

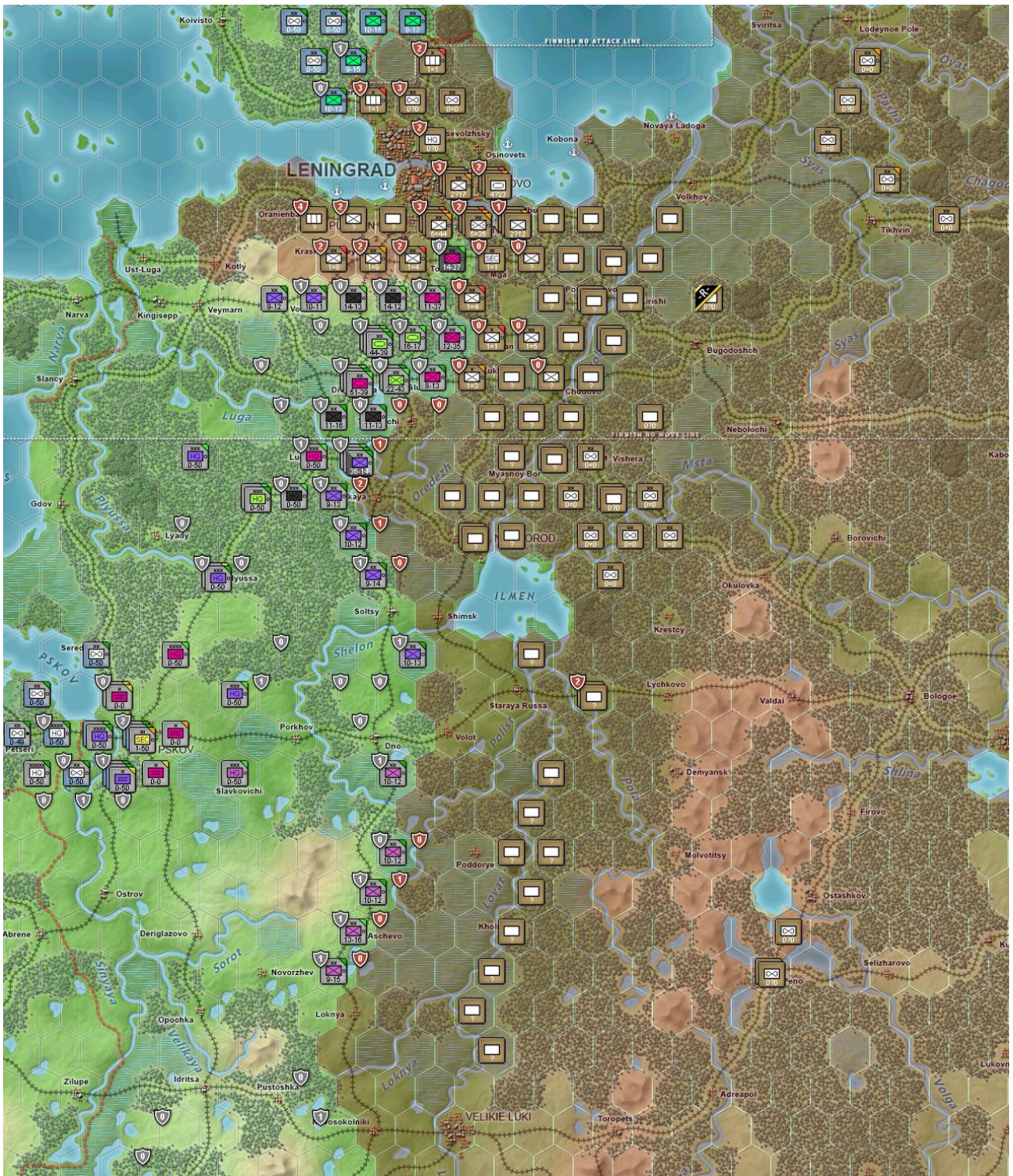
Turn 9, Strategic considerations

This turn, the Soviets have pulled back their forces at Smolensk and north of the Dnepr. In the north, it looks as if Leningrad might well be cut off this turn, in the center the pockets west of Smolensk holds and in the south, the way past the Dnepr is now open.

The Soviet withdrawal has led to a great number of interdiction attacks on my part, as can be seen below. Unfortunately, all these battles have not really led to any Soviets being stranded in “no mans land”, and Soviet losses are not spectacular either. Unfortunately, fatigue is now quite high for my fighter air groups, and I will need to make sure they no longer fly as escorts, which again means that I have to choose between moving them out of the way or setting them to fly nights (and thus miss any ground support missions).

