

## Strategic overview

Turn 39: Strategic Considerations

## Situational analysis

| SPECIAL |                      |      |    |        |         |   |
|---------|----------------------|------|----|--------|---------|---|
| -       | Vehicle Repair       | A    | -  | 3276   | 425464  | 0 |
| -       | Port                 | 74   | 1  | 0      | 0       | 0 |
| -       | Railyard             | 181  | 0  | 0      | 0       | 0 |
| -       | Manpower             | 2516 | 48 | 69361  | 4807571 | 0 |
| -       | Vehicle              | 114  | 0  | 184633 | 311807  | 0 |
| -       | Heavy Industry       | 195  | 0  | 0      | 3357050 | 0 |
| -       | Oil Production       | 128  | 0  | 0      | 2432000 | 0 |
| -       | Fuel Production      | 149  | 0  | 0      | 1358880 | 0 |
| -       | Resource Production  | 168  | 8  | 0      | 6422000 | 0 |
| -       | Armaments Production | 288  | 0  | 39958  | 2769275 | 0 |

The main news this turn are as follows,

- North of Moscow, the Germans have encircled two of my Guards divisions beyond hope of rescue and a few divisions more are in a precarious position.
- At the Crimea crossings my defenses still hold.
- In the air, the Axis have lost some 349 aircraft last turn for 219 Soviet ones. Most of the Axis losses are bombers. The exchange rate for fighters is 22 Axis for 123 Soviet ones.

