

Strategic overview

Turn 27: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

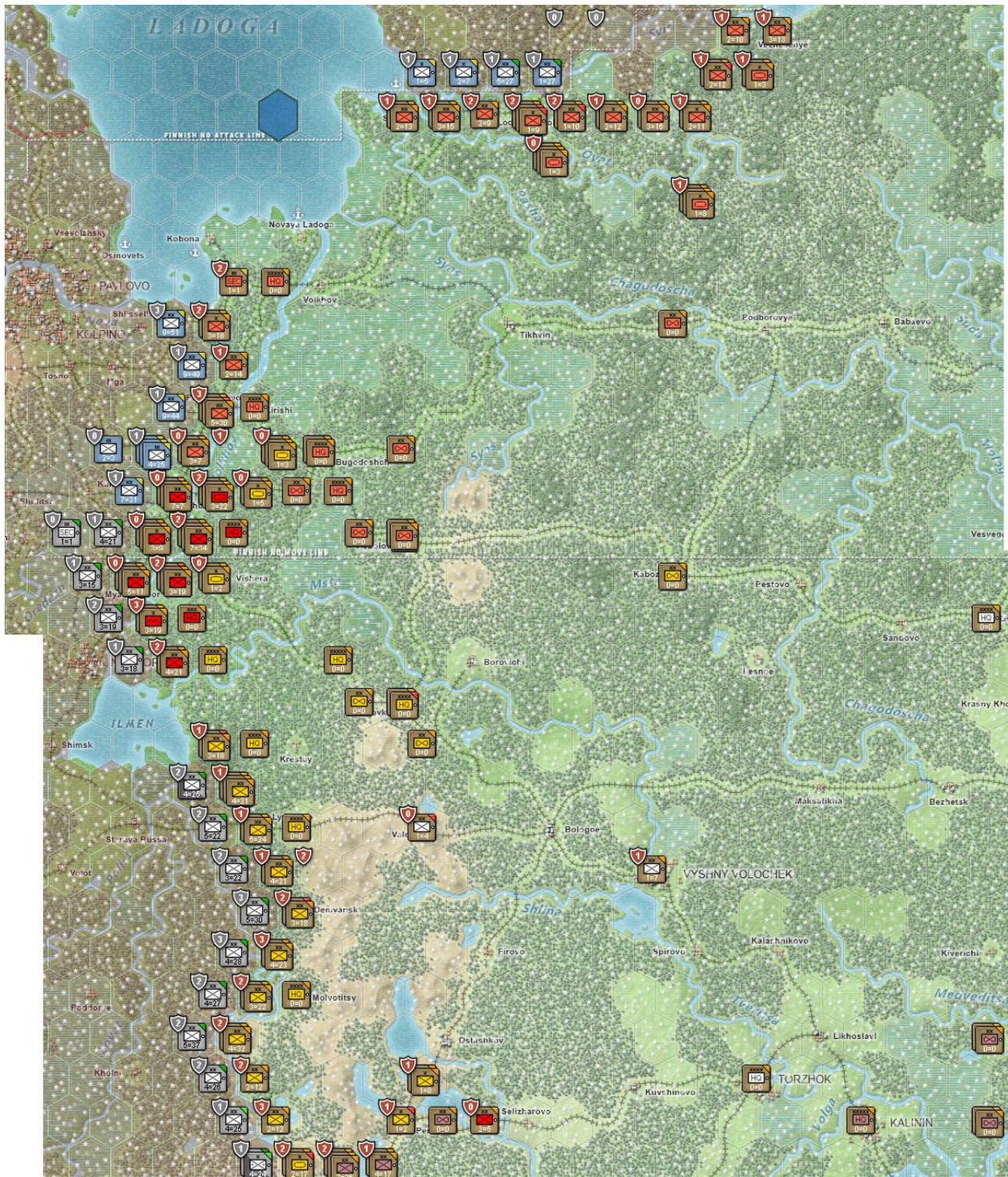
____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	5413	251352	0
-	Port	75	2	0	0	0
-	Railyard	181	1	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2505	51	146923	3601245	0
-	Vehicle	114	0	203530	295300	0
-	Heavy Industry	195	0	0	2182000	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	1664000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	929760	0
-	Resource Production	160	0	0	4470000	0
-	Armaments Production	288	0	0	1695500	0

The Germans have failed to relieve any of the three encircled divisions this turn.

