

Introduction to the Finns

The Finns were one of the few European minor powers to achieve their war aim, which was simply to survive as an independent entity. At the end of the war, Finland still existed and was not a satellite of the Soviet Union. Contrast this to all of the other Eastern European countries who had been allied with or occupied by Germany and you can begin to understand how great an achievement this was. All of the Finns' decisions can be seen in light of this primary objective.

The Finnish participation in World War 2 can be divided into 3 distinct periods:

1) The Winter War (November 1939-March 1940). After Poland had been divided by Germany and Russia, and Hitler and Stalin split Eastern Europe into "spheres of influence", Stalin set about gobbling up the small countries in Eastern Europe. These included Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Finland. The Baltic states "allowed" a Soviet military presence on their territory, and were eventually annexed outright. Next on the list was Finland, and the Soviets demanded some territorial concessions. When the Finns did not submit to occupation, the Soviet Union invaded. Finland resisted stubbornly for 4 months, giving the Russians repeated bloody noses until finally succumbing to sheer weight of numbers. Even when they lost, Stalin was reluctant to occupy all of Finland and settled for annexing border territory with an armistice.

2) The Continuation War (June 41-July/Sep 1944). Near the end of the period between the Winter War and Barbarossa, the Soviets resumed making territorial and economic demands. Finland became a reluctant ally of Germany, technically a "co-belligerent" rather than a formal ally. They never pushed hard toward Leningrad and Archangel, but were essentially satisfied with reclaiming what they had lost in the Winter War. This greatly frustrated Hitler, but probably helped Stalin to refrain from completely occupying Finland as a satellite in 1944-45. In June 1944, Stalin turned the now-veteran Soviet army loose on Finland. After initial successes, they again bogged down and, rather than engage in another slugging match possibly followed by a protracted guerilla struggle, an armistice was concluded that allowed Finland to remain independent.

3) The Lapland War (Sep 1944-Dec 1944) As part of the agreement with Stalin to keep their independence, the Finns drove the remaining German forces from their country. There are many interesting small unit actions that occurred in this period as the German forces retreated to Norway.

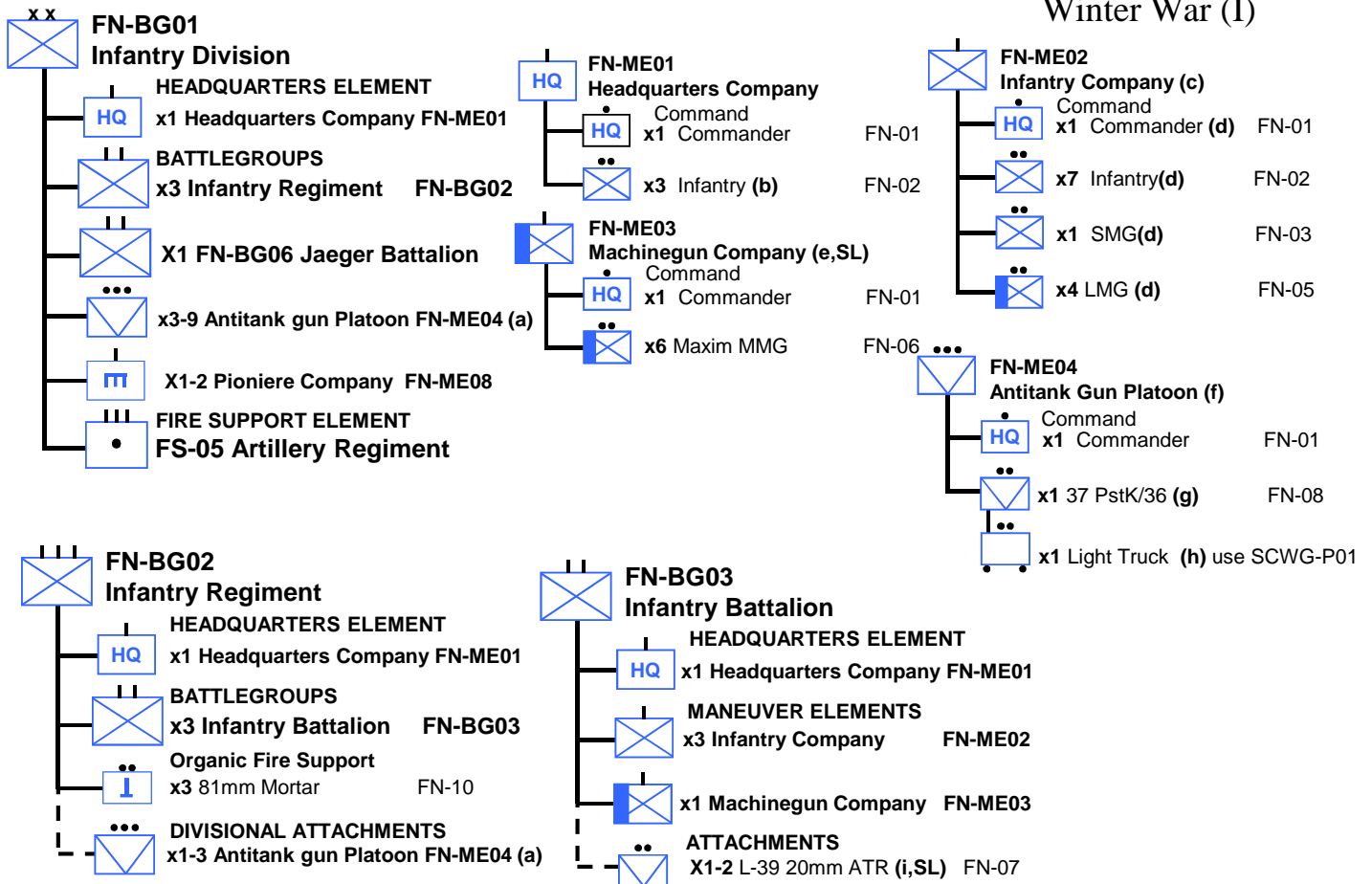
Winter War

The keys to understanding the Finns in the Winter War are that:

- A) They were extremely well-trained and motivated. They had only recently obtained their independence and were determined to keep it. Most Winter War troops, especially in the North, should be rated as Veteran or even Elite.
- B) Although they had good small-arms, they were short of heavy equipment, anti-tank assets, and suffered severe shortages of artillery ammunition. Much of their equipment was obtained from other countries, left over from WWI or before, or captured from the Russians.
- C) Much of Finland was undeveloped, and became almost impassable to motorized and mechanized forces in the Winter. Finnish forces that operated in this terrain were specifically trained to do so. They were extremely familiar with the terrain and how to work in it. The Russians were not.
- D) The parts of Finland that were passable were channeled into areas which the Finns had fortified.

