

## Kursk 1943: End of the Blitzkrieg Alea # 31 Main game

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### RULES

#### 1. Introduction

Kursk 1943 is a simulation of the German offensive against the Kursk salient in July 1943. This offensive ended in a bloody failure for the German *Panzerwaffe* (armored troops). For the first time in the war, a German offensive was unable to break the Soviet tactical defenses, remaining limited to a tactical penetration which in no case exceeded a few dozen kilometers.

The death of the Blitzkrieg was signed and certified in the vicinity of Ponyri station and on the Teploye heights. The era of the Guderians, Hoths, and Hoepfners had passed for the Wehrmacht, and now the era of the defensive specialists had arrived: the Models and Heinricis.

This first edition of Kursk 1943 simulates the offensive in the north of the German 9<sup>th</sup> Army against the Soviet Central Front. The second, to be published in Alea # 33, will simulate the offensive of the 4<sup>th</sup> Panzer Army against the south of the salient.

#### Abbreviations Employed:

Enem: Enemy  
Hex, hexes: Hexagons  
1d6, 2d6: 1 or 2 six sided dice.  
1d10, 2d10: 1 or 2 10 sided dice.  
DP: Dominating Position  
MP: Movement Point  
AT Front: Anti-tank Front  
Sov.: Soviet  
ZOC: Zone of Control  
Un.: unit

#### 2. Game Components

##### The Map

The map represents the area to the north of Kursk where the battle was fought. A hexagonal grid has been superimposed on the map to aid in the placement and movement of the counters, or units. Each

hex represents some 1.5 km from side to side.

##### The Counters

There are a total of 360 counters in the game, the majority of which represent combat units. Each combat unit has a series of numbers and symbols which describe its characteristics: unit type, nationality, combat factor, movement factor, etc. See figure X.

Other counters called “markers” are for resolving certain game functions such as keeping track of the losses suffered by each unit, keeping track of the game turn, etc. The usage of each marker is explained in the corresponding section of the rules.

##### Unit scales

Regiments and brigades for the infantry, battalions or equivalent for tanks.

Aviation: Groups of 40 and squadrons / divisions of 100-120 planes, according to nationality and type of plane.

##### Historical Abbreviations

###### Germans

ArKo: *Artillerie Kommand*. Concentrations of corps and army level artillery.  
Br: Brigade  
Gren: *Grenadiere* (Grenadiers).  
GvM: Gruppe von Manteuffel.  
J: *Jäger* (Light infantry)  
JG: *Jagd Geschwader* (Fighter Squadron).  
KG: *Kampf Geschwader* (Escuadra de Bombardeo).  
NW: *Nebel Werfer*. Rocket artillery.  
Pz: *Panzer* (armored).  
PzJ: Panzer Jäger (Tank destroyers).  
78 S: 78<sup>th</sup> *Sturm Division* (Assault).  
StG: *Stuka Geschwader* (Stuka wing, abbreviation of *Sturzkampflugzeug*, or attack aircraft)  
ZG: *Zerstörer Geschwader* (Wing of heavy fighters, literally “destroyers”).

###### Soviets

L: Lithuanian. Honorific title of the 16<sup>th</sup> Division.  
G: Guards (*Gvardeiskaya*).  
OB: Howitzers.  
OBS: Super Heavy Howitzers.  
M: Mortars.  
Minsk: Honorific title of the 8<sup>th</sup> Division.

P: Pesado (Heavy.)  
FRENTE AT: Anti-tank Front  
(*Protivotankovye Opornye Punkty*).  
Sh: Attack Aircraft (*Shturmovik*).  
TK: Tank Corps (*Tankovaya Korpus*).  
VD: Parachute Troops  
(*Vozhdushno-Desantnaya*).

### 3. Sequence of Play

Each turn of Kursk 1943 is divided into two player turns (a German turn and a Soviet turn) which are themselves divided into a series of steps or phases which must be played in strict order as indicated by the Sequence of Play.

#### 0. Construction

Construction of AT Fronts.  
Construction of minefields.

#### 1. Air Phase

Both sides assign air units to missions.  
See 13. Aviation.

#### 2. German Turn

(During the German turn the German player is considered the “phasing player” and the Soviet player the “nonphasing player”).

**2a.** Rally Disorganized units. Remove DSG markers from those Disorganized units which are not in an enemy ZOC. Supply verification. Verify unit supply statuses. Recover artillery units.

