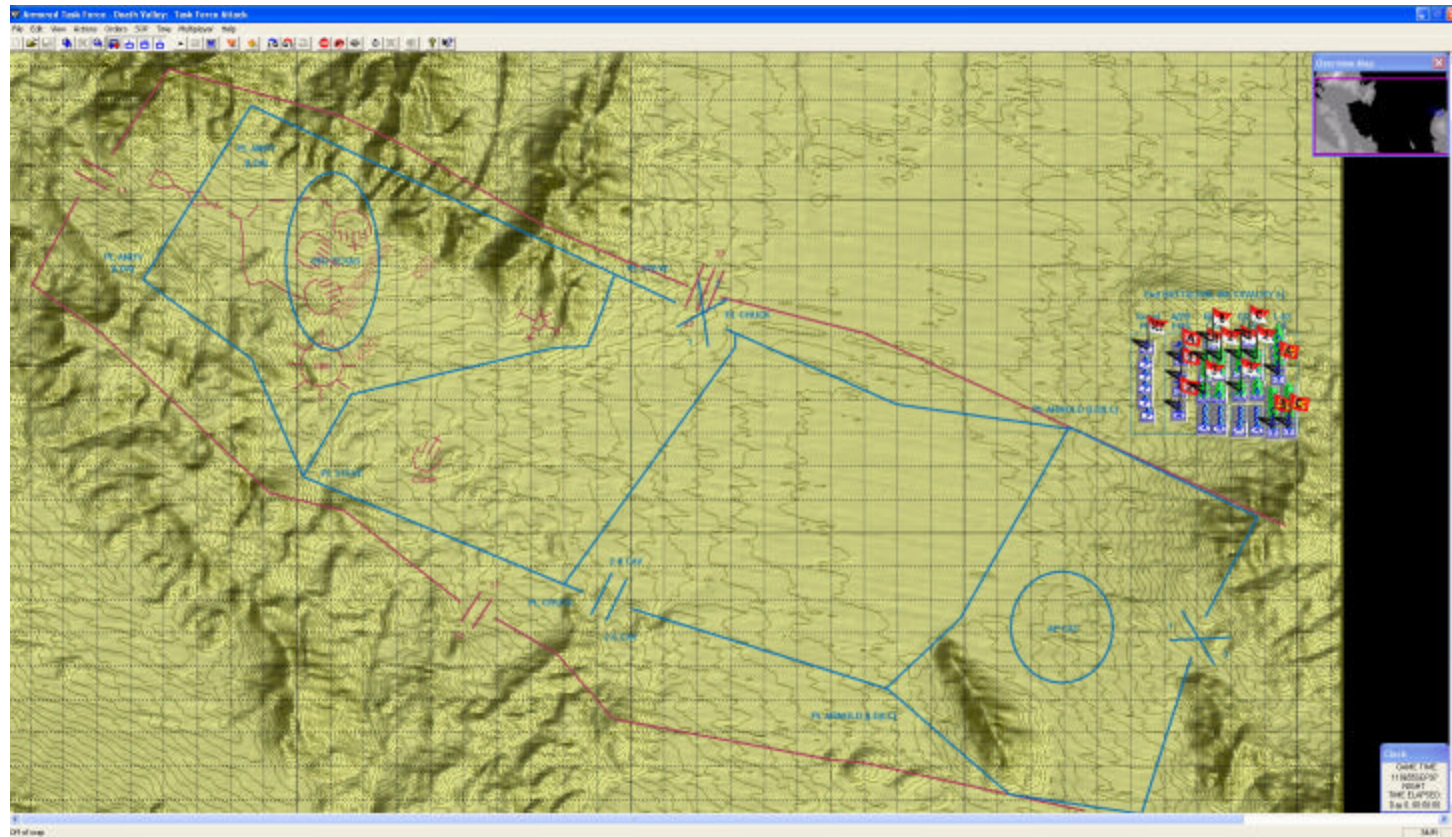


## AAR - Death Valley Attack (KB)

*Scenario for ARMORED TASK FORCE by Kevin Bluck*



written by Kevin Bluck

*Comments re scenario by kbluck:*

This one is done on my **kbDataModern** reimport version, titled **Death Valley Attack (KB)**. Not the one I totally rejiggered, just the original with my database merely substituted. I did this because I believe aggressive use of dismounts is key to defeating the enemy in this scenario, and such missions are largely impossible using the Database1 statistics, as in that version all your infantry generally gets killed by Spandrels long before they can close with anything. The only good uses for infantry in Database1 that I can find are as artillery spotters and as "ammunition sinks" in hopes the enemy will use up all his missiles killing infantry before you bring out your tanks.

One other significant difference is the artillery ammo levels. You might notice that the M109s now have a lot more ammo listed. This is to simulate the FAASV being colocated with the howitzer, which I decided to do for various reasons that I will discuss elsewhere if anybody is interested. However, in keeping with the spirit of the original scenario, I voluntarily will adhere to the original artillery ammo limitations; that is, although (for example) they actually have 12 smoke each, I will only actually fire a maximum of 4 each. I think you'll see that I am being fairly diligent at conserving ammo in my operation.

All the kbDataModern-reimported stock scenarios are located [here](#), if you are interested in following along.

*Necessary scenario and database can be found here:*

*(Note you need to be logged into Gamesquad to make the downloads)*

**Downloads: kbDataModern Database!**

<http://forums.gamesquad.com/downloads.php?do=file&id=816>

**Downloads: ATF Stock Scenario Update (kbDataModern)**

<http://forums.gamesquad.com/downloads.php?do=file&id=800>

**Downloads: ATF Bonus Scenario Update (kbDataModern)**

<http://forums.gamesquad.com/downloads.php?do=file&id=801>

**You are the commander of the 2-8 CAV, 1 BCT, 1st Cavalry Division, attached to the 52nd Infantry Division for NTC Rotation 97-12. The following are excerpts from an operations order for the 1 BCT to conduct a movement to contact.**

OPORD 97-35

1 BCT (IRONHORSE)

1. SITUATION:

A. ENEMY FORCES:

1. Due to recent losses, the 94th MRD has transitioned to the defense. The enemy's mission is to defend NET 110700SEP97 to prevent penetration of the first regimental echelon and, on order, counterattack to destroy the 52 ID. He is positioned with two MRR's abreast, the 33rd in the north and the 32nd in the south. A third MRR, the 31st is positioned behind the lead MRD's. Each MRR will defend with two MRB's forward and one back. These MRB's are at approximately 50 % strength with approximately a 8 / 12 / 10. Each MRR has a RAG consisting of 2 BN's of 2S19 at 18 tubes each. The DAG has been destroyed by fixed-wing deep strikes. The enemy is expected to have no SOKOL or fixed-wing capability.
2. The most likely course of action is that the enemy will defend with 2 MRB's abreast along PL MICHAEL. Each MRB will have a CAR of 3 / 0 / 3 which he will employ once the point of penetration is known. The MRD is holding one MRB in reserve. If a BCT establishes a serious breach on either flank of the 94th MRD, the reserve MRB will be used to reinforce enemy defenses. otherwise, the reserve MRB will counterattack to complete the destruction of the 52nd ID.

B. FRIENDLY FORCES:

1. Higher Mission. 52nd ID conducts an attack, NET 110800SEP97, to destroy the 94th ID and facilitate the IV Mojavian Corps attack to restore the International border. o/o conduct a hasty defense to repel the counterattack of the KPA's second echelon MRD's.
2. To our south, 4 Mojavian ID has the mission of attacking west to destroy the 9th MRD and turn north to secure the international border. To our north, 2 BCT, 52nd ID attacks as the division main effort to destroy the 33rd MRR in order to secure the right flank of IV Mojavian Corps. To our rear the 3 BCT, 52nd ID acts as the division reserve, B/P to assume the attack of 2 BCT to secure the right flank of IV Mojavian Corps.

C. WEATHER:

1. Winds are expected to be out of the west at approximately 4.5 miles per hour
2. The hours of daylight are as follows. Before morning nautical twilight (BMNT) will begin at 0705. Sunrise will be at 0735. Sunset will be at 1938. Early evening nautical twilight (EENT) will end at 2008.

## 2. MISSION.

1 BCT, 1 CAV (Ironhorse) attacks in zone NLT 110700SEP97 to destroy the first battalion echelon of the 94th MRD, seize OBJ's TEXAS and NEBRASKA **<not shown>**, in order to facilitate the attack of the 52nd ID to secure the right flank of IV Mojavian Corps.

## 3. EXECUTION:

### A. COMMANDER'S INTENT.

It is my intent is to deceive the enemy as to the main effort of the IV Mojavian Corps by initially weighting our attack in the north, in 2-8 CAV's sector. Once the enemy has committed to supporting the 11th MRB in defending against this attack, we will then attack in 12th MRB's sector to complete the destruction of the first battalion echelon.

### B. CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION.

#### 1. Maneuver.

This operation will be conducted in 3 phases.

