

German Strategy 1942

Background: The German army has been extremely successful in 1941 seizing Leningrad and Moscow. The Soviet air force resides in National Reserve as of turn 20 due to an aggressive domination of air supremacy. Soviet manpower is at 4.2 million at this time. This is a bitter end victory point game and the German's lead handily. The main problem is that game mechanics lead to the Russians in Berlin at some point. The key being that delaying this inevitability results in our victory.

Proposal: The route to victory lies in disruption of manpower and destruction of Soviet units that demand more manpower to fill. There are four main manpower centers worth a focused offensive effort: Voronkzh (18); Tamboy (21); Saratov (17); and, Kuybyshev (24). To the south there is Stalingrad (15). A strategy focusing on manpower would be best served by destroying these targets. A secondary offensive goal would be to set up staging bases to extend the Luftwaffe deeper into the battle space and strike at industrial centers near UFA.

The proposed route would be to set up Armies and Panzer Groups in the Stalino area with a plan to attack in a North East vector crossing the Don at Boguchar with the main thrust toward Saratov. Once established, a second drive toward Kuybyshev. During this time staging bases move forward to extend the air force into the battlespace. The final goal is to use the Luftwaffe to strike industrial centers near UFA. The final objectives of this offense is withdrawal to defendable lines for the winter of 1942 – 1943.

Strength: This offensive plan leverages the previous victories of the German team. In particular destruction of Soviet units and air supremacy – particularly the fighter force, which could be overcome for long range unescorted strikes. Disrupting manpower would slow the development of the Soviet Army and offensive capability that will eventually overcome the Axis if not addressed. This plan allows a reduction of Soviet Army growth over time with a plan that anticipates German withdrawal from the objectives.

Weakness: The plan requires first attacking from the Stalino staging point to Boguchar. At this point the units are organized into spearheads for crossing the Don around Bogucha area. The next phase is organizing forces for a penetration from Bogucha to Saratov, and then Kuybyshev of about 40 hexes total. This will represent a large extended bulge that will be vulnerable to attack. The movement of staging bases to threatening positions will certainly lead to riskier attacks by the Soviets to resolve this situation. Should a Soviet offense penetrate the bulge – units will be cutoff and vulnerable to destruction. The mud and blizzard winter conditions are of particular concern.

Opportunities: A Deep penetration in mostly open terrain opens the possibility of further destruction of the Soviet Army while continuing to leverage previously gained advantages on the Soviet Army. A large raid would bring the Soviets into less defensible positions than objectives the Soviets have already anticipated to defend and have already started preparation.

Threats: The crossing of the Don against a well prepared defense poses a risk of plan failure. The Panzer Groups will be operating in longer supply ranges -- even with extending the rail network.