

Introduction to OCS

Based on Smolensk: Barbarossa derailed, northern pincer v1.2

In this write up I will use an illustrated example of play to look at OCS rules and specific mechanisms in action, in particular Modes, Supply and the Combat Result Table. More specifically I will try to give some tactics and strategy guidance for OCS newcomers and show how to mount deep operations into enemy rear areas using the Smolensk game.

Smolensk, offers a good situation to learn the game. It uses only one map which makes it more approachable than the bigger titles in the series. Movements are not road bound, there are some difficult terrains, mostly swamps, but there is also plenty of open ground leaving you more room to maneuver than in Tunisia, Sicily or Burma. It has east front unit density, which could be a bit daunting for beginners, but the benefits are that it helps mitigate a few poor dice rolls, and tactics doesn't rely on a few specific units making a series of successful attacks.

I will use the latest, to date, *OCS 4.3* series rules, using the standard rules numbering system for the core rules, and specifying '*Smolensk*' for rules pertaining specifically to the Smolensk scenario booklet. Using *italics* for rules references. I will often say 'I' or 'we' when playing the attacker, which avoids longer wordings. However it doesn't imply any personal attachment to a specific side.

I will focus on the Northern part of the map where PanzerGroup Hoth operates, first because it will keep the narrative much simpler, and also because *Smolensk 3.4* do enforce a dividing line between the two PanzerGroups in this campaign game.

The two sides are very asymmetrical, the Germans having a huge advantage in quality and mobility whereas the Soviets have plenty of troops and some prepared defensive positions, which will help show the importance of Action Rating (AR).

OCS is a different beast:

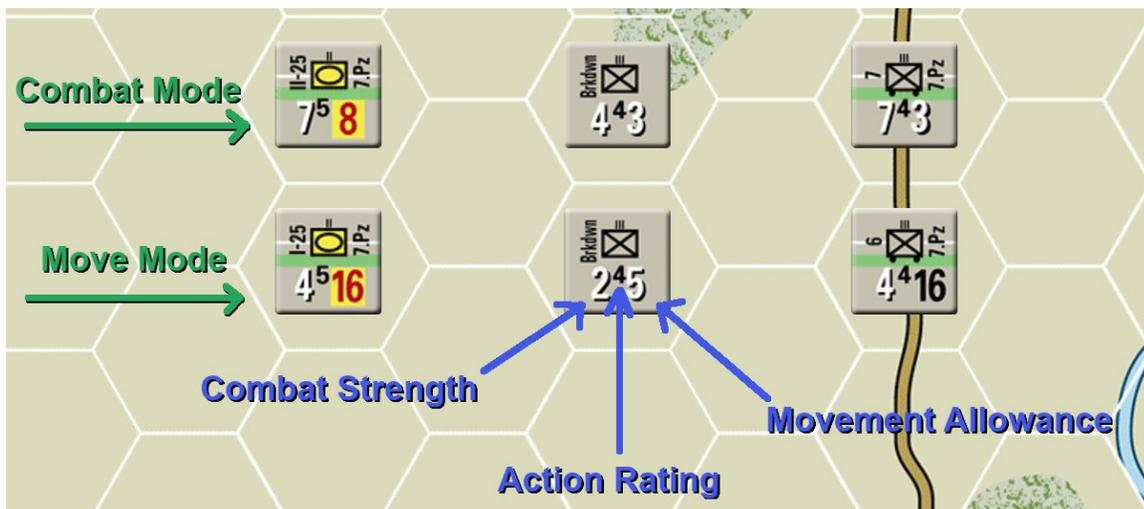
In many operational games you move all your units in the movement phase and then proceed to make all attacks in the combat phase, and maybe move again in the exploitation phase. In OCS you can't do that because every wheeled or tracked unit must expend Supply Points (SP) to move. Additionally every artillery barrage and every attack you make also cost SP. So if you try to move all your units, barrage with all your guns and make every favorable attacks, you'll probably run out of SP by turn 2.

The SP system works like a kind of higher echelon orders management, and force you to plan carefully each moves and attacks, and to only make those necessary for your overall plan. In particular you should pay attention to where your units finish their moves as if you want to adjust a unit position on the next turn, even by only one hex you'll have to pay SP for fuel again. The intent here is also to restrict the players ability to micro-react to each and every opponent moves, and somehow limit the information you enjoy from the wargamer's "helicopter view". In practice assigning SP for specific units movement and attack is a bit like assigning an order in game system with written or chit orders.

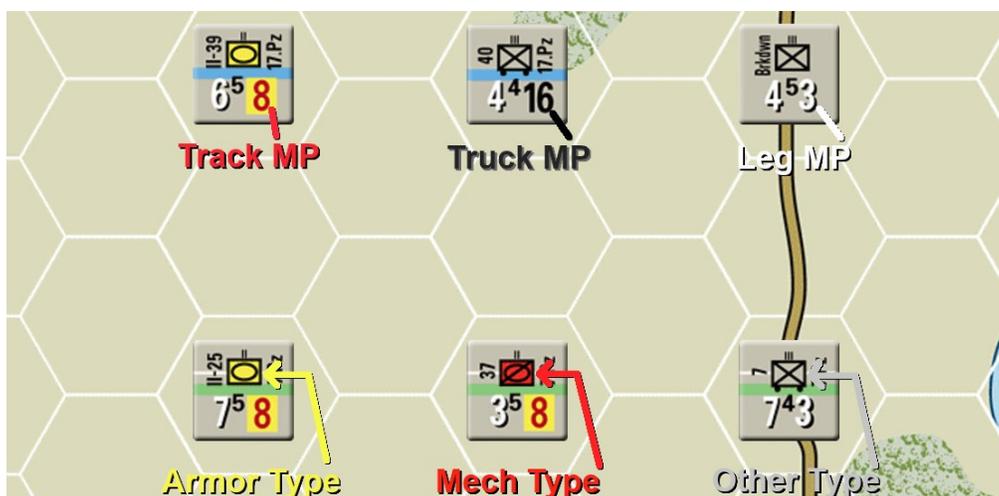
In OCS, trace supply, i.e. tracing a supply line from your units to friendly supply sources is extremely important, the game is not only about directly attacking enemy units but also targeting their supply network. For comparison think of the duality of the muscular and nervous system in the human body.

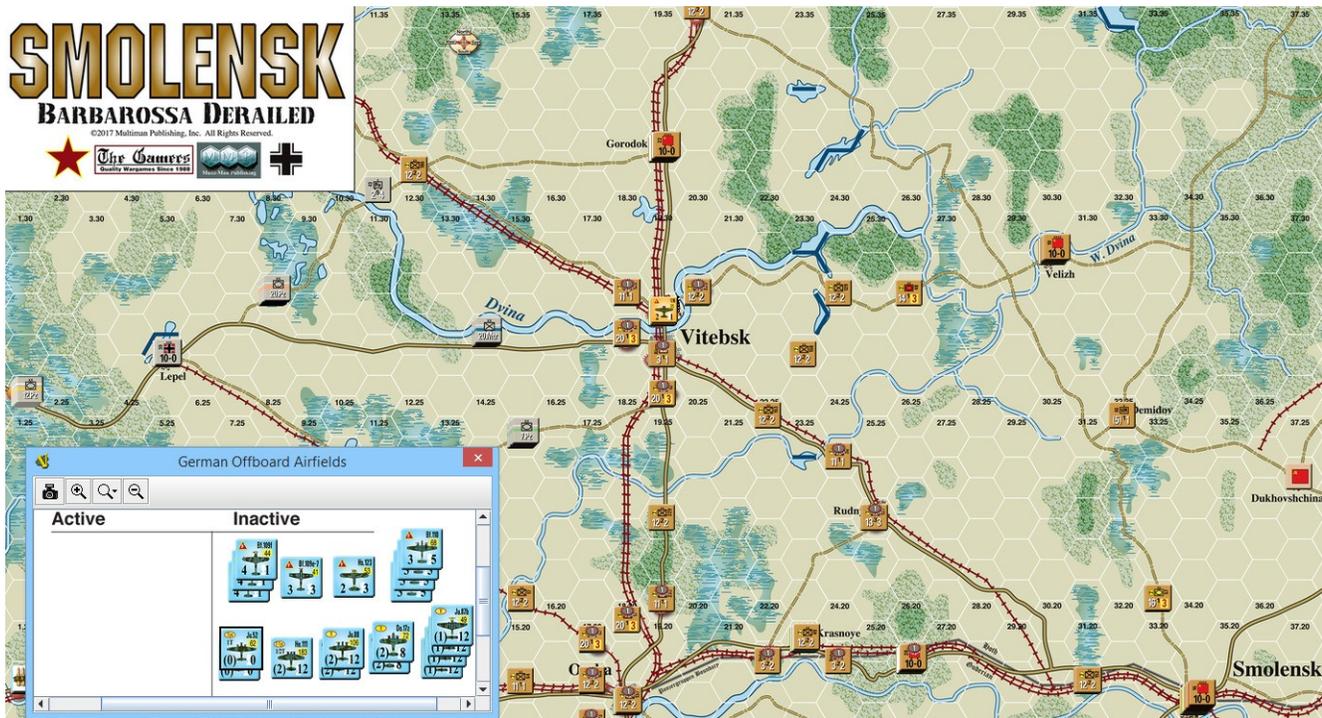
Counters factors are another OCS specific feature. In addition to the common Attack and Movement values, you also have the all important AR, also known as “troop quality”. It represents a unit advantage in morale, leadership and/or equipment, and it has a key role during combats, as we will see.

Moreover by flipping a unit to its reverse side, you switch to Move Mode which halve your combat value but double your Movement Allowance (MA). This is the general rule, but many units have a Move Mode that doesn't follow the x0.5 / x2 rule, like the one on the right below. Each turn you must decide for each unit in which mode it will operate. This is also part of the integrated command system of the game, again you are assigning a specific stance and mission when choosing a unit mode.



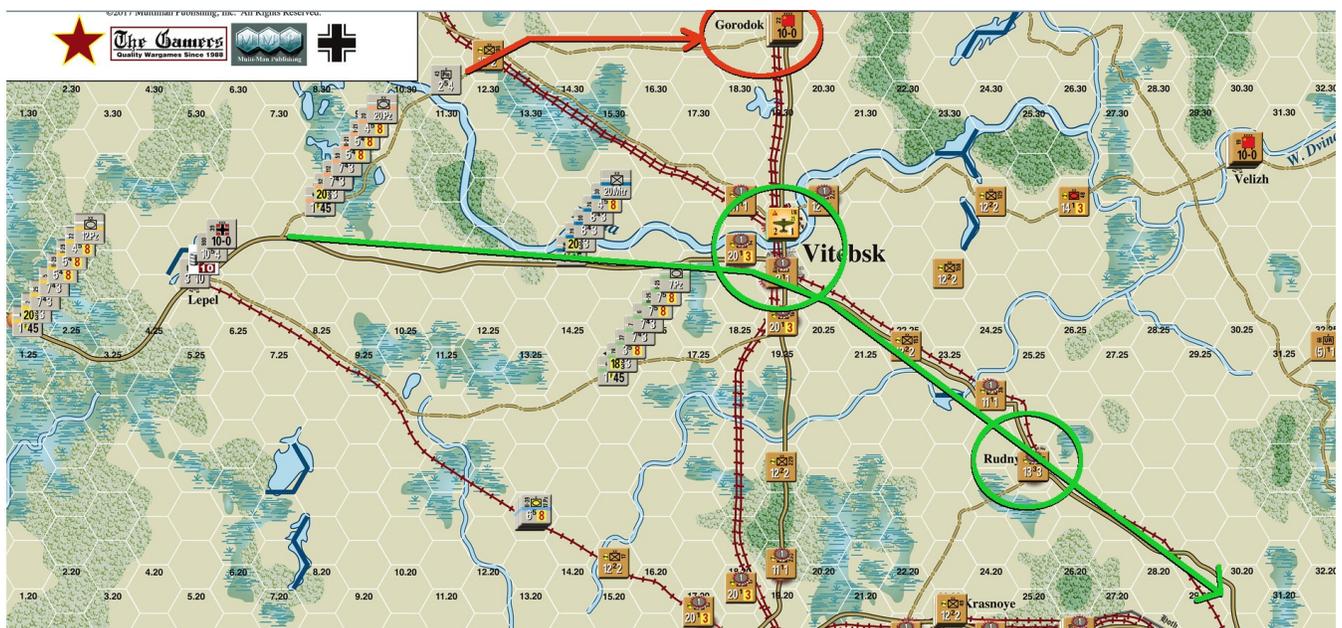
Units are further distinguished by the color of their MA, representing different types of locomotion, and by the color of their NATO symbol showing the level of armor component in the unit. Depending on terrain combat value could be doubled or divided up to 1/4. In the end, compared to many games the attack factor is not the single most important value on a counter, AR and MA are also very important.





Strategic analysis:

I will use scenario 1 Smolensk Campaign, though I will focus on the opening moves and not the whole campaign. The final objective is clear, control the Dnepr river line and then capture Smolensk and drive on further east around hexrow 47. Considering our northern PanzerGroup, the primary task will be to capture Vitebsk (19.27) and then head on to Smolensk via Rudnya (25.23). A later goal for the north group is to cut the Smolensk Vyazma railroad to prevent the Soviets from reinforcing Smolensk.



Destroying the Soviet 12-2-2 guarding the bridge at 12.31 and then proceeding on to encircle Gorodok (19.32) in the Exploitation Phase is an option. However attacking across the river into 12.31, a swamp hex, which is Very Close terrain ruins many Germans tactical advantages and would be costly in SP. Moreover on turn 4, entry L in the north is shut down for the Soviet (*Smolensk 2.1a*) and ceases to be a supply source, some Germans reinforcements may enter from this location, giving a strong incentive for the Soviet to vacate the area on their own.

Additionally any Germans mobile formations sent around Gorodok would have to pay for fuel to move back southeast toward the primary objectives. I'd rather not attack the Soviets head on in good defensive positions, but rather drive through weak spots, challenge them to a moving battle, and entice them to abandon their prepared position for fear of being encircled.

For all those reasons, I prefer to focus on capturing Vitebsk and driving directly toward Smolensk by the road, spending as few SP as possible. The road is critically important as all units spend only 1/2 Movement Point(MP) per road hex, so not only does the road allow units to move twice faster it also allow Supply to be thrown twice as far. Clearing and controlling the road will be my primary task.

Terrain Effects Chart		Terrain Cost			Combat Modifiers		
Feature	Combat Line	Movement			Special Modifiers		
		Track	Truck	Leg	Armor	Mech	Other
Open	Open	1	1	1	[x 2]	[x 2]	x 1
Woods	Close	2	3	1	x 1	x 1	x 1
Forest	Close	3	4	2	x 1/2	x 1	x 1
Swamp	Very Close	P	P	3	x 1/2*	x 1/2*	x 1*
Village	Close	ot	ot	ot	x 1	x 1	x 1
Minor City	Very Close	ot	ot	ot	x 1/2	[x 1/2]	x 1
Major City	Extr Close	ot	ot	ot	x 1/3	[x 1/2]	x 1
Secondary Road	ot	1/2	1/2	1/2	ot	ot	ot
Track	ot	1	1	1	ot	ot	ot
Railroad	ot	1	1	1	ot	ot	ot
Minor River	ot	+ 3	+ 5	+ 1	[x 1/2]	[x 1/2]	[x 1/2]
Major River	ot	P	P	All	[x 1/4]*	[x 1/3]*	[x 1/2]*
Lake/Blocked	ot	P	P	P	[x 1/4]*	[x 1/4]*	[x 1/4]*

[x#] — Attack times the multiple in brackets; Defend at x 1. P — Movement Prohibited.
 * — Attack needs a road if movement is 'P' (OCS 9.1f). ot — Dependent on other terrain in hex.

Corps Level Planning:

As you might know, German Panzer divisions were designed to be more or less autonomous. As such they have a little bit of everything, recon, tanks, mounted infantry, artillery and supply trucks. In OCS this translates into a multi unit formations which are much more powerful and flexible than a single counter division. However no matter how much a single Panzer Division can achieve on its own, it is much more efficient to plan your operations at a higher level, I mean at the **Corps level**.



A typical WW2 German armored corps comprises 2 armored divisions and a mechanized infantry division, plus some extra independent units. More importantly it also contains a HQ which is so critical for supply in the game. In practice the value of a corps is better than those of 3 divisions acting independently. It is also much more resilient to contact with the enemy, especially after a few losses.

This is not a rule point, but corps echelon existed for reasons. Thinking at the corps level gives you much more options and works well with the OCS system. The ternary (or triangle) nature of a corps typically allows you to use 2 divisions for the main task and keep one in reserve, either to exploit any success or to react to enemy counter moves. Depending on the terrain occupied by the defender, the mechanized infantry might make the initial assault if the terrain is difficult opening the way for the armored divisions. On the other hand in open terrain armored formations will usually lead the attack and the infantry will move behind either to control the gains, clear the pockets or secure the flanks.

Here PanzerGroup Hoth currently has one HQ, the 39th in Lepel, it only has 2 independent units under command but it controls three Panzer (7, 12, 20) and one Motorized (20) divisions which should be enough for the task, and offers plenty of options. Note that as mentioned in *Smolensk 3.4* Hoth Pz Group multi-units formations have a thin white stripe to differentiate them from Guderian PzGroup.

Setup:

We will use the setup for scenario 1 Smolensk Campaign.

The Soviets have some leeway for their setup, here we will assume those units will reinforce the Smolensk area. But be aware that they could setup with any HQ, in particular an AR 4 NKVD could be a nasty surprise for an overconfident German player if setup forward, however it would be vulnerable to early encirclement. As AR 4 units are so rare in the Soviet OB, keeping them for the two key Smolensk city hexes is a secure option.

