VICTORY ROADS

ГВАРДИЯ

FROM BAGRATION TO THE FALL OF BERLIN
1944-1945

HEXASIM

VICTORY ROADS

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Foreword :

These rules are split into Basic and Advanced Rules. Basic Rules are sufficient to play the Hungary 1945 and Berlin 1945 scenarios; which will help you get used to the main game mechanics.

Some rules have a grey background. They do not apply to these scenarios, so you can skip them.

For those who already played Liberty Roads *:*

Players who are used to play with Liberty Roads should find Victory Roads very familiar. The main difference the game offers relies in the way to handle the Soviet player's offensive. Theaters of Operation markers are somewhat similar to PLUTO markers although slightly more tricky to handle, especially combined with the rules pertaining to Soviet Infantry Corps. Some other rules simulate the specifics of this front.

BASIC RULES

1 EXPLANATION OF GAME TERMS

1.1 Units

1.1.1 Combat units (named "units" in the rules) represent the military formations of the two opposing sides that took part in the military operations simulated in this game.

1.1.2 There are three types of units:

☆ German divisions or Soviet army corps,

☆ Headquarters (HQ),

☆ German armored and infantry "Kampfgruppen" (KG).

For sake of simplicity, the term 'division' shall apply to both divisions and army corps. Therefore, rules applying to divisions apply to army corps as well unless otherwise specified. Rules applying to army corps apply only to army corps.

1.1.3 Each division is defined by the following:

Elite capacity — Unit designation — Attack strength — Movement Points — Defense strength
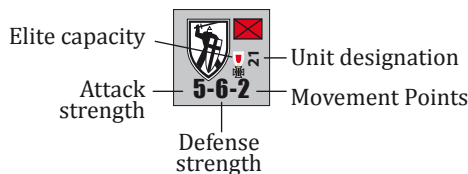
The back side of a division represents the exact same unit, but with reduced abilities, due to combat losses (we say that divisions have two step losses. (*cf. 1.3*).

Note: *Soviet Infantry Corps are subject to specific rules (cf.10).*

1.1.4 A division can either be an armored unit or an infantry unit.

An **armored division** is printed with a tank or with a horse's head (Soviet cavalry units only) icon in the middle of the counter, and with the historical division symbol in the upper right; its counter color is slightly darker than other units of the same nationality for ease of play.
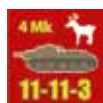
An **infantry division** has its historical division symbol in the middle of the counter and an infantry NATO symbol in the upper right corner of the counter.

The various NATO symbols used in the game are the following:

⊠	Infantry	⊠	Mountain infantry
⊠	Motorized infantry	⊿	Cavalry
VG	Volksgrenadier	VS	Volkssturm
☐	Static infantry	⊠	Paratroopers
⊟	Feldersatz	⊿	Flak
S	Security (Sicherungs)	⊓	Jäger
⊞	Ski (Skijäger)		

Note: The NATO symbols are provided only for informative purposes and have no impact on the game.

Note: The NATO symbols of some divisions are colored to ease the setup of the scenarios.

Note: Soviet cavalry units are armored divisions, while Axis cavalry units are infantry divisions.

1.1.5 Each Headquarters (HQ) is characterized by the following:

HQ Symbol — Designation — Setup information — Command Radius — Movement Points — Defense strength
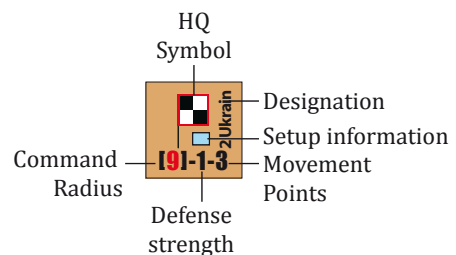
The back side of an HQ represents the unit in Pontoon mode. The arrow on the counter is meant to point towards the hexside the HQ is canceling the River crossing movement and supply penalties (*cf. 4.1.3*).

An HQ that has this face up still keeps all of its other abilities.

1.1.6 KGs are generic units that appear in play after a German Elite division is destroyed. They use the same game rules as the divisions they replace unless otherwise stated in the rules, and differ from them only by their counter symbol (no historical designation or NATO symbol, Hiwis counters).

1.2 Command Radius (CR)

1.2.1 The CR of an HQ is the range, in hexes, within which that HQ can provide Command and Supply to friendly troops.

1.2.2 The CR is measured from the HQ hex (exclusive) to the target unit (inclusive). So to be considered inside an HQ's CR, a unit has to be at the same distance or closer, in hexes, to the HQ than the Command Radius rating of this HQ. Connected Road and Rail hexes count for half (1/2) a hex each.

1.2.3 The CR path cannot pass through a hex occupied by an enemy unit, or through a hex adjacent to an enemy unit unless the hex is also occupied by a friendly unit.

1.2.4 The CR path cannot cross bridgeless Major Rivers (the bridges are drawn on the map or created by HQs on their Pontoon side, *Bridgehead* markers and the *Bridge Engineers* Support).

Example: Command Radius

The CR of the 2nd Baltic Front HQ does not extend into hexes 5017, 5117, 5217, 5417… because of the presence of the German unit. The CR path is also blocked by the Major River.

Thus, only the 1ˢᵗ Baltic Front HQ, being in Pontoon Mode, is able to supply the Soviet unit in hex 5119.

1.3 Step losses

1.3.1 Each unit can take one or two step losses, representing its actual combat power. The front side is the unit's maximum strength. If the unit is a Soviet Infantry Corps, the front side would represent the Corps in Reinforced mode (*cf. 10*).

When a unit loses one step because of combat, or when a Soviet Infantry Corps must be put in Standard mode (*cf. 10*), it is flipped over to its back side, showing reduced values. If it takes yet another step loss, the unit is eliminated.

1.3.2 Units that do not have a back side (HQ included) have only one step, and are eliminated after just receiving one step loss.

1.3.3 An eliminated unit is put in the "Eliminated Units" box of the owning player (on the map).

Exception: Eliminated Soviet Infantry Corps are put in their dedicated draw pool.

1.3.4 Units which are removed from the game due to Unit Withdrawal (*cf. 18.1*) as well as KG and Hiwis counters which are eliminated (*cf. 7.15.5*) are put in the "Units Removed From Play" box of the owning player (on the map). Those units cannot be rebuilt.

1.4 Game markers

1.4.1 Various game markers are used to note various states, either on the map, or stacked with units. Their use is explained later on in the rules.

1.5 Supports

1.5.1 Support markers are used by the players to influence military operations. Supports represent the effects of various materiel, equipment, as well as specific battle events.
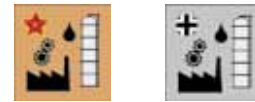
1.5.2 These Support markers can be used in two ways:

☆ to activate the Support marker's written Event (*see descriptions in the* **play aid**),

☆ or alternately, a player can expend any Support marker to comply with the requirements of various game actions (Armor Replacement, German Strategic Movement, etc…). In this case, the Support marker written Event does not take place and is not used.

Example: an Air Support marker can be used to give an Armor Replacement, even in Overcast weather.

1.5.3 Support markers with a red disk on their backside (*Stalin, etc.*) must be played for their Event when they are drawn.
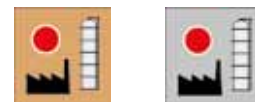
German *End of Reich* Supports (those with a burning Reich's symbol on their back) cannot be expended for any action other than their Event.

1.6 Theater of Operation markers (TO)

1.6.1 A TO marker represents an area of logistic and administrative support from the Chief Commander of Stavka. There are four markers, one for each Soviet Theater of Operation: North, Center North, Center South and South.

1.6.2 A TO marker has two sides. The front side represents the TO in Offensive mode, while the back side represents the TO in Movement mode.

Offensive mode   *Movement mode*

1.6.3 TO marker movement follows specific rules (*cf. 11.6 & 12.3*).

1.6.4 TO markers allow the Soviet player to use the Strategic Reserve of Stavka, to draw Soviet Support markers. They influence Soviet divisions' combat efficiency, reinforcement and replacement within their range.

1.7 Nationality and borders

1.7.1 Each unit counter is printed with a background color to denote its nationality and/or service branch as noted below:

Soviet Union

- ☆ Guard units: *red*.
- ☆ Regular units: *brown*.
- ☆ Polish, Bulgarian and Czech units: *light brown*

Germany

- ☆ Wehrmacht: *gray*.
- ☆ Waffen SS: *black*.
- ☆ Luftwaffe: *blue-gray*.
- ☆ Kriegsmarine: *violet*

Allied nations

- ☆ Hungary: *dark green*
- ☆ Romania: *olive green*

In the game:

- ☆ all Soviet Union units are considered to be of the same nationality,
- ☆ all German units are considered to be of the same nationality,
- ☆ Romanian and Hungarian units are of distinct nationality. They begin the game allied to the German player. Later during the game, they may join with the Soviet Union player.

1.7.2 When they are allied to the German player, unit nationality has an effect on Stacking (*cf. 1.11.5*), Supply (*cf. 4.2*) and Combat (*cf. 7.11 & 7.12*).

1.7.3 When they are allied to the Soviet player, Romanian and Hungarian units are to be considered Soviet units, *except for :* *Stacking (cf. 1.11.5) and Combat (cf. 7.11).*

1.7.4 **Borders**: borders have an effect on the placement of reinforcements, on *Partisans* Supports, on the End of Reich rule (*cf. 16*) and on 1.7.5.

1.7.5 **Movement restrictions**: as long as Romanian and Hungarian units are both allied to the German player, they cannot enter one another's country. Those countries' borders are to be considered impassable hexsides for these units.

1.8 Hexes with more than one terrain type

1.8.1 The following rule applies if more than one terrain type is present in a single hex:

- ☆ For movement, use the highest terrain cost

Note: a road or Railroad may cancel other terrain types,

- ☆ For combat, the defender selects the terrain type for combat modifiers. River effects must still apply.

1.9 Rounding rules

1.9.1 When a value is halved, the result is rounded to the next higher number (*Exception: 11.3.3*).

1.9.2 A value that is both halved and doubled stays unchanged. When many halved values are to be added together, halve them AFTER they are added together.

1.10 Hex Control

1.10.1 A player controls (and captures) a map hex as soon as he moves a unit into/through it during the Movement phase, or occupies it at the end of any phase.

1.11 Stacking

1.11.1 Stacking is the act of putting more than one friendly unit in the same hex. Such a pile of counters is called a "stack". A limited number of units can be stacked in each hex, as defined below.

1.11.2 Stacking is checked at the end of EVERY game phase. If the stacking limit is exceeded, the owning player must eliminate enough units so that the stacking requirements are met.

1.11.3 Unless otherwise stated, the stacking limit for each hex is 3 divisions (KG are treated like divisions). *Example: 2 divisions and 1 KG can stack in a single hex, no more.*

1.11.4 HQs units do not count towards the stacking limits but **only one** HQ can be stacked in a hex.

1.11.5 Romanian and Hungarian units can never be stacked in the same hex, whoever they are allied to.

1.11.6 *Bridgeheads*: when playing the *Maskirovka* Support, the Soviet player may receive *Bridgeheads* markers. The stacking limit on a hex with a *Bridgeheads* marker is increased to 6 Soviet corps. All Soviet corps present in these hexes may attack or defend.
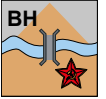
2 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

- ☆ **Weather phase**

- ☆ **Soviet player turn**
  - Supply phase
  - Support phase
  - Stavka phase
  - Movement phase
  - Combat phase
  - Exploitation phase
  - Reinforcement and Replacements phase

- ☆ **German player turn**
  - Supply phase
  - Support phase
  - Movement phase
  - Combat phase
  - Exploitation phase
  - Reinforcement and Replacements phase

3 WEATHER PHASE

3.1 Weather determination

3.1.1 The weather is determined at the start of each turn. The Soviet player rolls two dice and checks the *Weather Table* (*on the map and player aids*) for the result to get the weather. Two kinds of results are obtained: weather and sky condition.

3.1.2 The Weather markers are put on the corresponding squares on the map to indicate the weather for the turn.

Example : Weather determination
At the start of Turn 20 (Mrch I), the Soviet player rolls 2D6 during the Weather phase. The dice result in a "10", thus the weather for this turn will be Mud and the sky condition will be Overcast.

3.2 Weather effects

Three types of weather are possible:

Fair	Mud	Snow

3.2.1 If the weather is Fair: no effect.

3.2.2 If the weather is *Mud*:

- ☆ No unit can spend more than 2 MP.
- ☆ No strategic movement may occur.
- ☆ Tactical results of the attacker are not modified by Terrain, however:

(a) D1 results are ignored,

(b) E, E2 and E3 results are transformed into Eng but only the attacker shall take the ensuing step losses,

(c) all other results are unaffected.

☆ There is a penalty to the number of Support markers received by players,

☆ TO receive a penalty to their movement during the Support phase, and they are forbidden from moving during the Stavka phase,

☆ A Large Offensive cannot be launched,

☆ "**Hourra** !" attacks and some Support Events are forbidden,

☆ Minor Rivers are considered Major Rivers,

☆ A unit cannot move into a hex which is adjacent to an enemy unit while crossing a Major or Minor River,

☆ It is forbidden to attack across a Minor or Major River, unless through a bridge. Units attacking across a bridge (either drawn on the map or created by HQs on their Pontoon counter side, by a *Bridgeheads* marker or by the *Bridge Engineers* Support) see their Attack strength divided by three (rounded to the next higher number).