#### **2b.** Movement.

During the German player’s movement phase, he may move all, some, or none of his units. During the movement phase he may conduct air missions with units in the attack box(the Russian intercepts with those on defense). The Soviet player is permitted certain types of reaction. Movement of armored units and defensive air missions. Defensive artillery fire(See 9: Zones of Control).

#### **2c.** Bombardment

#### **2d.** Combat (Probe / Assault).

German artillery units which are available may fire.

#### **3.** Soviet Turn

During the Soviet turn the Soviet player is considered the “phasing player” and the German player the “nonphasing player”.

**3a.** Rally Disorganized units. Remove DSG markers from those Disorganized units which are not in an enemy ZOC. Supply verification. Verify unit supply statuses.

Soviet Front Reserves. Front Reserve units may be activated.

#### **3b.** Movement.

During the Soviet player’s movement phase, he may move all, some, or none of his units. During the movement phase, he may conduct air missions with units in the attack box. The German player is permitted certain types of reaction. Movement of armored units and defensive air missions. Defensive artillery fire (See 9: Zones of Control).

#### **3c.** Bombardment.

#### **3d.** Combat (Assault only)

Soviet artillery units which are available may fire.

**4.** End of turn. One of the players must move the turn marker forward one box on the turn track. Play proceeds to the next turn. If the last turn has ended, determine the victor.

#### **German Deployment:**

German units must deploy in German trench hexes. Units of the 4 Pz Div., 12 Pz. Div. and 10 Pz. Div. cannot deploy within 4 hexes of a Soviet position. Artillery units may deploy in any German controlled hex.

#### **Soviet Deployment:**

Must be deployed in hexes containing Soviet fortified positions. The Soviet player may place all available units on the map except the Front Reserve counters. These units must be placed off map (See 16., Front Reserves). Artillery units may deploy in any hex under Soviet control. Also, the units of the 3 TK and the 16 TK (2<sup>nd</sup> Tank Army) must deploy at least 8 hexes or more from the German front line.

The Soviet player has 8 AT Fronts available in his initial deployment.

#### **Deployment of other counters and markers:**

Air units from both sides must be placed in their respective "Available" holding boxes (See 13. Aircraft).

The turn marker must be placed in box 1 on the General Data Sheet.

#### **4. Movement**

(Phases 2b and 3b)

In general:

The movement factor printed on the far bottom right of a unit represent the number of Movement Points (MPs) that this unit has per turn. During the movement phase, units use these MPs in order to move through hexes on the map, "paying" the required cost in MPs to enter and/or cross the side of each hex. The cost to enter a hex or to cross a river hexside is indicated on the Terrain Costs Chart (TCT).

So, for example, a unit with 6 MPs could enter 1 hex with clear terrain (it costs 1 MP), cross a river and enter another clear hex (cost: 1 MP to cross the river and 1 MP to enter the clear hex). The unit would have 3 MPs remaining. It could continue moving as long as it has sufficient MPs to pay the cost which corresponds to the desired hex to be entered.

A group of stacked units (see 6, Stacking) can move as a single unit, but its MPs must be considered to be that of the unit with the fewest MPs.

During the Movement Phase, a player may move all, some or none of his units. The movement of a unit or stack must be completed before moving another unit or stack. Entry into enemy occupied hexes is not permitted.

When friendly units enter hexes in a ZOC this may provoke an enemy reaction.

ATTACK in movement. Units must begin their movement together. They pay the

terrain cost but do not enter the hex; first they must resolve an Assault Combat (See 7. Combat) with a -2 modifier. The attacker becomes DSG if he is not able to make the defender retreat. If he has MPs remaining he may continue moving.

#### **5. Stacking**

The placement of more than one unit in the same hex is known as "stacking". The limit is 3 units of any type in the same hex (German battalions and Soviet tank regiments count as ½ of a unit. AT Fronts and HQs do not count against stacking limits). Enemy stacks may not be examined, except those adjacent to Dominating Positions.

Stacking Effects:

Units which exceed the stacking limit cannot attack or defend. Overstacked armored units may participate in armored combat.

\*Soviet Stacking Restrictions:

There may be counters from different divisions or Tank Corps in a single hex, but their coordination is very poor. When this occurs, the stacking limit is 2 units per hex.

Independent Soviet units (Tank brigades and regiments and assault artillery not assigned to any higher formation) may stack with any Soviet unit.

