

## Matanikau River

### Japanese Briefing:

The bulk of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sendai Division is marching along the Maruyama Road to attack the US positions south of the airfield. Your detachment, along with the division's artillery and the 1<sup>st</sup> Independent Tank Company will attack the American positions west of the airfield along the Matanikau River to draw attention and reserves away from the main attack. Your mission is to attack and defeat the US positions at the Matanikau then advance along the coastal road to draw US troops away from the southern perimeter.

### Forces:

#### Main Force

Set-up second. Deploy west of Matanikau river

#### *Infantry Company*

HQ: CO rifle team, 2 snipers

2 rifle platoons: command rifle team, 9 rifle teams, 3 knee mortar teams

1 weapons platoon: command rifle team, 2 HMG teams, 2 ATR teams

1 Battalion Gun platoon: CO rifle, observer rifle, 2 70mm Type 92 battalion guns

#### *Tank Company*

HQ: CO Type 97 Chi-Ha, 2x Type 95 Ha-Go

1<sup>st</sup> Platoon: 3x Type 97 Chi-Ha

2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon: 4x Type 97 Chi-Ha

#### Flanking Force

Enter as reserves from south table edge. See Reserves below for entry conditions.

#### *Infantry Company*

HQ: CO rifle team, 2 snipers

3 rifle platoons: command rifle team, 9 rifle teams, 3 knee mortar teams

1 weapons platoon: command rifle team, 2 HMG teams, 2 ATR teams

#### Division artillery

The attack is to be supported by fires from the division artillery.

1 battery of four 75mm howitzers

1 battery of two 100mm howitzers

150mm artillery will conduct supporting fires against the airfield and US gun positions within the perimeter

#### Amphibious Detachment

Several landing barges are available to make an amphibious landing against the seaward flank of the US positions if desired. The barges may transport a single platoon of infantry or tanks. The platoon embarked can be from either the main force or flanking force. See rules below for arrival of barges.

### Game length

The game continues until all companies on one side have been routed.

### Victory

Each Marine Company routed 5 VP

Each Marine Company cut off 3 VP

Each Japanese platoon that exits the east table edge within 24" of coast 2 VP

Marine Victory Conditions ? VP

(Marine units are cut off if not able to freely move by trail/road from company CO to east edge)

#### Total VP scored

0-2 Major US Victory

3-6 US Victory

7-10 Draw

11-14 Japanese Victory

15+ Major Japanese Victory

**Scenario Special Rules:**

Preparatory Bombardment

All bombardments fired on the first turn automatically range in on the first attempt.

Artillery Ammunition

The Japanese artillery is very low on ammunition. Starting on turn 3, every time a Japanese battery rolls a '1' when attempting to range in, reduce the number of guns firing from that battery by one.

Reserves

The reserve company has marched inland before attempting to turn north and strike the American flank. However, navigation and movement through the jungle is difficult and can easily upset timetables. Prior to the game, for each platoon in reserve, record the desired entry point for that unit. Each turn the Japanese roll 1 die for each platoon in reserve and consult the table below to determine the results. Starting on turn 5 they may roll 2 dice for each platoon (and take the best result) and on turn 9 may roll 3 dice per platoon.

Entry Point	Die Roll				
	1-2	3	4	5	6
1	No entry this turn	No entry this turn	Lost – change entry point to 2, and enter next turn	Enter this turn at desired point	Enter this turn at desired point
2-3	No entry this turn	Lost – randomly change entry point $\pm 1$ , roll again next turn	Lost – randomly change entry point $\pm 1$ , roll again next turn	Lost - change entry point $\pm 1$ and enter this turn	Enter this turn at desired point
4-5	No entry this turn	Lost – randomly change entry point $\pm 1$ , roll again next turn	Lost – randomly change entry point $\pm 1$ , roll again next turn	Lost - change entry point $\pm 1$ and enter next turn	Enter this turn at desired point
6	No entry this turn	Lost – do not roll next turn	Lost – randomly change entry point to 5, roll again next turn	Lost - change entry point to 5 and enter next turn	Enter next turn at desired point

platoons entering the table move on normally from the indicated entry point. The company HQ may be attached to one of the platoons for entry purposes (or may wander the jungles alone if desired). Only one platoon may enter at each entry per turn. If two end up at the same point, the lower rolling one must wait until the next turn.

Amphibious Landings

The Japanese may commit one platoon of tanks or infantry to an amphibious assault. While not subject to the difficulties of the jungle, the landing barges can be seen from shore and countered. The barges may carry one platoon of tanks or infantry. If the Japanese players have launched an amphibious attack, a token is placed on the north edge of the table, ~6" west of the mouth of the river. Each Japanese turn the token may be moved east 12" along the table edge or the Japanese may declare the barges are starting their run into shore. On the first turn of the run in to shore, the barges may be fired on as if they were ~20" from the shore line. On the next turn the barges are placed on the table's edge. On the next turn they are placed on the shore. Finally, the passengers may disembark on the following turn. Barges are treated as armored vehicles with armor 0. If a barge is bailed and doesn't remount, it cannot move that turn. If a barge is destroyed and hasn't reached shore, all passengers are killed. If a barge is destroyed on the shore, then passengers may make a normal 5+ save. Any vehicle on the barge may immediately dismount into the surf, taking the normal bogging test indicated below. Until they are placed on the table, any bombardment (from either artillery, mortars, or air support) will only hit a single barge in each attack

## Matanikau River

### USMC Briefing:

Your forces covering the east bank of the Matanikau River have been subjected to intermittent shelling for a couple of days. Yesterday a couple of Japanese tanks poked their snouts out and were driven back. All signs point to a major Japanese advance along the coastal road. Still, command is worried that the Japanese may have something else up their sleeve and are reluctant to thin out the line to much. Reserves have been put on alert to be ready to move to your aid, including most of the division's artillery. Command wants you to stop any Japanese attack up the coast and if possible hold the east bank of the river. Your boys are tired, sick, and understrength, but if the Japanese come this way, you'll be ready.

