

Turn 29, Strategic Considerations

SU	Yak-1	75	0	274	1428	46
SU	Yak-7A	18	0	72	72	0
SU	LaGG-3 '11 Series'	22	0	14	371	13
SU	LaGG-3	66	0	259	1845	66
SU	Pe-3	5	0	38	80	2
SU	Hurricane IIB	28	0	222	392	8
SU	P-40E	9	0	0	0	0
SU	Su-2	12	0	147	336	11
SU	IL-2	90	0	326	1372	38
SU	U-2VS	84	0	424	1554	52
SU	Pe-2	60	0	410	1428	34
SU	IL-4	15	0	680	392	20
SU	Pe-8	1	0	37	28	0
SU	Li-2VV	3	0	3	3	0
SU	SB-2 Rcn	0	0	306	0	6
SU	U-2 Rcn	6	0	168	168	0
SU	Pe-2R	6	0	103	103	0
SU	U-2 (transp)	12	0	748	327	8
SU	Li-2	9	0	62	192	9
_____ GROUND _____						
SU	T-60 M1941	90	0	40	1002	50
SU	M3 Stuart	24	0	4	24	5
SU	Matilda II	10	0	45	140	4
SU	T-34 M1941	176	0	693	3088	99
SU	Valentine III	26	0	120	232	5
SU	KV-1 M1941	56	0	151	937	108
SU	GAZ-AA-37	15	0	0	14	5
SU	BM-13-16 Rocket Launcher	28	0	18	392	10
SU	BA-20 Armored Car	10	0	103	280	92

I have had a brief conversation with the Axis Headquarters in Rastenburg, and it seems the Germans are not particularly dismayed with recent events. To give a direct quote: "The tactics you used are great for 41 but they leave the Germans unbeatable in 42". The result is that the carnage on the Eastern Front must go on for some time to come.

With the turn of the year, I have begun receiving new weapons. In the air, the P-40E is making its debut. This fighter bomber is fast and nimble, but packs little punch. As such I will use it for an escort fighter if need be, but with the current aircraft production of the Red Army, I think it likely that it might never hit frontline duty.

On the ground, the arrival of the M3 Stuart is of more interest to me. Looking at the logistics report from this turn, the Red Army is still crying out for light tanks, and it is currently short of some 637 T-60's. Any production of light tanks to help fill the gap is welcome.

Strategically, I need to consider how to use my tank production, as I produce a large surplus of both Heavy (KV-1's) and Medium tanks (T-34's). As Tank Brigades consume a lot of trucks, I am more inclined to build some Separate Tank Battalions and assign those to armies and corps as they are built.

I have also begun producing the GAZ-AA-37, which is fine by me. It is basically an upgunned version of the GAZ-AAMG, and will begin replacing that vehicle throughout my forces as it becomes available.

On the ground, the Germans have failed to relieve any of their encircled divisions, and this turn looks to become another heavy casualty turn for the Germans.

Axis VP are 190.

The North



Situational assessment

In the north, the front has not moved since last turn. There are still eight German divisions plus one regiment encircled.

The only noteworthy event in the area has been that the Germans have moved their Luftwaffe airbases back to a safer distance from the front.

Planning

I will do what I can to eliminate the German pocket this turn, and also push forward into the last couple of swamp hexes I want for my summer front. Once those tasks have been completed, I will stop my northern offensive.

South of Lake Ilmen, I will do nothing.