(5)-1-1 UR Bde → 61, 65 Smolensk (34.18) Velizh (30.29)

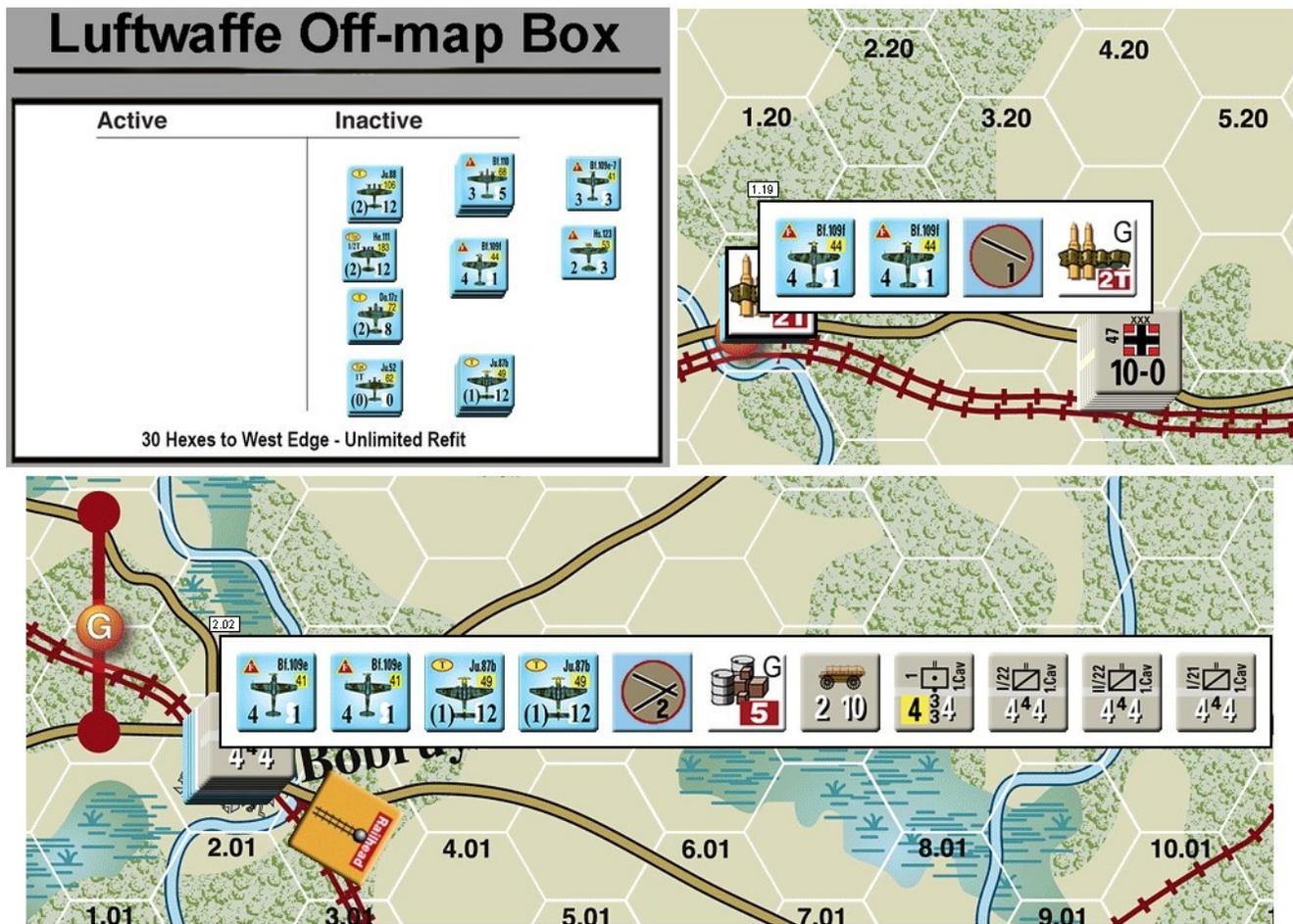
(2)-4-3 NKVD → 86,105 Smolensk (34.18)

(2)-0-3 NKVD → 76 Krichev (27.05)

26-1-1 Arty Bde → Smolensk (34.18)



The Germans only setup flexibility comes from their air units. Here you should pay attention to the *Smolensk 1.4a* rules that mentions that the German off map Luftwaffe box is 30 hexes away to the west. This is a serious concern as a number of German planes range are only between 40-50 hexes, and the Soviet main line of resistance is around hexrow 18.00 Which means those plane will be at the limit of their operational range. So the Germans should setup planes on their 2 on map airbases, although this will cost some precious SP to refit them. However there is no point in setting more planes than those bases could refit on turn 1 as all planes start inactive on turn 1 by scenario rules. The remaining airplanes are better left in the off map box where they can refit for free on turn 1, because off-map boxes have infinite Supply Dump (*Smolensk 1.4a*).



For security reason it is safer to put some fighters on those on map bases. For example two Bf.109f on the level 1 airbase (1.19), and 2 Bf.109e + 2 Ju.87b on the level 2 airbase (2.02). However a more radical approach would be to use one Construction marker (*Smolensk 3.5*) to place an airstrip then to transfer a fighter from your off-map box on station on this airstrip.

Per *Scenario 1 SSR*, the German must shift 4 mobile formations 3 hexes west of their listed location, the random chits draw results in **20 Pz**, **12 Pz**, SS.R and 4 Pz being moved backward. Additionally **7 Pz** 18 Pz 10 Mtr and 29 Mtr must exchange one of their Motorized Regiment for the Aufklarung Bn that start in the dead pile.

Start of Turn 1, July 8th, Pre-Turn Phase:

Both the weather (Flight) and the initiative (Germans) are predetermined by the scenario.

German Turn 1 Aircraft Refit Phase:

Inactive planes cannot fly any air missions, an active plane can perform one air mission, then it usually becomes inactive and has to wait the next friendly turn for refit.

All aircrafts in the Luftwaffe off-map box refit for free (*Smolensk 1.4a*)

However both on map airbases must pay 1T each to refit up to twice their base level, so the level 1 Airbase refit both fighters and the level 2 Airbase all four planes.

SP can be divided into smaller amounts called tokens, 1SP = 4T.



German Turn 1 Reinforcement Phase:

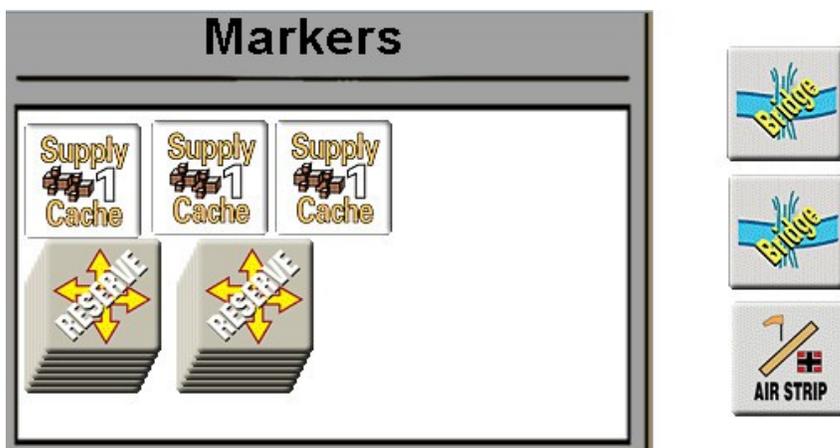
Don't forget that unless otherwise specified **you DO roll for Supply and Replacements on the first turn of a scenario.**

For the SP we will assume a Dice Roll (DR) of 7 which gives the Germans 7 SP, by *Smolensk 3.4b* rule, 3SP should go to Hoth PanzerGroup in the north and 4 SP to Guderian PanzerGroup in the South. So we will put **3 SP** on entry hex K (1.26).

A Repl DR of 6 yields no replacement.

Then the special Repl DR (*Smolensk 1.6c*) gives an additional Supply Cache marker, it joins the other two such markers given by the scenario.

The Axis Arrivals Card mentions that no unit enter play on July 8th.



German Turn 1 Movement Phase:

The Germans are allowed to use Hip Shoots (14.7d) representing their efficient air to ground support, furthermore they enjoy a large AR advantage over the Soviets. **Hip Shoots + AR advantage means that the Movement Phase is actually a genuine combat phase.** Hip Shoots allows you to barrage a target **during** the movement phase, in contrast if you are not allowed to use Hip Shoots you must wait until the end of the Movement Phase when all units are done moving to barrage with your air forces. Moreover with Hip Shoots you are allowed to barrage a single hex several times (10.0e – A) until you succeed in getting the precious Disorganized (DG) result. Whereas only one regular barrage per hex, per phase, is usually allowed (10.0e-A). Hip Shoots in combination with Overruns is a very powerful tool, I will show you why.

During regular attacks a Dice Roll of 10+ result in Attacker Surprise, and 5- in Defender Surprise, for an overrun attack you need 9+ for Attacker Surprise, and 6- for Defender Surprise.



In general this makes overrun a more risky affair. However consider an AR 5 German attacker (pretty common) attacking an DG AR 2 Soviet unit, the DG reduces by 1 the AR of the Defender to 1 (5.10b-B), resulting in a final Dice Roll Modifier (DRM) of +4 in favor of the German, this DRM will work **both** for the Surprise DR and the Combat DR. Which means the German will get attacker surprise for an overrun on a DR of 5+ (83%) and will only be surprised on a DR of 2 (2.8%). In effect it makes overrun more efficient than a regular attack, when you enjoy a significant AR differential. Additionally, as with Hip Shoot you can overrun the same hex several times, if need be (8.1d).

All in all when you need to take a key hex there are multiple advantages to use overruns during the Movement Phase rather than wait until the Combat Phase. Especially here in the opening phase of the Smolensk campaign as the Germans have a lot of bombers available for Hip Shoots. And the Soviets are surprised and thus limited in their reactions.

Overruns have several restrictions (8.1) though. In particular, you can use only units stacked in the same hex at the start of their Movement Phase, and the target hex Movement Points (MP) cost should be 3 or less. I'm not suggesting that overruns are the be all and end all, regular attacks also have their own merits especially when attacking heavily defended positions or when facing difficult terrains.

Air Superiority:

So let's jump into the fray. The first order of business is to get air superiority. In case any Soviet fighters are setup active in the area where we plan to attack those fighters would project a 10 hex radius Patrol Zone(PZ) around their airbase (14.4c), which would make Germans air missions that target a hex in this PZ subject to interception (14.5). Rule 4.8b-E says that any active fighter should be the top unit of a stack to make PZ obvious. The scenario setup mentions that two (half of 3 rounded up) of the Soviets fighters must start inactive. Which leaves only one active fighters, and all of them have a rather low Air to Air rating of 2, in contrast the Germans Bf.109 have a rating of 4. Let's consider that the Soviets stationed an active I.16 in Vitebsk (19.28). Actually it is dangerous for the Soviets to setup an active fighter so close to the front line, for one it isn't much of a threat for the better Germans fighters and for two, if the Soviet airbase gets captured the plane will have to roll for survival (9.14f).



The tool to gain air superiority is the Fighter Sweep (14.6) air mission. Using the on map Bf.109 make as many fighter sweeps as necessary to abort any active Soviet fighters. That's why I put two Germans fighters on each on map airbases, in case the Fighter Sweep dogfight result in a 'Both Abort' result that would still leave another active fighter to protect the base and the other planes there.

With two strength 4 Bf.109 available for Fighter Sweeps, it should be enough to neutralize a single strength 2 Soviet fighter. The differential of Air to Air Rating is a DRM to the Air Combat Roll So the Germans need a DR 5+ to abort the Soviet plane, in our particular case it doesn't matter that much if the Attacker also abort, as far as the Defender abort. If things go badly you can still use more of the on map fighters for Fighter Sweeps, then later use a Base Transfer mission (14.11) to move another fighter from the Luftwaffe off-map box to one of your on map Airbases. If one of your fighter perform a Base Transfer within its normal range it stays active. Note that the Base Transfer could be up to twice the plane printed range but if it exceeds its normal range the fighter arrives inactive at the destination base, also note that only fighters can remain active after a normal range transfer all other plane types always arrive inactive.

Air Combat Table (14.3e)

Roll two dice for the main table, and a third to see if aborting aircraft take a loss.

Dice Roll	Result
6 or less	Attacker Aborts
7	Both Abort
8 or more	Defender Aborts

Dice Roll Modifiers:

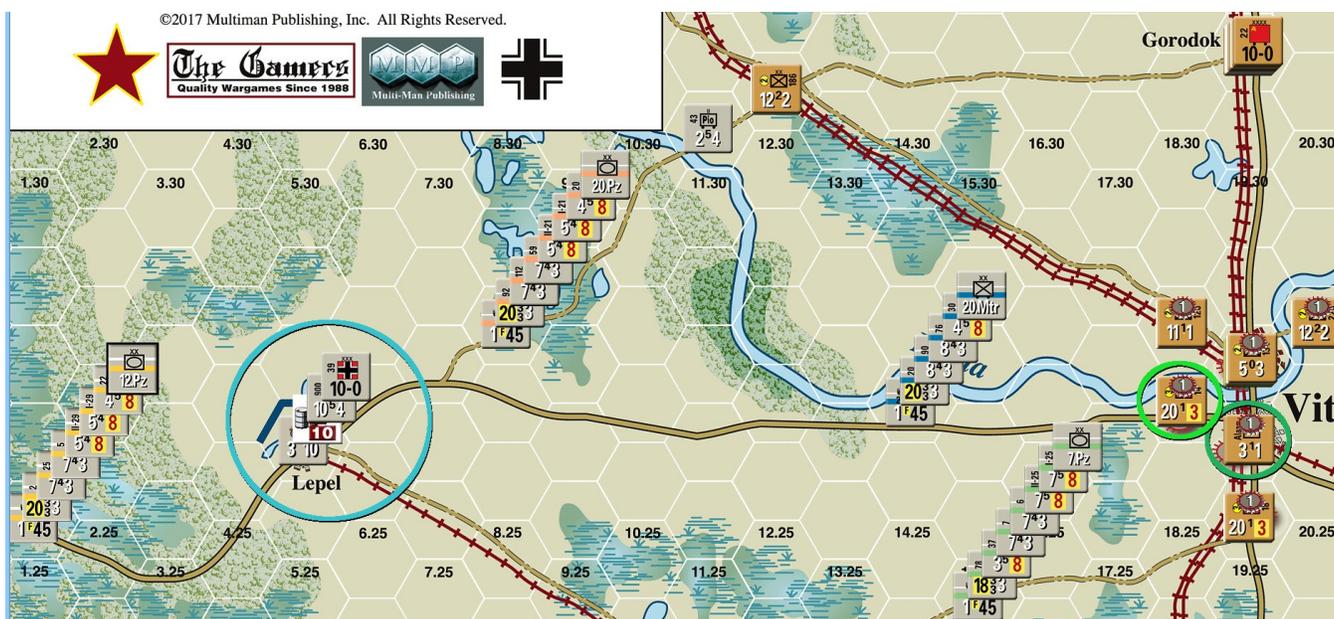
Add Attacker's Air Combat Rating.
 Subtract Defender's Air Combat Rating.
 [Option 21.4] -1 if beyond half range.

Note these DRMs do not apply to Loss Die.

Loss Die	Result
1-4	No Loss
5-6	Step Loss



A Bf.109f conducts a Fighter Sweep against the I.16 in Vitebsk (19.28). The Air Combat Rating differential is +2 (4 - 2) in favor of the Germans, a DR of 7 gives a final result of **9** causing the **Defender to abort** under the airbase marker in 19.28, a loss die (dr) of 3 yield no casualty for the aborted fighter. Finally the Bf.109 returns to its airbase where it becomes inactive ending his air mission. With air superiority, we can now safely use our bombers to prepare the way for our overruns.



Let's turn our attention to the ground attack proper. I want to clear the Vitebsk road, attacking only Vitebsk city (19.27) would be easier but I really need to open the road to allow the HQ in Lepel (5.27) to throw supply to our spearheads during the ensuing Supply Phase. Here it is important to realize that the distance that we can move our units is not only a matter of their MP, we must also be able to supply them. Hence our maximum reach is the minimum of our unit's MP, and the throw range of our HQ. So you have to train your eyes to virtually project on the map the maximum radius of your throw range, considering that in most case HQ use truck type MP to compute their throw range, it means:

- Open hex costs 1 truck MP.
- Wood/ Forest costs 2 or 3 MP respectively, thus SP throw is reduced, but still possible.
- Swamp and Major River are prohibited, completely blocking supply throw.
- Road, costs only ½ MP, which actually doubles the throw range, making them critical.
- Enemy Zones of Control (ZoC) stop truck type MP, unless negated (4.5a-A and B).

The 7Pz Artillery moves in 17.27, then the motorcycle Recon Bn moves to 18.25 neutralizing the Soviet ZoC there, which allows the Inf Rgt to move to 18.26. All in Reserve Mode oriented toward Move under the reserve marker. Note that **you cannot enter Reserve Mode while in an enemy ZoC, however once in Reserve Mode you can move into an enemy ZoC (5.7c)**. Be careful though, as units attacked while in Reserve Mode defend at half combat strength (5.7). I keep the powerful remaining 7Pz units as they are for now, to wait to see how the situation unfold before committing them to any mode.



Hip Shoots:

It's now time to call the Luftwaffe ground support, but to be able to make Hip Shoot a **Spotter (10.0b)** is mandatory. For this we will use the 7Pz Inf Rgt in 18.26, even though it is Reserve Mode. It is perfectly placed to spot for airstrikes on all 3 adjacent Soviets occupied hexes.

With the spotter in place, it is time to call an airstrike on 18.27. As the off-map box is 30 hexes away from hexrow 1 and the target is located on hexrow 18, a Ju.87b from my off-map Luftwaffe box is perfect for this mission with its range of 49. The tactical bomber will execute a Hip Shoot air mission which is a special case of the Barrage air mission (14.7d). Following 14.2f the Barrage Mission follows those steps:

- Move the aircraft from the off map box to the target hex 18.27.
- There is no air combat as no enemy plane are in the hex, and there is no Interception either, thanks to our earlier Fighter Sweep which cleared the sky of enemy patrols.
- However as we are making a Hip Shoot, or Barrage, there is always a Flak Roll (Anti-Air defense) for the defender, a DR of 7 with a DRM of 0 result in **no effect** (FLAK need a final DR of 11+ to succeed).
- Now the Stuka drop its bombs, its barrage strength is 12, however the Soviet Tank Division enjoys a 1 column shift for being in a Hedgehog, resulting in a final column of 8-11 on the Barrage Table a DR of 7 is just enough to get the coveted **DG** result.
- Finally the Ju.87b returns to its off-map airbase where it becomes inactive.

It is really important to DG a target before making a ground attack, not only it halves its combat, barrage and movements values (5.10b) but it also reduces its AR by 1. Altogether it seriously improves the chance of a successful attack. It also significantly reduces the chances of mishap for the attacker.

Barrage Table (10.0a) roll two dice using column for Barrage Strength and apply column shifts that apply

Roll	1 or less	2	3-4	5-7	8-11	12-16	17-24	25-40	41-68	69-116	117+
Cost	1T	1T	2T	2T	2T	3T	3T	4T	6T	8T	10T
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]
6	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]
7	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2
8	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2	1/2
9	-	-	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2	1/2	1/2
10	-	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1
11	DG	DG	DG	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	2
12	DG	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1	2	3

Roll once for hex. Owner's choice of unit(s) which take the step loss (exception: no choice for targeted ship).

Explanation of results:

- No Effect
- # Lose # steps and become DG.
- DG Target is disorganized. All combat units in the hex are now in DG mode.
- [1/2] If in a Level 3 or 4 Hedgehog, an Air or Ship Fire, OR else no correct spotter treat as DG. Otherwise check as regular 1/2.
- 1/2 Roll one die, on a 4-6 lose one step and become DG. Otherwise become DG only.