##### a. Phase One.

This phase begins at 110800SEP97. TF 2-8 CAV crosses the LD and attacks to destroy the 11 MRB. The phase ends when TF 2-8 CAV has secured OBJ TEXAS.

##### b. Phase Two.

**<paragraph omitted>**

##### c. Phase Three.

**<paragraph omitted>**

#### 2. Fires.

This operation is sequenced to allow fire support to be focused on each MRB separately as it is engaged.

##### a. Phase One.

During this phase, priority of fires for 1-82 FA goes to TF 2-8 CAV. 3-8 FA (MLRS) will be dedicated to counterfire and suppressing the RAG. CAS will not be available during this phase. The CFL for this phase will be PL ANDY in TF 2-8's sector and PL ARNOLD in TF 2-5's sector.

##### b. Phase Two.

**<paragraph omitted>**

##### c. Phase Three.

**<paragraph omitted>**

#### 3. Tasks to Subordinate Units.

See Appendix C for Task Organization.

##### a. TF 2-8 CAV.

1. Destroy 11 MRB.
2. Secure OBJ TEXAS.?
3. o/o Defend PL ANDY. The NO PEN line will be PL STEVE.

##### b. TF 2-5 CAV.

**<paragraph omitted>**

4. Coordinating instructions.
  - a. Prior to 110800SEP97, the limit of advance for recon elements is PL STEVE. This applies only to brigade COLT's and Task Force Scouts. The limit of advance for all other elements prior to LD is PL ARNOLD, the LD/LC.
  - b. PIR

<paragraph omitted>

#### 4. SERVICE SUPPORT.

There will no resupply of any class of supply until mission completion.

#### 5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL.

- A. Succession of command is per SOPB. Current SOI is in effect.

### APPENDIX C (TASK ORGANIZATION) TO OPORD 97-55

#### TASK FORCE 2-8 CAV:

##### HHC/2-8 CAV:

Scout Platoon

##### B/2-8 CAV

2 X Tank Platoon?

1 X Mech Inf Platoon

##### C/2-8 CAV

2 X Tank Platoon?

1 X Mech Inf Platoon

##### A/20 ENG

1 X ACE Platoon?

1 X AVLB Platoon?

1 X MCLiC Platoon

#### TASK FORCE 2-5 CAV:

<paragraph omitted>

#### 1-82 FA

##### A/1-82 FA

6 X M109A6 Paladin

##### B/1-82 FA

6 X M109A6 Paladin

##### C/1-82 FA

6 X M109A6 Paladin

#### 3-8 FA (MLRS)

<paragraph omitted>

### **ATF: Death Valley Attack (KB)**

Well, since NORAD issued a challenge and all to see who could beat Death Valley Attack, here it is: how to decisively beat DVA.

First, some game details. I presume CPT Proctor's AAR was done on the "stock" Database1 version of the scenario. This one is done on my **kbDataModern** reimport version, titled **Death Valley Attack (KB)**. Not the one I totally rejiggered, just the original with my database merely substituted. I did this because I believe aggressive use of dismounts is key to defeating the enemy in this scenario, and such missions are largely impossible using the Database1 statistics, as in that version all your infantry generally gets killed by Spandrels long before they can close with anything. The only good uses for infantry in Database1 that I can find are as artillery spotters and as "ammunition sinks" in hopes the enemy will use up all his missiles killing infantry before you bring out your tanks.

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**\*\*\*SPOILER ALERT!\*\*\***

*What follows is essentially a recipe on how to win this scenario, complete with pictures. If you want to beat this scenario by your own devices, do not read any further. Once you have read this AAR, you will have an excellent idea of where everything is and how to kill it. Do not read this AAR unless you have already beaten it, don't care about beating it by yourself, or have lost all hope and wouldn't play it again anyway.*

**\*\*\*\*\*SPOILERS FOLLOW \*\*\*\*\***



## First, I read the order.

**Tip:** The "view order" window is kind of restricted. It is much easier to review and refer back to the order if you print it. Right click on the order window and select "Print" from the popup menu.

First, I review the brigade's mission. It is to attack in zone and seize terrain, destroying the enemy first echelon in the process. There is no particular time limit mentioned for end condition. Next, I review the commander's intent. He wants to deceive the enemy into thinking my task force is the main attack, so that he commits his reserve against me. My brother TF 2-5 will then execute the \*real\* attack.

There are some implications here in my reading of the commander's intent. First, my main job isn't so much to attack as it is to demonstrate. I am to make a lot of ruckus, while keeping the enemy in the dark as to my actual strength as long as possible, the point being to make him think I'm the big push and to commit all his reserves against me. That leads to the second point --- if I succeed, I'm going to be receiving a substantial counterattack at some point in the near future. That means I'd better have enough combat power left over after this fight to repel it.

Now I review the concept of the operation. Again, I note there are no particular time constraints. Basically, I have as long as I need to secure TEXAS (within reason), at which point the remainder of the brigade's operation will proceed. If this was a time-sensitive operation, surely the CO would have made that clear. So, ultimately I gather that what my CO wants is for me to make a lot of noise, hand the enemy some serious damage, grab some ground, but to conserve my own strength in the process and not to make any precipitous moves.



I looked at the ground overlaid with the SITTEMP. The obvious axis was up the valley floor and make a left turn into the objective. I didn't like that option at all, for

two main reasons. First, the enemy was undoubtedly expecting it. Certainly, the S-2 thought so, since he'd templated just about everything the enemy had as covering that avenue of approach, and that's probably where all his obstacles were to boot. Second, was that left turn onto the objective. As if running right through the kill sack wasn't bad enough, I'd be doing it with my flanks presented to the enemy the whole time and have to make a big wheeling maneuver under fire. No, the valley floor was nice and roomy for maneuver, but actually getting all the way down it was going to be bloody work.

So, I looked around for options. As I studied the map, I did see an alternative. There was an infantry strongpoint situated on some high ground south of the objective. It appeared that the enemy didn't regard it as a practical avenue of approach, and was merely using it as an elevated platform to give his infantry some range. But, doing a bit of terrain analysis, it looked trafficable to me. It was a bit narrow; probably only one company could pass at a time. I didn't think that was a fatal flaw, though, given the enemy's difficulty in seeing what was going on up there if his strongpoint was neutralized. There was a lot of rough ground in front of it, which offered a reasonably covered approach to it; certainly the enemy wouldn't be able to target me the whole way as I dipped in and out of the terrain folds. It also offered several options to get onto the objective. I could turn right and follow the edge of the valley floor, I could go straight north into the objective, or I could turn left through a little pass to enter the objective from behind. Best of all, the enemy's main battle positions couldn't see me as I approached. I'd be able to breach through whatever obstacle was there and move into a position commanding the valley floor and they'd be completely impotent to engage me with direct fire; that is, unless they were willing to leave their holes and come get me, which would largely neutralize their defender's advantage.

There were three flies in the ointment. There was, of course the infantry strongpoint, which clearly would have to be reduced. Undoubtedly bristling with ATGMs. Then there was the CSOP right in the middle of the rough ground. Finally, there was an AT firing line to the northwest. They couldn't range me, but they could see me. They'd have to go. Besides, taking them out would be a useful diversion to the enemy's attention.

All three had a fatal flaw, though. They were in rough ground with little or no overwatching support, and covered avenues of approach nearly right to their doorsteps. Perfect targets for an infantry infiltration.

### **So, my initial plan.**

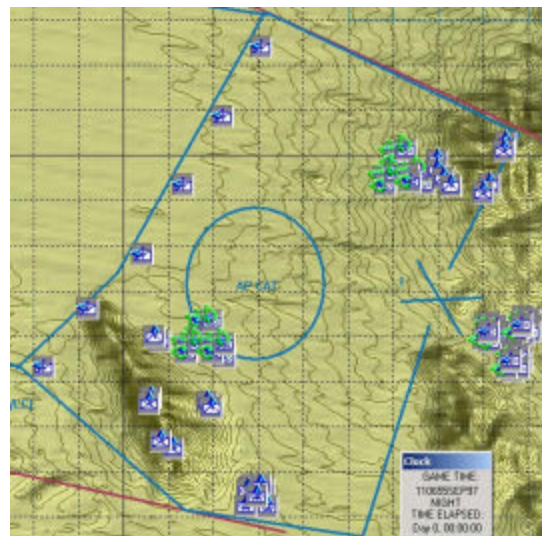
First, I would advance my scouts cautiously from the LD to perform counterrecon and to get a picture of the enemy outposts. I would infiltrate my dismount infantry along a covered avenue. The infantry would advance on foot to engage and destroy the CSOP and the AT firing line. The CSOP infantry would continue forward to locate obstacles and possibly engage the infantry strongpoint, but more likely call for fire if the enemy was really in company strength. The AT Line infantry would continue over the ridges to get a good look into the objective and possibly engage some enemy there as a diversion. Finally, my heavy forces would breach any obstacle found, charge through the strongpoint and assault the objective.



