

UNTERNEHMEN DORA

OFFICIAL BRIEFING

BRANDENBURGERS IN LIBYA, 1942

BY MIKE HAUGHT



FLAMES OF WAR.

THE WORLD WAR II MINIATURES GAME

DORA THE EXPLORERS

When the war began to turn against the Italians in North Africa, Germany had to plan to send help. To do that, they needed to collect as much information as they could about Libya and the Sahara Desert.

The Abwehr, Germany's intelligence service, sent its first mission to Murzuk in southern Libya in March 1941. This expedition was made up almost entirely with scientific personnel, including astronomers, geologists, and cartographers. The mission was code-named *Unternehmen Dora*, or Operation Dora.

Only a few months before the Abwehr team arrived, the French and British had launched a series of raids against Murzuk. When the Germans arrived in the area the Italians were busy reinforcing the garrisons and were not particularly interested in helping to provide security, so the Abwehr would have to provide its own. Soon, a small security section of a few armed Steyr trucks and a pair of Sd Kfz 222 armoured cars.

On 28 October 1941 the first Brandenburger *Halbkompanie* (Half Company) arrived in North Africa, but these troops were diverted and used as normal troops in Rommel's advance in January 1942.

VON LEIPZIG'S BRANDENBURGERS

Dora finally received its own protection on 22 January, with the arrival of Oberleutnant von Leipzig's company of 100 men and 24 captured British vehicles (including 12 captured 2-pdr portee trucks) all taken after the Allies lost Tobruk. With their arrival, Dora took on a more military aspect with the added mission to find out if the Free French in Chad were a threat to Rommel's *Afrikakorps*.

The Italians, still weary of a French attack, suggested that the reinforced expedition (now called Sonderkommando Dora, or Special Force Dora) should be situated at El Gatrun. The Germans set up an airfield there and flew in a motley collection of odd aircraft, including a captured Spitfire aircraft for reconnaissance work.

From El Gatrun Dora sent three armed expeditions out to explore the mountains and passes of southeastern Algeria, northern Niger, and the Tibesti mountains of Chad.

The first expedition led by Leutnant Becker headed into Algeria where they found a German dressed as an Arab who had deserted the French Foreign Legion when the war started. He was able to give Becker's team detailed information about the area. Becker pressed on into Algeria where his troops, dressed as British and French troops, slipped through the thin French picket line along the border.

However, the ruse failed the second time they accidentally ran into a much stronger French force. A firefight broke out and four of the Brandenburgers were killed and two trucks destroyed. The survivors piled into the remaining cars and made a run for the Libyan border, narrowly escaping and returning to Gatrun.

Von Leipzig led the second expedition, dressed as British soldiers to avoid suspicion. This group moved into Niger to check out the Tümmö Pass. A French roadblock stopped the Germans, but von Leipzig was able to fool them into letting them pass. The team found the pass to be heavily manned by the French and surmised that several divisions would be required to break through. With that, von Leipzig returned to Gatrun.



