

Strategic overview

Turn 22: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	3366	185207	0
-	Port	74	1	0	0	0
-	Railyard	181	1	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2483	27	45323	2987922	0
-	Vehicle	114	0	221576	288460	0
-	Heavy Industry	195	5	0	1787500	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	1344000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	750960	0
-	Resource Production	160	0	0	3656000	0
-	Armaments Production	288	0	0	1387000	0

Winter is here, and snow is falling all along the front.

My pool of armament points have now dried up, and I can expect my armament production for the rest of the year to be about half of what I have been used to so far.

The Germans have not attacked east in the area north of Voronezh! That means that either my prediction was wrong, or my preparations for the battle was so good, that the Germans thought better of it. I choose to believe it is the last of the two, as the Germans have pulled the Panzers east of Voronezh back and instead conducted a limited offensive to the west of the area where they have easier access to supplies.

German AFV losses have still been high though, with 111 AFV's and 52 SP/AC's lost for 136 Soviet AFV's. In the air, the Germans have lost another 165 aircraft (incl 18 transports) for 211 lost Soviet aircraft.

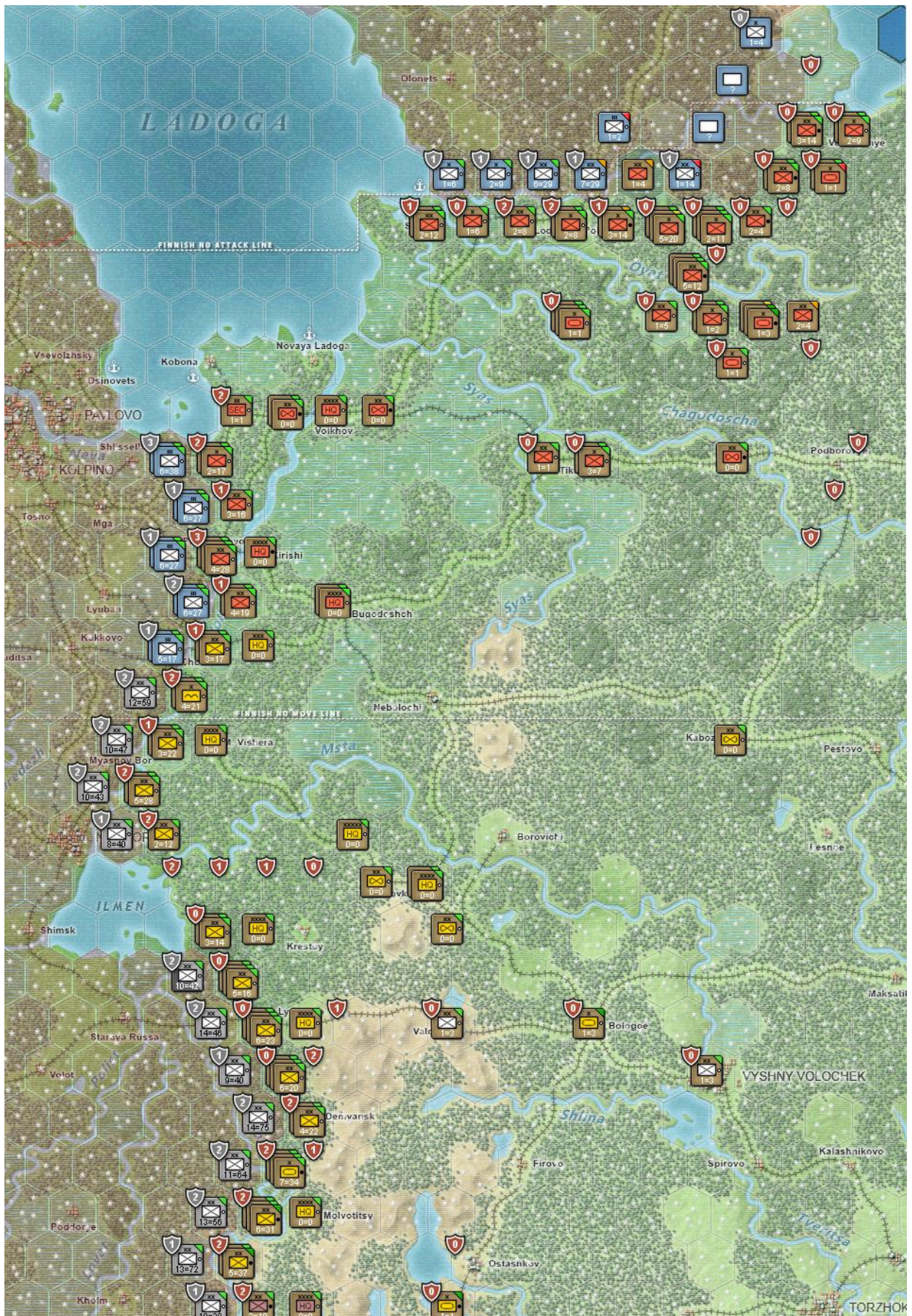
Axis VP advantage is 3.0 to 1.

