

Dyhernfurth Raid

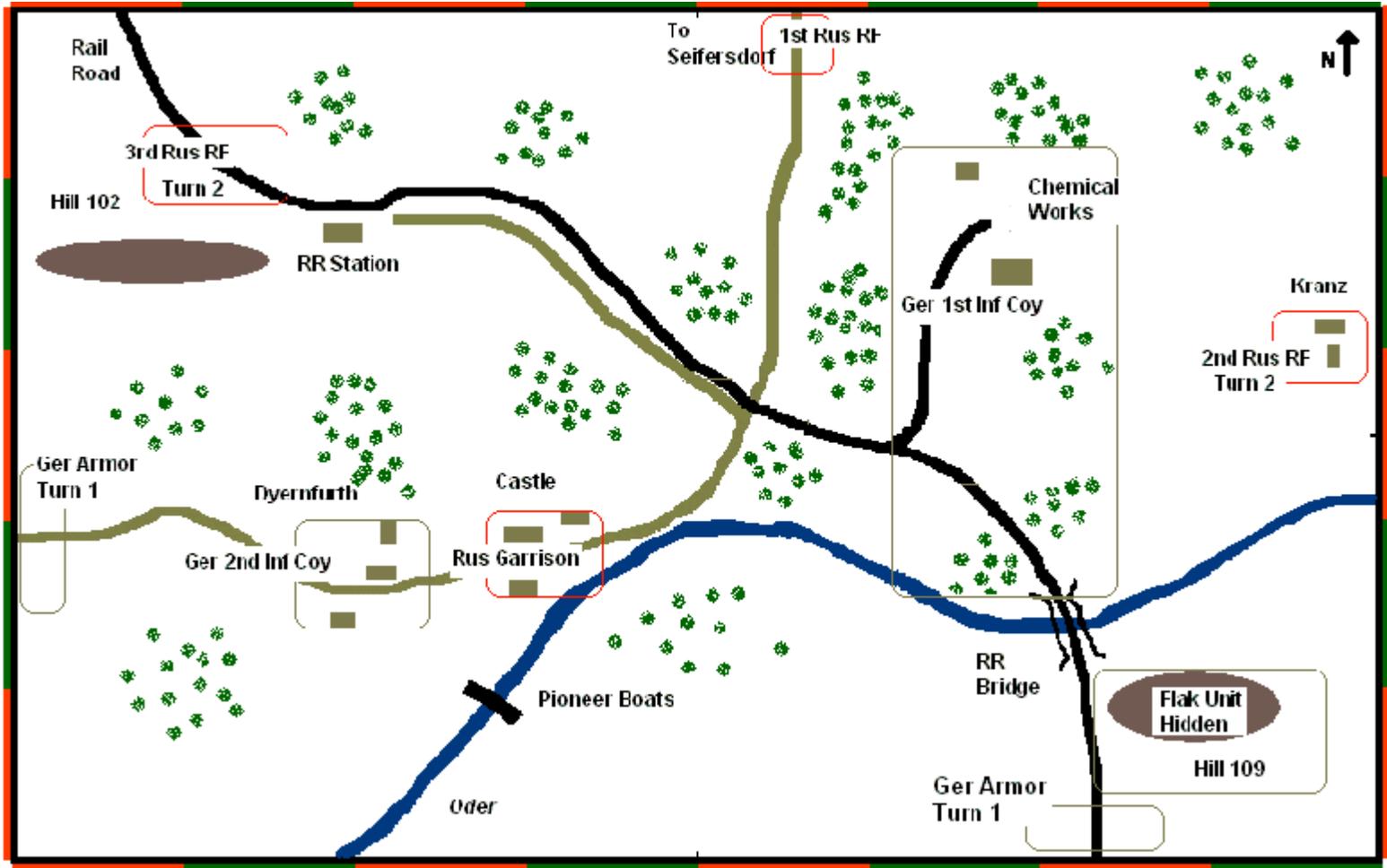
By Faron Bell
(West Texas Wargamer's Association)

5 Feb 1945

After sustaining weeks of crushing Soviet advances into Poland and Germany, the German High Command enjoyed a brief respite while the Central Soviet Forces on the Oder came to an unexpected halt. Early February 1945 finds the Soviet Forces suffering from an overextended supply lines, shortage of useable airfields, morale problems through indiscipline, threats to their flanks and unconquered German "Fortress" Garrisons to their rear. This afforded the German High Command a brief opportunity to launch limited counterattacks supported by temporary command of the air.

