

Strategic overview

Turn 14: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	1719	109501	0
-	Port	121	15	0	0	0
-	Railyard	227	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2772	35	52231	1995034	0
-	Vehicle	120	0	237630	278120	0
-	Heavy Industry	203	10	0	1229500	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	832000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	464880	0
-	Resource Production	171	0	0	2368000	0
-	Armaments Production	303	13	399717	952000	0

A lot of things happening this turn. The collapse of the Leningrad pocket is ongoing, in the center, the Germans have taken Moscow and concentrated their Panzers between Kaluga and Bryansk and in the south, another encirclement battle is engulfing the Southern Front.

German AFV + SP/AC losses this turn is 120, and they have also lost 78 fighters and 73 bombers. I did some math before receiving the turn, and the Germans have now lost an average of 150 guns every turn compared to their starting OoB + reinforcements. Totally, the German air production more or less match their losses. They will likely upgrade the Luftwaffe come the mud, leaving them with a more or less intact OoB but hopefully with few reserves. On the ground, the total Axis losses of 1998 AFV's + SP/AC's are slightly more than their production over the campaign, but it is nothing they can not replace over the winter.

Soviet losses this turn are some 187 fighters and 164 bombers. However, I only lost 10 Yak-1's (to a production of 52), 21 LaGG-3's (to a production of 66) and 21 IL-2's (to a production of 88). The Soviet airforce is improving in quality. On the ground, the Soviet's have little more than 700 AFV's more than the Axis and currently, production is bad with only 15 KV-1's and 69 T-34's being produced against an expected German production of approximately 100 various AFV's. Those numbers will improve come October, as I then begin production of the T-60 Light Tank (50 pr turn), The Matilda (10 pr turn) and the Valentine (4 rising to 26 pr turn).

It does seem as if the Germans are content to no longer threaten new production facilities, and with a little luck, I can expect to lose no more production than that already encircled by the Germans in Leningrad.

Axis VP advantage is 2.2 to 1.