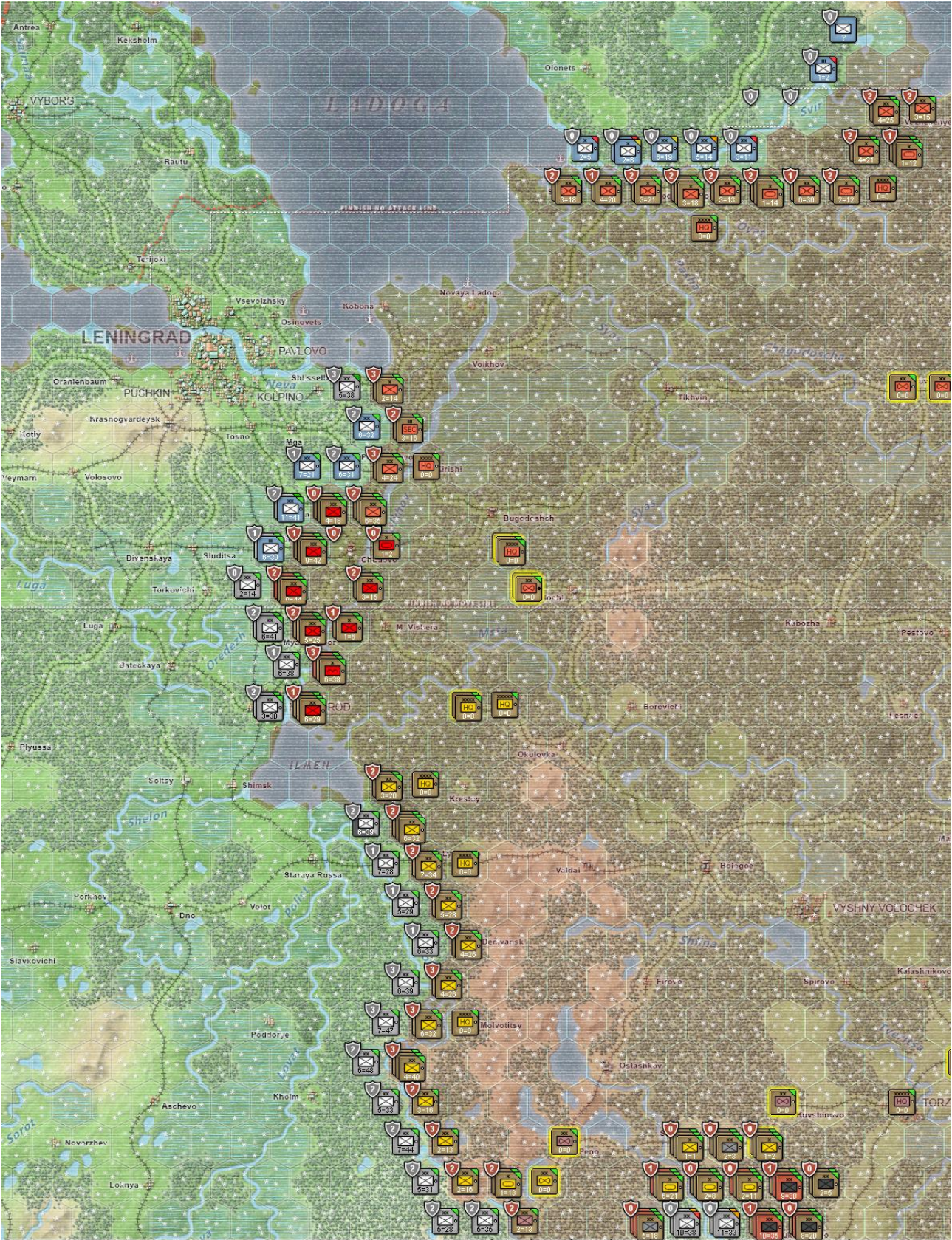
Losses this turn are as follows,

| Type        | Axis  | Soviet |
|-------------|-------|--------|
| Men         | 21011 | 44310  |
| Guns        | 488   | 522    |
| AFV + SP/AC | 46    | 46     |
| Aircraft    | 349   | 219    |

As I still have some 1611 Medium tanks and 8600 Rifle squads in my reserve pool, I have decided to set the MaxToE on all tank brigades in STAVKA to 100% and "Refit" status. I am hoping that the tanks assigned this way will spend the muddy period training, and will be ready for combat when the spring begins.

Axis VP advantage is 4.0 to 1.

The North



### Situational Assessment

Little has happened in the north, except that the axis spread of recon missions suggest that the Germans are considering to continue their Moscow strike northwards, in order to encircle the huge area northwest of Moscow that is still in Soviet hands.

### Planning

As there seems to be no real activities going on in this sector, I will do little as well. Come the mud, I might decide to extract the 22<sup>nd</sup> Army to a pure defensive role, but I see no need for doing this just yet.