3.2.3 If the weather is *Snow*:

☆ E3 results obtained after modification by Terrain are transformed into E2. (If a "**Hourra** !" attack, the result is eventually returned to E3). Other combat results remain unchanged.
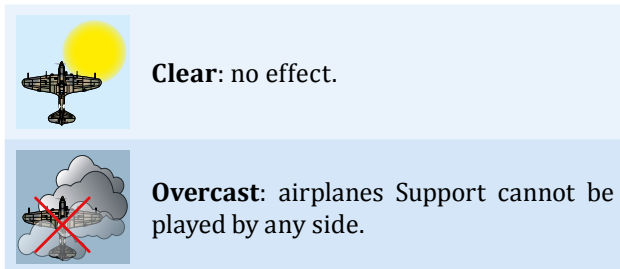
☆ Swamp hexes are considered Forest hexes,

☆ There is a penalty to the number of Support markers received by players,

☆ TO receive a penalty to their movement during the Support phase.

3.3 Sky condition

The sky condition can be either:

Clear: no effect.

Overcast: airplanes Support cannot be played by any side.

4 SUPPLY PHASE

During this phase, the phasing player checks the supply status for each of his HQs, then for each of his units.

4.1 HQ Supply

4.1.1 For an HQ to be in supply, it must either be located on a supply source hex (*cf. 4.3, 4.4*) or be connected to a supply source by a Supply Route (SR). A Supply Route is a contiguous path of connected Railroad or Road hexes traced from the unit to a Supply source. A SR may be of an unlimited length. A SR may not be traced into a hex which is occupied by an enemy unit, or into a hex which is adjacent to an enemy unit unless such a hex is also occupied by a friendly unit.

4.1.2 HQ units that are not in supply are removed from the map and will come back as reinforcements in the Reinforcements and Replacements phase of the same turn.

4.1.3 During the Supply phase, a supplied HQ adjacent to a Minor or Major River can be flipped to its Pontoon side, pointing its arrow toward a water hexside. A bridge is now

considered to exist on that specific hexside, and will cancel any Movement or Supply penalties of that hexside.

4.1.4 During the Supply phase, an HQ unit which started the Supply phase on its Pontoon side can be flipped back to its regular side, where it no longer affects any River hexside.

4.2 Unit Supply

4.2.1 For a unit to be in Supply, it must either:

⊕ Be located on a supply source hex (*cf. 4.3, 4.4*);

⊕ OR be located within the Command Radius (*cf. 1.2*) of a supplied HQ of the same nationality (*cf. 1.7*).

Exception: A German HQ can supply Romanian and Hungarian units as long as these nations are allied to Germany.
Exception: Play of the Ju-52 Support.

Reminder: The CR of an HQ cannot cross a hex occupied by an enemy unit, a hex adjacent to an enemy unit (unless a friendly unit is in the hex), or a Major River hexside without a bridge.

4.2.2 Units that do not fulfill any of these conditions are out of supply (OOS) for the rest of the turn. Put an Out of Supply marker on these units.

4.3 Soviet Supply sources

4.3.1 Any City controlled by the Soviet player at the beginning of the June III turn is a supply source. Any Railroad or Road hex on the Eastern border of the map is a supply source.

4.4 German Supply sources

4.4.1 Any City in Germany controlled by the German player is a supply source.

4.4.2 Any Port on the Baltic Sea controlled by the German player is a supply source until the Soviet player controls at least 4 hexes adjacent to it.

4.4.3 German units in advanced fortifications hexes are always in supply.

4.5 Other Supply sources

4.5.1 When Hungary is allied to Germany, Budapest is a supply source for Hungarian units as long as a Supply Route (SR) can be traced between Budapest and any German supply source.

4.5.2 When Romania is allied to Germany, Bucharest is a supply source for Romanian units as long as an open Supply Route (SR) can be traced between Bucharest and any German supply source.

4.6 Out of Supply effects

4.6.1 Any division that is not in supply is put under an *Out of Supply* marker until the owning player's next Supply phase.

4.6.2 Out of Supply (OOS) divisions have their Attack and Defense strengths as well as their Movement points halved (round fractions up).

4.6.3 OOS divisions have a maximum of 1 Movement Point for Exploitation movement (*cf. 8.2.2*).

4.6.4 OOS divisions can only move towards a supply source or a friendly HQ unit.

*Exception: If the OOS unit is of Elite quality, it can move in any direction.*

Example: Supply

During the Soviet player's Supply phase, the Soviet player first checks the supply for the 1st Baltic Front HQ. The HQ is on a Railroad hex connected through a chain of Railroads to **Velikie Luki** *(6115)* is a Supply Source for the Soviet player. The HQ is thus in supply. It can eventually supply Soviet units in 5818, 5719 and 5619 since a CR path can be traced through 5817 and 5917 to this HQ. Notice that the HQ's CR cannot pass through hex 5918 because of the presence of the German unit in 5919. German units in 5620, 5722 and 5819 block the CR path from the 1st Baltic Front HQ to the Soviet unit in 5721. This unit is thus out of supply.

4.7 Withdrawal against the Fürher's will (German player only)

4.7.1 At the end of the Supply phase, the German player may place the *Withdrawal* marker on any hex of the map. All units within 3 hexes of this marker (exclude the marker's hex, but include the unit's hex) may immediately move according to the retreat after combat rules *(cf. 7.10.5 and 7.10.6)*. They may either spend Movement Points or move two hexes, disregarding any OOS status or Dismissal that may have occurred in the same turn *(cf. 15.3)*. These units can move in the following Movement phase, but cannot attack in the following Combat phase.
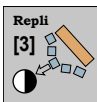
4.7.2 Once this movement is complete remove the *Withdrawal* marker from the map (it can be used again in a later turn), then increase the *Freedom of Action* marker's current position by 1 on Hitler's Approval Track and decrease the Hitler's Approval marker by the value of the box just reached by the *Freedom of Action* marker *(cf. 15.1.4)*. A Dismissal may immediately occur *(cf. 15.3)*.

Example: Withdrawal against the Führer's will

At the end of the German Supply phase, the Führer's Approval marker is in the 3 box (cf. 15) and the Freedom of Action marker is in the 0 box. After a strong attack by the Soviet player, the German player decides he must withdraw some of his units against the Führer's will. He places the Withdrawal marker in a hex on the map. He then moves as many units which are within the range of this marker as he wants away from Soviet units. When his last move is done, he advances the Freedom of action marker in the next box to the right on the Führer's Approval Track. The marker ends in the 1 box. The Führer's Approval marker is consequently lowered by 1 and ends in the 2 box.

5 SUPPORT PHASE – (BASIC RULES)

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 The Support markers available in each scenario are indicated on the Scenario Card. At the beginning of the game, place those Support markers in a separate pool for each player.

5.1.2 During his Support phase, the phasing player randomly draws a number of Support markers and places them, Event side down, in his "Available Supports" box on the map.

5.1.3 At the end of the Support phase, if there are more than six Support markers in the "Available Supports" box, the phasing player returns the extra counters in the draw pool, at his own discretion.

5.1.4 A player can never inspect the Support markers of his opponent, but can check his own at any time.

5.2 Support markers leave the map

5.2.1 At the start of the Support phase, all Support markers of the phasing player **which were played during the previous turn** are put back into the pool (those still in the "Available Support" box stay there).

Exception: Some Supports may remain on the map (cf. Supports Player Aid: Model...).

5.3 Gaining Supports

5.3.1 **Soviet player**: during his Support phase, the Soviet player rolls 1D6 to which he may add or subtract modifiers according to the scenario played. The result is the number of Support markers he must randomly draw from the Soviet Support pool.

5.3.2 **German player**: during his Support phase, the German player draws the number of Support markers indicated by the scenario played.

5.4 Placement and use of Support markers

5.4.1 The Support markers are placed in the "Available Supports" box, Event side down. They may eventually be placed on the map when they are played as Events, according to the Event's conditions specified in the Supports Player Aid.

5.4.2 Airplane Supports cannot be played as Events by any player when the sky conditions are Overcast.

5.4.3 In the Basic Rules, the "TO" indications on the Support markers are ignored.

5.4.4 Some Supports markers must be attached to a friendly unit. Such Support markers must remain stacked with that unit until the Support must leave the map. If the unit is eliminated, the Support goes back into its draw pile. Different Leaders may not be attached to the same unit:
Soviet leaders: *Rybalko, Katukov, Bogdanov.*
German leaders: *Schörner, Model, Heinrici, Himmler.*

Different Support markers may be used together in the same combat.

Exception: two Supports with the same name or two leaders cannot be used in the same combat.

*For **example**, Artillery Supports [1]/+2 and [1]/+3 may not be used together, nor may Rybalko and Bogdanov.*

6 MOVEMENT PHASE

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 During this phase, a player can move all, some or none of his units, expending up to their total Movement Points. Units can be moved alone or in stacks. Units moved in stacks MUST start their movement in the same hex.

6.1.2 Units move from hex to hex, either spending Movement Points (*cf 1.1.3*), or a using special movement capability (6.2 Strategic Movement, 6.3 Abandon equipment and retreat, 6.4 Rail Movement or 6.5 Naval Movement).

Note: There is no specific order in which to use these movement capabilities during the Movement phase.

6.1.3 A unit or stack must end its move before a player can start moving another one.

6.1.4 Movement of units is affected by terrain. The cost of entering a hex or crossing some hexside depends on the type of terrain entered/crossed. The cost is indicated in Movement Points in the "*Terrain Effects Chart*".

Example: an armored division with 4 Movement Points can move through 4 Clear terrain hexes, or through 2 Wood hexes.

6.1.5 Movement Points cannot be accumulated from one turn to the next; nor can they be transferred from unit to unit.

6.1.6 Friendly units do not affect the cost of moving.

6.1.7 It is forbidden to enter a hex containing an enemy unit.

6.1.8 **A unit can always move at least one hex per Movement phase or Exploitation phase** even if it would not normally have enough Movement Points for such a move, as long as the movement is legal.

Exception: HQs on their Pontoon side and units with 0 MP cannot be moved.

6.1.9 Units moving along a Road, from one connected Road hex to another (with common Road hexsides), only spend one half Movement Points per hex, ignoring the other types of terrain in the hex or hexside.

Note: *For this above rule, Railroads are considered the same as Roads.*

6.1.10 **HQ Movement**: HQs cannot end their movement in a hex where they would be Out of Supply (*cf. 4.1.1*). Thus, HQ may leave Rail roads/Road hexes during their movement, but must end their movement in a hex from which they can trace a Supply Route.

6.1.11 Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced mode expending more than 2 MP and ending their movement outside the Operation Range of a TO marker are immediately put in Standard mode.

6.2 Strategic Movement

6.2.1 Any unit, except for HQs, can do a Strategic Movement if it complies with the following conditions:

☆ it must make the entire move in the Command Radius of one (or many) supplied HQs of the same nationality ;

☆ it cannot be, at any time, adjacent to an enemy unit; therefore, units which start the Movement phase adjacent to an enemy unit may not use Strategic Movement (*Exception: Abandon equipment and retreat, cf.6.3*);

☆ Soviet units can neither move into hexes containing a fortification nor into German cities unless they are controlled by the Soviet player.

6.2.2 A unit using Strategic Movement doubles its Movement Points.

6.2.3 The German player may only use Strategic Movement if he expends one of his available Support markers of his choice. If he does not have such a counter, Strategic Movement is not possible. Only one counter needs to be spent to move as many units as he wants using Strategic Movement.

6.2.4 Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced mode expending more than 4 MP and ending their Strategic Movement outside the Operation Range of a TO marker are immediately put in Standard mode.

6.3 Abandon equipment and retreat (German player only)

The German player places two available Support markers on one German HQ. The Support markers have no effect, they are expended to allow this movement capacity. This HQ cannot move this turn. All units in the CR of this HQ may use Strategic Movement according to 6.2 even if they start the Movement phase adjacent to an enemy unit, and without expending the required Support (*cf. 6.2.3*).

Once this movement capability is completed, return the Support markers to the draw pile then increase the Freedom of Action marker current position by 1 on Hitler's Approval Track and decrease the Hitler's Approval marker by the value of the box reached by the Freedom of Action marker (*cf. 15.1.4*). A Dismissal may immediately occur (*cf. 15.3*).

Example: Abandon equipment and retreat

(This example follows the Withdrawal against the Führer's will example in 4.7.2).

During the following Movement phase, the German player realizes that another pocket is in danger of being formed. He decides to sacrifice two Support markers to abandon some equipment enabling a faster retreat. The two supports are placed on an HQ in the concerned area. He then performs Strategic moves with as many of his units as he wants which are within the CR of this HQ, even those units which are adjacent to enemy units. After he performed the last of these moves, he advances the Freedom of action marker one box to the right on the track, which is the 2 box. The Führer's Approval level is consequently decreased by 2, which puts it in the 0 box and causes a Dismissal (cf 15.3). A Dismissal affects movements only during the next Movement phase, the German player may thus go on with his moves in the current phase as normal.

6.4 Rail Movement
(German player only)

6.4.1 The Rail Capacity for each turn is indicated in the corresponding scenario. Rail Capacity Points cannot be carried over from one turn to the next turn; they must be used in the current turn or they are lost. Use the Rail Capacity marker to indicate the number of points left on the "Rail Capacity Track".

6.4.2 Each Rail move costs one Rail Capacity Point per infantry or HQ unit, and two per armor unit. The cost is the same if the unit is on its reduced side.

6.4.3 A unit can use Rail Movement if it complies with the following conditions:

☆ it has at least 1 Movement Point printed on the counter ;

☆ it moves on Railroad hexes only and the Rail line used must constitute a Supply Route to a German supply source;

☆ it cannot be, at any time, adjacent to an enemy unit; therefore, units which start the Movement phase adjacent to an enemy unit may not use Rail Movement;

☆ it can never move into a Major City hex which has been controlled by the Soviet player, even if that city was taken back by the German player. Such a hex may be indicated using *Soviet Control* or *Rail Movement Forbidden* markers.

