

## Strategic overview

Turn 30: Strategic Considerations

## Situational analysis

SPECIAL						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	5592	300659	0
-	Port	76	3	0	0	0
-	Railyard	181	1	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2526	70	114992	3921028	0
-	Vehicle	114	0	195244	299606	0
-	Heavy Industry	195	0	0	2459450	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	1856000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	1037040	0
-	Resource Production	168	8	0	4964000	0
-	Armaments Production	288	0	0	1941175	0

The Germans have reestablished contact with the divisions encircled in the Kharkov Bend (that is what I call the bend in the German frontline east of Kharkov).

They have also conducted a small series of counterattacks at different locations along the front. This has caused the loss of 146 German AFV'SP/AC's for a price of 98 Soviet ones. As my production is also a lot higher than the German one, I am building my relative OoB strength. The bad news are that the Germans have increased their number of troops by 50.000 this turn, and they also built some 340 guns.

The German armored formations along the front are grouped as follows:

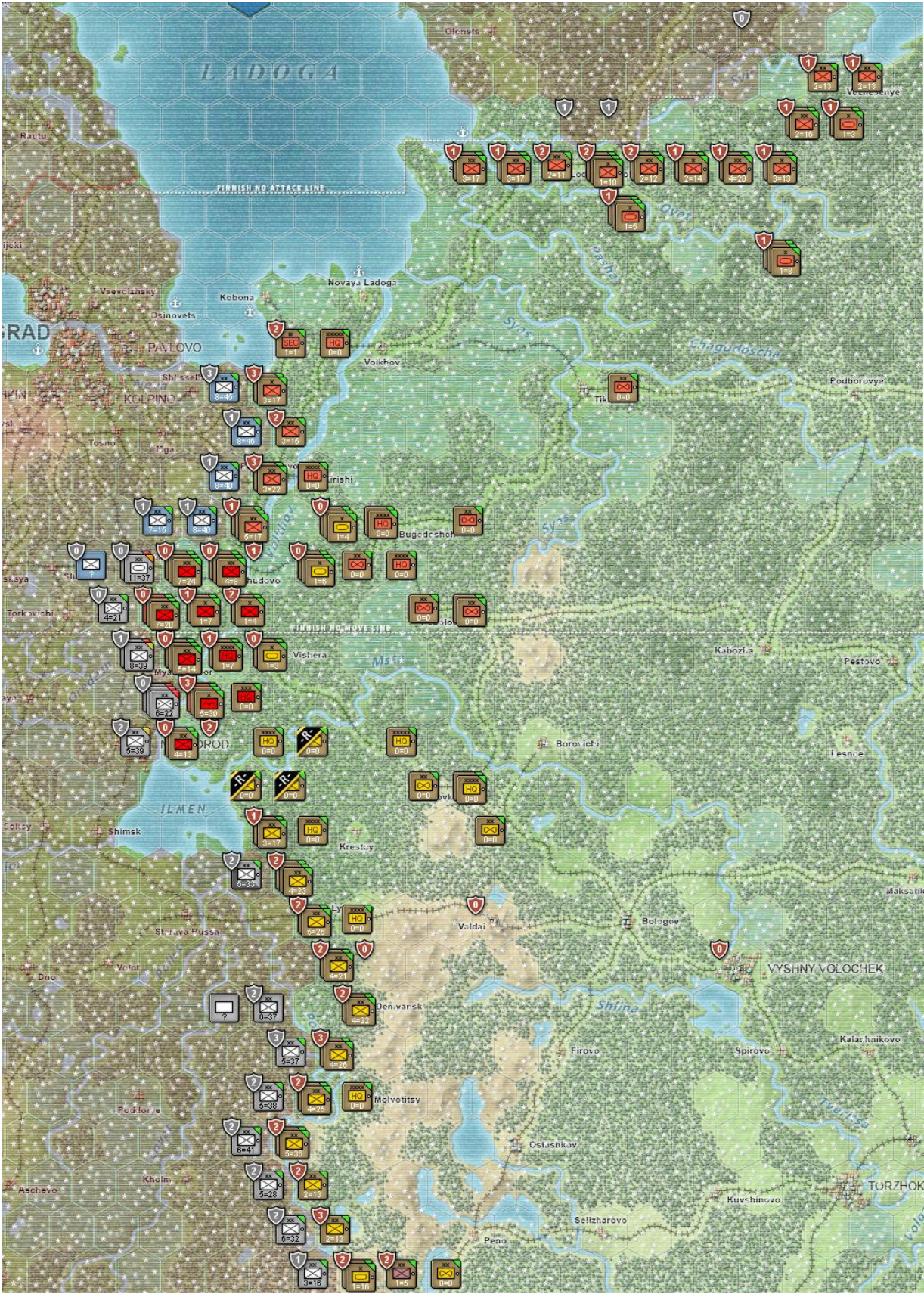
- The Northern Front: One Panzer and two Motorized divisions.
- The Moscow MD: Two Panzer and one Motorized division.
- The Western Front: Four Panzer and two Motorized divisions.
- The Bryansk Front: Two Panzer divisions.
- The Southwestern Front: One Panzer and one Motorized division.
- The Southern Front: Five Panzer divisions and two Motorized divisions.
- The Caucasus Front: One Panzer division and one Motorized division.

