

Turn 30, Strategic Considerations

____ SPECIAL ____						
-	Vehicle Repair	A	-	6084	289122	0
-	Port	105	4	0	0	0
-	Railyard	267	10	0	0	0
-	Manpower	2935	72	91039	4336192	0
-	Vehicle	140	0	215154	303435	0
-	Heavy Industry	232	0	0	2947700	0
-	Oil Production	128	0	0	1856000	0
-	Fuel Production	149	0	0	1037040	0
-	Resource Production	182	0	0	5418000	0
-	Armaments Production	366	0	83748	2373925	0

On the ground, the Germans have continued withdrawing in the Moscow area. Strategically that means I gain territory in front of Moscow without having to fight for it. Of course, I would have preferred to fight and destroy the German divisions here, but I am content nonetheless.

Between Dnepropetrovsk and the sea, the Germans are holding on to their forward lines. This, combined with the withdrawals at Moscow, means that my next strategic offensive will be launched in this area.

Axis VP are 190.

The North



Situational assessment

In the north, the Germans have attacked and thrown me out of one of the swamp hexes I took last turn. It seems we both want those hexes for our defensive lines come the spring and the summer.

The German lines south of Leningrad are showing signs of strain. On both sides of the forward swamp hexes are a couple of hexes with CV's of no more than a max of 2=7. Opposite those hexes, I have massive forces of the Leningrad Front standing ready to attack.

South of Lake Ilmen, the situation is all but static.

Planning

The tactical situation at Leningrad bids me to do another offensive against the weak German flanks, hoping to be able to encircle even more German units. Should this fail, such an attack would surely force the Germans to evacuate those swamp hexes I need for building my summer lines.

In order to strengthen the attack here, I will set the local armies back on “Refit” mode for now.

South of Lake Ilmen, I will do nothing.

Execution

South of Leningrad, my attack has driven through the German defenses, and I think it very likely that the Germans will withdraw their exposed units next turn. If they do not, they may never get another chance to do so.

South of Lake Ilmen, I caved in to temptation and did an attack to force the Germans back from the fortified positions in the area. Like further north, the Germans are more or less forced to withdraw next turn, if they wish to escape destruction.

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



Situational assessment

In the center, the Germans have abandoned Rzhez, pulling back their lines another two or three hexes in front of Moscow. They are still holding on to Vyazma, although their lines to the southwest of the city look ragged indeed with CV's between 1=2 and 3=5.

At Bryansk the Germans are pulling back as well. I am in need of a major reordering of my lines in this area, as the Bryansk Front is hopelessly out of position. It seems that I by now use an entire Front to besiege the Germans in Orel.

Batov's army is on rails and ready to move out of the area.

Planning

At Moscow, I will continue to pursue the withdrawing Germans. The more hexes I can get this way, the better. In order to convince the Germans to keep pulling back, I will use my northernmost forces of the Western Front in an attack towards Smolensk, as that will create a dangerous salient in the German lines.

At Bryansk, I will start replacing the Bryansk Front at Orel with units belonging to STAVKA Armies, and move the Front into position between the Southwestern Front and the Western Front.

Batov's Army will be railed to the south.

I will also close up to the Germans and maybe even conduct a few attacks here in order to convince the Germans to keep pulling back.

