

Designer's Notes

I started work on this game several years ago at the request of Rich Hamilton. I am sure I tried his patience as progress was always slow and sometimes non-existent. While I had helped to playtest Soviet – Afghan Wars and even designed a few scenarios for that game, I had a lot to learn about putting a game together from the ground up. I am still learning as I am sure the play-testers would be happy to confirm.

When I was told that the subject of the game would be the Falklands War of 1982, my initial thought was that it would have to be combined with some other conflicts, such as Grenada and Panama to provide enough material for scenarios. However, the more I read about the war, I realized that this was not necessary at all. Unlike any other tactical wargame I am aware of, in Squad Battles Falklands, there are scenarios that cover almost every action above squad level that actually occurred, along with several that did not occur, but might have. This gives the gamer, as well as the designer, a chance to fully experience the conflict from beginning to end. It also provides a number of small scenarios utilizing elite troops, such as the SAS, SBS and the Argentine Commandos

This game uses the weapon values from Squad Battles Tour of Duty, with only a few changes. HEAT type weapons have a reduced lethality, but the flag that doubles their lethality against vehicles. This was started in Soviet – Afghan Wars and I have retained it. Players who scrutinize the weapon values will notice that the penetration values for artillery and medium machine guns are slightly higher than in other titles. There is a reason for this. More than half of the battles in this conflict took place at night. To try and simulate the difficulty of hitting a target during limited light, I increased the protection value for open terrain to four and other terrain that provides concealment by two in night scenarios. Even when illuminated by star shells there are shadows not present during daylight and it is more difficult to see a target. In addition, few if any of the weapons of this era had luminescent night sights. Not being able to see your sights make hitting a barely visible target that much harder. Increasing the protection value seemed like a reasonable method to simulate this difficulty. However, true area weapons like artillery and sustained fire machine guns do not suffer from darkness to the same extent. Consequently, their penetration values were increased to offset the increase in protection values.

Another change from the previous titles was the wide-spread issue of white phosphorus grenades to the British troops. While the British did use these weapons to great effect during the war, their inclusion in the game is more to represent the higher training and skill of the British troops than for historical accuracy. The WP grenades can be used as smoke grenades to screen an advance over open ground. They can also be used to soften up an improved position before an assault. They can even be used to illuminate a single hex and allow fire from non-adjacent hexes, albeit at half value, during night scenarios. These advantages help to simulate the better quality of troops that Great Britain fielded and believe me, they will need all the advantages they can find.

Both Argentina and Britain used many of the same weapons during this war. You might wonder why there are differences between a FAL and a SLR. While the two weapons look identical, fire the same round and have many interchangeable parts, the values are not the same. The Argentine version of the FAL is fully automatic, whereas the SLR fires semi-auto only. The value of a shoulder-fired fully automatic .308 caliber weapon is debatable, but I gave it a higher assault value than the SLR, but a reduced lethality to try and simulate the difficulty of hitting a target at distance while firing full auto. You will also notice that the reliability of the FAL is rated at “B” as opposed to “A” for the SLR. The few Argentine oral histories that I was able to find translated into English make a surprising reference to the number of inoperable weapons or weapons that did

not function properly. In addition, many English reference works refer to the dirty and rusty condition of captured Argentine weapons and ammunition. Lastly, the basic web gear used by the Argentine Army only provided magazine pouches for four magazines or a total of 100 rounds including the magazine in the rifle. This will not last long in a firefight with a weapon that fires fully automatic unless the user is well-trained and disciplined. This does not describe the average Argentine soldier or Marine. Consequently, I elected to down grade the reliability of the basic rifle and sub-machine gun used by the Argentine forces to a “B” rating. After trying to storm an Argentine position during daylight and over open ground, you may think it should be lower. For those that wonder, the FAL (C) represents the rifles carried by Argentine commandos and paratroopers. I assume that these elite troops know the importance of a clean weapon and will carry enough ammunition for the mission.

Another change from most other titles in the Squad Battles series was the terrain the war was fought over. The Falklands are barren and windswept with almost no trees. Much of the ground is wet bog and nearly impassable to wheeled vehicles. There are only a few tracks that cross East Falkland Island and they are only minimally improved. There are not a large number of vehicles in Squad Battles Falklands. The Argentines sent two squadrons of armored cars to the Falklands, but they stayed mainly in Stanley, in part because of the poor terrain. The British used light tanks and over-snow vehicles to assist their troops on the march, but there were nowhere near enough of these vehicles available and the British troops moved on foot rather than in vehicles. The high movement costs for wheeled vehicles simulate the poor terrain and the breakdown factor is about twice that of other games in the series. If you try and you’re your wheeled vehicles cross-country, there is a good chance that they will bog down before they arrive where you want them.

Helicopters bore the brunt of long distance troop movement and logistic resupply. Once the Argentines lost the air battle of the Falklands, their helicopters were vulnerable to attack by Harriers and several were lost this way. This affected their ability to supply their more distant garrisons, especially those on West Falkland. The troops there subsisted mainly on mutton shot in the surrounding hills. Even those troops close to Stanley had limited access to food and dry clothes which drained their morale over time. The British troops also suffered, but their commanders did everything they could to get food, mail and dry clothes forward. In addition the officers ate the same meals that the enlisted men did, which was unheard of in the Argentine Army. The old saying, “amateurs talk about strategy and tactics while professionals talk about logistics” was certainly borne out on the Falklands.

The Argentine military drafted conscripts for a two year commitment to the military. The first year was spent learning the basics of military life while the second was spent as a reserve living at home, but having to respond to a call up at a moment’s notice. The new conscripts reported for duty early in the year, usually in January or February. Argentina’s original plan called for an invasion in the later part of the year (Spring in the Southern Hemisphere). The conscripts would have received eight to ten months of training and be as prepared as possible. When the invasion was changed to the beginning of April, it interrupted the conscript’s basic training. The Army tried to call up as many reserves as possible, but at least half of the troops sent to the Falklands had less than three months of training. They were going to fight some of the most experienced and well trained troops in the world. It doesn’t seem and it wasn’t fair.

The Falklands War was almost exclusively an infantry battle and consequently is well suited for the Squad Battles system. This war saw some of the first use of modern tools like night vision goggles and red dot sights. It was a challenge to try and work them into the system and I hope I have succeeded on some level. I learned

more about this conflict than just about any other and I want to pass some of that knowledge on to you. I hope that you enjoy this game as much I enjoyed putting it together.

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July 26th, 2011

A Brief History of the Falklands War

The Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) are located about 250 miles east of the portion of Southern Argentina and Chile referred to as Patagonia. They are made up of two large islands, East Falkland and West Falkland, as well as more than 700 smaller islands. The islands are home to numerous species of waterfowl, including penguins, and marine mammals. The only land mammal, the Falkland Island Fox is now extinct. The climate is cool to cold, damp and very windy. Snow can occur at any time of the year, although does not often accumulate.

The islands were first observed by Europeans in the early Sixteenth Century, possibly by Magellan and/or Vespucci, and they started to show up on maps about 1520. The first explorer to land on the islands is open to debate. John Davis, an Englishman, is thought to have ended up in the Falklands after being separated from his accompanying ships during a strong storm. For a brief time the islands were referred to as "Davis Land." A Dutchman, Sebald de Weert, also ended up in the islands and the Sebald Islands was another name given to the archipelago. In 1690, John Strong, another Englishman, named the channel separating the two largest islands after the sponsor of his expedition, Viscount Falkland. Over time, the name came to represent all of the islands to English speakers.

The first European settlement was established by the French at what is now Port Luis in 1764. The English, not knowing about the French Settlement, started one of their own on West Falkland the following year. The French colony was transferred to Spain who attacked the British colony in 1770 ending the British presence. A treaty, however, allowed the English to return in 1771 and neither side relinquished their claims to the islands. In 1776 the English withdrew their colonists, but left a plaque behind claiming sovereignty over the islands. The Spaniards maintained a colony until 1811 when they also withdrew and also left a plaque behind describing their rights to the islands.

In 1816, Argentina won its independence from Spain and claimed all of the Spanish possessions in that part of the New World, including the Islas Malvinas as they were referred to in Spanish. Argentina attempted to establish a penal colony on the islands in 1820, but the governor was murdered by the convicts and the Navy had to round up the felons. Luis Vernet established an Argentine colony on the islands, but drew the ire of the United States Navy when he arrested three American ship captains for violating sealing regulations. The frigate, USS Lexington, attacked Vernet's colony and did considerable damage. Argentina maintained their settlements until 1833 when the English returned to the islands.