The German OoB has climbed however. I am not fond of the fact that they now have 1500 more guns than when I last gave the turn back to Pelton. Obviously, they will lose some of those guns during my phase, but I can probably not count on encircling three German divisions every turn.

Axis VP advantage is now 3.5 to 1.

The North



Situational Assessment

The Germans have not attacked in the area this turn, but have focused on digging with all their might. I now face a frontline of defensive CV's ranging from 3=15 to 7=31. Nothing much has happened in the north.

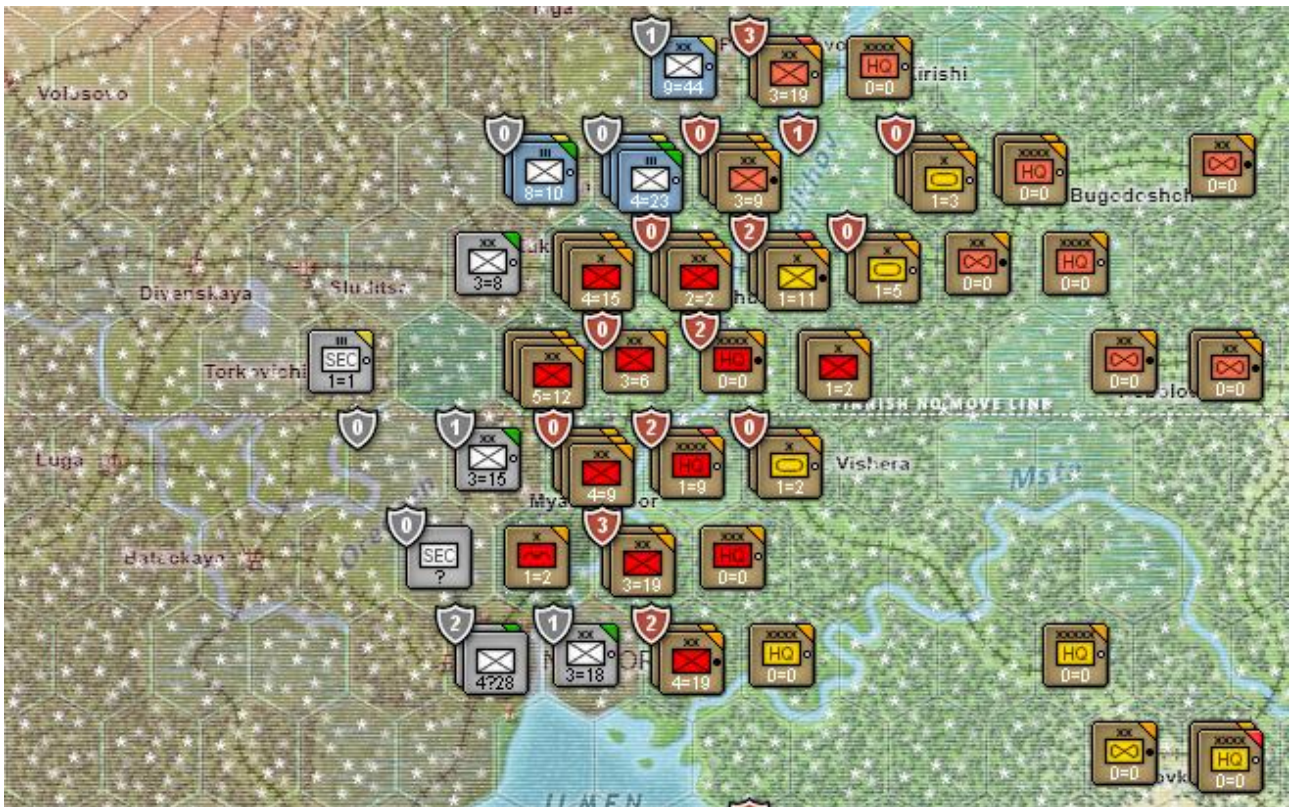
Planning

I will not get in a position to create gaps in the German line this turn. Because of this, I will simply focus on pushing the Germans back where I can, hopefully inflicting some casualties and forcing a longer front on them.

