

# GAME MANUAL

Gary Grigsby's

# WAR IN THE EAST 2

STEEL INFERNO



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

*Steel Inferno* is the first expansion for *Gary Grigsby's War in the East 2*. It adds additional short scenarios, new campaign start dates and brings in regions such as Yugoslavia and Finland into the playable map area.

## 1.1. USING THIS MANUAL

This manual is divided into three main sections and should be read in conjunction with the original game manual (as updated in the Living Manual).

The main section covers the new scenarios, giving background information and some play notes.

The second section gives background on the evolution of the Red Army in the second phase of the war.

The final section briefly covers the major changes to the game rules since the original release. To some extent this is divided into changes that affect both sides or changes that are particularly relevant to one side or the other. Where there are references to particular sections of the game rules these refer to the original manual.

## 1.2. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

### 1.2.1. MINIMUM SPECS:

OS: Windows 7/8/10/11

CPU: 1.5 GHz+

RAM: 4GB

Video Card: 256MB DirectX 9+ Compatible

Sound Card: 16 bit DirectX 9+ Compatible

Hard Drive Space: 4 GB Free

DirectX 9.0c or higher

### 1.2.2. RECOMMENDED SPECS:

OS: Windows 10/11

CPU: 2.0GHz+ (or multi-core equivalent)

RAM: 8GB

Video Card: 1GB DirectX 9+ Compatible

Sound Card: 16 bit DirectX 9+ Compatible

Hard Drive Space: 4 GB Free

DirectX 9.0c or higher

## 1.3. INSTALLING THE GAME

To install the game, insert the game DVD disc into your DVD drive. If you have disabled the Autorun function on your DVD or if you are installing from a digital download, navigate to the DVD or download file location, double-click on the installation file, and if it is a zip archive, then double click on the executable (exe) file that is shown inside the archive. The correct file name will normally include the words "SetupRelease". Follow all on-screen prompts to complete the installation.

If you have purchased your game from the Steam Store, you can download the game by finding it in your Steam library, and then pressing the INSTALL button.

Any games purchased from the Slitherine or Matrix stores that are available on Steam as well can be registered for a Steam Key, which will allow you to add the game to your Steam library. To do this go to [http://www.matrixgames.com/my\\_page](http://www.matrixgames.com/my_page) and enter your serial number that came with the download to register.

## 1.4. UNINSTALLING THE GAME

Please use the Add/Remove Programs or Programs and Features option from the Windows Control Panel or the "Uninstall" link in the game's Windows START menu to uninstall the game. Uninstalling through any other method will not properly uninstall the game.

## 1.5. PRODUCT UPDATES

In order to maintain our product excellence, Matrix Games and Slitherine release updates containing new features, enhancements, and corrections to any known issues. All our updates are available free on our website (see more details in the section below) and can also be downloaded quickly and easily by clicking on the Check for Updates link in your Game Launcher.

## 1.6. REGISTER YOUR GAME, RE-DOWNLOAD YOUR GAME, BETA UPDATES

We also periodically make beta (preview) updates and other content available to registered owners. Keeping up with these special updates is made easy and is free by signing up for a Slitherine Group Member account. When you are signed up, you can then register your Slitherine Group products in order to receive access to these game-related materials. Doing so is a simple two step process:

**Sign Up for a Slitherine Group Member account** - THIS IS A ONE TIME PROCEDURE; once you have signed up for an account, you are in the system and will not need to sign up again. Go to [www.slitherine.com](http://www.slitherine.com) and click the SIGN UP button on the top-right, then click "Register" on the subsequent page after filling in your personal information. When you're finished a confirmation email will be sent to your specified e-mail account.

**Register a New Game Purchase** - Once you have signed up for a Slitherine Group Member account, you can then register any Slitherine/Matrix title you own in your new account. To do so, log in to your account on either the Matrix Games website ([www.matrixgames.com](http://www.matrixgames.com)) or the Slitherine website ([www.slitherine.com](http://www.slitherine.com)). Click MY PAGE on the top and then REGISTER SERIAL on the right to register your new purchase.

We strongly recommend registering your game as it will give you a backup location for your serial number should you lose it in the future.

**If you were already logged into your main member account when you purchased your game, it will be automatically registered for you as part of the purchase process.**

Once you've registered your game, when you log in to the Members section you can view your list of registered titles by clicking My Page. Each game title is a hyperlink that will take you to an information page on the game (including all the latest news on that title). Also on this list is a Downloads hyperlink that takes you to a page that has all the latest public and registered downloads, including patches, for that particular title.

You can also access patches and updates via [www.matrixgames.com/member/mypage](http://www.matrixgames.com/member/mypage). Once there select the game you wish to check updates for, then check the downloads link. Certain valuable content and additional downloads will be restricted to Group Members so it is always worthwhile to sign up there.

Remember, once you have signed up for a Member account, you do not have to sign up again at that point you are free to register any product you purchase.

Thank you and enjoy your game!

## 1.7. UNIFIED LOGIN SYSTEM

Slitherine and Matrix now have a new "Unified Login System". This allows you to access the Slitherine and Matrix Games sites using just one username and password.

To merge your accounts so that they work for all Slitherine Group sites, go to (<http://samelogin.slitherine.com/>) and enter the details of one of your accounts (ie. Either your Matrix or your Slitherine login).

You will then be presented with the option to merge your accounts (listed as "[Merge my accounts]"), which will then allow you to combine any other accounts you have and/or generate a user for another website using the same details (For instance, if you were called "JohnSmith123" on the Slitherine site but had no account on Matrix, you could enter the details into the site and it would create a "JohnSmith123" account for Matrix as well, with the same password as the Slitherine login.)

## 1.8. GAME FORUMS

Our forums are one of the best things about Matrix Games. Every game has its own forum with our designers, developers and the gamers playing the game. If you are experiencing a problem, have a question or just an idea on how to make the game better, post a message there. Go to <http://www.matrixgames.com> and click on the Forums hyperlink.

## 1.9. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Should you have a technical problem with the game, the best way to get help is to post a note in the Technical Support sub-forum of the main game forum at <http://www.matrixgames.com/forums>. You'll then hear back from either our Matrix Games Staff, the development team, or from one of the many helpful players of the game. This is usually the fastest way to get help. Alternatively, you can contact our Help Desk at <http://www.matrixgames.com/support/> or [support@matrixgames.com](mailto:support@matrixgames.com). Support requests will generally be answered within 24 hours, except on weekends or US/UK national holidays.

# 2. SCENARIOS

*Steel Inferno* adds a number of new scenarios to *War in the East 2*.

## 2.1. SCENARIO LIST

All the campaign scenarios use the full game map, all the available theatre boxes and the victory rules set out in section 29.1 of the original manual.

SCENARIO NAME	START DATE	LENGTH (TURNS)	FIRST PLAYER	NOTES
1941-45 Campaign	22 June 1941	215	Axis	1
1941-45 Campaign (no early end)	22 June 1941	215	Axis	1, 2
Stalingrad to Berlin	19 Nov 1942	137	Soviet	1
1943 Campaign	3 July 1943	105	Axis	
1944 Campaign (May Start)	11 May 1944	60	Axis	
Vistula to Berlin	13 Jan 1945	20	Soviet	1

Notes:

1 – included in the base War In the East 2

2 – a modified version of the campaign. This removes all the sudden death victory conditions but retains the need for the Soviets to match the Axis High Water Mark score at the end of 1944 and the rules that relate to the ownership of Berlin.

The non-campaign scenarios differ in that they use a portion of the map, the victory conditions in section 29.2 of the original manual and mostly only have a single Reserve Theatre Box for both sides (though feasibly they could include other theatres if the scenario was designed that way).

SCENARIO NAME	START DATE	LENGTH (TURNS)	FIRST PLAYER	NOTES
Road to Leningrad	22 June 1941	16	Axis	1
Road to Karelia	22 June 1941	16	Axis	2
Introductory scenario 2: Road to Minsk	22 June 1941	2	Axis	1
The Destruction of South Western Front	22 June 1941	17	Axis	1
Operation Typhoon	30 Sept 1941	14	Axis	1
AGA – Part I: Race for the Caucasus	25 July 1942	17	Axis	
Case Blue Phase II 42-43	25 July 1942	34	Axis	
Case Blue Phase II 42-43 (Alternate Version)	25 July 1942	34	Axis	
Introductory scenario 1: Velikie Luki 42	17 Nov 1942	10	Soviet	1
Red Army Resurgent 42-43	17 Nov 1942	17	Soviet	1
Red God of War	24 Nov 1942	11	Soviet	1
AGA – Part II: Kuban Bridgehead	1 Feb 1943	36	Soviet	
AGC – Kutuzov to Bagration 43-44	12 July 1943	38	Soviet	
Western Ukraine 43-44	3 Nov 1943	25	Soviet	
Drama on the Danube 44 – AI Drama on the Danube 44 – H2H	20 Aug 44	37	Soviet	3

Notes:

1 – Included in the base War in the East 2

2 – Adds the Finnish offensive north of Leningrad to the original scenario

3 – Note there is a small difference between the scenario for play against the Soviet AI and the multi-player version.

## 2.2. 1943 CAMPAIGN



### 2.2.1. OUTLINE

Having staged a dramatic recovery from the loss of 6th Army at Stalingrad and the Soviet winter offensive, the Axis has built up its armored forces to exploit the strategic opportunity offered by the salient around the city of Kursk. Delays in the arrival of new tanks have allowed the Soviets to build strong fortifications around the salient.

### 2.2.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

**Axis Player:**

- The Axis has two choices: Risk its precious armor to cut off the Kursk salient and destroy a major portion of the Red Army or conserve the armor and look for another opportunity to inflict major losses on the Red Army.
- APs/Turn: 35

**Soviet Player:**

- The Soviets have huge reserves, including highly mobile mechanised units which can be used to protect the salient or used in offensive operations, which may be limited due to logistic constraints.
- APs/Turn: 25

### 2.2.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

This scenario uses the appropriate events from the 1941 Grand Campaign. As with the Stalingrad-Berlin campaign, these are slightly modified and are mostly slightly lower than the thresholds in the 1941 campaign (mainly as both armies will tend to be weaker in the later starts).

### 2.2.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

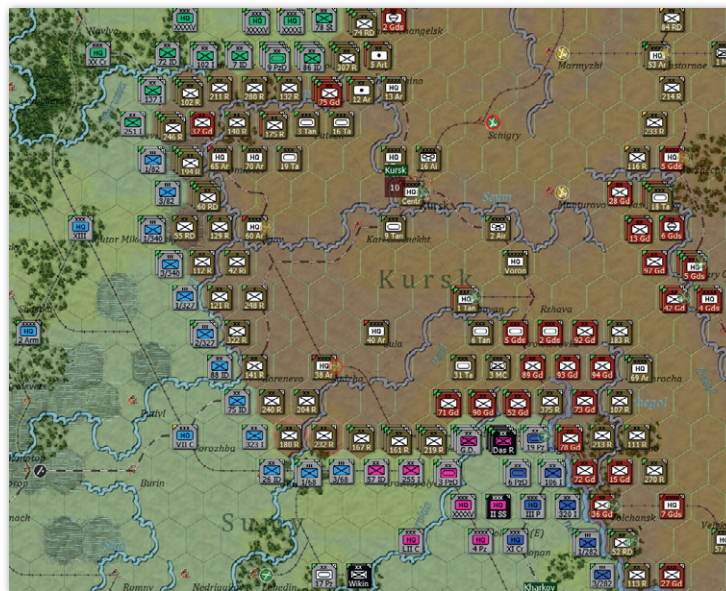
This scenario opens with the final major German strategic offensive in the East. The bulk of the offensive assets of both AGC and AGS were concentrated north and south of the Soviet bulge around Kursk with the goal of a major encirclement that would badly set back Soviet capacity to sustain any offensive themselves. The northern prong, led by 9 Army, had stalled by 10 July and on the 12 July the Soviets launched their own offensive initially aimed at Orel. Army Group South made more sustained gains but the offensive was stopped on 17 July as Hitler wanted to transfer formations to Italy following the Allied landings in Sicily on 10 July.

The Soviets went over to the offensive on the south too (Operation Rummyantsev) from 3 August after a series of secondary attacks along the Mius. The initial Soviet attack was blocked by the SS formations withdrawn from the Kursk offensive but by 23 August had liberated Kharkov.

From this point to the end of the war, the Germans were able to mount many successful counter-attacks, especially when the Soviets were over-extended, but this was the last time the Germans had the strategic initiative and could choose where, or if, to attack.

By the end of 1943, the Soviets had regained Kiev, Smolensk and Gomel and were threatening a major encirclement around Korsun. By the end of 1944, all of the Soviet Union, apart from the Courland region, had been recaptured, Finland and Rumania had switched sides and Soviet forces were close to Budapest and Warsaw.

### 2.2.5. PLAY NOTES



#### Axis

The following comments concern Axis Gameplay in Campaign 1943 and Campaign 1944 (May Start). While the German Player does have attack potential for a few turns in the 1943 Campaign both Campaigns put the Axis Player on the strategic defensive.

The 1943 Campaign begins on 3 July 1943 the same as the 1943 Campaign in War in the West. The timing was not accidental. You can play a synthetic War in Europe beginning in July 1943, or May 1944 as the 1944 Campaign (May Start) has an identical counterpart in War in the West.

In game play it can be useful to set a Turn Sequence to create order out of chaos. The sequence, below, captures the phases up to but not including the ground phase.



- Logistics Phase
- Theater Boxes
- Reich Flak Defense
- Set Air Units to Rest
- Air Directives
- Ready Ground Support

Review the Logistics Report to make sure HQs are receiving freight, any factory damage, upgrades, leader changes, arrivals, and withdrawals. This gives you an overall picture to consider going forward

Next review each Theater Box. Try to keep all of them near 100% in every area. Since arrivals and withdrawals are historical you will many times see a unit leaving a TB and another one coming in. You can visualize the real-life decision making of the discussions of, "I'll let this unit go, but what unit will replace it"? Do not get greedy pulling units to the East. Victory Points will be taken away from you and surprisingly they can make a difference at the end.

Try to keep Flak Units in cities as strong as possible. Consider assigning extra Heavy Flak Battalions from the East to any important factory locations. In these cities strive for a 9 in High Altitude Flak. After reviewing the factory Damage in the Logistics Phase assign Construction Battalions to critical locations to continually repair the factory damage being inflicted. In Campaign 1944 the city of Merseburg is a good place to assign at least two construction battalions.

### Setting Air Units to Rest

There are various ways to organize the Luftwaffe but one option is to use Flieger Divisions as the fighting elements, or at most a Flieger Korps. These AOGs have Day Fighters, Tactical Bombers, and Level Bombers assigned. By far the most important aircraft the Axis have is the Fighter. The Fighters keep the Soviet fighters off your Stukas, Fw-109Gs, and Fw-190Fs. If your Tactical Bombers get in without much interference your bombing will be more effective. Fighters can also down large numbers of Soviet Sturmoviks if they can overwhelm the Soviet escort fighters.

The second most important aircraft is the Tactical Bomber. Stukas, Fw-109Gs, and Fw-190Fs deliver very accurate strikes. They are superior in this role to the Level Bomber. Always use Trained Pilots Only for Fighters and Tactical Bombers. You may have to make concessions on pilot quality in other types of aircraft, but do not do it here.

At the Flieger Korps level or Luftflotte level retain the Recon Aircraft, and Transports. Recon will fly on Days 1 and 4 if necessary and if so there is almost never any need to set these AOGs to Rest. They will be Ready to fly the next Turn without the need to go to Rest. The exception is for the Transport Groups which may need a breather.

Manage the combat AOGs with more care and set to rest with high fatigue, low morale or poor weather. .

### Air Directives

The German aircraft have an altitude performance advantage over the Soviets, so consider assigning missions at around 20,000 feet. Bring the Soviets to higher altitude where their aircraft do not perform as well. Before running the Air Directives make sure the Flieger Divisions are set to Rest. Only Recon will be flying during the Air Directives Phase. Make sure to bring new air units on the Map and do any airbase transfers before running your Air Directives.

### Ready Ground Support

The first step in your Ground Phase will be to move your Flieger Division AOGs from Rest to Day Only. After being on Rest they will have eliminated their Fatigue and recovered their Morale. They are now ready to fight in your Ground Phase and the Soviet Ground Phase in the next turn.

### The Ground Phase

The Soviets have a Two-to-One advantage in Men, Guns, and AFVs in both the new campaign scenarios. They can mass and break any point in your line. This means fighting a battle of attrition. Winning at the tactical level is your only chance to win. This is done by causing excessive losses on the Soviets.

Failed Soviet attacks can be bloody, and sharp counterattacks against his Tank and Mechanized Corps can destroy almost all of their AFVs.

Since these are late war Campaigns, it is probably better not to place the Panzer Divisions on Reserve. They are normally 10 or 20 miles to the rear in Ready or Refit status. Use them as breakwaters and rally points for the infantry that must bear the initial attack. If you can, try to keep them out of the front line, an astute Soviet player will target them with their Rifle Corps if they present an easy target.

Infantry Divisions man the front lines. Where the Soviets have their Tank Armies, try to give these Infantry Divisions a Panzerjaeger Battalion or StuG Brigade. Their Rifle Corps will often have Tank Brigades and SU Regiments attached and these attached Panzerjaegers and StuGs will get some kills in the fortified line.

Don't just think of retreating. In all the 1942 and later start dates, control your retreat and use bad weather to try and stabilise the front. In effect the lack of Prep Points by the Soviets helps the Axis Side, Excessive Soviet losses helps the Axis Side, and Avoiding Pockets helps the Axis side. Or, in other words, build your defensive approach to optimise these factors.

### **IN SUMMARY:**

- Use your Luftwaffe effectively! Even into 1944 you can retain control over the key sectors.
- Avoid large encirclements (some are inevitable)
- Use terrain to your advantage
- Retreat slowly, and at all costs keep the rail line running between your National Supply Sources of Berlin-Prague-Vienna open and free of Soviet zones of control. Once the rail is cut between Berlin and Prague every Axis unit is moved to Isolated Status!
- Have fun!

### **Soviet Player**

When playing the Soviets the saying quantity has a quality all its own comes to mind. Post Stalingrad the Soviets continue to receive better tanks, planes and other equipment in huge quantities. It is manpower though that requires the most management as Soviet manpower generation drops steadily as the war progresses. By 1944 it is down to 30k a week (plus any recovered manpower from the disabled pool) which is enough to cover attrition and build a few support units but not enough to cover more than minor offensive operations.

A ruthless disbanding of units to free up resources to build new units needs to be pursued. Battalions of artillery, tanks, AT, AA, etc. should be disbanded to build regiments, brigades, divisions and, in the case of armor/mechanized units, even corps. As much as possible combine infantry divisions into corps but beware, you can overbuild infantry corps. It's a long front and divisions (sometimes brigades) should be used to fill in hexes. Over time the Soviets should be able to steadily disband AA units as the Luftwaffe's numbers fall.

Managing manpower means managing attrition which can be substantial for infantry corps next to enemy units so keep them a hex or two back until offensive operations start. Manpower can be frittered away by building more units than you need. By 1944 it is about having the right mix of units rather than sheer quantity. Next to manpower having enough trucks is the major challenge so always be mindful of this. Tank corps are sexy but really don't have that much combat power and are best used for exploiting breakthroughs rather than crashing into entrenched Germans. Consider lots of armor/self-propelled gun regiment and brigade size support units attached to your infantry corps for a potent offensive potential. Finally, don't attack just to attack. Some players set a manpower budget each turn and prioritize attacks and stop when their losses reach the budget.

Operational pauses are important for the Soviets. Rested, full strength, high preparation point units are exponentially more effective. Once offensive operations begin entire armies should be held in reserve on refit to allow offensives to maintain momentum. The Axis can't maintain large reserves but have an easier job as defenders. As the Axis lines stiffen throwing a fresh army into the fight can precipitate a collapse of the Axis defense.

### Both Players

If you have not played a Grand Campaign into the 1943-44 winter, or the Stalingrad-Berlin Campaign then be aware of the implications of the mild winter rules (see 8.6.2 of the main manual). The main impact will be very few blizzard turns so both sides can sustain operations without weather imposed breaks (but will need to set their own breaks to rest and re-organise). Also few, if any, major rivers will completely freeze in the likely area of operations. This has a substantial impact on the cost of crossing such hex-sides both for combat units and for supply trucks.

