

WWII Battles: Scheldt

The Devil's Moat

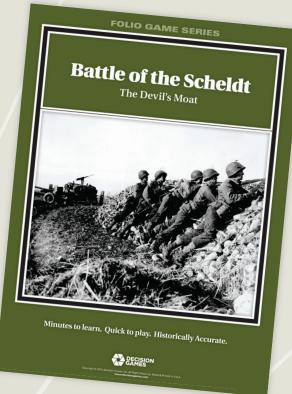
Battle of the Scheldt simulates the fighting between the First Canadian Army and the German XVth Army during November, 1944. The Canadian army was tasked to clear the area so that the still-intact docks of Antwerp could be used to start supplying the Allied armies, whom were still being supplied by extended supply lines all the way back to the Normandy beachheads. The Germans were attempting to delay this as long as possible, having set up formidable defenses covering the obvious approach routes, using presighted artillery, snipers and mines to batter the Allies' advance even before any combat engagement. Beyond that, the Germans resorted to flooding the low-lying areas around the estuary, and mining the entrance to the harbors of Antwerp. The fighting to capture the largest port in Europe would be brutal but vitally necessary to the Allied campaign in Western Europe.

Battle of the Scheldt uses the popular Fire & Movement combat system that is designed so that players can augment their units with "Support Fire" during the course of the battle. From mortars to tanks, units can receive support assets to engage enemy positions and formations, allowing combat to develop at all levels. A single recon battalion, for example perhaps supported by air cover could be tasked to assault a lone enemy regiment of infantry defending a key town. But as its attack gets underway, that recon battalion may find itself under the guns of enemy artillery; more support fire will be necessary to take the town, but assets are limited.

In Battle of the Scheldt, the attritional design of the Combat Results Table simulates the true nature of the battles in Western Europe; units are typically two-sided formations that can incur casualties during a game, accurately replicating the realities of combat and the high losses sustained by both sides during the actual fighting around Antwerp. Winning the battle is a matter of maneuver, firepower and asset management not merely odds ratios requiring numerical superiority. A map of the Scheldt estuary depicts the entire battle area, ranging from the Leopold Canal to the South Beveland peninsula and Walcheren Island.



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