

East Front Asides

By Jon Mischon

Jon Mischon, besides being one of our most valuable playtest sources for CROSS OF IRON, was the primary playtest group head for the additional CROSS OF IRON scenarios alluded to below. He, and his cronies Joe Suchar and John Kenower, played all of these scenarios extensively before they were unveiled to the public last April, and as such is probably the preeminent authority on the subject at hand. Scenarios A through D were a special insert in Vol. 15, No. 6 of the GENERAL which is still available as a back issue for \$2.00. Scenarios 101-110 make up the SERIES 100 scenario pad and is available from the parts dept. for \$4.00 plus \$0.40 postage and handling.

The goal of this article is to give players an insight into CROSS OF IRON playtesting and a handle on possible approaches to the individual additional scenarios.

We (I note the inherent contradiction of a solo playtester and hereby give full credit to my co-testers, Joe Suchar, Mike Suchar and John Kenower) see two aspects to playtesting. First is rule busting—we all try hard to abuse the rules to win (If the rules don't specifically limit you then you are free to do whatever). Our biggest problem here is that we are all enthusiasts who know the game so well we've developed pre-conceived notions. To help clear the vision we occasionally just completely reread the rules.

Once the idiocy rules are eliminated, then we work on play balance. Our contention is that a game is very well balanced when excellent play on both sides yields no wider split than 60/40. Herein lies the most delicate task of game development and it falls entirely to Don Greenwood to evaluate our and others' results and mesh them into one final product. The lion's share of credit (and/or blame) must rest squarely in his hands. Which leads me to tactics.

First, I might suggest that no one tactic in a well-balanced SL/COI game should work every time. In each chain there should be an ill-forged link and every thrust should be subject to parry. If it takes players months to discover-fine. (It took more than 6 months for us to discover the defense that made Scenario 7 pro-American). Therefore each scenario will only be reviewed in light of possibilities for attack and defense.

Scenario A-Burzevo

Winter 1941 finds the pressure on the Russian. The keynote to this scenario is survival as the German. This perhaps may best be accomplished by limiting the Russian advantages (i.e., firepower & mobility) and maximizing the German advantages; defenders get first crack.

A German leader on the second floor of N2 with squad and MMG (and possibly a DC for dropping) should discourage Russian tank leaders from long exposure and yield excellent illumination. Consider placing the 3 Stugs in V8, U9, and U10 or Q3, R2 and Q2 (ready to edge into PO, RO and Q 1) supporting the 88 in either V9 or O1 or RI and being

supported by infantry with the ATR and at least one demo charge, either around the T9 woods or building S3. Bore sight all guns in real close and watch the Russian response.

For the Russians, the only fatal approach is to try to simultaneously kill both squads and the major weapons. You must find the German weak point and use your L guns and superior armor to pierce that one point. Try to "roll up" the defense from a hole. I personally believe it's worth three AFVs to try to overrun the 88, but rather than use even one for that, look for a sneaky FT shot. Do not hesitate to try and set woods afire if spreading fire will rout the rabbits from their warren - If you waste one turn in this little gem of a game I hear it is a long walk to Vladivostok.

I rate this game as 55/45 pro German.

Scenario B-Hill 253.5

This vignette of Kursk is a lovely demonstration of the power of SLICOI to highlight larger battles.

The Russians should be aware that the Germans have only 3 avenues of approach: **R7-S8, R4-S4 and RI-S2**. Since the Russians lack anti-tank mines, your only real chance to immobilize or destroy a German AFV is to lump mines in one hex. Consider placing 36 mines in perhaps R7 and 4 mines in S8 and cover the R8 woods with leader directed MG fire. Use your infantry in entrenchments as much as possible in the woods of M7 and M4 and consider how well shielded J5 is for a last turn advance (say from J6 to J5 on turn 7 and from there to either J4 or K5 on turn 8). If you have artillery or an ATG on M4 you are a long shot gambler; this hex covers a lot of terrain but it is too vulnerable. Wire in S3, R3, S5, S6, T5, and perhaps O4 covered by entrenched squads in Q4 (no leaders here), N3, M3, L2 and N6 will substantially slow the German rush. An ATG in J4 has a very interesting arc of fire—the German may initially ignore it only to find it covers critical hexes. Play for time and don't hesitate to transfer reserves to the more threatened side.

