**The Battle of Noemfoor Virtual Staff Ride**

**2 July 1944 – 31 August 1944**

1. **Overview:** This Army University Press (AUP) virtual staff ride examines the planning and execution of OPERATION TABLETENNIS, the capture of Noemfoor Island by two separate Regimental Combat Teams. This operation was part of the larger “approach to the Philippines” that encompassed eight separate operations that took place from April through October 1944. At the time of the campaign, Noemfoor's strategic importance lay in its proximity along the planned Allied avenue of approach through western New Guinea toward the Philippines, as well as in the capture of the three Japanese airfields on the island. Seizing the island would allow the Allies to establish air and minor naval facilities for the purpose of continuing operations to the west.
2. **Learning Objective:** The primary learning objective is to discuss the insights and lessons learned in the seizing and expanding the initial lodgment taking place in a jungle environment, especially at the regimental level (today’s BCT level). The virtual staff ride offers insights into the following aspects of warfare:
   1. Maritime Operations
   2. Leadership and Decision Making
   3. Operating in a Jungle Environment
   4. Planning and Execution of Joint Forcible Entry Operations: Amphibious and Airborne
   5. Warfighting Functions
   6. Terrain Analysis
   7. Multidomain Operations
3. **Preliminary Study:** AUP provides the read-ahead packet for the participants to focus their study.
4. Materials include the Center for Military History Publication 5-8-1 (The Approach to the Philippines) <https://history.army.mil/html/books/005/5-8-1/cmhPub_5-8-1.pdf>; the Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume 4; The Pacific: Guadalcanal to Saipan: August 1942 to July 1944 <https://media.defense.gov/2010/Nov/05/2001329889/-1/-1/0/AFD-101105-010.pdf>; Document N-3020, the CTF 77 Report on the Noemfoor Operation; and Document N-4530-2, the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment Report on the Noemfoor Island (TABLETENNIS) Operation.
5. An optional reading for this staff ride is Samuel E. Morison’s book, *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, Volume 8 – New Guinea and the Marianas: March 1944-August 1944.* (See Chapter 10, pages 134-140).
6. **Field Study:** The field study consists of discussions about mission planning, the initial landings and expansion of the beachhead, the transition between the 158th RCT and the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, the preparations for an attack, and its execution.
7. AUP will incorporate virtual terrain of Noemfoor as a means for participants to visualize how the battle was conducted.
8. This virtual staff ride requires approximately 3-4 hours to execute.
9. **Integration Phase:** This phase is conducted immediately following the field study phase and is an informal opportunity for the participants to articulate their impressions of the lessons derived from the virtual staff ride and additional insights gained from sharing those impressions with their peers.
10. **Support Requirements:** The hosting organization is required to provide the following:
    1. A venue large enough to accommodate all participants. Standard audience cap is about 30 personnel. The quality of the facility, such as an AAR room in a mission training center, may allow an increase of up to 50-60 personnel.
    2. Two projectors (with cables) and two screens, large enough for the audience to see. The staff ride instructor team will bring the computers to connect to the projectors.
    3. Funding for government civilian travel with a DTS cross-org LOA.