

Strategic overview

Turn 50: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	3715	549085	0
-	Port	73	0	0	0	0
-	Railyard	181	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2490	1	42571	5892139	0
-	Vehicle	114	0	152021	326635	0
-	Heavy Industry	195	0	0	4497200	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	3136000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	1752240	0
-	Resource Production	168	8	0	8293000	0
-	Armaments Production	288	0	278730	3789125	0

I have made a horrible mistake this turn. Due to inadequate defenses on the Don River, the Germans have crossed in strength west of Rostov. As the Germans have already thrown two Panzer divisions and a Motorized division across the river, I have no hope of reestablishing a strong line on the Don River.

Other news from the German turn are as follows:

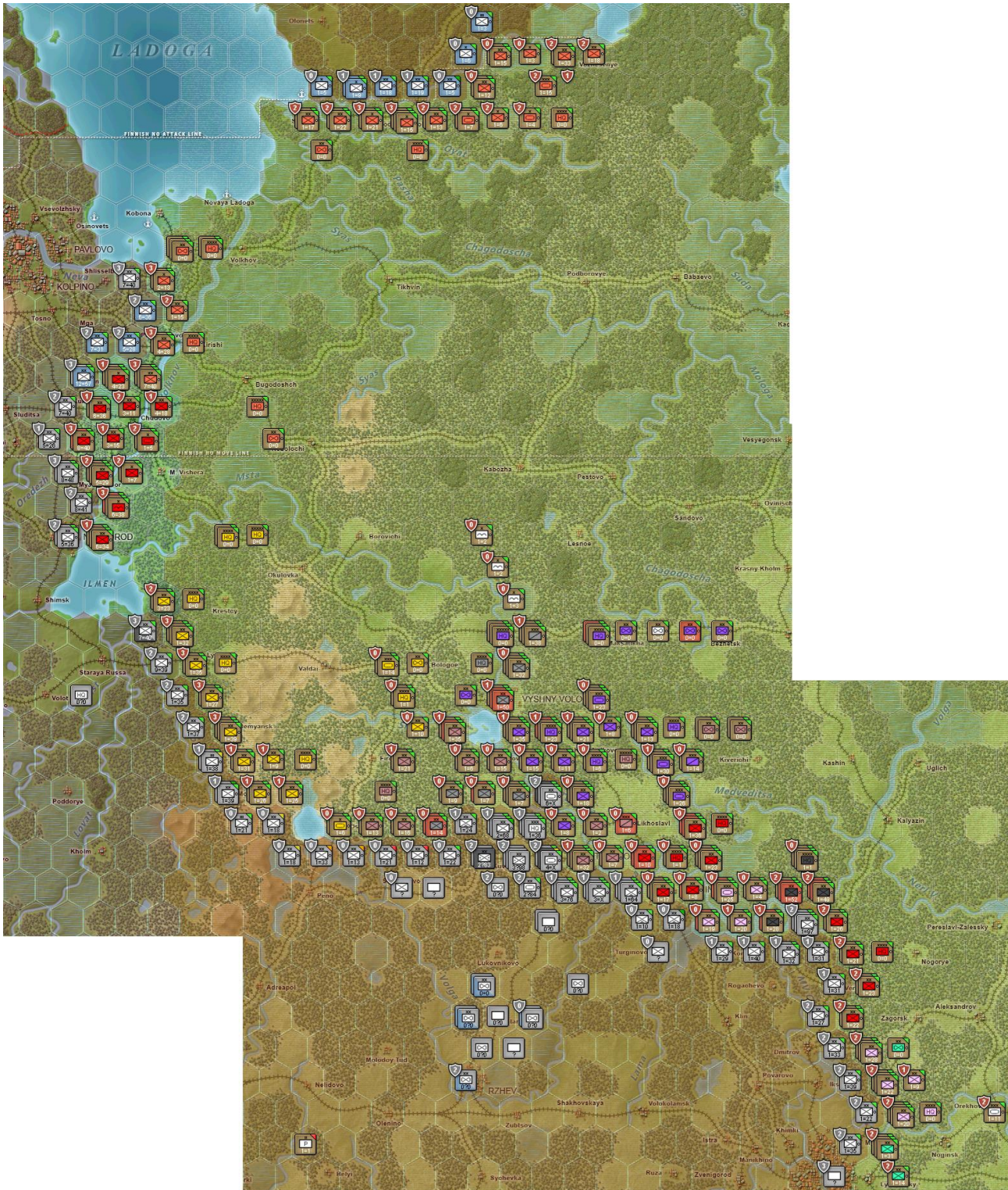
- South of Tolhzok, some of the German panzer divisions have disappeared. My recon attempts up at down the front have not discovered their location.
- Both the Luftwaffe and the Panzerwaffe have almost exactly the same numerical strength as they did when the game began.
- Aircraft losses continue to be heavy for both sides. This turn, I have lost about 200 more planes than I have produced, while Axis losses are an estimated 100 above production.