The poor Germans are stuck with AFVs that are very powerful versus AFVs and incredibly weak in mobility and anti-infantry power. The German is compelled by this lack of mobility to pick one-repeat 'ONE'-avenue. First, leave the Elefant somewhere close to Z4 as a fire base, then throw a brave recce squad (read suicide) down your chosen avenue. Now if it breaks in a lousy 4 mine hex you gotta decide to send another the same way or down a different lane (as a very tricky Russian won't hesitate to occasionally put 4 mines without the 36 mine hex behind it). If all goes well you'll thrust down, say R I, then up onto the second level. Try bringing in an offboard smoke shell concentration supplemented by Engineer smoke-then charge your best troops (a 10-2, 9-1, 8-3-8 and 8-3-8 stack is super for do-or-die jobs) with close armor support right into the damn N3 woods. You could do far worse than to set the woods afire.

If you penetrate this first morass, you can then push your armor deep. Bring the Elefant in on the road and smoke the hilltop and charge again over the crest. If the Sturmoviks and the Russian FT don't get you, you've won a real victory.

Rate 65/35 pro Russian, but a lovely historical situation. Players might wish to delay

the Russian reinforcements one turn to help play balance.

Scenario C-Bukrin Bridgehead

Just for fun, glance at Scenario 107 before you play this. Pressure again on the Russians.

German player should plan to win this one with his reinforcements. If the Russian armor is committed prematurely, the German can essentially throw away his light armor to immobilize the T34 and destroy the T70 from in close. The German might put his 10-3 and two 8-3-8's in 5C8 and a 9-2 with two 8-3-8's in 5F8 with a mix of Panzerschreck, DC, and LMGs. Backed up by 251/10 in 5C10, 5F9 and 5G10 they both block armor motion and are a very potent counterattack force. Place all your armor behind woods all on one side (suggest south side Board 4) and all flak, mortars and MGs beyond a 20 hex radius of 2R2. If the Russian insufficiently defends his northern flank, don't hesitate to mount up two 8-3-8s and a leader in halftracks and counterattack Hill 621. The threat alone may unhinge the Russian offense. Remember an armor leader with a 20L gun gets 2 shots for immobilization.

The Russian must consider trying to sweep Board 4 from either North to South or vice versa. A strong German force blocking the northern end of Board 5 is best contained by four or so squads with a couple ATRs. Use 6-2-8s along the hilltop of 621 to man your weapons as the German will be able to duel with you. Putting the 9-2 with the 50 cal. MG and three squads in 2R2 has a lovely field of fire and a good chance to dig in on the first turn, but indirect fire weapons in the 2S3 woods are very vulnerable to German mounted counterattack - The 621 hilltop is safer but much more limited.

Sneaky Russians might want to set up the ATG and perhaps the artillery on 5FF0 and push them into 5 GG I on Turn 1. If all the German armor is in the south of Board 4 and all those HTs and ACs start to scoot around, you can frequently see them through wheatfields and they can't see you. Look for the German to try and draw your 50 cal. fire to allow his suddenly converging infantry and light armor around your T34. Although the T34 and T70 must advance beyond safe areas, I'd work hard to cover them with infantry fire. If your T34 is immobilized, the German reinforcements will be almost impossible for your remaining forces to handle. It goes without saying that the judicious sacrifice of a few squads to desperately clear away Germans from 412 may clear 4B5 even better.

Rate as 55/45 pro German.

Scenario D-Delaying Action

Very historical, i.e., very tough on the Germans.

As the Germans you cannot hide away in nifty corners. You must try to kill two AFVs somewhere at the cost of only one leader or squad. Isolated squads in, say R5, die too easily but if you try to interlock fire, perhaps around K9, 16, 15, H2 and K2, the Russians will pound you with those 122s at 5 hex range. Obviously go for the T34s and don't waste a precious AT shot at a JS.

Russians will find this is more a naval exercise than armor action. Set tanks in line ahead like old ships-of-the-line. Whenever possible end a move

with 1/3 guns right, 1/3 guns left and 1/3 forward. Don't hesitate to pound a woods hex ahead*that you -will pass adjacent to. Don't forget a wily German can start in B7 and advance hidden into A7. Take our time-you've got scads.

Rate as 70/30 pro Russian and recommend players try it with five T34/85s and two JSI, with 100L guns.

