

Turn 9, Strategic Considerations

____ SPECIAL ____					
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	2758	71465 0
-	Port	121	0	0	0 0
-	Railyard	285	0	0	0 0
-	Manpower	3149	3	88244	1332135 0
-	Vehicle	140	0	215165	251500 0
-	Heavy Industry	232	0	0	883500 0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	512000 0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	286080 0
-	Resource Production	192	0	0	1556000 0
-	Armaments Production	366	2	676663	695750 0

The Germans have broken clean through my front east of Mogilev. Fortunately, they have not been able to do any massive encirclements, and I still have a corridor to let my Western Front divisions escape encirclement next turn.

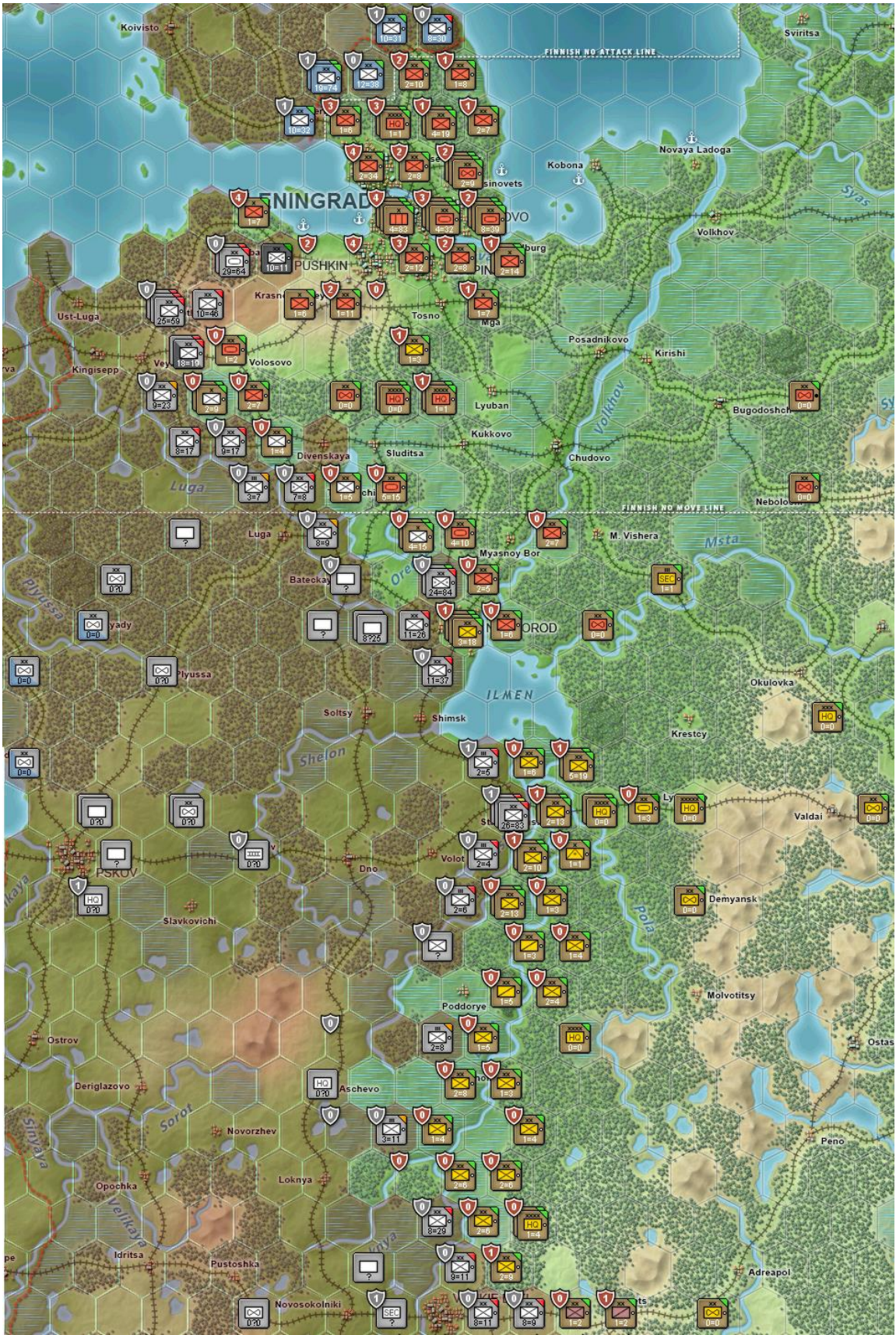
In the air, my Yak-1 production is struggling to replace the losses over the previous turns, but I do have a decent number of LaGG-3's in the pools, when remembering that production numbers for that plane is 66 pr turn. All told, my fighter production is now greater than 200 pr turn.