Density Shifts
RE's in hex (don't round)

Left 1	1 RE or less
None	Greater than 1 RE, up to 3
Right 1	Greater than 3 RE, up to 4
Right 2	Greater than 4 RE, up to 5
Right 3	Greater than 5 RE, up to 6
Right 4	Greater than 6 RE

Only combat units count for density – not transport points, SPs, etc.
No multi-step unit or multi-unit formation ever counts as more than 3 RE for this purpose.

Additional Shifts
Use all lines which apply (but a line can only be applied once)

Left 1	For a Hedgehog of any level (see also [1/2] result)
Left 1	For a Close or Very Close terrain hex
Left 2	For an Extremely Close terrain hex
Left 3	For no correct spotter adjacent to target (this always applies to a barrage with any Strategic Bombers)
Right 3	If any unit in the target hex in Strat Mode
Right 1	If all aircraft are at or within 10 hexes of their base
Left 1	[Option 21.4] If any aircraft flew more than half range

Reduce these ship-to-shore barrage results (18.3b):
1/2 (either kind) becomes DG 1 becomes 1/2 2 becomes 1

A single overrunning stack can make several overruns in a row, against the same or different targets (8.1d), as long as it has enough MP and do not retreat after an attack (8.1f). As combats don't always unfold as expected, before proceeding with the ground attack it is better to also DG the other units we plan to overrun, because once an overrunning stack start to move we wouldn't be able to temporarily halt its movement to call additional Hip Shoots (6.1g). Make all your preparatory barrages beforehand.

A second Ju.87b from the off map box goes on a Hip Shoot mission on Vitebsk (19.27). The air mission procedure is the same as before, however the Soviets benefit from a second column shift because the target hex is a Minor City which is Very Close terrain, the other column shift is for the Hedgehog. A Flak Roll of 9 causes **no damage** and a DR of 5 on the 5-7 Column gives **no effect**. So let's send a third bomber. Flak 10, Barrage 2 for **no effect** again. A fourth bomber gets a Flak of 7 and finally **DG** the target with a DR 9.

Overruns:

For overrunning we could use the 7Pz, its units are in range to attack Vitebsk in Combat Mode for the best effectiveness, but I have other plans in mind for this division. So let's fuel the 12 Pz, as it comprises six combat units I will also choose the Formation Method of fueling and pay 1 SP from the Dump at 1.26. I flip the 12Pz formation marker to its fueled side to show the fueled status. In case those units are successful in the Combat Phase they may gain Exploitation results, and be able to move again in the Exploitation Phase without needing to pay for fuel again.

As the 12Pz is far away from the front line, I flip all its counters to Move Mode side, giving them all 16 MP. Note that motorized or mechanized infantry usually have a Move Mode MA much higher than their Combat Mode leg MA, it represents the soldiers getting in their vehicles for rapid movements, the drawback is that fuel must then be payed to move. All in all it makes this kind of infantry flexible as they can either move on foot for free, or switch to vehicles and follow their armored fellows.

I don't want to attack 18.27 first for fear of seeing the Tank Division retreat in Vitebsk. Had I an Attack Capable Combat Mode unit in 18.26 it would project a ZoC in in the six hexes around it (4.5), and **if the enemy retreat into one of your ZoC it will either immediately become DG or if already DG the retreating stack will take an extra step loss (9.12e)**. So I decide to attack 19.27 first to cut the retreat path of the Tank Division.

Feature	Combat Line	Track	Truck	Leg	Armor	Mech	Other
Minor City	Very Close	ot	ot	ot	x 1/2	[x 1/2]	x 1

As it is a Minor City hex, Armored units combat strength are halved while attacking. So I choose to attack with an Inf Rgt. As it is a key location, I also add the elite Recon Bn with its AR5. Both units move to 18.26 for 13 MP and declare an overrun for +3MP.



Let's follow the full Combat Sequence (9.2) in details for this first attack:

- The two units stack in 18.26 attacks 19.27 using an overrun.
- Both sides must expend supply for ammo, on map supply markers serve both to fuel units for movements and to pay ammo for combats. The German attackers must pay 1T per attacking step, so I spend 2T from 1.26 using the HQ at Lepel (5.27) to throw the SP. I'd rather draw first from the SP farther away from the front line. The Soviet defenders must pay 2T even though they have 3 steps, Defender ammo cost is capped at 2T even if he has more step (12.4). They draw from the dump at Gorodok (19.32). It would be better to draw from the closer Dump at 19.28 as we will see.

- The German announces an AR of 5 for the Recon Bn which leads the attack, and the Soviet an AR of 0 (1 minus 1 for being DG).

		$4 + 2 = 6$	AR5
		$(5 + 3)/2 = 4$	AR 0 (1, -1 DG)

- The defender hex is Minor City, which is Very Close terrain. The attacker combat value is 6, the defender combat value is 4 for an odds of 1.5. rounded to 2. Per the 4.1 rounding rule if the fractional part is '.5' or more, round up. So the attack column is **2:1 in Very Close** terrain.
- The DRM is +4 for the Germans, AR 5- AR 0 = 5, minus 1 for the Hedgehog. The DRM is the same for the Surprise roll and for the Combat roll except that the full hedgehog value (if >1) applies to the Combat DRM but hedgehog effect is capped at -1 for the Surprise DRM (16.0d).
- The Surprise DR is 7 plus the DRM of +4, which gives an **11** resulting in **Attacker Surprise**, the subsequent dr of 4 gives a **4 columns shift** to the right, from 2:1 to **9:1 in Very Close**.
- I now roll the combat DR, the result is a 6 + 4 DRM (+5 AR, -1 Hedgehog), giving a final result of **10**. Which reads **Ao1e4-DL1o2**. Without surprise shifts the result would have been Ao1-Do1.
- First the attacker must take his option, I choose to take the 'Ao1' as a loss to force the defender to take his options (9.10c), the Recon Bn goes to the Dead Pile. Because the attack was an overrun you can't earn any Exploitation marker, so the 'e4' is discarded (8.1e). As the attacker has not retreated and took all his options, the defender must now take his options too. First the defender must take the mandatory 'L1', and kill the Alarm Rgt that led the defense with its AR1, now he still have the o2, result to deal with, he must take two options, for each option he can either take a loss or retreat all units 1 hex. In all cases he must leave the hex, so he rather chooses to keep both steps alive and retreat two hexes to 21.26 still hindering the road.
- Finally **as the combat was an overrun the remaining attacker must enter the defender hex** (9.12g-D) at no MP cost, the cost was payed during the overrun declaration (8.1a).

If you fail this first attack you can use the other 12Pz Inf Rgt, or the elite 900 Inf Rgt in Lepel. Now with the Tank Division in 18.27 surrounded we can attempt to overrun it.

Combat Table (9.9) roll two dice

Dice Roll Modifiers: Add the Action Rating of selected attacking unit. Subtract the Action Rating of selected defender unit and the Hedgehog Level (if any is in the hex).

Extr Close	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1	6:1	7:1	8:1	9:1	10:1	12:1	15:1	18:1	20:1	24:1	28:1	36:1	44:1	52:1	Extr Close	
Very Close	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1	6:1	7:1	8:1	9:1	10:1	12:1	15:1	18:1	20:1	24:1	28:1	36:1	44:1	52:1	Very Close
Close	1:4	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1	6:1	7:1	8:1	9:1	10:1	12:1	15:1	18:1	20:1	24:1	28:1	36:1	44:1	Close
Open	1:5	1:4	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1	6:1	7:1	8:1	9:1	10:1	12:1	15:1	18:1	20:1	24:1	28:1	36:1	Open
1 or less	AL2	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	1 or less																		
2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	2													
3	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	3														
4	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	4															
5	AL2	AL2	AL2	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	5																
6	AL2	AL2	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	6																	
7	AL1o1	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	7																		
8	AL1o1	AL1o1 Do1	8																			
9	AL1o1 Do1	9																				
10	AL1o1 Do1	10																				
11	AL1o1 Do1	11																				
12	AL1o1 Do1	12																				
13	Ao1 Do1	13																				
14	Ao1 Do1	14																				
15 or more	Ao1 Do1	15 or more																				

Surprise Roll Basics

A complete summary is on chart page 2

Overrun Attacks: 9 or more, Attacker Surprise
6 or less, Defender Surprise

Regular Attacks: 10 or more, Attacker Surprise
5 or less, Defender Surprise

The Tank Division in 18.27 had already lost a step, its nominal strength of 20 becomes 13.33 (20 x2/3), BTW, I always play OCS using the Proportional Loss (21.2) optional rules. Furthermore it is DG which again halves its value to 6.67. So, if my attack value amounts to 6.67 x1.5, I will in fact get the 2:1 attack column. Because of the peculiar OCS rounding rules, we only round the final odds (4.2) not the attacker and defender values separately, then we use the 4.1 rounding rule which specify that if the fractional part is '.5' or more we round up. It may sound complicated, but it is a question of practice, there is some math involved, but even without any calculator, it helps to know that if you get x.5 time the combat value of the defender the actual odds will be X+1. For example, if the defender value is 6.5 if your attackers combat strength is 16.25 (6.5+6.5+3.25) or more the odds are 3:1.

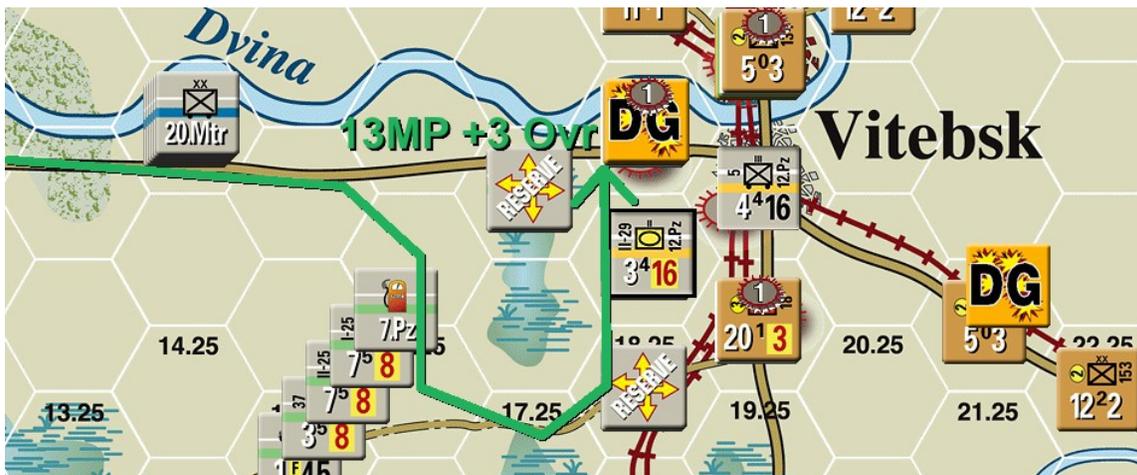
Feature	Movement					Special Modifiers		
	Combat Line	Track	Truck	Leg		Armor	Mech	Other
Open	Open	1	1	1		[x 2]	[x 2]	x 1

Just take a deep breath as the math are not over yet. As the defending unit is in Open terrain, following the Terrain Effect Chart all our Armor type units would be x2 while attacking (not in defense). Our Panzer Bn have yellow background unit type, hence they qualify for this Armor bonus, simple isn't it.

... well, not so fast, we must also take into account the defender Anti-Tank (AT) Effect (9.4e). As the Soviet Division is of the red type but do have a proper Tank Symbol it qualifies for the Heavy AT Effect, alternatively the Hedgehog it is in also gives the Heavy AT Effect.

In the end our two yellow Pz Battalion would only be x1.5. As they must be in Move Mode to reach the target each one has a value of $3 \times 1.5 = 4.5$. Using both Pz Bn would give 9 vs 6.67 for 1:1 in open. If I use both Pz Bn plus the last Inf Rgt I could reach 2:1. Here I prefer to send only a single Pz Bn on attack, sure it is a low odds but I expect to gain Surprise, if the first one fail I still have another shot. Moreover if the first one succeed, it saves some SP and I will still have units available for other tasks.

Those Pz Divisions still have obsolete tanks, or are less experienced, hence their AR of only 4 for the Pz Bn. In contrast the Pz Bn from the best divisions usually have an AR of 5.



Only one unit is attacking, so I pay 1T from 1.26 for ammo, the Soviets have two steps in defense, hence they pay 2T from Gorodok. Combat values are, attacker $4.5 = 3 \times 1.5$ (Armor in Open vs Heavy AT) vs defender $6.67 = 20$ (2/3 loss, /2 DG), $4.5/6.67$ round to **1:1 in Open**, however, notice as we are now attacking in Open terrain it actually yields a better column than if we had attacked in Very Close terrain like our first attack.

Extr Close	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	8:1	12:1	16:1	20:1	28:1	36:1	44:1	52:1	Extr Close
Very Close	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	6:1	9:1	12:1	15:1	18:1	21:1	24:1	Very Close
Close	1:4	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	6:1	8:1	10:1	12:1	15:1	18:1	Close
Open	1:5	1:4	1:3	1:2	1:1	2:1	3:1	4:1	5:1	7:1	9:1	11:1	13:1	Open

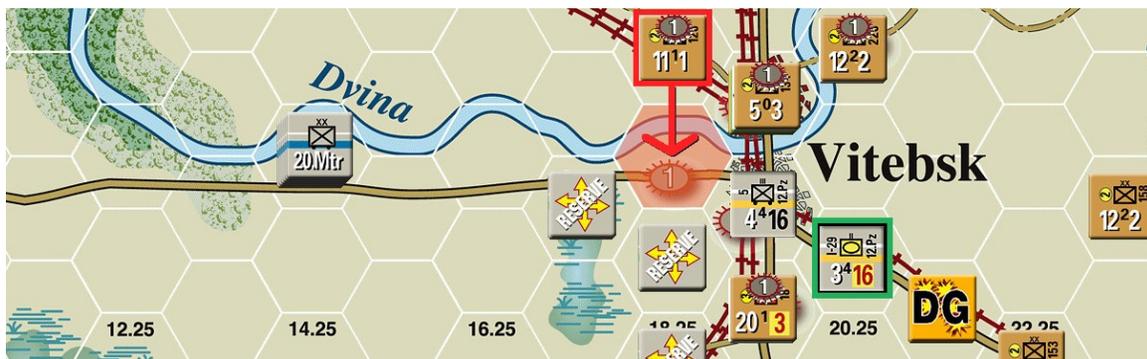
Surprise DR 9, +3 DRM (+4AR, -1 Hedgehog), but only 2 columns shift to **3:1 in Open**.

Combat DR 5, +3 DRM (+4AR, 1 Hedgehog) for **Ao1-DL1o1**.

The Attacker takes is option as a loss, and goes to the dead pile.

As the attacker did not retreat and took all his options, even though he died in the process, the defender is now forced to take his own option (9.10c). First he takes the mandatory 'L1' as a loss, and as he has no legal retreat path he must take his 'o1' as another loss, sending the Tank Division to the dead pile. Moving across a Major River is prohibited for track MP units, other hexes are occupied by Germans units.

There is no hard and fast rule, but sometimes, it is best to accept the option as a loss, it certainly sends one of your unit to the dead pile, but consider the SP and time you would need to mount another attack on the same target. This is a game of attrition, don't expect perfect moves with no casualty. We broke the lock, losing two units but it is not such a high cost for the momentum we gain. Hopefully we can now engage the Soviets in terrain more favorable for our maneuvering tactics. We could have used the Pz Bn from the elite 7Pz in Combat Mode for more punch, and I probably would if the other Pz divisions could not breach the Soviet main line of resistance, but I'd rather keep the whole 7Pz together. There is nothing preventing you from mixing your divisions on the map, or making joint attacks. However after you made your overall plan at corp level it is good practice to assign each division to a single task, and keep units of a multi-unit formation more or less in the same area. Otherwise units isolated from their parent formation might have to pay additional fuel if they can't fuel from the same source as the formation (12.5c-A).



The Soviet 11-1-1 in 18.28 casts a ZoC across the river (4.5), the tanks can move through the ZoC with their track MP however the HQ won't be able to throw supply for ammo as the HQ use truck MP which are blocked by enemy ZoC. So **before** moving a Pz Bn I must first send the remaining 12Pz Inf Rgt to 18.27 to negate the ZoC (4.5b) and "carpet" the road for friendly truck type units.

To finish the job, I send the other 3-4-16 Pz Bn from 1.26 to 20.26, it spends 10 MP to get there, then declares his overrun for 3 MP. Both players pay 1T as there is now only one step per side, the Germans finish the dump at 1.26 and the Soviets draw from Gorodok via 20.28.

Combat values are 6 (3 x2 Armor in Open) vs 2.5 (5 /2 DG) which is 2.4 so it rounds to **2:1 in Open** ground, The DRM is +5 now the Soviets have an AR of 0 minus 1 (3.2c) there is no more Hedgehog. The Surprise roll is 4 + 5 which gives a +3 columns shift to **5:1 in Open**.

The Combat roll is 7 +5 for a result of **Ae3-DL2o2DG**. So the 5-0-3 takes 2 steps loss for DL2 and die.

The German 3-4-16 Pz Bn enters the defender hex then proceed to 23.25 using all its 16 MP, **as he uses Track type MP he can move through enemy ZoC (4.5a – A last sentence)**. From there it can spot for airstrikes on both adjacent enemies and it also hinders the 12-2-2 retreat path.

I call a Hip Shoot on the Soviet 12-2-2 in 22.25. I now use a long range Ju.88. Flak DR 10 for **no effect** and barrage DR 6 with no DRM on column 12-16 barely **DG** the target.

On column **4:1** a Combat DR of 7 + 4DRM gives **Ae4-DL1o2**. The Soviet 12-2-2 takes one loss and must retreat 2 hexes to 24.25, there is no point in taking any options as loss. As Germans units around have no ZoC, the 12-2-2 doesn't take extra loss when retreating. **A retreat of 2 or more hexes automatically triggers DG (9.12a)**, but as the 12-2-2 is already DG nothing more happens (5.10C).

So far I have spend 11 MP including the first overrun. The 12-2-2 annoys me as I plan to attack the 11-1-1 in 24.24 by first moving across the river. So, the moving stack pursues the 12-2-2 and move to 23.26, where he declares another overrun vs the reduced 12-2-2. The Germans pay 2T from Lepel, now the Soviet can pay from Smolensk and throw supply to 24.24, **throwing adjacent to a unit is good enough (12.3c)** the game assumes that the unit will get its hands on the supply even across a river.



The base values are 8 for the Germans but now only 3 for the 12-2-2 (12 /2 DG, /2 Loss) which gives **3:1 in open** ground. The Surprise DR is a 3 which fails to surprise, too bad the column shift was a 6.

However the Combat DR 11 + 4DRM for a result of **Ae3-DL2o2DG**, killing the 12-2-2 for good. Now in 24.25 with 15 MP expended the Germans cannot cross the river. So the Pz Bn moves back to 23.26 to interfere with the 12-2-2 in 23.27.



