

THE PROBLEM:

"Ambush at Dogwood Crossing" from the November-December 1997 issue of ARMOR

Situation:

Terrain (see Fig. 2, Battalion graphics)

Obstacles - Dogwood Creek is a natural obstacle which will restrict tactical movement because it offers only three fording sites within the area of operation.

Avenues of Approach - Axis California is a high speed avenue of approach that will allow maneuver to be masked by the high ground nearby and the wood line to the east of CP 5. Route Kayla is a dismounted avenue of approach that provides outstanding cover and concealment up to CP 6. Occupation of CP 6 will allow dismounts to engage suspected enemy armored vehicles to their flank, causing disruption to the enemy COA.

Key Terrain - Dogwood Creek is key terrain since the creek can restrict or impede friendly maneuver. The ridge line on PL Yorktown is key terrain because it affords outstanding observation to the north, which will provide an advantage to friendly or enemy forces.

Observation and Fields of Fire - The ridge line along PL Yorktown provides great observation and fields of fire because it is the high ground that dominates the terrain within the area of operation.

Cover and Concealment - The high ground near CP 5 and the wood line to the east of CP 5 provide great cover and concealment as friendly forces maneuver along Axis California.

Enemy. The enemy is conducting a defense out of contact. The 13th MRD has deployed a forward detachment (MRB) ahead of the division to secure a key logistical site five kilometers north of PL Yorktown (airfield). The forward detachment has been establishing hasty fighting positions and protective obstacles for the last 24 hours in preparation for the arrival of the main body within the next 12 hours. Our task force (TF 1) will attack against an MRC (along PL Enterprise) that the forward detachment has deployed forward to provide early warning and to disrupt and attrit enemy forces that enter their engagement area. The MRC is currently at 70% strength. The MRC has been identified by a UAV that flew over their positions two hours ago. The defending MRC deployed a CSOP 2-3 kilometers forward of its main defensive belt (along PL Yorktown) to provide early warning and call for indirect fire to harass enemy maneuver. The CSOP is an MRP which is reinforced with a tank.

Friendly.

Brigade

Mission: 1st Brigade attacks in zone 230630SEP97 to destroy enemy forces vicinity OBJ Amanda in order to allow 2nd Brigade (the division's main effort) to maintain freedom of maneuver as they attack north to seize key logistical site vicinity OBJ Brittany.

Intent: (Purpose) The purpose of this attack is to allow 2nd Brigade to attack north maintaining freedom of maneuver to seize the airport vicinity of OBJ Brittany. The airport allows the division to provide more responsive logistical support within the area of operation. We will accomplish this mission by conducting an attack with three TFs attacking abreast, enveloping enemy forces from the east and west. This will prevent the enemy from massing fires, forcing him

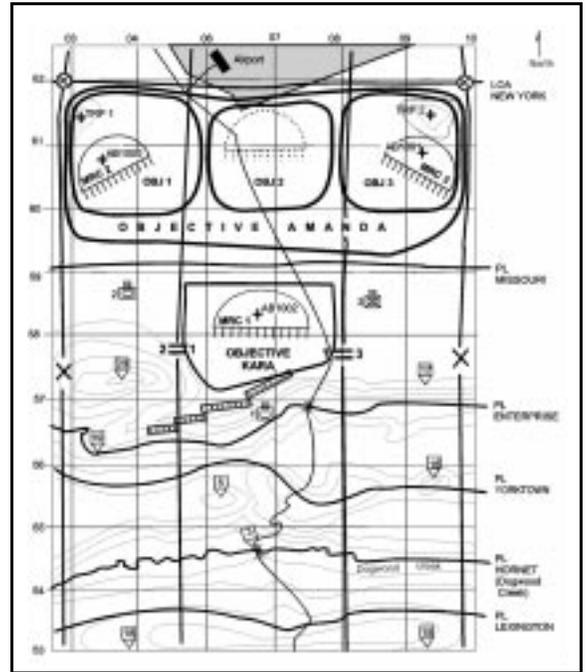


Figure 1. Brigade Graphics

to fight in three directions.

(End state). At end state, enemy destroyed in zone vicinity OBJ Amanda allowing 2nd Brigade to maintain freedom of maneuver as they attack north to seize OBJ Brittany (see Figure 1. Brigade Graphics).

Tasks to Maneuver Units:

TF 1 - Task: Seize OBJ Kara

Purpose: Allow 1st Brigade to maintain freedom of maneuver to destroy enemy forces vicinity OBJ Amanda.