Overstacked armored units participate in armored combat.

The steps of overstacked units are considered when determining forced retreats.

#### **6. Zones of Control**

In general:

The "Zone of Control" (ZOC) of a unit consists of the 6 hexes surrounding the unit. Depending on the unit type and also the position which it occupies (see Dominant Positions), a unit's ZOC will have different effects on enemy units and their lines of supply. Artillery and aircraft units do not exert a ZOC.

## Zones of Control and Movement

Hexes in a ZOC have an additional MP cost of +3. They also prevent unit movement.

It costs an additional 2 MPs to leave a ZOC.

A unit which leaves a ZOC may not enter another ZOC in the same movement phase.

It is not possible to move directly from one enemy ZOC into another. (Exception: Probing Attack, see 8: Combat)

## Zones of Control and Supply Lines

ZOCs cut supply lines unless the hex is also occupied by a friendly unit. (EXCEPTION: Dominating Position).

## Zones of Control and reaction

When an enemy unit or units enter a hex in a ZOC of the non phasing player, this may cause an enemy reaction. This reaction can be conducted during any phase. The reaction must occur as soon as the non phasing player's ZOC is entered. If additional friendly units enter this ZOC, this will not cause a reaction.

Units which suffer a forced retreat lack ZOCs during that combat phase.

Allowed reactions:

Reaction Movements: Armored units not in an enemy ZOC and which are within a 2 hex. radius of a unit whose ZOC has been entered may conduct a movement which situates them in the hex of the unit whose ZOC has been entered.

Dominant Positions:

"Dominant Position" hexes are, as their name indicates, high ground and positions which greatly favor the defense, and without control of which continuing the advance is made difficult or impossible.

## Effects on supply lines

It is not possible to trace a supply line through a ZOC exerted from a Dominant Position, not even if friendly units occupy this hex.

## Effects of DPs on stacking

A stack which is adjacent to a DP hex occupied by enemy units may be examined at any moment by the enemy player.

## Artillery Fire

An artillery bombardment against an enemy unit which is adjacent to a DP hex occupied by friendly units has a +1 modifier. See Bombardment Table.

## Effects on combat

Combat and defense factors are affected.

### **Historical/Design Note:**

*With the "Dominant Position" concept, we wish to reflect the great importance that high ground had during the battle. The battle for Ponyri station and the hill nearby, as well as the ferocious clash for the Teploye heights were the decisive moments of the 9<sup>th</sup> Army's offensive, as Model knew that it would not be possible to continue the advance and open the way beyond the Soviet tactical defenses without first securing these positions. Any aficionado of military history has read about dozens of battles which hinged on the possession of this or that hill, such as Hill 253.5 at Kursk, the heights of Pandols and Cavalls at the Ebro, Hill 112 in Normandy, etc, etc.*

## **7. Combat**

Combat is at the discretion of the phasing player. It is never obligatory.

In general:

There are two types of combat in Kursk: armored combat and regular combat. Also, within regular combat, the German player may choose between two types: Probing and Assault. Those units with a tank or assault gun silhouette may participate in armored combat. AT Front units may also participate in armored combat, but only on defense. Units which can participate in

armored combat are denoted by their armored combat factor on the left of the counter.

## **7.a Combat Procedure**

7.a.1: Indicate the target hex and the attacking units. Secretly choose the type of attack.

7.a.2: The defender decides (in secret) if he will retreat.

7.a.4: Reveal units from both sides.

7.a.5: Armored combat

7.a.6: Regular combat (assault or probe).

7.a.7: Defender retreat (voluntary or forced).

7.a.8: Infiltration Advancement

7.a.9: Front Advancement

7.a.10: Front Rupture

### **7.a.1: Attack Type Selection**

The German (only) selects in secret which type of attack will be used, probe or assault.

The Soviet always uses assault combat.

The player indicates the attacking units.

**7.a.2:** The defender elects whether or not to retreat.

In this case he suffers only half damage, rounding up the losses indicated from the combat. His defensive die roll has a -2 modifier. In order to choose voluntary retreat, there must be an available retreat hex which is not in an enemy ZOC.

**7.a.3:** The phasing player conducts an artillery bombardment.

All participating artillery units are combined into a single attack.

**7.a.4:** Attacking and defending units are revealed.

**7.a.5:** Resolution of armored combat.

Units from both sides with armored combat capability must be placed off map.