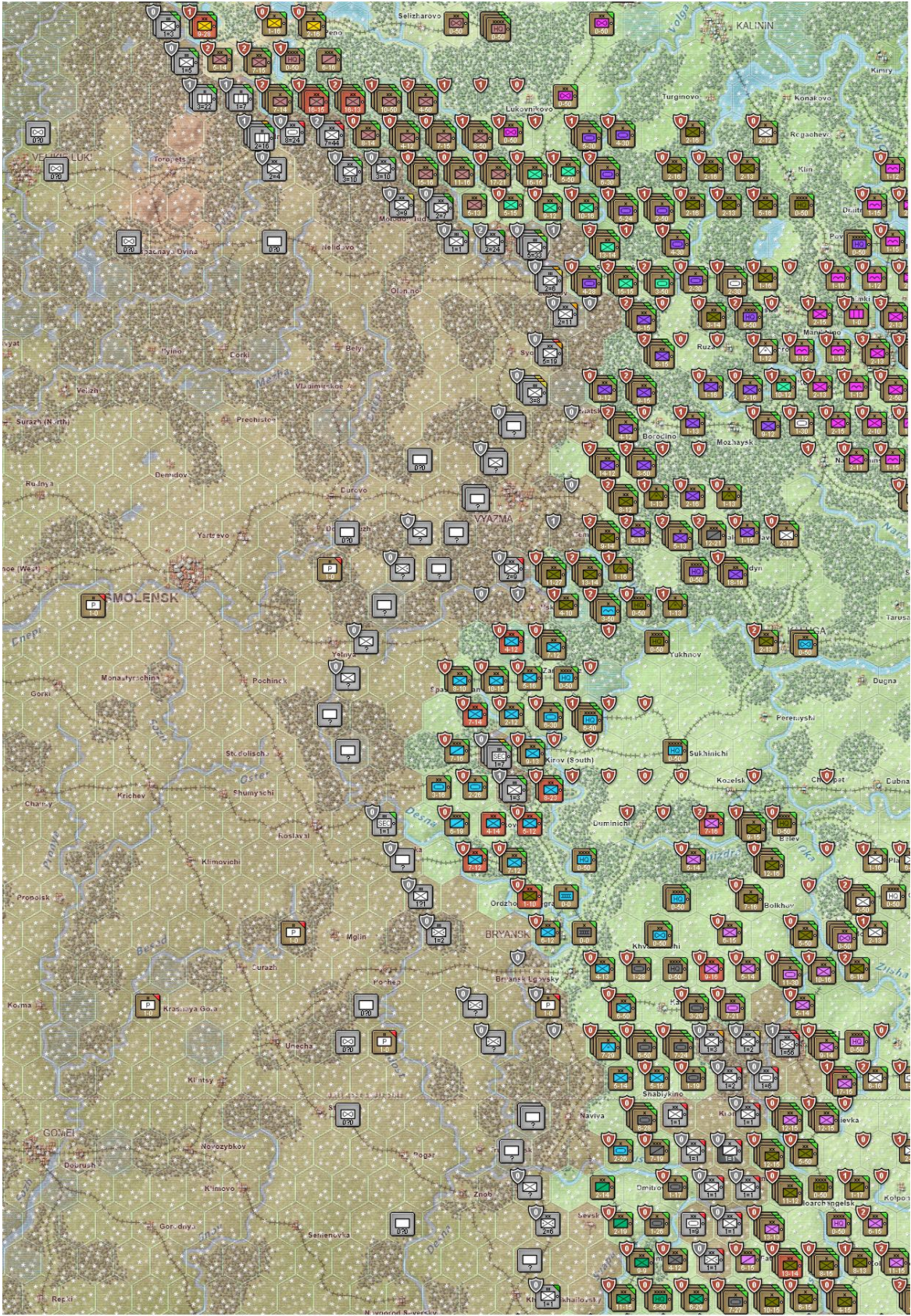
Execution

The German pocket is dead, and the strategic aim of the Leningrad offensive has been all but met. In this area, there is a large portion of unrepaired rail hexes for now, so the two Rail Repair units assigned to the north will be busy for a while to come.

Below is an image of the area south of Leningrad, as I give the turn to Hermann.



The Center



Situational assessment

In the center, the Germans have begun withdrawing their front towards Moscow. It seems they wish to avoid further encirclements this year.

The German withdrawal serves my purpose of putting some more space between the Germans and Moscow. Should the Germans try to hold their current lines, another opportunity for a major encirclement might soon rise in the area south of Rzhev. I assume the Germans will continue to pull back, as I push up to their lines.

