

Somewhere in Hell - Kursk 8 July 1943

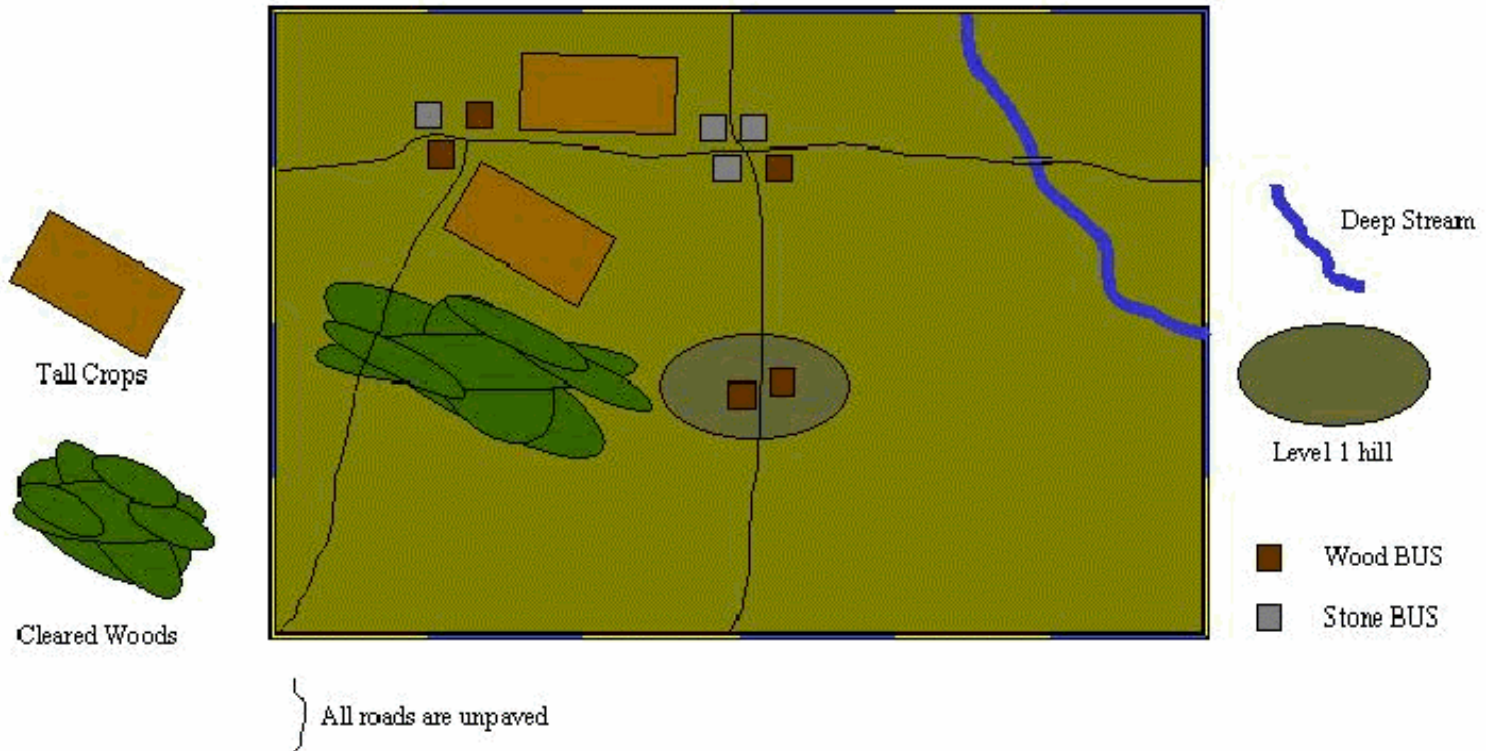
Operation Zitadelle has been raging for 3 days. The Germans have mounted dual attacks on the Kursk salient from the North and South. Model's Northern attack encountered stiff resistance, and by the third day had barely progressed 10 miles into the salient. In the South, Von Manstein had done much better, achieving gains of 15-20 miles in some places by the start of the fourth day. For every mile gained however, the Russians have exacted a terrible cost in men and materials.