When the Soviets attacked the Finns in 1939, they started at the beginning of the winter season, thus maximizing Finnish advantages and minimizing their own. Everyone expected the war to be short, as the Soviets enjoyed a greater than 4:1 numerical advantage and deployed a vast number of tanks (about 2000). However, the terrain and relative inexperience of the Russian forces (Stalin's great purge had just liquidated most of the experienced officers in the Red Army) ran headlong into stubborn and determined Finnish defenders. 4 months and almost 350,000 casualties later, the Russians finally broke through the Finnish fortifications and forced an armistice. In Northern Finland, the Finns used their training and familiarity with the terrain to win several spectacular victories against huge numerical odds. It is often said that the poor Russian performance in this campaign led Hitler to think that the Russians would be a pushover and helped his decision to launch Barbarossa in 1941.

Winter War (I)



(a) Although the paper strength of AT guns in a division was 18 AT guns (9 BF AT platoons), which would give each regiment 3 AT platoons, the Finns found themselves far below strength in their AT assets. One platoon/regiment was common at the beginning of the war. Note that the AT guns in the division are the same as those shown as divisional attachments to the regiment.

(b) The HQ company contained MP, logistics, and support troops and was about 60% of the strength of the normal infantry company. We are representing the combat strength of this contingent with the 3 infantry units.

(c) The Infantry company was divided into 4 platoons with nominally 2 infantry and 2 LMG squads in each. However, the LMG squads were smaller than the infantry squads, with only one weapon in each, and there was also one SMG in each infantry squad, so the 7-1-4 organization more closely approaches the equipment mix and strengths.

(d) Where enemy armor was expected, give 1-4 of the Infantry/SMG/LMG teams "Bomber" AT values, which represent infantry trained to close assault and destroy armored vehicles with Molotov Cocktails, satchel charges, and other close range weapons. Almost all Finnish troop units received some of this training, so any infantry-type troops (commanders, infantry, SMG, and LMG teams) can have this ability. 1-4 is a guideline, so scenarios can specify that more than 4 have the "Bomber" option if desired.

(e) Each Maxim unit represents 2 actual weapons. If you feel that the Finns need more help :-), let them have 12 MGs, as the MG company was actually organized into 3 platoons with 4 weapons squads in each (each with a single MG). The MG company may also be split amongst the infantry companies as attachments.

(f) Rather than being directly attached to units, Finnish AT Platoons often operated as independent elements stationed behind the Main Line of Resistance.

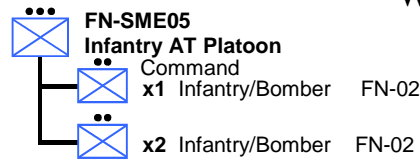
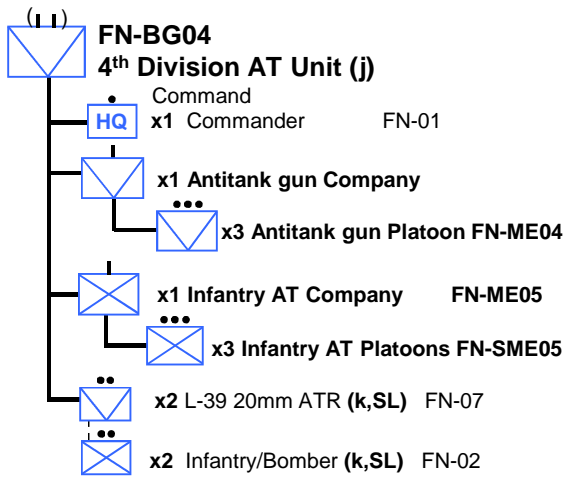
(g) The Finns used 37mm Bofors K36 Anti tank guns, captured Russian 45mm AT guns (RU-64), and 25mm AT guns (FR-24) and (at the beginning of the war) some almost useless 37 K/15 (FN-09) infantry guns left over from 1915. They allocated their supply of them to where the armor threat was greatest, mostly in the peninsula battles. They found that they were best in defense. At the start of the war there were 15 AT platoons available to the Peninsular army and 4 in the Lake Ladoga area. 94 were trained and sent to the front by the end of the war. The AT platoons usually operated independently.

(h) Also use horse-drawn transport SCWG-P04.

(i) Although accepted by the Finnish Army in the late summer of 1939, the excellent Finnish 20mm ATR was not available in any numbers until 1940. Some Boys ATR (BR-76) were available, but they were rare.

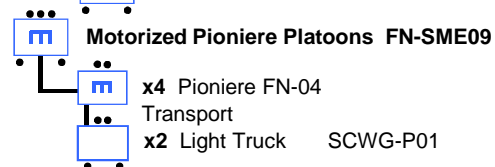
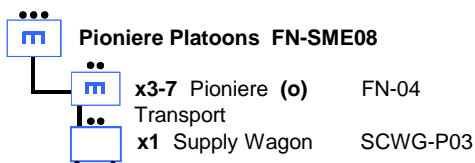
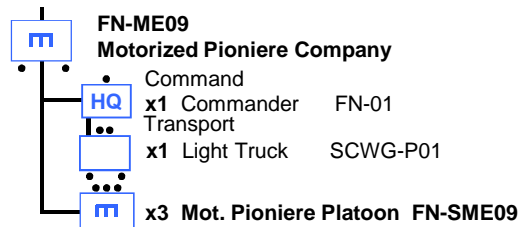
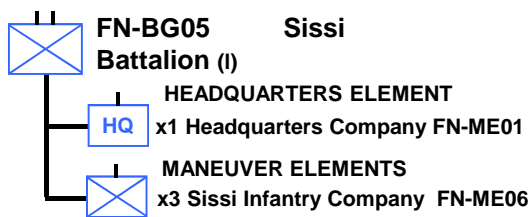
(SL) Where they expected to operate in deep snow, the Finns allocated sledge units to assist in the transport of their heavy infantry weapons such as HMGs and ATRs. Rather than having a specific "Sledge" units, this can be modeled by having Finnish ATRs, Mortars, and MGs ignore deep snow terrain movement restrictions. Also, in deep snow conditions, the Finns trained with skis which freed them from many of the movement penalties that afflict the Soviets.