The English allowed Vernet's settlers to remain on the islands as long as they did not interfere with English rule. The Royal Navy built a base across Berkeley Sound from Port Luis at Stanley. This port became a common coaling stop for ships transiting the Straits of Magellan to the Pacific Ocean. It also supported the

whaling fleets that came to the area in search of whale oil. An English fleet based at Stanley attacked and destroyed the German Asian Fleet in 1914. History repeated itself in World War II, when a squadron of British cruisers, supported by the base at Stanley, attacked and damaged the German raider Graf Spee. The German ship fled to neutral Uruguay. When the German captain was forced to leave neutral waters, he scuttled his ship rather than face what he thought was an overwhelming British force.

Argentina never relinquished her claim to the Islas Malvinas and tried to regain sovereignty through the United Nations following World War II. Britain responded that the United Nations' rules regarding de-colonization required that the occupants pass a referendum requesting that the British leave. As more than 70% of the islanders at this time were of English extraction and very few had a desire to become part of Argentina, this vote never took place. Britain did allow the Argentines to build an airstrip near Stanley so that regular air service from the mainland could be established. Argentine diplomatic attempts to acquire the islands continued, but without any success. During the 1970s, Parliament discussed possible plans to turn the islands over to Argentina including an option similar to that arranged with the Chinese over the control of Hong Kong. The islands were over 8,000 miles away and expensive to support, given the small number of people who lived there. However, The Falklands Island Company, which owned more than 90% of the land in the islands, lobbied hard against such an arrangement and none of the plans were ever adopted.

British support for the Falklands Islands in the late 70s and early 80s included two military units. Naval Party 8901 was a platoon sized unit of Royal Marine Commandos stationed at the Moody Brook Barracks just outside of Stanley, the largest community and the capital. The marines were posted to the islands for a year and while there were some privations, the friendliness of the islanders made it an enjoyable duty for most of the Marines. Supporting the Marines, as well as the scientists of the British Antarctic Survey, was HMS *Endurance*. She was a lightly armed, ice patrol vessel with a detachment of Marines and helicopter support. She routinely patrolled the waters of the South Atlantic including the Falklands, South Georgia Island and the South Sandwich Islands as well as making port calls in Argentina and Chile. As tensions had been rising in the area, it was decided not to withdraw NP 8901 81-82 when NP 8901 82-83 arrived and consequently there were twice as many marines at Moody Brook as normal.

In 1981 the British Department of Defense decided to scrap HMS *Endurance* as a cost saving measure. The Argentines viewed this as a continuing lack of interest in the Falkland Islands and the other British possessions in the South Atlantic. Meanwhile, Argentina was being racked by a serious financial crisis that saw inflation rates soar. While the worst of the "Dirty War" was over, there was still considerable political turmoil in the country as well. The country was ruled by a military junta consisting of General Galtieri of the Army, Admiral Anaya of the Navy and General Dozo of the Air Force. Argentineans had been taught for years that the Islas Malvinas were a part of Argentina and this feeling rang strong throughout the country. Admiral Anaya felt that the time was right for Argentina to take the Islas Malvinas by force and he convinced the other members of the Junta of his plan. Galtieri was not a hard sell, but Dozo was not enthusiastic. It was thought that with Britain's decreasing interest in the South Atlantic that the invasion would be a fait accompli and Britain's only response would be verbal. The invasion was planned for the late spring of 1982.

Constantino Davidoff was an Argentine who had secured salvage rights to the whaling stations on South Georgia Island from the British. In March of 1982, he and his party landed at the old whaling station at Lieth. He had been transported to the island by the Argentine Navy transport *Bahia Buen Suceso*, which raised a few eyebrows. Davidoff then failed to meet several of the requirements of his permit from the British government including not reporting to the BAS representative in Grytviken and bringing firearms ashore. HMS *Endurance*

was dispatched to South Georgia along with her Marine contingent to try and enforce the requirements. The Argentine Navy dispatched a corvette to try and intercept *Endurance* and brought several special forces troops under the command of Alfredo Astiz to Lieth on another Naval vessel, the *Bahia Paraiso*. These men raised the Argentine flag at Lieth which was observed by the BAS scientists. The British Foreign Department ordered Davidoff to comply with the initial requirements now including taking down the flag and the withdrawal of all military assets. They further threatened to use any means necessary if he failed to do as ordered. The *Bahia Paraiso* retired from the area, easing tensions somewhat, and *Endurance* was instructed to observe the Argentines at Lieth, but take no further actions.

Admiral Anaya took this posturing and lack of resolve as a sign to move up the timetable for his plans. The task force assigned to invade the Islas Malvinas was ordered into action and another task force set sail for South Georgia to take possession of that island. The D-Day was set for April 1, 1982, however, a storm delayed the invasion by a day.

The British intercepted several radio transmissions that informed them of the impending assault. HMS *Endurance* was ordered back to the Falklands to support the Marines of Naval Party 8901, but it was too late for her to arrive in time and she would have been of limited value even if she had made it. The Royal Marines hastily prepared a defensive plan. They would fight a delaying action from the suspected landing site at Yorke Beach near the airport and fall back on Government House, the seat of power. If possible they would then retreat into the unpopulated portion of East Falkland and fight as guerillas.

Meanwhile back in England, two nuclear submarines were dispatched to the South Atlantic at full speed, followed shortly by a third. However, these vessels would not arrive for several days, much too late to have any effect on the Argentine invasion. As Prime Minister Margret Thatcher and her cabinet discussed what other, if any, steps should be taken, First Sea Lord, Sir Henry Leach arrived on other business. He made a plea that not only could the Royal Navy take back the Falklands Islands, but that they should do so. Prime Minister Thatcher agreed and ordered a task force to be sent to the South Atlantic as soon as possible. Diplomatic efforts to forestall the invasion continued, but even a phone call from President Reagan had no effect on Argentine resolve.

In the early morning hours of April 2, 1982, men of the Marine Amphibious Commando Company (Compania de Comando Anfibios) climbed into Gemini boats from the Destroyer, *Santisima Trinidad*. The invasion plan called for them to land near the mouth of Mullet Creek and move overland to capture the Royal Marine Barracks at Moody Brook. They were supported by a handful of Tactical Divers (Buzo Tactico), the Argentine equivalent of the American SEALs. The main landing force was made up of the 2nd Marine Battalion (Batallon de Infanteria Marina 2) and a single platoon from the 25 Infantry Regiment (Regimiento de Infanteria 25). They would land in LVTP 7 amtracks near Yorke Bay. The platoon from the 25th Regiment was assigned with seizing Government House, while the other units would secure the airport, the town of Port Stanley and assist the Marine Commandos if necessary. The plan was changed slightly when the Argentine command became aware that they had lost the element of surprise. The Marine Commandos would also seize Government House and the platoon of regular infantry would secure the airport.

The Marine Commandos had trouble getting through the kelp beds near the mouth of the creek and landed further north than they expected, but they were able to make up time on the march and were in position as the sun started to rise. Divers from Buzo Tactico checked the landing beach for mines and obstacles and when they gave the all-clear signal, the amtracks rolled into the ocean right on time. The Marine Commandos threw CS grenades into Moody Brook Barracks, but found that it was empty. The sixteen man unit assigned to capture

Government House was able to get into position also without being seen, but unknown to them were significantly outnumbered by the Royal Marines guarding the building. A team of four men tried to enter the main house, but were spotted by two Royal Marines and taken under fire. Two of the Argentines were wounded while the other two took cover, but were later captured. One of the wounded, Capitan de Corbetta Pedro Giachino, later died of his wounds. A stalemate ensued around Government House. Major Norman, commander of the Royal Marine detachment realized that his delaying action had been outflanked and ordered his troops to retreat to Government House. Most of his men got the word, but only after the first action between the lead company in amtracks had taken place. The Royal Marines had fired a HEAT round from a Carl Gustav launcher at the lead amtrack and then raked it with machine gun fire. As the Argentines returned fire, the Royal Marines disengaged and retreated into town. The results of this action are disputed, the Argentines claiming that the anti-tank round missed while the British claimed a hit and that few if any men escaped from the stricken vehicle. As the troops from both sides concentrated around Government House, it became apparent that the Royal Marines were vastly outnumbered. Governor Rex Hunt elected to surrender to spare any additional injury or loss of life. Not a single Royal Marine had been wounded or killed during the engagement. Argentine losses included at least one killed and two wounded [Scenarios 001-004] .

