

BLOOD RED SKIES[®]



FAQ & ERRATA

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This document has been compiled as an official FAQ for *Blood Red Skies* from various questions and answers within the gaming community. All answers on this document have been edited by BRS' designer, Andy Chambers, and can be considered as official.



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BLOOD RED SKIES®



FAQ & ERRATA

Action Deck & Trait Cards

Q: *Is the Action deck built as the player wishes or shuffled before play begins?*

A: The deck is built with all the relevant cards. Any Theatre (e.g., Bad Weather, Clear Skies, Numbers, Radar Support) or Ace (e.g., Tactical Wizard) cards effecting deployment are removed and played during the deployment phase then the remaining cards in the Action deck are shuffled before the first draw.

Q: *Action cards, is there a reason that the backs are different when we shuffle them together? I would figure that the Ace cards and the Action cards would carry a same back so that there isn't the ability to know what is coming?*

A: It's imagined that, under normal circumstances, you'll be cycling through cards in your hand pretty fast, so knowing what you'll get off the top of the deck next is not a big factor and more than balanced off by your opponent being able to see what cards types you currently have in your hand (Theatre and Doctrine cards have different backs too, by the way). If you find it off-putting some players use card sleeves with paper inserts to blank off the card backs for full fog of war.

Q: *Does the vulnerable trait for the Zero apply every time someone shoots at them or is it a card that I can choose to play to get a new card into my hand?*

A: All Negative Trait cards (red cards) are in play all the time.

Q: *Is the Agile Positive Trait card for multi-engine aircraft placed into the Action deck like other trait cards?*

A: No, just like Negative Trait cards (red cards) Positive Trait cards, like Agile, are in play all the time.

Q: *If you have a card like Bad Weather, does it mean every squadron starts with a Boom chit, or is it player's choice?*

A: The card states that all squadrons start with a Boom chit.

Q: *Deep Pockets card. My plane is hit, do I play the card as soon as it's hit, or do I wait until after the dodge roll?*

A: Deep Pockets is played when the squadron receives the Boom chit. You get hit, the squadron takes Boom chit, then you play the Deep Pockets card. Your dodge is different as the dodge avoids the result of the hit on the target plane not the squadron.

If a plane is hit while Disadvantaged – and fails it's dodge – you'll have two Boom chits. One for being hit and another for being shot down. If Deep Pockets is played when hit and you still fail the dodge, you'll have only taken one chit from losing the airplane.

The wording makes it clear: it is applied when the Squadron takes a Boom Chit so the restriction of one card per plane per turn does not apply.

Q: *How does the Robust trait card work?*

A: Robust is played as reaction to a robust plane being attacked. It means you subtract 1  dice when shooting at the plane. No dice are lost from any Pilot Skill.

Q: *How does the Rapid Roll trait card work?*

A: Rapid Roll means you can make your 45 degree turn at the start of your move instead of the end (a bit like a more limited version of Tight Turn).

Q: *Can I play Heavy Hitter on an attack made using turrets?*

A: No, Heavy Hitter (and Buzz Saw) can only be played on shooting attacks made using a plane's forward pilot-controlled firepower.

Q: *When building an Action deck, you include a trait card for each plane, but how many others can you include?*

A: Page 14 of the *Air Strike* book details this – for a basic game of 1–6 planes a side include one Doctrine and two Theatre cards. In addition, one Trait card for each plane included, split evenly if multi-trait. Larger games include another Doctrine card per six aircraft. 'Always-on' Positive and Negative Traits like Agile and Vulnerable don't count towards the action deck as they're always in play.