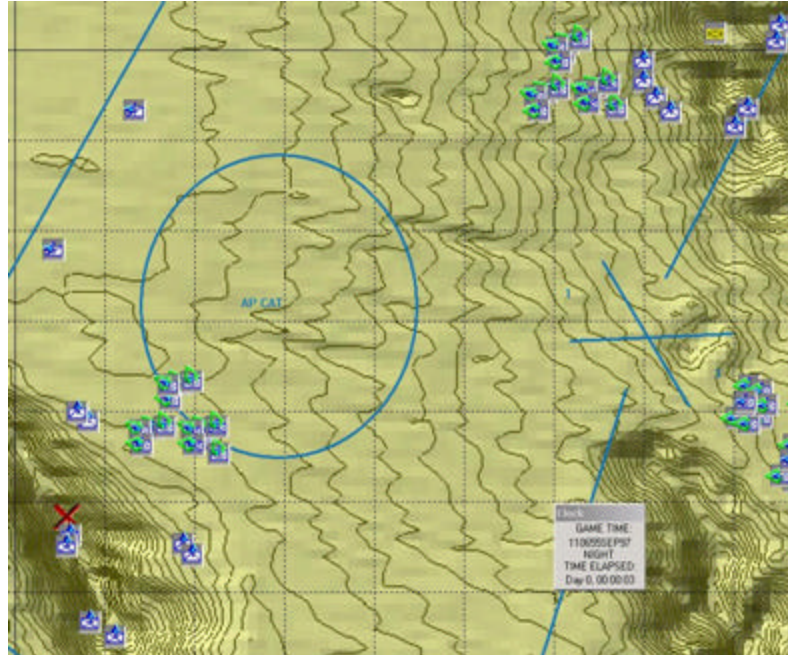
Thinking a bit about the timeline, I could see the critical path was going to be the infantry operations. I estimated they'd have to walk 5 or 6 kilometers before they were done. That's about 90 minutes of movement. Add some time for combat, and I estimated about two hours for them to do their thing. The scouts would need about an hour up front for their operations, and the final assault would probably occupy another hour. So, I estimated the following timeline for the phases:

1. Recon/counterrecon: 0655-0800
2. Infiltration: 0800-0845
3. Reduce outposts: 0845-0915
4. Reduce strongpoint: 0915-1030
5. Advance to assault: 1000-1030
6. Breach 1030-1100
7. Assault/consolidate: 1100-1130

I initially set up in a cautious stance, since I fully expect the enemy has left OPs in my assembly area. As the game begins, the artillery is deep in a hide area down a canyon in the BDE area. I have my two infantry platoons on patrol in the rugged high ground on either side of the AA, those seeming like the most likely spots for enemy OPs. My engineers are concealed behind a small range of hills, and my mech elements are laagered in preparation for a quick move. The scouts are on line just behind the LD, ready to scout forward.



When the clock kicked off, Bravo flushed an OP and dispatched them within a few seconds in a hail of machinegun fire. Charlie on the other hill also had an OP in their sights but had not yet closed to engagement range. Preferring not to give them any more sightseeing time than necessary, they called for



fire. Alpha battery queued up for three volleys of HE. At the same time, Charlie battery set up to deliver illumination for the two infantry platoons, to help ensure all the enemy OPs in the area were spotted.

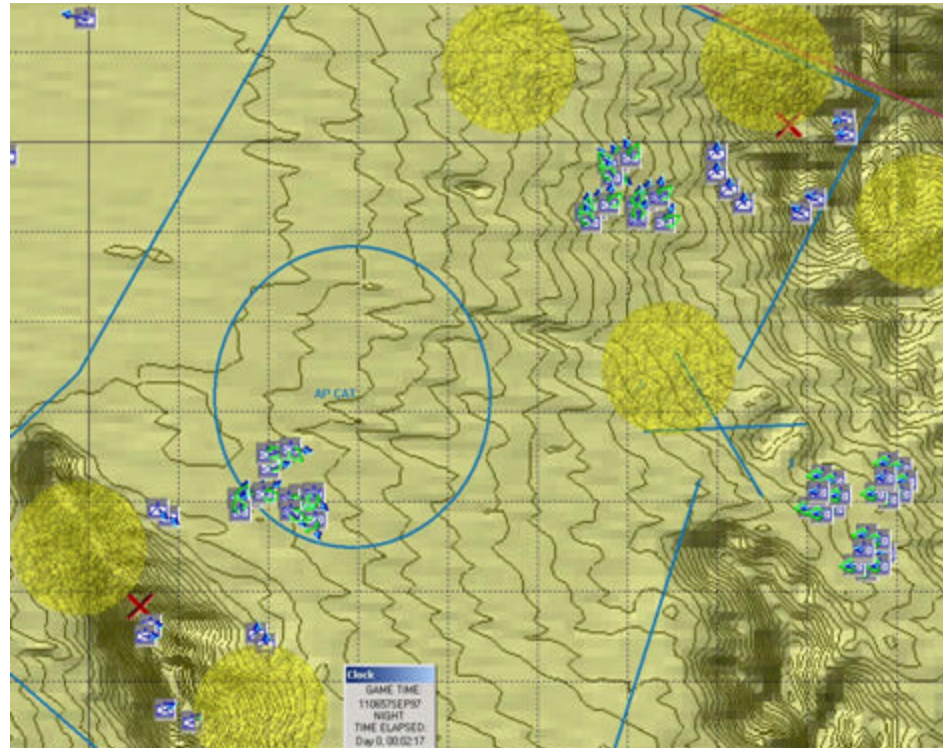
**Tip:** *I've noticed that artillery goes in on target more reliably when you aim 10m south and west of the actual center point of the target. Not a big deal for 155, but can make a real difference when targeting small-burst weapons like mortars. I'm not sure why this is, but there it is. See picture for an example.*



Doing a quick LOS analysis, I decided that my engineers and artillery were probably undetected by those two OPs, but my maneuver elements should probably reposition a bit to throw off any incoming. So, they moved to the side about 500 meters just before any enemy fire missions might be expected to arrive, about 90 seconds in.

Meanwhile, the scout platoon began a cautious advance towards PL Chuck, leapfrogging forward by sections.

As the maneuver companies performed their sidestep, the first volley came in on the enemy OP. It was an accurate shot and wiped them out. The following two volleys were cancelled.



The flares also popped, but no additional OPs were noted. The dismounts began moving back to their rally points to rendezvous with their Bradleys.

About 0700 scouts noted a possible OP near the south boundary about halfway to CHUCK. They immediately called for fire, one battery three volleys of HE, and monitored the situation, making frequent small repositioning moves. Shortly thereafter, the northern team of scouts also spotted an OP and repeated the performance. The wisdom of their frequent short relocations was proven when some enemy artillery came roaring in, landing harmlessly in already-vacated positions. The first volleys of US artillery came in off-target at well. The OPs realizing more was probably on the way, picked up and moved out of the impact zone. The scouts, seeing the movement, clicked off their safeties and opened up. A dangerous game of cat-and-mouse now ensued, as the scouts worked to keep them under fire while avoiding enemy incoming artillery and staying just out of range of the OP's weapons. After several minutes of simultaneous running firefights, punctuated by the thunder of impacting artillery from both sides, the scouts finally prevailed and the OPs would present no further threat.

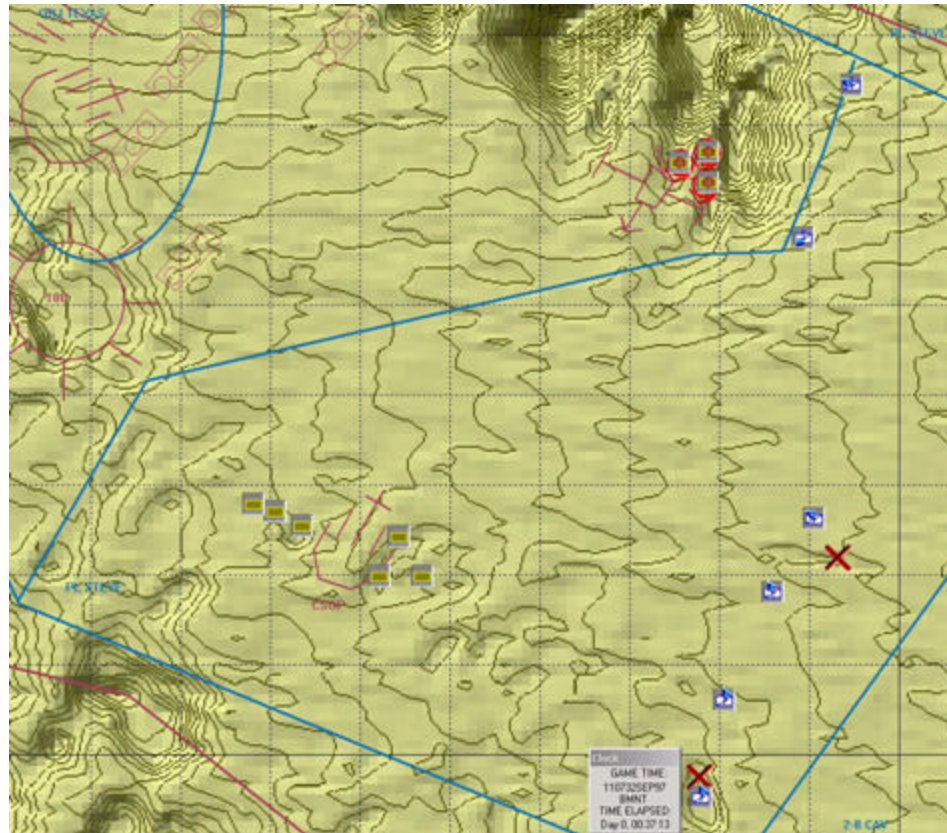
The scouts now resumed their advance towards PL CHUCK. Since they were approaching the limits of the artillery's ability to support them, 1-82 FA bounded Bravo and Charlie batteries forward to positions just behind the LD, just far forward enough to cover the projected enemy CSOP and AT firing lines with DPICM. Alpha remained on call should the scouts need any quick fire.



