

Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands

Background. The Battle of Santa Cruz Islands resulted from Japanese attempts to retake Henderson Field, the American-held airfield on Guadalcanal Island. These attempts featured an extended sortie by powerful Imperial Japanese Navy forces from their base at Truk, with the main units leaving Truk on 11 October and not returning until 31 October. The IJN sortie had a number of objectives. It guarded a series of convoys running troops and supplies to Guadalcanal against interference from the United States Navy. To clear the path for those convoys, the IJN scheduled a number of night time naval bombardments to cripple the airfield and soften up the American positions on the island. While safeguarding the Japanese supply convoys, the IJN also hoped to disrupt American efforts to supply and reinforce their troops on Guadalcanal. Finally, once Henderson Field had been captured, the IJN forces were to sweep south and destroy any Allied forces trying to evacuate the island.

The IJN offensive caught the USN at a low point of its naval strength in the region, with only one carrier and one battleship immediately available to face up to five Japanese carriers and six Japanese battleships. Fortunately for the Americans, a second carrier task force started on its way from Pearl Harbor to the South Pacific shortly after the main Japanese operations began. This, plus a now sizeable air contingent operating from Henderson Field, gave the Americans a fighting chance against the Japanese efforts.

Playing Area (All Scenarios). The scenarios are played out on a hex grid 30 hexes from north to south and 20 hexes from east to west. A sample of the grid is attached to this scenario description. Truk is in the northwest corner of the area, in hex 0101. Rabaul is in hex 0113. Shortlands/Buin is in hex 0515. Guadalcanal is in hex 1017. Espiritu Santo is in hex 1622. The Santa Cruz Islands are in hex 1618. Noumea is in hex 1630, at the bottom of the playing area. There are minor islands, controlled by Japan, in hexes 0213, 0314, 0414, 0615, 0716, 0816 and 0917. The US controls minor islands in hexes 1118 and 1218 as well as Guadalcanal and Espiritu Santo.

Initiative. For all scenarios, the USN player receives a +1 initiative modifier.

Short Battle. This covers the period from 24 October through 30 October. Prior to this period, the Americans won the Battle of Cape Esperance, the Japanese succeeded in moving most of their scheduled troop reinforcements to Guadalcanal, and Henderson Field had been subjected to a battleship bombardment that destroyed half of its air strength. The Japanese carrier Hiyo has had an engine room fire, forcing her return to Truk. Her aircraft went to land bases and to carrier Junyo, replacing heavy losses that Junyo's air group suffered in a raid on Guadalcanal. The Enterprise task force arrived from Pearl Harbor, and refueled east of Guadalcanal.

Scenario Length. 16 turns.

Victory Conditions. The IJN player begins the scenario with 25 VPs, but must have a margin of at least 35 VPs to win. With this exception, standard victory conditions apply.

Imperial Japanese Navy Order of Battle.

Carriers: Zuikaku, Shokaku, Zuiho, Junyo

Battleships: Kongo, Haruna, Hiei, Kirishima

Heavy Cruisers: Tone, Chikuma, Kumano, Suzuya, Myoko, Atago, Maya, Takao, Chokai*, Kinugasa*

Light Cruisers: Isuzu, Yura, Nagara, Tenryu*

Destroyers: Akizuki, Teruzuki, 3 x Shiratsuyu, 8 x Kagero, 3 x Yugumo, 1 x Fubuki, 1 x Asashio*, 2 x Shiratsuyu*, 1 x Fubuki*

Submarines: 2 blocks

* Denotes ships assigned to the Eighth Fleet.

Air groups:

Shokaku: 2 A6M2, 3 D3A2, 2 B5N2

Zuikaku: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 3 B5N2

Zuiho: 2 A6M2, 1 B5N2

Junyo: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 1 B5N2

Rabaul: 3 A6M2, 5 G4M1

Buin: 2 A6M3, 2 A6M2 (from Hiyo), 2 D3A2 (from Hiyo)

Imperial Japanese Navy Starting Positions.

- All surface ships must start at least 13 hexes away from Espiritu Santo and north of hexrow xx15.

- The Eighth Fleet units must start within 4 hexes of Rabaul.
- The submarine blocks may start with 4 hexes of Espiritu Santo or Guadalcanal.
- The IJN player may have up to 15 TF blocks on the playing surface. Any number of these may be dummies.
- The IJN player places TFs and submarine blocks on the map before the USN player.