During the previous two phases, the total losses were as follows:

	Prev. two Phases	
	Axis	Soviet
Men	26387	50924
Guns	755	675
AFV	54	42
Aircraft	306	708

Axis VP advantage is 4.1 to 1.

The North



Situational Assessment

Several German Panzer divisions have disappeared from the frontlines this turn. While I expect they have been pulled back to Germany for refitting, I can not be sure. However, I have done a series of recon missions up and down the front without spotting those divisions.

The weather prediction for next turn is “Clear”, so I expect the current calm to end with a “bang”, once I give the turn to Pelton.

Planning

The missing German Panzers force me to consider if the Germans are planning an attack on another sector in the near future, and because of this, I will need to prepare the Volkhov Front for reassignment. Consequently, I will let the other armies of this area take over as much of the front line duties as possible in this area.

I will defend Torzhok, as it is not unlikely that the German Panzers will return to this area, once the city has been cleared and there is a more “open” attack path northwards. I expect and accept the loss of three Rifle divisions because of this, but I hope to delay the German attack north for at least one turn with this gambit.

Execution

As usual, I have started my actions with a series of airfield attacks on the German fighter airfields my long range bomber fleet. When doing my first attack of this type, I got a really surprising result with combat losses including losses including 37 Bf 109F-4’s, 80 DB-3B’s and 49 IL-4’s.