Q: *Do Theatre and Doctrine cards all have to be different, or can you take the same cards multiple times?*

A: The intent is for them to be different cards. You can make a case for repeated Doctrine cards, I think. Such as if both squadrons are using Aggressive Tactics, the Doctrine card may be taken twice – although if you have the right bonus card traits that's probably unnecessary anyway. I can't imagine any good will come of allowing it for Theatre cards, however, as they tend to have unique and powerful effects that I certainly imagined to be one-offs when writing them. Even there though, for specific scenarios, you may want to show a 'very' heavy flak presence or an extremely dense cloud cover, in which case you can potentially make a case for it. For general play though you should keep them different.

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Q: *When aircraft are lost do you remove their trait card from the Action deck and if so, when?*

A: Yes, aircraft that are shot down or leave the tabletop no longer contribute their trait cards to the Action deck, likewise for Ace skills if the Ace is gone. Remove unsupported cards like these from the Action deck at the end of the turn that the relevant aircraft was removed.

Q: *If the total number of aircraft in your force is reduced do you lose Doctrine cards?*

A: No, the number of Doctrine cards is determined by the starting size of the force before deployment and does not change during the game.

Q: *What activates first, Heavy Flak Presence (HFP) Theatre card or the Low Altitude Performance (LAP) Doctrine card?*

A: Flak first – the HFP card can be played as a reaction when the plane activates. The LAP card moves the plane from Disadvantaged to Neutral, but at the point of activation it is Disadvantaged, so the Flak can shoot first because it's a reaction.

Q: *When playing a Ram attack does the aircraft initiating the attack need to have Advantage on the target (i.e., it says it's resolved as a head-on shooting so do the normal shooting restrictions apply)?*

A: Against a single-engine aircraft yes, the aircraft initiating the ram will need to be at a higher Advantage level. Against a multi-engine aircraft, a shooting attack can be made without regard to relative Advantage levels so the same is true of a ramming attack.

Q: *When using Defensive Tactics to turn when attacked is it possible to change the attack to being head on or would that still count as a deflection shot.*

A: When using Defensive Tactics, the shot is (re)calculated from the defending plane's new facing. So, if its new position is head-on then it is a head-on attack.

Q: *How do bonus cards work in combination with Doctrine cards? Specifically, reaction traits like Great Climb with High Altitude Performance or Seasoned Pilots?*

A: Traits played as bonus cards with a Doctrine do not always apply their trait effects. The primary purposes of using bonus cards with Doctrines is to retain the Doctrine card itself for further use in the same turn.

Q: *How is the Action deck used in a multi-player game, does each player have their own deck or are the cards pooled together? What happens with Theatre and Doctrine cards?*

A: Per page 12 of *Air Strike*, each player has their own Action deck built based on the aircraft that will be under their command. Available Theatre and Doctrine cards are split up between the players' Action decks on a given side before the deployment phase as they see fit.

Q: *Why do some named Aces not include 'Jet Fighter' as an available type even though they flew jets in the Korean War?*

A: Some of the Aces were published before MiG Alley became available and only WW2 jets were considered, on others it's an oversight – my bad. The following Aces can also fly jets:

- James Edgar 'Johnnie' Johnson
- 'Pappy' Boyington
- 'Gabby' Gabreski
- Wolfgang 'Bombo' Schenk

Q: *Are Ace skills tied to specific Pilots or can they be played on any Pilot Skill 5 aircraft?*

A: Ace skills are assigned to specific pilots before deployment begins and, with exception of 'support' skills like Mother Hen, can only be played on the Ace they are assigned to.

Aircraft Data

Q: *Is squadron synonymous with 'your entire force' or does it mean 'a part of your force'? For example, do you could have a squadron of Spitfires and a squadron of Hurricanes, or do both count as a single 'squadron'?*

A: A squadron (sqn) is representative of part of your main force, and while it might be all of it you could potentially field several squadrons on the table. For example, in a bomber escort mission you have bomber sqn and an Escort sqn. Each sqn is then further sub-divided into elements as dictated by the scenario for deployment. In smaller scenarios each side is likely to be represented by just a single squadron, but the rule of thumb is that any time different types of planes are being used (e.g., Hurricanes and Spitfires) they are treated for purpose of the rules as different squadrons.

