

AIR CAMPAIGNS OVER THE WESTERN DESERT 1941-1942



OFFICIAL SUPPLEMENT FOR BLOOD RED SKIES
AIR STRIKE! BY ANDY CHAMBERS





Welcome to the Western Desert! It's November 1942, the Afrika Korps is in full retreat after the decisive battle of El Alamein.

Ahead of the pursuing 8th Army the RAF's Desert Airforce seek to pound the Axis forces from the air as they flee towards the Libyan-Tunisian border. A desperate struggle for air superiority rages as RAF Spitfires and Tomahawks confront predatory Luftwaffe Bf109s and the deadly Fw190 only just arriving in the desert theatre.

Sandstorm is a two-player campaign system for Blood Red Skies, pitching you head first into the swirling furball over the Egyptian and Libyan deserts. You'll take the role of a British & Commonwealth wing commander, or a German Oberstleutnant, managing your squadrons of pilots as they soar across the desert sands!

Pilots will grow in stature over the course of the campaign, starting out as untested rookies and hopefully ending as battle-hardened aces. Every single engagement, however large or small will give your pilots the chance to make a name for themselves. This campaign system is designed to work alongside the brand new Air Strike! supplement, using several of the new scenarios and the rules for attacking ground targets to great effect.

URGENT

FROM : ROYAL AIR FORCE, MIDDLE EAST, OFFICE OF AVM SI

TO : ALL WING COMMANDERS, WESTERN DESERT AIR FORCE

REF NO: 30452, 9 NOVEMBER 1942

Before all operations begin at 0500 hours, you are ordered to procure the following items:

- · Suitable aircraft and Advantage Bases, along with the necessary aircraft and trait cards
- · Six-sided dice (d6)
- · Measuring sticks, cloud/barrage balloon markers, boom and zoom chits
- · The Blood Red Skies Air Strike! supplement
- · A completed set of squadron rosters

Wing Commanders need to agree on a campaign objective. This could be playing a set number of games, or one of the options suggested below.

- · Race for Ace: Play until one squadron gains its first Ace!
- Ground Pounders: Play 5 games whichever squadron destroyed the most ground targets at the end of the campaign is the winner.
- · Victory Scoring: Play 5 games whichever squadron shot down the most aircraft at the end of the campaign is the winner.

Creating Squadrons

At the beginning of the campaign, both players must create an air group consisting of one or more squadrons. Each player will track their air group and its valuable pilots over the course of several missions, with the pilots growing in experience and learning new skills - providing they survive.

You can choose your airgroup by simply following the standard squadron build rules found in Air Strike! (pg.xx) I.E. Choose a campaign maximum points between you (say 1500pts), and a max year (say 1941) for all aircraft involved. Then pay points as found on the relevant aircraft cards and pilots as per the costs listed in Air Strike! (pg.xx.)

Alternatively, begin by choosing up to 12 aircraft per squadron from the available types below. Players are welcome to field a mix of aircraft in a squadron, reflecting the confusion of air warfare over the desert. However, it is recommended that players have at least one squadron of single-engined fighters of the same type to start with. If mixing aircraft types within a squadron you must start with at least half (rounding up) as the same type. I.E: 5x Bf109Es, 3x Bf109Fs and 2x Bf110Cs.

Available Aircraft

"It's your life or theirs. This is war."

Clive "Killer" Caldwell

Players begin the campaign with 8 pilots of varying experience in each squadron. Use the optional *Creating Pilots* rules (Pg.7) to flesh out each pilot and determine their starting pilot skill.

Once each player has created their Pilots, they should check on the initial condition of their starting aircraft by rolling 2d6 for each aircraft

Roll	Result
2	Clapped Out: The Aircraft gains the Poor Quality trait for the remainder of the Campaign
3-5	Unfettled: The Aircraft gains the Sluggish trait in the next Battle.
6-11	Well-Oiled: No additional effects.
12	Tuned Up: The Aircraft increases its Speed by 1(+50mph) for the remainder of the Campaign.