## 2.3. 1944 CAMPAIGN (MAY START)



### 2.3.1. OUTLINE

11 May 1944 – The Soviet 1943-44 Winter Offensive is over. Almost all the Ukraine apart from the region around Lvov has been liberated, Soviet forces occupy NE Rumania, Leningrad now has an overland connection to the rest of the USSR and AGC is entrenched along the upper Dneipr.

With the just completed Soviet conquest of the Crimea, and the recent breakout of the 1st Panzer Army from the Kamenets-Podolsky Pocket, the rebuilding of the 6th, 19th, and 25th Panzer Divisions became necessary. After a unusually mild and combat intensive winter, both Axis and Soviet units contain large numbers of damaged AFVs, and overall low strengths.

In the West, the Allies put together the final plans for their invasion of Europe.

The Soviets start with four main choices. They can try to complete the conquest of Rumania, drive NW from Lvov threatening the rear of AGC and AGN or the historical choice of the Bagration offensive against AGC. In each case, they can attack now with formations weakened by the winter battles or wait 4-6 weeks for the weather to improve and their supply to catch up.

### 2.3.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

#### Axis Player:

The Axis are facing an imminent invasion of NW Europe and an Eastern Front that that is lacking reserves and strong in very few places. Should the Axis absorb the Soviet Summer Offensive in their fortified line, or should they shorten the front and move farther west?

- APs/Turn: 35

#### Soviet Player:

The Soviets have options for the timing of their 1944 Summer Offensive. The main blow can fall on Army Group Center, or a massive attack can be made by the 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts on AG North Ukraine terminating at the Baltic and isolating both AG North and AG Center.

The timing of the assault on Rumania is also another consideration.

- APs/Turn: 25

### 2.3.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

This scenario uses the appropriate events from the 1941 Grand Campaign. As with the Stalingrad-Berlin campaign, these are slightly modified and are mostly slightly lower than the thresholds in the 1941 campaign (mainly as both armies will tend to be weaker in the later starts).

### 2.3.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

By the end of March 1944 the Soviet 1943/44 winter offensive was over. It had seen the liberation of almost all the Ukraine apart from the region around Lvov and ended with Soviet forces in NE Romania reaching the foothills of the

Carpathians. Stavka's focus shifted to AGC and the liberation of Minsk setting aside options such as knocking out Rumania or attacking via Lvov.

During the ensuing lull, the Bagration offensive was meticulously planned and commenced on 22 June 1944, 3 years to the day after the Nazi invasion. Despite heavy Soviet losses in the early phases it was a stunning success, almost completely destroying AGC, forcing AGN to retreat towards Riga and finally running out of steam near Warsaw. By July, the Soviets had renewed their offensive past Lvov and by September Rumania was out of the war and Finland seeking an armistice. By the start of 1945, the Soviets were ready to launch the offensive that took them from the Vistula to the gates of Berlin while completing the conquest of Hungary and, by April 1945, capturing Vienna.

### 2.3.5. PLAY NOTES



Broadly the play notes for the 1943 start date apply here. Clearly the Axis is weaker and the Soviets stronger but this is partly balanced by the Soviets starting to stretch their supply lines (something that will worsen as they move into Hungary and the Reich).

Both sides face the strategic dilemma that both sides had to deal with. Principally, whether the Soviets can attack north or west from Lvov, potentially threatening a grand encirclement, but equally running the risk of hitting a solid defensive line. The alternatives of the historical Bagration offensive or going for Rumania first are worth considering (and the Axis player needs to guard against them).

Again, if your experience is only of the early game, note the very low rate of manpower replacements for the Soviets (in part eased by returning wounded men). It is quite easy to badly weaken your main assault formations to the point where they cannot sustain operations.

## 2.4. ROAD TO KARELIA



### 2.4.1. OUTLINE

22 June 1941. Operation Barbarossa begins and this scenario follows Army Group North and the Finnish forces deployed in Karelia and Lake Ladoga. Army Group North conducts its blitzkrieg through the Baltic states and drives on its objective at Leningrad - birthplace of Lenin's Communist utopia.

Mannerheim's Finnish forces open up their own offensive on 10 July to recapture lands lost in the Winter War of 1940. Finnish forces are strong and capable but are uncomfortable and unprepared for a siege of Leningrad proper.

## 2.4.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

### Axis Player:

- Defeat the Northwest Front in the Baltic States
- Isolate Leningrad and conduct a siege
- Recapture disputed Finnish lands from the Soviets in the Karelian Isthmus and the eastern territories of Lake Ladoga
- APs/Turn: 5

### Soviet Player:

- Try to preserve the Northwest Front forces
- Build defences to hold Leningrad
- APs/Turn: 7

### NOTE

There are several rules we recommend using that the players must self-enforce. Axis units that begin in Finland should not be moved by sea or air, and no German units outside of Finland should be moved to Finland. No Axis units operating from Finland should launch attacks at Soviet units in the Leningrad region until both Leningrad city hexes are Axis controlled.

The ctrl-m key can be used to highlight the Leningrad region.

## 2.4.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

There are no unique events for this scenario.

## 2.4.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

Army Group North with 16, 18 Armies and 4 Panzer Group aimed to clear the Baltic States and capture Leningrad. Initially it broke the Soviet 8 and 11 Armies with some ease and 4 Panzer brushed off a Soviet counter-attack and crossed the Dauga on 26 June. Pskov was taken on 8 July and the Panzer Group started to engage with the Soviet defences along the Luga line. Relying on hastily raised militia divisions, the Soviet line crumbled and by 4 August

elements of 4 Panzer Group were less than 30 miles from Leningrad. By 7 September the Germans captured Shlisselburg cutting off the city (apart from Lake Ladoga).

The Germans then made a major attempt to take the city on 9 September but by 19 September had only made limited gains. On 22 September Hitler ordered 4 Panzer Group to deploy south to take part in the planned Operation Typhoon.

As a result the front stalemated along the river Volkhov and it was not till early 1943 that the Soviets were able to regain a limited overland connection to the city.

Initially, Finland remained neutral despite heavy Soviet bombing raids on 25 June. Finland formally entered the war as a result (the Continuation War) with two major goals.

In the far north, in combination with German troops, the Finns tried to capture Murmansk and cut the Soviet rail lines at Salla and Kandalaska. However, lack of preparation, Soviet resistance and the terrain meant none of these goals were achieved and the Arctic Front stalemated till 1944.

In the south, the Finnish offensive to regain the Karelian isthmus began on 10 July and by the end of the week elements of the Soviet 7 Army were isolated north of Lake Ladoga. More Soviet forces were cut off at Vyborg/Viipuri on 23 August as the Soviets fell back to the 1939 border. By late September, the front had stalemated as the siege of Leningrad began.

In Karelia itself the Finns pushed past the old 1939 border and by October had reached the Svir River. The German defeat at Tikhvin meant the Finns could make no further progress and went over to the defensive on 6 December.

## 2.4.5. DESIGNER NOTES

Not much to say about this scenario as it is an extension of the Road to Leningrad scenario with the addition of Finnish troops around Lake Ladoga. It does put the entire northern front into perspective as the Soviet player now has to be concerned with holding off the Finns in the north as well as the Germans to the southwest. Consequently, it opens up an additional source

of tension as the management of defensive forces in Karelia can now impact holding off the Wehrmacht as it advances across the Baltics. I can see the balance being the Soviet player trying to use economy of force by deploying the bare minimum forces in the north so that they can deploy the majority of their forces against the Wehrmacht. If the player doesn't manage that economy of force well, then there could be more opportunities for victory for the axis player than there are in the Road to Leningrad scenario.



#### 2.4.6. PLAY NOTES

The attack by Army Group North is the same as in the 1941 scenario in the original game. The challenge for both sides is to use a relatively small force to gain, or retain, key ground. The speed at which the Germans can isolate Leningrad is critical.

On the Finnish sector, the Finns mostly lack the mobility to create encirclements but should be able to steadily drive the Soviets south in the Isthmus and towards the Svir river. For the Soviets, this sector is

really about delaying the Finnish advance and inflicting as heavy losses as possible.

## 2.5. AGA – PART I: RACE TO THE CAUCASUS



### 2.5.1. OUTLINE

25 July 1942, Rostov-on-the-Don has fallen to Army Group A and Phase I of Operation Blue is concluded. Operation Edelweiss begins with the 1st Panzer and 17th Armies, supported by Rumanian forces, driving into the Caucasus Region to capture the oil rich region and secure Germany's fuel needs for the duration of the war. The Soviet forces are disrupted and scattered but are quickly re-organizing and reinforcements from the Transcaucasus Front along the border with Iran are being sent to stabilize the lines.

### 2.5.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

#### Axis Player:

- Clear the Caucasus Region, secure the Black Sea ports and capture the oil regions around Grozny and Baku
- Hold Army Group B's right flank along the Kalmuck Steppe and possibly capture the vital port at Astrakhan
- APs/Turn: 10

#### Soviet Player:

- Reorganize the shattered remnants and rebuild the North Caucasus Front into a capable force
- Defend Astrakhan, Grozny, Baku and the vital Black Sea ports
- APs/Turn: 5

### 2.5.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

In addition to the events listed below, there are a number of events for historical flavour and background information.

TITLE	FIRST POSSIBLE TURN	MAIN EFFECTS
Operation Bluecher Begins	1	If the Axis player holds Temryuk and Tamanskaya then this triggers Rumanian reinforcements over the next 5 turns.
Germans climb Mount Elbrus	1	If the Axis occupy Kislovodsk and Mikoyan-Shahar then they gain 100 VP

### 2.5.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

The fall of Rostov on 25 July 1942 allowed the Germans to commence Operation Edelweiss, designed to capture the oilfields at Baku. Initially Army Group A was made up of 1 and 4 Panzer Armies, 17 Army, 3 Romanian Army and supported by elements of Luftflotte 4.

Initially the Germans made rapid gains capturing Stavropol on 3 August, Maikop (10), Krasnodar (12) and Mozdok on 23 August (in addition to planting a Swastika on Mount Elbrus on 21 August). However, supply problems and the diversion of formations to Stalingrad slowed the advance. By 11 September, the Germans captured the bulk of Novorossiysk but were unable to fully dislodge the Red Army meaning the port couldn't be used.

By the end of September, Soviet formations had successfully held the main passes into Georgia and stopped the German advance well to the west of Grozny. However, the Soviet forces in the region were too weak to attack until the Germans started to pull back in early 1943.

### 2.5.5. DESIGNER NOTES

This scenario fascinated me because Operation Edelweiss and the drive into the Caucasus was OKH's objective for the Summer 1942 campaign in Russia. It started heavily reinforced and then just whittled away over time as more and more assets were taken away from Army Group A and reassigned to Army Group B's drive on Stalingrad. It continues to show how much the Wehrmacht really did not take its logistics seriously as there was great "hope"

that the Wehrmacht would just somehow overcome these difficulties and miraculously crush the Soviets. As my previous battalion commanders used to tell me in the Army, "hope is not an answer." Obviously, this hope was generated from previous miraculous victories. While the 6th Army battered away for months at Stalingrad, Army Group A and the 1st Panzer Army limped forward with its meager supplies of fuel towards what was supposed to be the major objective of the summer 1942 campaign.

The real logistics constraint were the rail bridges. This is something that is not represented in WitE 2 but it played a major factor in rail chokepoints. Rail lines are relatively easy to replace but building rail bridges over the Dnieper and Don Rivers required extensive engineering support and raw materials. By the summer of 1942, most of these blown bridges had not been rebuilt or repaired so supplies got backed up going through the few operating bridges. In fact, the Soviets blew the Rostov bridge over the Don River when the 1st Panzer Army captured the city. The bridge would not be repaired during the campaign, so German supplies had to be unloaded in Rostov, driven across Don on an alternate bridge and then reloaded on trains on the other side. The train network in the Caucasus was not nearly as developed as in the rest of Russia and there was a severe shortage in rail cars. To add to this significant deficiency, Army Group A did not have any railroad engineer units assigned to it and had to create its own ad hoc unit with personnel within its own command. You can glance at the map and can tell just how much trouble the 6th Army is going to be in by seeing that FBD 3c is almost 200 miles behind the spearheads of the 6th Army.

Many historians point out that the Germans took away valuable forces from Army Group A and diverted them north but the simple matter of the fact is that Army Group A struggled to keep what forces remained supplied anyway. It wouldn't make sense to keep a strong force in the Caucasus that simply could not be supplied.

It is interesting to note that tactically, the Germans could destroy Soviet personnel and equipment with high loss ratios often scoring 5 or 6:1 losses in tanks. However, in the long run, the Germans abandoned mountains of equipment through their numerous long retreats. Case Blue was no different

as all German armies had repair yards full of disabled tanks, motorized vehicles, artillery and aircraft that could not be supplied with the spare parts needed to get this equipment back in operation. During the retreats, worn out trucks could not evacuate this damaged equipment and the trucks themselves were in just as bad shape as the combat equipment. During these retreats, perfectly functioning crew served weapons and artillery had to also be likewise abandoned. Aircraft that needed an engine overhaul were abandoned and lost.

One of the first issues in developing these scenarios was how to handle the Caucasus Mountains. WitE 2 will allow any unit to cross any mountain hex, and this is somewhat problematic to the Soviets. How can the Soviets defend a vast mountain range with a limited number of forces as it simply cannot be done. If you look at any Google Map view of these European mountain range, you can easily see that units simply cannot operate in this kind of terrain as operations were limited to the few mountain passes. So, I decided to make all mountain passes without a road or rail hex as impassible as it gives the defender some advantage in blocking choke points in a more realistic fashion. This technique is also used in the Danube scenario as well to help the Axis have more defensive opportunities in the Carpathians.

The other interesting issue was how to handle the Kerch Strait ferry. WitE 2 is very generous in how it uses these ferries and without any adjustments, the Rumanian Corps in Crimea could simply traverse the strait on the first turn and could be easily advancing along the Black Sea Coast towards Tuapse and Sochi long before the Soviet player could scratch together any kind of defense. The reality was that the Soviets had a flotilla of patrol craft stationed at the naval port of Temryuk and this patrol base had to be neutralized before the slow Kriegsmarine pontoons could cross the straits with their combat units. In the scenario, I made the strait impassible until the Germans captured Temryuk and Tamanskaya. Even then, it would take a week to ferry a single division across the strait so the units queuing up for the movement across the strait had to have their entry delayed at Kerch in a similar fashion.

Something I thought was always missing in many of our scenarios and campaigns was more of a narrative to connect the player to his game. I tried to address this by adding narrative historical text both in role playing (you are

the general) style and also informing the player about how things historically transpired in the conflict they were engaging with. By adding stories about the Dzerzhinzy Tractor Factory and the dry, waterless Kalmuck Steppe, I feel like the events add weight and raise the tension level in the scenario. I hope players enjoy these as much as I enjoyed putting them in.

The Alternate Case Blue Phase I scenario simply adds Manstein's 11th Army to the order of battle. Historically, the 11th Army had been allocated to Army Group South, and its drive in southern Russia, soon after it had taken Sevastopol. However, the 11th Army was quickly reassigned to Army Group North and tasked with breaking the siege at Leningrad. The players get to explore a what-if scenario in using this valuable asset and see if this additional force can be enough to achieve final victory.

## 2.5.6. PLAY NOTES



This is a short 17-18 turn scenario and both sides are pressured in two distinct ways; to attack as the Axis and to hold at all costs as the Soviets. Victory points are awarded to Axis and Soviet players on a per player turn basis and end of game basis for objective cities they control. VPs are also awarded on the number of men, guns, AFVs and aircraft lost by both sides. The objective cities can be divided into 4 groups plus a bonus event target:



- Easy for Axis to reach - Salsk, Krasnodar, and Maikop
- Black Sea ports - Novorossiysk, Tuapse, Sochi, and Sukhumi
- Eastern cities - Ordzhonikidze, Grozny, and Makhachkala
- Hard for Axis to reach - Baku and Astrakhan
- Bonus for control - Control of both Kislovodsk and Mikoyan-Shahar which implies surmounting of Mt. Elbrus

### Axis

Strategically you have two main options.

1. Drive to the north with a small force (one Corps) towards Astrakhan, drive due east and use all the panzer corps towards Grozny-Makhachkala and Baku with the 17th Army and Rumanians in a minor supporting role to shore up the Black Sea coast.
2. Focus on the Black Sea coast VP cities and use the panzer corps to drive east as far as you can go before time runs out.

Operationally, the Soviets at start forces are very weak and you should use turn one to encircle as many as possible. If pocketed on turn 1, your mop up forces can easily eliminate them on turn 2. Also, send some units to drive deep into the Soviet rear. Do not worry on turns 1 and 2 about all the low CPP units (all the Axis units start off with 0 CPP to reflect the first phases of Operation Blue). In the early turns you need to press forward at full speed. The air assets (Luftwaffe) are few and you will lose a portion of your fighters leaving you only seventy-five or so single engine fighters available. However, you still have dual engine fighters (Me 110s), and plenty of Stukas and two engine bombers, but you must use them wisely. You have two basic choices, either use the bombers for GS type missions or allocate a good portion to KG 100 and change the load outs of the bombers to use mines and begin a rigorous NP (naval interdiction) campaign on the Black Sea ports.

You should feel the pressure of never having enough time or resources to accomplish all your goals. Try not to dilute your forces too much in the vast open spaces. With that said, you can micromanage your CPPs by alternating resting 1-2 corps after the initial deep thrust attack. Ideally, you will want to

place these refitting units on a Depot that has been regauged if possible. Your recovery rate will be much improved for units not adjacent to the Soviets. When rested and at 100 CPPs the Panzer Corps are very powerful and can drive deep to the east. DA are your friends, when your panzers are at 100 CPP, they can achieve good odds and only be down to 70 CPP from one combined DA, allowing some maneuverability and if they stay away from the Soviets can regain those lost CPP quickly. Try not to be tempted to over push or over rest your units, as time is not on your side.

### Soviet

Strategically, all the Soviet forces are both scattered all over the map and all units are at 0 CPP. The front-line Soviet units are a complete mess, some units are down to 25% TOE, and after the initial German attack on the front lines many units will be depleted, unready and routed. Many units will have 2-15% TOE.

Operationally, try to move all your encircled units out of any pockets if possible, and you will need to retreat your depleted and unready units as far back as you can (despite the "Not one step back" orders). Expect to fall back quickly to Georgievsk in the center in the first 2-4 turns, while organizing garrisons of between 2-4 divisions in the westernmost Black Sea port objectives. Maintain a picket line in the north as you fall back. Some of your best and strongest units in the early turns are the Cavalry and any Guards units that show up. The first 10 turns the Soviets receive, 10 full Rifle Divisions, 25 Rifle Brigades, 2 Naval Brigade and one Cavalry division. Of these, one is a Guards division and 7 are Guards brigades. The Soviets also receive a sundry list of artillery, mortar, rocket, anti-tank, anti-air, and tank battalions. So, the main idea is to give ground where you can, find and set up defense positions (behind rivers, in the mountains or make a few VP fortress cities) and hold on. You can't stand and fight in the open until greatly reinforced. Try to determine the Axis *schwerpunkt* and react to it. The onus is on the Axis player, if you can just hold on a little longer.

## 2.6. CASE BLUE PHASE II 1942-43



### 2.6.1. OUTLINE

25 July 1942. Phase I of Operation Blue is complete. The Soviet Southwest Front is shattered and the 6th Army is in pursuit as it approaches the banks of the Don River west of Stalingrad. 2nd Army is holding Voronezh and securing the left flank of Army Group B. Army Group A has just captured Rostov and is launching 'Operation Edelweiss' to drive into the Caucasus and capture the rich oil fields. Italian, Rumanian and Hungarian forces are supporting the effort while Soviet strength, along with its desperation, is building. The Soviets must hold, build strength and launch a counterattack of their own.

### 2.6.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

**Axis Player:**

- Hold the Don River anchored at Voronezh
- Capture and hold Stalingrad
- Capture the Caucasus oil fields and Baku
- Capture and hold the Black Sea ports
- Prepare for a Soviet counteroffensive
- Hold your gains for the forthcoming 1943 offensive
- APs/Turn: 10

**Soviet Player:**

- Reorganize and strengthen the shattered fronts
- Hold Stalingrad at all costs
- Prevent Axis forces from capturing the oil fields in the Caucasus
- Prepare for counterattack
- Push the Axis forces back
- APs/Turn: 5

### 2.6.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

In addition to the events listed below, there are a number of events for historical flavour and background information

TITLE	FIRST POSSIBLE TURN	MAIN EFFECTS
Operation Bluecher Begins	1	If the Axis player holds Temryuk and Tamanskaya then this triggers Rumanian reinforcements over the next 5 turns.
Germans climb Mount Elbrus	1	If the Axis occupy Kislovodsk and Mikoyan-Shahar then they gain 100 VP

### 2.6.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

The second phase of the German 1942 Summer offensive commenced with the capture of Rostov on 25 July. At that stage, Army Group A (initially with the bulk of the armoured and motorised forces) struck towards the Caucasus. In the meantime Army Group B attacked towards the Stalingrad.

