OPERATIONAL COMBAT SERIES

The Forgotten Battles

Introduction

The Forgotten Battles (TFB) covers the key fighting from late September 1943 until April 1944 in the Army Group Center portion of the Russian front. This was a war of attrition around cities and rugged terrain in the Belorussian region of the former Soviet Union. The major Soviet success in this sector was delivered by the Belorussian Front commander, Rokossovsky, who far outshone his neighboring Western Front commander, Sokolovsky, who was a protégé of Zhukov and later Soviet Chief of the General Staff. When the time came to write the official Soviet history of the war, it was not politically acceptable for Rokossovsky, who was Polish, to be seen as more effective than Sokolovsky. The result was that the success of one commander was suppressed just as vigorously as the failure of the other. The campaigns here laid the foundations for the collapse of Army Group Center in the summer of 1944, but only recently has the full story of *The Forgotten Battles* been uncovered.

1.0 General Special Rules

1.1 Map & Terrain

There are four maps labeled A through D. Hexes are identified by a map letter and number, e.g., hex B18.18 is the southern city hex of Vitebsk.

1.1a Terrain Effects Chart. The movement and combat effects of the various terrain types are explained in the Terrain Effects Chart (TEC).

1.1b Hedgehogs. Hedgehogs may not be built above Level-2. They are reduced by one level when captured.

1.2 Railroads

Railroad lines are either Soviet gauge (broad gauge) or German gauge (standard gauge). The Axis may only use German gauge lines and the Soviets may only use Soviet gauge. Players change the gauge of these lines using Rail Repair units, per series rule 13.3f. Some map-edge rail hexes automatically convert to Soviet gauge during the game; see 1.4.

> **Design Note:** *By this point in the war, the Soviets had immense logistical capabilities that are not represented by units.*

During the Soviet Player's Clean Up Phase, any rail hex more than 10 hexes from an in-Trace Axis combat unit and connected to the Soviet rail network is automatically converted to Soviet gauge (ignore units being supplied by a Kessel HQ.)

1.2a Off-Map Rail. Either player can use their Rail Capacity to rail cargo off and back on any of their map-edges. The only hexes that can be used for this purpose are those capable of normal rail movement for that player. Only Soviet units in the AGN or AGS boxes may end the Movement Phase off-map (see 1.4).

1.3 Air Bases

1.3a Air Base Refit. There is NO supply cost to refit Air Bases which are in Trace Supply. Air Bases which are not in Trace or Axis Air Bases which can receive Trace only from a Kessel HQ must pay the normal 1T cost from on-map supply to refit.

1.3b Air Strips. Either player may build and use Air Strips (*OCS 15.2*) up to the limits of the counter mix.

1.3c HQ Fighter Hosting. Any Combat Mode HQ (except Kessel HQ) has the capacity to base and refit one Fighter. This "hosting" operates as if an Air Strip is present in the hex, except that it has a stacking limit of one Fighter, cannot be used to unload cargo, and cannot be upgraded. Whenever the HQ enters Move Mode the inherent Air Strip ceases to exist. Any air units in the hex at that point roll on the Air Base Capture Table (9.14f). Because no more than one Air Base can ever exist in a single hex, the presence of a regular Air Base cancels this hosting capability.

1.4 Army Group North/South Markers

These markers are used when playing *TFB* without combining it with *The Third Winter* or the planned *The Hero City*. The AGS marker moves along the southern edge of maps C and D per the Axis reinforcement chart to indicate Army Group South's front line. The AGN marker moves along the northern edge of maps A and B per the Axis reinforcement chart to indicate Army Group North's front line. Rail edge hexes on or east of the markers are Soviet supply sources, and those to the west are Axis supply sources. When the markers occupy or move to the west of a rail edge hex, that hex automatically converts to Soviet gauge. The marker positions are listed in the OOA. They move at the start of the indicated Axis Player Turn. Soviet units may exit the northern or southern edge of the map from any road or rail and re-enter the following turn on a hex anywhere on the same map edge to the east of the relevant marker as if they were Reinforcements. Displace any Axis units 1 hex to allow arriving units to be placed on the map. Place units which have exited in this way in the respective off-map box. Units in these boxes do not require supply. They may not remain in the box beyond the next Soviet Reinforcement Phase.

> *Design Note: Axis player, you have been warned! Marker progress does not always match the historical front-line trace since markers more properly represent the ability of units to maneuver off-map.*

1.5 Pontoon Units

Both sides can use Pontoon units to facilitate river crossings. Pontoon units, whether DG or not, that are oriented to Combat Mode create a "Pontoon Track Bridge" for friendly units across all adjacent Major and Minor River hexsides, as if a "Track" is crossing the river. These Pontoon Track Bridges disappear if the Pontoon unit leaves the hex. This Pontoon Track Bridge connects the hex the Pontoon occupies to all other transportation lines (per *OCS 6.2a*). Map-printed bridges are unaffected by the presence of a Pontoon Track Bridge. Optional "Pontoons" markers are included in the game as a play aid.

> *Play Note: The Pontoon Track Bridge that is created makes the cost to enter the hex across the bridged river 1 MP in most weather conditions (see TEC). Note also that OCS 6.1d applies, so if a unit with Track or Truck MA crosses the river into a swamp hex, it will need to use a road, track or rail when exiting that hex.*
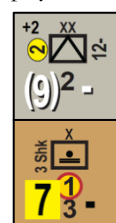
1.6 Special Units

1.6a German Flak and Soviet AA Units.

Both sides deployed substantial anti-aircraft assets during the campaign. To reflect their impact, these units add a Flak Die Roll Modifier (DRM) when in Combat Mode. Only one flak unit per hex may provide this DRM, with a Flak battalion/regiment providing a +1 and an AA division a +2. These DRMs are printed on the counter.

> *Play Note: Players sometimes overlook the fact that Soviet AA units are multi-step divisions and must use the Single Unit Method for fueling (OCS 12.5c (C)) when in Move Mode.*

1.6b Rail Movement Units.

The Soviet player has one rail artillery unit, and the Axis player has several rail Flak units. These act normally except for the following:

The units may only move by rail. They may start and end their move in any rail hex of the proper gauge that isn't in an EZOC (the hex does not have to be detrainable). If the unit moves, flip it to its "rr" side. Flip the unit over to its regular side in the player's next Mode Determination & Movement Phase. Rail Movement units forced to retreat after combat are destroyed. Their movement does not require any of a player's Rail Capacity.

1.6c Special Assault Units.

Assault Engineer units were used to spearhead attacks on cities (major or minor), forts, hedgehogs, and across rivers. The printed Action Rating is only for attacks into/across a hex or hexside that includes these types of terrain. For any other purpose (attacking a hex without these terrain types, defending, attrition, etc.) the printed Action Rating is reduced by 1.

1.6d Artillery Divisions.
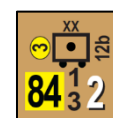
The Soviets possess multi-step artillery and Rocket Artillery (Katyusha) divisions. Defense strength is the current RE value, and Barrage Strength should be reduced in proportion to losses. For example, an 84-factor, 3-RE unit with 1 loss has a Defense strength of 2 and a Barrage Strength of 84 x 2/3 = 56.

These artillery divisions may fire each RE independently, as if equal units of 1 RE were in the hex. Divide the Barrage Strength by the RE to determine the strength per RE.

1.6e Breakdown Counters.

The counter mix is intentionally limited. Soviet Guards (including Airborne) units use Guards Breakdowns. Axis Luftwaffe and SS Mountain units must use Breakdowns of their respective unit type.

1.7 Reinforcements

There are two types of reinforcements—those obtained from each player's Replacements Table and the ones listed on each player's Order of Arrival.

1.7a Replacements.

Each player rolls on their Replacements Table during their Reinforcement Phase.

Rebuild Restrictions. Physical Pax and Eq units are not used. Instead, they are regarded as being present a hex with an HQ (German) or in the RVGK Box (Soviet). The handling of each player's ground unit rebuilds is as follows:

- **Flexible Axis Rebuilds.** Axis Replacements, including Special Replacements (SR) and Breakout returns, are placed with any non-Kessel HQ of the

appropriate nationality that is in Trace supply (see 2.1b). The HQ must be in Combat Mode, or else be in DG Mode and oriented toward Combat Mode. Alert units (2.4c) may also arrive at any Kessel HQ. A multi-step unit which has taken step losses follows this process and can do so it is located within 2 hexes of a qualifying HQ.

- **Rigid Soviet Rebuilds.** All Soviet rebuilds are done in the RVGK-3 Box. See 3.5 RVGK.

Replacement Table Results. Replacements are used per *OCS 13.5,* and the Rebuild Charts included in each Player's Booklet.

- **"Air"** One air replacement can rebuild a reduced on-map air unit back to full strength or rebuild one air unit at full strength from the dead pile. They cannot be saved for future use.

- **"Eq"** Receive the number of Eq indicated. There is an Action Rating (AR) value indicated. Rebuild a unit from the dead pile with that AR value or lower. Note: Eq cannot be used to rebuild aircraft or Axis Tiger units. Eq may be used to rebuild Soviet Artillery or Mortar Regiments which are part of a multi-unit formation. Eq cannot be saved for later use.

- **"Pax"** Receive this number of Pax. Pax may be saved for later use. Axis Pax are considered to be located at any non-Kessel HQ of the appropriate nationality that is in Trace supply.

- **"Ally"** Pax that can only be used to rebuild Hungarian units. These may be saved for later use.

1.7b **Special Replacements.** If there is a "Yes" in the Special Repl column of the Replacements Table, the player also rolls on their Special Replacements Table for "free" builds.

- **"Alert"** (Axis) Place one randomly chosen unit from the indicated Alert pool if available (see 2.4c). There are three separate Alert unit pools, one for "PG or AG" units, one for Flak units, and one for "Infantry" (includes cavalry units).

- **"Arty"** (Axis & Soviet) Rebuild one Artillery (Arty, Mortar, or Katy/Werfer) step (not an entire division), including

Artillery or Mortar Regiments which are part of a multi-unit formation.

- **"AT"** (Soviet) Rebuild one Anti-Tank Brigade.

- **"Assault"** (Soviet) Rebuild one Special Assault unit (1.6c).

- **"AA"** (Soviet) Rebuild one AA Division (1.6a).

- **"Hog"** (Axis & Soviet) Place a Level-1 Hedgehog or increase a Level-1 to Level-2 Hedgehog in any hex in trace supply. "Hog" results cannot increase a Garrison unit's Hog level (see 2.4a).

- **"HQ"** (Soviet) Rebuild one HQ unit.

- **"Partisan"** (Soviet) Place a Partisan Brigade face-down on the map (see 3.7a).

- **"Pontoon"** (Soviet) Rebuild one pontoon Brigade.

- "**Tiger"** (Axis) Rebuild one Tiger unit. These may be saved for later use **only** if a unit is not available in the Dead Pile. A counter is provided to track accumulated Tiger Repls.

Except for Tiger steps, all Special Replacements are "use or lose" on the turn in which they are received. Soviet players note "Special Replacement Priority" procedure description in the Soviet Player Book.

1.7c **Arrival Schedules.** Each Player Booklet provides a chronological Order of Appearance and Withdrawal (OOA).

Arrivals. Each entry indicates where the units appear.

Withdrawals. When a unit is called on to be "Withdrawn" by the arrival chart, it or a unit with identical factors is immediately removed from play. The exceptions are HQs and components of a multi-unit formation, which require that specific unit to be removed. Make withdrawals regardless of a unit's current situation (even if in the Dead Pile, one step remaining, or surrounded). Fuel is not needed to exit the map (no actual movement is conducted), but internal stocks must be replenished (deducted from the next Supply Table arrival).

Design Note: Both sides shifted units about more frequently than is reflected in the Arrival Schedules. We are trying to manage each player's overall force structure and not require removal of units that might be key to a specific tactical situation on the map. Actual unit designations are provided in the Player Charts & Tables for reference.

1.8 Weather

1.8a **Weather.** Weather affects air operations, ground conditions and combat as per the weather tables.
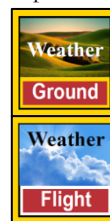
Weather is determined each turn by rolling first for Ground Conditions (one die) and then Flight Conditions (two dice). Use the row for the current date or Ground Condition and read across to find the result in the column with the number rolled. The full effects of each weather type result are given on the Weather Table.

- Weather on the first turn of a scenario is pre-determined (per the scenario General Information).

- Campaign scenarios may end early. During the Weather Determination Phase if Mud is rolled as the ground condition for three consecutive turns during April 1944, the game ends immediately—at the moment of the third Mud weather roll.

1.8b **Deep Freeze.** This weather condition, first seen in *GBII* and *Case Blue* is included in a simplified format for this game. Deep Freeze simulates Blizzard conditions and operational shut down.

Deep Freeze affects units in several ways:

- A Deep Freeze turn is played as a simulcast turn (*OCS 2.4*).

- Movement uses Freeze terrain costs, adding +1 MP for every hex entered. Rail Movement happens normally.

- Out of Supply units roll for attrition with a +2 modifier.

- Units may not Breakout.

- Units may not perform Construction (*OCS 13.8d*).

- Flight conditions are automatically "No Flight." Air Bases refit Air Units at half the normal rate.

1.8c Ice River Condition. It takes 3 consecutive turns of Freeze or Deep Freeze for Rivers and Lakes to freeze and become "Ice" in the game. Use the "Freeze" TEC effects for this terrain until then. Once "Ice" occurs it requires three consecutive Mud or Dry turns for the "Ice" effects to stop. *For example, if the Weather roll generates "Freeze" or "Deep Freeze" on 29 Dec, 1 Jan and 5 Jan, the "Ice" condition takes effect at the start of the Jan 8 turn, regardless of what that turn's Weather roll is.*

During "Ice" River Conditions, treat Lakes as Open terrain, except that Blocked hexsides remain impassable. Minor Rivers have no effect. Major Rivers have reduced effect.

1.9 Special Events

Special Events are used in all campaign games but not during smaller scenarios. Every third turn (marked with an asterisk on the turn record), roll two dice. A Special Event takes place on a result of 8 or higher. If so, consult the Special Event table on page 27. Some events may occur only once per game, and some have specific preconditions.

1.10 The Armies

Soviet units are:

- Red Army (tan)
- Guards (red-tan)
- Red Air Force (orange-tan)
- Guards Aircraft (red-tan)
- Partisan (brown)

Axis units are:

- Wehrmacht (gray)
- Waffen-SS (black)
- Luftwaffe (light blue)
- Lithuanian (dark gray)
- Hungarian (steel blue)
- Slovak (green)
- Ost (pale yellow)

- "German" collectively refers to Wehrmacht, Waffen SS, and Luftwaffe units.

Some units have colored unit type boxes indicating a specific nationality or NKVD. These are for historical interest and have no play effect.

2.0 Axis Special Rules

2.1 Supply and Reinforcements

2.1a Axis Supply Sources. Rail hexes on the west edge of maps A and C are Axis supply sources, as are rail hexes on the south edge of maps C and D which are west of the AGS marker, and rail hexes on the north edge of maps A and B which are west of the AGN marker.

2.1b Axis Unit Arrivals. New or rebuilt air units appear Active at any Air Base in Trace supply. Per the Axis Arrival Chart, new ground units appear at specific Entry Hexes, or at Army or Army Group HQ locations, as long as these HQ locations are detrainable hexes. Exceptions and special handling:

- Replacement Table Rebuilds and Breakout returns are placed per 1.7a. Alert units (2.4c) may also arrive at any Kessel HQ (2.3a).

- SP are placed per the Supply Table notes. Placement requires no Rail Cap expenditure. Increments of 1T or 2T of the amount received may be placed at as many in-Trace Axis controlled Air Bases as desired (*note 1.3a, but players may still want SP at some Air Base locations*).

- Some Special Events provide a player additional SP to be placed as directed. This is in addition to SP received from the Supply Table.

- Note that reinforcements can entrain in an arrival hex that has a German gauge railroad (per *OCS 13.6b*).

2.1c Emergency Reinforcements.

