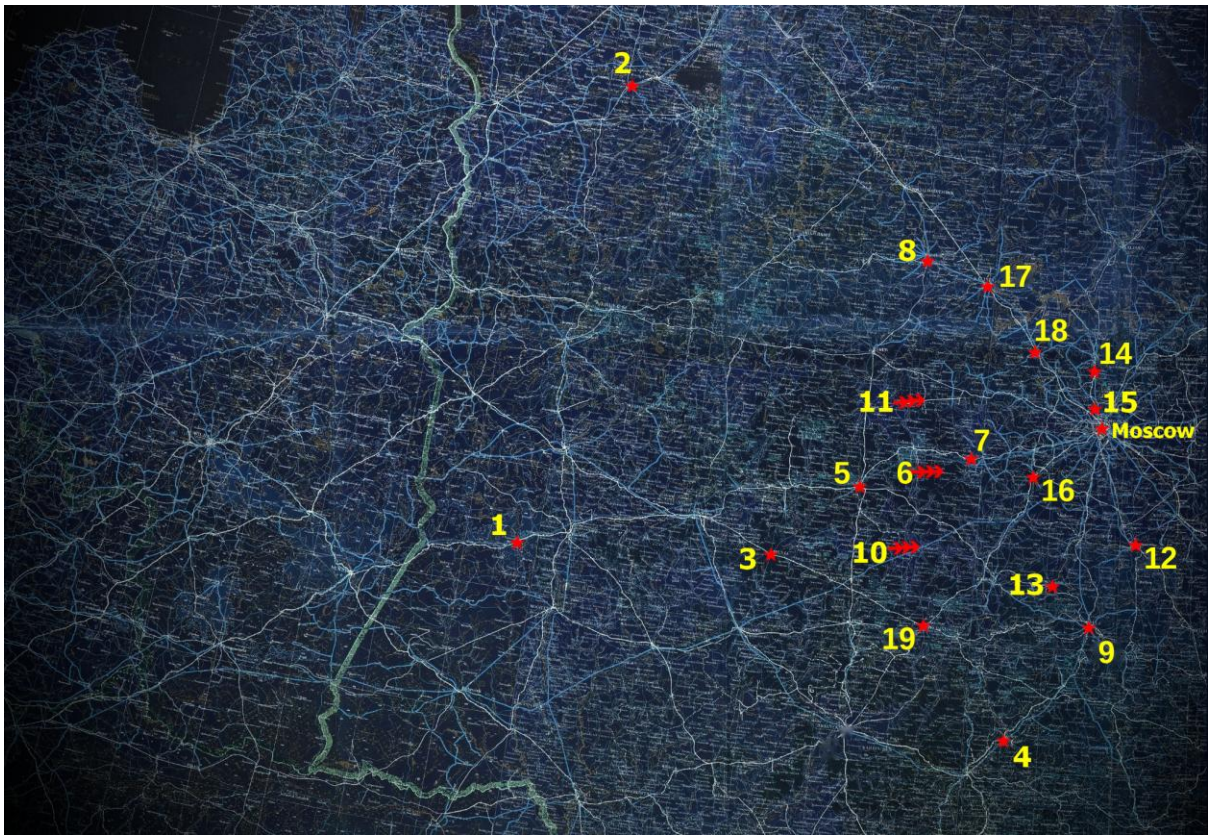
Eastern Front History Through Twilight in the East Scenarios

by Davide Gambina v.1.0

July – October 1941



Scenario	Timeline	Turns	Map
01 > Tolochin	07 - 09 july 41	7/12	(50 x 30)
02 > Soltsy	13 - 17 july 41	20	(40 x 28)
03 < Yelnya	01 - 08 sep'41	32	(37 x 37)
04 > Mtsensk	04 - 08 oct'41	20	(82 x 78)
05 > Vyazma	04 - 12 oct'41	36	(182 x 128)
06 > On to Moscow	10 - 21 oct'41	48	(296 x 114)
07 > Borodino	13 - 17 oct.'41	20	(32 x 26)
08 > Torzhok Road	16 - 21 oct'41	32	(80 x 40)
09 > Tula	12 - 21 nov'41	40	(66 x 46)
10 > Typhoon	16 nov.-5 dec'41	80	(296 x 334)
11 > Assault on Moscow	16 nov.- 5 dec'41	80	(250 x 200)
12 > Kashira	25 - 30 nov'41	24	(48 x 74)
13 > Aleksin	26 - 29 nov'41	16	(26 x 28)
14 > Yakhroma Bridg.	28 - 30 nov'41	12	(46 x 44)
15 > Khimky	29 nov-04 dec'41	24	(36 x 34)
16 > Naro Fominsk	01 - 05 dec'41	20	(40 x 30)
17 < Kalinin	05 - 11 dec'41	28	(90 x 64)
18 < Klin	11 - 15 dec'41	20	(46 x 34)
19 < Suchinichi	18 - 24 jan'42	28	(96 x 76)

"Tolochin" 07 - 09 July 1941 (7/12 Turns)



By the second week of Operation Barbarossa, the German drive across Belorussia had become a relentless pursuit of a defeated enemy. Yet east of the Berezina, the Wehrmacht increasingly encountered Soviet formations prepared to exchange ground for time.

Among the most capable of these was Colonel Kreizer's 1st Motorized Rifle Division, a formation whose stubborn resistance would earn both friend and foe's respect.

Scenario Overview

At Tolochin, Kreizer's division confronted General Walter Nehring's veteran 18.Panzer Division, one of the leading spearheads of Army Group Centre's advance toward Orsha and Smolensk.

Fighting a highly mobile defensive battle across a broad front, the Soviet commander exploited the constricted road network, difficult terrain, and a series of prepared delaying positions to repeatedly disrupt German tempo. Rather than defending every village to the last man, Kreizer traded space for operational time, compelling the panzers to deploy, regroup, and fight for every successive line of resistance.

