

Strategic overview

Turn 51: Strategic Considerations

Situational analysis

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-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	3055	558250	0
-	Port	73	0	0	0	0
-	Railyard	181	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2469	0	41104	5990388	0
-	Vehicle	114	0	151894	328013	0
-	Heavy Industry	195	0	0	4600050	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	3200000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	1788000	0
-	Resource Production	157	0	0	8457000	0
-	Armaments Production	288	0	294806	3879800	0

The main news from the German turn are as follows:

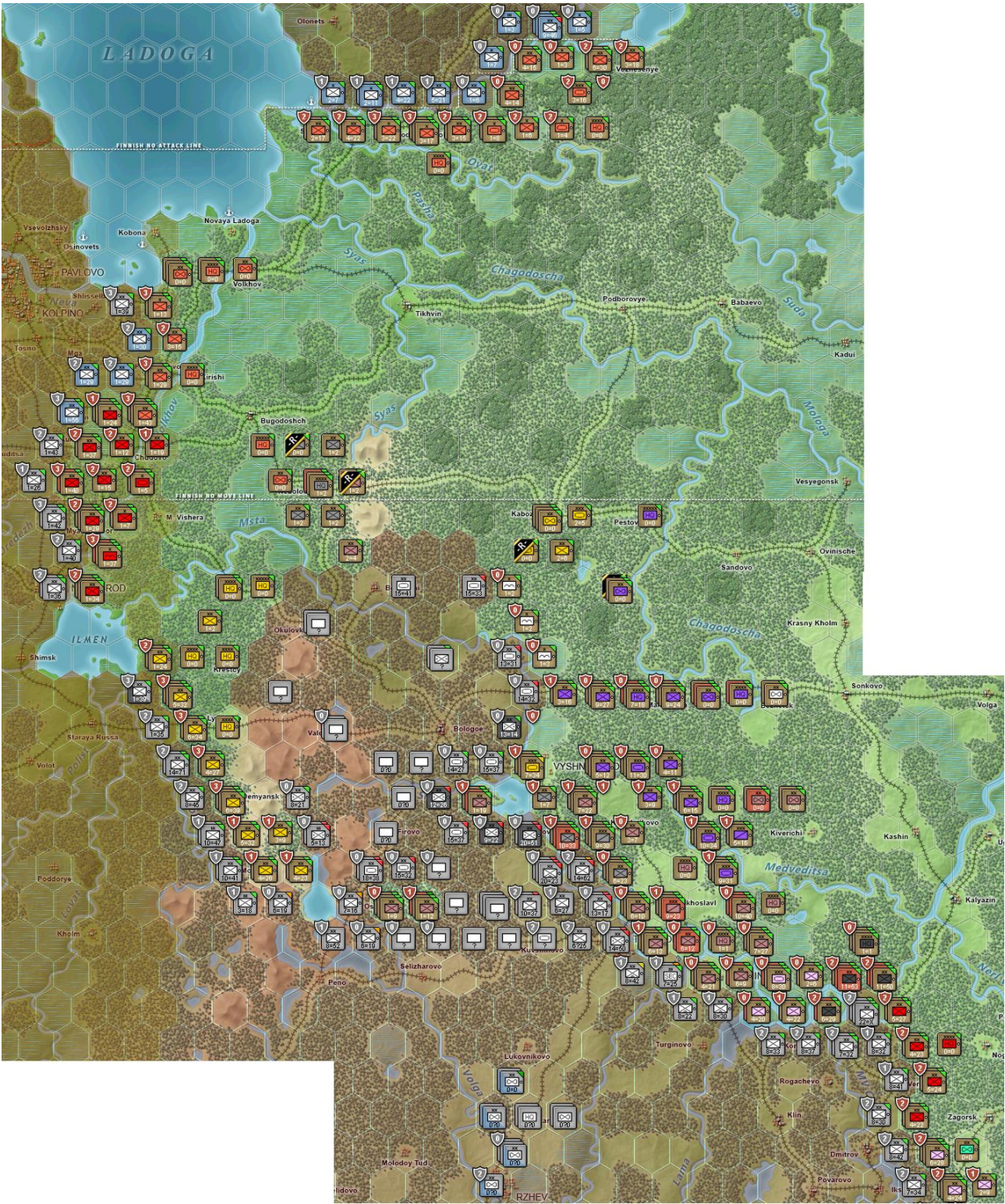
- The Germans have launched a major push in the terrain west of Vyshny Volochek. I already have eight divisions encircled and more are so far out of position that it is a matter of time. The northern rail carrying supplies to the Leningrad and Northwestern Front is now a mere eight hexes from the German Panzers.
- In the south, the Germans have focused on widening their bridgehead south of the Don river.