Imperial Japanese Navy Scenario Rules.

1. Air strikes from IJN carriers are subject to limits. Any strike from Zuikaku or Shokaku is limited in size to 5 air units, no more than 3 of which may be bombing units. Any strike from Junyo is limited to 4 air units, no more than 2 of which may be bombing units. Any strike from Zuiho is limited to 2 air units, no more than 1 of which may be a bombing unit. A “bombing unit” is any air unit with a P, M or A attack strength.
2. IJN strikes at ranges of more than 8 hexes may be cancelled due to weather. After announcing such a strike, the IJN player rolls D12. On a roll of 3 or less, the strike is cancelled. The aircraft committed to the strike may not be used for any other purpose in the strike phase.
3. The IJN player must always retain 1 A6M unit at Rabaul as CAP.
4. TFs containing carriers or battleships may not refuel at Rabaul.
5. The IJN player may designate 2 hexes within 6 hexes of Truk as refueling rendezvous.
6. The IJN player must designate 2 battleships as having conducted bombardment missions. The IJN player may use the “BOMBARD” counters included with the game to record this. Because the 2 ships have already conducted their bombardment missions, they cannot bombard again during the scenario.
7. The IJN player may use D defense strength ship units to supply Guadalcanal. Each D unit can carry 2 VP of cargo, and must start its supply mission from Rabaul or Truk. The IJN player may use the “TRANSPORT” counters provided with the game to designate D units engaged in transport missions. D units carrying cargo have all of their attack strengths halved.
8. The IJN player may have 1 dummy task force composed entirely of dummy ships. The IJN player receives as dummy ships 2 high ♣, 3 ♠, 1 ♥ and 3 ♦.
9. No Japanese ship can approach within 7 hexes of Noumea.
10. At the start of each turn, the IJN player rolls D6 and D12. If the D12 result is 12 and the D6 result is 6, Junyo has suffered an engine breakdown. Her speed is reduced to 3 for

the remainder of the scenario, and the maximum size of a strike group launched by her is reduced by 1 air unit overall and 1 bombing unit.

United States Navy Order of Battle.

Carriers: Hornet, Enterprise*

Battleships: Washington, South Dakota*

Heavy Cruisers: Portland, Northampton, Pensacola, San Francisco, Helena, Chester

Light Cruisers: San Juan, San Diego, Juneau, Atlanta

Destroyers: Fletcher, Nicholas, 2 x Sims, 3 x Bristol, 1 x Sims/Bristol, Porter*, 3 x Mahan*, 1 x Gridley*

Submarines: 2 blocks (1 speed 2 and 1 speed 3)

Other: Curtiss, Mackinac, Kopara, 1 x AVD, 2 x DMS

* Denotes ships just arrived from Pearl Harbor.

Air groups:

Hornet: 4 F4F-4, 3 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1

Enterprise: 4 F4F-4, 4 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1

Guadalcanal: 2 F4F-4, 1 SBD-3, 1 P-39/400

Espiritu Santo: 2 F4F-3P, 1 SBD-3, 1 F4F-4

United States Navy Starting Positions.

- The ships just arrived from Pearl Harbor begin on the map within 4 hexes of the refueling rendezvous designated by the USN player. They are fully fuelled.
- All other ships may all begin play anywhere south of hexrow xx17 and at least 12 hexes away from Rabaul. Any ships starting at Espiritu Santo, Noumea, or the refueling rendezvous designated by the USN player are fully fuelled. Ships starting in other locations have remaining endurance equal to their maximum endurance minus 1 turn for every 4 hexes (or fraction) from their location to Espiritu Santo.
- The speed 2 submarine block start within 4 hexes of Rabaul. The speed 3 submarine block start within 4 hexes of Truk.
- The USN player can have up to 15 TF blocks on the playing surface. Any number of these may be dummies.
- The USN player places TFs and submarine blocks on the map after the IJN player.

United States Navy Scenario Rules.

