
DIVISIÓN
AZUL
MEMOIR '44

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OVERVIEW

ESTABLISHMENT

División Azúl was a unit of volunteers from Francoist Spain operating from 1941 to 1943 within the German Army on the Eastern Front during WW2.

Francisco Franco's right wing Nationalists had secured power in Spain over the left wing Republicans after the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). More than 300,000 people were killed, and lasting damage was done to the country's economy. Franco had been supported by the National Socialist Party of Germany and the Italian Socialist Party of Italy during the Civil War, while the republicans had been supported by his Russian enemies.

Franco sympathised with many aspects of fascist ideology, especially its anti-communism yet he ensured that Spain was neutral at the start of WW2. He seriously contemplated joining the conflict as a German ally in the aftermath of the Fall of France in 1940. He met Adolf Hitler on October 23-24 1940 at Hendaye but was unable to gain promises that Spain would gain colonial territories from France in North Africa. Hitler feared delegitimizing the new Vichy Regime in France. Ultimately, Spain remained neutral.

Franco, while appreciative of German and Italian military and financial aid during the civil war, knew that a full Spanish commitment to the war would mean cutting necessary British aid that was needed to rebuild the country. Once Germany initiated Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941, Spanish foreign minister Ramón Serrano Suñer immediately began the establishment of División Azúl.



On their departure, División Azúl volunteers were often cheered by crowds and treated to farewell parties. After the war, they were a source of embarrassment for Franco's administration, the sole surviving fascist government in Europe.

TIMELINE

División Azúl

On July 13 1941 the first train left Madrid for Grafenwöhr, Bavaria for training and taking the Hitler Oath. At the conclusion of which División Azúl was formally incorporated into the German Wehrmacht as the...

250th Infantry Division

They began their long march to the front and were assigned to von Kluge's...

4th Army in Army Group Centre

After discipline problems in September 1941 they were ordered to join the...

16th Army in Army Group North

División Azúl dissolved in Late 1943

Legión Azul – Winter of 1943/44

Initially attached to the 121st Infantry Division, Legión Azul was a volunteer legion created from 2,133 falangist volunteers who remained behind on the Eastern Front after División Azúl withdrew in October 1943.

Legión Azul existed for 4 months, being ordered back to Spain on March 3 1944.

The various Spanish volunteers who remained on the Eastern Front integrated into different German units such as the 3rd Mountain Division and the 357th Infantry Division. A further 2 companies of Spaniards were sent to the Brandenburg unit for anti-Partisan action in Yugoslavia. One of these Brandenburg companies was sent in September 1944 to Austria, where it became the

101st SS Spanish Volunteer Company The 101st Company was initially attached to...

28th Waffen SS Division (Wallonien) and saw heavy action in Pomerania.

Ultimately, the 101st was attached to the...

11th SS Division Nordland and fought under Miguel Ezquerra, to defend Berlin against an overwhelming Russian assault from April-May 1945.

They fought in and around the central government district of Berlin (Zitadelle sector), which included the Reich Chancellery and the Reichstag, being among the last defenders of the Führerbunker.



RECRUITMENT

Recruitment began on June 27 1941 and 18,373 men had volunteered by July 2 1941 from within the Spanish Army and Falangist movement.

50% of officers and NCOs were professional soldiers given leave from the Spanish Army, including many veterans of the Spanish Civil War.

The division was made up mainly of Falangist volunteers and almost a fifth of early volunteers were students. General Muñoz Grandes was assigned to lead the volunteers.

ORGANIZATION & TRAINING

On July 13 1941 the first train left Madrid for Grafenwöhr, Bavaria for weeks of training. After taking the Hitler Oath, División Azúl was formally incorporated into the German Wehrmacht as the 250th Infantry Division.

"Do you swear before God and your honor as Spaniards absolute obedience to Adolf Hitler, leader of the German army, in the fight against communism and do you swear to fight as brave soldiers ready to give your lives at any moment to obey this oath?"

Initially, they were divided into 4 infantry regiments, as in a standard Spanish division. To aid their integration into the German supply system, they adopted the standard German model of 3 regiments named after the 3 Spanish cities that the volunteers were from—Madrid, Valencia and Seville.



División Azúl soldiers manning a gun during training in 1941

Early on problems emerged. Some were simple such as the different dietary preferences of the Spanish soldiers. Others problems were cultural, with the Germans having disdain for what was seen as ill discipline in the Spanish troops. The Spanish, in turn, resented the methodical German approach to combat.

"They regard a rifle as an instrument that should not be cleaned under any pretext." (Adolf Hitler)