The movement of the German Panzers have shown (again) that I simply do not have the recipe for avoiding encirclements against the German Panzers operating in good weather. While I can keep pommelling them with IL-2's from the air, the losses they take from this are mainly guns and men. When the odd AFV is lost, it is usually a halftrack or armored car that is lost. I have not yet found a way to inflict serious losses on the German Panzerkampfwagen.

Once again, the report I received at the beginning of my turn did not show the German losses of the previous turn. Thus there is little point in reporting the losses.

Axis VP advantage is 4.1 to 1.

The North



Situational Assessment

The Germans have made a major breakthrough of my front and headed north in the area west of Vyshny Volochek. They have already encircled eight rifle divisions of the Kalinin Front and threaten the encirclement of the main fighting force of the Northwestern Front.

The main body of the German Panzerwaffe is present on this sector, and I count nine or ten Panzer Divisions and five Motorized divisions along with several divisions of unknown type. I have little doubt this is the main body of the German Panzerwaffe.

With the remaining rail line shipping supplies to both the Leningrad and the Northwestern Front a mere eight miles from the forward German Panzers, the threat of encirclement means that there is no longer any point in trying to hold the line along the Volkhov river and south of Lake Ilmen.

The weather forecast for next turn predicts mud returning to this sector of the front. That should put a dampener on the German desire to do attacks and also limit the flow of supplies to the Panzers furthest north.

Planning

I will evacuate the western positions of the Leningrad Front along the Volkhov River and also pull back those divisions of the Northwestern Front that can make it to safety. The southernmost divisions of the Northwestern Front do not have sufficient movement to make it to safety and I expect an encirclement to take place in the Demyansk area (ironic when one remembers the 90,000 Germans encircled here during the winter of 41/42).

The divisions I pull back this way will be placed in such a way as to create a three stack alternate defense against further German Panzer movement north. Behind those stacks, my tank corps will be ready to push forward to encircle or beat back those Germans that venture to far north. Alternatively, they may end up forming the last line of defense against a German breakthrough.

Southwest of Vyshny Volochek, I will pull my line back behind the Medveditsa River in order to free up the divisions of the Volkhov Front. The Volkhov Front itself will then go to the area north of Vyshny Volochek and prepare for strikes against the German panzers as they advance further north.

