

# Know the Enemy

One distinctive characteristic of the German nation is its fondness for militarism. This is based not only on traditional sentiment, but also on long-range and intense education that glorifies the military spirit. This gives German military leaders the essential foundation for aggressive military operations.

The Germans believe that only the offensive can achieve success on the field, particularly when combined with the element of surprise. German military literature for the past century has emphasized the need for aggressiveness in all military operations.

A highly trained officer corps and a thoroughly disciplined army are necessary to implement this aggressive philosophy. German tactical doctrines stress the responsibility and the initiative of subordinates. The long-held belief that the German Army was inflexible and lacking in initiative has been completely destroyed in this war, in which aggressive and daring leadership has yielded many bold decisions. Yet while the Germans have many excellent tacticians, they tend to repeat successful maneuvers—a fact that British and Russian commanders have fully exploited. Overall, the Germans' greatest weakness is their tendency to look to the past when all else fails, in the hope of recreating some former victory which succeeded only because of a combination of luck and surprise.

The Germans are also aware of the psychological component in warfare and have developed systematic terrorization to a high degree.

At the same time they have placed considerable reliance on novel and sensational weapons, such as the mass use of armor, Talent forces, and the fully automatic rifle. Their principal weaknesses in this regard have been their failure to integrate these new techniques with established arms and tactics—German field artillery, for example, did not maintain pace with German armor—and their devotion to rate of fire at the expense of accuracy.

German specialization in particular types of warfare—such as Talent, mountain, desert, winter, or the attack on fortified positions—shows thorough preparation and ingenuity. The Germans have also been quite willing to learn from their opponents, and on numerous occasions they have copied Allied tactics and weapons.

Germany's pioneering use of Talents in warfare made for early gains, but their continued reliance on them as a vital means of warfare has also had the effect of both reducing and demoralizing their *Übermensch*.

## Recent Tactical Trends

The German Army has been forced on the defensive with the gradual shifts in North Africa and the eastern front. German tactical doctrines have undergone modifications, such as renunciation (except in unstated instances) of air support and the substitution of linear defense for elastic counter-offensives.

It is expected that Germany will in the future field large forces of *Übermensch* in the hope of repelling the coming Allied invasion of Western Europe.

## Exercise of Command

The American and German doctrines of the exercise of the command are virtually identical. The Germans stress the necessity of the staff in assisting the commander to evaluate the situation and in preparing and disseminating orders to the lower units.

## GERMAN TACTICAL RECONNAISSANCE PROCEDURES

When a German reconnaissance column expects contact with the enemy, it advances by bounds. The length of the bounds depends on the cover the terrain offers. As the distance from the enemy decreases, the bounds are shortened. The Germans utilize roads as long as possible and usually use different routes for advance and return.

The reconnaissance battalion commander normally sends out patrols that likewise advance by bounds. Their distance in front of the battalion depends on the situation, the terrain, and the range of the signal equipment, but as a rule they are not more than an hour's traveling distance (about 25 miles) ahead of the battalion. The battalion serves as the reserve for the patrols and as an advance message center ("*Meldekopf*"), collecting messages and relaying them to the rear. Armored reconnaissance cars, flying Talents, armored half-tracks, or motorcycles compose regular reconnaissance patrols, whose exact composition depends on their mission and on the situation.

Motorcycles and Talents are used to fill in gaps and intervals, thickening the reconnaissance net.

When the proximity of the enemy does not permit profitable employment of the reconnaissance battalion, it is withdrawn and the motorized elements of the divisional reconnaissance battalion take over.



*The Odal rune, symbol of the *Übermensch*.*

# Combat Lessons from the Frontline

We have gathered here impressions from our Allies who have engaged the Germans.

These impressions are invaluable for those entering combat for the first time. Something as simple as a single anecdote may save your life or the lives of your squad mates.

## Battle Leadership

Again and again, reports from the battlefields confirm the importance of leadership in every grade, whether corporal or colonel. Other combat lessons are important; the exercise of leadership in battle is vital.

Leadership has often been defined in theory. Here are some instances of its application or its absence in the field.

## Junior Officers in Battle

*Captain William T. Gordon, Infantry, North Africa:*

“I have had seventeen officers in my company since November, and I am the only one who started out with it who is left in the fight. I have heard enlisted men, pinned down in the dark, call out such things as ‘Where is an officer to lead us?’—‘We don’t want to lie here—we want to attack—where is an officer?’ In each case an officer or officers rose to the occasion. This shows beyond anything else the demand for battle leadership.

“An officer must build a legend about himself. He must take calculated risks. He must, on the other hand, do what he expects his men to do: He must always dig in; always take cover. His men must know that when he ducks, they must duck. On the other hand, they must not believe that when the officer ducks they must run away. The officer must come through every barrage and bombing with a sheepish grin and a wry remark. Masterly understatement of hardship and danger—plus a grin—always pays dividends.”

## Hate Your Enemy!

Our men do not ordinarily hate. They *must* hate. They are better soldiers when they hate. They must not fraternize with prisoners—must not give them cigarettes and food the moment they are taken. Hate can be taught to men by meticulous example.