The struggle lasted three critical days. By 9 July, mounting losses and the danger of encirclement compelled the 1st Motorized Rifle Division to abandon Tolochin and withdraw toward Kokhanovo.

Tactically, the field belonged to the Germans but operationally, however, the Soviet defence achieved its essential purpose.

Nehring's division failed to execute the deep turning movement originally envisioned, while precious hours were gained for the shattered Soviet forces retreating from the failed Lepel-Senno counteroffensive north of Tolochin. Many formations that might otherwise have been trapped succeeded in slipping eastward toward the Dniepr.

For the German player, the challenge lies not merely in defeating Kreizer's rearguards, but in maintaining operational momentum despite a determined and skilfully conducted delaying action.

For the Soviet player, every crossroads held, every bridge denied, and every hour wrested from the enemy contributes to the larger objective: preserving the remnant units of the Soviet Western Front for the battles still to come.

Key Notes for Wargamers

The German player must deploy very soon the rear area advancing regiments to exploit the breakthrough quickly, through the Soviet defenses. The balance between aggression and conservation of strength will be critical for the German player.

The Soviet player must balance the available forces to intercept all the enemy spearheads north and south the highway.

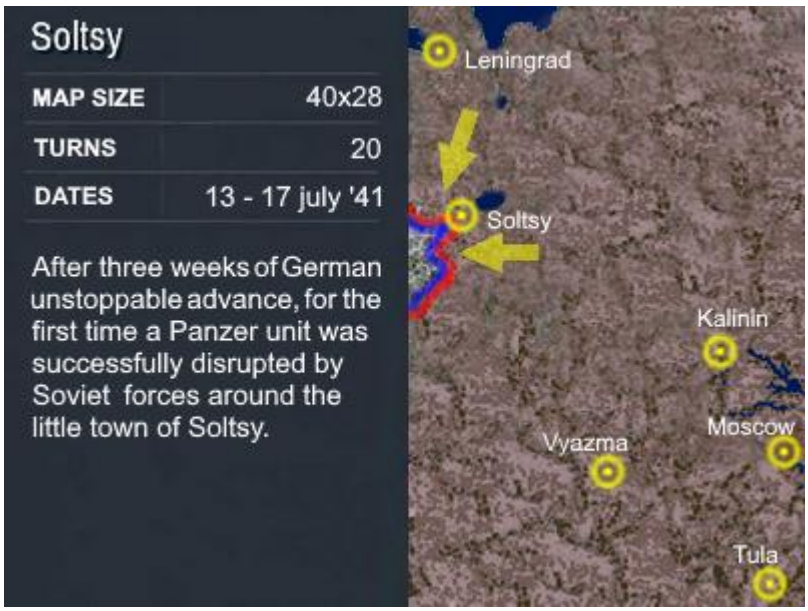
The Variant

You can choose the 7 turns variant for a fast and furious game lasting a few minutes, ideal for a PBEM++ game.

Closing Thoughts

After the battle both commanders were awarded, General Nehring on july 24 with the "knight Cross" for taking Borisov railbridge intact, thereby enabling a rapid advance toward Tolochin and Orsha, and Colonel Kreizer on July 22 "Hero of Soviet Union" for skillfully delaying the enemy advance. Colonel Kreizer was wounded on July 12 and after recovering promoted Major General August 7, 1941 and appointed commander of the 3rd Army on August 25.

" Soltsy " 13-17 July 1941 (20 Turns)



In the summer of 1941, as the German invasion of the Soviet Union surged eastward, General Erich von Manstein's LVI Korps (mot.), spearheaded by the 8.Panzer Division under General Erich Brandenberger, advanced toward Novgorod.

With the primary thrust of the German offensive pushing forward, the left flank of the LVI Korps was secured by the 3. Infanterie Division (mot.) commanded by General Curt Jahn. However, the right flank was more vulnerable, as the SS Division Totenkopf, led by General Theodor Eicke, lagged significantly behind the main force.

From the outset, LVI Korps faced repeated Soviet counterattacks from the 11th Army, commanded by General Morozov, around the town of Soltsy. These attacks, combined with the vulnerability of the unprotected right flank, placed the Germans in a perilous position. As the Soviet forces gained ground and pressured the supply lines, the threat of encirclement grew more imminent.

Timeline of Key Events

On the night of 14-15 July, at 03:00 hours, von Manstein received a disturbing report from his rear guard: "Rear areas of the 8.Panzer Division are defending against an enemy attack with machine guns and mortars." This news confirmed that the 8. Panzer Division supply lines were under severe threat and, with it, the potential isolation of the division's combat elements. Given the worsening situation and with the risk of being surrounded, von Manstein reluctantly ordered the abandonment of Soltsy on 15 July. The decision was a bitter one, but necessary to preserve the cohesion of his forces.

The 3. Infanterie Division (mot.), which had been attempting to reinforce Manstein's position, also found itself under heavy attack from Soviet forces, complicating any potential relief efforts. Meanwhile, the SS Division Totenkopf, which had been tasked with covering the right flank, was still far behind due to delays. General Eicke had been seriously wounded on 6 July when his command car struck a mine, and his replacement, General Georg Keppler, struggled to organize the division's delayed advance.

As the Totenkopf Division finally began its move up the Dno-Soltsy road, it encountered several minor Soviet infantry units but was unable to make significant progress. The first elements of Totenkopf did not arrive on the scene until 17 July, too late to prevent the German withdrawal from Soltsy.

Victory Conditions

If the Germans lose Soltsy, the consequences are severe. While not a decisive defeat, it would mark a significant setback. To achieve a minor German victory in this scenario, the Soviets must suffer substantial losses. The balance between the German need to extricate their forces and the Soviet desire to inflict heavy casualties will be critical. Players will face a tense and high-stakes situation where timely decisions and the effective management of resources, especially regarding reinforcements and supply lines are essential for victory.

