

V27 FALLING FOR NATASHA

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

LOCATION: Muong Thanh, French Indochina

DATE: 20 November 1953

COMMENTARY: General Henri Navarre, leader of the French forces in Indochina, had made the decision to occupy the valley of Dien Bien Phu so as to interdict and harass the Viet Minh supply lines into northern Laos. Operation ‘Castor’ was set in motion to assault the valley from the air, utilising the cream of the French forces to capture the objective by surprise, in the largest airborne operation since WWII. First to land on Drop Zone ‘Natasha’ was Commander Bigeard’s 6th BPC, tasked to capture an old Japanese airstrip just north of Muong Thanh village and assault the enemy’s H.Q. units in the settlement.

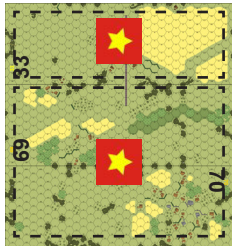
Unbeknownst to the French, a company of Viet Minh from the 320th Division was training near the old Japanese airstrip, resulting in a surprise for both sides. The Vietnamese Nationalists fought staunchly against the attacking French, but were instructed by their commander to break contact and withdraw to the south. The French were left holding the field, with all their objectives captured, and very light casualties for a parachute operation. The French now faced the difficult task of holding the broad, hill-ringed valley.



TURN RECORD CHART

★ PAVN Sets Up First	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	END
⊙ FRENCH Moves First									

THE BATTLEFIELD AND CONDITIONS



EC are mild, with no wind at start (Wind is blowing to the NorthWest for scatter purposes).

PTO terrain is in effect, including light jungle (EX: treat brush hexes as brush, all buildings are huts, and all hedges and walls are cactus hedges [F13.3, representing bamboo thickets]).

Place Overlay RR1 on hexes 33R6-R5. Overlay RR1 represents a dirt Runway (treat as an un-paved Road, EXC. Dash is N/A).



VICTORY CONDITIONS

The French win by accumulating ≥ 35 Victory Points at game end and losing ≤ 18 CVP. VP are awarded for CVP earned. In addition 10 VP are earned if no Good Order PAVN MMC are within 2 hexes of any airstrip hex at scenario end, and 10 VP are earned if no Good Order PAVN MMC are in hut hexes within 3 hexes of hex 70H5 at scenario end.

SCENARIO SPECIFIC RULES

- 1 Kindling (B25.11) is N/A.
- 2 Use Chinese counters and G.M.D. rules to represent PAVN units (EXC: G18.21). Commissar rule G18.31 does apply for PAVN units; only Elite MMC may be designated Death Dare units; Elite PAVN units have an ELR of 4, all other units have an ELR of 3. Treat the 120mm Mtr as G.M.D. ordinance (captured use penalties are N/A), the 120mm Mtr is worth triple (not quadruple) VP if captured/eliminated.
- 3 Use British counters and A25.53 to represent French units.
- 4 After the French have recorded their Initial Drop Points, the PAVN player must select either hex 33Q7 or 69I1. Place all eight MMC from the 320th Division on the selected hex and roll for scattered placement using C1.31 for each MMC (more than one MMC can occupy the same hex given the same dice roll; SMC and SW for this group may be placed with any MMC of the 320th Division).
5. Good Order PAVN units may exit the southern board edge of Board 70 on/after turn 7 without counting towards CVP.



Elements of the 910th Battalion and HQ of the 148th Independent Infantry Regiment set up on whole hexes of mapboard 70.

BALANCE: In the VC, change 35VP to 30VP.

ELR: 4/3
SAN: 3



Cadre and training units of the 48th Regiment, 320th Division set up on mapboard 33 and/or mapboard 69 as per SSR 4.



Elements of the 6th Bataillon de Parachutistes Coloniaux enter via E9. Paradrop on GT1.

BALANCE: In the VC, change 35VP to 40VP.

ELR: 5
SAN: 2