- If Vitebsk (both B18.18 and B18.19) is captured by the Soviet player, then the Axis player has the option to deploy several

units from Army Group G, per the Order of Arrival. However, exercising this option awards the Soviet player 1 VP.

- If Soviet units move within 5 hexes of Kovel (C14.12), then the Axis player may deploy the units indicated on their Order of Arrival. This does not award any VP to the Soviet player.

2.2 Luftwaffe

2.2a Hip Shoots. The Luftwaffe's Ju.87D and Hs.129 units are the only aircraft in the game allowed to Hip Shoot.

2.2b Luftflotte HQ. Each Axis Army Group on the Eastern Front had an associated Air Fleet. Luftflotte 6 was assigned to Army Group Center. It and its assigned air units are identifiable by the yellow-orange color stripe on the HQ and counters. *Note: This rule assumes greater significance when linking TFB with TTW and the forthcoming The Hero City.*

A Luftflotte HQ Marker has these characteristics:

- It must be located in a friendly Village, City, or a friendly Air Base, a minimum of 10 hexes from an in-Trace Soviet combat unit.

- A Luftflotte HQ may be moved during the Axis Movement Phase. It must be moved immediately if a Soviet combat unit comes within 10 hexes. Just pick it up and place it in a valid hex per above; there is no MP cost.

- It has no Flak DRM.

- Once per game, each Luftflotte HQ can place SP on the map in any friendly hex within 60 hexes, representing the use of finite airlift capability. Place either 2 SP on an Air Base or 1 SP in a non-air base hex. This is not an air mission and is not affected by enemy air unit presence or EZOC, but cannot be done on a "No Flight" turn. The counter's front side (with the "1") indicates it has not yet done this - after using this ability, flip the counter to its "0" side. This SP is over and above those received from the Supply Table.

2.2c Mission Hex Limits. The mission hex for Axis air units conducting Barrage, Fighter Sweep, or Trainbusting missions cannot be further than 60 hexes from a Luftflotte HQ Marker. *Note: this rule anticipates combination with other games where several Luftflotte HQs will be in play.*

2.2d Air Drop Limits. Only the German Brandenburger parachute unit may be air dropped (2.4k) and it can do so only once. Air Drop missions to deliver Supply Points are unaffected.

2.2e Tank-Busters. The Hs.129 unit is designated as a Tank-Buster, denoted with a red Barrage Strength. Germany developed several aircraft with anti-tank cannons to help counter Soviet armor.
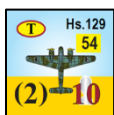
A) Tank-Busters:

◊ Can only perform Barrage, Hip Shoot or Base Transfer missions.

◊ May only barrage a hex containing a Yellow or Red symbol unit (see *OCS 3.2a*). If the target hex turns out not to contain at least one of these units, the mission aborts.

◊ *Require* a spotter.

◊ May have other air units as part of a Barrage mission, but those units cannot add their Barrage Strength (essentially, they are serving as escorts).

B) Perform a Tank-Buster Barrage as follows:

◊ There is a +1 DRM to the roll on the Barrage Table.

◊ Treat all [1/2], 1/2, 2 or 3 Barrage Table results as 1 (which includes a DG result for all surviving units).

◊ The *Soviet player* must choose the highest Combat Mode combat strength Red or Yellow symbol unit to take any loss.

C) Aside from the above, the roll and effects of the Barrage Table are handled normally.

D) Losses suffered from Flak must be taken from a tank-buster.

2.3 Axis HQ Capabilities

2.3a Kessel HQs. The pair of special Kessel HQs reflect Germany's command and control superiority. Hold them off map until needed.

Kessel HQs are placed and removed during the Axis Reinforcement Phase. They are placed with any friendly combat unit anywhere, even in a pocket or EZOC. If destroyed in combat, its time expires, or it is voluntarily removed, a Kessel HQ becomes available three turns later (put it on the appropriate space on the Turn Record Track).

A Kessel HQ:

• Has a defense strength of 2 in Combat Mode and 1 in Move Mode.

• Is not Engineer-Capable.

• Has a 0 Flak DRM.

Alert units are the only Replacements which may be placed at a Kessel HQ's location.

Player Note: Kessel HQ cannot provide Trace Supply indefinitely, as they can in The Third Winter, per the rule below.

Special Abilities:

A) Kessel HQs provide Trace supply to all Axis combat units within Throw range. This capability lasts for three turns, after which the Kessel HQ <u>must</u> be removed in the next Reinforcement Phase. A Kessel HQ can remain for three additional turns if it is in a hex containing a City or Air Base during the Reinforcement Phase (check each turn). During the seventh Reinforcement Phase and thereafter, the Axis player can "buy" an additional turn at the cost of destroying one air step that has a Transport Capacity. It must still be in a City or Air Base. That step must be Active, and in-range of the Kessel HQ. This cannot be done during a "No Flight" turn. No mission is flown, just eliminate the step. It can be repeated as long as eligible air unit steps are available. One Transport Capacity step may only benefit one Kessel HQ. Air Transport or Air Drop of SP and

Eating off the Map are used normally. After a Kessel HQ which provided Trace supply to a set of units (usually a pocket) is removed, another cannot be placed in the same pocket.

B) Axis units in Combat or Move Mode using Leg MA pay no MP cost to enter a hex within two hexes of a Kessel HQ with the following restrictions:

◊ The maximum such move is 4 hexes.

◊ The free move cannot be combined with regular movement or used for Overrun.

◊ Units must stop upon entering a hex or crossing a hexside with an MP cost of All.

◊ Units must stop upon entering an un-negated EZOC (*OCS 4.5b*).

◊ A unit can receive this movement advantage from only one Kessel HQ in a turn (no "daisy chaining").

◊ Units must end their move no further east than they began.

2.3b Army HQs. Army HQs represent a higher command level than is typically shown and have these special characteristics:

A) They can only move by rail (counting as 1 RE against Rail Cap). Follow normal rules for rail movement except the starting/ending hexes do not have to be detrainable.

B) SP received via the Supply Table marked "Army or Army Group HQs" may be placed with an Axis Army HQ in Trace Supply.

C) They have a Throw range and function as any other HQ for supply, Flak DRM and engineer functions.

D) Army HQs participate in combat like normal HQs, except that they are destroyed if forced to retreat.

E) If destroyed, they are rebuilt (at no cost) in the next Axis Reinforcement Phase, returning at any Detrainable hex. The Soviets gain 1 VP for destroying an Axis Army HQ each time it happens.

2.3c <u>Army Group HQs</u>. Special characteristics of Army Group HQs:

A) They can only move by rail (counting as 1 RE against Rail Cap). They must be located in a major or minor city hex.

B) SP received via the Supply Table marked "Army or Army Group HQs" may be placed with the Army Group HQ if it is in Trace Supply.

C) They have a Throw range and function as any other HQ for supply and Flak DRM, but cannot perform engineer functions.

D) Army Group HQs participate in combat like normal HQs, except that they are destroyed if forced to retreat.

E) If destroyed, an Army Group HQ is rebuilt (at no cost) in the next Axis Reinforcement Phase, appearing in any friendly detrainable major or minor city hex. The Soviets gain 2 VP for this each time it happens. In addition, ALL combats in the game from the moment of the HQ's destruction to its replacement incur a -1 DRM to the Combat roll when Axis units are the attacker and a +1 DRM to the Combat roll when Axis units are the defender.

F) **Special Supply Capability:** An Army Group HQ may carry 1 SP with it as it moves. Once per turn, an Army Group HQ in Combat Mode may place 1 SP which is stacked with the HQ at the start of the Movement Phase in any hex within its Throw range. No Transport Points are required, just place the SP in the new hex (considered "unloading" per 12.2a). Special dumps may not be created this way when the Army Group HQ is in Move Mode (indicated by the 0 on the counter to the left of the unit type icon).

G) Once per game turn, an Army Group HQ may add a +1/-1 die roll DRM to any ground combat (at least one Axis unit involved in the combat must be within the Throw range of the Army Group HQ). This must be announced before the dice are thrown and affects the Combat roll, not the Surprise roll.

2.3d <u>Corps HQ Recovery</u>. Whenever a German Corps HQ is eliminated, roll one die. On a result of 1-3, the HQ is rebuilt at no cost in the next Axis Reinforcement Phase, appearing at any Army or Army Group HQ. On a roll of 4-6 place the HQ in the Dead Pile.

Design Note: *Not only was German operational flexibility excellent, but they could also quickly recreate command and staff structures from available personnel.*

2.3e <u>German HQ Supply</u>. German HQs may supply any Axis unit. Hungarian HQs may supply only Hungarian units.

2.4 Axis Miscellany

2.4a <u>Garrison Units</u>. These named Garrison units are initially inactive (face-down) in their respective City hexes. None of an inactive Garrison unit's values (combat strength, AR, Flak, Hedgehog, RE size) apply until activated. It is a marker only. Axis units may leave the City hex normally.
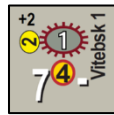
The Garrison may activate and flip to its Combat Mode side at any point when a Soviet combat unit is within two hexes of any hex of the city (even in the middle of a Soviet movement segment). An active Garrison is a static 1 or 2-step unit which is also a Level-1 Hedgehog (which cannot be further improved, and any existing Hedgehog markers in the hex are removed). It has 1 RE per step. Garrisons have an inherent +2 Flak modifier. This unit can never move or be transported. They are shown as "Attack-Capable" to give them a ZOC when not DG but they are never allowed to attack because they are immobile. The counters only have one orientation, Combat Mode. The Axis player is not required to activate a Garrison, and the inactive Garrison is destroyed should the hex be occupied by a Soviet unit.

All options must be taken as step losses when an active Garrison unit is attacked. The Garrison may provide its AR value to the combat, but it must be the last Axis unit eliminated in the hex.
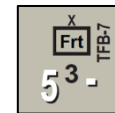
Unlike Fortress units, most Axis ground units may voluntarily move out of a city with a Garrison. For any combat unit that has Leg MA on its Move Mode side to voluntarily move out of the city after that city's Garrison is active, roll a die when it first attempts to move. On a 1-3 the unit may move away; 4-6 it must remain in the city until eliminated.

For Minsk Garrison units, see 2.4b.

Design Note: *Fortress and garrison preparation began in Belorussia and the Baltic States by the summer of 1943. The quality was mixed, as reflected in the counters. As the Soviets approached, some retreating Axis units sought shelter and became attached to these City garrisons.*

2.4b <u>Fortress Units</u>. Major or Minor Cities under Axis control which do not have a named Garrison may be declared a Fortress. The Axis player may do so at any point when an enemy combat unit is within two hexes of any hex of the city (even in the middle of a Soviet movement segment). This can only be done if a Fortress unit exists in the "available" pool. When destroyed, Fortress units are placed back in the pool for future use. Fortress status lasts until every hex in the city is Soviet controlled.

The moment a Fortress is declared:

• Place one Fortress unit and one Level-1 Hedgehog in the city.

• No Axis ground units in the city can voluntarily move or retreat into hexes outside of the city, even if this requires taking options as losses. This includes units which subsequently move into these city hexes—even by rail.

• Minsk is a special case. If declared a Fortress, activate the two Garrison units and place two Fortress units in the two non-Garrison City hexes, and one Level-1 Hog in any of the City hexes. The Fortress restrictions apply to all contiguous Minsk city hexes, and from this point forward, no Axis ground unit in Minsk can ever leave the city. Units can still move, advance, and retreat into connected city hexes, but can never do so into non-city hexes.

2.4c <u>Alert Units</u>. Alert units which don't start a scenario on the map are kept in three off-map pools (one for PG/AG units, another for Flak units and a third for

Infantry/Cavalry units). They may only appear via a Special Repl result and may be placed at Kessel HQs (2.3a) in addition to the usual placement options. When destroyed, they are placed back in the pool for future selection.
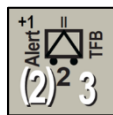
AG/PG Alert Pool:
1x 3-4-7 AG Co
3x 2-4-7 AG Co
2x 2-3-7 AG Co
2x 1-4-7 AG Co
1x 1-3-7 AG Co
1x 2-3-7 LW AG Co
2x 2-4-6 PG Bn
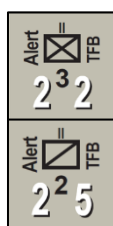2x 2-3-6 PG Bn
1x 1-4-6 PG Bn
1x 1-3-6 PG Bn

Flak Alert Pool:
10x (2)-2-3 Flak Bn

Infantry/Cavalry Alert Pool:
4x 2-3-3 Mot Inf Bn
4x 2-2-5 Cav Bn
5x 2-3-2 Inf Bn
3x 2-2-2 Inf Bn
4x 2-2-1 Inf Bn
1x 1-3-2 Inf Bn
1x 1-2-2 Inf Bn
2x 1-2-2 LW Inf Bn

> **Design Note:** *The Germans were falling back into an area which had been under Army Group Center's military rule for 2+ years. Alert units are various rear-area companies and battalions being conscripted for combat roles; cut-off German HQs often by necessity deployed such units.*

2.4d Remnants. If a 16-4-3 infantry division (only these!) loses its last step in combat or by Barrage (not by Attrition or Breakout), it creates a remnant battalion two hexes away under these conditions:

- A remnant battalion is available (they are limited by the counter mix).

- The placement hex is further west than the destroyed division's hex, and there is a path free of EZOCs between these hexes (EZOCs can be negated).

- The remnant maintains the "marker & mode" status of its (destroyed) parent division.
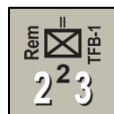
In the Axis Reinforcement Phase, a remnant battalion that is stacked with a Corps or Army HQ can be removed in order to rebuild a 16-4-3 (with one step remaining) if a Pax Repl is also spent. Removed or destroyed remnant battalions immediately become available for placement.

> **Design Note:** *Germany's ability to fight with ad hoc units and to retain cohesive integrity was renowned, even as the Wehrmacht's effectiveness declined during this period.*

2.4e Axis Kampfgruppe Markers. The Axis player has Kampfgruppe markers that can be used to create ad hoc multi-unit formations from scattered German units.

- Only units actually stacked with the Kampfgruppe marker are in the Kampfgruppe.

- Such units must be German and have Truck or Track Move Mode MA (although they don't have to be in that mode).

- A Kampfgruppe may contain a maximum number of RE equal to the number inside the Armor symbol plus one Company. They never count as more than 3 RE for possible density shifts. Use the actual amount, if less than 3 RE.

- To create a Kampfgruppe, place a marker on an eligible unit in the Movement Phase. Units may freely join and leave the Kampfgruppe, but there must always be at least one eligible unit stacked with the marker.

- The Kampfgruppe marker is returned to the pool either voluntarily during any subsequent Axis Movement Phase, or immediately if the last unit in the Kampfgruppe is eliminated.

- Units in a Kampfgruppe are exempt from the restrictions of *OCS 12.6f* and can hence Draw Trace supply from a different source than other units of their parent formation(s).

- A Kampfgruppe can use the Formation Method of fueling (*OCS 12.5c para A*).

- **Special Reaction Capability:** During their Reaction Phase, the Axis player rolls 1 die, halving the result (rounding down). This is the number of Kampfgruppen whose units are in Combat or Move Mode that may operate this Reaction Phase as if they were released Reserves. Such units are considered fueled for this Phase only (*per OCS 12.5c, para C*). Place 2T with one Kampfgruppe whose units move or overrun during this Reaction phase (this is in addition to SP received from the Supply Table).

- Kampfgruppen may use Reserve Markers normally but gain no special benefits from doing so.

> **Design Note:** *Axis forces were particularly adept at organizing Kampfgruppen out of different units for special purposes or desperate situations. These were under the command of resourceful and energetic leaders but heralded the breakdown of the German divisional formation structure from the pressures of constant combat.*

2.4f 216th SturmPanzer Company. These Brumbär vehicles were specifically designed to support combat engineers in built-up areas or fortifications. When attacking a hex containing a Hedgehog, Village or City, there is a 1-column rightward shift on the Combat Table. If an attacker loss is called for, this unit must be used for that loss.