This scenario offers players a challenging mix of offensive and defensive operations, as both the Germans and Soviets scramble to maintain momentum while managing their exposed flanks. The fate of Soltsy hinges on the successful use of fast-moving mechanized forces, but also on the ability to control critical supply lines and prevent isolation key themes that will challenge players on both sides

" Yelnya " 01 - 08 September 1941 (32 Turns)



Following the successful capture of Smolensk in late August 1941, the German Army's advance continued, pushing southward and seizing the town of Yelnya. This strategic town was located at a key crossroads and formed part of a German salient threatening to extend deep into Soviet-held territory.

The capture of Yelnya represented a significant step in the German effort to encircle Soviet forces and continue their march towards Moscow. However, the Soviet High Command (Stavka) was quick to recognize the danger posed by the German advance and began planning a counteroffensive.

On 25 August, with the German spearheads dangerously extending into the Yelnya salient, General Georgy Zhukov, the Soviet Chief of Staff, issued an order for a counterattack. He tasked General Vasily Rakutin’s 24th Army with recapturing Yelnya and neutralizing the surrounding German positions.

The Soviet 24th Army, however, was severely depleted after months of intense combat, and Rakutin's forces required reinforcement before they could mount a serious assault.

Soviet Preparations

To restore the strength of his army, General Rakutin received a significant infusion of manpower. By 26 August, the Soviet High Command had allocated 23 replacement battalions, each nearly 1,000 men strong, to bring the 24th Army’s divisions up to at least 70% of their

combat strength. These reinforcements were a mix of fresh recruits and seasoned soldiers, eager to take the fight to the Germans.

Despite the reinforcements, Rakutin's army was still far from full strength and had to operate under considerable strain. Rakutin's plan for the counteroffensive was built around the concept of "shock groups", highly concentrated, focused assaults aimed at key German positions in the Yelnya salient.

The 24th Army was divided into three such groups: a northern group, a southern group, and a central group. The northern and southern shock groups were to attack the German lines from both flanks, while the central group, weaker than the others, would push directly into the heart of the German salient from the east.

The German Defenses

On the German side, the Yelnya salient was stoutly defended by General Materna's XX Korps, which was tasked with holding the advanced positions at all costs. The salient was defended only by infantry divisions, the 78., 292., and 268. Divisions. To the north, the German positions were supported by the 137. Infanterie Division, and to the south, the 7. Infanterie Division held the line. Elements of the 15. Infanterie Division was kept in reserve, ready to plug any gaps or reinforce threatened sectors. Materna's forces were entrenched and well prepared for Soviet attacks, though their position was increasingly vulnerable as the Soviet counteroffensive gained momentum. The Germans had to contend with the possibility of being flanked by the Soviet forces to the north and south while attempting to hold their ground in the center of the salient. As the Soviet counteroffensive began on 1 September 1941, Rakutin's 24th Army launched its assault on the German positions around Yelnya. The northern and southern shock groups made initial gains, applying pressure on the flanks of the German salient, while the central group pressed forward directly towards the heart of the German defense. The initial Soviet attacks were met with stiff German resistance, as the German divisions in the salient fought tenaciously to hold their ground. Over the course of the next eight days, the battle would rage as Soviet and German forces clashed in a series of brutal engagements. The Soviets, while initially making progress on the flanks, found the German defenses to be formidable, and the centrally focused assault struggled to break through the entrenched German positions.

Scenario Overview

In this scenario, players take on the roles of the Soviet and German high commands during the critical battle for the Yelnya salient. The Soviet player must carefully coordinate the three shock groups to encircle and destroy the German defenders, while the German player must defend the salient, prevent encirclement, and attempt to break the Soviet offensive before the gap between the northern and southern forces widens too far. The scenario spans from 1 to 8 September 1941, a total of 32 turns, during which both sides will need to balance offensive action with logistical considerations and the challenges of maintaining supply lines and reinforcements. The battlefield is dynamic, with the Soviet counteroffensive constantly

evolving as the three shock groups push the Germans in different directions. The Soviet player will need to carefully manage the three shock groups and prioritize objectives. The northern and southern groups have the potential to outflank the Germans, but the central group, despite its weakness, must make a significant effort to break through the core of the German defenses. The Soviet player will also need to watch for opportunities to exploit gaps in the German line or weaken their defenses with encirclement maneuvers. Timing will be critical if the central assault is delayed or stalls, the Germans may be able to reposition their reserves and hold the line. The German player must hold the salient at all costs, but also avoid becoming too committed to any single defensive position. The threat of encirclement from the north and south means that the German player will need to be flexible, using their reserves effectively and reinforcing vulnerable sectors when necessary. The German defenses are strong, but the player must be wary of overstretching and failing to maintain a coherent defense across the salient. The German player will need to effectively manage their reserves, which could be critical in stabilizing the front if the Soviet breakthrough begins to gain momentum.

Closing Thoughts

The Battle for Yelnya was a key episode in the broader Soviet counteroffensive during the summer and fall of 1941. While not as famous as other engagements on the Eastern Front, the battle was a microcosm of the challenges faced by both the Soviet and German forces during this phase of the war. The Soviets, recovering from the initial shock of the German invasion, were still piecing together their shattered armies while launching a counteroffensive, while the Germans, stretched thin by months of relentless fighting, struggled to maintain their momentum. This scenario provides an opportunity for players to experience the tense and dynamic nature of these early battles on the Eastern Front, where one mistake could lead to catastrophe, but a well-executed maneuver could turn the tide in favor of either side.