At 18:36 the scouts noted some enemy vehicle activity in the approximate area of the projected CSOP. I decided to develop the situation before engaging with artillery, and so I simply noted their grid locations and the scouts continued to maneuver for a better picture. Since it seemed likely there would be BMPs or other ATGM vehicles located nearby, I gave it a wide berth.

During their continued maneuver, the scouts picked up another OP in the center of sector just beyond PL CHUCK. Since it was out of range of conventional HE, Alpha battery engaged it instead with HE-RAP. As they continued to maneuver, the scouts picked up a second and third OP closer to the boundaries. Those were also targeted with HE-RAP by Alpha battery. Meanwhile, some more enemy arty came down, missing the constantly repositioning scouts by a wide margin. One after another, the enemy OPs were put out of action by the impacting HE-RAP, and gradually the incoming enemy artillery died out.

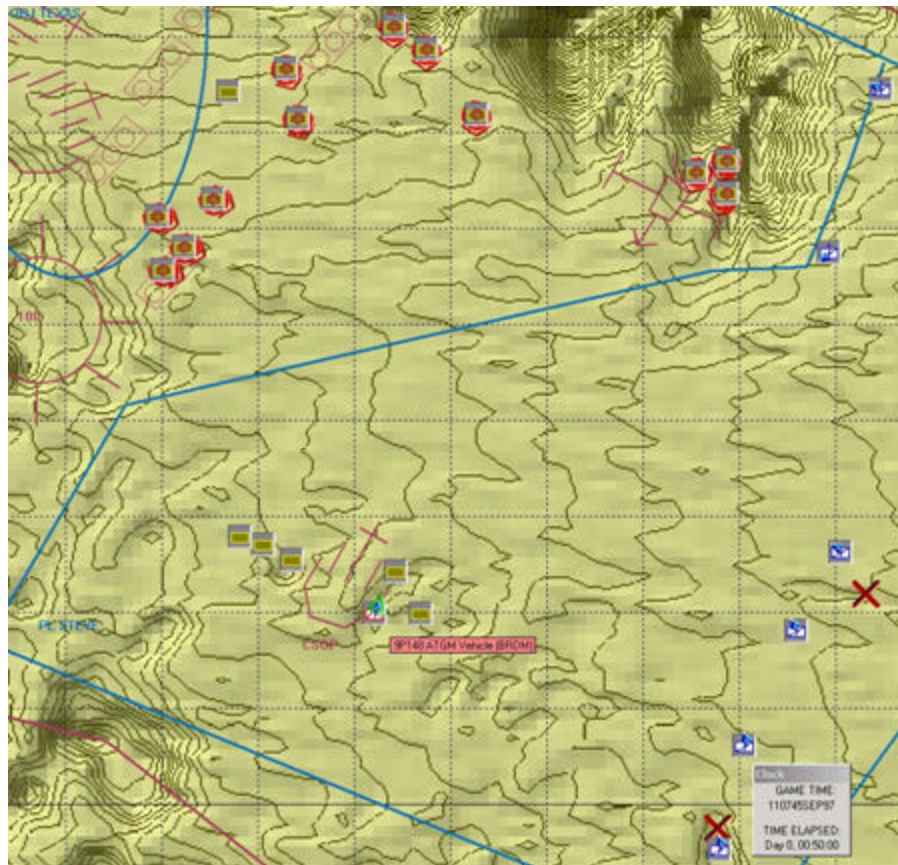
The scouts now busied themselves finding the best possible vantages to eyeball the enemy. After some careful shuffling, they had identified six likely vehicles near the projected CSOP, and three dug-in vehicles near the AT firing line. It was looking like the S-2 got those



backwards; 6 undug vehicles was very suggestive of an AT battery, while three dug-in vehicles felt a lot like a CSOP. At any rate, the scouts were now unable to approach any more closely without unacceptable risk of taking ATGM fire, and so we weren't going to get a good look into OBJ TEXAS for the time being. We had a good fix on their advance elements, though, so the infantry would have a pretty good idea of what they were getting into. Once the dismounts had done their thing, we'd be able to pull the scouts closer to PL STEVE and get a good look at the objective.

With 28 minutes to go before LD time (0800 per OPORD) it was time to get saddled up and prepare for the infiltration phase. Bravo and Charlie batteries were closing on their new position areas, and Alpha was ready to follow suit once they did. The infantry had returned from their patrols and mounted their Bradleys. I decided that each of the twin infiltration missions would proceed with one tank platoon up front and the Bradley platoon trailing a few hundred meters behind to the dismount point, in case any unexpected ATGM nests were to present themselves. The remaining two tank platoons would remain in reserve behind PL CHUCK. Once the infantry was dismounted, the tanks and Bradleys would rendezvous with the left-behind tank platoons behind CHUCK and bide their time, remaining responsive should a counterattack imperil the dismounts. They would continue to reposition periodically to avoid becoming artillery targets and to keep the enemy guessing as to where they might ultimately intend to go. The artillery would remain on call should the need arise, but it was my intention to destroy the enemy outposts entirely with direct fire from the infantry, so as to conserve ammunition for the final assault.

Upon sunrise at 0735, the situation in TEXAS clarified considerably. The scouts were now able to identify 8 more hull-down positions forward of the objective. Together with the apparent CSOP, that's 12 vehicles, about a company's worth. Given the strength



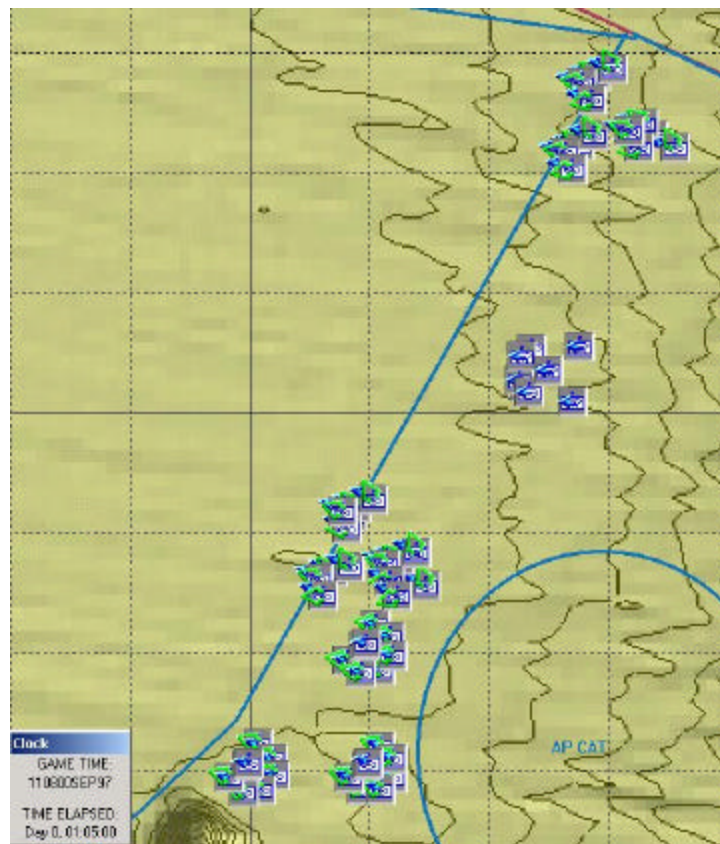
estimate in the order, that left about 8 more maneuver vehicles unaccounted for. Either they weren't immediately visible but in the same general vicinity, or they were in a hide position as a reserve --- probably a combination of both. There are probably some more AT assets lurking about, as well. They also positively IDed one of the 6 vehicles in the south as a 9P148 ATGM vehicle, so it seemed more certain that the CSOP and AT line indeed had traded places. The new evidence made it seem more likely that the S-2 was correct that the enemy is weighting his vehicle strength into the valley, using his dismounts to cover the flank of the battle line. The plan of attacking through infantry strongpoint seemed to be holding as the best course. If I could manage to reduce that strongpoint prior



to hitting it with my tanks, I could conduct my breach in a fairly sheltered location, inasmuch as the dug-in vehicles wouldn't be able to cover it. I could then attack straight north over the hills, directly through the strongpoint location, and thus hit the enemy line squarely in his right flank.

