

# The Kommandeur



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## AHIKS President

The current AHIKS President is Kenneth Oates, our previous VP. Kenneth will hold the office until December 31, 2020. So... we need a new president. If you are interested or know of anyone who might be interested, please let an officer know.

Officer addresses are always on page 12.

## From the Editor

Art Dohrman wrote, "the tank on page 10 is a Soviet T-26S light tank, a development of the earlier T-26B based on experience in Spain and Manchuria, fielded in 1938. Production halted in 1939. It saw combat in Finland and the early stages of Barbarossa." Many thanks, Art.

Art's article on the PanzerBlitz playoffs was very large. Since there was little else submitted, it worked out fine. George Phillis' **Stalingrad** article will continue.

One of the reasons *The Kommandeur* looks strange sometimes is that the articles I receive are of various lengths, so they don't fit nicely on one page or one column. The Editorial is always the last item to go in. It fits where there is space.

I apologize for the poor picture quality. As I have mentioned before, our current newsletter distributor limits the size of the issue.



## Upcoming Events

Oct. 10, Your home  
FnordCon 2.3  
<http://www.sjgames.com/fnordcon/>

Oct. 22-25:, Your home  
Essen Spiel.digital 2020  
<https://www.spiel-messe.com/en/>

November 5-9, Meriden, CT  
COMPASS GAMES EXPO 2020  
<https://www.compassgames.com/expo> CANCELLED

A good source for information on all kinds of conventions is the Steve Jackson game site: <http://sjgames.com/con>

## Multiplayer Info

Hopefully everyone is staying safe during this crazy year we are going through!

On the multiplayer front we are kicking off a game of **Advanced Third Reich** with 5 players! I even agreed to play Italy. 😊 Wonder if I can build a new Rome...

I was pleasantly surprised by the reaction to a post on the AHIKS Facebook page which drew a fair amount of responses. I am not sure if that is the because of the push notifications from the page or if we just have more active members linked in there. However, I will attempt to post more updates as to game openings going forward.

If you look at the current list **A Distant Plain and Fire in the Lake** only need one more player to get rolling now. I actually have, I think, all of the COIN series of games and would not mind playing any of them. For those who haven't, each one has some very interesting dynamics. The core of which is that you may be on the same side as another player but only one of you can actually win. Makes for some very interesting decisions and a bit of a balancing act. If interested, drop me a line please.

**Empire and Arms** is close and I would really like to get this one kicked off, so if you want to take part in playing this monster, now would be the time!

A couple of the classics have jumped up to 3 players interested, **Kremlin** for those of you who like the manipulations of power in the Soviet Union and **Samurai** [only need one more to kick this off!] for those of you who prefer the simpler [?] time of ancient warfare. 😊

I would also note that **Dune** is now up to 2 players, and I would love to get a game going; one of my all time favorites.

There are lots of games out there, and AHIKS members tend to be a lot more reliable in finishing long games, so let me know what you are interested in.

As a side note for those of you who might be interested, Duncan set up an AHIKS discord channel. For those of you not familiar, discord is a program to handle voice communications and, if you wish, video. If you want to play in live time, it's great. I have been running an AD&D campaign using it for about 2 years now, and it works great + it's free.

Regards, Jeff

[The list of multiplayer games available is on page 11.]

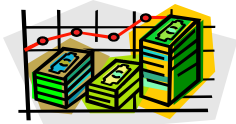
### 12.4 REINFORCEMENTS

Reinforcements may enter at any friendly North, South, East, or West mapboard edge. New units may arrive by ground, rail, sealift, or airlift and count against stacking limits. Reinforcements are fully combat-capable on Turn of entrance.

1990 Jeff Jones, Newark, CA  
1991 Delwayne Arakaki, Las Vegas, NV  
1992 Carl Wolf, Maricopa, AZ

## Treasury Notes

Brian Stretcher



### More for you about the **Men of Iron Tripack** Coming Soon

I have managed to learn more about this game, and I have been working on an analysis of the game for a separate article. Alas, too much to get done for this issue. Apart from the analysis, I have to say it was fun to actually punch out some pieces and play through a scenario to test the system, actually rolling a die to resolve combat instead of using a die roller within an electronic version of the game. Those are fun, but there is still something about physically handling a game and its components. I can only keep the smallest things set up here at home, because of limited space and two curious kittens who get into and on top of everything, but I do miss the old days of keeping games set up on the table for extended times. Except the dust. I don't miss the dust.

Anyway, look for it to appear over the holidays!

### Business as usual

No recent purchases for me. I was tempted to pick up a new card-driven game on the War of 1812 from Compass Games as a birthday present to myself, but for a number of reasons decided to pass on that, the biggest reason probably being that I want to learn all of these games that have been sitting on my study shelves for the past couple of years. Looked kinda fun, though...

My work schedule has also eaten into my gaming time more than usual the past month or so, with trial prep eating into my evenings. That is, there may be time, but no energy to work through a move that takes more than 15 minutes or so. Therefore, I try to prioritize my multiplayer games, especially over games that are in a "work-through-an-entire-move" stage of play. Those get saved for the weekend, when I hopefully have time.

As I head into the fall, here's what on my (electronic) table: We have had to pause our 5-player game of **Here I Stand** at the beginning of turn 4 while we searched for a replacement player for England, plus work out some technical issues to get him into the specific game. I think we're just about ready to resume play in that one, with no one having a particular advantage in the game. There has been peace between the major powers in Europe for the entire game so far. The Ottomans have defeated Hungary and have contented themselves with conducting piracy along the Mediterranean Coast. The Hapsburgs have been focused on building up their forces and conducting business in the New World; they nearly managed to have an explorer circumnavigate the world, but he rolled one pip short on the dice and was speared by natives. Most of the New World has been discovered, but both France and the Hapsburgs have struggled to maintain their colonies. The Mayan conquest continues to produce for France, but, the Incan and Aztec Empires have been depleted. England has conquered Scotland without French interference, and Henry VIII has asked the Pope for a divorce from Katherine of Aragon. It has not yet been granted. France has conquered all of the neutral minors in Italy except Venice and has been forced to build fleets to chase Ottoman pirates. The Papacy has stayed committed to resisting the reformation, but the Protestants have managed to convert almost all the German language zone. One Protestant reformer has been burned at the stake. War will break out between the Protestants and the Hapsburgs/Papacy by rule at the end of this turn, if not before.

In the Helgoland Bight scenario from Avalanche Press's **Jutland**, a major fleet action has been in progress at the island for

some time now. While my British have a battlecruiser dead in the water and two more with heavy damage, they have managed to sink the *Moltke* and severely damage both *Von der Tann* and *Seydlitz*, while wiping out most of the German torpedo boats. I am pretty confident about the outcome of this game at this point, although I was concerned for quite a while when the battle began.

In **Pearl Harbor**, Tony Arena and I are in the Allied portion of the Summer 1943 turn. An Allied invasion at Balikpapan was turned back following a prolonged surface engagement, in which an impressively lucky Japanese surface force managed to "break through to the transports" and eliminate the Marines making the landing, albeit at the cost of almost all of the Japanese ships. This has ended up being a pretty fun game, despite a few flaws in the game system and a few holes in the rules.

Jeff Miller and I have reached the Fall of 1916 in our second game of **The Lamps are Going Out: World War I**. This game has been much more even than our first game was, with both sides mostly keeping up with technology, and our concerns that the die roller was out of whack have been abated; in our first game the attackers typically could roll no wrong, and that *definitely* has not been the case in this game. The Germans have Belgium but have made no inroads into France itself. The British hold "Salonika" but are contained by the Austro-Hungarians and Bulgarians. The Central Powers have made some progress in Russia, but both sides there are pretty much stalemated at this point, although the bad event cards start coming in 1917. The Western Allies made a mistake and an Ottoman Army overran the Sinai, and AH forces have taken the Venetia area in Italy. Advantage somewhat to the Central Powers in this game, but it could go either way, especially since the US is poised to enter several turns earlier than it did historically.

Also in WWI, Mike Kettman and I have two scenarios going in **Balance of Powers**. We started the Fire in the East scenario recently, which covers the Central Power's summer 1915 offensive in Russia. This is a short 6-turn smash-and-bash scenario with no naval or diplomacy rules to worry about. Only in the second turn, and the Russians still hold the line in central Poland around Warsaw, awaiting a massive Central Powers assault. Meanwhile, Russian forces have crept forward towards Konigsberg in East Prussia and are conducting a fighting withdrawal against the AH forces advancing in Galicia. Victory in this scenario is determined only by comparing demoralization levels; the comparative spread has to be 9 or more in order to win.