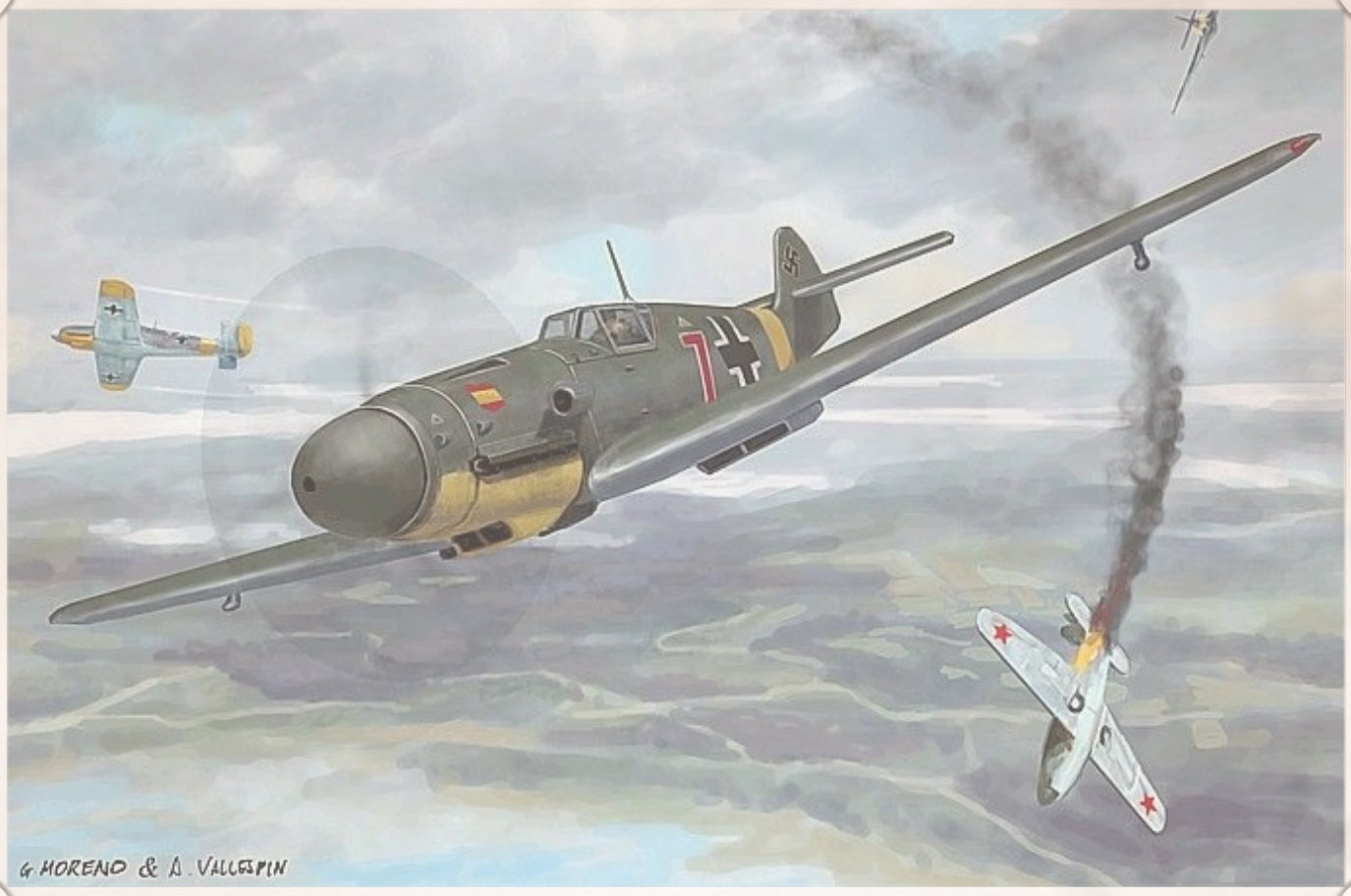


The Escuadrilla Azul was a generic name given to the group of volunteer pilots and ground crews recruited from the Spanish Air Force that fought alongside Germany on the Eastern Front, during WW2.

Between September 1941 and May 1943 5 Spanish squadrons rotated through the Eastern Front, attached to Luftwaffe fighter wings Jagdgeschwader 27 and Jagdgeschwader 51.

Flying Messerschmitt fighters and Focke-Wulf Fighter-Bombers, the Spaniards were credited with destroying more than 160 Russian aircraft in nearly 2 years, while losing 20 pilots killed, missing, or captured. The unit remained in central Russia, despite requests by Muñoz Grandes that they be attached to División Azúl, until their withdrawal in 1943.




G. MORENO & A. VALLESPIN


7

UNIFORM



Because the soldiers could not use official Spanish Army uniforms, they adopted a uniform comprising the red berets of the Carlists, the Khaki trousers of the Spanish Legion, and the blue shirts of the Falangists —hence the nickname Blue Division. (División Azúl)

When División Azúl left for Germany, to be trained in Grafenwöhr, they did so wearing these Spanish Army uniforms. When they started training they grudgingly wore the German Army field grey uniform (Feldgrau) with a shield on the upper right sleeve bearing the word "España" and the Nationalist Spanish national colors. They were only permitted to keep their blue falangist shirts.

OUTCOME



División Azúl members proved to be brutal, ruthless soldiers, as Munoz-Grandes' vaunted "Bridegrooms of Death".

"Where does the road lead?" the men asked themselves, and would provide their own answer...

"To glory!"

When the Russians retreated, the guripas would taunt them... "Send in another bull!"

"Otro toro! Otro toro!"

Hitler described División Azúl as...

"Equal to the best German ones".

"...the Spaniards have never yielded an inch of ground. One can't imagine more fearless fellows. They scarcely take cover. They flout death. I know, in any case, that our men are always glad to have Spaniards as neighbours in their sector."

FALANGISM



A political ideology of 3 Spanish political parties that were collectively known as the Falange.

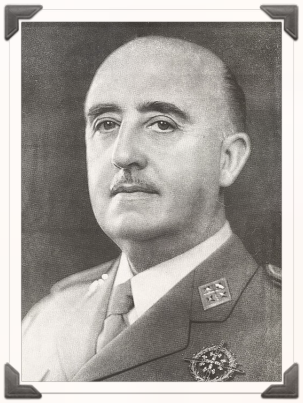
Falangism combined Spanish nationalism, authoritarianism, Catholic traditionalism, and anti-communism, along with a call for national syndicalism.

At this time, falangists were the Spanish equivalent of German Nazi Sturmtruppen or the Italian Fascist Black Shirt regiments.

However, Falangism has a mixed relationship with fascism; historians such as Stanley Payne, a scholar on fascism, consider the Falange to have been a fascist movement initially, before transforming into an authoritarian conservative political movement in Francoist Spain.

Falangists generally supported General Francisco Franco's Nationalist regime in Spain, which was aligned with Nazi Germany.

Francisco Franco (1892–1975) was a Spanish military leader and the dictator who ruled Spain from 1939 until his death. Born in Ferrol, Galicia, Franco entered the Spanish army at a young age, where he quickly rose through the ranks. His military career took a pivotal turn during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), when he led the Nationalist faction against the Republicans. After the Nationalists' victory, Franco established a totalitarian regime marked by military rule, repression, and strong nationalist rhetoric.



