Turn 38, Strategic overview

This turn, the Soviets have pulled back their front line in most places. Only in front of Moscow and in the northern part of the center, do the Soviets still stay in their winter positions. The result has been very limited losses, in that the Axis has only lost some 14.000 men this turn, of which nearly 12.000 has been merely disabled.

On the ground, the Soviet withdrawal of forces has led to a situation where there is now up to three hexes between the German forces poised to attack and the Soviet front line. As I have only four turns of March before the mud and I have also announced my plans to attack in the turn 34 AAR, I will need to make quick alterations if I wish to attack at all in March.

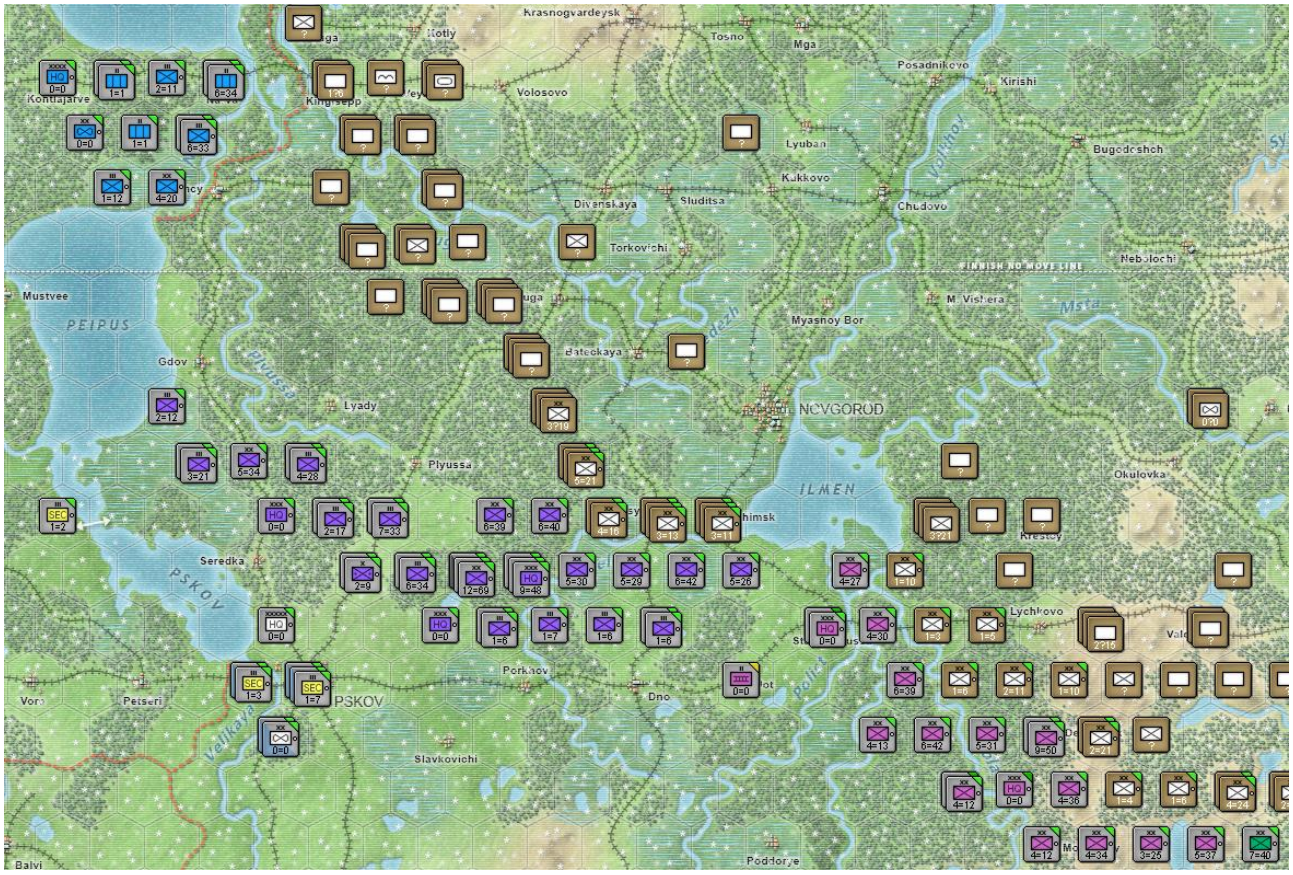
German armaments are now 64.000, even though I have reset the strength of three Panzer Armies. It seems my lack of armaments are temporarily over.