6.4.4 A unit can move an unlimited number of hexes using a Rail Move.

6.4.5 German reinforcements can be transported by Rail when put on the map during the Reinforcements and Replacements phase (using the Rail Capacity Points).

6.5 Naval Movement
(German player only)

6.5.1 Each turn, the German player may expend up to 3 Naval Capacity Points. Each Naval Move costs one Naval Capacity Point per infantry or HQ unit, and two points per armor unit. The cost is the same if the unit is on its reduced side. Use the KM Baltic marker to indicate the number of points left on the "Naval Capacity Track" for the turn.

6.5.2 A unit can only use Naval Movement if it starts the Movement phase in a Port on the Baltic Sea. It is then moved to any other Port of the Baltic Sea under German control which is not completely surrounded by Soviet Units. The Port of arrival must have never been controlled by the Soviet player even if the port was later reoccupied by the German player. Such a Port may be indicated by putting a *Soviet Control* marker in the hex.

6.5.3 Evacuation: A single unit which occupies a Port hex adjacent to an enemy unit must roll 1D6 before it starts its Naval Move.

☆ If the result is 1, the Naval Move is cancelled. The unit takes a step loss and cannot move anymore during the same turn.

☆ If the result is 2, the Naval Move is cancelled. The unit cannot move anymore during the same turn.

☆ If the result is 3, the unit takes a step loss and may perform the Naval Move.

☆ For all other results, the unit may perform the Naval Move as normal.

Example: Naval move

During the Movement phase of Turn 5, Soviet units threaten to surround Reval (Tallin). The German player decides to evacuate his units there. One Infantry and one Panzer division are in Tallin, and one Soviet unit is currently adjacent to the port. The German player begins the evacuation with the Panzer division. He uses 2 Naval Capacity Points to safely move his panzer unit to a friendly port, without suffering any adverse effect from the adjacent Soviet unit because it is not the last unit in the port. With his last Naval Capacity Point, the German player now attempts to evacuate the remaining Infantry division in the port. This time this is the last unit in the port, and as there is one Soviet unit adjacent to it he must roll a die. The result is 2 meaning that the unit cannot evacuate and must stay in the hex. With no Naval Capacity Point remaining, the German player cannot use Naval movement anymore this turn.

6.6 Crossing Rivers

The movement penalty for crossing Major or Minor Rivers is cancelled by the presence of a bridge, either drawn on the map or created by HQs on their Pontoon counter side (only the hexside towards which points the arrow), *Bridgehead* markers or a *Bridge Engineers* Support marker (for all adjacent hexsides).

6.7 Haltebefehl

6.7.1 **Overview**: At the beginning of his Movement phase, the German player may put *Haltebefehl* markers on one or more Major Cities, or Ports on the Baltic Sea, as long as these hexes are occupied by at least one German division. All divisions in the hex are then put under the *Haltebefehl* marker.

6.7.2 A *Haltebefehl* marker has two sides: the side which has unit characteristics is to be used on Major Cities in Germany or on one of the Budapest hexes, while the side without any unit characteristics is to be used on all other Cities.

6.7.3 There cannot be more than ten *Haltebefhel* markers on the map at the same time.

6.7.4 When a *Haltebefhel* marker is placed, all divisions in the hex must be put under this marker.

6.7.5 When three hexes adjacent to a *Haltebefhel* marker are occupied by enemy units and the divisions under the marker cannot trace a Supply Route, those divisions are affected as follow:

☆ They cannot attack;

☆ They cannot get replacements;

☆ The Tactical Modifiers on the Terrain Effects Chart applying to the defender are modified as follow:

⊕ S: ignored

⊕ DR, DR2 and DR3: transformed into Eng.

6.7.6 As long as a Soviet division is adjacent to a hex containing a *Haltebefhel* marker, the marker cannot be removed and at least one German division must remain under it.

6.7.7 Units entering a hex containing divisions under a *Haltebefhel* marker where the conditions of rule 6.7.5 are in effect must end their movement and be put under the marker. Any ensuing overstacking must immediately be resolved by eliminating units at the German player's choice. German units retreating into such a hex must stop and end their retreat in this hex.

6.7.8 *Haltebefhel* markers with unit characteristics represent 0-1-0 one-step garrison units. These markers may never take a step loss during combat as long as other units are present in the hex. These markers do not count toward stacking limits.

6.7.9 *Haltebefehl* markers without unit characteristics are removed from the map as soon as there are no German units under it.

6.7.10 *Haltebefehl* markers affect changes to Hitler's Approval Rate when Cities are captured (*see Player Aid*),

6.7.11 *Haltebefehl* markers may affect the *Stalin* Support.

7 COMBAT PHASE

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 During this phase, friendly units can do battle with adjacent enemy units.

7.1.2 The phasing player is named the attacker, and his opponent is the defender, regardless of the strategic game position.

7.1.3 Declaring an attack is always voluntary.

7.1.4 Attacking units do NOT have to attack all adjacent hexes containing enemy units.

7.1.5 Enemy units must defend when they are attacked.

7.1.6 Units in a stack cannot be attacked separately, but must be attacked all together in one combat.

7.1.7 The battles are resolved in the order the attacking player chooses, and do not have to be declared in advance.

7.1.8 Each and every hex can be attacked only once per Combat phase.

7.1.9 A unit can attack only once per Combat phase.

7.1.10 Units stacked together can attack different adjacent hexes, but each attacker can be involved in a maximum of one combat.

7.1.11 Units from different stacks can attack the same hex at the same time together.

7.2 Combat sequence

7.2.1 Each combat is resolved following the exact sequence of play below:

 ⊕ **STEP 1**: Determine one hex to be attacked and the friendly units that will participate.
 ⊕ **STEP 2**: Supply check for the defender.
 ⊕ **STEP 3**: Computation of the combat odds.
 ⊕ **STEP 4**: Combat resolution and application of Attrition Results.
 ⊕ **STEP 5**: Application of Tactical Results for the attacker, excepting results E, E2, E3, then those of the defender.
 ⊕ **STEP 6**: Placement of Exploitation markers.

7.2.2 Each combat is resolved using the *Combat Results Table (CRT)*.

7.2.3 The combat results of the CRT are defined as Attrition Results (losses) **and** Tactical Results.

7.3 Determine one hex to be attacked and the friendly units that will participate.

7.3.1 During **STEP 1**, the phasing player designates one hex he will attack, and the units that will participate in the combat.

7.3.2 All the defending units in the attacked hex must defend and will be affected by the results.

7.3.3 Only those units that were designated to attack may participate in the battle and any combat result shall apply to them only. Once this choice has been made, it cannot be changed afterwards. HQs can never participate in an attack. They can be affected by combat however (*cf. 7.8.2*).

7.3.4 Non-participating units of the phasing player that are adjacent to the attacked hex are unaffected by the battle.

7.4 Supply check for the defender

7.4.1 During **STEP 2**, the supply status of the defender is checked, following the procedure in *rule 4.2*.

7.4.2 The supply status is checked only for units that are not identified already by an *Out of Supply* marker. Units already stacked with an *Out of Supply* marker are not checked.

7.4.3 If defending units are found to be Out of Supply (OOS), the corresponding marker is put on them, and they will remain in this state until their own Supply phase.

7.4.4 HQ units that are found to be OOS during this step are NOT removed from the map, nor put under an *Out of Supply* marker. However these HQs may not be used to keep units in supply, obviously.

Reminder: Units that are Out of Supply have all their factors halved (Attack, Defense, Movement).

7.5 Computation of the combat odds

7.5.1 During **STEP 3**, the players compute the combat odds to obtain a ratio.

7.5.2 You first total the defense strength of the defenders; this total is then adjusted with the corresponding modifiers (Terrain, Support, Supply, etc.).

7.5.3 Then you total the attack strength of the attackers, this total is then adjusted with the corresponding modifiers (Terrain, Support, Supply, etc.).

7.5.4 To find the odds of the combat, the modified total strength of the attackers is divided by the defender's modified total. This result gives the players a combat ratio.

7.5.5 This combat ratio is always rounded to allow the nearest simple form in favor of the defender.

Example:

35 attack factors vs 10 defense factors gives odds of 35/10, simplified to 3/1.

10 attack factors vs 35 defense factors gives odds of 10/35, simplified to 1/4

7.5.6 These combat odds are THEN adjusted for the Support markers used by the attacker (possibly shifting the combat odds to the right on the CRT).

7.5.7 If the initial combat odds are too high or too low to be represented on the CRT, you can still adjust it using "imaginary" columns in case some shifts might put the result back on the CRT. Ex: 1:3, 1:4, 1:5, etc…

Example: Initial combat odds of 1:4 shifted two columns to the right on the CRT (in favor of the attacker) will give final combat odds of 1:2.

7.5.8 If the final combat odds are lower than 1:2, the combat is cancelled. If the final combat odds are higher than 6:1, the combat is resolved on the 6:1 Column.

7.6 Elite units, Armored Exploitation and "Hourra!" attacks

7.6.1 After the computation of the combat odds, players who have Elite units in the combat can choose to use their Elite bonus to affect the results of that battle (this will influence both Attrition and Tactical Results, *cf. 7.8.1 & 7.9.3*).

7.6.2 The attacker first announces his choice, and then the defender, indicating which Elite unit is used.

7.6.3 During this step, the attacking player using at least two attacking armor units can decide to announce an Armored Exploitation. He will then be able to get a bonus if the combat result is of an "E" type, but might lose one step of armor unit.

7.6.4 During the Soviet player's Combat phase, the Soviet player may declare a "Hourra!" attack for each battle occurring within the Operation Range of a TO marker. A "**Hourra**!" attack offers an additional « E » result (*cf. 7.9.5 & 7.14.3*) at the cost of an additional step loss for the attacker. It is not possible to declare a "**Hourra**!" attack when the weather is Mud, or against a hex containing an advanced fortification or a Major City in Germany.

7.7 Combat resolution

7.7.1 During **Step 4**, the battles are resolved using the *Combat Results Table (CRT)*.

7.7.2 The attacker checks the *CRT*, finding the correct column to use to resolve the battle (using the odds computed in the preceding step).

7.7.3 The phasing player rolls 2D6, and checks the sum with the correct odds column.

7.7.4 The result obtained in the "Losses" column gives the Attrition Result, i.e. the number of step losses taken by the attacker (first number) and the defender (second number).

Example: A result of "1/2" means 1 loss for the attacker, and 2 losses for the defender.

7.7.5 The result obtained in the "A" column is the Tactical Result for the attacker.

7.7.6 The result obtained in the "D" column is the Tactical Result for the defender.

7.7.7 Attrition Results are implemented immediately, then the attacker's Tactical Result is applied, then the defender's Tactical Result is applied.

7.7.8 Both attacker's and defender's Tactical Results may be modified if any of them used an Elite unit's bonus.

7.7.9 Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced Mode which attacked while outside the Operation Range of a TO marker are immediately put in Standard mode, before any Attrition Results are applied.

***Exception**: Soviet attack against Romanian defenders (cf. 7.12.1).*

7.8 Application of Attrition Results

7.8.1 When one side suffers an Attrition Result, the **first step** loss must be taken by an Elite unit if the Elite bonus was used in the combat or by an armor unit if an Armored Exploitation was called for. If both options were used (Elite bonus and Armored Exploitation), the defender chooses which units will take the first loss (either Elite or Armored).

7.8.2 The owning player can choose which units will take the other losses, but all units must take one step loss before any can take a second loss.

***Exception**: HQs take losses only if all other units in the hex have been eliminated.*

7.8.3 If all defending units in a hex are eliminated, the attacker can advance any or all attacking units in the said hex, up to the stacking limits.

7.8.4 When Soviet Armor Corps attack into a non-Clear hex, or across a River hexside, or when the weather is Mud, AND those units were outside the Operation Range of a TO marker, an additional step loss must be applied to one of those units.

7.9 Application of Tactical Results

7.9.1 During **Step 5**, the attackers, then the defenders, apply their Tactical Results. Tactical Results are implemented even if one side was completely eliminated by attrition.

7.9.2 Tactical Results of both sides may be modified by the terrain in the defender hex (*see Terrain Effect Chart*) or by other rules.

Example: In Woods, an initial S result is ignored; a DR result becomes an S result, etc…

Note: Tactical Results are explained in the Combat Results Table.

7.9.3 If a player decided to use an Elite bonus, he can choose his Tactical Result among other results of the same color, in the same column, as the initially rolled Tactical Result.

Example: In a combat with a 6:1 odds, the attacker rolls 2D6 and obtains a 3. The attacker's tactical result is D1. If an Elite bonus was announced, the attacker could choose between D1, E and E2.

7.9.4 If all attackers are attacking across a Major River, the defender chooses if the attacker's Tactical Result is modified by the defender's terrain OR by the River.

7.9.5 If a "**Hourra**!" attack was declared, one step loss must be taken by the attacking units. Then, an E result is added to the attacker's Tactical Result after the result has been modified by terrain. This additional E increases any other E result by one, so that E, E2, E3 would become E2, E3, E4 respectively.

Example:

  ☆ *A D1 result becomes D1+E*

  ☆ *An E3 result in a Marsh hex is ignored by terrain effect, however an E result is yielded by the "Hourra !" attack.*

  ☆ *In a Clear hex, an E3 result would become E4.*

7.9.6 Losses incurred by Tactical Results are implemented according to the owner's choice, disregarding any condition specified for the Attrition Results (*cf. 7.8*).