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Q: What represents a squadron?

A: As a rule of thumb, groups of different aircraft types (i.e., bombers and fighters, or different types of fighters) are represented as different squadrons. It's also sensible to group together aircraft into squadrons of six or so aircraft. For organising your own scenarios, the number of aircraft will be governed by the points costs in your scenario and currently there is not a maximum number of aircraft per sqn. Historically speaking, squadrons would have had an average of 12 aircraft but could have as many as 18 aircraft, although probably not all serviceable and some would be used for spare parts; availability of pilots was also a major factor.

Addenda: As of Air Strike, squadrons are specified as being 'two to eight aircraft of the same type' (page 40).

Q: If an aircraft has 0 Firepower can it still shoot? Similarly, if Agility 0, can it still pass manoeuvre tests and try to dodge enemy shooting?

A: Yes, in both cases use the Pilot Skill alone. Aircraft with no forward guns are denoted as '-' Firepower or a 360 icon on older cards to show turret Firepower instead. Note that multi-engine aircraft do not normally add Pilot Skill to manoeuvre tests, including dodges, unless they are rated as Agile. So, a multi-engine, non-Agile, Agility 0 aircraft would automatically fail a dodge test unless it was a deflection shot where it could substitute Speed for Agility.

Aircraft Initiative

Q: How do we determine tie-breaks for Speed if both aircraft have the same listed Speed values (i.e., A6M5 Zero vs Bf 109E)?

A: Roll off at the beginning of the game, highest roller has the faster planes for tie-breaks in that game.

Movement & Manoeuvring

Q: How do I outmanoeuvre an enemy aircraft?

A: You compare the Pilot Skill of both pilots – if the attacker is better, the target automatically loses an Advantage level. If they are even or the target is better, the target makes a Manoeuvre Test and if it fails it loses an Advantage level.

Q: Minimum move? Rules basically say a plane must move its minimum move. Does that mean if it can't it simply crashes?

A: If it can't for some reason then it immediately becomes Disadvantaged and if a Disadvantaged plane cannot move its

minimum then it crashes and counts as shot down awarding a Boom chit in the process.

Q: What happens when two bases overlap? If bases overlap, can one or either plane fire in arc?

A: In this case, if a plane's base would end its move overlapping another and cannot legally avoid this by slowing down or speeding up (for instance) the plane is moved directly forward the minimum needed until it clears the obstructing base. I'd justify this as a pilot error leading to an overshoot. This does not affect either planes Advantage situation. In theory this could involve planes exceeding their move distance in this case, to prevent someone using this to their advantage (it happens!) a plane that overshoots cannot use a Pilot Action that turn.

Clouds, Tailing & Wingmen

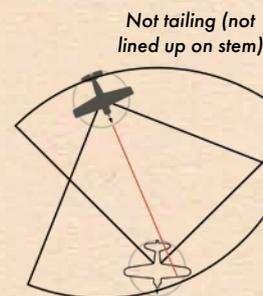
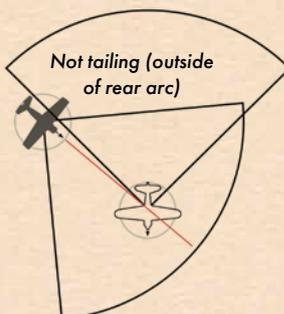
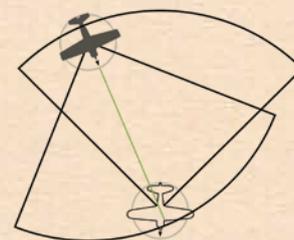
Q: What happens with Advantage level when aircraft are deployed in clouds at the beginning of the game? Are they 'pre-set' to being Neutral automatically or do they still roll for starting Advantage? If they roll, do Theatre and Doctrine cards still affect the roll?