My vehicle pool has grown to 83.000 however, and I am now repairing 25.000 vehicles in Germany each turn. Given that the total amount of damaged vehicles this turn was 9.590, this should mean I will be in proper shape after the rasputitsa.

Productionwise, I have begun producing another night fighter, the Do 217J. As with the other German night fighters, production numbers are low, and I expect little impact from this aircraft.

Of more value is the construction of the Pzkpfw IVG. Production is currently 11 pr turn, but will rise to 21 – with 80% going east. The special thing with this Panzer is that it is armed with a long barreled 75mm gun, and should be well suited for fighting the Soviet tanks. Sadly, the Stug IIIB went out of production this week, and it will be a month before the Stug IIIF enters production (but with production numbers of up to 16 pr turn).

The North



Situational assessment

In the north, the Soviets have pulled back from the area around the Plyussa river and have formed a line stretching southeast from the Bay of Finland to Lake Ilmen. In front of the Soviets are a lot of forested terrain with few towns and rail links.

Southeast of Lake Ilmen, the Soviets have remained in position, although they have pulled their stronger units off the lines.

Planning

I will do a few things in the north, but nothing really serious.

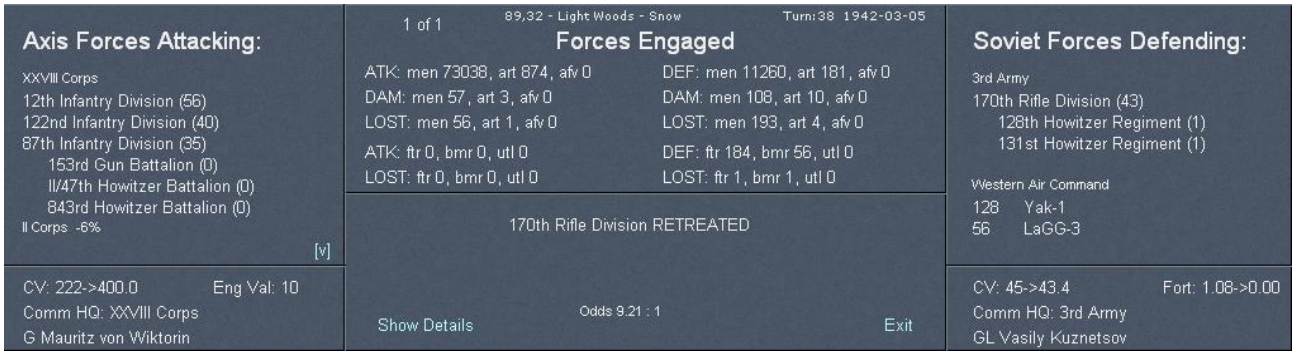
First, I will swap the terrain of those few towns left in front of the Soviet withdrawal. This will only swap a total of two population points, so the results should be fairly necligible.

Second, I will do a few attacks on the weak Soviets frontline units southeast of Lake Ilmen. The main objective is to see how attacks will impact losses at this stage of the war, and I also wish to see if I can raise the morale of a German division or two.