Finally, I notice that I have now started to put T-34's into the pool as the units I have using those tanks are at full capacity. I am struggling to find a real good use for my Tank Brigades feeling that they give little punch for the command price in my armies. Consequently, I prefer using infantry or cavalry divisions. I have decided to create a few Separate Tank Battalions at STAVKA and when they are ready to assign them to various Cavalry Corps. I want to check how this works against the German Panzers. Come spring when I create Tank Corps, I can then possibly assign Separate Tank Battalions to them in order to add some punch.

Axis VP advantage is 3.5 to 1.



The North





### Situational Assessment

The Finns have pulled back in the area east of Lake Ladoga. I cannot guess as to the purpose, but I assume that a general withdrawal to Janisjarvi might be underway in order to free up troops to assist the Germans south of Leningrad.

At Novgorod, the Germans have conducted a counterattack. The front seems unlikely to break for either side, unless a heavy commitment of extra troops are made.

### Planning

East of Lake Ladoga, I will send a few infantry regiments forward, to see what is going on with the Finns. I will not advance my front as a whole, but rather remain in my southerly positions for now.

North of Novgorod, I will continue the attacks on the German Panzer and Motorized division. It is unlikely that I will take Novgorod, but the attacks will continue nonetheless, in order to inflict whatever morale loss on the Panzer I can while keeping it here in the north.

I will also assign some LaGG-3's and Yak-1's to this area, in order to take up the fight against the Finnish airforce. My local bombers will all be of the SB-2 type at Novgorod, while I send the I-Types north to the area east of Lake Ladoga.

Finally, I will move the 8<sup>th</sup> Army south by rail, this time to the wedge I am forming with the Kalinin Front north of Moscow. I might well need fresh troops here soon, and even if the forces of the eight Army are only brigades, they may well help out by guarding the flanks of my attack.

### Execution

At Novgorod, my attack against the Motorized division ended up with 1:1, but without me getting that 1:1=2:1 bonus. If I had won this battle, I could have moved three good order divisions across the Volkhov and possibly taken hold of the hex.

83,24 - Light Woods - Blizzard Turn:30 1942-01-08		
Axis Forces Defending:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Attacking:
LVI Panzer Corps -36% 60th Motorized Division (58) III/818th Hwz Bn (0) 646th Howitzer Battalion (0) II/66th Howitzer Battalion (0) 563rd Panzerjager Battalion (0) 654th Panzerjager Battalion (0) 5/48th SP Flak Company (0) [v]	DEF: men 33716, art 424, afv 9 DAM: men 99, art 5, afv 0 LOST: men 136, art 4, afv 0 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	24th Army 91st Rifle Division (22) 133rd Rifle Division (24) 178th Rifle Division (20) 63rd Rifle Division (20) 9th Gds Hwz Rgt (0) 128th Howitzer Regiment (0) 129th Howitzer Regiment (0) [v]
CV: 161->227.2 Fort: 0.08->0.06 Comm HQ: XXVI Corps GL Lothar Rendulic	Defending Forces HELD  Odds 1 : 1.00 Pause	CV: 99->225.1 Eng Val: 2 Comm HQ: 24th Army GM Afanasy Beloborodov
	Exit	

To the north, the attack on the Panzer division was succesfull, even though I lost about three times as many men as the Germans.