61 Battles Selected																				
Near	Loc	Attk	Result	Type	ATTACKER			DEFENDER			ATTACKER LOSSES			DEFENDER LOSSES			DEFENDER ESCAPED			
					Men	Guns	AFV	Men	Guns	AFV	Men	Guns	AFV	Men	Guns	AFV	Men	Guns	AFV	
Sumy	97,78	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	143	9	0	0	0	0	
Mirgorod	93,86	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	121	4	0	0	0	0	
Grebenska	88,84	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	2	0	0	0	0	
Yagotin	87,83	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	105	4	0	0	0	0	
Demidov	86,49	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99	6	0	0	0	0	
Orzhitsa	89,86	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	98	4	0	0	0	0	
Khorol	91,86	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	89	4	0	0	0	0	
Kholm	91,35	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80	2	0	0	0	0	
Bateckaya	81,24	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79	3	0	0	0	0	
Yagotin	87,83	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76	0	0	0	0	0	
Piriyatin	88,82	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	3	1	0	0	0	
Lokhvitsa	93,81	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	0	2	0	0	0	
Piriyatin	88,82	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	5	1	0	0	0	
Rudnya	84,49	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	1	0	0	0	0	
Shostka	94,72	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	0	1	0	0	0	
Khorol	90,86	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	2	0	0	0	0	
Yartsevo	87,49	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43	2	0	0	0	0	
Smolensk	86,52	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	1	0	0	0	0	
Yelnya	92,54	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	
Khutor Mikhailovsky	95,72	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	2	0	0	0	0	
Krasnoe (v)	81,51	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	2	2	0	0	0	
Konotop	91,76	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	
Karlouka	99,89	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	1	0	0	0	0	
Demidov	85,48	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	1	0	0	0	0	
Cherkassy	87,87	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	1	0	0	0	0	
Galeschina	93,90	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	2	0	0	0	0	
Piriyatin	89,83	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	
Kobelyaki	95,91	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	
Shumyachi	88,57	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	
Pushkin	79,17	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	
Mirgorod	94,84	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	2	0	0	0	0	
Khutor Mikhailovsky	95,72	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	
Ichnya	90,78	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	
Gomel	81,67	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	
Smolensk	84,51	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	
Monastyrshchina	86,53	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	
Smolensk	86,51	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Poltava	96,88	Ax	Defender	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

The North



Situational Assessment

At Leningrad, the Soviets have shifted their defense away from the hills southwest of the city and to the defenses along the Neva river. It is somewhat unclear to me if this is an actual defensive line, or a last attempt at extracting some valuable units from Leningrad before they are cut off.

Further south, the Soviets have pulled back from the area west of Novgorod in order to defend the Volkhov river instead.

My own Panzer forces are relatively well off with regards to fuel, generally having movement points in the 30's. This should enable me to continue grinding forward towards Leningrad.

The Soviet airforces in the area look to be relatively heavy in the bomber department, but similarly light in the fighter department, which should give the Luftwaffe some options in the area this turn. Obviously, the Luftwaffe can be supported by the Finnish airforces currently north of Leningrad.

Planning

My primary mission this turn is the encirclement of Leningrad (although the ports will still be in place, making the term "encircle" slightly inaccurate). For this I will start with conducting a series of infantry attacks with the I Corps, also moving this Corps in the direction of the Neva river, as they are the ones meant for pushing over the river on subsequent turns. Depending on the outcome of the infantry attacks, I will deploy the Panzers to ensure this result.

Once Leningrad has been cut off, I will use the remaining Panzers on an attack towards Chudovo with the primary aim of establishing a bridgehead across the river Volkhov. If possible, I will also displace the Soviet airfields east of Novgorod and encircle the forces still in the city.

Execution

I started the action in this area by using the Finnish airforce to attack every possible Soviet airfield (four if them) and then following up by Luftwaffe attacks on the local Recon airfields.

After this I began attacking the Soviets still blocking my advance in front of the river Neva, which eventually led to the cutting off the Soviet connection to Leningrad over land. The main battles of this phase of action was fought directly in front of the river and can be seen below.

