



Though short on tanks, the Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler (LAH) division contained an extra battalion of infantry in each of its two infantry regiments. The 1st SS Panzer division was organized into four specialized kampfgroupes for this battle, each named for its commander, and they are presented as follows, along with their objectives:

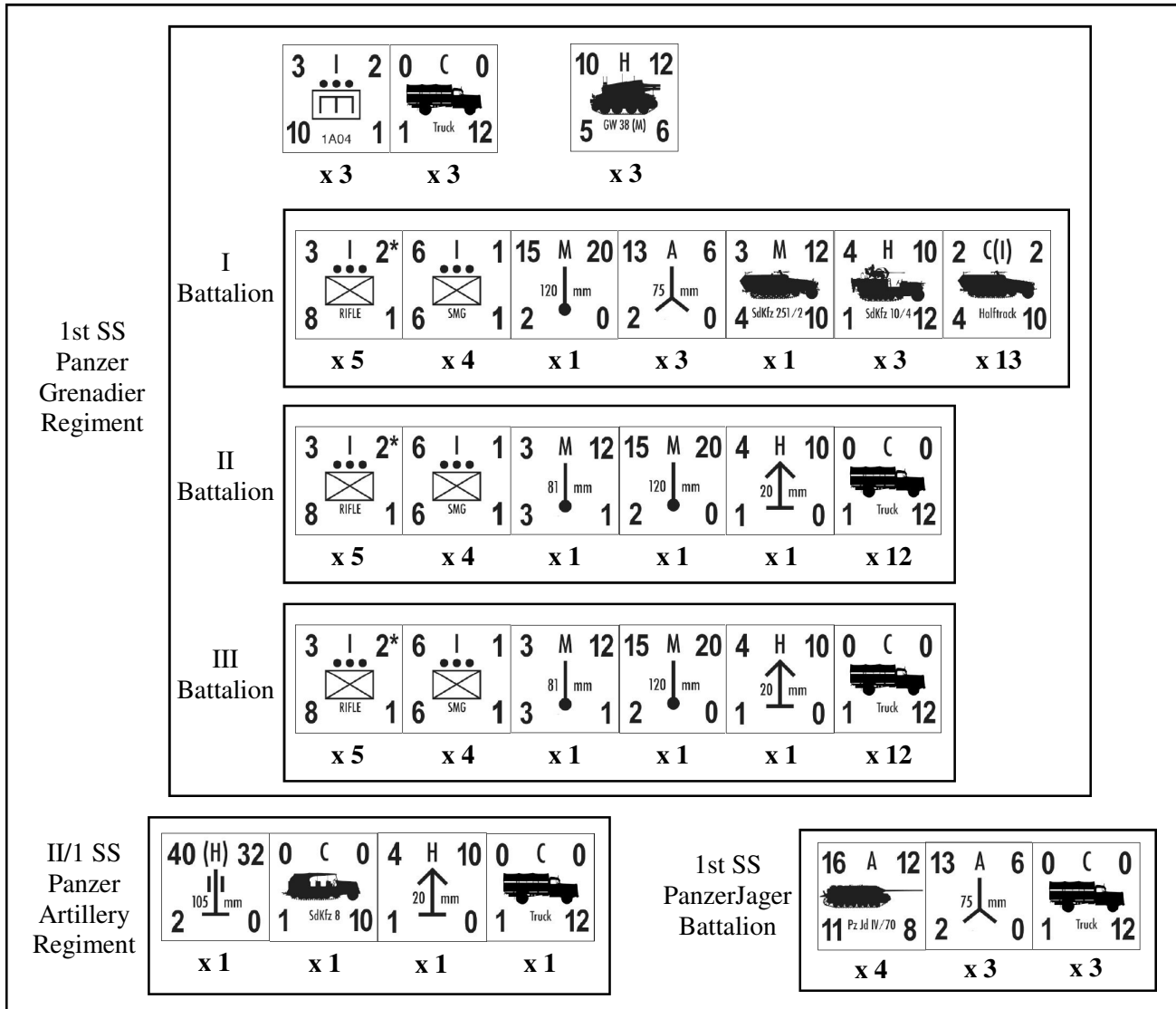
Kampfgruppe Peiper

II/1 SS Panzer Regiment	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>14 A 8 8 Pzkw IV (SS) 8</td> <td>16 A 12 12 Panther 10</td> <td>6 H 12 6 Ostwind 8</td> <td>14 H 10 6 Wirbelwind 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>x 6</td> <td>x 6</td> <td>x 1</td> <td>x 1</td> </tr> </table>	14 A 8 8 Pzkw IV (SS) 8	16 A 12 12 Panther 10	6 H 12 6 Ostwind 8	14 H 10 6 Wirbelwind 8	x 6	x 6	x 1	x 1	501st Heavy Panzer Battalion (attached)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>20 A 12 16 King Tiger 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>x 6</td> </tr> </table>	20 A 12 16 King Tiger 6	x 6						
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Kampfgruppe Peiper was probably the most famous and controversial German formation of the Ardennes battle. It contained all the tanks from the division along with an attached battalion of King Tiger tanks. This