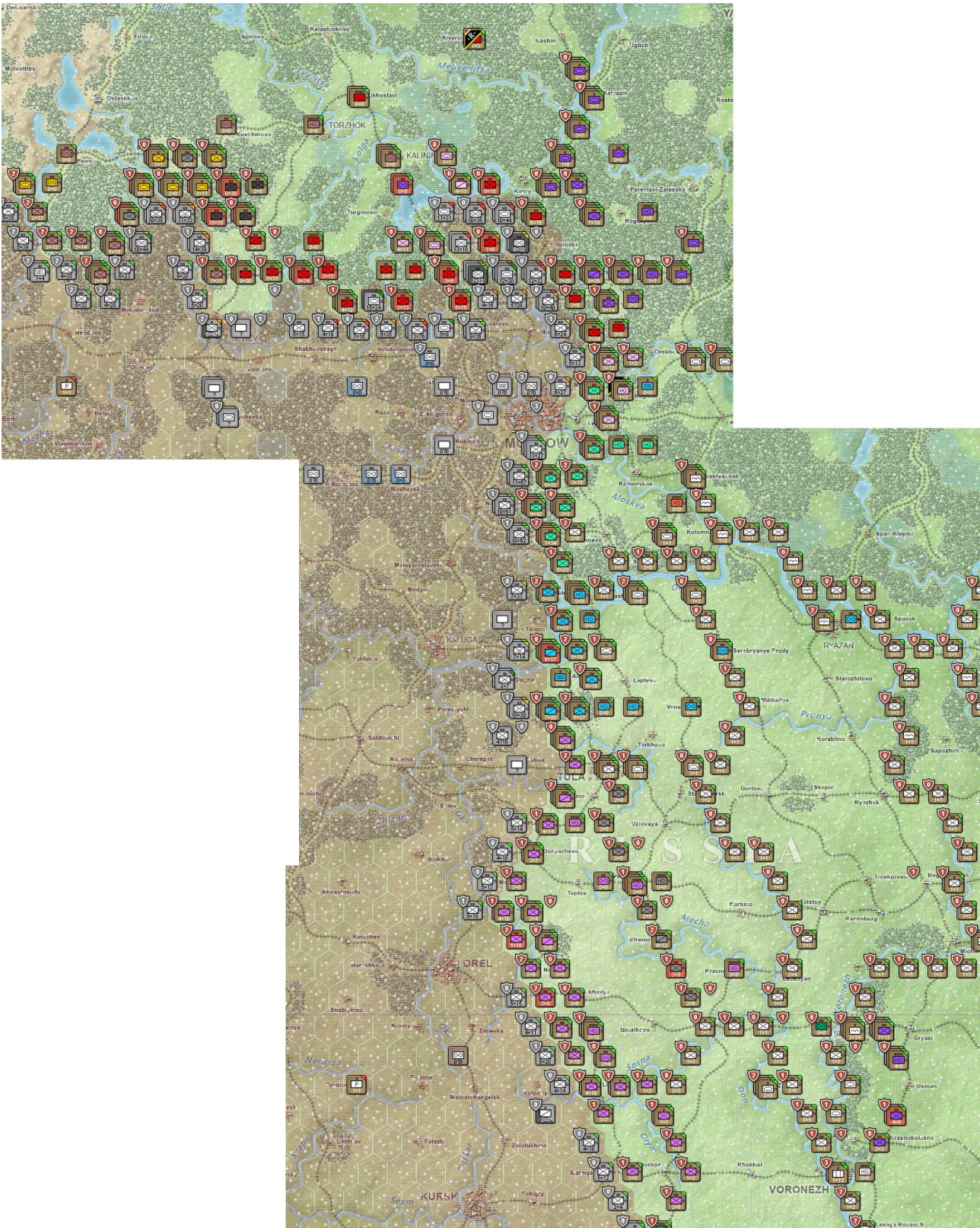
As I have a lot of Hurricane IIB's in my reserve pool, I have decided to risk a daytime attack on the Finnish airfields north of Leningrad. If I lose, I can replace my losses. Whatever losses the Finns take, they will find hard to replace.

### Execution

The attack on the Finns failed. My Hurricanes were severely outmatched by the Finnish fighters and my SB-2's were very vulnerable to the Finnish Flak. The report can be seen below.

|                               |                 |                                                                  |                             |                                 |               |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Axis Forces Defending:</b> |                 | < 2 of 2 79,14 - Light Woods(Terijoki) - Snow Turn:39 1942-03-12 |                             | <b>Soviet Forces Attacking:</b> |               |
| Finnish Air Command           |                 | <b>Forces Engaged</b>                                            |                             | Leningrad Air Command           |               |
| 26                            | Fokker D.XXI(F) | DEF: men 0, art 0, afv 0                                         | ATK: men 0, art 0, afv 0    | 12                              | LaGG-3        |
| 9                             | G.50(F)         | DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0                                         | DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0    | 51                              | Hurricane IIB |
| 54                            | M.S.406(F)      | LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0                                        | LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0   | 67                              | SB-2          |
| 10 : 10                       | Hawk 75A(F)     | DEF: ftr 89, bmr 0, utl 0                                        | ATK: ftr 63, bmr 67, utl 0  | airfield was BOMBED             |               |
| 10 : 10                       | Fokker D.XXI(F) | LOST: ftr 1, bmr 0, utl 2                                        | LOST: ftr 11, bmr 12, utl 0 |                                 |               |
| [v]                           |                 | Show Details                                                     |                             | Exit                            |               |

The Center



### *Situation Assessment*

The weather forecasts has been wrong, and the weather north of Moscow is snow.

The western of the two German attacks has been stalled completely, and the Germans have spent their turn digging in.

To the east, the Germans have moved to encircle two of my guards divisions in the area, and I see no hope of cutting them free. Here, I now count no less than ten Panzer Divisions and seven Motorized divisions.

The Germans have also moved two of the Corps HQ's into the wedge. Both those HQ's are within 20 MP of the German Rail lines, and one of the corps has not moved this turn. I expect an HQBU may have taken place. Two of the German Panzer divisions in the southern part of the wedge are also green in fuel. The end result is that I should be mindful of the possibility for some heavy German movement come next turn.

