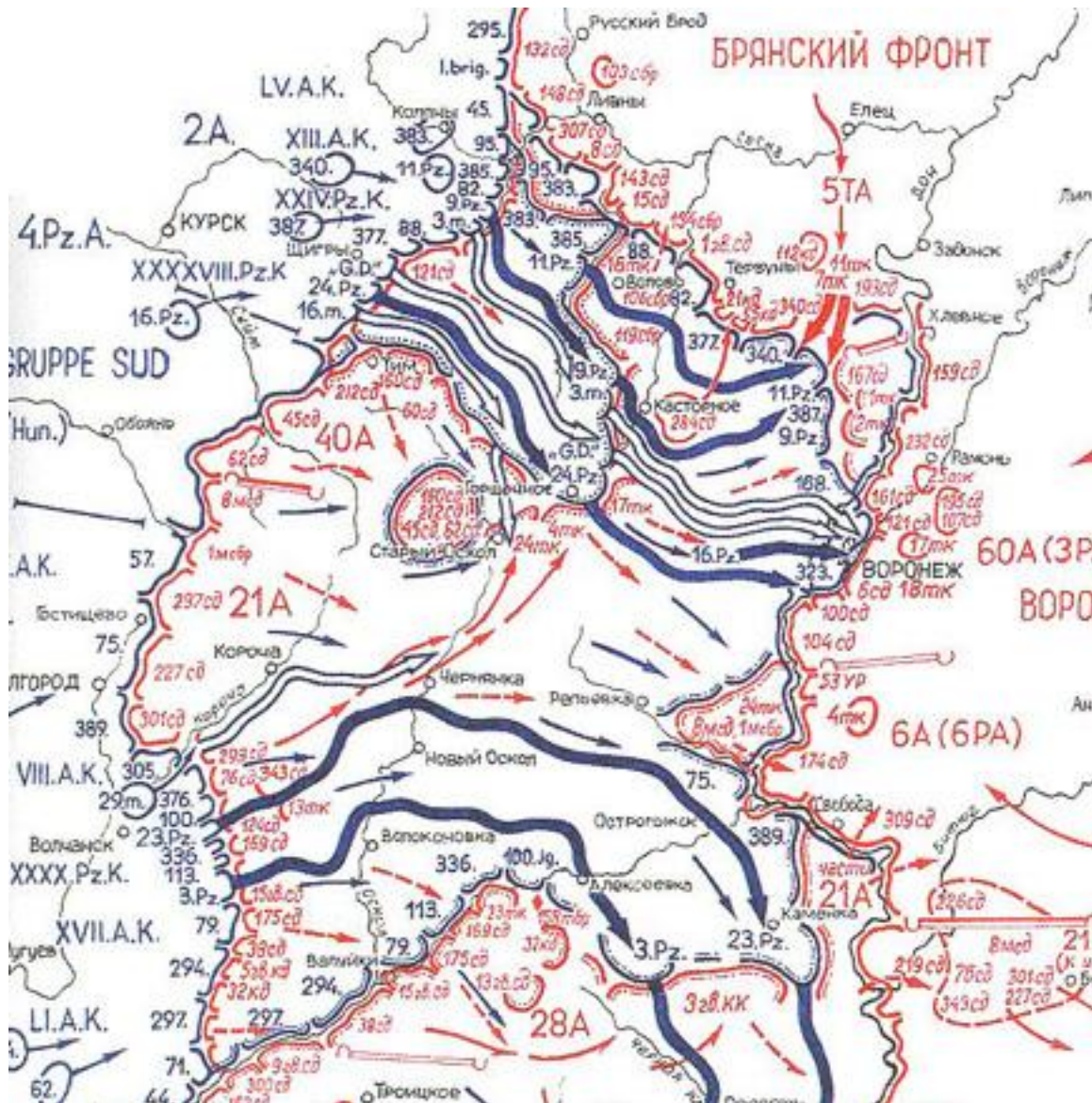


FALL BLAU

Army Group South, June to December 1942



Game Design by Gregory A Blanchett
Based on the Operation Typhoon game system.
Creation Begun - August 2007

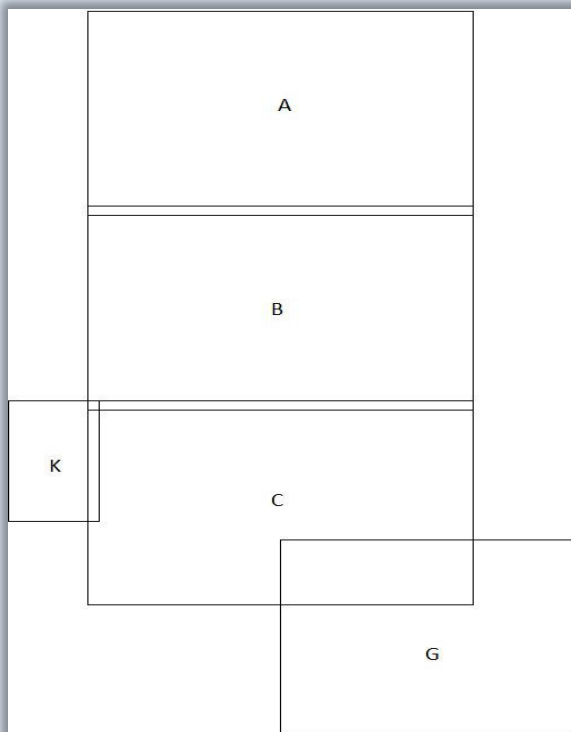
FALL BLAU BASICS

GAME VISION

Above all, this is designed to be a fun and entertaining game. It models the actual campaigns with actual units on a relatively accurate map of the area in 1942. But, this is not intended to be a simulation. With such a large area covered and large number of units to control by each side, I have tried to streamline a strength chit pull system so that it will not give you a headache with detail and take forever to finish. With the several smaller scenarios, you can usually complete a game in less than two hours by examining just a slice of the overall campaign. I believe Fall Blau accomplishes its goal better with the several smaller battle scenarios. However, what would a wargame of this size be without a full campaign game? To give the players a feel for the flow of the actual campaign, I have included rules to cover the various situations that only apply when playing with the entire German offensive. The complete Fall Blau Campaign uses five maps, but I have also included a smaller "Historical" variant which only uses Maps A & B. This smaller variant can be altered by the players to give the same options as the full campaign for those space-challenged individuals. Of course, if someone plays the entire campaign (grand opus), it is truly the meat of this game and will likely takes days to finish...

FULL MAP LAYOUT

There are three main maps aligned from north to south respectively: A, B, & C; plus two expansion maps labeled K & G which mate to map C as shown.



GAME SCALE

Each hexagon on the map represents just over 10 kilometers (6.5 miles) from side to side. Each Game Turn represents 3 days of real

time. The game of Fall Blau uses one ten sided die (results 0-9) for all die rolls called for in the rules.

KEY GAME TERMS

NATIONALITIES

Each nationality has its own color to differentiate between units of each side. All Axis units are considered friendly to each other (**Exception: Stacking Restrictions**).

AXIS

German Units – Grey

Slovak Units - Teal

Axis-satellite:

Hungarian Units - Purple

Rumanian Units - Orange

Italian Units – Green

SOVIET

Soviet Units – Tan

Soviet Guards Units - Brown

UNIT SIZE

Unit size is important for identification purposes and stacking. When symbol is bracketed, counter represents a part of the parent unit of that size. If the symbol is in a white box, it counts as a half unit for combat. Size used in Fall Blau from smallest to largest:

Battalion = II	Regiment = III	Brigade = X
Division = XX	Corps = XXX	

Headquarters:

Corps = XXX	Army = XXXX
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HEX OWNERSHIP

In Fall Blau the idea of possessing a hex—which side “owns” which hexes at any given instant—is important for rail hexes as well as towns and cities. At the start of play, the Axis Player has all hexes west of the start line, while the Soviet player has all those hexes to the east of the start line. The ownership status of a hex switches from one side to the other whenever a ground unit from the other side enters it. This switching is immediate and may occur and reoccur in the same hexes any number of times during play. Note that supply status has no effect on a units’ ability to change possession of a hex.

ZONE OF CONTROL

In Fall Blau most units exert a Zone of Control. The six hexagons immediately surrounding a unit compose that unit’s Zone of Control (ZOC). These Zones of Control affect movement, combat, supply, and

possibly displacement. Hexes upon which units exert Zones of Control are called "controlled hexes." All units which possess a Zone of Control exert it into all six surrounding hexes at all times. Only small battalions, cadre units, and Headquarters units do not exert a Zone of Control. These units are designated with a white band across their counter. The term EZOC stands for Enemy Zone of Control.

UNIT TYPE CLASSES

There are two classes of units in Fall Blau. Mechanized units are either tank/panzer/StuG or mechanized/motorized infantry units. Non-mechanized units consist of infantry, mountain, naval, commandoes, cavalry, and HQ units.

Units of different Classes (as defined above) pay different Movement Point costs for each hex entered and have different advance after combat restrictions. Their movement costs vary depending on the type of terrain in the hex moved into (or hexside moved across). See the Terrain Effects Chart for a complete explanation of Movement Point costs by terrain and by Class.

Example: An infantry unit need only expend one Movement Point to enter a Woods hex. However, a tank/panzer unit must expend two Movement Points to enter the same type of hex.

Units of different Classes also have different abilities and use separate Replacement Points.

STRENGTH CHITS

In a game of Fall Blau, when a unit with a Combat Rating is about to perform combat for the first time (or for a step loss due to a combat result to the stack), the owning Player picks a Strength Chit for that unit. This is nothing more than a counter with a set of numbers on both sides, one number of which will represent the Combat Strength of the unit in question. These are placed in an open container (like a bowl, hereafter called the Strength Chit Pool) for easy selection during the game. Note the reduced side of a strength chit is the lighter colored side. From the moment the Strength Chit is picked, it must remain underneath its "parent" combat unit until that unit is eliminated due to combat or reduced to cadre status. Strength Chits are never eliminated, they are always returned to the Strength Chit Pool when not attached to a parent unit.

COMBAT RATING

The letter represents the fighting ability of a larger unit based on the relative size and quality of manpower, indicating which value to use on its corresponding strength chit:

A - Above Average, Large
B - Average, Medium
C - Below Average, Small

UNIT STEPS

The following is a summary of the number of steps possessed by each unit in the game of Fall Blau:

- (a) Generally a unit with a Combat Rating has three steps of strength. When such a unit takes one step loss, it flips its Strength Chit over to its reduced side to indicate this loss

(obviously, its new Combat Strength will be smaller than the original). When the unit takes a two-step loss (or the unit takes a one-step loss after having taken a previous one step loss), the Strength Chit is put back in the appropriate chit pool and the parent combat unit is flipped to its cadre side. This cadre is now considered a combat unit with a combat strength of one (and worth one step). If it loses three steps in combat, the Strength Chit is returned to the pool and the parent combat unit is eliminated. Sometimes a unit will pick a Strength Chit that possesses a Combat Strength of two or less. It then has just two steps of strength. When such a unit takes a one-step loss, its Strength Chit is removed from play by placing it back in the pool and the parent combat unit is flipped to its cadre side. *(Note that when flipped over the Strength Chit will indicate a combat strength of zero; this is not considered to be a step of strength.)* If it takes a loss of two steps in combat, its Strength Chit is returned to the pool and the parent combat unit is eliminated.