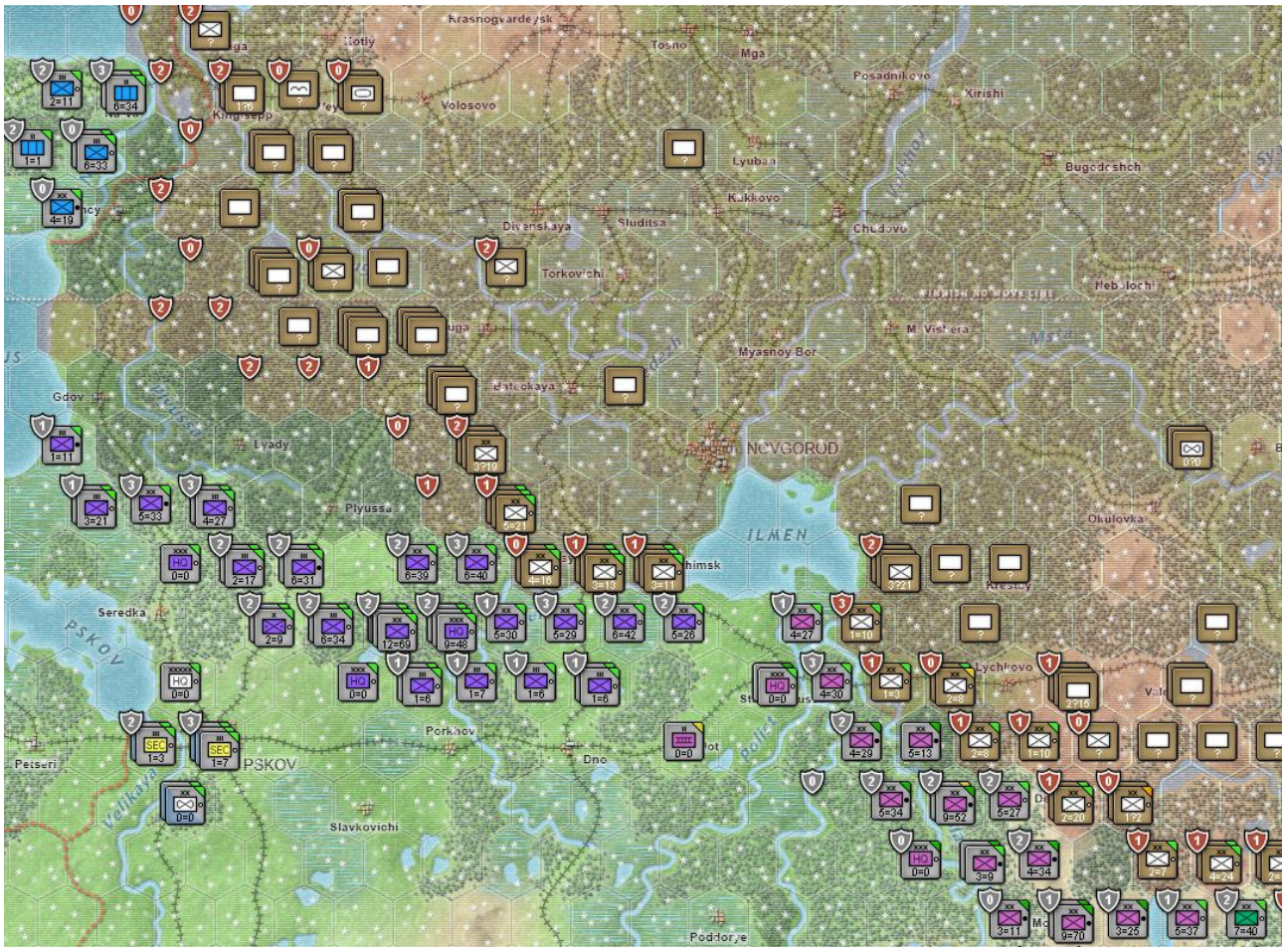
Execution

The two attacks I did in the north proved that lone Soviet Rifle divisions are no match for masses of German infantry when I comes to giving casualties. For once, the attack proved as able to inflict losses as the