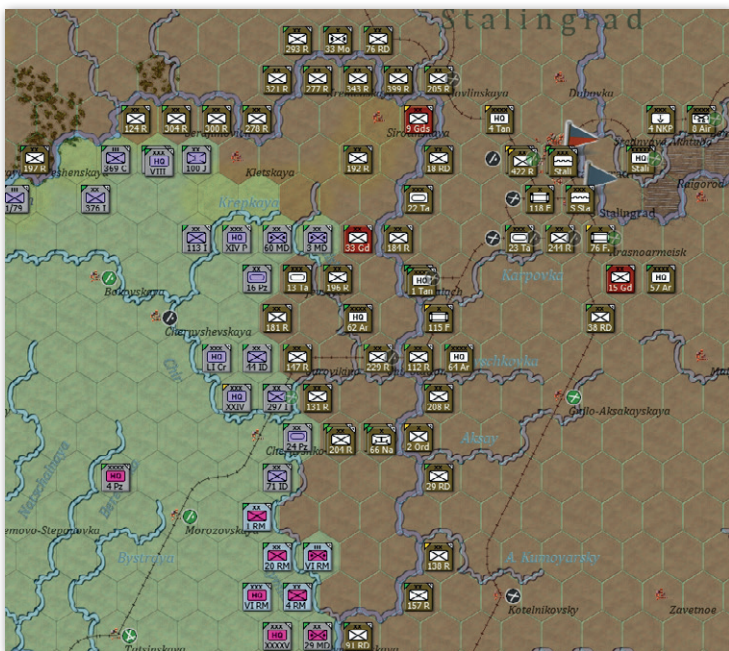
Both Army Groups were initially successful but by late August a weakened Army Group A had out-run its supply lines and, facing significant Soviet resistance, had stalled well short of its objectives.

Army Group B reached the Don by early August but was initially too weak to force the river line. By 10 August the Germans had secured the Don crossings but were already facing regular Soviet attacks on their northern flank and were able to hold onto several bridgeheads that were to be critical when they went over to the offensive later in the year. By 23 August 6 Army had reached the northern suburbs of Stalingrad while 4 Panzer Army the south. By

12 September the 2 Armies had entered the city proper facing the Soviet 62 and 64 Armies.

From then to mid-November the Germans launched 3 major offensives and had pinned the Soviets into shallow, disconnected, bridgeheads. However, on 19 November the Soviets opened their own offensive (Uranus) that was to see the destruction of 6 Army,

## 2.6.5. PLAY NOTES



This is a mid-size thirty-four (34) turn scenario that covers the operations in the southern regions of Russia, both sides start out depleted with the Axis having the upper hand and initiative. This is truly a see-saw battle covering summer, fall and winter combat, testing both players' resolve and skills.

VPs are awarded to both the Axis and Soviets on a per turn basis and end of game basis. While VPs are also awarded on the number of men, guns, AFVs and aircraft lost by both sides, most games will be won or lost by who controls Stalingrad and the Caucasus oil fields at the end of the game. The Soviets can afford to lose some of these for a time, but most likely must retake them (and some other objectives) by the end of the scenario to win.

## Axis General Overview

You have 213 units on map, of which 41 are HQs, 9 are armor (6 panzer divisions and 1 Hungarian, one panzer division is broken down), 11 motorized (6 German motorized divisions (the GD withdrawals on turn 5, 1 Slovakian Mobile division, an SS Motorized Brigade and a Rumanian motorized regiment), 67 infantry units, of which 47 are German (this includes 2 Jaeger Divisions and the 369th Croat Regiment), 7 Italian units, of which 5 are divisions and 2 are brigades), 4 Rumanian divisions, 9 Hungarian light divisions, 5 Cavalry divisions (3 Rumanian and 2 Italian). One other thing of note is that all your units CPP is at 0, and the % TOE is from 51-100%, however, the on-map units range from 75 to 100%, while the SU are much lower in TOE%.

As far as the air war goes, you start off with 292 fighters, 712 bombers and 729 utility planes. Your fighters should be able to dominate the skies, although they will be stretched to cover the front as it widens.

Reinforcements are far and few between. Germany receives the 22nd Panzer Division on turn 2, three Luftwaffe Field Divisions on turn 16, two Panzer Divisions on turn 20, one Panzer Division and a Static Division on turn 21, an Infantry Division on turn 22, another Static Division on turn 24 and the SS Panzer Corps (7th Panzer Div., L.A.H. SS PzG Div., Das Reich SS PzG Div., Totenkopf SS PzG Div. and 3rd Mountain Div.) on turn 26, a Static Division on turns 27 and 28, a Static Division and the GD Motorized Division on turn 30 and finally on turn 31 an Infantry Division. You will also receive a large number of Rumanian Divisions starting on turn 6, with enough to form a 4th Rumanian Army on turn 12.

### Axis Strategic Options

Option 1 (800 VPs): Hold the river line on the Don, including Voronezh (100 VPs) and drive towards Stalingrad (500 VPs), South Stalingrad (100 VPs) and Astrakhan (100 VPs).

Option 2 (300 to 1,600 VPs): Destroy the Soviet units on the southern Don River and drive east or south per the sub-options below.

Sub-option 1 (300 VPs): Drive into the Kuban, targets: Krasnodar (100 VPs) and Maikop (200 VPs).

Sub-option 2 (1000 VPs): Drive due east heading towards: Grozny (200 VPs), Makhachkala (300 VPs), and Baku (500 VPs).

Sub-option 3 (300 VPs): Drive to the Black Sea coast targets: Novorossiysk and Sukumi. Also target Tbilisi. (All three worth 100 VPs each)

### Axis Operational Options

The operational directives are driven by the strategic options chosen above.

Army Group B should be tasked with Option 1.

4th Panzer Army's main role should be to support the 6th Armies drive on Stalingrad, both armies are too weak to do this alone.

2nd Army's main role is to hold the Don River line and hold Voronezh if possible. The 1st SS Brigade can either be kept as a reserve or shuttled to 6th Army or 4th Panzer Army.

6th Army's main role as it was historically to drive on and capture Stalingrad.

2nd Hungarian Army's main role is tied to the 2nd Army's role, both Armies should hold the Don River if possible, to protect the left flank of 6th Army.

Army Group A should be tasked with Option 2.

1st Panzer Army is the main driving force of Army Group A, and you need to decide on which sub-option to strive for with this Army as the main wedge.

17th Army's main role is to support the 1st Panzer Army and it can also be used with the 3rd Rumanian Army to clean up the Black Sea ports if that option is chosen.

3rd Rumanian Army's primary role is to support the 17th Army and to also cross from Kerch once Krasnodar and Temryuk have been cleared.

8th Italian Army, the OKH reserve, is independent and can be used in either option 1 or 2. A strong case can be argued to move the 8th Italian Army into the gap where the 6th Army is on the Don and link in with the Hungarians on the left and protect 6th Army's left flank.

Both options will leave the Axis stretched with never seemingly enough forces to achieve either objective before the Soviets eventual counter blows.

### Soviet General Overview

The general situation depends on how and where the Axis strike the hardest first and what their strategic aim is. Your units start off battered with low CPP and TOE levels and depending on how and where the Axis have hit you will have a shattered line from Stalingrad to Rostov. Most likely the Axis player will attempt to run the historical course, with the 6th Army and 4th Panzer Army driving on Stalingrad and leaving the 2nd Army, 2nd Hungarian Army and most likely the 8th Italian Army behind the Don. For the drive into the Kuban and Caucasus it really depends how much effort and where the focus is at; clearing the Black Sea area and trying to skirt up the coast south of the Caucasus Mountains or a direct drive east towards the oilfields and Baku.

### Soviet Strategic Options

There are not a lot of strategic options to choose from, as you will be responding to the Axis player aims and direction. Your main goal will be to hold the Don line in the north, hold on to Stalingrad and to retreat in the Kuban and or hold on for as long as you can until your reinforcements start to kick in. In the end you will need to counterattack once reinforced, and control both Stalingrad and most/all the Caucasus by the end of the game.

### Soviet Operational Options

Air, you have (of course depending on the Axis first turn) around 1,450 to 1,550 aircraft available. There are quite a lot of reinforcements that will be received into the Reserves.

Ground, you must walk a fine balancing act of holding ground (easier in the north) and trading space for time.

Voronezh Front, primary task is to hold the Don River line until it's time for a counterattack.

Stalingrad Front, primary task is to hold Stalingrad (600 VPs for both hexes), secondary task would be to hold Astrakhan (100 VPs).

North Caucasus Front, primary tasks are hold the Black Sea coast VPs (Novorossiysk and Sukhumi, both 100 VPs each) and attempt to hang on to Krasnodar (100 VPs) and Maikop (200 VPs) if possible and retake them when possible.

Transcaucasus Front, primary tasks is hold or recapture the VPs: oilfields (Krasnodar (100 VPs), Maikop (200 VPs), Grozny (200 VPs), Makhachkala (300 VPs), and Baku (500 VPs)) and Tbilisi (100 VPs)

Over time there will be 1.5 million men, 29,493 artillery and 5,452 AFVs received as reinforcements. This is only a partial listing up to turn 12: 11x Guards Rifle Divisions, 38x Rifle Divisions, 4x Guards Rifle Brigades, 25x Rifle Brigades, 25x Tank Brigades, 4x Motorized Rifle Brigades and 2x Naval Rifle Brigades.

These reinforcements will form your backbone and your counterattack force, if you don't squander them in piecemeal or holding attacks, so use them wisely.

## 2.7. CASE BLUE PHASE II 42-43 - ALTERNATE



### 2.7.1. OUTLINE

25 July 1942. This scenario is an alternative version of the Case Blue Phase II scenario. It is a "what if" scenario to explore what might have happened had Manstein's 11th Army not been transferred from the Crimea to support the siege of Leningrad. Instead, it maintains the plan to have the 11th Army support the drive into southern Russia.

The scenario overview, and per turn admin point allocation, is identical to that in section 2.6.2.

### 2.7.2. PLAY NOTES

The play notes for Case Blue Phase II apply to this alternate scenario as well. The only significant difference in the two scenarios is the addition of 5 German infantry Divisions and the 11th Army HQs as early reinforcements. These additional forces provide another reserve that can be committed towards either Stalingrad or the Caucasus objectives, and as such makes this scenario easier for the German player than the standard version.

## 2.8. AGA - PART II: KUBAN BRIDGEHEAD



### 2.8.1. OUTLINE

Early February 1943, the 6th Army at Stalingrad is hanging on by their fingernails and all attempts to relieve the pocket have failed. The Soviet 1942-43 counteroffensive in the south has pushed back Army Groups A and B nearly to their starting lines at the beginning of Operation Blue. The 17th

Army holds another army sized pocket in the Kuban region of the Caucasus. Hitler has declared that the 17th Army will remain in place in order to relieve the pressure elsewhere on the battered southern front but has promised generous air support to keep the 17th Army fighting.

Will the 17th Army face the same fate of the 6th Army or be able to hold off the Soviet forces long enough?

## 2.0.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

### Soviet Player:

- Support the amphibious landing on the Black Sea to help unhinge the strong Axis defences at Novorossiysk
- Destroy the 17th Army and liberate the Kuban before the Axis have an opportunity to withdraw across the Kerch Straits
- Drive into the Crimean Peninsula and liberate Sevastopol
- APs/Turn: 2

### Axis Player:

- Hold on to the Kuban as long as possible
- Use your generous Luftwaffe resources to gain air superiority
- Destroy the Soviet amphibious landing foothold near Novorossiysk
- Preserve the 17th Army so that it can continue to fight
- APs/Turn: 3

### NOTE

We do not recommend playing this scenario against the AI.

## 2.0.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

There are no unique events for this scenario.

## 2.0.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

As Army Group A pulled out of the Caucasus, 17 Army fell back towards the Crimea. Multiple defensive lines were constructed, initially anchored on Novorossiysk. Soviet attacks commenced in early February but made limited gains.

Initially the German high command envisaged the Kuban Bridgehead as jumping off point for a renewed offensive into the Caucasus. By early September, German defeats in the Ukraine led to a withdrawal to Crimea and the Soviets had liberated the region by 9 October 1943.

Initially the region was defended by nearly 400,000 men (in the German V, XLIV and XLIX Mountain Corps, supported by the Romanian Cavalry Corps). The northern flank rested on the Sea of Azov and lay behind the Kurka and Kuban rivers. The southern portion was protected by poor terrain and the bastion of Novorossiysk. The centre was relatively weaker, relying on fortified villages, concrete bunkers and substantial manmade obstacles. Behind this were multiple lines.

The Soviet offensive opened on 4 February as elements of 18 Army established a bridgehead at Novorossiysk. Despite German counter-attacks the Soviets were able to expand this and turn into a strongly fortified region.

The main Soviet offensive controlled by the North Caucasus Front commenced on 10 September 1943. The 9 Army attacked to the north, and 56 and 16 Armies, backed by marines and naval assets, assaulted Novorossiysk itself. However, the Soviet offensive coincided with 17 Army being ordered to retreat. But even so, initial Soviet gains were slow and hard won and Novorossiysk wasn't liberated till 16 September. Each successive defensive line stalled the Soviet offensive but the German retreat was hampered by Soviet marines landed by the Black Sea Fleet. The Soviets assaulted Taman on 25 September. By this stage the Germans were in full retreat and evacuated the Taman Peninsula on 9 October with most of their heavy weapons. German losses were estimated at around 10,000 killed, the Rumanians lost over 1,500 and the Soviets over 40,000 killed in the fighting.

## 2.0.5. DESIGNER NOTES

This scenario is a fascinating look at some unique facets of the Eastern Front that are not commonly known and as such, I would recommend only experienced WitE 2 players to attempt to play through this scenario. This scenario will require an exceptional knowledge of the air and logistics system. The reason for this is that supply is very constrained for the German side and not very generous for the Soviets either. The Kerch Strait, during the winter months, was not calm enough to allow the Axis to consistently ship supplies across the straits. Additionally, the Germans had to rely on catamaran pontoon boats to move those supplies across the Strait. The 17th Army only had enough supplies in the Kuban for a couple of weeks of operations. The only way the army was going to be effectively resupplied was via the air. Considering that the Luftwaffe airlift at Stalingrad was such a failure, it is difficult to conceive that the Germans would think that an airlift would work in the Kuban but it did. The Soviets, likewise, had their own supply difficulties being far from the priority fighting further north and lacking a highly developed rail network.

Other than the logistical constraints, both the Axis and Soviets were worn out. The 17th Army, as part of Army Group A, had spent the previous two months withdrawing out of the Caucasus region with a Soviet pursuit hot on their heels. The severe logistical situation combined with needed haste to withdraw to safety forced the Germans to abandon much of its heavy combat equipment during the withdrawal. The 17th Army was also not a priority, so it did not receive much in the way of replacement personnel and equipment. Because of these conditions, many of the divisions in the 17th Army are severely understrength and represented as kampfguppen instead of full divisions. The Soviets were not in much better shape as these forces were also not a priority and had to rely on locally drafted conscripts to fill out their ranks. This resulted in Soviet rifle divisions that were divisions in name only. The average Soviet rifle division probably averaged less than 5,000 men. The North Caucasus Front never received a single tank or mechanized corps to support its operations. Regardless, Stavka expected the North Caucasus Front to isolate the 17th Army in the Kuban and ensure its destruction.

This is a long scenario and there is a lot of time for the Soviets to execute their objectives. However, replenishment of supplies, personnel and material will be slow for both sides which will severely affect the optempo. This will require both players to carefully consider their plans as any large mistake on either side could prove fatal. There will probably be periods of turns consisting of both sides licking their wounds and preparing for the next round.

This scenario is also unique because the conflict in the Kuban may have seen the most intense aerial battles on the Eastern Front. The Germans sent significant Luftwaffe forces into the Kuban to support local counterattacks while the Soviets reinforced their own air armies to counter the Luftwaffe. The efficient players' use of these aerial assets are now much more important than in other scenarios since these air forces represent a greater portion of available firepower and combat capability.

## 2.0.6. PLAY NOTES



## Axis

The German key to success is to trade terrain for time in a series of collapsing defensive lines with enough forces in reserve to respond to any immediate threats. Since the Soviets don't have much in the way of mobile forces, you shouldn't have to worry about any major penetrations but the Soviets will break lines in certain places. You will need to constantly build rear area fortifications to have a fall back plan. The 17th Army has enough room to start with without really worrying about potentially losing the scenario. An early withdrawal from the area north of Slavyanskaya should be considered, as trucking supplies through the swamps will use up precious vehicles and freight. The key defensive line that must be secured in order to potentially achieve a major victory is the Novorossiysk-Krymskaya-Temryuk. You will need to hold this line for as long as possible.

Consider withdrawing enough forces from the line to start building these fortifications as quickly as possible. Only consider attacks against weak Soviet forces or if you have to seal a breach. You cannot afford to waste any supplies, personnel or material. The most dangerous part of the Axis line is around Novorossiysk as that is the shortest distance from the Soviet lines to the Tamanskaya. Lose Tamanskaya and the 17th Army is potentially doomed. Your best forces need to be used here to hold the line. You cannot afford to lose much ground here. Mix your weaker Rumanian and Luftwaffe ground troops with the stronger Wehrmacht units to maximize your defense. Do not rely on these weaker units to hold the lines themselves.

When you do commit to an attack, make sure it is heavily supported by the Luftwaffe. The Luftwaffe still has a significant advantage in morale and experience and will outmatch the Soviet air forces. Up until May, the Luftwaffe is your fire brigade. Use them to set the conditions early as these assets will begin to withdraw to begin planning for the Kursk offensive. Also, consider using the Luftwaffe to interdict and damage the Soviet Amphibious HQ unit, especially if it attempts to block the Kerch ferry hex. Even forcing it to withdraw from the Novorossiysk area can allow the port to receive much needed freight.

Keep a close eye on your withdrawal schedule and make sure you don't have units pulling front line duty when a unit is ordered to withdraw. Consider using these units to build your rear area fortifications and serve as your reserve so they are not key to your defense.

## Soviet

The Soviet key to success is achieving a significant breakthrough of the German lines. The Germans will attempt to defend in depth with successive defensive lines. If you can break into the rear of the Axis lines, and sever links between the 17th Army and Temryuk and Tamanskaya/Kerch, you will significantly improve your chances for a decisive victory. Start with the lodgment near Novorossiysk and see if you can break the Axis lines there. Time is not on your side as both sides gain VPs for victory locations over time. You will need to secure Temryuk, Tamanskaya, Novorossiysk, Anapa and Krymskaya quickly in order to build up your VPs.

You will have to be mindful that your logistics and replacement capability is only slightly better than the German's situation. Your attacks must be well planned and deliberate. You cannot afford to drain yourself of critical resources that do not achieve some results. Keeping the Axis forces off balance and disrupting their defensive preparations is important as you do not want the Germans to dig in and get comfortable. Try to pick off the weaker Rumanian and Luftwaffe ground units so it stretches the German line even further. You might even be capable of pulling off some deception operations so as to not reveal your hand to potentially achieve some surprise.

The VVS will provide significant air reinforcements in late March and will be available through the end of May. Your best laid plans must be executed in this time period. After May, your forces will slowly be drained in preparation of the Kursk offensive. You may also need to use some of your fighter assets to protect your Amphibious HQ unit from the Luftwaffe. If the damage to the Amphibious HQ gets too high, withdraw it before it is lost for good. While you have it, you can use it to provide gunfire support along the coast, and to prevent your amphibious beachhead next to Novorossiysk from being isolated. If you are forced to withdraw the naval unit, you should evacuate



your units from the beachhead first. It may be possible to use the amphibious unit to temporarily block supplies from going over the Kerch Ferry hex, but don't expect that to last long without lots of fighter cover.

