

SCENARIO 4: THE BLACK BRIGADE

The 14th Army was the most southerly of the three armies in Army Group South and was tasked with attacking due east across lower Poland towards *Lwów*.

This scenario addresses the period after the initial clash. The Polish 10th Motorised Cavalry Brigade, called the Black Brigade, held the Germans to a slow advance of around ten kilometres per day. On the fifth day the Polish front to the north of the brigade collapsed and the 10th was pulled out of the line to act as a strategic reserve. It then fought as a screening force, delaying the Germans at river crossings so the slower moving Polish infantry could retreat into *Lwów*.

The Black Brigade took on the 2nd Panzer Division, the 4th Light Motorised Cavalry Division (later 9th Panzer) and the 3rd Mountain Division simultaneously. The Black Brigade was an elite unit as was demonstrated five years later at the Falaise Gap.

FORCES

4TH LIGHT DIVISION

In common with other European armies, there was a great deal of friction in the interwar years in the German military between the traditional horse-mounted cavalry and the new mechanised units. For example, in the British army the Royal Tank Regiment persisted in referring to mechanised cavalry regiments as 'donkey wallopers'. Germany followed a somewhat different route to the British, who mechanised their cavalry and turned them into armoured reconnaissance units. German cavalry elected to remain as independent mechanised heavy cavalry

divisions, known confusingly as Light Divisions. These usually had two motorised dragoon regiments (i.e. motorised infantry) and a Panzer battalion. Light divisions proved a failure in the invasion of Poland and were upgraded to Panzer divisions shortly afterwards.

The 4th Light Division was formed in Vienna in 1938, and was converted into 9th Panzer in early January in time for *Fall Gelb*. In 1939 it had an understrength Panzer battalion of 34 Panzer I, 23 Panzer II and 5 PzBef. Use the '1939 – The September Campaign' selector on page 70 of the *Armies of Germany* supplement to create the army. Note, however, that Panzer III and Panzer IV tanks are not available and that all transport vehicles should be soft-skinned.

BLACK BRIGADE SQUADRON

The Polish force, meanwhile, is made up of the Black Brigade Squadron (see the appropriate *Fall Weiss* selector on page 29)

THE BATTLE

Use 'Scenario 4: Hold Until Relieved' from the *Bolt Action* rulebook, with the following modifications:

- The Germans are the attackers.
- The Poles are the defenders.
- Set up a river (impassable terrain) traversing the centre of the table. Place a bridge (the objective) as per the scenario instructions in the *Bolt Action* rulebook.

PLAYER NOTES

This is a classic assault to capture a key terrain objective: a bridge over an impassable river. A river does not have to be the Volga to present a major obstacle to an attacker who is dependent on wheeled vehicles for supply. Some vicious battles in Normandy occurred around what were little more than agricultural ramps over ditches.

The whole game hinges on control of the bridge. Players should not lose sight of the fact that killing enemy units is merely a tool to achieve this purpose.

A great deal depends on whether the defender's on-table force can keep control of the objective until reinforcements arrive. The first few turns can be critical in deciding the final outcome.



Polish twin-turret 7tp