Winter War (II)



(j) This organization represents the centralized command of AT assets that was set up by the 4th Division late in the War (approx Jan 1940). AT assets were given to the division as needed, with usually one AT platoon being sent to each regiment. This organization was adopted by most of the army after the end of the Winter War. The 3 AT Infantry platoons could also operate as a company sized unit. Add A commander FN-01

(k) The ATRs became available to 4th Division on 8FEB1940. These attachments should be deployed as 1 ATR and one Bomber Infantry operating together.



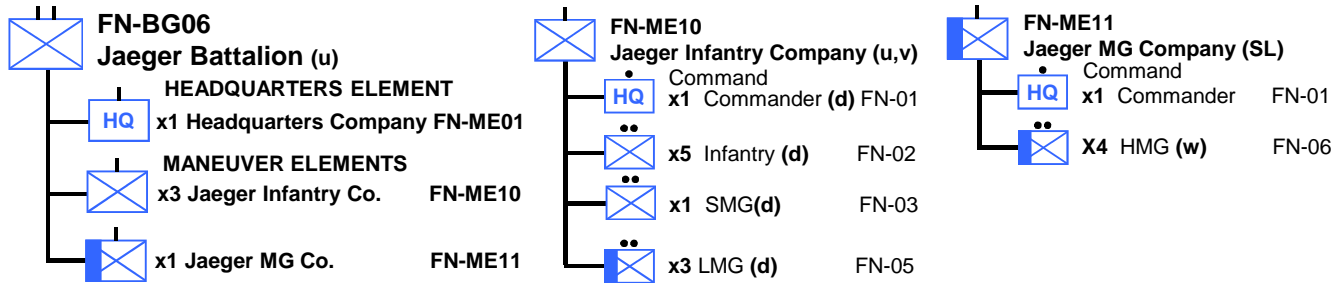
(l) Sissi ("guerilla" or "ranger" is perhaps the closest English translation) units were designed to operate as small independent groups behind enemy lines. They had more SMGs than the normal infantry battalions and lacked a HMG company. All Sissi troops should be treated as Recon and be equipped with skis if appropriate to the terrain.

(m) Sissi companies would often operate in platoon sized groups, but could combine into larger units if needed. The LMGs can operate as another platoon or be attached to the infantry platoons.

(n) You may give 1 infantry/SMG unit the bomber option if opposed by armor.

(o) The paper strength of the Pioniere company was 3 platoons of (7 pioniere squads + a delivery squad) + a delivery platoon. However, strengths varied greatly. The delivery units are represented by the supply wagons. Most of the Pioniere units used horse drawn transport to carry their equipment. There were some motorized units that used trucks.

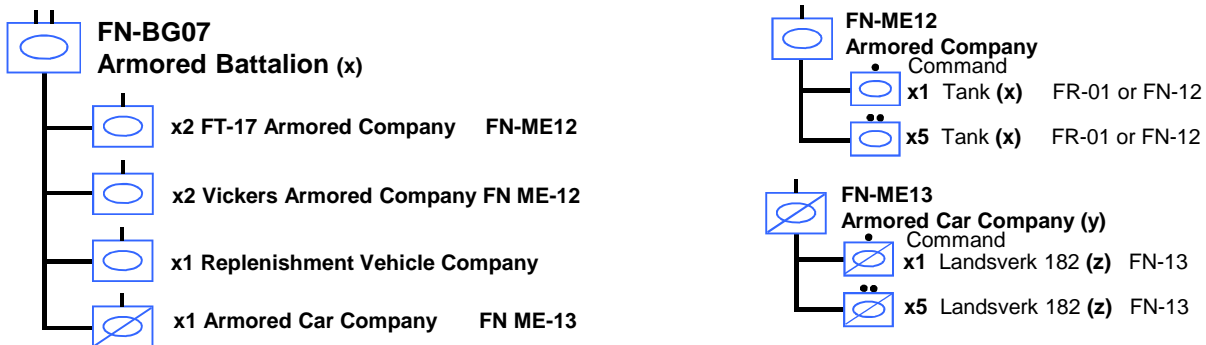
Winter War (III)



(u) Jaeger Infantry should be equipped with skis and probably be veteran or elite.

(v) The Jaeger Infantry company was similar to the normal infantry (FN-ME02) but had only 3 platoons.

(w) Each HMG unit represents 2 actual weapons. The MG company was organized into 2 platoons of 4 weapons each. They may also be split amongst the infantry companies as support.

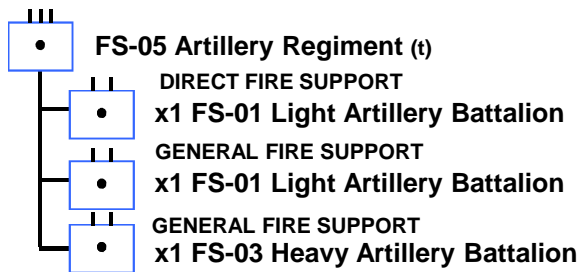
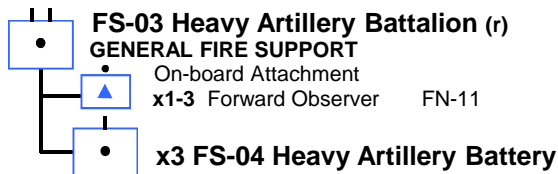


(x) The Finns fielded one armored battalion. 2 companies were equipped with obsolete FT-17 tanks from France, while two companies were equipped with a Vickers 6-ton chassis armed with the Swedish Bofors 37mm AT gun (quite similar in appearance and performance to a T-26). They also captured Soviet armored vehicles and turned them against the Russians, so the odd BT or T-26 (RU-52, RU-55, RU-56) would not be out of place. Only one of the Vickers companies saw any significant combat. The TANKS website indicated that the FT-17s were not used except as static fortifications. I have been unable to find the composition of the replenishment company. Armored warfare was not the Finnish specialty, and, unlike the infantry, they probably should have a discipline rating of Trained or Experienced at best.

(y) The armored car company was originally a cavalry company.

(z) There are some conflicts here. According to the TANKS website, only one of the Swedish Landsverk 182 6-wheeled AC was purchased, but several other sources indicate that a cavalry company was re-equipped with these vehicles.