## 2.9. AGC – KUTUZOV TO BAGRATION 43-44



### 2.9.1. OUTLINE

12 July 1943. The allies have landed in Sicily and Operation Citadel has been cancelled. German losses during the Kursk offensive have been high. With the redeployment of forces to Italy and Southern France, the Front is spread thin. At the Wehrmacht's weakest moment, the Soviets are poised to launch their counter-offensive "Operation Kutuzov" against AGC. The goal is to capture Orel and annihilate the German 9th Army, causing the collapse of AGC. Luftflotte 6 has been flying non-stop since the offensive began in early July and has enjoyed tremendous success where the German Wehrmacht has not. But the Luftwaffe is running short on fuel and the aircrews are exhausted, while fresh Soviet air units are being committed to the fray. The beginning of the front wide Soviet offensive to liberate the Motherland has begun in earnest.

### 2.9.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

#### Soviet Player:

- Liberate Orel, Smolensk and Bryansk
- Conduct deep operations to encircle and destroy Army Group Center
- Breach the Panther Line along the Dnieper River
- Liberate Minsk for the coup-de-grace
- APs/Turn: 5

#### Axis Player:

- Hold off the Soviet onslaught and hold your position along the Panther Line
- Hold Smolensk, Vitebsk, Mogilev and Gomel
- Prevent collapse of Army Group Center
- APs/Turn: 5

### 2.9.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

There are no unique events for this scenario.

### 2.9.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

By 12 July, the northern arm of the German Kursk offensive had been abandoned as it was bogged down in the Soviet defensive lines and facing increasing localised attacks. In turn, the Soviet Western, Bryansk, and Central Fronts struck the German 2nd Panzer and 9th Armies located in the Orel salient. The goal of this offensive was threefold. First, it was to put pressure on Army Group Center which was engaged at the time in fighting the Battle of Kursk. Second, it was designed to reduce the Orel salient and thus shorten the length of the front line. Last, but not least, the objective of Operation Kutuzov was to encircle and destroy a large number of German divisions in the Orel salient. The offensive also saw large scale co-operation with the Soviet partisan formations in the region. These operations disrupted the German logistics and hampered their attempts to respond to the escalating Soviet offensive.

Once launched, Operation Kutuzov proved an immediate success. German reserves earmarked for the Battle of Kursk were moved instead to resist the advances of Soviet forces involved in Operation Kutuzov. By 16 July the Soviets had broken the front held by 9 Army and this was threatened with encirclement. Counter-attacks by elements of 2 Panzer and 4 Armies allowed 9 Army to pull back and by 18 July it had fallen back to its start line of 5 July.

Orel was liberated on 5 August and the Germans commenced a hasty retreat towards Bryansk.

At this stage, Stavka prioritised the offensive towards Kiev and started to draw off Soviet formations leaving the offensive under the control of Western and Central Fronts. The Soviets tried to break the German lines at Yelnya from 7-12 August but were stopped by heavy resistance and well prepared defensive lines. Despite some gains at Spas-Demyansk by mid-August the Germans had held off Western Front inflicting heavy losses for limited Soviet gains.

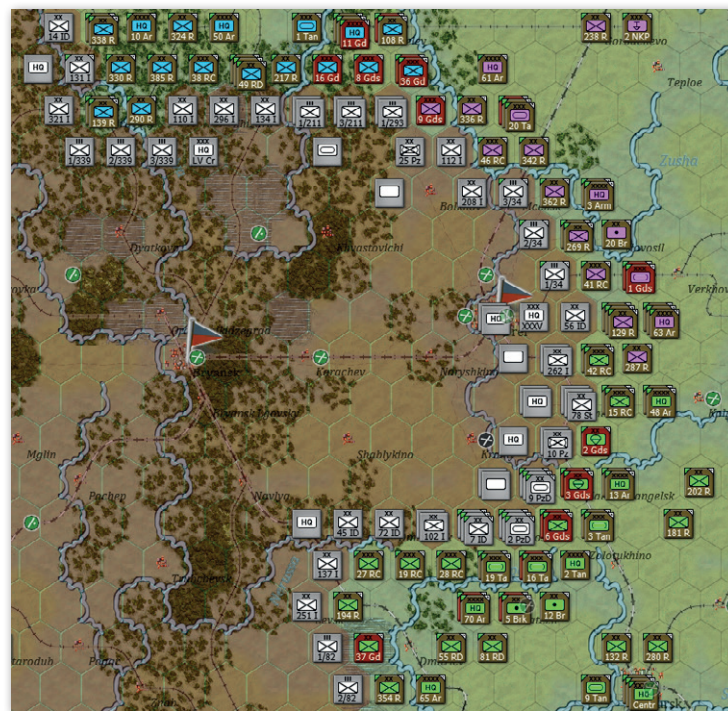
The Soviets renewed the battle for Yelnya on 28 August, captured the city on 30 August and pushed the Germans back to the Dnieper by early September.

On 14 September the Soviets launched an offensive to liberate Smolensk. Attacking from the north, Kalinin Front quickly breached the German lines. Western Front also made substantial gains and 19 September had torn a gap in the German defences. On 25 September the Soviets liberated Smolensk and Roslavl but the Germans managed to cling on to Vitebsk, Orsha and Mogilev.

Despite a series of localised attacks by Western Front the sector north of Mogilev saw a stalemate till the summer of 1944. The last major action was the liberation of Gomel by Belorussian Front on 26 November 1943.

Stavka continued to emphasise operations in the Ukraine until late Spring 1944. At that stage, the Soviet planning for what became the Bagration offensive was well under way.

## 2.9.5. DESIGNER NOTES



One of the first questions folks may ask about this scenario is why doesn't it begin with Operation Citadel and the German attempt to capture Kursk? I learned the answer to that question in creating the 1943 Campaign for the original WitE through reading many after action reviews that were posted on the forums. Everyone who plays Citadelle scenarios know that the Soviets have a vast reserve and will launch a massive counterattack so what is the point of bludgeoning the panzer forces by battering them on the Soviet fortified lines. Most players would start that campaign by completely re-organizing their forces and go on the defensive. So, the starting point I chose

was after 9th Army had exhausted itself and the Bryansk front launched its Operation Kutuzov.

I spent a lot of time researching this scenario and it helped me to learn some valuable lessons in designing future scenarios. One of the biggest struggles in designing these scenarios is getting the strength, equipment levels, and experience/morale mixes just right. If you don't get the mix right, you won't get the results you are looking for. Finding good personnel and equipment strength reports on anything other than units involved in well documented operations is a very serious challenge and I often have to take an educated "swag" and see what works.

One thing I learned was that a majority of the infantry divisions in Army Group North and Center had never really recovered from the losses suffered in 41 and early 42. The majority of replacements were sent to Army Group South in the spring/summer of 1942 to prepare for Operation Blue and then again in spring of 1943 to recover from the Soviet offensives in southern Russia. Most of the infantry divisions in Army Group North and Center either disbanded an entire regiment or disbanded one infantry battalion in each regiment. Even after that, Army Group Center's average infantry battalion strength just prior to the Kursk offensive was fortunate to have over 50% strength. A point that may now make sense why the Germans deviated from their standard tactics of letting the infantry punch a hole through enemy defensive lines and then have the panzers exploit. At Kursk, at least in Army Group Center's sector, the infantry divisions were still pretty weak and had to rely on the panzers to break through the fortified lines. Having never fully refitted from 41-42, the German infantry was further demolished in the summer and fall campaigns of 1943. Additionally, the Germans were rapidly de-motorizing their forces while the Soviets were becoming increasingly mechanized. There are even panzer divisions that were starting to use horses in the fall of 1943.

### 2.9.6. PLAY NOTES

For both players a key issue is that the army you start with will rapidly be re-organised. Stavka opted to prioritise the Ukraine over a drive on Minsk and over the first 10 turns nearly half the at-start Soviet forces will be withdrawn,

For the Soviet player this sets a dilemma between clearing Orel in the opening turns and pressing as far west as possible. Once the withdrawals are mostly complete, the force ratio will be closer to 1-1 meaning any further gains will be hard won. Even so, the Soviets should keep up the pressure as it is harder for a German player to refit badly damaged divisions than it is for the Soviets.

For the German player, the initial challenge is the inverse. You too will lose some units to the Ukraine but need to hold off the initial Soviet offensive. Decisions include how long to cling to Orel, the trade off between counter-attacks and force preservation and trying to stop the Soviets before they reach Smolensk.

Historically the Soviets went over to the defensive outside of Vyazma and after they took Gomel in late 1943. In the scenario, to win, they will need to exceed these targets.

## 2.10. WESTERN UKRAINE 43-44



### 2.10.1. OUTLINE

3 November 1943. Manstein's Army Group South and Army Group A are battered and exhausted with the majority of their losses since Kursk not having been replaced. Many mighty German infantry and Panzer divisions are no more than regimental Kampfgruppen. The Soviet juggernaut rolls over all in its path, as it can take any objective that it wants as long as it can take the casualties. The Axis forces in the Crimea are cut off and have been ordered by Hitler to hold at all costs. Defeat and annihilation seem inevitable, but

hope remains with the arrival of elite, fresh German reserves consisting of the 1st Panzer, Liebstandarte SS Panzer and 2nd Fallschirmjaeger Divisions. As the Soviet 3rd Guards Tank Army bursts out of its bridgehead northwest of Kiev, the 4th Panzer Army is near collapse. Will the newly arrived elite German forces stem the tide?

## 2.10.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

### Axis Player:

- Try to hold the Dnieper Line and Kiev
- Utilize reserves to launch strong counterattacks to throw the Soviets off guard
- Hold the Crimea
- Keep Army Group South intact through the winter so that it can be rebuilt in the late spring
- APs/Turn: 7

### Soviet Player:

- Liberate Kiev, Sevastopol and Lvov
- Knock the Rumanians out of the war for good
- Use mobile deep operations to penetrate German lines and encircle German forces
- Destroy Army Group South
- APs/Turn: 15

## 2.10.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

TITLE	FIRST POSSIBLE TURN	MAIN EFFECTS
Rumanian Surrender	1	This changes the conditions and effect of Rumanian Surrender compared to the Campaign rules. Towns north of the Focsani-Galati-Sulina line and east of the Carpathian mountains have been removed as triggers. Trigger chance for the remainder of the cities is reduced from 50% to 25%. If Rumania surrenders, no units are allocated to the Soviet player but instead they gain 2,000 VP.

## 2.10.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

After Kursk the Soviets made rapid gains towards the Dnieper but failed to expand their limited bridgeheads until early November. On 3 November, elements of 1 Ukrainian Front forced the river north and south of Kiev and liberated the city on 6 November. Rybalko's 3 Guards Tank Army then broke out driving south towards Zhitomir and threatening the rear of Army Group South. Zhitomir fell on 12 November and Korosten on 17 tearing a huge gap in the northern flank of AGS. However, a counter-attack by the German 48 Panzer Corps regained Zhitomir and both sides paused due to the autumn muds.

Early December saw a renewal of the German counter-attack and heavy losses were inflicted on 60 Army.

The Soviets went back to the offensive on 24 December 1943 and the Soviets had regained Zhitomir by 31 December. The Soviets then advanced towards Rovno and started to envelop German formations to the south. To stall 1 Ukrainian the Germans had had to pull reserves from the south badly weakening 1 Panzer Army.

In the meantime 2 Ukrainian had attacked on 5 January, pinning 1 Panzer Army and capturing Kirovgrad. The German troops anchored on the Dnieper at Korsun were now threatened both north and south.

2 Ukrainian renewed its offensive on 24 January and elements of 1 Ukrainian attacked south on 26 and the two forces linked up on 28 January encircling the German 11 and 42 corps at Korsun. The relatively warm weather affected both sides as the counter-attack by 1 Panzer Army was bogged down in the mud. In turn, Soviet attempts to deepen the encirclement fell short due to the muddy conditions. The Germans broke out on 16-17 February and many men escaped but almost all the heavy weapons were lost.

At the same time 1 Ukrainian renewed its offensive on the northern sector almost reaching Lvov and basically severing Army Group South from Army Group Centre. To the south, 3 Ukrainian Front had taken Nikopol by late February driving back Army Group A.

The Soviets renewed their offensive across the Ukraine on 4 March. 1 Ukrainian Front hit 1 Panzer Army and pushed towards Tarnopol. The fighting for the city, and its rail junction, lasted from 10-20 March, while the

Soviets liberated Dubno on 17 March and Kremenets on 19 even as they captured Vinnitsa. The Soviets forced the Dniestr on 25 March and the Prut on 28. By early April elements of the 1 Tank Army had reached the foothills of the Carpathians.

To the south, 2 and 3 Ukrainian Fronts encircled 1 Panzer Army but fresh German troops sent from France (2 SS Panzer Corps) enabled 1 Panzer to break out westwards by 10 April. On the same day, Chuikov's 8 Guards Army liberated Odessa.

The reformed 4 Ukrainian Front attacked into the Crimea on 8 April and the Soviets had regained Sevastopol by 9 May, as the Germans and Romanians completed the evacuation of 17 Army.

### **2.10.5. DESIGNER NOTES**

Along with Drama on the Danube, this scenario is my other favorite in the Steel Inferno DLC. I would also consider this one a more advanced scenario as there is little room for error for either side in pursuing that decisive victory. Both sides are like punch drunk boxers circling the ring. I heard a quote recently that I fell in love with and it goes, "The Soviets could breach any German line that they wanted to as long as they were willing to accept the casualties and there was nothing the Germans could do about it." I love that line and it certainly rings true here.

The Germans are in absolute terrible shape. Army Group South has been on the defensive under unrelenting Soviet pressure ever since the failed Kursk offensive. Panzer Divisions are down to a handful of tanks, many divisions have been reduced to *kampfgruppen* or *korps abteilungen* and the average infantry company strength is somewhere between 25-40% strength. The Soviets, likewise, are battered as well as their average rifle division is manned at 50% or less. However, the difference is that Soviets can replenish a tank corps in thirty days and get it back into the fight. The Germans simply cannot do that.

All is not hopeless for the Germans as they receive some powerful forces to work with. Early on, the 1st SS Panzer, 1st Panzer and 2nd Fallschirmjaeger Divisions arrive at full health to try and stem the tide. They are powerful and

can wreak havoc on over extended Soviet mobile units. Additionally, all of the other elite SS panzer divisions are here as well – Das Reich, Totenkopf and Wiking.

I was concerned over the early AAR reports that the Soviets were too powerful. Many players were complaining that the Soviets were simply wiping out the German forces completely by March 1944 and I was considering dialling back the Soviet strength. One of our beta testers, however, was regularly achieving decisive victories as the Germans in both normal and challenging modes and even managing to launch a counteroffensive to retake Kiev. This was, of course, against the AI and the AI can be taken advantage of. His key to success was the very realistic strategy in using his powerful mobile divisions in reserve and refitting whenever possible. Whenever the Soviets made a penetration, he would strike hard with his mobile reserves and then send them back behind the lines for a refit to keep them healthy.

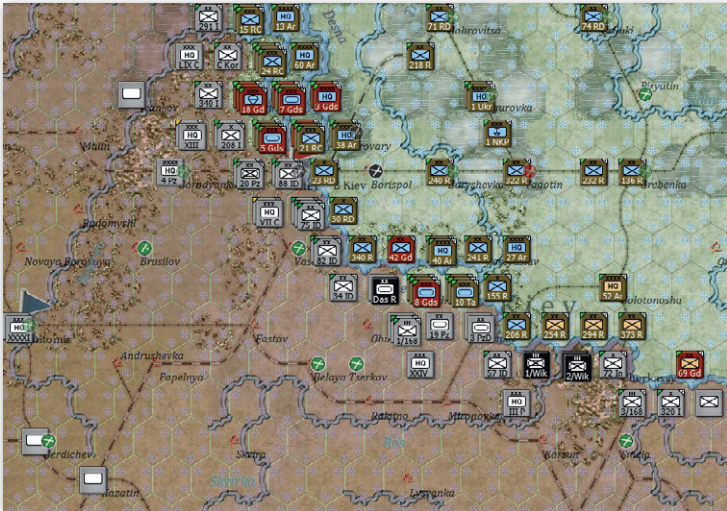
I did add some additional Romanian and Hungarian units to the Axis forces. I came to realize that there was more involvement by Romanian and Hungarian forces as the Soviets moved west. I also decreased the chance of a Rumanian surrender, so the Soviet player is likely going to have to push harder into Rumania in order to force a surrender.

### **2.10.6. PLAY NOTES**

#### **Soviet**

An all-out Soviet assault on Kiev can succeed on turn 1. In addition, the Soviet player should concentrate efforts on attacks towards Kirovograd and Krivoi Rog. An early assault into the Crimea can pay dividends, even if the Germans are able to turn Sevastopol into a fortress. Later in the winter, note the freezing of minor rivers which removes their defensive benefits and movement penalties. Given the mild winter rules in place, it is unlikely that the major rivers will actually freeze in this scenario.

Balance your forces to reduce command penalties and to take advantage of the 2 Front Assault HQs. With 4 NKPS units, you should be able to repair rail lines in your primary areas of advance, and keep depots close to your front line units. If you are stalled, use one or two of the NKPS units to create



super depots. The super depots will allow you to refit your forces quickly without having to return the units to the reserve. Once west of the Yuzhny Bug, put all possible pressure on taking Odessa.

### Axis

The Axis player, being outnumbered nearly 2 to 1, has a difficult job. However, several strong mobile formations provide the capability for successful counter attacks against over extended Soviet units. Look for those opportunities to cause large losses to exploiting Soviet units. Make sure to keep depots near the front line, as the Axis forces are seriously short of vehicles. This should be possible if you anticipate where you will be required to give ground, and create back up depots before your forward depots are overrun. Be careful committing Axis Allied units directly to the front without German stiffening units. Consider breaking a few of these divisions into regiments and using them to pre-build fortification lines along defensible river lines. Over time, if some AP points can be saved up, building a few fort units, to create a strong fortified zone in front of a key objective can pay off. Be prepared to pull back

in the Crimea in the face of a strong Soviet attack. Consider building a city fort in Sevastopol and trying to hang on. If you do this, be sure to commit enough aircraft to keep your forces from being isolated by naval interdiction.

### Both Sides

The winter of 1943-44 is treated as 'mild' and this will mean few, if any, blizzard turns. In addition the major rivers will not fully freeze imposing substantial movement costs on both units and supply trucks if they need to cross such hex-sides.

## 2.11. DRAMA ON THE DANUBE 44 - AI



### NOTE

There are two distinct versions to this scenario. One is designed to play against the Soviet AI and does not include the Allied airforces based in Italy. Instead some events have been added to simulate the strategic bombing by the US heavy bombers.

### 2.11.1. OUTLINE

Late Summer 1944, the Soviets launched their Iasi-Kishinev offensive against Army Group South Ukraine which results in the collapse of the Rumanian Army. The 6th and 8th Armies are nearly destroyed in the process. Soviet

forces quickly entered into Hungary and liberated Belgrade. German forces desperately tried to withdraw its remaining forces from Greece as the line of communications through Serbia and Macedonia were threatened by the Bulgarians switching sides to the Allies.

The Germans rushed reinforcements into Hungary and tried to suppress the escalating Yugoslavian partisan threat.