1. Air strikes from USN carriers are limited in their potential composition. Any P weapon bombing units in excess of 3 launched by a carrier in a single strike must be units with 2P attack strengths.
2. Curtiss, Mackinac and the AVD unit may operate their search aircraft from at any US controlled island hex.
3. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac and the AVDs can search during night turns as if they were day turns. If search aircraft based at one of these units searches during a day turn, it may not search during the following night turn. The USN player may use the "SEARCHED" counters provided with the game to track this.
4. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac or the AVDs may attack 1 of the spotted ships in each TF they contact at night with a 6L attack. They must roll 1 on D12 to make the attack. Roll for each TF contacted and select any attacked ship randomly, based on the cards dealt during the search.
5. The search aircraft based on Espiritu Santo may attack 1 of the spotted ships in each TF they contact with a 3H attack. They must roll 1 on D12 to make the attack. Roll for each spotted TF separately and select the attacked ship randomly, based on the cards dealt during the search.
6. All US bases have radar.
7. The USN player can designate 1 hex within 4 hexes of Espiritu Santo as a refueling rendezvous.
8. Guadalcanal may be bombarded. Espiritu Santo may not be bombarded.
9. Kopara, the AVD unit, and the DMS units may carry supplies to Guadalcanal. Each may carry 2 VP of supplies, starting from Espiritu Santo or Noumea. The AVD unit may not search when transporting supplies or returning from transporting supplies. The USN player may use the "TRANSPORT" counters provided with the game to designate DMS and AVD units engaged in transport missions.
10. The USN player may have 1 dummy task force composed entirely of dummy ships. The USN player receives as dummy ships one high ♣, 2 low ♣, 2 ♠, 1 ♥ and 3 ♦.
11. No USN surface ship may approach within 9 hexes of Truk.

Intermediate Battle. This covers the period from 16 October through 30 October. Prior to this period, the Americans won the Battle of Cape Esperance, the Japanese succeeded in moving most of their scheduled troop reinforcements to Guadalcanal, and Henderson Field had been subjected to a battleship bombardment that destroyed half of its air strength. The Enterprise task force left Pearl Harbor, bound for a refueling rendezvous west of the Santa Cruz islands.

Scenario Length. 30 turns.

Victory Conditions. The IJN player begins the scenario with 45 VPs, but must have 60 VP to win. Standard victory conditions apply.

Imperial Japanese Navy Order of Battle:

Carriers: Zuikaku, Shokaku, Zuiho, Hiyo, Junyo

Battleships: Kongo, Haruna, Hiei, Kirishima

Heavy Cruisers: Tone, Chikuma, Kumano, Suzuya, Myoko, Atago, Maya, Takao, Chokai*, Kinugasa*

Light Cruisers: Isuzu, Yura, Nagara, Tatsuta*

Destroyers: Akizuki, Teruzuki, 3 x Shiratsuyu, 8 x Kagero, 3 x Yugumo, 1 x Fubuki, 1 x Akatsuki, 1 x Asashio*, 2 x Shiratsuyu*, 1 x Fubuki*

Submarines: 2 blocks

Other: Tsugaru

* Denotes ships assigned to the Eighth Fleet.

Air groups:

Shokaku: 2 A6M2, 3 D3A2, 2 B5N2

Zuikaku: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 3 B5N2

Zuiho: 2 A6M2, 1 B5N2

Hiyo: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 1 B5N2

Junyo: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 1 B5N2

Rabaul: 3 A6M2, 5 G4M1

Buin: 2 A6M3

Imperial Japanese Navy Starting Positions.

- All surface ships must start at least 13 hexes away from Espiritu Santo and north of hexrow xx15.

- All Eighth Fleet units must start within 4 hexes of Rabaul.
- The submarine blocks may start with 4 hexes of Espiritu Santo or Guadalcanal.
- The IJN player may have up to 15 TF blocks on the playing surface. Any number of these may be dummies.
- The IJN player places TFs and submarine blocks on the map before the USN player.

Imperial Japanese Navy Scenario Rules.

