

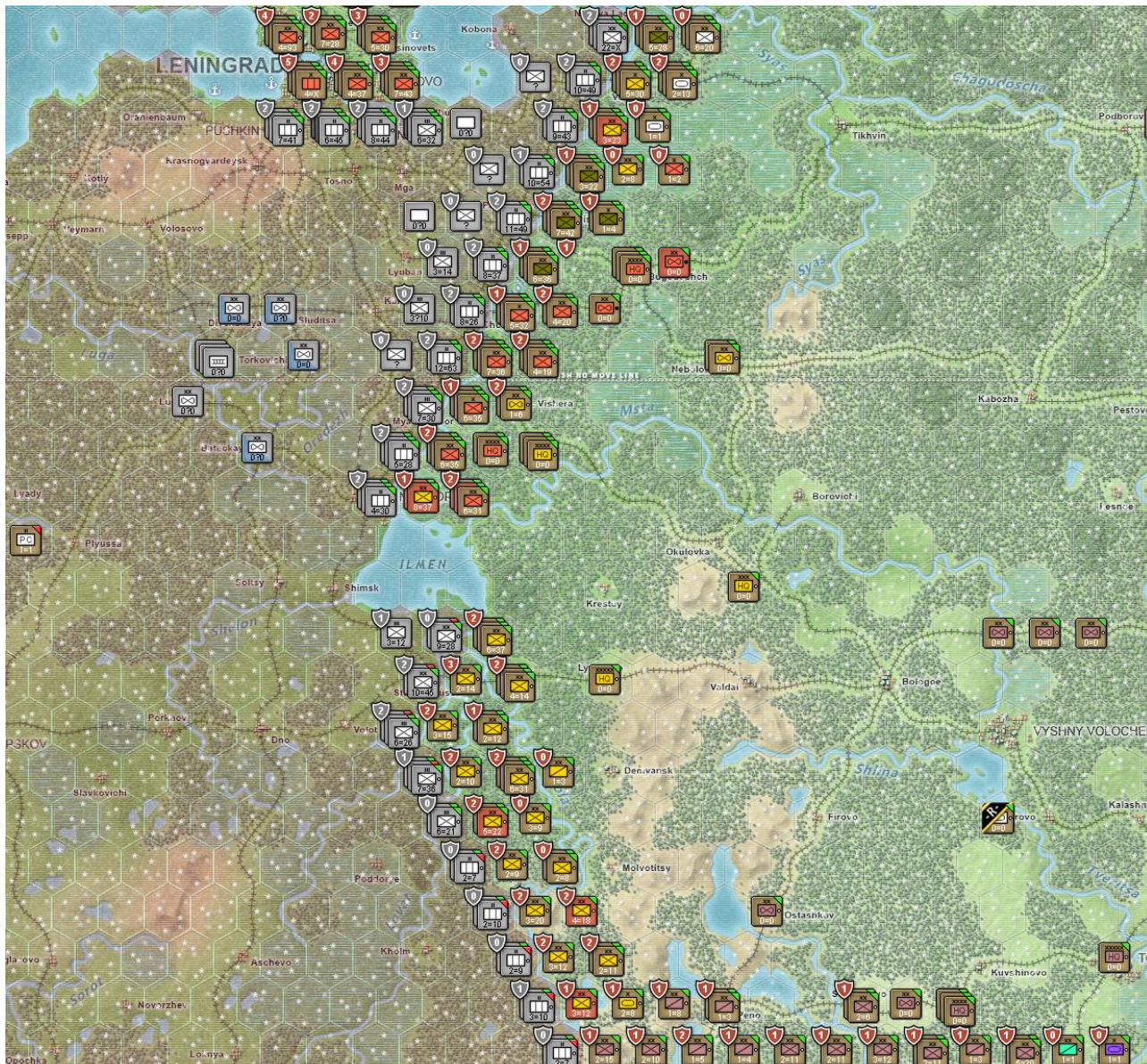
Turn 24, Strategic Considerations

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	2388	189458	0
-	Port	101	0	0	0	0
-	Railyard	257	0	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2861	1	120855	3531166	0
-	Vehicle	140	0	220937	294650	0
-	Heavy Industry	232	0	0	2343500	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	1472000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	822480	0
-	Resource Production	182	0	0	4296000	0
-	Armaments Production	366	0	348540	1829250	0

The German Panzers are being withdrawn from their most exposed positions except in the deep south, where they have continued to attack throughout the turn. The German attacks are ending, and the scene is changing. Next turn, the blizzard will arrive!

Axis VP stand at 197.