The North

As there has been little action in the north, I will do only one chapter on this section and end it with an image of the front as I hand the turn to Pelton.

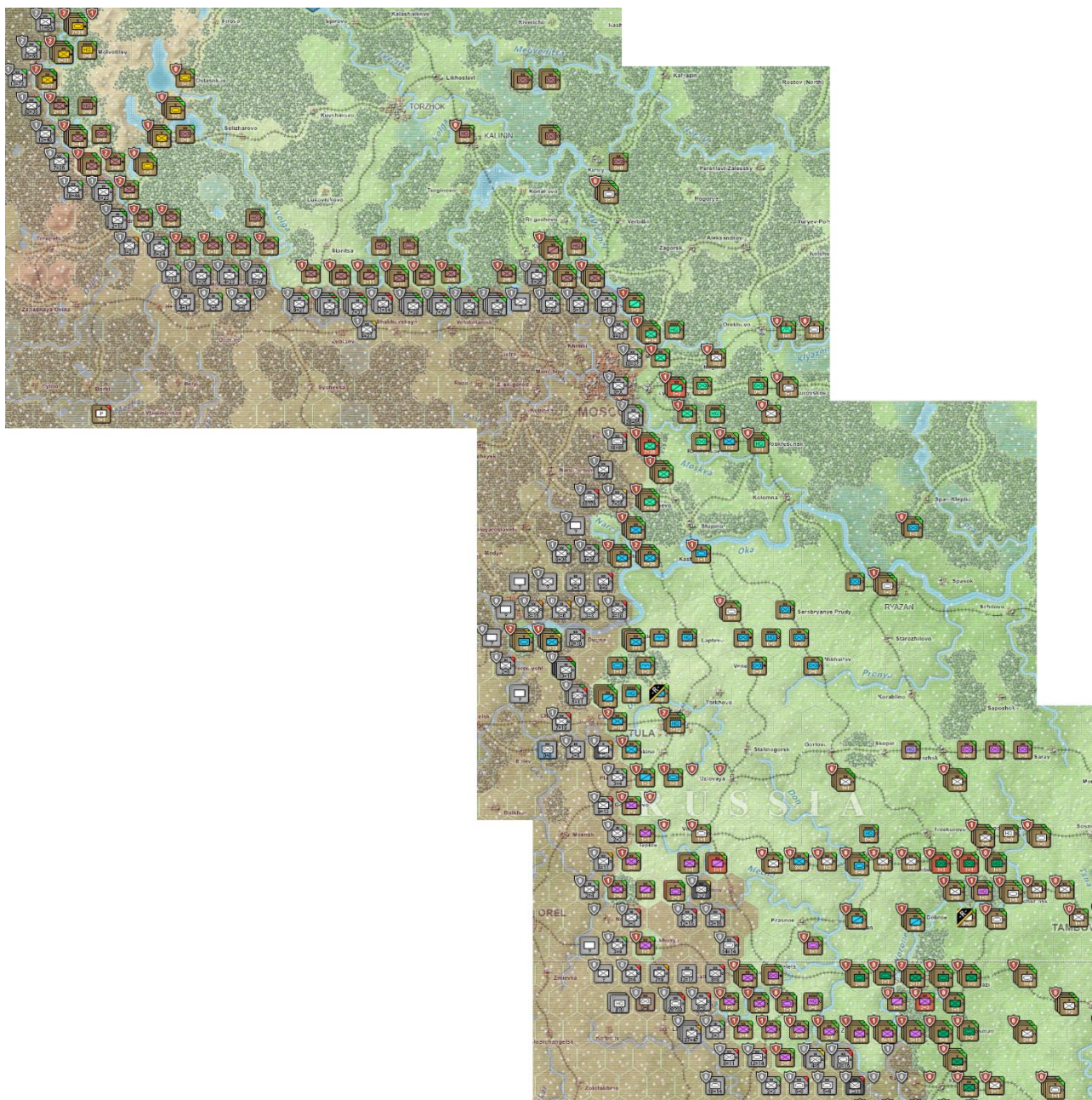
East of Lake Ladoga, I will continue to order my frontline in such a way that the 22nd Army can be pulled off to form a northern strategic reserve. While doing this, I will also be conducting a few attacks on exposed Finns in order to (hopefully) inflict some casualties.