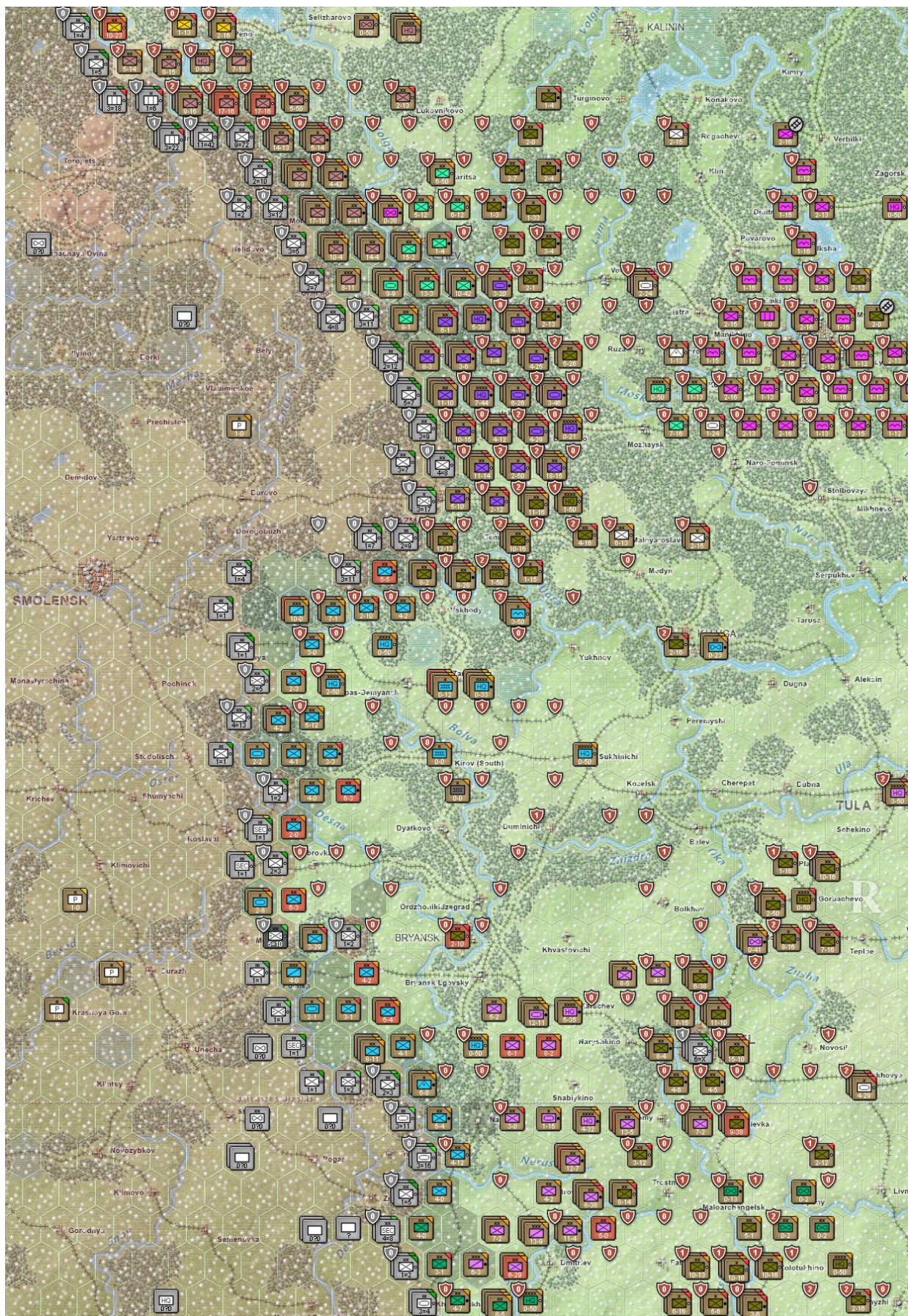
Execution

At Moscow, I have simply closed the gap between the Soviets and the Germans. I expect the Germans to continue pulling back, as north of Bryansk, I have made a series of attacks, and my forward units are now only six hexes from Smolensk. I will not be able to take it this year unless the Germans keep pulling back for the rest of January.

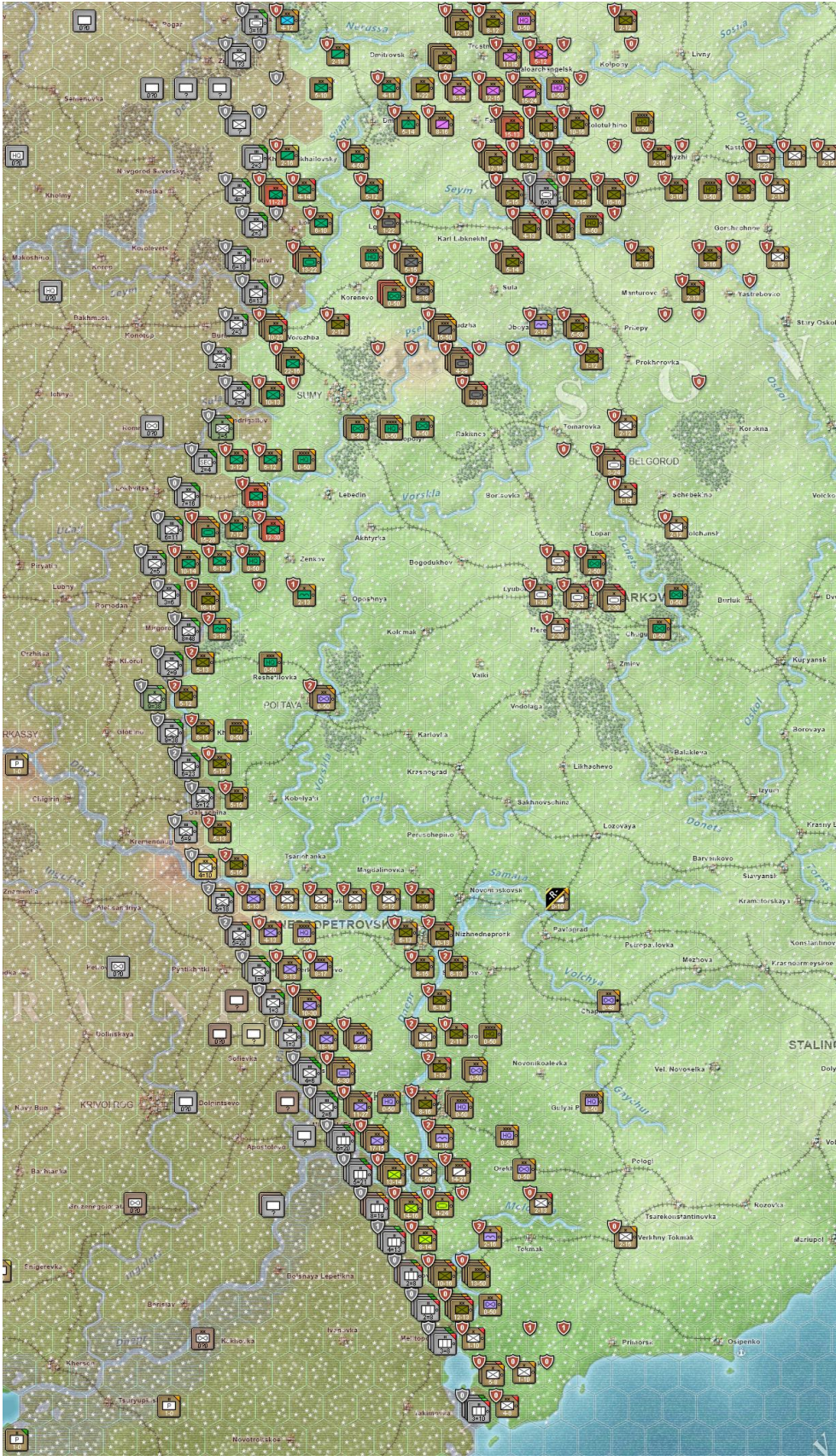
Directly west of Bryansk, I have been able to encircle a Motorized regiment in such a way that it is doubtful it will be able to break free. Even if it does, I will simply encircle it again next turn.