North of Bryansk, there is still a German Panzer division and four regiments encircled, while southeast of Bryansk, the major pocket is still in place. West of my forces south of Bryansk, the Germans have pulled back as well.

Planning

At Moscow, I will begin closing in on the Germans this turn. I do not have enough movement to actually make any serious attacks, and in some places I will even be unable to close all the clear hexes in front of the Germans.

Around the encirclements, I will attack the encircled Germans in order to free up the local forces. When this is done, I will decide on where to go next. With the German withdrawals around Moscow, it seems I might not have to strengthen this area in order to advance further. If so, I might send some forces south, in order to reconnect the land connection to Crimea, if possible (and hopefully encircle and destroy some Germans in the process).

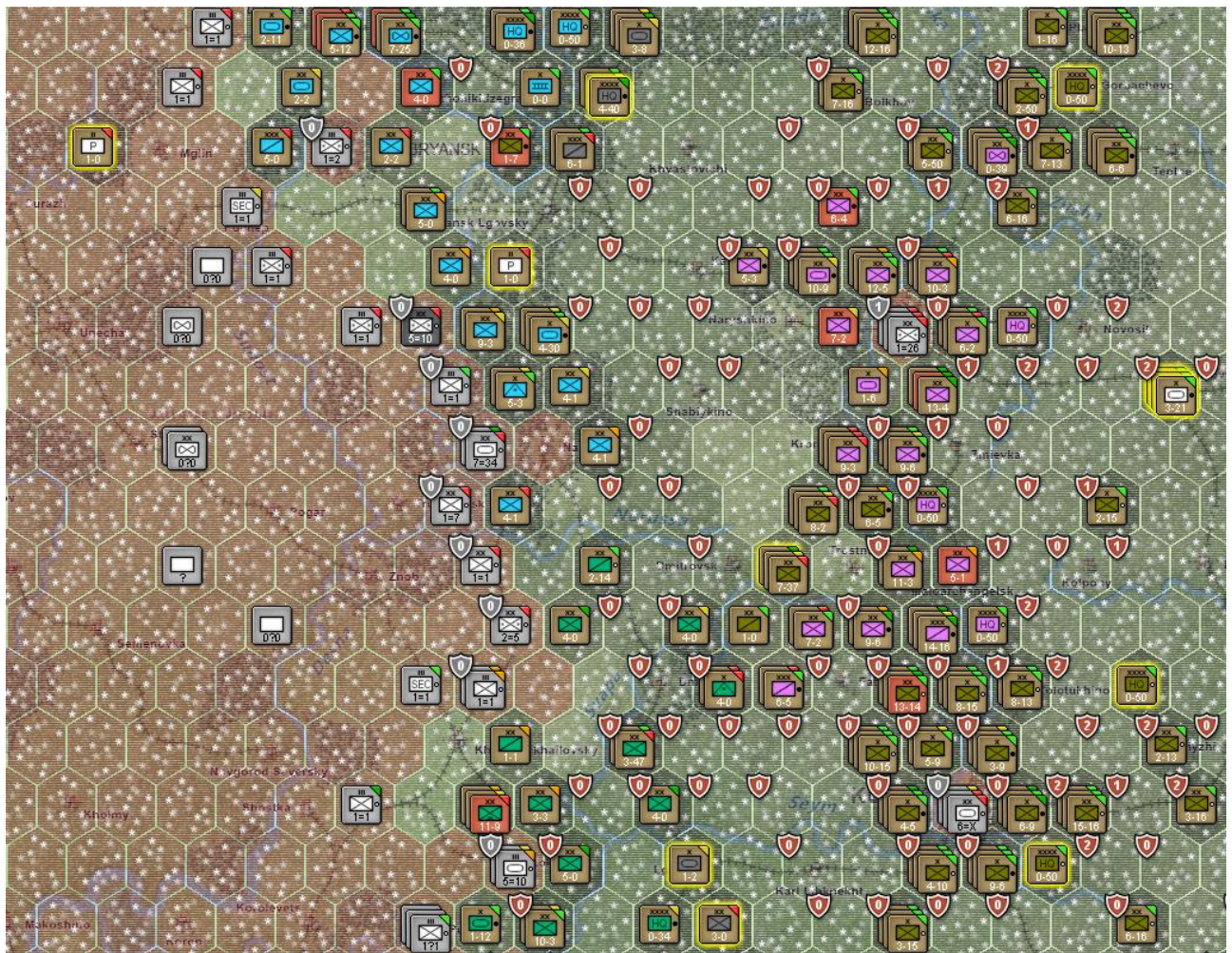
Execution

At Moscow, I have moved as close to the German front as I can, but have performed no attacks due to lack of movement.

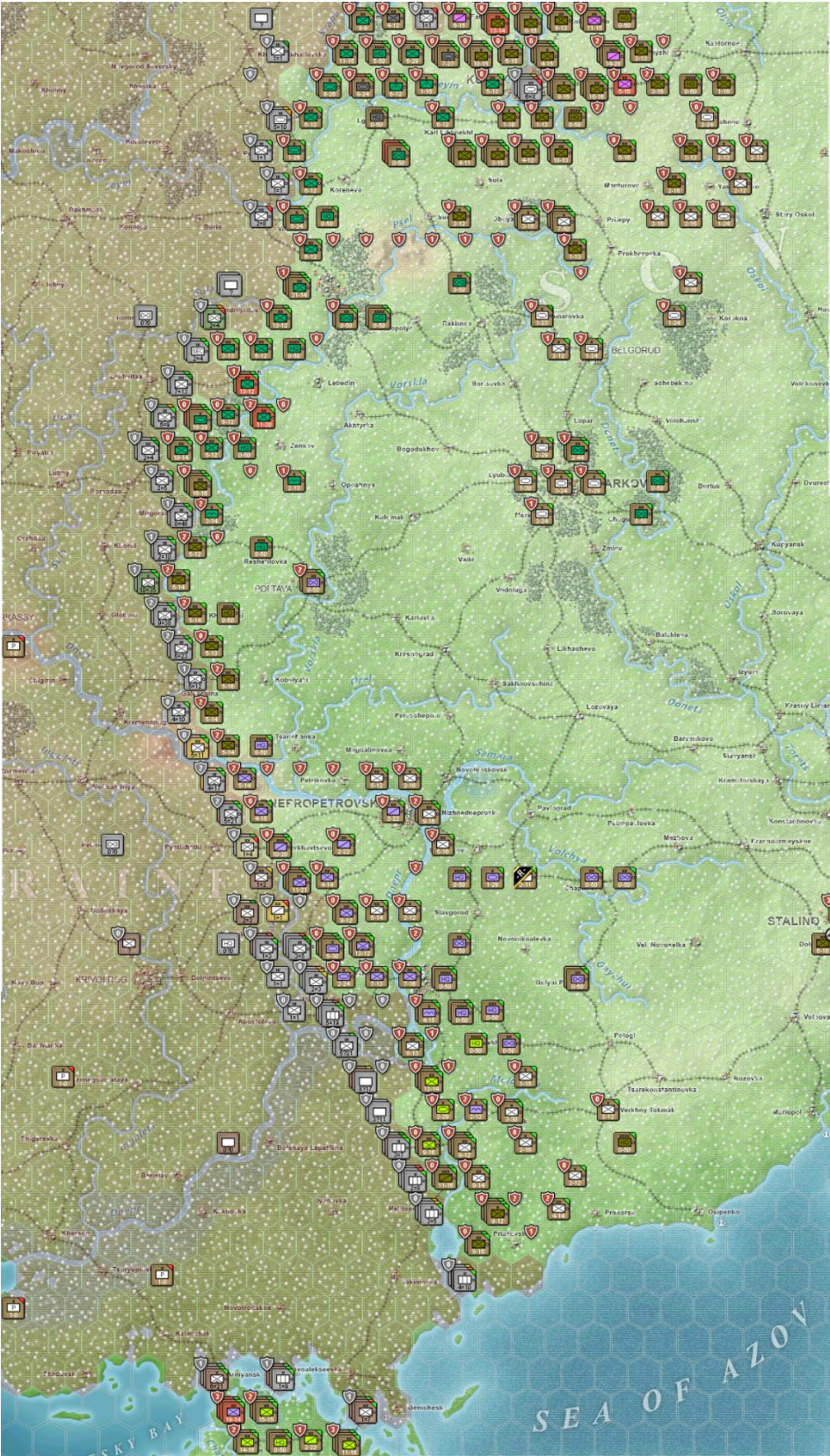
I have destroyed many of the encircled German units, though a total of three Panzer divisions, one Motorized division and two infantry divisions still hold out in Kursk and Orel. I have also moved the majority of the 56th Army (under Batov) and the 4th Army (under Rokossovsky) onto my rail lines. Come next turn they will be railed onto another front to perform another attack before the end of the winter.