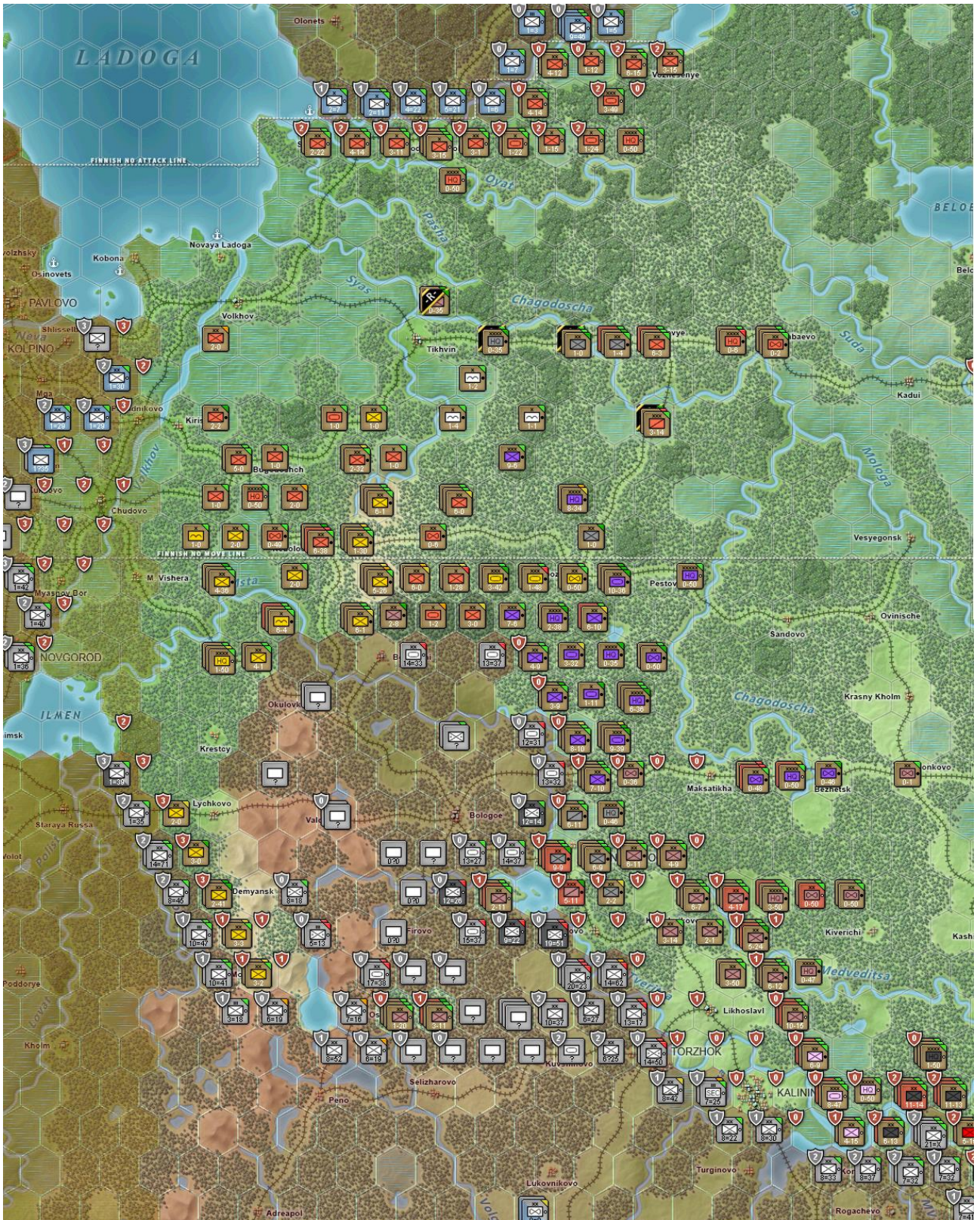
Execution

I have been regrouping my divisions as best I can this turn, and resupplying the encircled divisions a little by air as well.

