

# GUERRILLA TRAIN RAIDS

BY MIKE HAUGHT AND WAYNE TURNER



The partisan and raiding war that took place behind enemy lines during World War II is a passion of mine. When Battlefront first released the SAS and LRDG raid missions for *Flames Of War*, I was instantly excited to play them. Shortly thereafter, Wayne published this fantastic train attack mission for partisans on the East Front. I picked this mission to feature because it is a perfect example of a mission for the Finnish *Kaukopartiojoukot* (deep reconnaissance troops) briefing as seen in *Wargames Illustrated Issue 269*.

## DERAILING THE ENEMY WAR MACHINE

One very effective way to disrupt an enemy's war plans is to cut their vital railroad lines and destroy their supplies. Trains were a target for all of the major partisan and guerrilla operations in World War II, including Byelorussia, Finland, Russia, France, Yugoslavia, Italy and Poland.

Cutting the railway caused the Germans and Soviets no end of trouble. They had to commit a significant police force to defend the railroads and keep the lines open.

Regular troops like the Finnish *Kaukopartiojoukot* (long-range scout

patrols) managed to cut the Murmansk railway on several occasions, depriving the enemy of vital supplies destined to support the Soviet offensive in Finland. A raid on the railroad could be done at night with a small force, making it an ideal mission for a group of guerrilla fighters.

There were several tactics that could effectively disrupt enemy trains. One such method was to plant a pressure-sensitive bomb under the rail tracks so when the heavy locomotive passed overhead, the mine would detonate and derail the train. A small guerrilla force could set the charge and be long gone by the time the train was derailed.

The main disadvantage of this tactic was that it only delayed the enemy. The supplies eventually made it through, so the sabotage generally had a small impact on enemy operations.

However, if a raiding force was strong enough it could launch a follow-up assault on the train and destroy the supplies rather than just delay them.

The attack on the train would be preceded by the demolition of the rail line, embankment, bridge or tunnel. Sometimes they would place wreckage on the railroad to stop the train. With the trap set, the raiders would lie in wait until the train approached and stopped.

Then, the fighters sprang into action, taking the train by surprise and destroying as much of the cargo as possible before melting away.

The defenders were not completely helpless. As the guerrilla war progressed, the Germans and Soviets armed their trains with weapons carriages and posted small garrisons of troops to defend the train. When threatened, the troops would quickly deploy and defend the train from the raiders.

This made it very important for the guerrillas to hit the train quickly before the enemy could react. Sometimes the raiding forces would launch faint attacks to keep the pressure on the train guards, so that by the time the train had managed to clear several false blocks, the enemy troops were worn out and slower to react. Then the raiders would launch a major assault against the unsuspecting enemy.

## IN FLAMES OF WAR

This Train Attack mission is ideal for all raiding forces, not just the *Kaukopartiojoukot*. Feel free to play Train Attack with any of your Raiding forces for *Flames Of War*.



# THE TRAIN ATTACK

A patrol of raiders has launched an attack on a disabled supply train carrying vital supplies destined for the front lines.

The Train Attack mission uses the **Armed Train**, **Demolition**, **Escape**, **Raiding Force**, **Safe in the Rear Areas**, **Security Force**, **Scattered Reserves**, **Supply Wagon**, and **Time of Day** special rules.