The first "Guards" Division

After the Battle the 100th Rifle Division of General I.N. Russianov, "For combat feats and heroism of personnel", by order n.308 of the People's Commissar of Defense of September 18, was awarded "Guards", received a new military number 1, and was transformed with the honorary title of 1st Guards Rifle Division, thus becoming the first guard unit during the Great Patriotic War.

" Mtsensk " 4 - 8 October 1941 (20 Turns)



In the early days of October 1941, as the German offensive toward Moscow gathered momentum, the Soviets were desperately scrambling to form a cohesive defense.

Timeline of Key Events

On 1 October, Stalin issued an order for General Lelyushenko to halt the advance of the German 2. Panzergruppe toward Orel by organizing the newly formed 1st Guards Corps. This corps, however, would require 4–5 days to assemble, and the Soviets were soon confronted with the harsh reality that the Germans were already closing in on Orel.

By the night of 1 October, Lelyushenko received alarming reports that Guderian's forces were mere kilometers from Orel—far too close to allow for a meaningful defense of the city. Faced with this imminent threat, Lelyushenko made the pragmatic decision to abandon Orel and establish a defensive line south of Mtsensk, where he could still marshal forces in a more advantageous position.

With the 36th Motorcycle Regiment, still in reserve, and the Tula Artillery School hastily redeployed to reinforce the defense, Lelyushenko’s forces began to take position along the Suscha River, which Stalin himself marked as the new line of defense on a map. The decision was approved, but time was short, and the Soviets were far from ready to face the German onslaught.

By 3 October, the 4. Panzer Division captured Orel, advancing rapidly toward Mtsensk. However, the Germans were facing their own logistical limitations, fuel shortages were becoming a critical issue. Only a fraction of the 3. Panzer Division was able to follow up the advance, and those forces were diverted to secure the left flank, moving toward Bolchoff. Meanwhile, Kampfgruppe Eberbach, part of the 4th Panzer Division, pushed onward along the railway line to Mtsensk, intent on closing the gap and cutting off Soviet retreat routes.

Scenario Overview

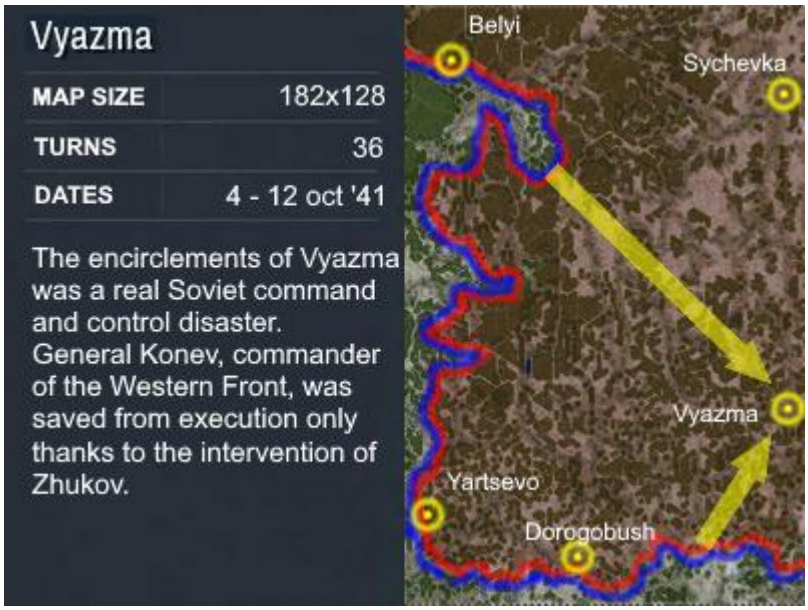
As the Germans closed in, the battle for Mtsensk began to unfold. The Soviet defenders, hastily organized but determined, were forced to delay the German advance as long as possible. The terrain, the limited forces available, and the desperate need to buy time for reinforcements all shaped the contours of the battle, which would be pivotal in delaying the German push toward Moscow.

For the player, the Mtsensk scenario offers a dynamic challenge of fast-moving tactical decisions, as both sides struggle with supply constraints and the urgency of holding or breaking positions. The Soviet player must leverage their limited resources and choose where to make their stand along the Suscha River, while the German player must balance the need for speed with the reality of logistical shortages, all while trying to maintain the momentum of their offensive.

Closing Thoughts

General Guderian in his book “Panzer Leader” about the battle writes “ I decided to visit the 4. Panzer Division at once and find out for myself what the situation was. On the battlefield that had been fought over during the 6th and 7th of October the commander of the battlegroup that had been there engaged himself described the course of the fighting to me. The tanks knocked out on either side were still in position. The damage suffered by the Russians was considerably less than that to our own tanks. The Russians attacked us frontally with infantry, while they sent their tanks in, in mass formation, against our flanks. They were learning. “

" Vyazma " 04 - 12 October 1941 (36 Turns)



The Vyazma Defensive Operation, a largely overlooked but catastrophic episode of the early stages of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, remains one of the most poignant examples of Soviet command and control failures during the war. Despite the subsequent reassessment of the battle, which only emerged over fifty years later, the operation's disastrous outcome was a result of a confluence of poor leadership, miscommunication, and a lack of coordinated defense.

Soviet General Georgy Zhukov, writing in the aftermath, noted that even with the forces at hand, the disastrous encirclement and loss of nearly 900,000 men from the Soviet Western, Reserve, and Bryansk Fronts could have been avoided. However, it took decades for objective analysis to unravel the series of strategic mistakes that led to this debacle.

The Soviet defenses around Vyazma, a key strategic location at the junction of the Moscow and Smolensk highways, collapsed in early October 1941 due to an expertly executed German pincer movement.

The offensive began in earnest on the morning of 2 October when the 3rd Panzer Group, under the command of General Hermann Hoth, broke through Soviet defenses around Belyi, a key town to the north of Vyazma. The Germans swiftly encircled the defenders, pressing deeper into Soviet territory. Meanwhile, the southern arm of the German advance, led by the 4. Panzergruppe and the 2.SS “Das Reich” Division, managed to sever Soviet supply lines, deepening the trap around Vyazma.