We cannot overrun across the river into 24.24 as the cost would be 1MP for the Open terrain +3MP for the Minor River hexside for a total of 4 MP, and (8.1) allows overrun only if the target hex cumulative MP cost is 3 or less. Additionally (8.1c) forbids the use of road or bridge to reduce the cost of an overrun. In contrast Leg type units can potentially overrun across minor river as they only pay +1 for a minor river hexside.

The other Pz Bn from the 20Pz can move to 23.24 via 22.24 however this would cost 13.5 MP, and it will be short of 0.5MP to overrun the 11-1-1 blocking the bridge in 24.24. Alternatively we could use units from the fresh 7Pz to overrun 24.24 but I have other ideas for this division. So let's call it over for the overrun. The Movement Phase is far from finished yet, now that we opened part of the road, which was our main goal, let's solidify our newly gained positions and prepare for the Combat Phase.



One Infantry Rgt of the 20 Pz moves to 25.25, and the other units of the 20Pz move forward to 23.24 to prepare an attack on 24.24. I separate the Infantry Rgt to avoid having more than 3 Regimental Equivalents (RE) in 23.24 as it would give enemy barrages a favorable column shift for stacking. Well in this first turn the Soviets reactions are very limited, still it is a good habit to avoid too much stacking.

Be careful that minor river hexsides add +3MP to the destination hex cost, for units using track type MP, but +5 MP for those using truck type MP. Note that our units are reaching the limit of the Lelap HQ (5.27) throw range. The HQ is able to throw supply north of the river and using the "adjacent is good enough" rules (12.3c) units on the other side of the river will get their hands on the precious SP.

Now, I move the 20Mtr units, both Inf Rgt move to 19.27 to prepare an attack on the other side of the river in 19.28 to capture the airbase and secure this critical bottleneck. I send both infantry regiments as I intend to move one in 19.28 if the attack is successful. It is important to try to anticipate both a favorable combat result but also a possible retreat whenever you initiate a combat. The 20Mtr artillery and organic trucks will stay one hex behind for security and to avoid excessive stacking.

As most of the 20Mtr used leg MP, the remaining Recon Bn use the Single-Unit Method (12.5c-C) of fueling, which means I **pay 1T to fuel a single unit for a single phase**. The Recon Bn moves to 20.26 to protect the artillery there.

Finally, I send the 12 Pz Organic Truck to 19.26.



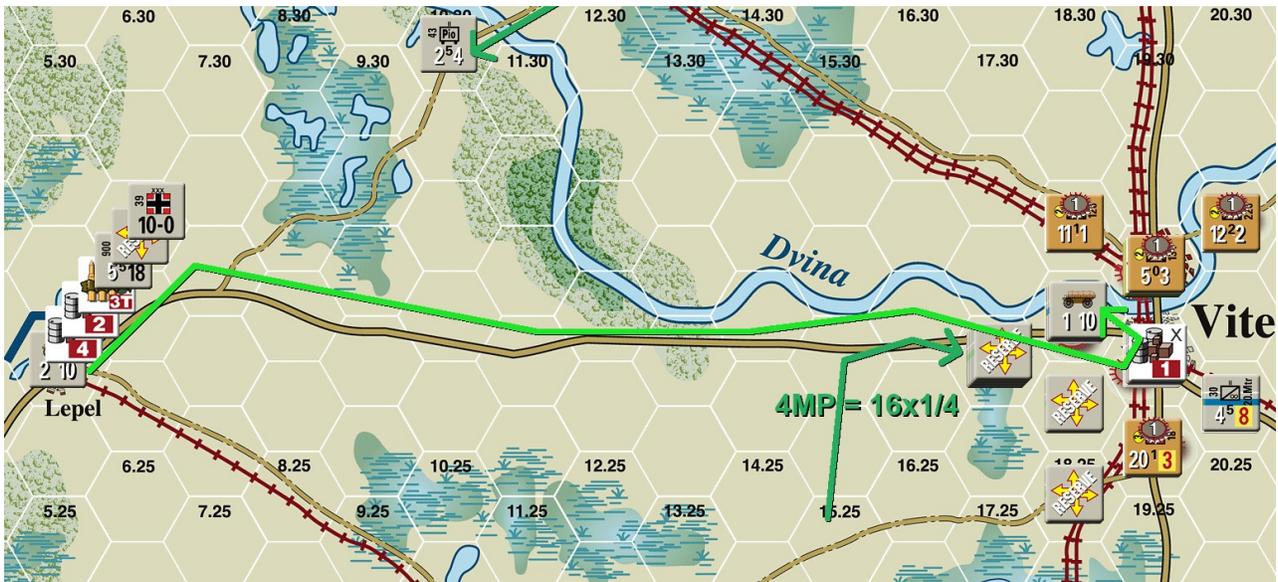
Those were the preparatory moves for the upcoming Combat Phase. However we must plan even further ahead and think about the following Exploitation Phase. I set the remaining units of the 7Pz in Reserve Mode, organic trucks are the only transport points that can enter Reserve Mode (5.7f). Here, we should be careful to select the proper side for each unit under the Reserve marker, as **Mode changes are decided during the Movement Phase** (5.4) even if the unit actually moves only during the Exploitation Phase. I flip them all to Move Mode. If you want you can select the mode for each unit of a multiple counters formation on a unit by unit basis, it just happens that in our case I want all sub-units in Move Mode.

I move those 7 Pz units to 17.27 where they join their Artillery already there. I cannot move them to 18.27 because **units in Reserve cannot end their movement stacked with a Hedgehog** (5.7g). Also note that I can now remove the Reserve marker on the 7Pz Artillery, as one Reserve marker is enough for the whole stack. Reserve markers are a limited resource, but the scenario limit is the number you can have at the same time on the map. It is OK to move several units with a Reserve marker to the same hex to save reserve markers, actually the Reserve marker can even be placed until after all units have finished their $\frac{1}{4}$ movements (5.4a).

Similarly I flip the 900 Inf Bde in Lpel 5.27 and put it in Reserve Mode, oriented toward Move. I'd like to move it $\frac{1}{4}$ of its MA but I have to pay for this $\frac{1}{4}$ MP, plus pay again later if it moves in the Exploitation Phase. I could also fuel the HQ in Lpel and that would fuel all independents in range at once for the whole turn (12.5c-B), unfortunately I haven't many independents under command on turn 1, they'll join the battlefield on next turn. So I keep the 900 Inf in Lpel for now.

The 43 Pioneer Bn moves back to 10.30 which is a better defensive position, and guard the bridge, as he uses leg MP it doesn't cost any fuel.

I can use the 3 Wagon points to shuttle some SP closer to the front line, but I'll need 2 of them to make a Wagon Extender (12.7d) with the 3 additional Wagon points due as reinforcements on entry K (1.26) on turn 2. So, I leave 2 of them in Lpel for now to make an extender. The remaining one loads 1SP from Lpel for 10% of its MA (13.2f) which makes 1MP, moves to Vitebsk (19.27) for plus 7MP, unloads its cargo there for another 1MP (10% of 10 MP again). With one MP remaining the Wagon moves to 18.27. It could moves to 17.27, but as the 7Pz in reserve will move later I' rather not let my Wagon alone so close to the enemy with no combat units to defend it.



Now at the end of the ground units movements there is a special Barrage Segment for the planes and ships. This is not Hip Shoots anymore, but regular Barrage air missions, the advantage is that you can now send up to 4 planes at once on a single mission (14.2a). I use this possibility to send 2 Bf.110 and the Hs.123 together to bomb the Tank Division in 19.26, I also plan to barrage Vitebsk (19.28) but as it contains an airbase it would increase the Flak roll of the defender by the airbase Level, 1 here.

In contrast to Hipshoots, those regular Barrage air missions do not require a spotter, however if you don't have a correct spotter your barrages suffer a severe -3 columns shift. A spotter is strongly recommended.

Individually those planes have low barrage values but stacked together they are worth 13 (5 + 5 + 3). The hedgehog in 19.26 reduces this to the **8-11 Column**. Flak DR 3, +1DRM because the air mission has 3 or more units results in **no effect**. Barrage DR 6, **just missed!**

Active	Inactive

30 Hexes to West Edge - Unlimited Refit

I have other planes available but I'd rather keep them for the Exploitation Phase if need be. It is not necessary, nor always possible, to DG a target before attacking it, but it really gives an edge in combat. Moreover it seriously hampers the enemy reactions.

We could use the 17 Pz in 13.22 to attack north toward Vitebsk, though it pertains to Guderian PzGroup. However this would be a tactical move, and later we would need to fuel it again to move it back to its parent formation area in the south. Somehow, this is not in the spirit of the game, or at least the system makes you pay for this kind of behaviors.

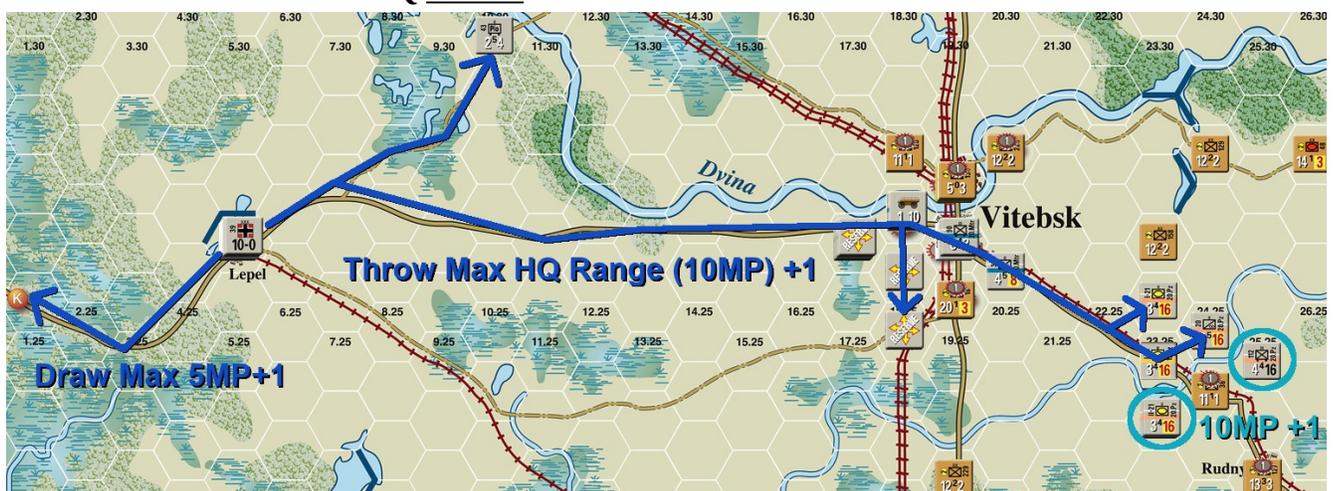
German Turn 1 Supply Phase:

Now there is the critical Supply Phase, no maneuver or attack occur here, but all friendly combat units must check to see if they are in Trace Supply (12.6). Trace Supply is something different from the on map supply markers we have used so far, it is just a matter of proving that for each of your combat units there is a valid path that connects this unit to a friendly Supply Source. Trace Supply doesn't cost any on map supply point. It represents general non-combat supply like food and maintenance.

The first thing is to find a friendly supply source. They are usually defined by the game specific booklet or by SSR. In our case, *Smolensk 3.1* defines Germans supply sources as any road (including track) or railroad map-edge hex west of 10.xx. A clarification specifies that hex 10.32 is not a supply source. In our simplified play-through, the Germans supply source is entry K(1.26). Similarly, the Soviets supply sources (*Smolensk 2.1*) are road or railroad map-edge hexes east of 12.xx.

Then using the usual draw and throw rules (12.3), we must find a supply path for all Germans combat units. First the German 39th HQ in Lepel (5.27) use Direct Draw (12.3a) to reach entry K supply source. Counting back from the HQ entry K is 2.5 MP away using the reduced road MP cost which fits easily with the 5MP allowed for direct draw.

Once we prove that the HQ is validly connected to the supply source, we can now use the HQ Throw Range (12.3b) to extend the supply trace link toward our frontline units. As the HQ as a printed throw range of 10 truck type MP, we can reach much farther than the limited 5MP of direct draw. Be careful that **when using 'Draw' count MP from the unit back to the supply source, and when using 'Throw' count MP from the HQ toward the unit.**



Using 10 truck type MP, and the road, the 39th HQ can throw as far as 24.25 nineteen hexes away. So all Germans units in this radius are actually connected to the supply source and in trace supply. The two stacks across the river are just beyond this reach, However by virtue of the “Adjacent is good enough rule” (12.3c) units in 23.24 and 25.25 are also in trace supply. So, everything is fine for the Germans.

Without the HQ, the 900 Inf Bde could have used direct draw to establish its own trace supply, but all other Germans units would have been unable to trace back to a supply source. If that unfortunate case happens you have two standard options:

- First you can “Eat off the Map” (12.6c), it means you must spend your precious on-map SP markers to pay for food, paying 1T to feed 2 RE.
- Otherwise each unit unable to trace are marked Out of Supply (12.6), and must roll for Attrition (12.8). Both being really bad.

In Smolensk a third option exists, you can spend a Supply Cache marker to pay for Forage (21.10b). For the purpose of our example we will suppose that Germans troops made progress through the outer Soviets defense around Orsha and managed to cut the Orsha-Vitebsk road like in the picture below.



Soviet Turn 1 Reaction Phase:

In this phase, the opponent has some limited opportunities to react and interfere with your brilliant plan, mainly by using his own Reserves or air forces. Unfortunately for the Soviets, they start this campaign with no Reserve marker. Furthermore *Smolensk 2.2d* prohibits them from flying missions in their Reaction Phase (and Exploitation Phase, but that’s another story), otherwise they could have tried to bomb German stacks pending for attack. Basically during German turn 1 Reaction Phase, the Soviets can just sit and watch.

German Turn 1 Combat Phase:

The Combat Phase start by a Barrage Segment where only Artillery can fire, but not planes. Let's make some barrages, I start by the most important targets first. The 20-3-3 Arty in 18.27 fires in Vitebsk (19.28). **In contrast to planes, ground artillery must spend SP for ammunition when making a Barrage.** Artillery barrages tend to be pretty expensive, be very selective in your barrage as firing all your available artillery is a good way to quickly run out of SP.

Following the 'Cost' line of the Barrage Table, a strength 20 barrage cost 3T. However here, I will use the new Supply Caches (21.10) optional rule, as *Smolensk 1.7* makes it a standard part of this game. By 21.10a spending a Supply Cache marker for "shells" reduces the cost of a barrage by 2T, in the end I only need to pay 1T from Lepel.

19.28 is Extremely Close terrain, giving a -2 columns shift, and the Hedgehog adds another -1 shift, for a final **column of 5-7**. Note that you pay the cost of the column before making any shifts. A DR of 6 results in **No Effect**. Though I have other guns in range I cannot barrage the same hex twice (10.0e-A).

Barrage Table (10.0a) roll two dice using column for Barrage Strength and apply column shifts that apply

Roll	1 or less	2	3-4	5-7	8-11	12-16	17-24	25-40	41-68	69-116	117+
Cost	1T	1T	2T	T	2T	3T	3T	4T	6T	8T	10T
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]
6	-	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]
7	-	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2
8	-	-	-	DG	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2	1/2
9	-	-	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2	1/2	1/2
10	-	DG	DG	DG	[1/2]	[1/2]	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1
11	DG	DG	DG	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	2
12	DG	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1	2	3

Roll once for hex. Owner's choice of unit(s) which take the step loss (exception: no choice for targeted ship).

Density Shifts

RE's in hex (don't round)

Left 1	1 RE or less	Only combat units count for density – not transport points, SPs, etc. No multi-step unit or multi-unit formation ever counts as more than 3 RE for this purpose.
None	Greater than 1 RE, up to 3	
Right 1	Greater than 3 RE, up to 4	
Right 2	Greater than 4 RE, up to 5	
Right 3	Greater than 5 RE, up to 6	
Right 4	Greater than 6 RE	

Additional Shifts

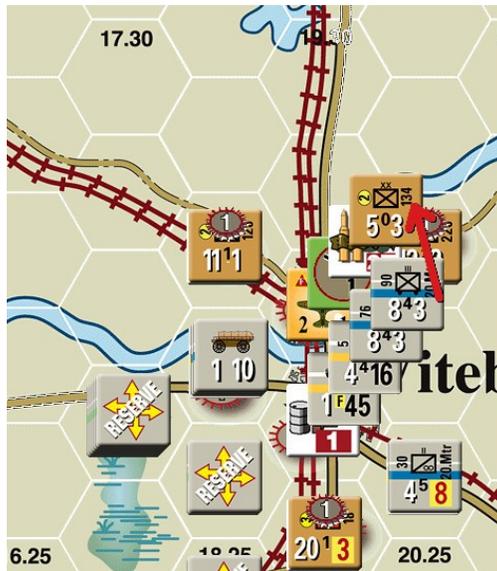
Use all lines which apply (but a line can only be applied once)

Left 1	For a Hedgehog of any level (see also [1/2] result)
Left 1	For a Close or Very Close terrain hex
Left 2	For an Extremely Close terrain hex
Left 3	For no correct spotter adjacent to target (this always applies to a barrage with any Strategic Bombers)

Now, the 10-3-16 in 20.26 fires on the Tank Division in 19.26, this cost 2T from Lepel. The Hedgehog in 19.26 causes a -1 shift, and the DR of 5 results in **another miss**.

Finally the 10-3-16 in 23.24 bombs the 11-1-1 in 24.24, this time I spent another Supply Cache to pay for the 2T. There is also a -1 column shift for the Hedgehog. A DR 8 finally gives a **DG**.

I'd like to get rid of the Soviet Tank Division in 19.26. I could attack it but it doesn't look like a promising attack, even if I had DG the target an 'Ao1' result could be problematic for the Germans. It is not strictly necessary to attack this Soviet Tank Division to open the road to Smolensk, however with its sheer combat strength and attack bonus for armor in open terrain, it might be a threat to my units around as they are spread and in Move Mode. Hopefully, combined with the Germans forces in the center operating around Orsha, I expect to put it Out of Supply (OoS) and force it to roll for attrition.



The two 8-4-3 Inf Rgts in 19.27 attack 19.28. I pay 2T from Lepel. The Soviet must also pay 2T, he draws directly from 19.28. The odds computation are a bit trickier here, per 9.4b **the defender gets to choose the one terrain that will modify each attacking stacks.**

As a Major City gives a x1 for infantry ('Other' type), The Soviet player rather choose the hexside Major River modifier which divides by 2 the attacking infantry. So the Germans combat value is 8 (16/2). Now the defender separately chooses (9.4c) that his lone 5-0-3 defend in the Major City terrain which keeps his combat value to 5 and, more importantly, its sets the category line used on the CRT, in this case the worst possible line for the attacker. So the initial odds are **2:1 in Extremely Close.**

Surprise DR is 9 + 3 DRM (AR +4, Hedgehog -1). Remember that in contrast to overrun where a final surprise roll of 9 is enough for Attacker Surprise, in regular combat the attacker now need a 10. I'm fortunate to get a full 6 columns shift, resulting in **20:1 in Extremely Close.** Here, note that it would be almost impossible to achieve such high odds ratio by normal means or it would cost tons of SP. In a sense surprise is more effective the harder the terrain is.