The North



Situational assessment

In the north, the front is completely static. The Germans are continuing to construct Fortified Regions, and by now some of the sector south of Lake Ilmen has been built up. The German front is steadily fortifying and if I am going to break it, I have to do so before it gets too strong.

In the air, it seems the Luftwaffe has either run out of Bf109E-3's or else turned reinforcements off for their fighters in the north. The result has been that there are only 30 functional single seat fighters available to protect the German bombers, which include some 96 Ju87's. A tempting target, even if there are plenty of Luftwaffe AA regiments protecting the Luftwaffe airfields.

Planning

My main focus of this turn will be to inflict losses on the Luftwaffe before launching my main attack next turn. I plan to bomb both Luftwaffe bases with aircraft on them and also to conduct steady attacks on the

German infantry north of Lake Ilmen. To help in this, I can use the airbase filled with Yak-1's I set up at the Northwestern Front last turn.

South of Lake Ilmen, I will conduct a few attacks, trying to break some of the German Fortified zones here. If that causes the Germans to consider this a likely area for a major Soviet offensive, then that is just fine by me.

Execution

I began my air attacks bby bombingthe local German infantry with my Northwestern Front airforces, as I wanted to save the IL-2's for the following airfield attacks, and I also wanted to disrupt as much of the German fighter effort in the upcoming airfield battles. At the end of those attacks, the Germans had lost four single seat fighters to 22 Soviets ones (mainly MiG-3's). However, counting damaged aircraft, the German fighter forces in the area were by now down to 14 operational Bf109E-3's.

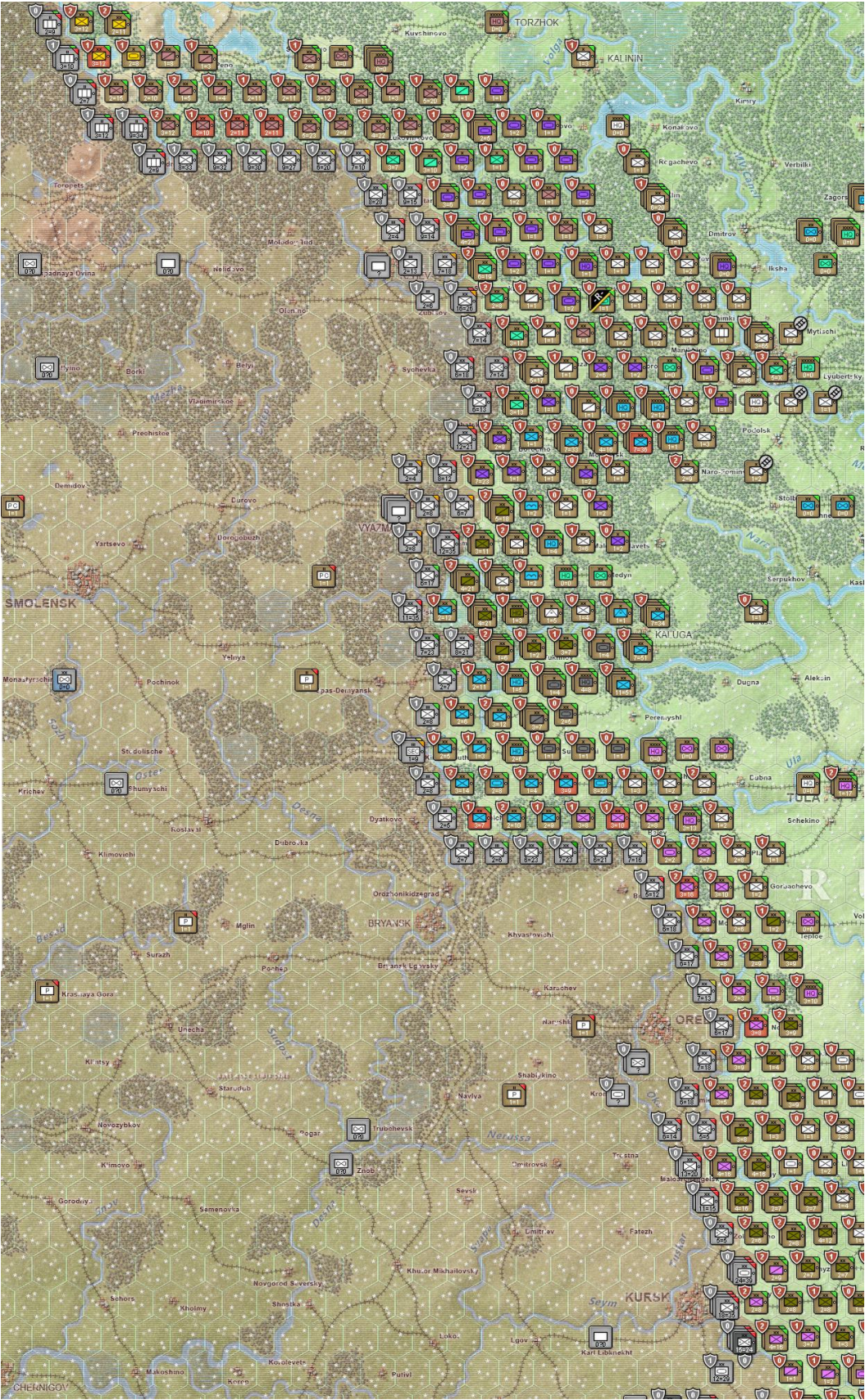
I then proceeded with a full scale IL-2 attack against the southernmost airfield (I was not sure, if those aircraft had just arrived). The first attack I bungled by clicking Ctrl instead of Shift, not allowing me to actually select the forces involved, resulting in the loss of five Soviet aircraft. The second attack can be seen below:

