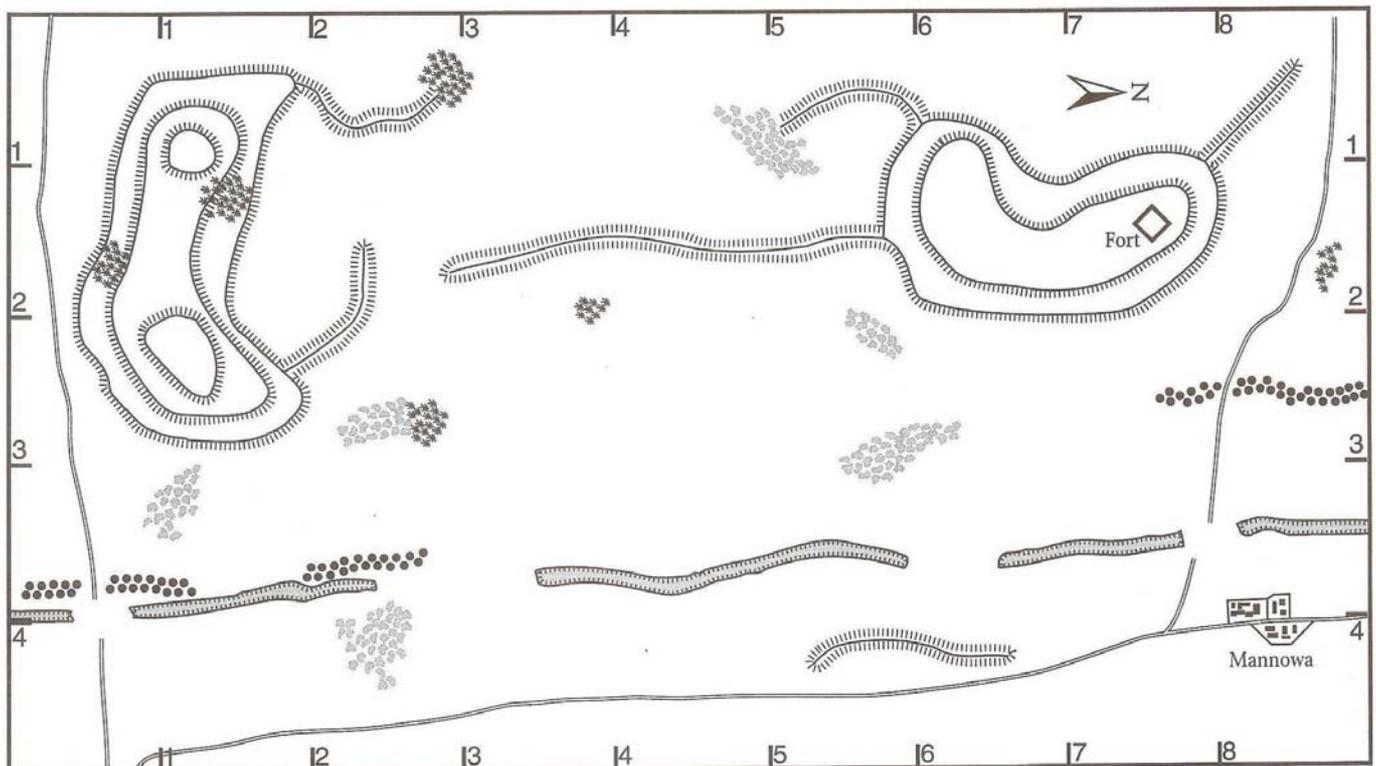


QUNEITRA – 7th October, 1973

Recently a group of us played a *Cold War Commander* game at our local Wargames club (the *League of Ancients* in Melbourne, Australia). The game was based on an Arab-Israeli Wars historical scenario from the 1973 Yom Kippur War. In recent months, I've supplemented my (already extensive) 3mm Modern collection with the brilliant new Israeli releases from Oddzial Osmy (distributed through PicoArmor in the US). After painting these up over the past few months, I'd been looking forward to getting them onto the table for a while.