Interestingly, the Germans have also moved several of their airfields forward. I count no more than 107 German fighters, but plenty of transports and bombers. One of the German airfields has been moved straight up to the encircled divisions north of Moscow. I guess the Germans wish to use these airfields to drop large amounts of fuel come next turn.

South of Moscow, the Germans have done little but move their divisions up to face mine almost along the entire front.

### *Planning*

In the air, I will try to destroy as many German aircraft as possible in this area. As the main force of German fighters are in one airbase, I will start by a night bombing of this airbase by as many level bombers as I can scrape together (some 265 level bombers from the Southwestern Front).

After that, I will attack the airfield furthest to the north with a daylight attack using Yak-1's, IL-2's and Pe-2's. Depending on the result of this, I may then do daytime attacks on the German airfields with the main body of transports, hoping to destroy as many as these as possible.

South of Moscow, I will use my local U-2VS to bomb the German infantry as much as I can.

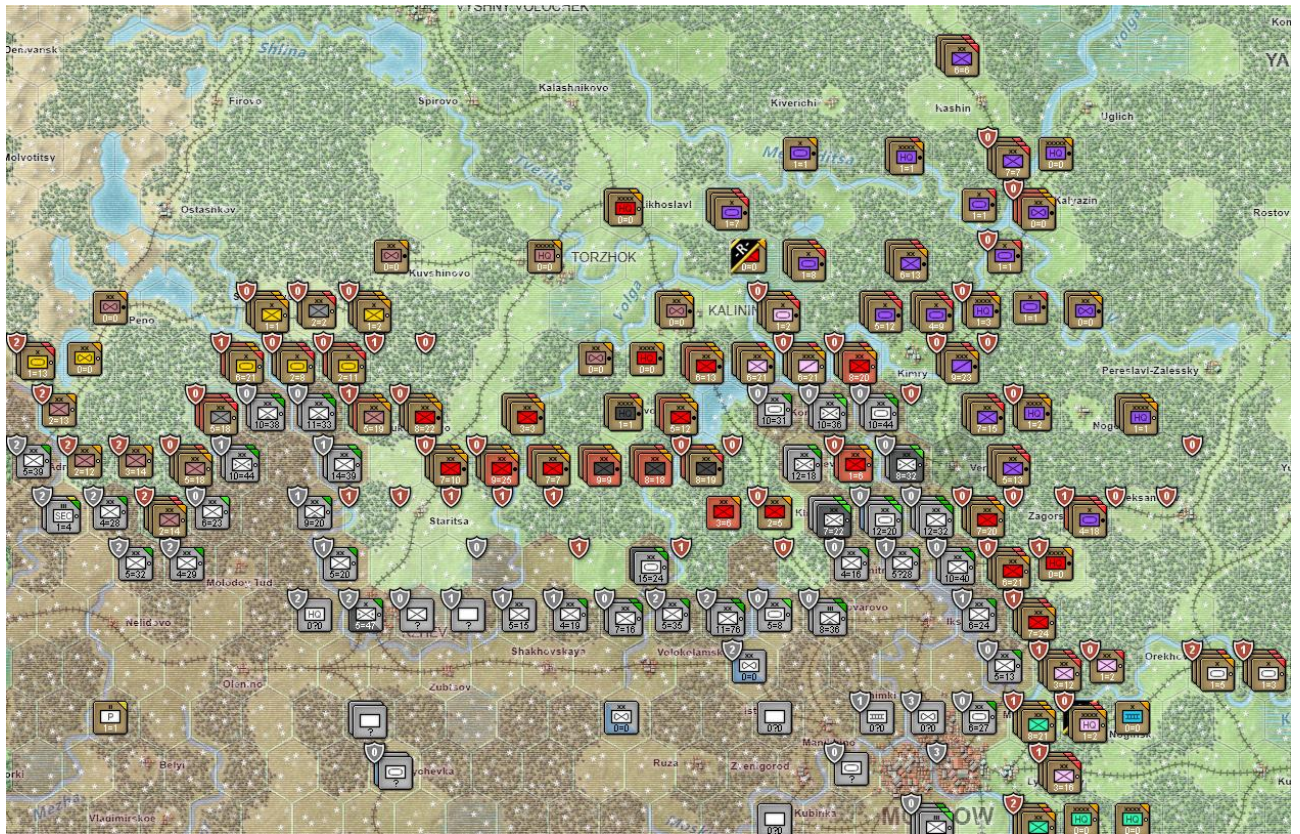
Due to the increased threat of a German attack based on a series of divisions with high movement, I have decided to shorten my front by falling back in the area between the two German attack wedges. I realize this is going to cost me another division or two that cannot make it back to the safety of my own lines, but I prefer that to risking a large encirclement just before the mud hits.