Near Breslau within the Silesian Sector on the enemy held banks of the Oder, lay the village of Dyhernfurth. This small hamlet and castle has been occupied by Soviet forces which threatened a further prize - containers of the secret chemical weapon Tabun. The Germans used the temporary halt in Soviet advances to cross the Oder, secure the chemical weapons factory near Dyhernfurth and pump the containers of Tabun into the river before the Soviets realize the value of the factory and its contents. On the morning of February 5th, a hastily formed Kampfgruppe under Major General Max Sachsenheimer crosses the Oder via a partially intact railroad bridge and by using assault boats. Sachsenheimer's troops are able to cross the river, secure the hamlet and factory and then hold off Soviet counterattacks while two scientists and eighty technicians work to destroy the chemical weapons.

This game uses this raid as a basis for a hypothetical Battlefront Scenario, Sachsenheimer's Kampfgruppe must hold the factory, hamlet, and the bridge (enabling the scientists to dump the chemicals in the river and make good their escape) against a formidable Soviet counterattack. The Soviets must drive the Germans from the factory so they can figure out just what makes this area interesting enough to warrant a German attack.



Terrain Notes

- The scenario is played on a 8' x 5' surface. Each division on the map edge represents 1'
- All woods are Cleared Woods.
- All slopes are Gentle.
- All roads are Unpaved.
- The Chemical Works consists of 2 4-sector buildings. The castle consists of 3 4-sector buildings. All other buildings have 2 built-up sectors.
- The Railroad is considered a low embankment.
- All buildings provide cover to troop units (-1 to direct fire attacks).
- Hills 102 and 109 have crest lines that block lines of sight.
- Vehicles may only cross the Oder at the bridge.
- German infantry may also cross using pioneer boats at the position indicated. Similar to breaching rule, a single German troop unit which begins its maneuver phase able to move and touching the boats may cross the river by using all of its movement for that turn. On the next turn, it may move normally from the other side of the river. If a Russian unit touches the boats then they are removed.
- Optional Rule-Bridge Collapse: The Bridge is damaged. Roll D10 for each vehicle crossing - on a 1 or 2 result, the bridge collapses and destroys that vehicle. No other units may then cross at bridge. Note that we have

deleted this special rule in some play tests due to trapping the German Armor on the wrong side of the river. Use at GM's discretion.

Game Length

- The Game is 10 turns long.
- The Russian player moves first.

Victory

There are 3 victory locations

- The Chemical Works(2 buildings)
- The Village of Dyhernfurth (3 buildings)
- The Bridge

At the beginning of the game, the German control all 3 objectives.

To control the Chemical Works or Dyhernfurth, a player must be the last to control, move through or occupy all of the buildings in the area.

For the Russians to control the bridge, no undisordered German unit may be within 5" of the bridge AND (the Russians must have been the last to move over the bridge OR one Russian unit on each side of the river must be within 5" of the bridge).

Victory Levels

- Decisive Russian Victory = Control all 3 Objectives
- Marginal Russian Victory = Control Chemical Works and 1 other Objective
- Germans must control Chemical Works to win a Victory (Decisive)
- Any other result is a draw.

Scenario Design Notes-Faron Bell

Play Testing and Development by Tom McBrayer, Curtis Bently and Byron Matthews

This scenario was originally designed for use at gaming conventions. The intent was to allow for an interesting multi-player game which would allow for multiple skirmishes spread across the board. While this was an actual raid and battle, great liberties and artistic license was used in creating the scenario.

The late war backdrop to the scenario is rather interesting, Zhukov's forces had overrun their supply lines and the Polish airfields under Soviet control were rendered unusable by the spring thaws. The Germans were able to gain temporary air superiority and launched over 5,000 sorties on February 2nd and 3rd. The Russians were also concerned with their flanks and unsecured German Fortress Garrison to their rear and to make matters worse, Russian indiscipline due to looting (and worse) was hampering operations. This allowed the Germans a brief window of opportunity to move against the Dyhernfurth Chemical Factory which held the secrets to their poison gas program. The Russians would not learn of the Chemical Works until after the war was over and reacted to the raid as if it was one of many typical German counterattacks.

In the actual raid, Sachsenheimer's forces crossed the Oder on the morning of February 5, 1945 with whatever forces he could scrap together (sketched out below) and managed to secure the Chemical Works before the Russians knew what was happening. The Russians, in turn, launched uncoordinated and half hearted armored counter attacks from Seifersdorf and Kranz. These were beaten off by infantry armed with panzerfausts (the Germans had no tanks available) and by day's end, Sachsenheimer's 2 scientists and 80 technicians had emptied whatever Tabun remained in the Chemical Work's storage tanks into the Oder (where was GreenPeace?).