Combat Roll is an 8 +3DRM for an **Ae4-DL1o2**. Both Germans attacking units have an AR4 so they both get an Exploitation Marker, as we are now making regular combats, we are eligible for the Attacker Exploit results. The Soviet take 1 Step Loss and retreat 2 hexes "**locally to the rear**" (9.12c) to 19.30. The instant it enters the second hex of retreat the Soviet defender becomes DG.

One of the German attacking unit advances into 19.28 capturing the airbase (4.4c), The inactive Soviet fighter is forced to roll for survival (9.14f) a DR 9 causes **no loss** and the fighter is displaced up to twice its range, it chooses to go to Krichev airbase (27.05).

Then the Germans try to capture the remaining 2T dump (9.14b) (12.11b), a die of 6 results in 75% of 2T = 1.5T rounded up to 2T by the general rounding rule (4.1). It wasn't a good idea for the Soviets to setup one fighter so close to the front line, similarly he should have used SP from this dump earlier. Those bad moves were merely to illustrate the capture rules. Also note that the Germans should consider using an AR5 unit to lead the assault on this vital hex.

Finally the 2-5-16 in 24.25, for the AR5, plus the 3-4-16 and 4-4-16 in 23.24 attack the DG 11-1-1 in 24.24. I could add more units but it would cost more SP and won't gain that much in odds ratio, actually I could improve from 2:1 to 3:1 in Open terrain, but with the AR5 unit I hope for surprise. So the Germans pay 3T from Lepel and the Soviets 2T from Smolensk. The 2-5-16 is halved across the minor river, and the Pz Bn is x1.5 (not x2 because the defender Hedgehog gives heavy AT effect) for a 9.5 vs 5.5 which means **2:1 in Open**.

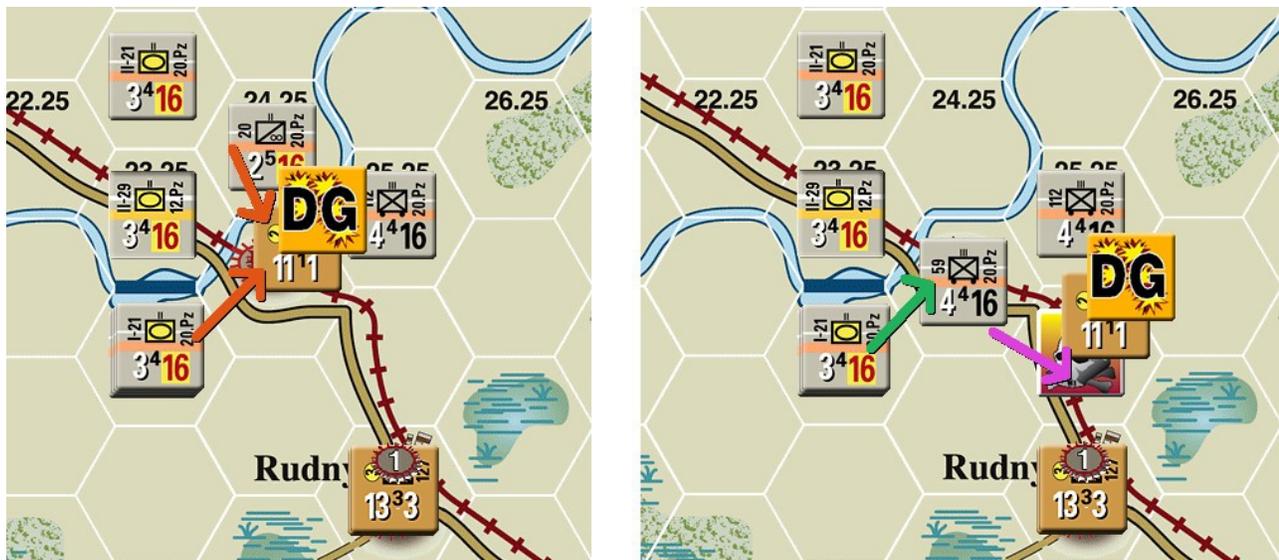
Surprise DR 4 + 4 (AR +5, Hedgehog -1), too bad.

Combat Roll 6 +4 for **Ao1-DL1o1**

The AR5 recon 2-5-16 takes the loss and goes to the dead pile forcing the Soviet to take his option, hence ensuring that the bridge is cleared for the unit of the 7Pz in reserve. The Soviet takes 1 step loss and retreats to 25.24. The surviving Inf Rgt advance in 24.24.

Be careful **as the attacker if you take any option as a retreat all attacking units must retreat**, possibly leaving weak or non combat units to fend for themselves. Some units are allowed to tag along (9.12d) with the retreating units but sometimes it is better to attack with only part of each stacks to make sure that some combat units will stay in each attacking hex even if the dice result forces a retreat.

It would have been better to invert the stack in 23.24 with the one in 25.25, as by attacking from two non contiguous hexes I void any chance for an Exploitation result (9.13b-C).



Even with a very good +4 DRM, two low rolls in a row, one for surprise and one for combat give an inferior result. In contrast having at least one of your two rolls above average is often good enough when you have such a favorable DRM. Sometime it is a valid tactic to try to push your luck for surprise, especially when attacking in very difficult terrain, but never take a favorable surprise for granted, as even a +1 surprise columns shift won't change that much anyway. Similarly you can prepare your attack to increase your chance to get an Exploitation result, but here again this would rely on good dice. Putting units in Reserve for the Exploitation Phase is a more reliable way to proceed..

This concludes the Combat Phase, it was far from brilliant but the objectives were captured albeit with casualties and without destroying all the Soviets units encountered.

Note how most of the combats actually took place via overruns in the Movement Phase, and not in the Combat Phase proper. However this is not a general rule, but be alert for such opportunities, Hip Shoots and overruns allow you to attack the same hex several times during the same phase which barrage and regular combat do not. On occasions, Move Mode is a powerful attacking tool though it may be counter intuitive.

German Turn 1 Exploitation Phase:

This phase allows you to exploit favorable combats results to push your advantage further. **Units with an Exploitation marker can now move ½ MA**, whereas **released Reserves can move their full MA**. Both can overrun and both will have a proper Combat Segment.

I now release the whole 7Pz in 17.27, it is usually a good idea to leave the Reserve marker in the original release hex for reference in case you have to re-count MP. As the whole division was fueled earlier in the Movement Phase, there is no need to fuel it again.

First I want to finish the 11-1-1 in 25.24. It has lost a step and is DG its combat value is only 2.25 (11/4). So I think a single Pz Battalion is enough for the job. I move a 4-5-16 from 17.27 to 24.24 for 3.5 MP, declare an OVR for +3MP, I pay 1T for ammo from Lepel. The Soviets pay 1T from Smolensk. As the terrain is Open the Pz Bn is x2 so the odds are 8 vs 2.25, which round to **4:1**.

Surprise DR 9 + 5 DRM (AR +5, DG) for a whopping 6 columns shift up to the **13:1** column. Combat DR is 8 + 5 DRM for an **Ae2-DL2o3DG**, more than enough to finish the 11-1-1. **You can never earn any Exploitation result for combats happening during the Exploitation Phase.**



The Pz Bn enters the defender hex. The 13-3-3 Infantry division in Rudnya (25.23) is too strong an opponent for the single Pz Bn, so it continues skirting the obstacle moving around the swamp till 26.22.

I release the 900 Inf Bde in Lepel 5.27, In contrast to the 7Pz which was fueled earlier for the whole turn, I didn't pay any fuel for the Inf Bde yet, so I fuel it now for 1T and moves it to 25.24 paving the way for other truck type MP units. This unit will be in good position to assault Rudnya next turn.

Then the rest of the 7Pz follows suit. The second Pz Bn moves to 28.19 cutting the road and railroad, thereby severing the vital supply artery from Smolensk to the whole Soviet 20 Army around Krasnoye.

The Motorcycle Recon from 18.25 moves to 28.21, and the 4-4-16 Inf Rgt from 18.26 moves to 28.20 forming a line to further isolate the Soviets to the west from their friendly positions to the east.

The 2-5-16 Recon moves to 23.22 a key position, as it physically blocks the sole open terrain in this area between the two swamp patches on both sides. This Recon is a bit weak on defense, I could send the 9-3-16 Artillery in the same hex to add an extra Combat Strength point. But I think the Soviets around are not such a threat, so I'd rather send the artillery forward to 28.21 eyeing toward Smolensk.



Now I decide to move the Organic Truck, forward to 28.21. The 7Pz units are currently OoS. However I expect to restore trace supply before the next German Supply Phase, that is I expect to either open a line by using overruns during turn 2 Movement Phase, or if that fails, to be able to sneak a supply truck forward to feed the 7Pz. Nonetheless in case the forward units of the 7Pz became isolated, I'd rather have them with their supply truck to provide some SP if need be.

I'd like to clear Rudnya, but a three steps AR3 unit in Close terrain with a Hedgehog requires a prepared attack. Had I performed better against the 11-1-1 guarding the neighboring bridge I may have been able to mount some form of attack in the Exploitation Phase on Rudnya. I could try to DG the 13-3-3 right now either with the 7Pz Artillery or with an airstrike, with 4 steps in Rudnya it gives a +1 column shift for stacking in favor of the Germans. However it is generally not good practice to DG a target you don't plan to attack as it will recover during its own Clean-up Phase, as such it is most of the time a waste of Supply. Anyway, rather than a brute force attack on Rudnya, I choose to encircle it hopping to put the defender OoS, thus making next turn attack on this key village that much easier.

I have no units to protect my Hq in Lepel. Be warned that **leaving a HQ without any supporting Combat units is an OCS cardinal sin**, as you are never sure on how deep the enemy can strike. However considering that the Soviets have a number of restriction on turn 1 in this scenario I think there is little danger here, for more security I could have left a unit of the 17Pz from hex 13.22 in Reserve.

I decide not to move the 8-4-3 Inf Rgt in 19.28 as it a hold critical hex and there are no back up unit. However as there is a back up 4-4-16 Inf Rgt in 19.27, I move the 8-4-3 from 19.27 to 21.26. From here it projects a ZoC as it is in Combat Mode, and helps isolate the Soviet Tank Division in 19.26.



I didn't make a lot of combats during the whole Exploitation Phase, rather I maneuvered to cut the enemy supply lines, it saves me SP and actually it is a bigger threat for the Soviets defenders, as we will see during his own Supply Phase. I could have moved a little further east, but I try to form a cohesive line. My defenses are a bit thin for sure, but Soviets turn 1 actions are severely impaired.

To give some air protection to my frontline units, a single Bf.109 from 1.19 now conducts a Base Transfer air mission (*2.3-Exploitation Phase*) to the recently captured Vitebsk airbase in 19.28. The fighter remains active as it doesn't exceed its normal range (*14.1c*) and as such exert a 10 hex radius defensive PZ. If the center group capture Orsha I could send there another fighter from the airbase at 2.02 in the south to extend my defensive umbrella.



German Turn 1 Clean Up Phase:

I **remove all friendly fueled markers**, it means that from this point on, none of my units are fueled anymore, and any units using truck or track type MP would have to pay for fuel again if they wanted to move anew. I also **remove any DG marker friendly units may have**. So far the Germans didn't had any. This conclude the German first turn.

Analysis:

- I achieved most objectives. Vitebsk and its airbase are captured, and the road to Smolensk almost open, at any rate I have made good progress forward as most my units advanced at maximum speed.
- More importantly, jointly with the Germans forces in the center of the map that, *hypothetically*, captured hexes 19.19 and 19.20, the whole Soviet 20th Army around Krasnoye (23.20) is in a difficult supply situation. Actually the HQ in Gorki (23.12) barely reaches the southern bank of the river providing supply with the, so important, "Adjacent is enough" rule. Depending on how the Germans fare around Orsha there is a serious threat that Germans units sneak through and also cut supply coming from the south, if not on turn 1, it is highly probable for turn 2. However as Supply Cache is an integral part of the Smolensk game, the Soviets will be able to use 21.10b to Forage for the 20th Army saving the day, at least for a turn...
- Having made a deep thrust, I'm in good position to flip to Combat Mode next turn, and thus regain the powerful ZoC effect which will help me tighten the knot over the encircled Soviets. As I have moved in a big hop, I also save supply compared to a series of smaller moves.
- I have no units in Reserve in the north, hence I can't react to any unforeseen maneuvers.
- I started with 13 SP on map, I have only 5 SP 1T remaining which is average, however I still have all my Organic Trucks full, and I captured 2T from the Soviets. Additionally on Turn 2 I'm guaranteed to have 6 SP loaded on transports plus the regular SP roll which gives an average of 3SP for the north Panzer Group.

- I had a little more casualties than expected, in particular precious AR5 units. And my positions are presently a bit thin. Most of my units are spread one per hex in Move Mode, and my supply backbone is merely 1 hex wide. The 13-3-3 still holding Rudnya is a thorn in my side, we will see how he find supply if any. Being spread out also limits my overrun options next turn to small stacks, though they might switch to Combat Mode for more punch.

- I'm a bit overextended, yet as thin are my positions I managed to drive a wedge between the northern Soviet 22th Army in Gorodok and the Smolensk area, with Germans looming to enter at Entry L(20.35), those Soviets forces are floating in an uncomfortable position. Moreover by slicing through the Soviets before they were able to reinforce and stabilize their initial defensive positions, I might well have saved many SP and casualties. In particular I captured a number of Hedgehogs before they were reinforced.

- All in all, it is not just a matter of how you fare, but rather a comparison of your own situation and that of the enemy. It is OK to be in a tough situation if the enemy is in a tougher one.

- By Smolensk rules (2.2, 2.3e and 2.4) the Soviet reactions are significantly reduced. Moreover they have zero Reserve marker on turn 1 and Scenario 1 SSR says, all their ground units only have one half of their printed MA on the first turn which severely interfere with their reactions. Actually I don't fear so much the Soviets reaction on turn 1, however there is a chance that the Soviets also play first on turn 2, and it is much harder to anticipate the whole extend of their reaction if they play twice in a row.

Soviet Turn:

Soviet Turn 1 Aircraft Refit Phase:

I, now playing the Soviet, refit all planes paying 1T per Air Base, the three planes in the off-map box refit for free. We'll assume the I.16 in Orsha was displaced (9.14f) to Krichev (27.05) when the Germans captured Vitebsk and its airbase.

Soviet Turn 1 Reinforcement Phase:

The Soviet Arrivals charts gives no new units this turn.

The Soviets receive 3 Reserve markers.

A Supply DR 7 gives 9SP for the whole map. we'll use only 4SP for our north example.

1SP arrives in Smolensk using free rail cap of *Smolensk 2.1*,

1SP on Entry L (20.35),

1SP on 37.35,

1SP on entry B (62.23).

The regular Replacement DR 8 gives 1 Pax Repl.

The Special Replacement dr 6 gives a 12-2-2 Inf Div with loss and a 3-1-1 Alarm Bn. (*Smolensk 1.6c*).

The 12-2-2 arrives in Gorodok (19.32) as *Smolensk 2.1* allows special Repl to enter at any HQ able to get Trace Supply by direct draw. We'll consider that the Alarm Bn and the Pax Repl enter in the southern half of the map in Krichev (27.05).

Soviet Turn 1 Movement Phase:

Smolensk 2.3e forbids the use of Strat Mode for the Soviets. The Germans didn't use Strat Mode on turn 1, as it is a terrible Mode to be in if you make contact with the enemy. In contrast here, for the Soviets Strat Mode would have been really helpful as it doubles the MA of units allowing them to move much faster, and a glaring weakness of the Soviets infantry is their slow movement speed.

To make things worse, SSR specifies that the Soviets are in "disarray" and as such all their ground units can only use half of their MA on the first turn.

Analysis:

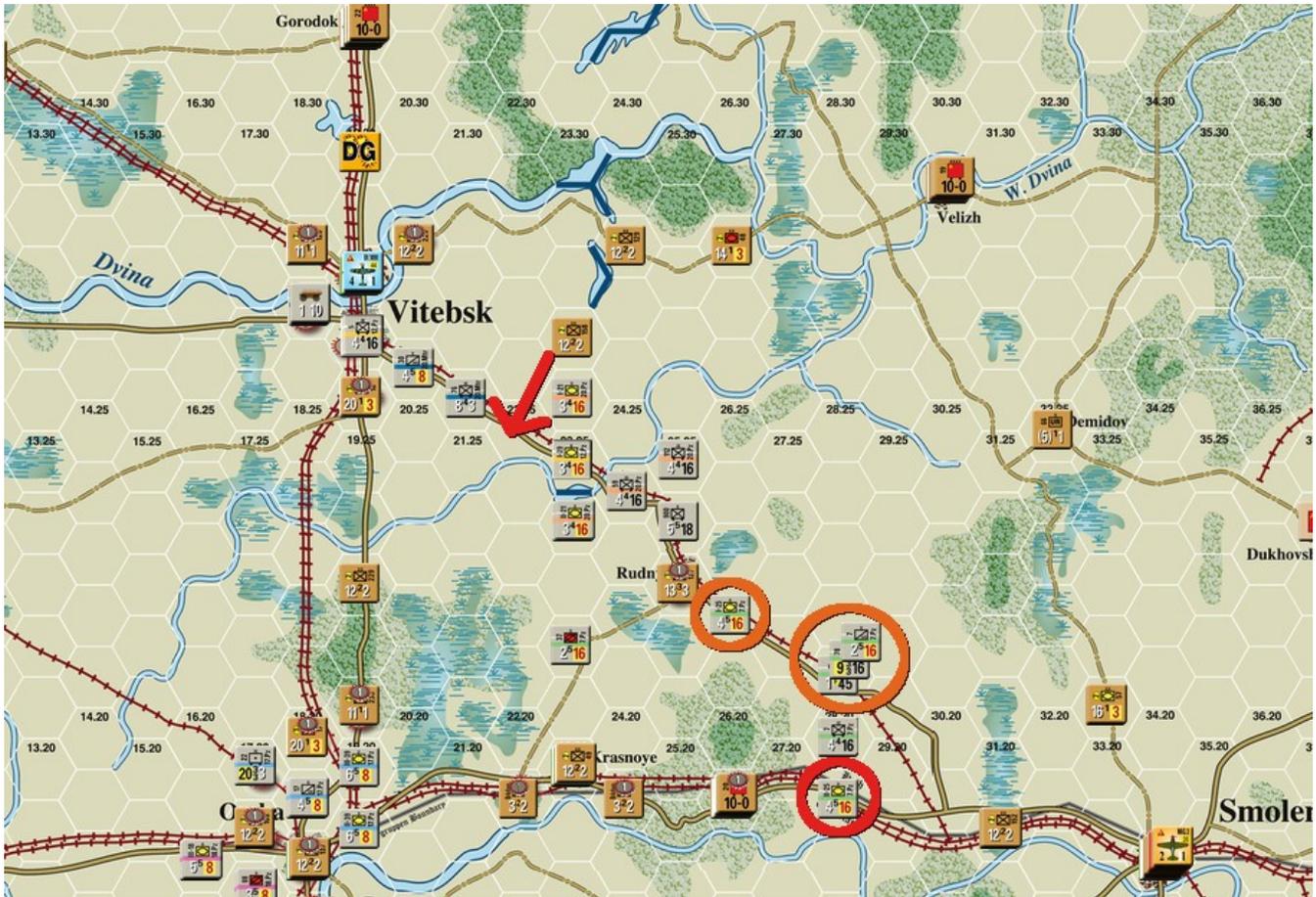
As the Soviet player, I have a tough decision to make, if I play first on turn 2, I could be more aggressive, however if the Germans get the Initiative on turn 2, I would not want to be caught in the middle of a move. In fact, I would like to move my units from a defensive position to another good defensive one, that's from and to Close terrains or Hedgehogs, but not to remain in Open terrain. I can't really do much with only half MA as most of my Infantry only has a base MA of 1 or 2 to start with. In particular it prevents overruns as they require 3MP. My tanks units in Move Mode have more MP unfortunately their Move Mode AR is often one less than their Combat Mode AR reflecting the poor Soviet leadership for offensive operations at this point in the war.