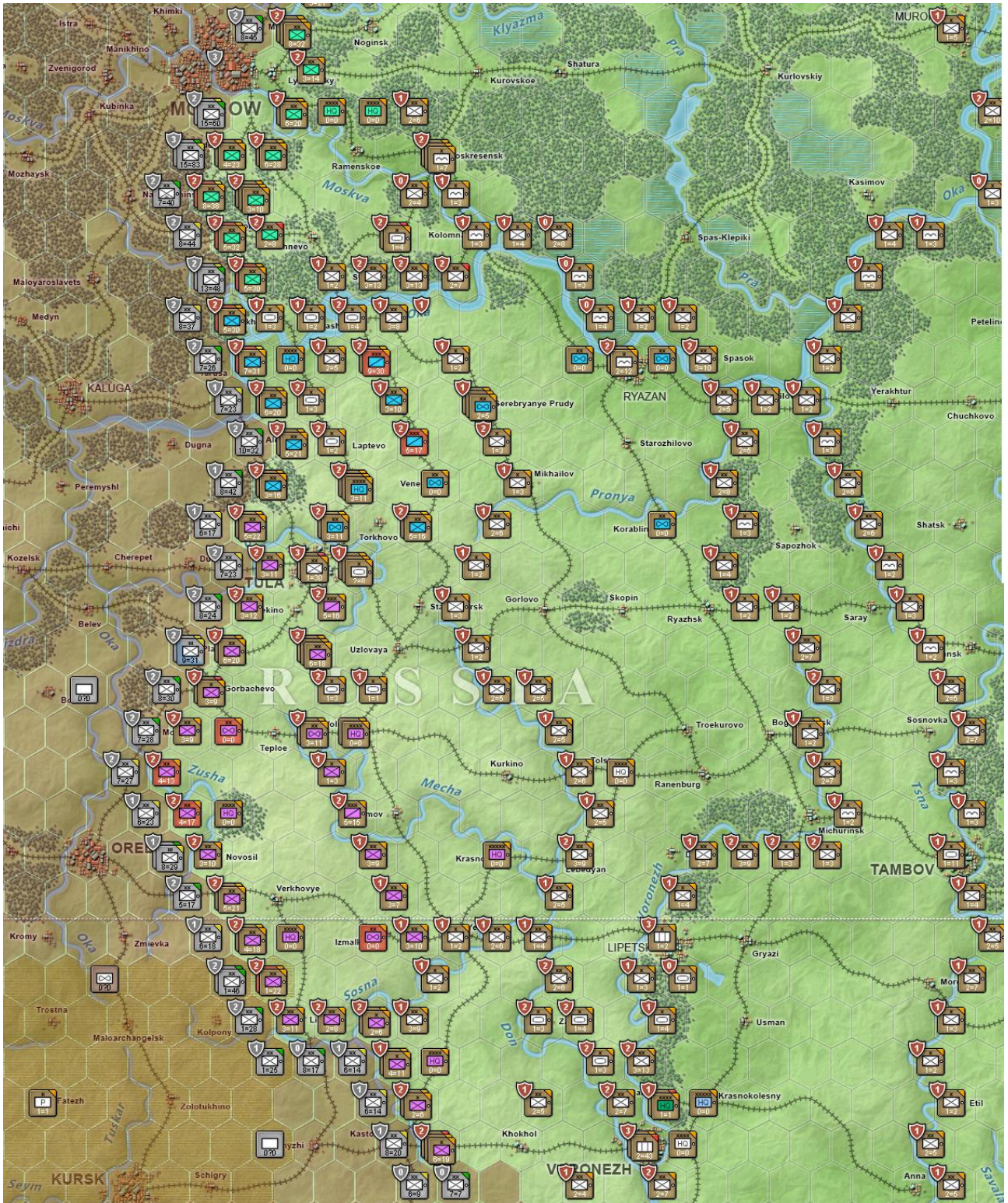
In the air, a series of ground bombings has been conducted against the German panzers, but as usual, few Panzer casualties have been inflicted.

I expect the upcoming turn will be used for regrouping, if the weather prediction is correct, and the weather will become mud.

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



The Center



Situation Assessment

The center is still very uneventful, the only interesting developments that may affect it being the German infantry attacks at the northern end of the Southern part of the front.

As the German Panzerwaffe is now more or less fully committed either north or south of this sector, there is little chance I will face much other than infantry divisions on this sector.

Planning

With the arrival of the Voronezh Front and the ability to form Rifle Corps, I can now start building the first offensive formations of the Red Army. My strategic plan is to form those formations around the Volkhov Front and the Voronezh Front.

This means that I can now start building some Rifle Corps for the Voronezh Front and also move some of my Cavalry Corps southwards for actions to be undertaken by the Voronezh Front, during future turns. This will require moving the most rearwards STAVKA troops forward to the defensive positions I have in front of them, as the new Voronezh Front armies will go onto the offensive.

