed by the Axis forces – in the areas noted in each force's deployment instructions.

The Axis forces will take the first turn.

Map:

FOW Mega-Game
Beda Fomm, 1941

N

Beda Fomm Table

Allied Sector C

Allied Sector D

Beda Fomm

Mosque Ridge

The Pimpe

Via Balbia

Sid Saleh

Axis Entry 2

Axis Exit 3

El Magrun Table

Allied Sector B

Allied Sector A

Via Balbia

El Magrun

Axis Exit 1

Wind Pump

Elevation Change

Road

Desert track

Soft Sand / Dunes

Objective

Hill
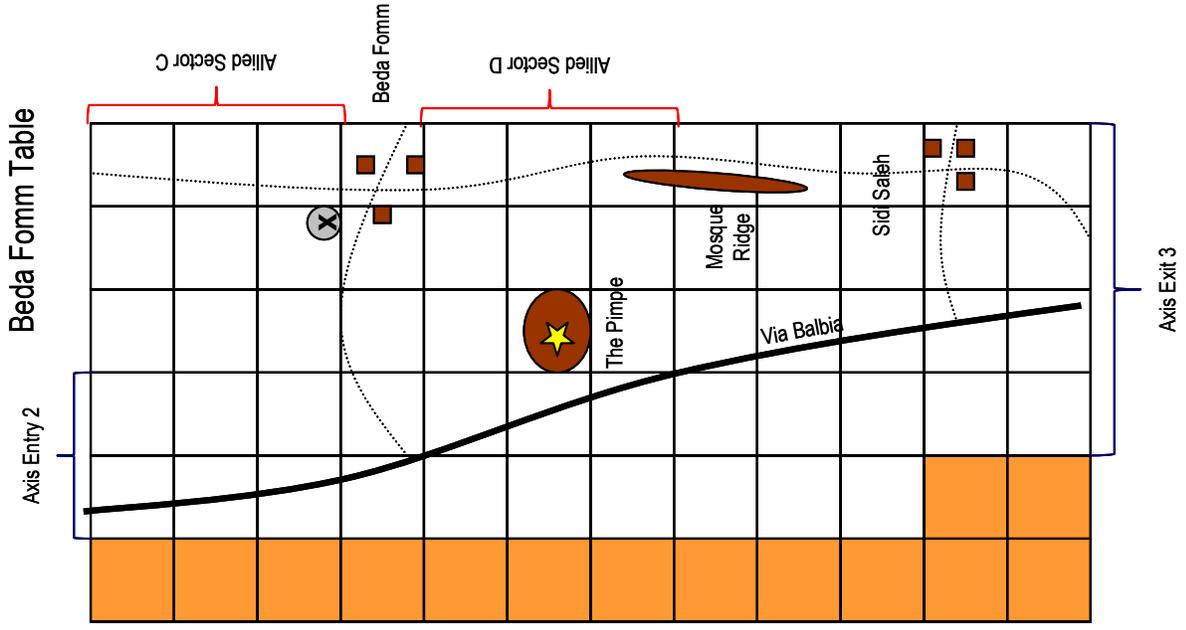
Forces – Beda Fomm Table:

Axis Forces –

10th Army Vanguard –

Rating: units are rated as specified in the list
Core List: Bersaglieri Company list from Hellfire and Back
Points: 2000
Added units: 3 supply trucks
Prohibited units: none
Deployment: Beda Fomm board, deployed at start anywhere within 12" of the coast road, south of the pimple and no closer than 12" from any enemy unit

---

[Vanguard] _____

3rd Battalion, Babini Armored Brigade –

Rating: units are rated as specified in the list
Core List: Carri Company list from Hellfire and Back
Points: 2000
Added units: 3 supply trucks
Prohibited units: none
Deployment: Beda Fomm board, enter on turn one from entry area 2

[Babini Armored Brigade] _____

5th Battalion, Babini Armored Brigade –

Rating: units are rated as specified in the list
Core List: Carri Company list from Hellfire and Back
Points: 2000
Added units: 3 supply trucks
Prohibited units: none
Deployment: Beda Fomm board, enter on turn two from entry area 2

[Babini Armored Brigade] _____

British and Commonwealth Forces –

Combeforce –	

	Rating: units are rated as specified in the list **Core List:** British Jock Column list from Hellfire and Back **Points:** 1500 **Added units:** may deploy one minefield anywhere in its deployment area **Prohibited units:** Crusader or Honey Armored Platoons, Humber Armored Cars **Deployment:** Beda Fomm board, anywhere within 30" of the southern table edge [no platoons start the game as dug in]