2.4g Static Units. These include:

- **Heinrici Defense Bases.** These are received on the Axis OoA or by a Special Event. They reflect the combat defenses developed by General Heinrici. These are static combat units that contain a combat factor, intrinsic AR value and Hedgehog level. They are 1 RE in size. They must be deployed adjacent to (not with) any German Infantry division in Trace Supply. These units must apply their AR to their hex when in defense (they have no effect on attack ARs). However, this comes with a cost: all defending options must be taken as losses. The Heinrici Defense Base must be the last step loss

taken in the hex. The Hedgehog level cannot be increased.

- **Static Panther Battalions.** These appear as reinforcements and may be placed in any hex in Trace supply adjacent to a River. They are destroyed if forced to retreat.
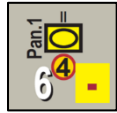
2.4h Rear-Area Units. Units identified as Reserve, Training, Security, Police, Replacement, Koruck, Ersatz and Border, as well as Hungarian and Lithuanian units may not voluntarily move adjacent to a Soviet Attack-Capable combat unit. If they find themselves adjacent to one, they are not required to leave. These units may attack, advance after combat or retreat normally, but may not participate in an Overrun.

> **Design Note:** *This area had been occupied by the Axis for over two years and there were a large number of rear echelon units not suited to active field operations. However, these units will play an important role countering Partisan activities.*

2.4i 399th River Flotilla. This unit has a deployed (Combat Mode) side and a riverine (Move Mode) side. When in Move Mode, it can only operate along the Major River from C34.20 to D5.02—just move it to any hex on either side of the river. When in Move Mode it cannot move into a Soviet ZOC and it cannot pass a point where two Soviet Combat units occupy both hexes which share a Major River hexside. The first turn of "Ice" River Condition forces it to flip to Combat Mode wherever it is located, and it can no longer enter Move Mode.
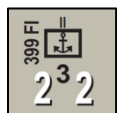
2.4j Heavy Todt Construction Unit. This unit is Engineer-Capable (*OCS 13.8a*) but the cost for it to build a Hedgehog is 2T instead of 2 SP per level.
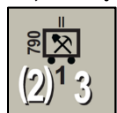
2.4k Brandenburger Parachute Unit. The Brandenburger Para unit may conduct an Air Drop once per game. If it starts the Axis Movement Phase on an Air Base, during that Phase it may be landed in any Open Terrain hex up to 10 hexes away. Flight conditions must be either Full or

Limited. No Air Units are needed, and no Air Mission is conducted, just place the unit and roll one die—it is eliminated on a roll of "6". The unit is in Trace Supply and Combat Supply for this and the following turn.

2.4l Night Fighter. This was a night fighter unit occasionally pressed into daytime service. It cannot perform Fighter Sweeps. Its Air-to-Air Combat value is marked with an asterisk as a reminder.

2.5 Axis Allies

2.5a Lithuanian Army Restrictions. A Lithuanian Border unit may not move from its setup location until a Soviet unit moves within 5 hexes. At this point, the unit is activated and may move per 2.4h. All Lithuanian units are activated if a Soviet unit moves within 5 hexes of Vilnius or by the "Baltic States commit to Germany" Special Event.
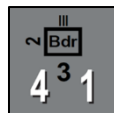
2.5b Hungarian Army Restrictions.

- Hungarian ground units may not move or be placed east of the Dnepr River (D11.27 to D7.01), or north of hex row XX.27 on the C and D maps (the Restriction Area). They also may not voluntarily move adjacent to a Soviet combat unit.

- Hungarian air units may not operate outside the Restriction Area, meaning mission hexes or air bases must be inside it. Patrol Zones may extend outside the Restriction Area.

- Hungarian HQs can rebuild and supply only Hungarian units.

3.0 Soviet Special Rules

3.1 Supply and Reinforcements

3.1a Soviet Supply Sources. Rail hexes on the east edge of maps B and D are Soviet supply sources, as well as rail hexes on the south edge of maps C and D which are east

of the AGS Marker, and rail hexes on the north edge of maps A and B which are east of the AGN Marker.

3.1b Soviet Unit Arrivals. Newly arriving or rebuilt air units appear active at any Air Base that is in Trace supply. Ground unit reinforcements appear at Front HQ locations per the Soviet Arrival Chart unless specifically noted otherwise. Exceptions and special handling:

- Breakout returns (*OCS 12.8e*) are placed at any Soviet Engineer-Capable (*OCS 13.8a*) HQ in Trace supply.

- Rebuilds arrive at either RVGK Box (see 3.5).

- 1 SP must be placed at each Front HQ location. Remaining SP are placed in any distribution the player wishes at Front HQ locations. Increments of 1T or 2T of the amount received may be placed at as many in-Trace Soviet controlled Air Bases as desired (*though note 1.3a*).

- Some Special Events award a player additional SP to be placed as directed. These are in addition to amounts from the supply table.

Soviet reinforcements may entrain in an arrival hex that has a Soviet gauge railroad (per *OCS 13.6b*).

3.2 Red Air Force

3.2a No Hip Shoots. Soviet air units cannot conduct Hip Shoot missions.

3.2b Frontal Air Armies. Some of the Soviet air units are allocated to specific Air Armies, each of which are assigned to a specific Front HQ (see 3.3). Colored stripes are used to identify these counters, matching the color stripe on the Front HQ.

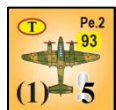Each Frontal Air Army has an Air Army HQ Marker, which has these qualities/limitations:

- It must be located in a land hex within its Front Boundary (3.3b), a minimum of 5 hexes from an in-Trace Axis combat unit (ignore units being supplied by a Kessel HQ).

- An Air Army HQ may be moved during the Movement Phase. It <u>must</u> be moved if an Axis combat unit comes within 5 hexes. Just pick it up and place it in a valid hex per above; there is no MP cost.

- It has no Flak DRM.

3.2c Mission Hex Limits. Apply the following range restrictions to Fighter Sweeps, Trainbusting and any type of Barrage missions:

- The mission hex for an independent air unit (no stripe) must be within 15 hexes of <u>any</u> Front HQ or Air Army HQ Marker.

- An Air unit with Frontal Air Army stripes (3.2b) may only count this distance from <u>their own</u> Front HQ/Air Army HQ Markers.

3.2d Air Operations.

Air units from different Air Armies may not combine in the same mission. Independent air units may combine with any air units.

Air units assigned to a Front which is in Regrouping Posture (3.3d) may not perform Fighter Sweeps or missions which are resolved on the Barrage Table. Missions which are resolved on the Barrage vs. Facility Table are unaffected. Fighters project Patrol Zones and may Intercept normally.

3.2e Air Drop Limits. No Soviet combat unit may be air dropped. Air Drop missions to deliver Supply Points are unaffected.

> **Design Note:** *While the Red Army was successfully undertaking deep penetration attacks in late 1943/early 1944, command and control were still evolving. They would reach their peak in the summer of 1944. This rule reflects these limitations and requires careful planning from the Soviet Player. Front HQs represent a large area of logistical activity, not "units in a hex."*

3.3 Front HQs

Four Front HQs are used to simulate the Red Army's command structure in this period. Front boundaries and a Front HQ's "Posture" (Offensive or Regrouping, per 3.3c and 3.3d) are very important. Scenario setups will indicate each starting Front Posture.

3.3a Front HQ Characteristics. Regardless of Posture, a Front HQ has these characteristics:

A) A Front HQ may only occupy a rail hex with an unbroken line of Soviet gauge rails back to a Soviet supply source.

B) The hex a Front HQ occupies becomes a Detrainable Hex.

C) A Front HQ Flak DRM is +2 (printed on the counter).

D) A Front HQ cannot be destroyed. It is unaffected by DG or Trainbusting/Interdiction. Should an enemy combat unit enter the hex containing a Front HQ, or should it no longer have a rail connection to a Soviet supply source, simply displace it five hexes or more to another hex it can occupy (per 3.3d below). Any supply in its hex is moved along with the Front HQ.

E) Each Front HQ has a "Command Radius" which:

◊ Extends 10 hexes in all directions.

◊ Does not extend into hexes with enemy combat units, un-negated EZOC or hexes which a Truck MA unit could not enter during current weather conditions. *Note that this Command Radius functions differently than a "Throw Range." The intent is that a Command Radius extends 10 hexes in all directions until it encounters the front line or impassible terrain.*

◊ Allows an Army HQ Assigned (see 3.3b) to a Front and within the Command Radius of its Front HQ to Draw (*OCS 12.3a*) from the Front HQ hex (Trace included). Only HQ units can do this (though the detrainable hex created by the Front HQ functions normally).

◊ There is no penalty for an Army HQ assigned to a Front being outside the Command Radius of its Front HQ

other than not being able to Draw from the Front HQ's hex.

3.3b Front Boundaries.

A) Boundaries between Fronts must be clearly delineated. During Setup, place a Front boundary marker on the right-most and left-most units belonging to each Front AND closest to contact with Axis units on the front lines).

Left and Right Markers
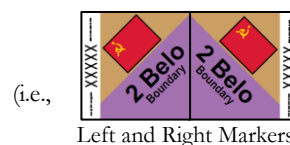
(i.e., During a Soviet player turn, the marker can be repositioned as units move, but the front-line boundary between any two Fronts should be clear to both sides. This is important for determining units that gain Regrouping Front attributes (see 3.3d).

B) During the Reinforcement Phase, each Army HQ on the map must be Assigned to a specific Front. Any number of Army HQs may be re-assigned at this point, but the Assignment is fixed until the next Reinforcement Phase. It is not necessary for the HQ to be within the Front boundary to which it is assigned, if the intent is that it will move there later in the Turn.

C) A minimum of three Army HQs must always be assigned to and within the boundary of each Soviet Front. Each Front must also have two artillery or Katy divisions within its boundary and within Throw range of an Assigned Army HQ located within the Front's Command Radius. There is no maximum limit.

D) Units are free to move across a Front boundary as long as the above minimums are maintained.

E) Any supply which is located within the Command Radius of a Soviet Front HQ Marker may not be transported (by rail or transport point) outside the Front boundary. (Exception: A loaded Organic Truck can carry up to 1 SP if

F) traveling with its formation.) Assigned HQs may not Draw or Throw supply across their Front Boundary marker. The mechanics of a unit "making its Trace" during the Supply Phase are unaffected and can be traced across Front Boundaries.

> **Design Note:** *At this point in the war, the Soviet Army had sufficient vehicles to create 200+ Truck Transport Points. Our intent is to reflect that lift capability abstractly.*

3.3c Offensive Posture. An eligible (see 3.3e) Front HQ may be changed to Offensive Posture (flip the counter) at the **start** of a Soviet Reinforcement Phase. A Front HQ in Offensive Posture has these characteristics:

A) It cannot move.

B) It may use its Artillery Barrage Marker (3.4)

3.3d Regrouping Posture. An eligible (see 3.3e) Front HQ can be changed into Regrouping Posture (flip the counter) at the **end** of a Soviet Reinforcement Phase. A Front HQ in Regrouping Posture has these characteristics:

A) It may move.

◊ It may only move by rail and must end movement in an eligible hex (per 3.3a). The cost is 5 RE of Rail Cap (adjust normally for multi-track lines and Trainbusting). Any supply in the hex may be transported along with the Front HQ at no additional cost.

◊ It cannot end its movement within 15 hexes of another Front HQ or within 5 hexes of an in-Trace Axis Combat Unit (except those Drawing Trace Supply from Kessel HQs).

B) Units which both are within a Front's Boundary and able to receive Trace supply from an assigned Army HQ located within the Front boundary, *regardless of whether that HQ is within the Front Command Radius,* have these attributes/limitations:

◊ They add 1 to the lead unit's printed AR when defending.

◊ They do not have to pay for defensive combat supply.

◊ They may not conduct Artillery Barrages. Should the Axis player attack units which meet these conditions, then conduct a barrage on each attacking stack using the 12-16 column on the Barrage Table with no shifts prior to combat. There is no supply cost for these barrages, nor do any artillery units need to be in range. This applies to overruns and to combat. This barrage takes place after step 2 of the Combat Sequence (*OCS 9.2*).

◊ They subtract 2 from the lead unit's printed AR if they conduct an attack.

◊ There is a 2 SP limit on attack supply per turn per Front HQ.

◊ Units which do not meet the conditions listed in B above do not receive these benefits/penalties.

C) It cannot use an Artillery Barrage Marker.

D) Air units assigned to the Front may not perform Fighter Sweeps or any mission resolved on the Barrage table (see 3.2d).

> **Play Note:** *Front Posture will effectively define where the Soviets are allowed to attack. Furthermore, the effects given to units defending in Regrouping Posture will severely limit Axis attack possibilities in these areas. However, "Regrouping" does not mean "Inert," as these units are capable of limited operations and considerable movement.*

3.3e Change Limits. Use the Soviet Off Map Display provided to keep a record of the turn a Front HQ changes to Offensive Posture, as each must adhere to the following:

• A maximum of two Front HQs may be in Offensive Posture at any time, and either one or two that are eligible may be designated so during a Reinforcement Phase. (*Note: starting 1 Mar 1944, only ONE

Soviet Front may be in Offensive Posture at a time.)

• A Front HQ must remain in Offensive Posture for a minimum of three turns. It may switch to Regrouping Posture after three turns and **must** do so after nine turns.

• A Front HQ must remain in Regrouping Posture for a minimum of three turns with no maximum. After three turns, a change to Offensive Posture can be made per 3.3c.

• Special Events may change these limits in some cases.

• Soviet Front status is not hidden from the Axis player.

> **Play Example:** *On 1 October 1943, the 2nd Belorussian Front is changed to Regrouping Posture (leaving 1st Belorussian Front as the only one in Offensive Posture). On 5 October, with three Fronts in Regrouping Posture, the Soviet player would be able to switch 3rd Belorussian or 1st Baltic into Offensive Posture (but not 2nd Belorussian, because it is not allowed to go back on Offensive Posture until 12 October at the earliest).*

3.4 Artillery Barrage Markers

Each Soviet Front HQ has a corresponding Artillery Barrage Marker.

3.4a Ready. An Artillery Barrage Marker may be spent in the Air/Naval Barrage Segment if the Front HQ is in Offensive Posture and the Marker is Ready. The process and restrictions are:

• Place the Marker in a target hex, which must be adjacent to a Soviet combat unit that is within the Throw range of an HQ Assigned to and within the Command Radius of the corresponding Front.

• During the Air/Naval Barrage Segment, Soviet artillery units which are a) in Combat Mode, and b) in the same or contiguous hexes, may barrage the target hex and any two adjacent hexes. There is no supply cost for these barrages. Each artillery or Katy unit may only barrage one hex (though per 1.6d artillery divisions may

fire RE independently). All normal Barrage modifiers apply.

- The units involved can Barrage again in the Combat Phase, paying normal supply costs.

3.4b <u>Not Ready.</u> After conducting the free barrages (above) use the track on the Player Aid Card or put it 9 turns ahead on the Turn track. The marker is "Ready" in the Soviet Reinforcement Phase of that turn (some Special Events may shift the marker's position).

> ***Design Note:*** *This rule reflects the stockpiling of munitions prior to major Soviet offensives and the barrages that preceded attacks. It is also likely to stagger those offensives in historical fashion, due to the way Artillery Barrage Markers are recycled. Their barrage takes place in the Air/Naval Barrage Segment to allow the Axis player some ability to use Reserves.*

3.5 RVGK

The RVGK is used for rebuilding shattered formations and to realistically simulate the Red Army's management of strategic reserves. The RVGK Box is further divided into a Rebuilding section for divisions and corps that are not fully rebuilt and a Ready section for units that are full strength and thus ready for deployment.

3.5a <u>RVGK 3 Marker.</u> This marker is used to show the approximate on-map location of units that are currently in the associated RVGK 3 Box. *Note that RVGK 1 & RVGK 2 are in The Third Winter.*

The RVGK 3 marker:

A) May only move by rail and must end movement in a detrainable hex. This costs 5 RE of Rail Cap (adjust normally for multi-track lines). RVGK movement is not affected by Trainbusting Markers.