We started the FITE game because neither of us are completely happy with the amount of work that has gone into the South Slavs scenario, mostly because the naval forces and rules are more work than they are worth in this scenario. We have uncovered some quirks in the system, such that the Entente player can pretty much operate ships at will in the Sea of Marmara without consequence, limited resources greatly reduce the abilities of both sides on land, the diplomacy rules allow minors to enter too easily within the limited scope of the scenario, and the scenario is long. We are thinking we may end this one a little early, since the Germans and a siege artillery unit have just entered play in September, 1915, and the Serbians should soon be toast.

So, what's on your table these days?

### Book Review and Vintage Game Corner: Stalingrad

I recently finished Antony Beevor's critically acclaimed 1998 treatment of the Battle of Stalingrad, which cover the campaign from the beginning of Case Blue in June, 1942, to the surrender of the Sixth Army in February, 1943. It is a well-

written treatise, relying on both German and Soviet-era sources that were declassified by Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is a story well-told, relying on a narrative based on both personal interviews and various written sources. I did pick it up for \$2.99 for my e-reader. I found it somewhat amusing that some of the reviewers on Amazon struggled with the book's description of the movement of military forces, claiming that they couldn't follow the movements of the 4<sup>th</sup> Guards Division or the 338<sup>th</sup> Flak battalion, but that's the sort of things that we wargamers come to expect. I don't think any aspect of the book was over- or underdone. It is appropriately gloomy and sad. Maybe I learned more about lice than I needed to, but I have often wondered why the little critters are such a big deal: typhus, that's why.

The only other book I have read specifically on this subject matter was **Enemy at the Gates**, written in the 1970s before many Soviet sources were unlocked. Both books are similar in style. Although it has been maybe 35+ years since I read that book, I recall it being a bit more personal in its description of events. A little more focused on the horrors of war, if you will, although both cover that topic quite well. Both are highly recommended, if you haven't read them. The movie version of **Enemy at the Gates** is decent as well, but it only covers certain sub-stories from the book and is significantly fictionalized. I do believe it was the first movie I ever saw with a very convincing computer-animated Stuka attack.

I dug through my games to see what titles I might have that specifically deal with the subject matter of Beevor's book. All of them are pretty old, and, frankly, I don't know if there are many current games on the subject that are actually in print; by and large, I don't look for games on subjects for which I already have a title at the same scale, unless the first one was a turkey. I found four titles in my collection that deal with just the battle or campaign, although several other games have scenarios that take place in Stalingrad, such as **Squad Leader** and other tactical games. They all have somewhat different frames of reference, which is good.

In no particular order, the first one I found was the TSR edition of **Drive on Stalingrad**, formerly published by the late SPI. This version came out in 1983 or 1984 depending on whether you look at the box or the rules, and is more-or-less a reprint of the SPI version; there is no reference to a redevelopment of the game anywhere in the rules or other materials. This is a large-scale application of the **Panzergruppe Guderian** system, which makes it a division and regiment level game, with untried Soviet units, locking ZOCs, overruns, divisional integrity, mechanized movement, etc. It has two maps, and the Germans can go plunging into the Caucasus if they will. Stalingrad itself is only two-hexes in size. There are special rules to mandate the stupidity of the high commands of both sides. The game runs from the end of June, 1942, through December, so the Soviets can try their big counterattack, I presume. I have not played it. There are no scenarios, just the main game, which would likely be a significant undertaking. I recall mixed reviews about the game, the one thing being a complaint that it was easier to defend river lines *behind* the river rather than *on* the river, because units are not allowed to cross a river hexside directly into an enemy ZOC. However, that appears to only be the case for the Don River, not all the rivers, so I don't know how that actually impacts the game. If the game is true to history at all, there won't be enough Soviet units to cover the entire length of the Don when the Germans initially approach, because the Don takes a convoluted course all the way across the map, north to south. So, I would say there will be ways to get across somewhere. I would like to try this game sometime, probably when I retire. It remains unpunched.

Next is **Panzerkrieg**. There are two editions of this game, one published by OSG in 1978, and a subsequent reissue by AH I don't know when. I have the OSG edition, which I think I purchased used, but I don't recall exactly when or where. The OSG version was published in 1978. While this game covers more of the war than just Stalingrad at the division level, since it is limited to the operations of Army Group South, two of the eight scenarios in the game deal with the Stalingrad Campaign.

**Panzerkrieg** is an interesting game. A John Prados design, it might best be described as an operational level **Third Reich**, as players of that old chestnut will recognize some similar elements here: only mechanized units have ZOCs. ZOCs cost movement points to enter, and there are air units, airbases, bridgehead counters, and although there is no mechanized movement per se, if mechanized units are adjacent to an attacking mechanized unit at high enough odds and a Breakthrough result is achieved, then the non-attacking units are eligible to move again after combat, although they do not have to create any sort of chain and they don't get to attack again. There are headquarters units to manage supply and leader units to supplement combat. The game itself is pretty simple, by modern standards. My recollection is that unit density tends to be pretty high, and there are a few rules problems that are not addressed in the one-page errata sheet that came with the game. I do know there is a Vassal module for the AH version of this game, although I do not know the differences between editions. Anyway, the two scenarios are *Drive on Stalingrad* and *Stalingrad*, the first covering the approach to the city (and into the Caucasus) in July to early September, 1942, *Stalingrad* covering November 19 through February 4, 1943. There is no way to play the entire Stalingrad campaign, but otherwise these scenarios cover the same ground as **Drive on Stalingrad**. It's a matter of scale: both games have turns that are a week long, but in **Drive on Stalingrad** it is 41 hexes from Kharkov to Stalingrad, in **Panzerkrieg** it's 25 hexes. I can't easily find a listing of miles-per-hex in either game.

I have set this one up and played through a few turns a couple of times, many years ago. I think I bought it new while I was in high school, and my copy is punched and the counters sorted in a manner I would have done some 40 years ago. It works, although I never played it long enough to be able to tell you how well. It has very nice set-up maps and scenario-specific OOBs and rules, and the components were nicely done for the time. One discouraging aspect to the game is that in the first scenario, *Kiev Pocket*, there are near-fatal setup instructions: the Russians are only allowed to set up a few units "opposite" Guderian's Panzergruppe at the northern edge of the map. However, since the deployment rules are generous, and the rule does not define "opposite" well, if you're not playing solitaire, there will be an argument as the Soviet player tries to put units in Guderian's way that might not be supposed to be there. Regardless, this is another title that I would like to play sometime. If anyone has information on how compatible the AH version is with the OSG version, I would like to know, because there is a Vassal module for the AH version.

Next is the golden oldie **Turning Point: The Battle of Stalingrad**, published by SPI in 1972. This game is one in a series of games with similar systems, including **Kursk**, **Moscow Campaign**, **Seelowe**, and **France 1940**, the last being published by AH after an earlier release by SPI. Game system features sticky ZOCs, mechanized movement, air elements, and division to corps scale. Some of these games work better than others, but they are all pretty easy to play and, as I recall, have fairly solid rules, even if some of them might be on the CRT or other player's aid. **Turning Point** has the Axis already in their lines at Stalingrad and begins with the Soviet counteroffensive,

although there are scenarios starting later with the German relief efforts of the pocket. Stalingrad itself is only two hexes in size, so it is a front sized game. There are various OOBs and reinforcement schedules to choose from, as is often featured in this series of games, although there are no separate cards for these OOBs like there are in **France, 1940**. There are optional rules for Russian Army Integrity (i.e. using the unit IDs to keep Armies together, a novel concept at the time), and German Insanity, which has Hitler interfering as he did historically and dooming the Axis player before the game even begins. “Good luck to you, Herr General...er, Field Marshal Paulus.”

I have set up and played through this game as well, but not since the 1980s. It works, and if I recall, this is one of the better games in the series. I don’t remember where or when I got it exactly, but other than the cracked lid of the old SPI plastic box, my copy is in really good shape.