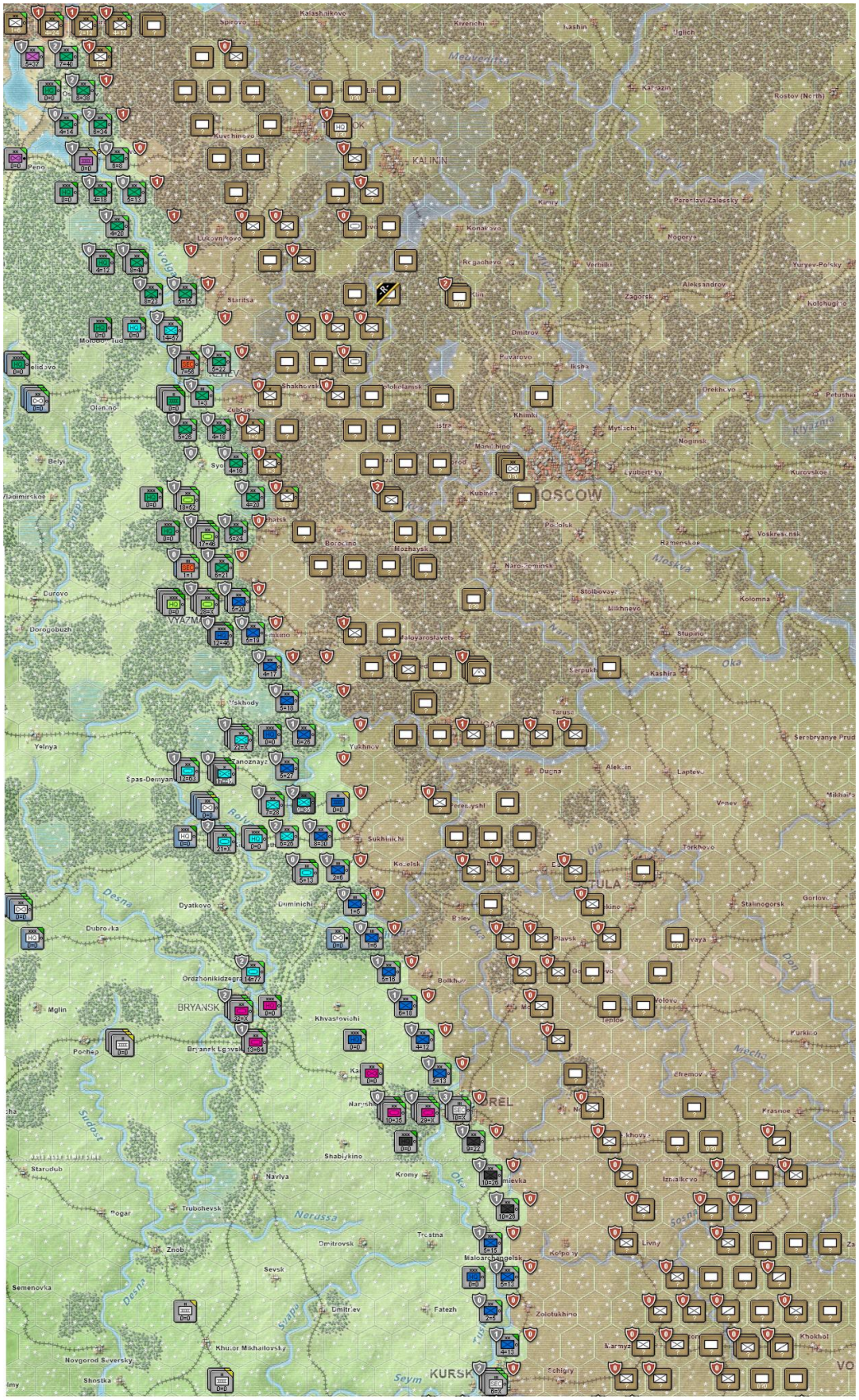
defense. The attacks also proved that German Infantry Divisions with morale less than National Morale, could gain significant morale by such attacks.



The north looks like this, as I give the turn to HardLuck



The Center


KALININ
MOSCOW
VYAZMA
TULA
BRYANSK
OREL
KURSK
Moskva
Oka
Desna
Nerussa
Seym

Situational Assessment

In the center, the Soviets have pulled back their forces along almost all of the frontline. No attacks or recon attempts have been made, and the Soviets do no fly interception against my recon missions.

The forces left along the German lines are weak, and it seems they are to function merely as a buffer before the main line of resistance some hexes back.

The German Panzers are now ready to surge forward, but there is little point in doing so, when they will all have to spend a lot of MP before even reaching the Soviet lines.

Planning

My main effort this turn will be to use my infantry to push my lines forward as much as possible, hoping for an opportunity to launch a Panzer attack come next turn. If this should fail, I will have no option but to wait to the end of the muddy season before launching further attacks.

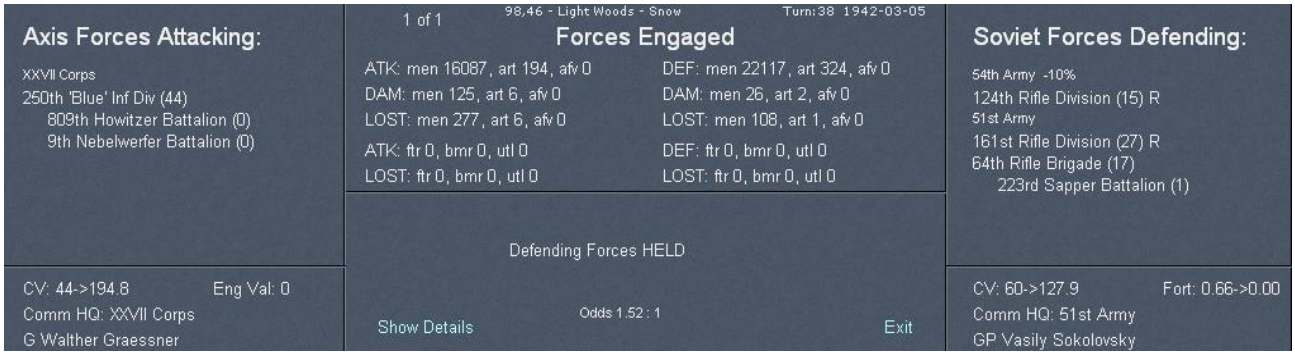
In order to do this, I intend to conduct a series of attacks where the Soviet forces are adjacent to the Germans and otherwise push my forces forward into the area left by the Soviets. If the Soviets decide to counterattack, this will cost them movement they could have used better when the German main attack comes.