I have not really been able to encircle any new units, but a few low strength German regiments are in a bad position and needs to be moved west in order to escape destruction.

Below a snapshot of the situation at Kursk, as I give the turn to Hermann.



The South



Situational Assessment

The Panzers encircled in Kursk can still muster an impressive CV of 6=X.

Between the Kursk area and Dnepropetrovsk is a long stretch of frontline, where neither the Germans or the Soviets really have any impressive forces arrayed.

South of Dnepropetrovsk, the Axis forces are pulling back from their most exposed sectors also, establishing an almost Peltonesque straight frontline for some 16 hexes.

Planning

While I realize I will suffer casualties and that I could just wait, I will still attack the Germans in Kursk this turn. I wish to finish off the attack here in order to free up my troops for another winter attack somewhere along the line.

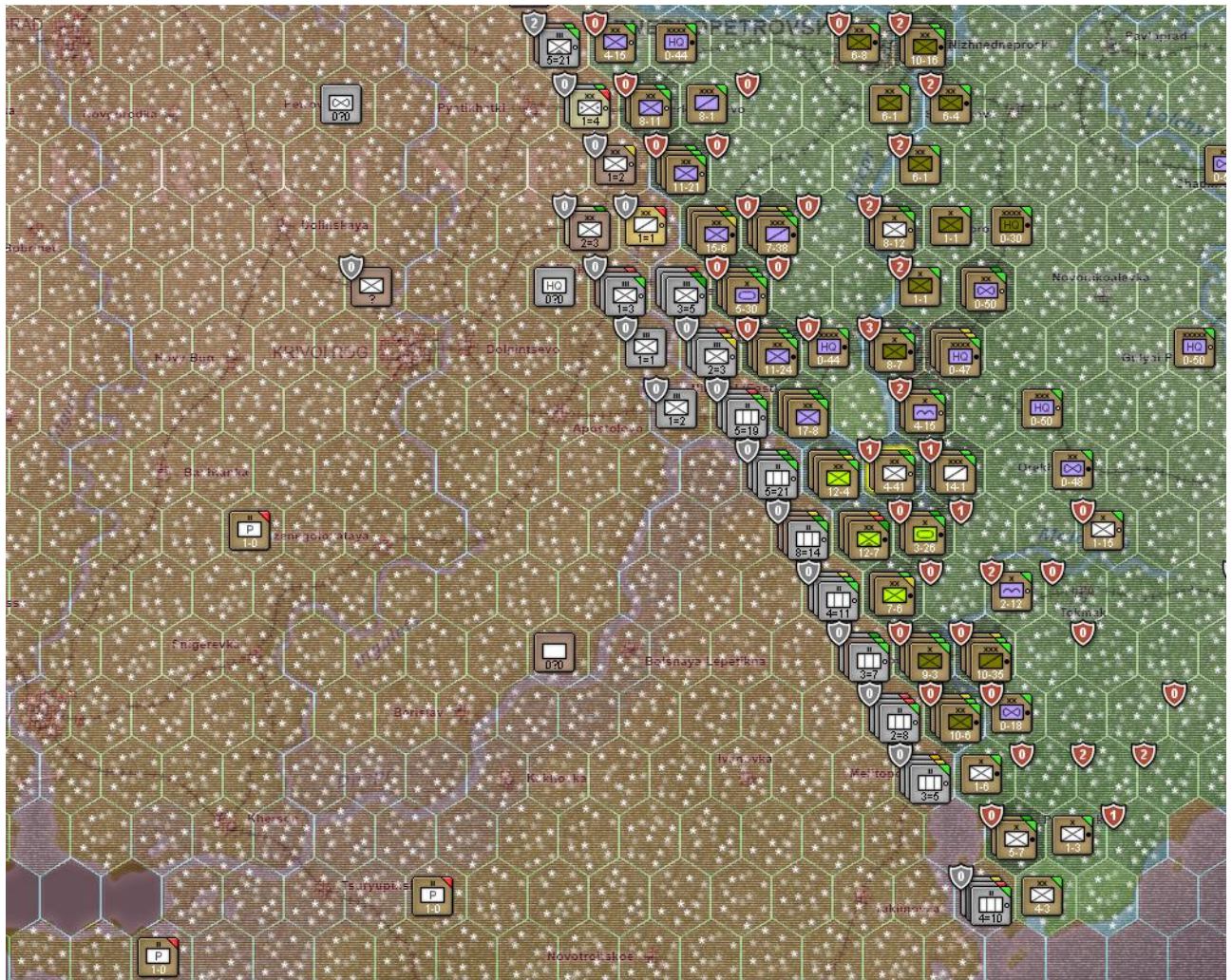
North of Sumy, I spot a potential chance of another rminor encirclement, but the more German casualties the better, and I will of course go for it.

From Zaporozhye southwards, I will refrain from any attacks this turn, as I can gain little but terrain. I would rather prepare my forces and potentially move reinforcements in for a major push in another couple of turns.

Execution

Little has happened in this area other than reshuffling units for a better position. As the Germans have constructed several Fortified Zones in the south, they may wish to defend their current lines over future turns. Because of this, I have set the local forces to "Refit" while turning that off for the majority of my other forces.