B) Cannot be railed into or through a hex that is within 10 hexes of an Axis in-Trace combat unit. (Exception: Ignore units being supplied by a Kessel HQ.)

C) Has no combat value.

D) The contents of the RVGK Box are hidden from the Axis player by fog of war.

3.5b <u>RVGK Box Minimum.</u> The RVGK 3 box must contain the following minimum units (but see 3.5d below):

Tank and/or Mech corps	1
Cavalry corps	1
Artillery and/or Katy divisions (not brigades)	1
Infantry divisions	2

For a multi-unit formation to count towards the minimum, at least one unit must be in the RVGK 3 box (even if just the Organic Truck). All its remaining units must be in either the RVGK 3 box or the Dead Pile. None may be deployed on the map.

Should the formations in the RVGK 3 box fall below the minimum due to withdrawals or deployments, formations sufficient to restore the minimum must enter the RVGK at the first available opportunity.

There is no maximum limit on additional corps, divisions and/or independent units (all types) that may be in the RVGK 3 Box.

3.5c <u>Entering the RVGK.</u> Units rebuilt from the Dead Pile are placed in the RVGK 3 Box in the Soviet Reinforcement Phase. Also, during the Soviet Reinforcement Phase, on-map units within 20 hexes of the RVGK 3 Marker and which they could reach using Strat Mode (*OCS 5.8*) may enter the RVGK 3 Box. Simply remove the units from the map and place them in the box. This requires no fuel expenditure. Consolidation (*OCS 13.9*) is not allowed in the RVGK.

- Units in the RVGK 3 Box are automatically in trace supply.

- All on-map units of a multi-unit formation must enter the box together – no units of a formation can never remain on the map.

- Organic Trucks automatically become "Full" when entering the RVGK 3 Box. Upon entering the RVGK, "Low" and "Exhausted" Markers are removed.

3.5d <u>Exiting the RVGK.</u> Units only exit the RVGK 3 Box under two circumstances:

A) The instant an Axis combat unit moves within 5 hexes of the RVGK 3 Marker, every unit in the RVGK 3 Box is put on the map within 3 hexes of the Marker. (Exception: Ignore units being supplied by a Kessel HQ.) The RVGK minimum must be restored at the first available opportunity after dealing with the enemy threat. *Note: "Dealing with the enemy threat" depends on the specific situation. The intent is that as soon as an Axis incursion has been defeated or contained and the Soviet rear area is no longer threatened then units must return to the RVGK 3 Box.*

B) At the start of the Soviet Movement Phase, units in the RVGK 3 Box may be released as long as they adhere to the following:

◊ Released units are placed anywhere within 5 hexes of the RVGK 3 Marker.

◊ The RVGK minimum must be maintained.

◊ Corps and multi-step units must be full-strength (with no missing steps or dead units).

◊ Independent units (*OCS 3.2f*) are only released in conjunction with an HQ that is also exiting the box. Up to 3 RE may be released along with this HQ. *Note: Players will find it helpful to cycle HQs in and out of the RVGK to release Independent units.*

◊ All Truck and Track MA units are fueled for free per the Single Unit Method (*OCS 12.5c para C*) in the phase in which they are released.

◊ Units may not enter and exit the RVGK on the same turn.

Released units are free to move as desired.

3.6 Special Truck Extenders

The Soviet player may not make normal use of Truck Extenders under the series rules (*OCS 12.7*). Instead, they have available two Special Truck Extenders

(STE). When deployed on the map, each STE functions as a truck Extender for the extension of Trace Supply range in accordance with *OCS 12.7*. The only method to move an STE is to take it off the map during the Movement Phase and place it in the Moving section of the Special Truck Extenders Holding Box. During the Soviet Clean Up Phase, move each STE from the Moving section to the Ready section. During the Soviet Movement Phase, an STE in the Ready section may be deployed on the map in a hex which can be reached by Truck MA from a Front HQ in the current turn 15 hexes or 22.5 Truck MP (whichever is less). If an Axis combat unit moves into a hex containing an STE, immediately place the STE into the Moving section of the STE Holding Box. An STE cannot convert into Truck Transport Points. STE cannot "daisy chain" from one another.

3.7 Partisans

3.7a **Partisan Deployment.** Partisan units are received by the Reinforcement Chart or Special Event. For each received, select a Partisan unit at random and place it, face down on the map. It may only be placed in a Light or Heavy Woods hex or Swamp that does not contain a road/rail line, an Axis unit or EZOC. Until activated, face-down Partisan units may not move and have no game effect. If no Partisan units are available, none are received. Should an Axis unit attempt to enter a hex with an inactive Partisan, the Soviet player immediately displaces it 2 hexes away.

3.7b **Partisan Activation.** Partisan units are activated by the Reinforcement Chart or Special Event. For each activation, flip over one Partisan unit to its Combat Mode side. Units placed this turn are eligible. Active Partisans may move but may not enter Open terrain or benefit from Roads (they may use Trails). They may not enter EZOCs but are not required to leave an EZOC if they start the turn in one.

3.7c **Partisan Activities.** Active Partisan units have these capabilities:

- They are always in Trace and Combat Supply. Front Posture rules do not apply to Partisans. They may only ever be in Combat or DG Mode.

- They exert a "disruptive ZOC" in any of the six surrounding hexes which contain Hills, Woods (Major or Minor) or Swamp terrain. This "disruptive ZOC" is negated by the presence of Village, City or Road terrain (not Tracks) or the presence of an Axis unit/EZOC. A disruptive ZOC blocks supply Trace and costs +1 MP for Axis units to enter.

- When a Partisan unit occupies a rail hex, roll 1 die. A 1-3 has no effect; 4-6 places an Interdiction marker in the hex.

- Should a Partisan unit be adjacent to an Axis Air Base, immediately roll 1 die. A 1-4 has no effect, 5-6 destroys an air step (select randomly from the steps, not units, on the Air Base).

- When a Partisan is adjacent to an Axis supply dump, immediately roll 1 die. A 1-4 has no effect, 5-6 destroys 25% of the SP (rounded down).

- A specific rail hex, Air Base or supply dump may only be affected by Partisan units once per Movement Phase, and a specific Partisan unit may only affect one hex during its movement. These actions can take place before, during, or after the Partisan unit moves and is considered part of its movement. The presence of an Axis unit does not prevent these Partisan activities, unless it projects an EZOC (which the Partisan cannot enter).

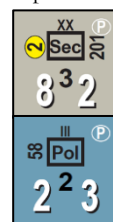- An Active Partisan may place a "Partisan Track" marker in its starting hex or any hex it moves into during the Movement Phase. Orient the marker so that it is clear which hexside it affects. Treat the hex as if it had a Track extending across this one hexside. Major River and Blocked hexsides are not affected. The Partisan Track marker remains until the Soviet player voluntarily removes it. Several markers can be strung together to effectively create a multi-hex Track. Partisan Track markers are limited by the counter mix. Only Soviet units may benefit from Partisan Tracks.

Design Note: Partisan bands familiar with local terrain could direct advancing Soviet units to river fording locations and paths through difficult terrain.

- During any Movement Segment a Partisan unit may be removed from the map (and placed in the pool) to rebuild one step of an adjacent Soviet Infantry Division. The absorbing division cannot move during this Movement Segment.

3.7d **Anti-Partisan Operations.** Axis Security and Police units that attack Partisan units gain a +3 die roll modifier to both the Surprise and Combat roll. These units expend NO SP to attack Partisans. As long as they are more than 5 hexes from a Soviet Combat unit (non-Partisan) and in the Axis rear area, Security and Police units are always in Trace supply. They must be fueled normally. These units are marked with a circled "P" to help identify them.

3.8 Red Army Penal Assault Units

When a Front moves to Offensive Posture, the Front receives two Penal assault units as Reinforcements, if available. These may be placed with any combat unit of that Front. They must be used on the turn they arrive, during either Combat Segment of the Soviet player turn, by stacking with a unit which participates in an attack. Their use negates the effects of one level of Hedgehog in the defender's hex for that combat (a Level-2 Hog is treated as Level-1 and a Level-1 Hog is treated as if it is not in the hex). The Penal assault unit does not require Combat Supply. There is no additional effect gained for using two Penal assault units in one combat. Once used, they are removed from the map. They can be reissued to Fronts any number of times during the game. Removal is in addition to any attacker losses and cannot be used to satisfy those. Penal assault unit availability is limited by the counter mix.

3.9 Guard Cavalry Corps

When moving as a stack with a cavalry division of their Corps, Track and Truck MA Corps units pay Leg MA costs to enter each hex. They may retreat from combat into prohibited terrain if so stacked. This costs no fuel; simply treat the unit as if its MA were Leg as long as it is moving as described.

> **Design Note:** *The light tanks were specially trained and equipped to operate as part of these formations. Each Cavalry Corps had reconnaissance units to identify tracks/trails for the non-horse units. The lessons gained in 1943-44 would be further enhanced in 1944-45 with famous Cavalry-Mechanized Groups, such as Pliev's and Baranov's.*

3.10 UR Brigades

Any turn in which a UR Brigade is within a Regrouping Front boundary, does not move, and can receive Trace Supply from an HQ assigned to that Regrouping Front, its associated MG Brigade and Field Engineer Brigade may be placed in the same hex. The Field Engineer unit is also a Level-1 Hedgehog. These two units are returned to the holding box if the UR Brigade either moves for any reason (including retreat), or if it is within an Offensive Front boundary. Units attacking such a UR Brigade stack suffer the Regrouping Front benefits plus the fortification benefits. A UR Brigade stack can benefit from Hedgehogs in its hex, but the combined effect of the Hog and Field Engineer Brigade cannot be greater than Level-2. A UR Brigade eliminated in combat must be rebuilt normally, but its associated MG and Field Engineer units are always available with no rebuild cost during the next Soviet turn in which the UR Brigade is eligible for this placement.

> **Design Note:** *The use of UR brigades in their true role has been abstracted. Backed by numerous defensive Front assets, this is a better attempt to reflect their true capabilities later in the war.*

3.11 Emergency STAVKA Reserves

Beginning 1 Nov 43, the Soviet player may appeal to STAVKA for Emergency Reserves. They may appeal once per turn, for a cost of 1 VP. See the Soviet Order of Arrival. These units are withdrawn on the 1 Mar 44 turn regardless of when they arrive.

4.0 Optional Rules

4.1 Combining TFB with *The Third Winter*. These two games can easily be combined for a large campaign. Place the TTW maps over the TFB maps. You will find the campaign dynamics along the seam affect both games in interesting ways. You can use either the 26 Sept 1943 or 26 Jan 1944 setup. There is also Gomel-Kiev Offensive scenario which uses components from both games. When playing the combined game:

- Do not play with the AGS Marker.

- These units must stay on their respective map sets: Front, Army and Army Group HQs, Luftflotte and Air Army Markers, Todt Heavy Construction Battalions, Special Truck Extenders, Breakdown units, Axis Ally units, Kampfgruppe markers and RVGK Markers.

- The mission hex for Independent Luftwaffe units must be within 60 hexes of any Luftflotte HQ. The mission hex for air units assigned to a specific Luftflotte must be within 60 hexes of their own Luftflotte HQ.

- Repls and SP must be placed in their respective map sets.

- Except as prohibited above, units may rail into the other game area, using the Rail Cap of the destination map set.

- The Soviet player may use a strategic rail network to move units from the Ready box of one RVGK box to the Ready box of another. This requires no Rail Cap; just move them from one to another. Units which move in this fashion may not be deployed in the current turn.

- The Axis player has a strategic rail network linking these cities: Minsk, Vinnitsa, Uman, Ternopol, Odessa, and Nikolaev. Up to 10 RE of units which start within 1 hex of one of these cities may be transferred to within 1 hex of another during the Reinforcement Phase. This requires no Rail Cap or fuel; just move them from one to another. Units may then move normally in the Movement Phase, but not by Rail. Capture of each of these cities reduces the 10 RE capacity by 1, and Minsk counts for two. A Panzer division costs 5 RE to move regardless of its actual RE size.

- Roll for Weather and Flight conditions normally. Treat each map set as a separate weather zone. Air missions are affected by weather in BOTH their Air Base and mission hexes.

- Front boundary markers and a Front's Command Radius extend across the map set boundaries, and Front boundary markers may be placed on the other side. Front HQs may not enter the other map set. There is no minimum distance a Front HQ on one map set needs to be from a Front HQ on the other.

- We recommend you apply 1.2 Railroads (the 10-hex automatic rail conversion distance), 1.3c Fighter Hosting and 2.3a, Special Ability A (the time limits on Kessel HQ) to both map sets.

- Evaluate victory for each game separately. It is possible for a player to win or draw one game but lose the other (as happened historically).

Rules covering the combination of *The Hero City* with these games will be forthcoming once it is completed.

Players familiar with *The Third Winter* should note these differences when playing TFB:

- 1.2 Railroads automatically convert at 10 hex range, not 20.

- 1.3a no cost for Air Base Refit and 1.3c HQ Fighter Hosting are new.

- 1.4 Army Group North/South markers are new.

- 1.8b Deep Freeze instead of Thaw and 1.8c "Ice" River condition.

- 2.3a, A) Axis Kessel HQ are removed after stated turns depending on their terrain and Axis Air Transport.

- 2.4a Axis Garrison units are new.

- 2.4e Axis Kampfgruppe units have RE capacity limits.

- Special Axis units listed in 2.4f to 2.4l, particularly note rear-area unit restrictions.

- 2.5 Axis Allies list Lithuanian and Hungarian movement restrictions.

- 3.3d Soviet Regrouping Fronts cannot be moved to within 15 (not 20) hexes of another Front. Regrouping Front defensive benefits extend to any HQ assigned to and within Front boundary (not just within the Front's Command Radius). Front minimums are smaller than in *The Third Winter*.

- 3.6 Special Truck Extenders are limited to placement 15 hexes or 22.5 Truck MP (whichever is less) from a Soviet Front and cannot "daisy chain."

- Rules 3.7 (Soviet Partisans) through 3.11 (Emergency STAVKA Reserves) are all new.

- Read the "Special Replacement Priority" on the Soviet Repl Chart notes.

4.2 Jansen Fueling Rule. A multi-unit formation ("MUF", such as a Soviet Mech corps or German Panzer division) can fuel and move in a player's Movement Phase (not the Reaction or Exploitation Phases), for the supply cost of only 1T, with the following restrictions:

- The units to be moved cannot start, move, or end next to an enemy unit of any kind (including air bases, supply dumps, transport points, etc.).

- These units can only be in Combat Mode. Road movement costs at least 1MP per hex (weather effects must be followed). A Road still functions to negate other terrain in the hex for movement purposes.

- Not all the units of the MUF must use Jansen Fueling. Any unit requiring fuel can use the Single Unit Method described in 12.5c, if desired.

> ***Development Note:*** *Steve Jansen is the leader of the Baltimore NEBO Grognards, our war gaming club. He developed this house rule during our recent play of Beyond the Rhine. Our club has been using this rule with great results since April 2016. Give it a try; I think you will find it works very well. (Highly recommended.)*

4.3 Series Optional Rules. We strongly recommend the use of *OCS 21.2* Proportional Loss, *OCS 21.9* Reactive Artillery and *OCS HR-7* Artillery Factors with The Forgotten Battles. Supply Caches (*OCS 21.10*) are not used in this game.

4.4 Stay in Trace. Neither side's units may voluntarily move out of Trace supply (i.e. to a hex where they could not receive Trace). If they become cut off due to enemy action, they are not required to move to be in Trace.

4.5 Soviet Intel. The Soviets placed great emphasis on determining the location of formation boundaries and divisions, especially Panzer Divisions. They were very effective at it. If needed as a play balance mechanism, apply these restrictions to the Axis player: MUF markers cannot be used to hold units, and all available units of a MUF must be on the map. In any hex, one of the largest sized units (division, then brigade, then regiment, then battalion) must be on top of the stack, Combat Mode taking priority.

