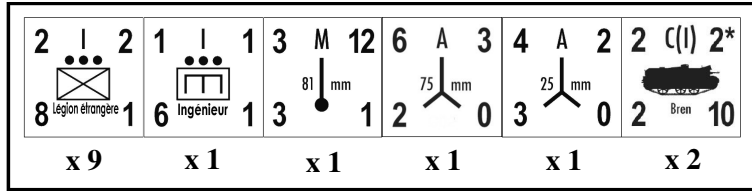


1st Free French Brigade

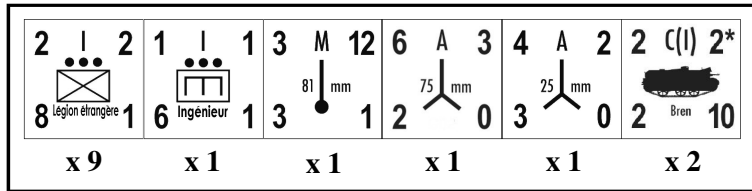
May 26, 1942

2nd
Battalion
Foreign
Legion



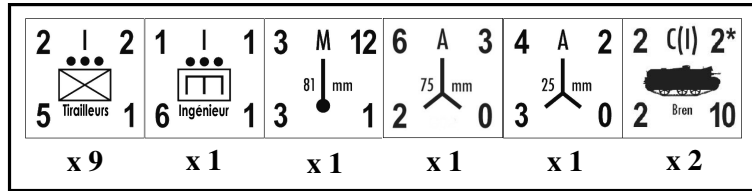
French Foreign Legionaries, some of them German and Italian but all loyal to France

3rd
Battalion
Foreign
Legion



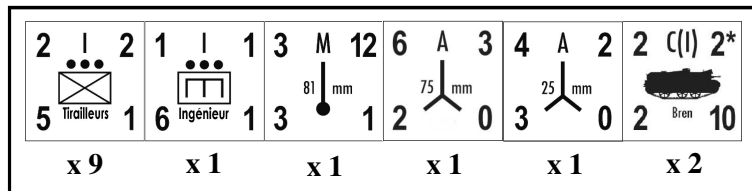
French Foreign Legionaries, some of them German and Italian but all loyal to France

Pacific
Battalion



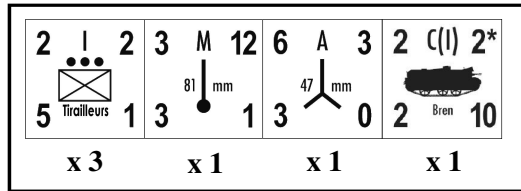
French colonists from the Pacific colonies, including Tahiti.

2nd
Colonial
Infantry
Battalion



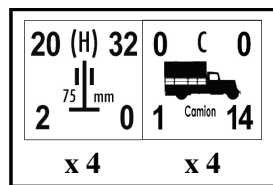
Colonial infantry with many native Africans.

1st
Naval
Infantry
Battalion
(-)

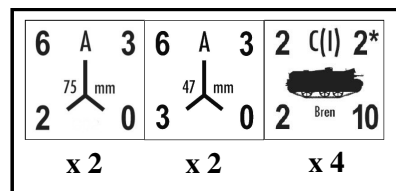


Naval Infantry battalion, usually tasked with guarding naval bases but sometimes used in the field.

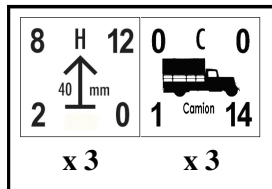
1st Free
French
Artillery
Regiment



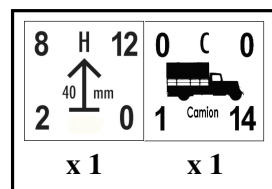
1st Free
French
Anti-Tank
Company



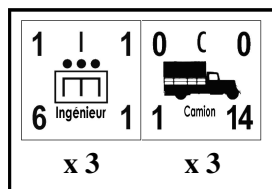
1st
Naval
Fusiliers
Battalion



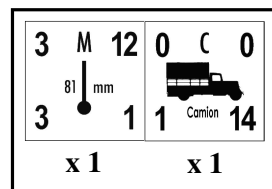
Troop,
43rd Light
Anti-Aircraft
Battery



1st Free
French
Pioneer
Company



22nd
North
Africa
Company



By Greg Moore
gregpanzerblitz.com
May, 2010

The 1st Free French Brigade (reinforced with some elements from the 2nd Free French Brigade) was presented with the challenge of holding the southernmost fortified box, near an old Turkish fort at Bir Hacheim. The Axis battle plan put the French directly in the path of the assault. The Italian Ariete Armored Division was supposed to reduce the box in the early going but the first day attack was repulsed with the loss of 35 tanks. The tough French, anchored by two battalions of Legionaries, continued to take all that the Axis could throw at them, including air attack by Stukas and daily artillery bombardments. Ignoring German calls for surrender, they continued to be such a problem for Rommel's supply lines and schedule that the entire Axis offensive was almost defeated. With Rommel himself leading some of the assaults, the French refused to yield or crack. After 15 days, they were finally given permission to retreat as most of the 8th Army, that could, was on the road to El Alamein. The French finally escaped with about two thirds of their manpower, having caused the loss of 51 tanks and 3300 men to the Afrika Korps.