- (b) Axis-Satellite divisions and some other smaller units have just two steps. When such a unit takes a one-step loss, it is flipped to its cadre side. If it takes a loss of two steps in combat, the unit is eliminated. They never possess a Strength Chit.
- (c) All HQ units, cadre units, breakdown units, Soviet rifle divisions, and most units smaller than a division (including German security divisions), consist of one step only. If any of these units are ever forced to lose a step in combat, they are immediately removed from play. They never possess a Strength Chit.

Important Note: A unit's Combat Strength may never be halved more than once, even if it is subject to more than one penalty. Also note that in Fall Blau, all units have a minimum Combat Strength of one.

CADRE UNITS

Multi-step units in Fall Blau are back-printed with a cadre side. When a unit is in its cadre state, it is considered to be badly battered due to previous combat. All cadre units have a Combat Strength of one and a Movement Point Allowance based on its type. Cadre units are always considered to have one step of strength and never exert Zones of Control. All cadre units may freely stack and do not count against stacking or supply limitations. Soviet cadre units may use Strategic Withdrawal at any time provided they meet the requirements.

COMMAND RANGE

Numerical value which is the distance (in hexes) a unit may be from the HQ and still receive supply effects. To have Supply, a unit must follow the rules of tracing a supply line which has restrictions. When a HQ is Unsupported or Uncommitted it has no command range and therefore, cannot provide supply.

MULTI-UNIT FORMATIONS

In Fall Blau, German panzer or motorized divisions (and Soviet Kuban Cavalry Corps) are comprised of two physical units (a & b). Formation structure allowed these units to operate normally over a larger area. For the German divisions, when attacking or defending together, combined assets were available, thus boosting their combat ability as shown by the white box allowing both units to participate in one combat when stacked together.

Both Soviet and Axis units which are available during the first 6 turns of the campaign have a colored box on their counter to reflect their parent army (armee). This color coding assists in their proper use with regards to Commitment and Support. **Note:** *If using the Optional*

Hidden Strength Rule, only units within an army's setup area will be considered part of that army for commitment purposes.

REPLACEMENT POINTS (RP)

These are used for bringing damaged units back to full strength and bring certain units back into play that were previously eliminated. Each scenario or campaign dictates how many of either mechanized or non-mechanized Replacements Points are available for each player to use. The Soviet player has the ability to use these points to convert some units into other larger units. Soviet Replacement Points are only available for a particular turn and may not be accumulated. If not used, they are simply gone. The Axis player has RPs assigned for the entire scenario and used by the player as he sees fit.

Whenever a Soviet rifle division or Soviet silhouette mechanized unit is eliminated determine if it can trace a supply line of any length to a supply source. If it can, it is placed in the Replacement Pool for possible return later in the game (remember to flip all Soviet rifle divisions to their 'Untried' side whenever placed in the Replacement Pool). If unable to trace, it is permanently eliminated.

COUNTER EXAMPLES

Multi-step units have their upper edge highlighted as a reminder.

The magenta letter(s) denotes which scenarios the unit appears in.

A mechanized unit's Armor Band behind the strength or Combat Rating and Movement Allowance, is blue, pink, or yellow.

A white box behind the unit size symbol makes this unit count as half for combat stacking purposes (i.e., two such units would count as one multi-step unit for an attack/defense).

A number in a white circle on the upper right portion of the counter denotes the turn of arrival during the full campaign.

If the reinforcement turn is in a pink circle; this means it replaces a unit that is already in play (if available).

Units with a white stripe across middle of counter have no Zone of Control.



Units with a silhouette have certain restrictions as outlined in the rules.

The color box denotes a unit's army (armee) affiliation during turns 1-6.

A grey boxed 'Opt' will signify an optional unit.

See also attached sheet.



SEQUENCE OF PLAY

GAME-TURN SEQUENCE OUTLINE

Fall Blau is played in Game-Turns. Each Game-Turn is comprised of one independent Stage plus two Player-Turns. The Player whose Player-Turn is in progress is termed the Phasing Player.

The following detailed Game-Turn Sequence Outline is an explanation of the flow of play during any of the scenarios. Strictly follow the Sequence of Play, Phase by Phase, until the end of the scenario being played. **Note:** *Scenario specific rules will always take precedent if there is a conflict.*

A. PREPARATION STAGE

Consult the Turn Record Track and place the appropriate marker for weather effects (Soviet Player rolls a die each turn 30-41 to see if this is a Mud turn).

1. Axis Support Phase

The Axis Player determines how many Support Points will be added to what's available in this turn. Marker is advanced along track in response. Support Points are then expended by flipping HQ units to their Supported side as they are counted down.

2. Mutual Air Allocation Phase

The number of Air Points available to each player is determined from the Turn Record Track. Those are placed in the 'At Base' box. Each player then moves the Air Points to one of the three 'Available for Sortie' boxes. Note that both players are restricted as to how many points are allowed in each Air Zone box. Within the respective zone, the Axis Player may place an 'Available for Sortie' Air Point on any hex on the map traversed by a Railroad that is within 20 hexes of an Axis HQ unit for Interdiction.

3. Axis Breakdown Phase

Axis Player may breakdown or re-combine eligible divisions during this phase.

4. Mutual Supply Determination Phase

Both players determine the supply status of all their units on the map. Supply lines are traced by Friendly units to a Friendly supply source. Units are determined to be in one of the following states: In Supply, Out of Supply, or Isolated. The supply status as determined in this Phase lasts until the next Mutual Supply Determination Phase.

5. Mutual Replacement/Withdrawal Phase

If available for this turn, each player may give replacements to his eligible units; place Out of Supply markers as appropriate. Soviet Player may expend a non-mechanized replacement point and replace two rifle divisions with an available Rifle Corps or one rifle division with a Guards division from the pool. A Soviet rifle division in the Replacement Pool may be brought back into play for the cost of two non-mechanized replacement steps. One mechanized replacement step may be used to bring one friendly HQ back into play. One Soviet mechanized replacement step may be used to bring one Soviet silhouette mechanized unit back into play. Units scheduled to replace other units this turn do so now. Units scheduled to be withdrawn (or their substitutes) are now removed from play.

B. AXIS PLAYER TURN**1. Axis Reinforcement Phase**

The Axis Player may place his eligible reinforcements for this turn, on the map near an eligible HQ (if delayed from the previous turn) or in their entry hex.

2. Axis Movement Phase

The Axis Player may now move all, some, or none of his units (that are eligible to move) by using Tactical Movement or Strategic Movement. Units may be moved in any particular order the player desires. Units moving by Strategic Movement must remain at least three hexes away from Enemy units at all times (including at the start and at the end of the move). A unit's Movement Allowance may be altered by supply status, all normal Movement rules apply. However, no unit may use both Tactical and Strategic Movement during the same phase. Mobile Assaults (*not allowed during Mud turns*) and Overruns may be conducted during this phase.

3. Axis Combat Phase

Units the Axis Player wishes to conduct a Prepared Assault may attack adjacent Enemy units as per the normal Combat rules. Attacks are declared (markers placed), naval assets and Air Points are placed if available. Strength chits are pulled for units that require them. A combat ratio is determined for each attack, and a ten sided die is rolled. Retreats and advances after combat are performed as called for on the Combat Results Table. Note that attacks are resolved in any order the Axis player wishes. Any 'Disorganized' markers are removed from the map.

C. SOVIET PLAYER TURN**1. Soviet Commitment Phase (Turns 1-6 only)**

Soviet Headquarters with an 'Auto Commit' marker are automatically committed this turn. The Soviet Player rolls a die for each of his uncommitted armies with a 'Commit Roll' marker. This will determine whether they will become committed. The player cross-references the current situation for that particular Army to find the Army Commitment Number (ACN) for that roll. If the roll is less than or equal to the ACN, all units of that army are committed. If the Army fails to be committed, place an 'Auto Commit' marker on the HQ. If there is an ACN for a Reserve Army, a roll is made for it as outlined. Place a 'Commit Roll' marker on the HQ of any army area which is adjacent to one that is committed or has an 'Auto Commit' marker. Soviet player may declare a Strategic Withdrawal for one HQ which is committed.

2. Soviet Reinforcement Phase

The Soviet Player may place his eligible reinforcements for this turn, on the map or in their Entry Area.

3. Soviet Movement Phase

The Soviet Player first removes all his Railed or Black Sea Transport (BST) markers and then may move up to the limit, his units that occupy Friendly rail hexes by using rail movement. Units may move up to 60 hexes apiece. Any unit that used Rail Movement this segment must have a 'Railed' marker placed on it. If available, a unit may use a BST marker to move from one port to another Soviet port. The BST marker remains on the unit.

The Soviet Player may now move all, some, or none of his units (that are eligible to move) by using Tactical Movement or Strategic Movement. Units may be moved in any particular order the player desires. Units moving by Strategic Movement must remain at least three hexes away from Enemy units at all times (including at the start and at the end of the move). A unit's Movement Allowance may be altered by supply status, all normal Movement rules apply. However, no unit may use both Tactical and Strategic Movement during the same phase. Certain units may have their Movement Allowance increased during Strategic Withdrawal. Overruns may be conducted during this segment. *After the Soviet player declares Counteroffensive*, Soviet tank or mechanized corps units may conduct Mobile Assaults during this phase.

4. Soviet Combat Phase

Units the Soviet Player wishes to conduct a Prepared Assault may attack adjacent Enemy units as per the normal Combat rules. Attacks are declared, naval assets and Air Points are placed if available. Strength chits are pulled for units that require them. A combat ratio is determined for each attack, and a die is rolled. Retreats and advances after combat are performed as called for on the Combat Results Table. Note that attacks are resolved in any order the Soviet player wishes. Any 'Disorganized' markers are removed from the map.

D. GAME-TURN INDICATION STAGE

All Air Points (and the Aerial Supply marker) are removed from the map. All Axis HQ units are returned to their unsupported side. The Game-Turn marker is advanced on the Turn Record Track to indicate the start of a new Game-Turn.

MOVEMENT**GENERAL RULE:**

During a normal movement phase, the Phasing Player may move as many or as few of his units as he desires, as many or as few hexes as long as its Movement Point Allowance is not exceeded in a single movement phase. Players should note that movement is basically divided into three types: Tactical, Strategic, and Rail movement. Each type of movement has its own set of restrictions.

PROCEDURE:

The Phasing Player's units may be moved in any order he desires. Eligible units are moved individually, tracing a path of contiguous hexes through the hex grid. Once a Player begins moving a particular unit, he must complete its movement before any other unit can be moved. Units expend Movement Points from their Movement Point Allowance for each hex entered during movement, according to the terrain in the hex (or a crossed hexside) whose costs are summarized on the Terrain Effects Chart. The Phasing Player may never combine movement options for one unit during the same movement phase (i.e., only one type of movement can be utilized during a single movement phase).

RAIL MOVEMENT

In order to move a unit by Rail, the unit must start the Movement Phase in a Rail hex and it must finish that phase in a Friendly owned Rail hex. It may move only along the railroad from Rail hex to adjacent (and connected) Rail hex.

When moving a unit by Rail, place a Railed marker directly on top of the unit in question. The Rail marker is normally removed at the beginning of the next owning player's movement phase (they clarify to the player which of his units have moved by Rail during his turn). Units with a Railed marker may not attack. Units that have been attacked, remove the marker immediately upon resolution of the combat.

A unit moving by Rail does not use its printed Movement Allowance. Rather, all units moving by Rail may move up to 60 hexes in a single movement phase.

Terrain has no effect on Rail Movement, other than the unit must follow the rail lines. A unit's supply status has no effect upon a unit's ability to move by Rail. Axis Air Interdiction may influence the movement of Soviet units by Rail.

