

2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment

Operation CORPORATE

Falkland Islands 1982

The Battle of Goose Green



2 Para
SUSSEX MOUNTAIN, FALKLAND ISLANDS
27 May 1982

ANNEX A: Task Organization to Operation CORPORATE

2 Para

LtCol Herbert "H" JONES

Tac 1 HQ (13)
Tac 2 HQ (10)
Bn Main (33)

XO: Maj Chris P. B. Keeble
OpsO: Maj Miller

"A" Company (90)
FOO
1 Plat (26)
2 Plat (26)
3 Plat (27)

Maj C. Dair FARRAR-HOCKLEY
Capt Watson
Sgt BARRETT
Lt COE
Lt WALLIS

"B" Company (90)
FOO
4 Plat (28)
5 Plat (27)
6 Plat (28)

Maj John H. CROSLAND
Capt Ash
Lt HOCKING
Lt WEIGHELL
Lt CHAPMAN

"C" Company (53)
Patrols Plat (24)
Recce Plat (24)

Maj R. JENNER
Capt FARRAR
Lt CONNOR

"D" Company (90)
FOO
10 Plat (24)
11 Plat (28)
12 Plat (26)

Maj P. NEAME
Sgt Bullock
Lt WEBSTER
Lt WADDINGTON
Lt James BARRY

Support Company (123)
AT: (22), (8) Milan
Mortars: (44), (2) 81mm
MG: (21), (6) GPMG
Assault Pioneer: (24)
Sniper: (12)

Maj Hugh JENNER
Capt KELLEY
Capt WORSLEY-TONKS
Lt LISTER
Sgt BELL
Sgt HEAD

Headquarters Company (100)
Quartermaster (20)
Signals (25)
Motor-T (22)
Regt Aid Post (15)

Maj RYAN
Capt Godwin
Capt Benest
CSgt Caudwell
Capt Hughes

50 Independent Commando Squadron, Royal Engineers (20)

Lt LIVINGSTONE

Det, 32 GW Regt, Royal Artillery (12), (2) Blowpipes

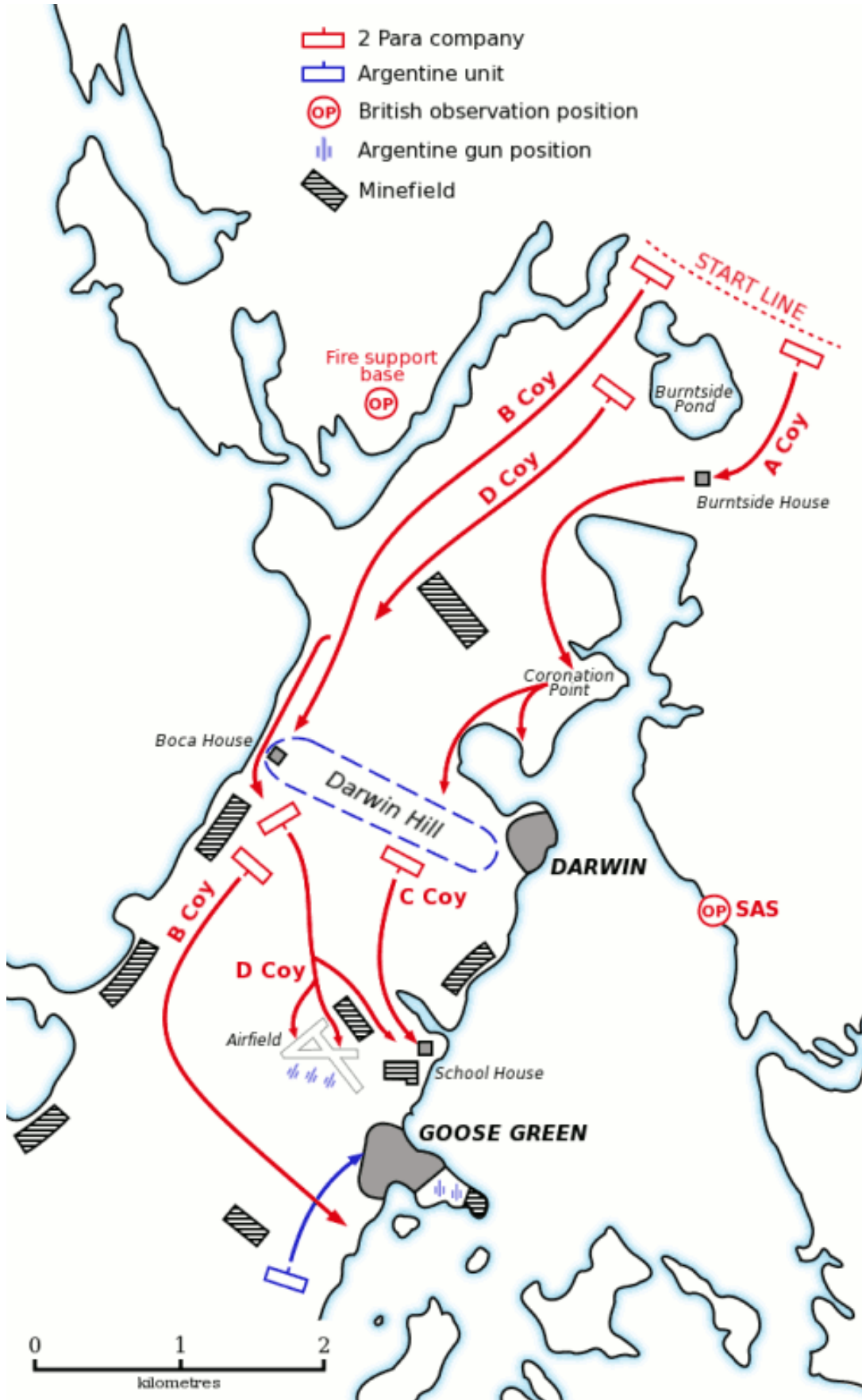
WO2 Smith

Section, 8th Battery, 29th Commando, Royal Artillery Regiment (DS) (83)