Finally, I have pulled out and looked through my copy of the classic mini-monster and original edition of **Streets of Stalingrad**, designed by Dana Lombardy and published by Phoenix Games in 1979, the year I graduated from high school. I picked it up by direct order from Ed Snarski, who I know at least used to be an AHIKS member, as he and I were matched years later in a game of GDW’s **1942**. Ed is mentioned in the credits.

This is one game I remain very happy to have in my collection. It is a mini-monster, two-map company-level tactical simulation of the fighting in the city itself. As such, it covers the time frame from September through November, 1942, and not the period when 6<sup>th</sup> Army was just waiting to die. The maps are tastefully done, and there are hordes of counters. Rules are well written, and there are a lot of scenarios, from smaller actions in a select part of the city to the whole shebang, at least 10 scenarios. For the time, production values are high, even if the counters are a bit thin, the scenario cards are on regular paper instead of card stock, and the rules are in black-and-white, because there are a lot of support materials in the box; the scenario cards are reminiscent of **Squad Leader**, but there are setup maps like **Panzerkrieg**. Two Basic Rules booklets, an Advanced Rules booklet, and a booklet of historical commentary and designers’ notes. The counters are not NATO style, but more like the units in **The Longest Day** with the German-style icons, although I don’t know if these are specifically that type or just similar. Armor units use icons, and since each unit has four numbers (attack fire, defensive fire, range, and movement), they look very similar to pieces from **Panzerblitz**, although the numbers mean quite different things.



I don’t want to get too much into the game system, but it’s not **Panzerblitz** on a large scale. Each side has movement, attack, exploit movement (1/2 movement allowance), and exploit attack phases. Units have ZOCs. ZOCs are sticky for armor units, but non-armored units have to stop when they enter a ZOC. Germans can stack 4 if one is a tank, assault gun or armored car, Russians 3 of any type. Combat is simple and brutal. Move your stacks adjacent. Declare attacks. Defender makes defensive fire. Surviving attackers fire. Fire either kills or misses, no in-betweens. It takes at least 2 factors to fire. There are lots of DRMs for terrain. There is indirect fire as well. And leaders. The rules have lots of examples of play. The advanced rules add a lot of chrome, including range attenuation, mines, air support, and a lot of other stuff.

The game came with lots of little plastic baggies and sticky labels so you can sort your units by division for easier setup. Did I mention there were a lot of units? But a nice touch. This is a pre-GMT GMT-style game. I can only imagine what a reprint of this game by GMT might cost now; I think I got this in 1982 for about \$20-25.

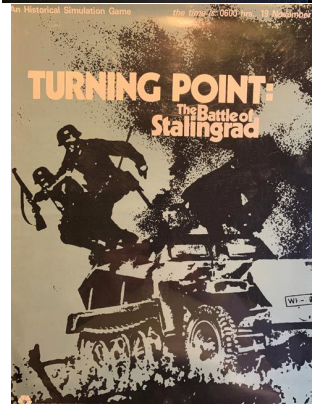
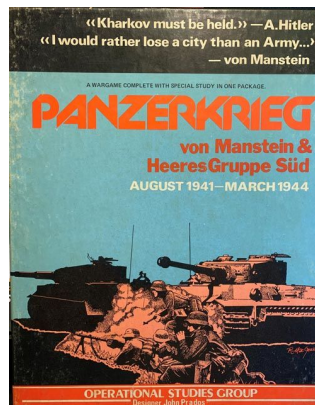
I believe this game was re-issued as two separate games, one of which might have been titled **Fire on the Volga**, but don’t quote me on that. Another one that will have to wait until I retire to play. If my wife doesn’t keep me too busy, that is.

### Treasurer’s Report

Only passive activity this time, but I apparently missed a deposit back in April; I made two that month and only reported one. Bank error in your favor! This brings everything up to date and reconciles the statements.

<b>Total balance 7-30-20:</b>	<b>\$ 8,228.79</b>
<b>Donations (4/2020):</b>	<b>40.00</b>
<b>Dividend 7-31-20:</b>	<b>1.75</b>
<b>Dividend 8-31-20:</b>	<b>1.76</b>
<b>Total balance 9-29-20:</b>	<b>\$ 8,272.30</b>

Until next time!



# Panzerblitz PBEM Tournament King-Hoffmann Semifinal Match

from Art Dohrman

This is the second semifinal of the tournament. Doug King and John Hoffmann followed the same method as in the Andriakos-Trosky semifinal (reported last issue) to choose a situation. Each player independently ranked each of five situations, most to least preferred. The gamemaster then combined the rankings, and in this case the most preferred situation turned out to be PB sit. 1A. Neither player had played this situation previously.

**PanzerBlitz**  
**Situation # 1A**

**Russian Partisan Attack – May '42**  
Partisans along with elements of the Russian 28th army make a surprise attack on a forward supply depot and attempt to intercept the German assistant supply road. Elements of the 3rd Panzer Division set out to search for partisans and to protect the forward supply depot and supply road.

Map Configuration

★
**RUSSIAN FORCES**

RECON 3 1 1 4 1 units represent partisans. Partisans set up anywhere but they must have three empty hexes between them and any German unit. They cannot begin the game stacked. Cavalry units enter on ANY Board 1 road hex. All other units must enter on any SOUTHERN edge hex of Board 1!

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The side with the most points wins. The Russian player wins ties. Russian Points based on end of turn 9:  
 1 point for each artillery unit able to fire on the EAST/WEST road on Board 2  
 10 point for each dispersed unit on that EAST/WEST road  
 1 point for each un-dispersed unit on that EAST/WEST road  
 1 point for each eliminated German unit  
 2 points for each CP unit destroyed

✚
**GERMAN FORCES**

Set up first on Board 2.  
 The 3 CPs (depots) must setup anywhere along the EAST/WEST road on Board 2 (running from GG3 to A3). They cannot stack together but they can be adjacent. They cannot be moved or destroyed by the German player.

**VICTORY CONDITIONS:** The side with the most points wins. The Russian player wins ties. German points based on the end of turn 9:  
 1 point for each eliminated Russian unit  
 3 points for each CP still on the board

Russian moves first	TURN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	END
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Figure 1 Situation card

In this situation, the Germans have to do two things above all: they must protect their depots (represented by the CP units), and they must prevent the Russians from establishing significant forces on the east-west road (main supply route or MSR). The Germans start out with 9 victory points (VP) right off the bat with their three depots; the Russians can typically get three easy VP by deploying their 82mm mortars in position to fire on the road, but, for a chance at victory, they have to get their guys onto the MSR. Once the Russian rifle companies (typically riding on the T-34s) get onto the road, they're just about impossible to dislodge. The T-34s themselves are a little more vulnerable to German fire, but, carefully managed, they can make a significant contribution to victory. The Russian cavalry can be a potent force, but its mobility is somewhat limited. For both sides, eliminating enemy units also gains victory points. Typically, this doesn't add up to many points, but, in a close game, it can tip the balance one way or the other. If the Russians keep their forces acting together and within supporting distance of each other, they pack a lot of combat power. Conversely, the Germans have to cover a lot of ground. If they concentrate to gain fire superiority, they risk leaving part of the board uncovered. In my experience both sides "shadow box" for a few turns to try to get the other side to overcommit and open up a vulnerability.

The German has three setup considerations: where to place the depots, blocking the Russian partisans from setting up on board 2, and not blocking the MSR for their own forces. Lateral mobility is key for the Germans.

Moving on to this game. Both players compiled a turn by turn log of the thinking behind their moves. I'll insert their thoughts for each turn, supplemented by screen shots and my own comments (in italics). One note on hex numbers: I will refer to hex numbers according to those presented in Vassal, the software used in this match, which are opposite to the conventional way of numbering hexes from the left hand side of each board.

**German Setup (Hoffmann):** I found a set of after-action reports for this situation on-line by Bert Schoose which I used as the basis for my German setup. This setup precludes Russian partisans from setting up on board 2. It keeps almost all units mobile, able to effectively respond to a Russian threat from any direction, and it puts the maximum amount of German firepower forward. I did make a couple of changes to Bert's setup. Specifically, I grouped all three CPs at the far western edge of the board. I feel it will be easier to defend all three of them if they were close together and near a board edge. The downside of this choice, versus putting two of them in the city, as Bert did, is one loses the defensive advantage of towns, versus woods. The other change I made is I switched the locations of the PZ IV at 2Q1 with the Jgd Pz IV at 2K1. I wanted to put my strongest unit at the most central position on the road, so it could more effectively respond either east or west.