Axis Forces Defending:		< 2 of 2 80.24 - Light Woods(Bateckaya) - Snow Turn:24 1941-11-27 Forces Engaged		Soviet Forces Attacking:
4 : 4	Ju 87D-1	DEF: men 0, art 0, afv 0	ATK: men 0, art 0, afv 0	Leningrad Air Command
20 : 35	Ju 87D-1	DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0	DAM: men 0, art 0, afv 0	2 Yak-1
4 : 9	Ju 87B	LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0	LOST: men 0, art 0, afv 0	47 LaGG-3
9 : 18	Ju 87B	DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	ATK: ftr 49, bmr 132, utl 0	106 IL-2
4 : 4	Bf 109E-7/U1	LOST: ftr 0, bmr 8, utl 0	LOST: ftr 2, bmr 18, utl 0	26 Pe-2
6 : 11	Ju 87D-1	airfield was BOMBED		
		Show Details	Exit	

I then follwed with attacks on the northern airfield. At the end of those attacks, the aircraft losses were as follows: 34 IL-2's, 27 Pe-2's, 17 MiG-3's, 5 LaGG-3's and 6 Yak-1's for 7 Bf109E-3's, 1 Bf109F-4, 6 Ju87B's, 5 JU87D-1's and 5 Ju88 A's.

The attacks south of Lake Ilmen were successful, and I have left my units stacked, so it appear I am getting ready for a full scale attack in this area.

The Center



Situational assessment

In the center, the German Panzers are being pulled off the front and back towards their winter bases. The German lines are poorly fortified, and the section of the front stretching north from Bryansk (where I am going to attack), is looking very weak indeed. With the coming of the blizzard, I estimate a halving of the German defensive CV's in the area.

The Luftwaffe seems to be absent still, giving me some good opportunities for continued bombing attacks against the German infantry at the front.

I cannot help but to be amazed at the strength of some of the units set to attack. One Tank division has a CV of eight, containing some 203 T-34's, 59 KV-1's and 54 OT-130's. I do not think that I have ever fielded a unit that strong before December of 1941 in any game I have played as the Soviets.

Planning

On the ground, I plan to do a few attacks this turn. The attacks will be spread out along the front, and the main purpose of them is to convince the Germans that the coming attack will not be a concentrated breakthrough effort, but rather a general attack all over the line.