Further south, I intend to have the Northwestern Front take over one more hex of the Kalinin Fronts line in order to free up divisions for the Kalinin Front attacks.



The Center

Situation Assessment



Nothing much has happened on the Kalinin Front except my offensive CV's have climbed considerably due to the end of the mud. The Germans have had no designs for this sector of the front. The Germans have managed to use the mud to dig in to well for my linking.

Outside Moscow I now notice two German Panzer divisions holding parts of the line south of the city. As to the north, the Germans have dug in, and it will take some fighting to be able to throw them back.

Further south, the Germans have attacked the Western Front and encircled six divisions in the area outside Kaluga. The Germans are very close to their railheads in this sector and should be getting ample supplies for next turn.

At the Bryansk Front, the Germans have conducted another attack, this time encircling only one division, that should find it easy to break out again. To the south of the spearhead, another five German Panzer divisions are moving in to bolster the attack.

The divisions in the spearhead should be getting some supply next turn based on a 24 MP range to the German railhead, but I sport an opportunity for extending that range somewhat, if I am willing to sacrifice a Soviet division or Regiment to narrow the base of the spearhead.

The divisions south of the base of the spearhead will only have the amount of supplies modified by the Axis Rail Modifier (60%) and the German truck pool (estimated 66%). This should leave them with about 66% of their entire fuel needs and thus with about 34 MP. However, they will need six of those MP to reach the point of the German advance and another two or three to cross the Mecha river.

Planning

The Kalinin Front will have to begin attacking the German lines again, although these lines are looking increasingly strong. It is my hope that they will weaken somewhat when the blizzard strikes and I will then be able to push back the Germans in this area.

At Moscow, I will begin pushing on the city with the limited strength I have, and I expect nothing to come of these attacks, except perhaps a temporary weakening of the German lines. However, the attacks must proceed in order to maximize the pressure on the German front.

The Western Front must reestablish a frontline against the advancing Germans, and for that reason the reserves of the 20th Army will be placed defensively along the Oka river. While the Germans may attack and may even force a crossing, they will have few MP left to exploit it. I think it likely, that the Germans have no wish to cross the river, but wished instead to hinge their defenses on it.

I will use the Bryansk Front more aggressively to try to narrow the base of the German thrust, ensuring fewer supplies of fuel will reach the Germans Panzers. If I can limit the amount of fuel reaching the German Panzers, I can also limit their strike capabilities for next turn. Consequently, I will move my divisions on the west side of the spearhead to retake a few hexes and I will even attack on the eastern end of the spearhead, hoping to dislodge that Motorized division with eight defensive CV's available.

I will also clear the area north of the river Mecha, in order to force the Germans to use even more MP in their attack north. As the only division north of the river only holds two defensive CV, I think this should be a fairly simple task to accomplish.

With that done, I will move my remaining forces of the Western and Bryansk Fronts to reestablish a continuous line, in order to further limit the German potential for advance.