In order to conceal my intentions, I will not be using the Luftwaffe to support my attacks.

Execution

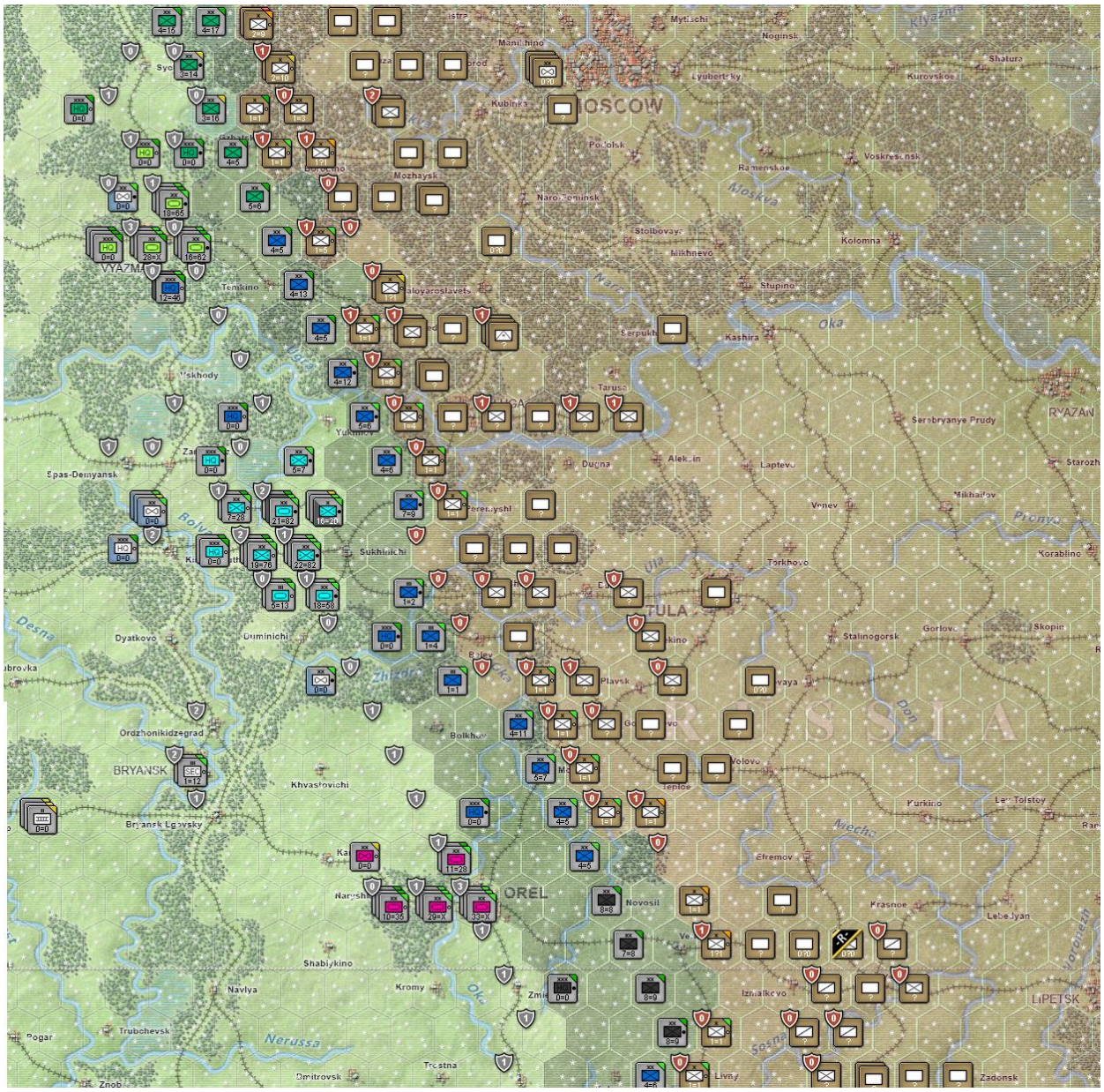
In the far north, the first attack saw a rather large force of Soviet aircraft flying in support of the ground forces. Those Soviets were more or less irrelevant to the battle however, as the combined airforces only managed to damage two elements and disrupt another seven at a cost of six aircraft.