## 2.11.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

### Soviet Player:

- Smash Army Group South Ukraine
- Force the Rumanians to capitulate and bring the Bulgarians to the Allied side
- Prevent German forces from escaping from Greece and into Yugoslavia - Liberate Belgrade and transition Yugoslavian partisan forces into a conventional army
- Capture Budapest and Vienna
- APs/Turn: 10

### Axis Player:

- Withdraw as much combat power from Rumania as possible to help with the defense of Hungary and Yugoslavia
- Secure land corridors in Serbia and Macedonia to allow forces to withdraw from Greece to be used for follow on action
- Maintain lines of communication in the Balkans by clearing out partisan centers of resistance and build up Croatian forces to be the main line of defense in Yugoslavia

### NOTE

We do not recommend playing this scenario against the Axis AI as it will not be able to handle the complex situation in Yugoslavia

- Defend Budapest and Vienna
- APs/Turn: 10

## 2.11.3. UNIQUE EVENTS

In addition to the events listed below, there are a number of events for historical flavour and background information

TITLE	FIRST POSSIBLE TURN	MAIN EFFECTS
Rumanian Surrender	T1	This is slightly different to the conditions in the Campaign rules. The same set of trigger locations are used (see 14.3.3 of the Living Manual) but in this scenario there is no random element, so simply meeting those criteria will trigger a Rumanian surrender.
Axis Retakes Portions of Rumania	T2	If Rumania surrenders this region will switch to Soviet control and then back to the Axis (so all the local rail net will be damaged). This affects the on map regions of Banat, Crisiana and Oltenia.
Bulgaria switches sides	On or after T4 (9 September 1944)	Triggers Bulgarian surrender if Bucharest is Soviet owned Bulgarian 2 Army is available to the Soviets in 5 turns Bulgarian 1 and 4 Armies are available to the Soviets in 6 turns
37 Army Guards the Turkish Border	Not before T9 – 15 October	If the Soviets own Sofia then the bulk of the 37 Army will be removed from the map.
Croatian Army re-organises	T14 – 19 November 1944	40,000 men added to German manpower pool Croatian brigades will either disband or convert to divisions in the coming turns.
Bulgaria Army demobilises	Not before T18 – 17 December	If Soviets own Skopje then the majority of the Bulgarian units will disband starting from this date.
Germans capture Nis	T1	If the Axis player captures Nis then the 1 Bulgarian Corps HQ will disband
Germans capture Skopje	T1	If the Axis player captures Skopje then the 5 Bulgarian Army HQ will disband
Soviets capture Katerini	T1	If the Soviets capture Katerini then all further German units scheduled to arrive there are removed from the game

#### 2.11.4. HISTORICAL NOTES

Since early June 1944, the front along the Rumanian-Ukrainian border had been quiet after a failed Soviet offensive in April-June. Soviet attention switched first to the preparations for the Bagration offensive and then for a renewal of the attacks around Lvov. At this stage, the German line in the region was stable and Army Group South Ukraine's left flank comprising of Army Group North Ukraine's 1st Hungarian Army had been pushed out of the Stanislav area and into the more defensible Carpathian Mountains along the Hungarian border. The front in Rumania had been quiet in the early summer of 1944, allowing the Germans and Rumanians to prepare and rehabilitate shattered divisions from their costly withdrawal from the Ukraine.

However, as the German position worsened to the north, Army Group South Ukraine had to give up almost all of its armored forces. The only armored reserves available to the army group were the recuperating 20th and 13th Panzer Divisions, 10th Panzergrenadier Division, and the underequipped 1st Rumanian Armored Division.

The Soviets, in the meantime steadily built up. Their plan was relatively simple, 2 Ukrainian Front was to attack southwards along the line of the Prut while 3 Ukrainian Front would attack west. In combination the aim was to encircle the German 6 and 8 Armies and force Rumania out of the war.

The Soviet offensive opened on 20 August 1944 and this quickly led to the second destruction of 6 Army as Soviet units concentrated their fire on them resulting in most Rumanian units simply melting away without a fight. This left the Germans, who relied on the Rumanians to cover their flanks, extremely vulnerable. As per their doctrine, the Germans hurled whatever reserves they could muster including the 20th Panzer and 10th Panzergrenadier Divisions, but these counterattacks could not turn the tide.

The weak German Luftwaffe could only provide token support amidst an effective Red Air Force. By the next day the situation was becoming chaotic for the German units. Soviet penetrations forced German headquarters to relocate. Communications were crumbling. The Germans desperately tried to protect their flanks but were overwhelmed and helpless. By nightfall of the 21st, the Soviets had penetrated over 30 miles in multiple areas and were

already approaching German 6th Army headquarters. General Friessner, Army Group South Ukraine's commander, ordered General Fretto-Pico to withdraw his army to the west immediately but it was already too late.

By the 23rd of August, the remnants of the 3rd Rumanian Army were bottled up and isolated along the Black Sea coast. The double envelopment by the 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Fronts had concentrated their shock forces on the 3rd and 4th Rumanian Armies with the objective being Husi. This plan effectively knocked the Rumanian forces out of the war for the Germans, encircled the 6th Army in place along with half of the 8th Army. It was a masterstroke of planning and execution which led to the immediate collapse and subjugation of Rumania.

Also on the 23rd, Antonescu reported to the Royal Palace in Bucharest to brief the king on the situation and was arrested. The Rumanian king announced the formation of a new government and cessation of hostilities against the Allies. He then ordered all Wehrmacht troops out of Rumania in 14 days. As a final measure, the King renounced the Treaty of Vienna in which Rumania had ceded parts of Transylvania to Hungary. Hitler ordered Friessner to arrest the king and restore Antonescu to the control of Rumania. Friessner was given control over the 5th Flak Division stationed at Ploesti to do so. The division was further reinforced by the Brandenburg Parachute Regiment airlanded into the Otopeni Airport.

The German attempt to recapture Bucharest was a failure, leaving Friessner facing a hostile Rumanian government in addition to trying to withdraw his army group from destruction.

A final, desperate attempt of the 6th Army to break out the encirclement began on the night of the 25th of August and was a dismal failure. Estimates mark the 6th Army losses around 150k men. Apart from its IV Corps (surrounded with 6 Army), 8 Army was able to fall back towards the Carpathians but this gave the Soviets an open route towards Bucharest and Ploesti. Bypassed elements of German troops continued to resist until early September but in the end German losses amounted to between 200k and 300k.



Friessner had only five divisions left intact to work with for the coming defense of Hungary together with elements of the 1st Hungarian Army defending the northern Carpathians and Fritto-Pico's 6th Army stragglers on his right flank. The 2nd Hungarian was quickly activated and sent to Transylvania where it struck the advancing, and now Soviet allied, Rumanian 4th Army at Cluj with great success. The Hungarian 3rd Army was also being formed to attempt to close the gap and block the mountain passes at Sibiu on the 6th Army's right flank but they were too late.

The loss of Ploesti meant that on 23 August Hitler allowed Army Group F to abandon Greece and retreat northwards. With Bulgaria seeking to exit the war there were some clashes between German and Bulgarian forces around Skopje. By early October, Bulgaria had changed sides. The bulk of the axis forces managed to fight their way towards Belgrade with some elements able to use naval transport in the Adriatic and others clearing a corridor towards Sarajevo. The US 15 Air Force contributed to slowing this evacuation till a clash with Soviet fighters near Nis led to the effective withdrawal of Allied airpower.

By late September the Germans had established some control around Nis, stalling the Yugoslav partisans but the entry of regular Soviet and Bulgarian forces meant that by early October they were steadily forced back towards the city leaving the Germans with isolated strongpoints to the south. The main assault opened on 12 October and the city was liberated by 20 October. The bulk of Army Group E then retreated west into Croatia and Bosnia and the Soviet 3 Ukrainian Front moved into S Hungary.

The Germans managed to stabilise the front around Srem and the river Drava by December 1944. From then, to the end of the war, Tito's forces made slow gains, clearing Croatia by early May 1945 and briefly threatening to occupy Trieste.

While this was going on, the Hungarians opened secret negotiations with the Soviets. Hungary also demanded that the Germans send five panzer divisions within twenty-four hours or it would defect to the Soviets and General Guderian reluctantly agreed.

By the 23rd of September, the Soviets had moved into Arad very near the Hungarian border. To keep Hungary in the war, and secure its oil and other economic resources, Hitler ordered Hungary to be reinforced at once. Army Group South Ukraine was also redesignated as Army Group South. SS Panzergrenadier Division "Polizei", and LVII Panzer Corps (with 23rd and 24th Panzer Divisions) were rapidly sent to shore up Army Group South.

Hungarian Admiral Nicholas Horthy was still negotiating with the Soviets to declare an armistice in late September and a treaty was signed on 11th October. However, Hitler was prepared for this after being surprised by the Rumanian defection. Germany sent SS General Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski and SS Major Otto Skorzeny to plan an operation to stop the defection. Horthy's son, who played a significant role in the negotiations, was captured by Skorzeny and the cabinet did not approve Horthy's armistice. The Germans, with elite units, captured the royal palace and installed a new pro-German government. Germany's ally, and its rear area, was secure.

On October 6th, the Soviets launched a new offensive by the 2nd and 4th Ukrainian Fronts aimed at enveloping both Army Group South and Army Group Heinrici (1st Panzer Army and 1st Hungarian Army). Soviet logistics simply could not support such an offensive, especially with the rail gauge differences. 1st Hungarian Army was quickly routed but 1st Panzer Army held the 4th Ukrainian Front on the Carpathians. The Pliet Mechanized Group broke through the 3rd Hungarian Army but was met with a furious counterattack from the newly arrived 23rd Panzer Division at Oradea and Pliet was forced to withdraw. The Axis forces were nevertheless forced to withdraw near Debrecen where they attempted to make a stand.

The Pliet Mechanized Cavalry group again punched through the Axis lines and captured Nyiregyhaza on the 22nd of October and also blocked the 8th Army's line of retreat. The Germans struck the extended Pliet group with III Panzer Corps from the west and 8th Army from the east and encircled the Pliet Group consisting of the 1st Tank and 2nd Guards Cavalry Corps. 4th Ukrainian Front desperately tried to relieve the encircled Pliet Group but failed. The Soviets lost around 25k men and over 600 tanks while the Germans recaptured Nyirgyhaza on the 29th of October.

On the same day, 2nd Ukrainian Front under General Malinovsky struck the 3rd Hungarian Army. The Hungarians were routed as the LVII Panzer Corps fought to hold the line. The Soviets advanced thirty miles within days with mechanized forces moving into 6th Army's rear and the 6th Army began retreating towards Budapest. The III and LVII Panzer Corps only managed to halt the Soviets briefly a few miles outside Budapest. The 8th and 22nd SS Cavalry Divisions were deployed around Budapest to bolster the defenses, as a costly city battle raged with savage fighting.

During the first week of November, Tolbukhin's 3rd Ukrainian Front entered Hungary from the south, fresh from its liberation of Belgrade. The task of defending southern Hungary fell to the 2nd Panzer Army which was ironic because this army had no tanks and was tasked with defending the crucial Hungarian oilfields at Nagykanisza. The Soviets renewed their offensive on November 11th and by December 8th had captured Vac and Estergom on the Danube just north of Budapest. The 3rd Ukrainian Front kept pounding the Balaton-Lake Velence Line and it was clear that the Soviets were attempting to envelope Budapest from the north and south. Friessner tried to block the penetrations with his panzer reserves but the divisions were worn out and were unable to check the Soviet advances.

Friessner asked to withdraw from Budapest but Hitler declared it a fortress city to be held to the last man. Hitler assumed operational control of the battle from Berlin and ordered renewed armored attacks by the III Panzer Corps between Lake Balaton and Velece which were unsuccessful. The Soviet 46th Army and 6th Guards Tank Army linked up at Estergom on Christmas Eve, surrounding Budapest. IX SS Corps and I Hungarian Corps were the main elements encircled at Budapest and tasked to defend the fortress. They were comprised of the 8th and 22nd SS Cavalry Divisions, Feldernhalle Panzergrenadier Division, 13th Panzer Division, Hungarian 1st Armored, 10th, and 12th Infantry Divisions and other various units.

These elements had been fighting bloody engagements within the city since the 10th of November. The Soviets thought they could capture Budapest in a matter of a few days but the Axis defenders were making the Soviets pay for every city block and tied up over 250k Soviet troops. The German defensive

lines within the city slowly shrank but the Soviets were taking enormous casualties. To relieve the city, Hitler ordered the IV SS Panzer Corps (3rd and 5th SS Panzer Divisions) to Hungary to spearhead the relief attempt.

Early on New Year's day, the IV SS Panzer Corps and Group Pape (6th and 8th Panzer Divisions) struck near Estergom (Operation Konrad) and achieved a local breakthrough. III Panzer and I Cavalry Corps launched a diversionary attack near Szekesfehervar further to the south.

Malinovsky quickly deployed his reserves and checked the III Panzer and I Cavalry Corps but the IV SS Panzer Corps was not stopped. However, a decisive breakthrough by the Germans was not achieved. By the 3rd of January, Malinovsky committed the 1st and 7th Guards Mechanized, 5th Guards Cavalry, and 21st Rifle Corps to halt the SS advance. By the 8th of January, the Germans were stopped cold just 15 miles from the outskirts of Budapest. IV SS Panzer Corps was pulled out of the line and re-assembled at Gran.

On the 10th of January, the IV SS Panzer Corps started its second relief attempt from Gran and towards Vac under Konrad II. On the 12th, it captured Pilisszenkereszt and was within 14 miles of Budapest. The next day, to the IV SS Panzer Corp's disbelief, they were withdrawn from the offensive under Hitler's orders who did not believe the operation could be a success.

Hitler devised a new plan that far exceeded the original goal of relieving Budapest but had now transformed into a double envelopment attack to encircle and destroy the Soviet forces west of Budapest. As part of Operation Konrad III, the IV SS Panzer Corps was redeployed again to the northern tip of Lake Balaton, and along with the III Panzer Corps smashed the Soviets on the 18th of January. Dunapentele on the Danube was taken on the 19th, only a dozen miles from Budapest. The garrison in Budapest could have broken out, but Hitler refused and demanded the recapture of the city. Marshal Tolbukhin requested to withdraw to the east bank of the Danube, but was denied by Stalin. IV SS Panzer Corps, depleted, spent, and down to less than thirty tanks, was stalled.

The Soviets began new attacks against IV SS Panzer Corps on the 27th and the Germans were forced to retreat. Although demonstrating impressive

offensives this late in the war, the Germans had nothing to show for their efforts except high casualties and worn out divisions.

Army Group South suffered around 35k casualties during the Konrad offensives. The 3rd SS, 5th SS, and 1st Panzer Divisions all together had barely thirty functioning tanks, and fuel and ammunition reserves were desperately diminished.

On the 30th, IX SS Corps in Budapest reported its situation as critical. Collapse was imminent as brutal fighting within Budapest continued. SS General Pfeffer-Wildenbruch, commander IX SS Corps, ordered a breakout without orders, to begin on 11 February, but few Germans managed to make it back to their lines as they scattered and were destroyed by the Soviets.

In a last gasp attempt, the last German major offensive was decided by Hitler to be launched into Hungary as part of Operation Spring Awakening. This was planned as a repeat attempt of Operation Konrad III to encircle and destroy Soviet forces west of Budapest and provide some breathing space around the oilfields of Nagykanizsa. Backed by the strongest German army in 1945, the almost full strength 6th SS Panzer Army, it was an impressive force of armored might that would be spent at Hitler's whim on obscure and questionable objectives in Hungary.

The operation was planned for the first week of March and began on the 6th of March. In a repeat of the previous Konrad offensives, impressive gains by the Waffen SS forces striking from North of Lake Balaton were countered by massive Soviet reinforcements. By mid March the offensive was stalling. The 2nd Panzer Army, south of the 6th SS Panzer Army, did not do nearly as well in the attack. In just a few days, the Soviets had driven the Germans back to their original start points. Germany had spent its last armored reserve and would not be able to mount an offensive at this scale for the rest of the war. Germany could only try desperately to hold the line.

By the end of March, the Soviets crossed into Austria and Vienna fell on the 13th of April. The shattered remnants of the 6th Army were fighting for survival near Gran and the 3rd Hungarian Army was virtually destroyed thirty miles west of Budapest as Army Group South effectively collapsed.

### 2.11.5. DESIGNER NOTES

Here we have the jewel in the crown as this scenario is my absolute favorite. I designed the base of the scenario back in WitE but was terribly disappointed that I couldn't at least use northern Yugoslavia and the liberation of Belgrade and also couldn't simulate the crazy withdrawal out of Greece. I couldn't create the scenario that I wanted in this DLC without unlocking the Yugoslavia zones and finding some way to simulate the partisans.

I honestly had to be a little devious in getting my vision of this scenario on the final approved list. While we were in the early stages of developing the scenario list several years ago, I didn't explain my full vision of unlocking the Yugoslavia regions as I knew that Gary and Joel were not crazy on the idea of opening up these potential problem-some areas. I took a chance and made the scenario as I intended by introducing partisan regions represented initially as fortified regions and mobile mountain divisions. I added Croatian forces, Free Serbian, Ustashe militias, garrisons, landeschutzen, Cossacks, Bulgarians, the RAF Balkan Air Force operating out of Italy and the prize – Army Group E's evacuation of Greece. Once all of these elements were in, I dropped the draft for Gary and Joel to look at. I hoped that they could see the vast amount of work that I put into the scenario and would find it difficult to say no to. To Gary and Joel's credit, I think they saw the potential in what I saw in this scenario – a drama story worth telling as a scenario. This scenario is truly unique as I have not seen these operations covered in any other wargames.

The tension in this scenario is what makes it great. The Germans are going to have to deal immediately with the Rumanians collapsing and most of the 6th and 8th Armies being destroyed. Then the Bulgarians (with the 5th Army and I Corps located in Yugoslavia) switch sides and turn on the Germans. This turn of events endangers Army Group E's position in Greece and those forces must be evacuated before they are cut off. The Germans will have to scrap together forces to clear the partisans and Bulgarians from the Athens-Pristina-Belgrade rail line to secure their rear lines of communication. Not only that, but Tito's partisans occupy great swathes of land. Within these areas partisan areas, Tito has mobile mountain divisions that can sortie out of

their mountain fortresses and cause some real trouble in the Axis rear areas. The German player will have to carefully balance the use of their combat and anti-partisan forces. The Croatians, Cossacks, Free Serbian Legions and security forces can assist but they aren't very capable. Balancing the needs of the front line with securing the rear areas is part of the overall difficulty.

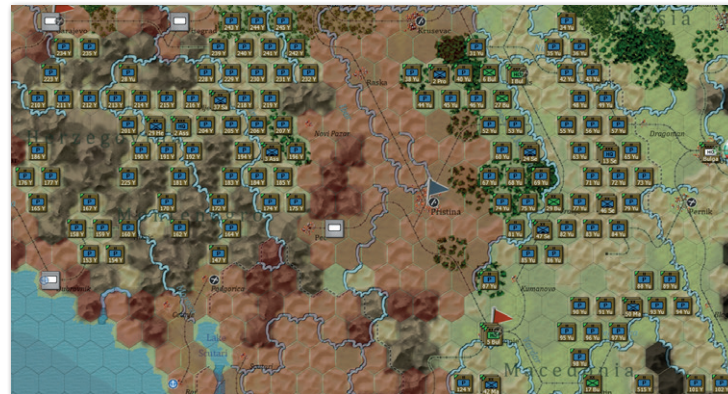
The scenario is absolute madness and for the German player, the situation certainly looks hopeless. I would not recommend anyone to play a PBEM game without playing a few solo sessions first as there are many events and house rules that can sneak up on you and take you completely by surprise if you are unaware of the consequences. Please read the players notes and the weekly events in game so that you grasp the many different aspects of the scenario. I consider this scenario to be more of an advanced scenario for the more experienced players looking for a significant challenge. This scenario is tough and unfair and it was designed to be that way.

There aren't many contemporary resources available for this scenario for research, so I had to dig deep to find useful information and this was one of the most rewarding aspects of designing this scenario. Original German daily situation maps were used to track unit dispositions and movements. I scoured digital copies of the available German war diaries and reports to determine the best OOBs to use and to determine their personnel and equipment strengths. I also would suggest the book, "Red Wind Over the Balkans – The Soviet Offensive South of the Danube, September-October 1944" by Kaloyan Matev. Wow. What an exciting book. This book is an example of a "grand slam" resource that I try to find. If you are interested in learning more about this campaign, I highly recommend it.

## 2.11.6. PLAY NOTES

### Axis

For the German player, most of 6 and 8 Armies will be lost in a Soviet pocket on T1. You should have enough to hold the line of the Carpathians for some turns, while rushing reinforcements to Transylvania to slow the Soviet push up from the southeast. You will need to retreat as the Soviets push into eastern Rumania. A key is to immediately cut the central and western



Yugoslavian partisan link to the east that is just south of Pristina. Once this link is severed, work hard to prevent the Soviets from linking up with these partisans. Keeping the partisans isolated will make your efforts to control them easier.

The situation in Greece is challenging and requires some risk taking. Holding the two NSS in Greece is critical till the last of your units arrive as this avoids any isolation penalties and allows those forces to attack northwards around Skopje. In addition, the at-start German OOB in the region is sub-optimal for regular combat and you should make use of the various commands (both at start and that arrive as reinforcements) in order to restructure your army in the region as much as possible.

The key in the early game is to allow as much of the Greek forces to escape. To do this you will need to attack south with the stronger units in Yugoslavia (and some reinforcements) to clear a corridor.

In addition to planning to retreat via Belgrade it can be a good idea to clear a line running to Sarajevo. The risk, of course, is that the forces committed to enable the Greek formations to escape might be pocketed as the Bulgarians change side, regular Soviet formations appear and the Yugoslav partisans become an increasingly mobile force.