Starting Earlier

These campaign rules are perfect for fighting the earlier battles of the desert war. For campaigns set in 1941, the Allies lose access to the Spitfire Vb and gain Grumman Marlets. The Axis lose access to the Fw 190A and Bf 109G, but gain access to the cheaper Bf 109E.

British & Commonwealth Squadrons	German Squadrons
P-40 Warhawk	Bf 109F
Hurricane Mk II	Bf 109G
Beaufighter IC	Bf 110C
Spitfire Vb	Fw 190A



Campaign System

Step 1: Mission Type

First, players should roll 3d6 on the table below to work out which scenario will be played next.

Roll	Result
3-5	Bounced! (Air Strike! Pg. 52)
6-8	Fighter Sweep (Air Strike! Pg. 51)
9-11	Dogfight (Air Strike! Pg. 50)
12-13	Priority Target (Air Strike! Pg. 60)
14-15	Front Lines (Air Strike! Pg. 68)
17	Target of Opportunity (Air Strike! Pg. 70)
18	Surprise Attack (Air Strike! Pg. 62)

Step 2: Determine Battle Size and Assemble Squadrons

Next, players should roll 1d6 on the table below to determine the size of the next battle. This sets the maximum points limit for the pilots and aircraft involved in the battle.

Roll	Result
1-2	Skirmish: A chance encounter between a handful of aircraft (500pts a side)
3-5	Engagement: A small battle between several elements of aircraft (1000pts a side)
6	Furball!: Time to scramble the whole air wing! (1500pts a side)

If the scenario includes a ground target (Priority Target, Surprise Attack, Targets of Opportunity and Front Lines), roll 2d6 on the table below to determine the nature of the target. Use the result in brackets for naval/coastal targets.

Tropicalisation

The biggest hazard posed to aircraft engines by tropical climates was not enemy fire, or bad weather but sand and dust.

If dust got into the inner workings of an engine, it would drastically shorten its operational lifespan, increasing the amount of necessary maintainance and the number of times parts would need to replaced. Studies made by the USAAF later in the war discovered that the lifespan of an engine in such climates might only be 20-30 hours between maintaince.

As such, many manufacturers produced "tropicalised" versions of their aircraft, fitting them with dust filters to protect the inner workings of the engine. In some cases, these filters had a dramatic impact on

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Players should create elements by choosing pilots and aircraft from their squadron, up to the rolled battle size.

If the scenario specifies that one player should add an element of free bombers to their squadron, choose one of the aircraft options from the list below to create your element.

British & Commonwealth Squadrons	German Squadrons
Blenheim IV	Ju 87D
B-25 Mitchell	Ju 88A

British & Commonwealth Transports	German Transports
Bristol Bombay	Ju 52

Roll	Skirmish	Engagement	Furball
2-5	Truck Column	Bridge (Small Freighter)	Artillery Position
6-8	Bridge (Torpedo Boat)	Tank Column (Large Freighter)	HQ Compound (Destroyer)
9-11	Artillery Position (Small Freighter)	Bunker Complex (Destroyer)	Airfield (Cruiser)
12	Two Targets: Roll twice, ignoring this	Two Targets: Roll twice, ignoring this	Two Targets: Roll twice, ignoring this result
	result if rolled again.	result if rolled again.	if rolled again.

Step 3: Play Mission

Get the aircraft in the air and play out the scenario with your selected forces!

Post Battle Step 4: Experience and Advancement

After each battle, pilots gain Experience (XP) for meeting the following criteria.

- +1 XP if a pilot survives a battle
- +1 XP if a pilot scores a hit on a ground target
- + X XP if a pilot shoots down an enemy pilot (X = Enemy Pilot Skill)

After each battle, the squadron gains XP for meeting the following criteria.

- +1 XP for each surviving aircraft in the squadron
- +2 XP for each enemy aircraft shot down
- +5 XP if the squadron achieved its objectives

Pilots may spend XP on the following:

- Spend 10XP to increase their Pilot Skill by +1 (Maximum Pilot Skill 4.)
- Once a pilot reaches Pilot Skill 4 and has scored 5 kills, they may spend 10XP to increase their Pilot Skill to 5, and choose an Ace Skill from the appropriate National List.
- Once a pilot reaches Pilot Skill 5 and has scored 15 kills, they may spend 10XP to choose a second Ace Skill from the appropriate National List.

