

Turn 35, Strategic overview

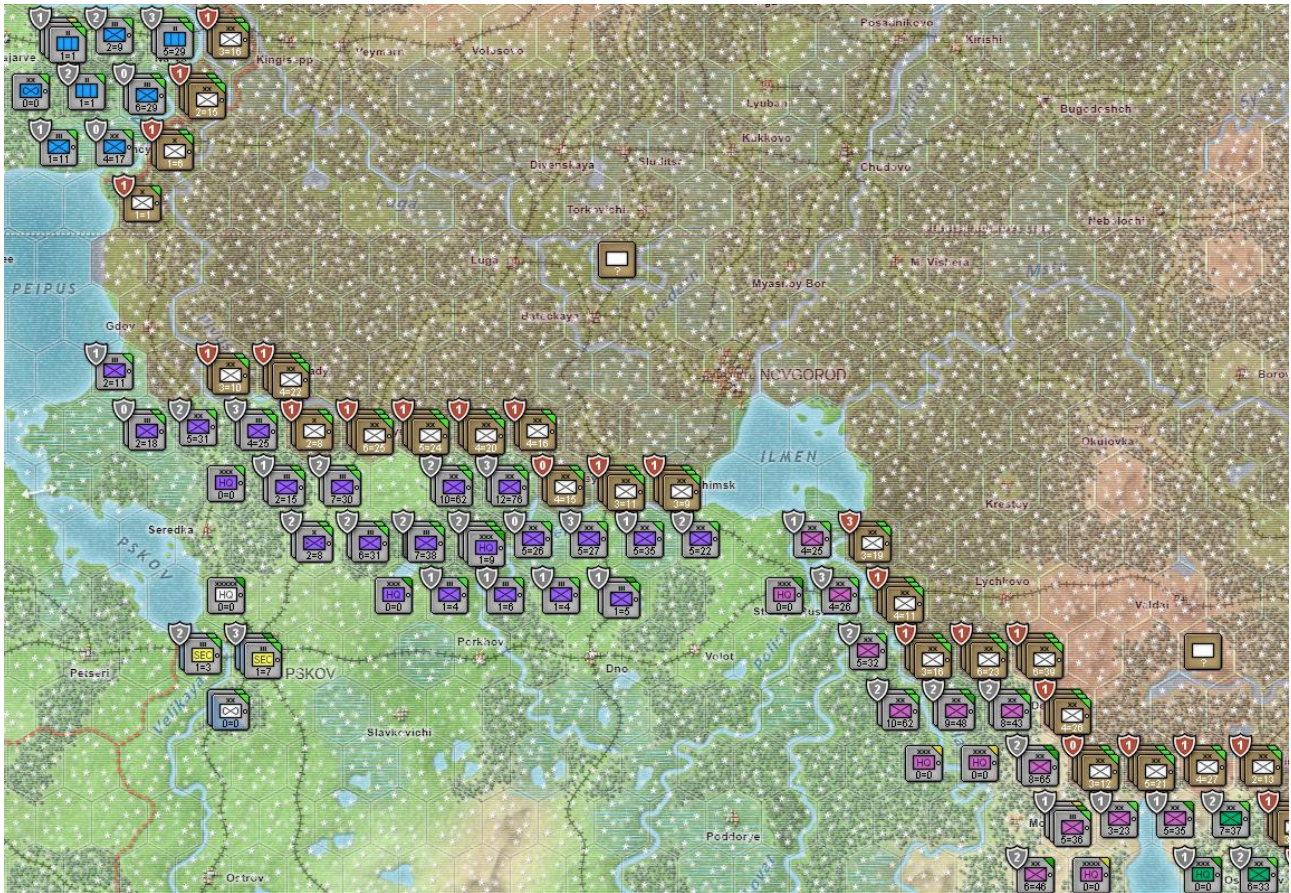
This turn, the Soviets have done four recon missions and one partisan attack, so losses continue to be very low. The Germans have lost less than 20.000 men, of which more than 16.000 have been merely disabled. The Germans also have 46.000 armament points available, but no more than 29.000 men in the manpower pool.

