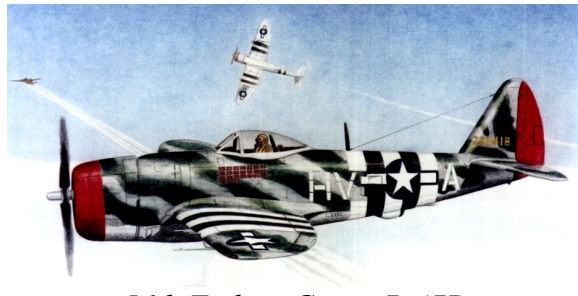


# LITTLE FRIENDS

FIGHTER COVER IN THE ETO  
*Advanced Guidelines for B-17: Queen of the Skies*



*56th Fighter Group P-47D*

by

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### August 1942 to March 1943:

Spitfires from the RAF, the 31<sup>st</sup> Fighter Group (August and September) and the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group. The 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group was The Eagle Squadron in the RAF until September 1942 when they disbanded and became a group in the USAAF on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The 31<sup>st</sup> transferred to North Africa in October 1942.

A. Type of Fighter Cover. **Roll D6** for cover in Zones 2-3:

**1-2:** Circus – Fighters try to draw out the Enemy Air Force. Table B-1 and 2 is -1. Roll on B below once per zone Out and Back.

**3:** Ramrod – Fighters provide close escort. Roll on B below once per mission Out and Back.

**4-6:** No fighter cover provided.

B. **Roll D6** for cover in Zones 2-3:

**1-2:** 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group: **D6: 1-3:** Fair Cover. **4-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover in Zone 4 if Outbound Ramrod.)

**3-6:** RAF Spitfires, including the 31<sup>st</sup>: **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover in Zone 4 if Outbound Ramrod).

### April 1943 to July 1943:

P-47 Thunderbolt units become operational (56<sup>th</sup> and the 78<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group) and the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group shows up in their new P-47s. To be more historically correct, P-47s will be available for escort from May 1943. The first P-47 escort mission was on May 4 to Antwerp. (I made the P-47 available from April because the 56<sup>th</sup> FG had been equipped with it in March. After the first or second mission in March some work had to be done on the radios so it was taken off combat until early or mid April.)

**Roll D6** for cover once per mission Out and Back in Zones 2-4:

**1-2:** Rookie/Inexperienced unit. (78<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

**3-5:** Experienced/Well-trained unit. (56<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial, in Zone 5 if Outbound.)

**6:** Veteran unit (Table M-4 DR +1, Initial). (4<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in Zone 5 if Outbound.)



*4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group*



*56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group*



*78<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group*

### **August to October 1943:**

Three more P-47 units became operational in July and August. P-47s began using drop tanks on July 28, on a mission to Kassel and Oschersleben.

**Roll 2D6** for cover once per mission Out and Back in Zones 2-5:

**2-6:** Rookie/Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

**7-8:** Experienced/Well-trained unit. (78<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover.

**9-10:** Experienced unit. (56<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover Table M-4 +1, Initial, in Zone 6 if Outbound.)

**11-12:** Veteran unit (Table M-4 DR +1, Initial). (4<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in Zone 6 if Outbound .)

### **November 1943:**

P-38 Lightnings became operational in the European Theater of Operations in October, 1943. The first escort mission was on Oct 20<sup>th</sup> to Duren in the Netherlands by the 55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group.)

P-38 ESCORT SPECIAL RULE: If P-38s escort the bombers on the return trip, they will rendezvous in the Target Zone (Return) or in Zone 8 (Return) if the Target is in Zone 9 or further away.

OPTIONAL: The P-38 was not really able to compete with the German fighters at higher altitudes, and since it was easily distinguished by its two engines and tail the Germans avoided a confrontation with the fighter cover and went for the bombers after it had left them. To simulate this in *B-17*, for the High Squadron: Table M-4 DR is -1, and when there is Fair or Good Cover offered by P-38s, Table B-1 is -1.

A. Type of Fighter Unit: **Roll D6** for cover once per mission Out and Back:

**1-4:** P-47 (Zones 2-5). Roll on B below.

**5-6:** P-38 (Zones 2-8). (55<sup>th</sup> FG) Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

B. **Roll 2D6** for cover once per mission Out and Back:

**2-4:** Rookie/Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

**5-6:** Experienced/Well-trained unit. (78<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover.

**7-9:** Experienced unit. (56<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover Table M-4 +1, Initial, in one zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range if Outbound.)

**10-12:** Veteran unit (Table M-4 DR +1, Initial). (4<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-3:** Fair Cover. **4-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in one zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range if Outbound.)

### **December 1943 to February 1944:**

The 354<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group takes the P-51B Mustang into action for the first time on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The first escort mission is on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

**P-51 ESCORT SPECIAL RULE:** If P-51s are rolled for escort on the Outbound leg they will stay with the formation for the rest of the mission. If they are assigned as escort on the Inbound leg, they will rendezvous with the bombers in the first zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range of the fighter type providing escort on the first part, and then stay with the bombers for the rest of the mission.