1. Air strikes from IJN carriers are subject to limits. Any strike from Zuikaku or Shokaku is limited in size to 5 air units, no more than 3 of which may be bombing units. Any strike from Hiyo or Junyo is limited to 4 air units, no more than 2 of which may be bombing units. Any strike from Zuiho is limited to 2 air units, no more than 1 of which may be a bombing unit. A “bombing unit” is any air unit with a P, M or A attack strength.
2. IJN strikes at ranges of more than 8 hexes may be cancelled due to weather. After announcing such a strike, the IJN player rolls D12. On a roll of 3 or less, the strike is cancelled. The aircraft committed to the strike may not be used for any other purpose in the strike phase.
3. The IJN player must always retain 1 A6M unit at Rabaul as CAP.
4. TFs containing carriers or battleships may not refuel at Rabaul.
5. The IJN player may designate 2 hexes within 6 hexes of Truk as refueling rendezvous.
6. The IJN player must designate 2 battleships as having conducted bombardment missions. The IJN player may use the “BOMBARD” counters included with the game to record this. Because the 2 ships have already conducted their bombardment missions, they cannot bombard again during the scenario.
7. The IJN player may use Tsugaru and D defense strength ship units to supply Guadalcanal. Tsugaru and each D unit can carry 2 VP of cargo, and must start its supply mission in Rabaul or Truk. The IJN player may use the “TRANSPORT” counters provided with the game to designate D units engaged in transport missions. D units carrying cargo have all of their attack strengths halved.
8. The IJN player may have 1 dummy task force composed entirely of dummy ships. The IJN player receives as dummy ships 2 high ♣, 3 ♠, 1 ♥ and 3 ♦.
9. No Japanese ship can approach within 7 hexes of Noumea.
10. At the start of each turn, the IJN player rolls D6 and D12. If the D12 result is 12 and the D6 result is 6, Junyo has suffered an engine breakdown. If the D12 result is 12 and the D6 result is 5, Hiyo has suffered an engine breakdown. If either of these carriers suffers

an engine breakdown, her speed is reduced to 3 for the remainder of the scenario and the maximum size of a strike group launched by her is reduced by 1 air unit overall and 1 bombing unit.

United States Navy Order of Battle.

Carriers: Hornet, Enterprise*

Battleships: Washington, South Dakota*

Heavy Cruisers: Portland, Northampton, Pensacola, San Francisco, Helena

Light Cruisers: San Juan, San Diego, Juneau, Atlanta

Destroyers: Fletcher, Nicholas, 2 x Sims, 3 x Bristol, 1 x Benham, 1 x Sims/Bristol, Porter*, 3 x Mahan*, 1 x Gridley*

Submarines: 2 blocks (1 3 speed and 1 2 speed)

Other: Curtiss, Mackinac, Alchiba, Bellatrix, Jamestown, Vireo, Kopara, 1 x AVD, 2 x DMS

* Denotes ships received as reinforcements.

Air groups:

Hornet: 4 F4F-4, 3 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1

Enterprise: 4 F4F-4, 4 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1

Guadalcanal: 4 F4F-4, 3 SBD-3, 1 TBF-1, 1 P-39/400

Espiritu Santo: 2 F4F-3P, 1 SBD-3, 1 F4F-4

United States Navy Starting Positions.

- The ships initially received by the USN player may all begin play anywhere south of hexrow xx17 and at least 12 hexes away from Rabaul. Any ships starting at Espiritu Santo, Noumea, or the refueling rendezvous designated by the USN player are fully fuelled. Ships starting in other locations have remaining endurance equal to their maximum endurance minus 1 turn for every 4 hexes (or fraction) from their location to Espiritu Santo.
- The ships received as reinforcements enter the map anywhere on the east edge, south of hexrow xx17. They have 4 turns of endurance left on the turn that they enter. They all enter on the same turn. They may enter on any turn on or after turn 5, at the USN player's option. The USN player selects the turn on which the reinforcement ships will enter at the start of the game. The IJN player receives 15 VP for every turn before turn

before turn 17 that the reinforcement ships enter. The USN player receives 15 VP for every turn after turn 17 that the reinforcement ships enter.

- The speed 2 submarine block start within 4 hexes of Rabaul. The speed 3 submarine block start within 4 hexes of Truk.
- The USN player can have up to 15 TF blocks on the playing surface. Any number of these may be dummies.
- The USN player places TFs and submarine blocks on the map after the IJN player.

United States Navy Scenario Rules.