Axis Forces Attacking: XXXXI Panzer Corps -16% Totenkopf SS Mot. Div (103) 601st SP Lt Flk Bn (4) 185th Stug Battalion (8) I Corps 1st Infantry Division (115) 11th Infantry Division (125) 251st Infantry Division (87) [v]	1 of 1 82,17 - Light Woods - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14		Soviet Forces Defending: 23rd Army 198th Motorized Division (78) 123rd Rifle Division (162) 108th BM Howitzer Regiment (2) 519th BM Howitzer Regiment (1) 485th AA Battalion (0) 153rd Sep. Sapper Bn (1) 234th Sapper Battalion (1) [v]
	Forces Engaged ATK: men 77212, art 838, afv 65 DEF: men 29679, art 373, afv 60 DAM: men 124, art 15, afv 0 DAM: men 276, art 6, afv 3 LOST: men 288, art 11, afv 2 LOST: men 3651, art 104, afv 26 ATK: ftr 91, bmr 14, utl 0 DEF: ftr 73, bmr 63, utl 0 LOST: ftr 4, bmr 0, utl 0		
	198th Motorized Division ROUTED 123rd Rifle Division ROUTED 13th Fortified Region SURRENDERED Show Details Odds 2.92 : 1 Exit		
CV: 509->1003.3 Eng Val: 22 Comm HQ: I Corps G Walter Model			CV: 248->342.7 Fort: 2.04->0.00 Comm HQ: 23rd Army GL Pyotr Pshennikov

Axis Forces Attacking: XXXIX Panzer Corps 7th Panzer Division (172) 20th Panzer Division (126) 20th Motorized Division (134) 51st Nebelwerfer Regiment (3) 1/52nd SP Flak Company (0) 702nd SP Inf Gun Coy (0) 705th SP Inf Gun Coy (0) [v]	1 of 1 83,17 - Swamp(Shlisselburg) - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14		Soviet Forces Defending: 23rd Army -15% 21st Tank Division (87) 519th BM Howitzer Regiment (1) 43rd Crps Art Rgt (1) STAVKA -20% 6th Naval Infantry Brigade (87) 10th Fortified Region (5) Reserve Air Command [v]
	Forces Engaged ATK: men 46695, art 520, afv 478 DEF: men 21237, art 289, afv 166 DAM: men 6, art 5, afv 17 DAM: men 155, art 10, afv 5 LOST: men 96, art 3, afv 4 LOST: men 2946, art 99, afv 67 ATK: ftr 187, bmr 126, utl 0 DEF: ftr 48, bmr 28, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0		
	6th Naval Infantry Brigade ROUTED 21st Tank Division ROUTED 10th Fortified Region SURRENDERED Show Details Odds 5.08 : 1 Exit		
CV: 435->733.1 Eng Val: 8 Comm HQ: XXXIX Panzer Corps GL Otto von Knobelsdorff			CV: 181->144.2 Fort: 1.06->0.00 Comm HQ: STAVKA MAR Boris Shaposhnikov

After these attacks had effectively sealed off Leningrad, I proceeded with the secondary mission of establishing a bridgehead across the river Volkhov. This attack eventually failed, when the Panzers assigned to attacking across the river failed to succeed.