By 7 October, the Soviet forces defending Vyazma had been completely encircled. This marked a pivotal moment in the battle, as the Germans secured a significant portion of the Soviet front, effectively trapping several Soviet armies in the process.

Timeline of Key Events

3 October: Belyi falls to the Germans after a swift advance by the 26. Infanterie Division and 1. Panzer Division.
7 October 10:30 AM: Vyazma is captured by the 10. and 7. Panzer Divisions.
9 October 12:00 PM: Gzhatsk falls to the 2.SS “Das Reich” Division, cutting off further Soviet retreat.
10 October: Sychevka is reached by the 1. Panzer Division, further compressing the encirclement.

Soviet Command Failures

The Vyazma operation quickly descended into a Soviet command and control nightmare. The failure to establish a coherent defensive line or organize a viable counterattack led directly to the encirclement. General Konev, the commander of the Western Front, was spared execution only by the personal intervention of Zhukov, who recognized that Konev's blunders, while serious, were symptomatic of a broader systemic breakdown within the Soviet command structure.

A critical misstep occurred on the afternoon of 5 October, when Konev, already under intense pressure and with Stalin having already summoned Zhukov to Moscow, ordered General Rokossovsky to relocate the HQ of the 16th Army to Vyazma. This order effectively left the 16th Army without a commander, as Konev delegated control of all his units to General Ershakov of the 20th Army. Rokossovsky, justifiably concerned about the lack of clear communications, requested written confirmation of the order. That night, an aircraft delivered Konev's signed orders to Rokossovsky. However, when Rokossovsky and his staff arrived at Vyazma, they found little but a few local militia units, and only two regiments of the 50th Rifle Division were en route to Vyazma.

The other units promised to Rokossovsky, such as the 38th, 73rd, and 229th Rifle Divisions, along with the 147th Tank Brigade, were still engaged with the enemy. As a result, the defense of Vyazma was hopelessly disorganized, with essential units scattered and under threat from German forces already pressing forward.

The Fallout

The disarray at Vyazma resulted in the total encirclement of the Soviet Western Front. While Konev's leadership was called into question, the true depth of the crisis lay in the lack of coordination and communication at higher echelons of Soviet command. The German attack, initially aiming to penetrate Soviet lines, instead became a rout of entire armies. The Soviet forces encircled at Vyazma suffered immense casualties, and the loss of roughly 900,000 men, including many prisoners of war, marked one of the most disastrous defeats of the early war years.

Scenario Overview

In this scenario, players will be thrust into the command chairs of both Soviet and German forces during the critical Vyazma defensive operation.
The Soviet player must contend with the chaos of a disintegrating front, struggling to coordinate a defense with limited forces while trying to avoid a complete collapse.
The German player, conversely, will capitalize on the opportunity presented by the Soviet disorder, seeking to crush the defending forces and achieve the encirclement of Vyazma.
The scenario is set over 36 turns, from 4 to 12 October 1941, and challenges both sides to make critical decisions that will determine the fate of the battle.
The Germans must push forward with speed and precision to exploit the gaps in the Soviet defenses, while the Soviets must adapt rapidly, managing their fragmented forces and attempting to buy time for reinforcements to arrive.
The Soviet player must contend with a badly fractured command structure and a rapidly disintegrating defense. Key to Soviet survival will be the ability to delay the Germans and avoid total collapse by reinforcing pockets of resistance and maintaining a tenuous hold on Vyazma as long as possible. The loss of communication and lack of cohesion at higher levels will make this a particularly challenging task.
The German player has the opportunity to press the attack and attempt to achieve a decisive encirclement. However, the success of this strategy hinges on the ability to maintain momentum, prevent Soviet units from escaping, and exploit the Soviets' lack of command coordination. The Germans must move quickly and decisively to capitalize on Soviet disarray and secure a victory.

Closing Thoughts

The Vyazma defensive operation was a sobering lesson in the consequences of Soviet poor command decisions, miscommunication, and failure to adapt to the fluid realities of modern warfare. In the aftermath, Soviet leaders, including Zhukov, would take the lessons of Vyazma to heart, recognizing the need for more agile, flexible command structures. This scenario offers wargamers a unique opportunity to explore a key turning point in the early stages of the war on the Eastern Front, where operational errors and leadership failures led to one of the most devastating defeats in Soviet history.

" On to Moscow " 10 - 21 October 1941 (48 Turns)



By October 1941, the Eastern Front was in turmoil. The German blitzkrieg, fueled by overwhelming mechanized forces, had driven deep into Soviet territory, and the Wehrmacht's advance toward Moscow was reaching its critical stage.

The catastrophic encirclement at Vyazma in early October had dealt a heavy blow to the Soviet forces, resulting in the destruction of a significant portion of their frontline units. The situation was dire, and the Soviet command structure, reeling from the series of defeats, was in disarray.

Timeline of Key Events

In response to the crisis, the Soviet High Command recalled General Georgy Zhukov from his duties in Leningrad to Moscow, hoping his expertise could salvage the deteriorating situation. On October 7, Zhukov faced the grim reality: the frontlines were in complete collapse, and the Red Army's defensive positions had virtually evaporated, leaving vast gaps for the German spearheads to exploit. Worse still, the Soviets had only a few Tank Brigades at their disposal, insufficient to halt the German tide. At the same time, the Germans were still engaged in mopping up the remnants of Soviet forces trapped in the Vyazma pocket. However, key elements of the Wehrmacht, particularly the 10.Panzer Division and the 2.SS "Das Reich" Division, were pushing rapidly towards Moscow, with other supporting units advancing in tandem.
On October 8, the Soviets, recognizing the desperate need to slow the German advance, committed their two most readily available Tank Brigades to counter the threat.