## Leaders in Front

*Sergeant Richard Delande, British Eighth Army, North Africa:* “We want our captain out front; we don’t much care about the position of our battalion commander.”

## Keep Them Moving!

*Operation Report, British Eighth Army, North Africa:* “During an attack, officers must never allow men to lie prone and passive under enemy fire. They must move forward if at all possible. If movement is absolutely impossible, have the troops at least open fire. The act of firing induces self-confidence in attacking troops.

“Attacking troops must not be allowed to dig in until they have secured their objective. If they dig in while momentarily stopped under enemy fire, it will take plastique to blast them from their holes and resume the advance.”



*Men look to officers for leadership.*

## NCO Leadership

*Sergeant Robert J. Kemp, Australian Army, North Africa:* “Acting Officer (NCO) leadership is important. NCO’s and officers should be taken to an observation point for terrain instruction and study before an attack, if possible.”

## Talents Go First

*Captain David “One Shot”*

*Thayer, British Special Service Squads, North Africa, Greece, Norway, France:* “It cannot be overstated: Talents should lead the way into combat. We, the blessed few who possess these amazing abilities, must give more, risk more, and do more than our fellow soldiers.

“I have seen the tide of battle shift because of the actions of a lone Talent rushing an enemy position. Talent abilities are important, but the other aspect of the Talent phenomenon is often overlooked—the Talent’s aspect of awe, charisma, and power.

“Like a great officer, a Talent can rally beaten men and turn a hopeless situation into victory. The regular troopers look to us to lead the way.”

## Urban Combat

As we prepare for a major campaign in Western Europe, urban combat assumes increasing importance. Cities, towns, and villages control the roads that must be opened for the movement of guns, heavy equipment, and supplies.

The recent German advance into Stalingrad illustrates the importance of cities in tactical operations. Not many cities will so effectively block the advance of a large force, but the same problem, in varying degrees of difficulty, will arise again and again. Combat in towns will often be the key not only to our successful advance, but, as with our Russian allies, to successful defensive actions.

**Subject: A report on an area of specialized enemy Talent activity**

1. Reports from the field indicate a number of enemy Talents capable of generating false impressions in the minds of targets, usually allowing them to camouflage their position, or the position of heavy weapons, equipment, or personnel, until it is too late for troops to react.

a. The number of reports of this phenomenon is growing. TOC analysts at Hedge Manor have determined that this is due in part to Germany's growing role as a defensive power in the conflict. Estimates indicate a larger number of defensive Talents will be developed in the Axis as the war turns against them.

b. Realizing the effectiveness of such Talents, German commanders are positioning "invisible" strong points along vital positions of the line, or dispatching "invisible" patrols to scout enemy positions, capture personnel, and determine troop strengths.

c. Without the component of sight, Talent detection of such enemy forces remains questionable.

Following is a report of a captured "invisible" enemy strong point near ██████████ which disrupted normal operations in the area for some time.

**2. a. Waffen SS Vorgesobene Stellung 64 (Armed Elite Guard Advanced Position 64)**

Located on a secondary road to the town of ██████████, two miles southwest of the German line, VS64 was a concrete German pillbox and two auxiliary scout posts flanking the road with a clear view of all approaches. The team manning the station performed nightly patrols of the area, reporting back to their HQ the disposition of troops in the area, and, when possible, eliminating vehicles or troops without calling attention to themselves. As far as is known, over a period of 15 days, two Jeeps, two White halftracks, and a Sherman tank were lost to the pillbox, as well as an estimated 40 troops, including a squad sent in to specifically locate the problem.

**2. b. The Disposition of the Pillbox**

The pillbox was located less than 10 yards from the road, in plain sight, and yet was passed without detection on several occasions by forces as extensive as an entire corps. The reason for this "invisibility" was a German Talent known as Der Hintergrund Kunstler, "The Background Artist". This Talent's unusual ability allowed him to "paint" various types of camouflage netting, somehow binding an "illusion" to the cloth that made invisible whatever it was draped over. The Germans could see clearly through the netting, which was strung over the entire structure. From outside, the gun emplacement appeared as nothing more than a copse of trees.

**3. Armament and Personnel**

VS64 was manned by six Waffen SS troopers with extensive combat experience from areas such as France, Russia, and Greece. Only one Ubermensch was present, Der Hintergrund Kunstler. All other members were conventional troops. They were left with specific orders to disrupt the enemy for as long as possible while remaining hidden beneath the illusions of their Talent. Members of the team would patrol the area nightly wearing the Ubermensch's painted camo smocks, which made them virtually invisible.

The pillbox was fitted with a 7.5 cm PAK 41 antitank gun, as well as two M.G. 42 machine guns with a clear arc of fire to the road. The Germans were left with enough ammunition, food, and supplies to last more than three months, but they had orders to "subsist by any means possible." members of the group had already begun scavenging equipment and weapons from the troops they eliminated. Two cases of American grenades, a Bazooka, 14 rockets, and four M1 cases of ammunition were located in the main storage room of the bunker, mixed in with the German supplies.

**BLUE**

**SECRET**