The main source used for the basis of this scenario was "Red Storm on the Reich," by Christopher Duffy. The author provides a bare bones map and sketch of the raid on pages 128-132. Duffy also sites two German books; "Der Kampf um Schlesien" and "So Kämpfte Breslau" by H. Ahlfen as sources for more detailed information on this raid. Unfortunately, I do not read German therefore I used creative license to fill in the vast gaps of information needed to flesh out the scenario. Perhaps, some of our German speaking friends can provide further details on this interesting battle and a second more historical scenario could be developed. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this hypothetical scenario. Feedback is welcome by contacting me at [Faron Bell](#) As to the scenario itself, the Germans will have to defeat the Russian forces piecemeal, before they can unite against the outnumbered German defenders. The German forces should set up the Flak unit on the hill, hidden, with the aid of the GM. In our playtests, the scenario was quite close and often came down to the wire. The Russians must safeguard their infantry so that it is available for assaulting the buildings. The Russians should cross the damaged bridge with infantry first less the bridge collapses and the victory objective is rendered unachievable. The drunken Russian Castle Garrison should prove an interesting small battle on the German left while action swirls around the area. The castle was in disrepair during the war and consisted of several large palace type buildings rather than a traditional walled castle and keep.

Forces Sketch taken from Duffy's Book:

German:

- Total force comprised "several hundred infantry" - probably from mixed units (main force crosses via bridge).
- Light Pioneer Assault Boat Company (some infantry crosses via boats 2.5km downriver, near Dyhernfurth as a diversion).
- 2 batteries of 88mm Dual Purpose AA Guns.
- 2 scientists, 80 technicians.
- Probably could call on artillery support.
- Originally operation was to comprise 2 companies of elite paratroopers gathered from several different corps in the area. These paratroopers never arrived.

Soviets:

- 2 x LMG's guarding the bridge
- Garrison Infantry (Drunk) at Dyhernfurth Castle.
- 1st Counterattack Wave of 18 tanks from Seiferdorf (1300 hours).
- 2nd Counterattack Wave of 8 tanks from Kranz (much later).
- Elements around Rail Road Station

Briefing for Major General Max Sachsenheimer, Commanding Kampfgruppe Sachsenheimer