Losses of vehicles continue to be high, however, and the German vehicle pool is now down to 79.000 vehicles. This surprises me, as I have lost or damaged 11.942 vehicles this turn but produced or repaired 13.881 in total. By my math, this should lead to an increase in vehicle availability, but it has not. The only reason I can think of is units soaking up vehicles, so I will have to keep an eye on that over the coming turns. For now, I have 119.548 vehicles in my German units, 78.831 in my German vehicle pool and another 129.940 in repair (and repairing a maximum of 10.000 pr turn).

The Rumanians continue to build their manpower reserves (they now have 55.000) but are completely dry on armament points, while the Hungarians have 23.000 manpower and 34.000 armament points in their reserve pool.

As for planning a march attack, it seems that the Germans will be unable to bring the Panzers together in significant numbers. Rail limitations suggest that I will be able to move no more than five divisions pr turn for the remaining turns of February, and moving the Panzers into position by normal movement, will simply deplete their fuel stores.

The North



Situational assessment

The north does not even deserve a section in the report, as absolutely nothing is happening.

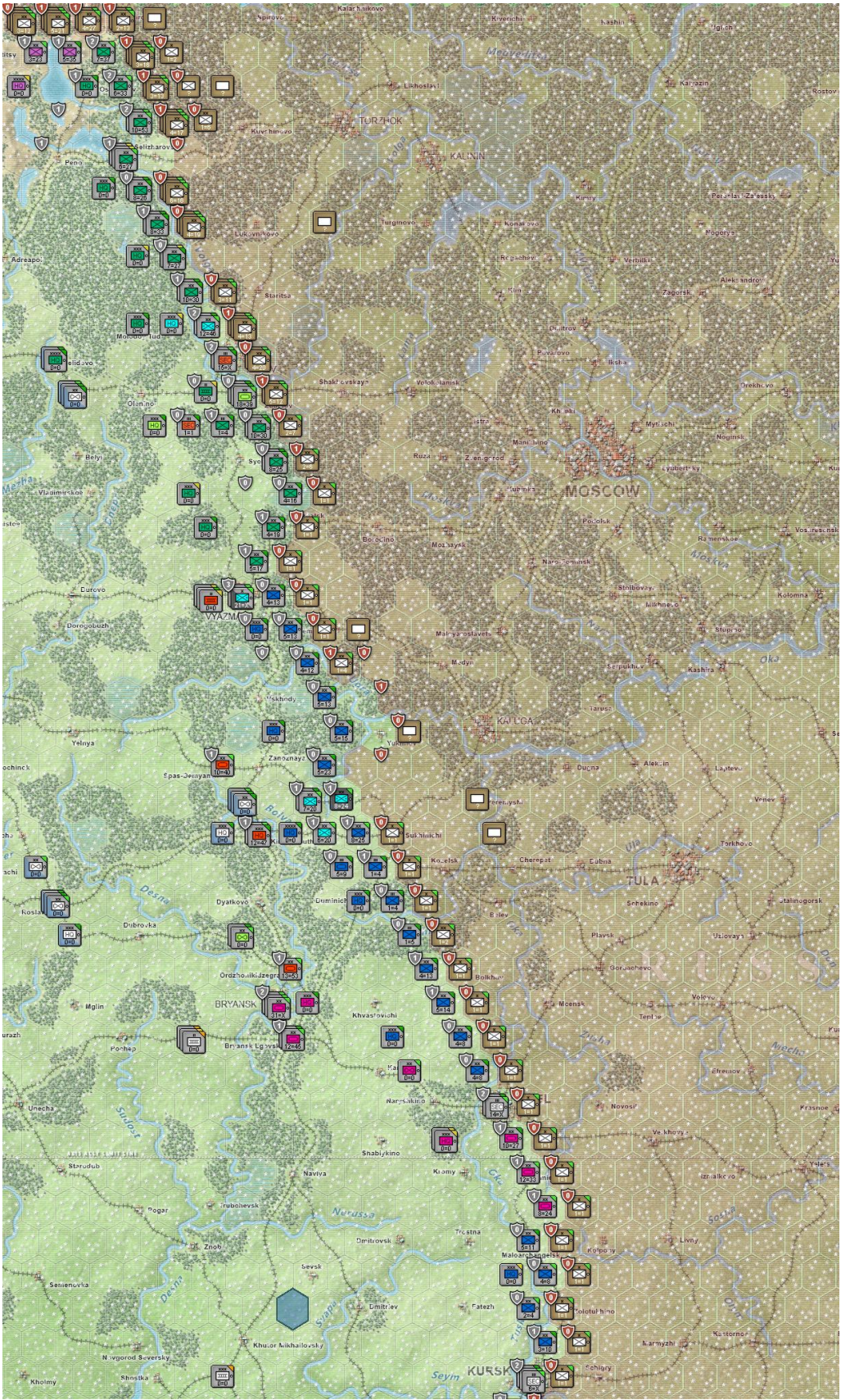
Planning

I plan to do nothing.

Execution

Nothing has happened.

The Center



Situational Assessment

The Soviets have stayed quiet this turn. Even the Soviet airforce has been inactive, and the Soviets have not even tried to intercept my recon missions done in the area.

Planning

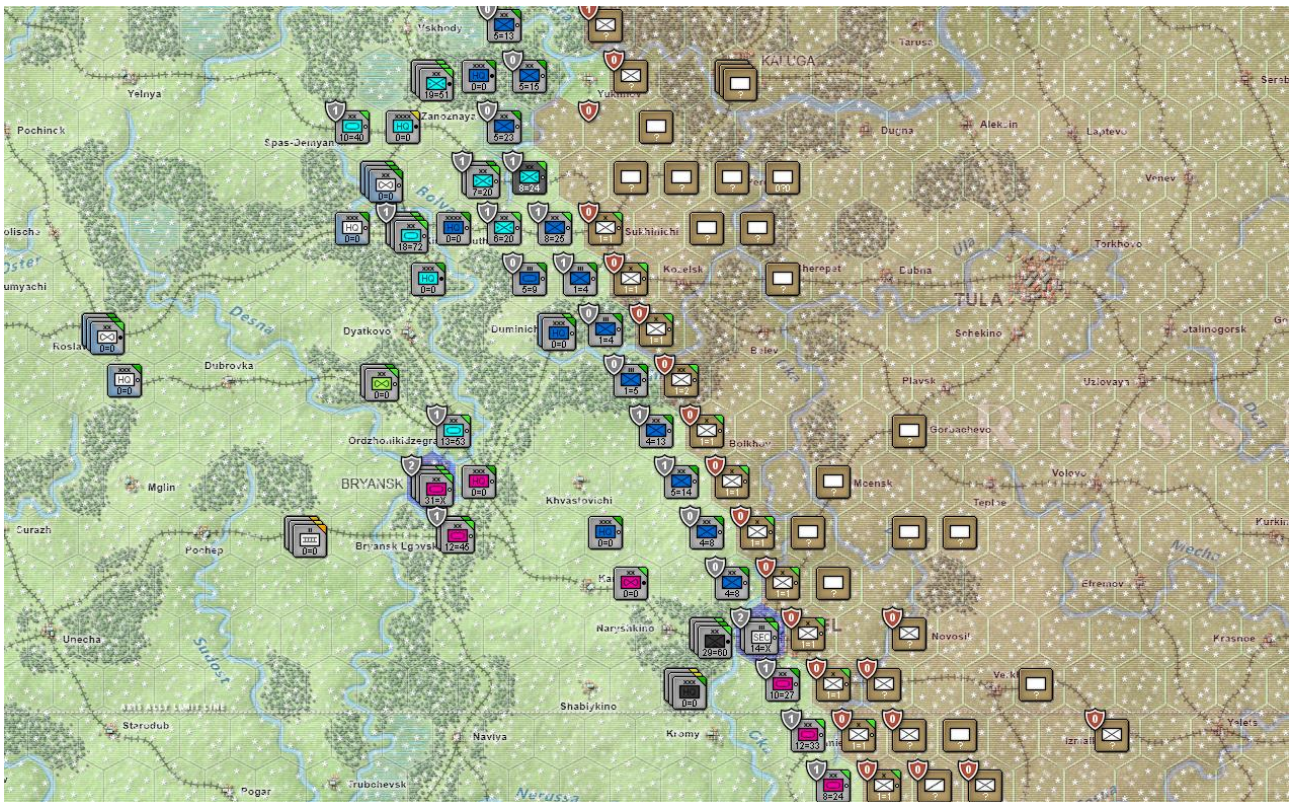
As I have rather few locations where I can move my Panzers straight up to the front by rail, I have decided to concentrate them yet again around Sukhinichi and have another go at the Soviets in this area come March. I will make a two pronged attack, using the 4th Panzer Army to attack northeast in the area around Bolkhov and the 2nd Panzer Army to attack east from Yukhnov to Kaluga. To cover the flanks of the attacks, I will use the LII Corps (with four Mountain divisions) to attack east at Orel and the 3rd Panzer Army to circle Kaluga from the north.