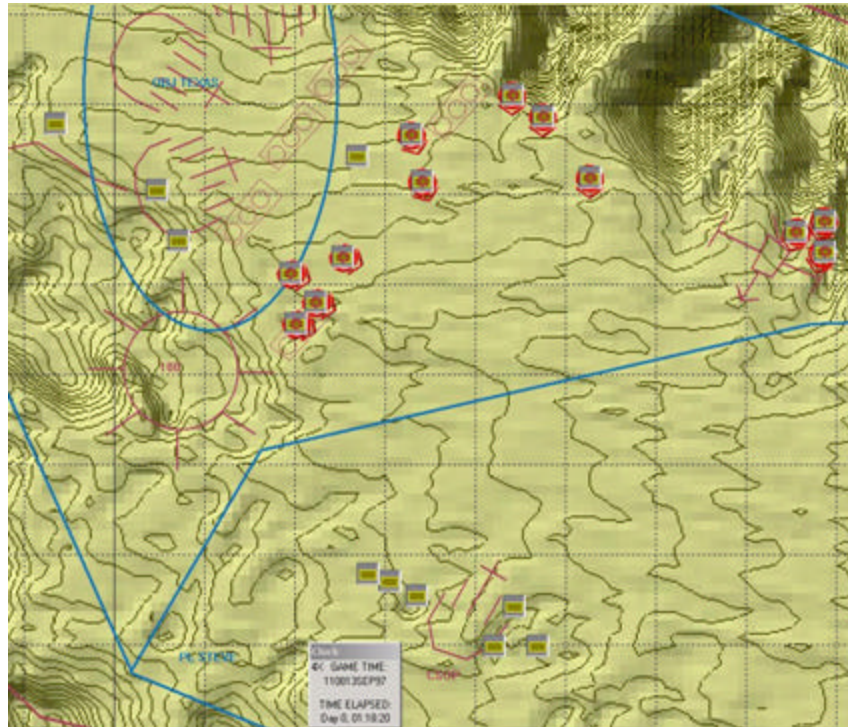
The key was getting those enemy infantry rooted out. However, I also still wanted to eliminate the CSOP, since it had a good view of my approach. It would also be imperative to get a good view into the objective, to see what might be lurking to the rear and to give advance warning of any reinforcing movements. The mountains around the (real) CSOP would be a great vantage point for that purpose. They might also be able to snipe a couple of enemy vehicles on that side of the battlefield, too. So, my original plan was still basically the same; one platoon of infantry down each axis. It was feeling like a good plan.

My only accomodation was to reinforce the southern axis a bit. I had 3/Bravo send over one of its squads of dismounts to Charlie, since they were looking at more combat. Everybody came on line, all three artillery batteries finished their redeployments, and at precisely 0800 TF 2-8 crossed the LD to kick off the infiltration phase. My arty batteries also leapfrogged forward about 4 clicks to cover the enemy's main defensive line.



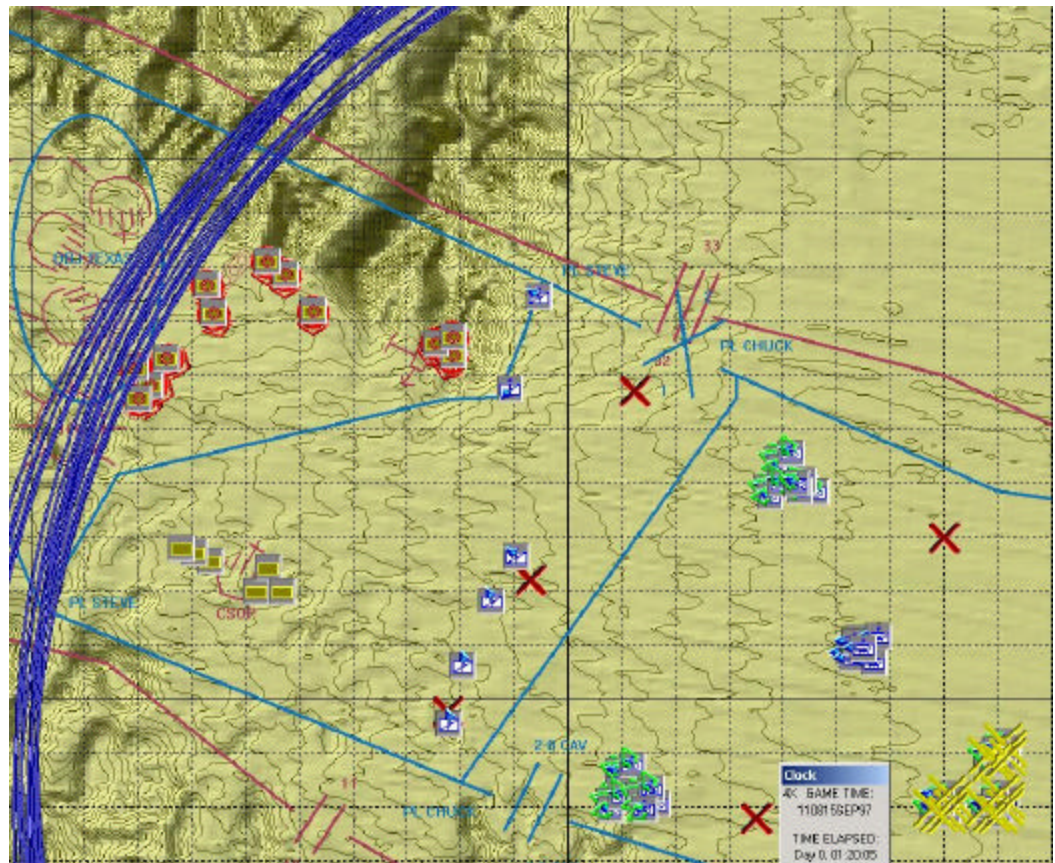


At about 0813, my scouts noted some movement across TEXAS. It appeared the missing reserve was deploying and positioning itself on the slope overlooking TEXAS to the east. They were clearly expecting



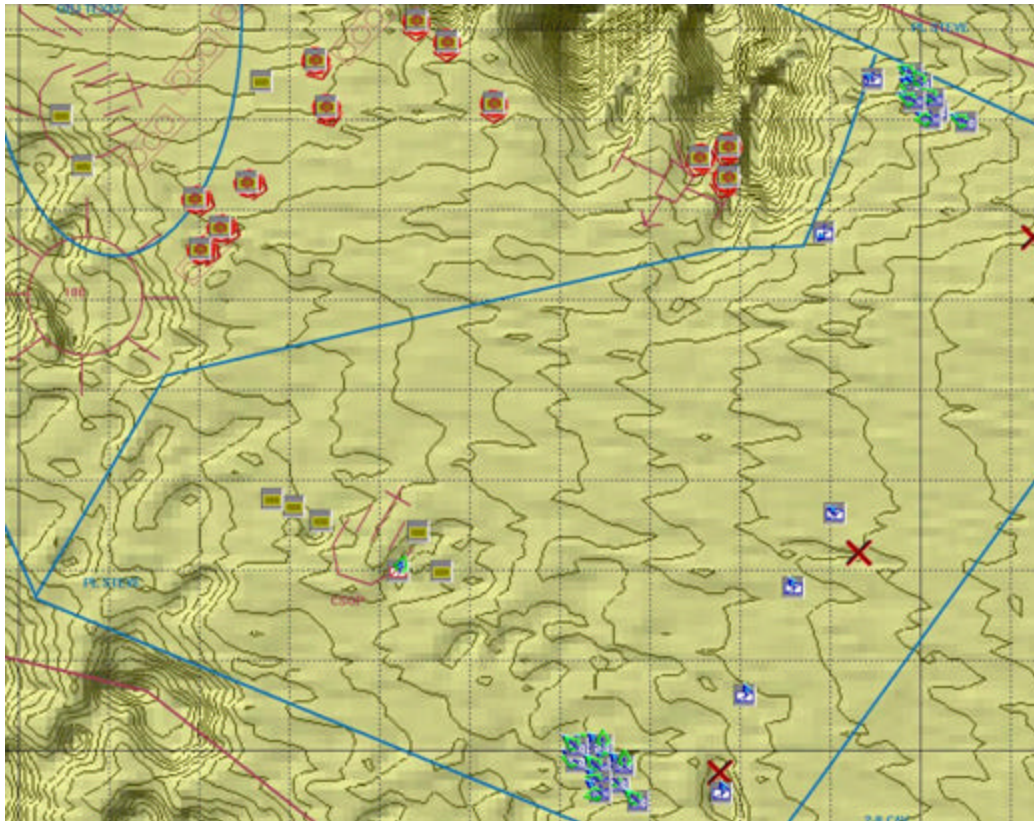
me to attack TEXAS along the canyon bottom. So much the better; I'd be able to take them in the rear when I stormed through the infantry strongpoint.