The following day, the invasion force destined for South Georgia arrived off the coast of Gyrtviken, the base for the British scientists on the island and the de facto capital. The Argentine force consisted of a composite platoon from the 1st Marine Battalion on board the *Bahia Paraiso* and the escorting corvette, *Guerrico*. The Argentines planned on using their helicopters, an Alouette III and a Puma, to land the Marines. They were not expecting armed resistance. However, Lieutenant Mills had deployed his Royal Marines on King Edward Point and had orders to resist the Argentine invasion. The Alouette deposited a fire team of Marines on the beach near Shackleton House, but the Royal Marines held their fire. When the Puma approached their position, however, they opened fire with every weapon they possessed. The Puma was seriously damaged and had to make a crash landing on the other side of the bay. The *Guerrico* then entered the bay and became the target for the British marksmen. She was hit by approximately 1000 rounds of 7.62mm as well as at least two HEAT rockets from the Carl Gustav and LAW anti-tank weapons of the defenders. The *Guerrico's* 100mm gun was damaged and the crew of her exposed 40mm anti-aircraft gun was pinned down by the fire. She quickly retreated out of the bay and tried to bring accurate fire on the British position. Meanwhile the Alouette had ferried additional marines ashore and these troops were advancing through Gyrtviken towards King Edward Point. Lieutenant Mills had a seriously wounded man who needed urgent medical attention. Believing that his troops had accomplished more than was required of them, he surrendered his command. So ended the First Battle of Gyrtviken [Scenarios 005-007].

The Royal Navy had been conducting a training exercise near Gibraltar while these actions were taking place. After loading combat supplies the destroyers and frigates quickly headed south. They were joined by *Hermes* and *Invincible*, the only carriers left in the British navy. Both carriers were carrying as many Sea Harriers as possible. The infantry component of the task forces was the 3rd Commando Brigade with the 3rd Para Battalion attached. The ocean liner *Canberra* was quickly converted into a troop ship and used to carry much of the Brigade south. The Brigade Headquarters and supporting units were transported in *Fearless*, an amphibious assault ship. Her sister-ship, *Intrepid*, had just been decommissioned and ironically, was to be sold to Argentina. Work started immediately on bringing her back to service. Each of these assault ships carried four LCUs and four LCVPs as well as having a flight deck for helicopters. The commander of 2nd Para lobbied hard for his command to be included in the task force, and this was ordered shortly thereafter. However, his men were transported in much less comfort aboard the ferry, *Norland*.

First stop for the Task Force was Ascension Island in the South Atlantic. Ascension was a little more than half-way to the Falklands, which lay 3700 miles to the west. Even though most of the troops were travelling in some comfort, the days were spent in physical training, target practice and class sessions. Upon arrival at Ascension, the troops were allowed to disembark for some forced marches and marksmanship drills, while attempts were made to reload the transports for an assault landing. After a brief rest, the carriers and their escorts continued west, to start the air battle that was intended to gain air superiority over the islands. This was considered a prerequisite to an amphibious landing.

A third task force had already sailed west. It was formed by the tanker, *Tidespring*, and her escorts, *Antrim* and *Plymouth*. Aboard *Tidespring* was M Company of the 42nd Royal Marines. These troops had flown to Ascension while their comrades sailed. They were joined by D Squadron of the SAS and a SBS troop aboard *Antrim*. Their mission was to retake South Georgia Island. On April 14, they met up with *Endurance* and proceeded towards South Georgia. On the 21st, reconnaissance elements from both the SBS and SAS were landed on the island. However, the weather was extreme, and little progress was made towards learning the Argentine strengths and positions. The SAS patrol on Fortuna Glacier was rescued the following day, but two helicopters were lost to crashes in white-out conditions. Fortunately, Humphrey, a Wessex helicopter from *Antrim*, piloted by Ian Stanley, was able to take the special forces troops and the crews of the crashed helicopters to safety in some incredible flying. Meanwhile, *Tidespring* was ordered further out to sea to avoid an Argentine submarine reported to be in the area. On April 23rd, the Argentine Submarine *Santa Fe* was observed cruising on the surface in shallow water. Repeated helicopter attacks using depth charges, missiles and machine guns, damaged the sub to the point where her commander beached her near the pier in Gyrtviken. Deciding to try and keep the initiative, the British commanders elected to launch an ad hoc assault on the Argentine forces there. While M Company was 200 miles away, the SAS and SBS along with the headquarters units of the Royal Marine group would make the assault, supported by naval gunnery. As the troops were helicoptered to a LZ on the south side of King Edward Cove, the naval bombardment began. The barrage was started to the east of the Argentine positions and then moved closer and closer. As the British troops closed, white flags could be seen above the Argentine positions. South Georgia Island had been recaptured[Scenario 008].

The war started in earnest on May 2. The Argentine Navy had launched a two pronged advance towards the Falklands. The northern force was based on the Carrier, *25 de Mayo* while the southern force was headed by the Cruiser *General Belgrano* (ex- *USS Phoenix*). The southern force was spotted by the British Submarine *Conqueror*. As the *Belgrano* was outside of the Total Exclusion Zone established by the British Government, the commander of the *Conqueror*, Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown, radioed for instructions. It was feared that the *Belgrano*, with her six –inch guns, and her two Exocet armed escorts could dash across the shallow waters of the Burdwood Bank, where *Conqueror* could not follow. In response, the British Navy changed the rules of engagement and allowed attacks on any Argentine warships outside of territorial waters. After stalking the cruiser for a short time, the *Conqueror* closed to 1400 yards and fired three torpedoes. Two of them struck the *Belgrano*. The results were catastrophic, in part because her captain had not ordered the water-tight doors to be shut. The ship sank quickly and 323 men lost their lives due to the explosions and the extended search and rescue operations. While the odds of Argentina agreeing to peace terms before the sinking were slight, they were impossible afterwards. Honor would require Argentina to shed more blood to make sure that *Belgrano's* sailors had not died in vain.

Britain had been trying to win the air superiority battle over the Falklands starting on May 1. Air attacks on the Stanley Airfield, by both carrier based Harriers and Vulcans flying from Ascension Island with massive tanker

support, had caused some damage, but failed to close the airport. As the carriers needed to move closer to the islands to launch their attacks, Type 42 destroyers were placed ahead of the fleet in the expected direction of any air attack. The Type 42s were equipped with both long range radars and long range Sea Dart missiles. On May 4, the Type 42 Destroyer *Sheffield* was manning one of these outposts about 40 miles southeast of the Falklands. An Argentine naval reconnaissance aircraft had recorded radar transmissions from this area and the Argentine Naval Command elected to launch a raid using two of their five air-launched Exocet missiles. Two Super-Etendard strike planes launched, each carrying one missile. They refueled and flew towards the target at low altitude to avoid radar. Both planes popped up to acquire a target with their radars before returning to low altitude. HMS *Glasgow*, another Type 42 Destroyer, detected the radar sweeps and sent out an alert, but it was not received on *Sheffield*. *Sheffield* also had her radars turned off so that she could use her satellite radio to communicate. The incoming missiles were visually spotted much too late to take any action and the *Sheffield* was hit amidships by one missile, the other one missing. A fire started immediately, and since the damage control center was one of the areas hit, it spread quickly. Firefighting efforts proved futile and the ship had to be abandoned. Twenty men lost their lives and the Royal Navy learned that it was not immune from loss.

The loss of the *Sheffield* forced the carrier task force to move further east, reducing the effectiveness of the air battle over Stanley. Other options were considered. Reconnaissance showed that the airstrip on Pebble Island was occupied by several planes, possibly Pucara ground attack planes. These twin turbo-prop planes were heavily armed and the damage they could cause during the proposed landing was considerable. A plan was formed to use SAS troops to raid the airstrip. A small patrol from Boat Troop, D Squadron reached Pebble Island by helicopter and canoe. They confirmed the presence of several planes on the airstrip. On May 15, the raid was launched. The remainder of D Squadron arrived by Sea King helicopter and *Glamorgan* was available for naval gunfire support. The raid was a complete surprise to the Argentine Marine defenders. The SAS troopers damaged or destroyed all eleven aircraft on Pebble Island, including six Pucaras. Only one trooper was wounded during the raid and his injuries were not severe [Scenario 009]. Unfortunately, a helicopter carrying many of these men hit a bird while transferring men from one ship to another. The Sea King went into the water and 21 men drowned, including 18 from the SAS. It was the highest loss of SAS troopers in one day since World War II.