Winter War (IV) Artillery



(p) Finnish Artillery doctrine was to fire by battalion, and was quite advanced for the inter-war period. It was hampered by a lack of trained observers and severe ammunition shortages. Use the French call-for-fire table and French methods. However, the Finns are considered to have a Fire plan in place. The Finnish doctrine nominally provided for more forward observers. Nominally, each light battery had 2 FO teams assigned, and each heavy battery had 1. However, in the Winter War, there were not enough trained FOs to satisfy the paper strength. Also, the Finns suffered from a severe artillery ammunition shortage which can be simulated either by limiting the number of missions or applying a negative modifier to the call-for-fire roll.

(q) Small Template 0 vs T, G, sV, -1 vs V. The Finns used 4 gun batteries (two BF templates).

The "75mm" represents any one of many kinds of 75-90 mm guns. The Finns essentially used anything that could shoot, and some of the artillery pieces dated to before 1900. If represented on the table, the French 75mm (FR-23) or one of the Russian 76mm guns (RU-15, SCWR-R06) would be good estimations. Records are readily available to the wargamer of the exact battery composition. The excellent www.winterwar.com site has this information for the Winter War. "Axis Allies on the Ostfront" by Bob Mackenzie (TAC Publications 2001) covers the Continuation war.

Usually the Finns fired their artillery by Battalion, but occasionally batteries were allocated to support specific infantry units.

(r) The Heavy Artillery Battalion could be specified as being in direct support if needed.

(s) As with the lighter batteries, there were many different kinds of weapons used in the Finnish organization ranging from 105mm (Lrg template, 0 vs T, G, sV, -1 vs V) to 152mm (Lrg template, +2 vs T, G, sv, +1 vs V). The most common of these seem to be 122mm (Lrg template, +1 vs T, G, sv, 0 vs V). The scenario should specify which are in use. Note that you even might have mixed batteries of different types.

(t) Finnish artillery regiments were the standard artillery allocation for an infantry division, organized with 2 light and 1 heavy battalions. A battalion often was assigned to support a specific infantry regiment. In BF terms, the support levels here show what happens when a FO attempts to combine all 3 battalions of his regiment into a single strike. One Battalion is in Direct Support, but the others are in General support. Scenario rules might limit the number of missions that can be fired.

Winter War Ideas

Here are some ideas for simulating some of the factors in the Winter War. Most of them favor the Finns, but they will help offset the Russian numerical advantages that should be a part of most scenarios. These rules should be used primarily in the Northern areas.

1) Experience: Finnish Troop Units should have a Discipline rating of at least Experienced, often Veteran, even at the start of the war. Jaeger units should be Veteran or Elite. Russians should generally be Raw or Trained.

2) Snow: Especially in scenarios in the North, the snow was deep enough to restrict most movement to the roads. Vehicle movement and infantry in snow areas should be halved, with bog-down rolls necessary in most off-road areas and sometimes on the roads themselves. Even the unpaved roads should be difficult, consider rolling randomly for traffic accidents that cause motorized units to bog down on a roll of d10.

Deep snow conditions should cause infantry to perform bog-down checks when moving off-road (think about forcing your way through 3-4 foot snowdrifts).

Finnish ski troops and sledge borne infantry weapons ignore snow movement restrictions.

3) Visibility. The Finns had snow camouflage, while the Russians usually did not. Russians should have a down-1 modifier to their spotting rolls in Snow conditions.

4) Cold. It was bitter cold, sometimes dropping below -20 Celsius for extended periods. The Finns were ready for this, the Russians were not. Consider applying a -1 or -2 discipline roll modifier to the Russian Maneuver rolls for intense cold. While the Finns were better prepared for the cold, they were still not immune to it. They should have an discipline roll effect 1 less than the Russians (-1 for the Russians, 0 for the Finns/ -2 for the Russians, -1 for the Finns).

5) Finnish Artillery Ammunition. Despite good artillery doctrine, the Finns were chronically short of ammunition. You should either limit the number of times that Finnish Artillery can fire or apply a negative modifier to their call-for-fire rolls. Ammo limits are probably more realistic, as the Finns were good at calling it, but couldn't do it as often as they would have liked.

6) Tank Fear: At the start of the Winter War, the Finnish bomber units should be immune to the "Tank Fright" modifier in close combat. This advantage should extend to all Finnish units after the first month of combat, and also into the Continuation War. Finnish Bomber and Panzerfaust units (LW infantry), should suffer only a -1 maneuver roll penalty when within 5 inches of enemy armor instead of the usual -2.

The Continuation War 1941-1944

The Winter War ended in the Spring of 1940, with the Finns making territorial concessions to the Russians but maintaining their independence. When Barbarossa was launched in the summer of 1941, the Finns initially declared neutrality, but the Finns had been negotiating with the Germans since 1940, as they feared that the Soviets might decide to renew their attack despite the armistice. Germany had sold arms to Finland, and German troops from Norway crossed Finnish territory immediately after 22nd June, and began to prepare to launch an attack on Murmansk. Also German Ju-88 bombers used Finnish air force base in Utti as a refueling point when returning from bombing the Leningrad. Public opinion in Finland was in favor of regaining the territories lost to the Russians in the armistice. In any case the Soviet government forced the issue by bombing several Finnish towns on 25 June 1941. Finland declared war and the Continuation war was on.

Initial Finnish attacks in the Karelian Isthmus were successful, but the Finns did not press Leningrad. This was also true to the North of Lake Ladoga, where the Finnish advances into Eastern Karelia were successful. Mannerheim took this area as a buffer and established defense lines in favorable terrain. In the far North Lapland front, a combined German/Finn offensive toward Murmansk and Archangel bogged down in the wilderness and the Finns refused to commit more troops. Having regained their territories, the Finns stopped, and the front remained essentially static until 1944. The Russians launched some local offensives in 1942, but they were repulsed. Actions were fought on a small scale, being mostly patrolling and sniping (excellent potential for Battlefield scenarios). It should be noted that the Finns attempted to conclude a separate peace treaty at this point, but the Allies wanted them to give back the territory they had regained, so they decided to wait to see who won the titanic struggle between Germany and Russia.