I'd like to open the Smolensk Orsha road to restore this important Supply line. The 20.20 swamps area is a very good position to establish a defensive line as the swamps void most of The Germans mobile formations advantages. Unfortunately, there's no point in mounting a defense there if we are already turned on hexrow 27.xx.

There is a gap at 22.25 where I could try to return the favor and cut the Germans supply line.

Most importantly, I must start to build the Smolensk defense as it is the key area in this scenario. I must also start to build defensive positions around the map and try to form some lines of defense, considering that my infantry units are so ponderous I cannot quickly switch them from place to place. So thinking on the long term in campaign terms, I should strive to start moving them to places where combined with other reinforcements to come they'll form a cohesive defense. This is a key point in the campaign, especially on the southern part of the map, but mostly out of the scope of this play-through.

I have a slight advantage in SP over the Germans, most of my units move only on foot so I have less need for fuel. If possible I'd like to mount some attacks here or there to force the Germans to burn some SP. Although I suffer from a terrible AR disadvantage I should try to fight on my term if the opportunity arises. With less SP the Germans might not be able to mount the large scale maneuvers where they shine.



Breakout Segment:

Although the supply check, actually happens during the upcoming Supply Phase, I must anticipate each of my units supply situation. If any units are isolated and can't expect to improve their status during my Movement Phase, I should decide right now if they attempt a Breakout (12.8e). It is a desperate measure but with low AR units it is better than to risk Attrition. As you can see on the table below units with AR of 2 or less have more than 70% of suffering two losses. On the other hand units with AR 4 or more stand a good chance to survive several turns even if OoS. Note that **DG doesn't reduce a unit AR for purpose of attrition only for combat.**

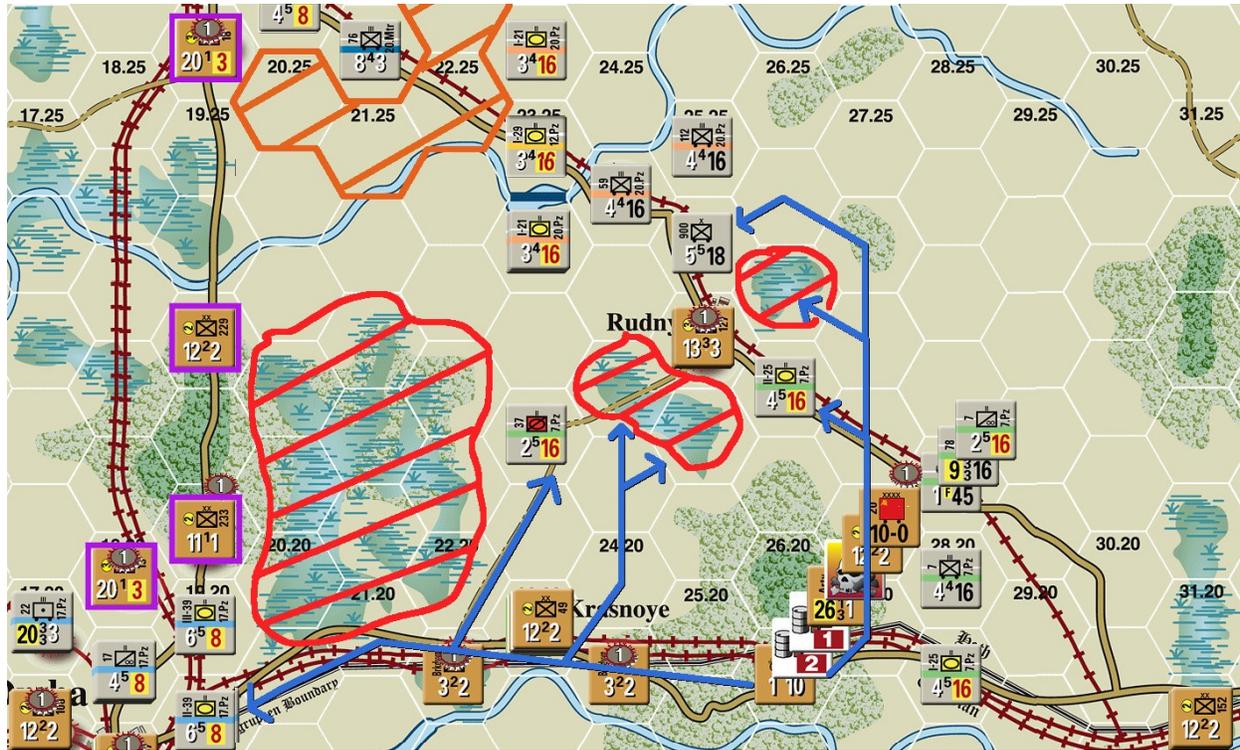
Attrition Table (12.8b) roll two dice

Use the column of the best AR in stack that is OoS.

Action Rating						Result
5	4	3	2	1	0	
2-8	2-7	2-5	2-3	2	-	No Loss
9-10	8-9	6-7	4-5	3-4	2-3	-1 Step
11	10	8-9	6-7	5-6	4-5	-2 Steps
12	11	10-11	8-9	7-8	6-7	-4 Steps
13+	12+	12+	10+	9+	8+	- All Steps

Dice Roll Modifier: +3 if there are 5 or more steps in hex.

The Soviets situation in the Vitebsk, Orsha, 30.19 triangle is tricky. The HQ in 26.19 is not connected to a supply source, it has some SP to throw to feed isolated units “off the map” (12.6c). However as the HQ use truck type MP to throw, all paths are blocked either by enemy units, ZoC, or swamps that are prohibited terrain for trucks. There is no way it can throw to Soviets units to the west highlighted in purple. Those units can’t either use direct draw on their own, because even if they use leg type MP for movements 12.3a clearly states that **all units actually use truck type MP for direct draw**.



Moreover, overruns cost 3MP, and with the turn 1 restriction, my isolated Infantry don’t even have enough MP if I switch to Move Mode to attempt desperate overruns. Which could be a good way to burn some German SP. My isolated tanks have no fuel, hence they can’t move at all.

Considering the fact that those units have low AR, and some have already lost steps. I think that the Breakout odds appear better than Attrition. Breakout is simple indeed, just roll a single dr:

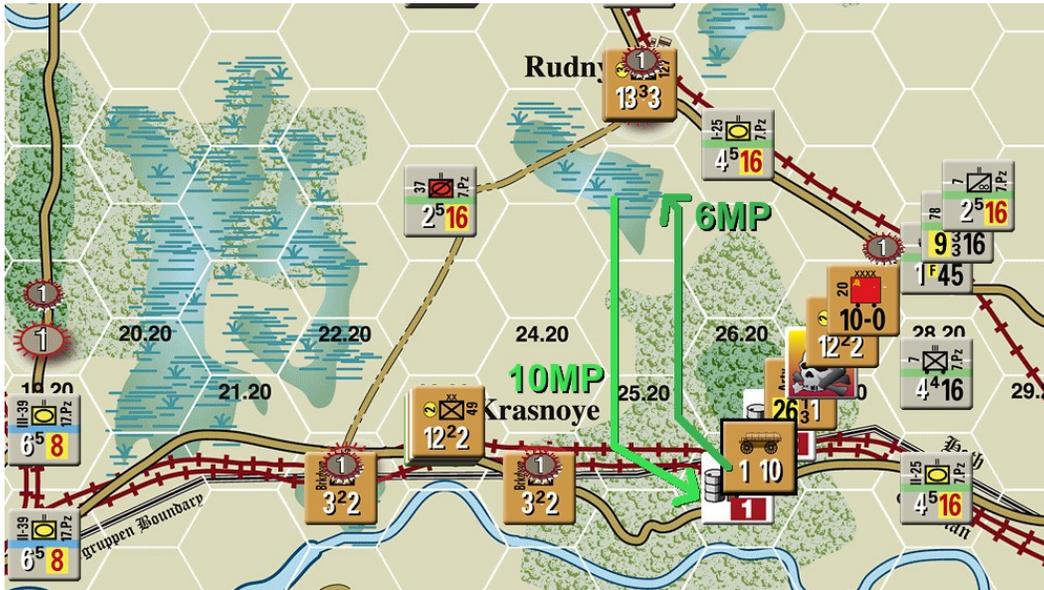
- 1-4 the unit fails and is dead,
- 5-6 the unit is removed from the map and will re-enter play as reinforcement in dr (1-6) turns.

Additionally, on the very first turn a unit finds itself OoS it benefits from a +1 DRM to its breakout dr, and doesn’t have to abide by the other requirements of 12.8e-A&B. The encirclement is not tight yet.

The 20-1-3 Tank Div in 19.26 rolls a **5 for a successful Breakout**, it is placed on the turns track 3 turns ahead keeping its step loss. The other Tank Div at 18.20 also roll a **5** and will re-enter in 5 turns. The 12-2-2 in 18.23 roll a **4 and just escape** with the above +1 DRM. It will come back in 3turns. The 11-1-1 in 18.21 roll a **1 and die**. The 13-3-3 in Rudnya looks OoS but will rely on its better AR and chances Attrition.

Movements:

...not so fast, a crafty Soviet Player, may use his lone Wagon Point for a rescue mission. For 1MP (10% MA) the Wagon Point loads 2T, from 26.19, then moves to 25.22, unloads the SP for 7MP and has just enough MP to return to the relative safety of 26.19. Those 2T would allow the 4RE in Rudnya to eat off the map (12.6c) and avoid both the Attrition roll and the OoS marker. This is an advantage of Leg MP they move better in difficult terrains and can reach areas whose access is impossible to other units.



However note that depending on how things unfold south of the river the Soviets might well prefer to save his units from the pocket including the valuable Wagon Point and SP, and let Rudnya defenders fend for themselves. This might be better on a larger scale. It is worth knowing that a HQ in Combat Mode adjacent to a river, actually serves as a bridge (13.8b), reducing the river class to an easier level.

For this example we will suppose that the Rudnya defenders are on their own on a sacrifice mission. First thing first, the units stacked in Smolensk 34.18 must deploy to form the inner defensive ring. I move an elite NKVD AR4 unit in the other Smolensk hex (34.17). Each will be the mainstay of my defense. Next I beef up this unit by adding a (5)-1-1 Ur Bde to add more steps, though of lesser quality. Using the road those moves only cost 0.5MP.

Now I'd like to move some SP to the front line I can use the Truck Points in Smolensk, but as I have no Combat units entering as reinforcement I will instead use my Rail Capacity of 2 to move those Supply (13.3). SP can move by themselves using rail, they can also use rails while being loaded on a Transport but that's not necessary (4.7). Anyway they must first Entrain (13.3e). The 2SP in Vyazma (56.20) can entrain there as the hex is a Minor City (13.3c), then they move to Smolensk and Detrain in 34.18. The SP on entry B can be considered entrained, as Reinforcements and new SP can entrain "off-map" (13.3e-1). It also moves up to 34.18. As both trips used only multi-track railroads the cost of 1SP per Rail Cap point is actually halved (13.3a).

For now I don't really need the transports in Smolensk so I move them back toward the entry point, this will gain some MP to bring back some SP next turn, as I'd like to use my Rail Capacity to move Combat Units instead on turn 2. Because their MA are also halved, the Wagon Point can only reach 43.21 while the 2 Truck Points can reach Entry B in 62.22 with their large 22.5 MP (45/2 MP are never rounded). Similarly the Wagon Point from Velizh (30.29) move back to 34.30 toward the map edge.

In The North I must try to make a fighting withdrawal before the Germans reinforcements enter on Entry L. Gorodok is not a strategic objective, However I'd like to leave the village for another defensive terrain. Unit with a printed MA of only 1 have actually only 0.5 MP, however using Minimum Move (6.1c) they can still move 1 hex whatever the actual MP cost,.

Actually there's not a lot I can do with so little MP. I could have flipped some units to Move Mode to get some more MP, but with the special turn 1 limitation, I wouldn't gain that much, and sitting in open ground in Move Mode will all the Germans panzer around is not a welcome prospect. Part of the Soviets advantage lies in their high Combat values, and Move Mode reduces it by half.

11-1-1 (-1 step) from 18.28 to 19.29,

11-1-1 (-1 step) from 19.32 in Reserve Mode to 20.31,

10-0-1 (-1 step) in 19.30 flips to Combat Mode and moves to 20.29,

(1)-2-10 Alarm Bn flips to Move Mode and moves from Gorodok to 23.34, fuel payed from Gorodok.

The lone Wagon point follows suit, I'd like to move it to a more friendly area, be careful that the enemy can capture your Transport Point (9.14c), which means less for you and more for him.

12-2-2 from 24.28 to 24.27,

(5)-1-1 UR Bde and 26-1-1 Artillery from Velizh (30.29) to 29.29,

12-2-2 from 23.27 to 24.26,

12-2-2 in 20.35 flips to Move Mode and moves to Gorodok.

Now, I use the Strategic/Transport TB.3 in my off-map box to bring on some extra SP from the infinite Dump in the off-map box. It only has a meager 1T load Capacity, However it has a range of 97 so by using rule (14.9e-C), if I make a transport trip to a base that is at half (or less) my plane range, its transport capacity is actually doubled, we consider that the plane actually makes two shorter back and forth trips. I must take into account the fact that the Soviet off-map box is 20 hexes away from the east map edge, so I can make a double trip to any base 28 hexes from the east edge. Which is just enough to reach Smolensk airbase. I add 2T there and the TB.3 returns to the off-map box inactive.



Air Barrage Segment:

As the Movement Phase comes to a close, its time to use the Red Air Force for some barrage missions. Bombing 1 RE size targets incurs a -1 column shift, similarly targets in Close terrain benefit from a -1 column shift. Ideally I'd like to barrage stacks of 2+ RE in Open terrain but there is none in sight that I can later attack on the ground. In a full game there would probably be more tempting targets around Orsha (18.18) and Mogilev (15.10), as the Germans might stack to assault those key cities.

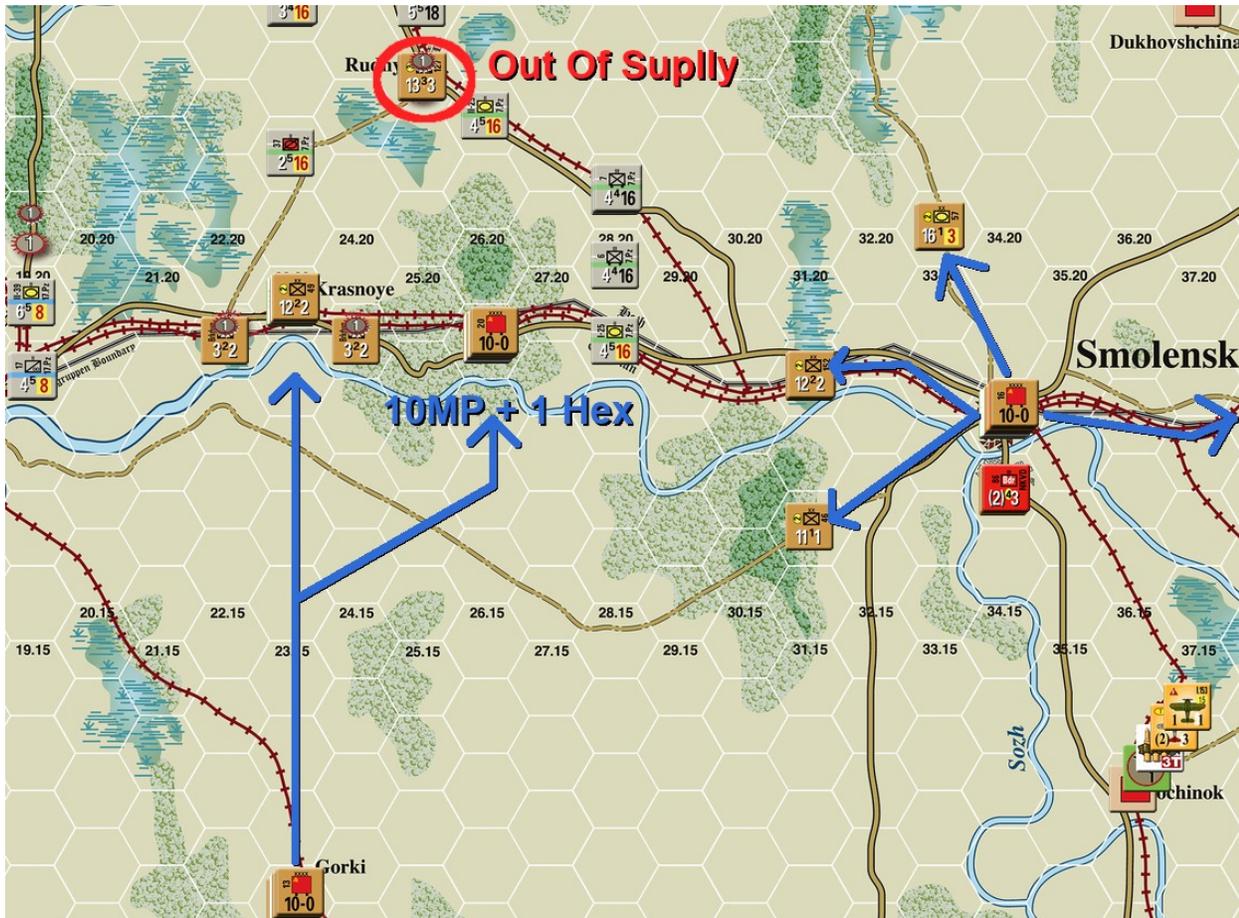
So let's try to hurt some German units. The PZ projected by the German Fighter in Vitebsk is annoying, and if there is another German Fighter on PZ in Orsha, all their frontline units would be covered. As an example let's suppose Orsha has not fallen yet.

