



# Capturing the Crossing



“**Capturing the Crossing**” refers to a World War II battle during the Normandy campaign, focused on securing a key **bridge over the Odon River** in **late June to early July 1944**.

## Brief Summary:

- **Context:**

Part of **Operation Epsom**, launched by British forces to outflank Caen and push westward. The Odon River valley was a natural defensive barrier held by the Germans.

- **The Battle:**

British units fought to **capture and hold the bridge crossings over the Odon River**. German SS Panzer divisions mounted fierce counterattacks to repel the advance and regain control.



- **Tactics:**

The British used coordinated infantry, armor, and artillery to secure the crossings under heavy fire and poor weather conditions. Engineers rushed to reinforce and repair bridges under fire.

- **Outcome:**

British forces **successfully captured and held key crossings**, enabling a bridgehead south of the Odon. However, they faced continued German resistance and did not achieve a full breakthrough.

- **Significance:**

The battle was part of the slow Allied grind toward Caen, tying down German armor and paving the way for later operations like **Goodwood** and **Cobra**.

#### General Howitzer's Summary:

"Boys, let me tell you about the push across the Odon in the summer of '44. It was part of Operation Epsom, the British aiming to **outflank Caen and punch westward**. The Odon River valley was no picnic—it was a natural fortress that the Germans, including those damn SS Panzer divisions, were ready to die defending.

The British didn't flinch—they threw in everything they had: **infantry, tanks, artillery, and those hard-as-nails engineers**. They fought like devils in the mud and the rain, grabbing those bridge crossings under heavy fire and refusing to let go.

The Germans counterattacked like rabid dogs, but the British held firm. They didn't smash through to Caen, but they sure as hell got a **bridgehead south of the Odon**, and that put Jerry on the back foot. That bridgehead was the key to bigger things—Goodwood and Cobra wouldn't have happened without it.

So remember, men: **sometimes it ain't about the breakthrough—it's about digging in, holding on, and bleeding the enemy dry!**"



**Card Balance:**

Allies - 6

Axis - 5

**Complexity: 3**

**Conditions:**

Countryside



**Context:**

Historical

**Location:**

France

**Year:**

**1944**



**Theater:**

Western Front

**Campaign:**

The Battle for Caen

**Codename:**

Operation Epsom

**Summary:**

**Objectives:**

6 VP's, and a territorial objective medal for the Allies

**Terrain:**

Countryside with forests, hills, some villages and the Odon River.

**Troops:**

Allies – 9 Infantry, 5 Armor, 1 Artillery

Axis – 8 Infantry, 4 Armor, 1 Artillery



**Allied Strategy:**

1. Your left flank is strong. Your right flank is weak. The center section is more balanced. You have a bit more firepower, but the enemy has well protected Infantry in hedgerows.



You will need to take up secure positions in the woods facing the enemy and begin to degrade their defensive positions before you launch a frontal attack.

2. Your artillery in the left corner should be moved forward into the nearby town to increase its effectiveness.
3. Be aware that an armor battle from your position at L3 to j6 is likely to be lost due to the fact that the enemy Armor is sandbagged. You will need to bring in your additional Armor at i2 into the fray to even out the battle.



### **Axis Strategy:**

1. The Odon River presents a mobility challenge for the armor units behind it, forcing them to angle to the left flank or cross the bridge before they can engage the enemy in the center or right flanks. You will need to get them mobile as soon as you can.
2. The enemy has you at a disadvantage with slightly more Infantry and Armor, and one additional card, thus increasing their responsiveness. You will need to compensate with strategic care and precision, and not waste resources on ill-conceived attacks.
3. Your right flank is weak. Your left flank is strong. The center section is a little more balanced. Allies have a bit more firepower, but your sandbagged infantry will be hard to dislodge.

## **7**

### **BR - Capturing the Crossing**

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