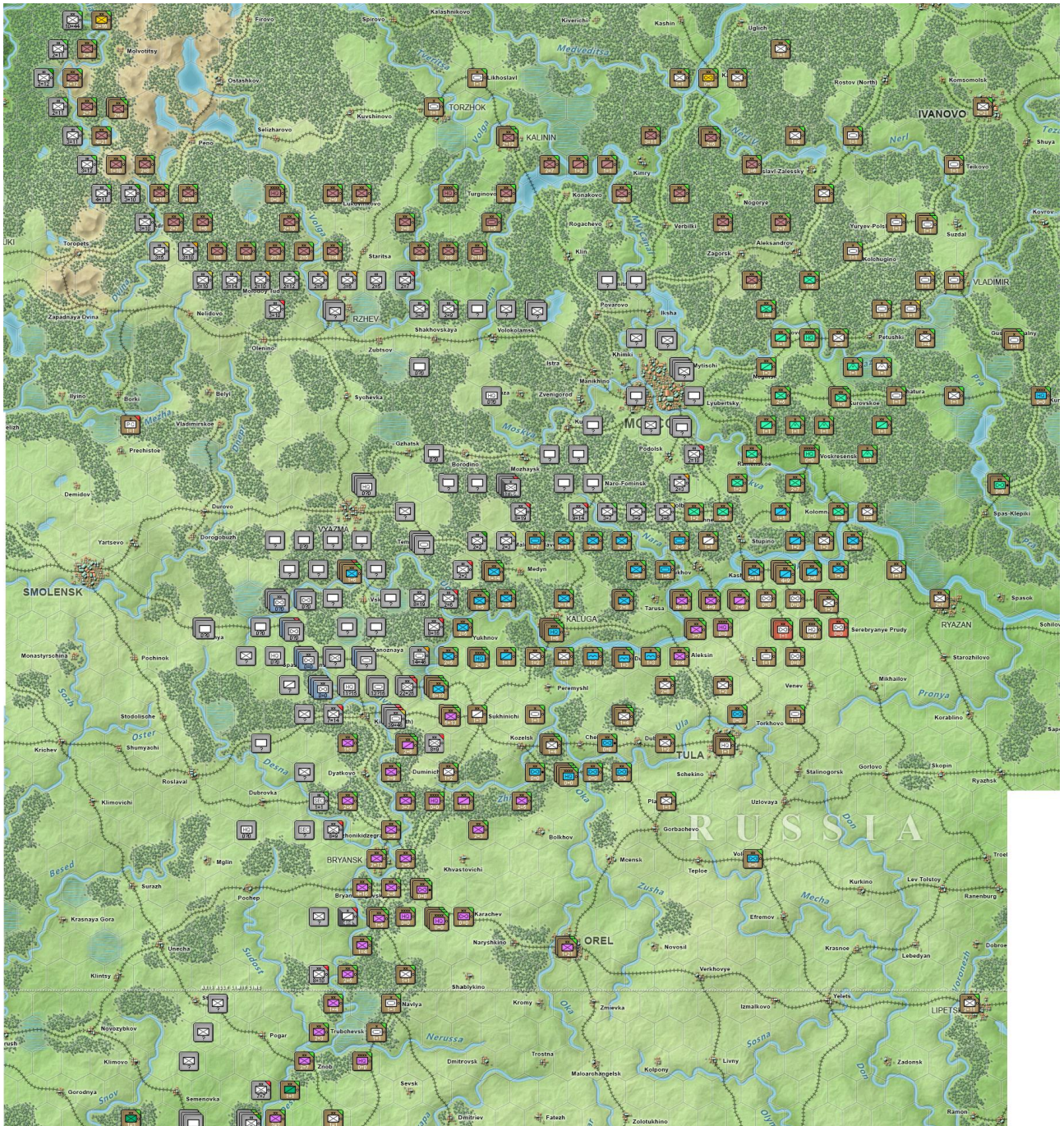
The North



In Leningrad, the Germans are now connected to the Finns and the Finns have begun streaming south. My guess is, that the fighting will probably be over in two turns, and are very unlikely to continue for more than three. For some reason, my encircled troops are extremely bad at looking at what stands opposite from them, and are again left with a bunch of enemy divisions with a detection level of one.

Along the Volkhov and east of Lake Ilmen, it seems as if the Germans are settling in for the winter. They have tried no more land grabbing this turn, and have even pulled back from two hexes. With the Finns coming south, the Germans will likely set up a very strong front, and nothing will happen here for a considerable time.

The Center



In the center, all divisions in Moscow have been destroyed. At the same time, the Germans have concentrated their Panzer divisions between Kaluga and Bryansk. This places them virtually on top of their rail heads, so I can expect some serious movement from these units over the next few turns. My guess is that the plan is for them to force their way southeast, surrounding and destroying Soviet divisions as they go. In front of them stands some of the best divisions of the Red Army at this point.

Outside Moscow, the Germans have pulled back, almost to the city itself. There are no Panzers left in the area, and I have an opportunity for moving my divisions closer to the city for no cost. Once they reach the German lines, a new assessment will have to be made on whether to attack now, or wait for the winter.