Begin by firing with the unit whose factor is the highest. In the event of a tie, use the side with the higher number of units with an armored combat factor.

Continuing on, the counters must “fire” by selecting a target and “firing” (compare the factor with 1D6). The target unit responds by attacking with its factor. Proceed until all units have fired once (on attack or in response).

A unit with AT ability responds to being attacked only once it is attacked by multiple armored units.

Important: A tank unit which receives a hit marker does not have its armored combat factor reduced by half, as occurs in regular combat.

If there are no armored units (or AT Fronts) which could be targets, armor may shoot at other units. A hit on the target unit causes it to become disorganized.

If the unit being attacked was already disorganized, it may suffer a second disorganization, (the unit becomes suppressed). Suppressed units do not count their steps when calculating a forced retreat. Suppression is removed at the end of the combat phase; thereafter the unit merely remains DSG.

Infantry units under attack have an antitank factor equal to their number of steps. They always respond to attacks, unless they are suppressed.

### **7.a.6: Resolution of Regular Combat**

During the Regular Combat phase, armored units as well as units of other types may participate. If attacking an enemy stack, it must be attacked as though it were a single enemy unit. No unit may attack more than once per turn. An enemy unit may be attacked more than once per turn, as long as it is done by different units.

All units in a hex must participate in a combat.

Add the attack factors of the attacking units together, and the defense factors of the defending units. Divide the attacker total by the defender total to find the combat ratio. For example, 10 attacking factors against 2 defender factors.  $10/2=5$ , which gives a combat ratio of 5 to 1. This ratio may be

modified by terrain, fortifications, etc. Once the final ratio has been obtained, the attacking player rolls 1d6 and the defender also rolls 1d6. Both then cross reference the result on the combat results table. Also, the die roll may be modified (See Combat Results Table, Die Roll Modifiers).

Apply the results immediately, before resolving the next combat (See Combat Results Table, Results).

### Errata : Combat Table

Assault Table for the 1:1 ratio is not correct, it should be the following:

DIE	D	A
1	2	0
2	2	1
3	2	1
4	2	2
5	1	2
6	1	3
7	1	3

### Initial German Bombardment Turn 1

The positive modifier for German artillery barrages on turn 1 is +1 column odds shift of the bombardment table, not +1 to the die roll. For instance, a bombardment by 13 artillery factors would be resolved on the 19-25 column instead of the 13-18 one.

### Types of Attacks

The German player may conduct two types of attacks; probes and assaults. The Soviet player may only conduct one type of attack; assault.

### Step Losses

The results on the Regular Combat Results Table and on the Probe table are expressed as "hits". The first hit must be inflicted upon whichever unit contributed the most factors

to the combat. The remaining hits may be assigned at the discretion of the affected player.

The number of hits which a unit can suffer before becoming eliminated is indicated by the number of steps printed to the right of the unit type symbol.

Thus, if a unit with 2 steps receives 1 hit a "+1 Step" marker must be placed under the counter. A unit with a +1 Step marker has its combat factors reduced by half (round fractions up).

Armored factors are not affected by losses.

### 7.a.7 Defender Retreat (Voluntary or Forced)

Voluntary:

If the defender chose to retreat, the unit is moved back 1 hex.

Forced:

If the losses suffered by the defender are more than half (rounding fractions up) of the steps present in the hex after armored combat (Suppressed units do not count toward the total steps in the hex), this causes a forced retreat. The units become disorganized (Mark them with a DSG marker).

The attacker may also suffer a forced retreat if the same criteria are met.

Retreat Procedure:

Must retreat to hexes not in an enemy ZOC. Friendly units negate enemy ZOCs. If the only retreat path is in a ZOC, the units lose an additional step for each ZOC they traverse, until they arrive at a hex free of enemy ZOCs.

If a player retreat, no armored unit step losses from the previous combat can be replaced. (See Optional Rules, Tank Replacements)

### 7.a.8 Infiltration Advancement

Certain results on the Combat Results Table allow the German player to advance into an empty hex even if the unit is already in an enemy ZOC. In this manner, advances after



probing attacks allow the player to move directly from enemy ZOC to enemy ZOC (Exception: see Dominant Positions).

All, some, or none of the attacking units may occupy the hex.