On 9JUN1944 (shortly before they launched their massive offensive against Army Group Center), Russia decided to clean up the Finnish front before going after Germany. Initial successes ran into a tough second line and the front bogged down into a vicious slogging match. The decisive battle was fought at the end of June and early July at Ihantala, where the Finns managed to hold the Russians. Another Russian attack at Vuosalmi was repulsed with heavy losses, and to the North of Lake Ladoga, the Finns repeated some of their Winter War successes in the battle of Ilomantsi, where they chewed up the Soviet 176th and 289th Divisions.

Soon thereafter, the German Western front collapsed in Normandy, and it looked like the Western Allies would soon defeat the Germans. As Finland was definitely a sideshow compared to the offensive against Germany, Stalin decided to terminate his offensive against the Finns to concentrate even more force on his main opponent. To a certain extent he did this because he wanted to prevent the American and British from beating him into Berlin. An armistice was proposed and accepted on 4SEP1944 The final peace signed on 19SEP1944 allowed the Finns to keep their independence, but ceded back all of the territories lost to the Russians in 1940 during the Winter War. A key provision of this armistice was that it required all German troops in Finland to leave within 15 days, which was an impossible task. This led to the final conflict in Finland, the Lapland War.

The Finns were better prepared for the Continuation War than they were for the Winter War. They did not demobilize completely after the Winter War, and had a approximately a year to prepare for the next phase.

Finnish Vehicles of the Continuation War

As in the Winter War, the Finns had no domestic armored vehicles, but depended on those they could buy or capture. As can be seen by the variety of equipment listed below (and there were several other less significant types which were represented by a single vehicle), the Finns used anything they could get.

Renault FT-17 (France)(FR-01) Although these were phased out in 1942, they were still in use at the beginning of the Continuation War. There were originally 34 in use.

Vickers-Armstrongs 6 ton tank, Type E (United Kingdom). 32 were bought in 1938 and 1939. These tanks were rearmed in 1940 with 45mm Soviet cannons.

T-26 of various models. (captured from the USSR)(RU-52) About 100 of these were captured in the Winter War and Continuation War. Despite being constructed with varying armament, they were all rearmed as cannon tanks. Some of these served into the 1960's.

FAI, FAI-M and BA-20 (USSR) (RU-P07, RU-P08) About 20 of these were captured in the Winter War and Continuation War. They were phased out in 1943.

BA-3, BA-6 and BA-10 (USSR) (RU-P10, RU-61) 28 were captured in the Winter War and Continuation War. They were in use until 1959.

T-37 (USSR) (RU-P06) 30 were captured but were found to be of marginal combat power. The last were phased out in 1944.

T-38 and T-38M-2 (USSR) (RU-59) 18 were captured in the Winter War and Continuation War. Phased out by 1945.

Komsomolets (RU-60) (USSR) About 200 of these tractors were captured and used mainly to draw anti-tank guns between 1940 and 1961.

T-28 (USSR) (RU-50) 7 of these were captured and served together in a single platoon. They were in use until 1945.

BT-5 (RU-55) (USSR) 4 were captured in the Continuation war and used in summer and autumn of 1941.

BT-7 (RU-56) (USSR) 4 were captured in 1941 and used until the spring of 1942.

BT-42 (FN-18) (USSR/Finland) In the Autumn of 1942 some captured BT-7 tanks were converted to assault guns. The only weapon of the assault howitzer, then named BT42, was its main gun, the English QF4.5inch Mark II 114mm field howitzer. The guns were outdated and almost useless against armored targets. A total of 18 were built, the last of them being delivered in late autumn of 1943. In combat BT42's achieved some small successes, but during the fighting in the summer of 1944, 8 were lost to enemy armor.

BT-43 (FN-19) (USSR/Finland) This vehicle was an attempt to convert a captured BT-7 into an APC. Its high silhouette and thin armor made it unsuccessful, and it was used primarily as a supply carrier.

T-34/76 (USSR) (RU-02) 6 of these were captured and 3 more purchased from Germany in 1944. At the end of the Continuation war, all were in service and they continued to be used until 1961.

T-34/85 (USSR) (RU-03) 9 were captured in 1944 and were in use until 1962.

KV-1E m 1940 "Klim Voroshilov" (USSR) (RU-47) 1 was captured in the Continuation War and used from 1942 to 1945.

KV-1 m 1942 "Klim Voroshilov" (USSR) (RU-04) 1 was captured in the Continuation War and used from 1942 to 1945.

Landsverk Anti II (FN-17) (Sweden) 6 were bought in 1942 and were use until 1966. Known in Finland as the 40 ItK38, these anti-aircraft tanks were armed with a 40mm Bofors. They served long after the war.

Sturmgeschutz Ausf G (Germany/Finland) (FN-14) A mainstay of the Finnish Tank Force, 30 were bought in 1943 and 29 in 1944. After some initial losses in 1944, the Finns up armored them with appliqué and log armor, which reduced their speed but made them more likely to survive. They were in use from 1943 to 1959. During the war they formed an assault gun battalion, which lost 8 of its number but was credited with 80 kills. The Assault-gun battalion was heavily involved in the fighting of 1944, taking part in the greatest Scandinavian tank and artillery duel of WW2 in the Tali-Ihantala area, just north of Vyborg. As many of the units bought in 1944 had not arrived by the Soviet offensive, Finnish sources estimate that about 20 vehicles were operational during the critical battles in the Summer of 1944.

Panzerkampfwagen IV Ausf J (Germany) (GE-03) 15 were bought in 1944 and they were in use until 1962.

ISU-152 (USSR)

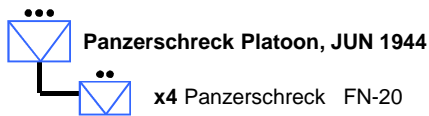
(RU-30) 2 were captured in 1944. One was taken into use immediately and lost three days later. Another was dragged to the rear for repairs. 1 served as an armored recovery vehicle after its gun was removed.