In order to bring my attacking units into position, I will have to use most of my rail capacity for this turn and the next. The Local Luftwaffe units will be charged with bringing themselves into position. To support the attacks, I will also begin to reassign fighters to the airfields in the area.

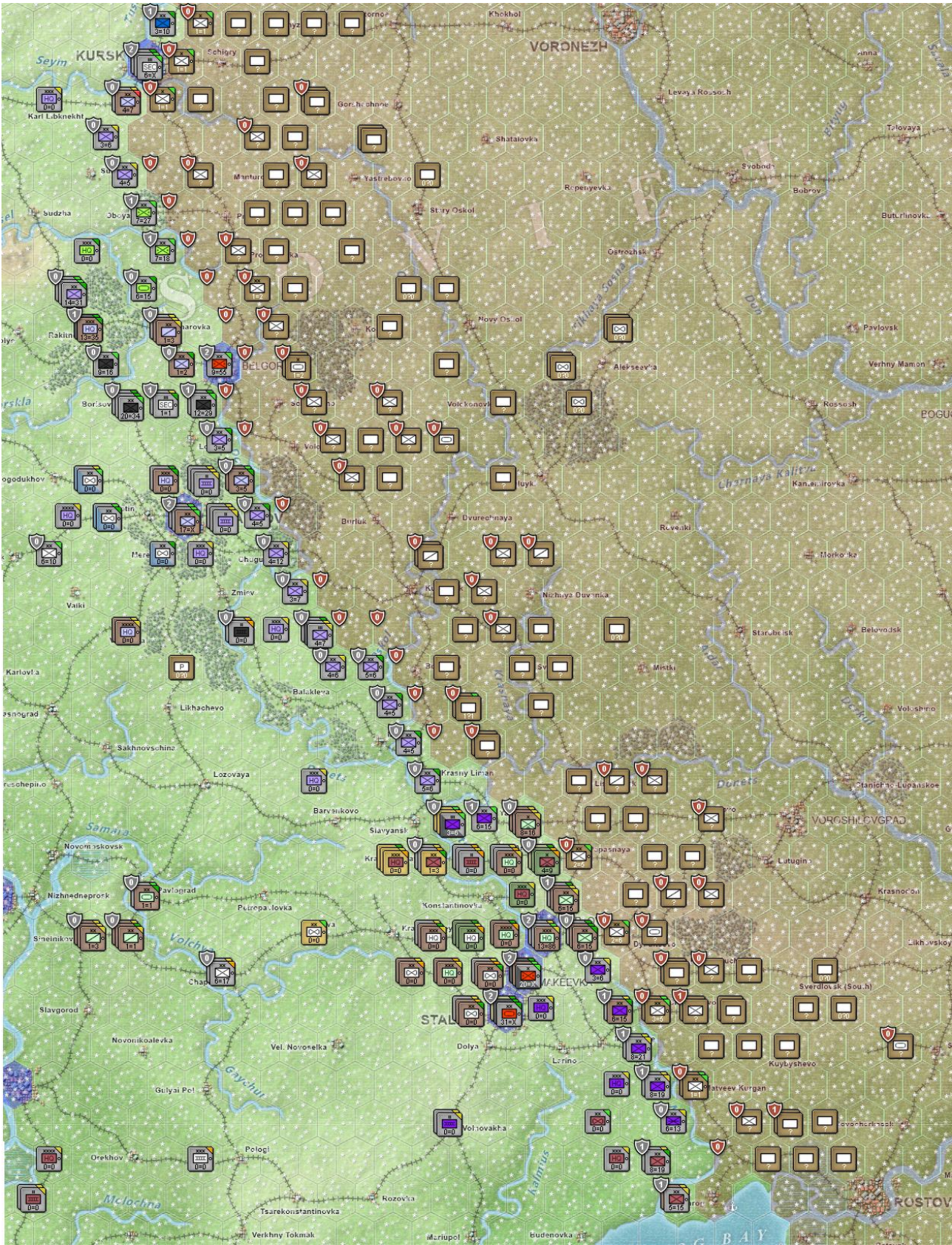
Execution

In the center, I have been concentrating forces for the coming attack, as well as moving Luftwaffe assets into the area where I plan to attack.

The situation around Bryansk looks like this, as I give the turn to HardLuck.



The South



Situational assessment