Execution

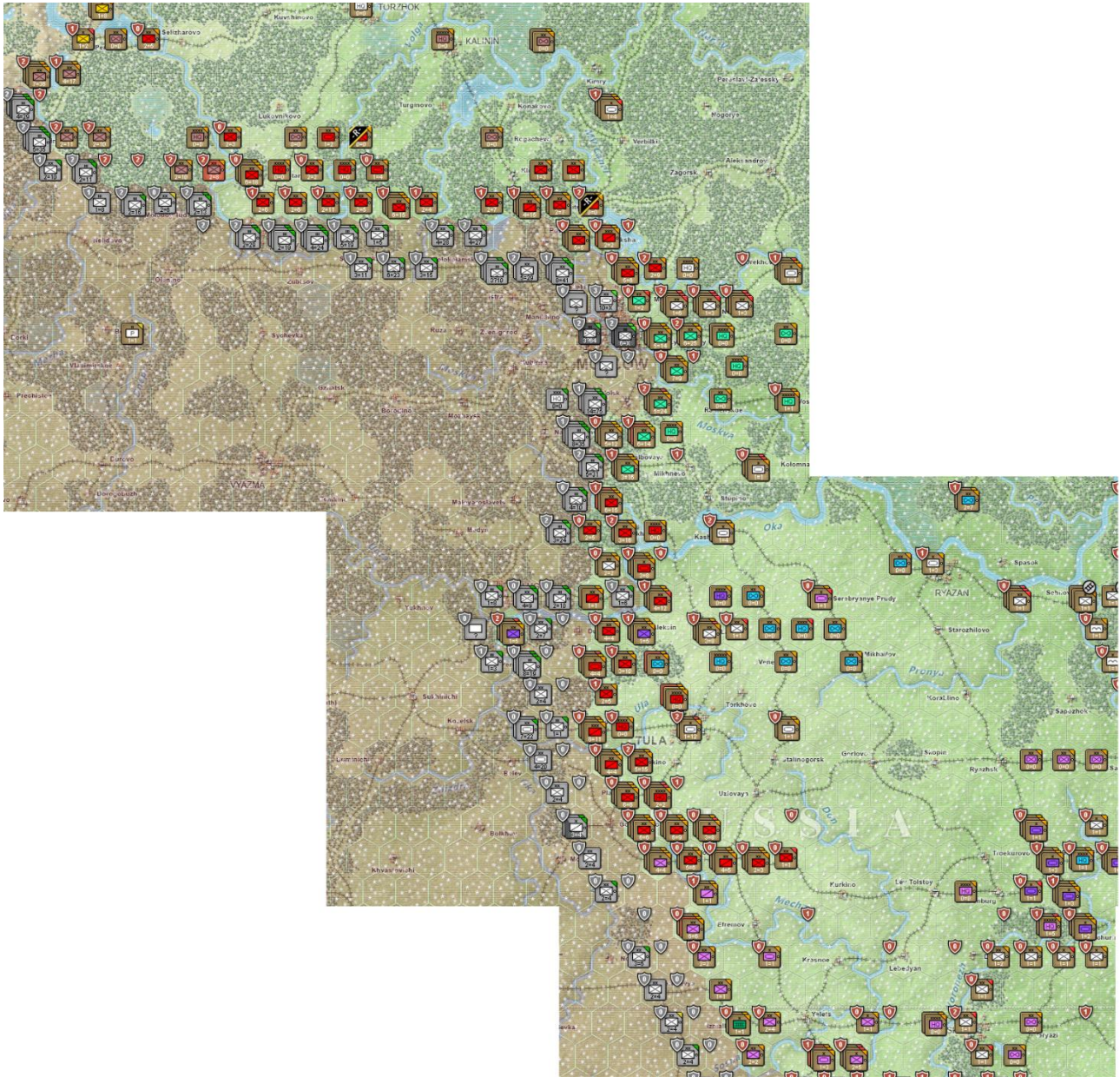
I have continued the push north of the Novgorod and driven the Germans back. If the Germans do not either shorten their line or push the Soviets back, holes will begin to appear in their front before long, I think.

Below an image of the area north of Novgorod as I turn over the turn to Pelton.



The Center

Situation Assessment



Along the Kalinin Front, I have more divisions on a narrower front than ever before, which is good. The Germans have done some counterattacks in the area during their fase, including one by the 20th Panzer division in Moscow which can be seen below.