## YOUR ORDERS

### ATTACKER

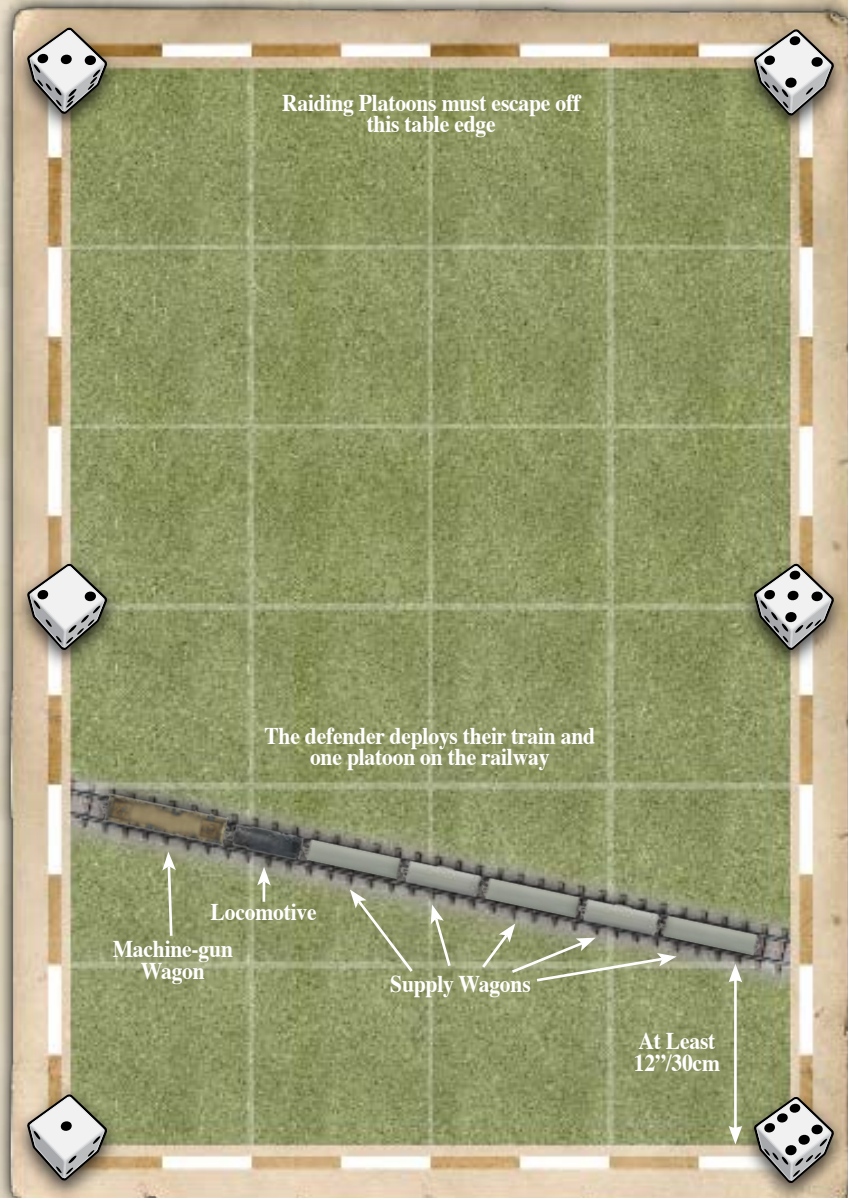
You have just blown the rail line forcing a supply train to come to a stop. Your light raiding force is to strike and destroy the supplies the train is carrying to the front lines and then escape.

### DEFENDER

Your company has been assigned to protect a train of supplies heading to the front. Enemy raiders have demolished the line, forcing the train to stop for several critical hours to repair the line. Defend the disabled train and repel the enemy raid.

## PREPARING FOR BATTLE

1. The attacker (the raiding force) chooses which table end the defender (the security force) will deploy in. The attacker must escape from the opposite board end after destroying the train's Supply Wagons to win the game.
2. The defending player then places a railway line across the table from one side of the table to the other. The railway line may not approach within 12"/30cm of the end of the table and must remain in the defender's half of the table.
3. The defender then deploys the train anywhere along the railway line. The train consists of one Locomotive, five Supply Wagons, and one Machine-gun Wagon. Push all wagons and the locomotive up against each other to form a continuous train. The five Supply Wagons are the attacker's objectives.
4. The defender now deploys a platoon mounted in the Machine-gun Wagon. This platoon may not contain any vehicles. The remainder of the defender's platoons start the game held in Reserve.
5. The attacker then deploys their entire force anywhere on the table. All attacking Infantry teams must be placed more than 4"/10cm away from all defending teams and train wagons. All other attacking teams must be placed more than 16"/40cm away from all defending teams.