Brandenburger vehicles at El Gatrun

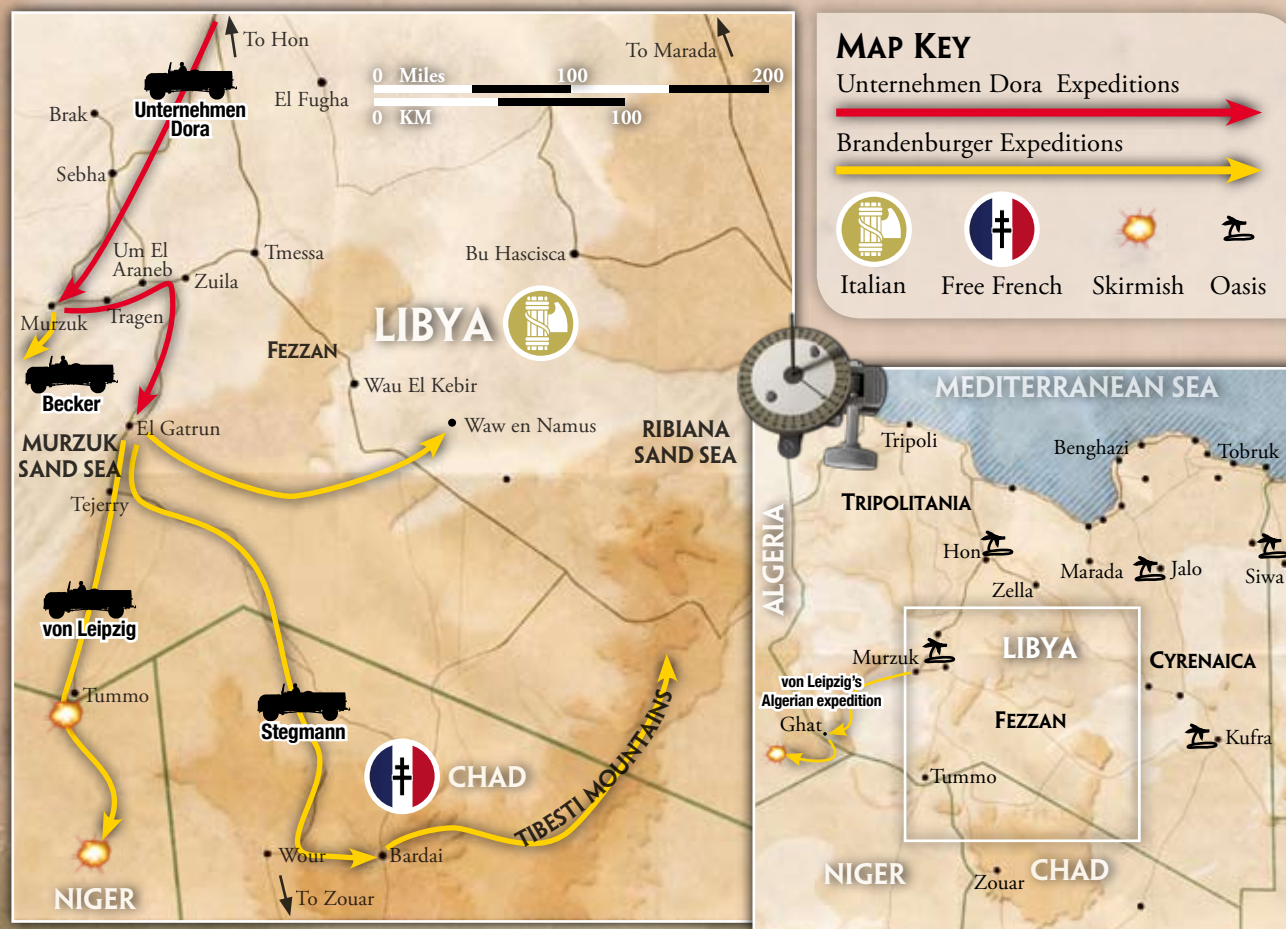
The third mission, commanded by Feldwebel Stegmann, ventured the furthest, slipping through French outposts and into the Tibesti Mountains. With the help of the local Tibbu Bedouins, who hated the French, they infiltrated the town of Bardai, a major French military base. Here they found out that the company-sized French garrison was about to be reinforced by a large number of troops. Stegmann decided to withdraw back to Gatrún, but not wanting to risk running though French lines again, the group travelled north using the mountains to cover their movement.

During these expeditions the captured Spitfire which took lots of aerial photos of the French forces in northern Chad and supported Brandenburgers if they ran into trouble.

RETURN TO GATRÚN

The missions returned to Gatrún after 14 days in the desert. The expeditions returned having accurately documented the area and mapped out roads that could be used in the future to raid the British land-based supply convoys in Egypt and the Sudan.