**P-38 ESCORT SPECIAL RULE:** See above (November 1943).

**A. Type of Fighter Unit: Roll D6 for cover once per mission Out and Back:**

**1-3:** P-47. (Zones 2-5). Roll on B below.

**4:** P-38. (Zones 2-8). (55<sup>th</sup> FG) Experienced unit. **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial, in Zone 9 if Outbound.)

**5:** P-38. (Zones 2-8). (20<sup>th</sup> FG - their first mission was on December 28<sup>th</sup>.) Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

**6:** P-51 B and C. (Zone 2 to Target): Rookie unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

**B. Roll 2D6 for cover once per mission Out and Back (P-47):**

**2-4:** Rookie/Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.

**5-6:** Experienced/Well-trained unit. (78<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover.

**7-9:** Experienced unit. (56<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in one zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range if Outbound.)

**10-12:** Veteran unit (Table M-4 DR +1, Initial). (4<sup>th</sup> FG) **D6: 1-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in one zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range if Outbound.)



*55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group*

### **March 1944 to July 1944:**

The P-51D became operational in the ETO in March. The 55<sup>th</sup> FG was the first unit equipped with the D-model. Several P-47 units converted from the Jug to the Mustang in the following months. Most of the P-38 units of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Air Forces converted to the Mustang during the coming year. The 367<sup>th</sup> converted to P-47s and the 474<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group and four Photo Reconnaissance Squadrons were the only P-38 units when the war ended.

P-51 ESCORT SPECIAL RULE: See above (December 1943 to February 1944).

P-38 ESCORT SPECIAL RULE: See above (November 1943).

A. Type of Fighter Unit: **Roll D6** for cover once per mission Out and Back:

- 1-2:** P-47. (Zones 2-5). Roll on B below. (Optional: DR +3.)
- 3:** P-51. (Zone 2 to Target. If P-51s are escorting, roll only once per mission.) Rookie unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.
- 4-5:** P-51. (Zone 2 to Target.) Roll on B below. (Optional: DR +3.)
- 6:** P-38. (Zones 2-8). (20<sup>th</sup> FG) Experienced unit. **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial, in Zone 9 if Outbound.)

B. **Roll 2D6** for cover once per mission Out and Back (P-47):

- 2-4:** Rookie/Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.
- 5-6:** Experienced/Well-trained unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover.
- 7-9:** Experienced unit. **D6: 1:** Poor Cover. **2-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in one zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range if Outbound.)
- 10-12:** Veteran unit (Table M-4 DR +1, Initial). **D6: 1-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (and Poor Cover, Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive, in one zone past the maximum Fighter Cover Range if Outbound.)

### **August 1944 to May 1945:**

The P-51 phased out the Jug and the Lightning as the long-range escort.

**Roll D6** for cover once per mission (P-51s Zone 2 to Target and back):

- 1:** Rookie/Inexperienced unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-5:** Fair Cover. **6:** Good Cover.
- 2-3:** Experienced/Well-trained unit. **D6: 1-2:** Poor Cover. **3-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover.
- 4-5:** Experienced unit. **D6: 1-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover (Table M-4 +1, Initial).
- 6:** Veteran unit (Table M-4 +1, Initial and Successive). **D6: 1-4:** Fair Cover. **5-6:** Good Cover.

Fighter Cover when Out of Formation:

If Good Cover, then Fighter Cover will be Fair. If Fair Cover, roll D6: 1-2: No cover. 3-4: Poor Cover. 5-6: Fair Cover.

**Fighter Cover when two turns per zone:**

If Good Cover, roll D6 (If Fair, DR -1): 1-4: No cover. 5-6: Poor Cover. If Poor, no fighter cover provided.

**Fighter Cover and Table B-1 and B-2:**

FIGHTER COVER	TABLE B-1 AND B-2
Good	-1
Fair and Poor	+0
No Fighter Cover	+1

**The YB-40:**

In May to August 1943 on missions with targets in Zone 2-6, and – if the Player wishes - on longer missions, but without the YB-40 after Zone 6, the YB-40 can provide some cover.

It was used by the 92<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group. The first mission was on May 29, to St. Nazaire, and the last on July 29, to Kiel.



**YB-40 Escort (D6):**

**1-3:** No YB-40 provided.

**4-5:** Squadron has one YB-40 (Table M-4, Poor Fighter Cover.)

**6:** Squadron has at least two YB-40s (Table M-4, Poor Fighter Cover, +1 DR).

Roll on Table M-4, Poor Fighter Cover, Initial and Successive attacks, after normal Fighter Cover has been resolved.