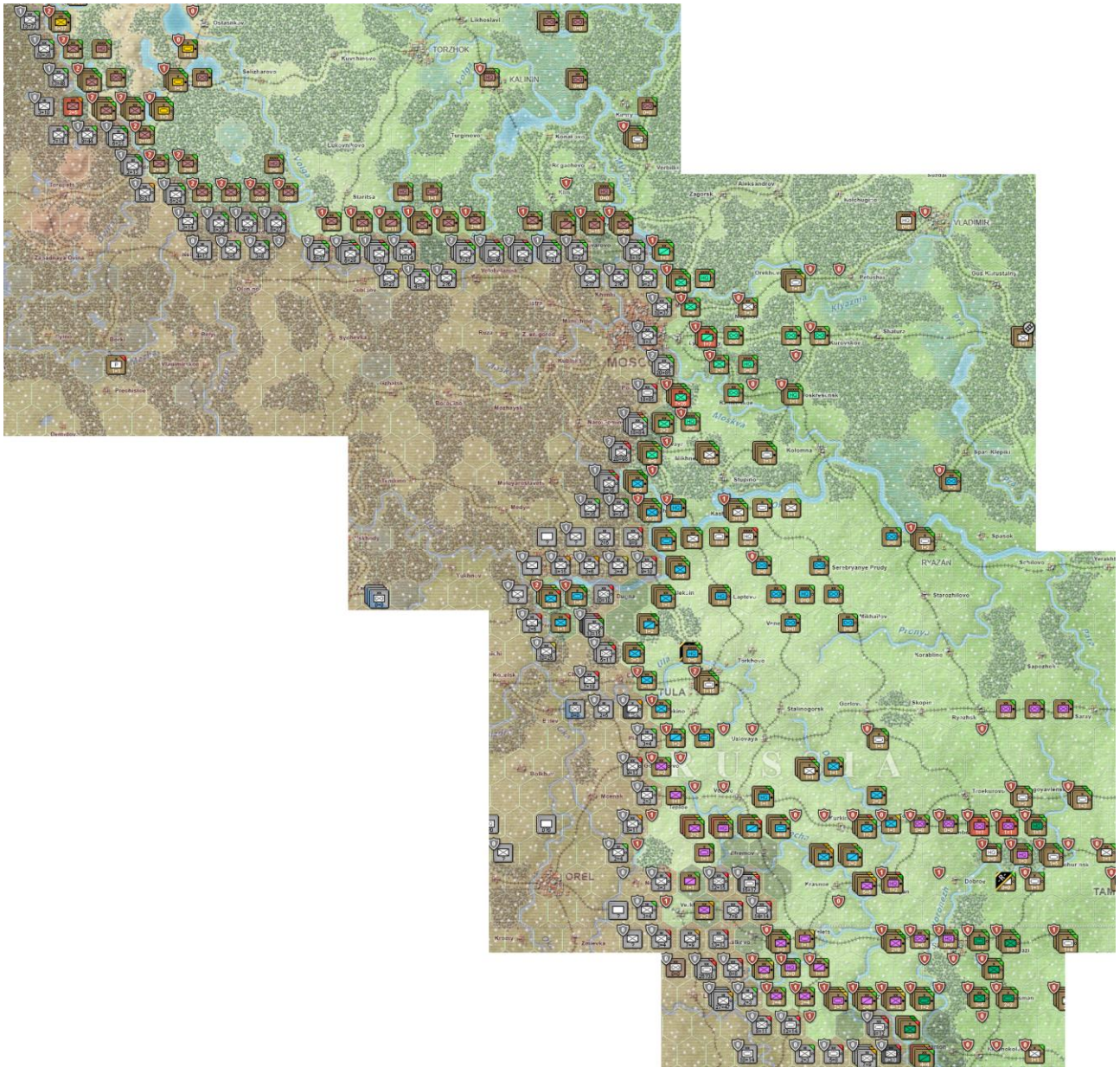
Execution

The Kalinin Front ended up doing three or four attacks, each of them successful but with heavy casualties (in the order of 10:1). The good news are that I did manage to remove a few hexes of German fortifications and if I can win now, before the blizzard, then I can surely also win during the blizzard.

The Moscow MD has assisted the Western Front in a single attack just south of Moscow. The attack was a success and enabled my troops to move forward to what I expect will be the main German line of defense in this area. It is possible that the Germans will actually attack here next turn, but I would welcome a "fluid" winter battle over having to dig German Panzers out of heavy fortifications.