In the evening hours of July 7, Soviet commander Vatutin and Party Leader Khrushchev reviewed the dire situation at hand on the Southern edge of the Kursk salient. Soviet high command is committed to stop the Germans before they reached the city of Oboyan. The battered 6th Guards Army was ordered to regroup and dig-in as the last line of defense for Oboyan. Due to the importance given to holding this line, the 1st Tank Army and 40th Army were rushed to the area as additional support and to potentially counterattack German spearheads.

4th Panzer Army was enjoying success on this front, and with 3rd, 11th Panzer, and Grossdeutschland Divisions, was pushing North to cross the Pena River and secure the road to Oboyan.

This scenario portrays a German advance in the Southern sector leading up to the assault on the village of Syrtsevo. Can the Germans advance to contact and continue steamrolling over Russian resistance? Or, can the Russians defend their homeland and halt the onrushing armies of Germany?

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Terrain and Scenario Notes

- The table should be 6 feet wide by 4 feet deep (15mm scale). Each division along the side of the map represents 12".
- The Wooded area is "Cleared Woods" Dense Concealment, Soft Cover. Troops Full Speed / Tracks Half Speed / Wheel or Guns Half Speed + Bog Chk.
- Tall Crops Sparse Concealment, Soft Cover. Troops Full Speed / Tracks Full Speed / Wheel or Guns Half Speed
- The stream is deep along its length. Troops Breach/Tracks, Wheel or Guns Breach + Bog Chk.
- All hills and flat terrain are considered clear terrain.
- The roads are "unpaved".
- The game is 10 turns long. The nominal start time is 0600.

Briefing for Officer Commanding German Leading Kampfgruppe of PzGren Div Grossdeutschland

Situation

The fighting over the past three days has been intense. The 4th Panzer Army is driving hard to the North, reaching onward toward the City of Oboyan, which is on the road to Kursk. Recent fighting has crushed the Russian 6th Guards Army, sending them to the North in retreat. The next objective is the village of Syrtsevo. Advance recon elements scouting a wooded area and hill have reported Russian hasty defenses setting up to the South of Srytsevo in a small hamlet at a cross-road. Further recon reports have been unavailable.

Mission

You are to clear the southern heights and a small hamlet at a cross-road leading toward Syrtsevo.

Execution

Your forces consist a mixed Panzeragenadier Kampfgruppe with companies of tanks and divisional attachments. Your forces and discipline ratings are attached.

Starting Positions and Reinforcement Schedule

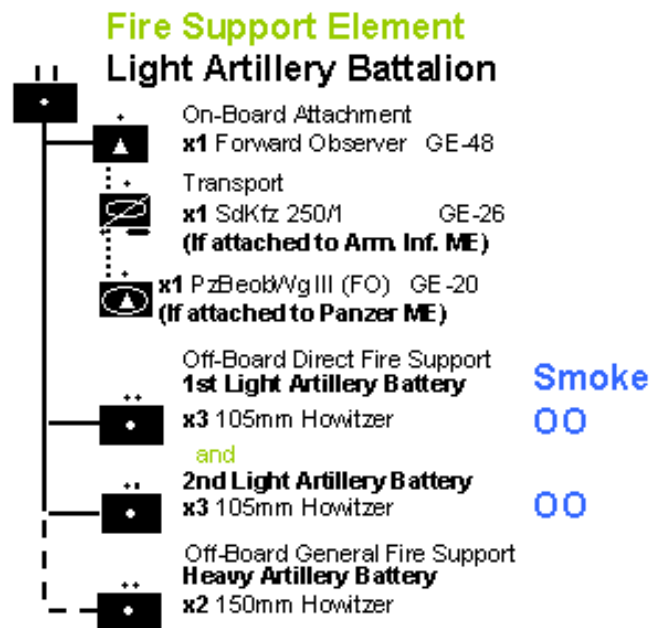
- You move first.
- None of your forces start the game on the board. Up to four Maneuver Elements may begin each turn anywhere on the South Edge of the map on or between the two roads.

Objective

You must clear the hill and cross-road built up sectors of all Russian undisordered forces within the time limits of the game (or Turn 10) and destroy as many Russian vehicles and maneuver elements as possible. All surviving Russian undisordered armored units must not be within 10” of the hill or cross-road built up sectors to permit control by German occupying units.