#### 7.a.9 Frontal Advance

Whenever the defending hex is left vacant (by elimination or retreat), the attacker may move the attacking units 1 hex (advance into the empty hex or retreat out of enemy ZOC).

#### 7.a.10 Front Rupture

If the attacker eliminates the defender and the number of step losses suffered by the defender exceeds the number of steps which were present in the hex, the attacker receives an additional free movement after conducting his Frontal Advance.

Mechanized units move 1 hex per extra step loss.

All other units move 1 hex for every 2 additional losses.

A unit may enter an enemy ZOC or leave an enemy ZOC during this extra movement, but not both.

#### \*Soviet Attack Limitations

Soviet units which attack from multiple hexes may only obtain a +1 modifier.

### 8. Anti-tank Fronts

In general:

Anti-tank Front function in combat as tank units, with the caveats that they cannot move and only participate in defense. They may not attack adjacent enemy tank units. The Russian player receives 2 per turn from turn 3 on. There may only be 1 per hex. They may be deployed in any hex under Soviet control which is not in an enemy ZOC and which is considered supplied, including fortified hexes. They do not count toward stacking limits.

#### **Historical Note**

*Anti-tank Fronts represent the massive concentration of anti-tank weapons, artillery, engineer obstacles and mines, as well as trenches and strongpoints, all arranged and organized to channel and enfilade the attack of the panzers. AT Fronts in this game represent the four AT brigades (1<sup>st</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>), the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tank Destroyer Division (4 more brigades) and many other independent AT battalions and regiments, such as the 1<sup>st</sup> Guards Engineer brigade, who were assigned to the Central Front for this battle.*

#### **The 216<sup>th</sup> Panzer Abteilung**

Assault combats against fortified hexes in which the 216<sup>th</sup> Panzer participates have a +1 DRM.

#### **Historical Note**

*The 216<sup>th</sup> Pz. Abt. had, at the beginning of the offensive, 66 Sturmpanzer IV Brummbär (Brown Bear) equipped with 150mm guns. This vehicle was designed specifically to support infantry assaulting fortifications.*

### 9. Supply

In general:

Units must be able to trace a supply line to a friendly supply source hex in order to move and fight at full capacity.

In order for a unit to be considered supplied, it must be able to trace a line of hexes free of enemy units or ZOCs to a friendly supply hex. This supply line may pass through a ZOC if that hex is occupied by a friendly unit.

German Supply:

German units are considered supplied if they are able to trace a supply line to a supply hex on the northern side of the map.

A German unit may not trace a supply line through a minefield hex that has not been cleared.

Soviet Supply:

Soviet units are considered to be supplied if they are able to trace a supply line to a supply hex on the southern side of the map.

Out of Supply Effects:

Combat units have their defense and attack factors reduced by half (round fractions down).

Tank units, assault guns, and motorized or mechanized infantry have their movement factors reduced by half (round fractions down).

Artillery may not bombard.

Dominant Positions and Supply:

Dominant Positions under enemy control affect the supply trace of friendly units.

## 10. Soviet Fortifications

In general, fortified hexes provide a series of defensive advantages to the Soviet player.

Fortified hexes are also considered to be mined hexes.

When a German unit enters a fortified hex, it loses its advantages (place a "Breached" marker in the hex).

Supply lines cannot cross uncleared mined hexes or fortified hexes which do not have a "breached" marker.

During the movement phase, a German unit can enter a fortified hex which is not occupied by Soviet units by paying the terrain cost +2 MPs.

## 11. Mines

In general:

Each Soviet fortified hex (see Terrain Key) is considered to be mined. In addition, the Soviet player receives three "minefield" markers starting on turn 3 (See Mobile Engineer Detachments). These may be placed in any hex under Soviet control which is

in supply and not in an enemy ZOC. They do not count against stacking limits.

Effects of Minefields:

If the German player attacks a minefield hex or one which has a minefield marker on it, 1D6 must be added to the defensive factors of the Soviet units (terrain modifiers do not apply).

*Panzerpionere* (Assault Engineers):

If one or more assault engineer units are among the units participating in an attack, divide the 1D6 for mines by 2 (round fractions up). *Panzerpionere* units may participate in probing attacks.

Mobile Engineer Detachments:

During the game, the Soviet player receives a series of mine markers each turn. These markers represent the thousands of mines, anti-tank trenches, etc. emplaced by the Mobile Engineer Detachments during the battle.