5.0 Victory Conditions

In the campaign game, the Soviet player accrues Victory Points (VP) and the total is used to determine who wins.

- **Soviets Win** with a VP score of 6 or more.

- **Axis Win** if the VP score is 3 or less. (*Historical result: the Soviets captured Gorodok and Gomel for 2 VP, and neither side deployed emergency reinforcements.*)

- Any other result is a **Draw**.

5.0a Victory Points. Specific cities and map locations may have Victory Point values. The last side to move a combat unit through a VP hex "controls" it for victory determination. Points are awarded for achieving historical goals, and the schedule below will drive both players to match history without necessarily following its precise path. Unless otherwise noted, no point can be awarded multiple times.

- +3 VP for controlling Minsk at game end (all 4 hexes, vicinity A51.07).

- +2 VP each for controlling Vilnius (A35.22) or Vitebsk (both B18.18 and B18.19) at game end.

- +1 VP each for controlling Orsha (B18.09), Gomel (D16.15), Mogilev (B15.02), Pinsk (C31.21), Polotsk (B7.26), Borisov (A62.09), Gorodok (C41.17, not the Village in B18.23), or Bobruysk (D2.27).

- +1 VP per Axis Army HQ eliminated. (Can be awarded multiple times.)

- +2 VP if the Soviet player destroys the Army Group Center HQ unit. (Can be awarded multiple times.)

- +1 VP for the exit of a Mech, Tank or Cavalry Corps off the western map edge (must contain at least 4 RE).

- Add or subtract VP for Emergency Reinforcements or STAVKA Reserve appeals.

5.0b Alternate VP Scheme. The game's victory conditions are based on capturing specific victory locations. This reflects STAVKA's over-ambitious expectations for the campaign. Operationally, the Soviet campaign was a series of sometimes-coordinated "Offensives" by their Fronts, tasked with achieving specific goals and provided with whatever resources were felt adequate. This alternate scheme focuses attention on Front activities:

- Ignore the Soviet Supply Table. Instead, each Front HQ always receives 1 SP per turn, which can be distributed to any hex in its Command Range in any way the player sees fit. The first turn a Front is moved into Offensive Posture, 20 SP are placed at the Front HQ location (in addition to the 1 SP above), and mark one HQ and one MUF fueled for no SP cost. The Front gets no additional SP to conduct the Offensive until the fourth and

subsequent turns it is in Offensive Posture. During each of turns 4-9 of an Offensive, 5 SP are placed at the Front HQ location. This is the entirety of the Soviet supply (it approximates the amount received from conventional Supply Table rolls).

- During the Reinforcement Phase when a Front is placed in Offensive Posture, the Soviet player must secretly designate one Strategic and one Operational Objective hex for that Front's Offensive.

  o The Strategic Objective must be a City hex in the intended direction of advance for the Front. Capturing a Strategic Objective while the Front is in Offensive Posture is worth 3 VP. Gorodok (C41.17) also counts as a Strategic Objective worth 3 VP.

  o The Operational Objective must be either a Village where 3 or more rail/road/trails intersect, a hex with a rail intersection, or a "bridgehead" (hex on the far side of a Major/Minor River which has a road/trail/rail river crossing). The Operational Objective must be at least three hexes behind the Axis front lines when it is designated. Capturing the Operational Objective while the Front is in Offensive Posture is worth 1 VP.

  o Strategic and Operational Objectives may not be the same hex, nor may a hex be an Objective for more than one Front simultaneously.

  o The Soviet player is free to "game" this scheme as much as they like—conducting fewer, shorter Offensives or continuing the attack if capturing an Objective hex is just within reach is up to them. Objectives are not revealed to the Axis player until the Front changes to Regrouping Posture and any VP are then awarded.

  o Points are awarded for deployment of each special or Emergency Reinforcement pool brought on by either player.

- **Soviets Win** with a VP score of 21 or more.

- **Axis Win** if the VP score is 15 or less. (Historical result: the Soviets conducted 19

3+ turn Offensives, achieved 10 Operational Objectives and 3 Strategic Objectives in capturing Gomel, Mozyr, and Gorodok for a total of 19 points.)

- Any other result is a **Draw**.

Abbreviations

AA – Anti-Aircraft
Abn — Airborne
AG — Assault Gun or Sturmgeschütz
AGC — Army Group Center
AGN — Army Group North
AGS — Army Group South
Arm — Armor
Arty — Artillery
AT — Antitank
Aufk — Armored Reconnaissance (Aufklärung)
Bde — Brigade
Bdr — Border
Bn — Battalion
Boer — Major Boer, panzer commander
Brand — Brandenburg commando unit
Breid — Oberst Breid, 20th Pz Div
Brkdwn — Breakdown
Buck — Oberstleutnant Buck, commander of 2nd Pz Div PG Regiment
Cav — Cavalry
Co — Company
Cos — Cossack
Div — Division
Erz — Ersatz
Est — Estonian
Eugen — Unit named in honor of Prince Eugene of Savoy
FHH — Feldherrnhalle (Field Marshals' Hall) in Munich, site of the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch battle.
FJ — Fallschirmjäger (Parachute Infantry)
Fl — Flotilla
Freiss — Oberst Freiss, KG Commander
Flm — Flamethrower
Frt — Fortress
Gd — Guard
Gille — Herbert Gille, commander of 5th SS Pz Div, later IV SS Corps
Gollw — General Friedrich Gollwitzer, 53rd Corps commander
Gott — SS officer, little known about him
Grp — Group
Hein — Heinrici Defense Base

HG — Panzer Division Hermann Göring
Hung — Hungarian
Inf — Infantry
Jec — Short for Jackeln or Jeckeln, an officer from the 16th Army.
JG — Jäger (light infantry)
Katy — Katyusha rocket launcher, named after a popular wartime Soviet folk song.
KG — Kampfgruppe
Kor — Korück (Axis rear area command)
Lehr — Training elite at German military specialty schools, whose role was to experiment with and demonstrate new equipment and tactics.
Lith — Lithuanian
LW —Luftwaffe Field Unit
MC — Motorcycle
MG — Machine Gun
Mitte — Center or middle (German)
Mort — Mortar
Mot — Motorized
Mtn — Mountain
MUF — Multi-Unit Formation
Ost — Ostruppen or "eastern troops" recruited from Soviet ethnic regions or POWs.
OST/K — Ost Korps (Hungarian HQ)
Para — Parachute
PG — Panzergrenadier (Mech infantry)
PJ — Panzerjäger (antitank)
Pio — Pioneer (engineer)
Pol — Police
Pz — Panzer
Res — Reserve
Rpl — Replacement
Rgt — Regiment
RR — Railroad
RVGK — Reserve of the Supreme High Command
Sch — Oberst Gerhard Schmidthuber, 2nd Pz Div. Later 13th Pz Div commander and head of German forces in Hungary; killed during breakout attempt from Budapest.
Sec — Security
SS — Schutzstaffel
SU — Samokhodnaya Ustanovka (Self-propelled), collectively refers to Soviet SP Artillery, AT with Track MA, and AG unit types.
T — Tiger
TFB — *The Forgotten Battles* game
Tk — Tank
Todt — Nazi civil and military construction organization
Tr — Training

Ukr — Ukraine
UR — Ukreplyonny Raion (Fortified Zone)
Von Chol — Dietrich Von Choltitz, 11th Panzer Division commander. Later commander of Paris who surrendered the city rather than follow Hitler's order to destroy it.
Von Sauc — Dietrich von Saucken, 4th Pz Div commander, later 2nd Army commander.
Werfer — Nebelwerfer rocket launcher
Wesc — Panzer Army staff officer named Wesch.
AGW — Army Group Weapons

Designer Notes

By Antony Birkett

Firstly, my sincere thanks for your purchase of this game. As a designer you hope your recreation of a historical campaign will resonate with gamers. However, the truth is never plainer than if those said gamers part with their hard-earned money to buy your game. So, thank you.

This game was a challenge and one I thought long and hard about. As *The Third Winter* was nearing conclusion, I thought deeply about the Army Group Centre battles in this period. Known by both sides as The Forgotten Battles, it covered a series of bloody attacks and offensives in poor terrain. Sources cover the period in less detail than in the Ukraine or the Baltics. One key reason is that, as with some of the 1942 Red Army failures, there were corresponding cover ups. As recently as 20 years ago, without the release of a great deal of new information, this game may have been impossible to complete. An example is the German LAGE OST maps (daily situation maps created by the Operations Branch of the OKH) in 100 Megabyte or above for enlargement and review.

Thankfully David Glantz, who has spent his life studying the Eastern Front, had recently completed his excellent volume titled *The Battle for Belorussia: The Red Army's Forgotten Campaign of October 1943 - April 1944*. This provided the impetus and anchor for my design. I was fortunate to spend a day with the great man who had many sources and first-hand accounts to answer my design challenges. He also signed one of my proof maps. This game is dedicated to him.

The Forgotten Battles provides the second major game module in my Ostfront Volume I series. *Crimea* is also available as a module to support this series with Guy Wilde's excellent 1941-42 campaign included. Once Ostfront Volume 1 is completed, gamers will be able to explore the entirety of the eastern front during the critical transitory period of September 1943-April 1944. Both armies are evolving in this period. Both have strengths and limitations represented in the games as campaign challenges. Paramount in *The Forgotten Battles* is combined arms in the engagements, with small units often the deciding factor. Local knowledge and the large partisan forces active in this period were also key. Partisans enter my series of games with an impact, but we avoided creating a game within a game. Players should review these rules closely. Partisans can be key in Russian attacks. If not dealt with by the Axis player, with the correct units, they are more than a nuisance. Also, the Penal Battalions used to achieve bloody breakthroughs enter the game series. Plan their use wisely.

Soviet Cavalry Corps were expanded in this period, especially here in the Western Front sector. These needed expanded rules to cover their use of scouting and light tanks in varying terrain. These new rules will form the core of the Cavalry-Mechanized Group rules now being playtested in the 1944-45 games. Glantz stated these formations were the most feared by the German Army, so start to use them wisely.

I am also pleased to have at last reviewed and come up with some answers to the UR Brigades. Often seen as "cannon fodder" or just poor units, this was not the case. I have thought long and hard about how best to represent them. Key to defensive positions in regrouping Fronts, they were heavily reinforced to free up units and to hold the line. They come with new rules and new counters which I hope demonstrate their historical effect.

Finally with Chip's help, the Frontal boundary rules have been tightened and counters produced that I believe help clarify this area greatly. Many gamers provided input on this area also, so thank you.

For the Axis player, there are a variety of new weapons from "Hornisse" to Maultiers and more. The fragmented operations in the Army Group Centre sector meant I also had to review the Alert Unit structure. Axis Players will see a multiplicity of these to help better represent the small unit actions and the fighting defense of the Wehrmacht. The Luftwaffe can also still strike back in limited flight and over a critical battle if grouped. It still possesses the only air units which can Hip Shoot. This can give your beleaguered panzers and Tigers the support and edge they need.

This is a big game and one that requires focus and planning. Poorly planned and resourced offensives will be punished. Equally, shallow defenses, poorly placed artillery and no reserves will lead to collapsing lines. Without the large-scale armored formations in other games, I am proud that *The Forgotten Battles* demonstrates areas of the core OCS rules that sometimes get overlooked.

As to strategy, the Red Army must attempt to force the flanks early on. Can you break through near Vitebsk with the Guards Armies of the 1st Baltic Front? Can you unhinge and roll up 2nd Army in the Prypet Marshes with 1st Belorussian Front? Time and the weather are against you. There must also be continued pressure down the Rollbahn from Smolensk to Minsk to prevent the redeployment of German reserves. Use your air force widely and in a focused way. You have air superiority where you need it and the grouping of independent air regiments to support an offensive is key. As the game progresses, the exhaustion of the Red Army, and its need to rebuild units for the summer 1944 offensive, weakens Soviet hitting power. At some point, defensive hog building may be needed to allow the Red Army to keep attacking in other sectors.

For the Axis player, defensive lines in good terrain must be held and the flanks kept secure. At the start this is a challenge, as most of Army Group Centre's armor finds itself scattered in swamp terrain in the south. If a line and reserve can be established, there are good units, excellent communication lines

and a useful air force to counterattack in limited flight and bad weather. The longer the game lasts the more the Axis player will find himself able to fight the Red Army to a standstill. One final tip—ensure you run an aggressive anti-partisan campaign during the game.

Now to thank a number of people. I can only capture a few. The rest of the stalwarts, great friends and OCS game and history counsellors are listed in the contributors at the front of the rule book. Firstly, Chip Saltsman. My developer and great friend. Chip and I, as I have as mentioned before, have an author and editor game completion relationship. It is so much more though. He is always available, and while we may often agree to differ, we always move forward in a constructive way. This is one of the core reasons you see such a quality product at the end. Marcus "Hog" Randall, my great friend of 40 years is always checking, catching missed points and tweaking supply. He always has the first complete test game on the table. I must thank the late Dean Essig and Hans Kishel for their map support. Dean also provided the simple blunt truth in his simple blunt manner at times, cutting through to the core of a question. As my Adobe Illustrator skills grow, I hope I can now take over some of the workload from these two great friends. Jeff Leach for his continued research on German Artillery. He and I may not always agree but his input is always appreciated and utilized widely.

Last but not least, my dear wife Helen, who still sees this as a strange hobby but supports me all the time. She knows how important it is to me, so only politely reminds to come in from my design studio for dinner.

Dean Essig

I had known Dean was ill for many months. He had taken me into his confidence and shared a great deal of his illness with me. Yet it remained a huge shock, how quickly he passed at the end. No one game can be dedicated to this giant of the hobby and my personal friend. Rather all my design output for the OST Front series of games owes so much to him. He kept me going with his directness, openness and support through long days. He had only words of encouragement when others disagreed with

an idea. As I have mentioned elsewhere, I will so miss our map talks and design principle chats, between the UK and Homer. Rest in peace, Dean, the work goes on.

Developer Notes

By Chip Saltsman

This is the third game Tony Birkett and I have collaborated on regarding the 1943-44 German-Soviet war. *The Forgotten Battles* is a "northern cousin" to *The Third Winter*, and we found we could easily adapt *TTW*'s concepts to this theatre. Glantz's book *Battle for Belorussia* was the narrative source for the campaign combined with Tony's detailed review of Tessin, Lage Ost maps and a wide range of unit histories for detailed information.

Early in development, we were privileged to spend a morning meeting with David Glantz himself to confirm and refine our approach. He was a fountain of information: Did Soviet Fronts shift boundaries periodically? Yes, weekly, let me show you some sample orders from the archives in Russia. What was the loss rate for Soviet tanks? 80% in the first few weeks of an offensive, with mechanical breakdowns and German anti-tank guns the main culprits. Front force compositions changed constantly. We gained a lot of ideas for *Forgotten Battles* from these conversations. One example was the amount of intel the Soviets were able to compile about German units and formations. They often planned assaults to strike at Corps or Army boundaries. Axis mobile divisions were regarded as dangerous opponents and their movements were tracked carefully. Soviet operations were always accompanied by extensive Maskirovka.

The campaign unfolded as a series of Front offensives by commanders who were often jealous or competitive with one another. STAVKA forced them to cooperate and launched several offensives with Fronts operating together. Typically, a Front was given a strategic and operational objective(s), not always realistic, and then prepared a plan with requested reinforcements and supplies. Sometimes the plan was essentially "push

forward until you run out of tanks!" New objectives might be assigned as an offensive evolved. Should a Front objective be reached, they might be tasked with a "Continuation Offensive" ("Continue to press until you run out of SP!").

When not conducting an offensive, a Front would deploy artillery/machine-gun battalions and set up Field Fortified Regions (UR Brigades). These were not engaged by the Germans, particularly in 1944-45, as they had too many problems elsewhere. These FFR's started in 1943 and played a significant role in enabling the Soviets to concentrate their forces in other sectors (they would move nearly all the divisions to other Fronts). Glantz devotes a chapter to this in *Colossus Reborn*. His work led us to the evolution in the way UR Brigades work as well as the Regrouping Front Posture rules.

