Futile Gestures

Setting
Date: February 28, 1942, ~0900 hours
Location: Tandjong Priok, Java
History: Following the Battle of the Java Sea, the cruisers HMAS Perth and USS Houston are retiring toward Java. Hurricanes of 605 Squadron are scrambled to provide top cover amid heavy cloud cover. Elements of the 22nd Air Flotilla conducted reconnaissance flights over the harbor in search of the remnants of the Western Striking Force.

Conditions: Max/Auto Visibility: 15/7 Sun: none
CAB: Surface Low
Clouds: Table Clouds: Eight 10-15 hex clouds Cloud Border: none

British Orders: Achieve more victory points than the opponent.
Score +2 VP for each Hurricane that fires on an enemy aircraft and successfully returns to base following the mission. Score +4 VP if the C5M is shot down before reaching sections E-F.

Japanese Orders: Achieve more victory points than the opponent.
Score VP for successful reconnaissance if the C5M exits a friendly table edge.

Game Length: no limit

Scenario Rules
1. The C5M may attempt aircrew tests to conduct reconnaissance on any turn the aircraft is in table sections E or F and not in clouds. Make an Aircrew Test instead of shooting that turn. If the C5M is able to exit a friendly edge, the Japanese score +4 VP per successful test (maximum of +12).
2. Japanese aircraft are not carrying radios. Japanese players may only communicate by hand signals.
3. AAA. The British may place 2 light and 2 medium AAA batteries anywhere in board sections E or F.

Japanese Naval Air Force
Elements 22nd Air Flotilla
2x A6M2 w/ Veteran (+2) aircrew
2x A6M2 w Skilled (+1) aircrew
2x A6M2 w/ Green (+0) aircrew
Set up second in two 3-plane Vee formations anywhere in board sections A or B. Any TAL, Speed 2, facing South.
1x C5M w/ Skilled (+1) aircrew
Set up second, anywhere in board section A or B. TAL 3, Speed 2, facing South.

Variable Rules
1-3 China Veterans. Upgrade the aircrew of the C5M to Veteran (+2).
4-6 Weather delays. The inclement weather has caused the flight to become split up. On shotai of three A6M2 enters from the north edge on turn 1. TAL 2, Any Speed.
7-10 Out of the clouds. One shotai of three A6M2 may set up in any cloud formation in area C or D. TAL 4, Speed 2, any facing.

Royal Air Force
Elements of 605 Squadron
1x Hurricane IIB w/ veteran (+1) aircrew
2x Hurricane IIB w Skilled (+1) aircrew
1x Hurricane IIB w/ Green (+0) aircrew
Set up first in Board Section C, D, E, or F at least 10 hexes from any edge. TAL 2, Speed 3, facing with one wing pointed toward intersection of CDEF.

Variable Rules
1-3 Battle of Britain veteran. Upgrade the Veteran aircrew to an Ace (+3) aircrew.
4-6 Trigger happy. AAA gunners have gotten jumpy. AAA emplacement will target the nearest aircraft regardless of nationality (ignore AA misdirection). If two aircraft are equally close, the gun will target the Japanese first.
7-10 Clapped Out. Randomly chose two Hurricanes. The guns on these machines are worn and prone to jamming. On any doubles result when firing, reduce the number of LMG on this aircraft by 2.

Aftermath
22nd Flotilla did not locate Houston and Perth in the harbor at Tandjong Priok, but the two ships were sunk days later when they encountered the main Japanese invasion fleet off the shores of Java. The 22nd Air Flotilla and 605 Squadron continued to clash over Java, but within a week 605 Squadron had been reduced to two operational aircraft. These were destroyed and the majority of the personnel evacuated to Australia.