On order, continue the attack north to destroy enemy in zone to LOA New York

Responsible for triggering brigade artillery target AB1002. Priority of artillery up to PL Enterprise

TF 2 - Task: (Brigade main effort) Seize OBJ (Amanda #1)

Purpose: To protect 1st Brigade's western flank

Responsible for triggering brigade artillery target AB1000. Priority of artillery at PL Enterprise

TF 3 - Task: (brigade supporting effort) Seize OBJ (Amanda #3)

Purpose: To protect 1st Brigade's eastern flank

Responsible for triggering brigade artillery target AB1001

Task Force 1

Mission: TF 1 attacks in zone along Axis California 230630SEP97 to destroy enemy forces vicinity OBJ Kara in order to allow 1st Brigade to maintain freedom of maneuver

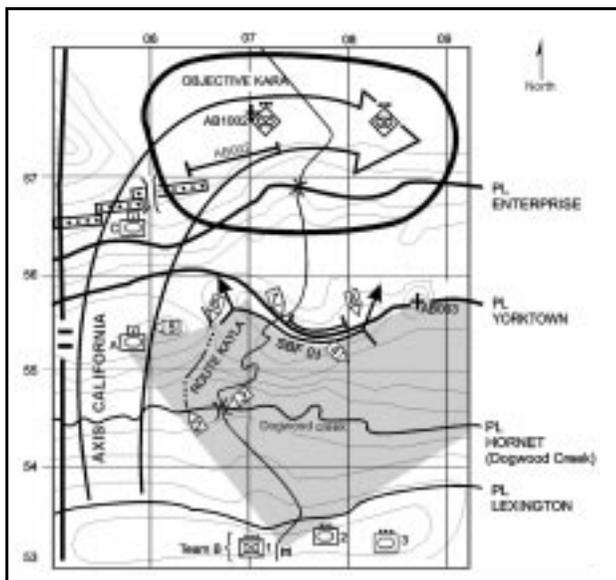


Figure 2. Battalion Graphics

ver and maximize its combat power as it attacks to destroy enemy forces vicinity OBJ Amanda. On order, continue to attack north to LOA New York, destroying enemy forces in zone.

Intent: (Purpose) The purpose of our attack is to destroy enemy forces in zone. This will allow 1st Brigade to maintain freedom of maneuver and maximize its combat power as it attacks to destroy enemy forces vicinity OBJ Amanda. We will accomplish this mission by conducting an attack enveloping enemy MRC 1 from the west. (End state) At end state, OBJ Kara has been seized, and TF conducting consolidation and reorganization operations in preparation to continue the attack north to LOA New York.

Tasks to Maneuver Units:

TM A - Task: (TF main effort) Seize OBJ Kara.

Purpose: Prevent MRC 1 from attacking into the flank of TF 2 or TF 3

Assault force during TF breaching operations

Responsible for firing one green start cluster at PL Enterprise to signal TM B to lift fires

Responsible for triggering artillery targets AB1002 and AB002

Priority of fires at PL Yorktown

Accept one tank platoon from TM C to maximize combat power to seize OBJ Kara, effective immediately

TM B - Task: Support by fire

Purpose: To suppress enemy forces on OBJ Kara in support of TM A's attack

Occupy terrain vicinity SBF 01, which will provide effective suppressive fires on eastern MRP

Lift your fires as TM A fires one green star cluster as they pass PL Enterprise

Support force during TF breaching operations

Responsible for triggering mortar targets AB001 and AB003

Initial priority of fires up to PL Yorktown

TM C - Task: Breach

Purpose: To clear a lane for TM A's attack to seize OBJ Kara

Attached assault and obstacle platoon effective immediately

Responsible for identifying point of breach

Detach one tank platoon to TM A effective immediately

Company Situation

You are the commander of TM B (tank heavy). Your team is attacking in zone as

part of a three-team task force attack. TM B is the support force. You are responsible for establishing a support by fire position (SBF 01) to suppress the enemy MRP on the eastern side of OBJ Kara. You have priority of mortar support throughout this operation and are responsible for triggering AB001 and AB003. Your team has just deployed along PL Lexington in anticipation of contact with the enemy CSOP (see Figure 2. Battalion Graphics).

You direct that 2nd platoon (tank) and 3rd platoon (tank) establish an overwatch while 1st platoon (mech) bounds forward towards CP 2. You direct 1st platoon to focus its observation from CP 5 to CP 3, 2nd platoon from CP 6 to CP 7, and 3rd platoon from CP 7 to CP 8. During 1st platoon's bound, they receive fire, and 2nd platoon reports seeing a signature from a firing BMP east of CP 5. As the team continues to develop the situation, it conducts the following actions and gains the following information:

3rd platoon conducts a reconnaissance by fire and reports a vehicle moving vicinity of CP 8.

2nd platoon initially identified a tank turret west of CP 7; the tank has since backed down into a defilade position, leaving only its antennae visible. The platoon additionally identified and destroyed a BMP vicinity NX065550.

THE SOLUTIONS:

Author's Solution

FRAGO:

"GUIDONS, this is BLACK 6, FRAGO follows. **Situation:** The enemy is overwatching the ford site and occupying SBF01. We have a possible BMP at grid 062556, a stationary tank at 074557, and possible BMP moving west near grid 081557. BREAK.

"**Mission:** Team B conducts a hasty attack to destroy enemy forces along PL YORKTOWN to establish SBF 01 in order to support the task force's attack on OBJ KARA. BREAK.