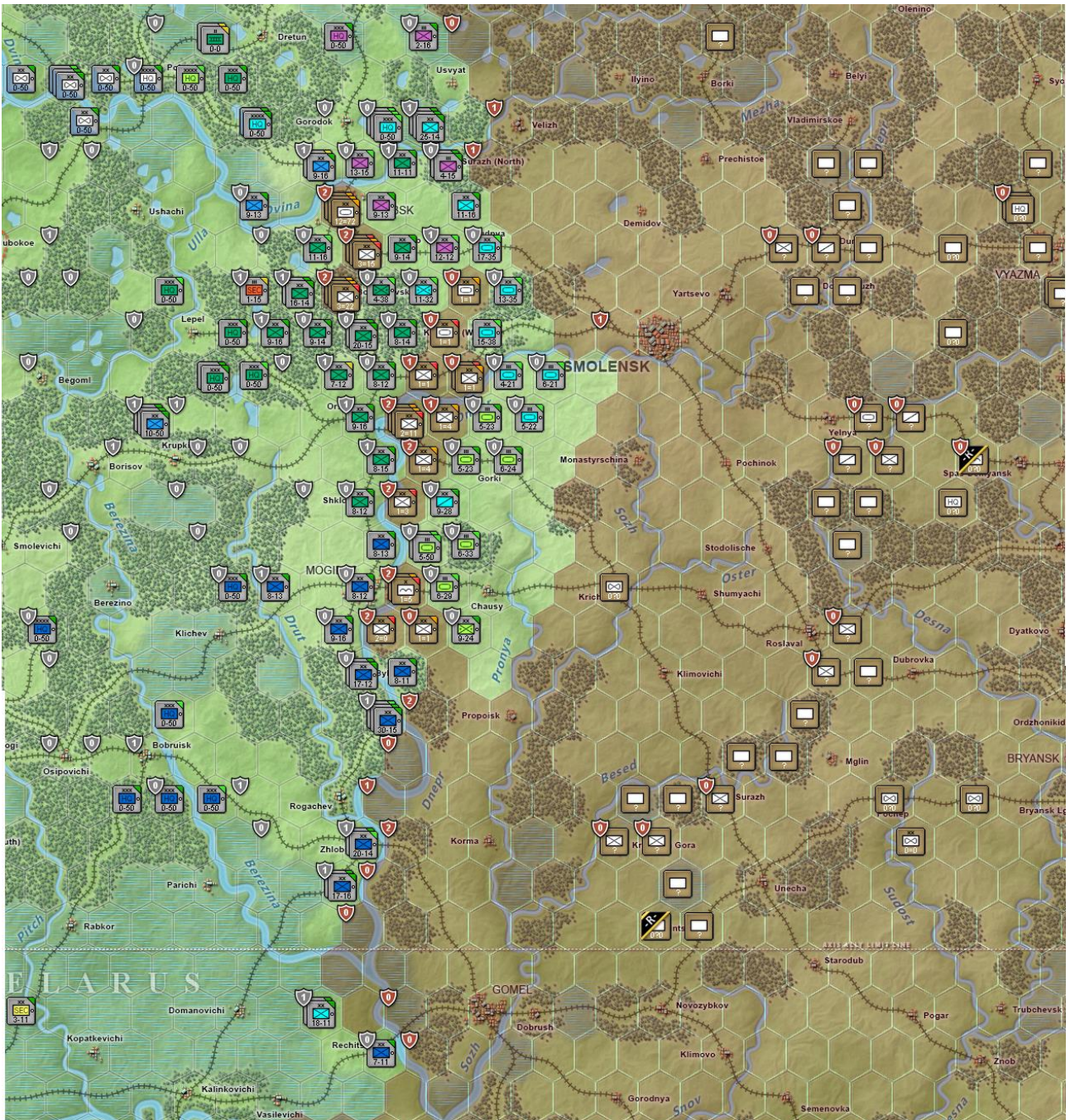
1 of 1 84,23 - Swamp - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14		
Axis Forces Attacking:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Defending:
XXXXI Panzer Corps 8th Panzer Division (106) 3rd Motorized Division (86) 101st Flammpanzer Battalion (12) 281st Mot. Flk Bn (0) 197th Stug Battalion (3) I Fliegerkorps	ATK: men 31211, art 353, afv 281 DEF: men 25629, art 295, afv 16 DAM: men 51, art 5, afv 10 DAM: men 79, art 2, afv 0 LOST: men 107, art 2, afv 2 LOST: men 500, art 8, afv 0 ATK: flt 141, bmr 101, utl 0 DEF: flt 74, bmr 8, utl 0 LOST: flt 0, bmr 0, utl 0	11th Army 181st Rifle Division (183) 110th BM Howitzer Regiment (1) 429th Howitzer Regiment (0) STAVKA -35% 245th Rifle Division (55) Northwest Air Command
CV: 207->500.2 Eng Val: 2 Comm HQ: XXXI Panzer Corps G Georg-Hans Reinhardt	Defending Forces HELD Odds 1.50 : 1	CV: 239->332.1 Fort: 0.26->0.00 Comm HQ: 11th Army GL Vasily Morozov
[v]	Show Details Exit	[v]

The overall result of my attacks have been that at least three Tank divisions and eleven Rifle divisions are now left in Leningrad, and if I can manage to cross the Neva river, their fate will be effectively sealed. Come next turn, I will begin that attack with six infantry divisions of the I Corps under Model. Those divisions currently have a CV of 68, which include 12 Pioneer battallions assigned directly to the divisions.

Below is an image of the situation south of Leningrad, as I give the turn to Dontra.



The Center



Situational assessment

In the center, the Soviets still hold on to Vitebsk, thus blocking my rail advance. This turn, the city is defended by 12=72 CV. In the same pocket are two other stacks of three divisions, and in the pocket further south is another 10 divisions. Finally, at Mogilev, two more Rifle divisions are all but encircled already.

The Soviet forces to the east of the encirclements have pulled back a full five hexes, and have, undoubtedly begun establishing a new defensive line. Meanwhile, my own Panzers in the area are scattered and certainly not fueled for another major push at the moment.