6. The attacker decides whether they will be attacking by daylight or in darkness, or at dawn or dusk.

## BEGINNING THE BATTLE

1. The defending player's platoon has been caught flat-footed and counts as if it moved in its previous turn during the attacker's first turn.
2. The attacking player has the first turn.

## ENDING THE BATTLE

The battle ends when there are no raiding platoons left on the table.

## DECIDING WHO WON

The defending player wins if the attacking raiders fail to escape. Although valuable supplies have been lost, future raids will be curtailed.

The attacker wins if they manage to destroy supplies and escape to safety. The raid has deprived the enemy of supplies, saving many lives back home.

Only platoons that have already destroyed an objective and escaped gain victory points for the attacking player.

Use the Victory Points Table to look up your Victory Points based on the number of objectives successfully destroyed by the platoons that escaped.



# THE TRAIN ATTACK MISSION SPECIAL RULES

## ARMED TRAIN

Supply trains are always wary of partisan and raider attacks. They have countered this threat by arming some of its wagons. Heavy weapons were mounted on a few wagons for extra protection.

*The Machine-gun Wagon cannot move. It is an armoured tank team with front, side and top armour rating of 0.*

*The wagon has a Deck Turret machine gun (see page 87 of the Flames Of War rulebook) mounted at each end of the wagon.*

### **Machine-gun**

*Range 16"/40cm, ROF 3, Anti-tank 2, Firepower 6.*

## ESCAPE

When the raiders demolish a target, the enemy will stop at nothing to ensure that they don't escape to enjoy their success. This makes the raiders' escape as important as the actual demolition.

*Raiding platoons may only escape by moving off their own table edge during their Movement Step. Platoons may not escape in any turn during which they have moved At the Double.*

*Platoons that escape do still count as being on the table for Company Morale Checks. Teams that escape the table like this do not count as Destroyed.*

*If the raiding force fails a Company Morale Check, all remaining raiders scatter hoping to make their way home individually.*

## RAIDING FORCE

The raiders must travel deep behind enemy lines to sabotage the enemy's war effort and cause havoc! However to avoid detection, only a small and light force will be able to sneak past the enemy lines.

*The attacker's force is limited to 700 points.*

*The raiding force must be a Reconnaissance Company, and may only contain reconnaissance platoons that use the Reconnaissance rules found on pages 149 to 153 in the Flames Of War rulebook.*

*Raiding forces may not have any air support as the range is too great for ground attack aircraft to operate with them.*

## SCATTERED RESERVES

You can never predict where a raid or partisan ambush will strike so, the best way to counter them is to establish a base of operations and send out reserve reinforcements to fight the enemy patrols as they crop up.

*The Scattered Reserves special rule can be found in the Flames Of War rulebook on page 200.*

## SAFE IN THE REAR AREAS

The defenders know that the enemy is only a small raiding party and that there are plenty of friendly troops nearby. Their main concern is not having to tell HQ why everything they were guarding got blown up and the raiders got away!

*The defender's force is not required to take Company Morale Checks. However, they take Platoon Morale Checks as normal.*

## SECURITY FORCE

Your troops are deployed well behind the front lines with the vital task of defending strategic assets such as supply dumps and airfields.

*The defending player has 1500 points to spend on their security force.*

## SUPPLY WAGONS

Trains running to the front are often packed with supplies, ammunition, and weapons for the troops in the front lines. This makes them primary targets for partisans and raiders operating behind the lines.

*The five Supply Wagons are the Objectives and are destroyed using the Demolition special rules.*

## VICTORY POINTS TABLE

Use the Victory Points Table to see just how successful your raid was and how much damage you caused your opponent's war effort.

VICTORY POINTS			
Objectives Demolished	Result	Attacker's Points	Defender's Points
5 objectives	Stunning victory	6	1
4 objectives	Major victory	5	2
3 objectives	Minor victory	4	3
2 objectives	Minor defeat	3	4
1 objective	Major defeat	2	5
No objectives	Stunning defeat	1	6





## TIME OF DAY SPECIAL RULES

Battles occur at any time. Most battles happen in daylight, but many raids take place under the cover of darkness. There are four times of day: Daylight, Darkness, Dawn, and Dusk.