SERIES 100

Scenario 101-110

Scenarios 101-110 are, in fact, a form of time lapse photograph of the East Front. If you look carefully at the breadth of these games you'll note the tactical changes engendered by changing 'weapons and growing losses for both sides. In scenarios dealing with the early 40s, the Russian player may best accomplish goals by concentrating overwhelming power at one point while the Germans use superior leadership to orchestrate small mobile teams into a multi-purpose threat. As the campaign ages, the German leadership edge dwindles and the advantage of flexibility shifts toward the Russian. By considering each scenario in this light, players may gain insight into play and see how well the play mimics history.

Scenario 101-Blocking Action At Lipki

This peek at Barbarossa is not a slashing armored advance. Rather, we glimpse the sudden recognition shock of German armored mechanical inferiority and how difficult it is for the Russians to coordinate their forces.

The Russian player will in essence dictate the flow of the game. He may decide to opt for either a pure northern or pure southern flanking move. Any attempt to split the Russian forces should lead to their easy defeat. I tend to favor the northern move.

Using your BT7s, move quickly towards 2F8 with the trucks next in line followed by the T24 and KV. If you hold back your attack till the KV can be brought to bear you will be facing an entrenched opponent who threatens to zip into your rear. Rather, I suggest going in with the BTs and T34 supported by on-foot infantry advancing behind the 4AA9-4FF6 hedgerow. Try to loop around the stone wall ' at 4ZI and constantly threaten to exit. However your true aim should be to try and kill 10 German squads. As the German moves AFVs to prevent your exit, concentrate on his armed HTs and Mark Ills. As the final coup, don't hesitate to use the fat KV to overrun a woods or building position. Balancing the threat of exit with the actual killing of Germans should lead to victory-but don't be surprised if you are left with token strength at game's end.

The German player must be energetic. If the Russian splits his force, don't hesitate to throw all your mounted forces against his weaker flank. I like an 8-1 with a squad and two LMGs in the 251/1. Leave the 25 1 /1 and the 25 1 / 10 back to give support fire as your Mk Ills move into the 7-14 hex range behind the Russian AFV. If the Russians rotate to face you, the 25 1 / 10 goes for side/rear kill (or the tracks). The KV is particularly susceptible to circling attacks.

Assuming that the Russian is unified, let him come to you, but the wheatfields, walls and hedges made a final exit stand chancey. You'll quickly see that attempts to get hull down in 4Y I are negated by the Russian holding 4Z8. If you put the 28LL anywhere other than 4XI you must support it with interlocking AT fires (or else your only gun will quickly develop tread-mark overlays). I do like the 28LL in 4XI with infantry dug in at 4ZO. Everyone else stays flexible and as far forward as possible. The Russian will come in; take your defensive shot then fall back and make him come again. I know it's painful to give up PREP fire, but your best differential is always in defensive fire advancing fire. When Russian superior firepower starts to chew you up and time is running out, it's perfectly acceptable to pull back and drive the Mark IVs into the woods at perhaps 4W I and 4ZO or rear hexes like 4RO and 4PO, and wait for the Russians final commitment.

Rate this as 55/45 pro Russian.

Scenario 102-Slamming Of The Door

Deeper into Russia and the German is badly strung out. German players should carefully read the victory conditions-then read them again. The Russian player must cross open ground to get to you so you're almost sure to eliminate two for one. However, if you gather together into any kind of strong defensive groups the T26s will roll on top of you, force you out, and then his infantry will cut you up. Concentrations of leaders and squads will draw tanks like flies. How then to cope?

VICTORY CONDITIOINS

To win, the German player must eliminate twice as many Russian squad and or crews as he loses himself and avoid the Russian victory conditions. If the Russian player eliminates 8 German squad and/or crews, regardless of his own losses, he wins. An eliminated AFV and crew counts as 2 squads eliminated. An eliminated AFV whose crew survives counts as 1 squad. Anÿ other result is a draw.

Start way back and spread way out - This will demand the Russian advance as far as possible. Try to have an alternate cover hex to move to when the T26s stop in your hex. Allowing for 1st turn movement hexes B7, J8, N8, R7, T8 and X8 are all possible. Use the SP guns to support your unattack.ed flank. Play for time and always shoot at leaders. A crummy shot at a Russian leader may make the Russian more cautious than a fair shot at several squads. Don't waste your infantry defensive fire on detracking T26s. Save your shots for infantry.