Squadrons may spend XP on the following:

- Spend 3XP to recruit a new pilot at Pilot Skill 2
- Spend 5XP to purchase an aircraft from the Squadron's aircraft list.

British & Commonwealth Ace Skills	German Ace Skills
Mother Hen	Eagle Eyes
Cool Under Fire	High Roller
True Grit	Tough
Loner	Accurate
Acrobatic	Tactical Wizard
Slippery	I Know Your Type
Set Them Up	Master Tactician
Blackout Master	Giant Killer
Killer Instinct	Killer Instinct
Aggressive	Tail Snapper

British & Commonwealth Doctrines	German Doctrines
Defensive Tactics	Wall of Lead
Big Game Hunters	Intruders
Intruders	Big Game Hunters
Slashing Attack	Bait and Switch
Sustained Dive	Aggressive Tactics
Wall of Lead	Sustained Dive
Dive Away	Dive Away
Head-On Attack	High Altitude Performance
Outnumbered	Seasoned Pilots
Mixed Bag	Mobile Front

"Marseille was extremely handsome. He had girl friends everywhere, and they kept him so busy that he was sometimes so worn out that he had to be grounded."

Hauptmann Johannes Steinhoff

Post Battle Step 5: Aircraft Damage

If an aircraft was shot down in the preceding battle, roll 2d6 on the table below to determine the aircraft's fate.

Roll	Result
2-3	Wrecked: The aircraft is little more than scrap metal. Remove the aircraft from your campaign roster.
4-5	Catastrophic Damage: The aircraft has limped back to base against all the odds. The aircraft cannot be used in the next mission and gains the Poor Quality trait for the remainder of the campaign (if it doesn't have it already.)
6-10	Light Damage: The aircraft has seen better days. The aircraft cannot be used in the next mission.
11-12	Undamaged: By some miracle, the aircraft is completely unscathed. No further effects.

Post Battle Step 7: Update Rosters and Start New Turn

Once both players have updated their campaign rosters, return to Step 1 and begin a new campaign turn!

Post Battle Step 6: Pilot Casualties

If a pilot's aircraft was shot down in the preceding battle, roll 2d6 on the table below to determine the pilot's fate.

Roll	Result
2-4	Killed in Action: The pilot has been killed or is missing in action. Remove them from your campaign roster.
5-7	Wounded in Action: The pilot has suffered a serious injury from enemy fire or a hard landing. They cannot participate in the next mission.
8-12	Unscathed: The pilot is miraculously unharmed - bar a few cuts, bruises and singed eyebrows.