### Forces:

Set-up first. Deploy east of Matanikau river and on or north of the ridgeline to the south.

#### *Rifle Company*

HQ: CO rifle team, XO rifle team, observer rifle team  
2 rifle platoons: command rifle team, 6 rifle teams  
1 weapons platoon: command rifle team, 2 LMG teams, 2 60mm mortar teams

#### *Rifle Company*

HQ: CO rifle team, XO rifle team, observer rifle team  
2 rifle platoons: command rifle team, 6 rifle teams  
1 weapons platoon: command rifle team, 2 LMG teams, 2 60mm mortar teams

#### *Support*

HMG platoon: command rifle team, 4x HMG teams (can make combat attachments to either company)  
Mortar platoon: command rifle team, 4x 81mm mortars  
AT Gun platoon: command rifle team, 2x 37mm AT gun  
3 sections of wire

### Reserve Force

Marines players must pay the listed VP to bring the reserves into play (see Reserves below)

On table platoons - enter on the east edge at the coastal road.

1 VP Rifle Platoon: command rifle team, 6 rifle teams  
1VP SPG Section: 2 75mm halftrack SP

Off table platoons - become available on the turn the "arrive"

1VP Limited Air Support SBD with bombs  
1VP 75mm Artillery battery 4 75mm pack howitzers  
1VP 75mm Artillery battery 4 75mm pack howitzers  
1VP 75mm Artillery battery 4 75mm pack howitzers  
2VP 105mm Artillery battery 2 105mm howitzers

### Game length

The game continues until all companies on one side have been routed.

### Victory

Japanese Victory Conditions	? VP
Marines maintain control of river mouth	-5 VP
Marines maintain possession of east bank of river within 24" of coast	-3 VP
Reserves brought into play	+ VP listed above

(Marines control the river mouth or bank if no enemy can freely move across it at the game's end)

### Total VP scored

0-2	Major US Victory
3-6	US Victory
7-10	Draw
11-14	Japanese Victory
15+	Major Japanese Victory

## **Scenario Special Rules:**

### Reserves

At the start of any turn, the marine players may request that division release some of the supporting platoons. The Marines receive 1d6 plus an extra d6 for each of these conditions that apply

- Enemy tanks have been sighted
- Enemy platoons are behind the forward companies
- Either company has been routed.

Assign each d6 to the unit being requested (a unit may have more than one) and roll the dice. If more than one die assigned, you may use the best result. On a 1-2, command is not convinced and does not release the unit. On a 3-4 the unit is released and will arrive in two turns. On a 5-6 the unit is released and will arrive next turn.

### Surf Zone

The surf zone is rated as Most Difficult. Any vehicle moving in the surf zone must make a skill test. If failed, the vehicle is permanently bogged and must be abandoned.

### Matanikau River

Infantry and man-packed guns may cross the river using the river crossing rules. To cross, teams must begin their movement adjacent to the river. The following turn, teams are moved into the river and placed adjacent to the far bank. On the following move, the troops may exit the river and move normally. Teams in the river may not shoot or assault and infantry teams save on a 5+. When shooting at a platoon with teams in the river, the attacker may declare that he is shooting either at teams on the shore or in the river and the defender must allocate hits to those teams first.

### Preregistered Fire

The Marine mortars have ranged in on the area immediately west of the Matanikau river. As long as the observer has not moved from his original prepared position from the start of the game, the marine mortars get a +1 to range in if the template can be placed over the river.

The Marine artillery has been preregistered on the strip of terrain immediately west of the Matanikau close to the shore. Any marine artillery may place a template adjacent to the river and within 12" of the shore without centering on an enemy team. This bombardment will range in on a 2+. A repeat bombardment from these batteries can be freely moved up 6" east-west each turn.

These maps and photos provide an idea of the terrain in the battle area



### Terrain Notes

Jungle: Most of the table should be covered with dense jungle, rated as Very Difficult area terrain

Ridges: The high ridges sticking up out of the jungle were mostly bare or covered in grass. However, the ridges were very steep and rugged. Treat as Very Difficult Terrain

Beach: The beach is regular clear cross country terrain.

Surf Zone: The surf zone is rated as Most Difficult. Any vehicle moving in the surf zone must make a skill test. If failed, the vehicle is permanently bogged and must be abandoned.

Matanikau River: Infantry and man-packed guns may cross the river using the river crossing rules. To cross, teams must begin their movement adjacent to the river. The following turn, teams are moved into the river and placed adjacent to the far bank. On the following move, the troops may exit the river and move normally. Teams in the river may not shoot or assault and infantry teams save on a 5+. When shooting at a platoon with teams in the river, the attacker may declare that he is shooting either at teams on the shore or in the river and the defender must allocate hits to those teams first. The river provides clear terrain for LOS. A sandbar (treated as normal beach) crosses the river mouth along the beach

Coastal Road: The coastal road is treated as a normal road for movement purposes, but for purposes of LOS, the terrain through which the road passes is used (i.e. where the road moves through the jungle, troops must use the area terrain rules. The road crosses the Matanikau river at the sandbar across the river mouth.

Jungle Trails: Allow infantry teams or manpacked guns to move as in clear terrain (single file only). As with roads, treat as the surrounding area terrain for purposes of LOS.