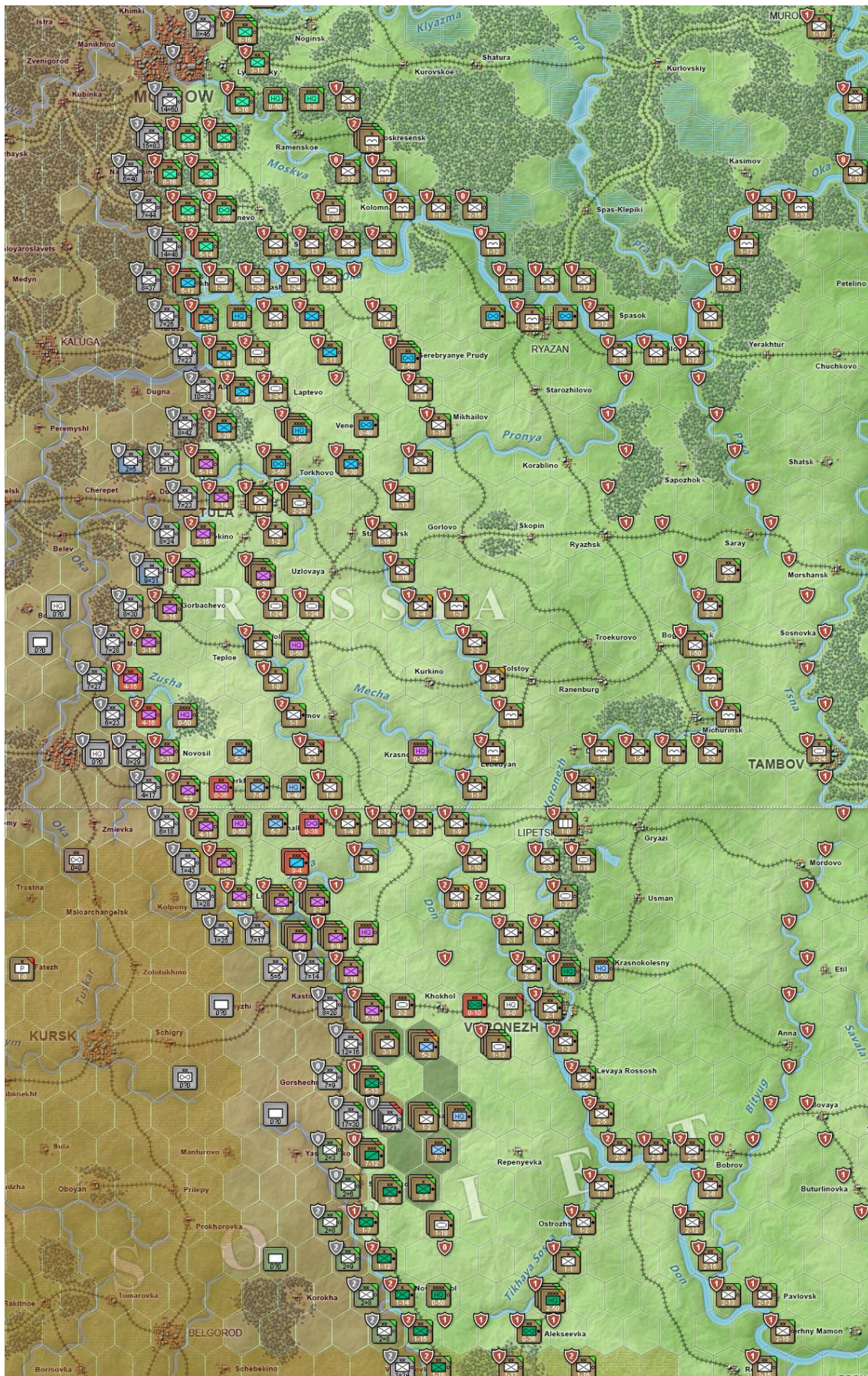
I will do just a few attacks this turn, but start forming the units and moving them into position for future attacks. However, I will start building a series of support units for future assignment.