Further south the Bryansk Front has conducted three attacks or so in order to improve its positions. As I set out to do, I have reduced the base of the German spearhead to only one hex, ensuring less supplies will come through. I have also thrown the Germans back across the Mecha river meaning the German Panzers will have to pay at least five MP each for crossing. Finally, I have set up a series of large CV stacks across the river, meaning that any German attacks must come at a high cost in MP, as they will need to conduct prepares attacks.

See below for an image of the front, as I turn it over to Pelton.



The South

Situational Assessment

First things first. I forgot to take a screen shot of the front before I got into planning and executing stuff, so no screen of initial frontline this time.

Second things first instead then. North of Voronezh, the Germans have vacated the three hexes they held east of the Don river. The Panzers are being pulled west, I assume to strengthen the thrust made in this area or else to reach the German rail lines so that they may be shipped to other parts of the front. Either way, it seems like the immediate threat to Voronezh is over.

Stretching south from Voronezh all the way to east of Gorlovka is a thin front of mainly German infantry regiments that stand against an equally thin line of Soviet infantry. Whoever will get fresh troops to this area first will have the initiative in the area.

Furthest to the south, the Germans are still creeping forward east of this Mius river (historical winter 41/41 frontline by the way). However, I am certainly stronger than the Germans in this area, and I will need to start making use of that fact.

Planning

Outside Voronezh, I will take back the three hexes just vacated by the Germans and establish a strong line. This will be done by the southwestern Front, who will also be able to conduct a probing attack versus the German.

In the Voronezh area, I also have the 6th Army in reserve, and as the threat to Voronezh is over, I can free it up for a strategic winter offensive in the south.

My main strategic aim for any offensive in the south should be to improve my situation before the expected German spring and summer offensive in 1942. The best way to do this is to push back the German railhead, which is now all the way up to Makeevka. Every hex of that line I take back, will mean one more hex for the Germans to push supplies through come next year.

I will try to achieve this result by a three pronged offensive.

First, the 6th Army of the Southwestern Front will be railed into position in the area northwest of Voroshilovgrad. From here it will use the blizzard to strike southwest into the back of the German defenses expected around Stalino, Gorlovka and Makeevka. The distance to the German rail lines is no more than six or seven hexes.

Second, the Southern Front will push forward directly towards the Germans south of Stalino, Gorlovka and Makeevka. This offensive needs to cross both the Mius and the Kalmius rivers and totally advance some ten or twelve hexes to reach its objectives.

Third, The Caucasus Front will continue its push north of the Crimean with the main objective is to strike north and northeast in the area east of the Dnepr river. I will assign a few rail repair units to this Front in order to advance the rail line going to Zaporozhye as best I can.

Hopefully, sometime during the winter, these three offensives will stretch the German capability for resistance in the area beyond its breaking point, and I will be able to push the front westwards well past Stalino and some distance towards the Dnepr river.