I send an Il.2 from Smolensk and another one from Roslav (38.05) to 28.21. **Flak DR 11 for a hit.** As both bombers are identical here, we don't need to make a selection dr to see which one is actually hit (14.4f). In this game Soviet IL.2 only have one step (*Smolensk 2.2c*), so one Soviet tactical bomber goes to the dead pile. If it had 2 steps it would be reduced and still allowed to barrage the target albeit at a reduced strength. The Barrage Strength of 4 for the now lone remaining bomber, is reduced by 2 Columns (1RE, Close Terrain) ending on the leftmost column. A DR 2 results in **no effect**.

Next, two Yak.4 conducts a barrage mission on 28.19, Flak DR 9, Barrage DR 7, **no effect**.



So the units in Rudnya must resolve to roll for Attrition. One DR is made for all the stack using the best AR available. A DR 6 gives 1 loss, I decide to kill the Artillery units as it don't have SP to fire barrages anyway. The 13-3-3 is marked OoS, which halves its combat strength and MA.



German Turn 1 Reaction Phase:

Like the Soviet the Germans can conduct Air Transport missions to bring some extra SP from their off-map box to on map airbases. The two Ju.52 can make a double trip to an on-map airbase. However **a given base can only unload 2T times the base level per Movement Segment (14.9f)**. So either the Germans should use one Ju.52 in the Movement Phase and another in the Exploitation or Reaction Phase, or they can fly both Ju.52 at once to the level 2 airbase in Bobruysk for 1SP. Actually they should fly the Ju.52 in an earlier Movement Segment. In contrast for the He.111 who are both Bombers and Transports, they can wait until the last segment, to see if they need to use them for barrages else they can fly transport missions as late as the enemy turn Reaction Phase.

Soviet Turn 1 Combat Phase:

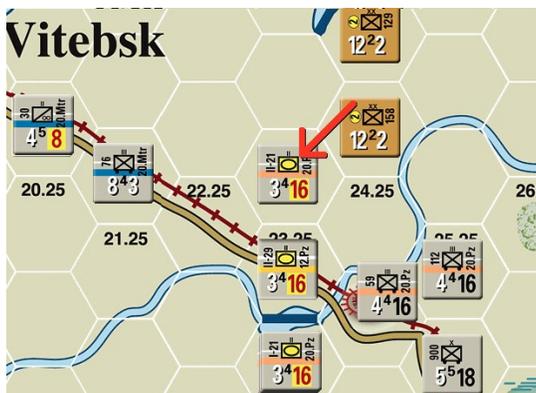
We start with a Barrage from 26.19 to 28.21 Soviet artillery have a high 26 Barrage Strength, the drawback is the expensive 4T cost. So I spend 1SP (= 4T) from 26.19. column 25-40, **Barrage DR 12! resulting in 1 step loss.** The Germans choose to kill the Artillery, the remaining Recon becomes **DG**.

Barrages losses happen from time to time but don't count on them, the primary purpose of a barrage is to DG the target, any casualty are just icing on the cake. There is no option to advance after combat following a barrage even if you kill all units in the target hex.



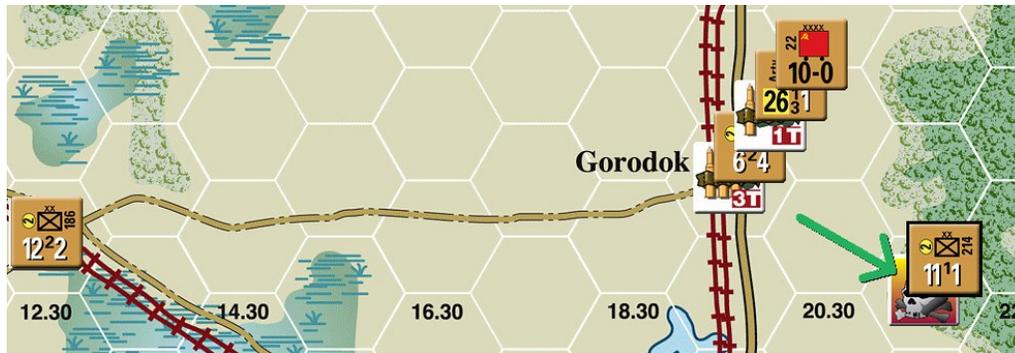
We have few, if any, good attacks, but just to keep the Germans under pressure the 12-2-2 in 24.26 will attack the lone Pz Bn in 23.26. The Soviet pay 2T from Velizh (30.29), and the Germans 1T from Lepel. Now the problem is we are attacking with a -2 AR differential, which usually invites mishaps.

The basic odds are 12/3 leading to **4:1**, note how the Panzer are weaker when being on defense. Surprise DR 12, -2 DRM for an incredible attacker surprise of 4 columns to **11:1!!!** Combat DR 11 -2 DRM giving **A3-DL2o2DG** smashing the Panzer dead. The 12-2-2 audaciously advance in 23.26 currently cutting the German supply line with its ZoC. He didn't earn the Exploitation result as Ae3 means only attackers with an AR of 3 or more get to exploit. Medals are on the way.



Soviet Turn 1 Exploitation Phase:

There is little to do here, I just release the 11-1-1 in 20.31 who moves to 21.32 using another Minimum Move.



Soviet Turn 1 Clean Up:

There is only one DG Soviet unit in 20.29, I remove the DG marker. No units were fueled, so this concludes the first turn. Actually there is not a lot the Soviets can do on turn 1 with all those special rules restrictions. Here I was very lucky to cause 2 Germans casualties. Yet adopting a cautious stance and patiently building defensive positions for the big fights to come seems the best approach.

Turn 2, Pre-Turn Phase:

Weather DR 6 for normal flight,

First Player Determination: Germans DR 9, Soviets DR 8. And **The Germans choose to play first.**

German Turn 2 Aircraft Refit Phase:

German pay 1T from Bobruysk (2.02) to refit all planes there.
The planes in the Luftwaffe off-map box refit for free.

German Turn 2 Reinforcement Phase:

Supply DR 8 for 7 SP, hence 3SP in 1.26 for Panzer Group Hoth.
Axis Repl DR 7, nothing,
Axis Special Repl dr 1 for a Supply Cache marker.
Additionally the Germans receive a host of new units on Entry K as the Axis Arrivals chart shows.



Now I want to clarify the situation around Vitebsk. A Ju.87 from my off-map box strikes the 11-1-1 in 19.29. Flak DR 11 **reduces the Stuka**, I flip the counter to its reduced side as planes don't use step loss marker. It still bombs the target but its barrage strength is now only 6. Barrage DR 6, **miss**.

A second Ju.87 try again, Flak DR 10, barely **miss**
Barrage DR 7 **DG** the target. This is not a critical objective, but my Stukas are a bit short on range anyway. As the Stukas are now at the limit of their range I choose to return them inactive to my level 1 airbase at 1.19, even if it means I will have to pay to refit them next turn.

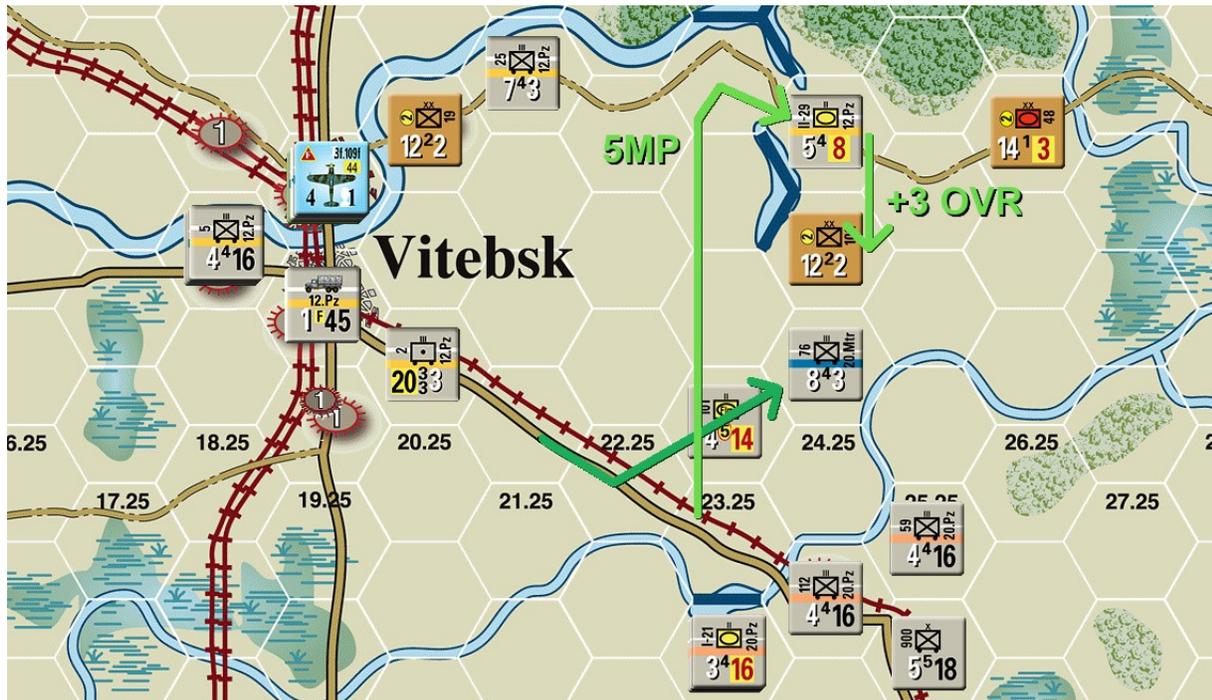
The Inf Rgt in 19.27 flips to Combat Mode and moves to 21.29. there it calls a Do.17 Hip Shoot on the 10-0-1 in 20.29, there is one column shift for 1RE as the Soviet division has already lost 1 step. Flak DR 3, **no effect**, Barrage on column 5-7, DR 8, **DG**.

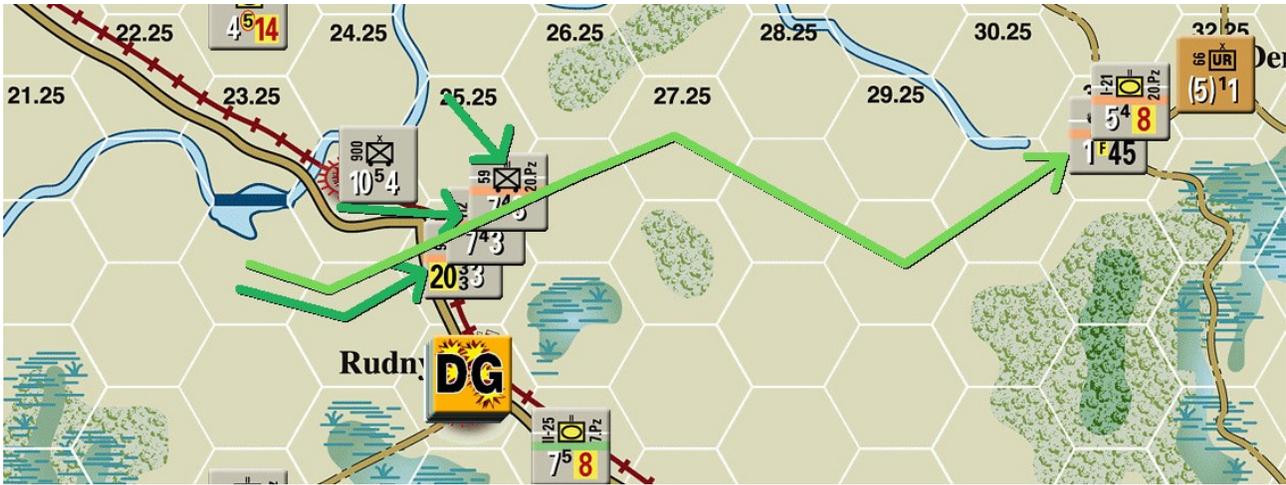
The 4-5-8 Motorcycle Recon Bn from 20.26 fuel its engines, the HQ in Lepel draws 1T from the Wagon at 1.26 and throws it forward to the 4-5-8 who moves to 19.28 for 1MP there, it declares an overrun vs the DG 11-1-1, The German use 1T for ammo from 1.26 and the Soviet draw 1T from Gorodok. Combat values are 4 vs 2.75 (11 /2 DG, /2 Loss) for a **1:1 in Open**, Surprise DR 9 +5 DRM, for a 5 columns shift to **7:1 in Open**, Combat DR 4 +5 DRM giving **Ae4-DL1o2**, finishing the 11-1-1.

The 4-5-8 Recon Bn enters 19.29 and declares another overrun vs the 10-0-1 in 20.29. The German use 1T from 1.26 via the Lepel HQ, and the Soviet 1T from Gorodok. 4 vs 2.5 (10 /2 loss) gives **2:1 in Open**, Surprise DR 6 +6!!! DRM (AR5 vs AR -1) to **5:1 in Open**, an AR can be negative (3.2c). Combat DR 9 +6 DRM **Ae2-DL2o3DG**, killing the 10-0-1. I enter the hex, and the bikers gang finish its death ride in 19.30, still hindering the 12-2-2 with its ZoC. Such a large AR differential gives a massive advantage in Combat.



The 8-4-3 Inf Rgt from 21.26 moves to 24.26, using leg hence no fuel needed.
 It now calls a Hip Shoot from an off-map Bf.110 on the 12-2-2 in 24.27.
 Flak DR 2, **no effect**,
 Barrage DR 2, **no effect**.
 So I call another Bf.110 on the same target,
 Flak DR 9, **no effect**,
 Barrage DR 8, **DG**.





The two Inf Rgts of the 20 Pz switch to Move Mode and move to 25.24.

The 20 PZ artillery switches to Combat Mode and moves to 25.24.

I fuel the Pz Bn of the 20Pz from 1.26 using the last supply token from the reinforcements wagons, and move the Pz Bn to 31.25 in Combat Mode, where it is joined by its Organic Truck.

The full strength 10-4-5 Inf Div moves from 1.26 to 19.27 using Strat Mode (5.8). The benefit is that **Strat Mode doubles your unit MA**, though you can't enter enemy ZoC. But be sure to avoid combat at all cost as **all combat values are set to 0 while in Strat Mode**.

The other reduced 10-4-5 Inf Div also in Strat Mode follows up to 18.27, to avoid excessive stacking.

The 2-5-10 Pz Jgr Coy in 1.26 enters Reserve Mode, oriented toward Move Mode and goes to 5.27. I fuel it by direct draw burning 1T from the Wagon Points. I didn't find a better way to spend this 1T.

I fuel the HQ in Lepel for 1SP from the SP loaded on the Wagon Points thereby emptying the wagons. This in turn fuels all independents in range including the other HQ (12.5c-B). Before moving my HQ I must first move all units it fuels, Independents in particular, as a **fueled HQ is only allowed to throw fuel from a single location each phase (12.5e)**.

The 5 HQ in Move Mode moves to 10.27 where I plan to build an Extender very soon,

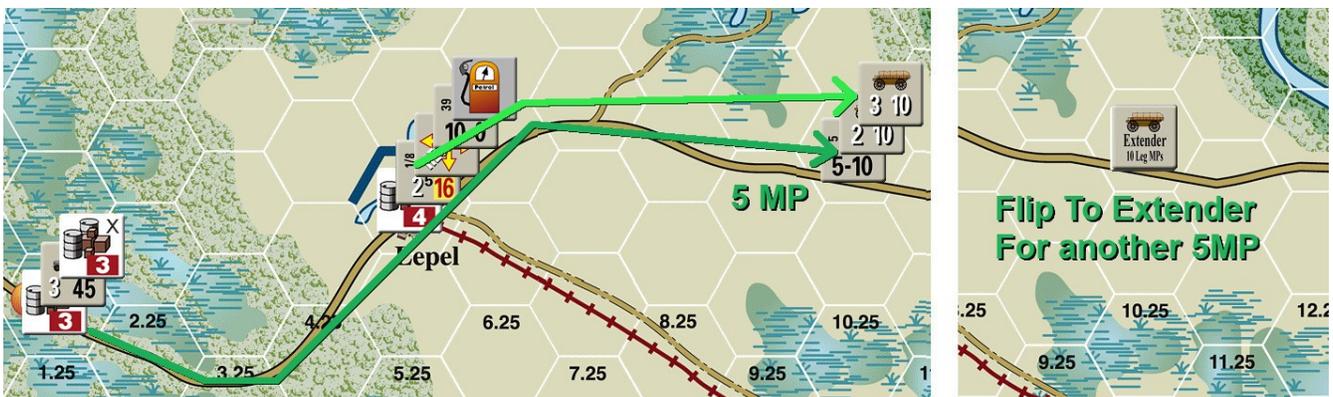
The 20 Mtr Artillery in 18.27 moves to 19.28 to support its Infantry. The Organic Truck does the same.



I must now anticipate my HQ move and prepare its defense by combat units. The lousy 1-4-14 PJ Bn moves from 1.26 to 19.27 to assume guarding duty (*Smolensk 3.3b*). Then, to give our vital HQ some protection, the 7-4-3 Inf Rgt from 18.27 flips to Combat Mode and goes to 21.26, where it is joined by the 12 Pz Artillery in Combat Mode from 20.06, and by the 12 Pz Organic Truck from 19.26.

It is now time to extend our supply network. First I move the 2 Wagon Points from Lepel to 10.27, then the 3 Wagon Points from the reinforcements join them in 10.27. Now according to (*12.7d*) all those 5 **Wagon Points form a Wagon Extender**, flipping the counter to the Extender side. It cost half of the 10 MA to switch to an Extender. Note that (*12.7e*) specifically allows you to move Transport Points from different locations to assemble into an Extender, in contrast it is usually forbidden to move a stack, then move another one, and later use remaining MP from the initial stack (*6.1g*).

The Extender must be in Trace Supply when created, so I could have created one as far as 21.26, however as I need half of the 5MP to make the switch from Wagons to Extender, I cannot actually create it farther than 10.27 otherwise my Wagon Points wouldn't have enough MP left for the switch.