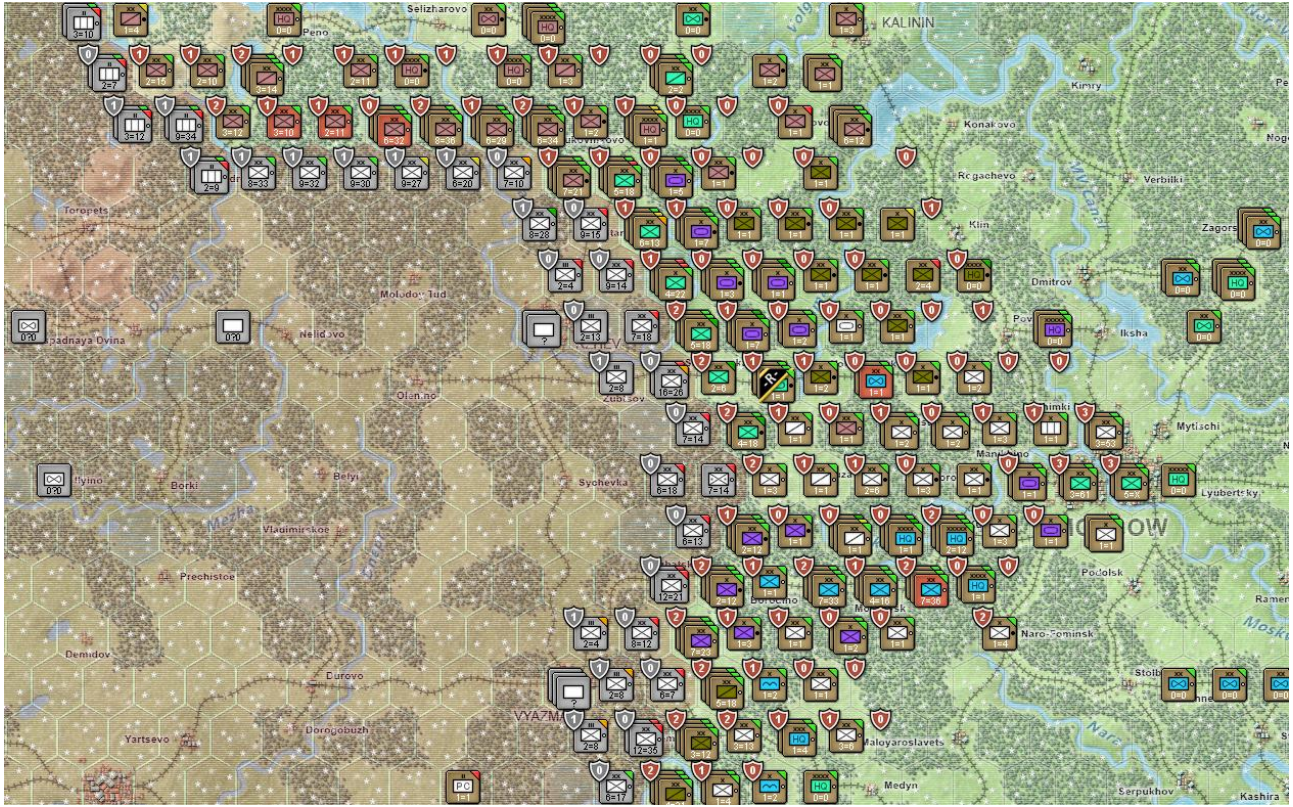
As part of the attack, I will have to remember to attack one of the breakthrough hexes this turn, as its fortification level is now 0+90%. I do not wish to risk a strengthening of the German lines before next turn. East of Kursk, I will begin stacking some of my units in order to make it appear I am going to attack in this area next turn.

In the air, I will continue to bomb everything that I can, not giving away the position of my coming attack in the process.