1. Air strikes from USN carriers are limited in their potential composition. Any P weapon bombing units in excess of 3 launched by a carrier in a single strike must be units with 2P attack strengths.
2. Curtiss, Mackinac and the AVD unit may operate their search aircraft from any US controlled island hex.
3. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac and the AVDs can search during night turns as if they were day turns. If search aircraft based at one of these units searches during a day turn, it may not search during the following night turn. The USN player may use the "SEARCHED" counters provided with the game to track this.
4. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac or the AVDs may attack 1 of the spotted ships in each TF they contact at night with a 6L attack. They must roll 1 on D12 to make the attack. Roll for each TF contacted and select any attacked ship randomly, based on the cards dealt during the search.
5. The search aircraft based on Espiritu Santo may attack 1 of the spotted ships in each TF they contact with a 3H attack. They must roll 1 on D12 to make the attack. Roll for each spotted TF separately and select the attacked ship randomly, based on the cards dealt during the search.
6. All US bases have radar.
7. The USN player can designate 1 hex within 4 hexes of Espiritu Santo as a refueling rendezvous.
8. Guadalcanal may be bombarded. Espiritu Santo may not be bombarded.
9. Alchiba, Bellatrix, Jamestown, Vireo, Kopara, the AVD unit, and the DMS units may carry supplies to Guadalcanal. Jamestown, Vireo, the AVD unit and the DMS units may each carry 2 VP of supplies, and must start from Espiritu Santo or Noumea. Alchiba and Bellatrix carry VPs equal to their cargo ratings, and must start from Espiritu Santo or

Noumea. The AVD unit may not search when transporting supplies or returning from transporting supplies. The USN player may use the "TRANSPORT" counters provided with the game to designate DMS and AVD units engaged in transport missions.

Jamestown and Vireo carry cargo in the form of towed barges, and have their speed limited to 2 while towing. They may cast off their tows at any point, but can then score no VP for carrying supplies.

10. The USN player may have 1 dummy task force composed entirely of dummy ships. The USN player receives as dummy ships one high ♣, 2 low ♣, 2 ♠ and 3 ♦.
11. No USN surface ship may approach within 9 hexes of Truk.

Long Battle. This covers the period from 9 October through 30 October.

Scenario Length. 44 turns.

Victory Conditions. Standard victory conditions apply.

Imperial Japanese Navy Order of Battle.

Carriers: Zuikaku, Shokaku, Zuiho, Hiyo, Junyo

Battleships: Kongo, Haruna, Hiei, Kirishima

Heavy Cruisers: Tone, Chikuma, Kumano, Suzuya, Myoko, Atago, Maya, Takao, Chokai*, Aoba*, Furutaka*, Kinugasa*

Light Cruisers: Isuzu, Yura, Nagara, Tatsuta*

Destroyers: Akizuki, Teruzuki, 3 x Shiratsuyu, 8 x Kagero, 3 x Yugumo, 1 x Fubuki, 1 x Akatsuki, 1 x Asashio*, 2 x Shiratsuyu*, 2 x Fubuki*

Submarines: 2 blocks

Other: Chitose*, Nisshin*, Tsugaru*, Azumasan Maru, Kyushu Maru, Nankai Maru, Sado Maru, Sakido Maru, Sasago Maru

* Denotes ships assigned to the Eighth Fleet.

Air groups:

Shokaku: 2 A6M2, 3 D3A2, 2 B5N2

Zuikaku: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 3 B5N2

Zuiho: 2 A6M2, 1 B5N2

Hiyo: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 1 B5N2

Junyo: 2 A6M2, 2 D3A2, 1 B5N2

Rabaul: 3 A6M2, 5 G4M1

Buin: 2 A6M3

Imperial Japanese Navy Starting Positions.

- All surface ships not in the Eighth Fleet (except the Marus) must start at Truk.
- All Eighth Fleet units must start at Rabaul.
- The 6 Marus may start at either Rabaul or Truk.
- The submarine blocks may start with 4 hexes of Espiritu Santo or Guadalcanal.
- The IJN player may have up to 15 TF blocks on the playing surface. Any number of these may be dummies.

- The IJN player places TFs and submarine blocks on the map before the USN player.

Imperial Japanese Navy Scenario Rules.