		:Fliegerfuhrer A		Squadro		ıstained 1	Dive		
		Jagdgeschwad		Fischadler" Doctrin	e:				
Aircraft:	Code:	Condition:	Pts:	Pilot Name:	PS:	Vics:	XP:	Notes:	Pts
Fw 190A	4(W) + ~	Tuned-Up	47	ObFw. Helmut von Essen	2	0	4	Injured, miss next game. Shot down by Flt. Sgt Derek Winter in P-40 Warhawk	25
Fw 190A	3(W) + ~	Clapped Out	47	Ob Fw. Ingolf Schafer	5	6	3	Eagle Eyes, recently gained Ace. Medieval Knight nose art.	100
Fw 190A	5(W)+~	Well-Oiled	47	Lt. Axel Strobel	3	1	4	Injured, miss next game. Shot down by Flt. Lt Rodney King in Spitfire Vb.	50
Fw 19074	6(Y)+~	Unfettled	47	ObLt. Hermann Falk	3	3	7	Acquired Fw 190 after crashing a Bf 109G. Shot down by Flt. Lt Chris Campbell in Spitfire Vb but survived unscathed.	50
Bf 109G	5(Y)+~	Well-Oiled	37	Lt. Gunther Gass	2	2	1	New arrival to squadron, replacing Ob Lt. Fabian Messner after he was KIA by Flt. Lt Chris Campbell	25
Bf 109G	4(7)+~	Well-Oiled	37	ObLt. Otto Leitzke	3	3	3	Working with new wingman after Messner KIA. Promising pilot.	50
Bf 109F	6(W) + ~	Unfettled	36	Lt. Eike Stauss	2	1	9	Lots of assists but few Vics to his name - almost able to promote to PS 3.	25
Bf 109F	3(Y) + ~	Clapped Out	36	ObLt. Lukas Achterberg	3	2	4	Injured, miss next game. Shot down by Flt. Sgt David Makepeace in Hurricane 99, plane survived unscathed.	50
Bf 109F	1(W) + ~	Unfettled	36	Lt. Malthe Andres	5	11	3	Tactical Wizard, Killer Instinct. Bird of Prey nose art. Staffelkapitan (8. Stf) and highest scoring ace so far. Iron Cross holder.	100
Bf 109F	2(W) + ~	Well-Oiled	36	ObLt. Sven Jollenbeck	3	2	8	Approaching promotion to PS4. Wingman to Hpt. Andres - helps set up lots of kills. Bird of Preu nose art.	50
Bf 109F	2(Y)+~	Tuned-Up	36	Ob Lt. Diethelm Vogel	3	1	1	New arrival to squadron, replacing Lt. Wolfgang Beyer after he was KIA by Flt. Sqt David Makepeace in Hurricane 99.	50
Bf 109F	1(4)+~	Clapped Out	36	Hpt. Jan Grunberg	4	4	9	Staffelkapitan (g. Stf), new wingman in ObLt. Vogel. Lucky Dice nose art. Very close to Ace status.	75

Roll o	f H	one	our:
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3.11.42: ObFw. Hartwig Nussbaum (3), Lt. Florentin Schwartz (4) 10.11.42: ObLt. Sepp Kiefer 17.11.42: ObLt. Fabian Messner (2), Lt. Wolfgang Beyer

The Christmas Post

The fluid nature of the war in the Western Desert usually saw one side or the other at the end of a long tenuous supply line with ammo, food and most importantly fuel dwindling rapidly. Often the only way to deliver much needed supplies was to replenish these units from the air. However, this was a dangerous undertaking as the transports would often be operating well within the range of enemy interceptors.

Interceptors and Escorts

The player with the largest number of planes in their force is considered to be the intercepting player. If points or numbers of planes are equal each player rolls a dice for initiative. The high roller is the one intercepting and has the option to use the 'Numbers' Theatre card as one of their Theatre card choices.

Elements

The intercepting player may deploy a maximum of three elements.

The escorting player may deploy a maximum of two elements. The escorting player is assigned one extra element of transport aircraft, comprised of three twin-engine or tri-engine transports.

Starting Advantage Level

The escorting player can opt to have either have:

- All escorts begin Advantaged, and all bombers begin Disadvantaged.
 or
- All bombers begin Advantaged, and all escorts begin Disadvantaged.

Roll a D6 for each intercepting plane on the tabletop, on a 1-2 it starts Disadvantaged, a 3-4 Neutral, and on a 5-6 it starts Advantaged.

Deployment Sequence

The escorting player begins by selecting one edge of the table and deploying their bomber element within 3" of it. The bomber element must be deployed at least 9" from the table sides.

The first element of escorts is deployed by the escorting player anywhere within 18" of the same table edge. If the escorting element consists entirely of twin engine aircraft or planes with the Deep Pockets trait the element may be deployed anywhere on the table.

The second escorting element is placed in high cover with the High Cover marker placed anywhere on any table edge by the opposing player.

The intercepting player then deploys one of his elements as a High cover marker anywhere on any table edge. The remainder of his elements are deployed on the tabtletop more than 21" from any enemy planes.

Blood Red Skies & Bolt Action

Combine this scenario with Scenario 3: Key Positions from the Bolt Action core rulebook. Instead of randomly rolling for objectives, the number of objectives used is equal to the number of supply crates jettisoned by transports in this scenario.