The 18th Tank Brigade was dispatched to the critical crossroads town of Gzhatsk, while the 17th Tank Brigade was sent to Maloyaroslavets, another key town along the German axis of advance. These two tank brigades, hastily assembled and largely underequipped compared to their German counterparts, were tasked with delaying the German advance and buying time for reinforcements and defensive preparations in Moscow itself.

The Germans, for their part, were determined to press forward. The 10.Panzer Division, renowned for its speed and firepower, was racing ahead to capture key points along the road to Moscow. Meanwhile, the 2.SS “Das Reich” Division, bolstered by elements from other divisions, was tasked with securing critical terrain and holding off any Soviet counterattacks. The road to Moscow, however, was still a long and perilous one.

Scenario Overview

In this scenario, players take on the roles of the Soviet and German high commands during the critical early days of October 1941, as both sides race to control the terrain and resources necessary to shape the course of the impending battle for Moscow.

The Soviets must manage the limited resources at their disposal and attempt to delay the German advance long enough to allow for reinforcements to reach the capital.

The Germans, meanwhile, must maintain the momentum of their attack, knowing that time is of the essence if they are to capitalize on their initial breakthroughs.

The scenario spans a critical period of 48 turns, from 10 to 21 October 1941. Players will need to consider the strategic value of key towns like Gzhatsk and Maloyaroslavets, as well as the logistical challenges inherent in maintaining a rapid advance while under the threat of Soviet counterattacks.

Will the Soviets succeed in their delaying actions, or will the Germans break through and set the stage for the final push to Moscow? The outcome of this scenario could well decide the fate of the capital and the course of the war on the Eastern Front.

Strategic Considerations

With only a handful of tank brigades and limited reserves, the Soviet player must use the available forces judiciously. Effective use of terrain, delaying actions, and strategic withdrawals will be key to slowing the German advance and buying time for reinforcements. Holding Gzhatsk and Maloyaroslavets could prove critical in denying the Germans vital roads leading to Moscow.

The German player must maintain the tempo of their advance, pushing swiftly towards Moscow while ensuring that their spearheads are not overly stretched. The 10.Panzer Division and 2.SS “Das Reich” Division are formidable, but they must deal with Soviet resistance without becoming bogged down in prolonged engagements. Capturing key towns along the route to Moscow and cutting Soviet lines of retreat will be essential for maintaining initiative.

Closing Thoughts

The historical reality of the October 1941 crisis for the Soviets was one of near-collapse. The German offensive had breached the Soviet defenses at Vyazma, and the road to Moscow lay

wide open. Yet, the tenacity of Soviet resistance and the skillful leadership of figures like Zhukov would come to play a critical role in turning the tide. In this scenario, players will have the opportunity to explore this pivotal moment in history. Will the Germans capitalize on their momentum, or will the Soviets buy enough time to prepare for the decisive showdown in Moscow itself?

" Borodino " 13-17 October 1941 (20 Turns)



The name Borodino is forever etched in military history as the site of one of the most famous and bloody battles of the Napoleonic Wars, where in 1812, the Russian Imperial Army under Marshal Kutuzov held its ground against the overwhelming might of Napoleon's Grande Armée.

However, the battlefield's legacy extends beyond the era of muskets and cavalry, for in the autumn of 1941, the very same ground saw renewed combat, albeit under far different circumstances. In the midst of the brutal German advance into the Soviet Union, the Borodino region became a focal point of the fighting during the German push towards Moscow.

Historical Context

As part of the wider Operation Typhoon, the German XL Korps (mot.), fresh from a string of successes, engaged Soviet forces defending a critical sector of the Soviet defensive line.
This time, however, the combatants were not the legions of Napoleon but the Wehrmacht's seasoned troops and the determined Red Army units that had dug in along the Moscow approaches.

By mid-October, the German offensive had pressed hard into Soviet territory, though not without significant opposition.
Despite fierce fighting, the XL Korps (mot.), after several days of intense engagement, eventually managed to overrun the Soviet positions near Borodino.
The strategically important town of Mozhaisk, a key bastion in the Soviet defense line, fell to the Germans on 18 October, although the Soviets managed to hold the rest of their defensive positions.

While the Germans had gained ground, the Soviet defensive network, though battered, remained unbroken. The Red Army's leadership, unwilling to cede more territory, soon began

preparations for a counteroffensive, which would culminate in the retaking of Mozhaisk on 20 January 1942. Notably, the Borodino battlefield itself would also be reclaimed the very next day.

Scenario Overview

The German XL Korps (mot.), reinforced by 2.SS “Das Reich” division, faces off against the stalwart Soviet 32nd Rifle Division, which, despite suffering heavy casualties, is well-positioned to slow or even halt the German advance.

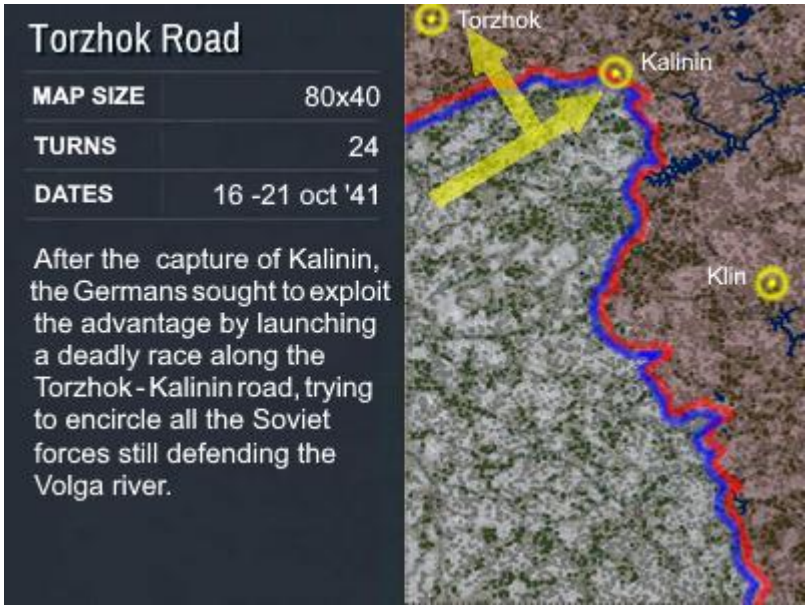
This 20-turns scenario captures the bitter fighting that occurred between 13–17 October 1941, as the German XL Korps (mot.) attempted to break through the Soviet defensive positions on the outskirts of Moscow. Will the German forces repeat their historical success and capture the vital town of Mozhaisk? Or will the Soviet defenders manage to hold out long enough for reinforcements and counterattacks to change the course of the battle?