Artillery Options

- The German artillery battalion is to the South, so templates will be laid with long edge oriented N-S.
- Any turn, the artillery battalion can elect to be broken into two batteries. If broken up, the battalion will not be able to recombine for a battalion mission within the scope of the game. Note that if the battalion fires a 1-battery shelling mission (as per the restriction on p.39), this does NOT constitute a breakdown into batteries.
- If the battalion splits into batteries, the GS battery must go with a specific DS battery and FO and not be used with any other.
- The FO for the Light Artillery Battalion may be attached to any of German companies.
 - If he is attached to the armored infantry, give him a Sdkfz 250/1 (GE-26).
 - If he is attached to the tank company, give him a PzBeobwagen III (GE-20).
 - He may not be attached to the Tigers.
- The light artillery battalion may fire
 - A battery random shelling mission (three templates -2 vs V, -1 vs T, G, sV)
 - A battery shelling mission (three templates -1 vs V, 0 vs T, G, sV)
 - A battalion concentration mission (three templates 0 vs V, +1 vs T, G, sV)
 - A thickened battalion concentration mission (two templates across, center section thickened Outer area 0 vs V, +1 vs T, G, sV, center section +1 vs V, +2 vs T, G, sV)
 - A battalion concentration mission (two outer templates 0 vs V, +1 vs T, G, sV) with the center template thickened by the 150mm in General support. (+3 vs V, +4 vs T, G, sV)
- The Germans must fire by battalion or break into batteries. Individual batteries of the light artillery battalion may only conduct separate fire missions if the battery is broken up.



HQ Maneuver Element

(Experienced)

•	Command		
HQ	x1 Commander	GE-46	
•	Transport		
■	x1 Kubelwagen	GE-34	

Maneuver Element-01

Panzer Company (Experienced)

••	Command		
○	x1 PzKpflw/G, H	GE-03	
••			
○	x5 PzKpflw/G, H	GE-03	

Maneuver Element-02

Panzer Company (Experienced)

••	Command		
○	x1 PzKpflw/G, H	GE-03	
••			
○	x5 PzKpflw/G, H	GE-03	

Maneuver Element-03

Panzer Company (Trained)

••	Command		
○	x1 PzKpflw/V	GE-04	
••			
○	x3 PzKpflw/V	GE-04	

Maneuver Element-04

Heavy Panzer Platoon (Veteran)

•••	Command		
○	x1 PzKpflw/M	GE-05	
••			
○	x1 PzKpflw/M	GE-05	

Maneuver Element-05

Panzergranadier Company (Armored)
(Experienced)

•	Command		
HQ	x1 Commander	GE-46	
•	Transport		
■	x1 SdKfz 251/10	GE-22	
••			
⊗	x6 Infantry	GE-44	
••			
⊗	x3 Light Machine Gun	GE-49	
••			
⊗	x1 Heavy Machine Gun	GE-50	
••	Transport		
■	x5 SdKfz 251/1	GE-21	
••	Organic Fire Support		
⊕	x1 SdKfz 251/2 80mm Mortar Halftrack	GE-23	
••	Organic Fire Support		
⊗	x1 SdKfz 251/9 75mm Halftrack	GE-24	

Maneuver Element-06

Panzergranadier Company (Armored)
(Experienced)

