

FACES OF WAR

GAME INFORMATION: FEATURES

Timescale

The game Faces of War is devoted to the final period of World War II in Europe: the summer of 1944 – the spring of 1945. During this period mighty battles were held in France, Poland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Hungary and Germany. The German war machine was making every possible effort to defend the territory of Third Reich from the Soviet and Allied troops. However, during 11 months the German resistance was crushed at all the front lines and the war ended where it had begun – in Berlin.

Campaigns

There are three campaigns in the game: you can be either for the Allies, for the Germans or the Russians.

The main events of the **Allied** campaign took place mainly in the summer and autumn of 1944 when the offensive named Overlord was held, then the Allied troops freed France, Belgium and cleared the exit to German borders. Afterwards the Allied forces moved to the Ardennes, where they had to repulse German counter-offensive in winter. The campaign ends with a fascinating offensive aimed to seize the German submarine Flying Dutchman, that tried to transport German secret archives to South America.

In the course of the **German** campaign the player will be given the opportunity not just to achieve success in battles by the Ardennes but also to fulfil pretentious plans of the German Command to occupy Brussels and Antwerp. Thus there are elements of alternate history in the German campaign.

The Soviet campaign is devoted to the last great battle on the East Front, namely to the breakthrough of Soviet armed forces over the Oder and seizure of Berlin (towards the end of the winter – spring of 1945).

All three campaigns have their own unique heroes. They are paratroopers, rangers, commandos, scouts or intelligence officers, panzer grenadiers and even front-line press photographers. The player himself has to choose the way – the easy one or the hard one – to lead the heroes through the flames of battles. Thus each campaign implies that there are several ways of passing through depending on the complexity of the player's decisions. It is clear that the player will achieve the best results if he chooses the most complicated tasks and the most vehement battles.

Historical Battles

There is a description of four great battles in the game:

Overload – Allied forces disembarkation in Normandy;

Cobra – the breakthrough of the Allies from Normandy beachhead and the crushing defeat of the German armed forces in France;

Wacht am Rhein – the German counter-offensive by the Ardennes.

The Offensive of Berlin – the encirclement and takeover of Berlin by the Soviet army.

Overload Offensive is quite well-known and there is no need to dwell on it too much. It is necessary to mention that there will be offered not only such famous episodes of disembarkation in Normandy as the takeover of the German battery on the cliff of Pointe du Hoc or landing of the English parachutists round the bridges on the river Orne but also less known battles on the bridgehead, nevertheless very interesting ones. For example, repulse of the German tank battalion attack by Lion Sur Mer.

Cobra Offensive is less known to the players though according to its practical results it has achieved greater results than Overload. As a result of Overload a relatively small bridgehead the size of about 120 km per 30 km was occupied, then Cotentin Peninsula and port Cherbourg were freed owing to the battles held in June. At the same time one of the main objectives of the June battles – the city of Caen – was not occupied. It was defended by the Germans with great tactical skill and fanatic perseverance. In order to get exit to strategical open space Cobra Offensive was launched. The German emplacements were crushed by the small town Saint Lo, then American tank columns headed south and occupied a very important bridge over the river Selune near Pontaubault village. Several divisions had passed over that bridge in 48 hours and then turned west and found themselves in the hinterland of the German 7th Army. On 13 August, 1944 the Americans reached the town of Argentan, the English and the Canadians moving in the north-southern direction got to the town of Falaise that is situated in 20 miles away from Argentan. Thus the famous Falaise pocket was created and the main forces of the German 7th Army got right into it. With great difficulties the remains of the German 7th Army managed to escape capture and broke through to north-east but they had lost all the equipment and ran away from the Allies so fast that the defence of France and Paris was out of the question. To strengthen the success they had achieved, the Allies moved so fast southwards and eastwards that in three weeks they freed at once two European capitals: Paris and Brussels. On 13 September, the Americans freed Maastricht, i.e. the Germans failed to create fortifications on the border line of the river Maas.