Planning

In order to test the defences of Vitebsk, I will assign a lot of the local infantry divisions to the newly arrived XXXV Corps and then assign several support units and Walther Weiss to the Corps as well. I will then proceed to attack the city of Vitebsk, with the locally available forces.

Whatever the outcome of this attack, I plan to use most of the turn to destroy encircled Soviet divisions, gather together my own Panzers and placing them for optimal fuel and if possible, moving infantry in the direction of the Soviet main lines.

Execution

The attack by Walther Weiss on Vitebsk as well as the two following attacks on the Vitebsk pocket turned out to be successes as can be seen below.

1 of 4 > 79.48 - City(Vitebsk) - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14		
Axis Forces Attacking: II Corps -36% 32nd Infantry Division (49) 122nd Infantry Division (56) II/72nd Gun Battalion (0) 506th Howitzer Battalion (0) 526th Howitzer Battalion (0) XXXV Corps 8th Infantry Division (111) [v]	Forces Engaged ATK: men 180578, art 2267, afv 66 DAM: men 43, art 8, afv 1 LOST: men 98, art 1, afv 0 ATK: ftr 192, bmr 127, utl 0 LOST: ftr 1, bmr 0, utl 0 DEF: men 27691, art 111, afv 967 DAM: men 354, art 1, afv 11 LOST: men 25936, art 108, afv 937 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 57th Tank Division SURRENDERED 17th Tank Division SURRENDERED 