A: Aircraft starting in clouds are only set to Neutral when they activate, so they will still roll for starting Advantage level in scenarios where this is called for. This will affect the initiative sequence on the first turn, and any Disadvantaged aircraft will not be able burn Advantage. Theatre and Doctrine cards can affect starting Advantage levels of aircraft deployed in clouds as normal.

Q: When are you classed as Tailing?

A: To tail you must be in the rear arc of the target with your direction arrow pointing at the stem and be within 6" range, additionally, you must not be Disadvantaged. You must not also be in the front arc of an enemy plane within 6", that is also not Disadvantaged and none of you can be in clouds!

Tailing



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Q: Could someone in the community come up with some better diagrams that explain tailing?

A: Yes they could, courtesy of Koin-Koin on the BRS forum:

Q: Does a Wingman in a cloud still act as a Wingman?

A: No – once in a cloud the aircraft cannot affect or be affected by other aircraft such as outmanoeuvring, wingman effect, cards that affect nearest aircraft, etc.

Q: When it comes to tailing, are we measuring a straight line from the front arrow to the target's flight peg?

A: Yes – the tailing aircraft arrow must point towards the flight peg of the target and the tailing planes peg must be within the rear arc of the enemy aircraft.

Q: If you end up tailing two or more planes do they all become Disadvantaged?

A: No – only one does, and it is the tailing planes choice which one.

Q: Are bombers (multi-engine aircraft) susceptible to tailing?

A: Yes, an older scenario special rule in the Battle of Britain starter set used to exempt bombers from being tailed while carrying bombs but this has been superseded by the *Air Strike* rules for being Laden.

Q: One thing that seemed odd is the rules don't prevent planes in the clouds from being wingmen and preventing tailing. Are you all playing it that way too?

A: Being in a cloud prevents a plane from shooting, being targeted, or otherwise interacting with another plane in any way. This includes the wingman effect and being 'closest plane' for outmanoeuvring purposes. Basically, planes in clouds effectively stop existing for as long as they're in there.

Q: How much of a plane's base must cover a cloud to receive the benefit?

A: Even just the smallest amount counts. This also counts for barrage balloons. However, when using the larger sabot bases for bombers and such, only the core original base part counts for being affected by clouds or barrage balloons.

Shooting

Q: If a plane starts within 6" of the front of another aircraft do they have to take the Snap Shot?

A: Rules as written are that you can shoot at an enemy plane that is in your front arc, within the range template distance, and is at a lower Advantage level (Advantaged to Neutral and Disadvantaged or Neutral to Disadvantaged). You don't have to shoot if you don't want to.

Q: If a plane starts within 6" in the front of another aircraft and does not take the Snap Shot can the opposition fire instead?

A: No – the opposition cannot act when they are the inactive player unless shot at in a head-to-head confrontation.

Q: With multiple squadrons how do Boom chits accumulate? Is it per squadron, or for the whole force? Can you have a situation where Boom chits knock out certain elements of one side while the others keep fighting?

A: Each squadron takes the Boom chits separately. So, if you have six Spitfires and six Hurricanes, and the Spitfires get 7 Boom chits they are off, but the Hurricanes remain.

Q: When shooting at a target, does the target just have to be in your front 90-degree arc or does there have to be a straight line from your front arrow to the target?

A: It only needs to be in the arc for shooting. However, when tailing a line has to be drawn straight from your front arrow to the centre peg of the enemy aircraft.

Q: Aircraft 1 can shoot at aircraft 2. However, aircraft 1 is in both the front and side arcs of the target, aircraft 2. Is it a head-on shot or a deflection shot? How is it decided?

A: Draw a straight line from the center post of the attacker to the centre post of the target to see which arc of the target it passes through.