Axis Forces Attacking: LVI Panzer Corps 20th Panzer Division (55) 671st Pioneer Battalion (1) 660th Pioneer Battalion (1) 742nd Pioneer Battalion (1) VIII Corps -36% 161st Infantry Division (8) 2/1st Mountain Division (17) [v]		1 of 1 103,42 - Clear - Blizzard Turn: 27 1941-12-18 Forces Engaged ATK: men 52563, art 527, afv 261 DEF: men 20295, art 216, afv 36 DAM: men 523, art 7, afv 25 DAM: men 528, art 12, afv 0 LOST: men 398, art 7, afv 4 LOST: men 1521, art 14, afv 0 ATK: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 DEF: ftr 18, bmr 9, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 292nd Rifle Division ROUTED 291st Rifle Division ROUTED Show Details Odds 4.83 : 1 Exit		Soviet Forces Defending: 38th Army 291st Rifle Division (18) 292nd Rifle Division (17) 156th Army Art Rgt (1) 103rd Gds Lt Rckt Rgt (1) Kalinin Air Command 18 Yak-1 CV: 37->52.0 Fort: 0.02->0.00 Comm HQ: 38th Army GL Rodion Malinovsky	
CV: 93->251.3 Eng Val: 8 Comm HQ: LVI Panzer Corps G Erich von Manstein					

Even if I failed to kill many tanks, I consider it a plus that I force the Panzers into winter battles. I hope that this will lead to some attrition over the winter.

Around Moscow, the Germans have evacuated one of their heavily fortified positions south of the city. I am slowly pushing my way towards a possible encirclement of the city. Should that threat become imminent, I believe the Germans will abandon Moscow.

At the Western Front, the Germans have failed to relieve the encircled division and my own forces are now close to establishing contact with the Kaluga pocket (and its remaining 13.000 men). The Germans did attempt to free the encircled division but failed, losing some 43 He 111H-4's in yet another unescorted bomber attack.

At the northern half of the Bryansk Front, I now have considerable forces ready to attack. The Germans have responded by withdrawing their line one hex.

Planning

The Kalinin Front will continue its attacks on the Germans northwest of Moscow. However, the Germans still have a very strong presence here, and I doubt I can achieve much.

The Moscow MD will also be moving forward, but with Panzers on the line, the CV's they are facing seem even more daunting than those the Kalinin Front is facing.

The Western Front however, will try to relieve the Kaluga pocket and begin preparing to swing north. Obviously, it will also do what it can to eliminate that encircled German division.

South of the Kaluga pocket I will push forward, while also attempting to shift my divisions a hex or two to the north, so that they will be better placed for assisting in the coming push north.

Execution

The attacks by the Kalinin Front and the Moscow MD has turned out to be more or less futile all along. The Germans are simply too strong to be pushed back. Around Moscow I just need to push one hex forward every other week, and I will have encircled the city by the end of January. However, with defensive CV stacks of 8=41 and 14=75, I am somewhat in doubt as to whether I can achieve this.