Maj RICE

The Battle of Goose Green

28-29 May 1982



Observations on the Battle of Goose Green

1. Platoons, companies, and the battalion were small compared to U.S. standards. Twenty-four-man platoons had three eight-man sections. Line companies had less than one-hundred men. Long-service professional leaders focusing on smaller number of soldiers significantly increased the skill levels of their units.
2. Resupply was extremely difficult. QM resupplied from Sussex Mountain via HQ Coy at Camilla Creek House.
3. The Motor-T section was used as a security platoon for the Bn HQ. There were no Battalion vehicles ashore.
4. The 81mm mortar platoon could carry only (2) of their (8) mortars. Men were needed to carry ammunition.
5. The Assault Platoon was attached to the MG Platoon as ammunition bearers. **GPMG is the critical weapon.**
6. Platoon HQ included two-inch mortars and 84mm assaultmen. The Platoon Commander and Platoon Sergeant carried separate radios on the platoon net. The RO carried radio on the company net.
7. Battalion HQ. Tac 1 traveled with Bn CO. Tac 2 traveled with Main. OpsO supervised the Main.
8. 2 Para had zero casualty evacuation capability. Some casualties were not evacuated for 20 hours. Morphine was carried by individual soldiers.

Very Experienced Company Commanders at Goose Green

1. 2 Para Company Commanders were *very* experienced Majors: Average **36 years old, 16 Years TIS**. All had wide experience leading, fighting, and training. All were true mentors for their platoon commanders.

“A”: Maj Farrar-Hockley, 36, 15 years TIS. Served in Malta, Cyprus, and Northern Ireland.

“B”: Maj Crosland. Served with SAS in Oman.

“C”: Maj R. Jenner. 20 years TIS as Para. Private to RSM, and Lieutenant to Major.

“D”: Maj Neame

HQ Co: Maj Ryan. 20 TIS. Private to Major. Served with Rhodesian Army, fought rebels in Dhofar.

Support Co: Maj H. Jenner

Battalion Commander: LtCol Jones, 42, 22 years TIS.

2. Common British Army and Royal Marine experience is more experienced officers with smaller units:

Major David A. Collet, “A” Co CO, 3 Para in Falklands Islands				
TIS	Months	Billet	Unit	Deployments
1 – 6	~48	Platoon Commander	3 Para	
7 – 10	~48		SAS	
11 – 14	~48	Helicopter Pilot	Army Air Corps	
15 – 16	~24	Company CO	3 Para	Falklands

LtCol Peter N. Ward, Royal Marines				
TIS	Months	Billet	Unit	Deployments
1 – 5	~48	Platoon Commander	42 Commando RM	(4): Pac, Med, Indies, Norway
6 – 7	~18	Company Commander	Army of Oman	Dhofar War
7 – 9	~24	Company XO	42 Commando RM	(3): Northern Ireland
15 – 16	~24	Company CO	41 Commando RM	Cyprus, Northern Ireland
23	~12	Company CO	40 Commando RM	Northern Ireland

References

- Mark Adkin, *Goose Green: A Battle Is Fought to be Won* (London: Casswell Military Paperbacks, 1992)
- Spencer Fitz-Gibbon, *Not Mentioned in Despatches* (Cambridge, England: Lutterworth Press, 1995)
- Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983)

Combat Orders and the Battle of Goose Green 1982

A bad operations order, poorly communicated and poorly understood, almost cost the 2nd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment the battle of Goose Green during the Falklands War of 1982. Spencer Fitz-Gibbon's *Not Mentioned in Despatches* (Cambridge, England: Lutterworth Press, 1995) contends that the battalion order for the Goose Green battle was a complex ballet of six phases with fragile linkages and schedules requiring excessive oversight and coordination. A critical flaw of the order was its assumption of perfect intelligence on the enemy. It was never understood by the officers or the men. Yet this order, and the style of planning and control that it represented, was the norm in the British army. The Battalion Commander who wrote it had been the lead instructor at the army's school of infantry. When the battle quickly exceeded the scope of the order, the battalion commander froze all initiative, berating his company commanders to remain in position, in some cases for hours: "Let me fight my own battle!"



2nd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment (2 Para) in the Falklands Islands, 1982

Mark Adkin, in *Goose Green: A Battle Is Fought to be Won* (London: Casswell Military Paperbacks, 1992), is not as critical of the Battalion Commander but agrees that the badly conceived and communicated operations order almost cost the British the battle. Not until after the Battalion Commander was killed and the choreographed scheme of maneuver discarded did the initiative and combat skills of the battalion's small units outfight and defeat the enemy.