

# German Panzer Grenadiers - SS-Panzer Grenadier Regiment "H"

## About the infantry units of the 9th SS-Panzerdivision "Hohenstaufen"

The division had two panzergrenadier regiments - 19. and 20. *SS-Panzergrenadier-Regiment* - each of which consisted of three battalions and a number of support units. In the 19th Armored Grenadier Regiment, it was motorized infantry (trucks); in the 20th Armored Grenadier Regiment, the 1st and 2nd Battalions were also transported on trucks, while the 3rd Battalion was armored - i.e. actual armored infantry equipped with armored personnel carriers.

The organization as such was not peculiar to this division and thus followed what was prescribed in the official organizational charts (*Kriegsstärkenachweisung, Panzer-Division 1944*). The variation could consist of which of the battalions in the two regiments of an armored division was the armored one.

When the division is transferred from the Eastern Front to France in June 1944, the two regiments are largely at full strength. After a month of hard fighting in Normandy (from 29 June 1944), the losses among the infantry have been so high that a reorganization is necessary.

Per On July 23, 1944, Panzergrenadier Regiment "H" was established, consisting of three battalions (= five battalions become three), while the armored battalion (3rd Battalion/20th Panzergrenadier Regiment) together with the remnants of SS-Panzer-Regiment 9 formed the battle group "Gepanzerte Gruppe Meyer" [named after the commander of the armored regiment Obersturmbannführer (= lieutenant colonel) Otto Meyer]. The commander of Regiment "H" will be the 33-year-old Obersturmbannführer Emil Zollhöfer, who was previously commander of the 19th. Armored Grenadier Regiment.

Regiment "H" is organized as follows:

- 1st Battalion (with 1st, 2nd and 3rd Company and 4th (heavy) Company.
- 2nd Battalion (with 5th, 6th and 7th Companies and 8th (heavy) Company 3rd Battalion (with 9th, 10th and 11th Companies and 12th (heavy) Company as well
- 13th Company - heavy infantry guns (12 15 cm infantry guns)
- 14. Company - heavy mortars (12 pcs. 12 cm mortars)
- 15th Company - anti-aircraft (12 pcs. 2 cm anti-aircraft cannon)
- 16th Company - engineers (partly in armored vehicles)
- 17. Company - staff company (signal division, motorcyclist division, armored infantry division)

The infantry companies are at 60-70% combat strength, while the special companies were largely at full strength.

## My wargame units

Based on the above organization, I have chosen to organize my German infantry units so that they can show the 1st and 2nd Battalions from Regiment "H" as well as the five special companies. The strength list follows at the end of the article. In addition, I can field most of the "armored" panzer grenadier battalion (still missing a couple of SdKfz 251s to make it full).

As mentioned in previous articles, the units can easily be used to display all sorts of other units, but the basic organization is as mentioned here.



### Regimental Commander



## 17. Company (staff company)

The staff company consists of three elements:

- Signal sharing (Esci Opel Blitz ambulance converted to radio van).
- Biker part (Hasegawa BMW motorcycle with converted Airfix figures).
- Armored Infantry Division (Esci SdKfz 251/1)

Among other things, the company functioned as the regiment's own reconnaissance element, which I have shown in terms of gameplay by letting the two platoons function as units under "own command".



### **Battalion Chief/1. and 2nd Battalion**

The battalion commander of the 1st Battalion together with the staff company. The leadership elements in the two battalions are largely identical - it is only the commanders who are different.

The Motor Ordinance is pure staffing. The figure is converted from an English RAF engine order from Airfix.

The Kübelwagen shown is from Eidai, while the radio van has a past as an Esci Opel Blitz ambulance.

The battalion commander figure is an Esci figure which has been converted for the purpose.



### **1st, 2nd and 3rd Company**

The three companies are completely alike, both in terms of figures and organization. The figures are a selection of Esci's *German Infantry*, now sold under the Revell brand name.

The support squads are a combination of the figure set's radioman and one of the machine gunners. Although it may look a bit neck-breaking, it is a correct shooting position for a light machine gun.