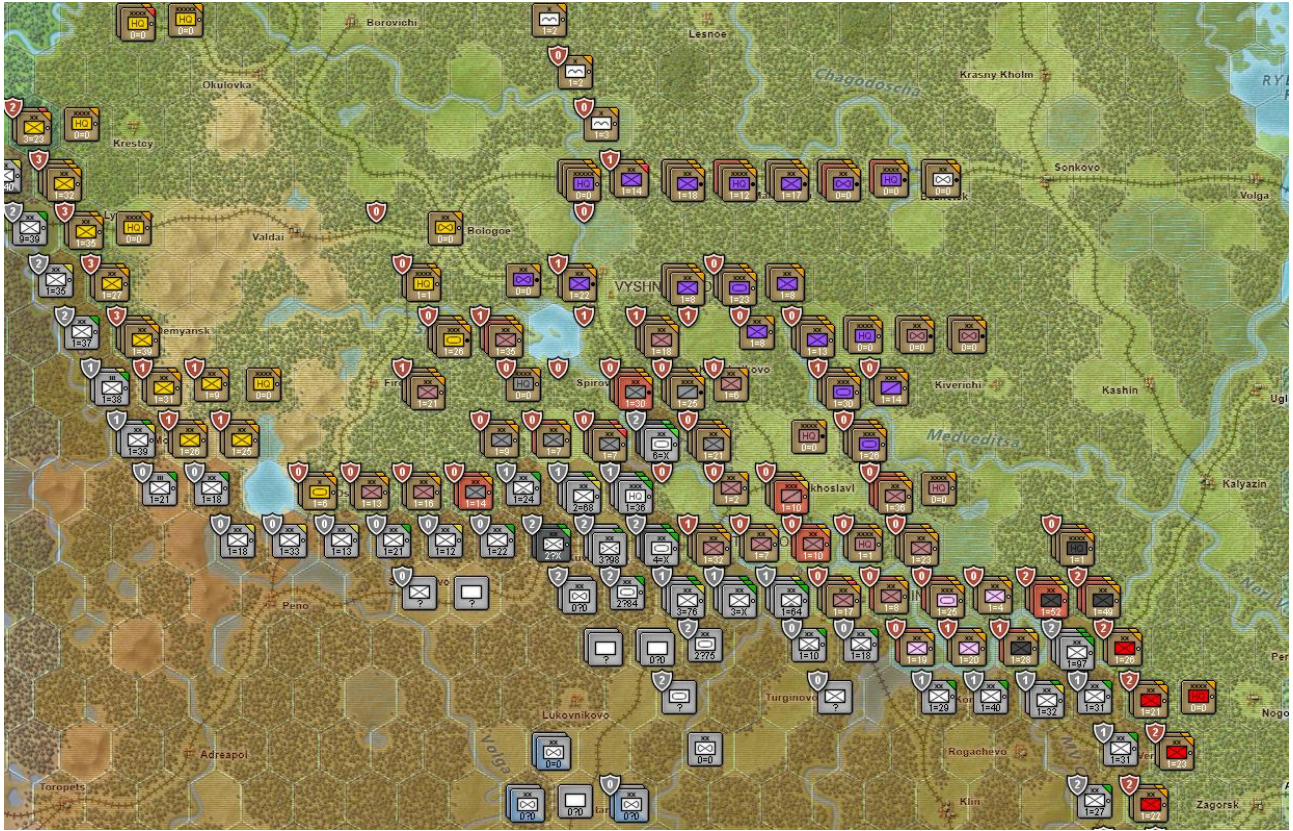
Axis Forces Defending:	1 of 1		97,40 - Clear - Mud	Turn:50 1942-05-28	Soviet Forces Attacking:
	Forces Engaged				
	DEF: men 0, art 0, afv 0		ATK: men 0, art 0, afv 0		
	DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0		DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0		
VIII Fliegerkorps	LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0		LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0		Moscow Air Command
4 Bf 109F-2	DEF: ftr 110, bmr 0, utl 0		ATK: ftr 0, bmr 158, utl 0		96 DB-3B
100 Bf 109F-4	LOST: ftr 41, bmr 0, utl 0		LOST: ftr 0, bmr 129, utl 0		62 IL-4
4 Bf 109G-2	airfield was BOMBED				
1 Bf 109E-4B					
1 Me 210A-1					
	[v]				
	Show Details				Exit

This result caused an immediate pause in my actions, and some time was spent on analyzing how to react to this situation. On one side, losing 129 long range bombers in a single attack, is a loss that far exceeds my ability to produce replacements. On the other hand, killing 41 German fighters in a single attack far exceeds the German fighter production, and exploiting this could potentially lead to the soviets winning the air war in 1942.