Situation **Dyhernfurth Raid, 5 Feb 1945**

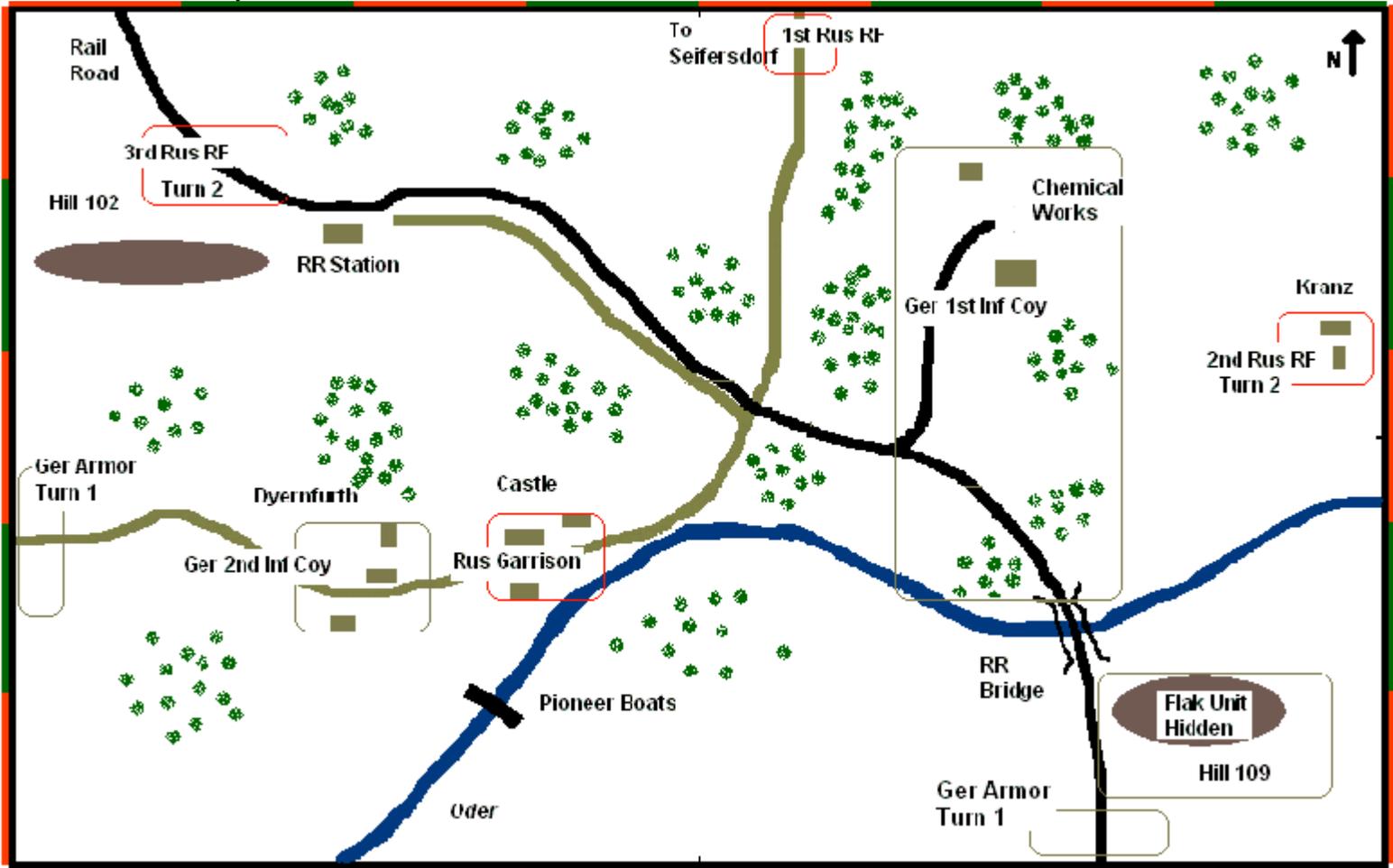
The Russians have steadily pushed your forces back to the Oder, but have reached the end of their supply lines and been forced to pause on the Oder river line. Unfortunately, they overran the German Chemical Weapons complex at Dyhernfurth, but intelligence has indicated that they do not know of its significance. A quick counterthrust was launched to recapture the complex, accompanied by some scientists who will destroy evidence of its purpose. You must defend this position long enough to enable its destruction while holding open a line of retreat back across the Oder. The Russians have just become aware of your presence, so you can expect a counterattack soon. The only force that you now have contact with is in the castle, where a drunken party seems to be in full swing. So far you have elected to "let sleeping dogs lie".

Mission

Hold the Chemical Complex at Dyhernfurth. If possible, hold the village of Dyhernfurth and the railroad bridge to allow your troops a quick line of retreat after the scientists have done their work.

Execution

Your forces and entry areas are detailed below.



Elements of the 79th Infanterie Division have taken the Chemical complex and the village of Dyhernfurth

The first infantry company sets up anywhere within the deployment area that surrounds the Chemical Works.

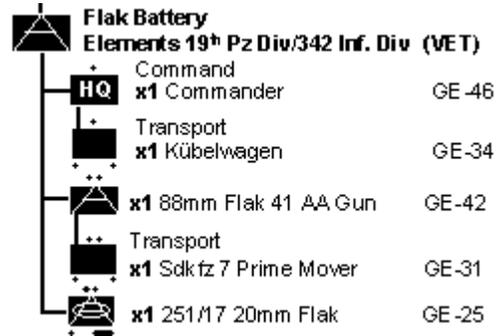
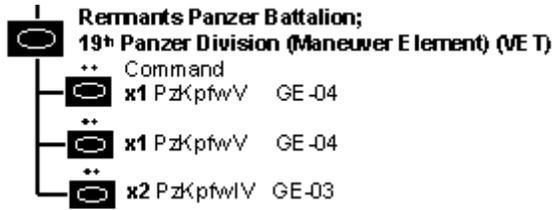
The second infantry company sets up in the deployment area around Dyhernfurth.

- 1st Infantry Co.**
Elements 72 Infanterie Div (EXP)
- ☒ HQ Command
 - ☒ x1 Commander GE-46
 - ☒ x6 Infantry (all Pzfst) GE-44
 - ☒ x2 Light Machine Gun GE-49
 - ☒ x1 Heavy Machine Gun GE-50

- 2nd Inf Co.**
Elements 72 Infanterie Div (EXP)
- ☒ HQ Command
 - ☒ x1 Commander GE-46
 - ☒ x4 Infantry (all Pzfst) GE-44
 - ☒ x2 Light Machine Gun GE-49
 - ☒ x1 Heavy Machine Gun GE-50

The Panzer company enters at one of the two entry areas. The German player must specify which area (in secret) before the game begins.