It continues to be included (at least until 1997) in the Danish army's regulations for the M/62 machine gun. For easily understandable reasons, this is a wartime shooting position that must not be practiced in peacetime.



### 5th, 6th and 7th Company

The companies correspond in terms of figures to the 1st Battalion, only different figures have been used for the support platoons.

The figures have been adapted slightly to their current function; thus, the machine gun assistant has been given a new rifle and an ammunition box, so that he is better suited to his function.



### 4th and 8th (heavy) Company

The battalions' heavy companies were equipped slightly differently from corresponding companies in other units.

- Company manager.
- Anti-tank gun division (7.5 cm anti-tank gun).
- Infantry gun division (7.5 cm light infantry gun).
- Mortar division (8 cm mortar).



The figures are basically all from the Esci - *WWII German Guns* set.

The anti-tank gun is from Matchbox, while the infantry gun is from Skytrex (metal).

The mortar is also from Esci, who once made a set of Afrika Korps figures (in hard plastic). The mortar shells also originate from here.

The Kettenkrad is from Hasegawa, with a driver converted from an Airfix figure with an Esci head attached.

The company's other vehicles are not shown in the picture.

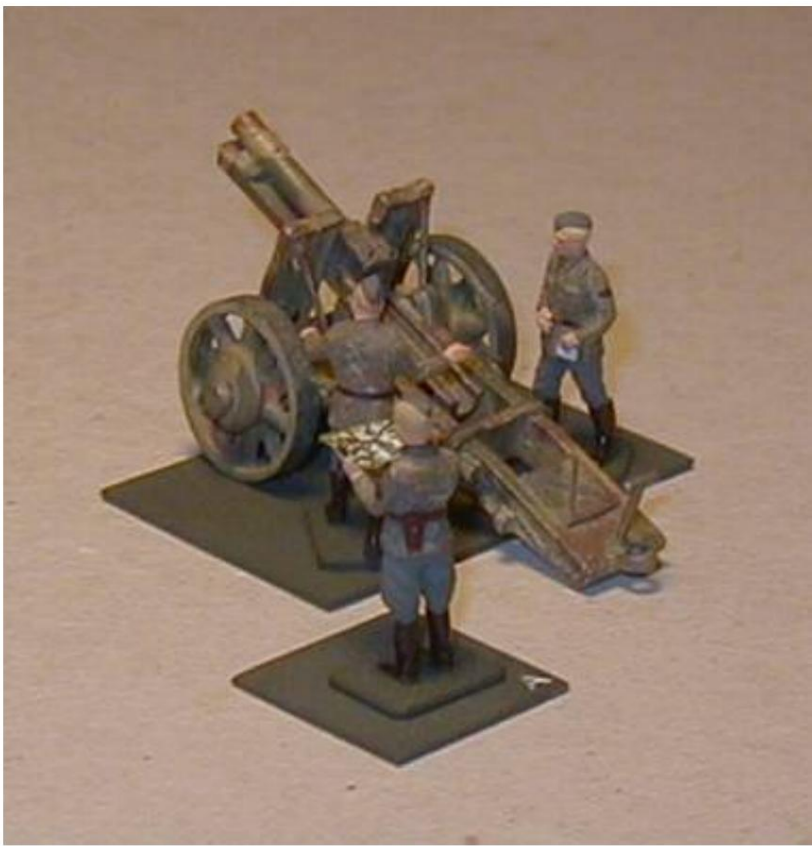


### 13. Company (heavy infantry guns)

The regiment's own "artillery" - the heavy infantry guns were organized in 13. Kompagni.

The vehicles are from Eidai, Matchbox and Airfix.





Skytrex makes an excellent model of a 15 cm heavy infantry cannon. My models are pretty much as the factory intended; however, I have added a few details - two struts which hold the armor shield and the pamphlets' sights.

The crew is partly an Airfix figure - from *the SdKfz 234/4* set - and a Hasegawa figure. Both have new heads with field caps.