*Q: 1) Can you shoot through friendly planes?
2) Can you shoot through enemy planes?
3) Does the 'Wingman Effect' work if there's another plane between the attacker and the Wingman?*

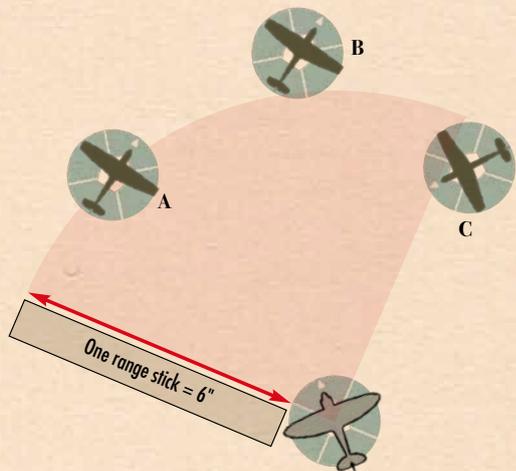
A: 1) Yes, 2) Yes, and 3) Yes.

Remember that the wingman has to have its front arc facing the attacker to have the wingman effect.

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Q: In the diagram below, would attacking aircraft 'C' be a head-on or a deflection shot for the attacker?



A: The attacker cannot choose 'C' as a target because by going centre post to centre post the shot would have to come out of the side of the attacker.

Q: Does a critical hit affect a deflection shot?
A critical reduces the plane's agility by 1, but a deflection shot uses speed instead of agility.

A: yes - a critical hit reduces the total number of dodge dice

Turrets

Q: Aircraft with turret firepower can shoot at the end of an aircraft's activation – does the turreted aircraft need to have a higher Advantage level than the target?

A: No – turret shooting doesn't need to have Advantage to target an enemy aircraft.

Q: Does turret firepower shooting provoke a head-on attack if the target's forward arc is towards the shooter?

A: No, it does not.

Q: Do turrets act as 'wingmen' for the purpose of preventing tailing?

A: No – they do not prevent tailing no matter how much as their real-life crews wished that were true.

Q: Can turrets shoot at the beginning of an aircraft's activation?

A: No – turrets only get a shot at the end of the aircraft's movement.

Multi-engine aircraft

Q: Where are the rules for multi-engine aircraft types? They are mentioned in the Battle of Midway rulebook but there are no rules for them.

A: Rules for multi-engine aircraft can be found in the *Air Strike* rulebook on pages 20–21.

Q: Can multi-engine aircraft gain Advantage?

A: Yes – the restriction on 'climbing for advantage' only applies to aircraft carrying a payload of bombs. Once the payload has been dropped then they act like any multi-engine aircraft and can climb for Advantage.

Q: When do multi-engine aircraft get damaged?

A: REMEMBER: A shooting attack can be conducted against a multi-engine aircraft regardless of its Advantage level relative to the shooter (*Air Strike* rulebook, pages 20–21).

A multi-engine aircraft that is shot at, hit, and fails to dodge loses Advantage levels until they get to Disadvantaged, but no Boom chits are generated. Hits while Disadvantaged start to place Boom chits directly on the aircraft itself. Each Boom chit reduces Speed and turret Firepower by one. Additionally, damaged multi-engine aircraft can no longer be Advantaged (i.e., they can climb back up to Neutral but no further). Once the number of Boom chits equals the number of engines it has, the multi-engine plane crashes, generating another Boom chit (e.g., an Advantaged twin-engine bomber would go through these stages: Advantaged – Neutral – Disadvantaged - 2 x Engines – Crash).

Q: Can a multi-engine plane dodge when Disadvantaged?

A: Technically yes, but unless they have something special that mitigates Boom chits (e.g., Ace skill, house rule, etc.) it won't matter because they suffer the Boom chit anyway and Advantage loss won't occur.

Q: How do Boom chits work for multi-engine squadrons?

A: When a multi-engine plane is shot down all of its Boom chits are then transferred to the multi-engine's squadron plus one more Boom chit for being shot down. If the number of Boom chits on the squadron ever exceeds its number of remaining engines the squadron will break off and turn for home.