For missions in Zone 2-6 the YB-40 stays with the formation to the Target. On the return trip in each zone after the Target Zone the YB-40 is no longer with the formation. It was too heavy and too slow to keep up with the bombers. OPTIONAL: Spend two turns in each zone on the way back to receive the protection of the YB-40.

For the *B-17: QOTS* YB-40 Variant:

<http://www.33rdinfantrydivision.org/b17/Modifications/yb40.htm>

**B-17G SPECIAL RULE:** German fighters were sometimes careful when attacking a B-17G flying alone out of formation due to the resemblance of the YB-40 with the chin turret. In September and October 1943 when flying a G-model out of formation Table B-1 and B-2 is -1.

**The Strategic Movement Map Board:**

The Fighter Cover Range is based on the original Map Board. If you are using the map by Tom Cundiff or the B-26 map Maximum Range is +1 zone.

### ***Interesting Links:***

4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.fourthfightergroup.com/resource/4th.html>  
<http://www.web-birds.com/8th/4/4th.htm>

20<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Quarters/6940/20thfg.html>  
<http://usaaf.com/8thaf/fighter/20fg.HTM>

31<sup>st</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.31stfightergroup.com/31stReference/Reference.html>

55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.55th.org/>  
<http://www.web-birds.com/8th/55/55th.htm>  
<http://www.web-birds.com/8th/20/20th.htm>  
<http://www.museum119.cz/55thfg.htm>

56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.boxted-airfield.com/56th.htm>  
<http://www.langham.org.uk/Airfield/Airfield56FighterGroup.htm>

78<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.web-birds.com/8th/78/78th.htm>  
<http://www.78thfightergroup.com/>  
<http://usaaf.com/8thaf/fighter/78fg.HTM>

354<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group:

<http://www.354th.com/>  
<http://www.acepilots.com/eto/eagleston.html>  
<http://www.homestead.com/354thfightergroup/>

P-38 Lightning:

<http://www.hlswilliwaw.com/aleutians/Aircraft/html/p-38.htm>  
<http://www.vectorsite.net/avp38.html>  
<http://home.att.net/~ww2aviation/P-38.html>  
[http://home.att.net/~jbaugher1/p38\\_17.html](http://home.att.net/~jbaugher1/p38_17.html)

P-47 Thunderbolt:

<http://www.p47pilots.com/>  
<http://rwebs.net/avhistory/history/p-47.htm>  
<http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/research/p47.htm>  
<http://www.warbirdalley.com/p47.htm>  
<http://www.vectorsite.net/avp47.html>

P-51 Mustang:

<http://www.sproe.com/p/p51-mustang.html>  
<http://www.mustangsmustangs.net/p-51/p51.shtml>  
[http://home.att.net/%7ejbaugher1/p51\\_10.html](http://home.att.net/%7ejbaugher1/p51_10.html)

YB-40:

[http://home.att.net/~jbaugher2/b17\\_12.html](http://home.att.net/~jbaugher2/b17_12.html)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YB-40\\_Flying\\_Fortress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YB-40_Flying_Fortress)

<http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/research/bombers/b3-89.htm>

[http://www.b17flyingfortress.de/english/index.php?id=other\\_versions.htm](http://www.b17flyingfortress.de/english/index.php?id=other_versions.htm)

B-17:

[http://home.att.net/~jbaugher2/b17\\_16.html](http://home.att.net/~jbaugher2/b17_16.html)

<http://www.faqs.org/docs/air/avb17.html>

RAF vocabulary:

[http://www.associations.rafinfo.org.uk/code\\_names.htm](http://www.associations.rafinfo.org.uk/code_names.htm)

Little Friends:

<http://www.littlefriends.co.uk/>

Little Friends and Escort:

[http://www.web-birds.com/NCF/oct2001/oct\\_14th.htm](http://www.web-birds.com/NCF/oct2001/oct_14th.htm)

<http://rhinobytes.com/haze/escort.htm>

[http://www.microsoft.com/games/combatfs1/articles\\_8.htm](http://www.microsoft.com/games/combatfs1/articles_8.htm)

<http://www.geocities.com/bigassbird17/friends-foes.html>

<http://logicalthinker2.tripod.com/BomberEscort.html>

## **ALSO AVAILABLE FROM MYK646**

### **YB-40 Historical Campaign Part I and II**

Part I is a detailed campaign for YB-40 based on the real missions. Part II includes new YB-40 Damage Tables, Table M-1 and M-3, several new tables and new targets and gazetteer, based on the period between May and August 1943.

### **58<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing – B-29s in the CBI Theater**

A new B-29 SUPERFORTRESS variant. Fly missions from India, China and Ceylon. The campaign spans from April 1944 when the first B-29s landed in India and ends in March 1945.

### **The Tuskegee Airmen - 332<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Group**

Fighter Cover in the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, based on the African-American Fighter Unit. They never lost a bomber they were escorting.

*There are several projects under construction.*