Execution

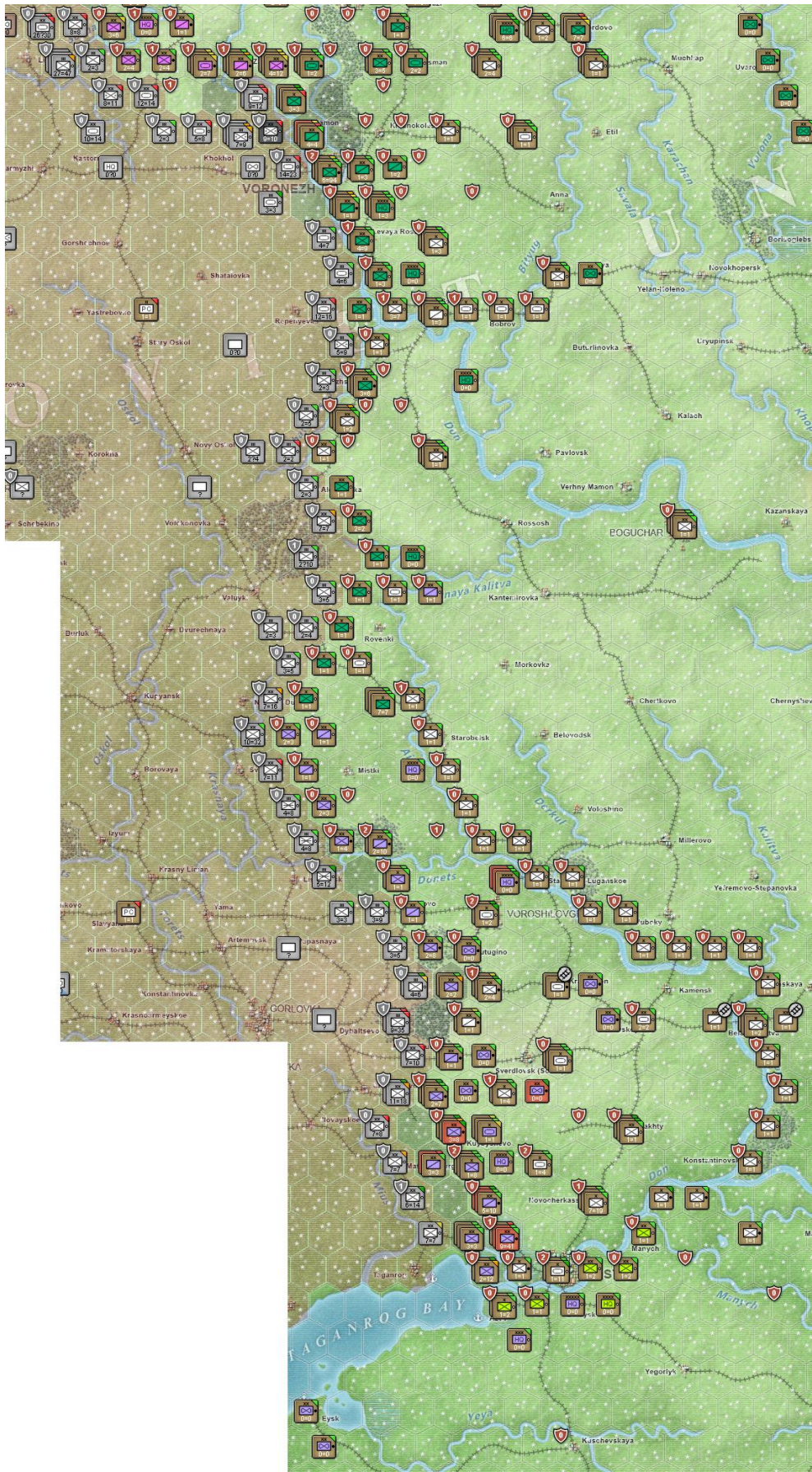
At Voronezh the front has been solidified as best I can, and a single attack has been made on the German Panzer regiments across the river. The 6th Army has begun shipping south, but it will still be at least two turns before it is ready to commence offensive actions.

The southern Front, meanwhile, have conducted some six attacks throwing the Germans back here and there. The important fact is that the Germans are not entrenched in this sector, and with no more than level one entrenchments and blizzard in the far horizon, it looks like I will be able to continue operations. Hopefully, this will also draw away attention from my coming push by the 6th Army to the north.

The Caucasus Front meanwhile have been attacking relentlessly against both Germans and Axis Minors in its area of operations. The Axis Minors have begun to rout regularly when I attack them and they now have three routed divisions in the area. The main problem I face here is my own supply distance where my foremost units now have 36 MP to their railheads.

To deal with the expected supply issues of the Caucasus Front, I have moved some airfields to Eysk on the southern side of the Sea of Azov and reassigned three Li-2 Air Groups to the National Reserve. In two turns time, these will be in Eysk and ready to fly supplies to the forward Soviet divisions in this area. To protect them, I have sent one airfield with LaGG-3's and Hurricane IIB's and I will also send the Caucasus Front Air Command HQ with no less than six AA Support units attached. However, the Germans still have 94 operational bombers in the area (most of them He 11H-4's) and the potential to repair and bring forward a lot more than that.

Finally, a couple of images showing the Southern sector and the Caucasus Front area.