Other members of the SAS as well as the SBS had been landed by helicopter, submarine and small boat on the Falklands since at least the beginning of May. They had provided information on Argentine dispositions as well as beach conditions and terrain. Commodore Clapp, the commander of the Amphibious Assault Group; Brigadier Thompson, commander of 3rd Commando Brigade; and both of their staffs worked together with this information to develop a landing plan. Another essential part of this planning team was Major Ewen Southby-Tailyour. He had served as the commander of Naval Party 8901 on the Falklands previously and was an avid yachtsman. Besides being an expert on amphibious operations, he had written a booklet on sailing around the Falkland Islands and was a source of invaluable information. Several possible landing sites were considered, but as the information continued to accumulate, a landing at San Carlos Water was chosen. This area was not heavily defended, provided good protection from the South Atlantic waves as well as submarine attack. It was also ringed by hills that could be used for anti-aircraft missile positions. The only downside was that it was on the other side of East Falkland from Port Stanley and there was only a very simple track between the two locations.

The Argentine military had been trained mostly by the United States military. US Marine doctrine called for an amphibious landing as close to the objective as possible. Consequently, the Argentines expected the British to land near Stanley. They mined the beaches around Stanley and dug in the majority of their troops on the

surrounding heights. One infantry brigade was based further to the west with one regiment (an Argentine infantry regiment is about the same size as a battalion in most other armies) dug in near the Community of Goose Green and two located on West Falkland. Reserves, including two squadrons of armored cars were located in and around Stanley as was almost all of the artillery.

SBS patrols reported that a small detachment of Argentine infantry was occupying Fanning Head, on the north side of the entrance to San Carlos Water. An assault group of SBS was landed by helicopter on the night of May 20-21 to neutralize this group of soldiers nicknamed "The Fanning Head Mob." The SBS included Marine Captain Rod Bell who was a fluent Spanish speaker with the intent of trying to get the Argentines to surrender without a fight. This plan did not work and the "Mob" opened fire on the SBS troops. The fire was returned and the rather one-sided fight was ended by naval gunfire [Scenario 010]. Several Argentines were wounded and captured, but the survivors headed east towards Stanley. Some straggled in over the course of the next two weeks. Others were never heard from again.

The landings started early on May 21. There were some delays, but the landings went well and shortly after dawn all of the troops were ashore. The Fanning Head Mob had been part of Task Force Eagle, a reinforced platoon from B Company of the 25th Regiment. This regiment was considered one of the best in the Argentine Army. The remainder of Task Force Eagle was trying to withdraw from Port San Carlos when a Sea King carrying a slung pallet overflowed them. Thinking that they were under attack, the Argentines opened fire. The Sea King was able to escape and a Gazelle gunship responded to bring fire onto the Argentine troops. It too was taken under fire and it crashed into San Carlos Water. A second Gazelle was also in the area and made the mistake of flying too close the Argentine machine gunners and it too was hit and destroyed. Troops from 3rd Para hustled to the site, but they could not catch the Argentine troops before they withdrew to the east [Scenario 012]. Like their mates on Fanning Head, most of them made it back to friendly lines near Stanley, but some did die of exposure before reaching safety.

The withdrawal of the Argentine troops ended ground combat for the day, but the air attacks on the Task Force were just beginning. Wave after wave of Argentine Mirage and Skyhawk fighter-bombers struck at the naval forces inside Falkland Sound and San Carlos Water. The Argentine Air Force concentrated their attacks against the warships rather than the amphibious assault ships and *Canberra*. Several ships were hit by bombs, but the vast majority of the bombs failed to detonate. Even the unexploded bombs caused considerable damage, however, and HMS *Ardent* sank after being the subject of at least three separate attacks. HMS *Antelope* sank later than night when efforts to defuse an unexploded bomb went awry. The unloading of the supply ships continued unabated with only short breaks during air attacks to take cover. While the losses on both sides had been heavy, the amphibious landing was proceeding as planned. *Canberra* was ordered out of San Carlos Water to protect her from future attacks. A considerable amount of supplies went with her including most of the Brigade's medical supplies, but the risk of her loss was too great to contemplate. She was soon headed to South Georgia Island to pick up the 5th Infantry Brigade which had also been ordered south. They were transported by the liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*, which could not be risked in the war zone.

The British amphibious operation continued as did the air attacks and the losses rose on both sides. May 25 was Argentina's Independence Day and they celebrated by launching several air raids, including another strike by Super Etendards. The British carriers were the target, but a single missile hit the container ship *Atlantic Conveyor*. The missile started a fire that could not be suppressed and the ship was destroyed. This ship was carrying several aircraft reinforcements. The Harriers had been flown to the carriers already, but only one of the four Chinook heavy lift helicopters had left the ship when the missile hit. Several Wessex helicopters were

also lost along with stores of all types. In addition to the loss of the *Atlantic Conveyor*, HMS *Conventry*, another Type 42 destroyer was also sunk after being hit by three bombs.

Brigadier Thompson wanted to avoid the Argentine garrison at Goose Green as his intended direction of march was along the north side of East Falkland. But the British High Command at Northwood had other ideas. The mounting naval losses were putting pressure on the British High Command for some type of success. Thompson was ordered to launch a raid against the Argentine position. Thompson thought this was an unnecessary distraction, especially since the loss of the Chinooks meant that his troops were going to have to walk across the island. He was overruled. Since 2nd Para was closest to Goose Green, they were given the task. They would be supported by three 105 mm light guns and the naval gunfire support of HMS *Arrow*. Since the paratroopers were going to have to march to Goose Green on foot, their commander, Lt. Col. H. Jones elected to take only two of his eight mortars and half of his Milan anti-tank missile launchers. On the night of May 26, the men marched south carrying extra mortar bombs and machine gun ammunition. The three light guns and their ammo were flown in by the single Chinook available. The following day, 3rd Para started a two day "tab" east and 45th Marine Commando "yomped" in the same direction, but on a slightly more southerly axis.

The men from 2nd Para slowly wound their way south. It was a miserable march for some especially those carrying the Blowpipe anti-aircraft missiles as they were not trained as paratroopers and were not as fit. They reached Camilla Creek House about dawn and laid up there to prepare for the coming night attack. They were surprised to hear on the BBC of their upcoming attack. If that wasn't bad enough, an Argentine patrol in a Land Rover was spotted heading up the track. The patrol was dispatched quickly enough and the Land Rover put to good use, but any thoughts of surprise were gone. Teniente Coronel Piaggi was the commander of the 12th Infantry Regiment at Goose Green. His command was made up of mostly raw recruits and much of their heavy weapons had not arrived. His men had been bolstered by a company from the 25th Infantry Regiment, although Task Force Eagle had been formed from this unit and so now the company was understrength. He had also received three pack howitzers by ship when the British landed so close to his position (a fourth had been damaged in an air attack on the transporting ship). His Brigade commander in Port Stanley ordered him to advance his lines to meet the oncoming British attack. He moved his A Company forward from their prepared positions and had them dig in on Coronation Ridge. He also ordered parts of his Recon Platoon further forward to screen his lines and give advance warning of the attack.

Lt. Colonel Jones' plan was ambitious and complicated. He wanted to reach Goose Green before the sun came up. The SAS provided some information on the Argentine positions, but much of this was out of date and currently incorrect. His men would attack over ground they had not seen during daylight and fight an enemy whose location was uncertain. While it might not be a recipe for disaster, given the quality of the troops involved, it was going to be an uphill struggle. The plan called for two companies to attack in line; A Company on the left and B Company on the right. D Company would follow B Company and Patrol Company was in reserve behind A Company. The attack kicked off on time. The initial contact was at Burntside House where a detachment from Piaggi's Recon Platoon had set up. They fired a few shots at the advancing troops of A Company and then took off. A Company returned fire, nearly destroying the house. Luckily for the occupants, the only casualty was the family dog. A Company continued moving south. HMS *Arrow* provided naval gunfire support on suspected positions, but her gun soon malfunctioned. On the other flank, B Company closed to a very short distance from the dug in Argentines of A Company on Coronation Ridge. They were able to achieve complete surprise, even though the Argentines knew the attack was coming. The paratroopers closed quickly on the Argentine foxholes and used combinations of white phosphorus and fragmentation grenades to clear them. Some of the Argentine troopers fought well, but many simply ran or tried to hide in their sleeping

bags. The position was cleared fairly easily, but it took time and B Company's platoons became quite disorganized after the night assault [Scenario 035].