The Soviet Player is allowed to move units (of any size or type) in this fashion within a single movement phase, up to the limit printed on the Turn Record Track for that turn (*Reinforcements entered by rail will count against this limit*).

SEA MOVEMENT

During a campaign scenario which uses Map C and K, the Soviet Player is allowed to move up to three units (of any size or type) via Sea Movement within any single movement phase. There are three Black Sea Transport markers for this purpose; when moving a unit by Sea, place a BST marker directly on the unit in question. A unit, so designated, moves from one port to another Soviet owned port as its movement for the turn. The unit must start the phase in a port hex. Ports are defined with a white anchor symbol.

Units with a BST marker may not attack. Units that have been attacked, remove the marker immediately upon resolution of the combat.

Only one BST marker may be used during Mud or Freeze turns.

STRATEGIC MOVEMENT - *Strategic Movement is exclusively moving via transport, and as such, is somewhat faster than when deployed in the proximity of the enemy.*

A unit may move by Strategic Movement only if it did not use any other type of movement during the current movement phase. A unit may only use Strategic Movement if it remains at least three hexes away from Enemy units while moving (including at the start and at the end of the move). In order to count the distance in hexes from an Enemy unit to a moving unit, count from the Enemy unit's hex (exclusive) to the moving unit's hex (inclusive).

Units using this type of Movement can utilize the bonuses provided by Roads as listed on the Terrain Effects Chart.

TACTICAL MOVEMENT - *Tactical Movement is deployed movement in the proximity of Enemy forces.*

Tactical movement is the only movement allowed into or out of an Enemy ZOC. A unit moving in this manner which enters a hex through a hexside crossed by a road may ignore the normal Movement Point cost of that hex (and hexside, if applicable), and treat that hex as a Road hex.

EFFECTS OF OTHER FRIENDLY UNITS ON MOVEMENT

A Friendly unit may move through hexes occupied by other Friendly units at no additional cost in Movement Points. There is no limit to the number of Friendly units that may be moved through a particular hex in a single movement phase.

EFFECTS OF TERRAIN ON MOVEMENT

The standard Movement Point costs for entering hexes or crossing hexsides are influenced by unit type.

Mountain units treat Rough and High Woods hexes as if they were Hills terrain for movement purposes.

If more than one terrain exists in a particular hex, use the highest cost for movement. **Exception:** *Hexes with roads.*

All types of bridges (Road, Railroad, or Pontoon) negate the cost of crossing a river hexside during movement.

MOVEMENT INHIBITIONS AND PROHIBITIONS

A Friendly unit may never enter a hex occupied by an Enemy unit. **Exception:** *Overrun.*

A unit that enters an EZOC must stop movement completely and move no further during that movement phase. **Exception:** *Mobile Assault.*

A unit which started a movement phase in an EZOC may leave an Enemy-controlled hex only if it moves immediately into a hex that is not Enemy-controlled. Units may never move directly from one Enemy-controlled hex to another Enemy-controlled hex. **Exception:** *Mobile Infiltration.*

A unit may not expend more Movement Points than its total Movement Point Allowance in a single movement phase. Any unit may expend all, some, or none of its Movement Points in a given movement phase. A unit may not save Movement Points for another Game-Turn, nor may any unused Movement Points be transferred to another unit.

Units may move only during their friendly Movement Phases, although some moving may occur as a result of attacks (in terms of advances or retreats). These are not considered movement and do not require the expenditure of Movement Points.

Units that are in certain supply states may have their movement capabilities restricted to some degree as per the supply rules.

A unit may always move at least one hex per friendly movement phase, even if it does not possess enough Movement Points to accomplish this movement, except where prohibited by terrain and Enemy Zones of Control.

SPECIAL TACTICAL MOVEMENTS

MOBILE INFILTRATION

German mechanized units have the ability to ignore Enemy control for purposes of the one hex move provided they do not cross a Major or Volga River or enter a Fortified Zone hex. *After a Soviet Counteroffensive is announced*, all Soviet **mechanized and cavalry** units may also utilize this move ability.

MOBILE ASSAULT

German mechanized units have the ability to conduct an attack during tactical movement against certain target hexes and continue moving afterward. *After a Soviet Counteroffensive is announced*, Soviet **tank or mechanized corps** units may also utilize this ability.

In order for a unit to conduct a Mobile Assault, it must be In Supply, and in an EZOC that is exerted from **only** the target hex (i.e., no other enemy stacks may be exerting a ZOC on the friendly unit), or a non-controlled hex adjacent to enemy units without ZOC. **Note:** *A unit may not conduct a Mobile Assault in the same movement phase as Mobile Infiltration.* An attack is initiated by the friendly unit expending two movement points plus the cost of entering the target hex. If the unit doesn't have enough Movement Points available, the Mobile Assault may not be conducted. Each player may commit up to one Air Point to the attack (attacker choice then defender). Combat strengths are tallied for the attacking unit and for the **entire defending hex** (**Note:** *This ignores any stacking restrictions on combat as it takes place during the movement phase*). An odds ratio is found as in a normal combat. If the ratio is less than **1-1**, the attack cannot be made and place a 'Disorganized' marker on the attacking unit (Air Points are considered used). A die is rolled and compared to the Mobile Assault Table. The die result may be modified by the conditions listed on the table.

A result of 'Dr3' **requires** the target units in the hex retreat three hexes as per normal retreat rules (steps may not be lost in exchange for these hexes). If this result is 'D(1)r3', the stack retreats and also loses one step. **Note:** *In both cases, this retreat is conducted by the attacking player.*

Any 'A' result ceases movement for the attacking unit. Place a 'Disorganized' marker on the unit. If this result is 'A(1)DG', the attacking unit also loses a step.

If the target hex is vacated, the friendly unit is moved into that hex and may continue movement if it has Movement Points left, until it enters another EZOC. A unit may conduct a Mobile Assault a maximum of two times in one movement phase. A hex can be used to initiate a Mobile Assault only twice in a movement phase.

Mobile Assault **may not** be made into a city or town hex, a Rough or High Woods hex, from or into a Marsh hex, or across a Major or Volga River. Mobile Assaults are not allowed during Mud turns.

A unit may be the target of Mobile Assault any number of times within the enemy movement phase.

Disorganized - When a unit has been designated as 'Disorganized', its strength is halved (round down) for any combat during the following friendly combat phase. Markers are removed at the end of the combat phase. Disorganization only affects combat strength and there is no effect on their ability to advance or retreat.

OVERRUN

Multi-step combat units (i.e., those with a stripe at the top of the counter) may move through a hex occupied by a lone enemy HQ or cadre, or any other lone unit without a ZOC. This may occur during Tactical Movement at the cost of one extra Movement Point for entering the hex. This is the only time a unit may enter an Enemy occupied hex. **Note:** *A unit may not conduct an Overrun in the same movement phase as Mobile Infiltration.*

Units that are 'overrun' in this manner are removed to the Replacement Pool (if appropriate) or eliminated. An exception is made in the case of the defending unit also in a friendly (to the displaced unit) ZOC, that unit may move to the hex of the unit exerting the ZOC. If more than one friendly hex is available, the owning player may choose which one to use. Note that this may cause stacking limits to be exceeded, but

remember the restrictions apply only at the end of a *Friendly* movement phase. This exception is called Forced Displacement.

Overruns **may not** be made against a unit in a city hex, hex with a town, Rough hex, or across a Major or Volga River not crossed by a bridge.

SOVIET STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL

Any Soviet cadre or committed HQ unit may use Strategic Withdrawal.

At the end of the Soviet Commitment Phase, the Soviet Player may also declare any one committed army HQ capable of giving other units this ability. Place a marker on the HQ unit for the following movement phase. All units within the Command Range of that army HQ unit at the beginning of the phase are eligible for Strategic Withdrawal.

Units using Strategic Withdrawal have their MA doubled for Tactical Movement. These units must be within three hexes of an enemy unit (*which would force the use of Tactical Movement*), and must end their move at least three hexes from an enemy unit. All units not meeting these conditions use normal movement rules and are not utilizing Strategic Withdrawal.

ZONES OF CONTROL

EFFECTIVENESS OF A ZONE OF CONTROL

A stack consisting of units with and without a ZOC will exert a ZOC.

If an Enemy unit and a Friendly unit, both of which exert Zones of Control, are adjacent to each other, each unit is affected by the other unit's ZOC.

Impassable and Volga River hexsides block a ZOC. Therefore, a ZOC never extends through these hexsides into hexes on the other side. **Exception:** *Pontoon Bridges.*

There is no additional effect in having more than one unit exert its Zone of Control to a given hex.

ZONE OF CONTROL AND MOVEMENT

All units must initially stop movement upon entering an EZOC. Certain units have the ability to perform a Mobile Assault and thereby possibly continue movement. All others must finish their movement after entering.

Units exiting an Enemy Zone of Control must pay a special Movement Point penalty of two Movement Points plus the terrain cost of the hex entered.

A unit may move freely and without penalty into and through hexes that are adjacent to units that do not exert Zones of Control.

For the purposes of movement, Friendly units **do not** negate Enemy Zones of Control in the hexes they occupy.

ZONE OF CONTROL AND SUPPLY

An Enemy-controlled or Enemy-occupied hex blocks the tracing of Friendly supply through that hex. **Exception:** *Friendly units (not Friendly Zones of Control) negate the presence of Enemy Zones of Control in the hexes they occupy for the purposes of tracing supply lines.*

STACKING

GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

There is a limit to the number of Friendly units that may end a Friendly movement phase stacked in the same hex. There may never be more than three combat units stacked in the same hex at the end of a Friendly movement phase. In addition, there are certain rules which regulate the number of combat units that may perform combat out of a given hex.

During a movement phase, Friendly units may freely enter and pass through stacks – as long as the stacks comply with the restrictions of this Section at the end of that Friendly movement phase. If stacks of units exceed these restrictions at that time, the excess must be immediately eliminated by the owning player.

Cadre units may freely stack, the stacking limit does not affect cadre units. Headquarters units normally do not count against the stacking limit, but neither player may stack more than one HQ unit in a single hex.

Axis-satellite units may not freely stack with certain friendly units. They can only stack with units of their own specific nationality and German units. German units may stack with any other Axis units.

STACKING AND COMBAT

Regardless of the physical stacking limitations listed, there are further restrictions when it comes to units that may actually perform combat from within a single hex during a particular Combat Phase. Only one multi-step combat unit may participate in combat out of a hex during a Combat Phase. Units with their size symbol in a white box count as half a unit for purposes of this rule only. One step units (e.g., cadres, HQs, battalions, etc.) may freely participate in any combat out of a hex.

The choice of which units in a stack will participate in a combat during a particular Combat Phase (after following the prior restriction) is left entirely to the owning Player. The units that do not participate in a combat are still affected by the results of the combat, whether it succeeds or not. The non-participating units may also be used to fulfill other requirements.

The stacking restrictions concerning combat apply to both attacker and defender.

Note that, since stacking restrictions apply only at the end of a Friendly movement phase, units may retreat as a result of combat onto Friendly stacks in violation of stacking restrictions. However, this situation must be corrected by the end of the next Friendly movement phase.

COMBAT (PREPARED ASSAULT)

GENERAL RULE:

Friendly units which are adjacent to Enemy units during a Friendly Combat Phase may attack those Enemy units subject to the stacking restrictions. A given unit possesses a Combat Strength which is used when attacking and defending. This strength may not be divided among different combats either on the attack or defense. The Phasing Player is termed the attacker and the non-phasing Player is termed the defender regardless of the overall strategic situation.