Franco's rule saw the suppression of regional autonomy, particularly in the Basque Country and Catalonia, and the repression of non-Castilian languages. Despite his initial alignment with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, he maintained a neutral stance during WW2, which helped Spain avoid direct involvement in the conflict. Franco's regime was characterized by censorship, the lack of political freedoms, and the cult of personality that portrayed him as Spain's savior.

Franco ruled as Caudillo (leader) and implemented policies that sought to modernize Spain's economy while maintaining strict control over social and cultural life. He also enjoyed a close relationship with the Catholic Church, using it as a tool to legitimize his rule.

Raza : A Peculiar Relic From 1942

One of the stranger items that Francisco Franco left behind is a film he scripted under a pseudonym in 1942 called Raza (Race).



It's an allegory depicting Spain as a family torn apart by war but eventually reunited through the acts of a chosen son. As a propaganda film shaped by Franco, it contains accidental depths: it reflects his intent, and betrays his vanities. It is his autobiography.

Franco kept an eagle eye on its production. While it was being shot, every day a driver would arrive with precise instructions as to how the sequences should be. The film was also backed generously by the state, with 1,650,000 pesetas – a fortune at the time. That was, in part, spent on dozens of sets and costumes, as well as hundreds of extras and almost 45,000 metres of film, only one in 15 of which were used.

Once the shooting was finished, Franco had a private viewing. Then director Saénz de Heredia recalled...

"We watched it together, Franco and I at the front, his wife and the others behind; out of the corner of my eye, under the light from the screen, I saw he was moved, and that his eyes were moist and attentive, which made me happy, because it meant it had gone well. "



Yet Franco's satisfaction was short-lived. He had started rewriting history to suit his needs — and, in time, his needs changed. By the end of the decade the fascists had lost WW2, and Franco's version of the civil war had to be rewritten to legitimise his power.

So on July 3 1950 Franco censored his own film and destroyed every original copy he could find. The title became Espíritu de una Raza (Spirit of a Race) and it had 6 minutes of footage erased. All fascist salutes were cut out. The enemy went from being republicans, masons, bourgeoisie and politicians to simply communists. And the jabs at the US were removed — they were becoming Spain's allies. Now, Raza was compatible with the new political contours of the Cold War.

RUSIA 1942



DIVISION AZUL

Eastern Front

After completing their training División Azúl was assigned to Army Group Center, the force advancing towards Moscow. The division was transported by train to Suwalki in **Poland** on August 28 1941, from there it had to continue on foot - a grueling 560 mile march. The soldiers walked about 25 miles per day on roads that were periodically scattered with landmines and partisan fighters opportunistically attacking them. It was scheduled to travel through Grodno, and Lida in **Belarus**, Vilnius in **Lithuania**, and Maladzyechna, Minsk, Orsha in **Belarus**, before arriving in **Russia** - specifically Smolensk, followed by the Moscow front.

Problems with discipline continued, and the División Azúl was regularly paraded and marched by the Germans who were keen to instill discipline - but this led to tension and rebellion.

Additional quotes that can not be attributed to an individual include...

"Gas mask containers are used as coffee pots."

"Dust and driver glasses are cut from gas masks."

"The German authorities were so concerned about fraternization that they authorized the guripas (Spanish soldiers) to patronize Wehrmacht brothels. Condoms were issued. Rumors that anti-erotic pills had also been distributed to the 250th Division abounded. Indignant at the order, the guripas retaliated by marching before German officers with inflated condoms flying from the muzzles of their rifles."

"Some Russians who observed the condom incident reported it as possible use of poison gas balloons."

On the road to Minsk the Germans had had a guts full of the Spaniards. While en route División Azúl had refused to give right of way to some members of von Kluge's staff. Furious, Von Kluge, rerouted the Spaniards to Army Group North (the force closing in on Leningrad), on September 21 1941. They then became a part of the German 16th Army.



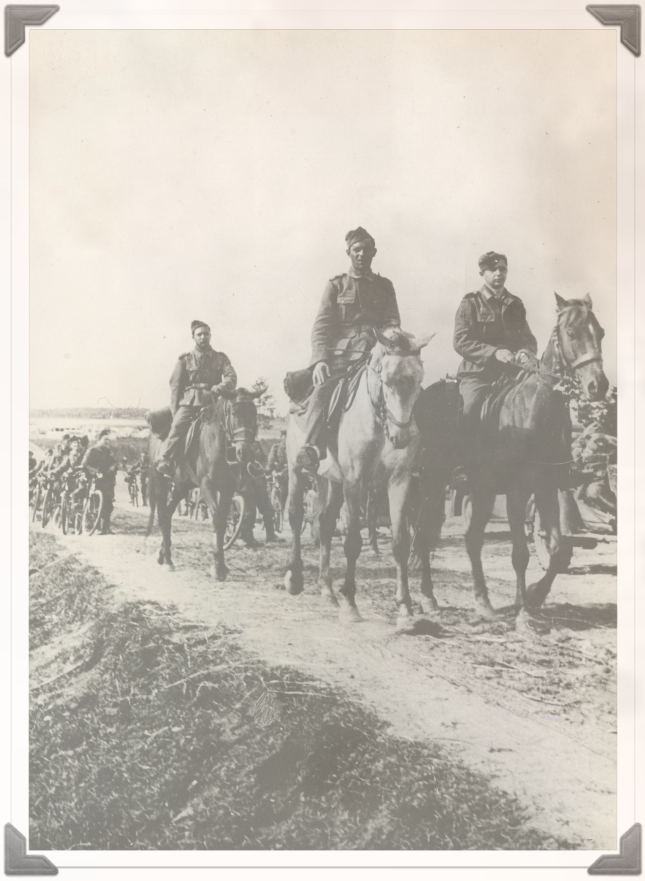
HORSES AND BICYCLES

German, Russian and Spanish troops relied heavily on work horses to pull artillery and supplies. Horses seemed to be a cheap and reliable transport especially in the spring and fall mud of the Eastern Front but the associated costs of daily feeding, grooming and handling horses were staggering.