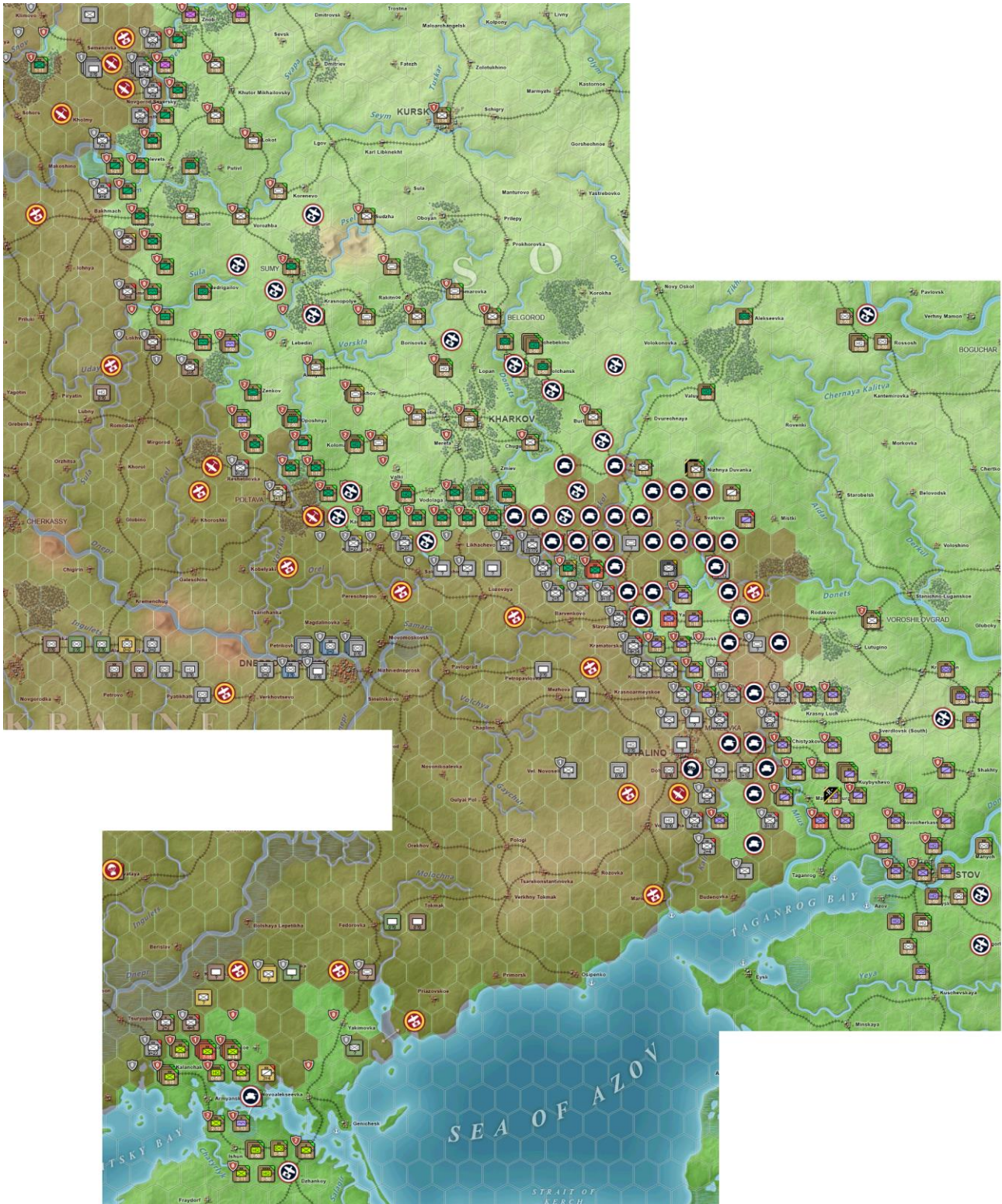
The threat on the Oka line has diminished considerably, and I can free up the two armies standing guard on this line and replace them with STAVKA divisions.

The Reserve Front divisions are finally beginning to show a rise in CV. As a considerable part of the front opposite them is manned with only infantry regiments, this means that I am now able to start more offensive maneuvers.

To the south, the Bryansk Front is also beginning to show some decent (for the soviets) CV values. There is one German Motorized division out in front of their spearhead. One option is to gather an entire army of the Bryansk Front, attack it and then spread out for the coming German attack.

In the air, the Germans have moved their airfields straight up to the front. As I count more than 200 fighters in the area, I guess I need to be slightly careful with what I choose to attack in this area. The Western and Bryansk Fronts standing across from this show of strength are mainly using I-type fighters, with a few LaGG-3's thrown in for good measure.

The South



In the south, the infantry attacks on the western parts of the Southwestern Front has stopped, and the Germans have launched a major attack eastwards instead.

Three pockets have been created, but all of them can be broken with ease. However, I have little strength behind the German breakthrough, and I will need to ensure that the Germans do not make any large territorial gains just before the mud.

I notice that the Southwestern Front is now often facing only divisions with one hew between them, and for part of the frontline those divisions are Romanian.

East of Stalino, I notice that the Germans have conducted five fuel drops, so I guess some fuel will reach the Panzers next turn.

The Caucasus MD has created no less than four guard divisions this turn, and hold their lines just fine. In Odessa to the west, the port damage has risen from 54 to 55. The Romanians have also suffered 1500 KIA in a failed attack on the port. If the Axis can do no more damage than this, I will hold on to Odessa until winter.

Planning

In the air, I will focus on adding my good fighters to the Western and Bryansk Front airbases. I will also be creating a new batch of fighter and tactical bomber Air Groups, hoping to be able to inflict some casualties on the Germans before the mud. I will also be building one new SB-2 Rcn Group for assignment to the North Caucasus MD. The Germans conduct large supply drop operations in the south, and I want to see if I can find the airbase and then send my long range bombers on a visit.