D Company managed to pass B Company to the east in the confusion. They ran into additional Argentine positions on Coronation Ridge and took some casualties clearing them [Scenario 013]. They, too, became disorganized in the dark, and the company commander had to resort to firing flares to bring his command together again. B Company once again took the lead and continued to move south. The hours of darkness were growing short, however, and it seemed more and more unlikely that they would reach Goose Green before the sun came up. Meanwhile, A Company had continued south at a slow pace and arrived on the north side of the Community of Darwin as dawn was beginning to break. They moved quickly to try and make use of the last bit of darkness. As they closed on the small hill to the west of Darwin, they saw figures on top. The figures waved to them, but it did not take long for both sides to realize that these were not friendly troops. The Argentines brought down a heavy fire on the advancing paratroopers, who dashed for a section of dead ground in a ravine. Most made it, but they found that any advance out of the ravine brought a tremendous amount of fire and was quickly beaten back. Lt. Colonel Jones was concerned about his A Company coming to halt and brought his tactical headquarters to that location. His assessment of the situation was clouded by his desire to push through this enemy position and reach Goose Green. He ordered an attack by elements of his headquarters as well as some troops from A Company. The men followed their leader out of the ravine and into the teeth of the Argentine position. Unlike the recruits on Coronation Ridge, these men belonged to the 25th Infantry Regiment and were well trained if not experienced. The attack failed predictably with several casualties, including Captain Dave Wood, the Battalion Adjutant who was killed [Scenario 014]. He had been one of Lt. Colonel Jones' best friends in the unit. Without telling anyone else, Jones headed west towards another smaller ravine. He was followed by his sergeant-bodyguard and his radioman, but no one else seemed to notice as they tended to the wounded. Jones advanced up the smaller ravine, firing on an Argentine position with his sub-machine gun. His sergeant tried to warn him about another position to his rear, but it was too late. He was mortally wounded and died about an hour later. For his conspicuous bravery, he was awarded the Victoria Cross. It is a fine line between bravery and stupidity. I won't try and make a distinction here.

As A Company was bogged down on Darwin Hill, B Company crested a ridge and headed towards the ruins of Boca House. The advancing paratroopers were visible to the Argentines dug in on a small hill just to the south of the ruins and they called for artillery as they opened fire. Some of the paratroopers moved forward into dead ground in the ravine that separated the two ridges, while others retreated back the way they had come. B Company also was bogged down by the vast amount of open ground between them and the Argentine positions [Scenario 016].

Back on Darwin Hill, the action had slowed, but not stopped. NCOs continued to urge their men forward, both to bring back the wounded and to take on the enemy positions. Corporal Dave Abols was one such NCO and while Jones was leading his one man assault against the enemy to the west, Abols was able to rescue a wounded comrade and then find a firing position to use a 66 mm LAW rocket. His fire knocked out one of the enemy bunkers and allowed other men to move forward. They used additional LAW rockets to work over the enemy positions. The enemy fire slackened and the paratroopers were able to advance, albeit cautiously to clear the enemy trenches and bunkers. Teniente Roberto Estevez led his men well, but he was mortally wounded while trying to direct artillery fire onto the enemy. His radioman continued to direct the artillery fire until he too was killed. Both men received awards posthumously for their bravery. Estevez was the only Argentine officer who was killed at Goose Green, perhaps showing some of the differences between the Argentine and British Officer

Corps. Only a very few men from Estevez's platoon were able to fall back towards the Schoolhouse and the next line of Argentine defense [Scenario 015].

With the death of Lt. Colonel Jones, the Executive Officer, Major Chris Keeble took over command. Keeble's command style was the exact opposite of Jones, allowing the company commanders to make their own decisions, figuring that the man on the ground knew more about the situation than he did. Major Keeble did order Support Company with the sustained fire machine guns and Milan missile launchers forward before he started to work on resupply for the battalion and the attached light guns.

Back at Boca House, Major Crosland, commander of B Company, used the Milan launchers to bring accurate fire against the Argentine bunkers on Boca Hill. Major Neame, the commander of D Company, found a path that led along the water's edge that he thought would keep his men in dead ground as they approached the enemy positions. The Milan fire had considerable effect and the return fire slackened noticeably. When Neame's men moved away from Breton Loch and towards Boca Hill, white flags could be seen flying over several of the enemy positions [Scenario 017]. Both companies were able to resume their advance after taking care of their prisoners. B Company continued south before swinging across the isthmus below Goose Green. D Company swung east towards the airfield.

A Company was too beat up to continue the advance. Patrol Company moved forward with A Company's reserve platoon attached. As they crested Darwin Hill and headed towards the Schoolhouse below, they were visible to every Argentine position. The Argentine anti-aircraft guns on the airfield as well as those on the peninsula to the east of Goose Green delivered a withering fire against the advancing paratroopers. Nineteen men, including the company commander were hit, but none were killed. Patrol Company continued to move forward despite their losses, but the impetus of their attack had been lost. Their advance was aided by an airstrike on the 35 mm AA guns on the end of the peninsula that had caused them so much grief. Besides silencing the guns, the cluster bomb attack raised the morale of the paratroopers [Scenario 018].

Meanwhile, D Company moved east along the north edge of the airfield. They were approaching the ground held by Patrol Company, but the paratroopers were able to recognize the tactics and formations of the other company and hence a blue on blue incident was avoided. C Company assisted by a platoon from D Company was able to close on the Schoolhouse position and used LAW rockets and machine gun fire to suppress the defenders. The building was riddled with holes and eventually caught fire, burning to the ground. The Argentine troops holding this area retreated back towards Goose Green [Scenario 019].

Back on the airfield, a brisk firefight had started between portions of the 25th Infantry Regiment and the advancing D Company. When Lieutenant James Barry saw a white flag flying over the Argentine positions, he advanced under another white flag to accept their surrender. However, the white flag, if that was actually what it was, had not been raised by the men of the 25th Regiment and they were incredulous that the British would ask them to surrender. Barry was given two minutes to return to his lines. Unfortunately, the sustained fire machine guns of Support Company had been brought up to Darwin Hill to give support to Patrol Company's attack and a burst of their fire landed near the Argentine position. Thinking that Barry's advance had been part of a ruse, the Argentines opened fire, killing Barry and two NCOs who tried to provide covering fire as he fled. This act incensed the members of Barry's platoon, who showed no mercy as they quickly rolled up the enemy position.

The sun was beginning to set. The British had captured all of the Argentine positions surrounding Goose Green, but now they ran out of steam. B Company observed Argentine reinforcements arrive by helicopter and

brought artillery fire down on them as quickly as possible. The reinforcements, B Company of the 12th Infantry Regiment, elected to head for Goose Green rather than attempt to attack the British. Night fell with the British troops having sealed off the peninsula on which Goose Green lay.

Major Keeble did not want to continue the fight the following day unless he absolutely had to. He did not know where the civilians were being held and he knew that a considerable amount of fire support would be needed to break into the village. He found two Argentine prisoners who spoke passable English and ordered them to take a message to their commander. He threatened to destroy the village with artillery and airstrikes if the Argentines did not surrender. Lt. Coronel Piaggi advised his brigade commander of the ultimatum and the decision was left up to him. He decided to spare his men, as well as the civilians from further injury as long as his men could surrender honorably. Major Keeble agreed. Early the next morning, more than 1000 Argentine troops, both Army and Air Force, marched out of Goose Green and laid down their weapons after singing the national anthem. The battle was over, but at the cost of sixteen paratroopers and more than fifty Argentine infantrymen.

Mount Kent is one of the highest mountains on East Falkland. It lies west of the ring of hills surrounding Stanley, but because of the height and location, Stanley and all of the surrounding hills are visible from its summit. This important high ground was left undefended by the Argentines. SAS patrols had found the heights empty and quickly took up defensive positions. Brigadier Thompson wanted to helicopter the 42nd Commando to this dominating position, but the weather was not cooperating. One attempt had to be aborted due to the weather and even then the Chinook crashed lightly during a white-out damaging the undercarriage slightly. As 3rd Para and 45th Commando reached Teal Inlet on foot, 42nd Commando waited for the weather to clear. 3rd Para then pushed on to Bluff Cove, which they found unoccupied, although there was evidence that the Argentines had been there recently.