PROCEDURE:

All attacks are designated before any are resolved (i.e., before the die is cast). Separate combats may be resolved in any order the Phasing Player desires, so long as all of his necessary combats are resolved at some time during the current Combat Phase. Follow these steps in order for each combat. Assign any naval assets, followed by attacker and then defender Air Points. Total the Combat Strengths of all units participating in combat against a specific defender by examining the Strength Chits possessed by the applicable units (drawing new ones if necessary) or the Combat Strength printed on the counter while keeping in mind the multiple unit rules. Next, the Defending Player does the same for all of his units participating in the defense. Compare the total Combat Strength of the Attacker to the total Combat Strength of the Defender and state this comparison as a probability ratio: Attacker's strength to Defender's strength. Round the ratio in favor of the Defender to conform to the simplified ratio columns found on the Combat Results Table. Next, determine the terrain in the hex occupied by the Defender. Cross index this terrain line with the proper ratio column on the Combat Results Table. Make whatever cumulative "shifts" in the ratio column necessary for this combat based on terrain and bonuses. To resolve a combat the attacker rolls one die. Read the result on the appropriate terrain line under the proper ratio. Apply the result immediately, before resolving any other attacks (**Exception:** *Two units in a hex conducting two different combats.*).

WHICH UNITS ATTACK

The Phasing Player may resolve attacks in any order desired. Every non-phasing unit which exerts a ZOC on a Phasing unit, which is designated to attack, must be attacked by some Phasing unit during that Combat Phase, with the following exceptions:

- (a) Any units occupying City hexes are **not** obligated to attack or be attacked during the Friendly Combat Phase. They may ignore adjacent Enemy units and are never required to have combat by this rule.
- (b) Units are **never** obligated to attack adjacent Enemy units across a Major River hexside during a Friendly Combat Phase.

No unit may attack more than once per Combat Phase, and no unit may be attacked more than once per Combat Phase.

MULTIPLE UNIT AND MULTI-HEX COMBAT

Units in two or more different hexes may combine their Combat Strengths to attack a single, adjacent hex.

All units in a given hex must be attacked as a single Combat Strength. The defender may not withhold a unit in a hex under attack, except as called for in the stacking restrictions. When more than one unit occupies a single hex, those units may not be attacked individually. An attack on a hex involves all possible combat units in that hex.

When a single hex contains more than one unit, each of those units may attack a different hex at the owning Player's discretion subject to the stacking restrictions.

A single attack may involve numerous attacking or defending units. For an attack to be resolved as a single combat, however, all attacking units must be adjacent to all defending units.

If the multiple units subject to a single attack are defending in more than one hex, use the terrain from the hex which is most favorable to the defender.

TERRAIN EFFECTS ON COMBAT

All units attacking across Major River hexsides (bridged or un-bridged) have their Combat Strengths halved (round fractions down).

If all attacking units are attacking across Minor River hexsides or a combination of Minor and Major River hexsides, shift the odds one column to the left. **Exception:** When *Freeze* is in effect some Minor River hexsides are considered clear terrain for all purposes.

Silhouetted mechanized units are prohibited from attacking into Marsh hexes unless the hexside being attacked across is also crossed by a road or railroad. All mechanized units which attack *into* a Marsh hex have their Combat Strength halved (round fractions down).

Exception: When *Freeze* is in effect some Marsh hexes are considered clear terrain for all purposes.

If any defending units are in a hex with a Town, shift the odds one column to the left.

No attacks may be made across an Impassable hexside.

No attacks may be made across a Volga River hexside (**Exception:** *Pontoon Bridges and Volga Freeze*).

COMBINED ARMS (CA) BONUS

A player may receive the Combined Arms Bonus for units involved in a combat if they possess tanks and therefore have an Armor Band. Any stack which has a unit(s) with a blue Armor Band and a non-mechanized unit(s) may receive a CA Bonus during combat. Some units possess a yellow Armor Band which will automatically qualify for a CA Bonus. If there is a unit with a pink Armor Band, the stack may qualify when stacked with either a non-mechanized unit, unit with a blue AB, or another unit with a pink AB. For each attack that qualifies for a Combined Arms Bonus, the player may shift the odds one column to the right.

If a defending stack of units is eligible for a CA Bonus, then the attacking player is denied any Combined Arms Bonus against those defending units during the Combat Phase. This is known as a Combined Arms Defense. However, it is purely defensive, meaning that nothing may ever be awarded to the defending player if the attacker does not possess such a Bonus.

CA Bonus is never allowed against a Fortified Zone, Rough, High Woods, City hex, or across a Major/Volga River.

ENCIRCLEMENT BONUS

When the defender is comprised of a single stack in a hex and all adjacent hexes are occupied by an Enemy unit or an Enemy ZOC **at the time of combat resolution**, the attacker receives an Encirclement Bonus of one shift to the right. **Exception:** Friendly units (of the defender) in any adjacent hexes will deny the attacker this bonus.

WINTER COMBAT BONUS

After the Soviet player declares his Counteroffensive, Soviet **tank or mechanized corps** units will have their combat strength doubled after all other adjustments. **Note:** This does not apply to *Mobile Assaults*.

If the unit becomes a cadre, it loses the ability to use this bonus.

COMBAT RESOLUTION

All combat results are expressed in terms of a number of steps lost and/or hexes retreated. The letters "A" and "D" on the Combat Results Table stand for attacker and defender, respectively.

All numbers in the combat result which are parenthesized indicate mandatory step losses for the affected Player's force.

All numbers in the combat result which are preceded by an 'r' signify that the affected unit(s) must either retreat the indicated number of hexes and/or take a step loss which equals the number result.

All units in the stack are affected by the combat result. However, the first step loss must be from a unit **directly participating** in the combat (**if attacker, mechanized units lose the first step**) and the other units in a stack may take losses if more than a one-step loss is called for (i.e., except for the first step loss, distribution of losses is entirely up to the owning player). Remember that distributed step losses are calculated not per unit, but per attacking or defending force (*a force could consist of multiple stacks and units*).

All combats conducted at odds of **12-1** or greater (after all shifts are applied) are considered to be a "**D(3)r3***" (*Breakthrough*) without an actual roll of the die. Combats conducted at odds less than the furthest left column are resolved on that column.

Note that combat results take effect after all attacks from a single hex have been rolled for. If two units in a single hex are attacking two different hexes, no combat results may be applied until the second attack has been resolved (the attacker applying results to his units first). If, in one attack, the defender is permitted to advance, and in the other the attacker may advance, then neither Player may advance his units after combat.

RETREATS

A Player must adhere to all the rules that follow. Retreats are expressed in hexes, not Movement Points. **Terrain has no effect on retreats.** Stacks forced to retreat off the map or into hexes they could not normally go (e.g., across Impassable hexsides, enemy occupied hexes, etc.), instead **must lose one step for each hex** of the retreat result.

Retreats are always conducted by the owning Player (**Exception:** *Breakthroughs and Mobile Assaults*). When a retreat is called for, he moves the stack as a whole (not each unit individually), one hex at a time while trying to meet the following criteria in order of priority:

- A. To a hex that is not Enemy-controlled.
- B. To a hex that is closer to a Friendly supply source.
- C. To a hex that is closer to a Friendly HQ unit.

Within these criteria, the owning Player may retreat his units any way he sees fit as long as no retreating unit or stack enters the same hex more than once and ends in a hex that is the maximum possible distance from all Enemy unit(s) that participated in the attack, given the combat result. Whenever a stack is forced to retreat as a result of combat, it will leave a path of vacant hexes behind it called the Path of Retreat.

A unit may retreat through Enemy Zones of Control. However, for each Enemy-controlled hex entered during a retreat, the owning player must remove one step of strength from a single unit of the retreating stack, regardless of whether the Enemy-controlled hexes are occupied by Friendly units.

If the only possible end hex of the retreat is Enemy-controlled, the stack must continue its retreat until a free hex is found (note these extra hexes have no effect on the enemy advance).

ADVANCES AFTER COMBAT

Any victorious units which participated in the combat (or which are stacked with units which participated) are allowed to advance along the chosen Path of Retreat and sometimes deviate from it. They can advance up to the number of hexes taken as a retreat, which may differ from the original combat result.

If all defending or attacking units are eliminated due to combat, the victorious unit(s) may freely advance the number of hexes remaining in the eliminated unit's retreat obligation. **In this case, the victorious player decides the Path of Retreat according to the retreat criteria.**

Example #1: If two one step units received a "D(1)r3" result and the owning Player wishes to satisfy the result by eliminating the two units, the victorious unit(s) could advance only two hexes, since that is the number remaining in the defender's numbered retreat obligation.

Example #2: If a full strength unit alone in a hex received a "D(1)r2" and the owning player wishes to convert the "r2" into step loss, thereby eliminating the unit, the victorious unit(s) may not advance. *Consider the defending unit to have fought a delaying action with heavy casualties.*

Advances after combat are conducted in the following sequence:

Step 1 - Move each victorious unit individually. The first hex entered must be the hex formerly occupied by the retreating units. If the retreating units occupied more than one hex, the advancing player may choose which to enter and its corresponding Path of Retreat to follow. If this first hex is a city hex or the hex is entered by crossing a Major River hexside, no further advance is permitted.

Step 2 - All non-mechanized units not currently in an Enemy Zone of Control may advance the permissible number of hexes along the Path of Retreat just conducted by the defeated Player. This move is conducted hex-by-hex, and may not deviate from the Path of Retreat. They must stop their advance immediately upon entering any Enemy Zone of Control. If this first hex is in an EZOC, these units may advance no further.

Step 3 - Mechanized units may now advance the permissible number of hexes ignoring any EZOC in the first hex. However, they must stop their advance immediately upon entering any other EZOC. These units may deviate from the Path of Retreat - they are not obligated to strictly follow it.

Note: Victorious units may cease their advance at any point during execution. They are never required to advance.

Units may never advance across a Major River hexside after the first hex of the advance, unless that hexside is traversed by a bridge (*Road, Rail, or Pontoon*). Units may never advance across a Volga River hexside, unless that hexside has a pontoon bridge (**Exception:** *Volga Freeze*).

BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS

Combat results on the Combat Results Table that are in bold face with an asterisk are considered particularly successful attacks labeled "Breakthroughs." Breakthrough results differ from normal attack results in the following ways:

- A. The attacking Player determines the Path of Retreat.
- B. All units which advance due to this combat can ignore enemy Zones of Control for the duration of the current advance (i.e., not just into the first hex, but all hexes of the advance).
- C. The defending Player may not take step losses in lieu of retreating.

SUPPLY

GENERAL RULE:

There are three possible states of supply in Fall Blau: In Supply, Out of Supply, and Isolated. The state of an individual unit does not affect the supply of the rest of the stack, and vice versa. A unit that is considered to be Out of Supply, is Out of Supply until the next Supply Determination Phase, even if the unit moves back into supply during a Movement Phase (**Exception:** *Two physical units of the same parent formation in one hex.*). Reverse is true for a unit that is In Supply.

SUPPLY LINES

A supply line is defined as a path of continuous hexes from a combat unit to the destination. These hexes may never pass through Enemy-occupied or Enemy-controlled hexes (unless they are occupied by Friendly units).

A supply line may only cross a Major or Volga River hexside, by bridge (*Road, Rail, or Pontoon*) or by being the first hexside crossed (i.e., *unit is adjacent to the river*). Otherwise, terrain has no effect on tracing a supply line.