Leading up to a game, I'd been reading whatever I could lay my hands on about the Arab Israeli Wars, and have been on the lookout for sources of scenarios to refight on the table. During my search, I was lucky enough to lay my hands on the *From Golan to Sinai* supplement published by Clash of Armor Games. It contains six scenarios for the 1956, 1967 and 1973 wars. Although designed for their *Clash of Armor* rules, the scenarios are at the same level as CWC, with Platoons used as the base movement stand, so they are easily adapted. After going through them all, I decided on a scenario covering the grim fighting on the Golan Heights in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. I made a few tweaks to the scenario to align it better with CWC, but these were pretty minor changes. The scenario is outlined below (Acknowledgement should go to Clash of Armor Games for the map, which is the original from the *From Golan to Sinai* scenario book).

Quneitra October 7th, 1973



The scenario covers the second day of the Israeli 7th Armored Brigade's three day defense of the northern Golan. When the Syrians attacked on the 6th of October, the Brigade was only partially deployed to the front. However, the Israelis occupied a strong defensive position, complete with pre-prepared three-level tank positions, anti-tank ditches and minefields. The opening attack by the Syrian 7th Infantry Division got bogged down in the Israeli defenses, while the entrenched Israeli tanks picked off the key Syrian bridging and mine-clearing vehicles. During the night, however, the Syrians succeeded in creating several breaches in the Israeli ditches and minefields. A night attack by the Syrian 78th Brigade (with IR equipped tanks) resulted in the Syrians falling back after fierce fighting. Later in the day, the Syrian 7th Infantry Division, reinforced by the 81st Tank Brigade, renewed the attempt to punch through the Israeli lines and reach the Sea of Galilee. That's where the scenario picks up the action...

The Israeli players were allowed to set up anywhere on the two hills or up to halfway in from the western table edge. The Golani Infantry units had to set up in the fort. There was no reconnaissance. Israeli units in the open with a clear LOS to the eastern table edge were placed on the table. All other Israeli units started using *hidden deployment* (mark with counters initially). The Israeli players were given 13 tank entrenchments (one for each stand), which could be placed within their deployment zone. The location of the tank pits was known to the Syrians (they had been there for a while after all!), but whether individual positions were occupied was not revealed. Syrian units are spotted as per the normal rules as they enter the table.

The Syrians were able to enter anywhere along the eastern table edge, using *Mobile Deployment*.

As far as terrain went: all slopes and ridges are steep, the town is stone, scrub counts as light woods (area terrain) for infantry, and the fort provides the Golani units with hard cover. Fortifications were as follows: the Tank Entrenchments provide Hard Cover, the AT ditch is impassable to vehicles (except at the cuts, which are treated as open ground), and the two minefields near the AT ditch were known to the Syrian player. The minefield which crosses the north road was suspected, but not confirmed. To keep the Syrians guessing a little, the Israeli players were allowed to place it in the location marked on the map, or had the option to move it to anywhere else on his side of the table as long as it was not within 12" of a cut in the AT ditch. The minefield is spotted at 20cm, and placed on-table once located.

Play begins at 1800 hrs and ends at 2200 hrs, or 8 turns at 30 minutes per turn. Night falls at 2000 hrs (ie. after turn 4). If the Syrians reach their automatic victory conditions, play ends immediately.

Victory Conditions

Victory conditions were relatively simple. The Syrians win automatically as soon as they can exit two battalions in good morale off the western table edge. Otherwise total the following victory points: 1 point for each enemy unit eliminated for both sides. The Syrians got 3 points for each stand exited off the western table edge, 1 point for each stand within 60cm of the western table edge, and 2 points for each Israeli airstrike called (whether or not it actually succeeds in arriving). In addition to casualties, the Israelis also got 3 points for each Syrian stand east of the AT Ditch at the end of play (or routed off the board)

We also used the *Multi-Player Battles*, *Fixed Formations*, and *Morale Grades* optional CWC Rules.

The forces used are listed below. The Israelis had command stands down to Company level, which made them very flexible, whilst the Syrians (following Soviet doctrine) are less flexible, with command stands down to Battalion level only. But the Syrians have a much larger force to try and bludgeon their way through the Israeli defenses.