The North

The Northern Front is becoming increasingly static. I can do little in Leningrad and the defensive CV's along both the Volkhov and east of Lake Ilmen are simply too large for me to deal with at present. I plan to relocate the army commands of both armies still in Leningrad.

In the Air, the U-2VS, the IL-2, the Pe-2 and the LaGG-3 Air Groups will begin to either shift south to the Reserve Front or else be pulled back to the National Reserve.

The Center

My plans for the upcoming turn is based on the movement of the German Panzers to a new part of the front. Facing those panzers are currently one army of the Western Front and one of the Bryansk Front. I intend to create a second line behind those two Fronts using the two armies currently standing guard on the Oka. All those four armies already have large numbers of support units attached, but nonetheless, I will attach three AA batallions to each of them, hoping for some result against the Luftwaffe. The four armies in question also already have some of the best leadership available to the Soviets.

One of the armies in question will be charged with attacking that forward German Motorized division. Hopefully, I can dislodge it and force some replacement casualties on it. If I recall correctly, this will be the first time in the campaign I attack a full sized German Motorized division.

In the air, I will be moving the 59 IAD to the rear and bring up the 38 IAD once more. Meanwhile, I will also be reassigning several airfields from 1 BAK to the Western Front. This will add five LaGG-3 Air Groups, five Yak-1 Air Groups and ten IL-2 Air Groups to that front, and hopefully this will help in the upcoming battle against the German Panzers. The remaining SU-2's will keep attacking the Germans outside Moscow. I assign them all to the Western Front as this keeps the command together, as this is the Front closest to their current position and as I might well use the Western Front offensively come winter.

The departure of the German Panzers from Moscow enables me to push the divisions from both the Moscow MD and the Reserve Front forward and hopefully start to put some pressure on the remaining Germans.

Along the Reserve Front's line there is a long stretch of front held only by German infantry regiments. I will begin attacking this line, hoping to beat some of the German divisions thus removing their fortifications for future turns. I do not expect to move my front forward in this sector.

The South

On the Southwestern Front, I will move divisions around slightly in order to attack the Romanians holding part of the line. Further south, I will position a cavalry unit for a push through the gaps in the German line. If I'm lucky, by next turn I might just have enough movement points to reach the rail lines to its south. If not, I risk little.

The easternmost army of the Southwestern Front will be deployed eastwards parallel to the front in order to prevent the Germans from pushing north and in order to present as good an attack as possible come next turn, when the pockets have been reestablished.

The pockets themselves will of course be opened, but I have no doubt the Germans will then proceed to reclose them.