*Observer: Germans deploy all three depots on the west end of the MSR and deploy their other forces so as to prevent the Russian partisans from setting up on board 2. Tanks and vehicle-mounted infantry spread out evenly along the board 1-board 2 edge. The big 120mm mortar is set up on top of hill 129, overlooking most of the prospective battlefield in the east and center.*

**Russian Turn 1 (King).** John's setup maximizes his mobility while pushing my recon units so far back they pose no threat to the road. Indeed, he almost seems to be intending to attack! His one weakness may be the CPs all stacked together in the west woods – there is a possible net +15 points for me all in one spot. His immobile 120mm makes the east half of the map dangerous, so that only makes my course of action more clear.

My main attack will be toward the CPs with the cavalry and two tank-rider combos. The cavalry will be protected by the hills and woods as they advance. The tanks will try an Ardennes-style breakthrough in the X to CC area. Attacking over a wide front will hopefully spread John's forces thin enough for the cavalry to easily push aside any resistance, and/or allow a T-34 to get through the lines. Dropping off even 1 Rifle near the CPs should be very helpful.

To widen the front even further, two tanks and riders will try to move over hill 129 and then down the road to the CPs.

The Recon units will never get to the road, so I'll use them to defend the mortars. There are some spots in the rough area of board 1 west of the V row that have LOS to the road (for a point each). I'll hide the mortars in here and use the wagons and Recon to block any units John may send after them. I suspect that he will not want to use many resources to hunt them – any units he sends will never be able to get back out of that region to help out the CPs.

The Recon at 1GG10 is to prevent an overrun from the Pz IV and halftrack. Even though I could probably return the favor and make a net +1 point for me, I'm sure I'd miss the cavalry more than John would miss his tank, halftrack, and rifle.

*The Russian T-34cs with rifle companies mounted, operate in pairs: two entering at Uschas and advancing through the badlands between hills 127 and 123. The other two swing right and advance towards the German position on hill 129. The Russian cavalry advances en masse on the extreme west side of board 1. The Russian 82mm mortars, carried by wagons, remain in the center. In contrast to my introductory remarks about "shadowboxing" the Russians are telegraphing their*

main effort immediately. Sending half the tanks and rifle companies to the east, on the other hand, represents a dispersal of effort. They have too far to go, and there are too many Germans to block them, to accomplish Doug's plan of swinging all the way around the German position.



Figure 2 End Russian Turn 1. Notice German setup to suppress partisans.

**German Turn 1.** A couple of comments on Doug's setup and turn one. It is clear that he will be sending his cavalry after my CPs. The terrain on the western end of board 2, favors the cavalry as they are not impeded by solid green hexsides, however, he must first navigate the hills on board 1 and this is where he will be vulnerable to concentrated bombardment from Hill 132. I was surprised to see him string out his T-34/rifle units all the way to the far eastern part of board 1. I assume he is trying to draw as many German units as possible away from the main event in the west, but that lone pair at 1E9, with no dismounted infantry support, unlike its neighbor at 1J8, is vulnerable to ambush. I rate those four rifle-loaded T-34s as the most dangerous units to the Germans, so any chance to destroy one or the other, or force the rifle unit to involuntarily dismount, will be a high priority even if it costs me a unit (hopefully only a transport unit) in exchange.

For my turn, I ambush the T-34/rifle pair at 1E9, and spot the T-34 at 1J8, so it could not attempt to break the encirclement of hex 1E2 without endangering itself.

In the west, I mass my artillery on the western rim of hill 132 awaiting the impending cavalry charge, and I block the T-34's exit points from the broken terrain on board 1.

*The Germans react aggressively to the Russian threat to the east, committing three rifle platoons and their associated transport to trapping a T-34 and its passenger rifle company at 1E9. A Pz IV and a Wirbelwind join the 120mm mortar on hill 129 to provide fire support, while the JgPz IV takes up a firing position on a ridge at 2P2 to join in. Another two rifle platoons maneuver to block the exits from the badlands at 1CC9 and 1X10.*

**Russian Turn 2.** Well, John pretty much checked my whole tank strategy – albeit at the cost of unloading half his rifle units. To make matters worse, the 1E9 T-34 fails its 4:1+1 attack, so I won't even be able to exchange it for a halftrack!

The cavalry begins its slog over the ridge. Since the T-34s aren't going through the middle of the map, I try to punch them through alongside the cavalry. That halftrack at 1CC9 should

retreat, and, if it drops off the Rifle, my cavalry should destroy it next turn with help from the T-34s.

In the east, I continue the original plan with my remaining T-34, now that the path to Golod is quite clear.

I drop one mortar off, but keep the rest in the wagons. John has a potent force in the middle of the board, and I'd like to keep him guessing what my plans are.

*The trapped T-34 misses a 4:1+1 versus a halftrack in the woods. Its comrade advances to the outskirts of Golod and is poised to take up a position on the MSR (worth 2 VP). In the west, both T-34s concentrate versus the halftrack blocking their exit at 1CC9, but in doing so they may have inadvertently given the Germans an opportunity to take out one of the tank-mounted rifle companies. The cavalry crawls up over the ridge at the 1EE and 1FF rows, which in turn exposes them to fire from 2X5.*

**German Turn 2.** The Germans get a break when the Russian T-34 misses its 4:1(+1) attack on one of the encircling halftracks. Doug surprises me when he sends his lone T-34/rifle pair to the outskirts of Golod. Did I abandon Golod too soon?! Now, I'll have to send several defenders (mostly trucks) back east to keep the Russians from outflanking the German line.

I return the favor to Doug and miss my 4:1(+1) shot on the loaded rifle unit at 1BB9! I decide to unload a precious rifle unit at 1CC9 to further contain those two T-34s. It has about a 50/50

chance of surviving, albeit dispersed, for a second turn of blockage. I send halftracks from both directions to harass the Russian mortar units which are moving to their firing positions. I decided not to try to reload those two rifle units in the far east, as taking too long and I would still likely lose one to the now dismounted Russian rifle unit which will be looking to settle a score. Those rifle units still serve a purpose as they keep the Russian mortars away from firing positions along the 1J8-1F10 tree line and potentially threaten firing positions on the east end of hill 135. German artillery begins its barrage on the advancing Russian cavalry.

*The bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> starts off with a bang, literally, as the trapped T-34 in the east succumbs to a deluge of fire. But in the west, the 4:1+1 versus a mounted rifle company misses, and the Germans only manage to disperse one of the Cavalry companies. The fighting German truckers block the road along the 2H/2I rows, while the JgdPz IV takes up a hilltop position overlooking the western half of the battlefield. Rifle platoons still block the badland exits at 1CC9 and 1X10, while a backstop line of halftracks and trucks form from 2CC1 to 2GG4. The Germans now have three rifle platoons mounted on halftracks in this area, and three armored vehicles confronting the Russian breakthrough attempt. Not content with this, three German halftracks which have unloaded their passengers are roaming the back areas of board 1, threatening the Russian mortars which have been left without support.*

**Russian Turn 3.** John continues to point out the flaws in my plans. His halftracks are not only preventing my mortars from getting to the safety of the west rough, but now threaten both them and their wagons. I missed the potential Pz IV shot on my Rifle unit, too – only a lucky (for me) 6 roll on his 4:1+1 attack staves off disaster on that end.

The cavalry cross the ridgeline. I throw the Recon onto the ridge to soak off his artillery on hill 132. Even though John can get an automatic kill and an extra point, I'd rather my cavalry not be dispersed again.

The east T-34 cannot go west from Golod without getting trapped like its partner. Instead, it goes to the south of Hill 129. The Rifles at 1F10 and 1E8 can disperse its passenger with direct fire, sure, but then my own Rifle at 1E9 can escape towards Hill 135 and reinforce my mortars. Also, my then-unloaded Rifle can easily move over the hill into Golod and the road and get me a point. Of course, an elimination would be bad, but I am running out of options on the rest of the board.

I now need to get my mortars to deploy on Hill 135 and support them with any available Recon units (and the Rifle at 1F10). The initial plan still goes, just the location has changed.