At Orel, the Bryansk Front is moving hastily towards the front line while several STAVKA armies have taken over the guard at Orel.

Below is an image of the center, 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. The Germans have spent significant resources flying in supplies to the Germans. Looking at battle reports, the Germans have lost or damaged 29 transport planes this turn performing this task.

Along the Southwestern Front, the Germans are pulling back their lines slowly.

From Dnepropetrovsk going south, the Germans are holding on to their lines. The strength of the German lines is very varied, going from 1=3 to 6=20. Opposite the lines, my local forces are prepared to attack.

Planning

In order to destroy as many German transports as possible flying supplies to Kursk and Orel, I will move my LaGG-3 and PB-3 airfields close to Kursk and Orel, and set the local aircraft to fly both day and night.

The Southwestern Front is not really in a position to do any encirclement attacks this turn, so will simply be moving up to the German lines, preparing for future battles.

Between Dnepropetrovsk and the sea, I will be launching my attack this turn. While I might wait for the arrival of Rokossovsky and Batov, there is really no room for them on the front right now, and I need at least one turn to smash the German lines, so that I will be able to conduct a mobile war over the next few turns.

Execution

I have moved an airfield filled with LaGG-3 '11 Series" fighters into position between Orel and Kursk and set their orders to fly both night and day. I have also moved two long range bomber airfields to this position, as they have a Pe-3 night fighter each (a bad setp on my part as it turns out). I hope that these fighters will be able to deal the German transport missions some heavy casualties over the coming turns.

In the Dnepr bend, my attack has broken the Axis lines and forced the defenders into the open. There are few strong units standing in the way of further advances. Further south, my attacks have largely failed to penetrate the Axis lines, but the breakthrough to the north should make it a tough choice to stay put in this area. With the arrival of Batov's 56th Army and Rokossovsky's 4th Army, I now have seven Cavalry Corps in this area, ready to exploit any kind of advance.

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



Conclusion

German losses this turn has been light, with only 9.500 men lost. However, with 51 AFV lost and an AFV production in the early 50's, the German production system seems unlikely to replace what was lost during the remainder of the winter.

Strategically, I am quite content with developments this turn. At both Leningrad and in the Dnepr bend, I have broken the German lines and created a more "fluid" situation, forcing the Germans to pull back or risk losing units. At moscow, the Germans are also withdrawing, and I now have twelve hexes between Moscow and the nearest German units.

AXIS LOSSES			
Men	26	9514	1277111
Guns	1	227	21114
AFV	0	31	3194
SP & AC	0	6	1041
Men Killed	20	5032	359431
Men Captured	0	1486	329936
Men Disabled	6	2996	587744
Men Returned			41930
SOVIET LOSSES			
Men	8	34210	3031444
Guns	0	202	30900
AFV	0	78	15230
SP & AC	0	37	3952
Men Killed	0	24656	677994
Men Captured	0	0	1101590
Men Disabled	8	9554	1251860
Men Returned			84926