

# Catching a Link

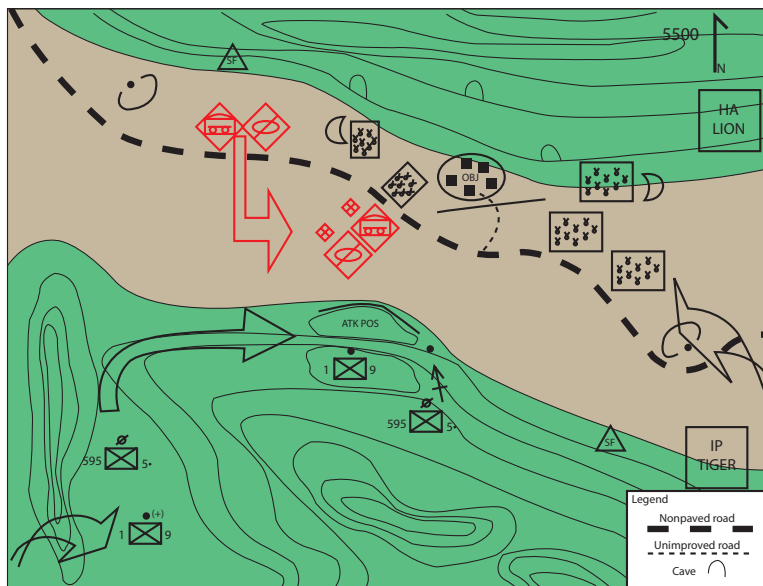
## Situation

Intelligence reports that one of al-Qaeda's top generals, Omar Sharruf, will be in the Ka Bada (KB) training camp. The camp has a squad (plus) element providing security. The camp's last reported activity was training and strengthening the defense. The camp is in northern Remotistan in the mountains. It's now 1300. It is believed that Omar will leave in 24 hours. At KB they have Soviet Bloc small arms (AK series and RPK light machineguns (MGs)), as well as RPG-7s (rocket propelled grenades) and third-generation night vision goggles (NVGs). The enemy's most probable course of action will be to defend the compound long enough for Omar to leave via roadway or foot trails into the mountains. If Omar gets to the mountains he'll be there for months. They have the ability to reinforce via roadway from the northwest. Special forces (SF) teams have been watching the compound for 24 hours, and they have eyes on and are updating the situation. SF positions are around the compound. There will be one SF team at the landing zone (LZ) to mark it and guide you to the objective.

At 1700 the 28th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) launches a platoon-sized heliborne raid against the compound. You are now 1st Squad leader, Company B, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. Your squad has 13 Marines, and you have an assault team and a squad of MGs as your attachments. Your reinforced squad has a combat load—two claymores, one AT-4, three shoulder-launched multi-purpose assault weapon rockets, and 1,000 rounds for each MG. Your mission is to extract Omar (alive if possible) to LZ Tiger, destroy all KB equipment, and capture or eliminate all KB personnel. To prevent escape along the roads, 2d Squad will position themselves to the northwest of the compound to set a blocking position. 3d Squad will set up a blocking position to the southeast on the road. Both squads setting up blocking positions will land

by Sgt James Fegler

## TDG #04-10



via helicopter onto their objective. They each have an assault team and an MG squad. You have two Harriers that are in direct support of you. They will stand by at Holding Area Lion.

You arrive at 0100 on the deck in northern Remotistan. The hills are steep with loose rock and boulders that provide good cover. It'll take a little time and effort, but the hills can be climbed. It is a cold night with the moon giving a little more than 60 percent illumination. While sitting in the LZ you give radio checks to all of the key leaders, and communications is excellent. You then scan the area with your NVGs, and you see two flashes of an infrared beam. You respond back with three flashes; the light shines back one time; you have made link up.

As the SF team guides you through the valley, you notice that it's very flat and is all loose sand. At 0305, as you move into your objective rally point, the KB compound begins to shoot up flares and spotlight the valley floor. This lasts for about 5 minutes. Your MG attachments break off to go to their overwatch positions from which they can provide overhead fire until your squad reaches Phase Line Red. The SF team will provide security. You

spend 40 minutes crawling to Phase Line White. Listening to the radio, 3d Squad notifies you that they have set in. 2d Squad had to turn around and abort due to a mechanical malfunction with the helicopter.

Hearing something that alarms you, you look to your west and see vehicle lights. Taking a closer look through a AN/PAS-13 you discover a BTR-70 (Soviet armored vehicle) and an old Russian flatbed truck with a ZSU-23 (self-propelled anti-aircraft gun) mounted on it. The truck has four to six men on it.

Both vehicles are heading toward your position. As the vehicles close to 500 meters, the BTR-70 and the truck dismount all troops. They assume a combat formation and continue a course that will bring them straight to you.

The observation post to the northwest reports that through their NVGs they have spotted an individual they believe to be Omar, and he is getting ready to flee. They also report that the compound is scrambling to their defensive positions. The radio goes quiet as more flares go up and the spotlights come back on.

## Requirement

In a time limit of 5 minutes, organize your squad for a hasty ambush of the vehicles, extraction of Omar, and destruction of the compound and its equipment. Include your intent, scheme of maneuver on an overlay, and your signal plan. Send your solution and rationale for your actions to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #04-10, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, fax 703-630-9147, or e-mail <gazette@mca-marines.org>.