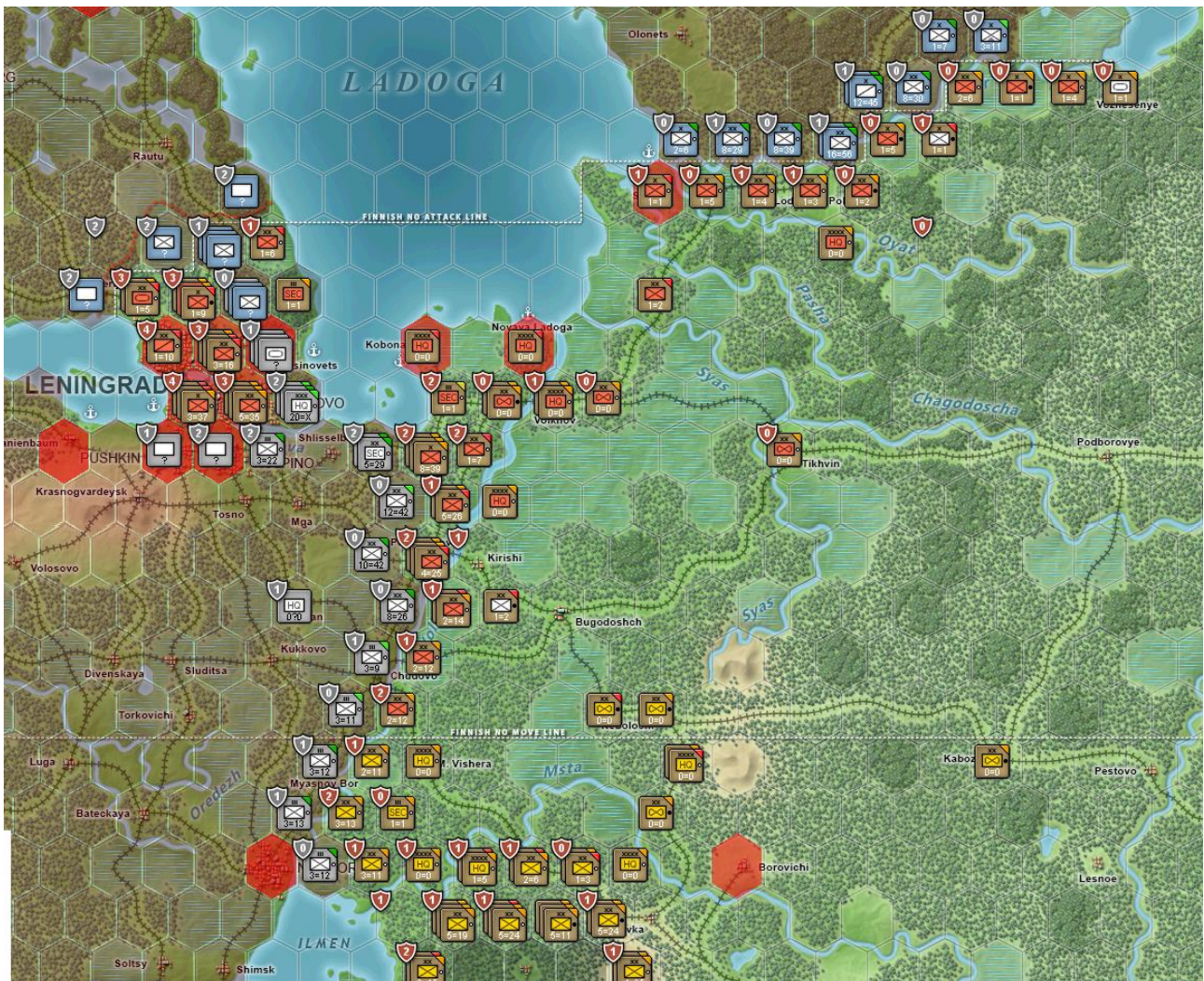
Further south, I will reposition the 37th army of the Southern Front to its north, in order to link up with the Southwestern Front and present a contiguous frontline to the Germans.

The units of the North Caucasus MD will continue to hit the Axis Minor units opposing them, by now helped by eight U-2VS Air Groups.

I will leave all divisions in Odessa for another turn.

