

**German Forces
Operation Battleaxe
15 June 1941**

Afrika Korps: Generalleutnant Erwin Rommell

Afrika Korps Headquarters:

Corps Staff

575th Motorized Mapping Detachment

Division Staff

259th Motorized Mapping Detachment

Signals Company

Attached Italian Troops

2 unidentified Regiments of Italian Artillery

Infantry:

155th (mot) Regimental Staff

3/241st Infantry Regiment

3/255th Infantry Regiment

3/258th Infantry Regiment

3/268th Infantry Regiment

3/347th Infantry Regiment

361st Infantry Regiment

2 Battalions, each with

361st Artillery Battalion, with

2 (mountain) Batteries, each with 4-105mm 1FH 18

1 Light (horse drawn) Supply Column

2nd, 6th, 10th, 12th, & 13th Oasis Companies

Feldersatz Battalions:

598th Feldersatz Battalion

599th Feldersatz Battalion

Reconnaissance Forces:

580th Mixed Reconnaissance Company

1 Infantry Platoon (2-28mm AT)

1 Armored Car Platoon (6-37mm PAK36)

1 AT Platoon (3-50mm)

1 Self Propelled Flak Platoon (4-20mm)

Artillery:

612th Flak Battalion

3 Batteries (12-20mm AA guns ea)

2/115th Artillery Regiment

3 (mot) Batteries, each with

3-210mm Mrs 18 howitzers

1/612th (mot) Flak Battery (12-20mm AA guns)

408th Artillery Battalion

3 (mot) Batteries, each with

4-100mm K18 guns

902nd (mot) Artillery Battery

3-170mm on Mrs. Carriages

11th Artillery Battalion Staff

1 (mot) Staff Company

1 (mot) Sound Locating Company

1 (mot) Flash Locating Company

(no guns assigned)

Pioneers:

900th Pioneer Battalion

2 (mot) Pioneer Companies

Signals Troops:

Libyan (later 475th) Signals Battalion
1 (mot) Radio Company

Other Signals Formations

Afrika (mot) Propaganda Company
3/56th (mot) Radio Company

Supply Service:

Independent Staffs

585th Regiment
619th Battalion
681st Battalion
148th Italian Battalion
149th Italian Battalion

Supply Units:

529th Supply Battalion
6 Light (mot) Supply Columns
534th, 535th & 536th Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
1 (mot) Maintenance Platoon
1 Light (mot) POL Supply Column
592nd (renumbered 572nd) Supply Battalion
6 Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
1 (mot) Maintenance Platoon
1 Heavy (mot) POL Supply Column
533rd Supply Battalion
6 Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
1 (mot) Maintenance Platoon
1 Heavy (mot) POL Supply Column
686th Supply Battalion
6 Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
1 (mot) Maintenance Platoon
1 Heavy (mot) POL Supply Column
909th Supply Battalion (formed later)
6 Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
532nd (mot) Supply Battalion
2 Supply Companies
548th Instructional Battalion
122nd, 129th & 134th Vehicle Instruction Companies
560th (mot) Army Maintenance Park
3 (mot) Maintenance Platoons
1 Light (mot) Supply Column
566th (mot) Army Maintenance Park
3 (mot) Maintenance Platoons
1 Light (mot) Supply Column

Other

641st, 645th & 651st (mot) Heavy Water Columns
659th (mot) Water Purification Company

Medical:

1/3rd Medical Park 530 (formed later)
5/542nd & 667th (mot) Field Hospital
2/83rd (mot) Medical Company (formed later)
1/705th (mot) Kr. Tp. Troop
Tripoli Hospital

Other:

85th Construction Battalion (4 Companies)
1 Light (mot) Construction Supply Column