Conclusion

All in all, I'm pleased with developments this turn. The Germans have cancelled their expected push on voronezh and their secondary push is somewhat well contained. While I will certainly lose a few divisions, I simply can not imagine a situation in which I can avoid this when faced with 15 German Panzers and a player as experienced as Pelton.

On the other sectors of the front, I have begun being more and more aggressive instead of just waiting for the blizzard to arrive.

Moreover, I am now planning a major push in the south as well as at Moscow. While I am far from sure they will work out, the fact that I can take the initiative shows that I am not (entirely) beat yet. The fight will go on.

A few turns back, I was seriously considering if I would fall to the autowin criteria before the blizzard could save me. Now, I feel confident that this will not happen.

I will end this report with a screenshot of my U-2VS Air Groups and how they have done so far. Remember that I could not build them until August (and at a max of eight pr turn) and I then needed to get them onto airfields and wait for them to be operational before using them. This mean that on average they have not been active for more than five or six turns, they ones with more kills being the ones that have been around the longest. I will leave you to ponder the following question (I certainly have my own opinion): Is it worth it building those U-2VS air Groups at one Admin Point per Group?

35 Air Groups Selected										Functions													
										Night Missions					Change Mode		Replace		Reserve		Disband		
Aircraft Total: 644, Ready: 636, Reserve: 0, Damaged: 8 Kills: 0 air + 424 ground				Name	Nat	Size	Aircraft	Loc	Air Base	Air Command	NM	Upg	Rpl	Exp	Mf	Fat	Max	Tot	Rdy	Res	Dmg	NA	Trvl
197 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	68	69	15	20	19	19	0	0	47	85				
213 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	70	73	17	20	20	20	0	0	46	92				
267 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	67	69	15	20	19	18	0	1	44	89				
199 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	66	70	12	20	17	17	0	0	39	88				
195 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	67	72	17	20	20	19	0	1	37	85				
298 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	57	60	6	20	18	18	0	0	24	100				
326 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	98,111	74 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	53	56	6	20	19	19	0	0	21	100				
324 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	98,111	74 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	51	55	5	20	17	16	0	1	19	100				
310 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	57	63	6	20	17	17	0	0	16	100				
319 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	53	55	6	20	17	17	0	0	15	100				
322 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	98,111	74 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	52	57	8	20	17	17	0	0	14	100				
354 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	53	55	12	20	19	19	0	0	14	87				
303 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	54	55	5	20	20	20	0	0	13	100				
351 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	49	51	11	20	16	15	0	1	10	96				
349 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	44	53	5	20	19	19	0	0	9	100				
325 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	98,111	74 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	54	56	6	20	18	18	0	0	9	100				
350 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	46	49	10	20	19	17	0	2	8	95				
355 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	M	A	45	48	7	20	19	19	0	0	7	84				
358 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	M	A	39	41	5	20	19	19	0	0	6	89				
353 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	42	45	6	20	19	18	0	1	6	100				
352 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	88,36	57 SAD	Kalinin Air Command	Y	M	A	43	49	10	20	17	17	0	0	6	97				
227 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	43	46	5	20	17	17	0	0	5	100				
357 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	M	A	36	44	6	20	17	17	0	0	4	97				
348 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	M	A	40	46	5	20	16	16	0	0	2	100				
359 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	M	A	39	40	6	20	17	17	0	0	1	98				
226 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	M	A	45	49	7	20	16	16	0	0	1	90				
356 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	M	A	42	44	5	20	16	16	0	0	1	100				
245 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	99,111	73 SAD	Cauc. Air Cmd.	Y	A	A	35	39	14	20	20	19	0	1	0	100				
363 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	120,97	17 SAD	Southern Air Cmd.	Y	A	A	32	39	14	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				
364 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	120,97	17 SAD	Southern Air Cmd.	Y	A	A	34	39	14	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				
365 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	120,97	17 SAD	Southern Air Cmd.	Y	A	A	34	39	14	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				
366 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	120,97	17 SAD	Southern Air Cmd.	Y	A	A	36	39	14	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				
367 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	A	A	35	39	13	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				
368 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	A	A	37	39	13	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				
369 NBAP	SU	Rgmt	U-2VS	109,45	7/1 PVO	Moscow Air Command	Y	A	A	37	39	14	20	20	20	0	0	0	100				