Technically Bulgaria does not change sides till T4 but the Bulgarian forces in Yugoslavia were hostile to the Germans from the start. So they are treated as Soviet owned, but frozen in place, and you will need to fight with some of them to clear a retreat corridor.

Once the early game is over, the Croat forces will re-organise to a divisional structure and can be used to defend Zagreb. It is a good idea to try and clear out, or at least seriously reduce, the partisan groups in central and western Croatia to give you operational freedom.

In Hungary there are significant choices in terms of how to defend Budapest and how to make best use of the substantial reinforcements you will receive as the game goes on.

## 2.12. DRAMA ON THE DANUBE – H2H

This version of the game is largely the same as the version to be played against the Soviet AI but is designed for H2H play.

The main difference is it includes the Allied air-forces based in Southern Italy but the Soviet player is advised to adopt several house rules. These are detailed in the game play notes below.

### 2.12.1. OUTLINE

Late Summer 1944, the Soviets launched their Iasi-Kishinev offensive against Army Group South Ukraine which results in the collapse of the Rumanian Army. The 6th and 8th Armies are nearly destroyed in the process. Soviet forces quickly entered into Hungary and liberated Belgrade. German forces desperately tried to withdraw its remaining forces from Greece as the line of communications through Serbia and Macedonia were threatened by the Bulgarians switching sides to the Allies.

The Germans rushed reinforcements into Hungary and tried to suppress the escalating Yugoslavian partisan threat.

## 2.12.2. SCENARIO OVERVIEW

### Soviet Player:

- Smash Army Group South Ukraine
- Force the Rumanians to capitulate and bring the Bulgarians to the Allied side
- Prevent German forces from escaping from Greece and into Yugoslavia
  - Liberate Belgrade and transition Yugoslavian partisan forces into a conventional army
- Capture Budapest and Vienna
- APs/Turn: 10

### Axis Player:

- Withdraw as much combat power from Rumania as possible to help with the defense of Hungary and Yugoslavia
- Secure land corridors in Serbia and Macedonia to allow units arriving from Greece through turn 11 to withdraw north
- Maintain link between Thessaloniki and Katerini so forces from Greece can be supplied while moving north
- Maintain lines of communication in the Balkans by clearing out partisan centers of resistance and build up Croatian forces to be the main line of defense in Yugoslavia
- Defend Budapest and Vienna
- APs/Turn: 10

## 2.12.3. PLAY NOTES

This version of the scenario is intended for play against another player, not against the AI. There are several rules we recommend using that the players must self-enforce:

1. The Soviet Player must keep all air or ground units that begin in Italy in the Balkan Air Force, and not move any of the units out of Italy (this also applies to the reinforcement RAF air unit as well, which may only be based in Italy). No other Soviet air units may be moved to Italy. Also, USAAF air units may only participate in City Bombing, Recon, and Air Transport

missions, or escorting of those missions. The Soviet player may not use the AI Air Assist.

2. Soviet Yugoslavian HQs, and units with Partisan in their name, may not move into Germany, Hungary, Rumania, or Bulgaria.
3. Before turn 3, no actions should be taken with Bulgarian Air Force units (no ADs, no movement, etc.).
4. Before turn 4, Bulgarian ground units outside of Bulgaria may only move and attack in NE, E, and SE directions, towards Bulgaria.
5. Before turn 4, no Soviet non-Bulgarian units may move into Bulgaria.
6. Before turn 6, no Soviet units may use rail movement in Bulgaria or Rumania.
7. Before turn 6, for the Soviet player, only Soviet Bulgarian and Yugoslavian units may enter Yugoslavia and Greece.
8. Axis units with Croatian (Croat.), RSK, SFK and Serbia in their name may not move into Germany, Hungary, Rumania, or Bulgaria until 1945.

## NOTE

The intention behind these rules is to more realistically account for the activity of the Bulgarian forces, especially during the period between Rumanian surrender and Bulgaria officially switching to the Soviet side.

The rules concerning the Allied air-force ensure their contribution to the wider Balkan campaign is properly captured.

### Axis

The advice in the AI version of this scenario applies here.

### Soviets

For the Soviet player, the opening attacks in Rumania should aim to clear the rails running north-south and to isolate as much as of 6 and 8 Armies as possible. You must take enough of Rumania to trigger its surrender, notionally giving you control of most of Rumania. Since the Axis units in front

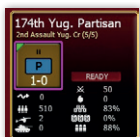
of the northern Carpathian passes can trace through the mountain hexes, it's more important to focus on moving south, and creating an unbreakable pocket to isolate and destroy the Axis units in the lowlands. How much you can exploit this will depend on how quickly you can repair the rail links and free up formations for a rapid march westwards. Initially it is likely the German-Hungarian forces will be able to hold onto the Carpathian passes but this position will be undermined as you move west in Rumania and move into Transylvania from the south.

In Yugoslavia, at start, your mobile assets are limited but can be used to constrict the German retreat from Greece. It is a good idea to use the Allied air assets in Italy to resupply some of the main partisan groups to try and avoid the full isolation penalties.

The second half of the game is relatively conventional in that the Soviets need to take Budapest and Belgrade as quickly as possible and then defeat the substantial German reinforcements.

## 3. RULE CHANGES SPECIFICALLY FOR STEEL INFERNO

### 3.1. SOVIET PARTISAN UNITS



A new unit type has been introduced in the expansion to reflect the semi-organized partisan units that the Yugoslav resistance had developed from mid-1943. These are immobile but can retreat if attacked.

In many ways these share the rules with fort units, so can be disbanded (if the rules for this are met – specifically they cannot be disbanded if in an isolated hex) but cannot be transferred to the Soviet reserve.

### 3.2. IMPASSABLE MOUNTAIN HEXES



A new terrain type was introduced in the Steel Inferno expansion to capture the type of mountain terrain where the movement of organized units was effectively impossible. These block all movement into the hex. Note that although they are impassable for movement, units can trace a path through these hexes, when determining whether they are isolated, if they are friendly controlled. The

hex pop-up display shows the control of the hex, and this control does not change during the scenario. A similar situation exists in small map scenarios for most of the hexes just outside the playable map area.

## 4. TRIUMPH OF STEEL: HOW THE RED ARMY DEFEATED THE WEHRMACHT

*By James Wirth*

### 4.1. PROLOGUE

On September 17, 1939 the Soviet Union, in accordance with secret protocols of the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact of August 24th, invaded eastern Poland under the guise of protecting Byelorussians and Ukrainians living in the area. A massive Soviet force of 25 rifle divisions and 16 cavalry divisions and two cavalry-mechanized groups pushed into Poland against minimal resistance from 20 Polish frontier-guard battalions. Despite their overwhelming superiority, the Soviets couldn't prevent somewhere between 80,000 and 100,000 Polish soldiers from escaping into neutral bordering countries. Soviet "bungling" of the operation was the result of command-and-control problems and vehicle maintenance issues. German and other foreign observers were quick to blame this embarrassing performance on Stalin's purge of the Soviet officer corps.

While it is certainly true that the purge had diminished the experience and capability of the officer corps, the notion that the purge had "decapitated" the brain trust of the Red Army is clearly hyperbole. Only a month before the invasion of Poland, Georgy Zhukov had defeated forces of the Japanese Kwantung Army in the Battle of Khalkhin Gol. Described in the West as a "border clash" Khalkhin Gol had inflicted 17,000 Japanese casualties for a loss of just over 9,000 Soviet casualties. So intimidated were the Japanese by this defeat that they never again challenged the Soviets. Forgotten in the humiliation that would be the Winter War with Finland, Khalkhin Gol was proof that there were still commanders of talent and capability in the post-purge Red Army.

From Stalin's point of view, the whole purpose of the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact was to create a "buffer" between the Soviet Union and her potential enemies (i.e. Germany). Having seized eastern Poland, Stalin's next target was to push out the border with Finland to extend the depth between the Finnish border and the strategic objectives of Leningrad and the Murmansk-Moscow railroad. After "negotiations" which were little more than Soviet demands failed, Stalin ordered the Red Army to invade Finland. With only two weeks of preparations, Soviet forces embarked on an overly ambitious offensive along five separate axes of attack. In the far north the Soviet 14th Army would drive on the Finnish port of Petsamo whose capture would isolate Finland from Western assistance. In the center of the front the Soviet 9th Army would attempt to cut Finland in half by seizing Tornio and Oulu. The Soviet 8th Army would advance along the north coast of Lake Ladoga with one corps while another corps would parallel its advance further north. Finally, the main effort would be made by the Soviet 7th Army against the Mannerheim Line in the Karelian Isthmus, the shortest route to Helsinki.

Despite some initial successes including the capture of Petsamo, the Soviet offensive failed to achieve its objectives and, in some cases, suffered humiliating defeats. On January 7, 1940 Stalin sacked the Soviet commander Meretskov (but did not execute or imprison him) and replaced him with Timoshenko, one of the most senior marshals in the Red Army. Zhukov was appointed Timoshenko's chief of staff and the two men set to work re-organizing and reinforcing their armies. On February 11th Timoshenko renewed the offensive against the Mannerheim Line with massive air, artillery and tank support. Within a month, the Winter War was over but Soviet victory had come at a high price. Although the tiny Finnish Army had suffered heavy losses for its size, those losses paled in comparison to Soviet losses. The disproportional Soviet casualties cemented the narrative that Stalin's purge had crippled the Red Army's officer corps. Lost in the assessments of the pyric Soviet victory was the fact that lessons had been learned in these bloody battles that would serve the Red Army well in the coming showdown with Germany.

## **4.2. PART ONE: THE GREAT REORGANIZATION**

Germany's victory over four armies, including the vaunted French Army, in the spring of 1940 stunned the world and had practically every other major army reassessing their organizations and tactics. Blitzkrieg was real and its instrument was the panzer division. The Soviet Union responded quickly with a massive re-organization of its armored forces. At the beginning of 1940 the Red Army fielded nothing larger than a tank brigade, but in the second half of the year the Soviets began forming new tank and mechanized (also referred to as motorized) divisions from the tank brigades. As authorized, the tank division was the strongest armored division in the world with 375 tanks including 210 T-34 medium tanks and 63 KV heavy tanks. The mechanized division was authorized 275 tanks but these were primarily BT types with no T-34 or KV tanks. The tank division's armor was organized in two tank regiments support by a motorized infantry regiment, an artillery regiment and the usual other supporting battalions (reconnaissance, signals, etc.). The mechanized division flipped these regiments around with one tank regiment and two motorized infantry regiments. On paper, if nowhere else, the mechanized division was vastly superior to the organically tankless German motorized infantry division.

In the year between the fall of France and the German invasion, the Red Army formed 61 tank and 30 mechanized divisions. Most of these divisions were grouped into mechanized corps (not to be confused with the divisional size mechanized corps later in the war) consisting of two tank divisions and one mechanized division. Despite having an estimated inventory of around 23,000 tanks, more than the rest of the world combined, the Red Army still did not have enough tanks to field all these divisions at the full strength of over 31,000 tanks. Not only were the numbers in total insufficient, but the number of new model tanks available were grossly inadequate. For example, 61 tank divisions would have required nearly 13,000 T-34s, but only around 1,000 were in service on June 22, 1941. Compounding the issue further, most of the older tanks were in varying degrees of unserviceability due to being essentially worn out. Why then were so many tank and mechanized divisions raised when not enough tanks, to say nothing of the correct types of tank,



were available to equip them? The answer is simple; a division doesn't need to be at full strength to train. With Germany preoccupied with trying to subdue Britain there seemed to be plenty of time to refit the tank and mechanized divisions with the new model tanks. In the meantime the divisions could train with whatever tanks were available regardless of type or numbers. Soviet calculations saw the tank and mechanized divisions being ready for combat by 1942. Unfortunately Hitler was calculating things differently.

The desire to create so many armored formations had an indirect effect on the cavalry and infantry branches of the Red Army. After peaking in early 1938, the number of cavalry divisions began declining as the tanks organic to the cavalry division were needed for tank units. From a high of 32 divisions and 2 brigades in 1938, by June of 1941 only 13 cavalry divisions remained. The Soviet cavalry division was smaller than its German counterpart with less cavalymen and less artillery but it boasted 64 light tanks compared to none in the German division. The Soviet cavalry division was a decent unit when its use was restricted to traditional cavalry roles, but it lacked the firepower of the German division to operate as a frontline combat unit.

Most rifle divisions had long since lost their organic tank support by the time of the Winter War, but they could at least still rely on the support of the independent tank brigades attached from corps or army level. As these independent brigades were absorbed into tank and mechanized divisions, the rifle divisions were left with little to no direct tank support. The rifle corps to which the rifle divisions were subordinate would have to rely on coordination with the mechanized corps for tank support, something with which the Soviets had no experience.

As the summer of 1941 approached, the Red Army was organized in an almost mirror reflection of the Wehrmacht. The Army was organized into military districts which, upon the outbreak of hostilities would be renamed Fronts, the Soviet organizational equivalent of German army groups. Each front would control one or more armies and, in some cases, directly control one or two mechanized corps. The armies would usually control one or more rifle corps and most would also control one or two mechanized corps. The rifle corps consisted of two or three rifle divisions supported by one or more

artillery regiments. Given the role envisioned for them, the mechanized corps had no attached artillery regiments. More artillery regiments were controlled at army and front level.

Where the Soviet and German armies differed sharply was in the higher-level organization of the mechanized units. The Soviet mechanized corps were independent formations controlled either at army or front level. They had no experience coordinating with other mechanized corps and precious little experience even maneuvering their own divisions. This lack of operational experience would prove fatal to the mechanized corps. By contrast the German panzer and motorized infantry divisions were organized into motorized corps with no fixed structure and could include non-motorized infantry and cavalry units. The motorized corps in turn were organized into panzer groups of two or three motorized corps and even an army (infantry) corps when necessary. While the mechanized corps was designed for both offensive and defensive action, the panzer group existed for one purpose and one purpose only – the concentrated employment of mechanized forces for decisive breakthrough and exploitation. In short, Blitzkrieg, and the Soviet mechanized corps would be woefully unprepared to stop it.

### **4.3. PART TWO: BEST LAID PLANS**

On the eve of Operation Barbarossa the Red Army was in a less than full state of combat readiness. Stalin's fear of doing anything that might provoke Hitler had caused him to ignore the intelligence reports that a German attack was imminent. The rifle divisions on the frontier with Germany were in their bivouacs behind the fortified regions. The mechanized corps were scattered even further back with their divisions often as much as fifty miles or more apart. The Red Air Force (VVS) was clustered on forward airfields wing tip to wing tip. This lack of preparedness didn't mean that the Soviets didn't have a plan to meet a German invasion, they did. It just wasn't going to work.

The Soviet plan to stop the invaders could be summed up as follows: First, immediately counterattack with whatever forces were available to stop the enemy as close to the frontier as possible; second, if counterattacking fails conduct a fighting withdrawal back to the pre-1939 border and link

up with reserve armies positioned between the old border and Moscow to halt the invader on or near the old border defenses (the Stalin Line); third, reinforced by strategic reserves from within the Soviet Union launch a counteroffensive to expel the invader from Soviet territory. Key to this plan was the commitment of the mechanized corps to smash the panzer divisions.

Early in the morning of June 22, a war alert starting reaching the Soviet armies along the frontier but it was too late to do much good. As the eastern sky began to lighten with the morning sun, the western sky lit up with the fire of thousands of German guns. Within hours the panzer groups were slicing through Soviet lines like hot knives through butter. Soviet commanders frantically tried to execute orders already overtaken by events. Communications broke down across the board leaving some divisional commanders with little choice but to order their divisions to "march to the sound of the guns". Displaying equal measures of heroism and panic, the Soviet units along the front disappeared into this maelstrom of combat.

Like reptiles awakened by the rising sun, the mechanized corps stumbled one after another into action only to be obliterated in one failed counterattack after another. Only in the area of operations of the Kiev Military District, now the Southwestern Front, did the concentration of multiple mechanized corps allow them to survive initial contact with the panzers. In what is now recognized as the largest tank battle of the war, First Panzer Group tangled with up to eight mechanized corps at various times.

By the end of the first week of July, the frontier battles were over and so too were the mechanized corps. Something like 10,000 Soviet tanks had been lost to a fraction of that in German losses. The counterattacks of the mechanized corps had virtually no effect against army groups North's and Center's panzer groups and had delayed Army Group South's advance a week at best. Worse still, the sacrifice of the mechanized corps had not prevented the destruction of the frontier armies. The Red Army had sustained nearly three quarters of a million casualties in the border battles. In addition to those 10,000 tanks, countless numbers of guns and mortars had been lost along with mountains of other equipment. As the Red Army scrambled to

bring up divisions to cover the huge gaps torn in the front another major reorganization of forces was rapidly being implemented.

#### **4.4. PART THREE: THE WINTER ARMY**

The Soviet mechanized corps had proven to be an unmitigated failure. They were too unwieldy and ponderous to react to the nimbler German motorized corps. The corps were dissolved in July and their divisions put under direct command of the armies. For a variety of reason, most notably the heavy losses in tanks, a new table of organization and equipment (TO&E) was introduced for the tank division with tank strength reduced from 375 to 205 tanks as well as smaller complements of everything else and the complete elimination of the heavy (152mm) howitzers. Tank divisions built to this new TO&E were not much, if at all, better than their predecessors but simply drew on fewer scarce resources.

September saw the return of the tank brigade in a new form. Even after the abolishment of the mechanized corps and reduction in the size of the tank division, the inexperienced Soviet commanders were still having problems operating division size armored formations. With a third of the manpower of the new tank division and half as many tanks, the tank brigade was indeed a more manageable unit. Light tank strength was cut from 64 T-60s to 38 in October and again to 16 in January. Also in January T-34 strength dropped from 22 to 20 but KV-1 strength curiously increased from 7 to 10. Starting from nothing, around 75 of these brigades had been created by the end of 1941.

The mechanized divisions had struggled from the very start of the war with Germany. Most divisions were seriously understrength in tanks and severely short on trucks for their infantry and prime movers for their artillery. The Soviets never bothered re-organizing the mechanized divisions preferring instead to convert the surviving divisions to ordinary rifle divisions by 1942.

The cavalry divisions were both dramatically reduced in size and dramatically increased in numbers. The new cavalry division TO&E cut the division's manpower by more than half reducing most other components substantially and eliminating the medium (122mm) howitzers and armored vehicles entirely. The number of cavalry divisions kept increasing throughout

1941 reaching over 80 by January, 1942. The destruction of so many tank and mechanized divisions in the border battles and subsequent operations left the Red Army in dire need of operational mobility and the cavalry division helped filled the void until division size armored units could be fielded again.

The rifle division did not escape the downsizing that was sweeping across the Red Army in the late summer of 1941. A twenty-five percent manpower reduction primarily hit the division's heavy weapons, artillery and support personnel. In particular, medium howitzers were reduced substantially and heavy howitzers eliminated altogether. At the small unit level, two thirds of the rifle squads lost their light machineguns. By December the equipment situation had improved enough to restore light machineguns to another third of the rifle squads and a submachinegun battalion was added to the division. The mountain division did not re-organize until December and it took the form of primarily a reduction in support personnel with combat strength actually slightly greater than before.

So severe had been Soviet losses in the opening two months of Operation Barbarossa that just introducing leaner rifle divisions was not enough. To provide units that could be handled with even less staff and other support personnel, the use of rifle brigades was greatly expanded. A handful of rifle brigades had existed in June, now that force was expanded to well over 100 brigades by the beginning of 1942. The rifle brigade was essentially a mini division with roughly forty percent of the manpower of the new rifle division and corresponding smaller complements of nearly all its elements. Compared to the rifle division, the only thing the rifle brigade completely lacked was medium howitzers. For an army now critically short of experienced officers, the rifle brigade was a formation more manageable for an officer who might have previously commanded nothing larger than a battalion.

All the military districts along the frontier had an airborne corps attached to them consisting of three airborne brigades. The airborne brigade contained a light tank company that would presumably have been airlifted by TB-3 bombers. No airborne operations were conducted before the airborne brigades were re-organized in October and the light tanks eliminated. The new brigade managed to reduce manpower but still add more capability in the form of a

submachinegun company and more mortars and anti-tank weapons. The same could be said for the naval infantry brigade which also re-organized in October to a smaller but more capable TO&E. Inspired by the experience with Finnish ski units in the Winter War, the Soviets introduced a ski "brigade" in December which was in reality little more than a regiment and a weak one at that.