Speaking of Fronts, the 2nd Belorussian Front appears during the entirety of *Forgotten Battles*, when in reality it was formed in February 1944. Rokossovsky's Belorussian Front covered an increasingly large territory as it advanced and STAVKA recognized this by splitting it into two entities during the campaign. We did so at game start to better reflect the tempo of the campaign and the way the Belorussian Front operated.

Axis players will readily note how a fortified defense combined with local counterattacks works well with the geography of Belorussia. The Germans conducted counterattacks whenever possible, but much of the campaign was a matter of "hanging on by their fingernails." Rokossovsky's advance unhinged the southern border, and a similar disaster elsewhere is entirely possible.

There are a variety of units in the Axis OOA which reflect the breakdown of their standard infantry division. The Soviets will find Alert units ubiquitous—when German commanders yelled for help, they weren't certain what might show up! Axis infantry commanders told to launch a counterattack nearly always demanded some kind of AFV support. This is why there are so many Stug battalions, and frequently just a few assault guns could turn the tide in a hex.

Another headache for the Germans is the Partisan battle. They will need to actively confront these units whenever possible, but

it won't be easy. Partisan activity was "low intensity" compared to normal OCS combat but had a significant role in this campaign. We wanted to show activity undertaken by Partisan brigades in this phase of the war. The Partisan Track markers show the local knowledge and close cooperation with the Red Army. At times, the Axis were forced to devote 10% of their manpower in Russia to defending against Partisans.

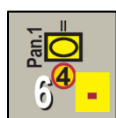Here are some of the interesting units to be found in *Forgotten Battles*:

LVF – The Legion of French Volunteers Against Bolshevism (Légion des volontaires français contre le bolchévisme) was a unit of the Wehrmacht recruited from French collaborationist movements for the German invasion of the Soviet Union in July 1941. Officially designated the 638th Infantry Regiment, it comprised a coalition of far-right political factions which supported Nazi ideology and collaborated with Nazi Germany. The Vichy regime maintained its neutrality, but tolerated the LVF and gave it some endorsement.

**Static Panther battalions** are the early Panther models phased out after Kursk and emplaced to bolster defenses. Their maintenance issues made them best suited for such a role.

655 Panzer AT Bn – Initially equipped with Hornisse ("Hornet") vehicles, later a mix of Nashorns ("Rhinoceros") and Panthers. Later in the war the unit was transferred to the Western Front and equipped with Jagdpanthers.
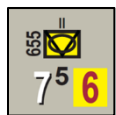
519 AT Bn (7)-5-6 – A Nashorn unit, with an 88mm PAK 43 mounted on a Pz IV chassis, which made a powerful, mobile anti-tank gun.
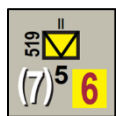
216 Sturm Panzer Co – Brummbär or Sturmpanzer 43. Pz IV chassis which mounted a 15 cm howitzer in an armored casemate. Intended for close infantry support in built-up areas.

The 4-3-6 Track MA yellow-box units represent a mix of Marder III and Stug units that have AT guns.

42/AGC is equipped with ten-tube 15 cm (5.9 in) Nebelwerfer launchers mounted on a lightly armored Sd.Kfz. 4 "Maultier" half-track chassis. Unlike other Werfer units, it packs a punch in Move Mode, making it very useful in Reserve for breakthroughs.

The **88/17 Nightfighter** was a small unit of radar-equipped Ju.88 and Do.17 aircraft which operated at night. They were sometimes pressed into daytime service.

Soviet Tank Battalions – The 4-3-6 are infantry-support T-34s, generally the 1942/43 variants. The 3-2-5 unit represents Lend-Lease Matilda tanks. A third of all Matilda production was sent to Russia.

Soviet Penal battalions – "*Shtrafbats*" in Russian. Penal battalion service in infantry roles was the most common use of *shtrafniki* ("punishees," usually deserters, designated cowards or labor camp inmates) and viewed by many Soviet prisoners as tantamount to a death sentence. Over 400,000 soldiers were reportedly sent to these units. Few of them survived the war.

1st Polish Army – Polish communists sought to create a new army, under communist control, out of the many ethnic Poles that remained in the Soviet Union. By 1944 it was a force of 200,000 known as the Polish People's Army (Ludowe Wojsko Polskie, LWP) but colloquially known as the Berling Army after its first commander, Zygmunt Berling. This force played a substantive role in the 1944-45 battles and its components became a part of the newly-created Polish People's Republic.

The Ghost of the 9th Tank Corps – The two Brigade Groups available early in *Forgotten Battles* are the remainder of the 9th Tank Corps, sent to Ukraine. A significant armor component remained for a few weeks since it was heavily engaged in offensive actions, while the Corps was reconstituted with new equipment.

Units that seem to be in two places at once – Alert gamers will spot several units which seem to exist in two games at the same time. Examples are the 1 Ski Bde, which arrives as a reinforcement in *Third Winter* 1 Nov 43 and *Forgotten Battles* 1 Jan 44, and the Soviet 108th Rifle Division, present in both *Third Winter* and *Forgotten Battles* for several months. What's going on? Partly this is due to source confusion—the Ski Brigade is listed in both locations. Another challenge is the way that STAVKA constantly shifted units around, far more often than is depicted in a player's Order of Arrival. When we create rules for a linked set of games, we plan to have a Master OOA for each side and a mechanism for commanders to make these decisions for themselves. The important point is that the force structures are consistent with history.

AGN/AGS Marker Movement – These markers help with the "edge of the world" problem so that historical off-map activity affects decisions in the game. If you compare the AGS marker locations with the actual locations of units in *Third Winter*, it will seem as if the marker is far behind the movement of the front. This is because the marker really represents two things: where the Axis forces were and the Soviet logistics capability to move and supply units. The AGC-AGS connection had ruptured by January 1944, but the Soviets were also stretched to the point they couldn't take full advantage of the situation.

Kessel HQ time limits – We did considerable research on formations surrounded during the war, as *Third Winter's* Kessel HQs enable a force to hold out indefinitely. The Breakout Rule (*OCS 12.8e*) holds up very well: units that broke out of encirclement immediately often succeeded. Axis forces surrounded in the field could last

up to several OCS turns but were usually destroyed in the process. Kessels defending a City or an Air Base could hold out much longer, but at severe cost to Axis transport capability. Formations in ports (Kurland, Königsberg, the Channel ports) remained for months. Soviet practice was to smother encircled units with artillery and attack them relentlessly until the pocket was destroyed.

The map today – The map portrays what is present-day Belarus and parts of the surrounding countries. We used LAGE OST maps and 1936 place names for this game, but many have changed since the war. For example, Vitebsk is now Viciebsk. The locals call themselves Belarusians. Tilsit (A8.35) is now Sovetsk in the Russian Kaliningrad province, sandwiched between Poland and Lithuania. Intersburg (A5.30) is now Chernyakhovsk. The Kaliningrad Oblast extends east to Vilkavilkis (A15.27). The "Sulwaki Gap" of present-day geopolitics is located between A12.24 and A17.18.

Historical Commentary

By Chip Saltsman

The Forgotten Battles (TFB) covers the desperate fighting from late September 1943 through April 1944 in the Army Group Center portion of the Russian front. This war of attrition around cities and rugged terrain in the Belorussian region of the former Soviet Union has mostly been, well, forgotten. Historian David Glantz was forced to do in-depth detective work to uncover details of the fighting sufficient for his book, *Battle for Belorussia* (2016, University Press of Kansas) which is the only comprehensive account of the campaign.

The stage was set by the Soviet counteroffensive following the failed German assault at Kursk. Operation Kutuzov initially shoved back the Axis forces from Orel to near Bryansk (a few hexes onto the *Forgotten Battles* maps). STAVKA continued pressing forward through August and September, forcing the Germans to commit units to slow the Soviet advance—units sorely needed to defend the Dnepr. As *Forgotten Battles* begins, Soviet forces have just recaptured Smolensk and Roslavl and are closing in on the cities of Vitebsk, Orsha, Mogilev and Gomel.

The next seven months saw a succession of Soviet offensives with the potential to break open the front. They were particularly successful in the southern part of the map, where Rokossovsky's Belorussian Front operated in parallel with Vatutin's 1st Ukrainian Front (on the *Third Winter* map). Other parts of the line resisted the Soviet tide, at the cost of soldiers the Axis could not afford to lose and an increasing reliance on fortifications instead of maneuver. The Soviets army possessed lavish artillery but had not yet perfected their deep strike offensive power, although the Cavalry-Mechanized formations delivered excellent results. Each Soviet Front's efforts mirrored the personality of its commander.

Soviet Army

Rokossovsky

1st Belorussian Front (Central Front until 20 Oct 43, then Belorussian Front until 17 Feb 44), commanded by Konstantin Rokossovsky. Rokossovsky was Polish, having been born in Warsaw, and fought with great distinction during the Russian Civil War. In 1937 he fell victim to the Great Purge, during which he was branded a traitor, imprisoned, and tortured. After Soviet failures in the Winter War of 1939-1940, Rokossovsky was taken out of prison and reinstated due to an urgent need for experienced officers. He was instrumental in

many of the Soviet successes during the war: the defense of Moscow, and the counterattacks at Stalingrad and Kursk. Subsequently, Rokossovsky planned and led part of Operation Bagration for which he was made a Marshal of the Soviet Union. He was an inspiring, confident, and innovative leader and very popular with his troops.
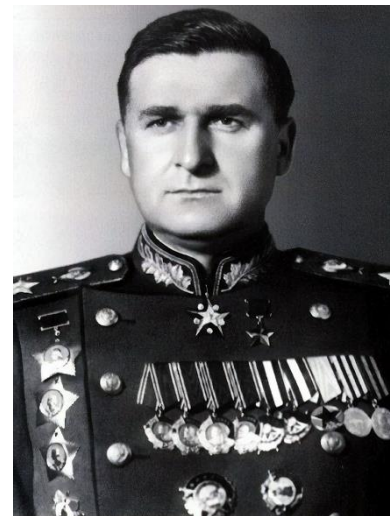
Sokolovsky

Western Front, led by Vasily Danilovich Sokolovsky. He was Belorussian, having been born at Grodno (hex A18.12). Much of Sokolovsky's experience was in staff roles and he became a protégé of Georgy Zhukov. Zhukov eventually placed him in command of the Western Front during the battle of Kursk, Operation Kutuzov, and the *Forgotten Battles* time period. His command style was the opposite of Rokossovsky, and most of his offensive plans were unimaginative frontal attacks. These led to severe casualties for minimal gains, and he failed to capture his primary objectives of Vitebsk and Orsha. Glantz assesses him this way (in his book *Battle of Kursk*): "Sokolovsky's reputation as a superb organizer must be tempered by his role in the Mars defeat of November-December 1942 and by his subsequent removal from Front command in April 1944 for his poor performance and the heavy losses incurred by his Front in operations in eastern Belorussia. The survival of Sokolovsky's reputation during the war and his prominence in the postwar years (as Chief of the General Staff, Minister of Defense, and author of 'Military Strategy') was due, in part, to his association with Zhukov."

Bagramyan

1st Baltic Front, named Kalinin Front until 12 Oct 43. Andrey Yeremenko was the commander until 19 Nov 43. Yeremenko had done very well during the initial Barbarossa battles in front of Smolensk and Moscow, then was the Front commander at Stalingrad. He was a strong commander who was shuttled to different locations, commanding five different Fronts and an independent Army over the course of the war. His successor was Ivan Bagramyan. Bagramyan was an Armenian whose experience in military planning as a chief of staff allowed him to distinguish himself early during the Soviet counter-offensives. He was given his first command of a unit in 1942, and in November 1943 received his most prestigious command as the commander of the 1st Baltic Front. Subsequent to the *Forgotten Battles* operations, he led this Front in the offensives which pushed German forces out of the Baltic republics, then captured Memel and Königsberg. Bagramyan continues to hold esteemed status among Armenians today. In 1960, then-Marshal Bagramyan was in charge of Operation Anadyr, the transportation of nuclear missiles to Cuba which precipitated the Cuban Missile Crisis.

2nd Belorussian Front was formed 17 Feb 44 to fill the gap which grew between 1st Belorussian and 1st Ukrainian Fronts. Its role was to capture Kovel (C14.12). The 2nd Belorussian Front was commanded by Pavel Kurochkin, former chief-of-staff of the 1st Ukrainian Front under Konev (where he planned the Korsun offensive). Stalin was disappointed in this Front's failure to capture Kovel and it was disbanded in early April 1944. Kurochkin commanded 60th Army for the remainder of the war. Kovel was

finally captured during Bagration in July 1944.

Kurochin in 1939

Very little attention is given to the Soviet offensives against Army Groups Center and North during late 1943/early 1944, as it was overshadowed by the dramatic actions in Ukraine. Ziemke describes the battles around Vitebsk and the Belorussian Front's activities in Stalingrad to Berlin, but Erickson has virtually no mention. Yet it is clear from Glantz's research that STAVKA devoted immense amounts of ammunition and manpower to these areas, hoping for big results (or at least to avoid a stalemate). The offensives carried out by 1st Belorussian and 1st Baltic Fronts in November were both aimed at Minsk and intended as a double envelopment of Army Group Center. The German lines sagged but held in the north but were pushed back significantly west of Gomel.

A glance at the game map shows one of the challenges faced by increasingly ambitious Soviet commanders. West of the Dnepr River is Swamp, Woods, and Hills terrain with few Open hexes. "Tank country" it isn't, and neither side deployed many of their armored formations in this region. The geography supported the increasing Axis reliance on fortifications, who shifted reserves and made local counterattacks as their primary tactics. The region was also ideal for partisan activity, which seriously hampered Axis forces and triggered brutal reprisals. Although only a few panzer divisions are present, local commanders had come to rely on Stug units as the key element of any counterattack, and a few assault guns

often had an outsized influence on the success of a particular battle.

German Army

Army Group Center - Günther von Kluge had commanded AGC for nearly two years. As Axis resistance stiffened around the Dnepr in late October 43, he was badly injured in an auto accident and only returned to duty as OB West in July 1944. Kluge supported the Hitler bomb plot and committed suicide in August 1944 when he was summoned to Berlin to explain himself.

Kluge was succeeded by Ernst Busch. Busch had performed capably in Corps and Army command but much of this was on static fronts. He proved wanting at the Army Group level, showing little independence in exercising his command and often deferring to Hitler's orders without protest. Busch was easily browbeaten by Hitler into ordering units to stand fast when they needed to retreat or to send his reserves out of theatre. After the catastrophe of Operation Bagration, Hitler fired him.

Reinhardt

3rd Panzer Army - Georg-Hans Reinhardt commanded this Army for nearly three years, from Operation Typhoon in 1941 until it was shattered during Operation Bagration. Having not conducted significant offensive operations since early 1942, this was a "panzer" army in name only. Reinhardt was a capable commander, but he was operating in the most active partisan area on the entire Russian Front. His troops took brutal

measures in conducting "rear-security operations" that involved killing the population of entire villages. After the war, he was found guilty of war crimes and imprisoned until 1952.

Heinrici

4th Army - Sokolovsky's unimaginative leadership of Western Front made little headway against the German 4th Army, but he was also facing the premier defensive specialist of the Wehrmacht. Gotthard Heinrici was thoroughly familiar with the command, having led the 4th Army for 18 months. He was a genius admired by his peers, although little-known today because he was, in the words of one historian, "as charismatic as a 20-pound sack of fertilizer." He was revered by his officers and men who nicknamed him Unswer Giftzwerg (literally "our poison dwarf" but meaning "our tough little bastard") in recognition of his character and lack of physical stature.

9th Army - Another excellent practitioner of defensive warfare was the 9th Army's commander, Walter Model. Model had led the 9th Army through the brutal defensive battles at Rzhev and then the failed northern pincer at Kursk. Once the Soviet advance to the Dnepr had been halted, Model was replaced by Josef Harpe. Harpe had previously led the 41st Panzer Corps and was perfectly capable as an Army commander. However, he is primarily remembered for his brutality. Combating partisan activity, Harpe

set up the makeshift Ozarichi death camp where thousands were murdered (approximately hex C62.18). It has been called "one of the worst crimes the Wehrmacht ever committed against civilians." He somehow managed to escape prosecution after the war.