We ended up having five players on the day, so conveniently there were three Israeli (battalion) commands and two Syrian (brigade) commands. I took the Israeli Mechanized Battalion, whilst Ray and Bryan took the two Israeli Tank Battalions. Peter and Rob took command of the Syrian Brigades.

Israeli 7th Armored Brigade:

74th Tank Battalion: (Ray)

CO

A Company: HQ, 2x Sho't

B Company: HQ, 3x Sho't

77th Tank Battalion: (Bryan)

CO

A Company: HQ, 3x Sho't

B Company: HQ, 3x Sho't

75th Mechanized Battalion: (Bish)

CO

A Company: HQ, 2x Infantry, 2x M113J

B Company: HQ, 2x Infantry, 2x M113J

(from 82nd Battalion): HQ, 3x Sho't

Elements of Golani Brigade: (*Deploy in Fort*)

1x Infantry, 1x Heavy Weapons (MG), 1x Missile Team (MAPATS), 1x FAC

Air Strikes:

F-4F: may call up to 6 turns, each call costs 2 VP. Aircraft may attack with GP Bombs or strafing (ie. Cannon).

Syrian 7th Infantry Division:

78th Tank Brigade (remnants): (Rob)

CO

Tank Battalion: HQ, 9x T-62

7th Mechanized Battalion: HQ, 9x Infantry (regulars) with RPG-7 Upgrade, 5x Support Units (ATGW, AT-3 Sagger), 1x 82mm Mortar, 1x 107mm RR, 11x BTR-60PB

81st Tank Brigade: (Peter)

CO

1st Battalion: HQ, 9x T-55

2nd Battalion: HQ, 9x T-55

3rd Battalion: HQ, 9x T-55

AA Bn: 2x ZSU-57

Artillery Battalion: 3x Towed 122mm (off-board), FAO



So finally, I get to a description of the battle itself.

The Israelis spread their tank positions across the whole frontage of the defenses. We ended up leaving the third minefield where it was, since it assisted in covering our northern flank. A photo showing the battlefield before deployment (looking from the north) is below.