The Argentine command at Stanley decided to push the issue. They ordered their own Commando companies to push forward and try to interdict the British lines of communication. One assault section and the support section of 602 Commando company was lifted by helicopter to positions to gain the heights of Mount Kent. However, they found SAS troopers there already and brisk firefight broke out. The Argentines gave as good as they got, but there were unable to push the British special forces off the mountain [Scenario 020]. Another section of 602 Commando Company was on the slopes of Bluff Cove Peak when they too ran into SAS troopers, these from the D Squadron's tactical HQ. Two Argentine commandos were killed in the ensuing firefight, but the rest managed to escape back to their lines. The 1st Section of 602 Commando Company had been airlifted to Mount Simon. They were to call in artillery on the British troops moving to the north of them, however, their radio failed and they could only receive and not transmit. Since they could not complete their mission, their commander Capitan Verseci decided to try and reach his lines on foot. The men headed east down Mt. Simon, but found the going difficult. They were thoroughly cold and demoralized after they waded through the ice water of Arroyo Malo. Top Malo House was located nearby and the commandos used the structure to warm up and dry out. However, they had been spotted by a patrol from the Arctic and Mountain Warfare Cadre (AMWC), the teachers of the Marine Commando cold weather school. These men were being used as a Brigade level recon platoon by Brigadier Thompson. The patrol thought their position had been compromised and requested an air strike. No aircraft were available, however. The commander of the AMWC, Captain Rod Boswell, put together an assault group of the available patrols and they were helicoptered to within a kilometer of Top Malo House the following morning. Boswell split his forces into two teams, an assault team and a support team. Although the Argentines had seen the helicopter that brought in the British troops, they did not react immediately and the Marine special force troopers were allowed to get within 100 yards of the house

before the alarm was raised. Boswell started his assault by firing a salvo of LAW rockets which blasted the two-story house and started a fire. The Argentines returned fire as they retreated in good order to the arroyo in the rear. The British troopers moved quickly, however and had them surrounded on three sides. After suffering two killed and several wounded, the Argentines surrendered. While none of the British troopers had been killed, four had been wounded, two seriously [Scenario 021].

As these patrol battles were taking place, the weather cleared enough for the first company of 42nd Commando to fly to Mount Kent. As the Chinook landed, Colonel Vaux, the commander, could hear a firefight in the distance. This was another skirmish between Argentine commandos and the SAS. His men quickly took up position on and around the summit and the mountain was secured. The Chinook made several additional flights bringing in artillery and the remainder of the Marines to complete the defense of the position. 45th Commando had yomped from Teal Inlet to Bluff Cove Peak while 3rd Para moved to Mount Estancia and Estancia House. 3rd Commando Brigade was in position to begin gathering information on the Argentine positions as each night patrols headed out to locate minefields and probe for the enemy. 40th Commando remained at San Carlos Water to defend the beachhead, much to their commander's chagrin. 2nd Para was still at Goose Green dealing with POWs and looking for Argentine troops that had so far escaped capture. They would be transferred to 5th Infantry Brigade when that command arrived. Most members of the battalion thought that Major Keeble should retain command, but High Command thought otherwise. Lieutenant Colonel David Chaundler was assigned to command 2nd Para and he was flown to the South Atlantic in a C-130. He had to parachute into the ocean to reach his command. His reception was not as warm as he would have hoped.

The 5th Infantry Brigade arrived on East Falkland on June 1. It was commanded by Brigadier Tony Wilson and consisted of the Welsh Guards Battalion, the 2nd Scots Guards Battalion and the 1st Battalion of the 7th Gurkha Rifles as well as supporting artillery and other attachments. Also arriving was Major General Jeremy Moore who assumed command of Land Forces Falklands Islands, much to the relief of fellow Marine, Brigadier Thompson, who could now fight his brigade and not have to worry about politics. 5th Infantry Brigade was to make up the southern wing of the British attack and they moved slowly to Goose Green as air and naval assets allowed. An attempt to march from San Carlos to Goose Green by the Welsh Guards had been aborted due to fatigue. 2nd Para, already at Goose Green and now part of 5th Infantry Brigade used the telephone to call the station manager at Fitzroy and asked him if there were any Argentine troops in the vicinity. When they received a negative answer, they reconed the area with scout helicopters and then commandeered the Chinook to fly the lead company in. This plan had not been cleared with General Moore or his staff. An observation post saw a Chinook landing troops at Fitzroy. Thinking the Chinook was Argentine, the observation post called for artillery. A serious blue on blue incident was only avoided at the last moment when the post saw roundels on the helicopter. Additional flights brought in the rest of the Battalion and 5th Infantry Brigade had leapt forward even before all of its components had landed.

The first week in June saw the British consolidating their position, bringing supplies forward, patrolling and moving the 5th Brigade into position. The first unit to make the move to Bluff Cove, near Fitzroy, was the 2nd Scots Guards. They were transported by HMS *Intrepid* to the area just east of Goose Green, but had to make the rest of the journey in LCUs as *Intrepid* was too valuable to risk. The trip was a miserable journey in darkness and rough seas. To make things worse, the Royal Navy was not aware of the move and the HMS *Cardiff* spotted the landing craft on radar. She illuminated the small boats with star shells and was about to open fire when she realized the boats were British. A major disaster had been narrowly averted. The seasick men were thankful to make it to shore. Within 24 hours, they had dug in and started patrolling.

The Welsh Guards were to make the transit the following night, but the LCUs failed to make the rendezvous with *Intrepid*. They had been commandeered by a 2nd Para officer to move men and stores around Bluff Cove. *Intrepid* returned to San Carlos Water and another plan was developed to move the Welsh Guards forward. They would now make the transit aboard RFA *Sir Galahad*, a logistic landing ship (LSL). They got a late start and did not arrive at Fitzroy until sunrise on June 8. As they had been ordered to land at Bluff Cove, a bit further on, the troops did not disembark immediately upon arrival. *Sir Tristram*, another LSL was also at Fitzroy unloading supplies. The two ships were spotted by Argentine spotters on Mount Harriet, as well as by a photo recon plane and the information was relayed to the mainland. Two flights of four Skyhawks took off from Rio Gallegos, although three of the planes had to abort due to mechanical difficulties. The pilots of the 5th Fighter Group had shown great skill in conducting their attacks so far and this mission was going to be no different. The Rapier anti-aircraft missiles that were supposed to protect the landing operation at Fitzroy were not yet fully operational nor had they been as successful as was hoped at San Carlos Water. The flight of five Skyhawks came in low and attacked both ships. They were both hit. A bomb exploded in the tank deck on *Sir Galahad*, which was crammed with troops waiting to disembark. A massive fireball flashed through the deck and a fire started in the fuel stored there. Rescue operations started immediately with helicopter pilots showing amazing courage to fly over the burning ship as casualties were hoisted aboard. Other helicopters used the downdraft from their rotors to push life rafts ashore and to pluck men from the ocean. The Welsh Guards had been severely hurt, however, with more than thirty men dead and over 150 wounded, most with severe burns or amputations. Helicopters from all over the island flocked to the disaster site and transported the wounded to Commander Rick Jolly's Field Hospital at Ajax Bay on San Carlos Water. The hospital did outstanding work stabilizing patients and then transferring them to SS *Uganda*, a hospital ship offshore.

By June 8, Brigadier Thompson felt that he had enough information on Argentine positions to order a Brigade attack on Mount Longdon, Two Sisters and Mount Harriet. However, the disaster off Fitzroy put the 5th Infantry Brigade off their timetable and he was forced to wait. Thompson's troops were suffering from the elements, especially 42nd Commando exposed on top of Mount Kent. If that was not enough, two companies of the 40th Commando were transferred to the Welsh Guards to make up for the troops they had lost aboard *Sir Galahad*. Thompson steamed, but his men continued to make use of the time with additional patrols to locate the extent of the Argentine minefields. The attack was now planned for the night of June 11/12. Thompson's plan had 3rd Para assaulting the positions of the 7th Regiment on Mount Longdon. 45th Commando would attack the troops of the 4th Regiment dug in on Two Sisters while the 42nd Commando would attack additional troops of the 4th Regiment on Mount Harriet. Each battalion had an artillery battery in support as well as at least one frigate dedicated for naval gunfire support.