Leaving the Battle Area

Transports that exit the table leave the scenario altogether. No Boom chits are inflicted for planes lost in this way.

If an escort or interceptor leaves the table it re-enters play on the following turn if it passes a Manoeuvre test. Redeploy the returning plane anywhere along the edge it left from and roll for its starting Advantage level. If the test is failed the plane returns to base. One Boom chit is inflicted on a squadron for each plane lost in this way.

Game Length

The scenario continues until the intercepting squadron(s) or the escorting squadron(s) are driven off by accumulated Boom chits.

Special Rules

The Transports

The transports are carrying vital supplies to the front. They begin the game laden with these supplies. See the laden rules on Air Strike! page 33.

The Dropzone

Place a marker in the centre of the table. If a transport aircraft chooses to remove its laden marker within 6" of this marker, it is considered to have successfully jettisoned its supplies.

Victory

Each aircraft shot down is worth the following number of victory points.

- Escort = 1 Victory Point
- Interceptor = 2 Victory Points
- Transport* = 3 Victory Points

If a transport survives the scenario (including by leaving the tabletop) the VPs are awarded to the escorting player. If a transport managed to jettison its supplies within 6" of the marker, the VPs awarded are doubled! A transport that jettisoned supplies but did not survive the scenario only earns 3 Victory Points.

If a transport is shot down the VPs are awarded to the intercepting player.

The player with the greatest total number of Victory Points at the end of the game is the winner.

Creating Pilots

There is nothing better than getting to know your pilots and forging them over time into a well-drilled and highly skilled airman. Feel free to develop your own storylines or get started by using the following optional rules.

First, choose your nation and roll 2d6 on the table below to determine the pilot's previous experience.

Previous Experience

Allied Roll:	Axis Roll:	Result:
2-8	2-5	Unproven: The Pilot begins the Campaign at Pilot Skill 2
9-11	6-8	Experienced: The Pilot begins the Campaign at Pilot Skill 3
12	9-12	Veteran: The Pilot begins the Campaign at Pilot Skill 4

Add some colour to the picture of your pilot by rolling 3d6 three times, once for each column to give your pilot some personality traits.



Having determined the pilot's previous combat experience, roll 2d6 to determine their pre-war background.

Pre-War Background

Roll:	Result:
2	Professional Athlete
3	Military Pilot
4	Teacher
5	Academic
6	Civil Servant
7	Officer Cadet
8	Commercial Pilot
9	Farmer
10	Shopkeeper
11	Labourer
12	Circus Pilot

Personality

Roll:	Trait 1:	Trait 2:	Trait 3:
3	Adventurous	Precise	Sneaky
4	Conscientious	Quarrelsome	Impulsive
5	Cultured	Aloof	Surly
6	Dependable	Unruly	Impulsive
7	Discreet	Bossy	Vulgar
8	Fair	Conceited	Obnoxious
9	Fearless	Ambitious	Assertive
10	Observant	Cheerful	Considerate
11	Impartial	Creative	Decisive
12	Independent	Disciplined	Earnest
13	Optimistic	Energetic	Enterprising
14	Persistent	Focused	Friendly
15	Capable	Genuine	Good natured
16	Charming	Jovial	Hard working
17	Cowardly	Insightful	Logical
18	Confident	Mature	Polite

Now your new knight of the sky needs a name, one that will soon be splashed across propaganda posters and newspaper headlines! Roll 3d6 twice and refer to the appropriate column of the table below.

"Telling Marseille that he was grounded was like telling a small child that it could not go out and play. He sometimes acted like one too."