7.10 Retreat after combat

7.10.1 A Tactical Result might cause a retreat after combat.

7.10.2 The owning player decides the path of retreat of a unit.

7.10.3 All the units involved in the combat (attacker and defender) are affected and must follow a retreat result.

7.10.4 Retreating units can move together or separately and can withdraw using different paths.

7.10.5 Retreating Axis units (German and Hungarian and Romanian troops before their defection) must satisfy one of the following conditions for each hex they move into. The conditions are given in priority order:

  1 The retreating unit is moving toward North-West or South-West or South AND moving away from enemy units,

  2 The retreating unit is moving toward North-West or South-West or South WITHOUT moving away from enemy units,

  3 The retreating unit is moving away from enemy units in any other direction than the ones mentioned above.

7.10.6 Retreating Soviet units (and Romanian and Hungarian units after they have swapped sides) must obey the above rule, changing the directions with North, North-East, South-East, respectively.

7.10.7 The retreat movement ignores the cost of the terrain entered, and is computed as the simple number of hexes to be retreated.

7.10.8 Retreating units cannot cross impassable hexes (*Example: Sea hex*).

7.10.9 At the end of their retreat move, affected units must be as far from their initial starting hex as the retreat result given by the CRT.

7.10.10 If the retreating units end their retreat move over stacked, they must continue their retreat until they can find a hex where they can safely stack.

7.10.11 A retreating unit is eliminated if it cannot do so while following rules *7.10.8* & *7.10.9*.

7.10.12 If a unit retreats into a hex that is being attacked later in the same phase, that unit contributes ONLY one (1) Defense strength instead of its normal Defense strength to the total defense of the hex.

7.10.13 A unit with "0" Movement Points cannot retreat and is automatically eliminated.

7.10.14 Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced Mode which retreat at least one hex must be put in Standard mode at the end the battle if the attacked hex was outside the Operation Range of any TO marker.

7.11 Attacks with Hungarian and Romanian units

7.11.1 Hungarian and Romanian units may never attack together.

7.11.2 When a battle involves attacking units of distinct nationalities (*examples: German and Hungarian, or Soviet and Romanian*), the step losses incurred by the attacker must first be taken by German or Soviet units, while respecting *7.8.2*.

7.11.3 Hungarian and Romanian units have limitations when attacking without their German or Soviet ally. Thus, they may each perform only one autonomous attack per Combat phase, whoever their current ally is. In order to determine whether an attack is to be considered an autonomous attack, compare the total number of unit's steps for each nationality involved in this attack. If the ally (German or Soviet player) contributes fewer than half the steps, it is then an autonomous attack.

The corresponding marker may be placed on the current turn of the Turn Track as a reminder.

Combat example with Romanian units

The German player launches an attack on hex 6161 with all his adjacent units.

In this attack, Romania is allied to Germany and there are more steps of Romanian units than steps of German units (6). Germany, the current ally of Romania, is not in the majority in this attack thus this attack does count for the single autonomous attack allowed for Romania per turn. All further attacks with Romanian units will have to involve more steps of German units than of Romanian units.

All combat steps are eventually followed resulting in combat odds of 2:1 (23:11). The combat dice roll yields a "7" resulting in a 1/1 E S combat result.

The Axis player must apply the step loss to one of his German units first. The Soviet player chooses to eliminate the 1-5-2 unit, and in order to save the reduced Guard unit he chooses to shift the "S" tactical result into a Retreat after combat. To comply with the Retreat after combat movement priorities, he retreats his unit into 6220, as if it retreated into 6159 or 6261, the unit would not be moving away from enemy units.

7.12 Defense with Romanian units

7.12.1 Whenever the Soviet player attacks a stack composed of Romanian units only and containing less than three steps, he may reduce his step losses by 1. Moreover, Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced mode are not put in Standard Mode if they were attacking outside of a TO's Operation Range (*cf. 7.7.9*).

7.12.2 Romanian units which incur a DR2 or DR3 Tactical Result before modification by terrain are eliminated. In cases they were stacking with at least one German division, all but one Romanian unit are eliminated (chosen by the German player).

7.13 Advance after combat

7.13.1 After application of the Tactical Results, if all the attacking hexes are empty, the defender can advance defending units into those hexes, up to the stacking limits.

7.13.2 After application of the Tactical Results, if the defending hex is empty, the attacker can advance attacking units into those hexes, up to the stacking limits.

7.13.3 Units with 0 Movement Points cannot advance.

7.14 Placement of Exploitation markers

7.14.1 During Step 6, following a Tactical Result of E, E2 or E3, the attacker can place an Exploitation marker on one or many of his units that took part in the battle.

7.14.2 An E result allows one unit to be placed under an Exploitation marker; E2, two units; E3, three units.

7.14.3 If an Armored Exploitation or a "**Hourra** !" attack was called by the attacker (*cf. 7.6.3 & 7.6.4*), each armored division is worth only one half of a unit for the allowed number of units to be placed under an Exploitation marker.

Example: If an Armored Exploitation was called, a result of "E3" would allow six armored divisions to be placed under Exploitation, or four armor and one infantry, etc…

7.14.4 Exploiting units are the only ones allowed to attack and move in the Exploitation phase (*cf. 8*).

7.15 German Kampfgruppen

7.15.1 If a German Elite division is eliminated in combat, the German player can choose to replace this unit with a full strength Kampfgruppe (KG) of the same type (armored/infantry). Armored KG are randomly drawn from the pool of available KG.

7.15.2 The armored or infantry division thus eliminated and replaced is available to be rebuilt at a later time.

Combat example 1: Simple example

During the German combat phase, the Axis player wants to attack hex 5026 with all his adjacent units.

Step 1 : The German player designates hex 5026 and commits all adjacent units to this attack. The Soviet player will defend the hex with the two corps in the hex.

Step 2 : The defender's supply status is checked. The Soviet units are not within the CR of any HQ because adjacent German units block any CR path from entering 5027 and 5127. The defending units are thus put under an "Out of supply" marker.

Étape 3 : Players determine the combat odds. The German player totals 22 attack factors. Notice that since the 14th German infantry division does not attack through the Minor River, other German units attacking across the Minor River are not halved. The Soviet player totals 10 defense factors: 10 times 2 for the Forest, and halved because of the line of supply is cut.

The combat odds are thus 22:10, simplified to 2:1.

The German player then decides to use his Elite bonus and declares an Armored Exploitation as well.

Step 4 : Combat is resolved during this step. The German player rolls 2D6 and crosschecks the result against the 2:1 column on the **Combat Result Table (CRT)**.

The dice give a "10".

The attrition result is 1/2 (one step loss for the attacker, 2 steps loss for the defender), and the tactical result is DR2 for the defender and E, E2 or E2 for the attacker, who can choose between any of these three results thanks to his Elite bonus. The Forest Terrain shifts the DR2 result into DR, as stated in the Terrain Effect Chart. The German player selects the E2 result, which is transformed to E as per the Forest effect.

Attrition results are applied first: the Soviet player loses his two units. The German player must apply his step loss. As he used an Elite bonus and announced an Armored Exploitation, and he has several eligible units (1 Elite infantry, 1 Elite armor and 1 armor), it is the Soviet player who selects the unit which will incur this step loss. He selects the Elite armor unit and the German player thus reduces the "Feldernhalle" unit.

Step 5 : The tactical results are then applied, starting with the attacking player, followed by the defensive player.

The German player will apply his E result during step 6.

The DR result cannot be applied because there are no remaining units on the Soviet's side. As the defender's hex is now empty, the German player decides to advance in the hex with his 14th Infantry Division.

Step 6 : The German player can now apply his E result. As he declared an Armored Exploitation, he can place up to 2 armored units under an "Exploitation" marker.
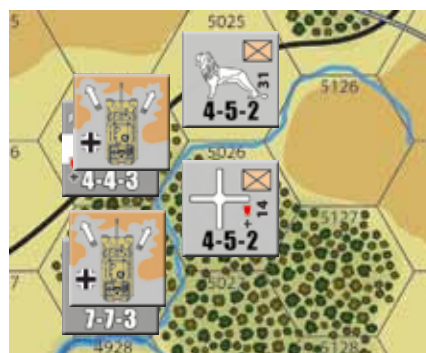
7.15.3 The value of the armored KG units vary in strength from one counter to another; some have 2 steps, some just one, or even none (like the "Hiwis" counter, which means that no KG was created).

7.15.4 The values of the infantry KG are all the same (they have only one step loss). Thus, there is no need to draw them randomly.

7.15.5 An eliminated KG (or a Hiwis counter which is drawn) is removed from the game: it cannot come back.

7.15.6 Once all KG are expended, the German player will not be able to replace Elite divisions with KG.

Combat example 2: Combat in a hex containing a Haltebefehl marker with a "Hourra!" attack

During the Soviet combat phase, the Soviet player decides to attack **Minsk** with all his adjacent units. We assume that all these units are in the Operation Range of a TO marker.

STEP 1: The Soviet player designates hex 5426 as the hex under attack, and commits all adjacent units to this attack. The Axis player will defend with the two divisions and the KG in the hex.

STEP 2: The defender's supply status is verified. The German units cannot trace a CR path to any German HQ and are thus put under an "Out of supply" marker.

STEP 3: The combat odds are computed.

The Soviet player totals 59 attack factors against 8 defense factors for the German player (8 doubled by the City hex and halved because OOS). The combat odds are thus 59:8, rounded to 7:1. The combat will however be fought under the 6:1 column which is the highest of the CRT.

The Soviet player then announces a "**Hourra**!" attack.

The German player does not use his Elite bonus as the tactical results cannot be optimized: indeed, all possible tactical results in the 6:1 column are shifted by the *Haltebefehl* marker to Eng (cf. 6.7.5).

STEP 4: The Combat is resolved during this step. The Soviet player rolls 2D6 and crosschecks the result against the 6:1 column on the CRT. The dice yield an unfortunate "3".

The attrition results are thus 1/1 (one step loss for the attacker and one step loss for the defender). The tactical results are D1 for the attacker and DR2 for the defender, which is transformed to Eng according to the *Haltebefehl* marker's effect.

Attrition results are applied first: the Soviet player attributes the step loss to the 36th Guard Infantry Corps. The German player eliminates the 211th Infantry Division.

If the Soviet units had not been within the Operation Range of a TO marker, the Soviet Infantry Corps would have to be flipped to their Standard mode before attrition results are applied, and one armored division would have to incur one additional step loss (cf. 7.8.4).

STEP 5: During this step, tactical results are applied, attacker first followed by defender.

The Soviet player obtained a "D1", which means that the defender incurs one step loss. The German player eliminates his KG unit as the result.

Since a "Hourra!" attack was declared, the Soviet player must apply one step loss as well. Since step losses given by tactical results can be applied to any unit (cf. 7.9.6), the Soviet player reduces his 65th Infantry Corps. As compensation, he obtains an "E" result that he will use in step 6.

The German player must now apply the "Eng" result. The Soviet players rolls 2D6 and obtains a "6", resulting in one more step loss for the Soviet player and two more steps loss for the German player. The Soviet player chooses to take the step loss on his already reduced 65th Infantry Corps and returns it to the Soviet Infantry draw pile. The German player applies one step loss on the armored division which eliminates it. However since it is an Elite unit he decides to replace it with an armored KG. He draws a 5-4-3 two-steps armored KG, and applies the second step loss to it.

STEP 6: During this step, the Soviet player obtains an "E". As he declared a "**Hourra**!" attack, he can put two Armored Corps under an "Exploitation" marker.

8 EXPLOITATION PHASE

8.1 Overview

8.1.1 During the Exploitation phase, only units under an *Exploitation* marker (cf. 7.14) can act. These units are called exploiting units.

8.1.2 The Exploitation phase is split into two segments: first the attacker moves some or all, of his exploiting units, then he can attack with those units (only).

8.2 Exploitation Movement

8.2.1 During this segment, only exploiting units can move.

8.2.2 Exploiting units have their Movement Points halved, rounded up.

Note: *Out of supply units have only one Movement Point for exploitation (cf. 4.6.3).*

8.2.3 Exploitation Movements are done in exactly the same way as regular movement, following the same rules and limitations. But other special movement such as Strategic, Naval and Rail Moves are not allowed.

8.3 Exploitation combat

8.3.1 During this segment, the attacker can conduct combat with his exploiting units that are adjacent to enemy units.

8.3.2 Exploitation combats are done exactly like regular combats, **except** that:

☆ *there are no Tactical Results for the attackers, only the defender Tactical Result is applied.*

☆ *the attacker's first step loss must be inflicted to attacking Soviet armored corps, if any.*

8.3.3 After the Exploitation combats, all the Exploitation markers are removed from the map.

Combat example: Exploitation (continuation of Combat example 2)

The Soviet player will try to complete the capture of *Minsk* during the Exploitation phase. After some analysis, he is certain to reach his goal with only one armored corps.

During the Exploitation movement phase, he moves the 11-10-3 armored corps to the West in order to secure the important crossroads in 5125.

During the Exploitation combat phase, only units under an "Exploitation" marker are allowed to attack. Thus no infantry can join the exploiting 12-12-4 armored corps in combat. Even without additional units, the combat odds are 6:1 (12 vs 2).

The dice gives a "7" which is enough to make him happy. Soviet tanks eliminate the last German KG and liberate *Minsk*.

You are now ready to play the introductory scenario
Budapest-Wien

ADVANCED RULES

9 THEATERS OF OPERATIONS

9.1 Overview

9.1.1 The Soviet player has one marker for each *Theater of Operations (TO): North, Center-North, Center-South and South*. The at-start placement of those markers is indicated in each scenario. An "Available Supports" box is displayed on the map for each corresponding *TO marker*, where Supports markers drawn for each TO are put.

9.1.2 A *TO marker* has two modes and an Operation Range which depends on its current mode. The front side of the *TO marker* represents the TO in Offensive Mode. The back side represents the TO in Movement Mode. A TO in Offensive Mode has an Operation Range of 9 hexes. A TO in Movement Mode has an Operation Range of 5 hexes.