Weiss

2nd Army - Led by Walter Weiss for over two years, until March 1945. Weiss was born on the map (Tilsit, hex A8.35), but information about him beyond a list of commands and honors is difficult to find. He ended the war in command of the remnants of Army Group North. 2nd Army had the difficult challenge of facing off against the aggressive Rokossovsky, where it became ever more stretched out defending the southern portion of the Prypet Marsh and maintaining a tenuous contact with Army Group South.

Overview of Offensives

The campaign unfolded as a series of offensives conducted by the different fronts, much as the Soviet player operates in the game. Not all the "offensives" conducted by the Soviets historically exactly match the Front Posture system in the game (clearly, the Soviets didn't know how to play *OCS*), but it models the activity well. Below is a list of the principal offensive operations (summarized from Glantz's book).

Any of these offensives had the potential to breakthrough and wreak havoc on Army Group Center's defenses. A few of them did. The ones that had the most success were:

Model

1st Baltic Front north of Vitebsk. Yeremenko and then Bagramyan conducted a series of offensives that captured Nevel (B19.30) and pushed past Vitebsk to the north. Then in November they punched through the seam with Army Group North (the boundary ran from roughly B21.29 back to B1.34) and got into the Open terrain west of Gorodok (B18.23). The Soviets carefully identified Axis formation boundaries and frequently attacked at these points. Finally, in December the 1st Baltic unleashed an assault that surrounded and destroyed a German Corps and nearly enveloped Vitebsk. Bagramyan tried another attack in conjunction with Sokolovsky's Western Front in February that pushed the Germans to the breaking point, but ultimately their lines held.

Rokossovsky's Belorussian Front (1st Belo) generated a sustained series of offensives that advanced across the southern play area to capture Rovno (C25.01) and Lutsk (C17.05) on 2 Feb 44-at the same time the Korsun Pocket battle was in full swing 46 hexes to the southeast. The linkage between Army Group South and Center started to disintegrate. Soviet cavalry was approaching

Forgotten Battles Front Offensive Summary 1

Start Date	Offensive	Objective	Notes ("Glantz" flags specific pages in his book)
Turn 1 26 Sep 43	**1st Belo: Gomel-Rechitsa offensive**, 30 Sept-30 Oct 1943 (Chernobyl'-Radomysl' offensive, 1-4 Oct 1943 & German Chernobyl' and Gornostaipol' counterstrokes, 3-8 Oct 1943)	Strategic: Minsk, Bobruysk (D1.28). Operational: Loyev (D12.09), Dnepr River bridgehead.	Operational success, 3-8 hex advance. Crossed the Sozh/Dnepr at Loyev, advanced on Gomel (D16.15) from the south. Tail end of the "Bryansk Front" offensive 13 Aug-3 Oct 1943. Bryansk forces handed to Belorussian Front by 10 Oct 1943. Some attacks through 31 Oct 43. Glantz 90-124, 4 turn duration.
Turn 3 1 Oct 43	**1st Baltic: Vitebsk (and Nevel) offensives**, 3-12 Oct 1943.	Strategic: Vitebsk (B18.19). Operational: Nevel (B19.30).	Operational success, 4 hex advance. Aimed at Vitebsk, captured just 1-2 hexes towards it, no more. Supporting attack captured Nevel but main effort "failed badly." Glantz 31-50, 3 turn duration.
Turn 3 1 Oct 43	**Western: Orsha offensive**, 3-26 Oct 1943	Strategic: Orsha (B18.09). Operational: Krasnoye (B23.11).	Operational success, 4 hex advance. Crossed the Berezina river, pushed until the Germans firmed up their defenses before Orsha. Huge losses to the Soviet formations. Glantz 60-89, 7 turn duration.
Turn 8 19 Oct 43	**1st Baltic: Vitebsk (Riga), Idritsa and Pskov offensives**, 18-30 Oct 1943	Reach specific line (p. 59), gain bridgehead at Nevel (B19.30).	Operational success (Nevel bridgehead), several hex advance. With the Baltic and Northwest Front, forced a bridgehead that had later potential. Glantz 50-59, 4 turn duration.
Turn 12 1 Nov 43	**1st Baltic & 2nd Baltic: Polotsk-Vitebsk offensive**, 2-21 Nov 1943 (2nd Baltic off-map to north)	Strategic: Vitebsk. Operational: Cut rail line, Gorodok (B18.23).	Operational success, 5-6 hex advance. Significant breakthrough north of Nevel, narrow shoulders, right at the AGN/AGC boundary. Both Fronts went through hole created, with their boundary mid-breakthrough. Joint offensive. Glantz 129-144 (1st Baltic), 145-155 (2nd Baltic).
Turn 15 12 Nov 43	**1st Belo: Gomel-Rechitsa offensive**, 10-30 Nov 1943 & **Novyi-Bykhov-Propoisk offensive**, 22-30 Nov 1943	Strategic: Gomel. Operational: Rechitsa (D10.15).	Strategic success (Gomel captured, Rechitsa bridgehead), 16 hex advance. Third attempt to break out of Loyev bridgehead. Glantz 172-208, 6 turn duration.
Turn 16 15 Nov 43	**Western: Orsha offensive**, 14 Nov - 5 Dec 1943	Strategic: Orsha. Operational: Orshitsa River n. of Orsha bridgehead.	Failure, 1-2 hex advance. Stavka gave up on frontal assaults against Orsha after this, shifted efforts towards Vitebsk. Glantz 156-171, 6 turn duration.
Turn 23 8 Dec 43	**1st Belo: Kalinkovichi (Bobruysk) offensive**, 8-11 Dec 1943 & German Kalinkovichi counterstroke, 20-27 Dec 1943	Strategic: Bobruysk. Operational Kalinkovichi (C61.14).	Made immediate progress (4-5 hexes), then was hit by German Nikolaus counterattack and driven back, so no objectives reached. Axis halted counteroffensive to send units to Ukraine. Glantz 241-261, "One-turn offensive."
Turn 24 12 Dec 43	**1st Baltic: Vitebsk (Gorodok) offensive**, 13-23 Dec 1943	Strategic: Vitebsk. Operational: Gorodok (B18.23).	Operational success (Gorodok), 4 hex advance. Surrounded and destroyed Axis Corps, got close to Vitebsk. Supporting attack east of Vitebsk advanced about 2 hexes. Glantz 209-234, 4 turn duration.
Turn 25 15 Dec 43	**2nd Baltic: Idritsa-Opochka offensive (Novosokol'niki pursuit)**, 16-25 Dec & 30 Dec-15 Jan 1944	Operational: Idritsa (village two hexes north of B11.35).	Operational success (captured Idritsa), 4 hex advance. This doesn't "count" as it was off-map to the north, reflected in AGN marker movement. Small Soviet attack, then Axis pulled back 29 Dec and Soviets just followed. After this, 2nd Baltic was reoriented to support Jan 44 Leningrad offensive. Glantz 235-240 (attack), 304-306 (pursuit), 3 turn duration.
Turn 28 26 Dec 43	**1st Baltic & Western jointly: Vitebsk offensive**, 23 Dec-6 Jan 1944	Strategic: Vitebsk (surround and capture).	Pushed a few hexes, desperate fighting, no success. 1st Baltic continued right after Vitebsk (Gorodok) offensive. Glantz 279-303, 9 turn duration.
Turn 32 8 Jan 44	**1st Baltic & Western jointly: Vitebsk-Bogushevsk offensive (Continuation offensive)**, 8-26 Jan 1944	Strategic: Vitebsk. Operational: Bogushevsk (B17.15).	Much pain, no gain (1 hex). Did cut the Vitebsk/Orsha road. Glantz 307-331, 5 turn duration.

Forgotten Battles Front Offensive Summary 2

Start Date	Offensive	Objective	Notes ("Glantz" flags specific pages in his book)
Turn 32 8 Jan 44	**1st Belo: Kalinkovichi-Mozyr' offensive**, 6-14 Jan 1944	Strategic: Mazyr (C60.12). Operational: Kalinkovichi, bridgehead at Klinsk (C59.15).	Strategic success (Mazyr), Operational success (bridgehead), 7 hex advance, due to good generalship by Rokossovsky, then advanced westward along rail line. Opened up dangerous hole for Axis to deal with. Glantz 417-452, 3 turn duration.
Turn 34 15 Jan 44	**1st Belo: Ozarichi-Ptich' offensive (concurrent)**, 14-30 Jan 1944	Strategic: Bobruysk. Operational: Bridgehead across Ptich River at C56.15, C57.20 or C57.21.	Same offensive, redirected after capture of Mazyr. No objective reached, 2-3 hex advance. Pushed Axis several hexes west to behind the Ptich River. Slow and sloggy, but they got there. Simultaneously readying forces for Bobruysk (Marmovichi-Mormal') offensive. Rokossovsky got rare reputation as an "unbloody commander" (p. 478). Glantz 453-479, 5 turn duration.
Turn 39 1 Feb 44	**1st Belo: Parichi-Bobruysk (Marmovichi-Dubrova) offensive**, 16 Jan-6 Feb 1944	Strategic: Bobruysk. Operational: Parichi (hex D2.22).	Same offensive, different group pushing towards Bobruysk. Didn't achieve objectives, 3 hex advance. As 2nd & 7th Cav Corps pushed west along south bank of Berezina River, STAVKA created 2nd Belorussian Front to operate towards Kovel (C14.12). It took southern Belorussian Front's units and northern 1st Ukrainian Front's units. Glantz 480-505, 6 turn duration.
Turn 40 5 Feb 44	**1st Baltic & Western: Vitebsk offensive**, 3-16 Feb 1944	Strategic: Vitebsk.	Almost successful, huge cost in lives, just 1 hex advance. Glantz: "The forces Stavka allocated to this task should have been more than sufficient to achieve its objectives." (p.339). Prepared defenses and cold/snowy weather were problems, but the Axis was pushed to near-breaking point. After 16 Feb, some of 1st Baltic's Armies were moved north off-map to reinforce better opportunities there. Glantz 332-361, 4 turn duration.
Turn 45 22 Feb 44	**1st Belo: Rogachev-Zhlobin & Mormal'-Parichi offensives**, 21-29 Feb 1944	Strategic: Bobruysk. Operational: Rogachev (D9.25), cross Dnepr, obtain Drut bridgehead.	Operational success (captured Rogachev, gained bridgehead over Drut). 1st Belorussian advanced about 2 hexes towards Mormal (hex D7.22). Afterwards, 1st Belorussian stood down to prepare for Bagration. Glantz 506-525, 3 turn duration.
Turn 45 22 Feb 44	**Western: Babinovichi offensive**, 22-25 Feb 1944	Push south of Vitebsk.	One-turn offensive. Attacked a few hexes around B20.14. No gains. Glantz 362-368.
Turn 47 1 Mar 44	**1st Baltic & 2nd Baltic: Opochka and Sebezh offensives**, 1-8 Mar 1944, 10-26 Mar 1944. Resumed 7-18 Apr 1944.	Strategic: Opochka (THC D13.09). Operational: Sebezh (THC D7.03).	These offensives are on the map set for upcoming game The Hero City (THC), included as it is referenced in Glantz p. 272. Opochka is a Major City at THC D13.09. Sebezh is a Village at THC D7.03.
Turn 47 1 Mar 44	**Western: Vitebsk offensive**, 29 Feb - 5 Mar 1944	Strategic: Vitebsk. Operational: cut rail line in hex B17.17.	Fail, a bloody nothing. Sokolovsky's shortcomings were getting more apparent, and his unimaginative planning and lack of prior results meant Stavka gave him minimal support. The assault went nowhere. Glantz 368-380, 3 turn duration.
Turn 48 5 Mar 44	**Western: Orsha offensive**, 5-9 Mar 1944	Strategic: Orsha. Operational: ??	Same as 29 Feb-5 Mar offensive in game terms. This was straight at Orsha along the Smolensk-Orsha highway, and gained at most 1 km. Glantz 381-387, 2 turn duration.
Turn 51 15 Mar 44	**2nd Belo: Kovel offensive**, 15 Mar – 5 Apr 1944	Strategic: Gorodok (C41.17). Operational: Kovel (C14.12).	Gorodok was captured 25 Mar 1944, but the effort to capture Kovel and drive a wedge between AGC and AGS was blocked by the Axis shifting units north from Ukraine. Stalin regarded Kurochkin's leadership of 2nd Belorussian Front as a failure and returned him to commanding 60th Army.

Forgotten Battles Front Offensive Summary 3

Start Date	Offensive	Objective	Notes ("Glantz" flags specific pages in his book)
Turn 53 22 Mar 44	**Western: Bogushevsk offensive**, 21-29 Mar 1944	Operational: Bogushevsk (B17.15), or populated points in its direction.	Offensive went nowhere, continuation of Vitebsk offensive. Sokolovsky had suffered over 50% of his Front's 1 Jan 44 strength in casualties by the end of March. Stalin relieved Sokolovsky within two weeks of the end of this offensive. Glantz 387-401, 3 turn duration.

the key rail nexus of Kovel (C14.12). Army Group South commander Erich von Manstein was forced to send first an infantry corps and then the 48th Panzer Corps to the area to stabilize the situation, units he could scarcely afford to divert. The front lines began to stabilize at this furthest extension of Rokossovsky's advance. Throughout, Rokossovsky demonstrated flexibility and earned a reputation among his soldiers as an "unbloody commander," a general who was careful with the lives of his troops.

Sokolovsky's Western Front was a disappointment throughout the campaign. Even his one operational success in the October 43 Orsha offensive came with huge losses. After being relieved of command, he returned to a staff planning role under Zhukov's wing and eventually rose to become Minister of Defense (1952-1960).

Glantz's overview of the fighting is that: "This campaign, which involved more than five months of bitter and costly fighting and cost the Red Army in excess of 700,000 casualties (including 150,000 dead), ended in late March 1944 with much of Belorussia still in German hands. Because this five-month campaign failed to achieve its objectives and also resulted in the relief of one of the three participating Red Army front commanders . . . Soviet and Russian historians have since studiously erased much of the campaign's conduct from the historical record. Interestingly enough, however, the expunging of this campaign from Soviet military history also rendered "forgotten" the exploits of another participating Red Army front commander, Rokossovsky, whose efforts in the campaign were far more skillful and successful. This, perhaps, was done to avoid tarnishing the record of a truly "Russian" general when compared with the achievements of another general many considered merely a "Pole.""

On the German side, Hitler was drawing the wrong conclusions. As the Wehrmacht was losing its mobile capabilities and strategic initiative, his "stand fast" strategy was shifting to more of a "fortress" strategy. Vitebsk and other cities in Belorussia evolved extensive defensive works during the campaign. While this stalled the Soviet onslaught during late 1943-early 1944, it fostered a false confidence in their ability to hold the next summer. Rokossovsky and STAVKA were well into planning Operation Bagration by campaign end, where they applied lessons learnt during these Forgotten Battles to create a cataclysm for Army Group Center.

Game Play Notes

By Chip Saltsman

Soviet Player

Soviet players, who have the strategic initiative, quickly realize how challenging the "burden of attack" is. Here are some topics for your consideration:

• Compound the Axis player's problems by causing trouble in widely separated areas of the map. The Axis player(s) will be working to create a mobile reserve, especially early in the game when much of their armor is stuck in the swamp to the south of the play area.

• If you are going to make major advances, you will need a rail line. Unhappily, this means capturing key cities—every major east-west rail line goes through cities: Nevel, Vitebsk, Orsha, Mogilev or Gomel at game start. Nevel, Mogilev and Orsha have the most promising lines leading to the west, which make them the most useful avenues of advance. Look hard at which combination of VP locations will win the game for you and

plan a long-term approach to capturing them.