In the south, the Soviets have withdrawn a large part of their forces one hex this turn, leaving a buffer between the Soviets and the Axis forces. Other than that, only a few recon missions and one partisan attack has occurred.

I will deal with Crimea in a separate section.

Planning

As I will be beginning to ship forces north to participate in the March offensive, I will not have the strength to attack much in the south.

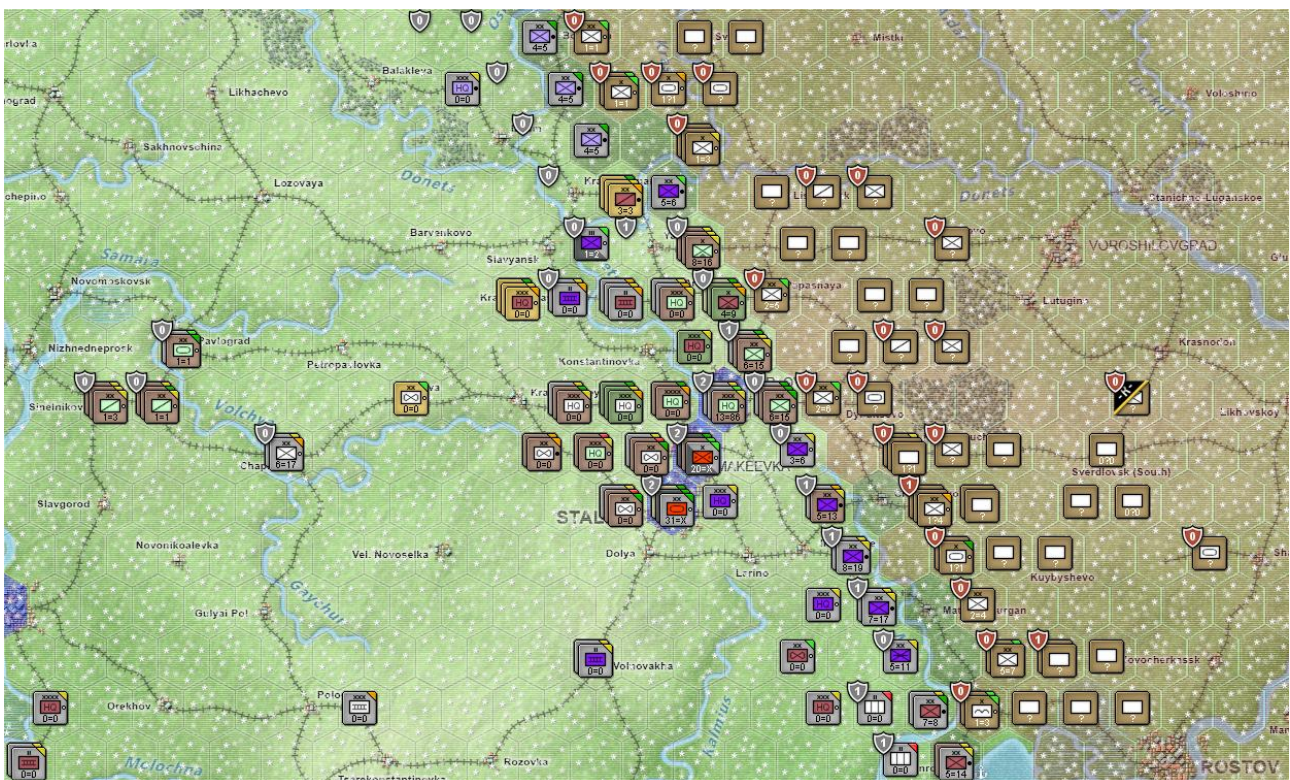
However, I will be following the Soviet withdrawal, partly to mask my own intentions for March and partly to gain a little terrain in the south before the main summer offensive.