The Operation Range of a *TO marker* is measured from the *TO marker* to the unit; exclude the hex containing the *TO marker* when measuring Operation Range. Terrain and enemy units have no effect on a TO's Operation Range. Soviet units' movement and combat, as well as Soviet Supports' placement are affected by the TO Operation Range.

9.1.3 The Soviet player may only move his *TO markers* which are in Movement Mode. These TO may move during the Support phase (*cf. 11.6*) and the Stavka phase (*cf. 12.3*). A TO marker in Offensive Mode may not move.

9.1.4 A *TO marker* must at all times be in a hex containing either a Road or Railways leading to a Supply source, and be able to trace a Supply Route as described in 4.1.1. Should a TO be unable to trace a Supply Route, or a German unit enters a TO's hex, this *TO marker* must immediately be moved to the nearest friendly Major City eastwards where it would be able to trace a new Supply Route. All Support markers in this TO's "Available Supports" box must then be put back into the draw pile.

9.1.5 The Soviet player may change a TO's Mode during the Support phase (*cf. 11.7*).

9.2 Effects of TO markers

9.2.1 Support markers which have a «TO» labeled on the counter can only be placed in a hex within the Operation Range of the *TO marker* from which they come from. Other Support markers don't have this limitation.

Indication TO

9.2.2 Soviet Infantry Corps may only be put in Reinforced Mode if they are within the Operation Range of a TO in Offensive Mode and outside of the Operation Range of any TO in Movement Mode (*cf. 10.3.2*).

9.2.3 Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced Mode which end their movement outside the Operation Range of any TO are put in Standard Mode if:

☆ They expended more than 2 PM during Standard Movement (*cf. 6.1.11*),

☆ They expended more than 4 PM during Strategic Movement (*cf. 6.2.4*).

9.2.4 Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced mode sitting outside the Operation Range of a TO during combat must be put in Standard Mode:

☆ before applying Attrition Results, when they attack (*cf. 7.7.9*),

☆ at the end of combat, if they had to retreat at least one hex while defending (*cf 7.10.14*).

9.2.5 When Soviet Armored Corps are outside the Operation Range of any TO AND attack into a non-Clear hex, across a River hexside, or when the weather is *Mud*, the Soviet player must inflict one additional step-loss on any one of these units (*cf. 7.8.4*).

10 SOVIET INFANTRY CORPS

10.1 Overview

10.1.1 Soviet Infantry Corps are two-steps units, however special conditions apply. The side with reduced factors represents a standard infantry corps. The unit is said to be "**in Standard Mode**".

Standard Mode

The side with the strongest factors represents the same infantry corps reinforced with attached artillery, trucks and other combat capacities. The unit is then said to be "**in Reinforced Mode**".

Reinforced Mode

10.1.2 Soviet Infantry Corps arriving as reinforcements or as rebuilt units always arrive in Standard Mode.

10.1.3 Soviet Infantry Corps are put in Reinforced Mode only by expending a Support marker during the Support Phase (*cf. 11.5.2*) or by the use of particular Support events.

10.1.4 A Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced Mode is flipped to its Standard Mode when:

☆ it receives a step loss,

☆ it attacks from a hex outside of any TO's Operation Range – the unit is flipped to its Standard Mode after rolling the combat dice, but before applying any Attrition Results (*cf. 7.7.9*),

☆ it retreats at least one hex when the unit was defending outside any TO's Operation Range (*cf. 7.10.14*),

☆ it ends its movement outside of any TO's Operation Range while having spent more than 2PM, or more than 4PM if it was using Strategic Movement (*cf. 6.1.11 & 6.2.4*).

10.1.5 Soviet Infantry Corps in Standard Mode which receive a step loss are eliminated.

10.2 Reinforcement and rebuilding of Soviet Infantry Corps

10.2.1 Soviet Infantry Corps which are not placed on the map at the beginning of a scenario are put into a draw pile. Soviet Infantry Corps which are eliminated return to that pile instead of being placed in the "Eliminated Units" box.

10.2.2 When the Soviet player receives infantry corps as reinforcements, or chooses to rebuild infantry corps, he randomly picks the required number of units from the draw

Example:
Soviet Infantry Corps reinforcements

Theater of Operation marker Center-North has 2 available Supports which it would like to use to reinforce some Infantry Corps.

Infantry Corps that are in hexes 5225 and 5326 seem like good candidates: they are stacked in piles of two which allows expending only one Support to reinforce two corps per hex they are in supply and they are on hexes containing Railroads connected to the TO.

Unfortunately, the two Guard units in 5225 are also in the Operation Range of TO N, which is in Movement Mode, and are thus non eligible (even though they are also in the Operation Range of TO CN in Combat Mode).

In this situation, the Soviet player can only spend one Support to reinforce the two Infantry Corps in 5326.

pile. These units arrive in Standard Mode, either on the map or in the S*tavka* box (at the player's choice).

10.3 Putting infantry corps in Reinforced Mode

10.3.1 Soviet Infantry Corps may only be flipped to their Reinforced side by expending a Support marker or by playing particular Support Events. It is **not permissable** to expend Replacement Points (RP) to place a Soviet Infantry Corps on its Reinforced side.

10.3.2 In the Support Phase, the Soviet player may expend at most two Support markers per TO in Offensive Mode in order to put infantry corps in Reinforced Mode. Each Support expended this way allows putting one or two infantry corps stacked together in Reinforced Mode provided they fulfill all the following requirements:

☆ the units are in supply,

☆ they are in the Operation Range of the TO marker in Offensive Mode from which the Support marker is taken,

☆ they are in a hex containing a Road or Railroads connected to this TO,

☆ they stand outside the Operation Range of any TO in Movement Mode.

11 SUPPORTS PHASE – (ADVANCED RULES)

11.1 Sequence of the Supports phase

The Supports phase must be played in the following order:

1. Return Supports which were **played during the previous turn** to the Support Pool (*cf. 5.2*),

2. Apply the TO remoteness rule (*cf. 11.2*) (*Soviet player only*),

3. Draw Support markers,

4. Placement and use of Supports markers,

5. Move TO in Movement Mode (max: 2 Supports/TO) (*Soviet player only*),

6. Switch TO's mode (*Soviet player only*),

7. Return Support markers in excess (*cf. 5.1.3*).

11.2 TO remoteness

Any TO marker which is more than 10 hexes away both from enemy units in supply and from *Haltebefehl* markers is subject to the following rules:

☆ TO in Offensive Mode may not draw Support Markers,

☆ TO in Movement Mode get a free move up to 5 hexes along Road and Railroads hexes.

11.3 Draw of Soviet Supports markers

The Soviet player must **strictly** obey the order of this sequence:

11.3.1 The player assigns one TO as the Priority TO, and one TO as the Secondary TO. The Priority TO will receive a bonus when drawing Supports and may launch a Large Offensive while the Secondary TO may not draw any Supports.

11.3.2 **Large Offensive**: when the weather is not Mud, the Soviet player may decide to launch a Large Offensive with his Priority TO. In order to do so, this TO must:

⊕ be in Offensive Mode,

⊕ be on a Major City hex,

⊕ have six Support markers in its "Available Supports" box prior to drawing any Support this turn.

This TO immediately receives a Support marker chosen by the Soviet player from the Support Pool, and will receive a bonus to his die roll for obtaining Support markers (*cf. 11.3.3*). On the turn a Large Offensive is launched, **other TO may not draw any Support markers nor move** (even during the Stavka phase). Moreover, only the Priority TO may receive strategic reinforcements during the Stavka phase.

11.3.3 For each TO in Offensive Mode staying on a City hex, **except the Secondary TO**, the Soviet player rolls 2D6. The result is halved, then rounded down, then the following modifiers apply:

+2	for the Priority TO
+2	if a Large Offensive was launched this turn
-2	if the TO marker is on a Minor City hex
-1	if the TO marker is on a hex *without* Railroads
-1	if the weather is *Snow*
-3	if the weather is *Mud*

On a positive result, the Soviet player randomly draws the corresponding number of Support markers from the Support Pool and places them in the "Available Supports" box of the TO being considered. On null or negative result, no Support is drawn.

Reminder: *On the turn a Large-Scale Offensive was launched, only the Priority TO may receive Support markers.*

11.3.4 For each TO in Movement Mode, except the Secondary TO, the Soviet player may choose to receive a Support marker if the weather is not Mud. Those TO markers which received a Support marker this way may not move anymore during this turn (including during the Stavka Phase). If necessary, use a token to indicate that these TO may not move.

Reminder: *On the turn a Large-Scale Offensive was launched, only the Priority TO may receive Support markers.*

Drawing Supports example 1: Standard case

It is Turn 3, during the Soviet player's Support draw phase, and:

The weather is *Fair* and the sky condition is *Clear*;

• TO N is in Movement Mode, on a Clear hex containing a Railroad;

• TO CN is in Offensive Mode, on a Major City hex containing a Railroad;

• TO CS is in Offensive Mode, on a Major City hex containing a Railroad;

• TO S is in Offensive Mode, on a Minor City hex containing a Road.

After returning all supports on the map to the Support Pool, and after verifying whether or not the **TO** remoteness rule applies, the Soviet player assigns priority and draw Support markers for each of his **TO**.

He begins by declaring **TO CS** as the Priority TO and **TO N** as the Secondary TO. Hence, the latter will not draw any Support marker during this entire turn. As **TO CS** does not possess six Support markers in his Available Support box, it cannot launch a Large Offensive.

The Soviet player now rolls 2D6 for each of his other **TO**.

He begins with **TO CN** and gets a "7". 7 halved gives 3.5 rounded down to 3, to which no modifiers is added nor subtracted. Thus he randomly draws 3 Supports from the Soviet Support Pool and places them face down in TO CN's Available Supports box.

Then he rolls an "8" for **TO CS**, which is halved to 4, and to which 2 is added because **TO CS** is the Priority TO. He randomly draws 6 Support markers and places them in the TO's Available Support box.

Finally, he rolls for **TO S**. The dice, after halving and rounding down gives 2, to which 2 is subtracted because **TO S** is on a Minor City hex, and 1 is subtracted again because the **TO** is not on a Railroad hex. The final result is -1. Hence, this **TO** does not receive any Support this turn.

TO N, being the Secondary TO, does not receive any Support. Even if he chose not to move this turn it wouldn't be allowed to draw a Support marker (*cf. 11.3.4*). As the Soviet player did plan to move this TO, he is quite satisfied with his choice.

Drawing Supports example 2: Large Offensive

It is now turn 5 and:

The weather is *Fair* and the sky condition is *Clear*;

All TO are in Offensive Mode, on Major City hexes containing Railroads.

During the Soviet player's Support draw phase, after returning all Supports on the map to the Support Pool, and verifying whether or not the TO remoteness rule applies, the Soviet player assigns TO priorities and draws Support markers for his TO.

He declares **TO S** as the Priority TO and **TO N** as the Secondary TO. As **TO S** has six Supports in its Available Support box, it meets all requirements to launch a Large Offensive. After some thinking, the Soviet player decides to launch a Large Offensive with this TO, which he will direct towards Romania. He now draws Support markers for this **TO** only, as other **TO** are not allowed to receive Support markers nor move during this turn.

He begins with choosing a Support marker from the Support Pool, and selects the "**Ally Capitulation**" Support marker. He then rolls 2D6, not without some fear, and obtains a wonderful "10", which divided by 2 gives 5. He receives a bonus as the Priority TO (+2) as well as a bonus for launching a Large Offensive (+2), resulting in the random draw of 9 Support markers from the Support Pool. TO S has now 16 Support markers in its Available Support box. The Soviet player must spend at least 10 of these markers during this Support phase if he does not want to exceed the 6 available Support limit by the end of the phase. That's bad news for the Axis units in Romania…

Drawing Supports example 3: TO remoteness

It is turn 12 and:

The weather is *Mud* and the sky condition is Overcast;

All TO are in Offensive Mode on Major City hexes containing Railroads, except TO S which is in Movement Mode on a Clear terrain hex containing a Road.

During the Soviet player's Support draw phase, after returning all Supports on the map back to the Support Pool, the Soviet player verifies whether or not the **TO** remoteness rule should apply. It appears that two **TO** are concerned by the rule:

There are no in-supply German unit in a 10 hex radius from **TO N**. **TO N** is thus subject to the TO remoteness rule and, as it is in Offensive Mode, cannot draw any Support markers during this turn.

There is a single German unit in a 10 hex radius of **TO S**. This unit is neither in supply nor under a *Haltebefehl* marker, thus the TO remoteness rule applies. As **TO S** is in Movement Mode, it may move up to 5 hexes for free, and thus come closer to Soviet exploiting units.

The Support phase resumes as the Soviet player designates **TO CN** as the Priority TO and **TO N** as the Secondary TO. Note that there will be a -3 modifier to the number of Supports drawn as the weather for this turn is *Mud*.

11.4 Draw of German Support markers

11.4.1 The placement of the Hitler Approval marker on the "Führer's Approval" Track indicates how many Support markers the German player randomly draws this turn. Moreover, as long as the German player controls all six Strategic Objectives (*cf. 16.1*), he draws one additional Support marker.

11.4.2 In *Mud* weather, reduce the number of drawn Supports by 1 (minimum: 0).

11.4.3 These two rules do not apply if a Dismissal occurred between the previous German Support phase and the current phase. Instead, the number of Support markers the German player may draw this turn is indicated on the "End of Reich" Table by cross-reading with the number of Strategic Objectives currently under German control (*cf. 16*).

11.5 Placement and use of Support markers

11.5.1 The Support markers drawn are either placed face down in the "Available Supports" box, or on the map when the player decide to play them as Events during their respective Support phase. Some Support markers can still be used during another phase or during the enemy's turn (*see Supports Player Aid*).