In theory horse units could feed off the country, but grazing on grass alone rendered horses unfit for work and the troops had no time to spend searching the villages for fodder. Hard-working horses required up to twelve pounds of grain daily; fodder carried by the troops made up a major portion of their supply trains.

Good stables around the front line were scarce; makeshift lodgings invariably caused premature wear and disease.

"Spanish view grooming horses as a bother and feeding them unessasary. Belts and suspenders are cut from the horses harnesses."



Like the German military, División Azúl depended on horses for transportation. Tens of thousands of horses would die on the Eastern Front, severely hampering the Axis forces.

The Spanish soldiers who had expected to form part of the bicycle battalions had brought their own from home. Typically these were fast, sturdy and comfortable bikes. These were used by both messengers and fast moving infantry combat units.

These bicycles were taken away and replaced with big, bulky german bikes. This caused considerable distress for the Spaniards, who were often too small in stature to ride them.

"Rifles are often sold. New bicycles are thrown away as they find tire repair too boring. The MG- 34 is often assembled with the help of a hammer. Parts left over during assembly are buried." (German Liaison Officer to the Spanish Division's report to Field Marshal Fedor von Bock)



OCTOBER 1941 - AUGUST 1942

División Azúl were first deployed in the northern area of the Eastern Front, on the Volkhov Front (October 1941-August 1942) with its headquarters in Grigorovo, on the outskirts of Novgorod. They were in charge of a 31 mile section of the front north and south of Novgorod, along the banks of the Volkhov River and Lake Ilmen.

"In winter, food had to be sliced with axes and temperatures of -12°C were considered mild weather."

The Russian winter of 1941-1942 hit with terrible ferocity. Battling the deadly, numbing cold as well as the massive numbers of Red Army troops were soldiers from sunny Spain. Yet the men, who were more accustomed to sipping sangria on a Mediterranean beach than trying to survive in a white, sub-zero arctic hell, were giving as good as they got.

"A shortage of winter clothing forced they Spaniards to share 1 overcoat between several men. By Christmas, 700 men had been disabled by frostbite."



Soldiers of División Azúl kitted out with skis near the Volkhov in 1942.



Soldiers of the 250th Infantry Division in a group photo with soldiers from the 6th SS Gebrigs Div. Nord, on the Volkhov front in 1942.

AUGUST 1942 - OCTOBER 1943

In August 1942, División Azúl was transferred north to the southeastern flank of the siege of Leningrad, just south of the Neva River near Pushkin, Kolpino, and Krasny Bor in the Izhora River area. After the collapse of the German southern front following the Battle of Stalingrad, more German troops were deployed southwards.

División Azúl faced a major Russian attempt to break the siege of Leningrad in February 1943, when the 55th Army, reinvigorated after the victory at Stalingrad, attacked the Spanish positions at the Battle of Krasny Bor, near the main Moscow-Leningrad road. The battle raged all day and night, with requested German reinforcements not arriving until the hours of very early morning.

Despite heavy casualties, the Spaniards were able to hold their ground against a Russian force seven times larger and supported by tanks. The assault was contained and the siege of Leningrad was maintained for a further year. The division remained on the Leningrad front where it continued to suffer heavy casualties due to weather and to enemy action.

División Azúl was the only component of the German Army to be awarded a medal of its own, commissioned by Hitler in January 1944 after the Division had demonstrated its effectiveness by impeding the advance of the Red Army.



Soldiers of División Azúl march through a route near the village of Krasny Bor, Leningrad Region, January–February 1943.



Field defences in January 1943

DISBANDMENT AND THE LEGIÓN AZUL

Eventually, the Allies and many Spaniards began to press Franco to withdraw troops from the quasi alliance with Germany.

Franco initiated negotiations in the spring of 1943 and gave an order to withdraw on October 10 1943. Some Spanish volunteers refused to return. On November 3 1943 the Spanish government ordered all troops to return to Spain. In the end, the total of "non-returners" was close to 3,000 men, mostly Falangists.

Spaniards initially remained part of the 121st Infantry Division, but even this meagre force was ordered to return home in and were transported back to Spain on March 21 1944.

The rest of the volunteers were absorbed into German units. Platoons of Spaniards served in the 3rd Mountain Division and the 357th Infantry Division. One unit was sent to Latvia. Two companies joined the Brandenburger Regiment and German 121st Division in Nazi Security Warfare in Yugoslavia. The 101st Company (Spanische-Freiwilligen Kompanie der SS 101, "Spanish Volunteer Company of the SS Number 101") of 140 men, made up of four rifle platoons and one staff platoon, was attached to 28th SS Volunteer Grenadier Division Wallonien.

Through rotation, as many as 45,000 Spanish soldiers served on the Eastern Front. The casualties of División Azúl and its successors included 4,954 men killed and 8,700 wounded. Another 372 members of División Azúl, Legión Azul, or volunteers of the Spanische-Freiwilligen Kompanie der SS 101 were taken prisoner by the Red Army; 286 of these men remained in captivity until April 2 1954, when they returned to Spain aboard the ship Semiramis, supplied by the International Red Cross. In action against the Red Army, División Azúl suffered 22,700 casualties, while inflicting 49,300 casualties.





"Bridegrooms of Death" La Legión - The Spanish Legion

La Legión, a fearsome elite military unit - with a hefty dose of Latin flair.

Officially, La Legión did not participate in the División Azúl but there is evidence that individual legionarios did volunteer on their own - but they did so unofficially.

Meanwhile, at least 40,000 volunteers, many of themselves legionarios, fought in the 250th Division aka Division Azul, with the German armor in the Soviet Union. (Military History, February 2003, Page 40)

One thing that can cause confusion is that División Azúl adopted La Legión's nickname "Bridegrooms of Death". Muñoz-Grandes, División Azúl's commander, began using the name no doubt aware of the evocative imagery associated with it.