SUPPLY DETERMINATION

Supply determination for each unit is made during the Supply Determination Phase of each Turn. A supply line is always traced from the unit to a supply source. A supply source may provide supply for any number of units. Supply lines are never affected by weather (**Exception:** *Mountain Snow*).

To receive supply, a unit must be able to trace a supply line to a supported or committed HQ unit of its nationality equal to or less than the Range of the HQ unit (**Exception:** *Axis-satellite units may trace to German HQ units and vice versa*). Those HQ units must then trace a supply line of five or less hexes to any hex traversed by a road which in turn leads along a continuous series of road hexes of any length (although note that once this path begins to trace along the road, it may never leave a road) to a supply source.

A Soviet unit on a road or rail hex may also normally receive supply directly from a supply source via a continuous series of road or rail hexes of any length (although note that once this path begins to trace along the road or rail, it may never leave a continuous road or rail).

Any (Axis or Soviet) units which can trace a supply line three or less hexes directly to a supply source is In Supply.

Each supported Axis-satellite HQ unit may provide a supply line for any number of units of their own nationality and one German multi-step unit.

German HQ units have an additional limit on the number of divisions that may receive supply through them. Security divisions, brigades, or smaller units are not affected by this limit (e.g., as many one step units as are within the Command Range of a supported HQ may trace supply). The limits are as follows:

- German PanzerKorps HQ units may only allow three mechanized divisions (*up to six physical units*) to trace supply through them when supported. One of these three may be non-mechanized if no other mechanized divisions are within range.
- All German Armeekorps HQ units may allow a maximum number of four divisions to trace supply through them when supported. However, only one of these divisions may be mechanized (*both physical units*).

Whenever the two units of the same parent formation end the friendly movement phase stacked together, they assume the same optimal supply state (i.e., if one is OOS and the other is In Supply, they become both In Supply).

SUPPLY STATES

In Supply - When able to receive supply from a Friendly source during the Mutual Supply Determination Phase, units are considered to be In Supply and function normally. Being In Supply is not designated by any markers.

Out of Supply (OOS) - Place an 'OOS' marker on all units that are unable to receive supply from a Friendly source during the Mutual Supply Determination Phase (MSDP). On the Axis side in particular, due to the Support rules, there may be many units in this state during a given turn. Therefore, some markers provided have arrows on one side to help denote portions of the map as being in this state.

All units that are considered Out of Supply have their Combat Strength and Movement Point Allowances decreased as summarized below:

- (a) If the units are attacking, their Combat Strengths are halved (round fractions down).
- (b) If the units are defending, their Combat Strengths remain the same.
- (c) If the units are mechanized, they can only use half (round down) their printed MA.
- (d) If the units are non-mechanized, their Movement Point Allowances remain as normal.

Out of Supply units may not move using Strategic Movement.

Isolated - Place an Isolated marker on all units that already have an 'OOS' marker at the beginning of the MSDP and are unable to trace a supply line of any length to a Friendly source during the MSDP. An Isolated marker may only be removed from a unit when it becomes In Supply or receives Aerial Resupply.

All units that are considered to be Isolated, have their Combat Strengths and Movement Point Allowances decreased as summarized below:

- (a) If the units are attacking, their Combat Strengths are considered to be one.
- (b) If the units are defending, their Combat Strengths are halved (round fractions down).
- (c) If the units are mechanized, their Movement Point Allowance is considered to be one MP.
- (d) If the units are non-mechanized, their printed Movement Allowances are halved (round down).

Isolated units may not move using Strategic Movement.

ATTRITION

All hexes with units that are considered to be Isolated within the MSDP, which already had an 'Isolated' marker from the previous turn, must roll one die on the Attrition Table. One roll is made for each stack no matter how many 'Isolated' units are present in it. Units which are 'OOS' in the hex, are not affected by the roll. Results are immediately applied.

SUPPORT

The German Fall Blau offensive which began on 28 June 1942 was not a massive assault launched by every unit on the eastern front. Before this major offensive could be supported, Soviet pockets had to be removed and units rebuilt, thereby causing a delay as units made their way back to the frontlines. Then during the campaign itself, many units had to stop for sometimes days awaiting fuel and supplies to continue the advance. After the results of 1941, the Germans never had enough material to attack across the expansive Eastern Front. Commanders had to pick and choose among meager resources to carry the advance into 1942. Here I am giving the player the ability to decide easily which units will be ready for the fight within the overall restraints of the situation.

GENERAL RULE:

Only the Axis Player is required to determine support. By allocating Support Points, the Axis Player is dictating which of his armies will receive priority in terms of supply and attack-potential in the upcoming Game-Turn. The Axis Player must determine which of his Corps HQs will be "in support", and which will be "unsupported" for the following Game-Turn (Note that during historical Fall Blau play, support points must be assigned via the special rule.). At the end of the turn, all Axis HQ units are returned to their unsupported side.

WHEN TO DETERMINE SUPPORT

The Axis Player must determine support every Game-Turn. Note that there is a specific Axis Support Phase in the Sequence of Play. No aspect of Axis support may be changed except in a Support Phase. This includes changing Support Point allocation to change the status of supported or unsupported groups.

HOW TO DETERMINE SUPPORT

During every Game-Turn, the Axis player consults the Turn Record Track for the total amount of Support Points added. A running total is maintained with markers on the Replacement & Support Track. He receives the historical number of Support Points which he may allocate in any way he sees fit. In general, each Support Point allocated to a given HQ allows their subordinate units to attack and move efficiently.

Optional Rule – There are shaded totals for each month on the Turn Record Track. At the agreement of both players, the historical dispersals can be ignored and this monthly tally can be kept on the Replacement & Support Track. In this instance, the Axis player may allocate as many or as few Support Points each turn until his total reaches zero; limited only by the zone maximums and any applicable scenario rules. **NOTE:** *The Axis player always gets just seven Support Points on turn 1.*

When the Axis Player is allocating Support Points, they are distributed on a one for one basis among the German Corps HQs or nationalities in any way he desires. He does this by flipping a German Corps HQ unit to its Supported side for each Support Point from the track. Each Axis nationality (i.e., Hungarian, Italian, and Rumanian) can receive one Support Point to give support to *all* its HQ units.

Support can only be given to a HQ unit that can trace a supply line to a source.

There is a maximum allocation of 5 SP to HQ units in the Caucasus Air Zone and a maximum of 10 each for the other zones.

As the Axis player captures oil derrick hexes, he is awarded extra support capability. Each turn, for every four oil derrick hexes the Axis player owns, he receives one additional Support Point.

EFFECTS OF BEING UNSUPPORTED

Unsupported headquarters may not be used to trace supply for other units. They function normally in all other respects.

SOVIET COMMAND CONTROL

There was an element of surprise in the Soviet command when the main effort was launched. The following rules simulate their delayed reaction.

All Soviet units are normally considered 'uncommitted' at the start of the game. Units that begin in Reserve status (they will have the letter 'R' as their reinforcement turn) are always committed.

Uncommitted units may not move or perform combat during their Player Turn. They do not trace supply and supply effects do not apply to them until they are Committed. As a reminder, HQ units of uncommitted armies are flipped to their commander side until they become committed.

Uncommitted Soviet units normally may be committed in one of these four ways:

- An Axis attack (Mobile or Prepared Assault) on a Soviet unit will commit all Soviet units within that unit's parent army setup area immediately.
- Soviet Player rolls less than or equal the current Army Commitment Number for a Soviet HQ unit will commit all Soviet units within that army setup area during the Soviet Commitment Phase of a turn.
- An 'Auto Commit' marker on the HQ at the beginning of the Soviet Commitment Phase will commit all Soviet units in that parent army setup area immediately.
- On turn seven all Soviet units become committed (*Exception: The 47th & 51st (Kuban) Armies.*).

Committed units can move and function normally for the duration of the game. Units are considered In Supply on the turn of commitment. Soviet units that enter as reinforcements are considered committed the moment they enter the map.

Commitment Procedure - During the Soviet Commitment Phase, the Soviet Player rolls a die for each of his uncommitted army HQ units with a 'Commit Roll' marker. This will determine whether they will become committed. The player may roll in any order. Cross-reference the current turn with the line for that particular Army to find the Army Commitment Number (ACN) for that roll. If the roll is less than or equal to the ACN, all units of that army area are committed, remove the marker and flip the HQ unit. If the Army fails to be committed, place an 'Auto Commit' marker on the HQ to remind the player that it will be automatically committed in the following turn. At the end of the phase, for each army that is committed or receives an 'Auto Commit' marker, all uncommitted HQ units in adjacent setup areas will receive a 'Commit Roll' marker.

Reserve Armies which have an ACN for that turn will cross-reference the current turn with the line for that particular Army to find the Army Commitment Number (ACN) for that roll. If the roll is less than or equal to the ACN, all units of that army are committed, flip the HQ unit. If the Army fails to be committed, it must wait until the next turn to roll again or for its release condition to be met.

The Soviet 47th and the 51st Army have no ACN and are committed as per scenario rules. *These units were garrisoning the Kuban peninsula against a possible Axis invasion across the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait.*

SOVIET SPECIAL ABILITIES

SOVIET COUNTEROFFENSIVE

At the beginning of the Soviet Player Turn of any turn after 45, the Soviet player may declare a Counteroffensive. Up to five combats during the turn in which it is declared may have their column shifted one to the right. This may only happen once.

From the moment a Counteroffensive is declared, all Soviet mechanized and cavalry units may ignore EZOCs during a one hex move (*Mobile Infiltration*). Units of a Soviet **tank or mechanized corps** can claim a Winter Combat Bonus during combat and are eligible to conduct a Mobile Assault.

SOVIET NKVD STRAGGLER RECOVERY

During a turn where a committed NKVD unit of any type is in a city hex, the Soviet player may bring back one extra rifle division from the Replacement Pool during that Soviet Reinforcement Phase.

AIR POWER

GENERAL RULE:

Both Players can possess a certain number of Air Points. These are not historical units per se; rather, they are abstract counters representing an indeterminate number of airplanes of varying types. Each Air Point may be used only one mission per Game-Turn. Note that Air Points are only considered to be markers – under no circumstances should they be considered combat units. Air Points have no Zones of Control and do not affect stacking.

AVAILABILITY OF AIR POINTS

Total Air Point availability is given in the scenario rules or printed on the Turn Record Track. These are placed first in the 'At Base' box and then moved by the player to the desired zone of the 'Available for Sortie' boxes. The map is split into three Air Zones: Voronezh, Stalingrad, and Caucasus. Within each Air Zone there is a maximum number of Air Points which can be designated 'Available for Sortie' by each Player. This maximum applies whether the points are later used for Ground Support, Interdiction, or Resupply.

Air Points may never be eliminated during the course of play of a game of Fall Blau.

Each Air Point may only be used once per Game-Turn and must come from the proper 'Available for Sortie' box. Any Air Points placed on the map or remaining in the boxes are always removed at the conclusion of the Game-Turn Indication Stage.

GROUND SUPPORT

Ground Support is a means by which Friendly attacks may be increased in effectiveness or Enemy attacks reduced in effectiveness. Both Players' Air Points may be utilized for Ground Support in either a friendly or enemy phase.

After an attack is designated, the Phasing Player must declare if he is allocating any of his available Air Points to his attack. Next, the non-Phasing Player must declare if he is using any of his available Air Points for the combat in which his units are being attacked.

One Air Point from each side may be committed to Ground Support during a Mobile Assault. An Air Point so committed will adjust the die result as shown on the Mobile Assault Table.