*Direct fire versus the German rifle platoon at 1CC9 accomplishes nothing, but the cavalry advancing over the ridge at 1DD10 scores a lucky success, eliminating a German rifle platoon with a close assault. The T34 with rifle company backtracks from Golod to the southern slope of hill 129, evidently to threaten the German mortar/AFV position.*

**German Turn 3.** In the west, the Russian made short work of my blocking rifle unit at 1CC9! I decided not to throw another rifle unit into that breach as it would be too costly and the odds would be worse this time as he will be able to bring more cavalry into the close assault. In the east, the German rifle units score a minor coup, when forcing the Russian rifle unit to involuntarily dismount. However, that created a problem in itself as now my 120mm mortar on hill 129 is threatened unless I leave units to protect it, or evacuate it with my other units. I chose the latter.

*The Germans make a series of relatively low odds direct fire attacks, the net result of which is to disperse one cavalry company at 1DD10, and to disperse (and force to unload) the tank-mounted rifle company on the southern slope of hill 129. The Germans begin to evacuate hill 129 anyway and adjust their backstop line. With the elimination of the German rifle platoon at 1CC9, the Russian prospects in the west have brightened somewhat.*

**Russian Turn 4.** John gives my mortars a brief reprieve but is going after easy points in my wagons. He also has done a good job preventing the west T-34s from making any effective headway. However, there is a path where my east T-34 might get a breakthrough.

In the west, I get my first two cavalry units into the safety of the woods. Now, halfway into the game, they will be able to start earning their keep. John didn't go for my Recon bait last turn, and instead dispersed a cavalry unit; let's see if he takes it now and gives my remaining cavalry a clean path to the woods.

The mortars unload on hill 135. There is not much for them to shoot at, but at least they will be out of their wagons and less vulnerable to John's marauding halftracks.

*No direct fire. The T-34s in the west, and two cavalry, advance onto board 1 into mostly sheltered positions. The two 82mm mortars on hill 135 unload, giving Ivan (after one more turn to adjust position) 2 more VP. The third T-34, which had been on hill 129 in the east, moves toward the center, possibly aiming at the town of Bednost on hill 132. That would add some oomph to the Russians' push in the west.*

**German Turn 4.** Doug surprises me again. I thought he might send that T-34 in the east around the northeast corner of my line, but, instead, he heads back to the southwest.

In the west, I take the easy partisan (recon) unit and ambush the wagon unit. Not much honor in smashing wagons, but it is a point! Doug's disposition of his mortars on hill 135 prevents me from using my trucks to more effectively block the westward movement of the T-34 in the valley between hills 135 and 132.

With little room left for tactical retreat, German defense starts to stiffen. The units at 2EE4 will hold their ground. The limita-

tions of my artillery positions on hill 132 are becoming apparent. Doug is deftly using the green and brown hexsides in that region to screen his units from my artillery. Perhaps I should have positioned an artillery piece on the slopes north of the CPs or infantry at 2EE3.

*German direct fire eliminates a recon unit exposed on the slope at 1DD10. They form a line to block the Russian cavalry advance on the west side of board 2, dismounting three rifle platoons and supplementing with transport. The 120mm mortar, mounted on a Pz IV, comes down off hill 129 in the east; more "fighting truckers" block the road leading up the south slope of hill 132, while a battery of 50mm antitank guns unlimbers in Bednost. A slim garrison to be sure.*

**Russian Turn 5.** John is now making his stand in the west. Again, his deployment prevents the T-34s from advancing very far. I unload one of my Rifles to help the cavalry out with CAT. If I wait too long to unload it, it may not get to attack at all! The cavalry now have a clear path through the forest and are protected from the artillery on hill 132 by green hexsides and the ridgeline. I lose a point when John eliminates the Recon unit on the ridge, but at least the remainder of the cavalry will be able to get to the safety of the woods this turn.

If the forward cavalry can disperse the Rifle-Halftrack combo at 2EE4, they might be able to swing around with the help of the Rifle (the lead two cavalry units move to 2FF4, the rear two come up to 2EE3 and CAT again at 2-1 with the Rifle, which moves to 2FF5). John will have to decide whether to pull the other Rifles off the ridgeline to CAT the cavalry (and possibly open up a hole for the T-34s) or find something else to block in 2FF6 or 2FF5.

I can sneak my east T-34 to 2U2. Even though a breakthrough by itself won't help me out that much at this point, it may be able to help out my last mounted T-34/Rifle combo.

I'll move the east Rifle onto an open hill 129 hex. Hopefully John will try to overrun with the Pz IV – I think I can risk the -2 points (elimination of Rifle plus the Rifle NOT being on the road) if the Pz IV and the 120mm are kept on that side of the board and away from defending the CPs.

The Wirbelwind and 81mm at 2W4 don't threaten my 82mm at 1P5. I'll keep it there and move the other to 1N7. Now both mortars can attack the road and can also auto-eliminate any truck that threatens to surround the T-34 on hill 132.

The wagon at 1Z7 is lost, but at least it tied up three mobile blocking/transport units. I'll move another wagon to 1Q5 to keep the halftrack from overrunning the Recon at 1Q10. I'll move the last wagon to block the road: it might keep the halftracks busy or prevent them from getting somewhere important.

*No direct fire; the Russians continue their western drive, unloading a rifle company to support the cavalry. The "wandering" T-34 parks on the slope of hill 132 adjacent to the blocking trucks. The two leading Russian cavalry companies close assault and disperse a German rifle platoon and its halftrack at 2EE4, while the two following companies close up behind. The Russians now have four cavalry companies and a dismounted rifle company basically in contact and largely sheltered by green hexsides or slopes from the German guns on Hill 132, with three T-34s (one with a mounted rifle company) in the immediate area. The Germans are shifting to their right, but they still are somewhat dispersed, with three rifle platoons on board 1 not in significant contact, and their 120mm mortar loaded on a Pz IV and out of action for at least one more turn. At this point, it appears the Russians have achieved a concentration of combat power and the Germans are on the back foot; however, the Russians still have several hexes to go between their current position and the objective hexes.*

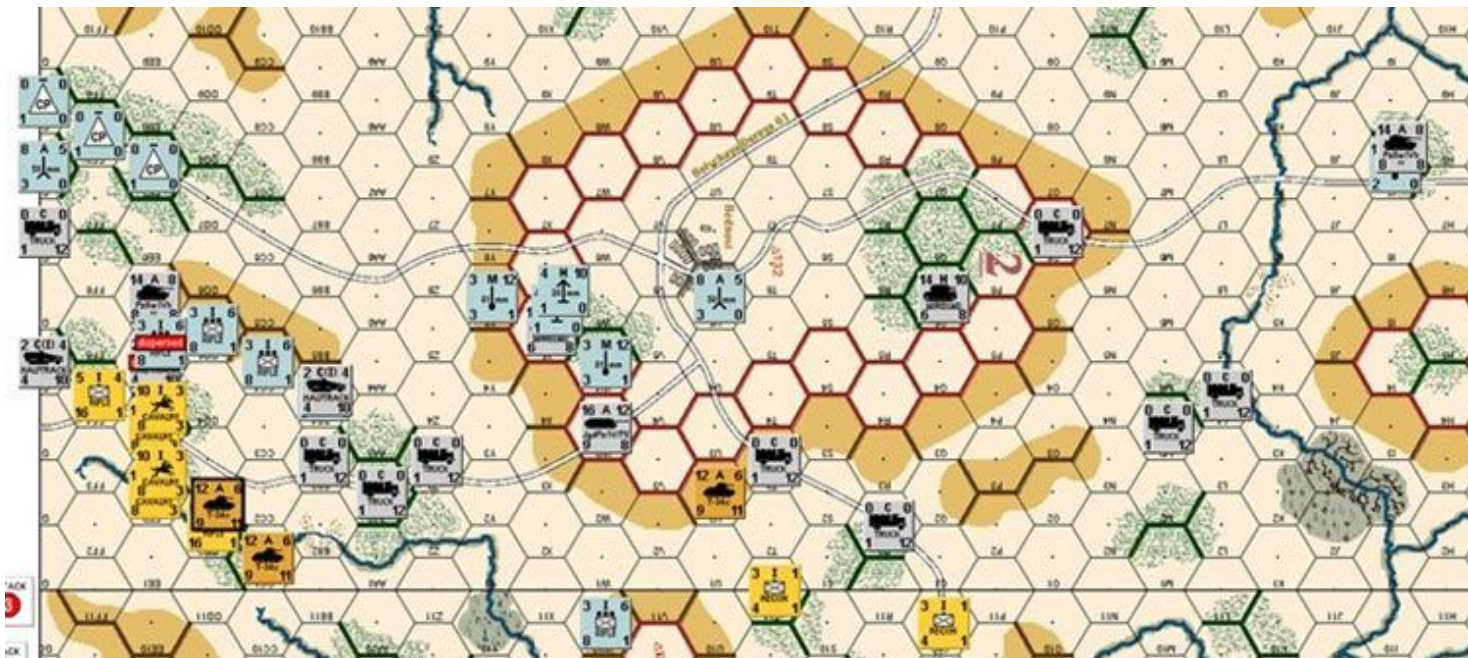


Figure 3 The end of Russian Turn 5. Closeup of the western part of the board, where the main action is.

