

# KAMPFGRUPPE VON KOENEN

## OFFICIAL BRIEFING

BRANDENBURGERS IN TUNISIA 1942-43



BY MIKE HAUGHT

UPDATED ON  
15 JANUARY 2015

**FLAMES OF WAR.**  
THE WORLD WAR II MINIATURES GAME

# BRANDENBURGERS ALOFT

In December 1942, British, American and Free French forces were closing in on the Axis forces in Tunisia from the west, while Montgomery's Eighth Army pushed from the east. The German command needed to inflict decisive defeats on these forces before they could join up and permanently push them out of North Africa.

Operations were planned for the new year, but for now a delaying action was all they could manage as they built up their forces. This was remarkably easy to do in Tunisia owing to the complicated mountains, salt marches and wadis that crossed the country. Bridges became vitally important ways of getting through this geological mess and therefore the ideal targets for demolition.

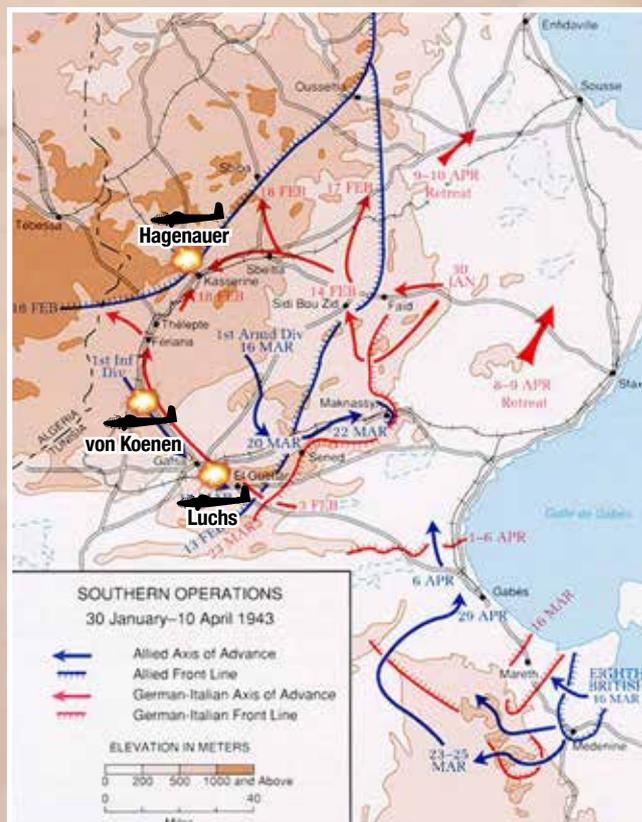
The trouble was getting to the choke points. Allied troops had advanced into the western frontier of Tunisia, and captured many of the bridges they needed to bring up further reinforcements. If the Germans were going to eliminate these bridges, they'd have to get their teams through enemy lines.

The Brandenburgers of the *13. Tropenkompanie* (13<sup>th</sup> Tropical Company) were first to step forward for the mission. They had fought a very successful rear action through Libya, skirmishing with the Long Range Desert Group and Popski's Private Army, before arriving in Tunisia.

In November 1942 the company was expanded into the Tropical Battalion, commanded by Hauptmann von Koenen. For the mission he was given a handful of DFS 230 gliders. Using these he could deliver his troops over the heads of the Allies and land silently on target.

At the end of December they launched two assaults against bridges in southern Tunisia. The first target was the railroad bridge at Sidi bou Baker, which crossed the Wadi el-Kbir. This crossing was one of very few that the US and Free French troops could use to reach El Guettar. The second bridge was north of Kasserine, and cut the allied supply route.

The first assault was led by von Koenen. Although three gliders had been promised for the assault, only two were provided. Leutnant Hagenauer's assault only had one glider available. After some readjustments and packing the gliders over their maximum capacity, the gliders took off during the evening of 26 December.



Both glider assaults landed wide of their targets due to Allied anti-aircraft fire, but managed to collect itself and make its way to the bridges. The Brandenburgers demolished the targets, but came under fire from the Free French guarding the area. Fortunately, a last-minute addition of an extra MG42 to the squad helped suppress the French long enough for the Brandenburgers to destroy their gliders and retreat back to base on foot 75 miles (120km) east. Using their trademark enemy disguises and relying on pro-Axis local Arabs, most of the Brandenburgers made it back to safety.