Oberstleutnant Werner Schroer

Names

Roll:	British & Commonwealth First Names:	British & Commonwealth Surnames:	German First Names:	German Surnames:
3	Ted	Easton	Julius	Kahler
4	Jonah	Hadley	Otto	Falk
5	Sebastian	Douglas	Felix	Seidel
6	Monty	Barlow	Reiner	Eberhardt
7	Lionel	Yoxall	Matthias	Von Essen
8	Clarence	Braddock	Helmut	Weiner
9	Lloyd	Courtenay	Lutz	Warner
10	Mark	Leonard	Hermann	Konigsmann
11	Rufus	Adcock	Gunther	Strobel
12	Gordon	Winterbottom	Axel	Diefenbach
13	Donald	Barker	Rudi	Schultheis
14	Leigh	Hightower	Karl	Schafer
15	Jimmy	Howland	Erik	Gass
16	Patrick	Padmore	Jost	Hofmeister
17	Richard	Shepherd	Willy	Jundt
18	Sidney	Spooner	Johannes	Gerber

Once you've named your pilot, consult the table below to find an appropriate rank. You'll only need one Squadron Leader, and most pilots will be a Flight Lieutenant or its equivalent. Rookie pilots might still only be flying officers or its equivalent. There were also many non-commissioned officers working as pilots and aircrew.

Rank

British & Commonwealth Ranks	German Ranks
Flight Sergeant	Oberfeldwebel
Pilot Officer	Leutnant
Flying Officer	Oberleutnant
Flight Lieutenant	Hauptmann
Squadron Leader	Major

Miniature Photo
Desert P-40 Cutout

Why not add some further detail to your pilot by rolling 1d6 on a table of your choice to generate the nose art that they've emblazoned on their aircraft. You could limit this to veteran (PS 4) pilots who you feel have earned this honour!

Nose Art

Roll:	Animal Motifs	Mythical Beasts	Cartoons
1	Wolf	Dragon	(Un)Lucky Dice
2	Bird of Prey	Pegasus	Fan of Playing Cards
3	Cat	Gryphon	The Ace of Spades
4	Wasp	Mermaid	Bugs Bunny
5	Shark Mouth	Imp/Devil	Mickey Mouse
6	Fox	Satyr	Grim Reaper

STATE STATE OF THE	Roll:	Axis Celebrities	Allied Celebrities	Weapons
	1	Kristina Soderbaum	Marlene Dietrich	Trident
	2	Lale Andersen	Rita Hayworth	Scimitar
	3	Zarah Leander	Ava Gardner	Sheaf of Arrows
	4	Margot Heilscher	Greta Garbo	Longsword
	5	Lilian Harvey	Grace Kelly	Aerial Bomb
	6	Renate Muller	Betty Grable	Battle Axe

New Cards

Bomb Shackles

YEAR: 1942

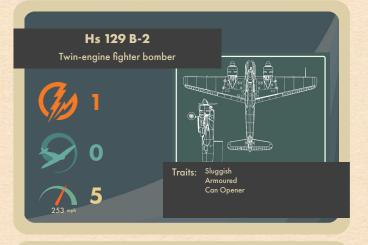
Pts: Free

PLAY:

Play this card during deployment.

Can Opener with high velocity guns to enable then to punch through the armour of tanks On a plane with this trait attacking a ground target with the "Armoured" Quality DO:

POSITIVE AIRCRAFT TRAIT





As engine power grew it became easier to convert aircraft for bombing duties.

PLAY:





Bomb Shackles

YEAR: 1942

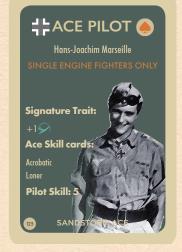
Pts: Free

PLAY:

DO:







Bomb Shackles

Pts: Free

PLAY:

DO:

Can Opener

On a plane with this trait attacking a ground target with the "Armoured" Quality

DO:



POSITIVE AIRCRAFT TRAIT





Squadron Roster Sheet

			Notes: Pts:									
ROSTER			Vics: XP:									
SQUADRON		Doctrine:	Pilot Name: PS:									
	Air Group Name:	Squadron Name:	Aircraft: Condition: Pts:							Squadron XP:	Roll of Honour:	

BLOOD RED SKIES





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P-40 Warhawk Squadron SKU: 772211012 £20.00 / \$32.00



Bf 109G Squadron SKU: 772212006 £20.00 / \$32.00

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