### NIGHT FIGHTING RULES

When planning missions, especially hit-and-run ones, it pays to utilise the night to help protect your troops.

*All of the Night Fighting rules are found in the Flames Of War rulebook, on page 154.*

### DAYLIGHT

Most operations occur in the daylight, where the troops can see what they are doing and where they are going.

*In a mission being played in daylight, the night fighting rules are not used.*

### DARKNESS

Night time is an excellent time to conduct clandestine missions to conduct sabotage and then vanish into the night.

*In a mission played in darkness, the night fighting rules are used for the entire game.*

### DAWN

Dawn is usually when the enemy is the least prepared to defend themselves.

*In a mission being played at dawn, the game starts in darkness, with the night fighting rules in effect. At the start of the defenders turn three, roll a die. On a score of 5+, morning has broken. If the roll is unsuccessful, at the start of turn four the attacker rolls two dice. If it is still dark at the start of the defenders next turn, they roll three dice, and so on until morning breaks on any roll of 5+. The turn that morning breaks, the night fighting rules are no longer used, and it is daylight for the remainder of the game.*

### DUSK

Dusk can be helpful for your attack, allowing your troops to conduct their mission under the last remaining daylight and then fade away into the dark.

*In a mission being played at dusk, the game starts in daylight. At the start of the defenders turn three, roll a die. On a score of 5+, night has fallen. If the roll is unsuccessful, the attacker rolls two dice at the start of turn four. If it is still daylight at the start of the defenders next turn, they roll three dice, and so on until night falls on any roll of 5+. The turn that night falls, the night fighting rules come into effect for the remainder of the game.*

## DEMOLITION SPECIAL RULES

### EXPLOSIVE CHARGES

The most reliable way to blow up a target is with explosive charges. Demolition experts on foot fix time bombs to the target and then get far away before the resulting explosion.

*Teams that are not Pinned Down and start their turn adjacent to a objective can attempt to demolish it. The team cannot move in the Movement step, nor shoot in the Shooting step while setting the charges. They count as moving and cannot claim to be Gone to Ground.*

*In the Assault step, roll a Skill test for each team instead of assaulting. If they pass the test, they have successfully planted the explosives which will explode once they get clear. The objective now counts as demolished.*

### GUNFIRE

A quick machine gun burst hitting the cab or wheels can put a target out of action for the rest of a battle. However, a lot more intense shooting is needed to completely demolish a truck, aircraft, or fuel depot.

*Your troops can demolish an objective by gunfire by shooting at it using the normal shooting rules. The score required to hit an objective is 2+, modified as normal for long range, darkness, etc. An objective never counts as gone to ground.*

*The defending player rolls a die for each hit on an objective. If they roll 3+, the objective has taken some damage, but is not demolished.*

*On a lesser roll, the shot hit something vital. The attacking player must now roll another die, scoring at least equal to the shooting weapon's Firepower to demolish the objective.*

*An objective can never be demolished by accident. The only way to demolish an objective with gunfire is to deliberately shoot it with the intention of demolishing it.*





## ADAPTING THE TRAIN ATTACK MISSION

Some players may not have the train wagons and track necessary to play the mission. If this is the case, or you simply would like to play the mission in a different light, here are some simple adaptations to help make the mission more accessible for player with limited terrain.

### REPLACING THE TRAIN

You can convert the train into a truck convoy. This is as simple as replacing all of the train wagons with vehicles. Follow the notes below to convert the mission.

1. Replace the railroad track with a road.
2. Replace the five supply wagons with five supply trucks.
3. Replace Machine-gun Wagon with two armoured trucks each equipped with an AA MG (with front, side, and top armour rating of 0).
4. Replace Locomotive with two transport trucks (plus any additional trucks as your escort platoon might require).
5. Place all of the trucks in a line along the road just as you would the train.



Just like the train in the normal scenario, the trucks have come to a stop and cannot move for any reason during the game.

Treat each truck as though it were the wagon it is representing. For example, use the demolition special rules to destroy the supply wagons.

The reason for this is that players are trying to destroy the contents of the truck,

not the truck itself. The only way to make sure the supplies are destroyed are to blow them up with demolitions!