One final airborne Brandenburg mission was conducted on 10 January under the command of Leutnant Luchs, targeting a bridge over Wadi el Melah north of El Guettar. However, this bridge was only partially destroyed during the raid and had to be finished off by sending in an Arab agent, who destroyed the bridge and put it out of action.



## BRANDENBURGER SPECIAL RULES

Kampfgruppe von Koenen uses all of the normal German special rules found in the *Flames Of War* rulebook in addition those found below.

### MIND & BODY

Brandenburgers were subjected to intense training which tested their physical and mental abilities. They were trained in skiing, mountain climbing, and parachuting. In every way they were to be ready for their mission.

*Infantry teams from a Brandenburg Halbkompagnie HQ, Brandenburg Glider Platoon are Mountaineers.*

*Brandenburger Infantry teams treat Difficult Going as Cross-country Terrain, allowing them to move At the Double through Difficult Terrain. In addition, they are well trained in night operations and may move At the Double during night time.*

### ENEMY DISGUISES

The Brandenburgers were to become the enemy, adopting their language, uniforms, and equipment. But they always wore German uniforms underneath in case they were discovered.

*A platoon equipped with Enemy Disguises must be identified before the enemy can shoot at it or assault it. These units start the game unidentified.*

*If a platoon equipped with Enemy Disguises shoots or launches an assault, they are immediately identified by all enemy platoons.*

*In order to identify a platoon equipped with Enemy Disguises, an enemy platoon must attempt to shoot at it or select it as the target for an artillery bombardment. Before rolling to hit with the shooting platoon, roll a Skill Test for the platoon.*

- If they pass the Skill Test, they identify the German platoon and shoot at it as normal. The German unit is now identified to all enemy platoons.*
- If they fail, they do not identify the unit, but may shoot at other German units instead.*

*Aircraft cannot choose an unidentified team as the target of an air strike.*

*Enemy reconnaissance teams automatically identify a platoon equipped with Enemy Disguises if they are within 8"/20cm when they attempt to shoot at them.*

## KAMFGRUPPE VON KOENEN ARSENAL - INFANTRY TEAMS

Team	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	Notes
Rifle/MG team	16"/40cm	2	2	6	
MG team	16"/40cm	3	2	6	
SMG team	4"/10cm	3	1	6	Full ROF when moving.

### ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

Pioneer teams are rated as Tank Assault 4.



## GLIDER ASSAULT SPECIAL RULES

The German DFS 230 assault glider allows small assault parties to land and assault vital positions before the enemy is even aware that they are under attack, making them perfect for Brandenburg operations.

### ARRIVING ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Glider troops arrive on the battlefield ready to fight as a single fighting force.

*A glider-equipped platoon may either deploy as a normal platoon, leaving their gliders off the table or arrive on the battlefield by glider. If the platoon arrives by glider, it does so in the owning player's first Movement Step of the game using the rules below.*

### SELECT GLIDER LANDING POINTS

Landing a glider full of troops can be tricky under the best circumstances, let alone under fire!

*Pick a landing point for each glider. Place your gliders at the start of their landing runs facing into the wind.*

### ROLL FOR GLIDER LANDINGS

Once down, each glider pilot attempts to brake his glider as soon as possible, as a long landing run increases the risk of a crash.

*To find the length of a glider's landing run, roll a die. Move the glider forward 2"15cm for each point on the die roll.*

*On a landing run roll of 1, the glider still moves 2"15cm, but crash-lands due to pilot error or enemy fire.*

*If the glider's body runs into rough terrain, an enemy gun or vehicle, or the body of another glider, the it crashes and stops immediately. However, if a glider's wings hit an obstacle, they just snap off and the wingless fuselage carries on unharmed. The glider only crashes if the fuselage itself hits an obstacle.*

*If the glider's body passes through or ends its run on the position of an enemy Infantry team, the defending player moves the team aside just far enough to avoid the body of the glider as they dive out of its path.*

### CRASH!

When a glider crash lands, there are so many things that can go terribly wrong for the passengers inside.

*If a glider crashes, roll a die for each team inside. On a roll of 5+ they survive. Otherwise, they are Destroyed. Due to the grisly nature of glider crashes, any teams destroyed in a crash count as casualties for Platoon Morale Checks.*

### SHOOTING FROM GLIDERS

German DFS 230 gliders have a machine-gun mount above the wing allowing the passengers to fire their machine-gun as they came in to land.