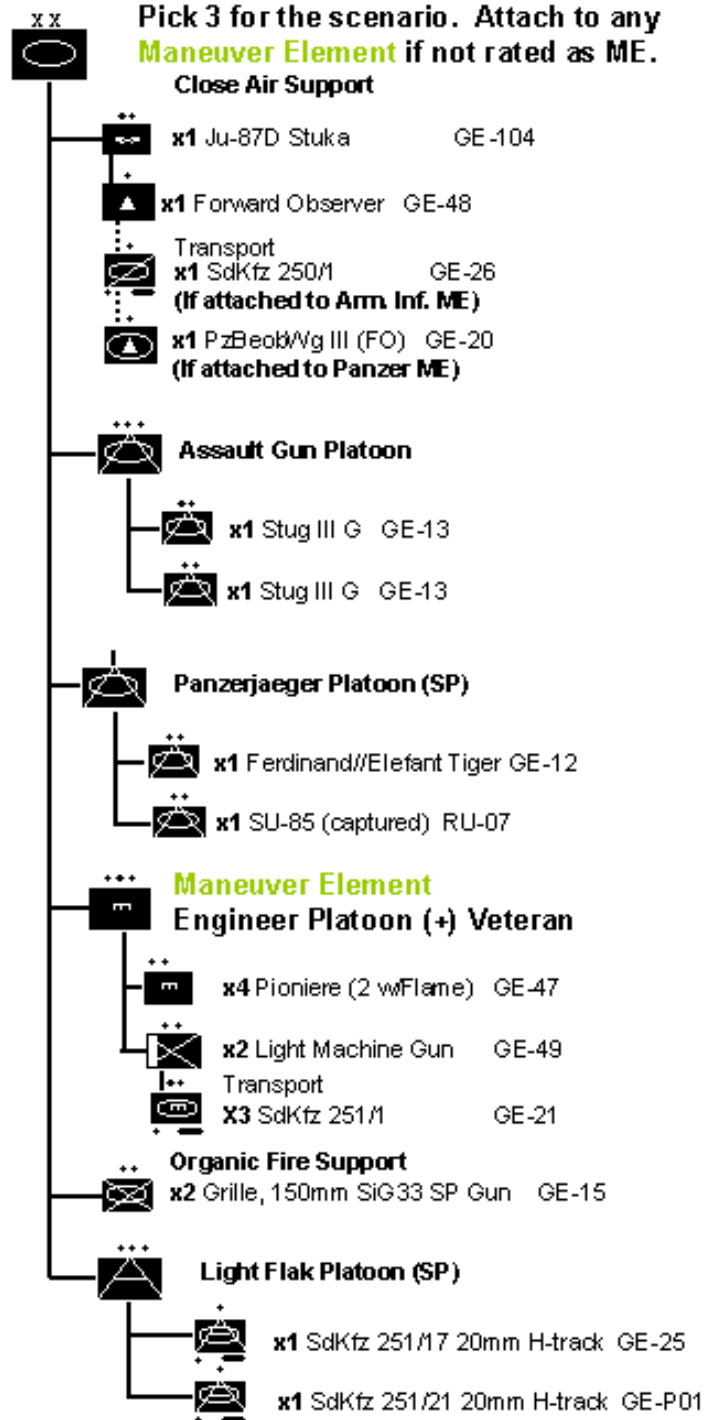
•	Command		
HQ	x1 Commander	GE-46	
•	Transport		
■	x1 SdKfz 251/10	GE-22	
••			
⊗	x6 Infantry	GE-44	
••			
⊗	x3 Light Machine Gun	GE-49	
••			
⊗	x1 Heavy Machine Gun	GE-50	
••	Transport		
■	x5 SdKfz 251/1	GE-21	
••	Organic Fire Support		
⊕	x1 SdKfz 251/2 80mm Mortar Halftrack	GE-23	
••	Organic Fire Support		
⊗	x1 SdKfz 251/9 75mm Halftrack	GE-24	

Division Attachments

(Experienced unless noted otherwise)

Pick 3 for the scenario. Attach to any

Maneuver Element if not rated as ME.



Briefing for the Commanders of Russian Forces South of Oboyan

Situation

Comrade! By direction of General Vatutin and Party Leader Khrushchev "On no account must the Germans break through to Oboyan". The second defense line has been breached and your forces are all that stands in front of the City of Oboyan and the road to Kursk.

Mission

You are to inflict maximum casualties on the Germans and prevent them from taking control of the cross-road that approach Syrtsevo and the small hill to the South. Without time or ATGs necessary to setup a defensive strongpoint, you are to launch a counter-offensive attack at the German spearhead to spoil their advance on Syrtsevo and onto Oboyan.

Execution

Forces from the retreating 6th Guards Army have erected hasty defenses at the cross road. Reinforcements from 1st Tank Army and 40th Army are expected soon. Scout units are on the Southern hill and report the German spearhead is within sight. Your forces and discipline ratings are attached.