The machine-gun trucks use all the same rules as the machine-gun wagon. However, you can split up the trucks and place them anywhere in the convoy.

## SPOTLIGHT: MIKE'S KAUKOPARTIOJOUKOT





## BUILDING A MACHINE-GUN WAGON

When I started putting together the Train Attack mission, the one thing I didn't have was a machine-gun wagon. So, I decided to build one on a flat-bed wagon.

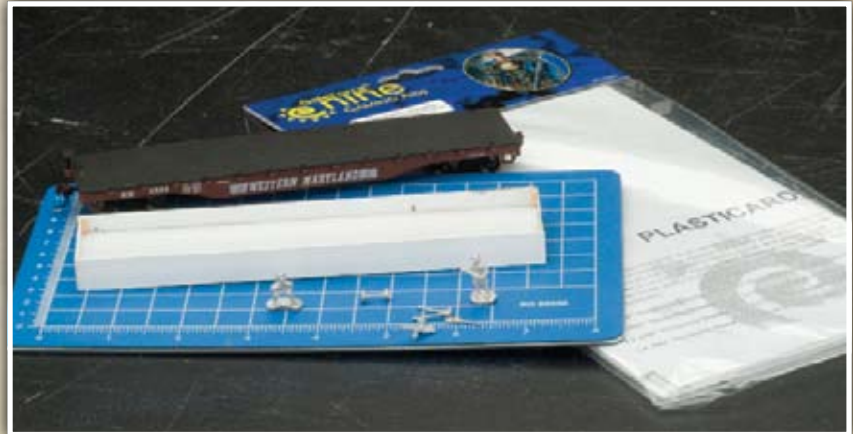
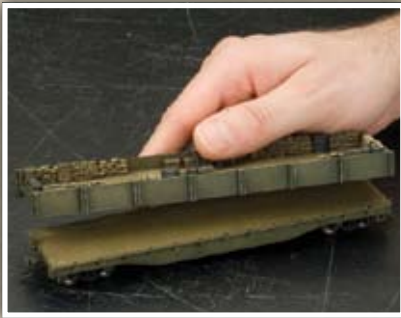
### MODEL RAILROAD SCALES

There are two scales that more-or-less work for *Flames Of War's* 1/100<sup>th</sup> scale. TT is 1/120<sup>th</sup> scale, but is comparatively rare and a bit small. HO is 1/87<sup>th</sup> scale, which is a bit bigger than your standard *Flames Of War* scale.

I chose HO scale because I wanted it to fit *Flames Of War* small command stands inside, and HO wagons are just wide enough.

### BUILDING

I wanted the machine-gun deck to be removable, so I could use the flatbed wagon by itself in the future. I designed and assembled a tray that would fit over the top of the flatbed.



I used *Gale Force Nine's* 1mm plasticard for the walls of the wagon. For the floor I found a piece of corrugated plasticard in my scrap pile. For the vertical struts, I used plastic I-beam (the sort architectural models use).

From there I filled the wagon with pieces from my bits drawer, including boxes and barrels. I did a little green-stuff sculpting to add sandbags, tarps, and bags.

Next, I needed to model up the machine-gun posts. I used two Soviet 0.5" DhsK Anti-aircraft machine-gun teams from the *Battlefront Special Order* catalogue.

These too are removable so that I can change up the wagon's armament if desired. I glued them to small squares of corrugated plasticard so that it would blend with the floor of the wagon.

### PAINTING

Once all of the green-stuff and glue had dried, it was time to paint the wagon.

I chose a generic green drab colour so that I could use the wagon for any army. Using an airbrush, basecoated the outside of the wagon green and the inside brown.

I then used a technique called panel fading, where I mixed in a bit of khaki into the basecoat colour and lightly sprayed each 'panel' of the car, staying away from the edges.

Once that was dry, I painted the wagon's contents and the machine-gun crews.

I applied a light black ink wash over everything followed by a brown wash. Then I drybrushed a light khaki over the whole car. Finally, I gave it an overall matte varnish to finish the model.