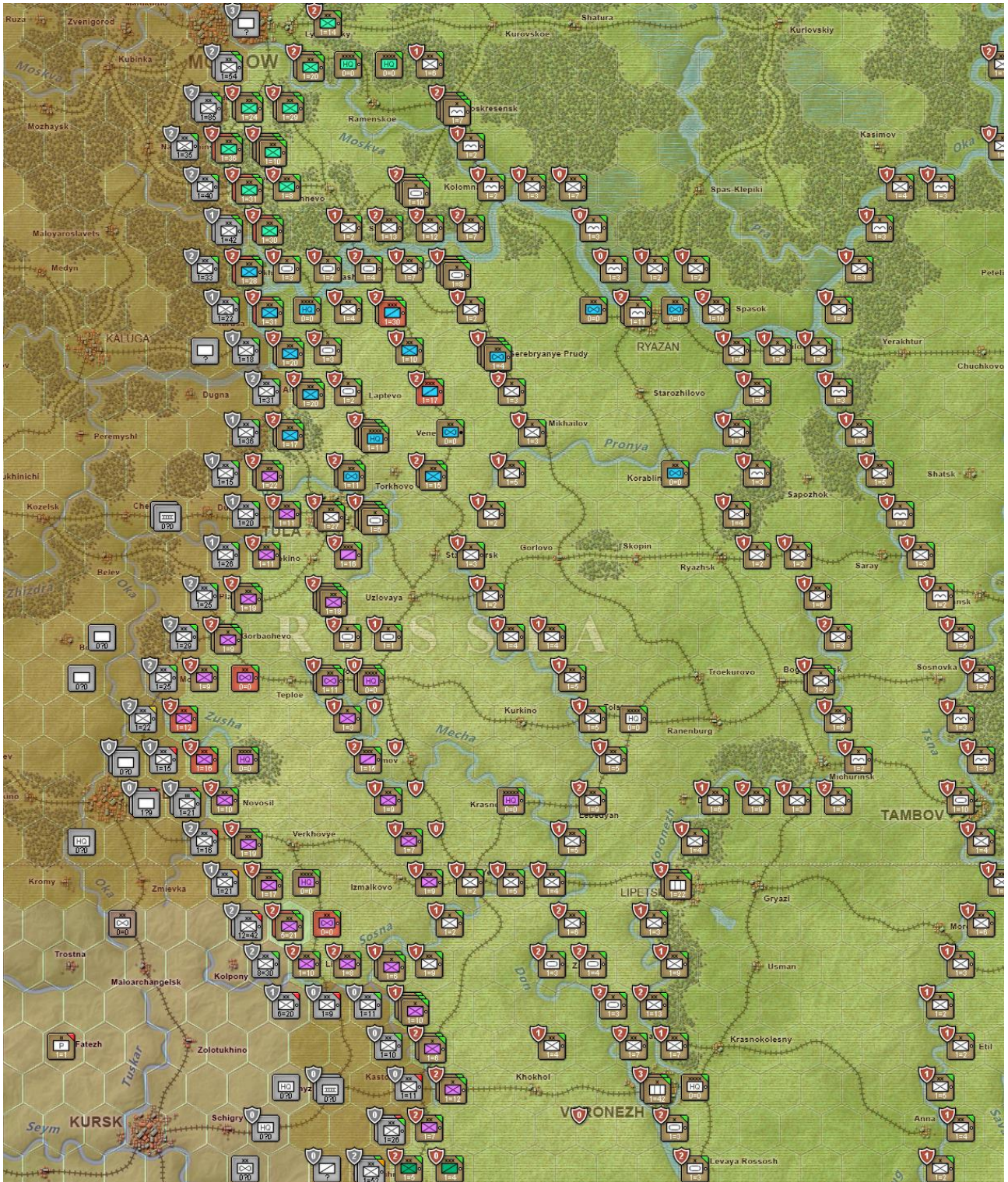
I decided to follow up with a series of airfield night bombing attacks aimed at decimating the German fighter force. The final result of those bombings were the loss of 15 Bf 109F-2’s, 81 Bf 109 F-4’s and 15 other German fighter aircraft for 51 SB-2’s, 81 IL-2’s, 119 Pe-2’s, 98 DB-3B’s and 92 IL-4’s.

On the ground, nothing serious has been going on. I have reshuffled a few divisions, but made no attacks.

Below is an image of the Torzhok area, as I give the turn to Pelton.



The Center



Situation Assessment

At the center, I am apparently facing only infantry units. While clear weather will give the Germans the ability to drive my divisions back, I doubt they will have much potential for encirclements.

