

SAIPAN



INTRODUCTION

The Battle of Saipan was a battle of the Pacific campaign of World War II, fought on the island of Saipan in the Mariana Islands from 15 June to 9 July 1944 as part of Operation Forager. It has been referred to as the «*Pacific D-Day*» with the invasion fleet departing Pearl Harbor on 5 June 1944, the day before Operation Overlord in Europe was launched, and launching nine days after. The U.S. 2nd Marine Division, 4th Marine Division, and the Army's 27th Infantry Division, commanded by Lieutenant General Holland Smith, defeated the 43rd Infantry Division of the Imperial Japanese Army, commanded by Lieutenant General Yoshitsugu Saito. The loss of Saipan, with the deaths of at least 29,000 troops and heavy civilian casualties, precipitated the resignation of Prime Minister of Japan Hideki Tōjō and left the Japanese archipelago within the range of United States Army Air Forces B-29 bombers.

One player represents the United States of America's land and naval forces, the other has Japan's land forces.

The Japanese have built extensive fortifications, tunnels, and other defensive positions. The Americans, United States Marines, US Army and Naval Air, are well equipped and trained,

- The **Americans** must advance must advance and conquer the 3 Airfields and all other objectives.
- The **Japanese** must hold desperately against the onslaught of their enemy, hoping to inflict enough casualties to force the Americans to cease operations.

Be careful with the supply lines for the Americans, as Japanese counterattacks could cut units off from the beachhead supply sources. Japanese units are always in supply, reflecting their preparation of extensive supply caches.

DURATION

Duration: 18h+

Favored Side: Americans

Most Difficult Side to Play: Japanese

The Saipan campaign lasts 25 turns, from 15th June till 9th July 1944, each representing a day,

The **Americans** always plays first.



FORCES

The **American forces** include **United States Marines Corps (2nd and 4th Divisions)**, **United States Army (27th Division)** and **United States Navy** units.

The **Japanese forces** include **Japanese Army** and **Japanese Navy Land (equivalent of Marines)** units.

MAPBOARD

The map represents the entire island of Saipan, and “landing areas” where USA land units arrive.

Naval Air and Fire Support icons and units are placed in two “Off Map” Boxes representing the US Navy fleet offshore supporting the invasion.

There are objectives on the main map that yield Victory Points

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 have a 1 point stacking value (the Naval Fire support units are classified as ‘air’ units for purpose of movement and action but are worth 0 stacking points).



VICTORY ★★★★★

IMMEDIATE VICTORY

The **American player** wins if he captures all airfields, villages, tunnels and the The “Central Redoubt” around Mt. Tapochau (4 regions)

The **Japanese player** wins if a preset level of Victory Points is reach, those VP being earned when US Marine units are eliminated in combat. He also wins automatically if his opponent does not control all the regions of Airfield#1 by the end of Turn 8.

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

BONUS VP

Many regions and structures give VP when captured, and may cause loss of VP if lost. All of those are shown by the VP stars on map and in the region navigator. *Right click on any owned region and examine the “Regions” tab and the “Structures” tab to see locations that award VP.*

Elimination of any **US** Armor or Mobile Infantry costs **USA -2VP** each.

Elimination of and **Japanese** Armor or Mobile Infantry gives **USA +1VP** each.

REINFORCEMENTS

AMERICANS

[Turn 1] June 15, 1944

4th Marine Division : 23rd, 24th, 25th Regiments each with 3 Infantry battalions, 14th Artillery regiment with 4 battalions, 708th Amphibian Tank Battalion (Army)

2nd Marine Division : 2nd, 6th, 8th Regiments each with 3 Infantry battalions, 10th Artillery regiment with 4 battalions.

[Turn 2] June 16, 1944

27th US Army Infantry Division : 105th, 106th, 165th Infantry Regiments each with 3 Infantry battalions, 104th, 105th, 106th and 249th Field Artillery battalions, 762nd and 766th Tank Battalions

[Turn 3] June 17, 1944

Card Option only: 3 companies of USMC armor

JAPAN

At Start: Thirty-first Army, Defenses of Saipan (Lt. Gen. Yoshitsugu Saitō) with essentially the 43rd Division and the 47th Independent Mixed Brigade, plus miscellaneous support units

No reinforcements in this scenario, but cards allow for the rebuild of some previously destroyed units.

SPECIAL RULES

WEATHER

At the time of this scenario some storms may occur in this part of the Pacific Ocean. This is handled via the play of cards or events. Bad weather will usually 'ground' all air forces and limit the movement ability of land forces.

REPLACEMENTS

USA receives 1 replacement every turn, beginning Turn 2.

Japan receives 1 replacement every turn, beginning Turn 2.

Additional replacements and constructions for both sides are handled by cards.

CARDS

One card is drawn each turn in this game, and players may keep up to 7 of them in hands.

SPECIAL RULES

SUPPLY SOURCES

Supply affects **American** units only. Their supply sources (the landing beaches) are identified by the supply icon.



BREAKTHROUGHS

In this game, no breakthrough are possible, unless Tanks are present.

START OPTIONS

The game offers to both side an array of different starting options, each at a cost in victory points.



The other side will not be aware of your choice, thereby creating new situations at each start of the game.

- The **Americans** may stay with the historical setup, request more Air Support, request more tanks, or offer the 27th Division to land at an alternative location.
- The **Japanese** may choose to stay with the Historical setup, or to relocate some forces to sites closer to the Historical Landing area in the South, receive a small number of air units, or ask for more replacements.

All those options and gambles are yours to discover. The game's event and cards allow full replay ability thanks to the numerous various situations that they create.

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 that are nearby to friendly units) until they enter in battle with those.

NO ARMOR TERRAIN

Several regions do not allow Armor units to enter. There are indicated by display of the "No Armor" icon.



DESIGN NOTES

This game is dedicated to all United States Marines past, present and future. Thank you for your service.

- The outcome of the game is inevitable: USA will eventually clear the island of Japanese forces. To make the game interesting without losing sight of the history, “milestones” are set that award Victory Points to Japan if not met.

*[Hint: Every Marine unit **eliminated** in combat gives Japan 3 Victory Points. Be careful!]*

- The modeling of Naval gunfire from Battleships and Cruisers posed interesting problems. Most SGS games are at a scale where artillery support is carried in units that are present in the same region as the battle [as they are also in Iwo Jima]. The naval “heavies” however have range that can reach every region on the map. Attempts to place units representing the gunfire each turn via reinforcements was getting very code intense and subject to errors and endless “bugs”. The solution is the “pseudo-Air” units that appear every turn. They have the same “infinite range” as the Carrier Air Groups, but cannot be intercepted or fired on in battle.

- The “Central Redoubt” around Mt. Tapochau include Tunnels and Bunkers similar to Mt. Suribachi on IwoJima. Armor units are prohibited from these mountainous regions, and stacking is limited to 3 units, making the whole effort slow and bloody.

[Hint: Tunnels and Large Fortresses are difficult to destroy. Use fresh troop (few or no hits already) and 3 or 4 Naval Gunfire units and as many Air Units as possible. It may still require many turns of attacks to eliminate these “tough nuts”.]

- The Japanese side may use “Tunnel Movement” between the Tapochau regions, that allow free movement at no cost between regions controlled by Japan.