Execution

Northern Front

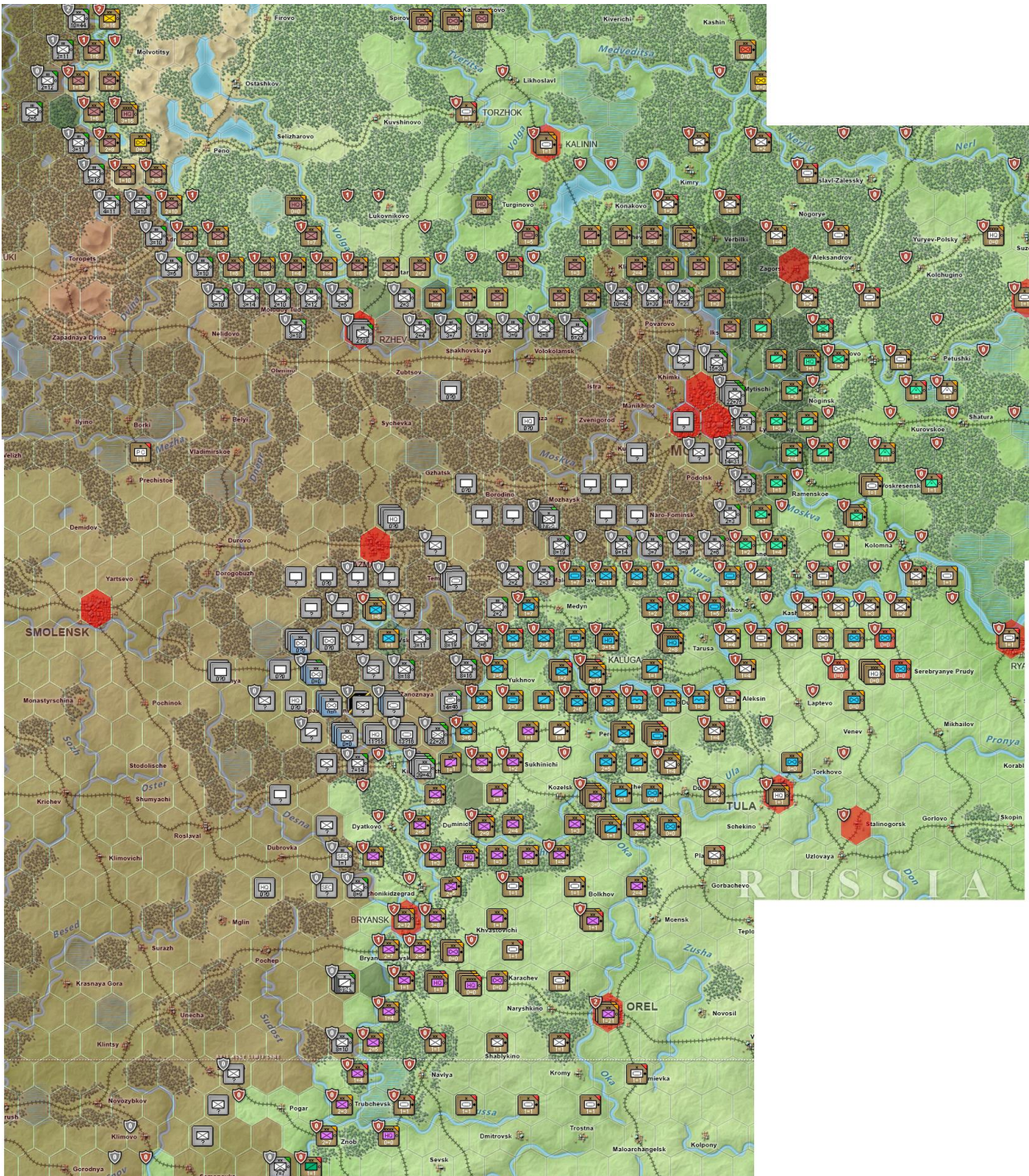


In the north, little has happened.

In Leningrad, the two armies involved in the defense of the city have been relocated. This will open up a spot for the remaining divisions to withdraw to when they are attacked.

Other than that, I have moved a number of airfields south, strengthening the airforces of the Kalinin Front considerably.