• One rail line doesn't require capturing a city, the one going along the southern part of the map. Combined with the wonderful effect of the Army Group South marker, it's clear why the most successful Soviet advance happened here. It doesn't even encounter significant Swamp terrain until you reach Olevsk (C41.06).

• Speaking of terrain, look closely at the approaches to the key cities. Vitebsk, for example, is difficult to capture with a frontal attack. But it is vulnerable both from the south across the "land bridge" above the Dnepr as well as through the Open terrain near Gorodok (B18.23) where historically the Soviets had the most success.

• The terrain is difficult for the Axis as well, and you can more easily put groups out of supply by seizing key transportation choke points in difficult terrain.

• Watch the "temporal terrain" of the Order of Arrival as well. With planning, the hefty withdrawals that take place in January and February of 1944 should come primarily from your Dead Pile.

• You do get a steady stream of Replacements, nearly always 2 Pax, an Eq2 or Eq3 and 1 Air. If you don't have those units available to be rebuilt, you aren't being aggressive enough!

• Another way to stress is the Axis player is shifting from one Front on Offense to another. You can attack for a few turns, seize key terrain, then switch to Regrouping Posture before their counterattack gathers steam. Also, you don't necessarily need to have Fronts in Offensive Posture every turn. If you sit still for a few turns, pull all your MUFs into the RVGK (with their automatic-refill Organic Trucks) you can build up 30-40 SP, and the Axis player won't know where your next offensive will take place. Sure, they

get SP as well, but you can concentrate your effort with a big batch of SP.

• The Axis side does not have many mobile formations, but their real vulnerability is infantry. On average, they receive less than 1 Pax per turn. By stretching your opponent's front lines and focusing on killing steps that require Pax to rebuild, you can stretch them to the breaking point.

• You have a huge air force. Use it to establish air superiority over the front line. If the Axis player pulls his air units out of range of your Air Armies, you are winning. Sure, he can Fighter Sweep your Patrol Zones, so spread out Fighters every few hexes! Use Air Strips and HQs to carpet key areas with overlapping Patrol Zones. Protect the air bases with AA Divisions—a Level 2 Air Base with an AA Division will cause a Flak hit on a roll of 7 or higher. Don't overlook the Trainbusting (Interdiction) mission— difficult terrain makes slowing down the Axis player much easier to do.

• The most insidious Partisan tactic is the "Partisan Track." Several Partisans can make a path through seemingly impenetrable Swamp, and your Cavalry Corps can zip along them into inconvenient places.

Axis Players

Yes, you are on the strategic defensive, but that doesn't require you to sit meekly and wait for the Soviets to hit you.

• You need a mobile reserve! The 12th Panzer Division is reasonably concentrated near Gomel, but the 4th and 5th are sitting in a swamp on the front lines. Hustle down some infantry and get these key units into a reserve (they may have a hairy first few turns).

• You probably want to construct a defensive line along the Dnepr and Prypet but have some back up as well. You get a lot of Hogs from the Replacement Table and you have the Todt Construction unit—you don't need continuous Hog lines as much as you do several layers of defenses at key bridgeheads and transportation lines through difficult terrain. Remember that the Todt unit can build Hogs within 2 hexes without moving.

• You are going to get assaulted, so plan accordingly. You will need SP spread out for cut-off units to survive for a few turns. Have a plan ready for breakthroughs: hold the "shoulders" so the incursion doesn't widen, rush units to slow or block the Soviet exploitation force and move your mobile formations to smash or surround the enemy. Your artillery units will be important to DG Soviets if the Luftwaffe isn't available. At times you must withdraw from an area, but strive to do it in a way that will upset your enemy's plans.

• Carefully study the rules about how Kessel HQs enable movement of German units through difficult terrain. It is tempting to use each Kessel HQ to prolong the time a surrounded city holds out but consider an alternative. Place a few SP in each of the cities for the garrison to consume. Use the Kessel HQ to reposition units faster than the Soviets can pursue. It's a particularly sneaky trick.

• Vigorously hunt down Partisans! Every Security and Police unit should be actively working on this task. Be sure to garrison larger Air Bases.

• There are too many Soviet air units to keep Patrol Zones over the front lines. Pull back out of range and focus on clearing Soviet Patrol Zones where you need air support.

• Read the Soviet Player notes and consider how to make what they wish to do impossible—you actually won this campaign!

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Special Event Table

During each turn which is marked with a star on the turn record chart, roll 2 dice immediately after the Weather roll. On a die roll of 8+, roll two differently colored dice again. One die counts as units of 10, the other as single digits e.g., 31 or 45. Then consult the results below. Should the event be a "One-Time Event" which has already occurred or was treated as "No Event" earlier, and for both players:

Soviet: Advance the Soviet artillery barrage markers one additional space on the availability chart and receive one Hero marker (see Event 34).

German: The German player receives an extra Pax replacement point this turn and one Hero marker (see Event 34, but read "German" for "Soviet").

Events:

11-12 Soviet Air Campaign. STAVKA increases the Soviet air strength to secure air supremacy in Belorussia. The Soviet player receives 5 "Air" replacements this turn in addition to the Replacement Table roll. One-Time Event.

13-14 Night Bombing Campaign. The German player receives the He 177 "NB" unit as a reinforcement this turn. It functions as a Strategic Bomber except that 1) it flies air missions as a single unit only, and 2) it cannot be intercepted. All other air mission rules apply. Use the normal barrage tables and apply a "Left 1" column shift for night bombing. The unit is withdrawn after 5 turns. May occur more than once; if the unit is currently in play reset the 5 turn duration to begin again this turn.

15-16 Invasion Alert. The Baltic states are placed on "Invasion Alert." During their Replacement Phase, the Axis player places 7 level 1 hedgehogs in any hexes adjacent to the river which runs from Dauvagpils (A51.35) through Drissa (B1.31) to Polotsk (B7.26) inclusive. One-Time Event.

21-22 Hitler Festung Order (1944 only). The March 1944 OKH "Festung Order #11" is implemented. Immediately activate all Garrison units (2.4a). Any undeployed Heinrici defense bases (2.4g) are received as reinforcements. Declare non-Garrison cities closest to Soviet combat units to be fortresses (2.4b) until all Fortress units have been deployed. This turn only, any non-fortress units may exit the fortress hexes during the German player turn. Units which do not exit must remain until eliminated. If rolled in 1943, treat as "No event," in 1944 it is a One-Time Event.

23-24 Peace Negotiations. The Baltic states secretly begin to sue for peace. The Soviet player receives 6 Pax this turn in addition to their Replacement Table roll. One-Time Event.

25-26 Initiative. This turn's first player automatically wins the Initiative roll on the next game turn. May occur more than once

31-32 Belorussian Partisan Offensive! The Soviet player receives 6 additional Partisan units in addition to their Replacement Roll. After placement, they may activate up to 6 Partisan units. During their Movement Phase, select any 6 Partisans which may use 3 infantry MPs regardless of their MA. May occur more than once.

33 German OKH/OKW Reserves Released. This costs the German Player 1VP if taken. The Axis receives 1x Eq4, 1x Eq5, 4x Pax, and 2 Air repl, in addition to the Replacement Table roll. The 15-4-3 Jaeger Div (114) and 8-2-3 Arty Bn (151) are placed in any detrainable city hex. 1x He.177 (T/Tpt) is placed at any Air Base. Any Heinrici defense bases that have not been

received are deployed. One Time Event but treat as "No Event" if these units are already deployed or if the German player declines to take them.

34 Hero. The Soviet player may designate one unit as a Hero unit for 2 turns. Place the Hero counter on the unit for 2 turns. This unit's AR is increased by 1, to a maximum of 5. May occur more than once.

35 One-Turn Offensive. The Soviet player places one Regrouping Front in Offensive posture for this turn only. Place 6 SP at the Front HQ (in addition to the Replacement Roll), 3x Partisan units may be placed and activated, and STAVKA provides the Guards Airborne Corps (13-3-3 Gd Abn Div (11, 12, 14)). The Airborne units may be placed in any hex within the Front boundary that is 1) not adjacent to an Axis unit, and 2) behind the Soviet lines (don't be gamey about this). If playing with the Alternate VP Scheme (5.0b), this Offensive can earn VP. The event may occur more than once, but the Guard Airborne Corps is only placed if it has not already been deployed. This turn does not "count" for Change Limits (3.3e), simply don't advance the selected Front's Regrouping marker on the off-map chart this turn.

36 Baltic States Commit to Germany. All Lithuanian movement restrictions are lifted (2.5a). The Axis receives 5 Level-1 Hogs in addition to their Repl Table roll this turn. These Hogs must be placed within 2 hexes of the double-track rail line which runs from Daugavpils (A51.35) through Vilnius (A35.22) to Varena (A27.18), inclusive. One-Time Event.

41-42 Accelerated Army Group North Evacuation. Germany accelerates the evacuation of troops from AGN. The German player receives 4x Pax and 2x Eq4 in addition to the Repl Table roll. If it is 1943, receive a Hero marker instead (treat in the same way as Event 34). In 1944, this is a One-Time Event.

43 Appeal for Support. Fronts appeal for support. The 10th Gd Tank Corps 26 Jan 44 withdrawal is rescheduled to 15 Mar 44. The Soviet player receives the Guard Airborne Corps (13-3-3 Gd Abn Div (11, 12, 14)) as

Reinforcements this turn. One-Time Event, and the Guard Airborne Corps is only placed if it has not already been deployed.

44 Anti-Partisan Campaign. Immediately conduct an anti-Partisan operation (prior to the Initiative roll): any Police and Security units within 3 hexes of an active Partisan unit that can move adjacent to it MUST do so and attack those units. Simply move adjacent, roll for the attacks, and then continue with the turn. Units which conducted the anti-Partisan operation may not move in this turn but are otherwise unaffected. May occur more than once.

45 STAVKA Offensive Support. The Soviet player receives an additional 5 SP at any Front HQ in Offensive Posture. Place and activate 3 Partisans. Three Soviet Artillery/Katy Divisions may barrage for no SP cost in the Barrage Segment of the Soviet Combat Phase this turn. If no Fronts are in Offensive Posture, then treat as "No Event." May occur more than once.

46. Stalin Insists on a Baltic Strategy. All Independent air units for this turn and the next two turns may only perform missions where the Mission hex is in the 1st Baltic Front's boundary. Place the Guards Airborne Corps (13-3-3 Gd Abn Div (11, 12, 14)), at the 1st Baltic Front HQ. Six Level-1 Hogs are placed within the boundaries of the two Belorussian Fronts. One-Time Event, and the Guard Airborne Corps is only placed if it has not already been deployed.

51 Soviet Leadership Dispute. Soviet commanders argue over strategic direction. All Front markers are moved 2 turns to the right on the marker track: this means some Fronts in Offensive Posture may suddenly change to Regrouping, but also some Regrouping Fronts may suddenly be eligible to switch to Offensive Posture. May occur more than once.

52 Zhukov's Experiments with Rolling Offensive. Within the boundary of any Front in Offensive Posture, choose one Tank, Mech or Cavalry Corps. Any units in the Dead Pile for that MUF are placed with or adjacent to any unit of that MUF which is not adjacent to a German unit. Place 3 SP at the Front HQ in addition to that received from the Supply roll. Place and Activate 3 Partisan units. May occur more than once.

53 STAVKA Commits to the Prypet Campaign. The Soviet player may ignore one Gd Cav Corps withdrawal later in the game at the cost of 1 VP. Simply ignore the withdrawal OR return at full strength a Cavalry Corps which has already withdrawn as if it were an arriving Reinforcement (it returns full strength even if some units had been eliminated previously). One Time Event.

54 Luftwaffe Directs Reserves to AGC. The Axis player receives two "Air" Repl this turn, which may ONLY be used on Fighter-type air units. May occur more than once.

55-56 Hitler Heeds Panzer Reserve Warnings. If a Panzer Division arrives as a result of this event, then the Soviet player receives 1 VP. The Axis player may refuse this event to avoid the 1 VP penalty, in which case treat as "No Event."

1943: Place the HG Panzer Division in Minsk as a Reinforcement this turn.

1944: (Prior to 19 Jan 44 only) On a die roll of 1-3, the HG Panzer Division is received as above, on a 4-6 the 21st Panzer Division is received.

On or after 19 Jan 44, if the division rolled for is already in play, or if refused by the Axis player, treat as No Event. One Time Event.

61-62 Hitler Allows Tactical Flexibility. Heinrici's "flexible defense" program is implemented. The German player deploys any available Heinrici defense markers and 4 Level-1 Hedgehogs in the front line within 12 hexes of 4th Army HQ. Add to the Axis Repl received this turn: 2 Eq4 points and the two 5-5-8 (Heer) Panzer Battalions (Panther tanks from the OKH reserve). One Time Event.

63. Western Allies Bomb Rail Lines. The OKH rail network is damaged. German Rail Cap reduced by 50% this turn and next. May occur more than once.

64. Accelerated Conscription in Liberated Areas. In their Replacement Phase, the Soviet player may add 1 step to any 4 Infantry Divisions. 3 Partisan units may be placed and activated, and up to 3 airstrips (if available) may be deployed

adjacent to a partisan in any clear hex. May occur more than once.

65 Goering Commits to AGC. Significant manpower and the Luftwaffe training schools are committed to AGC. The Axis receives 2 Air Repl this turn in addition to the Repl roll but these may only be used on Fighter units. Three Luftwaffe infantry divisions may rebuild 1 step each (if this is possible). One Time Event.

66 Partisan Interdiction Campaign. Axis Rail Cap is reduced by 50% this turn. Reduce the Axis Supply roll by 2 SP in the "Army or Army Group" column. May occur more than once.

Errata Counters.

The Third Winter:

The German 54th Corps HQ should be the 59th. The 54th Corps was present in *Forgotten Battles* and the 59th in *Third Winter*. There is no effect on game play, but the correct counter is provided.

Crimea:

The 140 Arty Rgt (22 Pz Div) has the wrong Move Mode MA (its MA should be 16 Truck). One of the German He.111H has its Transport Capacity printed in two places on the counter. Correct counters are provided.

Interdiction Markers.

A number of players have questioned the phrase "Trainbusting" for activities that more often are used to impede an opponent's road movement. A set of Interdiction Markers are provided for players to use. These are functionally identical to Trainbusting markers in accordance with *OCS Rule 14.8*. In each instance just substitute Interdiction for every mention of Trainbusting in rule 14.8 and you'll be good to go.

Fog of War – Zero "Strength" Step Loss Markers.

As far as we know there is no use for a four-strength step loss marker, which is the back side of a three-step marker. There are no five step units in the OCS. So, instead of this four-step loss side, we created these zero-step markers to aid the fog of war. (Thanks to Mark Mazer for this idea). Simply place a zero-step marker under a full-strength four-step unit and you have created some uncertainty in the mind of your opponent. In addition, you could use one of these markers to place under a single step brigade, regiment, or battalion with the same fog of war effect.

Give it try and let me know what you think.

New Marker Sheet

The Forgotten Battles comes with a revised OCS Marker Sheet, first included in *The Third Winter*. It has a few changes from earlier versions:

- Interdiction and Zero Strength Step Loss Markers per above.

- Railhead Markers are colored for ease in indicating the owning side.

- Revised Supply Point Marker Mix reflects our survey on relative numbers used during play.

- No Pax/Equip Repl Units. These are not used in the recent *Hungarian Rhapsody*, *TTW* and are not contemplated for use in future OCS games.

The Forgotten Battles Contents.

A complete game should contain:

- OCS Rulebook (version 4.3)

- Game-Specific Rulebook

- Scenario Booklet

- Two Player Booklets (Axis and Soviet)

- Two OCS v4.3 Charts and Tables

- Four Game Maps (22x34)

- Five Game Specific Countersheets and three v4.3 Marker Countersheets

- Ten Display Cards (Two TEC, Axis Multi-Unit Formation Display, Axis Tracks Display, Axis Reinforcement-Breakdown Display, Soviet Multi-Unit Formation Display, Soviet RVGK Display, Soviet Tracks Display, Soviet Reinforcement-Breakdown Display and Turn/Weather Card)

- Box and Dice