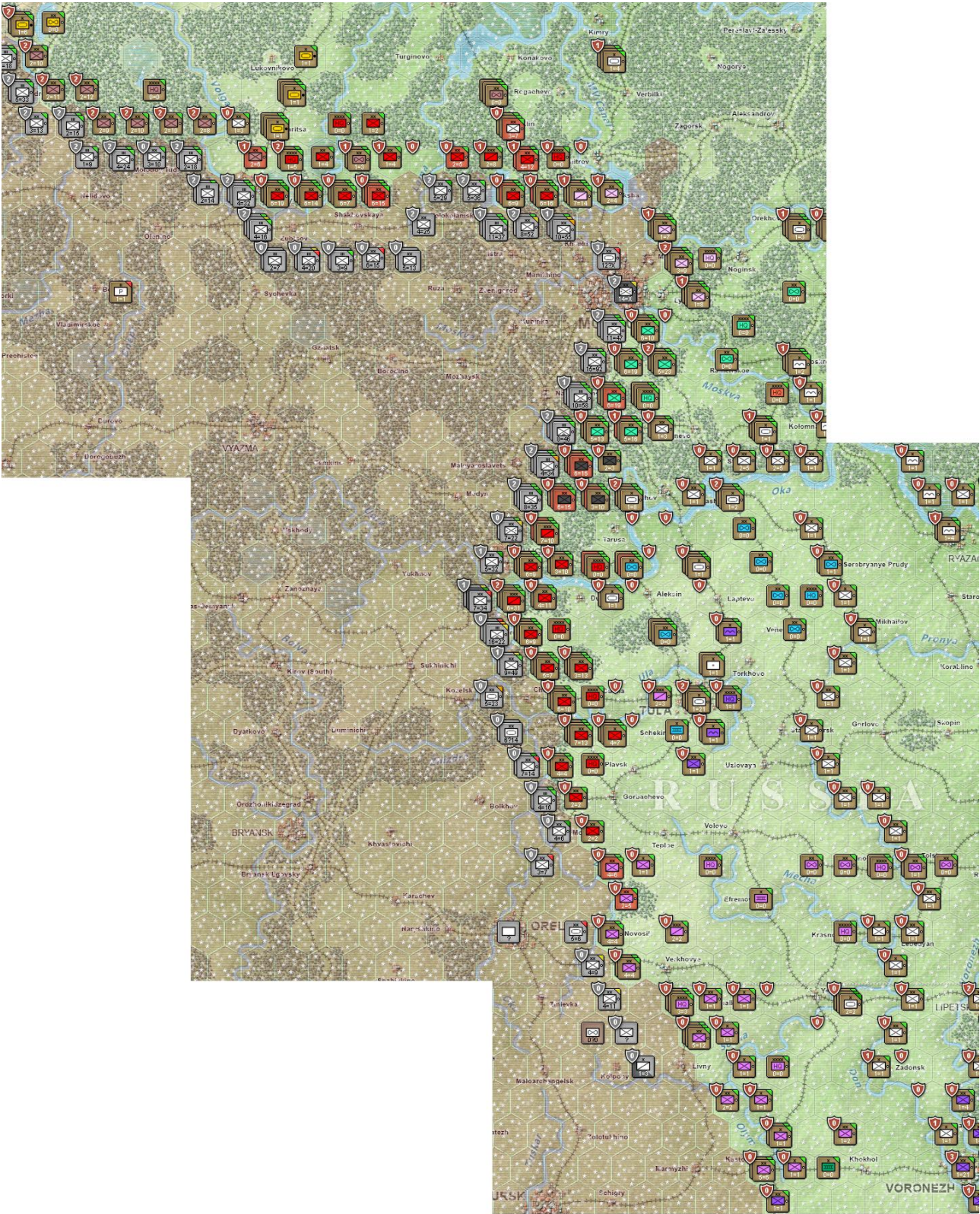
82,21 - Light Woods(Kukkovo) - Blizzard Turn:30 1942-01-08		
<b>Axis Forces Defending:</b>	<b>Forces Engaged</b>	<b>Soviet Forces Attacking:</b>
LVII Panzer Corps 19th Panzer Division (188) 217th Infantry Division (107) III/818th Hwz Bn (0) II/39th Howitzer Battalion (0) 5/55th SP Flak Company (0)	DEF: men 30616, art 302, afv 174 DAM: men 380, art 10, afv 7 LOST: men 369, art 3, afv 4 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	22nd Army 111th Rifle Division (33) 36th Guards Rifle Division (30) 166th Rifle Division (23) 237th Rifle Division (23) 382nd Rifle Division (23) 225th Rifle Division (19) 32nd Rifle Brigade (8) R
35   -> 40mm Anti-aircraft Gun	19th Panzer Division RETREATED 217th Infantry Division RETREATED	[v]
CV: 295->509.5      Fort: 0.06->0.00 Comm HQ: LVII Panzer Corps GL Otto von Knobelsdorff	Pause      Odds 2.18 : 1      Exit	CV: 166->605.9      Eng Val: 6 Comm HQ: 22nd Army GL Nikolai Vatutin