A mine marker has the same effect as a printed mine hex on the map. They may be eliminated and brought back into use various times throughout the course of a game.

The Soviet player may place the mine markers that he receives during the Replacement and Construction Phase in any hex under his control which can trace a supply line to a friendly supply source.

Mines alone in a hex have no effect. They are removed when an enemy unit enters the hex.

Elimination of minefield markers:

If the German player attacks a hex and eliminates all Soviet defenders and advance after combat into this hex, the mine marker must be removed. There may only be one minefield per hex. If a German unit enters a minefield hex which is not occupied by another Soviet unit, it pays +3 in addition to the terrain cost of this hex and continues moving.



## 12. Aircraft

In general:

Both sides have two types of aerial units: fighters and bombers/assault.

Assignment of Air Missions:

At the beginning of each turn, each player must secretly assign his aerial units to one of the zones into which his Aerial Mission Assignment Map is divided.

Resolution of Aerial Combat:

After assigning aerial units, both sides reveal their aerial mission assignment maps. If there are units from both sides in the same map zone, aerial combat must be resolved if at least one side has fighter units present.

Bombardment Resolution:

If, after resolving aerial combat, there are still bomber/assault units in a zone, these units may resolve attacks against their targets. The bomber/assault units must be placed in the hexes which they will attack. To resolve their attacks, total the bombing factors of the bomber/assault units, roll 1D6 and consult the Artillery/Air Bombardment Table.

Resolution of Aerial Combat:

After assigning aerial units, both sides reveal their missions and must resolve aerial combat if there are fighter units present from at least one of the two sides.

Combat proceeds similar to armored combat. Place the fighters and bombers off the map.

The intercepting side must line up all of its fighters together. If there are fighters remaining, they may face enemy bombers. Assignment is blind; that is to say, units are placed face down and are not revealed until combat is resolved.

Begin by firing with the fighter with the highest number of factors. Each fighter unit rolls 1d10 for each step it has. Thus, a unit which has three steps must roll 3d10. The

unit being fired upon rolls the number of d10 equivalent to its steps in turn. The number of d10 results which are equal or less than the air to air combat factor of the firing unit are the number of step losses inflicted on the enemy. Repeat for the other fighter units.

Air to Air Combat on Defense:

Units which have their air to air combat factor in parentheses may only use it on defense, that is to say, they may only use it if they are attacked by a fighter unit.

Air combat procedure

When firing each other between air units, each air unit may fire to any other enemy air units. Several air units may fire against the same enemy air unit if desired.

Example: 3 soviet fighters and 2 bombers vs 2 German fighters and 3 bombers. The soviet fighters may fire all against the 3 bombers, or all against the same bomber unit, or one fighter against the German fighters and the other two against one or two of the bombers, etc. etc. The German fighters may fire against one or two of the Soviet fighters, or against the soviet bombers, etc. etc.

Exception: bomber/assault units may only fire against fighter units that is firing against them. They cannot fire defensively against fighter units not firing against them.

Abort Mission:

When a bomber unit suffers hits in aerial combat, it may abort the mission and return to base instead of responding to the combat (in this instance it does not bombard).

Assault/Bombardment units aborting mission after having received hits may reduce 1 hit on a die roll of 4-6. That is, if a bombardment/assault unit received 2 hits and decides to abort mission, roll one die. On a result of 4-6 the hits are reduced by 1.

Close Air Support:

Players may opt to use their air units to provide close air support. For this, the aerial assault units must be deployed on the map,

stacked with those units to which they will give support. During the subsequent land combat phase, these units may add their ground attack factors to the combat factors of German units. German Ju88 and Ju87 units may provide support on attack as well as defense to land units with which they are stacked or to which they are adjacent. Soviet IL 2 and Pe 2 units may only provide close air support to Soviet land attacks and only to units with which they are stacked. After resolving land combat, aerial units are returned to the "Available Aerial Units" holding box.

### **Historical Note**

*As an anecdote, we have included a counter for the 15. (Spanische) / JG 51. This unit, better known as the Blue Squadron, and made up of Spaniards, participated in the Kursk battles from its base at Sjeschtschinskaja, near Orel. The arms which appear on the counter are those of the Blue Division and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Russian Expeditionary Squadron.*

## **13. Artillery and Headquarters (HQs)**

Each side has HQ counter which represent divisional support units (divisional artillery, engineers, reconnaissance, etc.). An HQ is considered to have one step.

