

NEW VARIANTS, UNITS & RULES

Operation Mercury: Allied Campaign Option

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This variant may be added to the Allied player's Campaign Options. It is eligible for selection under the same conditions as all other Allied Options (i.e. the Allied player's choice is limited by the number of VPs the German has selected with his options).

10. British Fighter Presence (Variable VPs)

One of the key determinants in the Axis victory on Crete was the complete dominance of the skies by the German *Luftwaffe*. Unopposed in the air, the *Luftwaffe* was left free to provide nearly continuous air support to the paratroopers on the ground, and to savage the Royal Navy at sea. But what might have happened if the Allies had been able to sustain air cover over the island? This variant allows players to examine this intriguing "what if?" by allowing the Allied player to exchange VPs for varying levels of Allied air cover over the island.

When choosing this variant, the Allied player determines which of three general levels of air cover he wishes, and pays the appropriate VPs, as follows:

Light Air Cover	10 VPs
Moderate Air Cover	20 VPs
Heavy Air Cover	40 VPs

The Allied level of air cover will vary from day to day, but will generally conform to the above levels.

Determining Daily Air Cover Level

Each AM game-turn, at the start of the Air Allocation Phase, the Allied player determines his Air Cover Level for the day by rolling one die and comparing it to Chart A (right). The result is the actual Air Cover Level for that Day (AM and PM turns).

Effects of Daily Air Cover Levels

The Allied daily air cover has three potential effects:

1. Each time the Germans perform any air mission *against any hex on the game map or in any sea zone adjacent to or south*

of Crete (including all Interdiction missions), there is a possibility that the mission will be intercepted by the Allied air cover. The Allied Player rolls one die against each air unit performing the mission. The die roll ranges for interception, for varying levels of that day's air cover, are:

Light: 1-2 = Intercepted; 3-10 = Not Intercepted
Moderate: 1-4 = Intercepted; 5-10 = Not Intercepted
Heavy: 1-5 = Intercepted; 6-10 = Not Intercepted

If interception occurs, its results are reflected as a DRM to the ensuing Allied AA Fire, as follows:

Light Air Cover	-1 to AA die roll
Moderate Air Cover	-2 to AA die roll
Heavy Air Cover	-3 to AA die roll

2. If the Allies choose Moderate or Heavy Air Cover, they may also receive air units (representing an amalgamation of Spitfires, Hurricanes, Blenheims, etc.) during each daylight game-turn which may perform bombardment (only!) missions against Axis units occupying hexes on the game map.

Design Note: The Allies just did not have the necessary communications capability on Crete to enable (even theoretically, in this variant) their air units to perform close air support missions.

Each air unit may perform one bombardment mission per turn. If more than one air unit is available during a given turn, units may be combined for bombardment.

Die Roll	Chart A: General Level of Air Cover		
	LIGHT	MODERATE	HEAVY
1	Moderate	Heavy	Heavy
2-8	Light	Moderate	Heavy
9-10	None	Light	Moderate

Chart B	Die Roll	Available-Moderate Air Cover	Available-Heavy Air Cover
		3 x Air units	5 x Air units
	1	2 x Air units	4 x Air units
	2-3	1 x Air unit	3 x Air units
	3-5	1 x Air unit	2 x Air units
	6-7	No units	1 x Air unit
	8-9	No units	No units
	10	No units	No units

Die Roll	Chart C: Allied Air Cover Level for the Day		
	LIGHT	MODERATE	HEAVY
1	Abort	Step Loss	Step Loss-Abort
2	-	Abort	Step Loss
3	-	Abort	Abort
4	-	-	Abort
5	-	-	Abort
6-10	-	-	-

- Aborted units are returned to their box in the airlanded reinforcements area of the German Setup Card. The German player may attempt to land them again in the next daylight turn.
- Units suffering a step loss, but not an Abort, arrive on the destination airfield, but lose one step.

Allied units do not undergo AA Fire, nor do they go through the Mission Allocation and repair *cycle* like the Luftwaffe units. The availability die roll takes maintenance, interception, and AA Fire into account. The result is the number of Allied air units that actually get to perform their bombardment.

Air units must be used in the turn they are received. They may not be saved for use on later turns.

To determine the number of air units which may bombard during each daylight turn, the Allied player rolls one die during Step 6 of the Air Allocation Phase. Availability on Chart B (left).


3. German Airlanded reinforcements may be affected by the Allied Air Cover. To determine such affects, at the moment the German player moves the airlanded reinforcement onto the game map, the Allied player rolls one die for each airlanded unit. Refer to Chart C.



Note: The air unit counters for this variant (shown in Chart B) were included in C3i Nr.4.

Operation Mercury

The German Airborne Assault on Crete, 1941
Published: 1994
Game Design: Vance von Borries and Gene Billingsley
Art Director: Rodger B. MacGowan



Contents: 480 die-cut Counters; Two 22x34 inch Mapsheets depicting most of the island of Crete; 40pg Rulesbook and 8-Player Aid Cards; One 10-sided die; Bookcase Box

Time Scale: 8 hours per game turn
Map Scale: 1.5 km. per hex
Unit Scale: Company/Battalion