By 0815, my companies were in position to begin the infiltration mission, and my batteries were emplaced to cover the area of immediate interest.

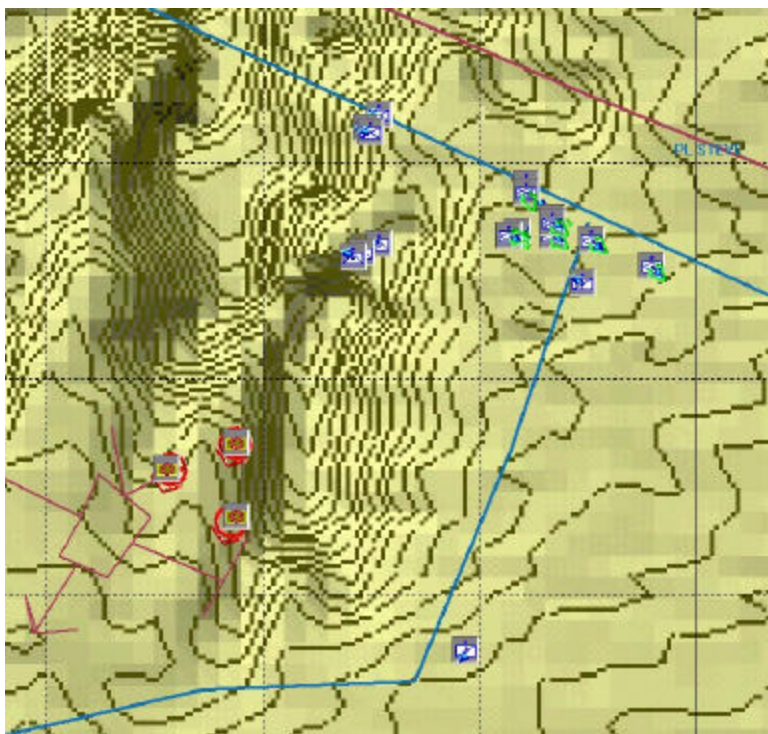
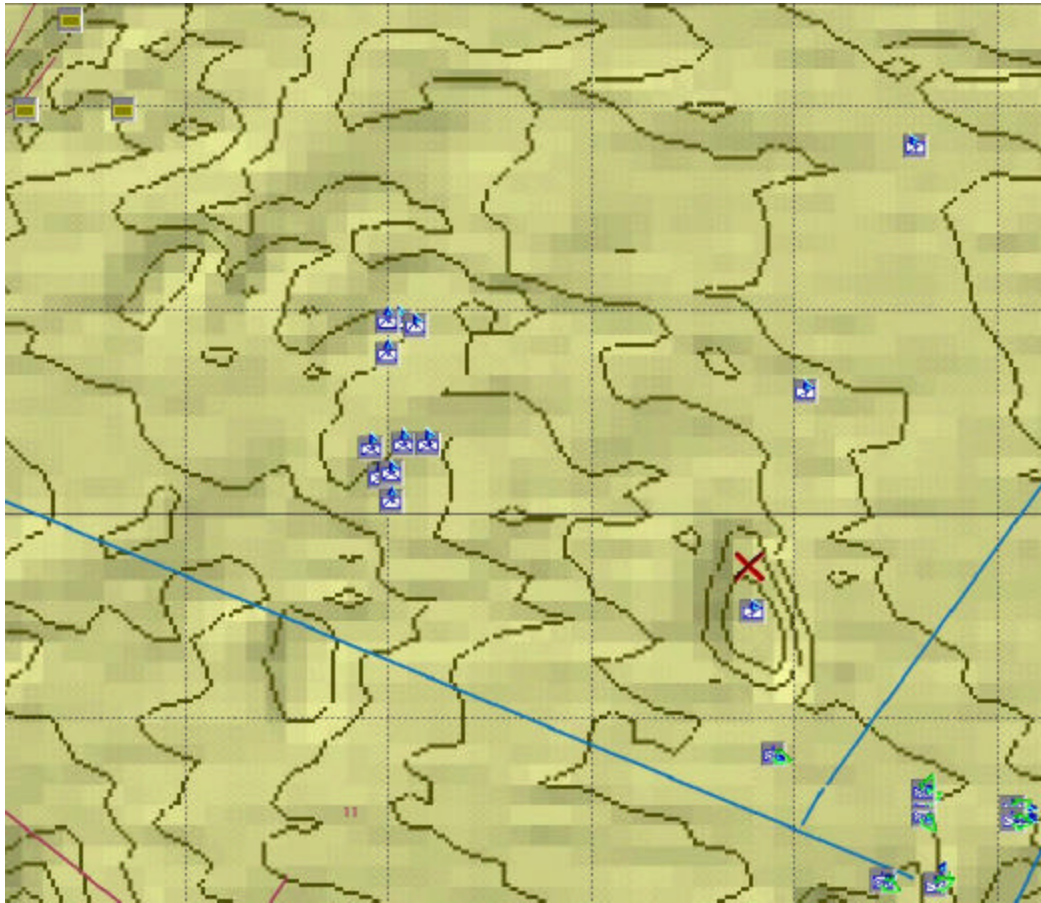




I had each company drop off one tank platoon to remain in reserve. The companies lined up with tanks forward and Brads behind to advance to their dropoff points. They remained in a cautious stance, watchful for any ATGM fire. (Hold Fire). The object was to run in as close as possible, kick out the dismounts, and beat it back to PL CHUCK before attracting any enemy artillery. I wasn't at all worried about Charlie in the north, as they had a nice covered route that had already been cleared by scouts. Bravo was a bit more puckerish, as it was rather rough ground with some funky LOSes, and the scouts weren't able to clear it for sure. We'd probably picked up all the vehicles, but there could well be enemy dismounts lurking in wait that wouldn't be seen until they fired. We'd have to count on quick reflexes and thick armor to see us through.



As it happened, the terrain analysis proved accurate and both insertions went smoothly with no enemy interference. Both dismount platoons were dropped off about two clicks away from their targets and moving to contact by 0830. The carriers and tanks withdrew and returned to PL CHUCK without incident, to wait in reserve should the enemy counterattack and otherwise await developments.



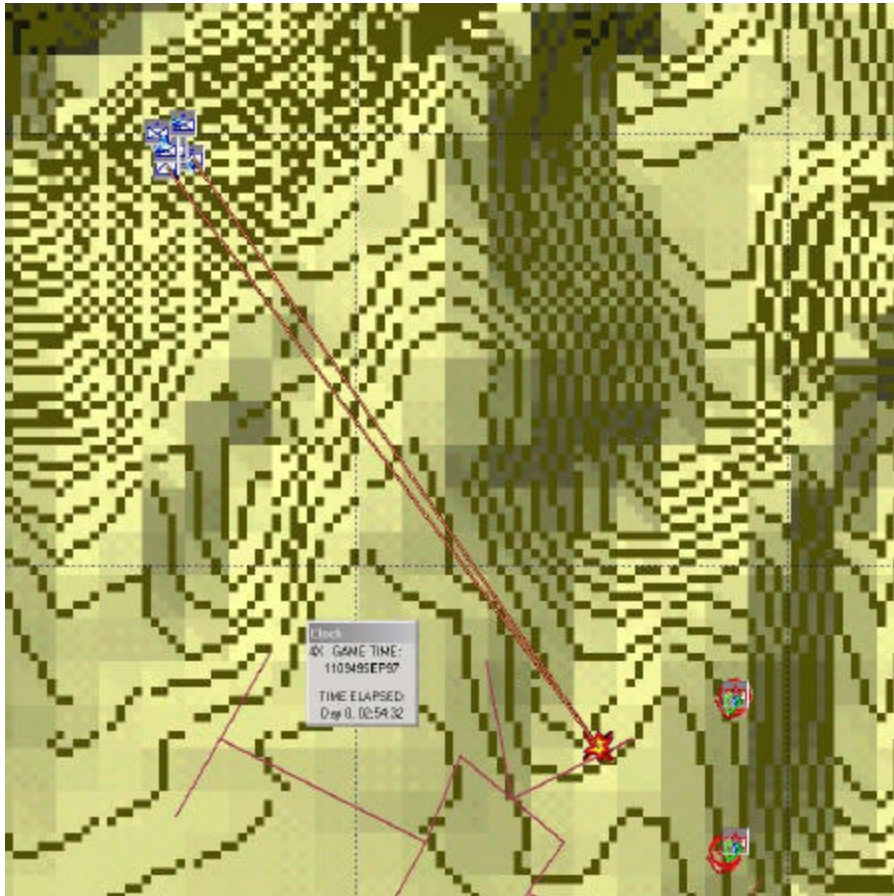
At 0845, 3/Charlie claimed its first victim, a 9P148 BRDM ATGM carrier. They also noted some dismounted activity in the vicinity; apparently the enemy had some

infantry sprinkled in as well. 3/Bravo continued its strenuous hike over the ridgelines to their firing position behind the enemy CSOP. At 0903 they identified a T-80 tank, but decided to continue to their planned firing position to engage the CSOP platoon all at once and prevent any escape should they realize their compromised position and try to run away.