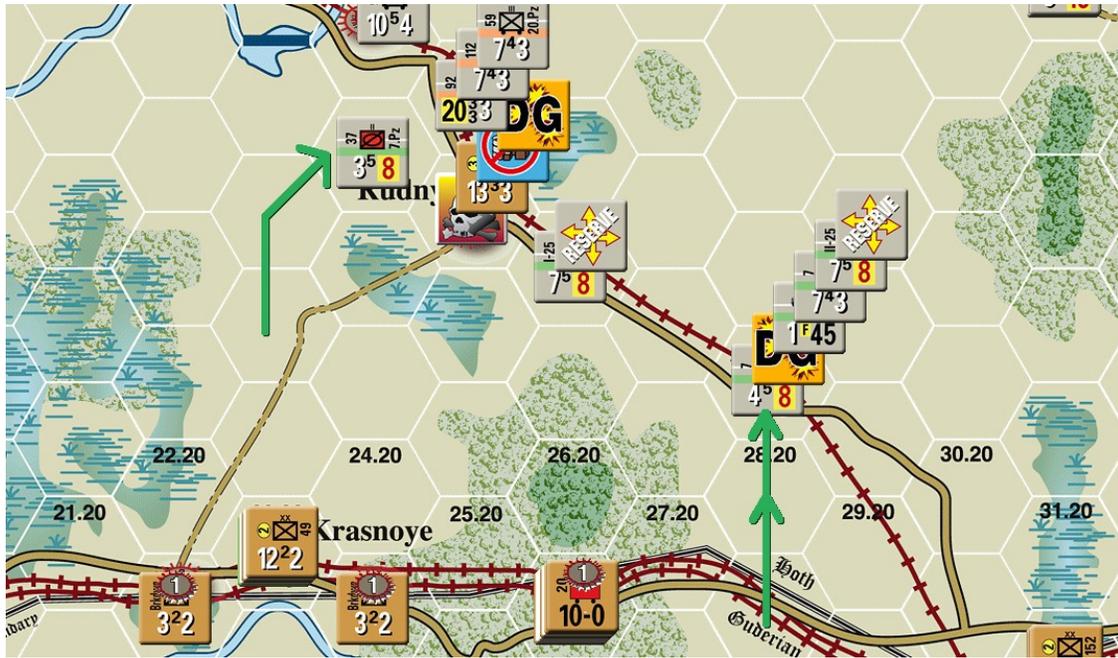
I keep one of my HQ to fuel the area around Lepel and future reinforcements entering at Entry K, but I also want to send a HQ forward in reach of the wagon extender I just made. So I flip the 39 HQ to Move Mode and move it to 21.26, as all combat units a HQ as a draw range of 5MP, so I must keep the Wagon Extender in my 5MP draw range. By virtue of the adjacent is good enough rule the HQ is just able to draw back to the Extender in 10.27. Actually keeping the HQ in Vitebsk would be safer, but the extra range will certainly prove useful when throwing toward Smolensk.

Be careful that HQ throw range is significantly reduced when they are in Move Mode. As the new 5HQ only has a throw range of 5 in Move Mode, hence I choose to send the other 39 HQ forward because it has a Move Mode throw range of 7. BTW those are the mobile formations HQ, other standard Infantry HQ like 5HQ move slower and throw at a shorter distance.



The forward units of the 7PZ are out of reach of my HQ. So I move the 7Pz Organic Truck to 26.21 for 4MP, there I “pause” the Organic Truck (13.2a), use its inherent 1 SP to fuel the whole division, all units can use direct draw using 5MP +1 hex to reach the Organic Truck. Otherwise those who couldn’t reach the truck would have to pay for fuel separately using the 1T per unit method (12.5c-A).

Then the 7Pz Organic Truck goes back to Lepel, refills with 1SP and comes back to 28.21. The DG Recon Bn in 28.19 also goes stays in 28.21.



Now fueled the 7Pz Recon moves to 24.23 in Combat Mode. The Pz Bn in 26.22 enters Reserve, it is adjacent to the Soviet 13-3-3 However this unit is DG (and also OoS) so it has no ZoC anymore, hence I can enter Reserve although I’m adjacent to it.

The 7Pz Inf Rgt enters Reserve Mode and makes a Minimum Move to 28.21 with its 1/4 MP just back in supply range. The last Pz Bn enters Reserve Mode and use 1/4 MP and also joins in 28.21. Please note, that the DG 4-5-8 in 28.21 is not in Reserve Mode, this is just a convenience as I know the units above the DG marker will move very soon in the upcoming Exploitation Phase.

The 3 Truck Points in 1.26 convoy 3SP to 21.26, then move back to 1.26 for 25.5 MP. There I split the Truck Point leaving 1 in 1.26, and loading 2SP on the 2 Truck Points who again, move to 21.26. The HQ could draw SP up to 5MP +1 away before throwing forward. However here I’d rather have a forward supply dump to reload Organic Trucks more easily. You cannot move SP with Truck Points, unload them and move them further with another transport in a single phase (12.2a Leapfrogging).

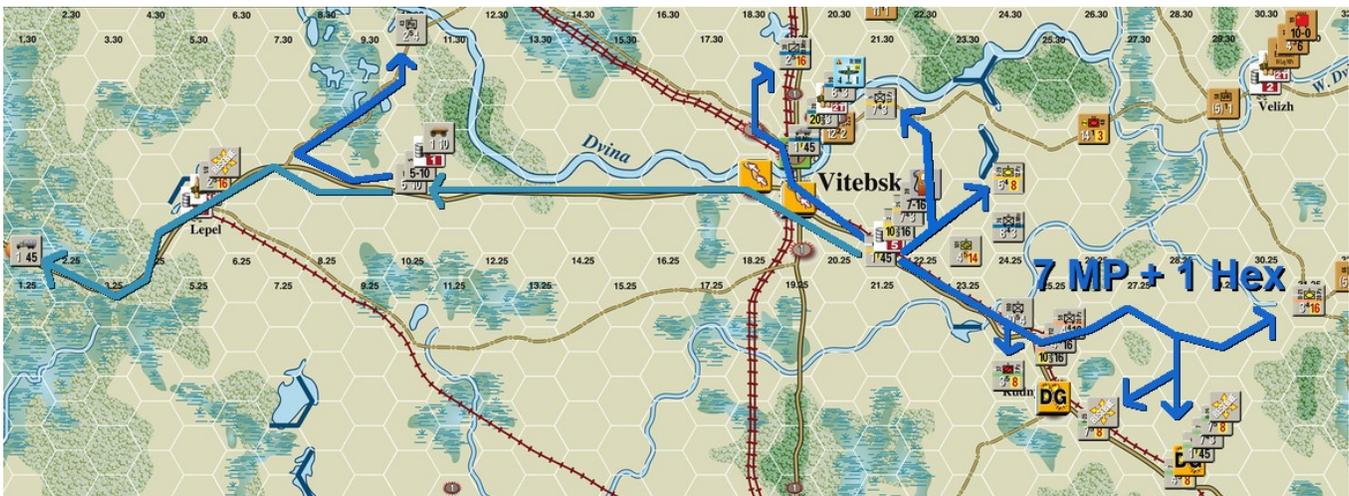
The lone Wagon Point in 18.27 moves back to Lepel load 1SP and finishes its move in 10.27.

At the end of the Movement Phase, I conduct a Barrage air mission on Demidov(32.25) using a Do.17 and a Bf.110 for a barrage strength of 13 (8+5). Flak DR 11 **reducing the Bf.110** for a Barrage strength of 11, 1 shift for Close terrain to column 5-7. Barrage DR 11 for a result of ½ subsequent dr 4 **killing the Soviet defender**. Actually this means I couldn't attack the village anymore as the defenders as been wiped by the barrage, hence I cannot advance after combat to control the village. Note FYI there an optional rule (21.8) that allows you to attack "empty hex"

The Soviets have no units in Reserve Mode, and *Smolensk 2.2d* forbid them to fly Missions during the Reaction Phase. When the opponent have significant options for his Reaction Phase, you should be very careful about it. So here, we move on directly to the Combat Phase

Germans Turn 2 Supply Phase:

Now, here is how the Germans supply network works. The forward edge of this network is the 39 HQ in 21.26. With the HQ Draw range of 5MP +1, it traces back to the Wagon Extender in 10.27, which uses its extender range of 10 MP +1 to trace back to the Entry B Supply Source in 1.26. As the HQ is in Trace Supply, it can in turn throw up to its range which is currently 7MP because it is in Move Mode. The 39HQ as just enough range to throw to all Germans units, or adjacent to them in the worst case. The Pioneer bn in 10.30 can draw 5MP +1 to the Extender, then to the Supply Source of 1.26, alternatively the 5 HQ in 10.27 can also throw to the Pioneer Bn.



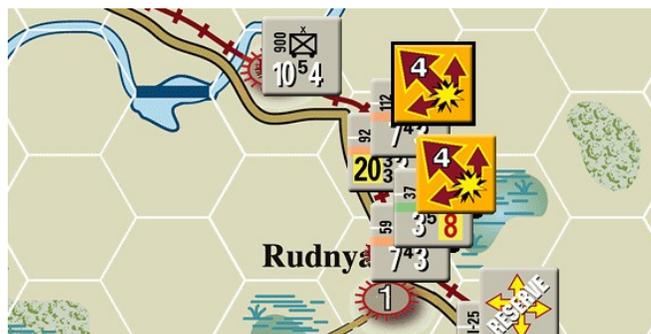
Next turn the HQ will be able to switch to Combat Mode thereby improving its throw range to 10. However this might prove not enough to operate around Smolensk. Developing your supply network forward to keep pace with your spearheads is no easy task, as you have to consider the reduced throw range of HQ in Move Mode. Having two HQs and making leapfrogs as far as possible is desirable. Similarly Extenders use 50% MP to convert back to Transport Points, which means they cannot move forward to make another Extender. So ideally, you'll need another Extender. In contrast to HQ you can daisy chain Extenders (12.7c) and make complex Extenders networks.

Besides optimizing Extender and HQ ranges, which often means using roads, it is more important to take into account their security, hence strive to set them in protective terrains and keep them garrisoned. Be careful that a lone HQ is also vulnerable to a lucky shot from an Air Mission, so add other steps.

German Turn 2 Combat Phase:

The 20-3-3 Artillery in 19.28 fires a Barrage on the 12-2-2 in 20.28. This cost 3T from 10.27 but I spend a Supply Cache marker to reduce the cost to 1T. Column 17-24, -1 for the Hedgehog, -1 for only 1RE to **column 8-11**.

DR 10 resulting in [½] as the Hedgehog is only level 1, this is treated as regular ½ and the subsequent dr of 6 **kills the 12-2-2** outright, same here I could not advance in combat and capture the hex.



I don't attack 26.19 as there are plenty of steps there, I'd rather save some SP and let them starve and wait until more German infantry are available for attack. In fact, to make a proper decision I like to see the progress made by the other Panzer Group to the South. I just keep it simple here.

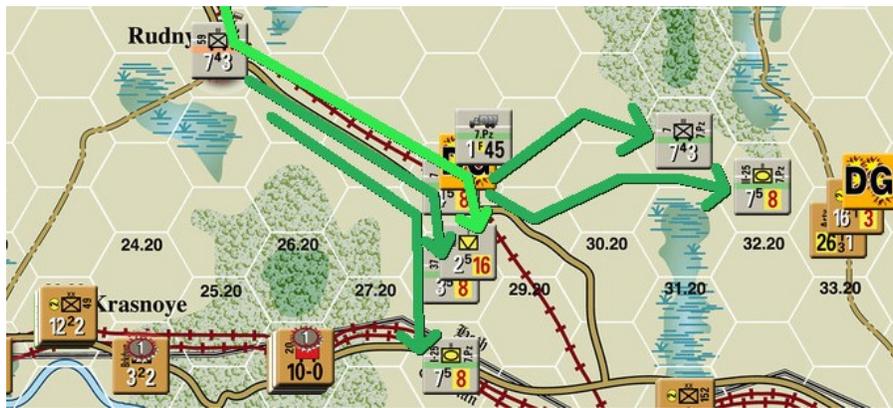
The two 7-4-3 of the 20PZ, and the 3-5-8 of the 7Pz gang up on Rudnya (25.23), they pay 3T from 10.27. The Soviets must use Internal as Germans ZoC cut any supply lane, switching the Low Ammo marker to its Exhausted side. The Germans use the 3-5-8 for AR. Combat values are 17 (7+7+3) vs 2.16 (13 x1/3 loss, /2 DG, /2 OoS) for odds of **8:1 in Close**.

Surprise DR 7 +2 DRM, **no effect**, Combat DR 12 +2 DRM for **Ae3-DL2o2DG** killing all defenders, one Inf Rgt and the Recon Bn enter the village. The other Inf Rgt stay back to protect the Artillery. **I earn Exploitation for all attackers as I attacked only from two contiguous hexes.**

German Turn 2 Exploitation Phase:

First I release the Pz Bn in 28.21 and moves it to 32.21 in the wood. Acting as a spotter it calls a He.111 Hip Shoot on the Tank Division in 33.21. Flak DR 10 **no effect**, Barrage column 12, DR 6, **DG**.

I 'd like to enter this wood before the Soviets reinforce it. From 32.21 I have access to the open terrain. The Inf Rgt in 28.21 finally moves back to 31.22 to provide some support for the Pz Bn. The other Pz Bn moves from 26.22 to 28.19. The 7 Pz Armored Recon moves from 25.23 to 28.2, where it is joined by the Pz Jgr from 5.27.



Even though it is DG, I choose not to attack the Soviet Tank Division as I don't want to risk an option result, and a possible retreat right now. Maybe it would have been wiser to use the He.111 to bring some SP from the infinite dump off-map.

This concludes this illustrated example of play.

German turn 2 Analysis:

- German turn 2 could feel a bit of a let down after the sharp drive of the first turn. Turn 2 wasn't as spectacular, actually I stabilized the German situation, I was hampered by operating at the limit of my HQ throw range. But in fact I cashed in on the long turn 1 leap, and in the end I was able to save some fuel SP and build up some dumps for a larger attack in the future. Still in two turns the Germans are in good position to attack around Smolensk.
- This is the nature of OCS, the game is not about pushing all your units to the limit of their MA each turn and making all possible attacks. There are up and down turns. When you benefit from a double turn you don't want to be short on supply, so you have to be patient and build up dumps for big offensives.
- The game is not only about battle feats, logistic is critical you must act as the troops general but also as the quartermaster. This is not an easy task as it requires to be able to read both the combat and the supply network situations some turns ahead. You should train yourself not only to visualize the front line and physical units, but also to superimpose on the battle map the evolving supply networks of both sides. You can attack the combat units proper but many times targeting or threatening the enemy supply network is more efficient. The supply system is more elaborate in OCS than in other games and you'll have to learn to play with it.
- OCS Combat is not just a matter of piling combat values, it is also about using mismatch in AR and unit type.
- I have reinforced my northern hook, in combination with a southern hook, this two pronged attack will create a sizable pocket around the difficult terrain east of Orsha. This is much more efficient than attacking those tough positions head-on from the west.



Let's take a closer look at combat unit counter values in hindsight of this two turns. If we compare a Soviet 11-1-1 with a Soviet 13-3-3, the +2 in combat strength is not that meaningful. On the other hand the +2 in MA is much more significant, basically a MA of only 1 means your units is a sitting duck, a MA of 3 gives you a lot more options when it comes to moving, making overruns or attacking. Yet, although those 2 values are the larger on the counter, the small AR number is even more important. AR1 units will often be surprised and won't get any good result when attacking with a negative combat DRM in fact they are crying for the dreaded AL1o1 result. As we have seen an AR3 units is significantly harder to surprise, and when in protective terrain, it is a serious obstacle.

Another advantage of the 13-3-3 which might not be obvious for newcomers is the small number on a yellow dot in the top left of the counter. This represents the unit number of step, obviously the more the better. In practice it means that even if you take one loss your 13-3-3 still has a combat value of 8.7 (using proportional losses), whereas after a single loss the 11-1-1 falls to 5.5 and is much closer to elimination as we have seen that forcing 1 step is much easier than forcing 2 or more casualties in a single attack.

Another benefit of the 13-3-3 we haven't see, is the ability to create Breakdowns (20.0). Basically splitting one counter in two or more separate units. You can voluntarily put up to two losses on your 13-3-3 and for each step loss you gain one Breakdown Rgt. All would have the same AR, in our case an AR of 3, which is above average for the Soviet. You can stack an AR3 Breakdown Rgt with a (5)-1-1 UR Bde for an improved defense.

The Germans first line divisions are even better as 20-4-3 with 4 steps. And that is also why the 10-5-4 is such a powerful unit, for the ammo cost of 1T it packs double the punch of a half 20-4-3 with an AR5 to boot.

Conclusion:

Keep in mind that this is not supposed to be perfect moves, if such thing ever exists, instead this is intended to show how deep you can drive into the enemy rear areas, while highlighting some key rules and mechanisms.

It is important to remember that in OCS there is no hard limit to the number of defensive lines the attacker can pierce in a given turn, this is in stark contrast with older operational games, with line defense or the famous checkerboard ZoC defense. For this reason, you'd better make a habit of garrisoning HQs, Extenders, dumps, crossroads and choke points with proper combat units.

Driving deep into enemy territory is not the only thing, you must also ensure a decent supply path to your spearheads units and also be able to resist enemy counterattacks. Grinding and attrition battles are also an integral part of the game but be alert for every opportunities to maneuver. One side will not always enjoy such a high AR advantage than during this early war period, and you'll have to adapt your tactics accordingly. Moreover in this teaching session we played an "open" game, in actual play there is more fog of war involved, hence you might want to attack with a little more strength against unidentified defenders.

To simplify, I also made some abstractions to handle the actions of the other Panzer Group in the south. Actually the center and the south are different stories, in particular there is a Major River in the Germans path, and this is a serious obstacle for movement and supply throw. Additionally capturing Mogilev, with an AR 4 Defender in Extremely Close Terrain is a tough battle.

I have played this attack several times with similar results, actually I see a number of improvement I could make in future plays. Even considering only the four divisions we used, there are many other ways to play the first turn, in particular you can try to lead the assault with the 7Pz in Combat Mode and exploit with the 20 Pz. Also note that following the latest errata the Soviet player is allowed to *wiggle* a bit and make some minor adjustments to his setup to avoid prepared opening.

On the other hand it is a reproducible, even with inferior dice results, and hopefully sound plan. It will never unfold exactly the same, this is the nature of the OCS, the large CRT combined with Surprise rolls and the 2D6 bell curve bring a lot of variations to the game. This is not a chess-like game at all, on one hand you have to make a sturdy overall plan to be supply efficient, yet you'll have to adapt to the combat results both favorable ones but also the inevitable mishaps that happens from time to time.

It is a good idea to practice on a small portion of the scenario until you feel more comfortable with the rules and core mechanisms. Then when you add the other part of the map, things get really interesting, There are two serious obstacles with Orsha and Mogilev, you might want to encircle those cities before launching an assault. Then crossing the major river is another big issue. However when this line is breached the open terrain behind invites daring maneuvers. But that is another story.

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10/26/2019

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