Anti-tank: Panzerfausts, ATRs and AT guns in the Continuation War

As described in the Winter War section above, the Finns trained their infantry in anti-tank tactics. They used satchel charges, Molotov Cocktails and other close-in weaponry to disable tanks. In addition, they developed an effective 20mm anti-tank rifle that was widely distributed to their infantry. During the Winter War, they established a dedicated Antitank Training Centre (Panssarintorjuntakeskus) in the town of Hämeenlinna that not only trained infantry in AT tactics, but also sought to incorporate the experiences of front-line troops into better tactics. As the war went on, the armor thickness and general protection of the Russian vehicles made them relatively immune to anti-tank rifles. To counter this, the Germans developed both the Panzerfaust and Panzerschreck shaped-charge weapons. Both were given to the Finns in 1944, but under the condition that they be kept secret. This secrecy provision was unrealistic, as thousands of the weapons had already been captured in the fighting in Russia, and also the U.S. had independently developed the bazooka, which also used the shaped-charge principle. However, the Finns duly obeyed the restriction and did not distribute the new weapons to the troops. When the Russian offensive started in JUN1944, the weapons were hastily given to the troops who then had to learn how to use them in combat, often using a German speaking member of the unit to translate a users guide while the unit was under attack! Sometimes the first time that Finnish infantry saw the weapon used was when it was being fired at an advancing Russian tank. However, Finnish infantry soon learned how to use the new weapons effectively. Here are some guidelines for Finnish infantry AT.

1. Then Finns should never be subject to the “Tank Fright” modifier, even in 1941 and 1942.
2. No Finnish units should be equipped with Panzerfausts and Panzerschrecks prior to JUN 1944. When they do become available, Finnish infantry can use a combination of bomber armed and Late-war (FN-16) infantry. Panzerschreck platoons (see below) will also become available.
3. A scenario rule could apply a -1 to the attack of a Panzerfaust/schreck armed unit during the very first battles of JUN44. After that, they can be used normally.
4. Before JUN44, continue to use the bomber option to simulate the special AT training.

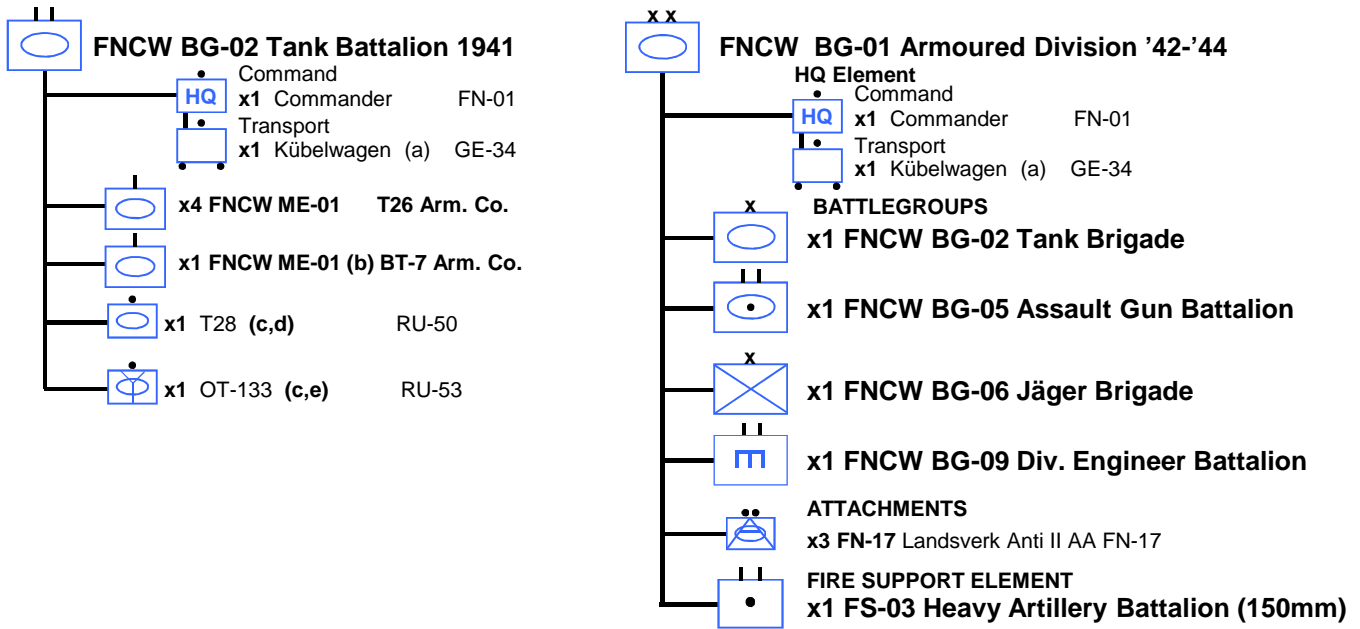
The Finns deployed some specialized AT units once the new weapons became available. These would be part of the Infantry AT company divisional AT assets that could be attached to lower level formations.



Changes to the AT organizations

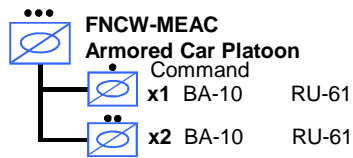
The Divisional AT company (see FN-BG04) was in use throughout the war. However, as new and more powerful weapons were developed, they displaced the smaller and less effective ones. In 1941-1942, the standard AT gun was either 37mm or 45mm. In 1943, the German Pak 38 (GE-40) became available. This in turn was replaced by either 75mm PstK/97-38 (FN-23 essentially a French 75mm field gun mounted for AT use) or a 75mm PAK 40 (GE-41). In August 1944, the official organization of 75mm gun companies reduced the number of AT gun platoons in the company from 3 to 2, but this changeover had not been completed the time the war ended. Obsolete guns were not discarded, but were often handed out as attachments to the infantry formations. Even if they no longer were effective against main battle tanks, they could still shoot up light vehicles and point targets.