At 0910 3/Charlie snuck up behind another BRDM and bushwhacked them. After a brief exchange of fire with the panicked crew, they destroyed it with an AT-4 rocket. At about the same time, they identified a Spandrel team and took them under fire with their SAWs. Without any supporting infantry of their own, the AT team was hopelessly outclassed and soon succumbed as well. Without missing a beat, a third BRDM was eliminated with a Javelin. A few minutes later yet another BRDM suffered a severe allergic reaction from eating an AT-4 rocket. 3/Charlie rallied up and began stalking their next hapless victims in the next grid square. I was sort of surprised the remnants of the battery didn't realize by this time the deep doo-doo they were in and try to flee, but it wouldn't have done any good if they had; they were within Javelin range and running away over the rough ground surely would have skylined them at some point, at which time they'd have become Javelin magnets. By 0925, the last two BRDMs were history. After taking some scattered mortar fire, 3/Charlie flushed out a second Spandrel team and destroyed it in a brief firefight. 3/Charlie proceeded towards the obstacle line with no further contacts in that area.

Meanwhile, the sweaty troops of 3/Bravo reached their firing point at 0945. Settling in, they found themselves with a commanding view of the CSOP. They opened fire with their Javelins, and two volleys later, the CSOP was only a bad memory. Pausing only briefly for a quick water break, they picked up once again and headed over the ridge a short distance away to have a look into the objective.

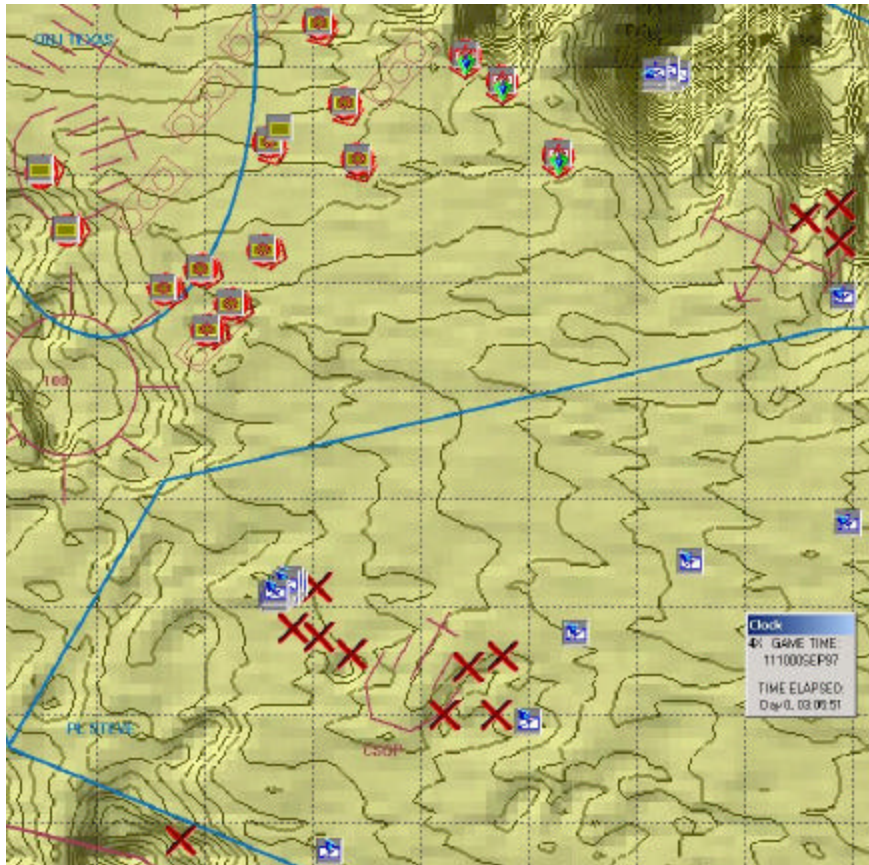




The scouts also seized the opportunity afforded by the destruction of the CSOP and AT firing line to reposition into more advantageous positions. Soon, a rather complete picture of the objective came into view. They also picked up an OP on a hill just out of sector south of PL Steve, which was promptly engaged and destroyed by 155mm HE.

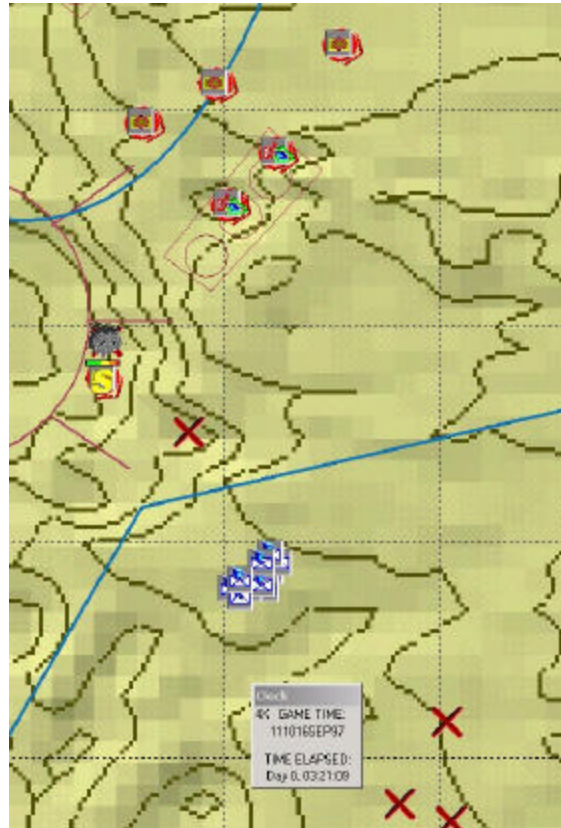
3/Charlie found themselves under mortar fire anytime they paused. Probably, some dismounts were looking down at them from the projected strongpoint. They resolved to keep moving to stay out from under the mortars as much as possible and nail that enemy infantry to the wall. But first, they had to see if they could find an obstacle.

At about 1000 3/Bravo started coming over the ridge and identifying targets in the objective. They settled down n, apparently undetected, into firing positions and waited for the opportune moment to fire their remaining Javelins at targets east of TEXAS. I began to regret not sending at least one more Javelin team to that side.





A few minutes later 3/Charlie started picking up dug-in infantry positions near the strongpoint location. Since their primary concern at the moment was finding an obstacle, they called for fire. They didn't want to get hung up in an obstacle with enemy observers calling mortars on them if at all possible. Because they were dug-in, I called for three battery volleys of HE on each target as they appeared.



My final assault plan was now taking shape. I was going to run Bravo as the breaching force more or less due north from PL STEVE up over the hilltop where the strongpoint was located. 3/Bravo would expend their Javelins against nearby positions within range, while the arty concentrated on the two hillside positions in TEXAS. Bravo would pause at a good vantage point to engage enemy positions east of TEXAS while still masked from anything deeper in the objective. Meanwhile, Charlie would follow them through the breach and attack through to the north into TEXAS, engaging any enemy found behind the objective. Bravo would then follow up to the northeast to finish clearing the other side of the valley, assisted by 3/Charlie who would spend their last Javelins on any enemy within range. Observing the progress of 3/Bravo, I set 1030 as the kickoff time to cross CHUCK. In preparation, I set Charlie and the engineers into motion to form up behind Bravo for the big push. I also began shifting artillery forward a bit more to completely cover the objective, leaving one battery behind to support 3/Bravo on short notice.