*As long as a glider carrying passengers has not crashed, one team can fire the glider's machine-gun as a vehicle-mounted AA MG immediately on landing.*

*Once landed, the team abandons the glider's AA MG and may move and shoot as normal. The glider's machine-gun cannot be fired for the remainder of the game.*

### SHOOTING AT TEAMS IN GLIDERS

Gliders were built of wood and fabric to keep their weight down. This offered no protection to the troops inside.

*The gliders are only markers showing where the troops land and cannot be shot. Teams inside gliders do not benefit from Concealment as the troops are so tightly packed in. However, teams behind a glider body are Concealed.*

### SURPRISE ASSAULT

Glider assaults were swift and silent, catching their prey off guard and giving the glider troops the element of surprise.

*During the first turn in which any Brandenburg Glider Platoons arrive by glider, all enemy teams, vehicles, and bunkers are considered to be Pinned Down and Bailed Out when conducting Defensive Fire against teams from Kampfgruppe von Koenen.*

### GLIDER PASSENGERS ASSAULT

The biggest advantage of landing by glider, aside from landing fully armed in a tight group, is the surprise element. Glider troops can launch an assault before the defenders are even aware that an attack is underway.

*After landing, a glider-equipped platoon can either launch an assault or attempt to move using the Stormtroopers special rule. Even if the game hasn't started, such as in the case of the Death From Above mission, the assault is fought like a normal Assault Step. The troops dismount from the doors of the glider just beneath the wings, so measure their movement from that point.*

### ISOLATED

Glider troops were often left to defend their objective against repeated counterattacks until they could be relieved. But they had all the tools and bravery required to hold out against the odds until help arrived or the enemy gave up.

*Platoons that arrived on the battlefield by glider cannot contest an objective placed in their opponent's deployment area until turn six. However, they may demolish objectives at any time if the mission uses the Demolitions special rules.*



# KAMPFGRUPPE VON KOENEN

(MECHANISED COMPANY)

**HEADQUARTERS**

**COMPANY HQ**



Kampfgruppe von Koenen HQ

Kampfgruppe von Koenen is a Mid-war (M) force. You must field one platoon from each box shaded black and may field one platoon from each box shaded grey.

## MOTIVATION AND SKILL

The Brandenburgs were selected from the most loyal and able volunteers in the German army.

Kampfgruppe von Koenen is rated Fearless Veteran.

**BRANDENBURGER**

RELUCTANT	CONSCRIPT
CONFIDENT	TRAINED
<b>FEARLESS</b>	<b>VETERAN</b>

**COMBAT PLATOONS**

**INFANTRY**



Brandenburger Glider Platoon

**INFANTRY**



Brandenburger Glider Platoon

**INFANTRY**



Brandenburger Glider Platoon

## HEADQUARTERS

### KAMPFGRUPPE VON KOENEN HQ

#### HEADQUARTERS

Company HQ

**M**  
60 points

#### OPTION

- Equip the Company Command Pioneer SMG team with Enemy Disguises for +10 points.

*Hauptmann* (Captain) Koenen and *Leutnant* (Lieutenant) Hagenauer led two glider assaults to fly behind the American and Free French lines in Tunisia and destroy vital bridges.

Although three gliders were available to Koenen's group only two could be used, while Hagenaur's group had one.

**HAUPTMANN**

**HAUPTMANN**



Company Command Pioneer SMG team

**COMPANY HQ**

**KAMPFGRUPPE VON KOENEN HQ**

*The Company Command SMG team rides in the DFS 230 glider of one of your Brandenburger Glider Platoons.*

## COMBAT PLATOONS

### BRANDENBURGER GLIDER PLATOON

#### PLATOON

HQ Section with:

2 Brandenburger Teams

**M**  
320 points

#### OPTIONS

- Replace all Pioneer Rifle/MG teams with Pioneer SMG teams at no cost.
- Replace any or all Pioneer Rifle/MG teams with Pioneer MG teams for +5 points per team.
- Equip all Pioneer Rifle/MG teams with Enemy Disguises for +10 points per team.

The Brandenburgs of Kampfgruppe von Koenen were joined by pioneers who offered their expertise and equipment for demolition work.

**LEUTNANT**

**LEUTNANT**



Command Pioneer Rifle/MG team



DFS 230 Glider

**HQ SECTION**

**OBERJAGER**




Pioneer Rifle/MG team Pioneer Rifle/MG team

**BRANDENBURGER TEAM**

**OBERJAGER**




Pioneer Rifle/MG team Pioneer Rifle/MG team

**BRANDENBURGER TEAM**

**BRANDENBURGER GLIDER PLATOON**