

Axis Strategy/Mountbattan's Gambit Revised

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Overview:

Playing the Axis is generally more difficult and complex than the allies. The bid placement will determine what options the allies will have. You can influence the type of game that will be played. Germany must base its opening on what the Russians attempt and achieve. In addition, Japan must make efficient use of its navy to achieve the 84 IPCs necessary before the Allies can contain can or crush Germany. No preset strategy exists that can't be countered. -Particularly for the Axis. Don't lock yourself into an opening if your opponent is clearly waiting for it.

This opening is one of my favorites because it provides the basis for a strong foundation. It is aimed at getting an IPC victory. It is for use when things have gone badly or typically for the Axis after the first Russian attack.

Placement with a bid of 15: three men in Lybia, two in Manch.

Alternative with a bid of 17: three men in Lybia, tank and one in Manch.

(Risky only because Russia may beat the odds in an attack on Manch. UK could then hit Kwang.)

Most Russian players will destroy your Baltic transport with a fighter or two. You will submerge. He will move in his transport so you can't use the sub. Russia will also attack you sub off the coast of Spain with his sub. In addition, Ukraine will be taken by USSR with 4 men and 3 tanks remaining. Manchuria might also be taken or at least reduced in force.

Germany

You now have no ships to attack the North Sea fleet and must waste your planes to do so. The Russian front is equally grim.

Purchase

9 men 1 tank

Naval Action

Ignore the North Sea Fleet generally. Many players will buy a carrier anyway. If your sub off the coast of Spain retreated from attack by the Russian sub, attack the transport bordering Eastern Canada. If it actually won the battle or wasn't attacked, use it against the UK battleship in the Med. Use a fighter to attack the E. Canada transport instead. The other three fighters and bomber should be used to hit the Med. Battleship.

Land action

Attack W. Africa with the infantry in Algeria. Use the units in Lybia to attack Egypt. (Blitzing is always assumed when an option.) Load two men from S. Europe onto the transport and attack Egypt. (Move in the Battleship to deal with the sub.) I'll assume you had three men in Lybia for the duration of the strategy. You should take Egypt with 6 units. In addition, the UK battleship and sub in the med should be destroyed. You have a large advantage in all these battles.

Pull everything but one man back from E. Europe into Germany. Put 1 inf and all tanks in W. Europe. -All other ground units in Germany. During placement put everything in Germany except for 4 men for S. Europe. Ftrs and bomber should land in WE. You will lose E. Europe for a turn. Russia generally does not have the manpower to survive an all out counter-attack if they move everything into E. Europe. If Russia tries that, blast them with everything available. Unless Russia took

Ukraine with 7-8 infantry and 3 armor, you are safe from the threat of Russia moving into EE on R2.

[In case of such a Ukraine disaster, handle it like this: If USSR does that well in Ukraine, it presents a problem. The allies can move 2 UK plus about 19 USSR infantry into EE. Here are two options on how to handle it. Options 1. Attack the sub with the BB and non-com Extra units to Egypt depending on how well Germany does. If UK destroys two, you'll need to send two. If only one is destroyed, send one to Egypt. The key is having 5 units in Egypt to discourage a counter attack. If UK/USSR moves into EE hard, you'll need to bring two units back from Egypt to hit EE on G2. There will be no retreat because of the transport. The odds are not in your favor but you must retake EE hard to remain in the game. The other "safer" alternative is this: Don't take Egypt or take it with minimal force and ship units from Africa back to Europe. This will give Germany better odds in the counter attack if you suspect USSR will move into EE hard. However, Germany's long term development will be completely crippled. Only use this option if you are certain you are a superior player to your opponent and can recover later as long as you aren't forced to give up EE on G1. Retreat before taking the province if it would leave your armor exposed. If it is an overwhelming victory, take it. UK/USSR won't be able to kill the surviving German armor. If you use option one, you won't have the choice of retreat, you'll be shipping the infantry back from Egypt via transport to EE on G2.] Baring the relatively rare Ukraine problem discussed above things will progress normally. USSR won't be able to move into EE hard and now UK will counter. UK's Standard Counter