The Flak unit sets up using hidden placement on hill 109. They are considered well-camouflaged and even though they are in open terrain, units in this are spotted as if they were on the edge of dense terrain until they open fire, after which they are spotted as if they are in the open. Note-if possible the referee should keep the presence of this force secret until the Russians stumble into them or they open fire.



The Kampfgruppe HQ can set up anywhere within the setup area of the on-map units or arrive with the Panzer Element.

The attachments may be split amongst the on-board elements (infantry, Flak). They use the discipline rating of the element to which they are attached.



Briefing for Russian Commander of forces near Dyhernfurth

Situation: **Dyhernfurth Raid, 5 Feb 1945**

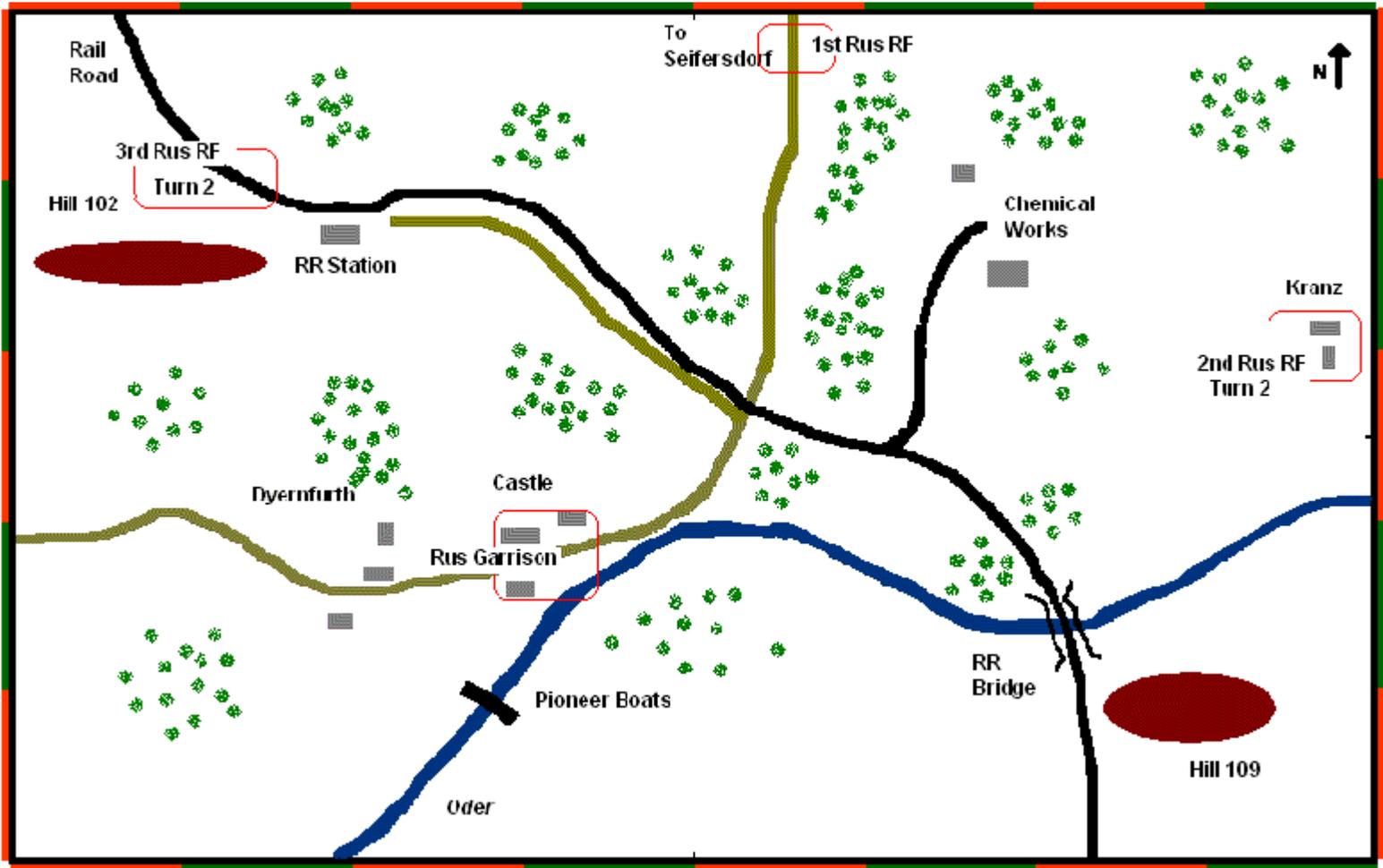
Our recent offensives successfully pushed the Facists back to the Oder, and are now regrouping and starting to prepare for the final push on Berlin. While we prepare for our next big push, you have been the task of maintaining security around a stretch of the Oder. Your troops are making the most of this temporary lull, and you have had some trouble controlling looting and indiscipline. However, this is just revenge after what the Hitlerites inflicted on the Motherland.