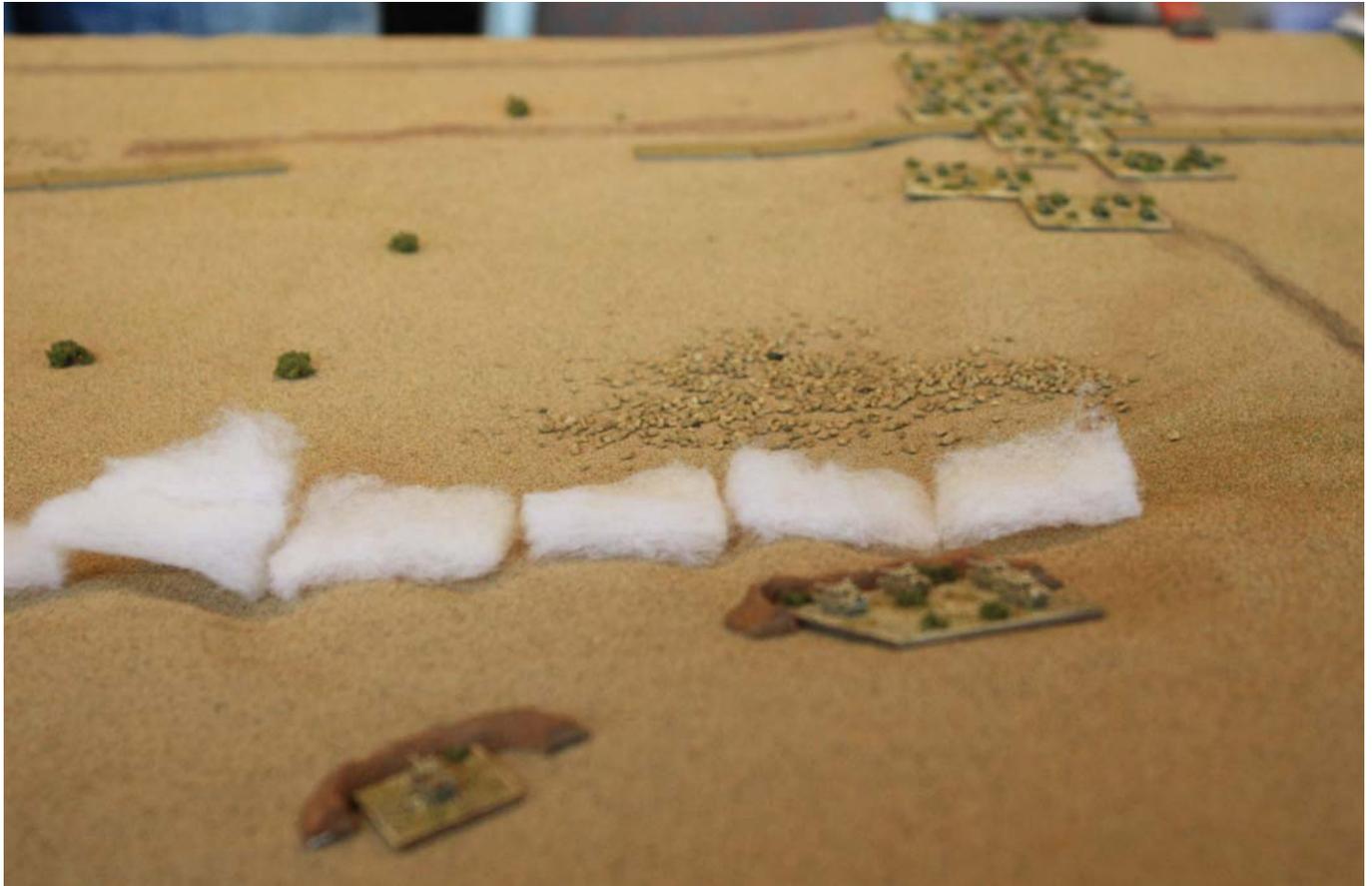
The Israeli tank positions can be seen (brown markers), as well as the high ground, tank ditches (the straight brown lines at left of picture) and areas of scrub (palm trees) and rough ground (gravel patches). The positions were concentrated on the two large hills, with a tank battalion on the ridge in the foreground of the picture and the Mechanized Infantry Battalion (with a Tank Company attached) on the southern ridge (top of picture). The other Tank Battalion was kept to the rear in reserve, since we didn't know where the Syrians would concentrate their attack. We had minimal defenses in the centre, since we were hoping to invite a Syrian attack into the centre to concentrate our fire there.

But of course, our Syrian opponents weren't that stupid! They (wisely) chose to concentrate their attack on one flank. Luckily for them, they also chose to attack on the weaker of our flanks, defended only by the mechanized infantry battalion with a company of tanks. They avoided the fort, and the majority of our pre-positioned tanks on the northern hill.

The attack commenced with pre-planned artillery. An extensive smoke screen was laid, obscuring the southern feature that was the objective of the massed attack. Concurrently with this, mechanized infantry with Sappers attempted to position themselves in fire support positions to the east of the AT Ditch. This was a good plan, due to the lethality and extended range of the Sappers. Unfortunately for the Syrians, the Sappers were in range of the deadly 105mm guns of the Israeli Sh'ot Centurions, and were quickly destroyed by tank fire from both hill features. Two of the three fire support platoons can be seen in smoking wreckage at top of the picture below (destroyed by Sh'ots out of picture to the left). The third was the RCL platoon, which was destroyed the following turn.



The Syrian's poor command ratings cost them some critical momentum early on, with several turn-1 failed command rolls resulting in only a couple of battalions entering and the attack starting off piecemeal. The lead Syrian battalions can be seen entering at the top of the picture below, and pouring through the narrow breach in the ditch and mines along the southern road (right of picture). At this stage, the Israelis held firm, not knowing if this was a diversionary attack. Also, the tanks in this area of the battlefield had been successfully screened by Syrian Artillery smoke. The other Israeli battalion (in the north) was well out of range of this attack and could only watch on as the Syrian Tanks appeared and raced towards their blinded mates on the other feature.



Turn two convinced those of us on the Israeli side that the Syrians were indeed concentrating on the Southern flank, with the entry of the rest of the T-55 Regiment and the majority of the Mechanised Brigade (see below). The Israelis decided that three platoons of tanks wasn't going to do the job against a reinforced Tank Brigade, and we committed our reserve from depth to start heading over to the threatened sector. Meanwhile, the Syrian Tanks poured forward, screened by smoke (see below).