If UK decides to keep the India troops in Asia, Japan will be under heavy pressure. On the other hand, Germany will control half of Africa until round 5 or later. -Maybe even for the duration of the game. You should have hit Egypt with 7 units and taken with 6. UK won't be in a position to counter Egypt successfully. (Even 5 units is enough to discourage attack.) UK might have softened or taken Finland to help USA set up an IC or reduce the forces USSR needs to devote to taking it. Still Germany is in a good defensive position so lets discuss Japan. UK will send the trans to Australia and the India infantry to Sinkiang. The ftr will generally go to Yak with the bomber in Russia to pressure the Sea of Japan. The allies are in a position to cripple Japan if this turn is misplayed. Japan must calculate its move carefully. How to handle this is discussed below.

Alternative 2

UK ships India units to Africa. This is rare. You'll have the strength with Germany to eventually move down and take SA with help from the German air. Germany will be distracted and its African unit count reduced. On the other hand, Japan will develop much faster and be able to ship to Egypt sooner.

Japan

Buy 2 transports and 3 men on turn 1. Not an IC. IC's are for producing tanks to give you men some attack strength. The men must be in position first. In addition, towards the end of the game when you are making your final push for either 84 IPC's or Russia, those transports will be critical. [Also, never put an IC in India or China unless you have the game wrapped up. The allies will move tanks into Caucus and force you into a defensive position. You'll be spending more to defend that IC than it is producing. The Allied player knows that if he can take it before UK's turn, UK will be able to produce troops there immediately.]

Assuming USSR didn't attack the 5 infantry, ftr in manch on USSR 1, no disasters occurred on the Mainland. Some aggressive players will try to run the Kwang Surprise (taking Manch and Kwang before Japan's turn) even against two extra in Manch. It's rare because it's a bad bet. If your opponent ran a normal USSR/UK opening here is how to handle it: UK has setup in the standard India infantry to Sink/ftr to Yak/ bomber to USSR/ 2 ftrs to Caucus/trans to Australia counter. -Hence

forth referred to as Mountbattan's Gambit[1]. It allows UK to apply heavy pressure to Japan and still threaten the German BB/trans. It is absolutely critical that Japan recognize how many threats they are under. UK can hit the Sea of Japan. That limits the firepower that can go to Hawaii. Australia units can hit FIC so it's tempting to send the Japan sub to kill the transport, further weakening the Hawaii attack. If China isn't taken strongly, it can be attacked. Manch is also under heavy threat. – Especially if USSR landed one of its ftrs in Russia. Japan is in a position to be blasted off the board if it isn't careful. Here is how I handle this common UK opening: Send a sub, BB, ftr, bmb to hit Hawaii. The ftr should be the one from the Caroline Pacific. Don't move the carrier. Send 5 infantry, 3 ftr to hit China. The infantry should come from Manch. Take SFE if it is empty and send only 4 inf to China from Manch if so. Take the other FIC inf and send it to China to make the 5 infantry if that's the case. Don't use the Kwang infantry. Take India with 1 inf if it is empty. The results should be China taken with one or two inf. India or SFE taken, possibly both or neither. Hawaii should be cleared with 1 bb remaining with only 1 hit left. Sacrifice the planes last at Hawaii. Withdraw if it goes badly. The USA sub may have retreated to Midway.

Non-combat is the key to this Japan opening. It is very conservative and solid. Move the two infantry in Kwang to Manch. Transport one inf from the Philippines one from Borneo to FIC. Move the 2nd BB to FIC to guard the trans. In addition, the BB will prevent the UK trans from hitting FIC. The bad news is that they will stick 4-5 UK units in India. You may want to send the sub against the trans and go even thinner to Hawaii. (You may lose a ftr there however.) Transport one inf from Okinawa and one from Japan to Manch. Move the carrier to from Carline Pacific to Sea of Japan. Land the Hawaii ftr on the carrier. Land the Hawaii bmb in Japan. You should have three infantry in FIC unless SFE was left open. Land three ftrs in FIC. If only two are there land 4 ftrs in FIC. The Philippines ftr plus the ones used in China. If you have three inf in FIC land the Philippines ftr on the Sea of Japan carrier.