All these events are depicted in the game including the battles for the bridge Pontaubault, the encirclement of the Germans by Falaise and Argentan, liberation of Brussels and passing over the river Maas.

The final part of the Allied campaign is devoted to the winter defense at the outskirts of Bastogne and finally to the special offensive to seize the submarine Flying Dutchman.

Wacht am Rhein offensive was planned by the German Command in the autumn of 1944 when the Allied forces approached the Rhein and even managed to break the part of Siegfried defense line near the town of Aachen through. The aim of this offensive was to crush the Allies in Belgium and

North-Eastern France. This offensive got the name Wacht am Rhein. Three German armies including two tank armies had to strike the American and English emplacements in the area of the mountain range of the Ardennes and reach the river Maas near the towns of Dinant and Namur, occupy the bridges, move till Brussels and finally come out at sea near Antwerp. In such a way the Germans planned to cut off the English forces, which were situated north to Brussels, from the Americans and possibly to persuade the Allies to make separate peace.

The main problem of the German offensive was fuel. The shortage of fuel was so acute that the German Command planned to reach Brussels with the help of the fuel that they would manage to get at the large Allies' depots in the rear. The second problem was the weakness of the German air forces. During the first days of the offensive the weather was non-flying, so the German columns did not endure killing attacks from the air, to which they got used during the battle for France.

Wacht am Rhein started on December 15, 1944 and took the Allies by surprise. During 9 days the Germans managed to occupy several crucial emplacements: StVith, Houffalize, Wiltz, Rochefort. The Germans widely used detachments of wreckers, who were dressed in American uniforms and used equipment masked into American one.

In spite of all the efforts and war ruses made by the German soldiers, the important road junction – Bastogne – was an undefeated bastion in the rear of the German forces. It was desperately defended by the American paratroopers of the 101st airborne unit. The Germans also failed to get large fuel depots – the Allies had blown them up. In many respects due to this fact the German offensive got exhausted just in a few kilometers away from Dinant where there were bridges over the river Maas.

After that the 4th tank division headed by General Patton stroke the left German flank, moving along the road Neufchateau – Bastogne, and came to rescue of the paratroopers of the 101st airborne unit bestead by enemies. After that the Germans began to move back to the starting points, leaving behind many tanks including well-known Pz.VIB King Tigers because of the lack of fuel.

There will be offered historic battles connected with the breakthrough of the Allies' defense at the outskirts of Bastogne and the combat for fuel depots in Rochefort. Besides the player will get the opportunity to rewrite history the way it was planned by the German High Command in December 1944. If the player is persistent enough, he will be able to get hold of fuel, to partially neutralize the Allies air forces, come out to the Maas and occupy bridges over the river. After that the player can start his offensive on Antwerp. In the course of this offensive he will have to endure the harshest tank counterstrokes by the Americans and English who will desperately try to save the situation.

Berlin Offensive began on 16 April 1945 with a powerful attack made by the armies of the three Soviet fronts headed by the marshals Zhukov, Konev and Rokossovsky. This offensive developed rapidly and successfully and the organized enemy resistance in Berlin had been broken by the 1st of May.

To come out to the river Oder that served as a starting point for the offensive, the Soviet armies had to carry out several very important attacks at the end of winter and at the beginning of spring in 1945. First of all, the Soviets made a forced crossing over the Oder and occupied a very important beachhead on the west bank by the town-fortress Kustrin. Still they failed to occupy Kustrin fortifications at once. To get rid of this annoying barrier in one own rear, the Soviet armed forces carried out a thoroughly planned storm and occupied Kustrin stronghold. On the eve of the beginning of Berlin Offensive the German mighty fortress Konigsberg in western Prussia was occupied because it was necessary to free storm divisions for action in the main direction.

Thus the Soviet campaign of the game Faces of War will tell you not only about the battles at the outskirts of Berlin and in the city itself but you will also get to know about other interesting battles of the last months of war on the East front.