[Combeforce] _____

2nd RTR –	

	Rating: units are rated as specified in the list **Core List:** British Armored Regiment list from Hellfire and Back **Points:** 1750 **Added units:** none **Prohibited units:** Humber Armored Cars, Captured Armored Platoons **Deployment:** enter the table on turn one from Allied Sector D [exception – 2 platoons must be held as reserves, may be rolled for as normal commencing on turn 2]

[2nd RTR Commander] _____

3rd & 7^h Hussars –	

	Rating: units are rated as specified in the list **Core List:** British Armored Regiment list from Hellfire and Back **Points:** 1750 **Added units:** none **Prohibited units:** Humber Armored Cars, Captured Armored Platoons **Deployment:** enter the table on turn one from Allied Sector C [exception – 2 platoons must be held as reserves, may be rolled for as normal commencing on turn 2]

[3rd & 7th Hussars] _____

Forces – El Magrun Table:

10th Army Rearguard –

Rating: units are rated as specified in the list
Core List: Compagnia Bersaglieri list from Hellfire and Back
Points: 1500
Added units: 6 supply trucks
Prohibited units: none
Deployment: deploys on El Magrun table, must be more than 24" from both the north and south table edges. Supply trucks are an exception, they may be deployed on the Via Balbia, no closer than 8" from the south board edge.

[Rearguard] _____

Australian Screening Force –

Rating: units are rated as specified in the list
Core List: Divisional Cavalry Squadron (Australian) list from Hellfire and Back
Points: 1000
Added units: none
Prohibited units: Humber Armored Cars, R35 tanks
Deployment: enter the table on turn one from Allied Sector B

[Australian Screening Force] _____

6th Australian Division –

Rating: units are rated as specified in the list
Core List: Commonwealth (Australian) list from Hellfire and Back
Points: 1200
Added units: none
Prohibited units: Matilda tank platoons
Deployment: enter the table on turn one from Allied Sector A

[6th Australian Division] _____

Italian Supply trucks:
Italian supply trucks are used in this scenario to represent the column of stragglers and equipment that was trying to make its escape from Cyrenaica. They are deployed as noted on each Italian force's briefing.

- Deployment – supply truck models starting on table must be deployed on the Via Balbia, no closer than 8" from the southern board edge or to another supply truck model.
- Congestion – no supply truck model may move closer than 8" from another supply truck model. Any unit crossing the Via Balbia within 8" of a supply truck model moves as if in slow going for that move.
- Moving – supply truck models may move 8" per turn, and are not allowed an Avanti move. Supply truck models entering the game must enter along the Via Balbia, and no supply truck model may leave the Via Balbia other than to exit the table.
- Objectives – Capturing or destroying the column of Italian transport was a key Allied objective. Supply truck model play a significant role in determining victory for the scenario. Supply trucks may be targeted with fire and destroyed normally if they fail their transport save. If an Allied platoon gets within 4" of a supply truck its crew flees and it may no longer move or be targeted with fire. It remains in place and now may be "captured" just like a normal FOW objective.

Split Tables:
There was a significant distance between the head of the Italian column near Beda Fomm, and the rear near El Magrun. Forces cannot transfer between the two tables during the time allowed for the game.

Weather / Airpower:
The weather did not play a role of any significance in the action. At this stage of the war, neither side had sufficient airpower to dominate the skies above the desert. No forces receive airpower in this scenario.

Winning the Game:
The Allied objective was the final destruction of the remnants of the Italian 10th Army, streaming to make its escape from Cyrenaica. The Italian forces were looking to save what they could, by exiting off the southern table edges, to preserve their retreating forces.

To reflect this, each side earns victory points as follows:

- Holding the Pimple at the end of the game – 5 VP
- Each supply truck exited safely off the El Magrun table (Axis only: exit 1) – 1 VP
- Each supply truck exited safely off the Beda Fomm table (Axis only: exit 3) – 3 VP
- Each supply truck captured (Allies only) – 3VP
- Each supply truck destroyed (Allies only) – 1 VP

Based on the victory points earned:
- If a side exceeds the other side's VP total by 10 or more it has won an overwhelming victory
- If a side exceeds the other side's VP total by 5-9 it has won an significant victory
- If a side exceeds the other side's VP total by 1-4 it has won an tactical victory
- If the VP totals are identical the result is a draw