Other than that, I will pull the 20<sup>th</sup> Army east again and ship the last of the Volkhov Front armies north.

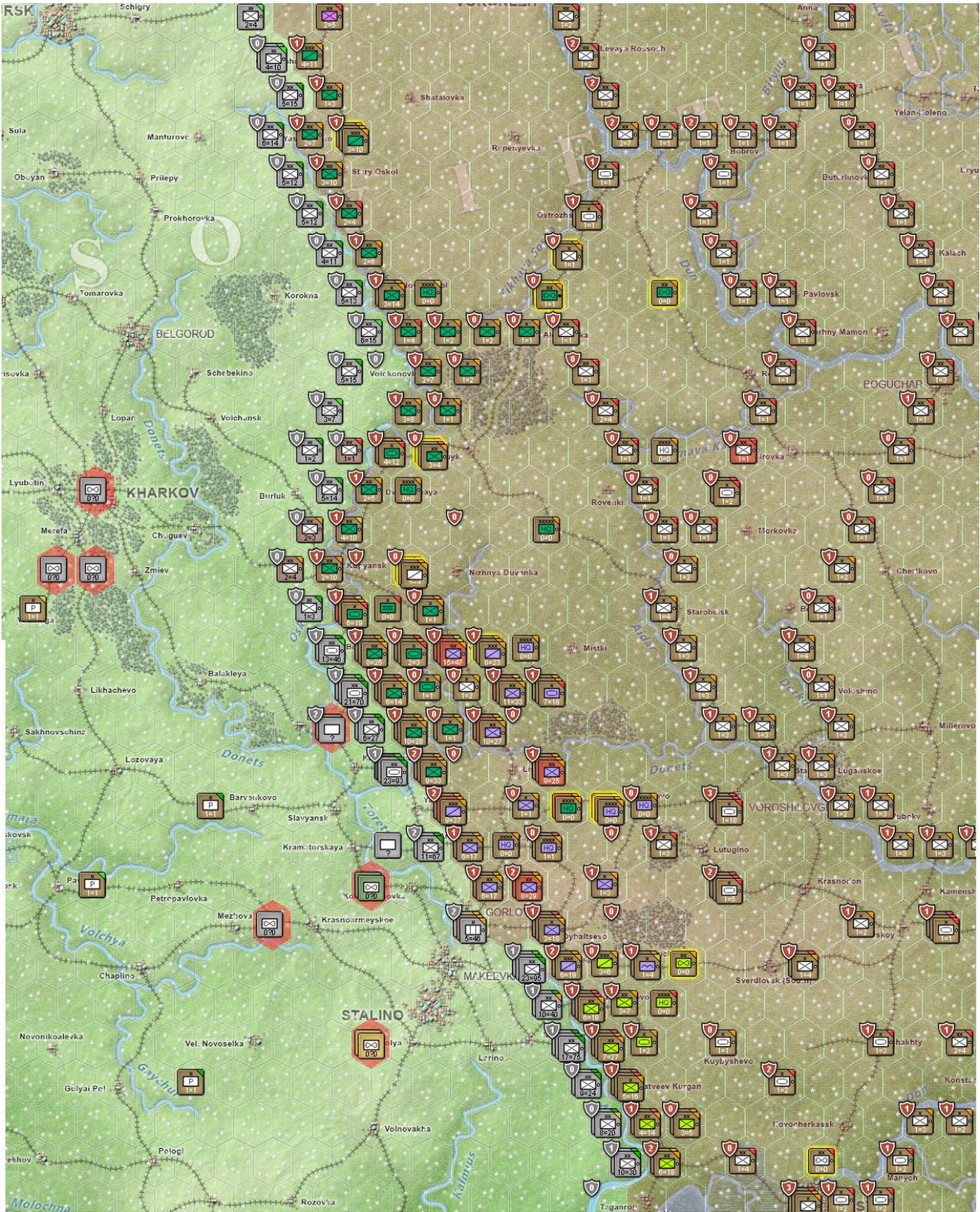
### *Execution*

The initial level bomber attacks I did on the German fighter airfield was mainly ineffective, in that I only took out a total of four fighters. However, I continued to hit the German airfields in a series of bombing attacks, followed by even more attacks on the northernmost Panzers and this resulted in a total of 52 German fighters going down due mostly to heavy air to air combat.

Below is an image of the situation north and west of Moscow as I give the turn to Pelton.



The South



## Situational Assessment

North of Gorlovka, the German Panzers are still gathering fuel for whatever purpose they may have. If the Germans wish to make a move before the mud, it has to be soon. Their Panzers are in yellow or green on the fuel indicator. However, the Germans do not have many offensive CV available at this front, so I will be slightly surprised if the mount an offensive before the mud.

The Germans have also done intensive recon missions up and down the entire front, including missions to a great depth.

At Crimea, my defenses still hold. I am a little surprised that the German commander is Walter Weiss and not Walter Model. The Germans have suffered some major bomber losses on this turn, their two air attacks and one ground attacks looking like this.

| Axis Forces Attacking:                                                                                               | < 3 of 3 95,112 - Clear - Snow Turn:39 1942-03-12                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Soviet Forces Defending:                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>V Fliegerkorps</b><br>7 Bf 109E-3<br>32 Bf 109F-2<br>38 Bf 109F-4<br>6 Bf 109E-4B<br>11 Bf 109E-7/U1<br>26 Ju 87B | <b>Forces