It has no stacking cost, but there may only be one per hex.

If an HQ is alone in a hex and is attacked by enemy units its combat factor is considered to be half of the printed factor.

HQs may only enter hexes where there are friendly units present.

HQs may ignore the additional costs imposed by enemy ZOCs if there are units in the hex. HQs moving alone do not provoke enemy reactions.

### **Artillery**

Artillery unit steps do not count towards the total for forced retreats.

In regular combat, artillery factors are  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the bombardment factor (round fractions down).

### **Artillery Bombardment:**

Both the Soviets and the Germans have artillery units which may conduct bombardments in the appropriate phase.

#### **Procedure:**

During various game phases, players have the option to bombard. The player may conduct bombardments against enemy units.

Designate the units which will conduct the bombardment. All units are combined into a single attack.

The bombardment must be conducted within the units' range.

Total the bombardment factors of the firing units, roll 1d6, and consult the Artillery / Air Bombardment Table. Apply the results immediately.

Turn the units to indicate that they have fired.

#### **Bombardment Table Results:**

The Bombardment Table results are expressed in two ways: disorganization / step losses (D+X).

#### **Disorganization:**

If a "Disorganized" result is obtained on a bombardment, all the units in the hex become disorganized. Place a "Disorganized" marker to indicate this.

#### **Effects:**

Disorganized units have their factors reduced by  $\frac{1}{2}$  (round fractions up).

The maximum combat factor reduction is  $\frac{1}{4}$  (although there are more negative modifiers).

DSG units cannot enter enemy ZOCs.

#### **Artillery Movement:**

An artillery unit which moves must be turned and cannot fire until rallied.

Move or Fire.

One artillery unit firing bombardment/fire support must not move during the movement phase of its own side. Also, an artillery unit that has moved may not give fire support to other units under attack.

German Artillery on Turn 1:  
Artillery units which bombard on turn 1 have a + 1 die roll modifier.

### **Armored Trains**

The armored train unit may only move and/or attack enemy units situated on rail hexes.

It may not enter rail hexes north of the German trench line. It may only trace supply through rail hexes. The armored train unit has an armored combat factor and it may participate in offensive and defensive armored combats as long as these occur in rail hexes.

## **14. Victory Conditions**

In general:

Victory in Kursk 1943 is measured in Victory Points. During the game, both sides add up their VPs. At the end of turn 10, total the points obtained by each side and find the difference between the two.

Soviet Victory Points:

+2 VP for each German tank/assault gun, mechanized infantry, motorized infantry, or HQ unit eliminated at the end of the game.

+1 VP for each unit of any other type eliminated at the end of the game.

0.5 VP for engineers and units with only one step.

+1 VP for destroyed artillery units.

German Victory Points:

+30 VP for exiting at least 6 or more armored or mechanized infantry units off the

southern edge of the map before the end of turn 6.

+15 VP for exiting at least 6 or more armored or mechanized infantry units off the southern edge of the map before the end of the game.

+1 VP for each Soviet tank/assault gun unit eliminated at the end of the game.

+1 VP for eliminated HQs.

0.5 VP for each Soviet infantry or artillery unit eliminated at the end of the game.

At the end of turn 10, total the VPs accumulated by both sides and find the difference between the two totals.

Victory Levels:

If the VP difference is 30 or more in favor of the Germans, the Germans obtain an operational victory.

If the VP difference is 20 or more in favor of the Germans, they obtain a tactical victory.

Any other result is a Soviet victory.

## **15. Soviet Front Reserve**

The units marked with a red star are the operational reserve of the Central Front, and may only be activated if there is a danger of a breach in the front.

These units are located off the map during the initial deployment. The Soviet player may opt to activate the Central Front reserve units at the beginning of each turn, starting with turn 2. For each unit activated, the Soviet player loses the following number of Victory Points:

\*Activation of a Tank Corps (only whole Corps may be activated; individual brigades cannot be activated): -5 VP

\*Activation of Artillery Brigades: -2 VP for each one

\*Activation of any other unit: (AT Fronts, assault guns, armored trains): -1 VP

Activated units may enter during the movement phase via the hedges on the southern edge of the map (3021, 2221, or 1121).

AT Fronts are placed as desired by the player.

## 16. Optional Rules

The use of all or some of these rules must be agreed upon by the players before beginning the game.