"**Intent:** We will destroy the CSOP in order to establish our support by fire position and suppress enemy forces as the TF attacks to seize OBJ KARA. BREAK.

"Tasks to subordinate units:

"**RED (MECH),** Seize the crossing site and establish near side security. On order, establish the left flank of SBF 01 vicinity CP6. Report when set. BREAK.

"**DISMOUNTS,** Clear enemy dismounts along Route Kayla and anchor the left flank at CP6 oriented towards CP5. BREAK.

"**WHITE,** Support by Fire BLUE's assault to seize SBF 01. Orient fires from CP6 to CP8. BREAK.

"**BLUE,** Seize SBF 01. Move through the ford site. Establish the right flank of SBF 01 vicinity CP8. BREAK.

"**FIST,** Suppress the enemy positions at CP5 and CP7 with artillery fires. Trigger AB001 to mask our movement to the ford site. BREAK.

"**BLACK 5,** Move with BLUE. Report movement of enemy or friendly forces maneuvering from the east. You are second in priority of calling fires. BREAK.

"**BLACK 7,** move the trains to a hide position vicinity PL LEXINGTON. BREAK.

"I'm moving with BLUE. Once we're set on SBF 01, RED orients from TRP1 to TRP3, WHITE from TRP2 to TRP3, BLUE from TRP2 to TRP4. ACKNOWLEDGE, OVER."

RATIONALE:

Since the enemy is currently occupying my SBF position, and I am in a time crunch to establish it, I must conduct a hasty attack to destroy him or force him to withdraw in order to establish my SBF position. First, I get the company team to attack known enemy positions with direct fire, while the FIST suppresses them with HE and uses smoke to cover RED's seizing of the crossing site. WHITE supports by fire from his position since he has visual contact with the enemy, and will support BLUE's assault. BLUE then assaults through to destroy or force the withdrawal of any enemy along PL YORKTOWN, and establishes the center of the SBF01.

I'm counting on our firepower and movement to quickly gain a position of advantage over what enemy remains along PL YORKTOWN before we establish SBF 01 and turn our attention on KARA. I make sure we crosstalk with the teams and let the TF know what's going on.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: We purposely reduced unnecessary verbiage staying away from the perfect school house solution that would be unrealistic in the heat of battle. We want to provide to the readers a quick realistic FM fragmentary order from the company commander to his subordinates.

A Reader's Solution

(Submitted by 1LT Dan Head, HHC, 2nd BDE, 3ID, Fort Stewart, Ga.)

Frago:

Guidons, Black 6, Frago follows:

Situation: Probable enemy CSOP with tanks and BMPs in hasty defense from 060555 to 082557.

Mission: No change

Execution:

Redleg: Call for mortars. Fire for effect, grid 062555, one BMP on a hilltop. Repeat twice.

Red: Move to CP 2 and dismount. Clear Route Kayla up to CP 6 and report whether or not the enemy is in position on the reverse slope of the ridge. Bradleys support dismounted move up Route Kayla and cover company sector from CP 6 to the edge of the battalion sector. Watch ATGM position vic 062555. Use impact of mortar rounds as the trigger to start your move.

White and Blue: Overwatch Red's move and destroy any enemy vehicles

spotted. DO NOT fire into Route Kayla once dismounts are on the ground. White, you have from CP 6 to CP 4. Blue, destroy any remaining enemy on the ridge. White moves first, covered by Blue. White occupies CP 7. Blue occupies CP 8. Once White and Blue are set, Red moves to CP 6 and remounts.

Black 5: Move up behind Red to cover their move forward to the dismount point. Stay on the ridge. Battlecarry Heat.

RATIONALE:

Now I am in good shape. I have destroyed one enemy vehicle, and have good ground and have taken no losses. What I do not want to do is charge up to the defile at Dogwood Creek while in direct fire contact. In order for the battalion mission to succeed, my company must reach SBF 1 without taking serious losses. I must first clear the woodland along Kayla to avoid enemy dismounted ATGM fire to my flanks and rear as I advance and set my SBF position. The best way to do this is with my dismounts supported by their Bradleys. The problem is that the infantry platoon must

cross over 1000 meters of open ground before they reach the relative safety of the woodland. I will use my tanks and indirect fire support to suppress and destroy the enemy while Red gets into position and dismounts. I know that the enemy is well within range of my tanks, so in many ways I actually hope that they try to shoot Red, so that my tanks can engage and destroy them with superior firepower.

Once Red has cleared up to CP 6 and has eyes on suspected enemy locations, I can bound my platoons forward, execute platoon defile drills, and seize our SBF position. While White moves to seize SBF 1, Blue can destroy any enemy that has remained in position. Once Blue and White are set in the SBF, I can safely bring up Red's Bradleys and remount the infantry.

The XO moves to cover Red in case any enemy tanks are hidden in the woodland or in the vicinity of CP 5. I can trust him to determine when and if it is safe to fire over Red's head and to cross talk with the Red platoon leader and platoon sergeant before he fires. He battle-carries HEAT so that he will not cause fratricide with SABOT petals.