1. Air strikes from IJN carriers are subject to limits. Any strike from Zuikaku or Shokaku is limited in size to 5 air units, no more than 3 of which may be bombing units. Any strike from Hiyo or Junyo is limited to 4 air units, no more than 2 of which may be bombing units. Any strikes from Zuiho is limited to 2 air units, no more than 1 of which may be a bombing unit. A “bombing unit” is any air unit with a P, M or A attack strength.
2. IJN strikes at ranges of more than 8 hexes may be cancelled due to weather. After announcing such a strike, the IJN player rolls D12. On a roll of 3 or less, the raid is cancelled. The aircraft committed to the raid may not be used for any other purpose in the strike phase.
3. The IJN player must always retain 1 A6M unit at Rabaul as CAP.
4. TFs containing carriers or battleships may not refuel at Rabaul.
5. The IJN player may designate 2 hexes within 6 hexes of Truk as refueling rendezvous.
6. The IJN player may designate 2 battleships and 3 heavy cruisers as having bombardment missions. These 5 ships are equipped with special bombardment ammunition that triples their B or C attack strengths for 1 bombardment. The IJN player may use the “BOMBARD” counters included with the game to mark ships so assigned.
7. The IJN player may use Chitose, Nisshin, Tsugaru, the 6 Marus and any D defense strength ship units to supply Guadalcanal. Chitose and Nisshin can each carry 8 VP of cargo. Tsugaru and each D unit can carry 2 VP of cargo. All ships on supply missions must start their missions at either Truk or Rabaul. The Marus may be used for 1 transport mission only. The IJN player may use the “TRANSPORT” counters provided with the game to designate D units engaged in transport missions. D units carrying cargo have all of their attack strengths halved.
8. The IJN player may declare that any or all of the 6 Marus are beaching at Guadalcanal. A beached ship counts as sunk for VP purposes. If the USN player destroys a beached ship before it completes unloading, the IJN player still receives half of the VP value of its cargo.
9. The IJN player may elect to substitute Mutsu and Yamato for any other battleships. The Japanese player may take either or both of these ships. Mutsu and Yamato may bombard, but do not have special bombardment ammunition. The USN player gets double normal VPs for damaging or sinking these ships.

10. The IJN player may have 1 dummy task force composed entirely of dummy ships. The IJN player receives as dummy ships 2 high ♣, 4 low ♣, 4 ♠, 1 ♥ and 4 ♦.
11. No Japanese ship can approach within 7 hexes of Noumea.
12. At the start of each turn, the IJN player rolls D6 and D12. If the D12 result is 12 and the D6 result is 6, Junyo has suffered an engine breakdown. If the D12 result is 12 and the D6 result is 5, Hiyo has suffered an engine breakdown. If either of these carriers suffers an engine breakdown, her speed is reduced to 3 for the remainder of the scenario and the maximum size of a strike group launched by her is reduced by 1 air unit overall and 1 bombing unit.

United States Navy Order of Battle.

Carriers: Hornet, Enterprise*

Battleships: Washington, South Dakota*

Heavy Cruisers: Portland, Northampton, Pensacola, San Francisco, Helena, Salt Lake City, Boise

Light Cruisers: San Juan, San Diego, Juneau, Atlanta

Destroyers: Fletcher, Nicholas, 2 x Sims, 5 x Bristol, 1 x Sims/Bristol, 1 x Benham, Porter*, 3 x Mahan*, 1 x Gridley*

Submarines: 2 blocks (1 2 speed and 1 3 speed)

Other: Curtiss, Mackinac, Alchiba, Bellatrix, Jamestown, McCawley, Vireo, Zeilin, Kopara, 1 x AVD, 2 x DMS

* Denotes ships received as reinforcements.

Air groups:

Hornet: 4 F4F-4, 3 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1

Enterprise: 4 F4F-4, 4 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1

Guadalcanal: 4 F4F-4, 3 SBD-3, 2 TBF-1, 1 P-39/400

Espiritu Santo: 2 F4F-3P, 2 SBD-3, 2 F4F-4

United States Navy Starting Positions.

- The ships initially received by the USN player may all begin play anywhere south of hexrow xx17 and at least 12 hexes away from Rabaul. Any ships starting at Espiritu Santo, Noumea, or the refueling rendezvous designated by the USN player are considered to be fully fuelled. Ships starting in other locations have remaining

endurance equal to their maximum endurance minus 1 turn for every 4 hexes (or fraction) from their location to Espiritu Santo.

- The ships received as reinforcements enter the map anywhere on the east edge, south of hexrow xx17. They have 4 turns of endurance left on the turn that they enter. They all enter on the same turn. They may enter on any turn on or after turn 19, at the USN player's option. The USN player selects the turn on which the reinforcement ships will enter at the start of the game. The IJN player receives 15 VP for every turn before turn 31 that the reinforcement ships enter. The USN player receives 15 VP for every turn after turn 31 that the reinforcement ships enter.
- McCawley and Zeilin must start at Noumea.
- Alchiba, Bellatrix, Jamestown, Vireo, and Kopara must start at either Espiritu Santo or Noumea.
- The speed 2 submarine block start within 4 hexes of Rabaul. The speed 3 submarine block start within 4 hexes of Truk.
- The USN player can have up to 15 TF blocks on the playing surface. Any number of these may be dummies.
- The USN player places TFs and submarine blocks on the map after the IJN player.