Born in 1920, amid Spain's brutal colonial campaigns in North Africa, La Legión was modeled after the French Foreign Legion. They developed a ferocious identity all of their own. Though called the Tercio de Extranjeros (Tercio of Foreigners), it was mostly composed of Spaniards. A rough bunch of guys seeking adventure or just a place for misfits with a violent streak.

Discipline was ironclad, but their mannerisms were theatrical and intense. They spoke in reverent tones about death, honor, and brotherhood. To die for the Legion was not a tragedy—it was a triumph.

Legionarios would into battle with their sleeves rolled high and shirts unbuttoned. Their chests puffed with pride, they would pace faster than any other unit in the Spanish military. They did not march - they stormed. With their eyes bulging and singing their haunting anthem, "El Novio de la Muerte"—"The Bridegroom of Death."



UNIFORM FEATURES OF LA LEGIÓN

1. Cap

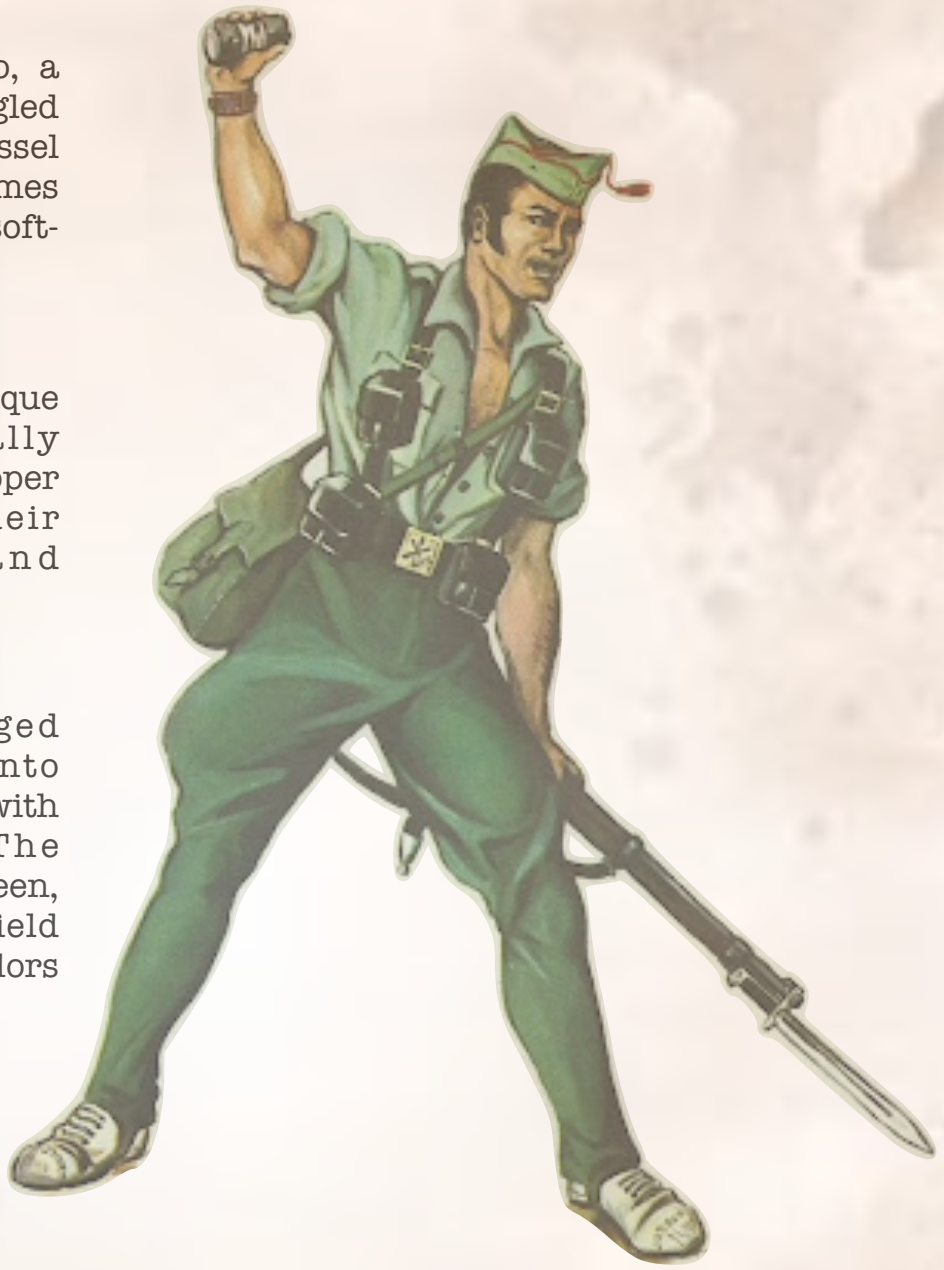
- The iconic gorrillo legionario, a side cap with a sharply angled peak and a distinctive red tassel hanging from the top. Sometimes they wore a chambergo (a soft-brimmed bush hat)

2. Open-Chested Shirt

- The Legionnaires wore a unique light green shirt, usually unbuttoned, exposing the upper torso, contributed to their romanticized image and projected bravado.

3. Trousers and Gaiters

- They wore straight-legged trousers, often tucked into canvas gaiters or puttees, with sturdy leather boots. The trousers were also light green, matching the shirt, but field conditions often made the colors appear faded and worn.



4. Belt and Equipment

- A broad leather belt housed ammunition pouches, a bayonet, and personal items.
- Officers carried ceremonial sabers or pistols in addition to their rifles.

5. Decorations and Insignia

- Legionnaires wore distinctive badges and patches, including the emblem of crossed rifles, halberds and crossbows - symbols of their warrior ethos.
- Medals and religious symbols like crucifixes were common, reflecting both nationalism and mysticism.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Agustín Muñoz Grandes



Born in 1896, Grandes was a Spanish general, politician, vice-president of the Spanish Government and minister with Francisco Franco. He was also known as the commander of División Azúl between 1941 and 1942.