I have been spending a lot of time assessing the German Panzer movement potentiel for the coming turn, based on MP and hex distances to the nearest rail head. A large part of my tactics have been based on how to affect such numbers, in turn reducing the potential for German territorial gain. I have suddently realized that it would be a simple task to add the fuel formula from the manual into my excel spreadsheet, so that I may have an even better understanding of the German movement potential.

I have done this, and I will be testing the formula ove rthe coming turns, by giving my estimates on how many MP's I think the panzers will have next turn. Of course the forumla may be wrong, so if you are as big a nerd as I, you are more than welcme to look them over to see if you can spot any mistakes.

Axis VP's are 173, which would mean a minor Axis win should the game end here.

The North



Situational Assessment

The struggle for the Leningrad approaches is almost over. The Germans have pushed the local mobile forces through my lines near Oranienbaum, and their forward units are now only three hexes from Leningrad. I notice that the foremost of the German Motorized divisions is expected to have a massive 40+ MP next turn. The German move will cost me three infantry units that are either already encircled or else hopelessly outmaneuvered.

I am actually still somewhat relieved to see the German Panzers at Oranienbaum. This will give me more time to look at the Volkhov river defense. I believe the Leningrad defense will hold for a while. Of course that is always a gamble much dependant on the leadership rolls, so I will look over the Leningrad leadership once more.

Planning

In Leningrad, I will assign Malinovsky to the second of the two armies assigned to the city defense (the 23rd Army). I will also assign Konev to the Front command, hoping to up my command enough to be less dependant on lucky leadership rolls in the defense of the city.

At Leningrad it is about time to group my units for the close up defense of the city. While doing this, I will try to maneuver the 28th Army in such a way that its withdrawal route to the Volkhov is kept clear.

South of Lake Ilmen, I am going to attack! Southwest of Poddorye, a single German infantry regiment is ripe for encirclement. As there is virtually nothing behind this regiment (confirmed by recon), I can encircle it and threaten to move cavalry into the rear of the German positions south of Leningrad. If the Germans fail in their response to this, I might even be able to reach their supply rail lines in a turn or two.

To support the main encirclement attack, I will appoint Bobkin commander of the 11th Army that is doing the attacks. That will give me an initiative of seven on the army level, which will both replace a poor commander and should make it possible for me to get some extra movement on subsequent turns.

Finally, I will make a minor attack on the infantry regiment east of Volot, as it would make it more difficult for the Germans to pull back their infantry from Lake Ilmen, if I were situated in that hex.

Execution

The armies around Leningrad are by now the best led forces in the entire Red Army. With Vasilevsky, Malinovsky and Zakharov assigned to the local armies, the Front itself is led by Konev. I do hope that is enough to ensure a properly led defense of the city. To support the leadership, I have assigned several of my heaviest artillery support units to the Leningrad Front. They will in turn be distributed to the subordinate units to provide some real firepower for the defense.

South of Leningrad, I have repositioned my units to delay the progress of the Germans, but I fear they will be at the very gates of Leningrad come next turn.

The initial supportive attack against the lone German regiment south of Lake Ilmen was a complete disaster. Even if I had a numerical superiority of 10:1, the Germans managed to kill off more than 2000 attacking troops, for virtually no losses of their own:

1 of 3 > 83,30 - Clear - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14			
Axis Forces Defending (C):		Forces Engaged	
X Corps 2/126th Infantry Division (37) 1818th Gun Battalion (0) 846th Howitzer Battalion (1)		DEF: men 6323, art 82, afv 0 DAM: men 0, art 4, afv 0 LOST: men 64, art 1, afv 0 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	ATK: men 67755, art 898, afv 48 DAM: men 186, art 5, afv 1 LOST: men 2285, art 24, afv 5 ATK: ftr 6, bmr 1, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0
		Defending Forces HELD	
CV: 38->58.5 Fort: 0.52->0.00 Comm HQ: X Corps G Christian Hansen		Show Details Odds 1.56 : 1	Exit
		Soviet Forces Attacking:	
		27th Army -10% 112th Rifle Division (9) 376th Howitzer Regiment (0) 613th Crps Art Rgt (1) 614th Crps Art Rgt (0) 8th Army 242nd Rifle Division (7) 8th Moscow PM Rifle Division (7)	
		CV: 36->91.3 Eng Val: 2 Comm HQ: 8th Army GM Ivan Galanin	