For each Air Point allocated to a Prepared Assault, the Phasing Player may "shift" the final ratio column one to the right on the same terrain line on the Combat Results Table. However, a maximum of two Air Points may ever be allocated to a single combat. When allocating Air Points in this fashion, the owning Player simply places them directly on top of the Enemy unit(s) that is to be the subject of this attack.

The non-Phasing Player may decide to allocate Air Points to some of his units that are defending during an Enemy Player's Combat Phase. For every Air Point allocated to a defense, the non-Phasing Player may "shift" the final ratio one column to the left on the same terrain line on the Combat Results Table. However, this single Air Point is the maximum amount that may be allocated per attack to Ground Support in the Enemy Player's Combat Phase (i.e., a maximum of one shift to the left on the Combat Results Table is permitted per combat due to Air Points). When allocating Air Points in this fashion, the owning Player simply places them directly on top of the Friendly units that are being attacked during this Combat Phase.

Immediately after performing Ground Support, all participating Air Points are removed from the map and may not be allocated again until the next Game-Turn.

Air units may never participate in combat that does not involve Friendly ground units.

AIR INTERDICTION (Axis Player Only)

Only the Axis Player is permitted to use Air Interdiction. During the Air Allocation Phase of the Axis Player-Turn, the Axis Player may place a maximum of three Air Points (total, not per zone) on any hexes traversed by a railroad on the map within 20 hexes of any Axis HQ unit.

When being placed, a maximum of one Air Point may be placed in the same rail hex per Game-Turn.

Axis Air Points used for Interdiction only affect the ability of Soviet units to move by Rail or Strategic Movement. They have no other effect in the game whatsoever. Any interdicted Rail hex may not be entered by a Soviet unit utilizing Rail Movement; the Soviet Player must stop in an adjacent hex. The interdicting air point also negates a road within the hex for purposes of Strategic Movement.

Axis Air Points used for Interdiction may be placed in Soviet-occupied hexes.

AIR RESUPPLY (Axis Player Only)

The Axis aerial supply marker can provide limited supply to any Isolated Axis units in its hex of placement and in the six surrounding hexes. Units receiving aerial supply are now considered OOS. The aerial supply marker may be committed to aid Axis units *anywhere on the map board* by using one Air Point from the respective zone. The marker may be placed at any time during the Mutual Supply Determination Phase and its supply effects are immediate, but it may never be committed to more than one hex per Game-Turn. The marker may never be placed on an enemy unit. Enemy ZOCs have no effect on placement or function. Once placed, it cannot be moved. It is automatically removed at the end of the turn.

RUBBLE

The cities of Voronezh, Rostov, and Stalingrad were the site of multi-day battles that waged for control of the city. The Germans succeeded in capturing two but not the other, at least not fully. Part of the reason was the massive aerial bombardment of the city turns it into a veritable fortress. This rule represents those unintended consequences.

If two Air Points are used against an enemy unit or stack in a city hex, a Rubble marker is placed. The marker is placed in the city hex

immediately upon resolution of the combat and has no effect on that particular combat; it will affect subsequent combat and movement.

The Rubble marker has no effect on stacking.

A unit may not use a Road or Railroad within a hex containing a Rubble marker.

Any unit defending in a hex containing a rubble marker receives an additional one-column shift to the left on the Combat Results Table.

DYNAMIC UNITS

HEADQUARTERS (HQ) UNITS

Soviet and Axis headquarters units have a Command Range, which is the maximum number of hexes a unit can trace a supply line to the HQ and receive trace supply. HQ units can function normally for supply purposes even when in an Enemy-controlled hex.

Headquarters units never exert Zones of Control and may never attack by themselves.

When stacked with other units, HQ units will add one to the total combat strength (whether 'Supported' or 'Unsupported'). All HQ units are affected by any combat results suffered by the stack.

Any HQ unit alone in a hex that is declared as being attacked defends with a strength of one.

Soviet HQ units may conduct a Strategic Withdrawal at any time if they meet the requirements.

REPLACEMENTS

Soviet replacement points may not be saved for future turns; if not used they are lost. The Axis player receives a total of replacement steps for the entire campaign for each nationality as specified in the scenario rules.

To be eligible for receiving replacements, the unit must not be adjacent to an enemy unit and be able to trace a supply line of any length to a supply source. Current supply state has no effect on eligibility, the supply line is determined at the moment the unit desires replacements.

Units which receive RPs will normally do so with one RP equal to one step. When a cadre receives replacements, the cadre takes two RPs to become a full strength unit. A unit with a reduced strength chit takes one RP to remove the chit and return the unit to full strength (no strength chit needed). **Exception:** A cadre may not receive only one RP (because of the increased reorganization needed for such an action).

Units which receive steps through the use of RPs are immediately marked with an 'OOS' marker, if not already in such a state, and are treated as Out of Supply for that turn. *This effect somewhat shows the reduced effectiveness of incorporating replacements during combat operations.*

One Soviet rifle division in the Replacement Pool may be brought into play in exchange for two non-mechanized replacement points. One silhouette mechanized unit may be bought into play in exchange for one mechanized replacement point. These units are placed in a hex with an eligible HQ which is not adjacent to an enemy unit. The HQ unit must be Committed, and not be OOS or Isolated. Only one unit of each type may be brought into play within the Caucasus Air Zone. *Remember stacking limits only apply at the end of the Soviet Movement Phase.*

Two In Supply Soviet rifle divisions may become a single Soviet rifle corps or one In Supply Soviet rifle division may become a single Guards rifle division (if available, one per turn). Simply swap the units with an appropriate Rifle Corps or Guards unit during the Mutual Replacement Phase and expend a non-mechanized replacement point. Normal restrictions apply (i.e., must not be adjacent to an enemy unit) and they must be stacked in the same hex. Note, in this case the division units are not placed in the Replacement Pool, they are considered to be eliminated from the game.

A HQ unit is eligible to be returned to play by using one mechanized replacement point any time after elimination. The returning HQ is placed in any friendly Entry Area (for Soviets) or city hex (for Axis and Soviets). If there are no mechanized replacement points available, no HQ units may be replaced.

BREAKDOWN REGIMENTS

During the Axis Breakdown Phase (ABP), German infantry (not Le or LW) divisions which are not in an EZOC, may breakdown or recombine. A division is only eligible for breakdown when it either has no strength chit or has a full strength chit. When breakdown occurs, the original parent unit is removed to the Breakdown Pool and three breakdown regiments are placed in the hex.

During the ABP, three German breakdown regiments stacked in the same hex, not in an EZOC, may recombine into a full strength infantry division. These regiments are removed from the map and the division is returned from the Breakdown Pool to the hex formerly occupied by the regiments. Breakdown regiments are generic so any division may be brought back, but there must be an available division unit in the Breakdown Pool.

Cadres and units which begin the ABP in an Isolated state, cannot breakdown or recombine. If less than three regiments are on the map, re-combining may not occur. Breakdowns are limited by the counter mix.

COMMANDOS

Each side has a special commando unit which is treated as a cadre for stacking purposes. When in a stack attacking a town hex, commando units allow them to ignore the column shift for the town. (**Exception:** *An enemy commando unit in the defending hex negates this ability.*). If used in this way, they must take the first step loss, if applicable. These units do not count for a CA Bonus.



SOVIET BLACK SEA FLEET

Soviets have two naval assets (represented by the ships Krasniy Krim and Krasniy Kavkaz) which can be used to benefit the Soviet player during the combat phase. When a defending stack is in a coastal hex, one of the Soviet ships may assist with the combat. A maximum of one naval asset (ship) can be assigned to each combat. Soviet naval assets may be used for both attack and defense. If supporting, the combat is resolved with the Soviet player receiving a favorable column shift. When no Axis Air Points are assigned, the support is automatically successful. However, if the Axis player commits any Air Points to the combat, a roll is made on the Soviet Naval Loss Table before any shifts are applied. On a result of "Sunk", the Soviet ship is eliminated (combat is resolved normally); a result of "Abort", the support is unsuccessful and the ship returns to port (combat is resolved normally). Any other result means the support was successful and the Soviet player receives a favorable shift. *Subtract two from the above roll for each Soviet Air Point also used in the combat.*

REINFORCEMENTS

Both Players may receive reinforcements. These units appear during the owning player's Reinforcement Phase on the Game-Turn indicated, in the "Entry Area" or in a hex on the map that is designated.

Once placed on the map, reinforcements may be moved normally. It is permissible for reinforcements to use Strategic Movement or Rail Movement in their Game-Turn of entry, as long as they follow the rules for the chosen movement.

Reinforcement units scheduled to replace other units may do so no matter where a unit may be or what condition it may be in (this includes the Replacement Pool). If a unit to be replaced has been entirely eliminated, the replacing unit is discarded as well.

SOVIET REINFORCEMENTS

Reinforcements may not leave an Entry Area to enter a hex that is currently occupied by an Enemy unit or an Enemy Zone of Control.

If all Entry Area entry hexes a unit is scheduled to use are occupied by Enemy units or in an Enemy Zone of Control, the Soviet player may shift his reinforcements to any adjacent open Entry Area (*Example:* from B to C or K to L). However, such an action entails a one Game-Turn delay in the entry of these units. Remember that some Entry Areas have more than one entry hex and some units have more than one Entry Area which the owning player may choose from. The Soviet player may not voluntarily delay his reinforcements, shifting and delays may only take place via enemy action.

If a specific entry hex is occupied by Enemy units or in an Enemy Zone of Control, Soviet units will be delayed one Game-Turn and enter via the closest Entry Area.

Soviet player has three special release groups which normally arrive as reinforcements only when conditions are met:

- **Bryansk Front Release Group (BFRG)** consists of the 5th Tank Army and other reserves of STAVKA and the Bryansk Front which were sent to protect/recapture Voronezh when the offensive began. These come into play if the Bryansk Front is threatened or after everybody is responding to the attack. Triggering forces on the map are the 13th and 40th Armies. Therefore, this group arrives in the Soviet Reinforcement Phase after one of these two armies is committed, but not before the turn indicated on the counter.
- **Groznyy Release Group (GRG)** arrives via the Release Entry Area (only) the Soviet Reinforcement Phase after any Axis unit moves within 5 hexes of Groznyy. Two units of the GRG arrive as normal on turns 47 & 50 if not triggered by the above condition.
- **Makhachkala Release Group (MRG)** arrives via the Release Entry Area (only) the Soviet Reinforcement Phase after any Axis unit moves within 5 hexes of Makhachkala.

AXIS REINFORCEMENTS

If an entry hex is occupied by Enemy units or in an Enemy Zone of Control, Axis units given a specific hex for entry may be purposefully delayed by the owning player for as long as he wishes.

Axis units given a specific hex for entry have the option of being delayed one Game Turn and is then placed with any HQ of their nationality instead. The HQ may not be 'OOS' or 'Isolated'. The unit is placed in a hex, within five hexes of an eligible HQ, that is closer to a supply source than the HQ, and at least three hexes from an enemy unit. *Remember stacking limits only apply at the end of the Axis Movement Phase.* **Exception:** See *Option K*.

Axis units arriving in the Kerch Entry Area **must** enter from that area as soon as the entry hex is free of enemy units or ZOC. If the hex is not free, they may be delayed indefinitely.

WITHDRAWALS

The Turn Track also indicates withdrawals. On the turn that a withdrawal is indicated, that unit(s) is immediately removed from play during the Mutual Replacement/Withdrawal Phase.