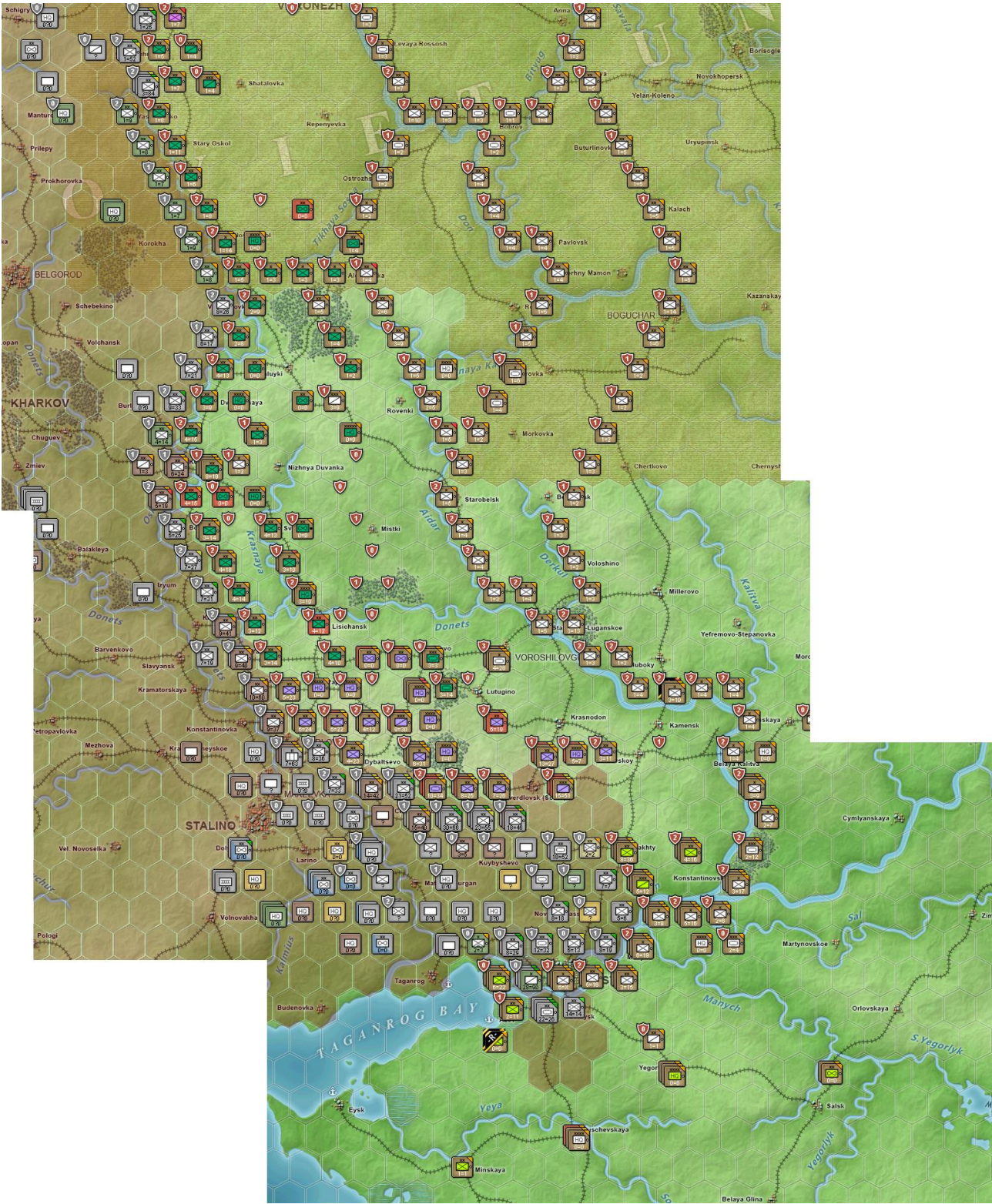
Planning

I plan very little action along this stretch of front.

Execution

I have faced more shortages of ammunition in my U-2VS bombing airfields. The standard seems to be that I can often do seven attacks with each airfield before running out of bombs to drop on the Germans.