Victory Conditions

The Germans must aim to capture the city of Mozhaisk and secure the Borodino battlefield, inflicting as many casualties as possible.

The Soviets must hold as much of their defensive line as possible and prevent a breakthrough, setting the stage for a potential counteroffensive

" Torzhok Road " 16-21 October 1941 (32 Turns)



By mid-October 1941, the German offensive in the Soviet Union had reached a critical juncture. Following the rapid advance of XLI Panzer Korps from Staritsa to Kalinin, the Germans had captured a vital intact bridge across the Volga River, opening the way for a deeper thrust into Soviet territory. The 1. Panzer Division, reinforced by the elite 900. Lehr Brigade was tasked with exploiting this breakthrough and driving eastward toward Torzhok.

The objective was clear: encircle and destroy the remaining Soviet forces defending the Volga, thereby securing a decisive victory and cutting off Soviet forces to the north.

As the German forces advanced along the Torzhok road, the situation began to shift. The Soviet command, recognizing the peril of losing their defensive line along the Volga, quickly organized a counteroffensive. The Soviet counterattack came from both the north and the southeast, with the 8th Tank Brigade striking from the north and the 21st Tank Brigade launching a pincer attack from the southeast. This concerted effort forced the Germans into a hasty retreat, and they were ultimately compelled to pull back to the city of Kalinin, where they sought to stabilize their line and reorganize in the face of the Soviet onslaught.

Historical Context & Gaming Notes

The Torzhok Road scenario represents a tense moment in the German advance during the autumn of 1941, as the Wehrmacht sought to exploit the fragile Soviet defenses along the Volga.
While the Germans had achieved significant successes in the early stages of Operation Barbarossa, the harsh realities of the Soviet stubborn resistance and the steady deployments of new Soviet reinforcements were becoming increasingly evident. The battle along the Torzhok road encapsulates the difficult nature of the campaign as the Germans pushed deeper into Russian territory, only to encounter stronger Soviet resistance.

For the German player, this scenario presents an opportunity to capitalize on the initial success of the bridgehead at Kalinin. The key to victory lies in maintaining the momentum of the advance, avoiding overextension, and preventing the Soviet counteroffensive from disrupting the fragile German line. The 1. Panzer Division and the 900. Lehr motorized Brigade will need to work in concert, leveraging their mobility and firepower to deal with the Soviet tank brigades before they can build strength and momentum.

For the Soviet player, the scenario offers a chance to strike back at the Germans and capitalize on the vulnerability of the German advance. The Soviet counterattack is critical and must be executed with precision, as the combined thrust of the 8th and 21st Tank Brigades presents a dangerous pincer movement. Delaying or forcing the Germans to retreat back to Kalinin is a key goal, as it buys time for reinforcements and helps to keep the defensive line intact.

Victory Conditions

For the German player, the capture of Torzhok and the destruction or encirclement of Soviet forces defending the Volga will provide a significant advantage, potentially crippling Soviet defenses in the region. Holding Kalinin and pushing eastward will be critical for achieving victory.

For the Soviet player, the ability to force the Germans back into Kalinin and disrupt their advance is the key to success. Keeping the Germans from establishing a secure bridgehead and forcing them into a retreat will buy time for reinforcements and shift the balance of the campaign.

This scenario reflects the ebb and flow of the early war on the Eastern Front, where each side was engaged in a desperate struggle for control of critical terrain, and every tactical victory had the potential to influence the broader course of the conflict. The outcome of the battle will depend on how effectively each side manages their forces and seizes opportunities amid the fluid and volatile conditions of combat

Heeresgruppe Mitte OOB - october 1941

Heeresgruppe Mitte :	(Feldmarschall Fedor von Bock)
--9.Armee:	(Generaloberst Adolf Strauss)

---XXIII Korps: (Gen. Infanterie Albrecht Schubert)
256. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Gerhard Kauffmann)
251. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Karl Burdach)
206. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Hugo Hoefl)
102. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. John Ansat)

---VI Korps: (Gen. Pioniere Otto Wilhelm Foerster)
110. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Ernst Seifert)
6. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Helge Artur Auleb)
26. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Walter Weiss)

---XXVII Korps: (Gen. Infanterie Alfred Waeger)
86. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Joachim Witthoeft)
162. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Hermann Franke)
129. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Stephen Rittau)

--3.Panzergruppe: (Generaloberst Georg Hans Reinhardt)

---XLI Korps (mot.): (Gen. Panzertruppen Walter Model)
1. Panzer Div. (Gen.lt. Walter Kruger)
36. Inf.Div. (mot.) (Gen.lt. Hans Gollnick)
161. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Heinrich Recke)

---LVI Korps (mot.): (Gen. Panzertruppen Ferdinand Schaal)
7. Panzer Div. (Gen.major Hans von Funck)
14. Inf.Div. (mot.) (Gen.major Heinrich Wosch)