11.5.2 The Soviet player must obey the following order if he decides to play any of his Support markers:

☆ play of *Stalin* is mandatory and must occur first; roll the die immediately,

☆ play of the *Lend-Lease* Support (not mandatory),

☆ play of the *Surprise Attack* Support (not mandatory),

☆ eventually play of the other Support events in any order,

☆ expend Supports to put Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced mode (*cf. 10.3*) (max: 2 supports/TO),

☆ expend Supports to get a bonus for TO movement in the corresponding sequence (max: 2 supports/TO).

Example of play with Support markers: "Surprise attack" Support marker and combat situation

*After having launched a Large Offensive on Turn 1 with **TO CN** and drawn Support markers for this TO, the Soviet player decides he will play 10 Supports during the Support phase: 1 **Lend lease** Support, 1 **Surprise attack** Support, 3 Artillery Supports, 3 Air support Supports, 1 Leader and 1 Partisan Support.*

*The Soviet player plays the **Lend Lease** Support first as he must obey the sequence in 11.5.2. He places the **Lend Lease** Support on TO CN which increases its Operation Range.*

*He next plays the **Surprise attack** Support, still following the priorities in 11.5.2, with the hope to breach the German defensive line. He places the Surprise attack Support marker on hex 6221 and chooses to attack the one-step German unit to the South without moving his units prior to combat. The attack is resolved immediately. The final combat odds are 4:1 (32 halved by the River against 2 doubled for the Fortification). The combat roll is "7", which clears the way for the Soviet units through this hex for the following Movement phase.*

Design note: we recommend that the Soviet player takes some inspiration from this example for his first turn …
At the end of combat, the placement and use of Support markers resume. There is no required order of play for the remaining Supports, so the Soviet player places them according to their description in the order he prefers.

11.5.3 There is no limit to the number of Support markers which can be played by the **Priority TO** during this phase, as long as the specific limits for putting infantry corps in Reinforced mode and for TO movement are observed. **Other TO may play (as event or as spending) no more than 2 Support markers each per turn**. Mandatory Events (such as Stalin) do not count against this limit.

11.5.4 Rules for the placement of Supports on the map are explained in the Supports Player Aids.

Note that placement and use of Support labeled with a 'TO' on the counter must be confined within the Operation Range of the TO marker to which they belong (*cf. 9.2.1*).

No airplane Support can be played by any side when the sky is *Overcast*.

Some Supports markers must be attached to a friendly unit. Such Support markers must remain stacked with that unit until the Support must leave the map. If the unit is eliminated, the Support goes back into its draw pile. Multiple Leaders may not be attached to the same unit:

☆ Soviet leaders: *Rybalko, Katukov, Bogdanov*.

☆ German leaders: *Schörner*, *Model*, *Heinrici*, *Himmler.*.

Different Support markers may be used together in the same combat.

Exception: two Supports with the same name or two leaders cannot be used in the same combat. For example, Artillery Supports [1]/+2 and [1]/+3 may not be used together, nor may Rybalko and Bogdanov.

11.6 Movement of TO markers

11.6.1 TO markers in Movement Mode which did not draw a Support marker previously during this phase (*cf. 11.3.4*) may now move (Exception: TO may not move during a Large Offensive).

11.6.2 A TO marker must observe *9.1.4* when moving. A **TO** may move three hexes, with the following modifiers:

☆ +1 hex if moving on Railroads only,

☆ +1 hex per Support expended from the TO's "Available Supports" box (maximum +2),

☆ -1 hex if the weather is *Snow*,

☆ -2 hex if the weather is *Mud*.

11.7 Switching TO's Mode

The Soviet player may decide to switch a TO's mode if this TO is in a Minor or Major City hex; flip the TO marker over for each TO which switches mode.

Exception: A TO in Offensive Mode which played an Artillery Support may not switch mode.

Exception: A TO which launched a Large Offensive may not switch mode.

Exception: The Zhukov Support prevents a TO from switching mode.

12 STAVKA PHASE

The Stavka box represents the Soviet player's strategic reserve. During this phase, each TO may appeal to the High Command in order:

☆ to use the strategic reserve (*cf. 12.1*)

☆ or to move (*cf. 12.3*).

The player must announce which option he chooses before rolling the die.

12.1 Using the strategic reserve

Soviet units may enter or leave the Stavka box subject to the following rules. Units which are to leave the box must do so before new units may enter the box.

12.1.1 Leaving the Stavka box

TO which are selected to use the strategic reserve each roll 1D6 in turn, and check the result in the *Stavka Table*. The die must be rolled for the Priority TO first, and for the Secondary TO last. The Soviet player may expend any Support marker from the TO's "Available Supports" box to add 1 to the die result for each marker expended. Return those Supports to the Soviet Support Pool.

If a Large Offensive was launched this turn, the Priority TO adds +2 to its die roll, however no other TO may receive Stavka units this turn.

Die roll	Priority TO	Normal TO	Secondary TO
1	1	0	0
2	2	1	0
3	3	2	1
4	4	2	2
5	4	3	2
6+	5	3	3

The result indicates the number of units that may leave the Stavka box. Armored Corps with an Attack strength above 8 count for 2 units (that is all armored units which are not Cav). The Soviet player chooses which units leave the box and places them on the map in a way such that they are:

☆ within the TO's Operation Range,

☆ next to a friendly unit which was on the map prior to the Stavka phase,

☆ not adjacent to an enemy unit,

☆ in supply.

12.1.2 Moving into the Stavka box

Up to six units which are in supply, not adjacent to an enemy unit, and stacked with an HQ may be put in the Stavka box each Stavka phase.

12.2 Properties of the Stavka box

12.2.1 An unlimited number of units may be placed in the Stavka box.

12.2.2 The Stavka box may never contain less than 4 infantry corps and 3 armored corps.

12.2.3 Infantry corps are automatically put in Standard Mode when they arrive in the Stavka box.

12.2.4 Armored corps are automatically placed on their full strength side when they arrive in the Stavka box.

12.2.5 Armored corps which were in the "Eliminated Units" box are put in the Stavka box when they are rebuilt (*cf 17.3.9*).

12.3 Movement of TO in Movement mode

12.3.1 TO in Movement Mode which did not draw any Support marker this turn may move again during this phase, provided the weather is not *Mud* or a Large Offensive has not been launched this turn.

Roll a die and check the *Stavka Table*. The result indicates the number of hexes the TO may move, observing *9.1.4.* Each Support marker expended from the TO's "Available Supports" box adds one to the result. Return the Supports spent this way to the Soviet Support Pool.

Stavka phase example (reinforcements and movement)

(This example follows the Drawing Support example 1)

During the Stavka phase of Turn 3, the Soviet player appeals to the High Command in order to obtain more reinforcements and more movement possibilities.

There are currently 10 infantry corps, 1 armor corps with an attack factors below 9 and 5 armor corps with attack factors of 9 or more in the Stavka box.

*He selects **TO CS** first, which is the Priority TO, to be certain that there will be enough reinforcements left in the Stavka box for it. The die roll gives a "5" allowing up to 4 units to leave the box. He takes 2 armored corps with attack factors above 9, which each count for 2 units, so that there's no point left.*

*He next rolls for **TO CN**. A roll of "6" under the "Normal TO" column allows up to 3 units to move out of the Stavka box. He takes 1 armored corps with attack factor 12. He cannot take the armored corps with attack factor 6, worth one point, with his remaining point, because this would leave fewer than 3 armored corps in the Stavka box. So he selects 1 infantry corps.*

*The player chooses not to reinforce **TO S** so as to keep his reserves for other fronts.*

*He finally tries to move **TO N**. He rolls 1D6 under the "Secondary TO" column, which yields a "3" allowing **TO N** to move just one hex.*

13 FORTIFICATIONS AND DEFENSE OF THE REICH

When the Soviet player captures a hex containing a basic fortification, an advanced fortification, or a Major City in Germany, this hex loses all of the characteristics which are described in the rules underneath. Such hexes can be marked with *Soviet Control* markers as a reminder.

13.1 Basic fortifications

13.1.1 Basic fortifications are represented on the map with fortifications lines A2 and B2, as well as the fortification line along the June 1944 front line. Basic fortifications grant the same terrain modifiers as Major Cities as long as units in these hexes are not attacked from an unfortified hexside. These modifiers cannot add up with other Terrain Modifiers, except for Rivers.

13.2 Advanced fortifications

13.2.1 Other fortifications on the map are advanced fortifications.

13.2.2 Those fortifications give a defensive bonus as shown on the *Terrain Effect Chart*. This bonus cannot be added to those of other terrain in the hex.

13.2.3 Soviet units must spend 4 MP to enter such a hex (roads are ignored).

13.2.4 No "E" result may occur in hexes with advanced fortifications (including with "**Hourra** !" attacks).

13.2.5 The Soviet player may advance after combat ONLY if there was an "S" or "DR" combat result (after terrain modifiers).

13.3 German Major Cities

13.3.1 No "E" result may occur in Major Cities which are in Germany (included with "**Hourra !**" attacks).

13.3.2 The Soviet player may advance after combat ONLY if there was an "S" or "DR" combat result (after terrain modifiers).

14 CAPITULATION OF AXIS ALLIES

Capitulation of the Axis player's allies (Romania, Hungary) may occur when the Soviet Union player plays the *Ally Capitulation* Support. This Support can only be played when conditions specific to each nation are in effect. The Support must be targeted against one nation. Once played, the Support marker returns to the Support Pool, even if both nations have capitulated.

14.1 Capitulation of Romania

The Soviet player can use the *Ally Capitulation* Support and target Romania whenever the Support marker is in the TO South's "Available Supports" box. He must use the Support marker at the end of his Combat phase before the Exploitation phase. The player rolls 1D6 with the following cumulative modifiers:

☆ Both IASI and CHISINAU captured:	-1
☆ GALATI captured:	-2
☆ Either of BUCHAREST or oil fields captured:	-3

If the modified result is less than the number of Romanian units in the "Eliminated Units" box, the event is successful. Romania sides with the Soviet Union and declares war on Germany and its allies. Follow the procedure for changing sides (*cf. 14.3*).

If the final result is equal to or more than the number of Romanian units in the "Eliminated Units" box, the event fails and Romania remains allied with Germany. The Support marker returns to the draw pile.

Example: Capitulation of Romania.

*The Soviet player launched a Large Offensive in Romania during Turn 5. As the free Support, he chose to draw "**Ally Capitulation**" as he expected to be in a good position to have this country change sides. After a bloody battle, the player elects to play the Support marker. Both IASI and CHISINAU have been captured, providing -1 modifier to the die roll. On the Axis' side, 4 Romanian units have been eliminated.*

The Soviet player rolls a die and obtains a "4". Thanks to the die roll modifier, the resulting number is inferior to the number of Romanian eliminated units causing Romania to capitulate !

14.2 Capitulation of Hungary

14.2.1 The Soviet player can use the *Ally Capitulation* Support and target Hungary whenever the Support marker is in the TO South's "Available Supports" box and any of the two Budapest hexes is Soviet-controlled. He must use the Support marker at the end of the Exploitation phase. The player rolls 1D6 with the following modifiers:

☆ both Budapest hexes are captured:	+1
☆ Romania is allied with the Soviet Union:	-1

If the modified result is:

Equal to or less than 3	Hungary will not capitulate until the end of the game, no other capitulation attempt may be performed against her.
4 or 5	no effect.
6	an armistice is agreed to. At the beginning of the next German turn, all Hungarian units are put in the "*Units Removed From Play*" box.
7	Hungary sides up with the Soviet Union and declares war on Germany and its allies. Follow the procedure for changing sides (*cf. 14.3*).

14.3 Ally changing sides procedure

The procedure to follow when a German ally sides with the Soviet Union is as follows:

☆ The German player cannot use Rail Movement inside the former ally country.

☆ All units of the former ally are now considered Soviet units for all purposes, except for combats (*cf. 7.11 Attacking with Romanian and Hungarian units*).

☆ All HQ units of the former ally are removed from the game.

☆ The Soviet player rolls 2D6 and removes the corresponding number of units of the former ally's nationality from the game. He must remove the full-strength units first.

☆ At last, units remaining on the map are put in the "Ally Capitulation" box, keeping their current number of steps left.

☆ During each future Soviet Reinforcement phase, the player rolls 1D6+3. The result is the number of units which arrives as reinforcements for this turn. Those units arrive in a hex belonging to their country, on or adjacent to a Soviet unit in supply.

⊕

You are now ready to play the Bessarabia 1944

⊕

15 FÜHRER'S APPROVAL

15.1 Overview

15.1.1 This rule, using a Track of the same name, represents Hitler's Approval (or lack of) of the way the operations are going in this theater of operations.

15.1.2 The loss of Strategic Sites will lower this rating. Taking back those Sites, and going onto the offensive, will raise it.

15.1.3 The location of the *Hitler Approval* marker on the Track will determine how many Support markers and Replacement points the German player will have for this turn. The higher the value on the track, the happier the Führer is, allowing for more Support markers and replacements.

15.1.4 The *Freedom of action* marker represents the degree of liberty a player has when deciding to use the Withdrawal against the Führer's will (*cf. 4.7*) and the Abandon equipment and retreat orders (*cf. 6.3*). The higher on the track the marker reaches, the bigger the ensuing drop of Hitler's Approval.

15.1.5 The *Hitler Approval* and *Freedom of Action* markers are placed on the track per the scenario instructions.

15.2 Procedure

15.2.1 Lowering of the Approval level:

☆ at the start of the German's Reinforcement and Replacement phase, the Approval Level automatically goes down 1 Point.

This automatic decrease does not occur anymore as soon as the German player loses Strategic Objective n°1 (*German cities cf. 16.1*) ;

☆ after the capture of a Strategic Site by the Soviet player (*See the Strategic Site Value Table*).

☆ if a German HQ is eliminated, Approval drops 1 Point.