Further south, west of Moscow, I have also pushed forward in a series of infantry attacks. Some of these were successful, while others got stranded on Soviet activation of reserves.

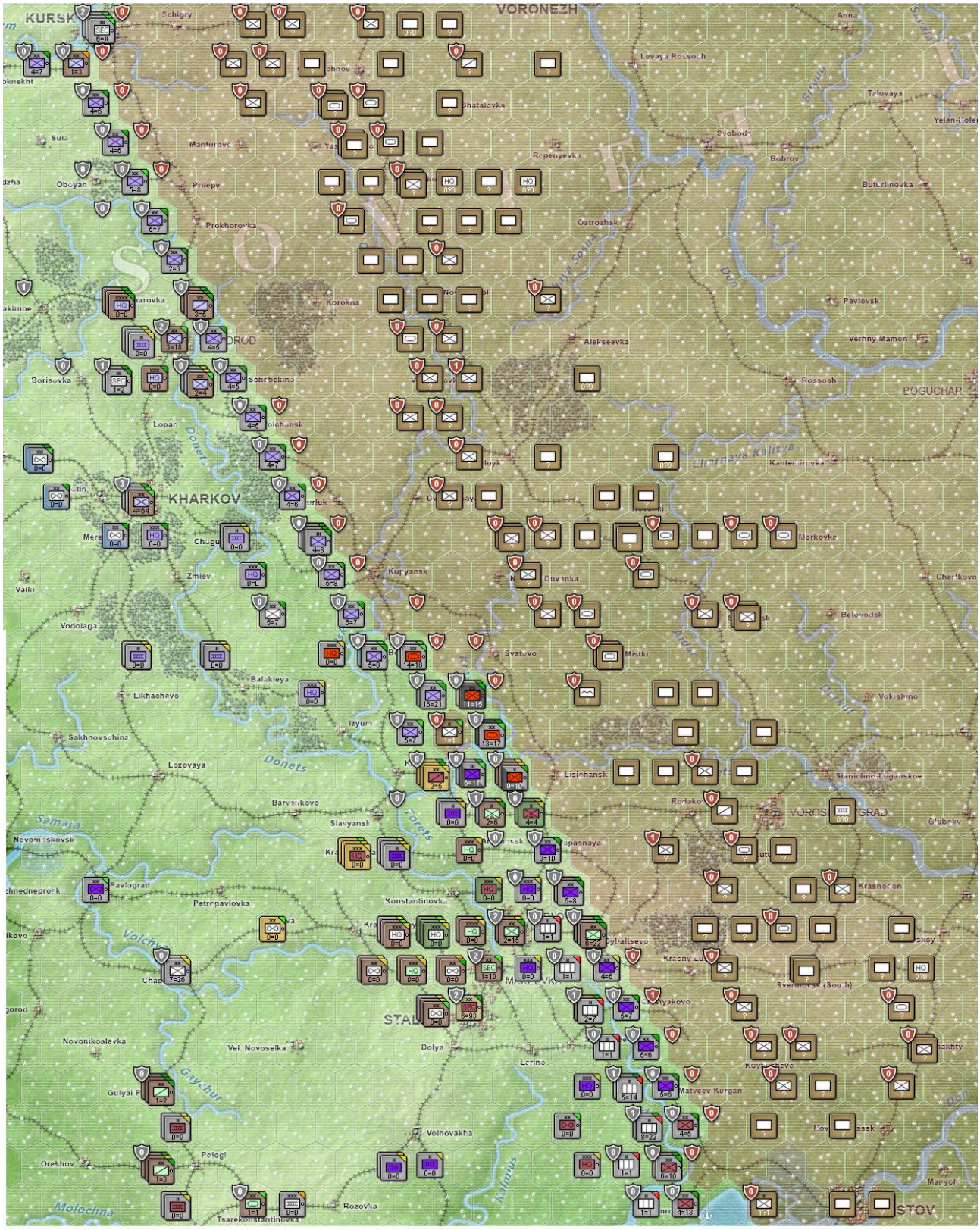


Finally, I have done two HQBU's in order to support the coming attack with some movement. We shall see if the Soviets continue to pull back, or if the attack can get underway.