Below is a snapshot of the situation at Zaporozhye, as I give the turn to Hermann.



Conclusion

The Germans have suffered much this turn also. With a total loss of more than 540 AFV over the last two turns, that will take the German production system no less than 10-11 turns to catch up – provided the Germans do not suffer any further AFV losses during those turns. With three Panzer divisions encircled, I think that highly unlikely to say the least.

With the loss of over 200,000 men this turn, that is also a lot of losses that the Germans can ill afford. I can not even begin to guess at when the Germans will have filled in their manpower losses. I will certainly do what I can to see that it never happens.

On the ground, I have launched no new attacks this turn, but rather regrouped and positioned myself instead. Depending on the German actions at Moscow, I might prepare for an attack either here or in the deep south.

An interesting item of note is that I have captured no less than 1138 Vehicles from the Axis this turn. That makes me wonder if the Axis supply system can ever replace what was lost due to the loss of so many destroyed divisions.

AXIS LOSSES			
Men	5	202599	1242021
Guns	1	2447	20624
AFV	0	311	3113
SP & AC	0	111	1021
Men Killed	5	3348	348958
Men Captured	0	153039	328273
Men Disabled	0	46212	564790
Men Returned			37690
SOVIET LOSSES			
Men	0	23991	2943618
Guns	0	146	30172
AFV	0	56	15072
SP & AC	0	21	3881
Men Killed	0	17410	640977
Men Captured	0	0	1101188
Men Disabled	0	6581	1201453
Men Returned			78918