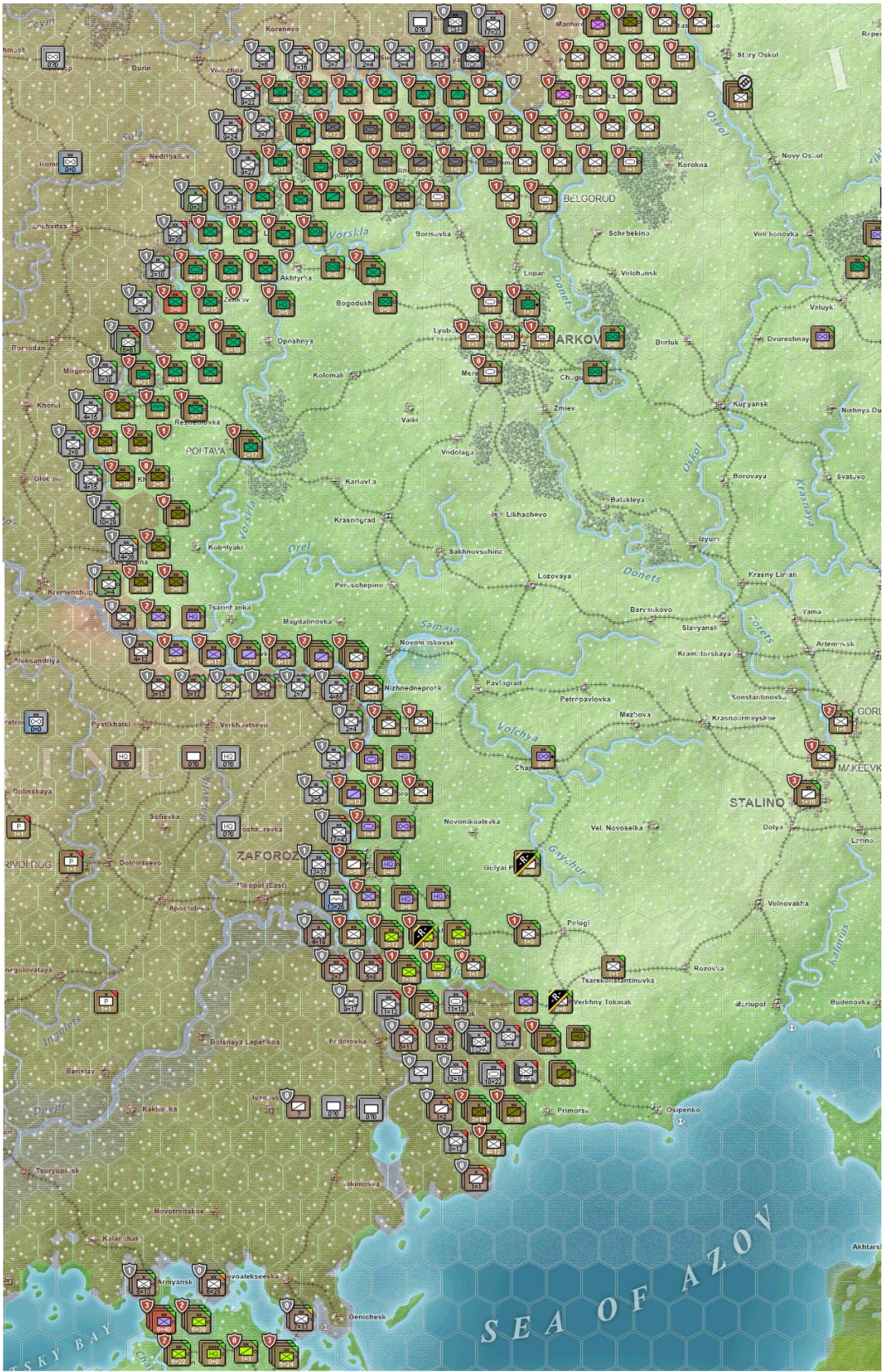
Execution

At Moscow, my movements have mainly been to stack up my units in a Maskirovka effort in order to convince the Germans that a major attack is underway in this area. I have decided to wait one more turn before moving the remaining Western Front forces into position for the attacks. The reason for this is that the German line I will be attacking is very weak, and the forces I have at hand already should be more than up for the task. If I start pouring more troops into that area, the Germans might also decide to strengthen it, with unpredictable results.

Below is an image of my maskirovka setup at Moscow. I am curious to see if it works.



The South



Situational Assessment

In south, the Germans have pulled their Panzers back from the attack south of Kursk. This is bad, but expected, news to me, as that means they only have a short distance to go before arriving in the area of my southern pincer for the coming Kursk offensive. If that happens, the offensive will probably not be able to reach its strategic objectives, but will instead end up giving casualties to the German Panzers over the winter.

In the area northwest of Kharkov where I will attack next turn, the Germans have taken Sumy. Apart from that, the German lines are still relatively weakly fortified, but it is stronger looking than the area where the northern pincer will attack.

Around Dnepropetrovsk, it seems I will have an opportunity for an impromptu attack next turn, where I might be able to encircle the forces inside the city by attacking across the frozen river on either side of the city.

In the deep south, the German Panzers are continuing to move forward, but I am unable to see what the purpose of the attacks is. While they may encircle some Soviet units against the coast, they will then have to hold the line and destroy those units during the blizzard. They will have to do this while also holding out against the Soviet relief attacks that will be coming from the north.

Planning

Once again, I will do some attacks across the front, partly aimed at disrupting German fortification construction. Of more importance is retaking Sumy. I do not wish to have that city in German hands when I launch my own attack next turn.

In the deep south, I will try to establish as good a close up defense against further German attacks as I can. I half expect the Germans to start pulling back through the blizzard, and when they do I want it to cost them as much as possible.

In the air, I will continue to bomb the German infantry as best I can.

Execution

I have retaken Sumy and conducted a series of bombing attacks against the German infantry.

In the far south, I have routed a couple of Rumanian Cavalry brigades and I will stand my ground in the face of the German Panzers. If they wish to attack during the blizzard, they are very welcome to do so.

Conclusion

This phase, Axis ground losses are 3927 soldiers, 199 guns and three AFV. Soviet losses are 5539 men, 54 guns and 44 AFV. The Germans have also lost two Fortified Zones. In the air, the Axis has lost 32 aircraft against a total of 157 Soviet ones. In other words, losses have been light.

I expect that to change next turn.