United States Navy Scenario Rules.

1. Air strikes from USN carriers are limited in their potential composition. Any P weapon bombing units in excess of 3 launched by a carrier in a single strike must be units with 2P attack strengths.
2. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac and the AVD unit may be based at any US controlled island hex.
3. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac and the AVDs can search during night turns as if they were day turns. If search aircraft based at one of these units searches during a day turn, it may not search during the following night turn. The USN player may use the "SEARCHED" counters provided with the game to track this.
4. The search aircraft operated by Curtiss, Mackinac or the AVDs may attack 1 of the spotted ships in each TF they contact at night with a 6L attack. They must roll 1 on D12 to make the attack. Roll for each TF contacted and select any attacked ship randomly, based on the cards dealt during the search.
5. The search aircraft based on Espiritu Santo may attack 1 of the spotted ships in each TF they contact with a 3H attack. They must roll 1 on D12 to make the attack. Roll for each

spotted TF separately and select the attacked ship randomly, based on the cards dealt during the search.

6. All US bases have radar.
7. The USN player can designate 1 hex within 4 hexes of Espiritu Santo as a refueling rendezvous.
8. Guadalcanal may be bombarded. Espiritu Santo may not be bombarded.
9. Alchiba, Bellatrix, Jamestown, McCawley, Vireo, Zeilin, Kopara, the AVD unit, and the DMS units may carry supplies to Guadalcanal. Jamestown, Vireo, the AVD unit and the DMS units may each carry 2 VP of cargo, and must start from Espiritu Santo or Noumea. The other ships carry VPs equal to their cargo ratings, and must start from Espiritu Santo or Noumea. The AVD unit may not search when transporting supplies or returning from transporting supplies. McCawley and Zeilin can be used for 1 transport mission only. The USN player may use the "TRANSPORT" counters provided with the game to designate DMS and AVD units engaged in transport missions. Jamestown and Vireo carry cargo in the form of towed barges, and have their speed limited to 2 while towing. They may cast off their tows at any point, but can then score no VP for carrying supplies.
10. The USN player may have 1 dummy task force composed entirely of dummy ships. The USN player receives as dummy ships one high ♣, 4 low ♣, 4 ♠ and 3 ♦.
11. No USN surface ship may approach within 9 hexes of Truk.

Outcome. The IJN mounted its largest operation since the attempted invasion of Midway. Only fuel shortages at Truk kept the Japanese forces from being larger still. The IJN was largely successful in achieving its objectives, but ultimate victory still eluded the Japanese. In an initial operation, the IJN succeeded in landing supplies on Guadalcanal but took heavy losses in an unsuccessful attempt to bombard Henderson Field. It then failed to stop the USN from bringing substantial reinforcements to the island. In its next major operation, it subjected Henderson Field to a devastating battleship bombardment, and then succeeded in landing the bulk of a division of troops for an assault on the American positions. This success was followed by IJN carrier aircraft disrupting an American attempt to run supplies through to Guadalcanal.

The carrier battle came on October 26. The main fleet units of the IJN had swept south in response to a mistaken report that Henderson Field had been taken. They met Hornet and Enterprise coming north in an attempt to work around their eastern flank. In the action that followed, Hornet was sunk, Shokaku and Zuiho were knocked out of action and Enterprise took moderate damage. USN CAP fighters and anti-aircraft fire savaged the IJN carrier air groups.

When the smoke cleared, the IJN and the USN were each left with one functioning fleet carrier in the South Pacific. Of the pre-war USN fleet carriers, only Enterprise remained active. Lexington succumbed at the battle of Coral Sea, Yorktown at the battle of Midway, Wasp to a submarine attack, and Hornet at Santa Cruz. Saratoga was under repair from a torpedo hit and unable to return to the South Pacific until December. While new carriers were commissioning, they would not be ready for war until 1943.

Of course, the IJN carrier force had suffered as well, losing four fleet carriers at Midway while adding Hiyo and Junyo to its order of battle. After Santa Cruz, Shokaku and Zuikaku both retired to the Home Islands – Shokaku for repairs and Zuikaku to rebuild her shattered air group. Hiyo remained at Truk, but her engine problems kept her from being an effective unit. November would see the Japanese mount a final effort to take Henderson Field, but with the burden shifting in both navies from carriers to surface forces and land-based air.