The Russian's temporary blessing of unopposed armor must be pushed to its fullest. Speed T26s down the road to 4G4 and 413. If the German bunches up, drive a T26 atop him and in all adjacent cover hexes. Use your tracking infantry to bust the displaced defenders. If at all possible, save a T26 or two to load up squads (with molotov cocktails) for panzerblitz assaults. The Stugs are particularly vulnerable to combined infantry-tank assaults. Your T26s will have no trouble with the Stugs if they

come to you but even at 5 to 3 odds will have real trouble attacking them without aid from infantry.

As to Russian infantry placement, I like putting the 8-1, three 4-4-7s and a MMG in 5WI while holding five squads back for flanking and tank usage somewhere in your backfield. Move part of your forces through the 4111 woods, leap into the 415 woods, then link arms (shouting URRRAURRA) and cross the open ground. You must move fast because once the Stugs arrive, if the German isn't already on the ropes, they will take up mutually supporting positions with the remaining German infantry and the combination is very tough to break. Don't forget one prisoner is worth two kills.

I rate this scenario 50/50 with much depending on the turn of entry of the Stugs.

Scenario 103-Bald Hill

This scenario shows the essence of mobility versus stolid firepower. The Russian player quickly sees there are only 7 approaches to Bald Hill. The significant hexes are 2F8, 2K9, 2L7, 207, 2R6, 2R4 and 2RL Your 122Ls are *not* sufficient defense against a frontal assault but if the German tries to outflank the guns you won't have the mobility to reform your lines. I try to use my AA guns to limit early German mobility and pull it off the heights once the German can bring any gun to bear on it. Suggested hexes for the AA include 2177, 2S7 or 2Q6. I keep my ATG on the heights till it's shot off, looking for long range fire versus open top halftracks with leaders. Block two avenues (R1/S2 and R4/S4 are good) with roadblocks and put wire in the approach woods around the roadblocks. This complex must be covered by infantry (perhaps in the R3 woods. Don't put any weapons with a 360 0 arc of fire in the bunkers (Note that a German tank in 2V8 can knock out the super bunkered gun at 2N5 without any possibility of return fire). Once you've set your defense, be ultra cautious about shifting. The German will almost always have a shot at moving troops.

German players should get a lot of mileage out of holding your three trucks with matching squads and the 8-1 leader off board 4 as a threat. Even if they never move, this "fleet in being" cannot be ignored. Moving the heavy and medium MG with one squad and the 9-1 leader to hill 522 will essentially paralyze Russian movement on the southern 2nd level of hill 621. Consider moving the Mark 11 with the 8-1 armor leader to either Hill 522 or 547 to force the 37AA off the crest. If the Russian has depended entirely upon his 122Ls to guard his front take your lumps (and the guns) by direct assault. You'll find the Russian has great difficulty counterattacking uphill.

More likely the Russian will have enough infantry and support up front so you'll be forced to loop your halftracks through 5U4 and your tanks through 5GGI. Lead with your tanks to knock out the ATG. After the ATG is gone, take your entire mounted force and fight *mounted up* one avenue. There is nothing wrong with ignoring defending stacks if you can get up the rear slope of Hill 621. You should find your bunker assault from the rear fairly easy while tanks and long range MG hold down counterattacks.

The 8-0 leader and radio is tempting to move into 3N2 but the Russian quickly learns to indirect bore sight that hex. As a second choice, Hill 522 is excellent. Don't forget off-board smoke potential.

I rate this tense game as 50150 but suggest that players allow bunkered guns to be given 0 level armor to prevent the 20mm popgun from knocking out naval gun turrets.

Scenario 104-Penetration Of Rostov

The Russian temptation is to set up loads of dummy positions interspaced with cute "traps" of NKVDers. Forget it! The German firepower will gobble up the penny pockets 'en passant' and throw you out of Rostov fast. Your best bet is to pick a section of town, defend it with 90076 of your forces, then use 10% to slow the German down and make him look. A strong case may be made for defending along Q3, Q4, N4, N5, P7 and P8 with a MMG position on S I (check LOS from S I - The only northern covered hexes which may fire on it are T4, T2, U2 and BB2) with perhaps a sniper at W1 but I prefer the upfront defense.