Example: A three strong squadron of twin-engine Do17s has one aircraft shot down placing three Boom chits on the squadron – the squadron still has four engines remaining, so they carry on. Later another Do17 takes damage, but the squadron still carries on as it has three engines remaining and three Boom chits. The damaged Do17 is then shot down, placing three more Boom chits on the squadron so this forces the last Do17 in the squadron to give up and head home.

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Q: When and how does a multi-engine aircraft with turrets lose Firepower?

A: When a multi-engine aircraft takes a Boom chit on it directly, it loses 1" (50mph) of movement and loses 1 Firepower dice from turrets for each Boom chit it has accumulated (*Air Strike* rulebook, pages 20–21).

Q: Can a damaged multi-engine aircraft still climb for Advantage? If it is Agile, can it still outmanoeuvre?

A: Yes (but it can no longer be Advantaged, so up to Neutral at best), and yes.

Q: Does a multi-engine aircraft that has crashed get another Boom chit?

A: Yes.

Q: How does the Deep Pockets trait work with multi-engine aircraft?

A: Deep Pockets is played as a reaction when the squadron receives a Boom chit, so the same rules apply as usual. It cannot be played to prevent a Boom chit being placed on a multi-engine aircraft to denote damage. In effect, Deep Pockets only kicks in for a multi-engine squadron when a member of the squadron is shot down and the Boom chits it's carrying (i.e., number of engines + one for being shot down) is transferred onto the squadron.

Bombers

Q: Can single-engine bombers be outmanoeuvred? In the *Air Strike* rules it says 'fighters' can be outmanoeuvred but makes no mention of bombers.

A: Single-engine bombers can be outmanoeuvred just like fighters. This wording has been updated in the *Battle of Midway* rules to say 'aircraft' instead.

Q: Can a dive bomber choose to level bomb instead of diving? Can a torpedo bomber be used as a level bomber as they were historically?

A: Yes, and yes. Anything that has the 'bomber' designation can perform a level bombing run, so that includes torpedo bombers and dive bombers. Note, however, that with a torpedo bomber it should be made clear whether it is carrying a torpedo or bombs at the beginning of the game.

Leaving the Table

Q: Do aircraft that leave the table count as losses for squadron morale purposes? What happens if or when they return?

A: Aircraft that leave the table don't automatically count as losses. When a test is to be taken to return an aircraft to the table in their next activation the testing aircraft still counts as being part of the squadron until the test is made. At that point the aircraft might count as a loss if it fails the test and does not return.

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Aircraft

B5N Kate

Q: Why is the B5N Kate torpedo bomber listed on its datacard as a fighter? Why does it have a point cost when it should clearly be a free bomber type?

A: Unfortunately these are errors that crept into the aircraft datacard when it was printed, the type should be 'bomber' and it should have no points cost.



Nakajima B5N Kate

The 'Type 97 Carrier Attack Bomber' first saw action in China where combat soon revealed its own vulnerability to attack. An improvised version of the 'Kate' (as called by the Allies) participated in the attack on Pearl Harbour, sinking the battleship Arizona with special shallow-running torpedoes. Later the B5N went on to play a key role in the sinking of the US carriers Lexington, Hornet and Yorktown

1937



Boulton Paul Defiant

Q: What is the Sluggish trait?

A: Sluggish is a Negative aircraft trait. A Sluggish plane may not use the outmanoeuvre action.