The attack on Mount Longdon began first. It was a "quiet" attack meaning that no artillery was fired on the Argentine positions before the advance began. The quiet of the night, as well as any hope for surprise, was ended when a paratrooper stepped on a mine. The Argentine positions erupted with gunfire. A Company was on the left flank of the attack and was assigned to seize a rocky ridge that ran north from the summit. This ridge had been code-named Wing Forward. They were to provide covering fire from this position and allow Support Company to set up a base of fire. B Company was to lead the main assault on the summit of Mount Longdon, code-named Fly Half. They would continue over the summit and reach a lower peak just to the east, code-named Full Back. C Company was in reserve and Patrol Company was screening the left flank. B Company made progress moving up the ridge and overran the position of Teniente Baldini near the summit. However, several men were lost as the company crossed the summit and entered the "Bowl" between the two summits. Sergeant Ian McKay took over command of 4th Platoon when his lieutenant was wounded. He organized an assault group of men from 4th and 5th Platoons and set to cross the bowl and knock out an Argentine .50 caliber

machine gun that was holding up the advance. McKay's men broke cover as the remainder of the platoon tried to cover their advance. One by one, the men fell as they crossed the open ground until only McKay remained. He was last seen continuing to charge the Argentine machine gun position. Shortly thereafter, fire from this position ceased. McKay's body was found amongst those of the machine gun crew. McKay was awarded the second posthumous decoration of the Victoria Cross for his actions [Scenarios 022-023]. B Company again pushed forward, but was only able to gain a short distance before grinding to a halt again. Almost a third of the company had been killed or wounded. A company had found Wing Forward to be unguarded and moved into position to supply covering fire to B Company. They continued to do this until they were ordered to cease as their fire was getting close to B Company. Lt. Colonel Hew Pike, commander of 3rd Para realized that his attack was bogging down and he needed to inject fresh troops to get it going again. He considered using C Company, but he felt they were too far away to reach the battleground in time. Instead he ordered A Company to retrace their steps and then follow B Company up the ridge. This they did and pushed through the remains of B Company to gain Full Back just before dawn [Scenario 046]. The remains of 7th Regiment's B Company retreated to Wireless Ridge, which was held by the rest of their regiment. The skirmishing continued as the sun came up with long range fire from the Argentine positions on Wireless Ridge and Mount Tumbledown. Artillery fire would also be brought down on Mount Longdon as the paratroopers policed the battlefield of wounded, dead and prisoners. The night assault had cost 3rd Para eighteen men killed and more than fifty wounded. The 7th Regiment lost 36 killed, more than 80 wounded and about 50 captured.

Lt. Colonel Whitehead's plan for 45th Commando's attack was also quiet, although it would start after 3rd Para's assault on Mount Longdon had started. Whitehead's plan called for X Company to make a frontal assault on the western summit of Two Sisters, code-named Long Toenail, supported by the sustained fire machine guns and Milan launchers of Support Company. While this attack diverted the attention of the Argentine defenders, Y and Z Companies would attack the eastern summit, code-named Summer Days from the northwest. X Company's attack was delayed by a difficult approach march. They advanced up the ridge towards Long Toenail until they were spotted by the Argentine defenders. Artillery support was not immediately available, but the Milan launchers were able to knock out enough bunkers for the advance to continue. The Argentines put up stubborn resistance, but were forced to retreat by the steady advance of the Royal Marines. When X Company reached the summit, they had to retreat to avoid a fire mission from the 4th Regiment's supporting artillery. Once the barrage ceased, however, they reclaimed the summit and engaged the Argentine machine guns covering the retreat. On the northern flank of Two Sisters, Y and Z Companies advanced to make use of the remaining darkness. They approached within 400 yards of the Argentine positions without being spotted. Mayor Cordon, the Executive Officer of the 4th Regiment gave the alert to all of his troops when he realized that the assault on Long Toenail was more than a patrol. A flare illuminated the Marines of Y and Z Companies and a brisk firefight broke out. The Argentines were in good defensive positions and the Marines could not suppress their fire. They fell back to a piece of dead ground to escape the fire. However, Argentine artillery and mortars soon started to fall about their positions. Lieutenant Clive Dytor realized that the only thing an Englishman could do in this case was charge. He started advancing on the Argentine positions urging his troops to follow. They urged their commander to get down before he was killed, but the NCOs started to push the men forward and soon all of Z Company was charging pell-mell up the hillside screaming "Zulu – Zulu," the company's battle cry. At the same time, Mortar Platoon started a bombardment of Summer Days and then crept the bombardment onto the defending Argentines. This was too much for the recruits of 4th Regiment and they gave ground, allowing 8th Troop to seize Summer Days [Scenarios 025-026]. Y Company was able to secure the saddle between the two objectives, but any thought of advancing on to Mount Tumbledown was brought to a standstill by B Company of the 6th Regiment, dug in on the rear slopes of Two Sisters [Scenario 024]. The

battle had not been as fierce as that on Mount Longdon, in part because many of the Argentine recruits had retreated rather than stand up to the night assault. Still nineteen men of the regiment had died and more than 40 had been captured. 45th Commando suffered four killed and several wounded. Mayor Cordon was criticized for his handling of the battle and he retired from the Army after the war. Whitehead on seeing the position he had taken during the daylight felt that a company of Marines could have held this position against any type of attack.

The third and last attack of the night was that of Lt. Colonel Vaux and the men of 42nd Commando. Vaux had lost one of his companies, M Company, to the Task Force that seized South Georgia Island from the Argentines. It had been replaced by J Company, made up mostly of men from the two Naval Party 8901 detachments that had been captured during the initial Argentine invasion and then repatriated. Vaux planned on using these men to make a diversionary attack on the west slope of Mount Harriet. His patrols had found a gap in the minefields to the south and east, however, and the main attack was to come from L and K Companies attacking from the south. This was to be a “noisy” attack with a pre-assault bombardment, in part to cover the advance of the flanking companies. The bombardment was successful, causing some casualties and disrupting the defenders. J Company began the diversion with Support Company providing covering fire. The Argentines believed that this was the main assault. Meanwhile, K and L Companies were able to advance completely undetected right into the Argentine positions [Scenarios 027-028]. A short firefight erupted, but the Argentine troops were not prepared for the onslaught that ensued. The southern and eastern flanks of Mount Harriet were soon cleared of Argentine troops and those on the western flank had no option but to retreat or surrender. 42nd Commando suffered two killed and seven wounded while this portion of the 4th Regiment suffered eight killed and over 300 captured. Vaux’s attack has been described as an almost perfect example of a night assault on a defended position [Scenario 045].

Thus ended the Battle for the Argentine Outer Defense Zone. All of the British attacks had been successful, although 3rd Para’s assault had been costly. It was now up to the 5th Infantry Brigade to continue the attack. This was supposed to occur the following night, but Brigadier Wilson needed additional time to prepare his troops. Consequently, the attack was postponed to the night of June 13/14. The 2nd Scots Guards would attack Mount Tumbledown while 2nd Para was assigned Wireless Ridge. The Gurkhas would follow the Scotsmen to the summit of Tumbledown and then head south to attack Mount William from the flank. The Welsh Guards were in reserve. Each battalion attack was again to be supported by at least one battery of artillery and naval gunfire support. Morale was high on the British side of the lines, while it was beginning to plummet in and around Stanley.

The British used the time between the two Brigade level attacks move forward more ammunition, especially for the light guns and to dig in on the ground that had been gained. The Argentine artillery continued to fall on the captured hilltops and the casualties mounted. The British fired counterbattery fire in return and made life uncomfortable for the Argentine gunners.

Mount Tumbledown was occupied by men of the 5th Marine Battalion along with some troops from the 4th Infantry Regiment who had fallen back on this position. The Argentine Marines were better prepared for the miserable weather on the Falklands as they were based out of Tierra del Fuego at the southern end of Argentina. In addition, like most marines worldwide, they considered themselves to be an elite force even though they had the same conscript program as the Army did. Company N was dug in on the summit supported by the Army troops from 4th Regiment and a platoon of Marine engineers. Company O held the saddle between

Tumbledown and Mount William. Supporting both of these positions was B Company of the 6th Regiment, which had retreated from Two Sisters to the east slopes of Tumbledown.

Lt. Colonel Mike Scott created a simple plan to take Tumbledown. G Company would start the advance and after it had secured its objective, Left Flank Company would pass through their position and continue their attack to the rocks that marked the western edge of the summit. Right Flank Company would then continue the attack to the saddle between the summits where the Gurkhas would take over the advance. Scott also planned for a diversion to direct attention away from his main attack. Major Richard Bethell, who had served in the SAS before returning to the Scots Guards was to lead a small detachment from Headquarters Company and the Recon Platoon along the track to Stanley. They would be supported by a light armor troop from the Blues and Royals.