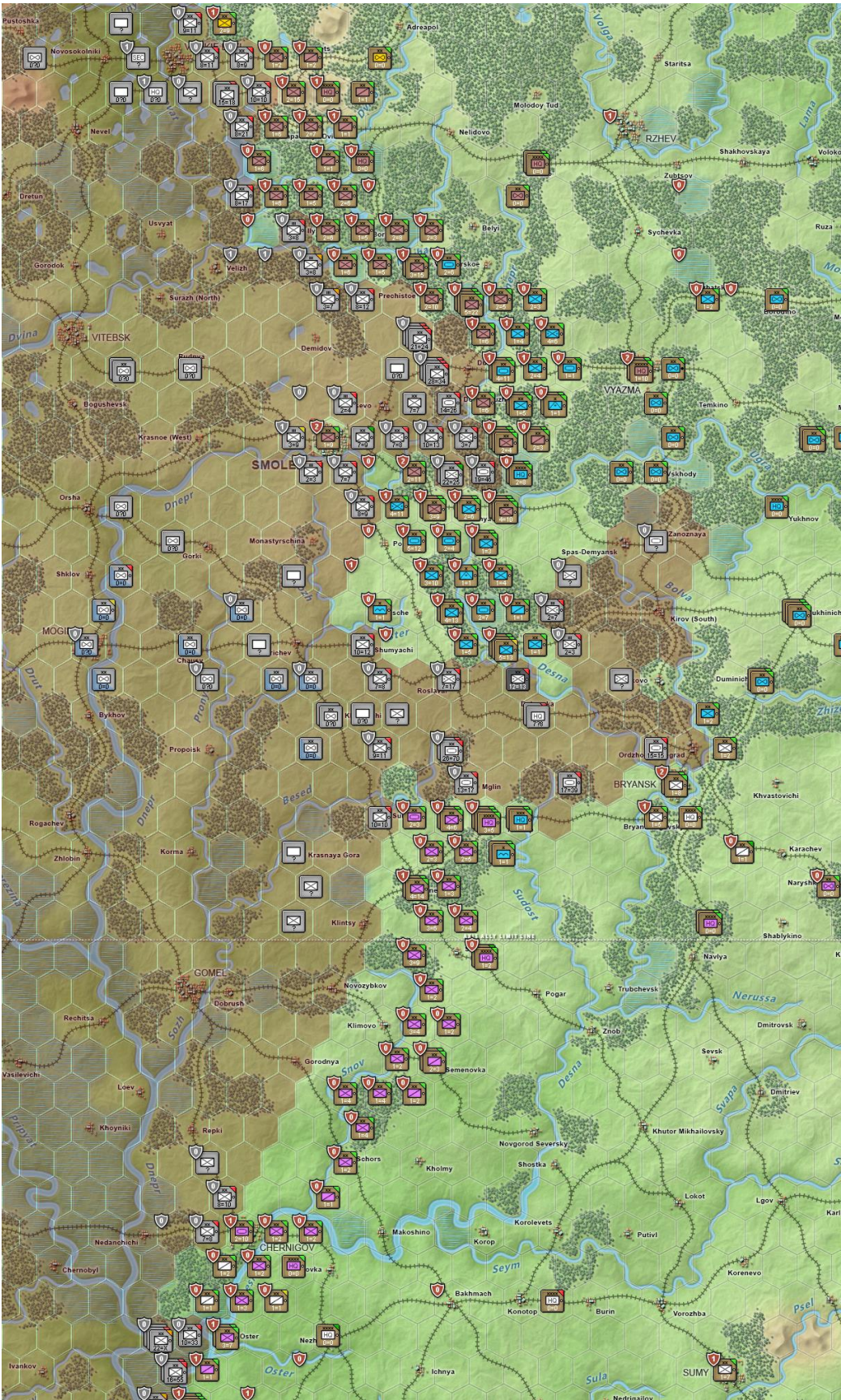
An extra hasty attack was pretty much all I could manage to throw together at this point, the result being another 450 dead Soviets for not a single German dead. Not the perfect start to my first planned offensive (as opposed to the continuous counterattacks I do most of the time).