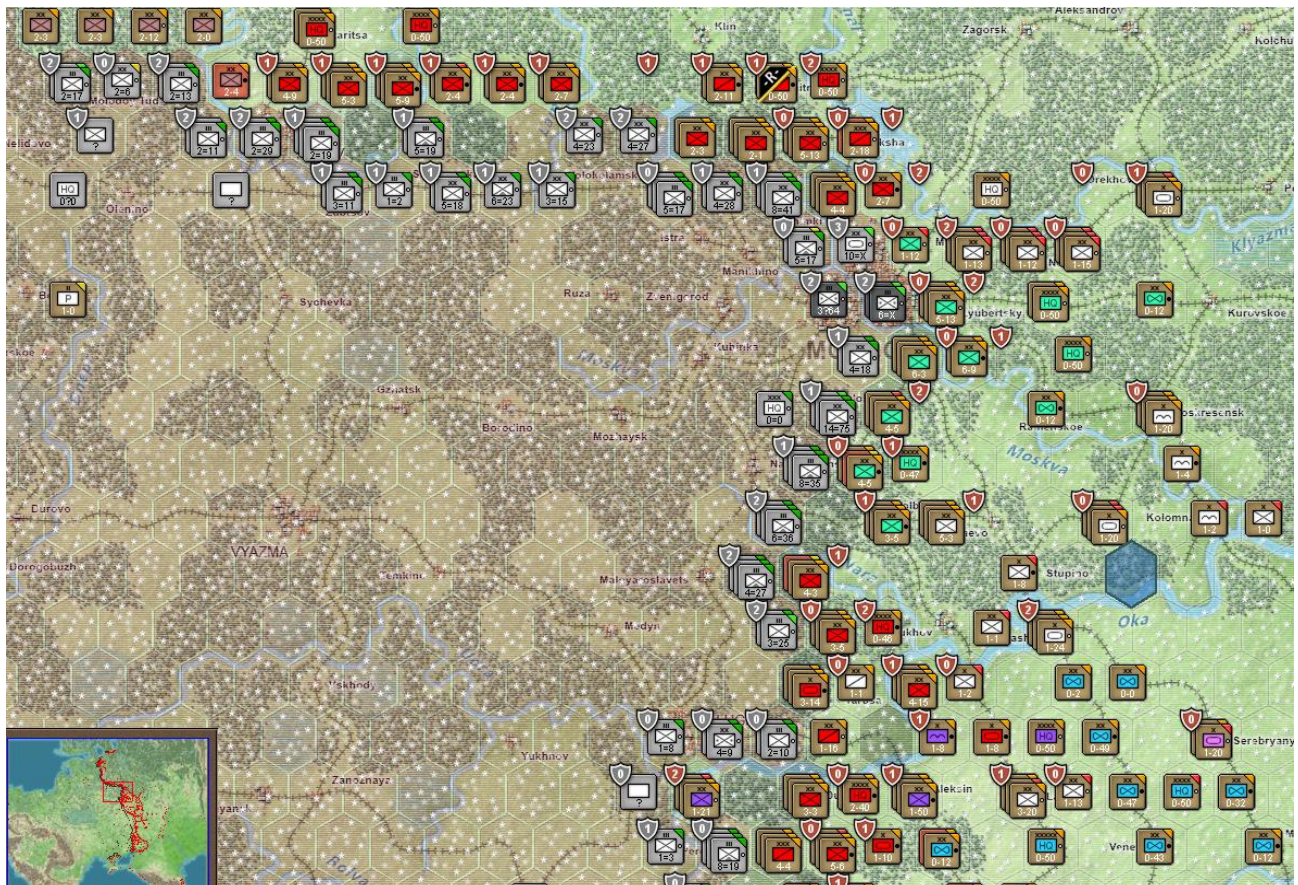
At the Western Front, I destroyed the encircled German division for what I consider my greatest victory so far in the game (hopefully to be reduced to second best when I attack at the Sea of Azov). The report is as follows:

Axis Forces Defending: XII Corps 45th Infantry Division (63)	106,53 - Clear - Blizzard Turn: 27 1941-12-18	Soviet Forces Attacking: 20th Army 53rd Rifle Division (26) 160th Rifle Division (16) 537th BM Howitzer Regiment (2) 301st Howitzer Regiment (1) 209th Art Rgt RVGK (1) 4th Army -30% 277th Rifle Division (12)
	Forces Engaged DEF: men 14504, art 146, afv 1 DAM: men 263, art 8, afv 0 LOST: men 12922, art 127, afv 1 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 ATK: men 50103, art 588, afv 1 DAM: men 404, art 3, afv 0 LOST: men 486, art 4, afv 0 ATK: ftr 6, bmr 3, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 45th Infantry Division SURRENDERED Odds 20.14 : 1	CV: 79->285.3 Eng Val: 6 Comm HQ: 20th Army GL Maks Reiter
CV: 63->14.9 Comm HQ: XII Corps G Walther Schroth	Pause Exit	

