

## Longa River, 1989



Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Cuba – far more than the Soviet Union – actively worked to support Communist political movements in Latin America and Africa. The island country expanded its military presence abroad, and by 1988 had 50,000 troops in Angola alone. Its efforts to back the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) were helped, at least logistically, by Russia. But it was Castro's advisors, infantrymen and tank crews who did the fighting.

This scenario covers a hypothetical clash between South African and Communist troops where the Soviet Union has actually put men on the ground in Angola. Frustrated by Cuban set backs (namely the disastrous defeat at Cuito Cuanavale), Moscow has deployed its first motorized rifle regiment on the African continent.

Military officials see this theater as a prime opportunity to field test their upgraded T-64 MBTs, equipped with reactive armor and capable of firing the AT-11 Sniper anti-tank missile. The kit is viewed as being miles ahead of anything the SADF can offer....and so planners have mapped out an ambush south of the Longa River.

Cuban units have been called to support the effort (as their personnel have the most experience in country), and by September 24, the lead elements of a rifle battalion have just pushed south of the water body – throwing up a protective screen as engineers scramble to establish their bridges.

Unknown to the Russians, however, the SADF's 83 Mech, bolstered by two squadrons of Olifants, is racing to the scene. Pretoria is aware its only hope of discouraging further Soviet involvement is to inflict a quick, bloody defeat on the Red Army. Gambling everything on radio intercepts and captured documents, the South Africans hope to smash the Communist bridgehead and engage the following elements in piecemeal fashion with their artillery.

The SADF's one ace-in-the-hole is its new ZT-3 ATGMs. Pre-production weapons have been incorporated into several Ratels, with representatives from Denel actually stationed alongside the crews. The laser-guided warheads are a decided improvement over the old French Entacs – and capable of killing modern battle tanks.

### Setup

Players can each plunk down 3 pieces of terrain on a standard 4x6' table. The game starts with a small Cuban detachment placed within 30cm of that player's table edge:

1. 1 HQ (BTR-60 PU Cmd)
2. 1 FAO capable of calling for support from two 122mm guns and/ or two BM-21s
3. 3 BMP-1 IFVs
4. 1 BTR-60 APC
5. 3 Conscript Infantry (w/1 RPG-7 Upgrade)
6. 1 Sagger Team
7. 2 BRDM Recce
8. 1 PT-76 Recce

Along the southern long table edge, the South African player may field the following:

1. 1 HQ (Ratel Cmd or Buffel APC)
2. 1 FAC & 1 FAO (Ratel 60mm IFV). FAO calls two 155mm G5s. FAC calls a Mirage.
3. 2 Eland 90mm Recce
4. 1 Rooikat 76mm Recce -- edited for MV of 30cm (12") and S1 for 95 points
5. 2 Ratel 90mm SPAT
6. 2 Ratel 81mm Mortar
7. 6 Ratel 20mm APC
8. 6 SA Regulars (w/ 2 RPG-7 Upgrades)

### **Reinforcements**

The SADF player gets the first turn. The Cuban player, starting with his first turn, rolls a single die during each Scheduled Phase to see which reinforcements arrive at the beginning of his NEXT turn. He can only receive each result once, so if a "1" comes up a second time, simply move it up a notch.

- 1 = 3 BTR-60s and 3 Conscript Infantry (with one RPG-7 upgrade).
- 2 = 4 BTR-60s, 1 SA-7 Team and 3 Conscript Infantry (with one RPG-7 upgrade).
- 3 = ZSU-23-4
- 4 = 3 T-64 MBTs
- 5 = 3 T-64 MBTs
- 6 = Any combination of two.

*\* The first assets to arrive come with a CV 9 Cuban CO represented by a BTR-60 PU. The first tanks to arrive also come with a CV 8 Russian HQ represented by a seventh tank.*

The SADF player follows the same basic procedure, but doesn't start rolling until the beginning of his second Turn:

- 1-2 = 3 Ratel 20mm APCs and 3 SA Regular Infantry (with one RPG-7 upgrade).
- 3-4 = 2 Ratel ZT-3 Swift vehicles -- 6/150cm (59") attack for 210 points apiece
- 5-6 = 6 Olifant 105mm MBTs

*\*First assets to arrive come with a CV 9 CO represented by a Buffel APC. The tanks also come with a CV 8 HQ represented by a seventh Olifant.*

Cuban troops follow the WP 1<sup>st</sup> Grade rules, with the one modification that the two 122mm batteries can be allocated to the Russian HQ (he can use his CV rating to make requests). Total value is 2,970 points with a breakpoint of 15.

SADF troops have a point value of 3,080 points with a breakpoint of 17.