formation was intended to be the "tip of the spear" in the drive to the Meuse River. Peiper was so unhappy at 3rd Fallschirmjager's engineers progress at building bridges that he sent his own engineers forward to finish the job. Fuming, he finally got his force moving almost 10 hours after the start of the battle. Peiper pushed his column forward relentlessly and his successes included capturing a 50,000 gallon fuel dump at Bullingen, which he used to refill his panzers. His opposition consisted of small scattered groups of Americans which he easily pushed aside. Unfortunately, Peiper experienced much trouble advancing his kampfgroupe on the narrow winding roads. What should have been a 10 mile column straggled out over 20 miles in length. Peiper eventually fought his way to Staumont, where he ran into serious trouble against the 30th Infantry and CCA and CCB of the 3rd Armored Division. His kampfgroupe was cut off there and became desperately low on supplies. On Christmas day Peiper led about 1000 men on foot back to German lines, having abandoned all their vehicles and heavy equipment.

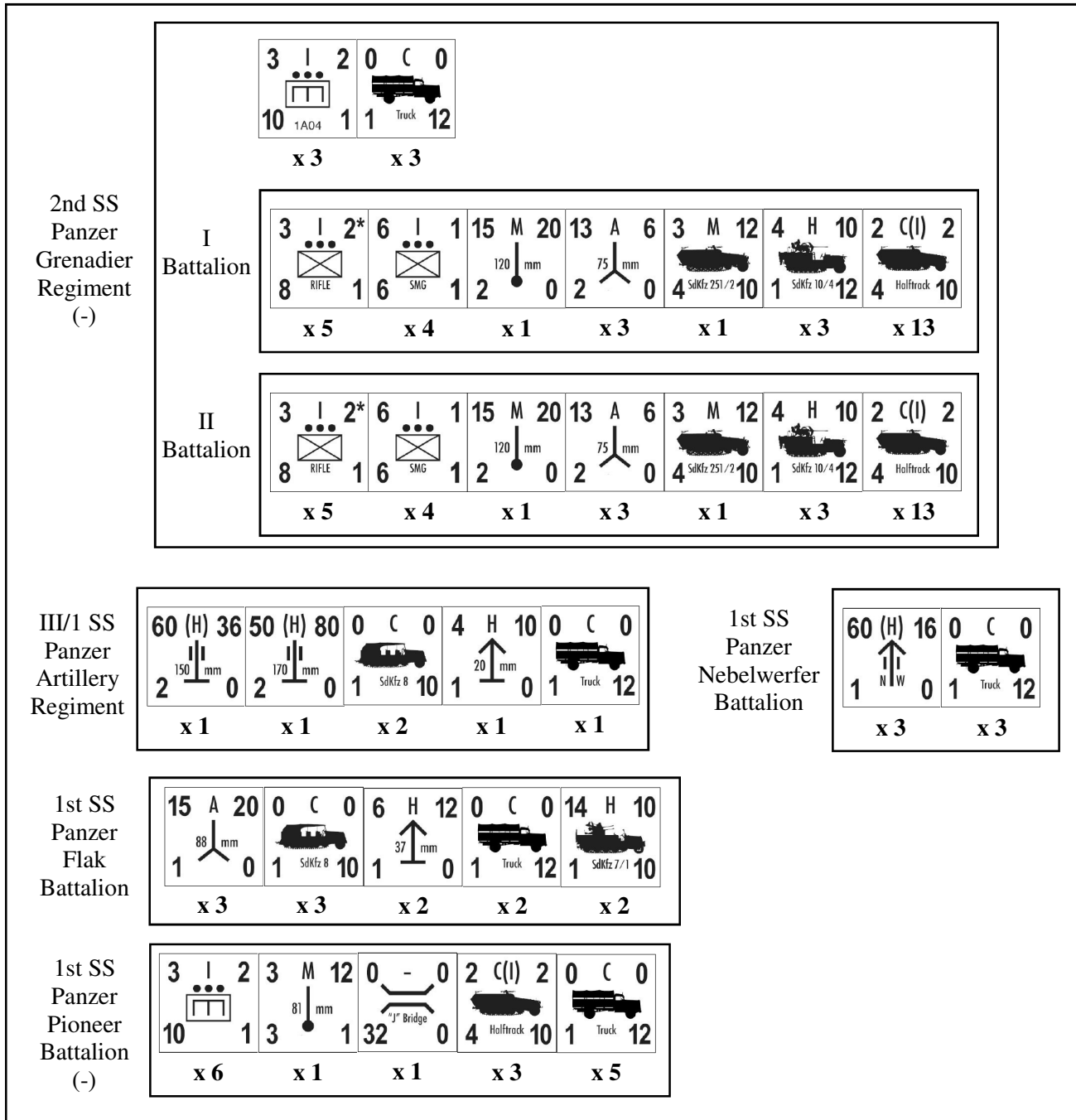
This group was also responsible for the massacre of nearly 80 American prisoners near a crossroads outside of Malmedy as well as the murders of various groups of civilians during this campaign.