Execution

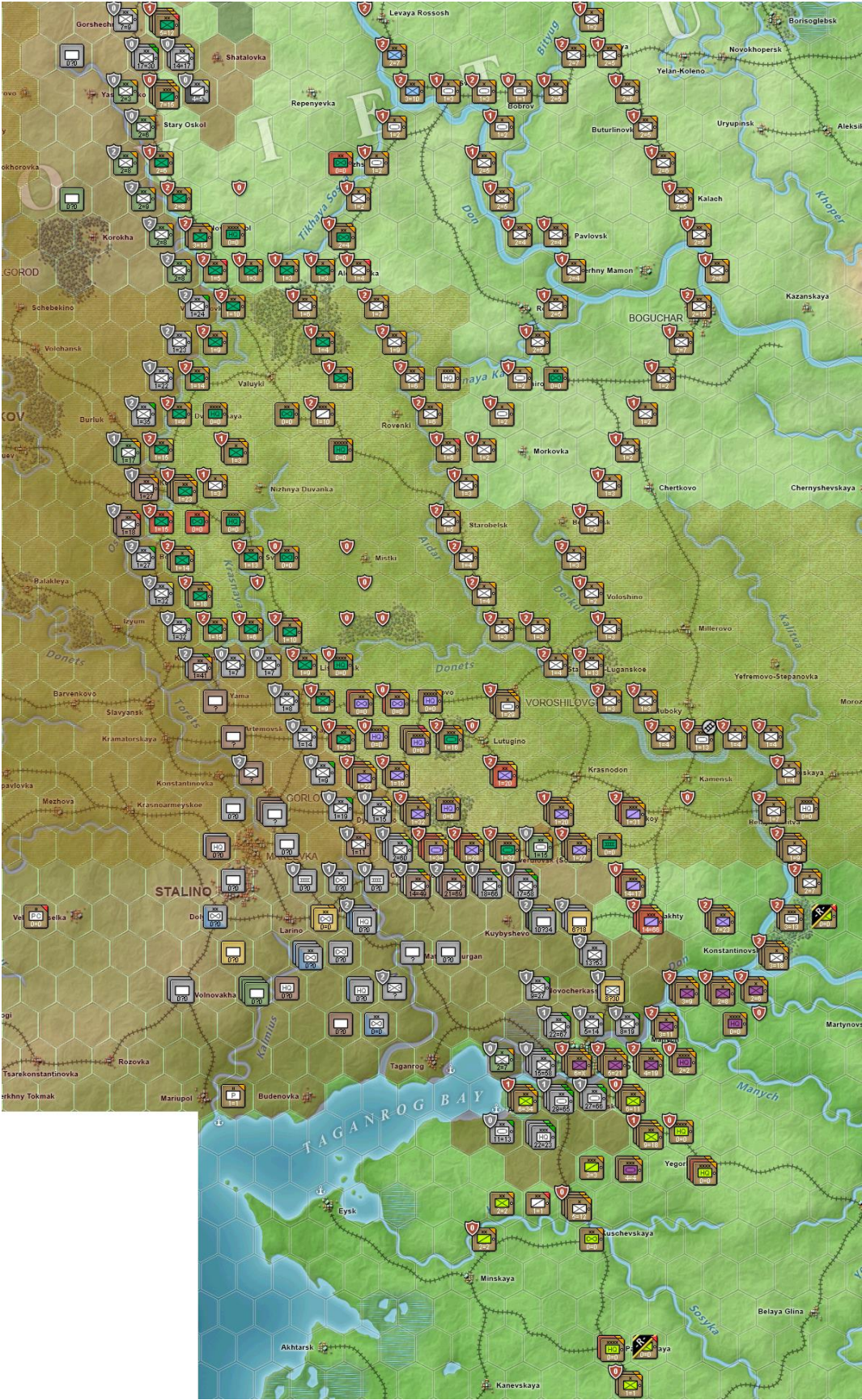
I have begun forming the Rifle Corps for the Voronezh Front and pushed several divisions forward towards the front.

I have also done a few attacks on exposed German infantry divisions. I am wondering if I have shown my hand too soon, as the promised mud next turn will give the Germans the chance to set up, fortify and bring forward reserves for this sector of the front. However, if they decide to do so, this will diminish pressure on other parts of the frontline, and then this attack will already be a success of sorts.

Below is an image of the center as I give the turn to Pelton.