**German Turn 5.** Doug's aggressive move with his T-34 to the slopes of hill 132 and his continued pressure in the west causes me to go into full "Maginot Line" mode. In doing so, I have to expose some of my trucks to potential dispersal from the Russian mortars and possible overrun from T-34s. Even with this, his T-34 could still turn my eastern flank reaching 2Q7 next turn! The German halftrack on hill 135 continues to pin down the wagon unit until enough support arrives to overwhelm it.

*Direct fire knocks out the trapped wagon on board 1. The Germans continue to shift combat power to their right to confront the main Russian threat and form a line across hill 132 to block the Russian T-34 on the southern slope. The Germans are relying on trucks in the open to block movement; at least two of them are vulnerable to mortar fire at 2:1 from the Russian 82mm mortars on board 1. The trucks in the open on board 132 between Bednost and the woods could also be overrun by the T-34, but that would leave the T-34 in an uncomfortable position, vulnerable in the German turn to direct fire or overrun. The Germans deploy the JgdPz and a Wirbelwind along the hogback ridge as blocking forces, however, this forfeits their combat power since they have no line of sight to support the units in contact. Maneuvering on board 1 continues somewhat inconclusively. The current VP totals: Germans 12, Russians 4, with four turns to go.*

**Russian Turn 6.** John has unloaded his last Rifle unit to stiffen his defense in the west woods. His armor is blocking the ridge by deploying behind it, but where they also cannot hurt the cavalry. He has thrown his trucks into the open where they are vulnerable to my mortars – perhaps hill 135 is the best place for them anyway! He nets the 1Z5 wagon, for another point, and has begun a series of 2:1 attacks on another at 1Q5. It will probably be dispersed until more halftracks come up to eliminate it, so there is another point lost for me.

I send the T-34 from the east all the way to the western part of the map: here, it can attack the halftracks at 1FF5 and 1GG4 and soften them up for subsequent CAT attacks, or make them retreat and let the cavalry advance. CATs by all four cavalry and the Rifle do some heavy damage, eliminating two units and preparing a third to be eliminated next turn. The T-34s try to help out, but to no effect and are stuck in the gully for another turn.

What John is doing to my wagon with his halftracks (dispersal until support comes up to eliminate), I can do to his trucks with my mortars!

The Recons and Rifle on board 1 move to protect the mortars from John's roaming halftracks and Rifles.

*Direct fire from Ivan's 82mm mortars disperses two of the German trucks in the open, but the two T-34s on the west side fail to make an impression on the rifle platoon at 2DD5. The Russians press the attack in the west, bringing the "wandering" T-34 finally back into the fold. The cavalry makes its combat power felt through two successful close assaults, dispersing the rifle platoon at 2DD5 and eliminating another rifle platoon and halftrack at 2EE4. All of a sudden the Germans have to be feeling the lack of their three rifle platoons on board 1; a little more defensive strength in the west would be most welcome. It appears to me that the Germans will have to give ground in the face of the Russian concentration. That's not all bad, though, as this may draw the Russians into a position where they're no longer sheltered from the German guns on hill 132.*

**German Turn 6.** Again, Doug surprises me when he pulls his free-ranging T-34 into the cauldron in the west. He could have easily dropped that tank on an eastern road hex at the end of the game if he kept it out of the fight for the CPs. Now I can focus all my defensive resources on containing the Russians in this eastern pocket and blunting his advance. It sounds easier than I know Doug will allow it to be. I know I can keep him away from the CPs, the question is how many units will Doug extract from me in the process. At this point, I am looking to the defensive strength of my AFVs versus their hitting power and range.

*A German halftrack disperses a Russian wagon on the slope of hill 135 with direct fire, pinning him in place while another halftrack moves up for a kill next turn. The big 120mm mortar unloads in 2X7, in position to put steel on target next turn, while the expected pullback occurs – only one hex though. The Germans move more of their armor into the danger area, but they still have two of their best units on the reverse slope of the hogback ridge with no field of fire. Fighting truckers continue to be a mainstay of German containment efforts.*

**Russian Turn 7.** John does some very effective shuffling of his blocking units. Also, I realize that any halftrack I destroy will create a wreck which prevents me from stacking enough units to get favorable CAT odds! The one advantage I have is





Figure 4 End Russian Turn 6. Russian concentration in the west. Note the “wandering” T-34 has come to rest at 2FF8.

that most of his heavy units have poor fields of fire to my own units, either due to the ridgeline or woods hexsides.

There will be no breakthrough to the CPs for the T-34s, so I unload my last Rifle unit to perhaps catch some trucks in and around the 2AA2 woods. All the T-34s take up firing positions that can soften up units for the cavalry’s CATs. I go for dispersals this turn while repositioning my units for the kill next turn – the ensuing CAT attacks manage to disperse any potential spotters (protecting the cavalry at 2EE4 and the T-34 at 2GG4 from the Wirbelwind and PzIV, respectively) and even take out another Rifle unit.

The mortars continue their dispersal of the trucks, and the various infantry units continue their missions.

It is clear that I will not make it to the CPs, and I doubt I will be able to safely put any units on the road at this point. John has eliminated 3 of my units, with another (wagon at 1Q5) sure to be gone next turn. That’s 13 points for him. I have one unit on the road and have eliminated 4 of John’s units. I will get another halftrack next turn, and most likely a rifle and two trucks by game’s end. That’s only 9 points. Maybe I can CAT another unit for another point (difficult when the wrecks impede my concentration in the protected areas!), but it is going to be very difficult to get another net 3 points after that.

*Russian mortars disperse the same two trucks in the open, while the cavalry scores a success, eliminating a German rifle platoon at 2EE4, and the rifle company on the extreme left disperses a German halftrack, setting it up to be killed by a T-34 next turn. The Russian rifle company stranded on the south side of hill 129 several turns ago has been steadily walking and has finally made it onto the MSR for a VP. The Russians are chewing away at the German defenses, but the score is still 12 to 8 in favor of the Germans and time is running short.*

**German Turn 7.** With Doug’s mortars in position and his rifle company on the east-west road near Golod, he only needs five points to tie me and get the win. This is after I claim my ‘wagon prize’ this turn. As far as the Russian getting more units on the road, only the three tanks can get there before the end of the game. Going into Turn 8, there will be three German units that are easy prey for the Russians, the halftrack at 2GG5 and the trucks at 2Z4 and 2T6. Plus, there are two more units he has a better than average chance of picking off. So, I need to find one or two more units to destroy while protecting my CPs and keeping those T-34s off the road.

At 2FF6, I quickly decided I needed a unit there to screen the CPs from the Russian Cossacks. First, I went big with the Jgd Pz as that would limit his CAT to 2:1, but decided against it because I didn’t want to risk my best unit being dispersed for the remainder of the game, or worse. The Pz IV would suffer a similar fate and be even more likely to be destroyed. So, it falls to the brave halftrack unit to face the threat with support from the PZ IV and a Wirbelwind—truly, the proverbial “Don’t worry, we’ll be right behind you!”

The artillery and armor on the west rim of hill 132 cover the open ground from marauding T-34s as well as the hills around 2CC5 and several key far-west woods hexes. In addition, the three armor units along that line, along with the three German halftracks on hill 135, can pivot in turn eight and nine to either ambush the two partisans at 2T3 or disrupt the two mortars that will be in position on hill 135.