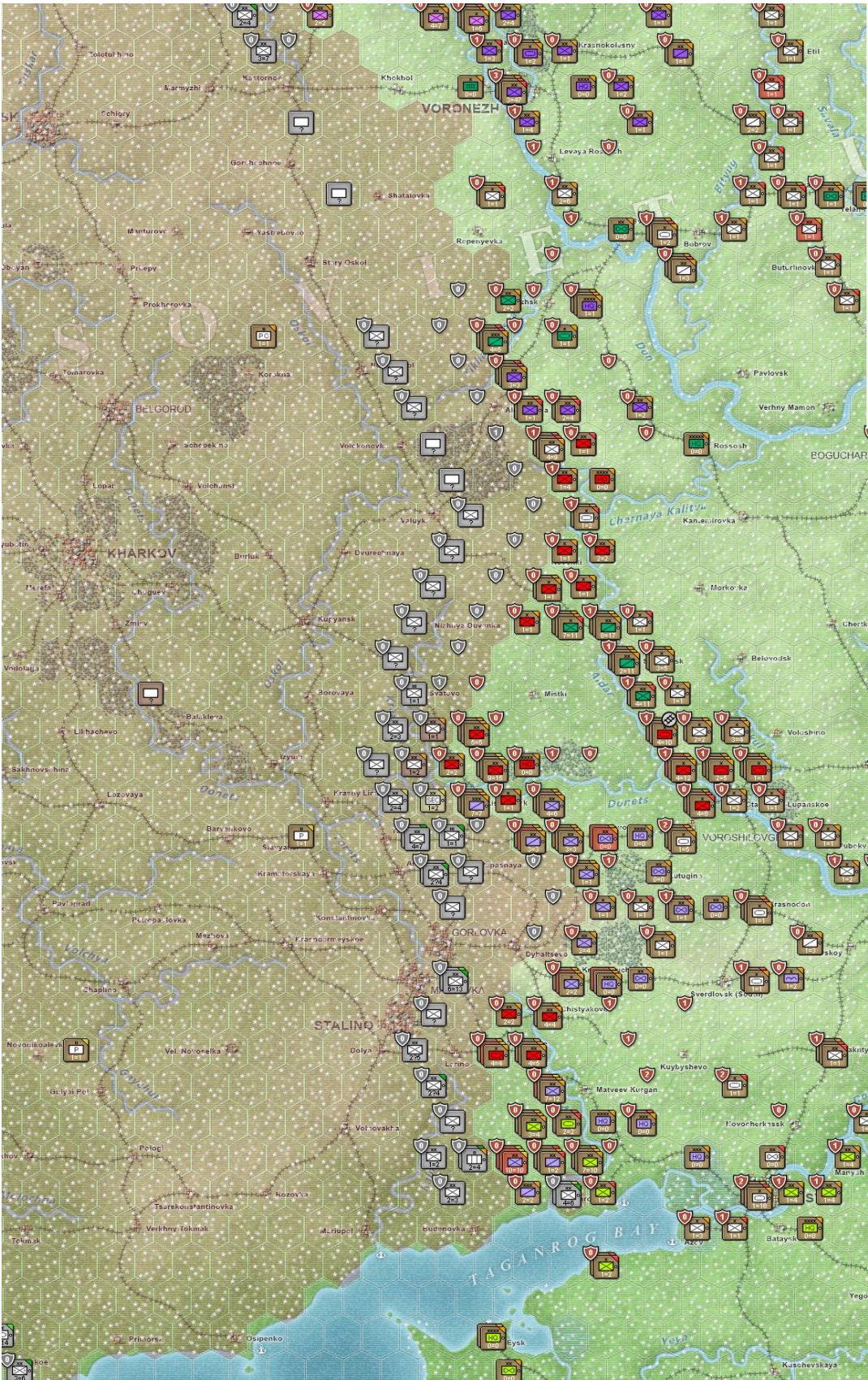
I also punched through to the beleaguered Kaluga Pocket. The Germans can easily reseal the pocket next turn, but then I shall simply reopen it once more. Come next turn, the Western Front will begin to turn northwards, in order to get into the rear of the German defenders around Moscow.

The Bryansk Front is positioning itself for future attacks.

Below is an image of the Front around Moscow as I give the turn to Pelton.



The South



At the Volkhov and northern part of the Southwestern Fronts, the Germans have continued to extract themselves from the fighting. Their units are now six hexes from Voronezh, and I could easily move my front forward quite a bit.

The 26th and the 12th Armies of the Southwestern Front are now getting into position for their attacks. However, as my attack progress to the southwest, there is little room for two new armies on the line. I might well have to send at least one of those armies in another direction.

At the Southern Front, the Germans have established a double line against my northern attack, the first line consisting of second rate troops or infantry regiments. They have also withdrawn from that bulge in the front my advances from last turn created. Their divisions are still struggling to put up some serious defensive CV's (at least compared to the situation further north).

At the Sea of Azov, the Germans have failed to relieve the two encircled divisions (as expected). These two divisions have been given supplies by air transport, but they still can muster only a 4=6 defensive CV.



The situation at the Caucasus Front is all but static. The German mobile divisions still hold the eastern end of the line, while the Axis Minors are occupying a large portion of the western portion of the line. All in all, the Caucasus Front ties up one German Panzer, two German Motorized and three German infantry divisions.