13th Tank Division SURRENDERED Show Details Odds 7.45 : 1 Exit	Soviet Forces Defending: 13th Army 13th Tank Division (221) 57th Tank Division (190) 16th Army -25% 17th Tank Division (183) 8 -> GAZ-AAMG 26 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun CV: 594->181.3 Fort: 2.08->0.00 Comm HQ: 13th Army GL Pyotr Filatov

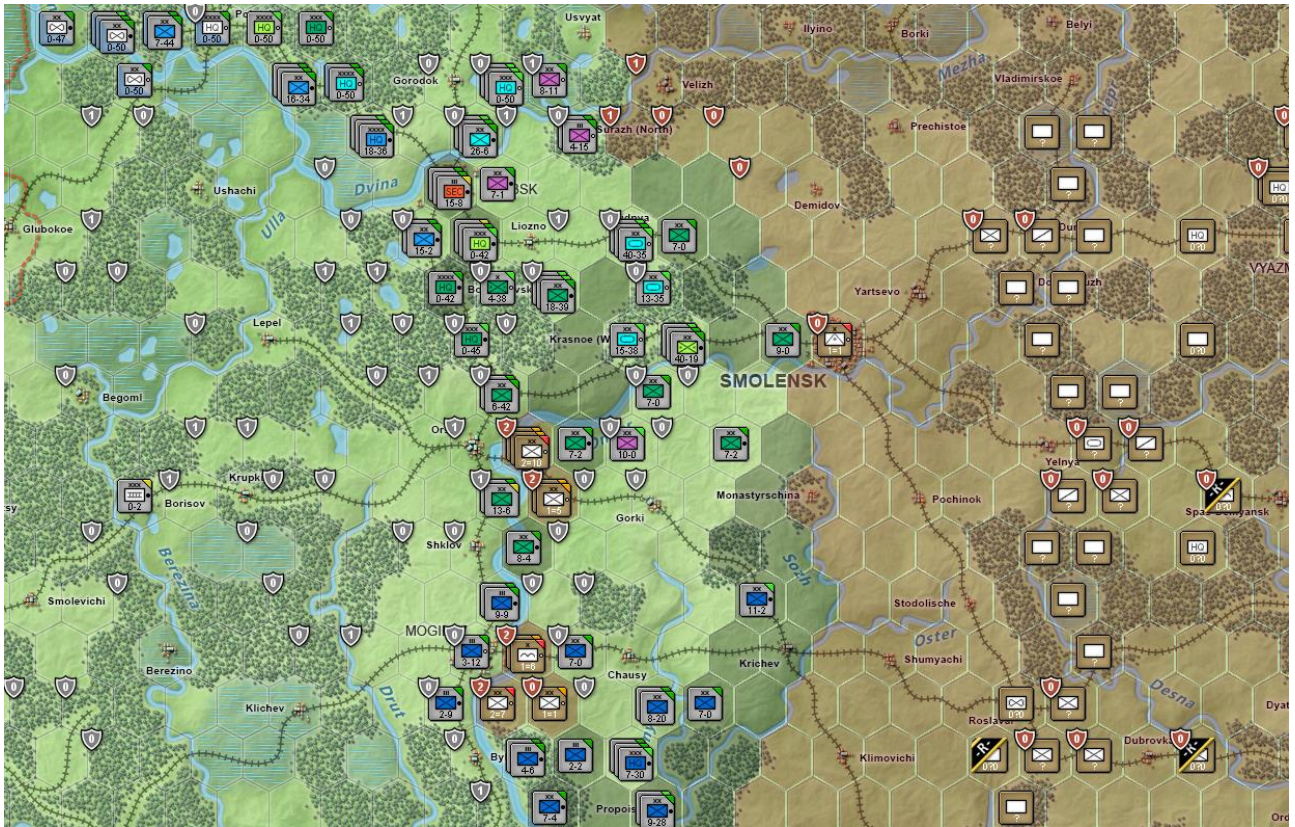
1 of 3 > 79.49 - Clear - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14		
Axis Forces Attacking: II Corps -36% 122nd Infantry Division (51) II/72nd Gun Battalion (0) I/106th Artillery Battalion (0) 506th Howitzer Battalion (0) XXXV Corps 8th Infantry Division (102) 31st Infantry Division (98) [v]	Forces Engaged ATK: men 50068, art 625, afv 6 DAM: men 48, art 12, afv 0 LOST: men 172, art 10, afv 0 ATK: ftr 152, bmr 75, utl 0 LOST: ftr 1, bmr 1, utl 0 DEF: men 30647, art 366, afv 40 DAM: men 570, art 1, afv 0 LOST: men 28764, art 347, afv 40 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 248th Rifle Division SURRENDERED 108th Rifle Division SURRENDERED 42nd Rifle Division SURRENDERED Show Details Odds 2.34 : 1 Exit	Soviet Forces Defending: 4th Army -10% 42nd Rifle Division (23) 13th Army 108th Rifle Division (74) STAVKA -35% 248th Rifle Division (25) 8 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun [v] CV: 122->164.5 Fort: 2.16->0.00 Comm HQ: 13th Army GL Pyotr Filatov