The Center



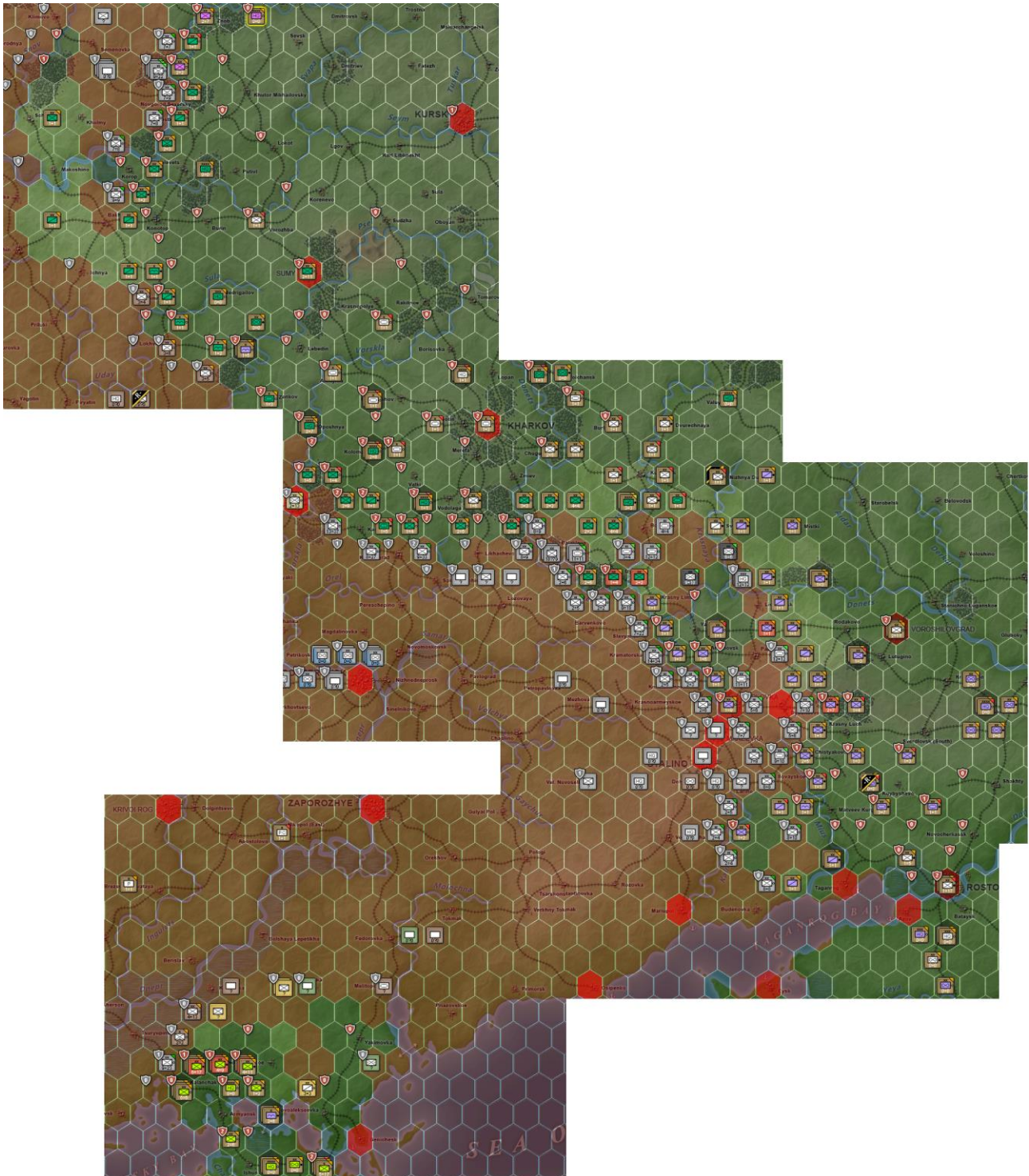
I have concentrated my armies of both the Western and the Bryansk Front in the area most likely to be attacked by the German panzers. The four armies in place have been strengthened with AA support units (three each) and I have assigned some of the airfields of the 1 BAK to the Western Front. I also have quite a

few good quality fighter Air Groups waiting in the National Reserve. The Bryansk front also did manage to remove that German motorized division that was left out in front of the German spearhead.

Outside Moscow, I have moved my divisions up towards the German front. I am wondering if the Germans will withdraw from the city already, as they need their infantry to take up positions along their very long frontline. Personally, I would have kept the city a little longer, but there's no way of telling what the Germans may decide.

The Reserve Front has conducted a few attacks on German infantry regiments displacing three of them. If the Germans do not deal with this, they will have no fortifications left in the area by the time the blizzard arrives.

The South



At the northwestern end of this section, I have routed a Romanian division and thrown a cavalry division into the gap. The infantry division was one left encircled a few turns ago. I have also repositioned the Recon of the Southwestern Front and moved a cavalry division into position for storming through a gap in the German lines southwest of Kharkov.

Further south I have pulled a Southwestern Front army eastwards and another army from the Southern Front northwards. I honestly don't know if this will be enough to save my forces here from a major defeat, but I hope for the best. The German supply difficulties might impact their aggressiveness. I did manage to encircle a part of the German Panzers temporarily by forcing a German Panzer Regiment to withdraw. However, the Panzers in the pocket are all yellow on fuel, and the southern ones will receive from their air drops, so they will have movement for the upcoming turn.

The North Caucasus MD has conducted another couple of attacks against weak Axis Minor divisions, but those attacks have little impact on the strategic situation. In Odessa, I still have 68 defensive CV against a Romanian force of twelve offensive CV.

Conclusion

In the air, I have managed to cause another 58 fighter losses on the Axis this turn. This means that the Axis has lost 136 fighters this turn. If I can keep up inflicting that many losses, I will end up having air supremacy. Entering October, the Soviets will also start producing 15 P-40's and 14 Hurricanes each turn. My airforce is gaining on the Luftwaffe.

Evacuationwise, I am still moving stuff to the rear, and I plan to continue doing this through the winter. By now I am getting ready to move the IL-2 production at Voronesh. This will cause a sharp decline in production, but Voronesh will eventually fall. Hopefully, it will not be before 1942.

I am expecting that the Germans will conduct major Panzer operations next turn, and I look forward to seeing what they can make of it. I hope I have not made any important failures in my positioning of troops.