Planning

I will not be following the Germans at Voronezh, so for now, a considerable distance will exist between our lines. I am fearful, that if I do follow, I will end up spending so many trucks on supply operations that my other offensives will stall. Moreover, my advances will bring me into "Panzer terrain" which will not be to my liking come the spring of 1942.

Further south, I move the two fresh armies into position on the front, one at each side of the attacking 6th Army. That army will, together with the 37th Army of the Southern Front continue their attack on the Germans. However. For at least one turn, there will be a gap in the direction taken by the two armies (to be filled by the 12th Army).

The Southern Front will continue its push westwards, while it will also destroy those two German infantry divisions at the Sea of Azov. I am hoping this will cost the Germans some 30.000 men lost along with a plethora of guns.

The Caucasus Front will concentrate on hitting the German Motorized division it faces. Any defeats inflicted on those Germans will be valuable come the spring. Further west, some careful positioning of my cavalry units just might place me in a position to encircle some of the Axis minor divisions come next turn.

Execution

I had to send both my newly arrived Armies of the Southwestern Front to the area north of the 6th Army as there is simply no room for maneuver to the south of this Army. I will launch both those armies in the direction of Kharkov come next turn I guess.

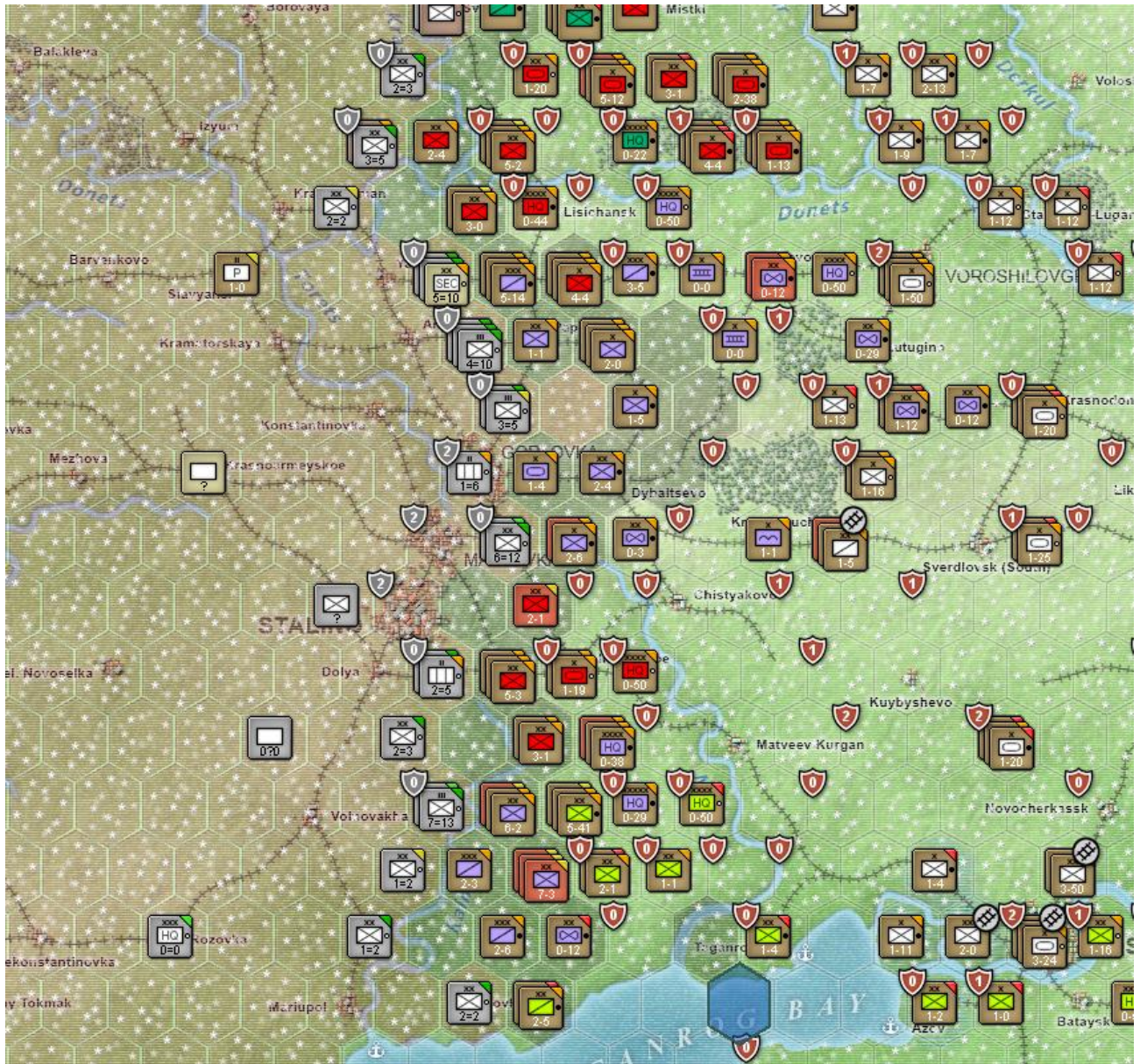
The 6th Army and the 37th Army of the Southern Front are slowly pushing forward, but the Germans are basically able to keep pulling back, even though their defensive CV's are beginning to look rather "ragged".