The company commander, who eagerly studies his map so that he can best solve his shooting tasks, is also a convert. The base is an Esci figure - from *the SdKfz 251* set - with head and arms from other sources.

The map is a photocopy (enlarged) of parts of the building instructions for the *Kettenkrad* kit from Hasegawa. Subsequently, it is colored with colored pencils and painted with a thin turpentine solution, so that it looks a little used.



## 14th Company (heavy mortars)

The heavy mortars are of our own make: The pipe originates from a so-called *sprue* (the casting which typically sits around the parts in a construction kit). The baseplate is a road wheel from a Panther tank, while the outriggers come from the Hasegawa kit, which includes an American 81mm mortar mounted in a

## Half Track.



The crew are Airfix figures - from *the SdKfz 234/4* set. The company commander is an Esci figure.

The trucks are basically the Airfix version of the Opel Blitz truck, which has been converted to represent the Opel Maultier.

The belts originate from Airfix's *Bren Carrier* set - a solution that is both practical and rooted in reality. For the first prototypes of vehicles of this type, parts from captured carriers were used.



## 15. Company (air defense)

The unit should be equipped with self-propelled 2 cm anti-aircraft guns; however, it was not possible for me around 1986-1987. Instead, I chose to use self-propelled 3.7 cm anti-aircraft guns.

The company is represented by two models. Basically, it's an older Eidai kit, on which I've mounted a Hasegawa anti-aircraft gun. The crew consists of converted Airfix figures - the driver *from the Scammel Tank Transporter* set - converted to look like German soldiers.

The guns of the gun crew are carried on the screens. For this I have used loose guns from Esci's *Nebelwerfer*

set, as well as a few small pieces of plastic from the spare parts box.



## 16. Company (engineers)

Here too, the figures are a selection of Esci's *German Infantry*.

As previously mentioned, the company was partially equipped with armored vehicles. I have chosen to show this by equipping one of the company's platoons with an Esci SdKfz 251/7.

The two bridge pieces carried on the armored personnel carrier can be used to build a bridge over a ditch or a narrow stream.



The company's two other platoons are transported in the medium-heavy lorry on the right in the picture. (An Esci model.)

The company's supply vehicle is an *Einheits diesel*, from the Czech company Mac Distribution.

This vehicle was - at least early in the war - a distinctive vehicle in engineer units. I have therefore chosen to place the model in the regiment's engineer company - also so that all trucks in the regiment were not of the same type.





Reality contained a variety of types/makes and vintages that are not reflected in my units.

One of the material items that are transported in the company's supply train are inflatable boats.

With the recently submitted proposal for rules for crossing over water obstacles, this element has gained greater relevance.

My engineer soldiers are from the Revell *German Engineers* set. They row an inflatable boat from Roco.



One element that is not directly included in our war games is the sanitation service.

However, in order to have this important part of the conditions of the war represented, I have chosen to produce a single medical vehicle and a stretcher team.

The vehicle is from the Esci - SdKfz 251/8 set; the drum (with water) on the side of the wagon and the sanitary flag on the front fender are of our own making.

The stretcher team is converted by two figures from Esci (with new heads) while the stretcher with the wounded soldier is from Airfix - English infantry!

## Closing

As will be apparent from the image material, I have aimed for uniformity in the choice of figures.

Thus, in the infantry companies I use figures of the same make and in principle in the same positions. In the special companies, there are often converted figures that I have endeavored to show in fairly correct exercise positions.

That way there is no doubt about the function of the platoon in question in a wargame and I think it looks good when the units are lined up.

When putting together figures that are to be mounted on the same base, it is, in my opinion, important to aim for them to "dress" each other - pose, clothing and the like - and that they also look as if they are working together to solve a common task.

It is of course always worth considering how clearly you want to display the function of a figurine. If you yourself as a player can recognize your division of command because of an officer figure and/or a radio man, then you can be absolutely sure that your opponent can too. Similarly with an artillery observer who has been equipped with nice relief binoculars - at a distance of kilometers everyone will be able to identify the figure and determine its function.