Execution

In the northern part of the southern area, I have replaced a few of my Panzers on the line, while also pushing my infantry units forward a little.

Further south, I have conducted a few attacks, pushing the forward Soviet units back a little. I have also pushed one or two of my own units forward and constructed two fortified zones to maintain the fortifications at Mius over the summer months.

The situation north of the Sea of Azov looks like this, as I give the turn to HardLuck.



Sevastopol



Situational assessment

Weather around Sevastopol is only snow this turn, which should help the Germans a little during their attacks, as they will suffer less breakdowns in material.

The Soviets still hold the outer defenses with to level 4.10 fortifications, the northernmost having a CV of 5=43, while the southern is only at 3=38.

Opposite this force, I have six infantry divisions and a Mountain division, about eight or nine engineer battalions ready to be assigned here and an airforce with 80 level bomber and 120 dive bombers.

Planning

I don't think I have ever been attacking these heavy fortifications with the Germans, so I am making up my attack plans as I go along. My primary objective this turn is to reduce the northern Soviet fortification level as well as inflict fatigue and ammunition shortages on the defenders.

In order to do this, I will initially make a couple of ground bombing attacks by my level bombers, followed by four prepared attacks by three divisions each. To support the attacks, I will set ground support level very high.

Execution

Below, I will go through the attack execution.

- 1) I initiated the attacks by a couple of day bombing attacks by my local Ju88 bombers, saving my dive bombers for ground support. These attacks cost the Soviets no more than 70 men lost and 1000 men disrupted. The fortification levels did not change at all and remained 4.10. The CV of the hex did change however, and ended up at 6=40.
- 2) I assigned seven Pioneer battalions to the IV Corps, changing the shown CV from 20=52 to 25=62 and set ground support level to 300 before commencing the first attack by the IV Corps. The initial air attack disrupted about 1.300 of the Soviet defenders, proving the value of ground support by

aircraft. Unfortunately, the following attack was rather costly and reduced the attacking stacks CV to 10=49. It failed to reduce the Soviet fortification level by more than 0.04, but did change the supply level of the defending Soviets to yellow on all divisions.

1 of 3 > 94,121 - Light Woods - Snow Turn:36 1942-02-19		
Axis Forces Attacking:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Defending:
IV Corps 24th Infantry Division (120) 71st Infantry Division (117) 262nd Infantry Division (86) II/52nd Artillery Battalion (0) 851st Howitzer Battalion (0) IV/207th Howitzer Battalion (0) 423rd Howitzer Battalion (0)	ATK: men 51717, art 534, afv 23 DAM: men 248, art 22, afv 1 LOST: men 640, art 10, afv 2 ATK: ftr 60, bmr 77, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	DEF: men 32598, art 495, afv 0 DAM: men 68, art 1, afv 0 LOST: men 141, art 5, afv 0 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0
	Defending Forces HELD	
CV: 409->665.6 Eng Val: 4 Comm HQ: IV Corps GO Viktor von Schwedler	Show Details Odds 1 : 1.79 Exit	44th Army 127th Rifle Division (258) 296th Rifle Division (239) 321st Rifle Division (213) 102nd Howitzer Regiment (1) 537th BM Howitzer Regiment (1) 637th Art Rgt RVGK (1) 614th Army Art Rgt (1)
		CV: 714->1196.2 Fort: 4.10->4.06 Comm HQ: 44th Army GM Stepan Mamonov

- 3) I then moved the 100th light infantry division into place, assigned an extra Poinoeer batallion to one of the local divisions, and then attacked with a fresh stack of 26=X. This attack saw the initial number of Soviet defenders drop by about 5.000 and proceeded to be a very delightful surprise: It succeeded!