North of the Sea of Azov, I have destroyed the two encircled German divisions (see attack report below) and continued the push forward south of Stalino. A German Panzer division is now in the area, giving the Germans a much needed boost to their defense in the area.

Axis Forces Defending:		1 of 3 > 118,102 - Clear - Blizzard Turn: 27 1941-12-18		Soviet Forces Attacking:	
XI Corps 239th Infantry Division (25) 72nd Infantry Division (28) 560th Panzerjäger Battalion (0) 190th Stug Battalion (2) 741st Pioneer Battalion (1)		Forces Engaged DEF: men 26682, art 210, afv 16 ATK: men 39539, art 426, afv 1 DAM: men 56, art 0, afv 0 DAM: men 763, art 3, afv 0 LOST: men 23460, art 181, afv 14 LOST: men 839, art 10, afv 0 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 ATK: ftr 10, bmr 4, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0		41st Army 204th Rifle Division (12) 159th Rifle Division (11) 173rd Rifle Division (12) 355th Rifle Division (22) Caucasus Air Command 1 I-16 Type 18 [v]	
CV: 56->69.0 Fort: 0.12->0.00 Comm HQ: XI Corps G Joachim von Kortzfleisch		72nd Infantry Division SURRENDERED 239th Infantry Division SURRENDERED Show Details Odds 3.87 : 1 Exit		CV: 57->198.3 Eng Val: 0 Comm HQ: 41st Army GM Nikolai Gagen	

At the Caucasus Front I have attacked the German Motorized divisions twice (one success, one failure), and otherwise attacked the Axis minor divisions repeatedly. I have also placed my cavalry in such a way that I just might be able to encircle an Axis Minor division or two, if they push back forward and adjacent to the Soviets.

Below is an image of the situation north of the Sea of Azov, as I give the turn to Pelton.



Conclusion

The Germans now have several Panzers helping to hold the line at various points from Moscow to the Caucasus Front. All in all, I think I counted some eight or nine Panzers on the front lines. The good news are that I can force them into winter battles which should be costly to them. The bad news are that they add some heavy defensive CV's to the Germans which I find very difficult to break with my Soviet offensive CV's of two or three pr division.

Losses this turn are a true joy to behold. The Germans have lost some 45.000 men and 500+ guns. Unfortunately, this only gives me around the same Victory Points as the Germans get evvery turn for holding Moscow. I guess I simply need to try to focus on killing Germans and then worry about the victory conditions in a couple of years of gametime.

As I give the turn over to Pelton, I will end this report with the following screenshot.

Destroyed & Disbanded Units				
Turn	Nat	Name	Type	Disband
[-] TURN 27 AXIS: 10 + 0 SOVIET: 0 + 2				
27	Ger	45th Infantry Division	Infantry	
27	Ger	72nd Infantry Division	Infantry	
27	Ger	239th Infantry Division	Infantry	
27	Ger	560th Panzerjager Battalion	Anti-tank	
27	Ger	190th Stug Battalion	SP Gun	
27	Ger	741st Pioneer Battalion	Engineer	
27	Ger	26th Fortified Zone	Fortified	
27	Ger	25th Fortified Zone	Fortified	
27	Ger	24th Fortified Zone	Fortified	
27	Ital	LXII Ital. Medium Howitzer Battalion	Artillery	
27	Sov	2nd Cavalry Corps	HQ	X
27	Sov	3rd Airborne Corps	HQ	X