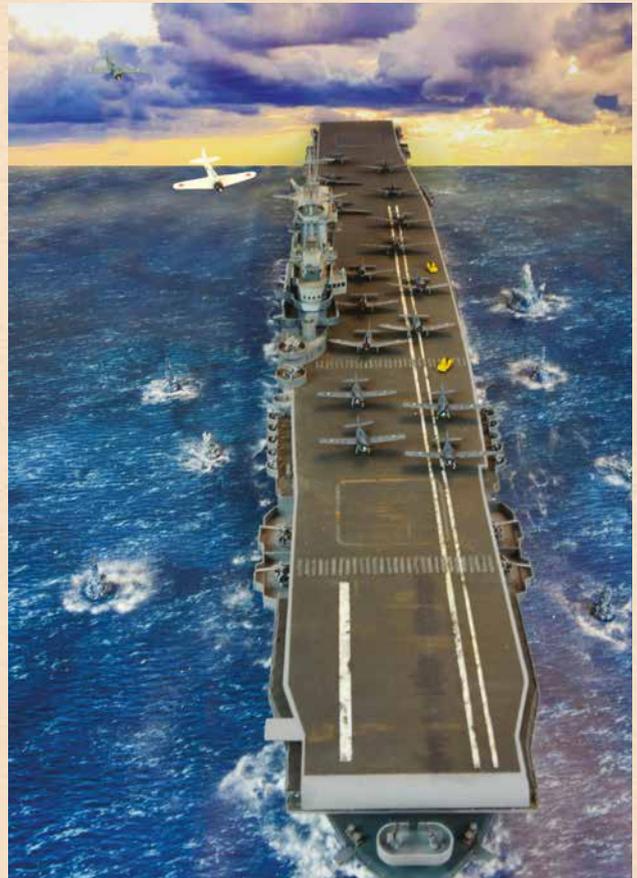
Q: The Defiant has a 0 Firepower? How many dice does it roll?

A: The Defiant has a turret Firepower of 2 with a 360-degree arc. It always rolls 2 dice but does not add pilot skill. However, it can only attack once in its own turn but may return fire every time it is attacked.

Note: The Defiant card is in an old format, in the new format it would be Firepower '-1'.

Q: As it lacks forward Firepower and only has a turret can a Defiant claim to be tailing? For that matter can a bomber or multi-engine aircraft with only turrets claim to be tailing?

A: No – only aircraft with a forward Firepower (i.e., no 360 notation on their Firepower stat) can claim to be tailing.



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Amended Cards

Aircraft Datacards

Yak 1

28 points

Mosquito II

62 points

Mosquito FB VI

67 points

P38J Lightning

59 points

P51D Mustang

44 points

A6M5 Zero

38 points

Ace Pilot Cards

Pierre Clostermann

125 points

Aircraft Traits

Mosquito traits

Remove 'Deep Pockets'. Add 'Heavy Hitter' and 'Great Climb'.

Ace Skill Cards

Overshoot

Minimum move is 1 inch, not quarter speed.

Doctrine Cards

Interlocking Fire

Should be 'Discard' not 'Remove'.

Opening Shot

Should 'only Firepower' not 'on Firepower'.

Battle of Midway starter set

Big Game Hunters doctrine card

Remove the word 'undodged' from the Do section and make it 'a critical' instead of 'an critical'.

Seasoned Pilots doctrine card

'rerols' should be 're-rolls'.

Aggressive Tactics doctrine card

Add 'No Stalling' to the Bonus section (the No Stalling card states it counts as a Tight Turn for doctrines so this may not be needed). Add 'towards the nearest enemy' after 'bonus turn'. Change 'Agility Test' to 'Manoeuvr Test'.

Compression Issues doctrine card

Change 'Agility Test' to 'Manoeuvr Test'.

Theatre Cards

Bad weather

Change 'players' to 'squadrons' in the Do section.

Amended Stats

Nakajima B5N 'Kate'

Rear turret Firepower should be 1 not 2.

Bristol Blenheim

Forward Firepower should be – not 1.

Junkers Ju 88A

Forward Firepower should be – not 1.

Dornier Do17 Z-2

Forward Firepower should be – not 1.

Airstrike! book

Historic Theatre Cards list (page 45)

Axis and Allied Pacific Theatre 'Numbers' are reversed. Axis get 'Numbers' from 1937-1942, Allied from 1943 to 1945.