☆ after the German player conducts Withdrawal against the Führer's will (*cf. 4.7*) and Abandon equipment and retreat orders (*cf. 6.3*), lower the Approval level by the value of the box the *Freedom of action* marker moves into.

15.2.2 Raising of the Approval level:

☆ for each German attack (exploitation attacks included) where at least TWO German armored divisions are attacking (not KG), and where an Armored Exploitation is declared, Hitler's Approval is raised by 1 Point, whatever the attack result;

☆ After the taking back of a Strategic Site by the Germans (*See the Strategic Site Value Table*).

15.3 Dismissal

15.3.1 As soon as the *Hitler Approval* marker reaches the "0" square on the Track, the Commanding Officer of the Front is dismissed, with the following consequences:

☆ Loss of ALL Support markers in the "Available Supports" box,

☆ No replacements are received in the next Reinforcement and Replacement phase or for the current one if the Dismissal took place during that phase ;

☆ On the next German Support phase, the German player draws a number of Support markers depending on the number of Strategic Objectives still under control as shown on the End of Reich track (*cf 16.2*) instead of the number indicated on Hitler's Approval Track;

☆ The Movement Points of German units are halved (rounded up) for the next German Movement phase and Strategic Moves are not allowed;

☆ After the first dismissal, the *Hitler Approval* marker is put back in the "10" square on the Track.

☆ The *Hitler Approval* marker is flipped over as a reminder.

It is flipped back to its front side at the start of the next turn.

15.3.2 After a second Dismissal, the *Hitler Approval* and *Maximum Satisfaction* markers will be put in the "9" square. After a third Dismissal, they are put back in the "8" square. For every Dismissal occurring after this: in the "7" square. The Approval level can never be put in a square higher than the *Maximum Satisfaction* counter.

16 END OF REICH

16.1 Strategic objectives

16.1.1 The German player has six Strategic Objectives to control in order to prevent the downfall of Germany. Those objectives are:

☆ to control all Major and Minor Cities inside Germany (excluding Berlin),

☆ to control at least one Major City in Soviet Union or one Port in any of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania,

☆ to control any two of: Katowice, Gleiwitz/Hindenburg/Beuthen, Oppeln,

☆ to control Ploesti oil field,

☆ to control at least one hex of Budapest,

☆ to control Berlin.

16.1.2 For the purpose of this rule, control of these objectives is checked at the end of the German Exploitation phase.

16.1.3 When an objective is lost, move the *End of Reich* marker into the square corresponding to the number of Strategic Objectives currently under control by the German player. Never move the End of Reich marker leftwards, even if an objective is recaptured.

16.2 End of Reich Track

16.2.1 There are four different consequences to the loss of Strategic Objectives. The End of Reich Track indicates which apply when an objective is lost.

☆ as long as the German player controls all six Strategic Objectives, he draws one additional Support during the Support phase. This effect does not apply during the turn a Dismissal occured.

☆ when the *End of Reich* marker enters a new square for the first time, randomly add the indicated number of *End of Reich* Support markers to the German Support Pool.

☆ the columns indicate the number of Support markers the German player shall draw on the Support phase following a Dismissal.

☆ last mobilization: the first time the German player loses a Strategic Objective, he receives on every future Reinforcement and Replacement phase two infantry divisions on their reduced side. Those divisions must be chosen from the "Eliminated Units" box and must have a reduced Attack strength of 0 or 1.

Example: Führer's Approval track and Strategic objectives

At the beginning of Turn 7, the situation is as follows. The *Führer's Approval* level is 3. There has already been 3 Dismissals, consequently the "*Maximum Approval*" is in the "8" box. The German player performed one Withdrawal against the Führer's will and one Abandon equipment and retreat, so that the "*Freedom of action*" marker is in the "2" box. Also, one Strategic objective has been lost: the oil fields in **Ploesti**.
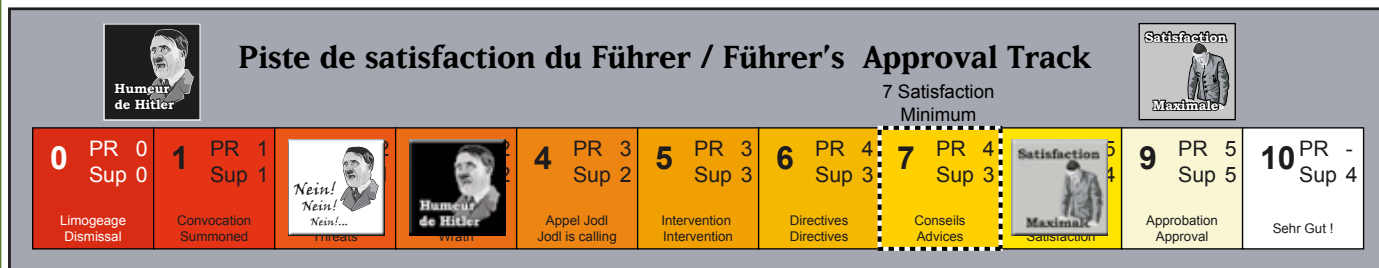
During the Soviet Exploitation phase, the Soviet player captured **Memel**, a Major German city, while it was only defended by a single unit not under a *Haltebefehl* marker. The first consequence of this is that the German player incurs a 4 point loss on Hitler's Approval track: a German Major city without a *Haltebefehl* marker is captured (-3) and which is a Baltic port (-1). The *Führer's Approval* level is first reduced to "0" causing a Dismissal. The "Hitler Approval" and "*Maximum Approval*" markers are put in the "7" box. Then, the "*Hitler Approval*" marker is moved one box down the track to account for the 4th
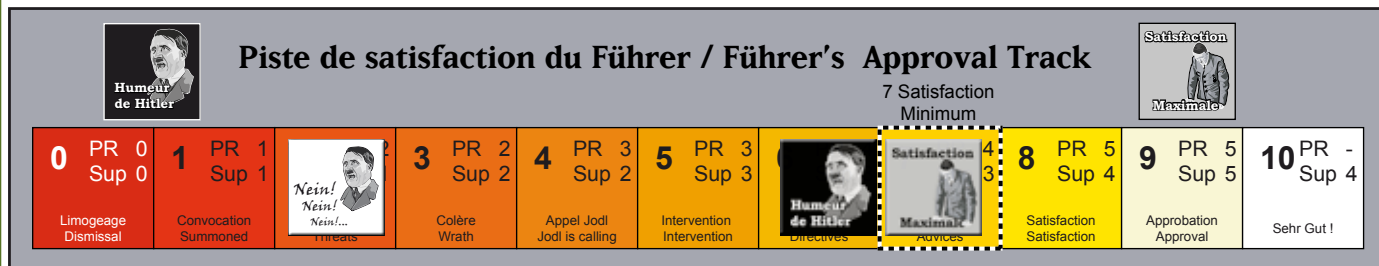
point loss. All German Supports in the German Available Support box are put back into the Support pool.

During the same turn, the German player will suffer the following constraints: he receives no RP, movement points of German units are halved, Strategic Movement is not possible. However, as control of Strategic objectives is only verified after the German Exploitation phase, he may still draw 2 Support makers during the Support phase, of which he can pick one.

At the end of the German Exploitation phase, control of Strategic objectives is verified. This is the second consequence of the fall of **Memel**: as it is the first German town which is captured, the German player loses control of a second Strategic objective.

The *End of Reich* track indicates that the German player must add two random End of Reich Supports to the Support Pool. Also, the German player notices with some bitterness that... he will not be allowed to choose one Support when the next Dismissal occurs.

17 REINFORCEMENTS AND REPLACEMENTS PHASE

At the start of the German's Reinforcement and Replacement phase, the Approval Level automatically goes down 1 Point.

Reminder: This automatic decrease does not occur anymore as soon as the German player loses Strategic Objective n°1 (cf. 15.2.1)

17.1 Soviet Union Reinforcements

All Soviet reinforcements appear according to the Reinforcement Schedule, in a Major City in the Soviet Union under control by the Soviet player or in the Stavka box.

Support markers scheduled as reinforcements are put in the Support Draw Pool.

17.2 German Reinforcements

17.2.1 All the German reinforcements appear according to the Reinforcement Schedule, in a City hex in Germany (Major or Minor) or in a hex containing advanced fortifications. Such hexes must be controlled by the German player.

Support markers scheduled as reinforcements are put in the Support Draw Pool.

17.2.2 The German reinforcements can be moved by Rail during the same phase (using Rail points).

17.2.3 If the German player lost control of at least one Strategic Objective, he receives on each Reinforcement phase two infantry divisions on their reduced side. Those divisions must be chosen from the "Eliminated Units" box and must have a reduced Attack strength of 0 or 1. If no such units are available, those reinforcements are lost for the turn.

17.3 Replacement points

17.3.1 The Soviet player receives Replacement Points (RP) as indicated in the Reinforcement Schedule.

17.3.2 The German player receives RP for German units as indicated on the Führer's Approval Track, unless it is the first turn of the game or a Dismissal occurred this turn, in which case he receives no RP.

17.3.3 The German player also receives RP for Hungarian and Romanian units as indicated on the Reinforcement Schedule, so long as those nations are allied with Germany. Once they change sides, those nations do not receive RP.

17.3.4 RP cannot be accumulated from one turn to the next.

17.3.5 A RP can be used to rebuild a HQ unit. This HQ arrives in a Major City of the same nationality.

17.3.6 Each RP allows the rebuilding of one step loss of German division, either by flipping back an existing unit to its full-strength side, or by bringing back on the map an eliminated unit on its lower strength side.

17.3.7 German armored divisions on the map or in the "Eliminated Units" box require 1 RP and 1 Support to gain a step.

17.3.8 Each RP allows the rebuilding of one Soviet Infantry Corps. For each RP, draw one counter from the Soviet Infantry Corps draw pile and place it on its Standard Mode side according to *17.3.11*.

Reminder: Soviet Infantry Corps are put on their full-strength side only by expending Support markers during the Support phase (cf. 10.3).

17.3.9 A Soviet armored corps in the "Eliminated Units" box requires the expenditure of 1 RP and 1 Support marker to be rebuilt. The rebuilt unit arrives in the Stavka box on its full-strength side.

17.3.10 Soviet armored corps on the map and within the Operation Range of a TO marker can be flipped to their full-strength side by expending 1 RP and 1 Support marker from that TO's "Available Support" box.

17.3.11 German rebuilt units are put back on the map in a hex containing a supplied HQ of the same nationality. Soviet rebuilt units are put either in a Major City in Soviet Union controlled by the Soviet player or in the Stavka box.

Exception: German rebuilt elite units only appear in the next turn, as reinforcements, in a German City controlled by the German player.

17.3.12 Out Of Supply units, units in advanced fortifications, units adjacent to enemy units, or units out of an HQ's Command Radius, never receive replacements. SS units (black color) cannot receive replacements.

18 TRANSFORMATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF UNITS

18.1 Withdrawal of German units

18.1.1 The Reinforcement Schedule indicates that the withdrawal of German divisions may be required on some turns.

The German player MUST remove from the map the number of divisions indicated for the turn according to the required Attack strength and unit type. These units are then placed in the "Units Removed From Play" box. Unless otherwise stated, the units can be from the Wehrmacht, Luftwaffe, or Waffen SS. The Attack strength indicated is the MINIMUM strength the withdrawn unit must possess.
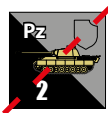
18.1.2 The divisions withdrawn must be in supply, and can be on their back side. If the German player cannot withdraw the number of divisions indicated for the turn, he loses ALL of his Replacement Points for the rest of the game.

18.2 Unit transformation

18.2.1 The Reinforcement Schedule calls, for some turns, for the transformation of some units. The player just shifts the corresponding counters. The new unit keeps the same status (OOS, reduced, eliminated, etc.).

✢

You are now ready to play the scenario: Bagration 1944

✢

19 WARSAW UPRISING

19.1.1 During the Soviet movement phase, the first time a Soviet unit is within 2 hex of Warsaw while a German unit is occupying the city, the Warsaw uprising begins. Put the *Warsaw Insurrection Start* marker on the corresponding turn of the Turn Track, and the *Warsaw Insurrection* marker on the city hex.

19.1.2 While the *Warsaw Insurrection* marker is on the city hex :

☆ the Soviet player gains a 2 column shift benefit when attacking the city. Should the city hex become empty of enemy units after the ensuing combat, the Soviet player must advance into the Warsaw hex. All Warsaw uprising markers are then removed from play. In addition, give the Stalin Support to the German player who can, from now on, force the Soviet player to play it on a TO chosen by the German player during each and every future Soviet Support Phase.

☆ at the end of the German Exploitation phase, the Soviet player rolls a die and adds the number of turns elapsed since the start of the uprising (marked by the Warsaw Insurrection Start marker). If the result is "5", the German player receives a step loss on any unit present in the Warsaw hex. If the result is "6" or more, all Warsaw uprising markers are removed from play. If, after the die is rolled, no German unit is left in the hex, also remove the Warsaw uprising markers.

✢

You are now ready to play the whole campaign.

✢

DESIGN NOTES

After the success met by Liberty Roads, I quickly thought about creating an Eastern Front version of LR. The initial idea was to build on LR's core features (Supports, Führer's Approval, PLUTO...) and add a few modifications to take into account the specifics of the war in the East.

It was quite easy to create Support markers which reflected the tactical specificities and events belonging to the German-Soviet war, which allowed adding the necessary chrome to the game without burdening the rules.

The geographical scale to use was obvious. It is comparable with LR, and allows covering the entire Front, including the Baltic countries, Germany and even the Balkans. As is the case with LR, players will have a global vision of the conflict by playing the campaign scenario.

For the units' scale, I must admit I was tempted to keep the game at the division level, even for the Soviet side. However this idea would not have been interesting, except for publishing an unplayable monster game out of megalomania. It was a wiser move to use the Soviet corps scale instead, which still provides a large, but manageable number of units.