317th Quartermaster Detachment
 1/278th Military Police
5th Light Division: Generalleutnant J. von Ravenstein
 Headquarters
 2/439th (halftrack) Signals Company
 200 (mot) Mapping Detachment
 200th (mot) Communication Section
 200th Construction Section
5th Armored Regiment:
 1st & 2nd Battalions, each with
 1 Armored HQ Company
 1 Light Armored Platoon
 1 Medium Armored Company
 2 Light Armored Companies
200th Machine Gun Regiment :
 1 (mot) Signals Platoon
 2nd Machine Gun Battalion
 1 (mot) HQ Company
 3 (mot) Machine Gun Companies
 1 (mot) Support Company (6-37mm PAK36)
 8th Machine Gun Battalion
 1 (mot) HQ Company
 3 (mot) Machine Gun Companies
 1 (mot) Support Company (6-37mm PAK 36)
 1 (mot) AT Company (3-37mm PAK 36)
200th Pioneer Battalion
 2 (mot) Pioneer Companies
200th Signals Battalion:
 1 Armored Radio Company
 1 Armored Signals Company
 1 Light (mot) Signals Supply Column
3rd Reconnaissance Battalion:
 1 (mot) Signals Platoon
 1 Light (mot) Armored Supply Column
 1 Armored Car Company (10 armored cars)
 1 Motorcycle Company (3 50mm mortars)
 1 (mot) Support Company
 1 Engineer Platoon
 1 AT Platoon (3-37mm PAK 36)
 1 Infantry Support Platoon (2-75mm leIG)
Artillery:
 1/75th (later 2/155th) Artillery Battalion
 3 Batteries (4-105mm LFH 18 ea)
 155th Artillery Regiment
 1st Battalion, with
 3 (mot) Batteries (4-105mm LFH 18 ea)
 3rd Battalion, with
 2 (mot) Batteries (4-150mm sFH ea)
 1 (mot) Battery (4-100 K18 guns)
 606th Self Propelled Flak Battalion
 3 Self Propelled Batteries (12-20mm AA guns)
 1/33rd (mot) (Luftwaffe) Flak Regiment
 3 Batteries (4- 88mm guns ea)
 2 Batteries (12-20mm guns ea)
Anti-Tank Formations:

39th Panzerjäger Battalion
 3 (mot) Companies (9-50mm AT)
 605th Panzerjäger Battalion
 3 Self Propelled Companies (9-50mm)

Feldersatz Battalion:
 4 Companies

2(H)/14 Pz Luftwaffe Liaison/Reconnaissance Staffel:
 organization unknown

Service Forces:
 822nd, 804th, 803rd, 801st, 800th, 797th Light (mot)
 Supply Columns
 622nd, 6/619th & 5/619th Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
 I/,II/Pz.5 Heavy (mot) Transport Columns
 9/200th Heavy (mot) POL Supply Column
 200th (mot) Maintenance Company
 532nd (mot) Supply Company
 1st (mot) Pz. Ers. Transport Column

Commissary Service:
 531st (mot) Bakery Company
 503rd (mot) Butcher Company
 341st Divisional Quartermaster Detachment

Medical:
 1/82nd & 2/592nd (mot) Medical Companies
 4/572nd (mot) Field Hospital
 631st & 633rd Ambulance Columns
 877th Light Filtration Column

Other:
 309th (mot) Military Police Detachment
 735th (mot) Field Post Office

15th Panzer Division: Generalleutnant W. Neumann-Sylkow
 Headquarters
 1 (mot) Mapping Detachment

8th Panzer Regiment:
 Armored Signals Platoon
 1 Light Armored Platoon

1st & 2nd Battalions
 1 Armored Staff Company
 1 Medium Armored Company
 2 Light Armored Companies
 1 Armored Reserve Detachment

15th Schützen Brigade:
104th & 115th Schützen Regiment:
 (mot) Headquarters Company
 1 Signals Platoon
 1 Engineer Platoon
 1 Motorcycle Platoon
 1 Anti-Tank Platoon (3-50mm AT guns)
 1 Regimental Band

Attached:
 1 (mot) Infantry Support Gun Section
 (2-150mm sIG & 4 75mm leIG)