The South



Situational Assessment

The Germans have crossed the Don. I really made a major mistake when trying to hold the forward marsh hexes rather than pulling back behind the river defenses. Doing so allowed the Germans to muster overwhelming strength in one attack beating my defenses into a pulp and then advancing against weak retreated units and crossing the river. The attack that beat my defense can be seen below.

1 of 1 122,102 - Swamp - Clear Turn:50 1942-05-28		
Axis Forces Attacking:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Defending:
XI Corps 76th Infantry Division (115) 227th Infantry Division (109) 339th Static Division (97) 707th Static Division (77) 54th Nebelwerfer Regiment (3) III/109th Howitzer Battalion (0) 740th Gun Battalion (0)	ATK: men 97367, art 800, afv 2 DAM: men 331, art 10, afv 0 LOST: men 294, art 15, afv 0 ATK: ftr 74, bmr 152, utl 0 LOST: ftr 13, bmr 75, utl 0	56th Army 8th Rifle Division (120) 386th Rifle Division (172) 54th Rifle Brigade (44) 430th BM Howitzer Regiment (0)
[v]	54th Rifle Brigade RETREATED 386th Rifle Division RETREATED 8th Rifle Division RETREATED	[v]
CV: 800->2209.5 Eng Val: 30 Comm HQ: XI Corps G Joachim von Kortzfleisch	Show Details Odds 2.70 : 1 Exit	CV: 336->816.4 Fort: 0.52->0.00 Comm HQ: 56th Army GM Ivan Chernyakhovsky

Further north, at the northern end of this sector, the Hungarians have taken over part of the German front freeing up several German infantry divisions, now poised to do an attack that will overcome my weaker Rifle divisions facing them. Behind the German infantry, a cavalry unit awaits to exploit any holes created in my lines by the German attack. I have no significant reserves in the area, and will need to plan accordingly.

At Crimea, nothing has happened.

Planning

To the north, I will start pulling back my most exposed divisions. While this mean I will leave a level two fortification line without a fight, I will not be abandoning any vital territory and I will not be able to hold the line anyway. By pulling back one hex and stacking my units three high, this will cost the yellow morale German infantry at least 12 MP to just move adjacent, which will not leave sufficient movement for any attacks. Green moral infantry will only pay nine MP and will be able to do some limited attacks.

At Rostov, I will be shifting my divisions of the Crimean front south of the Don river and establish whatever defense I can. I will certainly hold on to Rostov for as long as possible, as the Germans need that city for their rail connection into the Caucasus. The longer I can delay the Germans here, the shorter a summer campaign they will be able to conduct.