The South



Situational Assessment

The Germans have continued to pour their Panzers across the Don River and they now have six Panzer divisions and one Motorized division south of the river. North of the river, the Axis powers have established a strong line of infantry divisions guarding the flank of the German attack.

I expect the next attack of the Germans will be on the encircled divisions at the Don River estuary, followed by the encirclement of Rostov and later on the capture of the city.

At Crimea, nothing has happened.

Planning

South of Rostov, I will gather whatever strength I can and attack that lone German Panzer division holding the westernmost part of the German line south of the Don River. I hope to be able to gather substantial amounts of troops, including several tank corps. If I can succeed in this attack, the German division will be forced to withdraw back over the river and the encircled Soviet divisions will be relieved.

Further east, I will pull strong units back close to the German Panzer line in order to force the Germans to spend significant amounts of MP's to push them back once again. As the weather prediction for next turn is "Clear" in this sector, I will need to place divisions as much effective construction points after modifications for movement. That might place the divisions in level one fortifications come the German turn.

North of the Don River, I will move to retake the hexes in front of the German lines, and do whatever ground bombing damage that I can. I do not expect to find any openings for ground based attacks in this sector.

At Crimea, I am moving cavalry and mountain troops east to Kerch and beyond. It seems I have effectively won the battle for Crimea and the Axis are content to sit in their fortifications holding the crossings against my formations.

Execution

At Rostov, I began my turn with maneuvering my divisions into place for restricting the retreat options for the German 14th Panzer division should I win the battle I was planning. I then moved my divisions into place for the attack, did two preliminary ground bombing attacks and launched the main assault. That attack gave the following result:

Axis Forces Defending: XIV Panzer Corps 14th Panzer Division (115) 861st Howitzer Battalion (1) V Fliegerkorps 4 Bf 109E-3 6 Bf 109E-4B 12 Bf 110E-2 CV: 116->176.3 Fort: 0.06->0.00 Comm HQ: XIV Panzer Corps GL Hans Hube	1 of 3 > 121,104 - Clear - Clear Turn:51 1942-06-04 Forces Engaged DEF: men 14055, art 113, afv 158 ATK: men 113200, art 1559, afv 350 DAM: men 1707, art 9, afv 14 DAM: men 693, art 4, afv 14 LOST: men 303, art 39, afv 57 LOST: men 583, art 4, afv 22 DEF: ftr 25, bmr 91, utl 0 ATK: ftr 181, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 1, bmr 21, utl 0 LOST: ftr 6, bmr 0, utl 0 14th Panzer Division RETREATED Show Details Odds 2.60 : 1 Exit	Soviet Forces Attacking: 46th Army -30% 11th Tank Corps (13) 141st Sep. Tank Bn (1) 142nd Sep. Tank Bn (0) 143rd Sep. Tank Bn (1) 41st Army 14th Cavalry Corps (31) 65th Rifle Division (44) CV: 264->460.1 Eng Val: 8 Comm HQ: 41st Army GM Pavel Korzun
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For obvious reasons, I consider killing of 57 German AFV a victory in itself. 23 of those kills were Pz IIIG's, 9 were IIIL's and 5 were IVF's. Most were lost due to rereat attrition. The only bad news are that the Panzer division did not retreat north of the river but instead to the spare hex southeast of Rostov.

North of the river, I have "scouted" the German defenses and, as expected, they have proven far to strong for any attacks on my part.

The situation around Rostov looks like this, as I give the turn to Pelton.



Conclusion

The weather forecast for next turn is mud everywhere but around Rostov. I expect this will put a dampener on the action in the north, while heavy fighting will continue around Rostov.

The German armored formations have received reinforcements this turn, as can be seen by the increase of German AFV OoB of 150 even after all combat has been conducted.

All things being equal, this has been a bad turn for me. In the north, I have 15 Rifle divisions either encircled or about to become encircled and then lost over the next few turns. However, I simply can not figure out a way to prevent encirclements when faced with a force of ten Panzer divisions and five Motorized divisions backed by plenty of infantry divisions. I guess that ability is what defines the good soviet player. There is something to aspire to in this!