Another "casualty" of the disaster that befell the Red Army in the summer of 1941 was the rifle corps. Prior to the invasion the Red Army was structured like most of its contemporaries with divisions and smaller units subordinate to corps and corps subordinate to armies. The heavy losses in staff officers and other support personnel during the summer made continued use of corps HQs unsustainable and over the summer and into the fall corps HQs were either dissolved or converted to army HQs. Going forward, division and non-divisional units would be subordinate directly to army HQs. It would not be until 1943 when corps HQs would be re-introduced although some ad hoc formations that were functionally corps appeared now and then prior to 1943. (Author's Note: These late war corps are not present in War in the East. The "corps" that Soviet players can build from December, 1941 on are a game device to enable the Soviet player to create the concentration of forces the Soviets achieved in the late war period.)

As alluded to previously, one of the major aspects of the re-organization the Red Army underwent in the second half of 1941 was the concentration of the heavier artillery at the army and front levels. The 152mm heavy howitzers removed from the TO&E of the downsized tank and rifle divisions was concentrated in non-divisional artillery regiments under higher level control. Even the rifle division's complement of 122mm medium howitzers was pared back and eliminated entirely from the cavalry division to create non-divisional regiments of medium howitzers. The severe losses in artillery and communications equipment, particularly radios, made retention of these weapons at divisional level a luxury the Soviets couldn't afford. This necessary concentration of artillery in non-divisional regiments had the fortunate unintended consequence of allowing the Soviets the flexibility to mass large concentrations of artillery at critical points. It was a capability the Soviets would build upon in the coming months.

The long summer of 1941 had been punctuated by one Soviet disaster after another. Following the debacle of the border battles which had resulted in the virtual destruction of the entire Western Front and the immolation of Southwestern Front's mechanized corps, there was the futile and bloody attempt to hold Smolensk, the Uman encirclement and finally the cataclysmic Battle of Kiev which wiped out much of what was left of the Southwestern Front. If assessed purely in terms of men, equipment and territory lost, the battles in the summer of 1941 had been a crushing defeat for the Red Army. These losses seemed to confirm everything Hitler and the German Army High Command (OKH) thought of the Red Army. It was not an army in the German sense but a collection of units blindly striking back without competent direction or purpose. Nothing could be further from the truth, and the Germans were slowly beginning to realize the method in the assumed Soviet madness.

This stumbling colossus, as historian David Glantz has characterized the armed forces of the Soviet Union on the eve of World War Two, had: prevented Army Group Center from driving straight on to Moscow in July, stalled Army Group North's drive on Leningrad and ultimately forced OKH to reinforce it with 3rd Panzer Group from Army Group Center, and by refusing to withdraw from the Kiev salient compelled Hitler to order Army Group Center's 2nd Panzer Group into the Ukraine effectively thwarting any offensive towards Moscow before fall. Not a bad record for an army that was supposedly crippled by Stalin's purge of the officer's corps and composed of soldiers genetically inferior (Untermensch).

The Germans won one last great victory in 1941 when they destroyed three Soviet fronts in the double encirclement battle of Vyazma-Bryansk in early October. This battle and the brief exploitation that followed it before the autumn rains (rasputitsa) brought operations to a standstill left the German Army badly depleted. Average divisional strength had fallen to sixty percent and the tank regiments of the panzer divisions were well under fifty percent. As bad as the situation was the Germans assumed the situation with the Soviets was worse. It was and it wasn't. True, the average strength of Soviet units on the frontline had fallen to fifty percent, but unlike the Germans

the Soviets were in the process of substantially building up their reserve forces. During the month of November the Soviets fielded new divisions and brigades equivalent in strength to what they had before the Vyazma-Bryansk battle; Army Group Center did not receive a single new division over the same period. Once the Germans had shot their bolt in a final push on Moscow in mid-November to early December, the Soviets unleashed these forces in a massive counteroffensive.

The Moscow counteroffensive was the first real test of the re-organization of forces the Soviets had conducted during the late summer and fall. Some aspects of the re-organization proved very effective, others not so much. Even the smaller tank division did not provide the combat power relative to the resources it required and except in the Far East most would be gone by early 1942. The tank brigade needed further simplification as it still had too many moving parts for the mission it was playing. The winter weather magnified the effectiveness of the cavalry division which was in truth too small to be much more than a raiding force. The more manageable rifle division needed more artillery although an increase in medium and heavy mortars helped this situation somewhat. The virtual absence of artillery made the rifle and naval rifle brigades more useful in defense than offense. The airborne brigades actually got a chance to conduct air drops in the winter which while not accomplishing much certainly rattled the Germans. These airborne operations were evidently unproductive enough to result in no more operations being performed until September, 1943.

The anti-tank brigades that had been formed prior to Barbarossa were dissolved by early 1942. The heavily armored German tanks they had been built to defend against didn't exist and they represented an extravagant concentration of resources. Likewise the anti-tank regiments would be re-configured in 1942 to delete their 85mm anti-aircraft guns for the same reason. The re-organization of the artillery was a success and the Soviets would continue to develop this arm of the Red Army going forward.

## 4.5. PART FOUR: LESSONS LEARNED

As the brutal winter of 41-42 turned to spring, the Red Army was rapidly incorporating the lessons of the winter counteroffensive into new TO&Es for its formations and adding completely new formations. The most important of these new formations was the tank corps. Although the winter counteroffensive had succeeded in removing the most immediate threat to Moscow, it had failed in its overly ambitious goal of encircling and destroying Army Group Center. While Soviet cavalry were able to penetrate the exceedingly porous German lines, they were too weak to actually defeat the understrength German units. What was needed was a formation with more firepower than the fragile cavalry division while still having the requisite operational mobility. The solution was the tank corps consisting of three tank brigades and a motorized rifle brigade.

This first iteration of the tank corps had two serious flaws: The corps had virtually no artillery with even mortars in short supply, and it was saddled with the same inefficient mix of tanks as the tank brigade. Shortage of artillery would be a feature of the tank corps through 1942 and most of 1943. The tank type issue was a reflection of the massive tank losses the Red Army had sustained in almost twelve months of combat. Although the evacuation of Soviet industry to the East was one of the “miracles” of World War Two, those factories were still coming online and sorting out supply chains in the spring of 1942. The mix of heavy, medium and light tanks was a case of making the best out of what you had rather than the optimum configuration. The KV-1 was heavily armored but it was much slower than the T-34 and T-60 and offered no greater firepower than the T-34. The T-60 was poorly armored, poorly armed, and actually slower than a T-34. The T-60's only saving graces were that it could be made cheaply and quickly.

If the Red Army had only to deal with the tank corps structural problems things might have not been so bad but the Red Army had a bigger problem – nobody quite knew how the tank corps should be used. The tank corps only started forming in April and two were immediately thrown into combat when the Southwestern Front launched its spring offensive to recapture Kharkov in May. The results would have been predictable even if the offensive hadn't run

headlong into the German forces preparing for their own summer offensive (Fall Blau). The two fledgling tank corps were destroyed when the Germans counterattacked and pocketed the Soviet forces.

The experience of the ill-fated Kharkov offensive led to the next version of the tank corps being introduced in mid-year. This version saw the heavy tanks removed from the corps, more infantry and mortars added, and the curious addition of 8 BM-13-16 rocket launchers. Most importantly there was a dramatic increase in support personnel to correct the serious deficiency of support in the original corps. The new corps had its baptism of fire in the futile attempts to prevent Army Group B's advance to the Don River and Stalingrad. During these summer battles the tank corps suffered badly as a consequence of the inexperience in their use at every level of command. By the fall however tactical doctrine in the proper employment of tank corps had matured and the corps would finally get a chance to show what they were capable of.

Like the panzer division, even the improved tank corps of mid-1942 was an offensive formation not suited for prolonged defensive fighting. The Soviets recognized the need for something with the punch of a tank corps but also the staying power of a rifle division. In the early fall of 1942 that need was filled with the introduction of the mechanized corps. The mechanized corps was a monstrous unit by Soviet standards consisting of three mechanized brigades and a tank brigade. It had more tanks than its contemporary tank corps (175 compared to 135) and three quarters as much infantry. Most impressively it had eight times as many heavy mortars and over three times as many light field guns. On the negative side, the mechanized corps consumed so many resources that only 8 could be formed in 1942 compared to 28 tank corps that were raised. The mechanized corps combat debut in Operation Uranus, the counteroffensive at Stalingrad, was lackluster due to the lack of aggressiveness of the commander of the 4th Mechanized Corps but the concept was sound and mechanized corps would serve the Red Army well for the rest of the war.

As noted above, the downsized cavalry division had suffered from its weakness in firepower. To beef the division up a bit without reducing its

mobility a new TO&E was introduced for the cavalry division in mid-1942. This new TO&E saw small increases to the number of cavalry, engineer and flamethrower squads, medium mortars added and light field guns halved, and air defense assets beefed up. Finally, a company of T-70 light tanks was added to the division restoring some of the organic tank support the division had lost in 1941. These changes helped the cavalry division play a more important role in the offensive operations of 1942 and early 1943.

In the late summer of 1942 the Soviets introduced a new rifle division TO&E that attempted to get more “bang for the buck” by increasing the division’s heavy weapons at the expense of support troops. Given how fast the Red Army was burning through rifle divisions at Stalingrad, any negative effect of less support assets was probably negligible. In December, another revision of the rifle division TO&E continued this trend of increasing firepower and reducing support personnel. The infantry was better armed with nearly half the rifle squads getting a second light machine gun. Light mortars and Maxim machine guns were reduced but medium and heavy mortars were increased. With light field guns and medium howitzers unchanged since March, it was clear that the mortar was becoming the preferred means of increasing the firepower of the rifle division.

As early as September 1941, rifle and cavalry divisions had started earning the honorary title of “Guards”. Initially this title was just a badge of distinction in combat but beginning in 1942 the Guards rifle division started receiving an augmented TO&E. The Guards rifle division of March 1942 received an extra submachine gun battalion and by the end of the year received 4 more light field guns. Except for some minor differences, the armored and cavalry Guards units continued to use the same TO&Es as non-Guards units.

One of the principal lessons of the first year of what the Soviets called THE GREAT PATROITIC WAR was that there is no such thing as having too many anti-tank guns. The enormous losses in anti-tank guns of all calibers combined with the pressing needs of the new divisions being raised and the dislocation of Soviet industry had slowed the expansion of non-divisional anti-tank gun units. By the spring of 1942 anti-tank gun production had recovered enough to begin fielding new anti-tank gun regiments. Most of

these regiments were built around either the 76.2mm anti-tank gun version of the 76.2mm ZiS-3 field gun or the 45mm M37 anti-tank gun. Going forward, no Soviet defense could be considered complete without stiffening with anti-tank gun regiments.

The final piece in the puzzle to developing a Red Army to defeat the Wehrmacht was the resurgence of Soviet artillery. Out of necessity, in 1941 the Red Army had pulled heavy and even some medium howitzers from its divisions and concentrated them in non-divisional artillery regiments. In 1942 this necessity gave birth to a new and uniquely Soviet application of artillery on a massive scale. At the beginning of that year the Red Army began fielding light artillery (76.2mm) and howitzer (122mm) brigades. These brigades were three times the size of corresponding regiments, 72 and 84 pieces respectively, and foreshadowed the enormous concentrations of artillery that would be a feature of the Red Army for the rest of the war. In the fall of 1942, on the eve of Operation Uranus, the first artillery divisions were introduced. The artillery division grouped multiple regiments of medium and heavy howitzers, light field guns and heavy mortars together (260 guns and mortars) under a unified command. The artillery division had roughly the artillery firepower of four rifle divisions plus a regiment and a half of heavy howitzers.

In the fall of 1941 the Red Army introduced light rocket battalions and regiments of BM-13-16 multiple rocket launchers firing 132mm rockets. In the summer of 1942 a heavy rocket battalion of M-30-4 (300mm) rocket launchers was introduced followed in November with a heavy rocket brigade. Finally in December the first rocket launcher division was introduced consisting of the equivalent of two heavy rocket brigades (144 launchers) and four light rocket regiments (96 launchers). The rocket launcher division could deliver a massive barrage of rockets in a matter of minutes and completely shred any enemy units caught in the open. Although materially far less effective against dug in troops, the psychological effect of such a rocket barrage was still terrifying.

While the spring and summer of 1942 had been an ordeal for the Red Army beginning with the fatally poor execution of the Southwestern Front’s spring

offensive, the ejection of Soviet forces from the Kerch peninsula, the fall of Sevastopol, and the advance of German forces to Stalingrad on the Volga and deep into the Caucasus, by the fall the situation had improved markedly. The German drive into the Caucasus had literally run out of gas and the German 6th Army was bleeding itself to death fighting to clear the few remaining blocks of Stalingrad that the Soviet 62nd Army was desperately clinging to. Through a combination of timely reinforcements, patriotic persuasion and threats of draconian punishment, the STAVKA had managed to prevent a complete collapse of Red Army in the south while husbanding fresh forces for a decisive counterstroke. Sharpened by the trials of the previous six months, in the fall of 1942 the Red Army was ready to show what it had learned.

#### **4.6. PART FIVE: THE RED ARMY STRIKES BACK**

On November 19th 1942, Operation Uranus struck the Rumanian Third Army along the Don River northwest of Stalingrad like a thunderclap. Preceded by a two-hour barrage of thousands of guns and mortars that pulverized Rumanian defenses, Soviet rifle divisions surged forward from their bridgehead at Serafimovich overrunning and enveloping the battered Rumanian divisions. Once the Rumanian front had been torn open the Southwestern Front released its tank and cavalry corps to strike south for the vital river crossing at Kalach deep in the German Sixth Army's rear. The next day the other prong of the Soviet operation under the command of the Stalingrad Front attacked the badly overextended Rumanian 4th Corps south of Stalingrad. After a brief sparring with the German 29th Motorized Infantry Division, the Stalingrad Front's 4th Mechanized Corps linked up with the Southwestern Front's 26th Tank Corps on November 23rd. The Sixth Army and most of the Fourth Panzer Army along with various Rumanian remnants were trapped and the right flank of Army Group B hung wide open.

While three Soviet fronts (Southwestern, Don and Stalingrad) struggled to digest the enormous Stalingrad pocket, Operation Mars, an offensive planned and directed by Zhukov assaulted the Rzhev salient west of Moscow. This offensive, larger in scale than Operation Uranus, enjoyed initial success but faltered in the face of German panzer reserves. On this occasion Zhukov

fell victim to the age-old mistake of reinforcing failure. Even the best Soviet generals still had something to learn.

Given command of the newly formed Army Group Don, Field Marshal Erich von Manstein mounted an ill-fated relief attempt to rescue Sixth Army. The attempt was foiled by stubborn Soviet resistance, counterattacks, and the deteriorating situation on Army Group Don's left flank. By Christmas 1942, the effort to relieve the Sixth Army had failed, sealing the army's fate once and for all. The Soviets had planned to follow up Operation Uranus with Operation Saturn to smash the remainder of Army Group B, but the diversion of forces to deal with the Stalingrad relief attempt forced the scaling back of this operation, now called Little Saturn, to just enveloping the Italian Eighth Army and the ad hoc Army Detachment Hollidt. Little Saturn virtually destroyed the Italians and briefly overran the German airfield at Tatsinskaya which was a major part of the Stalingrad airlift effort.

Flush with these successes, Stalin reverted to his old form and overplayed his hand. Stalin ordered his armies to strike south and west to destroy what remained of Army Group Don and cut off Army Group A still deep in the Caucasus. Just as the Germans had made the mistake in Barbarossa and again in Blau of pushing their forces beyond the range of their logistical support, Stalin did the same thing sending his battle-worn armies deeper and deeper into the void their initial success had created. Like a chess player who sees his opponent has made a bad move, Manstein saw his opportunity and jumped on it. In a series of running battles, Manstein's forces not only succeeded in buying time for Army Group A to extract its forces from the Caucasus, save for a bridgehead on the Taman Peninsula, but with the timely arrival of the SS Panzer Corps, he smashed or drove back the Soviet spearheads recapturing the recently lost Kharkov in the process.

When the scorecard is added up for the Soviet winter offensives of 1942-43, they were in total a dramatic victory for the Red Army far eclipsing the successes of the winter offensive of 1941-42. Stalingrad had been held and the entire Sixth Army and most of the Fourth Panzer Army, Third Rumanian Army and Italian Eighth Army had been destroyed. Axis forces had been largely ejected from the Caucasus, removing the threat to the oil fields at

Grozny, Rostov had been recaptured, and a large salient had been driven into Axis lines around the city of Kursk. On the negative side of the ledger, Operation Mars had resulted in heavy losses for little gain, Army Group A's First Panzer Army had escaped from the Caucasus and Kharkov had been recaptured only to be lost again. The main difference between the two winter campaigns was how the Red Army had emerged from them. In the spring of 1942 the Red Army was still trying to find its footing. The resurrected deep battle doctrine of breakthrough and exploitation was still a work-in-progress yet to be successfully executed and its central component, tank corps, an unknown quantity. In the spring of 1943 the Red Army had a major victory under its belt, its new tactics and organization were battle-tested, and a new generation of commanders had risen from the fires of combat. Ultimate victory still hinged on one overriding question: Could they take the offensive in the summer and beat the Wehrmacht in its natural element?

#### **4.7. PART SIX: FINE TUNING THE WAR MACHINE**

Early 1943 saw some important changes to the tank corps. The rifle squads received a second light machine gun, the engineer company was expanded to a full battalion, the number of 76.2mm anti-tank guns doubled to a full regiment, number of armored cars were halved, BM-13-16 rocket launchers eliminated, anti-aircraft machine guns were substantially increased reflecting their addition to tank brigades, and a mixed regiment of SU-76 and SU-122 self-propelled guns added. The latter two changes hinted at the greater exploitation role the tank corps was expected to play going forward. (Author's Note: Self-propelled Gun was how the Soviets identified all the various SU models, not the role designations used in War in the East.)

The new 1943 TO&E for the mechanized corps had substantial changes from the initial version. Its rifle squads also added a second light machine gun. The motorcycle companies were replaced with reconnaissance companies mounted in American-made halftracks. The number of medium mortars was decreased but the number of heavy mortars increased. A brigade's worth of armored cars was added to the corps, significantly increasing the corps reconnaissance capability. There was a curious reduction in 37mm anti-

aircraft guns diminishing the corps air defense. As with the tank corps a mix of SU-76 and SU-122 self-propelled guns were added. Finally, light tanks were reduced by more than a third, heavy tanks eliminated entirely, and medium tanks increased by sixty percent. Most of these changes reflected changes being made in constituent brigades of the corps as was true of the tank corps.

The 1943 cavalry division was a third larger than its 1942 predecessor and considerably more capable. The minimally effective light mortars were replaced with a doubling of medium mortars and a fifty percent increase in heavy mortars. Both the 45mm anti-tank guns and 76.2mm field guns were increased to full battalions. The 37mm anti-aircraft guns were eliminated but anti-aircraft machine guns, increased fourfold. Lastly, the light tank company was replaced with a tank regiment of T-34s and T-70s. This new configuration gave the cavalry division back some of the staying power it had lost when the division was downsized in 1941. The division would use this TO&E for the rest of the war.

The rifle and Guards rifle divisions' TO&Es of 1943 were almost unchanged from late 1942. There was a steep decline over the course 1943 in the number of rifle brigades reflecting the Red Army's shift to the strategic offense and the need for units with greater firepower. The airborne brigade's TO&E was streamlined by deleting most of its towed weapons, doubling its anti-aircraft machine guns and increasing its anti-tank rifles by almost fourfold. These changes didn't prevent the last major Soviet airborne drop of the war in September, 1943 from turning into a fiasco due to poor planning and execution. Despite being pioneers in the creation of airborne forces, the Red Army had very limited success with airborne operations in World War II and more often than not squandered these elite troops by using them as regular infantry. The Guards airborne divisions that were formed from late 1942 on were "airborne" in name only. The former paratroopers who filled out these divisions were organized and equipped identically to their contemporary Guards rifle divisions.