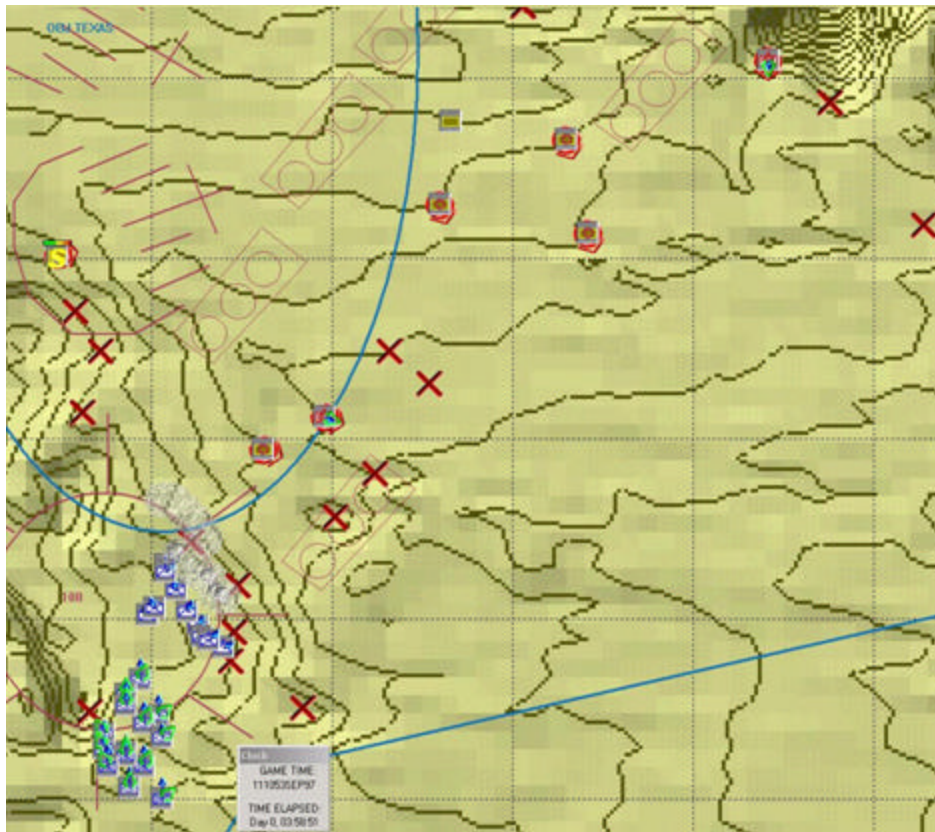
As 1030 approached and 3/Bravo crossed PL STEVE and started into the strongpoint, I began to feel a distinct sensation of glee. No obstacle! Unless the enemy had done something weird and stuck an obstacle over the top of a hill, which seemed unlikely, I might have lucked out and found the soft underbelly. I still wasn't taking any chances and keeping engineers close at hand, but I might just charge onto the objective with no need for a breach at all. To be sure, the best breach is always the one that you don't have to do.

1030 rolled around and it was time to kick off the assault. Bravo, engineers, and Charlie formed up and moved out, in that order. At the same time, I kicked off the artillery preparation, firing DPICM volleys by platoons at targets capable of menacing my advance. I added a bit of smoke at one point on their route which I couldn't be sure the enemy couldn't see with their ATGMs. I also scheduled a battery of smoke on the hill for when Bravo was to start climbing.

With the arty prep under way, 3/Charlie decided to finish up its Javelin allotment to see if they could spare the artillery any work, and expended their last four missiles. They killed two 9P148 BRDMs but unfortunately missed a BMP. Meanwhile, 3/Bravo encountered and engaged another Spandrel team, but also attracted the attention of a BMP which also brought them under fire. Some incoming mortar made the situation very uncomfortable. Dropping smoke from the M203 GLs, they beat a hasty retreat and began maneuvering to bring Javelins to bear on the offending BMP. Luckily avoiding any serious casualties, it was a reminder to check the terrain for cover when operating near enemy forces and to stay in motion when observers might be watching.

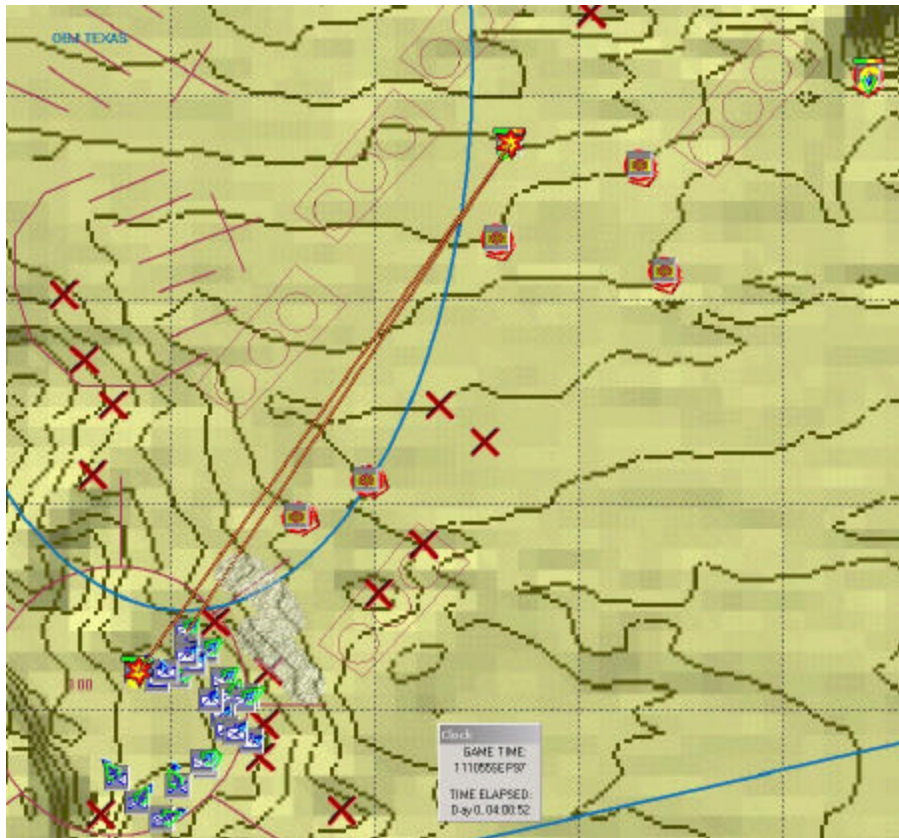


As the arty prep proceeded and 3/Bravo maneuvered, the situation gradually came together. The artillery knocked out 1 T-80 and 4 BMPs, while 3/Bravo, firing on the move or from very brief halts, unleashed their firepower and took care of 2 Spandrels, one BMP, one T-80, and an unlucky BAT-2 earthmover. As the smoke went in around 1053, the heavy equipment of Bravo company came storming up the back of the mountain.

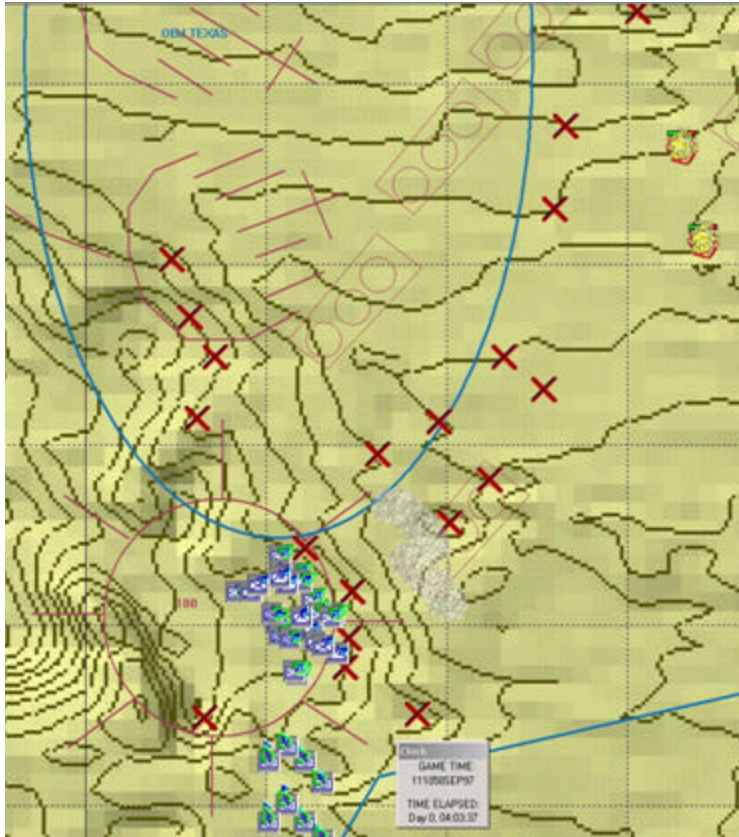




By 1055 the Bravo tanks had arrived in their ABF position under cover of smoke and assumed defilade positions. At the smoke drifted away and unmasked enemy targets one by one, they opened fire, while the arty shifted back to DPICM by platoon and began suppressing all visible targets. The first to die was a T-80. Although he went down swinging, he never had a chance against a full tank platoon with his range dialed in.



As the destruction proceeded apace, Charlie company arrived as planned and passed to the rear of Bravo, aiming at the little pass onto the high ground overlooking the objective.



It was now merely a matter of grinding down the last remnants of the enemy's combat power. With artillery targeted to suppress and the massed firepower of a company available, it was easy pickings. The final two targets were a bit too far to identify for destruction, so I simply dialed up the arty and sent Bravo's tank platoons out after them. Their reprieve didn't last long.

Charlie debouched onto the high ground without taking a single shot and proceeded towards the objective. They came across a couple of T-80s on the hillside and dispatched them forthwith with a bit of assistance from the artillery. The enemy was finished, and so was this scenario.