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



The Center

Situation Assessment



In the Center, the Germans have thrown back my forward line of divisions at the central part of the Kalinin Front. Further east, little has happened.

The Moscow MD still faces a formidable defensive line, but with a little luck (or a lot), the Western Front may actually start breaking through the German defenses and move forward towards the Kalinin Front attack in the north.

### *Planning*

The Kalinin Front will push on southwards, drawing in whatever reinforcements they can from the 8<sup>th</sup> Army and some cavalry corps moving in from the east.

The Moscow MD will stay quiet for another turn, as I think it unlikely that they will break the German defenses if they attack.

The Western Front might actually gain some ground north of Kaluga, however. If I can reach the Vyazma – Moscow railroad over the next four turns or so, I might make the supply situation for the Germans so bad, that they will abandon Moscow or face destruction. I think this unlikely to succeed, but it is my best shot at taking back Moscow this winter.

The Bryansk Front will continue westwards, hoping to tie down the German Panzers for one more turn.

### *Execution*

The battle for Moscow rages on. At the Kalinin Front, I have pushed my forward divisions another two hexes south, and broken through the line of German fortifications. From now on, the Germans will need to use more troops here, if they wish to maintain the same level of defensive CV.

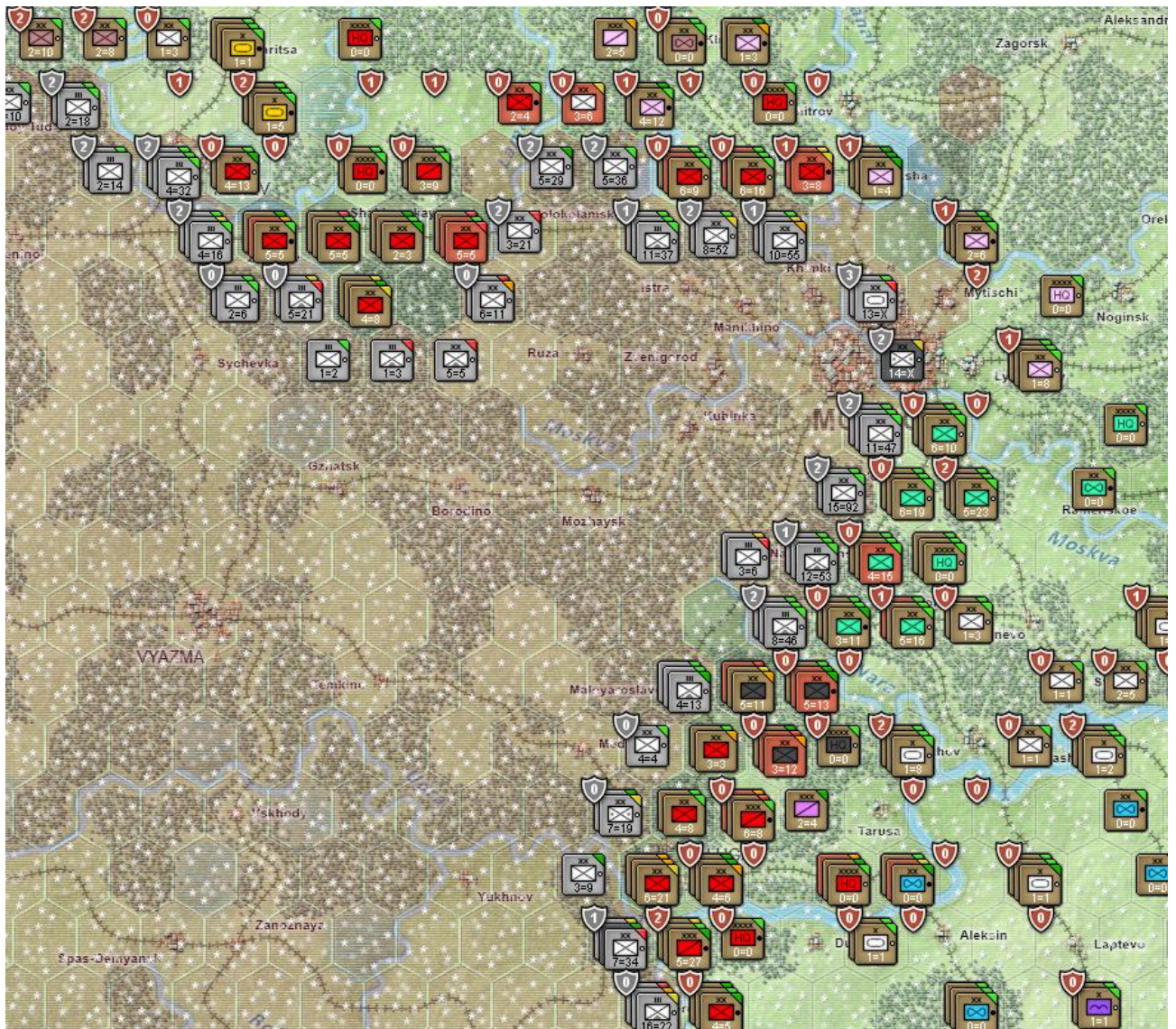
I must admit I got a little too cocky with the Moscow MD and conducted what proved to be an ill advised attack. If it had succeeded I would probably have felt it was a brilliant notion, but now I am left with the feeling I should have waited.

