

UP FRONT

As a simulation of command and control problems at the tactical level, *UP FRONT*'s mechanics excel at showing how difficult it is to motivate troops in a combat environment, where their next step could very well be their last. Besides lacking Movement cards, there are a great many other factors which can dampen a squad's enthusiasm for advancing. *UP FRONTS* "Scenario I. PARTISANS" does a good job of simulating the deadly effectiveness which can be achieved by irregular troops who are intimately familiar with the terrain which they are defending. How much more effective then, would such an ambush be if mounted by *regular* troops? Better equipped and almost certainly better led, such opponents would easily be capable of making an already bad situation a great deal worse.

One example of how effective an ambush can be is the Japanese employment of "Spider Hole" tactics as part of their defense of various island holdings in the Pacific during World War Two. Ideally, Spider Holes are an extension of a Reverse Slope Defense, one of the most effective tactics available to a lightly-armed, mobile force. Given a suitable combat environment, one with plentiful concealment, (such as a jungle), Reverse Slope tactics can be employed by an emplaced defender to devastating effect.

A Reverse Slope Defense simply means that a defending force will engage an attacker from a ridge, fall back across the valley behind it—doing so before the enemy can capture their previous position—and occupy the next ridge back just as the pursuing enemy reaches the low ground between the slopes. If executed properly, the attackers will be exposed to fire in the middle of the low ground; too far in to back out the way they came without exposing themselves on the slopes they've just come down, yet still too far from the defender's new position to threaten them with an effective charge; a charge which would be uphill at that, preventing the attacker's rear ranks from adding their firepower to that of their forward comrades.

Bad as that sounds, Spider Holes make the attacker's predicament even worse, adding the emplacement of concealed firing positions left behind on the back of the first slope; firing positions which the pursuing attacker passes over, leaving intact enemy positions above his force and to its rear. This is probably as good a definition of "between a rock and a hard place" as you are likely to find anywhere.

This installment of *The UP FRONT Column* allows players to try out rules for Spider Holes when playing late-war Pacific Jungle scenarios. They shouldn't be used in scenarios occurring before 1944, but Japanese forces using them can be of any troop quality desired in a DYO scenario. Included as a bonus are rules for British Gurkhas, respected without reservation by Japanese commanders as "the very model of a simple, honest soldier".

44.41. GURKHAS: Gurkhas are a special troop type available only to the British player, and are represented in the game by British personality cards. Gurkhas are considered Elite, and are entitled to the British Elite Troops capabilities. All Gurkhas have a minimum Morale of 3, and a minimum Panic of 4. Gurkhas resolve all Infiltration attempts with a one-column shift to the left. Gurkhas who fail Morale checks when attempting to Infiltrate or engage in CC are not Pinned, but such attempts still count as their group's sole action for that turn. Play of a Hero Card on a Gurkha attempting to Infiltrate or engage in CC allows the Gurkha to do either (not both) without a Movement Card or Morale Check. Gurkhas may be purchased for any DYO scenario in lieu of regular British troops by increasing the total DYO expenditures by 20% (instead of 15% for "regular" elite troops).



SPECIAL RULES:

28-5/A. SPIDERS IN THE GRASS -

1st: | 3

☆ 3-5, 7, 8, 19, 42, 43, #(BAR) (Elite)

🎯 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 17, 18, 22 (Elite)

🔴 1-12

No cards are removed from the Action Deck.

A.1 The Pillbox and Minefields are Cover cards for both players. Sniper cards are considered Cover cards for the attacker.

A.2 The Japanese player may keep one group of two men off the board during Prepare for Play. These men may only be armed with rifles; neither may be the SL or ASL. This group is considered to be occupying a "Spider Hole".

A.3 The Spider Hole group may be brought into play by the Japanese player during any Japanese turn after an Allied group has reached RR 2 to any directly opposite on-board Japanese group which is currently occupying a Range Chit greater than "0". The Japanese player must play a Brush or Woods (or Buildings/Jungle) card from his hand and places the Spider Hole group in that terrain. Revealing the Spider Hole group does not require use of a Movement Card, but the group must be placed in one of the terrain types specified above (EXC.: A.13, below).

A.4 The Spider Hole group is placed *directly behind* the Allied group specified in the conditions of A.3 and marked with an unused nationality marker of the same Group letter as its own friendly, directly opposite group (the one on the other side of the Allied group). The Spider Hole group is given any RR chit which, when added to that of the Encircled Allied group, will yield a RR of *five* from the Spider Hole group to the Allied group. The Spider Hole group may fire during the turn of placement.

A.5 During its first turn on the board *only*, a Spider Hole group capable of making a Fire attack may add the value of any one Concealment card in the Japanese player's hand to the strength of the attack, subject to the "ambush" rules given for Partisans (37.5).

A.6 Men occupying Spider Holes may never play "Concealment" cards to modify the fire strength of attacks against them, but may do so to modify the To-Hit number of ordnance attacks against them.

A.7 Men occupying Spider Holes can never be pinned as a result of Fire attacks, only as a result of ordnance attacks. A Fire Attack which would normally cause a "pin" result is treated as a KIA instead.

A.8 So long as a Spider Hole group remains on the board, the Allied group it has appeared behind is considered to be Encircled (8.9), with all applicable effects. A Spider Hole group is *never* entitled to doubling of its firepower against the encircled group, although all other groups are.

A.9 For DYO purposes, only the Japanese player may use Spider Holes, and only if defending in a Jungle scenario. Using a Spider Hole costs 75 points, plus the point value of the men occupying it. The Japanese player may never purchase more than two Spider Holes in any DYO scenario.

A.10 If using Random Reinforcements during a game in which the Japanese player is the defender, the Japanese player may substitute a Spider Hole group for any Random Reinforcement result of four or greater. Use Japanese personality cards 11 and 12 or their equivalent for the Spider Hole group.

A.11 VICTORY CONDITIONS: The attacker wins by breaking the Japanese encirclement *and* increasing the RR between *all* friendly groups and those of *all* enemy groups to RR 0 or greater (in effect, extricating himself from the trap). The Japanese player wins by breaking the attacking squad. Any other result is a draw.

A.12 VARIANT RULES: American: Add Personality Cards 16 and 17 to the American force mix. **British:** Treat British forces as Gurkhas and use the following British personality cards to represent the British squad: 1-6,8,15,17 & 24. **Japanese:** Add personality cards 18 and 20 to the Japanese force mix, Or, the Japanese player may set aside an additional two-man Spider Hole group during Prepare for Play. Or, the Japanese player may reveal a Spider Hole group in Hill Terrain if he has a Hill card. Or, allow normal doubling of a Spider Hole group's firepower vs. Encircled groups.