1 of 3 > 79.50 - Light Woods(Bogushevsk) - Clear Turn:9 1941-08-14		
Axis Forces Attacking: VIII Corps 28th Infantry Division (111) 161st Infantry Division (80) 634th Gun Battalion (0) IV/109th Artillery Battalion (1) II/44th Howitzer Battalion (1) I/Lehr LW Mix Flk Bn (4) XX Corps -6% [v]	Forces Engaged ATK: men 87757, art 1163, afv 15 DAM: men 0, art 10, afv 1 LOST: men 120, art 2, afv 0 ATK: ftr 196, bmr 116, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 DEF: men 30621, art 307, afv 141 DAM: men 70, art 5, afv 5 LOST: men 29384, art 295, afv 136 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 64th Rifle Division SURRENDERED 233rd Rifle Division SURRENDERED 109th Motorized Division SURRENDERED Show Details Odds 9.28 : 1 Exit	Soviet Forces Defending: 16th Army 109th Motorized Division (76) 20th Army -20% 233rd Rifle Division (42) 13th Army -25% 64th Rifle Division (33) 15 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun CV: 151->103.3 Fort: 2.18->0.00 Comm HQ: 16th Army GL Mikhail Lukin

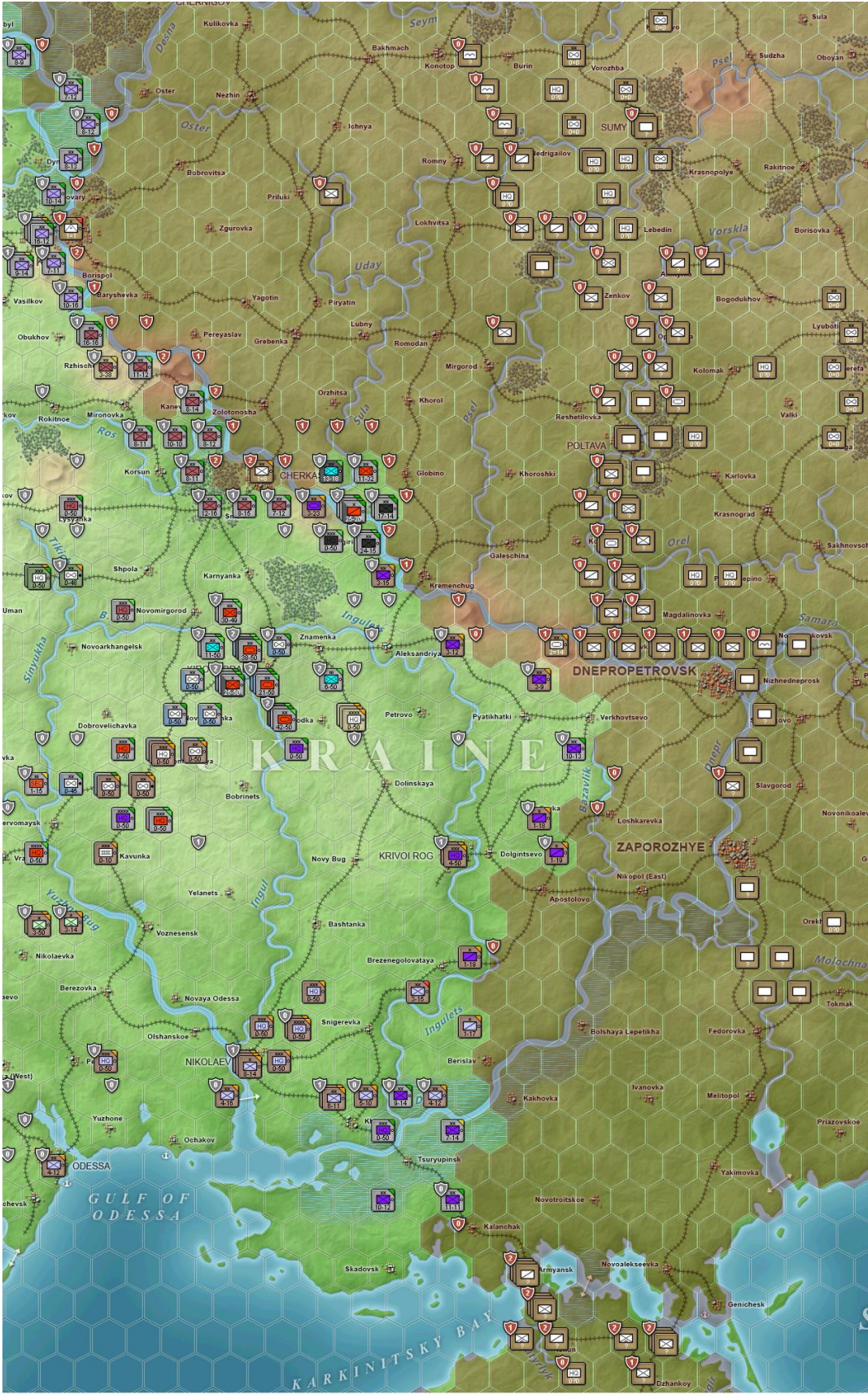
I was unable to exterminate the second pocket completely, leaving a total of six Rifle divisions still encircled in the area around Mogilev.

I have moved my Panzers north, so that they are closer to their rail heads, and I have also moved the 2nd Army onto rails, as I intend to move that army north to the Leningrad area, when I begin disengaging the Panzers from that area.

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



The South



Situational Assessment

In the south, the Soviets have pulled back from their defense of the Dnepr. They now hold a line along the Vorskla, running through Poltava. For obvious reasons, they will not have had time to fortify this line to any great degree yet.

My Panzers are now in great shape with fuel stores around the 160-170% mark.

The Soviet airfields have been withdrawn to a position just west of Kharkov.

Planning

I will launch an attack on the Soviet forces on the Vorskla river south of Poltava this turn. The objective is to break through and encircle the Soviet defenders left along the Dnepr west of Dnepropetrovsk. A benefit of this plan is that my Panzers will be in position next turn to either strike out towards Kharkov or else to the southeast in order to reach the area southwest of Stalino and effectively out maneuver the Soviets around Zaporozhye.

Further south, I will begin preparing the LIV Corps for the attack on the Crimean crossings. This will be done by assigning some Stug and Pioneer battallions to the divisions of the corps, and by assigning some artillery to the corps itself.