The Western Front meanwhile has also pushed another hex towards the northwest and liberated Kaluga. As on the Kalinin Front, it seems I have penetrated the last German line of fortifications and broken through to clearer terrain. That is good news.

The hexes I have taken at both the Kalinin and the Western Fronts have been occupied with troops of considerable defensive CV's, so I doubt the Germans will simply be able to push me back and regain their old positions.

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

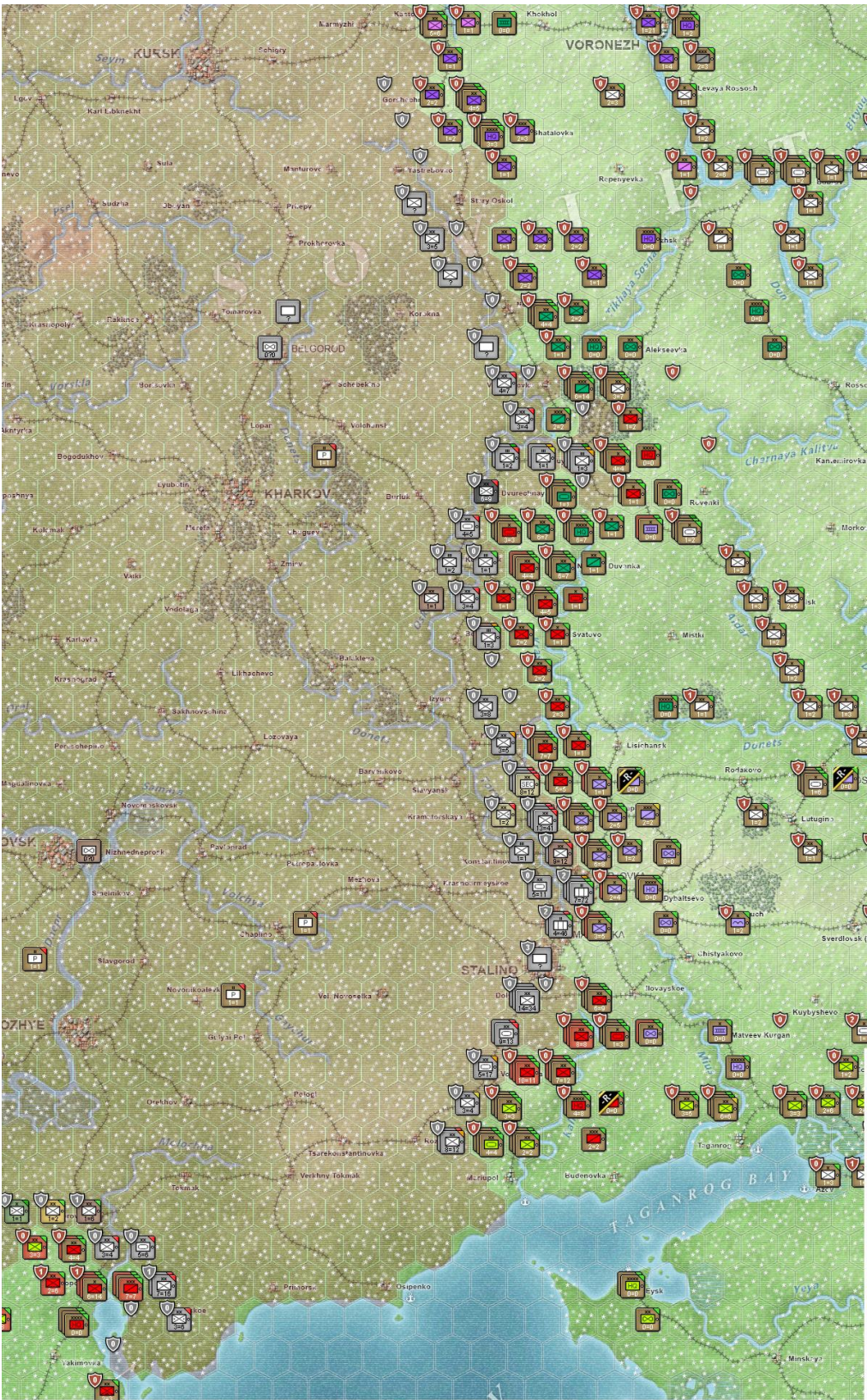






The South

Situational Assessment





The Volkhov Front has improved slightly in quality, but is still basically too weak to fight. The good news are, that it is still not in contact with the Germans.

The Kharkov Bend pocket has been reopened, but the Germans are looking anything but strong in the area. A large part of their defense consists of low CV infantry regiments and Rumanian divisions. On the other hand, I do have some strength in the area, and will need to use it wisely.

At Stalino, counterattacks has pushed back my forward divisions, but I am still capable of pushing on. The German defenses are still strong, but I have a feeling they might be beginning to weaken, especially south of Stalino.

At the Caucasus Front, the Germans have sent back one Panzer and one motorized division to deal with my renewed attacks. As the Axis seems to have few reserves by now, this might be the time to send a cavalry division speeding north towards the Dnepropetrovsk – Gorlovka railroad.

### *Planning*

At the Kharkov Bend, it is a difficult decision, if I should aim to encircle the three rearmost German units, or if I should go for all five of them. I have decided to go for the “big” solution, but also to conduct my attacks on such an order, that I can change my priorities if need be.

At Stalino, I will keep pushing. At the northern pincer, I expect little territorial results this turn, as the Axis forces here are quite strong. South of the city, I will push straight northwest, hoping to gain a hex or two in the process. Another army of the Caucasus Front is slowly moving up to take the far southern flank of the frontline.

At the Crimean Peninsula, I will attack a few times, but will likely not advance my front much. I will however, move up one more cavalry division if an opportunity presents itself for a ride north.