In 1942 the Soviets had formed an odd combined arms formation called the Destroyer Anti-Tank Brigade. In addition to a battalion each of 76.2mm and 45mm anti-tank guns and anti-tank rifles, this brigade's TO&E called for a



battalion of engineers, a company of submachine gunners, a mixed battalion of medium and heavy mortars and a company of 37mm anti-aircraft guns. Unusual as this brigade's configuration was, it stayed in service until mid-1943 when it was upgraded to a pure anti-tank brigade of two 76.2mm gun regiments, one regiment of 45mm guns and an anti-tank rifle battalion. Although the German defeat at Kursk had pushed the Wehrmacht onto the strategic defensive, the Soviets introduced yet another anti-tank brigade in late 1943. This new brigade was slightly larger than the one fielded in the summer and replaced the 45mm anti-tank gun with the considerably more powerful 57mm anti-tank gun.

Perhaps the most consequential development in the Red Army in 1943 was the introduction of the Breakthrough Artillery Division. This massive formation contained 356 guns and mortars ranging in caliber from 76.2mm field guns to 203mm howitzers. It was designed to do exactly what its name said and while the Soviets couldn't afford to field many of these divisions wherever one showed up you could expect trouble. The standard artillery division's TO&E for 1943 saw an increase in medium howitzers and heavy mortars, the latter of which could be increased very cheaply. At all levels, mortars were an increasingly important asset of the Red Army. A third version of the artillery division was also introduced in 1943 called the Cannon Artillery Division. This division consisted entirely of 108 152mm gun-howitzers. The advantage of the cannon artillery division was that with all its weapons of the same type it could manage its fire control more efficiently which is why non-divisional regiments and brigades also often consisted of just one type of gun or mortar.

One final development of 1943 that would play a significant role in the Red Army's transition to a permanent state of strategic offense was the creation of the Assault Engineer-Sapper Brigade. Prior to this brigade introduction, Soviet engineers were primarily focussed on typical engineering tasks like building fortifications and roads. The Assault Sapper Squad was patterned after the German pioneers who were experts in assaulting fortified positions. The Germans were adept at building field fortifications and experience in many a bloody battle convinced the Soviets that they likewise need specialists

to tackle these defenses. Victory in the summer of 1943 would hinge on how well the assault sapper brigades and all the other new or revised formations performed and the Germans wouldn't make them wait long to find out.

## **4.8. PART SEVEN: CLASH OF THE TITANS**

The spring of 1943 found Adolf Hitler on the horns of a dilemma. He had lost an entire field army at Stalingrad, had seen the surviving armies of that debacle driven back hundreds of miles with the Hungarian and Italian armies driven from the field entirely and to make matters worse, an entire German-Italian army group surrendered in North Africa. A realistic appraisal of the strategic situation would argue for Germany staying on the defensive along its multiple and widely dispersed fronts. On the other hand, Hitler needed a victory to stiffen morale on the home front shaken by these defeats, dampen the fervor of resistance movement across the occupied territories, and demonstrate to the Anglo-Americans and Soviets that the Wehrmacht was still a force to be reckoned with.

The Kursk salient seemed a likely place to secure a victory. This large bulge in the front line was ripe for being pinched off in a classic double envelopment. At the operational level the Kursk offensive was a no-brainer, the kind of operation the German had pulled off again and again since 1939. At the tactical level to the men tasked with conducting the operation it seemed a suicide mission. The Soviet defenses at Kursk consisted of multiple trench lines, on the most likely approaches up to eight lines deep. These trench lines were defended with infantry, engineers, artillery and score after score of anti-tank guns. Anti-tank ditches and countless mines were woven in between these trench lines. The Kursk salient was the strongest fortress in the world and the defenders outnumbered the attackers in men and every category of equipment. If these defenses failed, behind them an entire Front was in reserve.

German hopes for success hung on a handful of flashy new armored vehicles. In addition to more Tiger tanks, which had been in action since late 1942, there was the new Panther, Germany's answer to the T-34, the Ferdinand and Nashorn tank destroyers and more of the upgraded Panzer

IV medium tanks and Stug III assault guns. Even in the unlikely event that the German attack was to succeed, there was no real plan for follow up operations other than a vague and unrealistic notion of developing the success into a drive against Moscow. The Germans were literally attacking for the sake of attacking, a demonstration of power pure and simple.

In contrast the Soviets had a very defined plan for the future course of operations in 1943. They would first soak up German offensive strength in an attritional battle for the Kursk salient. Then when German forces were spent, they would go over to the offense, crush the former attackers, and exploit all the way to the Dnieper River cutting off Axis forces in the Crimea in the process. Once the Soviets were over the Dnieper, Axis forces would have no decent defensive terrain east of Poland and Rumania. The scope of the planned operations showed the extent to which the Red Army had matured as a fighting force. Stalin and the STAVKA had no intention of repeating the mistakes of the past. All efforts would be concentrated in one area, the south, while forces opposite army groups North and Center would merely keep pressure on the Germans in those sectors. The offensive in the south would be conducted in stages. First defeat the enemy at Kursk, then recapture Orel and Kharkov and only after those objectives had been attained move on to the Dnieper. It was a methodical approach that would characterize Soviet operations for the rest of the war.

To the shock and surprise of the Germans, the Battle of Kursk began on July 5, 1943 with the Soviets firing first. Soviet artillery hit the likely German assembly areas with a pre-emptive barrage a half hour before the Germans own preparatory barrage was scheduled to begin. It was the Soviets way of telling the Germans "Hello, we know you're coming". The Soviet barrage didn't do any serious damage to the attackers but it did portend the trouble to come. Within eight days the Ninth Army, the northern pincer of the German offensive, stalled and actually began falling back to its jump off positions two days later. The southern pincer spearheaded by the II SS Panzer Corps of Fourth Panzer Army made better progress until it clashed with reinforcing Soviet tank corps around the town of Prokhorovka. In what was for years incorrectly described as the largest tank battle of the war, the two sides

battled themselves into a burning heap of scrap metal. At this point an event far from the battlefields of Kursk intervened to end the German offensive. On July 9th Anglo-American forces began landing in Sicily causing Hitler to halt the offensive so troops might be freed up to meet the new threat. The last major German offensive on the Eastern Front was over and Germany's long retreat was beginning.

## **4.9. CONCLUSION**

It might seem unusual to end this analysis in July of 1943 with nearly two years of the War in the East yet to go, but the months that followed were characterized by growing Soviet strength and capability and continuing decline in the strength and capability of the Wehrmacht. From a strategic point of view the Wehrmacht's inevitable defeat was confirmed at Kursk. While German industry continued to churn out more tanks and planes despite the constant rain of Allied bombs, it had neither the fuel to effectively use these weapons nor enough of the trained men to man them. In the last two years of the war the continuously refitted divisions of the Wehrmacht would initially be highly effective but soon burn out due to lack of reinforcements and logistics. The accumulated damage that had been inflicted on the Wehrmacht in the first two years of combat with the Red Army was unrecoverable.

By contrast, the Red Army that had been on a trajectory of recovery from the staggering defeats of the first fifteen months of the war only got stronger and more combat effective after Kursk. In late 1943 Soviet tank production allowed the tank corps and tank brigades to finally shed their light tanks substantially increasing their firepower. Further increasing these units' assault capabilities most of their infantry was armed with submachine guns. The use of submachine gun armed infantry also proliferated across the mechanized corps and rifle and Guards rifle divisions. Not surprisingly some of the greatest increases in Red Army firepower came in the artillery. The Soviets were well on the way to mastering the use of massed artillery fire by the time of Kursk and this capability was enhanced with the new TO&Es for the Breakthrough Artillery Division and the Rocket Launcher Division in early 1944. The Breakthrough Artillery Division was expanded to an eye-popping

476 pieces including 160mm heavy mortars and BM-31-12 rocket launchers. At the same time the Rocket Launcher Division was upgraded from 216 M-30-4 rocket launchers to 288 BM-31-12 rocket launchers.

The Red Army didn't just keep getting larger after Kursk; it also increased in technological capability relative to the Wehrmacht. In response to the new armored vehicles being fielded by Germany the Soviets introduced the KV-85 heavy tank and SU-85 and SU-152 self-propelled guns followed shortly by the IS series of heavy tanks and the T-34/85 medium tank. While the new Soviet armored vehicles weren't quite a match for their German opponents one-on-one, Soviet production insured that they rarely fought with those odds.

Lend-Lease was also important to the Red Army's defeat of the Wehrmacht. Starting with a trickle of British tanks and planes in 1941, a significant amount of aid was reaching the Soviet Union by the time of Kursk. Most of this aid was indirect assistance in the form of raw materials and food but huge numbers of desperately needed trucks and jeeps were also provided. While American and British tanks were apt to be disparaged compared to their own vehicles by the Soviets, they used them nonetheless. The Germans were in the opposite situation trying to provide arms for their poorly equipped allies out of their own meager resources.

The combination of their own production and lend-lease assistance gave the Red Army the means to defeat the Wehrmacht. The defeat itself required not just steel in the form of shells and tanks but also steel in the form of nerves and courage. More than once the Red Army was brought to the edge of defeat by the more experienced and skilled Wehrmacht only to be saved by men who would not flinch in the face of disaster. With each defeat that was averted and each victory that was hard-won the Red Army improved its capability and strengthened its confidence. As the Red Army unleashed its first summer offensive in the aftermath of Kursk the lessons it had learned, the formations it had perfected, and the leaders it had nurtured had been forged in the steel inferno of combat into a war-winning juggernaut.

## 5. MAJOR CHANGES SINCE RELEASE

Since release the game has been regularly patched and also some originally undocumented rules have been added. All these changes are regularly added to the Living Manual. This section summarises the main changes up to patch 01.02.45.

### 5.1. RULES THAT AFFECT BOTH SIDES

#### 5.1.1. THEATRE BOXES.

This changes the rules in 13.1.13 of the original manual (transfers) and 21.10.1 for disbanding units.

For a unit on the map to disband or be sent to a theatre box, it must now be more than 8 hexes from enemy units. To be able to send a unit to a TB, it must also be on a connected rail hex. Other limitations/restrictions re disbanding and transferring to a theatre box remain unchanged.

Units will normally have their Max TOE automatically set to 100 when in a non-reserve theatre box.

Axis non-motorized units in non-reserve theatre boxes will have their TOE's lowered if they do not have the sufficient manpower in their national active manpower pool as follows:

- a. German non-motorized units will be set to Max TOE of 80 if the German active manpower pool begins the turn below 150,000. They will have Max TOE set to 65 if the pool begins the turn below 75,000.
- b. Italian, Romanian, and Hungarian, non-motorized, non-elite units, will be set to Max TOE of 80 if their national active manpower pool begins the turn below 20,000. They will have Max TOE set to 65 if the pool begins the turn below 10,000.
- c. Finnish non-motorized, non-elite units, will be set to Max TOE of 80 if their national active manpower pool begins the turn below 10,000. They will have Max TOE set to 65 if the pool begins the turn below 5,000.

- d. Slovakian non-motorized, non-elite units, will be set to Max TOE of 80 if their national active manpower pool begins the turn below 2,000. They will have Max TOE set to 65 if the pool begins the turn below 1,000.

### 5.1.2. COMMAND RANGE MODIFIERS

These rules change 15.5.4 of the original manual.

When determining the modifier, instead of subtracting 5 from the range before determining the modifier, you subtract the following:

Corps HQ - 5

Army - 10

Army Group/Front - 15

High command - 20

### 5.1.3. DEATH OF A LEADER

This alters the rules in 15.8 of the original manual.

The baseline chance a displaced/relocated HQ will lose a leader was changed, from 15% (50% if isolated), as follows:

- June 1941 - 5% (10% if isolated)
- July 1941 - 10% (15% if isolated)
- All other dates - 15% (30% if isolated)

No more than one leader may be killed, per player turn within any given HQ, due to HQ displacement/relocation.

HQs that have lost a leader due to displacement/relocation may suffer an additional MP reduction at the start of their next logistics phase

### 5.1.4. LEADERSHIP DISMISSAL COSTS

These rules change 15.6.2 of the original manual.

The cost of dismissing a leader is increased by the political rating of the leader being dismissed. If the leader is an Axis Allied leader, the cost is double the political rating of the leader.

The cost of dismissing a leader is reduced by the political rating of the leader of the Higher HQ for the leader being dismissed (i.e. OKH political rating is subtracted from the cost of dismissing the leader for Army Group North).

The base costs are as follows: All High Command 30, Axis Army Group 30, Axis Army 20, Axis Corps 10, Soviet Front 15, Soviet Army 10, Soviet Corps 5. There is a minimum cost of 2.

### 5.1.5. GROUND ATTACK MISSIONS

This alters the rules in 18.1.4 of the original manual.

A mission generated by a ground attack air directive that is performing an attack on a unit has a chance of having the mission converted to an interdiction attack. The chance of switching to interdiction increases with the number of movement points expended by the unit in the unit's prior turn, and increases against units smaller than divisions.

### 5.1.6. FIGHTER RANGE DISPLAY

This supplements the rules in 18.4 of the original manual.

Fighter's, and fighter bombers with a Mission setting of Fighter, display their escort range for radius in their air unit detail screen. Fighter bombers with a Mission setting of Bomber, display their combat range (in this case bombing range) for radius in their air unit detail screen. When the range circles are shown on map using the AOG functionality if the unit consists of fighter bombers one of two circles will be shown.

Changed the display of air unit range circles shown in the AOG view for fighters and fighter-bombers that are set to Mission: Fighter. Now they show the purple line equal to their combat (intercept/patrol) range. The unit detail screen has been changed so that for fighters and fighter-bombers set to mission:fighter, show escort range/intercept (combat) range. Clicking on a hex with an airbase in the normal map view (with no ground unit in the hex), will still show both the green (escort range) circle, and the purple (combat range) circle, for each air unit at the airbase).

If an airbase has aircraft but no ground units present in the hex, then left-clicking on the hex will generate one or two range circles depending on the aircraft at the airbase. The green circle is the greatest escort range of any fighters or fighter bombers with Mission set to Fighter that are at the base. The purple circle is the greatest combat range of any air unit at the base.

So if the airbase only has level bombers only the purple combat range circle will be shown but for fighters and fighter bombers with their Mission set to Fighter, both the shorter escort and the combat range circles are shown.

### 5.1.7. FORTIFIED ZONE UNITS

This changes the rules in 20.5.1 of the original manual.

Changed Soviet Fortified Region build limit to 50

Changed Axis Fortified Region build limit and AP costs as follows:

June 41 to Dec 42 – 4 AP / 20 build limit

Jan 42 to Jun 43 – 4 AP / 40 build limit

Jul 43 to Dec 43 – 3 AP / 60 build limit

Jan 44 to Dec 44 – 2 AP / 60 build limit

Jan 45 to end – 2 AP / 80 build limit

### 5.1.8. HQS AND REFIT MODE

This is in addition to the current rules in 21.11 of the original manual.

HQs on map and in the national reserve may now be placed into refit mode. This can be done on the CR screen or by right clicking on the unit within the Reserve box or on the map

### 5.1.9. ASSAULT FRONT RULES

The limits and rules for Assault Fronts are substantially revised (21.11.2 of the original manual).

The revised command capacity bonuses are now:

DATE	AXIS ARMY	AXIS CORPS	SOVIET FRONT	SOVIET ARMY
1941	1.34	1.17	Nil	Nil
1942	1.34	1.17	1.10	1.10
1943	1.34	1.17	1.34	1.25
1944	1.34	1.17	1.67	1.34
1945	1.34	1.17	1.67	1.34

The limits on the maximum number of Assault HQs are revised to:

YEAR	AXIS	SOVIET
1941	4	2
1942	3	2
1943	3	3
1944	2	4
1945	2	4

Note that it is still possible to exceed this number if you already had formations on Assault status in an earlier year.

### 5.1.10. CHANGES TO THE COMBAT RULES

There are four important changes from the original manual:

- Urban Combat;
- The effectiveness of low experience elements;
- CPP loss in Combat; and,
- Mechanized infantry elements in combat.

The first affects combat in heavy urban, urban or port hexes (in effect 23.5.2 of the original manual).

Isolated units suffer additional penalties in high intensity combat. Units must be fully isolated and not in aerial re-supply, not just be in isolated hexes, to suffer these additional penalties.

Combat in these hexes alters the combat delay rules (22.2.7).

A deliberate attack that fails, versus a defender in a non-isolated hex in urban/heavy urban/port, adds 9 to the combat delay. A hasty attack in this case adds 5 combat delay.

Hexes that have 9 (maximum) combat delay may not be attacked again that turn.

The second major change is that elements with low experience are less likely to fire in combat.

## NOTE

This will particularly affect the Soviets in the early period of the game and the weaker Axis-Allied formations.

The third major change affects how Combat Preparation Points are lost when a unit attacks (23.2.2 of the original manual).

The loss of combat preparation points (CPPs) by attacking units, instead of always being a 50% reduction in CPP, is now based on the type of attack and the final combat odds:

### Deliberate attack

<20 to 1 odds - 50% reduction

>=20<35 to 1 odds - 40% reduction

>=35<50 to 1 odds - 30% reduction

>=50 to 1 odds - 25% reduction

### Hasty attack

<20 to 1 odds - 50% reduction

>=20<35 to 1 odds - 35% reduction

>=35<50 to 1 odds - 20% reduction

>=50 to 1 odds - 10% reduction

When the sub units of an Axis Division or Soviet Corps reform into the larger unit, the unit with the lowest CPP value is weighted as if it was two units, when calculating the unit CPP. Example: When units with 25, 50, and 100 CPPs recombine, the combined unit will have 50 CPPs  $((25 \times 2) + 50 + 100 / 4)$ .

The final change affects how mechanized elements are treated in combat. These are now considered dismounted when shot at under 500 yards. In addition it is now less likely they would be fired at by armored piercing direct fire at ranges over 500 yards.

## 5.1.11. ALLOCATION OF SUPPORT UNITS IN GROUND COMBAT

These rules change section 23.6 of the original manual.

The original manual missed two important rules in this respect. One is relatively minor and only likely to affect commitment either across very poor terrain or in conditions of heavy mud or heavy snow.

For a support unit to be committed to battle the HQ that the SU is attached to must be within 30 motorized movement points of the attacking unit being supported.

For a deliberate attack there are some important modifiers. If the attacker (in the current phase) or the defender (in the previous phase) has moved the relevant HQ there is a -1 modifier to the chance of a Support Unit being committed. If the attacker has not moved their HQ in the current turn, then there is a +3 bonus to the chance of a Support Unit commitment

## 5.1.12. DISPLACEMENT OF ISOLATED HQS

This is in addition to the rules in 23.14.6 of the original manual.

If a HQ that is isolated displaces (either through relocate order or forced displacement) then all attached Support and Multi-Role units are lost. As with surrenders, some small amount of men and equipment can escape and will be placed in the transit pool.

## 5.2. RULES THAT AFFECT THE AXIS SIDE

### 5.2.1. IMPACT OF THE HARSH WINTER

This alters the rules in 8.6.1 of the original manual.

Axis units in heavy snow from December 1941 to March 1942 have their defensive CV modified as follows:

Dec 1941 - /2

Jan 1942 - /1.5

Feb 1942 - /1.33

This is reflected in the CV values shown on the map. In addition, once in combat, there are admin and land combat rating checks made. For each failed check, the defence value is modified an additional time. So a unit in

Jan 1942 in heavy snow can have its CV divided by 1.5 up to 3 times if it fails both checks.

### **5.2.2. GERMAN MOBILISATION EVENTS**

German mobilisation events (40.15). The 'more men for the ground forces' event now starts on 1 March 1943 and ends on 20 June 1943 (this raises the manpower production multiplier by 16 across this period).

## **5.3. RULES THAT AFFECT THE SOVIET SIDE**

### **5.3.1. LIMITS ON TEMPORARY MOTORISATION**

Soviet units may not be temporarily motorized in 1941 (22.2.5 of the original manual).

### **5.3.2. MISSING NSS**

The status of Kuybyshev as an NSS was omitted in the original manual.

### **5.3.3. CREATING SOVIET CORPS**

These alter the rules in 27.5.5 and 27.5.6 of the original manual.

When a corps is created using 2 or 3 guards units, if an appropriate guards OB is not available, the newly formed corps will not be a guards unit. The first available Guards Tank Corps is in December 1942, and the first available Guards Mechanized Corps in November 1942. So merging Guards brigades before these dates will not result in a Guards corps

### **5.3.4. CONVERSION OF SOVIET TANK DIVISIONS**

Any surviving Soviet Tank Divisions will convert to Tank Brigades in late January 1942, not March 1942. Surviving Mechanized Divisions will only convert to Rifle Divisions when they go depleted (i.e. they will not automatically convert to Rifle Divisions in March 1942). This alters the rules in section 27.5.1 of the original manual.

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