In fact, the main design effort was put on the strategic dimension of this campaign. When one studies this period of war, it is striking to note with what devastating power large offensives would begin, how suddenly they would be stopped, and the relatively long period of time that elapses before a new phase of offensive action would start. In game terms, how does one simulate the stopping of the Soviet advance after the Vistula-Oder offensive, when the Soviet player is only a few hexes away from Berlin ?

It was clear to me that the answer lay in an evolution of the PLUTO rule introduced in LR. An equivalent system with less flexibility was needed to simulate the burden of centralization and the planning process of the Soviet Command. This led to the birth of the Theaters of Operations (TO), and to the logical follow-up in my opinion: Soviet corps with two levels.

The following design notes combine amended LR's notes and original notes pertaining to the creation and development of Victory roads.

FÜRHER'S APPROVAL

This simple rule allows simulating both the Führer's influence on the conduct of operations and the complexity of the German Command. It also leads the German player to play in a historical way. If he bitterly defends his positions, if he shows an offensive demeanor, then the player will have more influence when asking his superiors for the necessary means to pursue his strategy (as symbolized by more replacements and Supports).

On the opposite, a German player giving ground without counter-attacking will be quickly punished and won't have the necessary influence to obtain any material support.

Thus, the German player is not forced by some artificial or prescriptive rules to defend this or that city, to protect his oil fields or his ports on the Baltic Sea, but he will be naturally driven to it by the need to preserve flexibility in his operations, achieving both historicity and game pleasure.

To this notion of Satisfaction track which worked well in LR, I added the End of Reich rule which, besides tactical considerations (loss of cities or HQ, armored combat, etc.), helps provide a strategic vision to both players. The loss of a strategic objective will not only have consequences on dismissals, but will also pollute the German Supports draw pool with End of Reich Supports, simulating the loss of German supplies and the decay of the Nazi power.

Finally, two new rules interact with the Führer's Approval to provide the German player with the possibility of withdrawing from a major encirclement: Withdrawal against the Führer's will and Abandon equipment and retreat. These two rules appeared while developing the game and allow the Axis player a breath of fresh air at an exponential cost of Approval level.

SUPPORTS

Support markers are the heart of the Victory Roads system, both because of their influence on the player's actions and as conceptual elements providing structure to the whole rules.

Their usefulness is obvious to the players: they allow preparing offensives, gaining favorable events, rebuilding armored units, etc. Without them, there's no real chance of breaching a solid enemy defense or of thwarting an attacker's plans.

Supports are truly a designer's dream when it comes to maximizing the number of simulated elements within a limited rule set. Here is such a list:

✦ Supports allow highlighting the structural differences of each side's army: the Ally using numerous and powerful equipment, the German relying mainly on a large number of hard trained and experienced troops (elite units).

✦ They allow re-telling the main events in the campaign without burdening the rules with exceptions or special cases. You will thus find Jukov, Model, partisans, katyushas, allied lend-lease, etc.

✦ Players face historical restrictions to obtain Support markers: as the Soviet player one must prioritize the Theaters of Operations; as a German player one must satisfy the Führer.

✦ Players also face operational choices between spending Supports for generic actions (such as rebuilding armored units, placing Soviet infantry in reinforced mode, performing strategic movement) and activating the Support's favorable event.

✦ They even carry a strategic aspect for the Soviet player as they are at the heart of large offensives and TO management.

Finally, on a more fun angle, the uncertainty on the number and type of Support available to each player generates some stress, makes each game a different one, and is ideal for solitary play.

NO ZONE OF CONTROL ?

Players may be surprised by the lack of zones of control in the rules (a concept which simulates a unit's influence on the six surrounding hexes, dearest to the old guard of wargaming).

That's a matter of realism in the first place. At this scale, there's no reason that a single division exerts influence on enemy movement as far as 75 km away (47 miles).

However that's mainly a design choice, allowed by the scale we selected: I'm amazed how much more fluid a game without zones of control becomes, emphasizing the significance of manoeuvre.

Nonetheless, old habits die hard and there remains a kind of zone of control in Victory Roads: units block supply in neighboring empty hexes. That's required to prevent encirclements from looking like a horrible rosette-shape ensemble of six units surrounding an enemy unit.

Without zones of control (or with just a little bit of it), players would be well advised to carefully watch their front line and to offer a solid defense to their adversary, especially since the defender's supply status is checked right before combat...

COMBAT AND ELITE UNITS

In Victory Roads, combat is quite classical; players compute an attacker vs defender ratio, possibly modified by supply, terrain or Supports.

The Combat Result Table is however quite distinctive. Along with the usual attrition result (step losses), each player implements a tactical result affected by terrain: retreat, exploitation, additional step losses...

This is where elite units are significant, as they give players the ability to choose, to some extent, the tactical result. This may look like a small benefit when one reads the rules and the Combat Result Table, but players shall quickly understand the importance of it.

"**Hourra !**" **attacks** are new feature compared to LR. This rule was created to make sure the Soviet player was able to perform exploitation even in difficult terrain. It has a high cost to pay for (a mandatory step loss) but it is worth it in the numerous cases when exploitation is essential, especially during large offensive phases.

Another rule was introduced to deter players from using Romanians and Hungarians as cannon fodder by having them take all step losses. I apologize for the cumbersomeness of this rule. The idea was supposed to fit in a couple of lines (do not attack with your minor allies in order to have them take step losses, those losses will be for your German or Soviet units), however taking into account all the constraints did not allow for such a simple redaction...

THEATERS OF OPERATIONS AND SOVIET INFANTRY CORPS

As explained in the introduction, I knew I would need a rule to simulate the logistical constraints of the Red Army, a necessity to depict the significant succession of phases between the various offensives.

The idea to use the PLUTO marker concept of LR (a marker which is placed on the map at the choice of the Ally player around which the best allied Supports could be used) was attractive because it did create a good model without too many rules for the Western Front. Faced with the hugeness of the Eastern Front and the large flexibility for placing the PLUTO marker (how many markers were needed? What would it simulate?), this idea was however quickly dropped. What was working for the US-UK allies was not for the Red Army.

TOs were born from this realization. They act as super-HQs, allowing the use of Supports within their operation range. They are however completely dependent on communication lines and major logistical centers. They can launch large offensives with unmatched power, and become negligible when they switch to Movement mode, as they move with infuriating slowness.

Although less "elegant" than PLUTO in LR, this rule allows to simulate (at least in part, see beneath) the necessary halts between each Soviet offensive. In a given Front sector, after the initial breakthrough, the German player can hope to get back on its feet at the cost of a significant loss of territory, before the Soviet player gets ready to strike again.

TO also have the advantage of compartmentalizing the game for the Soviet, allowing team play without too much difficulty, which is perfect for the campaign and which should give rise to Homeric debates on the choice of the priority TO.

I previously said that TO only partly simulate the Soviet logistical constraints. Indeed, before even the first playtests, I had the hunch that a Red Army based on traditional ideas would be impossible to stop, independently from the use of Supports, and that the intrinsic strength of Soviet units and their large number would allow a continuous advance of the Soviet forces.

I thus started to think about the concept of building a Red Army with two gears. I did not want to penalize armored corps to allow them to exploit deep in the rear, but I had the desire that the mass of Soviet units, the infantry corps, would be restricted by the influence of TO. This is the reason why infantry corps have two faces. The Standard mode has negligible attack strength but significant defense strength (which symbolizes large artillery supplies). The Reinforced mode represents the same formations boosted with multiple support units (armored brigades, artillery, engineers) which were attached to these corps during the preparation of these famous large offensives, and which are not represented at the scale selected for the game.

Infantry corps are thus extremely powerful when within the operation range of their TO at the beginning of an offensive, play a major role in breaching enemy lines, and eventually exhaust naturally following the rhythm of casualties and attacks taking place outside TO's range.

In order to make a starker distinction between these two faces, rebuilding and reinforcing those corps are managed differently. To reinforce costs precious Supports. To rebuild

however costs Replacement points, which are even rarer, in order to simulate the manpower shortage in the Red Army during this last year of the conflict. The Soviet player will thus permanently have to find the right balance between material and human resources when faced with losses.

In the end, I believe that rules on TO and Soviet infantry corps reach their goals: to simulate the declining effectiveness of offensives and the necessary lapse of time to prepare the next one. As always in the game system developed in LR or VR, players are tied to strong historical and strategic trends, but do retain liberty of action over operational and tactical choices.

Stavka

A necessity in all good games on the Eastern Front, the rule on Stavka effortlessly integrates in the Victory Roads system. Without giving way on complexity, it allows to simulate the Soviet strategic movements (while avoiding a rule on the rail systems conversion) as well as the prioritization of the different Theaters of Operation by the allocation of reinforcements.

With respect to the latter point, I shall draw both players' attention to the ability of this rule to make reinforcements appear within the holes of a careless German player's Front line.

LARGE OFFENSIVES

Large offensives are the culminating points of the game. They will delight the Soviet player while the German player shall dread them.

While writing these notes, I realized that it would be difficult to re-use those concerning the invasion of Normandy in LR. Nonetheless, I do notice some similarities in the fun provided by the choices a player has relative to the means to employ or the whereabouts of the beach landings in LR and those which appear when deciding the launch of a large offensive.

It is especially true in the case of the Bagration operation. In this operation, the heat is clearly on the Soviet's shoulders. The player must capture or reach Minsk by the end of his turn. It may sound surprising to achieve when one looks at the map and the initial setup, but with a bit of thinking and prior testing of the Bagration scenario, the feat should be relatively easy.

Thus, a large offensive is like a beach landing in LR; it requires preparation. TO positioning, choice and combination of Supports, and in particular using key Supports the right way (Surprise attack, Soviet leaders, Lend-Lease) shall guarantee the Soviet player's breakthrough.

CONCLUSION

Victory Roads is the biggest game I've ever tackled. This dimension only confirmed what I had always anticipated from my years as a wargamer: there is nothing extraordinary in conceiving a game system. However, developing a game this size simply represents an infinite amount of work. The real challenge is this one: to test and to test the rules again, to make sure of their consistency, to start a campaign all over again (and starting Bagration is nothing like starting the invasion in LR!) and to keep modifying rules until one is certain, at last, that the system is stable and that players shall enjoy this titanic confrontation as much as we have.

As was the case in LR, the two sides in Victory Roads are completely asymmetrical, but both sides will feel different than on the Western Front. A stark contrast with the Ally player is that the Soviet player will not fear being repelled by the German. It is nonetheless a real challenge to reproduce the historical advance and reach all goals by the end of April, 1945. The German player does indeed face an opponent which outperforms him everywhere; he is paradoxically much more powerful than in LR and benefits in the first part of the game of a real capacity to mount significant operations and foil the Soviet's plans. My advice to both players is this one: above all, do have a strategic vision. Which objective do you want to capture / defend above all else? For the Soviet: be careful that your TO interact well with each other; mount well-prepared large offensives. For the German player: anticipate where the ram will hit; prepare second lines for defense in depth; do avoid gigantic encirclement at all costs.

Finally, I would like to thank two friends in particular without whom Victory Roads would have never seen the light: Raynald Forest and Joël Maynard. Their knowledge of the East Front and their help in developing the game contributed to making this game a success. Also, big thanks to Christophe Gentil-Perret for his patience and his support during the long walk to produce this game.

by Nicolas Rident

VICTORY ROADS

DETAILED SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Weather Phase (3)

Soviet player turn

Supply phase (4)
  HQ Supply
  HQ side switch (4.1.3 and 4.1.4)
  Unit Supply

Supports phase (5 and 11)
  1. Return Supports previously played to the Support Pool (5.2)
  2. Apply the TO remoteness rule (11.2)
  3. Draw Support markers
     Assign the Priority TO and the Secondary TO
     Launch a Large Offensive or not
  4. Placement and use of Supports markers
     ☆ Play of *Stalin* is mandatory and must occur first; immediately roll the die,
     ☆ Play of *Lend-Lease*,
     ☆ Play of *Surprise attack*,
     ☆ Play of other Supports in any order.
     ☆ Expend Supports to put Soviet Infantry Corps in Reinforced mode according to **10.3** (max: 2 supports/TO).
     ☆ Expend Supports to get a bonus for TO movement in the corresponding sequence (max: 2 supports/TO)
  5. Move TO in Movement Mode (max: 2 Supports/TO)
  6. Switch TO's mode
  7. Return Support markers in excess (5.1.4)

Stavka phase (12)
  Each TO may:
     ☆ use the strategic reserve (*cf. 12.1*)
     ☆ or move (TO in Movement Mode only, *cf. 12.3*).

Movement phase (6)
  Normal and Strategic movements

Combat phase (7)

Exploitation phase (8)

Reinforcement and Replacements phase (17)
  Arrival of Soviet reinforcements
  Renforcement et reconstruction des corps blindés grâce aux points de remplacements
  Reconstruction des corps d'infanterie grâce aux points de remplacements

German player turn

Suppply phase (4)
  HQ Supply
  HQ side switch (4.1.3 and 4.1.4)
  Unit Supply
  Withdrawal against the Fürher's will (4.7)

Supports phase (5)
  Supports get back in Supports Pool
  Determination of Support Level according to Führer Approval
  Supports placement
  Return Support markers in excess (5.1.4)

Movement phase (6)
  Normal, Strategic (6.2), Rail (6.4) and Naval (6.5) movements
  Abandon equipment and retreat (6.3)

Combat phase (7)

Exploitation phase (8)
  Check of Strategic Objectives (16)

Reinforcement and Replacements phase (17)
  Reduction of one point of Führer Approval
  Arrival of German reinforcements (eventually by Rail)
  Withdrawal of German units
  Rebuilding of German units with Replacement points according to Führer Approval