Failing in the support mission, I nonetheless went on with the main mission. As the real prize of the attack is potentially severing the flow of supplies to the entire Army Group North, I have not focused on establishing a closed ring around the encircled infantry regiment, but rather on bettering my own positions in case I get the chance to move forward again. I guess the result of it all will be the Germans rushing in a few divisions to smash my attack, but that alone may take a little of the heat from Leningrad.

Below is an Image of the situation south of Leningrad, as I give the turn to Hermann.



The Center



Situation Assessment

The Germans have broken through my lines at the junction between the Western and the Bryansk Fronts. They have moved east before swinging north, and are close to making contact with those Panzers attacking southeast from Smolensk. Thankfully, I still have a three hex wide corridor to escape in.

The German Panzers are now getting further away from the supply sources. The Germans at the base of the attack wedge should have an expected MP in the vicinity of 31MP next turn, while those furthest in should come out with around 26MP.

Further north, the Rifle division in Smolensk is now encircled.

Planning

First of all, I will fly in some supplies for the Smolensk Garrison.

Second, I will move several units into the German attack wedge, reclaiming as much terrain as I can. This will partly be to stem the flow of supplies for the Germans, and partly to make it more difficult for them to move their units forward come next turn.

Next, I will bomb the German Panzers with every tactical bomber I have in sight of the attack wedge. First of course, I need to make sure I have as high a detection value on the Germans as possible, which means units sitting next to them

Finally, I will try to escape with as much of the Western Front as possible.

Execution

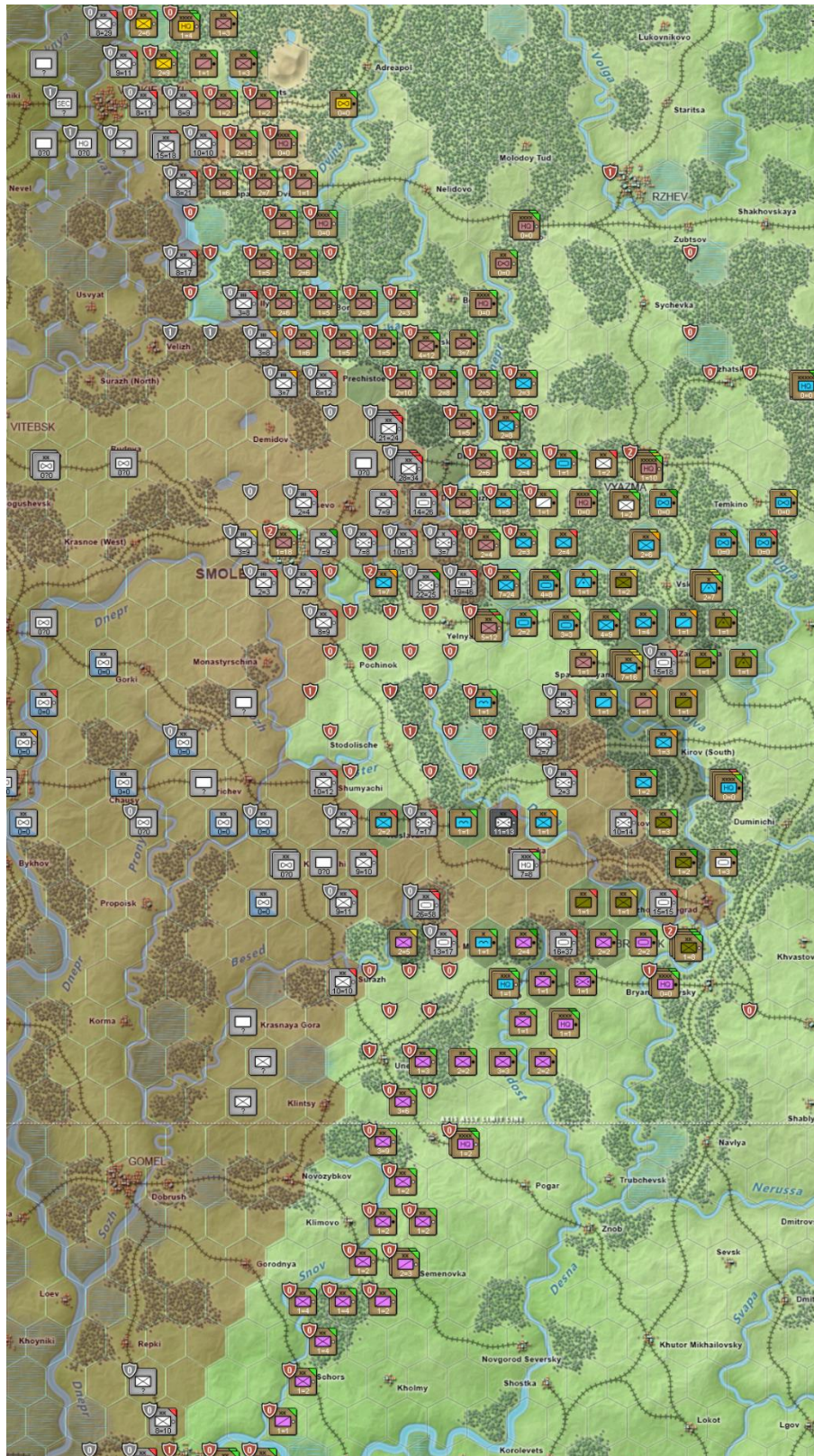
The Smolensk defenders were very happy about the supplies I flew in (even if it did cost me 5 SB-2's). The defensive CV changes from 1=9 to 1=18. Thank you to Stelteck for enlightening me about the opportunity to improve defenses by dropping supplies – even when they are not needed.