A fierce supporter of the Nazi German government for its effectiveness in governing the industrial and economic sphere, Muñoz Grandes was appointed the commanding officer of the 250th Infantry Division.

"I am prepared to stake everything, even my self, for friendship with Germany. My driving force is hatred for Britain, which has oppressed my country for centuries" (Said Muñoz-Grandes to Hitler as he declared that he wanted to take over the government of Spain. Hitler, unsurprisingly, encouraged him.)

Muñoz-Grandes praised his troops grandly and often...

"Hard is the enemy and harder the Russian winter - even harder are my men. You are the pride of our race. Trust in God and attack like Spaniards!"

A charismatic leader, he rarely wore his medals; instead, he daringly wore a yellow scarf around his neck, in a display of style that flaunted German uniform regulations.

On December 12 1942, he handed command over to General Emilio Esteban Infantes; and was awarded the Knight's Cross award, with Oak Leaves personally added by Adolf Hitler.

Hitler told Munoz-Grandes that División Azúl were...

"Equal to the best German divisions." and that he considered the Spaniards, to be the **"only virile"** people of the Latin races, a pointed barb at the Fascist Italians.

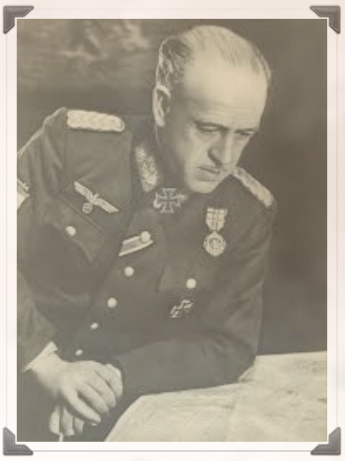
"The Spaniards have done all that we ask of our own soldiers. They and their general know the meaning of loyalty and bravery unto death." (Hitler speaking at the German Reichstag in Berlin's Kroll Opera House on April 26 1942)

"A magnificent soldier–and incidentally a man of great charm." (English volunteer in the Spanish Civil War)

"One of their best and most resolute generals." (British Military Intelligence)

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Emilio Esteban Infante



In December 1942, Esteban Infantes formally took command of División Azúl. He faced a difficult situation replacing the legendary commander Muñoz Grandes. Despite being popular with his soldiers, Muñoz Grandes behavior exhibited too much of a "pro-German slant" for Franco who was preoccupied with the general direction and possible outcome of the war.

Franco viewed Esteban Infantes as a more moderate and diplomatic option compared to the more controversial Muñoz Grandes.

The German generals also initially considered him to be too much of an Anglophile in his outlook but Esteban Infantes soon won their respect as he began to demonstrate his considerable skill as a great military planner especially in the counter-offensive situations that developed on the Eastern Front during 1943.

Esteban Infantes faced a major Russian attempt to break the siege of Leningrad in February 1943, when the 55th Soviet Army, reinvigorated after their victory at Stalingrad, attacked the Spanish positions at the Battle of Krasny Bor.



Miguel Ezquerra

Gonzalo Miguel Ezquerra Sánchez was a Spanish Falangist, soldier and member of the Waffen-SS.

At the outbreak of WW2, he visited the German embassy in Madrid, offering to enlist in the German forces. His enthusiasm was noted, but tactfully declined. Later when Spain sent volunteers to assist the Germans on the Eastern front, he enrolled in División Azúl and participated in the Battle of Krasny Bor.

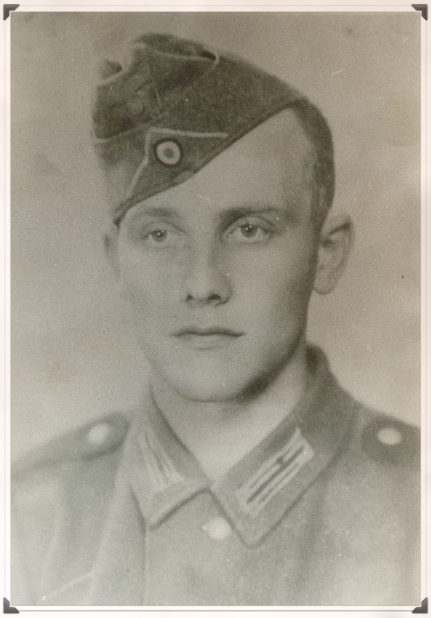
When División Azúl was repatriated back to Spain, he was determined to continue to fight. He secretly crossed the French border in April 1944 to enlist in the Wehrmacht and was eventually transferred into the Waffen-SS. As part of the 11th SS Panzergrenadier Division Nordland, Ezquerra fought to defend the town of Stettin on the Oder River.

From April-May 1945, Ezquerra was in Berlin leading 3 companies of Spanish volunteers defending the city. Ezquerra had linked up with remnants of the Charlemagne Division and Volkssturm and fought in the central Reichstag district, being among the last defenders of the bunker of Adolf Hitler.



HEROES OF DIVISION AZUL

Corporal Antonio Ponte Anido



Anido enlisted in División Azúl in 1942 to fulfill the requirements of his compulsory military service. He belonged to the third company of Engineers, under the orders of Captain of Engineers D. José Luis Aramburu Topete.

A Spanish engineer corporal, Antonio Ponte Anido (depicted in the centre foreground below), was awarded the San Fernando Cross for his bravery at Krasny Bor.



His company was guarding a position in the Krasny Bor sector, when a Russian T-34 tank burst through the lines they were defending.

Witnessing the tank direct its fire towards an improvised relief post/field hospital.

He took a German M-42 counter-tank mine and amidst a deluge of cross-fire ran toward the tank. Running lines that enabled him to remain within the tank crew's blind spots.





He managed to insert the mine between the chain and the running gear resulting in a tremendous explosion explosion that cost him his life.