Kampfgruppe Hansen



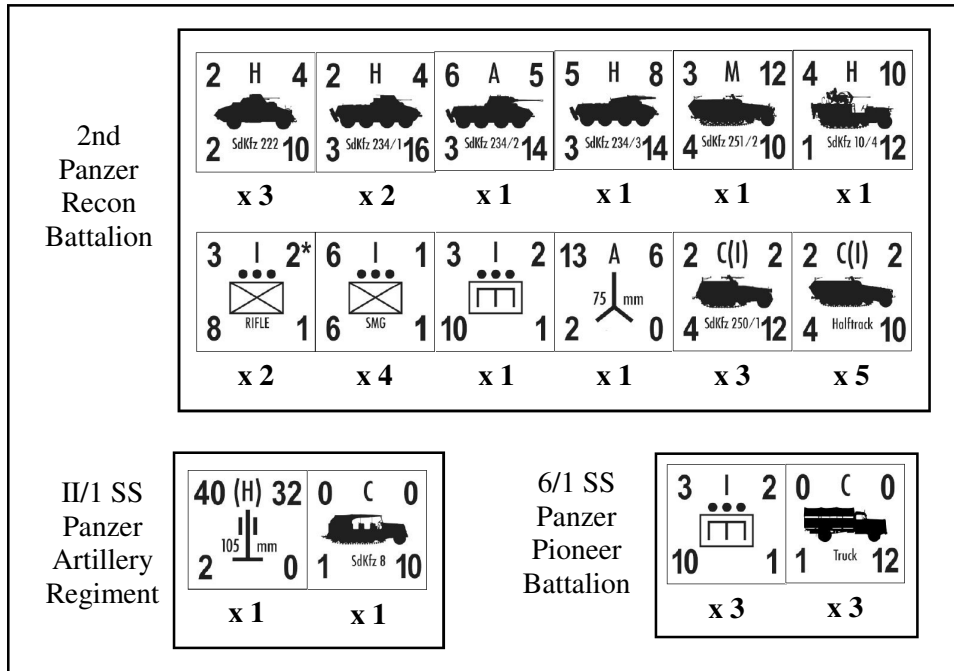
Kampfgruppe Hansen contained a full regiment of SS troopers with a bit of artillery. Armor support consisted of Pz IV/70's in the PanzerJager Battalion. Their job was to advance on a road to the south of Peiper so as to broaden the front and protect the southern flank. Their progress was slow as they got stuck behind the horse drawn artillery of the 3rd Fallschirmjager Division at the beginning. The high water mark for Kampfgruppe Hansen consisted of a failed attempt to recapture Stavelot from the Americans, thus helping to seal the fate of Kampfgruppe Peiper.

Kampfgruppe Sandig



Kampfgruppe Sandig contained two battalions of infantry and the heavy artillery of the regiment. This formation acted as a reserve and was to follow behind Peiper and Hanson (on both roads) and provide support where needed.

Kampfgruppe Knittel



Kampfgruppe Knittel consisted of a reinforced recon battalion. Its job was to loiter behind the spearhead until a breakthrough had been achieved and then to race forward and seize and hold bridges for the main force. In the end, the breakthrough was never achieved and this formation never got to achieve the glory they had hoped for.