The Israelis decided the reserve battalion was going to take a bit too long to get where it was needed and decided to call in some support from fast-air. This was a trade-off of VPs for doing so (as outlined in the scenario VPs), against the need to kill a few of the tank horde that was rapidly approaching. A flight of F-4 Phantoms were called in, but the FAC had been cunningly positioned in the fort on the North Hill. This meant that his LOS was unobstructed but at very long range. The resulting deviation (11d6 cm!) provided a totally ineffective delivery of bombs into the open ground to the north of the massed Syrian columns. Syrian AA fire was ineffective, but didn't end up being needed anyway.



The Israeli reserve Tank Battalion took longer than hoped to move around to the rear of the threatened flank (the tail-end of the reserve column can be seen at the top left of the picture below). The forward company of Sh'ot from 77th Tank Battalion took the drastic action of moving forward out of their entrenchments to close the range with the Syrian T-55s. They ended up being relatively safe due to the Syrian tanks' *restricted vision*, and as a result they started causing flank-shot casualties on the Syrian T-55s from long range. The other Company of this battalion moved forward into the positions vacated by the first company, ensuring the front was covered in the case of any secondary Syrian thrust in this sector.



The Reserve Battalion of Sh'ot MBT moves to reinforce the threatened flank:



Things started to get interesting for the Israelis below, as Syrian Tanks appear around and through the smoke screen quicker than they can fire. The head of the Syrian column can be seen on the right (south) of the smoke screen, right on the Israeli Flank. Also visible in the foreground is an Israeli Infantry company in a reverse-slope defensive position in their M113s behind the tanks.



Some of the Israeli Tanks had to realign to shoot at the emerging Syrians, abandoning the safety of their entrenchments to do so. The fighting got “up close and personal” here, with extremely short range fire exchanged on both sides. Syrian casualties started to mount rapidly (but not rapidly enough!), with the Israelis also losing a precious tank platoon in the exchange. By this stage, night had also fallen. The fight on this flank was degenerating into a truly terrifying engagement for all those involved.



The Israeli reserve tanks finally arrived at the threatened flank, and took up a position along the ridgeline to the rear. From here, they were able to support the tank and infantry companies to their front, engaging the rapidly increasing number of Syrian tanks appearing. It was a very close run thing for a turn or two, with short-range tank engagements and some lethal point-blank Bazooka fire from the Israeli Infantry.

The Syrians were unable to move their lightly armoured APCs into the assault to support their tanks due to flank fire from the Israeli Tank Company to the north. Perhaps dismounting the infantry could have got them in amongst the Israeli Tanks with their RPGs to further pressure the Israelis, but we'll never know now.

A note on the terrain at this stage, since some aspects can be seen quite well in this picture. The trees are some of the excellent 1:600 (3mm) Oddzial Osmy Palm Trees. The terrain surface is an 8x6' terrain mat from *The Terrain Guy*. The colour is the "Arid terrain" type, which I thought was more appropriate for the Golan than the "Desert" mat that he offers. I'm led to believe the Desert mat is a lighter colour, more suitable to sandy deserts like North Africa. I like the texture of these mats, and they are quite sturdy. The roads and ditches were drawn on with pastels, and just brush off with a stiff brush (it leaves a bit of a smudge, but this all adds to the mottled colours for future games!). any old wargaming styrofoam hills of appropriate height and shapes were placed under the mat to provide the elevations. We were all quite happy with the effect of the mat on the day, as it gives a nice, more naturally contoured battlefield.



The height of the fighting is shown below. The Syrian tank casualties mounted rapidly, eventually leading to the assault being blunted due to the high level of losses. In the background can be seen the T-62 Regiment attempting to move off to the North to stop some of the Israeli flanking fire. This came too late unfortunately, as the casualties were just too high to be able to continue to try and break through. After this photo was taken, even more casualties mounted and the Syrians conceded that the heights would have to remain in Israeli hands.



