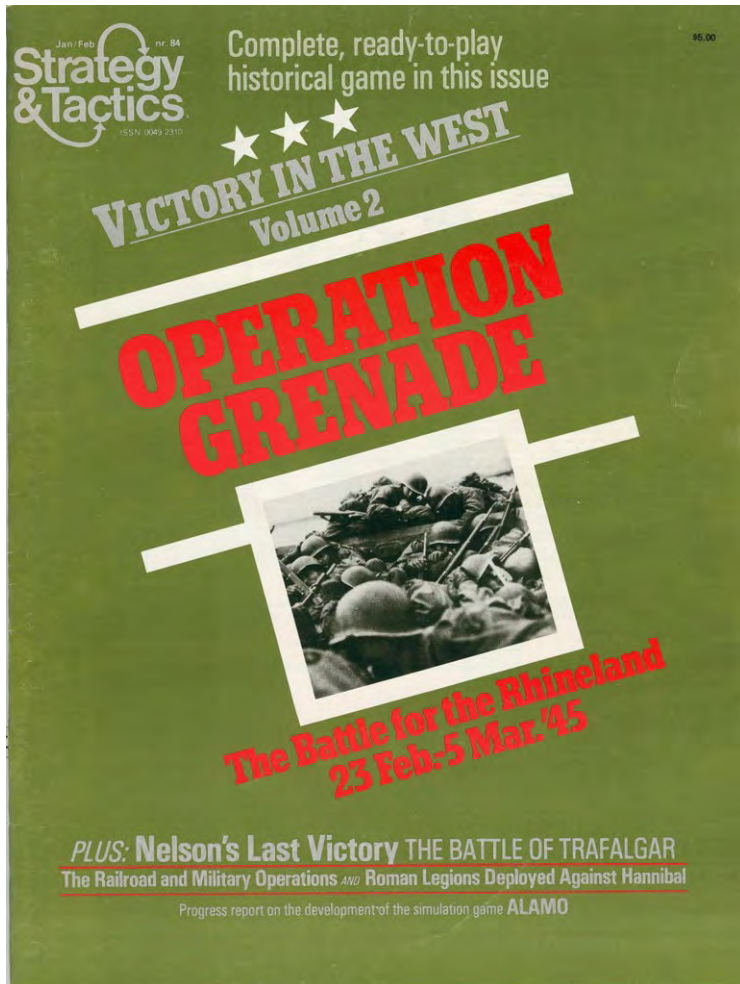


Operation Grenade

Victory in the West, Volume 2, SPI Games, 1980

by Nathan Mueller



*Editor's Note: I find **Operation Grenade** to be a 'perfect puzzle' to use for solo gaming. The opening setup is fixed, the objectives are known, and the fortified Germans are no pushover. Add in the randomization of the chit draws for strength, and the choice of a 'fast start' or 'slow start' option, it is made for repeat plays. Yet, it gets the least love of any of the Victory in the West (VITW) series of games. I asked Nathan if he would mind giving his thoughts on the trick of getting across the river. Enjoy! – RHG*

For the record, the first time I played **Operation Grenade** the Americans couldn't get their offensive going. Now that I have more games under my belt, it seems hard for the Germans to stop the Americans (though, depending on their reinforcements, they certainly can launch, or threaten to launch, some serious counterattacks).





I think the best opening for the US is to attack all along the front from the 01XX - 09XX columns, except for 04XX. This will give the US 8 units in position to attack 7 German units (not much of an advantage, but the best the US can get).

Not every attack will succeed of course, but the attack frontage needs to be wide enough to ensure some success. During setup, make sure the mechanized artillery is pushed as far up as possible so it can support the infantry while the US armor is under movement restrictions.

Once the Roer River line is cracked, VII Corps should push as hard and fast as possible (since they will not be available in the last part of the game due to movement restrictions). XIX Corps should take a wide right hook to the Rhine while XIII Corps sidles to the right to protect XIX Corps' flank. XII and XVI Corps should *not* conduct any opposed crossings of the Roer unless the Germans pull back except for the thinnest of screens.

End Game

[22.26] RHINE BRIDGE BLOWING	
Condition	Bridge Blown on Die Roll...
Non-volkssturm German unit occupies the eastern terminus hex.	3-11 (inclusive)
No non-volkssturm German unit occupies the eastern terminus hex.	4-11 (inclusive)
US ruso is attempted.	5-11 (inclusive)

End game should see the Americans pushing north, with one flank along the Rhine (I don't think I've seen a Rhine River bridge captured intact, but you gotta try).



If the Germans have not pulled back from the Roer, don't worry. Capture Geldern and Rheinburger and you'll pocket them all.

Usually the German panzers will be concentrated around Duisberg, west of the Rhine if they are in force. Krefeld can make a good defensive anchor if the panzers counterattack.

General thoughts for the US:

1. You have overwhelming force, but still bypass strongpoints. Go for the "big solution".
2. Your goal is to capture the VP cities since the Rhine bridges are a big gamble you can't really influence. A marginal victory is all you can be assured of.
3. Set D-Day at Feb 20 through 22 (better not roll high if you choose one of those earlier days). You'll appreciate the extra days at the end of the game.
4. Keep the Germans on the run. If the front stagnates, you're attacking along too broad a front. (I think *VitW* is best at modeling mobile warfare. It doesn't hold up well as an attritions model; which is why Mark Hinkle had to modify it so much when designing *The Killing Ground*).

By the way, **Operation Grenade** gets the least love of the *VitW* games, but I find myself drawn to it again and again. A very straightforward game with clearly defined objectives for