Your final position should look something similar to this: 3 inf/3 ftr FIC; 4 inf Manch; 2 ftr/CV/3 trans Sea of Japan; BB in Hwaii; Bomber, 5 inf, armor in Japan; 2 inf China.

This is adaptable. You may be able to put 5-6 inf and a ftr or two in Manch to hold it from Russia on R2. It all depends on how thin you are willing to go to China and whether India or SFE was left empty. It also depends on how many UK planes are in position to hit positions in Asia. You may not need much at all in FIC. Myth of Manpower

This is a lesson I learned recently. - The hard way. The most common tactic these days is to use the USA and UK to pump men into Karelia if Germany is heavily fortified. If this starts to happen, the axis must begin to plan its end game. Allied players often assume that the allies are always making more than the Axis. At the end of most games, this is often no longer the case. They continue trying to stall while Japan is building an enormous force. If you notice that the Axis is making a combined 76+ IPC's a turn, the Axis is making almost as much as the allies and should win the game. The reason for this is because the allied forces aren't unified. They may have more men but their attack strength is insignificant because of the separate forces.

Germany is heavily fortified by this time and can begin buying tanks and shifting everything to Eastern Europe. Assuming Japan has purchased sufficient men they will eventually be able to move into Novo. If the allies have been going the infantry route all game, you'll have a hard time taking Russia. If this is the case, go for the IPC victory. If they have too many USA units in Karelia/Russia to pull that off, make a choice. 1) Keep strengthening your board position inf Africa and Asia so that you are making more than the allies and can eventually attack Russia. Buy ICs and start

pumping armor into Asia. 2) Start rolling for tech. Either way you are in a strong position. If Germany is heavily fortified and the Axis is still controlling eastern Africa. This is where the transports come into play. You should always leave at least two to four transports shuttling back and forth between French-Indo and Manch dropping off men. In the final act, take Alaska hard. The USA will rarely have any men in position at this stage of the game. On the next or the same turn, take the provinces surrounding Russia and as much of Africa as you can. All in one turn. AFTER you have counted the necessary IPC's to win. Only the USA will be able to act before the IPC victory sets in. They may have men in position to take back one or two provinces. In addition, Germany should have taken Ukraine. They don't need to hold it forever... just the turn of the IPC victory. Russia's turn has already passed and only UK and USA are in position to attack. If they have been loading up on men, they won't have the attack strength to take back any of Europe. If you have Japanese trans in the Arabian Sea you can even take or reinforce Ukraine or Caucus. Finally, on using infantry as defenders, no mixture of tanks and infantry can beat and equal IPCs worth of infantry. However, some mixtures are close. More importantly, the attacker can retreat the defender can't. Always save your armor. Don't attack with it and leave it in a position where it can be counter-attacked with success. Infantry only players won't have the counter-attack strength to make you pay in many situations. Technology as a Strategy

If you can tell you're going to be beaten back in Asia or Germany is in trouble and you can't stop it. Buy men and technology with Japan. You can stall for three turns before things get drastic. If you get Industrial Tech or Heavy Bombers, things can shift dramatically. It's amazing how often this strategy works, particularly against the "Infantry Only" players. It will take them time to move tanks into position to attack Japan. Plus, Asia is a maze that has to be taken slowly if you have infantry in position. When you need tech, go for it and tech hard. -As much as you can spare and still remain functional with Japan. (Generally, 30 a turn.) If you get really desperate, you can even roll a few for Germany hoping to get Industrial Technology. This is great if you still have part of Africa.

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[1] Lord Mountbattan was the British expeditionary forces commander, South East Asia Southern Regions