In order to be Withdrawn, divisions or corps comprised of two physical units must meet the following requirements with both units. The unit or formation to be withdrawn must not be Isolated, previously eliminated, or a cadre. If these requirements cannot be met, or the unit is in the Breakdown Pool, then a substitute unit or formation must be withdrawn in its place. The substitute must be of the same unit size and type as the unit to be withdrawn.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

During the Preparation Stage of each Game-Turn, the Players consult the Turn Record Track and possibly roll a die in order to determine if any weather exists for this Game-Turn. Adjust the marker in the Weather box if necessary. Weather conditions affect the number of Air Points and certain terrain effects. The degree to which units are affected by weather is covered in this section.

There are three possible weather states: Clear, Mud, and Freeze.

Weather state of Clear has no effect at all, play proceeds normally.

MUD

The Rasputitsa (Rainy Season) applies to any time from turn 30 until the snows come in November. This weather is represented in the game by rolling a Mud result on the Weather Table. The die is rolled each turn 30-41 to see if it is clear or mud for that turn only. Mud is in effect automatically on turn 42 and ends after turn 45.

When Mud is in effect, place the marker in the Weather box to indicate this condition.

During Mud turns the movement point costs of some hexes and hexsides are increased (see the TEC). Air points are reduced for Mud turns. No Mobile Assaults are allowed. Only one Soviet BST marker may be used.

MOUNTAIN SNOW

During turns with Mountain Snow, Rough hexes can only be entered if they contain a road (units in other Rough hexes must leave them as soon as possible). Mountain units may ignore this restriction.

Starting on Turn 42, all Mountain Passes (except the Krestovy Pass on the Georgian-Military Highway) become closed due to snow fall. No movement, combat, or supply tracing is allowed across a closed Mountain Pass.

FREEZE

Freeze is a combination of snowy weather and ground conditions that greatly favored the Soviets. It was their land and they were adept at functioning in their adverse climate.

Freeze is called for on the Turn Record Track; place the marker in the Weather box to indicate this condition. Freeze starts on turn 46 and is considered to remain in effect until the end of the game.

During Freeze turns Attrition rolls are raised by one (highest roll is still a 9) and all **combats** are shifted in favor of the Soviet player by one before any other adjustments. Only one Soviet BST marker may be used.

Freeze allows all Marsh hexes in Air Zones Voronezh and Stalingrad to be treated as clear terrain. The movement and combat effects of crossing a Minor River in Air Zone Voronezh are ignored.

Volga Freeze - On December 17 the Volga River froze over. Therefore, the following additional affects are instituted from turn 58 to the end of the game. Volga hexsides are ignored for all purposes. The movement and combat effects of crossing a Minor River in Air Zone Stalingrad are ignored.

TERRAIN FEATURES

FORTIFIED ZONES (FZ)

Fortified Zones represent foxholes with cleared fields of fire, some basic slit trenches, sighted artillery coordinates, light barbed wire entanglements, a scattering of mined approaches, etc. These hexes are clearly marked on the map (or designated in the scenario rules) and may never be destroyed. A Fortified Zone may only benefit the Soviet player. Supply situation of the occupying units never affects a FZ hex.

Any stack in a FZ has the final column shifted one to the left when attacked.

Stacks are not eligible for a CA Bonus when attacking a Fortified Zone.

Any unit in an FZ may attack adjacent Enemy units during a Friendly Combat Phase, but if they do all normal combat rules apply.

All units within an FZ exert a ZOC no matter what type of unit is actually in the hex.

German units **may not** use Mobile Infiltration to **enter** a Fortified Zone hex.

Stalingrad Zone: All hexes of the Fortified Zone surrounding Stalingrad were built during the course of the campaign. During any campaign which uses Map B, place 'building' markers in every hex of this zone to show their incomplete status. Starting on turn 10 and every turn afterward (until all markers are flipped or removed by becoming Axis owned), the Soviet player flips one 'building' marker of his choice, and that hex functions as a FZ for the remainder of the game. If any hexes become Axis owned before being built or after, the marker is removed permanently from play. The Axis player never receives benefits from these hexes.

PONTOON BRIDGES

Pontoon Bridges markers may only be placed on friendly occupied hexes adjacent to Major or Volga River hexsides.

The marked River hexside adjacent to each Bridge marker is considered to be bridged. Once placed, Pontoons can be used by either player for all purposes.

A Volga River hexside adjacent to a Bridge marker may be used to attack through. It is treated as a Major River hexside crossed by a bridge (i.e., a unit's ZOC will extend into the adjacent hex).

Either player may permanently remove a Bridge marker from the map at any time during a turn, if the hex is occupied by one of his units.

THE UNFINISHED RAILROAD

The Railroad running east from north of Gudermes started the game unfinished and may not be used. It is only on the map for accuracy.

HISTORICAL NOTE: *When the Germans threatened to cut the rail line that runs through Salsk, the Soviets quickly built this replacement line. However, it was built so quickly that many parts were just laid right on the hard desert floor. All records indicate that most troop movement still occurred by sea via Astrakhan and Makhachkala.*

KUBAN LANDBRIDGE ROAD

The road running from Anapa to Taman passes across a land bridge between hexes K1415 and K1514. This hexside is treated like a bridged Major River (i.e., units attacking across it will be halved).

HITLER'S FALL BLAU CAMPAIGN OPTIONS

(Not used for Caucasus Campaign scenario)

OPTION K - KRIM GARRISON

Eleventh Armee - Axis units labeled with an 'Opt K' are part of the German 11th Armee. Historically this army was sent north after it secured the Black Sea port of Sevastopol. Some units were left in the Crimea and later brought into the area covered by Fall Blau. With this option their normal arrival turn is ignored. This option must be exercised by turn 10; it is not available after that turn.

If this option is taken by the Axis Player, he has two different choices of entry. If choice A is selected, all these units enter play on turn 10 through entry hex B3303 only (*the HQ placement option is not available as their entire Armee enters together*). If choice B is taken by the Axis Player, all these units enter play on turn 18 through either Taman (K1711) or Temryuk (K1716) hexes only (*the HQ placement option is not available as their entire Armee enters together*). If those hexes are occupied by Soviet units, the hexes must be attacked by each unit as if from a hex off-shore. The German units may advance one hex into the port on any result which includes a defender retreat (Soviet units *must* retreat at least one hex). Any units that receive an 'A' result, without a corresponding 'D' result, are considered eliminated and removed from play. A result of 'A(1)/D(1)' would be rolled again until one of the other options is rolled. These units may not be delayed.

Once owned, these two port hexes may be used as Axis supply sources for the remainder of the game. Once these units enter the map, the Axis player is granted one extra Support Point each turn for the rest of the game. All Soviet withdrawals after turn 32 and arrival of 2nd Guards Army are cancelled. The Axis Player loses **30 VP**.

SUB-OPTION AIR22 - (*Only available if Option K is exercised*)

The German 22nd Luftlande Division is an additional 'Opt K' unit which after Sevastopol fell was sent to Crete. This option may only be taken along with Option K. If this option is exercised, some other division has been sent to Crete for garrison duty. This unit has a special ability: On turn 10, the Axis player may elect to use it in its landing role instead of as regular infantry. If the Axis player chooses to use it in this role, it is placed off-map and may be placed during the reinforcement segment of any subsequent turn. To conduct a landing, simply place the division in **any** unoccupied or Axis occupied town or

city hex within 20 hexes of an Axis HQ unit. This hex may be Soviet controlled, but not occupied by Soviet units. The division is considered In Supply for the entire turn following its placement. If the special ability is not used, this unit enters with the rest of the 11th Armee as per Option K. The Axis Player also loses an additional **5 VP**.

NOTE: *The following options must be announced by the Axis player prior to start of the game.*

OPTION EP - EARLY PANZER RELEASE

These panzer divisions were kept in reserve until late in the campaign. One division was sent against Zhukov during Operation Mars and the other to attempt relief of Stalingrad. If the Axis Player wishes to use alternate resources to release them early, the 17th and 20th Panzer Division will be available starting on turn 8 (*20th Panzer is later withdrawn on turn 22*). They must be exercised together and the Axis Player loses **15 VP**.

If this option is not exercised, the units of the 17th Panzer arrive as normal on turn 55.

OPTION P19

The German 19th Panzer Division was not used in the actual campaign, being left in reserve and then used for Operation Wirbelwind and later against Mars. It can be made available for reinforcement on turn 4 (*then later withdrawn on turn 22*) with the Axis Player losing **5 VP**.

OPTION LAH

The German SS 'LAH' Motorized Division was sent to France during June and did not participate in any fighting within the scope of this game. However, it can be made available with the Seventeenth Armee at start by subtracting from the Axis Player, **10 VP**.

OPTIONAL HIDDEN STRENGTH RULE

Soviet rifle divisions consist of one step, but are printed on their reverse side with an 'Untried' status. To add further uncertainty to the quality of Soviet forces, players may utilize this status instead of the predetermined strengths matched to each unit ID. When setting up the game, place all rifle divisions in the Replacement Pool and randomly select units for setup. As reinforcements enter the game they are randomly selected for entry from the pool.

DESIGNER'S NOTES - ANYTHING TO CONFOUND THOSE NUMBER CRUNCHERS

Number crunching actually was what really sparked the start of this project. I was playing *A Victory Lost* against Mark Simonitch and he was constantly moving units around to make sure he had the magic 5-1 odds. I thought, "This is way too gamey, I like how *Iron Tide* and *Victory in the West* use hidden strength chits." After thinking about what situations had a similar 'Bulge' type feel to them, I remembered that nobody has really gotten this campaign "historical", especially when seeing the replays of the latest *Drive on Stalingrad*. So I embarked on a journey to try. I wanted to keep things simple because of the size of the game and this particular system fits that well. *Operation Typhoon* is often mentioned as one of the few playable monsters.

When you read the rules, you will see the basics are intact, with a few little twists from my years of solo experience, as well as the change in scale. I still think it has simple application and so will work without confusion. The air rules are very simple in application, but took a bit of space to write out. I expect to have plenty of examples of play. Everybody that has played the game has been positive and a couple testers were actually taught the game in 5-10 minutes by me before play. So don't be afraid of the size of the rulebook. I've tried to mesh everything so it fits together and easy to remember. If you know the *Operation Typhoon* rules, you could probably jump right into one of the scenarios by just looking over the one page reference sheet. I want this to be a simple to approach game like *AVL*. But since there is no way to recreate history at all with that game, I have to induce a bit more complexity in mine. Leaving Dean's *Case Blue* at the opposite end of a spectrum for which I'm striving to hit roughly middle. As everybody who has tested with me so far can acknowledge, I'm working on a fun, historical based, monster game that can appeal to players of both *AVL* and *Case Blue*.

March 2008

With changes to time scale (then at 2 days/turn) and trimming the turn, the German advance started to resemble history. There was more tension for the Soviets. Plus, the Axis had to be more careful where he conducts his advances with his mechanized divisions in order to make the powerful second combat phase work for him. When the couplets were removed, this went away, later to be replaced with an Exploit Movement Phase which gave slightly similar results.

I was leaning toward using Nathan's die roll for actual application of Air Points to lead to less of the, "I place one, you place one, cancel out." However, the added wristage didn't justify the gain, so things stayed as they were.

"I enjoyed the game, and I was impressed that it mimicked history quite well with a relatively non-complex design." - *Paul Borchers*

May 2008

Railroads were broken up into sections for conversion. This should have worked better than individual hex conversion. Later, rail conversion was deemed unnecessary overhead. Keeping track of it led to extra markers and didn't enhance the play of the game. Plus it added complexity that really didn't help the flow of the game. The scenarios hardly used it at all. The support rules show the lack of supply flow over the rail network enough to allow removal of Axis rail concerns altogether.