< 2 of 4 > 94,121 - Light Woods - Snow Turn:36 1942-02-19		
Axis Forces Attacking:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Defending:
XXXXIX Mountain Corps 292nd Infantry Division (102) 267th Infantry Division (97) 100th Lt Inf Div (165) 52nd Nebelwerfer Regiment (2) 635th Howitzer Battalion (0) 740th Gun Battalion (0) II/53rd Howitzer Battalion (0)	ATK: men 52875, art 631, afv 41 DAM: men 87, art 20, afv 2 LOST: men 424, art 8, afv 0 ATK: ftr 101, bmr 102, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	DEF: men 27684, art 414, afv 0 DAM: men 215, art 12, afv 0 LOST: men 1360, art 24, afv 0 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0
	321st Rifle Division RETREATED 296th Rifle Division SURRENDERED 127th Rifle Division ROUTED	44th Army 127th Rifle Division (235) 296th Rifle Division (208) 321st Rifle Division (188) 637th Art Rgt RVGK (1) 316th Heavy Mortar Battalion (0)
CV: 416->761.5 Eng Val: 4 Comm HQ: XXXIX Mountain Corps GO Lothar Rendulic	Show Details Odds 2.16 : 1 Exit	14 -> 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun CV: 632->351.8 Fort: 4.06->0.00 Comm HQ: 44th Army GM Stepan Mamonov

- 4) I have absolutely no idea how it came about, but at this time, the CV of the Soviet unit I had not yet attacked had changed into 4=40, and I proceeded to attack with two ground bombing attacks. As usage of my dive bombers were low at this point, I decided to use those aircraft in tha attacks as well as my remaining level bombers. Once again, these attacks failed to impact the fortifications, but did kill off 50 defenders and disrupt another 3.700.
- 5) Next I replaced one division on the front that no longer had sufficient movement for an attack and did a prepared attack on the southern stack with a CV ratio of 24=X against 4=40. This attack failed, but saw a significant reduction on the amount of damage done to the German attackers.

1 of 3 > 95,122 - Rough - Snow Turn:36 1942-02-19		
Axis Forces Attacking:	Forces Engaged	Soviet Forces Defending:
XXXXIX Mountain Corps 292nd Infantry Division (87) 17th Infantry Division (112) 100th Lt Inf Div (137) 52nd Nebelwerfer Regiment (2) 1st Lehr Nbl W. Rgt (2) 635th Howitzer Battalion (0) II/53rd Howitzer Battalion (0)	ATK: men 56701, art 757, afv 21 DAM: men 134, art 19, afv 1 LOST: men 270, art 10, afv 1 ATK: ftr 64, bmr 90, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0	DEF: men 24880, art 347, afv 0 DAM: men 94, art 5, afv 0 LOST: men 165, art 6, afv 0 DEF: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0 LOST: ftr 0, bmr 0, utl 0
	Defending Forces HELD	
CV: 403->731.0 Eng Val: 6 Comm HQ: XXXIX Mountain Corps GO Lothar Rendulic	Show Details Odds 1.03 : 1 Exit	44th Army 276th Rifle Division (285) 421st Rifle Division (191) 8th Naval Infantry Brigade (190) 102nd Howitzer Regiment (1) 537th BM Howitzer Regiment (1) 316th Heavy Mortar Battalion (0)
		CV: 668->706.1 Fort: 4.10->4.04 Comm HQ: 44th Army GM Stepan Mamonov

- 6) This left the situation depicted below at the end of my turn. Come next turn, the Soviets will have to either move the Army HQ away from Sevastopol to stock up on CV, or else have less defenses available in the fortress. Either way, the support units should be unwilling to commit to a battle for the remaining approaches, as they are now adjacent to the German attackers.



Conclusion

Since my last turn, I have lost 23.000 men, of which 17.000 are disabled. I have also lost 220 guns and 26 AFV + SP/AC's.

On the bright side, I am getting into position for a small push south of Kaluga in a few turns, and should the Soviets continue to refrain from doing recon missions, I might even obtain some level of surprise.

Around Sevastopol, my attack is going better than I had dared to hope, and I currently think the fall of the fortress before to long is all but a certainty. We shall see if I am just being fooliishly arrogant or if I can assess the situation correctly.