Finnish Armoured Formations



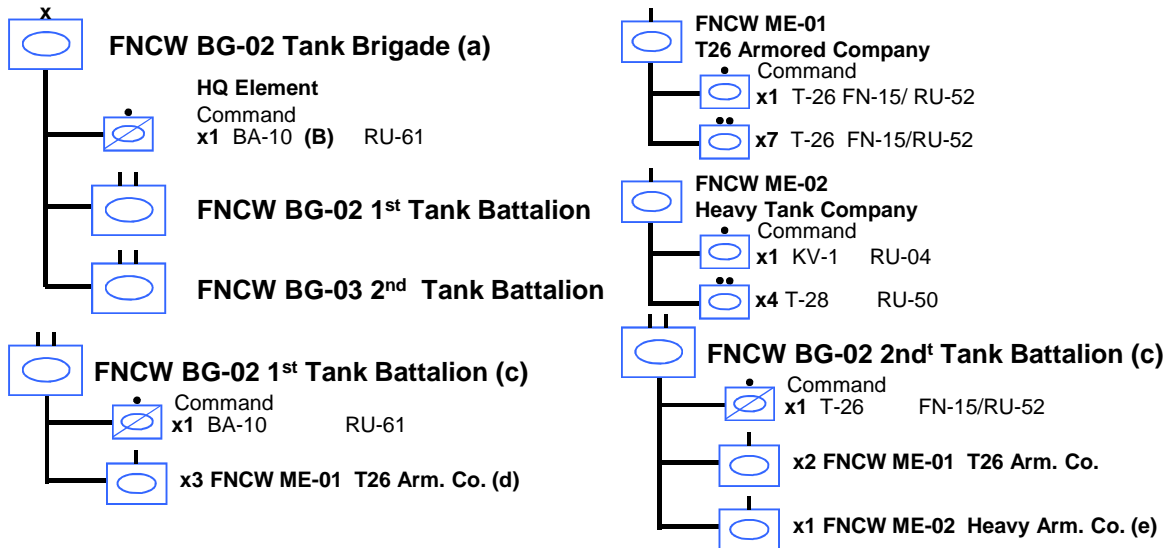
Finnish Armored formations grew in size and power during the Continuation War. In 1941, the Tank Battalion was the only formation, being armed primarily with captured T26 tanks. These were reorganized into a Tank Brigade in 1942 (essentially FNCW BG-02) and an all-arms Tank Division was created in August 1942. According to Bob Mackenzie (Axis Allies on the Ostfront), the Tank Brigade and Division had the pick of personnel, so it should almost always be Veteran or Elite.

- (a) Substitute any staff/unarmored command car.
- (b) This unit should have 1 command and 1 other tank BT-7 (RU-56). Note that the BT-7s were almost never available because of mechanical difficulties.
- (c) Acts as its own commander in a separate ME.
- (d) In Oct 1941, this unit increases to 4 T-28 (RU-50) one serves as the command vehicle.
- (e) Almost never available because of mechanical difficulties.



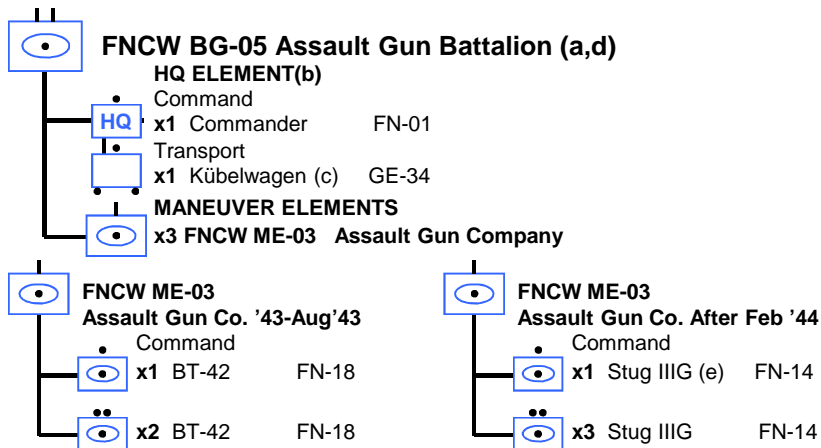
There were also several separate armoured car platoons. The 1,2,4,5 & 7 armoured car platoons had BA-10s (RU-61), but the 5th swapped these for captured T-37 light tanks (RU-P06) in October 1941. The 7th became part of the Armoured Battalion in October 1941.

Tanks and Assault Guns (Armoured Division)



Tank Brigade Notes

- The Tank Brigade existed as an independent formation from Feb-June '42 when it was incorporated into the Armoured Division.
- While it was independent, the Brigade Command vehicle was a T-26 (RU-52) instead of a BA-10
- The companies in the 1st battalion were numbered 1-3, while those in the 2nd Battalion were numbered 4-6. The 6th company was the Heavy Armored Company.
- In August 1944, there were enough captured T-34s to reequip the 3rd company with 1 Command T34/85 (RU-03), 2 T34/85 (RU-03) and 5 T-26 (FN-15/RU-52). Note that this is an estimate based on the number of T34s available as is note e).
- In August '44 the Heavy Company was replaced by 1 Command T-34/76 (RU-02) , 3 T34/76, and 4 T-26(RU-52).





Assault Gun Battalion Notes.

- The Assault Gun Battalion was formed on 20FEB1943
- Add 1 Recon BA-10 (RU-61) to the HQ Element from Aug '43-Feb '44
- Any staff car can be substituted for GE-34
- When the equipment of the Assault Gun Battalion was changed to StugIIIG, the BT-42s were made an independent battalion (not under the Armoured Division) with the same organization.
- After July '44, allow command Stug vehicles to call the divisional artillery as Commanders.

Jäger Brigade/Engineers (Armoured Division)

FNCW BG-06 Jäger Brigade

 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 Transport
 x1 Kübelwagen (a) GE-34






BATTLE GROUPS

x4 FNCW BG-07 Jäger Battalion

x1 FNCW BG-08 AT Battalion




FNCW-ME05

Jäger Infantry Company

 Command
 x1 Commander (b) FN-01
 x5 Infantry (b) FN-02
 x1 SMG(b) FN-03
 x3 LMG (b) FN-05
 Transport
 x10 Bicycle (c) GN-01

FNCW-BG07 Jäger Battalion

HEADQUARTERS ELEMENT




 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 x1 Forward Observer FN-11
 Transport
 x2 Kübelwagen (a) GE-34

MANEUVER ELEMENTS

x3 Jäger Infantry Co. FNCW-ME05






x1 Jäger MG Co. FNCW-ME06

Organic Fire Support



 x1 81mm Mortar FN-10
 Transport
 x1 Light/Med Truck RU-62

FNCW-ME06

Jäger MG Company




 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 x6 HMG FN-06
 x4 L-39 20mm ATR (d) FN-07
 Transport
 x6 Light/Med Truck RU-62

FNCW-BG08 Brigade AT Battalion (e)

 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 Transport
 x1 Kübelwagen (a) GE-34

x4 Antitank Gun Battery FNCW-ME07

FNCW-ME07 Antitank Gun Battery





 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 x1 Pak 38/40 (f) GE-40/41
 x1 Komsomolets RU-60

Jaeger Notes





- The Brigade's equipment consisted mostly of captured Russian equipment, so any appropriate motor vehicle or staff car can be substituted for the Kübelwagen.
- After June 1944, 1-2 should have Panzerfaust. 1-2 should have the Bomber option. Before that 1-3 should have the bomber option.
- In summer, use bicycles. In winter use skis/sledges.
- In 1943 the ATR were removed from these units. Replace with Infantry/Bomber. In June 1944, Pzschreck and Pzfausts became available. Replace Infantry/Bomber with Infantry/PzFaust and Pzschreck teams.
- The batteries probably were split as attachments to the 4 battalions
- Originally, all 4 batteries were armed with Pak38. By Mid 1944, 2 of the 4 batteries were armed with Pak 40. This AT organization was unique to the Armoured division.