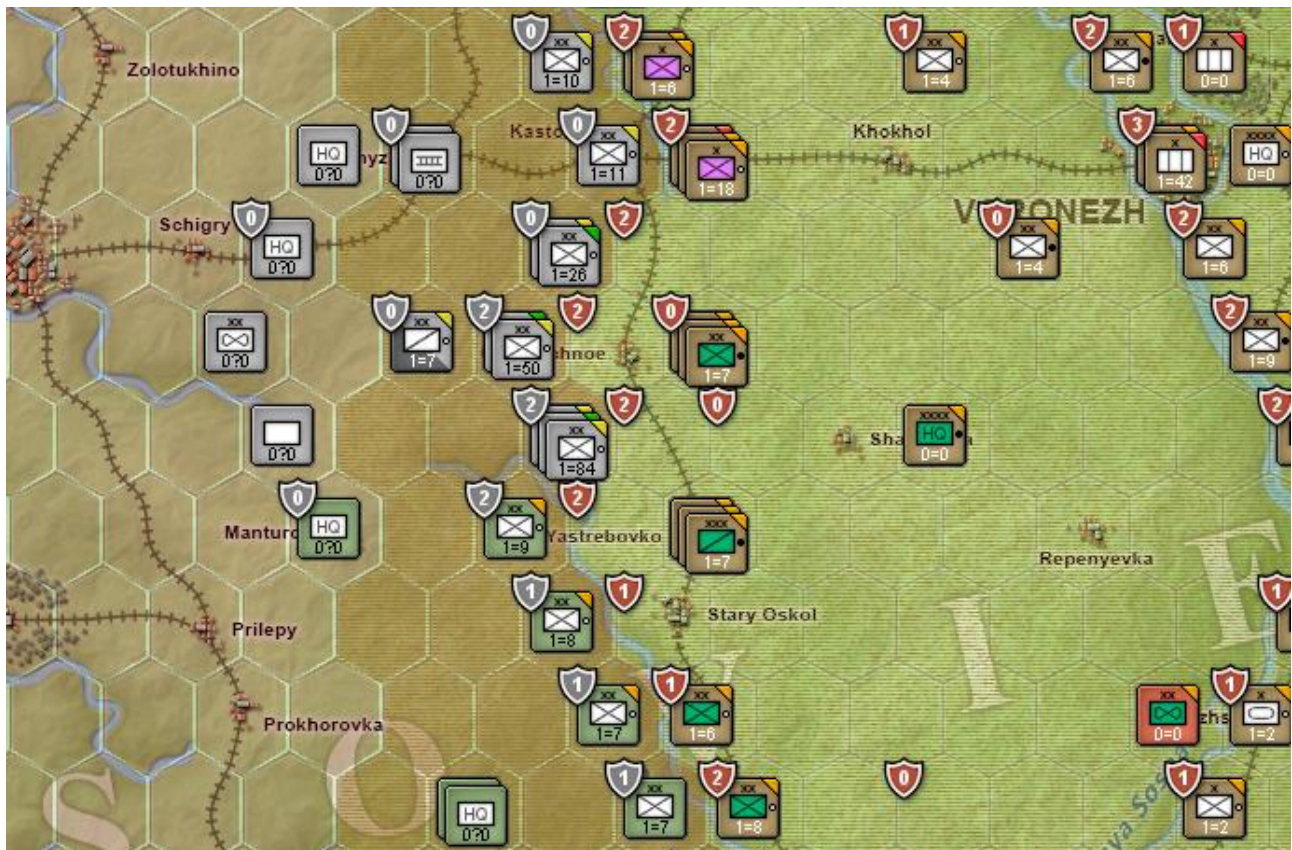
This means I will also be shifting around several of my Southern Front armies to cover the gaps left by the Caucasus Front.

South of Rostov, I will pull forward the Transcaucasus Front and assign several of the STAVKA armies in the area to this front. The general idea is to use the Caucasus Front in the west and the Transcaucasus Front in the east. I will slowly begin moving some of my tank brigades to the Transcaucasus Front as well. Once the battle for Rostov is over, the Axis are probably going to advance into the vast plains north of the Caucasian Mountains. When they do, I wish to have my defenses here based on mobility rather than slow moving Rifle divisions.

Execution

In the north, I have done a stacked defense, hoping that the Germans will not be able to do any serious attacks as I slowly pull back my line. However, as they slowly progress, they will leave their fortifications behind, making more tempting targets for Ground Bombing attacks by my local airforces.