*The German halftracks on board 1 succeed in eliminating a Russian wagon for another VP, while the maneuver units abandon the hogback ridge in favor of a hedgehog defense around the depots. At this point the depots are probably safe – the Russians don’t have enough time to get adjacent to them and mount an attack before the end of the game. Direct fire against one of the Russian cavalry companies is ineffective. The Germans now have, as part of their reshuffle, three armored vehicles on the edge or slope of hill 132 in position to provide fire support; at the moment, potential targets are all either concealed or in defilade. But the Germans have left a number of units vulnerable to Russian fire and/or close assault. The three rifle platoons on board 1 have been steadily marching toward hill 135 and the Russian mortars there, but odds are slim that they’ll be able to accomplish much in the way of VPs.*

**Russian Turn 8.** A correction to my last log: I forgot that my mortars get a point each for being able to fire on the board 2 road: therefore, I only need to eliminate one or two more units!

John gives me an opening when he elects to have his 2FF6 halftrack stand its ground. Even though the T-34 at BB3 destroys it, its wreck makes it difficult for the cavalry to advance under cover: only one unit can get to 2FF5, where the Wirbelwind and PzIV can get it; or the cavalry must go over the ridgeline and be subject to considerable artillery fire from hill 132. Essentially, the destruction of the halftrack makes any further advance impossible. So, I have the Rifle and two cavalry take out the 2EE5 Rifle with a 3:1/-2 close assault.

The T-34s net another halftrack and a mortar-dispersed truck with 4:1 direct fire. The repositioning of last turn pays off in that respect. Also, my Rifle in the 1AA2 woods eliminates John’s Rifle on the ridge! I was realistically only hoping for a dispersal, to hold it there for a turn and let my cavalry (two sent down to support the Rifle) finish it off next turn.

Unfortunately, the mortar on hill 135 fails its 2:1 attack on its truck target, one turn before another mortar would come up and help finish it off! The infantry on board 1 continues to position itself to protect the mortars from any interference.

Right now, John has 13 points (3 CPs and 4 kills) to my 13 (9 kills, 3 mortar LOS, and 1 unit on the road). Russians win ties, so I am in a fairly good position going into the final turn! My biggest fear is that John surrounds the Hill 135 mortars with his halftracks (at say, 1N8) and moves his Wirbelwinds up to the southeast part of hill 132. I probably won’t be able to disperse the halftrack spotters or have a place for the mortars to escape to. If he disperses even one of those mortars, I lose its point and the game.

*Big turn for Ivan! Direct fire eliminates two German halftracks and a truck. Close assaults eliminate both rifle platoons on the forward slope of the hogback ridge. The German depots are safe with just one more turn to go, but the screen in front of the MSR has evaporated. The Germans have no obvious targets on board 2 to pick up a victory point; Doug may be right that his mortars on hill 135 are vulnerable, but I feel that's a stretch for the Germans.*

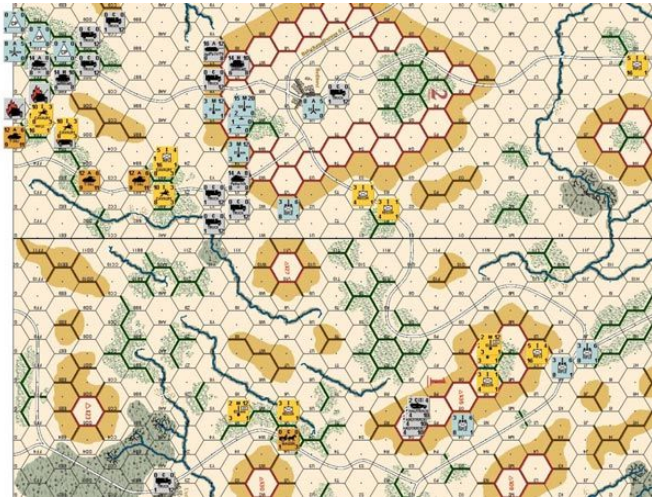


Figure 5 End Russian Turn 8. The German depots are safe, but they've paid a heavy price.

**German Turn 8.** Now it was my turn to miss a line-of-sight. I was so focused on defending hex 2FF6 against a CAT attack, I overlooked the company of T-34s lurking in the woods to the east. I would still have put my halftrack there but would have likely moved my rifle platoon at 2BB4 out of harm's way behind the ridge line to the north. That 1:1 attack on Doug's cavalry unit last turn was a waste, so the loss of that rifle unit was a waste on my part. Further I missed that Doug could get his one cavalry unit into hex 2AA3 through that green hex side. The only thing keeping me in the game now was Doug's unfortunate (for him) roll against that truck unit. That would have put me down by a point. Now, as it stands, we are even heading into the last turn.

I can't just sit back and expect him to charge the road. The Russian wins ties, so he could just sit back and protect his units for the win. I have to go after Russian forces somewhere and the partisans at 2S2 and 2R2 seem the best targets. I ambush the partisans as I had planned in turn seven and move my other armor and artillery to cover the 5 road hexes that the three T-34s and one cavalry could reach.

In Turn 9, I have to score at least ½ point more than Doug for the win. With average luck I should be able to do it, but nothing in this game is ever certain...

*The Germans surprise me, too, by going after the partisans in the middle. Possibly their best shot at picking up a VP. Most of their other forces move away from the main body of Russians and cover the western approaches to hill 132.*

**Russian Turn 9.** John makes a ruthless encirclement of my Recon units in the center of the board, almost guaranteeing him a winning point or even two if my own defensive attacks are particularly unlucky. I run the odds and find that the *best* option for me results in a 2/3 chance (Recon CAT on the PzIV) of leaving John with an 83% chance for the point. This is after the mortars fail their 1:3 attack on the Wirbelwind: if they had dispersed it (1/6 odds), John would have been hard pressed to destroy either Recon.

So, I must find another way to make up the point. All three T-34s can make it to the road, as well as both cavalry in the 2AA2

woods (I almost missed the cavalry in 2AA2 itself – good thing they can go through green hexsides!). John has drawn off his JgPz IV, Pz IV, and a Wirbelwind in order to make the destruction of the Recon a near certainty but has left only a PzIV, a Wirbelwind, and 29 factors of artillery to defend the road.

Placing the tanks and cavalry on the road in the fashion I chose (and moving the Rifle up to 2AA4) makes it very difficult for John to concentrate enough attack factors, either in direct attack or overrun, to get a good chance of either destroying 3 units, or destroying 2 and dispersing 2. Any less and I think I can pull off a win.

*With the path to the MSR open, the Russians move tanks and cavalry onto the road (worth, at the moment, 5 VP). They're exposed to direct fire and overrun from the Germans on the hill, but Doug is gambling that he'll come out on top of the exchange. This is the culmination of the Russian concentration of power in the west; originally conceived in order to eliminate one or more CP, the concentration of Russian power and the resulting destruction of German combat power opened the opportunity for the alternate victory objective of placing units on the MSR. The trapped recons in the center try to help their own cause by dispersing a Pz-IV in a close assault.*

**German Turn 9:** Well I did it again! I missed that the cavalry unit at 2AA2 could go straight north thru that green hex side and make it to the road. However, even with that I still had a chance at the win down to the last die roll. I sure could have used that Jgd Pz IV unit up in the northwest, but I had to make sure that I had enough firepower against the partisan to survive any lucky low odds rolls.

*The Germans miss another 4:1/+1, this time against the partisan at 1R2. Their direct fire against the units on the road accomplishes nothing. They follow up with a pair of overruns; the first destroys a T-34 at 2Z6 and the second ends up dispersing the tank and cavalry at 2AA5. This is the last turn of the game and the Russians have won with a score of 16 to the Germans' 14.*

**Russian Final Comments.** John is not able to take back control of the road, and to add insult to injury, his 4:1+1 attack on the Recon misses! The final score is my 16 (3 mortars LOS to the road, 3 from un-dispersed units on the road, 1 from dispersed units on the road, and 9 German units eliminated) to John's 14 (9 from CPs, 5 Russian units eliminated).

It is difficult to judge what went wrong or right with only one game played, both players never having seen it before, and the game being so close in the end (the victory conditions are a bit complex as well, requiring at least the Russian player to evaluate the merits of attacking units or defending at road hexes). For example, my efforts to widen the front certainly thinned out John's forces, but also weakened my own ability to concentrate, and even lost me a tank as well! It wasn't really until all my tanks and cavalry were together that they were able to consistently cause damage to the German lines. Of course, if they had been together in the first place, John could have focused his forces as well and possibly met me on ground better suited for his purposes.

