

"Mule Skinner"



Hukawng Valley, Burma — March 14th, 1944

In early March of 1944, the US 5307th Composite, better known as Merrill's Marauders were trekking through the Hukawng Valley in Burma. Their harassment of the Japanese 18th Division had been largely successful. But in order to continue their mission, Merrill's men had to rely on resupply airdrops. These airdrops provided medical, food, feed and ammunition supplies that were absolutely critical for mission success. On most occasions, the airdrops were completed with routine precision...but on March 14th, three of the resupply aircraft dropped their supplies late and into an uncontrolled area along the Marauders march to the north. Usually, Merrill would forgo searching for the supplies, but these three aircraft had dropped radio batteries, medical supplies and feed for the numerous mules that Merrill's men depended on. The supplies would have to be found. Led by local Kachin tribesmen and with mules in tow, Merrill's men set off into the jungle ahead to find the precious cargo. Unknown to Merrill and his men, a company of Japanese infantry from the 114th Regiment were patrolling in the exact same area of jungle.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: The American player wins immediately once 6 Pack Mules, each with one Resupply have successfully crossed onto Boards 62 or 73. Any other result is a Japanese victory.

Board Configuration:

	37	
		75
	62	73



US Player sets up first	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
US Player moves first									



Elements of 114th Regiment, 18th Infantry Division (ELR 4) (SAN: 4)

Setup HIP North of Row CC on BD37 & Row E on BD75

Setup on BD75 North of Row W

Enter per SSR 5



2 2



3 3



2 10 4



Elements 3rd Battalion, 5307th Composite (ELR 5) (SAN 2) (Setup: on Board 62 on or south of Hex Row D)



4

Setup on Board 73 on or south of Hex Row D

Setup on or south of Hex Rows DD on BD 37 and D on BD 75



2 12 12 ? ? 15



2 2

Special Rules/Notes:

- EC are Moist with a mild breeze from the West. PTO Terrain Rules (G1) are in effect. All buildings are Huts. No quarter is in effect.
- Radio Contact is automatically gained for both sides on Turn 1. Normal Radio Contact Rules are applied beginning on Turn 2.
- Only Hex Rows A-P are playable on Boards 62 and 73.
- Prior to play, the American player will conduct an airdrop of 3 Wings as per 9.0. The American Player must choose drop points North of Row W on Board 37 and North of Row K on Board 75.
- Before entering the game, the reinforcing Japanese Company must be contacted via Radio. This occurs when one or both of the Japanese HIP Radio Observers sees one or more of the American Units. As long as the Japanese observer has radio contact, the Japanese Reinforcements may enter the following Turn. The Japanese Player may enter along any Road Hex on BD 37 North of Row R or on BD 75 North of Row P.
- Horse Counters are Mules. See A13.7 and G 10.
- Mule SSR's: In order to move, each Mule unit must be led by a half or full squad. Mules have 4 MF. CX is N.A. for Mule Units.
- If the handler half-squad or full squad is broken or eliminated, the Mules will wander off in the next movement phase (roll random direction as per Sniper rules for direction and the Mules will move up to 4 MF in that direction and will not move again unless a new handler full or half-squad moves into their hex to control them.
- Control of Mules is automatically gained in the Rally Phase or the handler can spend 1 MF to gain control in the Movement Phase.
- Mules can enter Dense Jungle as if it is Light Jungle.
- Loading the Supplies— upon moving onto a parachute supply, the American Player takes possession of the Supplies but cannot load them until the next friendly Prep Fire Phase. Supplies (one per Mule Unit) can be loaded in Prep Fire and the unit is TI for the remainder of that turn. Loaded Mules are marked with an Animal Pack counter. (Should a Mule be eliminated, the supplies are placed in the hex as an Ammo Counter.) In the following, friendly movement phase, the loaded Mule may move normally.
- Destroying Supplies—the Japanese Player may elect to destroy supplies. A unit may attempt to do this in Prep Fire and Rolls 1d6 for success on a 1-5. Regardless of result, the Unit is marked TI for the remainder of the turn.
- The Chinese 1-2-7 represent Kachin Tribesmen who are acting as guides for Merrill's Marauders. Should the Kachin Tribesman move adjacent to an HIP Japanese Unit, that unit is immediately revealed and marked with a concealment counter.
- Spotted Fire for American and Japanese Mortars. The Japanese and American Mortars may utilize spotted fire as long as the mortar team is adjacent to a friendly leader with a radio. The spotter may be any friendly leader with a radio who can see the target and has radio contact. All other C9.3 Spotters and C9.31 Spotted Fire rules apply. A leader with radio spotting adjacent to multiple mortars may only spot for one.

Aftermath: As Merrill's men set off, Japanese reconnaissance patrols quickly radioed to the men of the 114th that the Marauders were moving towards them. One, divided company responded and moved into the resupply drop zone and ambushed the Americans as they loaded up their mules with supplies. Back at the deserted village further south, other Marauders heard the firing and moved up to support the mule columns. A fierce firefight erupted in the jungle. American and Japanese radios crackled as both sides called for artillery support. By early evening, the Japanese had melted back into the jungle and Merrill's exhausted Mule Skinners returned to camp with enough precious supplies to continue their mission.