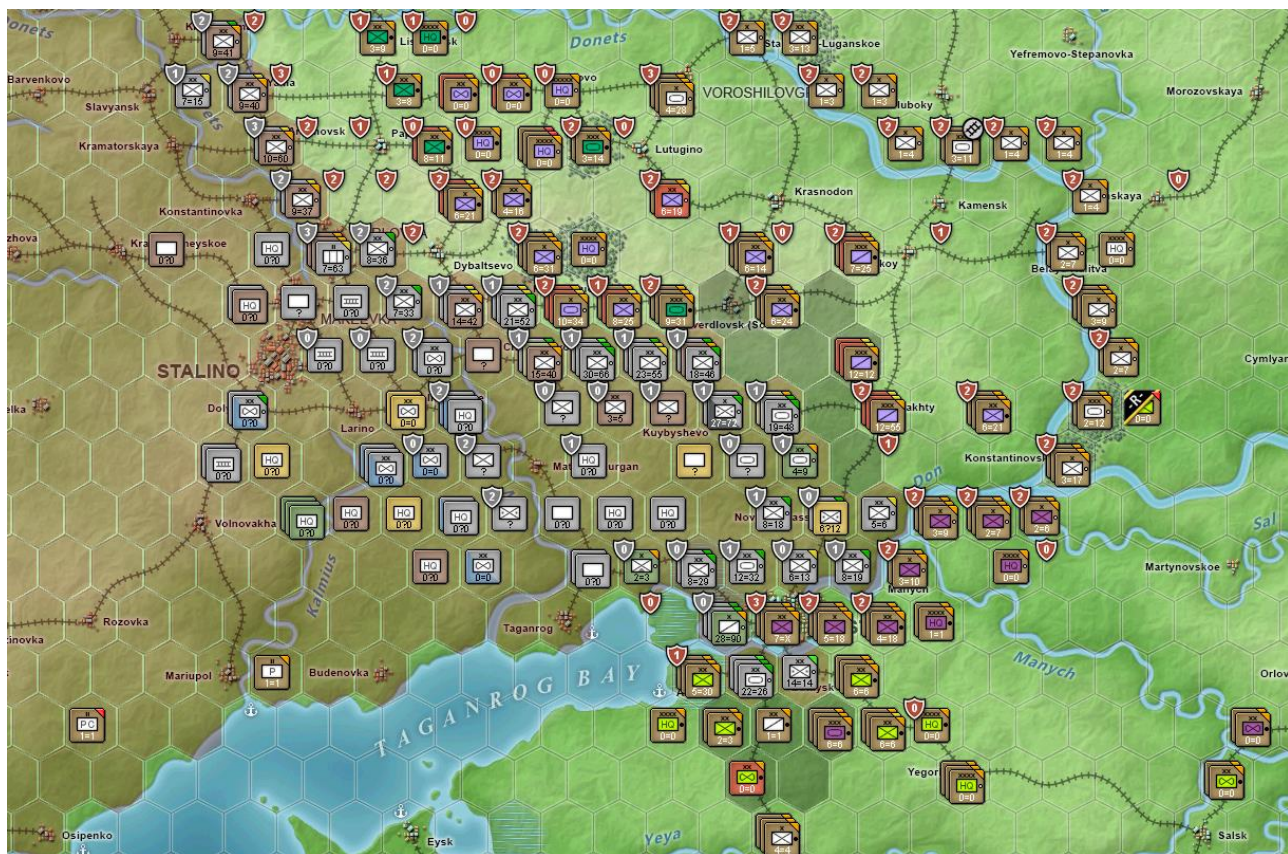
The defense west of Voronezh looks like this.



Further south, I have shifted the major part of the Caucasus Front south of the Don River and moved the Transcaucasus Front to the north. I have also conducted a couple of local counterattacks at the easternmost German advances, mainly to restrict the Germans in their further attacks by forcing them to spend extra MP's to advance the same distance.

As the Germans have no more than about seven Panzer divisions and three Motorized divisions in this area, they will have to prioritize their efforts either north or south of the river don, I hope. This way, I might be able to still contain the German attack for a few turns. In any case, Rostov will be defended to the end.

Below is an image of the frontline at Rostov, as I give the turn to Pelton.



Conclusion

Losses in the air has been extremely heavy this turn. With 664 Soviet planes lost for a mere 157 Axis ones, the figures themselves indicate an Axis air victory this turn. I do not look at it this way however, as most of my losses were either easily replaced aircraft or level bombers of little worth. The Axis planes lost have been largely German fighters.

Next turn the North Soviet Zone will be clear weather, and I expect massive German movement for this turn. The presence of no less than twelve German Fighter groups in the area seems to suggest this is where the Germans will host their main assault.