Starting Positions and Reinforcement Schedule

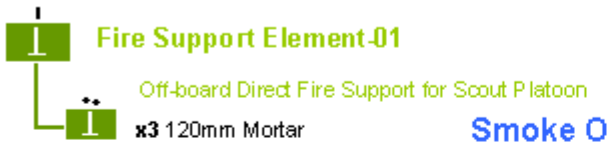
- Divisional and Battalion attachments must be allocated prior to Turn 1.
- Maneuver Element 01 (Scouts) start anywhere on the Southern Hill. They may begin in improved positions or BUS.
- Maneuver Elements 02-07 may set up anywhere within 8" of a BUS at the cross-road.
- All forces are "Experienced" unless noted otherwise. ME-01 is veteran, ME-06 is trained.
- Your reinforcements will not arrive before Turn 3. Arrival time is GM controlled. Maneuver Elements 08-09 from 1st Tank Army will arrive on the NW road. Maneuver Element 10 from the 40th Army, if it arrives, will enter from the NE road, across the stream.
- All Russian Forces start the game unspotted. Use single dummy markers to indicate Maneuver elements in the open until spotted.
- The Russians may place 2 2" sections of minefields and 1 dummy minefield and 2 x 2" sections of barbed wire. The Germans can see these, but do not know which are real and which are dummy. This must be done before Turn 1.
- The Germans move first.

Objectives

You must hold the hill and cross-road built up sectors at the end of the game (or Turn 10) and destroy as many German vehicles and maneuver elements as possible. All surviving German undisordered armored units must not be within 10" of the hill or cross-road built up sectors to permit control by Russian occupying units.

Artillery Options

- The Russian artillery battalions and mortar battery are to the North, so templates will be laid with long edge oriented N-S.
- Each of the two Russian Forward Observers start the game in improved position observation posts.
- Each FO can only make calls for fire to their assigned Artillery Battalion.
- Each FO can select one preregistered point for battalion concentration missions. Any target within 5" a preregistration point and is spotted or suspected by the FO with LOS, may be attacked by the battalion concentration mission. Mark each preregistration point on the map and show to GM prior to Turn 1.
- If a FO displaces from their observation post, they will lose the ability to use preregistrations and battalion concentrations.
- The Battalion CO can make calls for fire to either battalion, but cannot use pre-registered points.
- Any unit in the Scout platoon may call for fire from the Heavy Mortar Battery. Only Scout platoon units may call for fire from the Heavy Mortar Battery.
- Each of the Russian batteries has 1 turn of smoke.



The Russian 120mm mortar battery may place a 3-large template shelling pattern (0 vs V, +1 vs T,G,sV).
 Battery Concentration is not available (no preregistration point).



The Russian 122mm batteries may place a 2-large template shelling pattern (0 vs V, +1 vs T,G,sV).

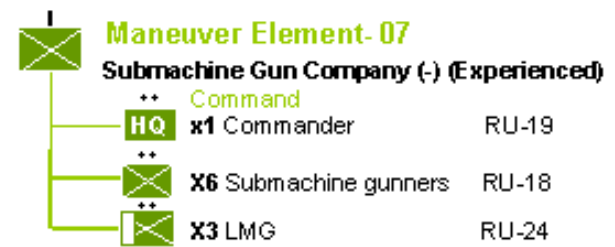


A Russian 122mm battalion may place a 3-large template concentration mission on a target within 5" of the battalion's preregistered target(+1 vs V, +2 vs T,G,sV).

Or

A Russian 122mm battalion may place a 2-large template thickened concentration mission on a target within 5" of the battalion's preregistered target(+2 vs V, +3 vs T,G,sV).

Maneuver Elements 01-07 start on table. 01 deploys on the Southern hill. 02-07 deploy within 8" of the cross-road.



Maneuver Elements 08-09 arrive after Turn 3. GM controls arrival. Enter on the NW road.



Maneuver Element 10 arrives after Turn 5. GM controls arrival. Enter on the NE road.