At the Panzer breakthrough east of Smolensk, I have moved quite a few divisions into the German wedge and encircled the northernmost Panzer division. I have then moved my Western Front units as best I could to signal a threat to that Panzer divisions existence. The supply lines for the Germans furthest into the wedge is horribly long by now, and I expect them to get little off anything come next turn.

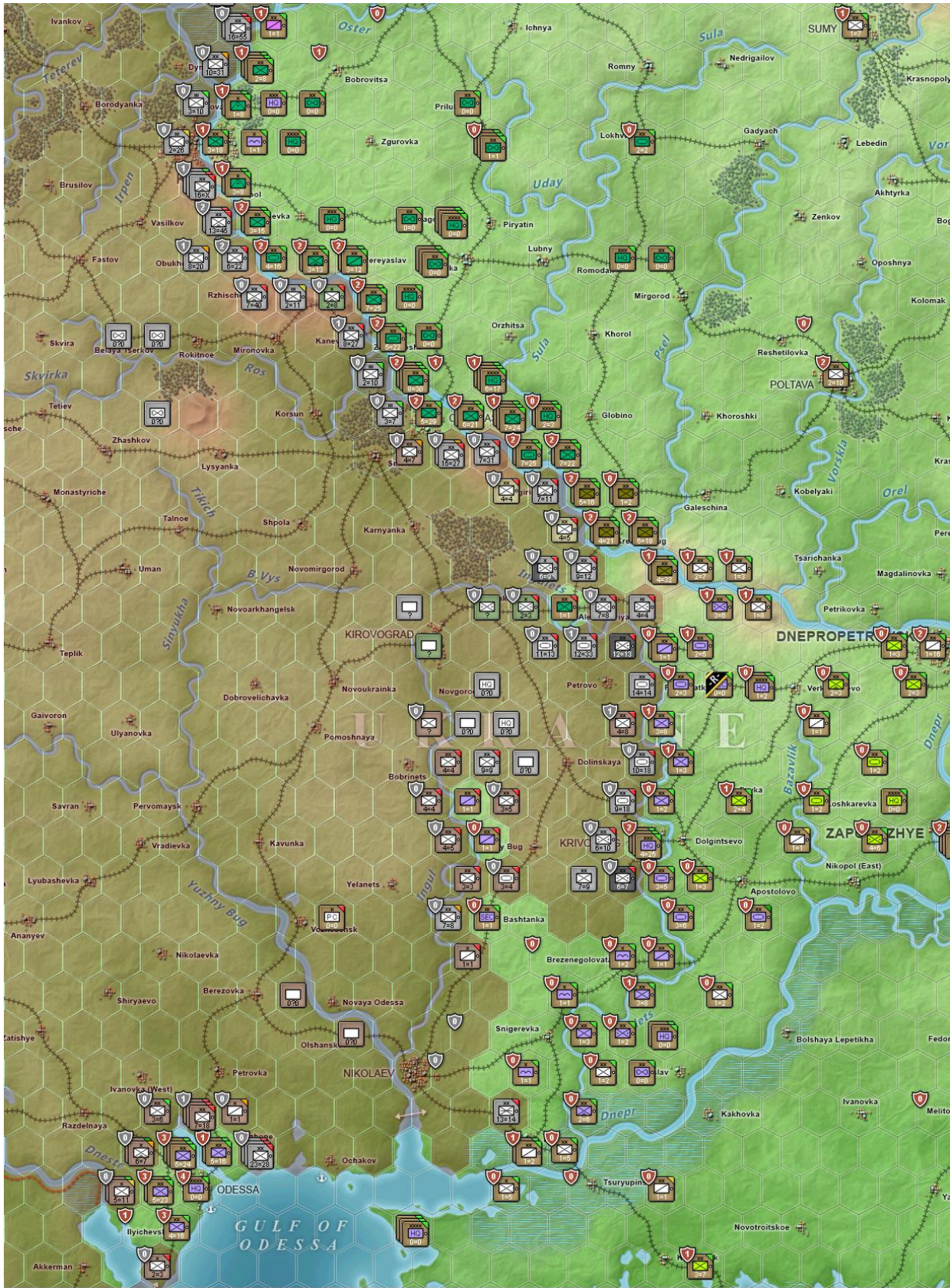
I am pretty sure that the Germans will break through to relieve it come next turn, but I hope that the experience will have put some caution into future German advances. I also hope the German focus will be solely on rescuing that division and not on encircling any of my divisions. We shall see.