Engaged</b><br>ATK: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>ATK: ftr 83, bmr 78, utl 0<br>LOST: ftr 1, bmr 15, utl 0<br>DEF: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>DAM: men 30, art 4, afv 0<br>LOST: men 31, art 4, afv 0<br>DEF: ftr 130, bmr 0, utl 0<br>LOST: ftr 19, bmr 0, utl 0<br>ground forces were BOMBED | <b>Crimea Air Command</b><br>65 Yak-1<br>65 LaGG-3<br>10 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun<br>3 -> 85mm Anti-aircraft Gun<br>1 -> 76mm Anti-aircraft Gun |
|                                                                                                                      | <a href="#">Show Details</a> <a href="#">Exit</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                  |

| Axis Forces Attacking:                                                                                              | < 2 of 3 > 95,112 - Clear - Snow Turn:39 1942-03-12                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Soviet Forces Defending:                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>V Fliegerkorps</b><br>4 Bf 109F-2<br>26 Bf 109F-4<br>3 Bf 109E-4B<br>19 Bf 109E-7/U1<br>44 Ju 87B<br>92 Ju 87D-1 | <b>Forces Engaged</b><br>ATK: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>ATK: ftr 33, bmr 180, utl 0<br>LOST: ftr 1, bmr 93, utl 0<br>DEF: men 0, art 0, afv 0<br>DAM: men 24, art 4, afv 0<br>LOST: men 26, art 2, afv 0<br>DEF: ftr 120, bmr 0, utl 0<br>LOST: ftr 9, bmr 0, utl 0<br>ground forces were BOMBED | <b>Crimea Air Command</b><br>42 Yak-1<br>78 LaGG-3<br>10 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun<br>3 -> 85mm Anti-aircraft Gun<br>1 -> 76mm Anti-aircraft Gun |
|                                                                                                                     | <a href="#">Show Details</a> <a href="#">Exit</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                  |