1st & 2nd Battalions:
 3 (mot) Infantry Companies, each with
 1 (mot) Infantry Company, with
 1 (mot) Support Company, with

1 Engineering Platoon
 1 AT Platoon (1 28mm AT gun and
 3-37mm PAK 36)
 1 Infantry Support Gun Section (2-75mm leIG)
15th Motorcycle Battalion:
 3 Motorcycle Companies
 1 Motorcycle Company
 1 (mot) Support Company, with
 1 Engineering Platoon
 1 AT Platoon (1 28mm AT gun, 3-37mm PAK36)
 1 Infantry Support Gun Section (2-75mm leIG)
33rd Artillery Regiment:
 HQ Company
 1st & 2nd Battalions, each had:
 3 (mot) Batteries (4-105mm 1FH 18 ea)
 3rd Battalion, with
 3 (mot) Batteries (4-150mm 1FH 18 ea)
 326th (mot) Observation Company
33rd Reconnaissance Battalion:
 1 (mot) Signals Platoon
 1 Light (mot) Armored Supply Column
 1 Armored Car Company (10 armored cars)
 1 Motorcycle Company
 1 (mot) Support Company, with
 1 Engineer Platoon
 1 AT Platoon (3-37mm PAK 36)
 1 Infantry Support Platoon (2-75mm leIG)
33rd Panzerjäger Battalion:
 1 (mot) Signals Platoon
 3 (mot) Companies (8-50mm PAK38, 4-37mm PAK36)
33rd (mot) Pioneer Battalion:
 3 (mot) Companies
 1 Light (mot) Engineering Supply Column
78th Signals Battalion:
 1 (half track) Radio Company
 1 (half track) Signals Company
 1 Light (mot) Signals Supply Column
Service Forces:
33rd Supply Battalion:
 9 Light (mot) Supply Columns
 2 Heavy (mot) Supply Columns
 1 (mot) Pz. Ers. Column
 3 Heavy (mot) POL Supply Columns
 3 (mot) Maintenance Companies
 33rd (mot) Supply Company
Commissary Service:
 33rd (mot) Quartermaster Detachment
 33rd (mot) Bakery Company
 33rd (mot) Butcher Company
Medical:
 1/,2/33rd (mot) Medical Companies
 36th (mot) Field Hospital
 1/,2/,3/Ambulance Companies

Other:

33rd (mot) Military Police Detachment
33rd (mot) Field Post Office

102nd "Trento" (Motorized) Division:

61st Sicilia Infantry Regiment
62nd Sicilia Infantry Regiment
7th Bersaglieri Regiment
 8th Bersaglieri Battalion
 10th Bersaglieri Battalion
 11th Bersaglieri Battalion
46th Trento (motorized) Artillery Regiment
96th Signal Company
161st Mining Company
512st Medical Section
 57th Field Hospital
 897th Field Hospital
22nd Motor Transport Section
297th Motor Transport Section
9th Mixed Motor Transport Section
37th Heavy Motor Transport Section
68th Field Bakery
160th CCRR Section

Note: Pitt indicates that of the 5th Light Division only the 5th Panzer Regiment and 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion were present. He indicates no artillery or other support units. He also indicates that the 15th Panzer Division had only the 8th Panzer Regiment, 33rd Recon Battalion, one anti-tank battery, one 88mm flak battery, divisional artillery, and the 104th Schützen Regiment were present. On the other hand, German records indicate that everything shown above was present in Africa, and had been so since mid-May. It seems unlikely that Rommel would have committed himself to battle while leaving so much in the rear. I suspect that Pitt's access to the German records was limited and his limited OB was missing much of what was actually available to the Germans.

Note: The numbers of guns are the "authorized" numbers and types and do not necessarily reflect what was actually with Rommel.

Pitt, B., The Crucible of War, Western Desert 1941, London, Jonathan Cape.

The American Historical Association for the Study of War Documents and the National Archives and Records Service (National Archives Microcopy No. T-78, Roll 404.).

Copyright GFN 1993