FNCW-BG09 Engineer Battalion

Div.

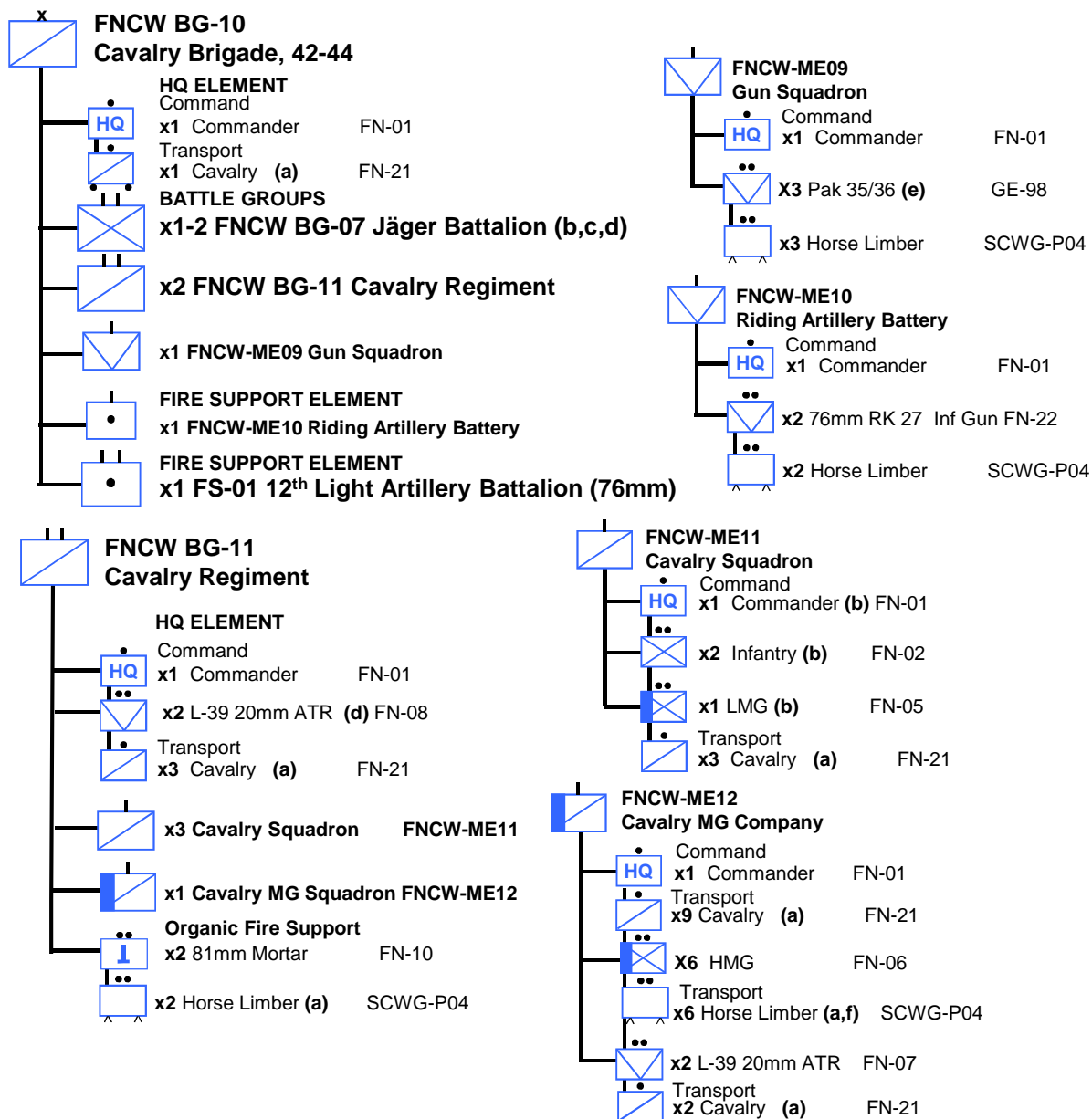
 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 Transport
 x1 Kübelwagen (a) GE-34
 x3 FNCW-ME07 Bicycle Pioniere Company
 x1 Bridging train

FNCW-ME08 Bicycle Pioniere Company

 Command
 x1 Commander FN-01
 x6 Pioniere FN-04
 Transport
 x7 Bicycle (c) GN-01

Cavalry

In 1939, there were two larger mounted cavalry formations, the Häme and Uudenmaa cavalry regiments, both of about battalion size. As with most cavalry regiments of WW2, these fought essentially as mounted infantry, using their horses primarily to increase their mobility. During the Winter War, these regiments fought on foot, but in the Continuation War, they were joined together with the 1st Jäger Battalion (mounted on bicycles) to form the 1st Cavalry brigade. In late-1942/early 1943, the 6th Jäger Battalion was added. In 1941, this formation was used in the Northern Karelian area, where the terrain was suited for horses. In 1944, they took part in some serious fighting battles in Southern Karelia near Viborg.



- a) Cavalry, Bicycle, Horse-drawn transport replaced by skis/sledges during winter for all troops.
- b) 1st Jäger Battalion initially, 6th Jäger Battalion added in Winter 1942-43
- c) Replace light trucks in basic Jäger organization by horse-drawn transport. Replace cars by bicycles.
- d) Add x1 Pak35/36 GE-98 + Horse limber to Jäger battalion
- e) Pak 35/36 eventually replaced by x2 75mm PAK 40 (GE-41) in 1943-1944
- f) Two of the HMG company may have bicycle transport.

Sources

1. Much of the Winter War material was derived from the excellent website www.winterwar.com
2. Axis and Allies on the Ostfront-Bob Mackenzie 2001, TAC Publications is an excellent source of material on the continuation war.
3. An extremely interesting site on the Finnish Military is <http://www.jaegerplatoon.net/MAIN.html>