### *Execution*

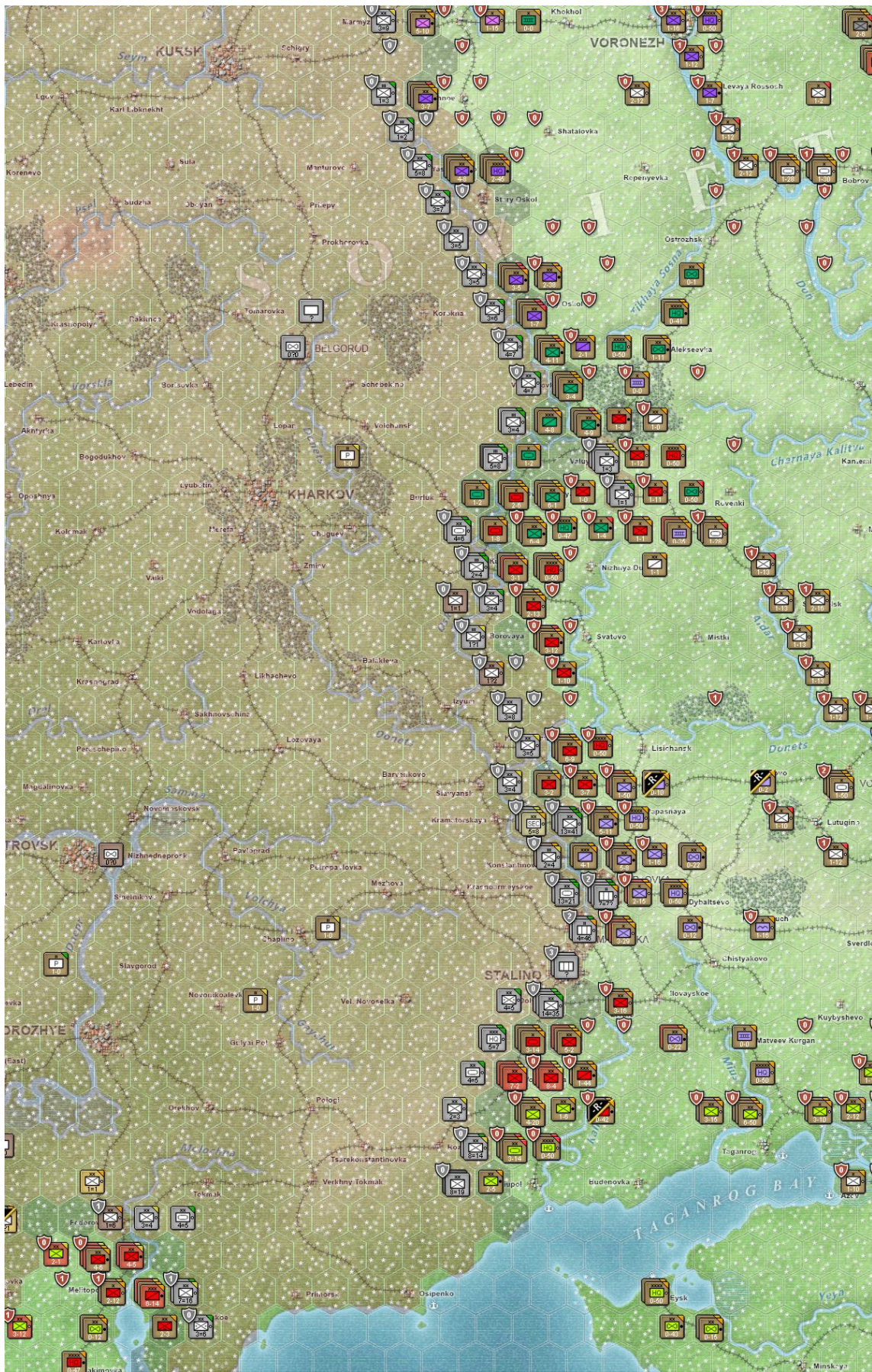
At the Kharkov Bend, I did manage to encircle all five German units, but I made a mistake in not having enough MP to fill all hexes I conquered. This way, the encircled units may break free for one more turn before their eventual demise. I am now seven hexes from Kharkov.

The Stalino battle is also continuing. In the north, I grind slowly forward, but without really gaining any ground. Every time I take a hex, it seems I have too little strength available to hold it against the Axis counterattack. The southern pincer of the Stalino attack is doing better, I think. In this area, I am beating the German Panzers and moving one hexrow forward per turn or something like that.

At the Crimean Peninsula, I am also attacking the Germans, mainly to inflict morale losses and keep them in place. But I also hope for an opportunity to send my cavalry storming north, into the area east of Zaporozhye and on to the Dnepropetrovsk – Gorlovka Railroad. I have also assigned a few LaGG-3's to the area, as the Rumanian airforce seems to be active here.

Below is an image of the front from Kursk going south of the Sea of Azov, as I give the turn to Pelton.







## **Conclusion**

I think the most interesting thing this turn is the development around Moscow. I simply can not see what will happen here. Will the Germans abandon the city? Will they allow it to be surrounded and then attempt a spring rescue? Or will they hold on with whatever resources they have and keep the Soviets at bay?

At the Kharkov Bend, I made an annoying mistake, but it should not allow the encircled Germans to escape.

The Stalino battle is also quite interesting. I am not moving forward as fast as I would like, but there might still be time to take the city before the mud arrives.