Losses were significant on the Syrian side, at thirteen T-55 stands (half the Brigade), and four Sagger teams destroyed in their APCs. The Israelis lost two of the three Sh'ot stands from the hard-pressed company attached to the Mechanised Battalion. The Israelis also lost two VPs for calling in the ineffectual airstrike. In VP terms, it was a 17-4 Israeli victory.

Whilst on paper, this looks like a very lop-sided result, we were happy that the game was pretty even. It was certainly a lot more in the balance than the result would suggest, and just like in real-life, the Israeli defenders were very hard-pressed indeed. The main problem for the Syrians was the very first turn of failed command rolls and the traffic-jam through the channeling obstacles, which stalled the advance just enough to let the Israelis react. If not for this stroke of misfortune, the Syrians would have had the numbers to roll over the Israeli's weak right flank and exit the requisite two battalions off the table edge.

The Syrian task was always going to be a hard one. Attacking through channeling obstacles across open ground against entrenched defenders is not a very desirable mission. In the circumstances, our Syrian commanders made pretty much all the right moves (screening smoke, concentrating on one flank, attempting to cover with ATGMs etc), and they nearly got the result they were seeking. We were happy that the CWC rules provided a tension-packed game, which resulted in an entertaining but historically accurate result.

A close up of the victorious Israeli Sh'ots. Magnificent aren't they?



Israeli:

Troops	Arm	Move	Attacks	Hits	Save	Cost	Limit	Notes
Tank Bn CO (Command Value 10)	Command	60	3/100	6	4			[67+]
Tank HQ (Command Value 9)	Command	40	2/100	4	4			[67+]
Infantry Bn CO (Command Value 10)	Command	60	3/30	6	6			[67+]
Infantry HQ (Command Value 9)	Command	60	2/30	4	6			[67+]
FAO (Command Value 7)	Command	30	-	4	6			
Tank Unit (Sho't)	Armour	20	5/100	6	4			S2 / IR
Transport Unit (M113 Bardehlas)	Transport	25	3/50*	4	6			[72+], A
Infantry Unit (Regulars)	Infantry	10	3/30*	6	-			
Infantry Upgrade (M20 Bazooka)	Infantry	-	3/20(H)	-	-			
Support Unit (HMG)	Infantry	10	4/60*	5	-			
Support Unit (ATGW, MAPATS)	Infantry	10	6/150	5	-			[73+]

- Israelis use *Flexible* Tactical Doctrine
- Israelis are *Motivated* Morale Grade (Suppressed on 6+, Hit in CC on 6+, Knocked out when falling back further than 15cm)

Syrian:

Troops	Arm	Move	Attacks	Hits	Save	Cost	Limit	Notes
Tank Bde CO (Command Value 9)	Command	60	2/60	4	4			[67+]
Tank Bn HQ (Command Value 8)	Command	40	1/60	2	4			[67+]
Infantry Bn HQ (Command Value 8)	Command	60	2/30	4	6			[67+]
FAO (Command Value 7)	Command	30	-	4	6			[67+]
Tank Unit (T-62)	Armour	25	5/60	4	4			R / IR
Tank Unit (T-55)	Armour	25	4/60	4	4			R / IR
Transport Unit (BTR-60)	Transport	25	2/50*	3	6			[67+], A
Infantry Unit (Regulars)	Infantry	10	3/30*	6	-			
Infantry Upgrade (RPG-7)	Infantry	-	4/30(H)	-	-			[73+]
Support Unit (ATGW, Sagger)	Infantry	10	4/150	5	-			[73+], IR
Support Unit (Mortar, 82mm)	Infantry	10	3/120*	5	-			
Support Unit (RR, 107mm)	Infantry	10	5/60(H)	4	-			
Air Defence Unit (ZSU-57-2)	Artillery	25	2/60	3	6			[67+], O
Artillery Unit (122mm)	Artillery	-	3	3	-			[67+]

- Syrians use *Rigid* Tactical Doctrine
 - Syrian Infantry are *Regular* Morale Grade (Suppressed on 5+, Hit in CC on 5+, Knocked out when falling back further than 10cm)
 - Syrian Armour are *Unmotivated* Morale Grade (Suppressed on 4+, Hit in CC on 4+, Knocked out when falling back further than 5cm)
-