| Axis Forces Attacking:                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 1 of 3 > 95,112 - Clear - Snow Turn:39 1942-03-12                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Soviet Forces Defending:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>11th Army -3%</b><br>3rd Prin. Arm. IT Celere Div (22) R<br>XXXVIII Corps<br>81st Infantry Division (56)<br>88th Infantry Division (60)<br>216th Infantry Division (61)<br>51st Nebelwerfer Regiment (1)<br>70th Werfer Regiment (1) | <b>Forces Engaged</b><br>ATK: men 65519, art 764, afv 41<br>DAM: men 1419, art 25, afv 2<br>LOST: men 1532, art 22, afv 0<br>ATK: ftr 273, bmr 64, utl 0<br>LOST: ftr 8, bmr 3, utl 0<br>DEF: men 45468, art 616, afv 0<br>DAM: men 489, art 9, afv 0<br>LOST: men 386, art 6, afv 0<br>DEF: ftr 257, bmr 20, utl 0<br>LOST: ftr 23, bmr 0, utl 0<br>Defending Forces HELD | <b>51st Army</b><br>3rd Guards Rifle Division (101)<br>4th Guards Rifle Division (116)<br>5th Guards Rifle Division (104)<br>8th Guards Rifle Division (45) R<br>4th Guards Howitzer Regiment (1)<br>6th Guards Howitzer Regiment (1)<br>596th Art Rgt RVGK (1) |
| CV: 232->675.6 Eng Val: 12<br>Comm HQ: XXXVIII Corps<br>GL Walter Weiss                                                                                                                                                                 | <a href="#">Show Details</a> Odds 1 : 1.05 <a href="#">Exit</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | CV: 369->710.1 Fort: 1.48->1.28<br>Comm HQ: 51st Army<br>GL Nikolai Vatutin                                                                                                                                                                                     |

With two turns left before the mud, my defense hangs on with a 1.28 Fortification and three sapper regiments ready to help building further fortifications this turn before the German attacks.

If the Germans wish to break into Crimea before the spring, they have to get a move on by now.

## Planning

I will not be conducting more than one or two ground attacks along the entire stretch of front, as I will instead be focusing on saving movement points that my troops can use to dig in further.

In the air, I will do a number of attacks against the German and Axis minor airfields and against the German Panzers north of Gorlovka. It is my hope to add to the number of losses sustained by the Axis this turn. At the Crimea, I will not use my fighters and IL-2 at all this turn, hoping instead they will do some damage come the expected German attack.

### *Execution*

Little has happened on this section of the front this turn.

There is little to report, other than the following image from Crimea.



## Conclusion

Due to the renewed discussion on Steltecks AAR over the merits of the U-2VS bomber, I have decided to document the results of my use of it over one turn. Doing that, I have recorded the number of men, guns and AFV lost to the Germans due to U-2VS attacks this turn. I havenot registrered the amount of damaged elements, but it seems to be about the same.

In turn 39, I have done 53 Ground bombing attacks bby U-2VS and caused these losses to the Germans: 2571 men, 225 guns and 2 AFV lost. I have suffered a total of 80 U-2VS losses due to enemy fighter intercepts, but have also shot down a small number of enemy planes (about three to five, I think).

Losses this turn are as follows

|                 | Axis Phase |        | Soviet Phase |        | Total        |              |
|-----------------|------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------------|
|                 | Axis       | Soviet | Axis         | Soviet | Axis         | Soviet       |
| <b>Men</b>      | 21011      | 44310  | 4674         | 406    | <b>25685</b> | <b>44716</b> |
| <b>Guns</b>     | 488        | 522    | 281          | 2      | <b>769</b>   | <b>524</b>   |
| <b>AFV</b>      | 46         | 46     | 3            | 0      | <b>49</b>    | <b>46</b>    |
| <b>Aircraft</b> | 349        | 219    | 122          | 180    | <b>371</b>   | <b>399</b>   |

On top of the losses above, I will suffer another 18.000 men lost next turn, when my encircled divisions are destroyed.

With 419 aircraft produced this turn, I break even on aircraft production vrs aircraft losses. The Axis however, have lost about three times more aircraft than they have produced this turn. In total, the aircraft lost amount to about ten percent of their entire OoB. If this contines for long, the Axis pools will run dry and their airforces will be depleted.