Bethell's attack initiated the action. His small group of men located the positions of M Company of the 5th Marines and launched an immediate attack. They took the Marines by surprise, but were greatly outnumbered. They managed to clear a couple of trench positions before casualties began to mount and Bethell elected to withdraw. The light tanks moved forward to cover the retreat, but one drove onto a mine and was destroyed. The remaining three tanks provided fire support onto Tumbledown and Mount William. The diversionary group had done its job, but at great cost. Two men had died and ten were wounded out a total of twenty infantrymen. The Argentine High Command moved O Company off the saddle between Tumbledown and Mount William to support M Company against what they thought was a battalion level attack [Scenarios 029 and 044].

This diversion allowed G Company to secure its objective with almost no resistance. However, when Left Flank Company moved forward they ran into the remnants of the 4th Regiment. This platoon sized group of men along with a platoon of Marines fought hard and the Guards pulled back to allow artillery fire to be brought onto their position. Once the barrage ended, the Guards moved forward once again. They were able to infiltrate the Argentine positions in the darkness and take out one position at a time using house clearing tactics. The Marine engineers supporting this position withdrew without orders and this allowed the attack to gain momentum. Major Kiszely personally led the attack of 15th Platoon and was one of the first men to reach the summit. Mopping up operations continued for some time, but the Guards were now in control of the high ground [Scenario 041]. Now it was time for Right Flank Company to push through and assume the assault. Meanwhile the Argentines realized that the attack along the Stanley Track was not the main British effort and O Company returned to their positions on the saddle. Company O launched a platoon sized counterattack, but this ran headlong into Right Flank's attack. A short range fight broke out and the Argentines were pushed back toward Mount William [Scenario 042]. As the sun began to rise, O Company was preparing another counterattack to try and stop the Guards attack. However, they were ordered to retreat to Stanley by General Jofre, their Brigade Commander. Another platoon sized counterattack was launched to cover the withdrawal of the infantry and Marines. Additional close quarter action took place between Right Flank Company and the Marines, but this ended when the Gurkhas pushed through the Guards and were finally able to secure the now abandoned summit of Mount William. Below them, they could see Argentine troops streaming into Stanley. Nine members of the 2nd Scots Guards were killed in the attack and 43 were wounded. Twenty-two Argentines died trying to defend the heights and more than 50 were wounded. More than half of these losses were from Army troops showing that although they had not done well in their first battle, if properly led, they would stand their ground.

Wireless Ridge lies to the east of Mount Longdon and is actually made up of two parallel ridges that run east-west with a marshy saddle between them. The more southerly of the two ridges is longer and becomes Cortley Ridge on the north side of Stanley Harbor. Both portions of Wireless Ridge were defended by the remnants of the 7th Regiment. A Company was dug in on the west facing slopes with the Recon Platoon and a group of dismounted cavalymen from the 10th Armored Car Squadron in support. The northern flank was held by C Company along the northern ridge. Headquarters Company, with a supporting platoon from the 2nd Airborne Regiment, held the center of the southern ridge. The remnants of B Company were in reserve near Moody Brook Barracks and a company from the 3rd Regiment was nearby on the south side of the track to Stanley. Facing these troops were 2nd Para, once again attached to 3rd Commando Brigade. They had been flown from Fitzroy to the area of Estancia House to prepare for their attack. Lt Colonel Chaundler felt that the Argentines were expecting an attack from the west. Consequently, he planned to attack from the north. A and B Companies would attack the main positions of C Company while D Company flanked their defenses and then pushed down the southerly ridge toward Moody Brook. Chaundler had a troop of the Blues and Royals as well as two batteries of artillery and a frigate in support.

The attack started on time and C Company was completely overwhelmed by the amount of firepower they were receiving. The artillery, tank fire, and covering fire from Support Company squashed their will to resist and they were falling back before the paratrooper arrived at their positions. A and B Companies stopped on their objectives, but D Company pushed on as planned [Scenario 052]. D Company was able to push through A Company's positions on the saddle and southerly ridge without slowing down, but the troopers of the 10th Armored Car Squadron counterattacked into their flank. This forced the company to slow and allowed other Argentine units to move towards the fight. This counterattack was the only occasion when armored vehicles fought other armored vehicles. The Blues and Royals had moved up to support D Company while the Mortar Platoon of 10th Squadron was supporting the dismounted troopers. The action was inclusive [Scenario 030]. When D Company finally was able to move east along the ridge again, they were hit by their own artillery and then ran into the positions of Headquarters Company. The infantrymen of 3rd Regiment launched another uphill counterattack from the area around Moody Brook. This attack actually reached the top of the ridge, but faltered there and the paratroopers were able to throw back the few infantry who had tried to hold the ridgeline. This ruptured the morale of the Argentine troops and they started to fall back on Stanley. As the sun rose on June 14th, the paratroopers could see hundreds of Argentine troops retreating from Tumbledown and Mount William. They directed every weapon they could find on these troops and made their retreat even more miserable.

General Moore wanted to keep the pressure on the Argentines, even if it meant a daylight attack. He ordered the Welsh Guards to seize Sapper Hill, the last high ground before Stanley. The Welshmen and Marines were loaded onto helicopters to move them quickly into their forming up area. However, two Sea Kings, carrying 9th Troop of the 40th Commando, overshot the LZ by more than two miles and flared to land on the track to Stanley, right at the base of Sapper Hill. The Argentine Marines from M Company on Sapper Hill were angered by the British audacity and opened fire with every weapon that would bear. The Sea Kings shuddered with hits, but managed to unload their troops and take off. Marine fought Marine in desperate firefight, the last skirmish of the war. The Argentines even counterattacked down the hill, trying to overrun the British positions. British machine gun fire beat back the attack. M Company was ordered to retreat to Stanley as the remainder of the Welsh Guards and the tanks of the Blues and Royals became visible moving down the track [Scenario 000].

White flags began to appear over Stanley and the British High Command ordered a cease fire. With General Moore's permission, Colonel Rose, the commander of the SAS on the Falklands tried to contact the Argentine High Command about surrender. He found Rod Bell, the fluent Spanish speaker and used a short-wave radio to

contact a civilian doctor in Stanley. The doctor agreed to try and bring an Argentine representative to her radio set. She was able to accomplish this and General Mendoza, the commander of the Argentine forces on the Falklands agreed to meet Rose and Bell. General Mendoza changed some of the wording of the surrender document to placate Argentine honor to some degree, but ultimately he agreed to surrender all of the troops on East Falkland. General Moore met with him later in the day to sign the document. General Mendoza was resplendent in his dress uniform while General Moore was damp, dirty and smelled like a man who had lived in the field for weeks on end. After the short ceremony, General Moore asked to meet some of the civilians in Stanley and he helped them to celebrate their freedom.

The surrender process went fairly smoothly. The two regiments of infantry on West Falkland agreed to surrender also as they had no realistic source of supply now that Stanley had fallen and they were already subsisting mainly on mutton from the surrounding hills. Since there was still some fear that Argentina would continue the war with air and naval attacks, the senior officers were held prisoner while the enlisted men and junior officers were repatriated on *Canberra* and *Norland*. Many of the Argentine enlisted men had never experienced the conditions of a luxury liner, such as beds, before. Since Argentine logistical efforts had been sub-par in many regards, the men gorged themselves on the available food. Many had lived on a thin soup for days on end and they found it ironic that their captors treated them better than their own Army. While Argentina never signed a peace treaty with Britain, the feared attacks never materialized. All of the prisoners were eventually released, even Commander Astiz who was wanted by France and The Netherlands for murders allegedly committed during the Dirty War.

The results of the war were profound for the residents of the Falklands. They no longer had to fear becoming part of Argentina, a country they felt no love for. Argentina changed too. When the people found out how badly the war had gone, the military junta was other thrown and a civilian government took their place. Britain built a new airstrip on East Falkland, one that was capable of handling high-performance fighters and the garrison was increased significantly. A war that had started in part because Argentina wanted to take advantage of British military cost cutting ended with Britain increasing spending significantly to protect what they had fought for. While Argentina has never renounced its claims to the *Islas Malvinas*, they have made no threats or attempts to take them back either. The greatest impact of the war was on the families of the men who lost their lives fighting for their country, those that came back with wounded bodies and those that came back with wounded souls. Unofficial, but probably accurate, estimates suggest that more men who fought in the Falklands and returned to their homes have committed suicide after the war than those who died during it.

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