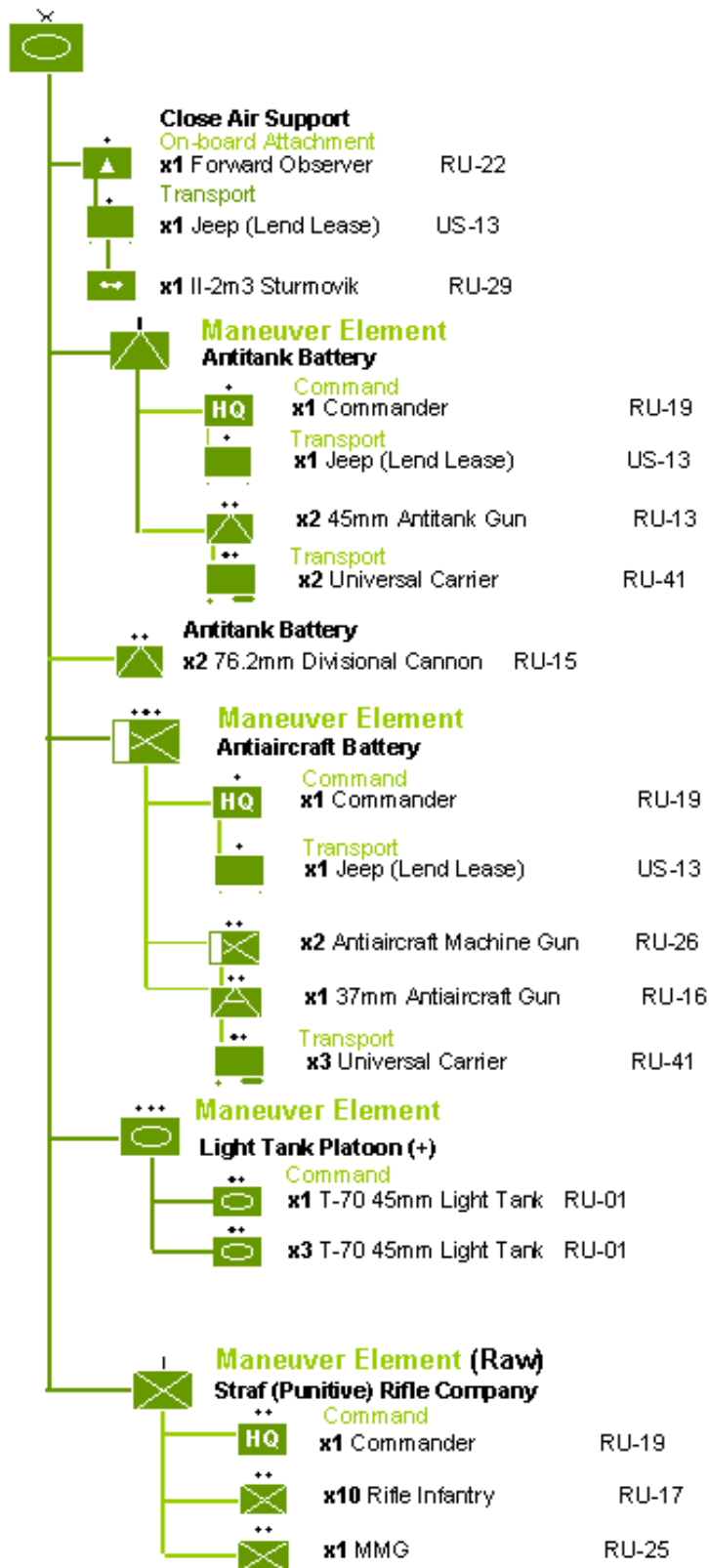


Division Attachments

(Experienced unless noted otherwise)

Pick 3 for the scenario.

Attach to any **Maneuver Element** (other than **ME 01**) if not rated as ME.



Referee Notes

This scenario was designed for large convention play for 8-10 total players (4-5 experienced with Battlefront) and a GM. The miniatures required to play this scenario are significant, and were assembled by pooling the resources of 3 gamers in Houston, TX.

The map and OOBs were developed to get lots of players into early-contact and have large armored forces clashing in the open areas between the hill and the cross-road. The tall crop fields will help vehicles hide once they enter. Sparse cover does not block LOS to targets beyond so this will encourage tankers to close-range to gain concealment (and better gunnery).

This scenario is meant to be fun, and inspire good use of tactics and ability to shift from offense to defense (German) or vice versa (Russian). The game begins with an assault by an overpowering Kampfgruppe that has a good chance of success. The Russians start with a defensive mind-set, but initiate a strong counterattack just as the Germans are pressing home and looking for the kill. A smaller counterattack is potentially available late in the game to support Russia's situation as a defender with access to lots of reinforcements.