Initially there was a campaign game running from 11 May using the Kharkov expansion map. It was scrapped in favor of a 10 June start. However, there was too much temptation to use the 2nd & 17th Armee without restrictive rules to hamstringing the game. I shifted things to keep the Kharkov battles. Chronologically, the Kharkov scenario ran from 12 to 25 May and then everything started up again at 10 June if you wanted the full 1942 experience. Over time, pieces of these extras got dropped one by one.

July 2008

I noticed a constant effort had to be maintained to keep the complexity down as there were so many special circumstances during these battles. Things I will try to recreate with game flow rather than direct rules. Without direct rules they will not take place every game... but are possible.

August 2008

Originally I broke the rules up into three books: Base Rules, Scenario Book, & Campaign Game Manual. I felt this would ease entry without confusion because the campaign game adds quite a few extra rules that are not needed in the smaller scenarios. Later, I ended up combining a lot of those campaign rules into scenario play which simplified things into one rulebook. I want this to feel like the real 'Case Blue' without the obvious restrictive rules (*key points in allowing continuation into other campaigns in the future*).

A line of weak units doesn't really help. I've made a strong German army that can do what it wants early, but will have to pick and choose where to strike later in the game. Soon the sheer size of the Soviet force will begin to exploit weak areas. If everything goes well with the balance, November will see a large Soviet counterattack to take back as many victory towns as possible. This desired play flow necessitated a permanent change back to the three day turn.

With rules version 4.30, I made a couple of design decisions based on the tests. I really wanted to show the effect of limited supply that plagued the Germans throughout the campaign. Coupled with the attacker-friendly aspects of the system, not having any limit to what the Axis Player can do, would lead to a very boring game for the Soviets. So taking a cue from the other games in the series, I decided on a simple approach to Support Points. This may induce a massing of strong panzer divisions around a HQ, but overall I think that will play right into what is represented without the extra rules overhead. If you are strong in one place, you will be weak in another. Players will find they will need to balance things. As the front expands onto the third map, the Germans find they don't have enough divisions to strike everywhere at once anyway.

September 2008

Q: How does your game differ from *Campaign to Stalingrad* (CtS)?

A: I am using the *Operation Typhoon* strength chit system to keep away from the factor-counting and make each play different with a pseudo fog of war. *Campaign to Stalingrad* uses a standard approach with unit strengths. The scale is slightly different, CtS is approximately 16km to the hex, where FB is closer to 10km. This increases the size of the game, but also helps show the vast distances of the actual campaign. A key difference being that you can now actually see Grozny and the oil fields on the map. Mark's little things like ZOC bonds and the city battle charts obviously don't fit within the system I'm using. I am keeping the complexity down as much as I dare in order for people to have fun with a game of this size. I think in that

aspect, *FB* is on par with *CtS* with maybe a few less things to keep track of, like no supply depots and no rail conversion.

As things spread out during the course of the campaign game, I added the ability to breakdown German infantry divisions into their regiments. I was initially uncomfortable with not allowing the motorized and panzer divisions to do the same (which they historically did), but the Divisional Integrity thought popped up again. I just decided to bump each mechanized division up to two counters, which also has the side effect of given them more resiliency with six steps vice three.

Q: What is the map scale which will drive you with the need or not to breakdown the divisions?

A: Six and half miles to the hex, with well over a hundred hexes of front possible. The Germans have a total of 115 divisions available (that includes reinforcements). If I don't allow the Axis player to spread out somewhere, play will never even get close to history. It is a very big game, can't help that. That's why I'm keeping the rules as simple, straightforward, and smooth as possible so that a maximum of time is spent moving counters and not looking up rules.

"I will say that Greg emphasizes clean rules, with few exceptions. It makes the initial learning curve very easy." - *Al Hay*

Using better techniques with *Illustrator*, I started a new counter layout. I tried a better way to deal with stacking; which initially had some weird abnormalities. For a while there I was using a stacking point system, which true to my streamlined mantra, was easy to remember. Ten stacking points per hex and six can be used for combat. This also did away with the need for a Size Band (Size Dot) and allowed the band to be used to designate a unit with limited ZOC. There were complaints about the little yellow circles used for the stacking points despite *The Gamers* using them repeatedly throughout their *SCS* and *OCS* games. They reluctantly went the way of the Dodo. After all that, I eventually ended up going back to the original simplified three units per hex stacking.

Counter Features

Originally there was a stripe across the top of the counter to designate what Army/Armee the unit belongs to at the start of the Campaign Game. *This feature was kept, but changed to a box left of the unit symbol.* Some units which had a colored stripe across the middle of the counter possessed a limited ZOC. *Entire idea of limited ZOC was deemed too complicated for desired effect.* Now a white ZOC stripe denotes the unit has no ZOC. Units that are mechanized were shown by a white circle around the Movement Allowance. A white square around the Movement Allowance denoted a non-mechanized (foot or horse) unit. *When cleaning up the counters these mnemonics were dropped for aesthetics.* A grey boxed 'Opt' would signify an optional unit. A number in a white circle on the upper right portion of the counter denotes the turn of arrival during the campaign game was an important feature and kept along with pink circle for upgrades.

October 2008

Embankments make the map more accurate, but were hardly ever used. So, in the interest of keeping things useful and streamlined, the map was refined without embankments.

February 2009

In an effort to keep the counter total down, I came up with a simplification of strengths. This reduced the number of units using strength chits and hopefully made the relative strengths between units more realistic. Think more like *Red Star Rising* than your usual *VitW* game. I had toyed with having or not having Corps level HQs for the Axis, but when the number of units with strength chits was reduced, they were wiggled back into the picture to ensure supply and support.

Q: Additionally with the overall appearance of the Soviet mechanized units, it seems that they have learned the lessons of 41' and are the equal of their German counterparts. Is this what you are trying to convey?

A: For the most part it is to balance, without having the Soviets make huge stacks when stopping or counterattacking the Germans. As an aside, game play is a key focus within the historical parameters. It must be smooth and fun to play. I'm leaving the minute detail to games from *OCS* or *EFS*. However, I left the Soviets out of the most bonuses until late in the game to reflect the early inexperience.

March 2009

Nathan inspired a change which alleviates one of the last major concerns I had with the system. Say goodbye to double impulse! Tying things in with Nathan's ideas solidified the inclusion of Corps level HQs.

Fall Blau will be very familiar to those who have played *Operation Typhoon*, but there are key differences. When it comes down to command in *FB*, I had to go with more freedom for the player, simply because of the numerous instances of restructuring that happened during this campaign. To keep a fixed structure like in *OT* or *TKG* (or *VCS*), I would have needed many more counters to swap out during the game. Combat is not mandatory, but you still have the soak-off rules if you do launch an attack against a solid line. Attacking lone HQ units is handled differently and there is a small change to the advance and retreat rules which may take a conscious effort to remember, but I think makes sense and keeps the flow. Above all, I want this to play as smooth as *OT* by representing the flowing campaign of 1942, much as *OT* does the slow plodding advance of winter 1941.

May 2009

Soviet units were temporarily made more generic with Division Groups manning the front lines. I felt from my little experiments that this actually did not work out better in the long run.

The biggest changes were from tester suggestions. HQ Displacement came about from Al chasing my HQs around during one test. So you could not just build a wall of weak units as Mark did in another test, I changed the Breakthrough rules to eliminate the need for some markers. The effect was a little more punishment of the "weak unit carpet" strategy that Mark showed me. Overall his is a worthy ploy, I just don't want it to work that well (lessen its potency, as it were). I think it has been finally "put to pasture" by the Mobile Assault rules.

May 2010

At one point the rules had asymmetrical couplets to cover 3 days per turn. That was about the time Mark joined me for a playtest. I dropped that because I wanted simple and things then began to shift. It was interesting to see Mark's *Caucasus Campaign* come out with such a similar sequence. Showed me it could have worked...

If you look at the old charts, 10 June to 25 December at 2 days/turn comes out to exactly 100 turns.

Q: What do you think of putting it to 2 turns/week(a 4 days turn and a 3 days turn) do you think it would change something.

A: I started with 3 days/turn because of *Campaign to Stalingrad* and it allowed for a reasonable scenario length. Stretching things out will lead to small turn length scenarios which will take any balance and fun out of the situations.

The scenarios are the key. The time frame has to stay consistent with the actual advance possibilities. There's no way to go as far as a week without making it strictly campaign (and no scenarios). The main emphasis has been on the individual scenarios (i.e., cater to the space and time challenged), while keeping things as simple as possible for approaching the hundreds of unit campaigns.

Q: Otherwise, why these 3 hexes for rail movement? Don't you think a unit could detrain/entrain adjacent to an enemy unit if the detrainable hex is already friendly occupied (with combat unit of course.)?

A: Most of the base structure is from *Operation Typhoon* and kept simple as a result. We are talking about divisions mostly and within the short time frame of 2-3 days I didn't see a need to clutter up things with train exceptions.

However, I did take note and eventually removed the three hexes from enemy requirement.

Q: Mechanized/armored div/corps should have big penalty IMO. Same thing for marshes and also the movement penalty seems really low I think. Also about the Dnepr, there is part of it where this Major River is very wide and to consider it Volga class river on these part could really make sense. I think the last EFS Kiev To Rostov show it.

A: (I believe there was a mistake here as the Dnepr is not present on the maps of Fall Blau, but my answer addresses why I allowed movement over major rivers in the game.) Actually with such large units there usually are organic engineers and corps assets not covered in detail by the game which I have simplified to retain the proper flow.

October 2010

Laying out all maps again for testing the full campaign with the latest rules after starting work on *VCS Kharkov*, got me to thinking. There was still a lot of testing to be done, as well as some corrections I was already making. So looking at the extended campaign with strength changes to account for earlier battles and the way the extra turns *could* skew out of control, I decided to leave those battles for possible inclusion into *Spring Prelude*.

Running through the Caucasus Campaign scenario has brought out a lot of details. Marsh rules have been refined and map errors corrected. Support rules had been in flux, but finally solidify.

November 2010

I think I finally have the flow of play down to the pace that mimics the situation best. I've almost come full circle from those first tests that were basically two turns within one, shedding all those redundancies as I went...

One thing I kept coming across again and again... one of my pet peeves. A unit which historically advanced from point A to point B in eight days should darn well be able to go from point A to point B in three turns in *Fall Blau*. No, I don't want the game to recreate history every time... but historical results **MUST** be possible.

December 2010 – February 2011

I was able to make a Zun Tzu gamebox to allow for testing without going through so much time and ink. Very helpful, an awful lot of tweaks were made...

March-August 2011

I was working on the prequel (*Typhoon*) and contemplating the Guderian blitz at the beginning when a came up with an idea. Would this game work better for the initial advances by including "overrun" style gameplay instead of an "attack & exploit" style. I added the Mobile Assault for use during the movement phase by blitzing German (and later Soviet) mechanized units. Actual testing has so far proven very positive...

ENJOY THE GAME

Germans show up at the gates of Voronezh on 4 July and a massive Soviet army arrives on 7 July. Historically the panzers went south, but did you pull the Moscow Directive chit? Can you exit enough mechanized forces before either the Soviet reserve armies arrive or Hitler changes his mind? Play the Campaign Game and find out...

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Work In Progress:

Typhoon: Army Group Center, October 1941 to January 1942.