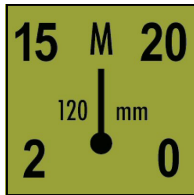


Americans in the Bulge

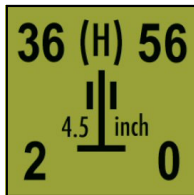
Supplemental counters

By Greg Moore

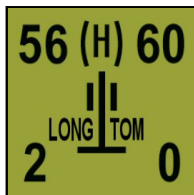
The big artillery in WWII consisted of howitzers and guns. Guns fired a higher velocity projectile than howitzers and therefore had a longer range. The tradeoff is that the round usually had less explosive power than a same size howitzer due to shell casing thickness and other factors. Generally, howitzers were part of divisional artillery and guns were part of corps level artillery. At corps level they were used for counter-battery fire and attacks against heavy fortifications, although often they were used for general artillery support. Since I have included corps level assets, I have decided to include some of these big guns. These guns should mostly be off-board assets in a game scenario (as should most of the artillery actually). I have not included the 8" gun and 240mm howitzer as they had to be disassembled to be transported and are beyond the scope of this game.



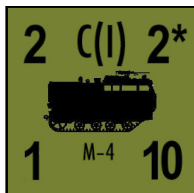
The maintenance section of the 90th Infantry Division was so good at scrounging German weapons and putting them into American service that they received a unit citation for doing so. When ammunition for their regimental cannon companies became a problem in the summer of 1944, they replaced the 105mm guns with captured German 120mm mortars which they had ample supplies of captured ammunition for. These pieces remained in service with the 90th until the end of the war.



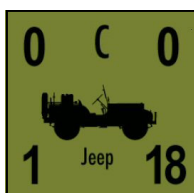
The 4.5" gun was not produced in large numbers but did equip a number of battalions in the ETO. The range characteristics were good but the explosive round had a number of shortcomings and was less effective than the 105mm round even though it was a larger caliber (114mm). These guns were not considered to be a success and did not see service beyond the end of the war.



The 155mm Long Tom was on the other hand a very good gun which remained in service a number of years. Good range and an explosive round only slightly less effective than the 155mm howitzer put this gun in constant demand. They were fired out to their longest range more often than anticipated and many of them were worn out by the end of the war.



A more powerful towing vehicle than the trucks in service was needed to tow the big artillery pieces. The American solution to this was to take the chassis of the M-2 light tank and build it into a high speed artillery tractor called the M-4 HST (high speed tractor). The entire gun crew could ride inside the vehicle and the back end had room to haul a good quantity of ammunition as well (the engine was in the middle). A .50 cal machine gun mounted on the roof provided some protection against air attack and the occasional ground target in a pinch. This tractor hauled the 4.5", 155mm, and 8" artillery pieces as well as the 90mm AA gun. The piece also represents the M-5 HST which is very similar but was built on the chassis of the M-3 light tank.



Jeeps were all over the place in the allied armies and are usually not represented in the game. The paratrooper divisions, however, needed some represented on the map as prime movers to tow some of their guns so I have included a version which does not mount a weapon. These jeeps can tow 37mm AT, 57mm AT, 75mm pack howitzer, and 40mm AA guns but should not tow anything larger.