To win, the German must move boldly with the initiative early, and gain as much ground for as little damage as possible. The initial advantage will soon be offset, and adequate forces will be necessary to take the ultimate objective and survive the counterattacks.

The Russian must bleed the German advance and hold out until the Turn 4 counterattack. Trading ground for German kills is a good deal. Conserve that infantry and hold the cross road at all costs. Help is on the way! The T-34s when they arrive should totally disrupt the German attack and cause them to go defensive. Use the high speed of the T-34 to exploit and breakup the attack rather than driving straight into the nearest German unit. T-34s are fast, use them!

The Infantry in this game are precious. Neither side can meet their objectives if they lose their infantry prematurely. Russians are challenged with the situation where their infantry have a long walk across open ground if they try to take the hill. Germans have armored infantry, but very few in numbers. The Russian units are hurting from recent fighting and are at reduced strength. The trained company and optional Straf company represent last ditch reserves and rear-area troops being thrown into the line after 3 days of constant fighting.

Depending on the German entry move, the Russians will have to decide to keep the Scout platoon in place or evacuate. An aggressive Russian plan would be to push-off early to hit the hill before the Germans can consolidate their gains, or even before the Germans take it from the Scout platoon. If the Russians make a push for the hill later in the game, the regular Russian infantry MEs are all designed to be tank rider capable on any armored ME (except the Straf ME and the Assault Gun ME).

The choices each side makes on what divisional attachments should be made before the game begins, and committed to the GM. Each has options for Air, anti-air, ATG, and increased infantry. Every game will be unique based on each side's choices.

Some important notes for the GM:

- Don't forget the hill provides increased spotting for units at the top. Any Russian defenses on the reverse slope will be spotted at one level higher. This serves to negate the improved position concealment benefit.
- The Russian T-34/76 reinforcements that enter on the roads to the East and West should not magically appear behind German units. Apply the normal spotting ranges for the Germans, and inform them that they can see a dust cloud moving up the road, being led by an armored vehicle. On Russian T3, give the Russian players

command of the tanks from 1st Tank Army at a range down the road sufficient to allow for German spotting. Example: T-34/76 moving in the open is seen at 80". Shift down for spotting to the rear and spotting while in rapid advance brings the range down to 40". In this situation, where the Germans are facing East and rapid advancing, the T-34s would start 40" from the nearest German unit to the West table edge. T-34 road movement at rapid advance is 32" per turn, so in Russian T4, the tanks from the West will actually get on the table.

- The same applies for the reinforcements from the East (40th Army). On Russian T5, tell the Germans about the 'dust cloud approaching' and give control of the T-34s at 40" or 60" (depending on the German situation) from the Eastern most German unit.

To prevent the unfair advantage of having T-34 large vehicles materializing out of thin air, factor in the spotting to off-board vehicles accordingly.

If the battle is going badly for the Germans on Russian T3 dynamically playbalance and hold back some or all of the T-34 reinforcements. The GM must always 'make the die-roll' for reinforcement success but don't tell the players the odds. Sometimes a '11' is required on a d10 to bring in the reinforcements. Strange things can happen on road marches...

For Victory Points, count Infantry and armor vehicle kills as well as terrain features as described below. Ignore transport vehicles of any kind for points. Armored tanks and SP guns are 1 point each. Infantry Maneuver Elements are counted for points as described on page 12 of the rules.

Controlled Terrain Feature	German	Russian
Cross-Road village	+12	+6
Southern hill	+6	+12
Bridge	+2	+2
NW village	+1	+1

Note: Historical inaccuracies included in this scenario are present only to fit the miniatures on hand in our club. Feel free to add/modify as you see fit.

- The Elefants with 656th PzJag Reg. at Kursk were all with Army Group Center on the Northern front. Feel free to substitute a Marder or Nashorn
- The SU-85 wasn't available for Kursk, and certainly hadn't been captured by the Germans yet. Again, you can use a Marder instead.
- The SdKfz 251/21 wasn't available until 8/44. Feel free to substitute a SdKfz 10/4 or similar 20mm armed halftrack
- Optional additional divisional attachments would be more artillery and recon vehicles.
- KV-2 and T-28s were obsolete by 1943. Feel free to substitute more KV-1s