In terms of their primary mission to assess the French strength in the area, all three expeditions agreed that the French strongly held the mountain passes, and that a serious amount of troops would be needed to capture them (something that Rommel could hardly afford). However, they also determined that the French posed no real threat to the Axis forces in the north, as they possessed very little capability to move a sizable force beyond Murzuk.





FRENCH ATTACK IN THE FEZZAN

Coincidentally, this is exactly what the French were planning to do. The troop buildup that Stegmann had discovered was being amassed for a major assault on Murzuk. Colonel Philippe Leclerc, commander of the Free French, launched his attack in mid-February.

Italian and German forces in the region had been expecting this attack, thanks in part to the information gathered by Sonderkommando Dora. The French columns were detected by air and each defeated and sent back to Chad.

RETREAT TO TUNISIA

When Rommel was finally turned back at El Alamein, Sonderkommando Dora was recalled to Tripoli, where it met up with Brandenburgers of Battalion von Koenen. The two combined and fought a fighting withdrawal.

At Wadi Zemzem, the Brandenburgers bloodied the nose of the British Long Range Desert Group and Popski's Private Army before safely retreating back into Tunisia.

UNTERNEHMEN DORA SPECIAL RULES

Unternehmen Dora uses all of the normal German special rules found in the *Flames Of War* rulebook in addition those found below.

BEDOUIN INFILTRATION

Unternehmen Dora could rely on local help to infiltrate their expeditions behind enemy lines. The Tibbu Bedouins, among others, hated the colonial French and wanted to see them gone.

In a mission where Unternehmen Dora is attacking an enemy and has the first turn, any or all Brandenburg Dora Platoon, which are equipped with Enemy Disguises, may attempt to get closer to their objectives.

Brandenburger Dora Platoon equipped with Enemy Disguises may deploy 6"/15cm closer to the objectives than normal. After all deployment is complete, roll a die for each platoon that deployed closer to the objective:

- on a roll of 2+, they have slipped safely through the enemy picket line.*
- on a roll of 1, they are detected and your opponent now has the first turn.*

If any of your platoons have been detected, all of your platoons equipped with Enemy Disguises are immediately identified.

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.

UNTERNEHMEN DORA

(MECHANISED COMPANY)

HEADQUARTERS

COMPANY HQ



Unternehmen Dora HQ

Unternehmen Dora 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.

COMBAT PLATOONS

INFANTRY



Brandenburger Dora Platoon

INFANTRY



Brandenburger Dora Platoon

INFANTRY



Brandenburger Dora Platoon

INFANTRY



Brandenburger Dora Platoon

WEAPONS PLATOONS

RECONNAISSANCE



Panzerspäh Patrol

AIRCRAFT



Captured Fighter Platoon

INFANTRY



Brandenburger Dora Platoon

INFANTRY



Brandenburger Dora Platoon

MOTIVATION AND SKILL

Unternehmen Dora included mostly scientific personnel with little combat experience. This was compensated by the addition of Brandenburger personnel who provided the group's security. Together they formed a good team.

Unternehmen Dora is rated **Confident Veteran**.

UNTERNEHMEN DORA

RELUCTANT

CONSCRIPT

CONFIDENT

TRAINED

FEARLESS

VETERAN

HEADQUARTERS

UNTERNEHMEN DORA HQ

HEADQUARTERS

Company HQ



75 points

OPTIONS

- Add an extra hull-mounted MG to any or all trucks for +5 points per truck.
- Equip the entire platoon with Enemy Disguises for +10 points per vehicle.

LEUTNANT

LEUTNANT



Company Command Brandenburger truck



2iC Command Brandenburger truck

COMPANY HQ

UNTERNEHMEN DORA HQ

Unternehmen (Operation) Dora was assigned to southwestern Libya to map the region and assess the possibility of conducting raiding operations against the British in eastern Africa.

The force was established in Gatron, south of Murzuk, and sent out several mapping patrols and reconnaissance missions against the Free French in Chad.

Teams from the Unternehmen Dora HQ use the Motorcycle Reconnaissance rules except for the Basing Motorcycles rule (cars and trucks are based individually).