I myself am of the opinion that the visual impression is the most important, and with my figures I want to show an officer, radioman, flame thrower or whatever the special function is. That it can sometimes give the experience that the special characters appear as fire magnets, you have to live with that as a wargamer.

It is exactly the same with tanks and the like - markings, antennae and other special characteristics (everything you have learned in armor knowledge) - reveal the function of the piece against opponents even from kilometers away. In itself, it reflects reality very well, and if you play with sensible people, it doesn't give rise to problems either.

In other words - there is no reason to hold back from showing the figures in the functions they actually represent. So just go ahead with the small brushes and paint degrees, orders and the like on the figures and feel free to decorate the vehicles with antennas, numbers and unit markings!

## Sources

1. *9. SS-Panzerdivision Hohenstaufen* by Herbert Fürbinger, Editions Heimdal, 1984, ISBN 2-902171-17-X.
2. *The Thin Gray Line* by Bob Mackenzie, Tac Publications, Oxford, 2000.
3. *German Half-Tracked Vehicles of World War 2 - Unarmoured support vehicles of the German Army 1933-45* by John Milsom, Arms & Armor Press, London 1875, ISBN 0-85368-330-1.

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## Organization according to the Command Decision rules

**Armored Grenadier Regiment "H" (-)**

Regimental Commander:

Chief  
SdKfz 251/3

Staff Company: *(17th Company)*  
Radio van *(staff division, radio)*  
Motorcyclist division *(own command)*  
Infantry division *(own command)*  
SdKfz 251/1  
Supply truck, medium *(6 x ½ ton ammunition)*

Infantry Gun Company: *(13th Company)*  
Boss  
Kübelwagen  
15 cm infantry cannon with crew (db)  
SdKfz 11  
15 cm infantry gun with crew (db)  
SdKfz 11

Air Defense Company: *(14th Company)*  
Chief  
Kübelwagen  
3.7 cm anti-aircraft gun (self-propelled)  
3.7 cm anti-aircraft gun (self-propelled)

Mortar Company: *(15th Company)*  
Boss  
12 cm mortar with crew (db)  
Maultier  
12 cm mortar with crew (db)  
Maultier

Engineer Company: *(16. Company)*  
Command Platoon, Engineer  
Schwimmwagen  
Engineer Platoon, Flamethrower  
SdKfz 251/7 *(Carries a Class IV bridge)*  
Engineer  
platoon Support platoon,  
engineer Truck, medium  
Heavy Supply truck, medium *(4 x ½ ton engineer supplies)*

## 1st Battalion

Battalion Chief:  
Chief  
Kübelwagen

Staff and staff company:  
Signal vehicle *(staff division, radio)*

1. Company:

## 2nd Battalion

Battalion Chief:  
Chief  
Kübelwagen

Staff and staff company:  
Signal vehicle *(staff division, radio)*

5th Company:  
Command division, infantry

Command division, infantry  
Infantry division  
Infantry division  
Support sharing

Infantry division  
Infantry division  
Support sharing

2nd Company:

Command platoon, infantry  
Infantry platoon  
Infantry platoon  
Support platoon

6. Company:

Command platoon, infantry  
Infantry platoon  
Infantry platoon  
Support platoon

3rd Company:

Command platoon, infantry  
Infantry platoon  
Infantry platoon  
Support platoon

7th Company:

Command platoon, infantry  
Infantry platoon  
Infantry platoon  
Support platoon

4th (heavy) Company:

Chief  
Kettenkrad  
7.5 cm anti-tank gun + crew (db)  
Truck, medium heavy  
7.5 cm infantry gun + crew (db)  
Truck, medium heavy 8  
cm mortar + crew (db)  
Truck, medium-duty

8th (heavy) Company:

Chief  
Kettenkrad  
7.5 cm anti-tank gun + crew (db)  
Truck, medium heavy  
7.5 cm infantry gun + crew (db)  
Truck, medium heavy 8  
cm mortar + crew (db)  
Truck, medium Heavy  
Supply truck, medium (4 x ½ ton ammunition)

**Note:** A possible 3rd Battalion will be organized as 1st and 2nd Battalion.