In the air, both sides have done a series of attacks, the Germans being very focused on interdiction attacks, making my Western front very hard to coordinate correctly. I have also tried a few night bombings of German airfields, with mixed results. In total, 42 German aircraft have been downed for the loss of 109 Soviet ones.

Below is an image of the central front, as I give the turn to Hermann:



The South



Situational Assessment

In the north, the German infantry divisions are still trying to force their way across the Dnepr. So far without success. By now it seems more than likely that they will be able to force a crossing both north and south of Kiev come next turn.

Further south, the mopping up operations behind the German Panzers are coming to an end. While I still have a few units encircled here, their maneuverability is all but non-existent, and they will surely die next turn.

The German Panzers are far from their supply lines, and I expect them to have somewhere below 30MP next turn.

At Odessa, the Rumanians have arrived in force and brought three German infantry divisions with them. The northeastern part of the defenses have survived four ground attacks this turn. If things continue like this, I shall be able to create my first Guards divisions from the defenders of Odessa. Unfortunately, my defensive positions have suffered from the battles, and my Fortification modifier in the relevant hex is now only one.

Planning

At the Dnepr, I will try to hold my defensive line for one more turn. At Kiev I will accept the Germans are going to come across the river to the north of the city, and I will only try to delay them here. To the south, I will put up a slightly stronger defence, although at the possible cost of sacrificing east Kiev in the process. It matters little, as I will be forced to give it up next turn anyway.

West of Dnepropetrovsk I will extend my line along the Dnepr, so that every hex down towards Zaporozhye is defended somehow, while I leave only picket units too the west of the river. I will try to maneuver in such a way that the Caucasus MD units will become the southernmost, while the Southern Front stand to their north. I will make no real attempt to hold the Dnepr south of Zaporozhye.