### Luftwaffe Fuel Shortage:

The German player has a maximum of 6 aviation gasoline points for the entire game. At the beginning of the aerial phase, the German player chooses in secret whether or not to use a gasoline point. If one is used, his aircraft operate at full capacity and he may activate all of their steps.

If he does not use one, he may only activate 15 aircraft steps. Count each bomber step as two.

The German player must keep track of the aviation gas points expended by using the "Aviation Gasoline" marker on the general data sheet. This marker must be placed on the "6" box at the beginning of the game.

### Historical Note

*Due to among other things, partisan attacks against the German supply trains, the two Luftflotten were only able to accumulate enough gasoline for little more than a few days of offensive operations (2 sorties per day for bombers, 3-4 for assault aircraft, and 5 or 6 for fighters). Thus, the first days of the offensive ended with the imposition of "gasoline tactics". That is to say that the planning of many of the operations was determined more by the amount of available gasoline than by amount of aircraft needed to complete the mission.*

### Buried Tanks:

The Soviet player may opt to "bury" some of his tank units, thus sacrificing mobility in exchange for protection, leaving only the turret of the tank exposed.

#### Procedure:

During the movement phase, the Soviet player may opt to "bury" some of his tank regiments or brigades (assault guns may not be buried). To do this, Soviet units may not move during this entire movement phase. If at the end of the movement phase the tank unit has not moved, it may receive a "Buried Hull" marker. The unit is placed beneath this marker. If there are several buried tank units present, they must all be placed beneath this marker.

#### Effects:

AT fire against a buried unit has a +1 modifier (they are more difficult to hit).

In regular combat, combat factors are reduced to  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

A buried Soviet tank unit cannot protect in armored combat, that is to say that the German may directly attack the infantry, ignored the presence of the armored unit.

Its movement factor is reduced to 0 while it remains buried. It may not react. It cannot attack; it only acts on defense.

### "Digging Out" tanks

If the Soviet player decides to unearth/dig out his tanks, he must pay 3 MPs.

### Secret Deployment of Panzer Divisions

The German player records the positions that the 4<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> Panzer divisions occupy on a piece of paper (in any German controlled hex which is at least 4 hexes away from the German trenches).

The Russian player will not know their location until they move or until the German turn 1 movement phase ends.

### **Free Deployment of the Panzer divisions:**

The German player may choose to deploy the panzer divisions in any German controlled hex on the map which is at least 4 hexes away from the German trench lines. Deployments may be chosen individually for each division.

### **Soviet Artillery Bombardment during the Initial Deployment**

After both sides have deployed, the Soviet player may conduct bombardments with his artillery. This bombardment has a -1 modifier.

Units which conducts bombardments must be turned as a reminder.

### **Tank Replacements**

During each turn's combats, both sides must keep track of tank and assault gun step losses. For this, each side has a marker which should be placed on the General Data Sheet.

During the tank replacement sub phase, both sides add up the total number of lost tank/assault steps and roll 1d6. Compare the result with the Tank Replacement Table. The result gives the total number of tank/assault gun steps which can be replaced.

Units destroyed while unsupplied cannot be replaced.

Each player may choose the type of steps which he wishes to recover. Thus, they may replace step losses from any unit, including those which have not fought on the current turn.

### **Historical Note**

*This rule simulates the work of the armored units' maintenance teams, who worked against the clock by night to recover and return to combat those tanks which had suffered minor breakdowns. Indeed, the majority of vehicles were knocked out of combat due to having been immobilized or due to easily fixed mechanical problems.*

### **Replacement of Aerial Units**

Each player must keep track of aerial unit step losses incurred during the turn. There is a marker for lost fighter steps and one for lost bomber/assault steps. This marker is used to keep count on the General Data Sheet.

During sub phase 3.b (Aerial Unit Replacement), both sides count the number of fighter unit step losses during the turn, roll 1d6 and consult the Aircraft Replacement Table. Both sides then do the same for bomber/assault aircraft step losses during that turn. The result from the table gives the number of replacement steps. So, if he can replace 2 Soviet fighter steps, the Soviet player may make it so that a unit with 2 step losses is left with no step losses, recover a 2 step unit from among those units destroyed, etc.

After replacing aircraft, the step markers for aircraft losses must be placed at 0 on the General Data Sheet.

### **Artillery and HQs**

Artillery units may only fire during the bombardment phases or to give Fire Support.

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### **Credits**

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