

Nimitz Scenario: "Surprise Encounter"

This scenario offers an option for surface actions that result from an "Engage" operation in the Halsey campaign system, in which the passive TF is a carrier group or a convoy, or includes merchant ships. That passive TF is said to be "surprised," or the "surprised side," and has its setup restricted as shown below.

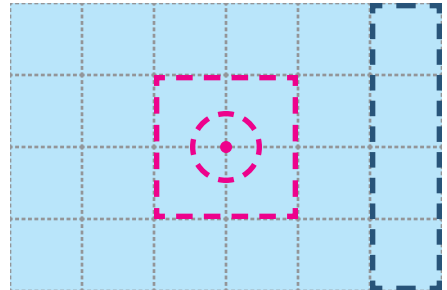
No Roll for Setup Advantage

The surprised side in this scenario always sets up first.

Table Center and Radius

Imagine a point in the very center of the *Nimitz* battle board, as shown by a purple dot in the board illustration at right. Imagine a circle with a radius of 6" from that point. That is the "radius."

If the surprised side has a carrier group, then its carrier(s) must set up with their centerpoints inside the radius. All of the surprised side's merchant ships must set up according to the "merchant setup" rule below, and with all their centerpoints inside the radius.



The *Nimitz* Battle Board

Escorting Zone

The four central squares of the board, outlined by a purple dashed line, are the "escorting zone." Other ships of the surprised side (other than carriers or merchants) may set up anywhere within this zone, including inside the radius, if desired.



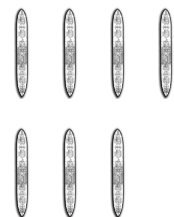
Merchant Setup

You must make a good faith effort to set up all merchant ships in as "square" a formation as possible. Start by placing one with its centerpoint directly over the table center. Then add the other merchants so that none's centerpoint is more than 2" from at least one other's, and in "ranks and files" that are as equal in number as possible.

For example, if you had twelve merchants, you could set them up in a 4 x 3 "box" formation. If you had ten, you might set them up in a 3 x 3 box with one trailing behind, and so on.

If you have a really big convoy and you simply can't fit all of its ships inside the radius, then you must fit the maximum possible number of their centerpoints within the radius, and the rest within the escorting zone.

Note that if you're using very large ship models, you might have to adjust this rule to keep their centerpoints no more than 3" (instead of 2") apart.



Seven merchants, in two rows of 4 and 3.

Set Up the Active Side

After all the surprised side's ships are set up, the active side (the side that initiated this battle with the *Engage Op*) now sets up anywhere in the four squares on the right-most column, as shown by the blue dashed boundary on the previous page's illustration.

Choice of Advantage

During the battle the active side always has the choice of advantage (move first or shoot first) in *every* turn. No die roll is made.

The Convoy Scatters!

It can be tedious to fight a hopeless battle involving a convoy that can't defend itself. This rule applies to scenarios in which one side has merchant ships, whether they are in a convoy or not.

In the marker step of any *Nimitz* turn, the passive side may declare that their fleet **scatters**. When this happens, roll one die for each *operational* merchant ship on the passive side, to determine its fate:

- The roll to scatter is 5+ for ships in the northern weather region, or if this battle is happening at night.
- Otherwise, the roll to scatter is a 6.

If a ship scatters, it is removed from the *Halsey* campaign permanently. It will never reach its destination and thus never provide VPs for its side in the scenario, but it will also never be sunk by the enemy, thus denying him those VPs.

Otherwise, if a ship fails its roll to scatter, it is assumed lost, and the enemy gets the VPs for having sunk it.

A ship that is crippled when the order to scatter is given, is sunk.

Warships Don't Scatter

The decision to scatter applies to all *merchant* ships on that side. Any warships remaining on the table are still there, and the *Nimitz* battle continues.

Other Notes

This scenario may be used for either day or night actions.

If you are using the advanced rule for auxiliary ships (page 109), but otherwise have no other carriers or merchants, you do not use this scenario. Use a normal setup as described in chapter five.