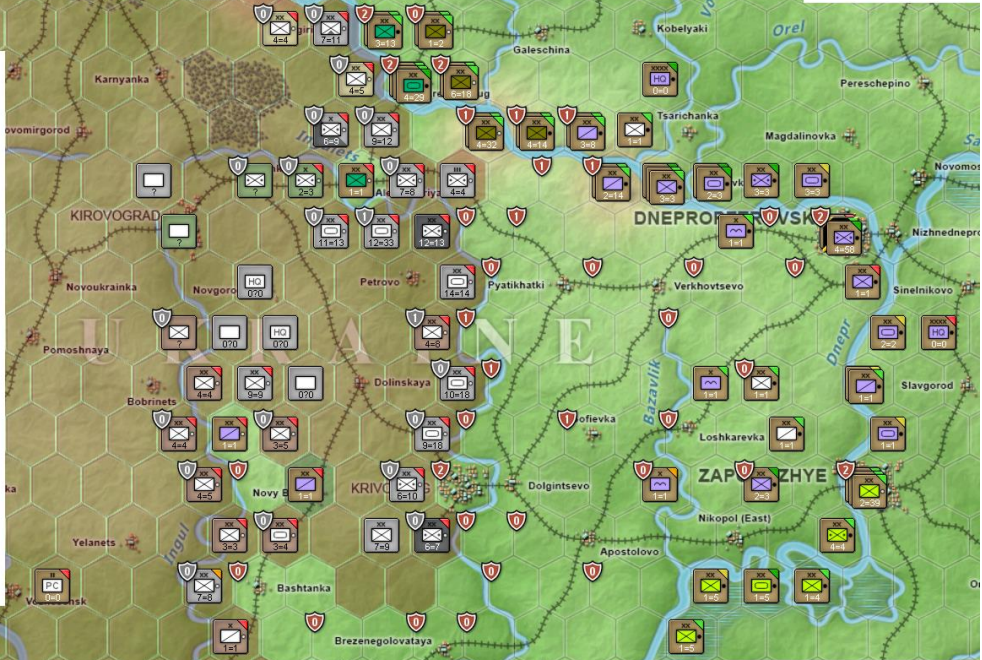
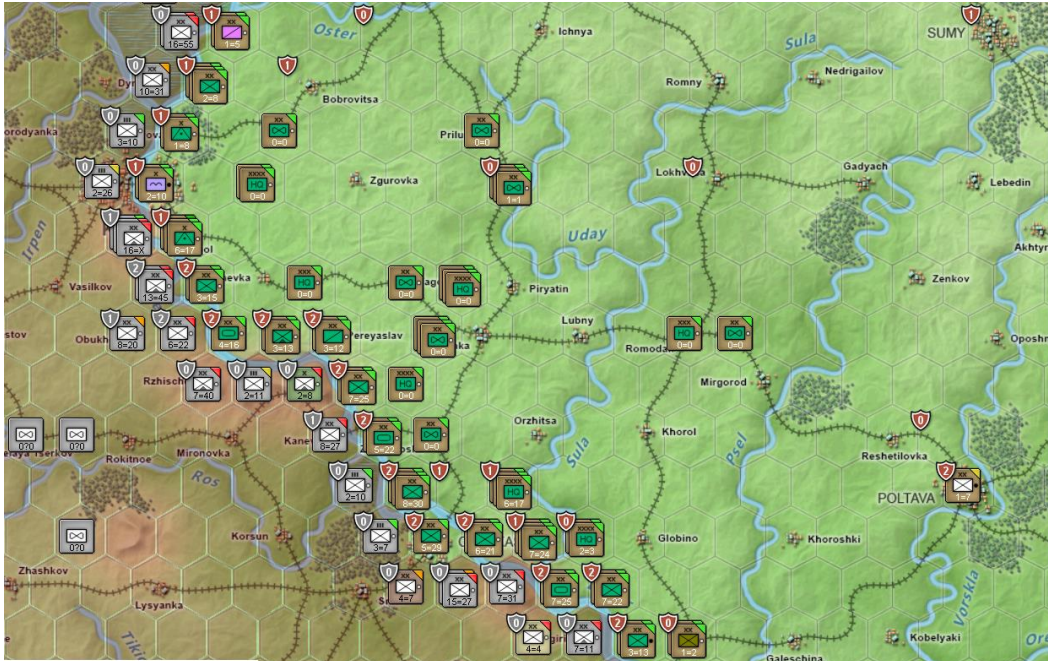
At Odessa, I will leave the northeastern most part of the fortress, but also attacking the lone Rumanian regiment to the southwest.

Execution

A lot of maneuvering for little visible result is what best describes this turn for my part. I am still in position along the Dnepr, and I expect the Germans to have too few MP to breach the weaker southern defenses at Dnepropetrovsk next turn. After that, it is my plan to pull back, starting in the west and continuously shortening my front.

At Odessa, I have given up the northeastern part of the fortress, and beaten off one more Rumanian regiment.

Below an image of the south, as I give the turn to Hermann:



Conclusion

The major news this turn, has been the German attack east of Mogilev. I will be very interested to see what happens next.

Evacuation wise I have evacuated Dnepropetrovsk this turn, and if the Germans do not push forward to Zaporozhye, I will evacuate that town next turn.