

Resistant Roosters Guide: Japanese Rifle Company (1941-1945)

The Japanese had a very flexible approach to unit organization. The variability in organization makes accurate data (very) hard to come by, as such this document should not be taken as being 100% accurate, but instead should be viewed as our interpretation of the historical organization of the Japanese Rifle Company.

At the core of the Infantry Battalion was the Rifle Company. There were two basic types of Rifle Company - the 'Type A' and the more standard 'Type B'. The 'Type B' Rifle Company will be used as our baseline.

Japanese Infantry Rifle Company (1941 - 1945, 'Type B')

- Company Headquarters (1 Officer, 18 men)
- Three Rifle Platoons
 - Platoon Headquarters (1 Officer, 1 sergeant)
 - Grenade Launcher Squad (1 NCO and 12 men)
Typically 3 (or less often 4) launchers (knee mortars)
 - Three Rifle Squads, (1 NCO and 12 men each)
Typically 1 LMG, the remainder armed with rifles

The squad, circa 1941 was comprised of an NCO and twelve men. With the exception of a single light machine gunner, all the men were armed with rifles. The three (3) Rifle Squads of the Platoon were supported by a fourth, the Grenade Launcher Squad which also consisted of an NCO and 12 men. The squad served 3 or less often 4 launchers. The launcher was the Type 89 Grenade Discharger (commonly referred to as the 'knee mortar') capable of launching a grenade-like round a distance of about 600 meters.

The Platoon Headquarters consisted of an officer and a sergeant. The officer would carry a pistol and a sword. The sergeant was armed with a rifle.

The Company Headquarters consisted of an officer and several NCOs, runners, buglers etc. one officer and 18 men being the typical contingent.

As variations to the above we have seen reference to 1) a larger squad circa 1939: 10 riflemen and a 5 man gun group - 8 rifles and 2 LMG would be a logical grouping. 2) A platoon consisting of 6 squads (8 men each). Three of these would be supported by LMG teams. The remaining three supported by Grenade Launchers. Each squad led by an officer and NCO.

The 'Type A' Rifle Company would add one more launcher (team) per launcher squad (making a total 12 rather than 9 Grenade Launchers per Company).

Heavy weapons support could be added to both the 'Type A' and 'Type B' Rifle Companies. The heavy weapons support would consist of two (2) HMG sections and two (2) ATR sections each with 11 men and one of either weapon.

The 'Type C' Rifle Company was limited in use, being configured for specific missions. Information concerning this type of company is limited and as such has not been considered in this article.

**Resistant Roosters
Produced by:**

**HistoriFigs
P.O.Box 94
Portage, WI 53901**

On the Web:
www.ResistantRoosters.com
sales@historifigs.com