HEROES OF DIVISION AZUL

Captain Manuel Ruiz de Huidobro Alzurena



On February 10 1943, Huidobro was stationed on the Leningrad front. His company (of 150 men) defended a 1.5 mile long front in the Krasny Bor sector.

Having turned down leave to visit his wife and newborn son, Huidobro had chosen to remain with his men in battle.

One of his officers raised the alarm - the sound of Russian tanks was emanating from a nearby forest. Simultaneously, an intense artillery bombardment was unleashed on the Spaniards.

Huidobro set up a 10 man anti-tank group as a mobile reserve. He then offered encouragement to his troops advising them to remain lying at the bottom of their trenches for the duration of the bombardment.

1. **The first attack was repelled, with a hail of rifle and automatic weapon fire.**
2. **A second attack, executed with greater intensity, was repelled in the same way.**
3. **Supported by flamethrowers, the Russians broke out from the edge of the forest.**

Huidobro then left the observatory and serenely, toured his posts checking developments. He took in some soldiers from a nearby company that had been overrun on the right flank of the position. He then doubled his effort to defensively organize the new front from an exposed position at the top of the trench. As Russian bullets whizzed passed him his men pleaded with him to protect himself...

"My captain, cover, they're gonna kill you!"

"This is nothing, guys! They will not pass, we are Spaniards!"

Eventually, two of his lieutenants Duque and Borquez, dragged him back into the relative safety of the trench.

As his position became increasingly overwhelmed his command tent was overrun. Huidobro went down emptying his pistol into a wall of stampeding Russian attackers. A bullet struck him in the throat killing him, Huidobro collapsed and lay on the ground with his arms crossed, uttering his last words...

"Hold the Position"

Huidobro was granted the Laureate Cross of San Fernando November 16 1945.



Death on the Volkhov River

ORIGINAL TITLE : Death on the Volkhov



Historical Background

Leningrad was being strangled and people were dying in the thousands. The Germans had been blockading the city since the first week of September 1941. However, the city was not entirely cut off, supplies were arriving via a rail line through the city of Volkhov.

"Although the Spanish troops were impressed by the quality of the arms with which the Germans equipped División Azúl, they soon came to appreciate that Russian weapons were often more reliable and hard-wearing. The PPSh submachine gun and the Degtaryev DP light machine gun were especially appreciated." (Ramiro Bujeiro)

To completely sever the city's lifeline, Hitler planned to send his forces across the Volkhov River and cut off all supply routes to Leningrad. The Red Army launched costly counterattacks across the Volkhov River inorder to keep the supply line to the city open.

Briefing

Axis [Germany/Spain] : 11 OT Command Cards (FIRST MOVE)
Allies [Russia] 11 OT Command Cards

Conditions of Victory

17 MEDALS

- The Valdai Hills (2 Hexes) are a Temporary Majority Medal Objective worth 2 medals for the Axis.
- Towns, Ruins or the Church on the German side of the Volkhov River are Temporary Medal Objectives for the Russians worth 2 medals each.
- Towns or Ruins on the Russian side of the Volkhov River are Temporary Medal Objectives for the Germans worth 2 medals each.

Setup order

1		x25
2		x16
3		x15
4		x9
5		x9
6		x6
7		x5
8		x3
9		x2
10		x1
11		x1
12		x2
13		x4
14		x6
15		x7
16		x7

Special Rules

- Infantry with the Spanish Republican badge are División Azúl (Troops2)
- Cavalry (Troops8)
- Half-Tracks(Troops18)
- All Infantry (Troops27) or Armor (Troops28) units with a battle star are supported units.
- Exit Markers (Actions23) are available to both sides. One medal for each unit that escapes on or between the exit markers of their opponent's baseline.
- Use (SWA1) + (SWA3) + (SWA8)

Optional Rules

OPTIONAL

Red Army Rules (Nations2)
Winter Combat Cards (Actions25)
Winter Weather (Actions26)
Rivers & Waterways (Terrain8) for the Volkhov River.
ONE Field General may opt to assign 2 units for 'On the Move' instead of initiative roll. See Page 5 of The Overlord Rule Book)

Infantry from either side may do the following in lieu of battling.

1. Lay a pontoon bridge across the river in an adjacent hex.
2. Destroy a pontoon bridge in an adjacent hex. (Enemy unit on pontoon bridge retreats 1 hex if bridge blown.)
3. Place sandbags in the hex they occupy.



REINFORCEMENTS

Before distributing cards to his/her Field Generals, the Commander-in-Chief must complete all of the following actions.

✦ Roll 2 dice

1 Infantry: 1 Regular Infantry Unit.
2 Infantry: 1 Infantry Unit (Early War SWA, Special Forces, or Engineer)
1 Armor: 1 Regular Armor Unit.
2 Armor: Special Forces Armor Unit (Troops2)
1 Infantry + 1 star: Supported Infantry (Troops27)
1 Armor +1 Star: Supported Armor (Troops28)
2 Stars: Mobile Artillery Unit (Troops14)

Any flags that were rolled allows the Commander-in-Chief to designate any unit(s) for 'On the Move' orders. The unit(s) cannot battle. He/ She may designate the reinforcement unit for On the Move.

✦Place units on any baseline hex of your own baseline.
Note: The Commander-in-Chief may pass up using the unit that was rolled.

✦ Pass out cards. Those reinforcement units not designated for On the Move may be ordered, move and battle. First row does not count as first movement point for these units.

A maximum of 7 units may be called as reinforcements. No limit as to which units are available.



