

THE MARETH LINE



INTRODUCTION

This is the **Mareth Line** scenario, beginning in mid March 1943. It starts with Operation 'Pugilist', the British 8th Army attack on a set of fortified lines and defenses in southern Tunisia, called the Mareth Line. It is an old French fortified line that the Axis has reinforced and plans to use as a lock for the entry into Tunisia.

The Battle of the Mareth Line was the first big operation by the Eighth Army since the Second Battle of El Alamein. The first British attack, established a bridgehead but a break-out attempt was defeated by Axis counter-attacks. Finally, an outflanking manoeuvre a week later forced the Axis to retreat another 40 miles (64 km) back in Tunisia.

- The **Allies** forces are essentially good quality units from the British 8th Army, well equipped, with a lot of artillery and the very large and powerful support of the Desert Air Force.
- The **Axis** has a good fortified line and good mobile divisions. Those assets are nevertheless brittle against the might of the British forces and lack air support. Clever use of fighting retreat and counter-attacks will be the key to success.

The scenario starts with the British poised to attack the approaches of the Mareth Line. Can they break through the various defensive lines and move fast to the north? Can the Axis hold that line?

The game Cards and Events allow full replay ability thanks to the numerous various situations that they create on the environmental, diplomatic, military, or political fields.

DURATION

Duration: 3h+

Favored Side: Allies

Most Difficult Side to Play: Allies

The **Mareth Line** scenario lasts 3 turns with each turn representing 1 week, starting March 19, 1943. This is a medium small introductory scenario with a heavy unit density.

The **Allies** player always plays first.



FORCES

The **Allies** include **British**, **Indian**, **New Zealand**, **Free French**, **RAF** and **American Army Air Force** units.

The **Axis** forces include **German Army**, **Italian Army**, **Luftwaffe** and **Regia Aeronautica** units.

MAPBOARD

The usable portion of the map in the scenario is only the most southern part of Tunisia (everything north of Sfax is off limits)

Regions that cannot be entered in the scenario (usually in the north) are grayed out.

An important feature is Mountain Ridges, shown on the map by brownish border between regions: they can be crossed, but this costs an extra +1 movement point.

Also, the swampy salt marshes on the coastline have very limited stacking and not very useful, except for some flanking maneuvers.

Tripoli and Ghadames, the 2 off-map boxes controlled by the **Allies** cannot be entered by **Axis** forces.

AIR STACKING: in this scenario it is limited to 4 points of stacking in all regions except off-map boxes, where it is unlimited. Most air units of both sides have a 1 point stacking value, except the **Allied** Fighter Wings (cost 2)



VICTORY

IMMEDIATE VICTORY

The **Allied** player wins if he controls both Gabes and Sfax, with units in supply, at anytime.

The **Axis** player wins if he controls ALL the cities he has initially and the city of Medenine, with units in supply, at anytime.

Otherwise, the player with the most Victory Points at the end of the scenario wins the game.

END GAME BONUS VP

The **Allied** player earns 5 VP each for the control of: Mareth and El Hama

The **Allied** player earns 10 VP each for the control of: Gabès and Sfax

The **Axis** player earns 5 VP each for the control of: Gabès and El Hama

The **Axis** player earns 10 VP for the control of: Mareth and Sfax

Each side receives 1VP for each enemy Armored unit destroyed.

REINFORCEMENTS

ALLIES

[Turn 2] March 26-31, 1943

In or adjacent to Tripoli: British 1st Armored Division with

GB: 2nd-3rd Arm, 7th Mech, York Mech, 12th Lancers Rec, 1st Indep Arty, 5th Lit AA, 9th Supply

In or adjacent to Tripoli or in one of the Libyan connections zones: British 4th Indian Division with

GB: 11th Indian Inf, 5th Indian Inf, 7th Indian Inf, 4th Indian Arty, Central India Horse Rec, 8th Supply

AXIS

No reinforcements in this scenario.

SPECIAL RULES

WEATHER

Weather will not apply in this scenario except via the play of cards. In this region at the time of the year, it is mostly fair.

REPLACEMENTS

Most replacements and constructions are handled by cards. Each side may receive free replacements each turn according to the scenario rules.

In this scenario, 2 per turn for the **Allies** and 1 for the **Axis**

CARDS

There **Allies** start with 10 cards in hands and will receive two cards each turn in this game. In addition, representing the importance of the 8th Army and general Montgomery's skills, the player will draw 2 extra cards (mostly with tactical effects) on the second and third turns of this scenario.

SPECIAL RULES

SUPPLY SOURCES

- For the **Allied** units: Tripoli and Ghadames off-map boxes
- For the **Axis** units: Sfax



FOG OF WAR

Both sides benefit from a partial fog of war, i.e. the player cannot see what an enemy stack contains (only a flag is displayed on those). To observe the enemy content, you need to play a Reconnaissance card (Air or Land).

BREAKTHROUGHS

Only Armor and Leaders can initiate a Breakthrough.



Mechanized units, Artillery, some motorized units and Fighters, Fighter-Bombers and Dive-Bombers Air units may accompany a breakthrough.