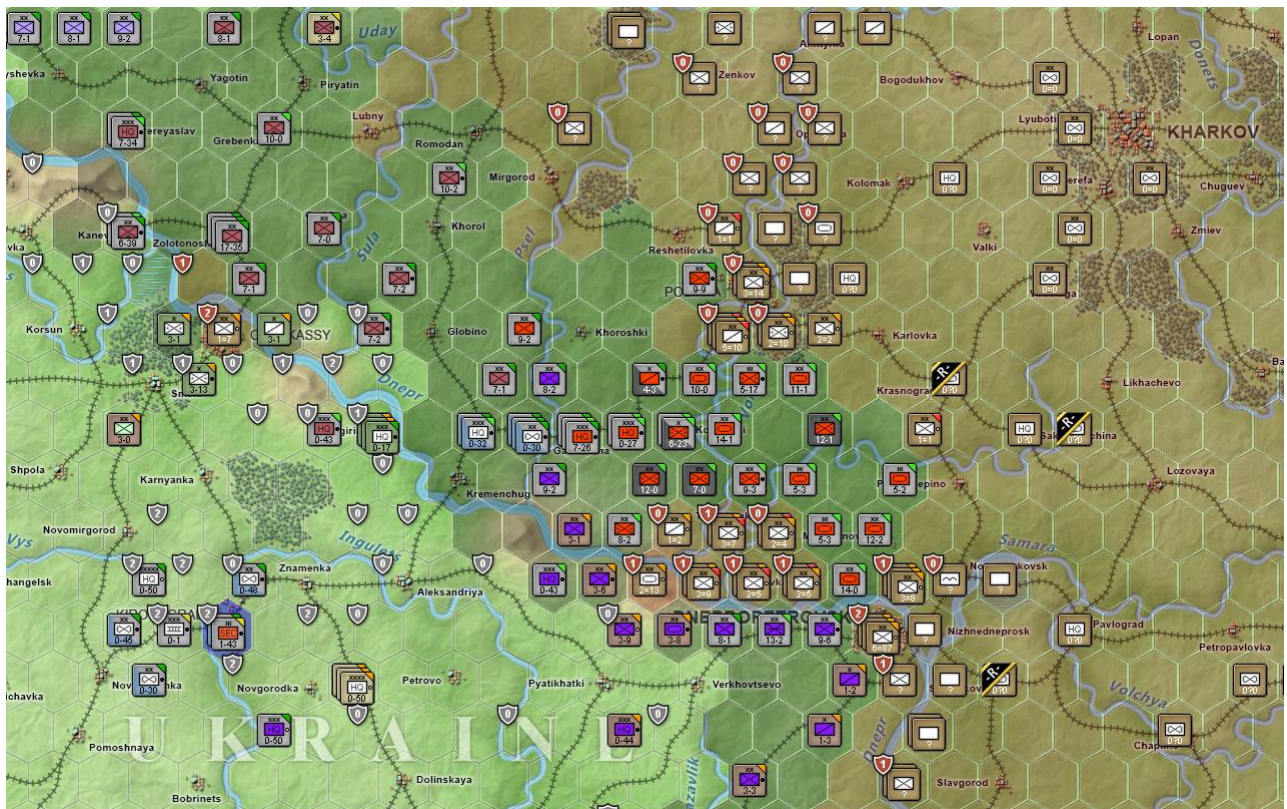
Execution

I began the turn in this area by a series of Luftwaffe bomber attacks on priority targets on various Soviet airfields, and followed up by some attacks by the local Hungarians.

Attacking the soviet forces west of Denproptetrovsk turned out to be a success. In total I have encircled two Tank divisions and nine Rifle divisions in this pocket, and it looks unlikely that the Soviets will break the pocket. As I had a "spare" division at this point, I moved it adjacent to Poltava, as the Soviets have yet to evacuate the Armaments industries from this city.

Further south, the LIV Corps is getting ready to attack the outer defenses of the Crimea crossings.

Below is an image of the situation southwest of Kharkov, as I give the turn to Dontra.



Conclusion

This turn has been costly for the Soviets. In total, they have lost 171.000 men, 1800 guns and 1800 AFV + SP/AC's this turn. Moreover, they still have two Tank divisions and sixteen Rifle divisions encircled as well as three Tank divisions and eleven Rifle divisions cut off in Leningrad. Axis ground losses are negligible in comparison.

By now, the total AFV strength of the Soviet OoB is now barely 1000 AFV stronger than the Axis one. With five more Tank divisions in peril, this number may soon change to an actual Axis advantage, although such a situation will certainly not last.

In the air, the Axis have lost 60 aircraft for 315 Soviet ones. Notable losses are twelve Bf109F-2's for the Germans and 24 SB-2 Rcn's for the Soviets. Comparing the relative fighter strength of the non I-Type Soviet fighters to the Luftwaffe fighters of course still show a Soviet numerical advantage of 2202 to 713 German fighters and fighter bombers.