The situation in the center looks like this, as I give the turn to HardLuck.



The South


KURSK
VORONEZH
KHARKOV
BOGUCHAR
Donets
Kalitva
Aidar
Torets
Samara
Volchya
Gaychur
Kalmius
Molochna
Schigry
Anna
Levaya Rossosh
Talovaya
Shatalovka
Sula
Manturovo
Repenyevka
Svoboda
Bobrov
Obcyan
Prilepy
Butirinovka
Prokhorovka
Ostrozhsk
Korotna
Pavlovsk
Alekseevka
Verhny Mamon
Borisovka
Rossosh
Lopan
Kantemirovka
Morkovka
Zmiev
Kuryansk
Cherkovo
Vodolaga
Belovodsk
Svatovo
Mistki
Balakleya
Likhachevo
Volokhino
Sakhnovshina
Izyum
Lozovaya
Lisichansk
Stanichno-Luganskoe
Barvenkovo
Slavyansk
VOROSHILOVGRAD
Novomoskovsk
Pavlograd
Krasnodon
Petropavlovka
Konstantinovka
Sverdlovsk (South)
Novonikolaevka
Vel. Novoselka
Dolya
Lerino
Matveev Kurgan
Volnovakha
Orekhov
Pologi
Rozovka
Tsarekonstantinovka
Marych
STOV

Situational assessment

In the south, the Soviets have disengaged along the entire front. The only contact between the Axis and the Soviets are the encircled Rifle Brigade north of Gorlovka.

On Crimea, the Soviets have abandoned Sevastopol, and the battle for that fortress has come to an end.

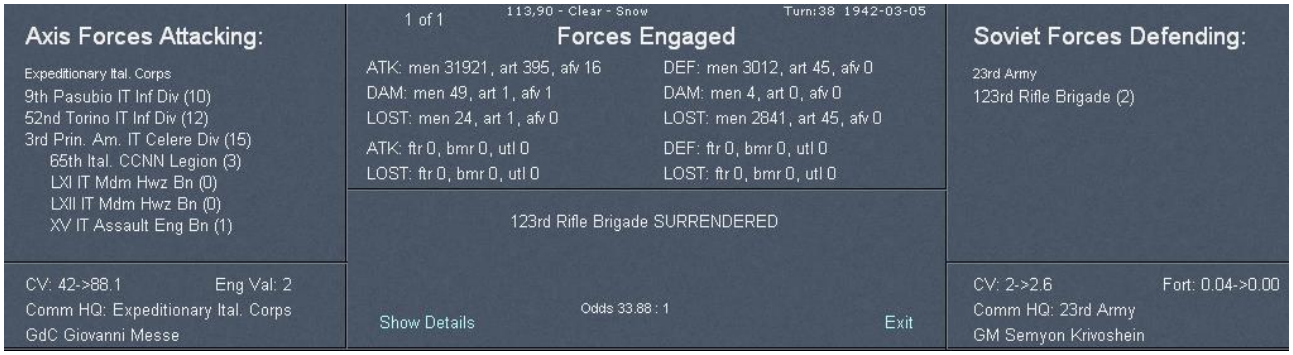
Planning

Much as in the center, I will be following the Soviets east in this area. In the deep south, I will push all the way up to the Soviet lines, while further north I will leave a bufferzone between myself and the Soviets. This is largely due to the fact that I simply do not have the movement to push all the way up to the Soviet lines through the snow.

On Crimea, I will send a division to capture Sevastopol and then begin bringing my other forces northeast to Kerch. If possible, I wish to clear that bridgehead before summer.