--4.Panzergruppe: (Generaloberst Erich Hoepner)

---XL Korps (mot.): (General der Kavallerie Georg Stumme)
10. Panzer Div. (Gen.Pz.tr. Wolfgang Fischer)
2. Panzer Div. (Gen.lt. Rudolf Veiel)

---V Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Richard Ruoff)
35. Inf.Div. (Gen.Inf. W.F. von Weikersthal)
106. Inf.Div. (Gen.Infanterie Ernst Dehner)

---VII Korps: (Gen.Artillerie Wilhelm Fahrmbacher)
7. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Eccard Freiherr von Gablenz)
267. Inf.Div. (Gen. Artillerie Robert Martinek)
197. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Hermann Meyer-Rabingen)

---IX Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Hermann Geyer)
78. Inf.Div. (Gen.Infanterie Paul Völckers)
87. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Bogislav von Studnitz)
252. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Diether von Boehm-Bezing)

---XLVI Korps (mot.): (Generaloberst Heinrich von Vietinghoff)
5. Panzer Div. (Gen.Major Gustav Fehn)
11. Panzer Div. (Gen.Major Hans Karl von Esebeck)

--4.Armee: (Feldmarschall Guenther Hans von Kluge)

---XX Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Friedrich Materna)
183. Inf.Div. (Gen.Major Richard Stempel)
3. Inf.Div. (mot.) (Gen.lt. Curt Jahn)
258. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Karl Pflaum)
292. Inf.Div. (Gen.Major Willy Seeger)

---LVII Korps (mot.).: (Gen.Panzertruppen Friedrich Kirchner)
19. Panzer Div. (Gen.Pz.tr. Otto von Knobelsdorff)
20. Panzer Div. (Gen.lt. Wilhelm Ritter von Thoma)
15. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Ernst Eberhard Hell)

---XII Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Walter Schroth)
34. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Friedrich Fürst)
98. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Erich Schroeck)

---XIII Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Hans Felber)
52. Inf.Div. (Generaloberst Lothar Rendulic)
260. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Hans Schmidt)
268. Inf.Div. (Gen.Infanterie Erich Straube)
263. Inf.Div. (Gen.Major Ernst Haeckel)
17. Inf.Div. (Gen.Major Ernst Guntzel))

--2.Panzergruppe:(2.Pz.Armee oct.5) (Generaloberst Heinz Guderian)

---XLIII Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Gotthard Heinrici)
31. Inf.Div. (Gen.Major Gerhard Berthold)
131. Inf.Div. (Gen.Artillerie Heinrich Mayer-Burdorf)

---XXIV Korps (mot.): (Gen.Pz.tr. Leo Geyr von Schweppenburg)
3. Panzer Div. (Gen.lt. Hermann Breith)
4. Panzer Div. (Gen.Major Willibald von Langermann)
296. Inf. Div. (Gen.Art. Wilhelm Stemmermann)

---LIII Korps: (Gen.Infanterie Karl Weisenberger)
112. Inf.Div. (Gen.Infanterie Friedrich Mieth)
167. Inf.Div. (Gen.lt. Wolf Trierenberg)
29. Inf.Div. (mot.) (Gen.Major Max Fremerey)

---XLVII Korps (mot.): (Gen.Artillerie Joachim Lemelsen)
18. Panzer Div. (Gen.Major Walter Nehring)
17. Panzer Div. (Gen.Major Rudolf Eduard Licht)

Vyazma Soviet OOB - october 1941

Western Front (I. S. Konev)

--Dovator Operational Group (L.M. Dovator)
50th Cavalry Div. (I.A. Pliev)
53rd Cavalry Div. (K.S. Melnik)

--Boldin Operational Group (I.V. Boldin)
126th Rifle Div. (I.P. Korchagin)
152nd Rifle Div. (P.N. Chernyshev)
45th Cavalry Div. (A.T. Stuchenko)

--30th Army (V.A. Khomenko)
250th Rifle Div. (P.A. Stepanenko)
242nd Rifle Div. (V.S. Glebov)
162nd Rifle Div. (N.F. Kolkunov)
251st Rifle Div. (V.F. Stenin)

--19th Army (V.A. Khomenko)
244th Rifle Div. (N.T. Shcherbakov)
91st Rifle Div. (I.A. Volkov)
89th Rifle Div. (T.F. Kolesnikov)
50th Rifle Div. (A.A. Boreiko)
166th Rifle Div. (M.I. Dodonov)

--16th Army (K.K. Rokossovky)
112th Rifle Div. (A.V. Gladkov)
38th Rifle Div. (M.G. Kirillov)
108th Rifle Div. (N.I. Orlov)

--20th Army (F.A. Ershakov)
144th Rifle Div. (M.A. Pronin)
73rd Rifle Div. (A.I. Akimov)
229th Rifle Div. (M.I. Kozlov)
129th Rifle Div. (F.D. Yablokov)

Reserve Front (S. M. Budenny)

--49th Army (I.G. Zakharkin)
194th Rifle Div. (A.P. Firsov)
220th Rifle Div. (N.G. Khoruzhenko)
248th Rifle Div. (K.K. Sverchevski)
303rd Rifle Div. (A.G. Moiseevsky)

--32nd Army (S.V. Vishnevsky)
2nd Rifle Div. (2Militia) (V.R. Vashkevich)
8th Rifle Div. (8Militia) (D.P. Skripnikov)
29th Rifle Div. (7Militia) (I.V. Zaikin)
140th Rifle Div. (13Militia) (P.Y. Morozov)

--24th Army	(K.I. Rakutin)
19th Rifle Div.	(A.I. Utvenko)
139th Rifle Div. (9Militia)	(B.D. Bobrov)
309th Rifle Div.	(N.A. Ilyantsev)
103rd Rifle Div.	(I.I. Birichev)
106th Mot. Div.	(K.S. Monakov)