

# *From Savo to Samar: CA*

By David Thornberg

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SPI's CA appears realistic and playable, a winning combination. As a long-time naval buff, though, I prefer to do my own research before accepting anyone else's games, and so I found some minor order-of-battle faults. I have added my own corrections for Japanese variable reloads, and have totally recast the Samar scenario.

First, a few corrections for the counters. There is no apparent reason why the Japanese *Kirishima* (BC-1) should be different from her sister ships. Therefore, I recommend that all Japanese BC's be given a Defense Strength of sixteen. Further, the American cruiser classes lumped under the title of CA-2, while homogeneous in size, armament, and speed, were not identically armored. Raise the Defense Strength to six, except for *Northampton*-class cruisers, which I will refer to as CA-2Ns. These retain the Defense Strength of five, and will be mentioned in my scenario corrections whenever they appear.

Naturally, I have corrected only the real battles in these scenario notes, as the hypothetical ones could have turned out far differently. The exception is the Samar scenario, in which there were three different times where the Japanese could reasonably expect to be brought to battle. The main corrections are in the classes of destroyers; in addition, I have noted the varying number of reloads carried by the Japanese destroyers (all Japanese cruisers have one reload in all scenarios).

**SAVO ISLAND:** The Japanese destroyer has a torpedo strength of six (four 21-inch tubes), and the CA-2 in the American Group 1 is a CA-2N.

**GUADALCANAL-1:** Remove

the Japanese DD-2s, and add one more DD-S. Three DD-3s have a torpedo strength of twelve on their second torpedo attack (partial reload). The American destroyers are one DD-2, one DD-3, four DD-Ss, and two DD-6s.

**GUADALCANAL-2:** The Japanese destroyers are five DD-2s, three DD-3s (one with reload strength of 12, as above), and one DD-S. The Americans have one DD-2, one DD-S, and two DD-6s.

**TASSAFARONGA:** Both Japanese DD-3s have two torpedo reloads, instead of one; one of the American DD-2s should be a DD-S.

**KOLOMBANGARA:** The Japanese have one DD-3 (with no reloads) and four DD-4s; the Americans have only two DD-3s, not three.

**EMPRESS AUGUSTA BAY:** The Japanese DD-3s have no reloads.

In the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the Japanese Center Force came east through the San Bernardino Strait and began to go around the island of Samar, when they met a hopelessly inferior American force that decisively repulsed them. Had they continued, they would have entered Leyte Gulf from the east. Actually, though, they turned and retreated through the San Bernardino Strait. There were three possible times where a battleship duel might occur: in the Japanese emergence from the Strait; the Japanese entry into Leyte Gulf; and as the Japanese withdrawal through the Strait. The first Samar variant therefore has the Japanese facing Halsey's Task Force 34. Victory for the Japanese lies in defeating the American force or exiting three BBs or BCs off the east

edge; the Americans must prevent the Japanese from exiting. The second variant has the Japanese against the slow American battleships; this scenario hinges solely on Japanese exit from the west edge. The Japanese force for this scenario is depleted by the fighting off Samar, as indicated. The third variant has the Japanese against Task Force 34 again. The object of the Americans is to sink all of the Japanese (ships that have not exited from the west edge at the end of the game are considered sunk), and the Japanese try to escape off the west edge and sink American battleships. These may require additional counters; use spares, the backs of unused counters, or don't play these variants.

**JAPANESE FORCE:** one BB-1, one BB-3, two BC-1s, two CA-2s, two CA-3s, two CA-4s, eleven DD-4s (four without reloads). For the second and third variants, eliminate two CA-3s, one CA-4, and three destroyers.

**AMERICAN TASK FORCE:** four BB-1s, two BB-4s, two CA-2s, five CL-Ss, two DD-3s, and sixteen DD-6s.

**AMERICAN SLOW BATTLESHIPS:** two BB-2s, four BB-3s (the battleships in this group have a maximum movement allowance of four), two CA-2s, one CA-2N, one CL-3, two CL-Ss, two DD-Ss, and eleven DD-6s.

As American torpedoes and torpedo doctrine had improved considerably since the beginning of the war, they may be allowed an increase of one-half in torpedo strength—that is, for example, from ten to fifteen.

All orders of battle were taken

from Samuel Morison's *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, which may be in error in some Japanese orders of battle. Information about ships and ship classes was taken from Watt's *Japanese Warships of World War II* and Silvertone's *U.S. Warships of World War II*, supplemented by Lenton's *American Battleships, Carriers, and Cruisers*.

=David Thornberg