Execution

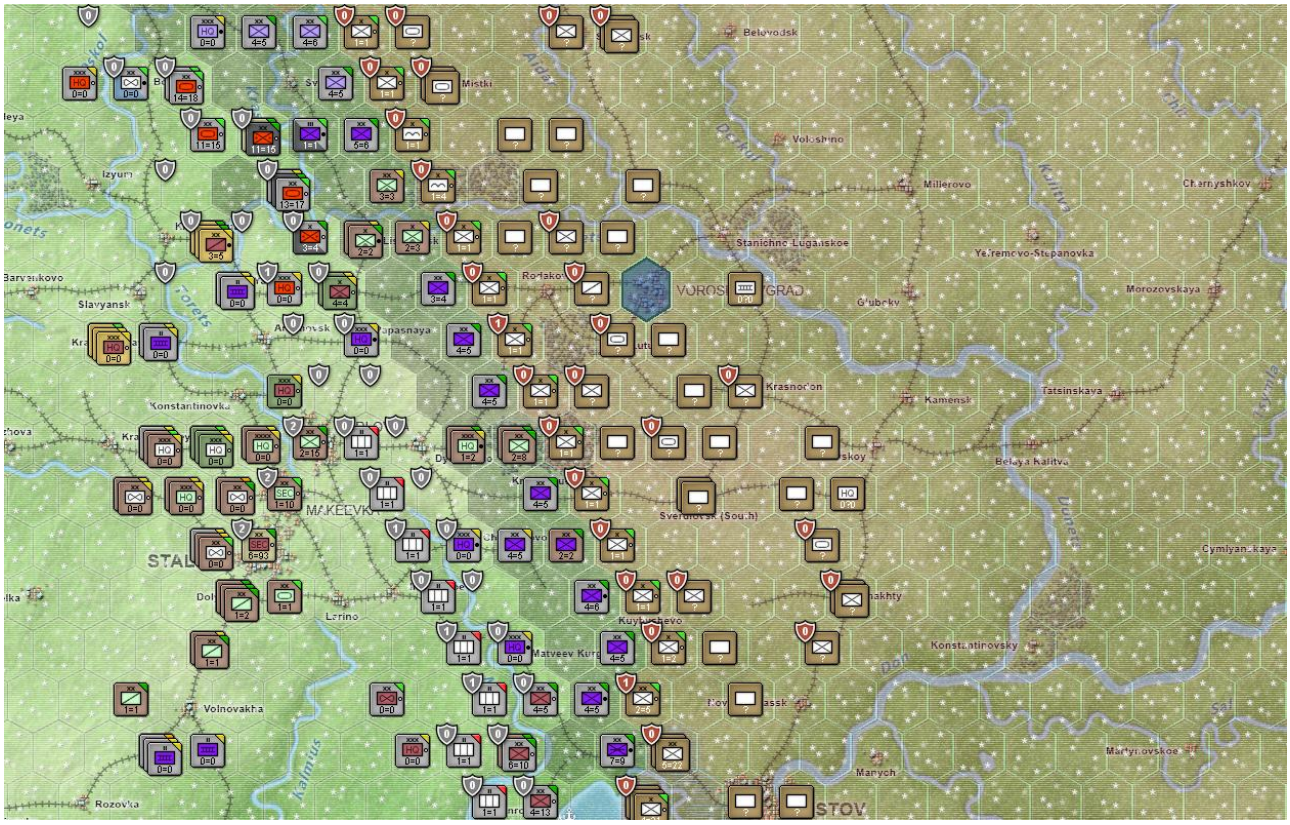
The only battle in the south, saw three Italian divisions conquer the encircled Soviet Rifle Brigade.



Elsewhere, the turns has been spent moving east, following the retreating Soviets. Whatever ground I can take this wasy will be that much less ground to cover come summer.

On Crimea, the Germans and Rumanians have begun closing in on Kerch, but apparently, the Soviets are already building a scondary line in the swamps east of the crossing. I wonder if I will be able to cross while there is still heavy ice in place.

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


Belovodsk
Mistki
Volushino
Millerovo
Chernyshkov
Izyum
Stanichno-Luganskoe
Yeremeyevo-Stepanovka
Barvenkovo
Slavyansk
Rovenki
VOROSHILOVGRAD
Gubkin
Morozovskaya
Krasnodon
Kamensk
Tatsinskaya
Konstantinovka
Belaya Kalitva
MAKEEVKA
Sverdlovsk (South)
Cymlyanskaya
Lozno
Kuybyshevo
Matveev Kurgan
Konstantinovsky
Volnovakha
Marfinovskoe
Marinovka
Rozovka
Donets
Don
Kalmius
Kalitva
Aidar
Derkul
Tsimla

Conclusion

Since my last turn, I have lost 16.000 men, of which 12.000 are disabled. I have also lost 130 guns and 23 AFV + SP/AC's. In short, my production should currently be building up the German Wehrmacht for the coming battles.

The withdrawal of Soviet forces has meant that there has so far been no winter battle, but gaining up to three hexrows in the snowy months of March might not be to bad either. If the Soviets keep onpulling back this fast, they will be giving up a lot of ground.

Around Kerch, the battle is about to begin. I hope to be able to throw the Soviets back over the straits and to cross while there is still heavy ice cover. If I can do so, there will be one more position the Soviets will have to worry about during the summer.