Krasny-Bor
RUSIA
1943

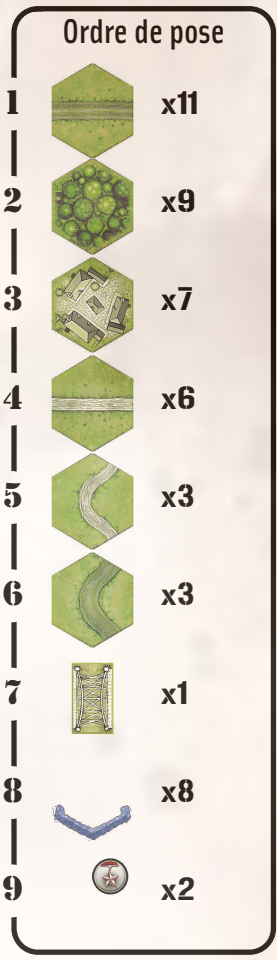


DIVISION AZUL

Krasny Bor I

ORIGINAL TITLE : Bataille De Krasny Bor - La Route Moscou-Leningrad





Historical Background

For the troops on the Leningrad front, the connection between Moscow and Leningrad was of vital importance. The 55th Army was driven to capture and control this strategic transport artery.

Warned by the Germans of the impending Russian assault at Krasny Bor, 20 miles east of Leningrad, a Spanish officer told his men...

"Tomorrow the bulls will run."

At Krasny Bor the Spanish suffered an onslaught from the Red Army on a scale that they had never experienced before. The early artillery bombardment was especially heavy, and they were outnumbered by the mass of infantry unleashed against them.

It was the Russian T-34s and KV-1s that finally broke through their lines. Almost all División Azúl's anti-tank guns were 37mm pieces - inadequate for the task of stopping the Russians armor.

The isolated Spanish units repelled the Red Army, but were eventually cut off from their rear lines when the Russians gained control of the Popovka Railway Station.

Surrounded, the Spanish units clung to the road between Leningrad and Moscow until being inevitably overrun by the stampeding Russians.

Briefing

Axis [Germany / Spain] : 5 Command Cards
Allies [Russia] : 5 Command Cards (FIRST MOVE)

Conditions of Victory

7 MEDALS

The city and the bridge are Temporary Medal Objectives for the Allies.

Special Rules

- Red Army Rules (Nations2)
- The artillery unit protected by sandbags has only 1 figure.
- The bombing caused the snow to melt. This made the terrain a terrible slushy bog in which Russian tanks can only move 2 hexes.

"Where snow has lain, the fierce heat had laid bear the scarred grass. A moment later the grass and topsoil also vanished. A landscape like the mountains of the moon was created."



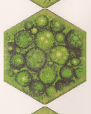
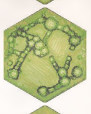
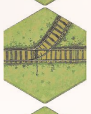
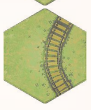
"An absolute inferno."

Krasny Bor II

ORIGINAL TITLE : Bataille De Krasny Bor



Ordre de pose

1		x10
2		x10
3		x8
4		x6
5		x1
6		x1
7		x1
8		x1
9		x1
10		x6
11		x3

Historical Background

The Russians launched Operation Polyarnaya Zvezda, to encircle the 18th German Army by advancing northwest of the front towards Louga and the Gulf of Finland.

In Krasny Bor, a company of the 250th Infantry Division that occupied the Popovka Railway Station, repelled several infantry attacks as well as 3 armored attacks. The 250th Infantry Division managed to hold out until 12.00, then the survivors made a break for the city.

"Almost 100 Russian tanks and thousands of soldiers charged. The Spaniards called artillery fire down on themselves as they were being overrun. Members of the HQ staff armed themselves, charged singing the Falangist anthem "Face the Sun" and were wiped out. Russian tanks fired point-blank into the clearly marked field hospital and at fleeing ambulances until driven back with Molotov cocktails."

Spanish artillery, engineering troops were attacked by infantry and Russian armoured vehicles that opened fire on a hospital and fleeing ambulances. They were finally repelled by Spanish troops, armed with Molotov cocktails and hand grenades. At 12.00, the 63rd Guard Infantry Division signalled the capture of Krasny Bor. However, the southern half of the city was still controlled by the Spanish.

Historical Background (Continued)

The 63rd Infantry Division of the Guard continued its advance in the central-west part of the city, and at 15.15 arrived at the Spanish HQ, which retreated.

At the end of a day of heavy losses, the 63rd Guard Infantry Division advanced 3 miles and occupied Krasny Bor, Mishkino, Stepanovka and Popovka Station.

Briefing

Axis [Germany / Spain] : 5 Command Cards
Allies [Russia] : 6 Command Cards (FIRST MOVE)

Conditions of Victory

6 MEDALS (AXIS)
7 MEDALS (ALLIES)
The Train Station, Hospital and the City are all Temporary Medals Objectives for the Allies.

Special Rules

- Red Army Rules (Nations2)

Optional Rule
Axis Infantry have 2 Molotov Cocktails (Actions36) tokens.

OPTIONAL



Krasny Bor III

ORIGINAL TITLE : Battle of Krasny Bor - East Front



Historical Background

Since 1941 the Germans had surrounded and choked Leningrad.

"Long live death!"

In their attempt to end the siege, the Russians chose Krasny Bor as the place to launch their offensive...

Briefing

Axis [Germany / Spain] : 5 Command Cards
Allies [Russia] : 6 Command Cards (FIRST MOVE)

Conditions of Victory

8 MEDALS

Special Rules

- Spanish Republican Infantry are División Azúl (Troops2)
- Big Guns (Troops3) (Only 1 figure)
- Cavalry (Troops8)

Custom 88 Gun Rules (2 Units each with only 1 figure)
4444 vs Armor
2222 vs Infantry or Artillery
Star has same effect as a retreat flag vs Armor.
Can move 1 and attack.
Requires line of sight to attack enemy unit.
Terrain battle restriction a remain.

Setup order

1		x14
2		x9
3		x6
4		x6
5		x6
6		x6
7		x5
8		x4
9		x3
10		x2
11		x2
12		x2
13		x2
14		x2
15		x1
16		x1
17		x1
18		x1
19		x1
20		x1
21		x2
22		x2
23		x1
24		x2


GLORIA
A LA
DIVISION AZUL