Brandenburger trucks dismount as MG teams.

COMBAT PLATOONS

BRANDENBURGER DORA PLATOON

PLATOON

HQ Section with:

4 Brandenburg trucks

145 points

OPTIONS

- Add an extra hull-mounted MG to any or all trucks for +5 points per truck.
- Equip the entire platoon with Enemy Disguises for +10 points per vehicle.
- Replace up to one Brandenburg truck in the platoon with a Brandenburg truck (2cm) at no cost.
- Replace up to two Brandenburg trucks in the platoon with a Captured 2pdr truck for +5 points per truck.

UNTEROFFIZIER

UNTEROFFIZIER

Command Brandenburg truck

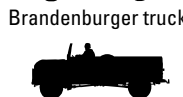


Brandenburg truck

BRANDENBURGER PATROL

UNTEROFFIZIER

Brandenburg truck



Brandenburg truck

BRANDENBURGER PATROL

BRANDENBURGER DORA PLATOON

Brandenburger patrols were responsible for collecting geographical and geological data in the southern Sahara. While not a raiding force in the strictest sense, they certainly were well armed for self-defence.

Teams from a Brandenburger Dora Platoon use the Motorcycle Reconnaissance rules except for the Basing Motorcycles rule (trucks are based individually).

All trucks in a Brandenburger Dora Platoon dismount as MG teams.

WEAPONS PLATOONS

PANZERSPÄH PATROL

PLATOON

2 Sd Kfz 222

1 Sd Kfz 222

70 points

35 points

UNTEROFFIZIER

UNTEROFFIZIER

Command Sd Kfz 222

Sd Kfz 222

PANZERSPÄH PATROL

PANZERSPÄH PATROL

A Panzerspäh Patrol is a Reconnaissance Platoon.

Unternehmen Dora had two Sd Kfz 222 armoured cars as part of its protection detail. They spent most of their time garrisoned at Gatrún, but occasionally accompanied the Brandenburgers when a run in with the French was expected. However the armoured cars were not well suited to Saharan conditions and one permanently broke down. Not to let its firepower go to waste, the Brandenburgers installed the Sd Kfz 222's gun on one of their Steyr 1500A trucks.

2cm KwK38 gun mounted in a Steyr 1500A truck



CAPTURED FIGHTER PLATOON

PLATOON

Captured British fighter

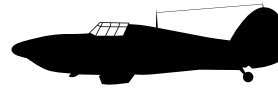


100 points

The Captured Fighter Platoon counts as a normal platoon for all purposes. A Captured Fighter Platoon cannot be placed from Ambush or held in Reserve.

HAUPTMANN

HAUPTMANN



Captured British fighter

FLIGHT

CAPTURED FIGHTER PLATOON

CAPTURED BRITISH FIGHTER SPECIAL RULES

DEDICATED AIRCRAFT

The captured Spitfire flew low over the Brandenburger patrols photographing the area and offering support.

The Captured British fighter aircraft uses many of the aircraft rules. However, one of the primary differences is that the Captured British fighter aircraft starts the game on the table and remains there for the rest of the game until it is shot down or chased off, at which point it is permanently removed from the game.

In the Starting Step of each turn, you reposition your Captured British fighter aircraft anywhere on the table (but not within 16"/40cm of friendly troops) when you would position any other aircraft. If your opponent has air support, they can roll for Fighter Interception as usual and use this to attempt to shoot your Captured British fighter aircraft down instead of intercepting Ground Attack Aircraft.

DISGUISED

The Brandenburger left the British markings on the Spitfire to confuse the French anti-aircraft gunners.

The Captured British fighter uses the Enemy Disguises special rule.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE

The captured Spitfire relied on its disguise to navigate past French anti-aircraft gunners. It worked for the most part, until the plane started shooting at them!