You have just received word of an unexpected German counterattack in your sector. The village of Dyhnfurth and small factory complex are the only objectives in your sector, but they hardly seem worth an attack. You are gathering up some scattered troops to push the Germans back so you can discover what makes this area so interesting.

Mission

You must push the German troops out of the Factory complex and cut off their retreat across the Oder by capturing the bridge and the village of Dyhernfurth.

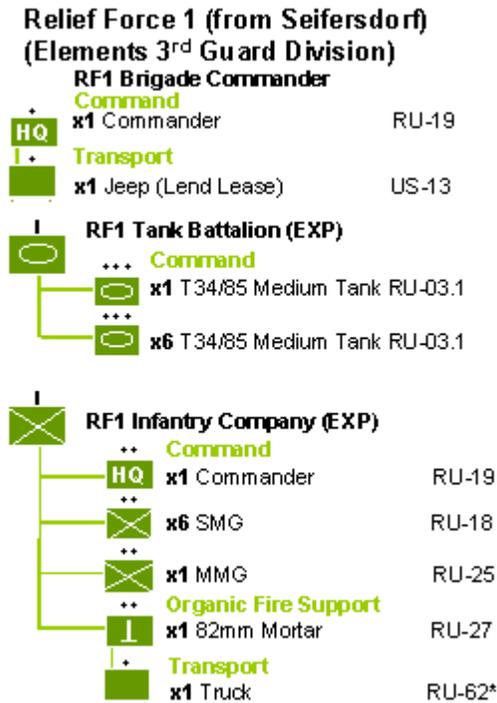
Execution



You have sent a company of the 13th Rifle Division to occupy the Dyhernfurth Castle. Earlier reports from them indicate that they may have discovered a stash of alcohol on the premises, but they just reported that they have made contact with a German force in Dyhernfurth. They must set up in and around the castle.

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-------|--|
| I | Castle Garrison Force | | |
| (Elements 13 th Rifle Division) (RAW) | | | |
| -- | Command | | |
| HQ | x1 Commander | RU-19 | |
| -- | | | |
| -- | x9 Rifle Infantry | RU-17 | |
| -- | | | |
| -- | x1 MMG | RU-25 | |
| -- | Organic Fire Support | | |
| -- | x1 82mm Mortar | RU-27 | |

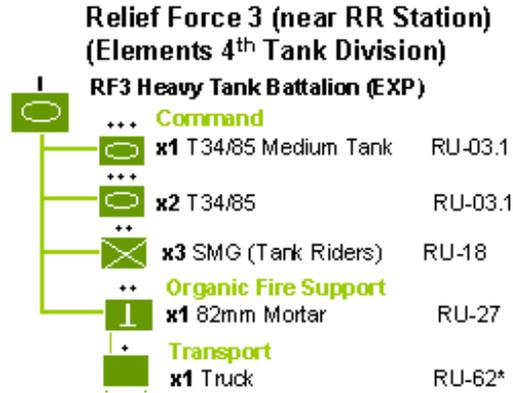
You are traveling in person with a battalion of tanks and accompanying infantry to drive out the German forces from the factory and help the castle. Your force enters from the North Road to Seifersburg (up to 6" on either side of the road) on turn 1. The infantry may enter the board as tank-riders.



You have called other forces to help you drive out the encroaching Germans. A heavy tank unit starts the game deep within the village of Kranz (i.e. it cannot fire out or see out unless a German unit enters the village). The infantry may be mounted as tankriders. On turn 2, this unit is released and move as you wish.



Another force starts to the NW of the RR station. It cannot see beyond the hill or the RR station and may not move on turn 1. The infantry may be mounted as tankriders. On turn 2, this unit is released and move as you wish.



* you can use any Russian or US (lend-lease) medium truck here.