**German Epilog:** My biggest lessons learned from this match were to not underestimate what it takes to stop those cavalry units and not rely so heavily on artillery to thwart their advance. I need stronger infantry support in those western woods. Doug was able to use green and brown hex sides to effectively screen his cavalry from my artillery. Also, I didn't take the threat of the 82mm mortars on hill 135 seriously enough, especially when I was using so many trucks in screening efforts. I had thought about sending a Wirbelwind with those halftracks to harass them, but I needed both of them in the west against the cavalry.

(Continued on page 12)

## Open Match Requests from Duncan Rice

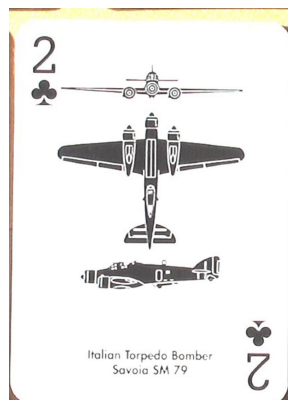
1985 Under Iron Sky TRL	Martin Hogan (1704)
ACW Brigade Series MMP	Aaron Kulkis (1983) FVL
<b>Bitter Woods CG</b>	<b>Bob Jones (1548) V</b>
Bloody 110 COA	Aaron Kulkis (1983) FVL
Chickamauga SPI	Peter Bertram (790)
D-Day '77 AH	Ron Hass (1863) E
<b>The Dark Sands GMT</b>	<b>Bob Jones (1548) VL</b>
Empires and Alliances CG	Tom Thorsen (472) V
Empire in Arms AH	Edson Ramos (1989) P
Empires of Rising Sun AH	Mike Scott (1555)
GCACW AH	Paul Warnick (1430)
<b>Guns of August AH</b>	<b>John Troskey (1554) CV</b>
<b>To Green Fields Beyond SPI</b>	<b>John Troskey (1554) CVS</b>
<b>Hammer of Scots Columbia</b>	<b>Duncan Rice (1394) V</b>
Main Battle Tank 2ed GMT	Martin Hogan (1704)
Monty's Gamble: Market Garden FV	Jerry Wong (1974)
No Retreat: North Afrika GMT	Jerry Wong (1974) FV
No Retreat: Russian Front GMT	Bert Schneider (1569)
Panzer 2ed GMT	Martin Hogan (1704)
<b>Panzer Battles MMP</b>	<b>John Troskey (1554) CVS</b>
<b>Panzer Grenadier AP</b>	<b>Carl Wolf (1992) V</b>
Proud Monster XTR	Edson Ramos (1989) P
<b>Rock of the Marne MMP</b>	<b>John Troskey (1554) CV</b>
Russian Front AH	Aaron Kulkis (1983) FVL
<b>Storm Over Stalingrad MMP</b>	<b>Duncan Rice (1394) V</b>
Squad Leader AH	Jack Cameron (1988) V
Thunder at Cassino AH	Jerry Wong (1974) FV
<b>War of 1812 Columbia</b>	<b>Duncan Rice (1394) V</b>

### Match Coordinator

To accept one of the listed matches or have a new match listed, email to: [DUNCANR@TELUS.NET](mailto:DUNCANR@TELUS.NET)

### Match Codes

A: ADC2	P: Postal Mail
C: Cyberboard	S: Slow Play
E: Email	T: A.C.T.S..
F: Fast Play	V: V.A.S.S.A.L.
G: Will Gamemaster	X: Non-rated Game
L: Learning Game	Z: Zuntzu



## The Cabinet War Rooms

(A.K.A. The Match Coordinator's Office)

by Duncan Rice

There has been a fair amount of activity in the Match Coordinator's office. A couple of folks missed the deadline for match requests, and I will be posting them on the AHIKS Facebook page. I now have time to pick up my own gaming pace as well. On September 25<sup>th</sup> we had a movie night over the AHIKS Discord server. Five of us got together to view the 1970 film "Waterloo." Ron Has was a wealth of information and put the battle together for us. We'll likely be doing this again in October. Grab your popcorn.

### Storm Over Arnhem Tournament

The tournament has ended and **Jeff Miller** is declared overall victor. Unfortunately, the pandemic has made it problematic that a trophy will be delivered. Jeff will likely receive a fine certificate of achievement from AHIKS. Thanks to folks who enrolled and played through the tournament. On that note, tournaments by correspondence are problematic for a number of reasons. If anyone has a suggestion or a tournament topic/system they think would work well, please let me know. My ideas are that another tournament would be a repeat of our **The Hunters** solitaire, or playing games live on VASSAL and thus giving a strict timeline for quick play.

## Multiplayer Games

If you are interested in playing any of the following games, contact Jeff Miller (address on page 12).

A Distant Plain [GMT] – Duncan Rice [1397]  
 A Distant Plain [GMT] – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 A Distant Plain [GMT] – John Hern  
 Angola MMP – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Amoeba Wars AH – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Colonial Twilight GMT – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Crown of Roses GMT – Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 Conquistador AH – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Conquistador AH - John Hoffmann [884] V  
 Diplomacy – Duncan Rice [1397]  
 Dune AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Dune AH – John Hoffmann [884] V  
 Empire in Arms AH – Kevin Conway [1930] V  
 Empire in Arms AH – Andrew Patience [274]  
 Empire in Arms AH – Thomas Scarborough [1345]  
 Empire in Arms AH – Mike Kettman [1067] V  
 Empires of the Middle Ages SPI – Mike Kettman (1067) V  
 Falling Sky GMT – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Fire in the Lake GMT – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Fire in the Lake GMT – Art Dohrman, [1551] V  
 Fire in the Lake GMT - John Hoffmann [884] V  
 Gunslinger AH - Matt Scheffrahn [1844] VMG  
 Kremlin AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Kremlin AH - John Hoffmann [884] V  
 Kremlin AH – John Hern  
 Samurai AH – Delwayne Arakaki [1991] EMV  
 Samurai AH – Jeff Miller [1303] V  
 Samurai AH – John Hoffmann [884] V  
 Stellar Conquest – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Time of Crisis GMT – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 War of the Suns MMP – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Wizards Quest AH – Jeff Miller, [1303] V  
 Wizards Quest AH - John Hoffmann [884] V



Figure 6 End German Turn 9. A look at the final positions.

(Continued from page 10)

**Observer final comments:** both players picked up on the importance of concentrating their forces; the Russians, because of their lesser range, have to be physically closer together, while the Germans' longer range on several of their units gives them standoff capability. John's comment about "needing stronger infantry support" in the west has got to have him thinking about those three rifle platoons stranded on board 1. Doug's weak center left his 82mm mortars vulnerable – in the event, the Germans weren't able to mount a serious threat against the mortars, but the effort to protect the mortars cost the Russians several wagons and the associated victory points. The excursion to the right by half of the tank-rifle force, out of supporting distance from the rest of the force, detracted from

the main effort. The main benefit to the Russian from this side-show was the diversion of three German rifle platoons from the main effort on board 2. In this situation, the game will be won or lost primarily on board 2, not on board 1.

Both sides committed to their main effort almost immediately, as opposed to my own past experience where each side remains mobile and probes for vulnerabilities for a turn or three before committing.

One of the benefits of GMing this tournament is that I get to see some different approaches and techniques – in this game, Doug's use of the slopes and green hexsides to screen his cavalry's approach was very well done.

Doug moves on to the final versus Steve Andriakos; I plan to have a writeup of that game in a future issue of The K.

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### **PUBLICATION DEADLINES**

Articles will be accepted at any time, though submission of an article does not guarantee its publication. News items will be accepted if received in sufficient time to allow production schedules to be met.

**Deadline for next issue: November 30, 2020.**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

*The Kommandeur (K)* is the official newsletter of AHIKS, an international society of mature adults who play historical simulation games by email and mail. AHIKS is an organization of amateurs, staffed by volunteers, and is not affiliated with any game company or publisher. Society dues are yearly. Additional information about current rates is available from the Treasurer. We do not accept advertising. We do accept "ad trades" on an issue-for-issue basis with other publications and organizations. Direct inquiries to the Editor.