The opposing player can fire anti-aircraft fire at your Captured British fighter aircraft at the end of the Shooting Step, after all other shooting is complete, but just before aircraft make their attacks, just as they can at any other aircraft. This is conducted just like firing at Ground-attack Aircraft, including the limits on anti-aircraft guns ability to see over terrain.

Self-defence Anti-aircraft Weapons may shoot at the Captured British fighter aircraft.

AIR ATTACK

Although not its mission, the Spitfire could offer the Brandenburger some limited fire support.

The Captured British fighter aircraft carries machine-guns and, unlike normal aircraft, may make attacks by itself like a normal team.

Treat it as a team on the ground (although the model sits just above the table) when determining what it can see, as the Captured British fighter aircraft flies low to support its comrades and take photos. It cannot see over terrain.

Platoons that are hit by the Captured British fighter aircraft are not Pinned Down as it is only a single aircraft.

AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE

The primary mission of the Brandenburger planes is to photograph the region for the maps Dora was working on and gather intelligence wherever possible.

In missions using the Demolition special rules, a Captured British fighter aircraft may 'photograph' an objective instead of demolishing it.

The Captured British fighter aircraft must start its turn adjacent to the objective it intends to photograph. It cannot be relocated or shoot in the same turn it attempts to photograph the objective.

In the Assault Step, roll a die:

- on a result of 5+ the Captured British fighter aircraft successfully photographs the objective,
- otherwise, the Captured British fighter aircraft fails to photograph the objective and must try again next turn.

Once photographed, the objective is counted as demolished.

The Captured British fighter aircraft must survive to the end of the game in order to count as having Escaped.

GERMAN ARSENAL

TANK TEAMS

Name Weapon	Mobility Range	Front ROF	Armour Side Anti-tank	Top Firepower	Equipment and Notes
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RAIDING TRUCKS

Brandenburger truck	Wheeled	-	-	-	AA MG.
Brandenburger truck (2cm) 2cm KwK38 gun	Wheeled 16"/40cm	- 3	- 5	- 5+	Co-ax MG. Self-defence anti-aircraft
Captured 2 pdr truck 4cm PaK192(e) gun	Wheeled 24"/60cm	- 3	- 7	- 4+	No HE

ARMoured CARS

Sd. Kfz 222 2cm KwK38 gun	Wheeled 16"/40cm	1 3	0 5	0 5+	Co-ax MG. Self-defence anti-aircraft
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AIRCRAFT

Captured British Aircraft Machine-guns	- 16"/40cm	- 2	- 2	- 6	AA MG. Hull-mounted
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INFANTRY TEAMS

Team	Range	ROF	Anti-tank	Firepower	Notes
MG team	16"/40cm	3	2	6	ROF 2 when Pinned Down.

DORA'S TRUCKS

Unternehmen Dora had a wide variety of trucks at its disposal. Most of the German-made vehicles were not up to the demanding task of desert travelling, and all suffered serious performance problems, limiting their range and overland capabilities. To remedy this Dora got a fresh supply of British trucks captured at Tobruk, including some 2 pdr portee trucks.

Feel free to model some or all of your trucks in your Unternehmen Dora with Steyr Kfz 70 trucks, Opel Blitz 3-ton trucks, Horch or Kübelwagen jeeps. A disguised platoon would have been equipped with captured British 15cwt and 3-ton trucks of all varieties.

TRUCK

Kübelwagen

Horch Kfz 15

Steyr 1500 Kfz 70

Opel Blitz 3-ton

British 15cwt

British 3-ton

British 2pdr truck

PRODUCT CODES TO USE

GE409 Kübelwagen (x3)

GE412 Horch Kfz 15 car (x2) or
GE413 Horch Kfz 15 car (x2)

GE425 Steyr 1500 Kfz 70 (x2)

GE439 Reinforced Trucks (x2) or
GE430 Opel Blitz 3, 6-36S (x2)

BR430 Morris 15 cwt truck (x2) or
BR431 CMP 15 cwt truck (x2)

BR451 CMP 3-ton lorry (x2)

BR154 2 pdr portee