Our maximum upfront defense is snipers in FF6 and FF3, MMG at Y3 bored onto FF3, MMG at AA7 bored onto FF6, infantry positions in Y5, BB4 and mines in CC7, DD7, DD3 and CC3. The final squad might go to D4 or K7 for a turn 7 advance. (Once the German knows the sniper trick, he'll always lead with rece squads.) Plan to defend one town section 60076 of the time and the other 40070. Leave dummies in the old positions to confound the attacker.

The German should plan to doubletime rece squads through the woods if it looks as if the Russian is strong up front. If the woods are clear, prolong the guns into the GG4 and GG7 woods, along with the HMG and be prepared for a slow firefight. By working slowly on one building, you can clear one flank and push troops deep while enveloping other strong points. Let your guns and tank shoot it out with the Russian infantry. Withholding infantry and leaders (see German setup instructions) permits rapid truck movement in if you get faked out. I like truck mounted infantry anyway, as it forces the Russian to commit fire early. Don't be afraid of snipers, as long as you don't lead with your 9-2 leader. The likelihood is that a sniper will only get one shot in this thick terrain.

Play balance rated as 50150 with again much dependent on the turn of entry of the tank.

Scenario 105-Night Battle At Noromaryevka

A German player should find almost no reason not to put two functioning AFVs on 3K7 and 3J7. Putting leaders on 3K7 and Hill 522 will allow early flare placement and they're easily pulled back. The decoys may be of some small assistance if you concentrate all four remaining AFVs around 304 and don't take a defensive shot. I like to screen the town with perhaps a squad in 3Q7 and 3SI while dropping everything else around the 3NI building. Given a couple of PFs in 3SI and the inability of Russian infantry to undertake a wide flanking move, you'll probably end up facing a frontal assault across open terrain.

Russians must pick their initial axis of attack trying to think three moves ahead. Your infantry

can't keep up with a wide sweeping move to the west and a straight down assault from the north will leave you as flare lit targets for hull down German gunners. A reasonable compromise is moving along the west of Board 4 then through the 4LIO woods while your tanks go over and around Hill 522. If possible hold at least one mounted 6-2-8 back for a dash-in assault. While concentrating on the two story building, don't lose the game to the lousy screening squads. How best to approach the 3N2 building will solely depend on German troop disposition but don't ignore Board 5.

Play Balance rated as 55/45 pro German.

Scenario 106-Beachhead At Ozereyka Bay

A truly powerful attacker versus a truly weak defender but like the ancient Spartans, the defenders have terrain and time strongly in their favor.

For the Germans there is little choice, in general terms, for their defense. Everything must support, as much as possible, everything else. The 8-0 leader with radio is best placed on Hill 522. Hide a concealed squad somewhere in town, perhaps in 305 or 3SI with all the rest of your concealed counters in town. Place both artillery pieces along the 2P3-2R2 ridge while splitting your remaining German squads between 2H3 and 2J4 so that when (not if) they break they have easy woods access. I tend to prefer both remaining German leaders up front exposing perhaps the 9-1 at 2H3 and holding the 8-1 in the 2L3 woods. Leave your Rumanians to fend entirely for themselves. My suggestion would be to leave your west flank covered by the guns and "concentrate" your dispersed Rumanians along Board 5.

The Rumanian might profitably post entrenchments in 5EEL, 5FF3 and 5FF4, while starting in 5FF1, *outside* the entrenchments in 5FF3 and 5FF4, and lastly 5FF7. Obviously MGs belong on the flanks while you advance phase up one squad at a time from the gully. The entrenchment position is interesting. By moving into the woods at 5GG4 you'll be beyond Russian MMG range and moving into the entrenchment makes you tough to hit with the pesky 50mms. With reasonable luck, your line will last into turn 4.

For the Russian I must advise you break several cardinal rules to have a shot at winning this game. But we're at the '43 turning point, aren't we?

First divide your forces! Unless you're inordinately lucky, you will not have time to both crush the guns and exit 5 squads. I tend to put seven regular squads and one leader in 406, 4N8 and 4M10. I like the 50mm mortars so I put both in 5V5 with the 82mm mortar in 5T4 but obviously any combination that puts maximum firepower up front is valuable. I recommend *at the very least* three full turns of softening up the defenders before you even start to move. When you do move try to put a smoke round atop the most threatening German position. I rush the west flank in waves of four units spread out while filtering down the weakest edge of Board 5 with my other units. If you wait till the defense is completely bust you simply run out of time. If you simply rush on turn 4 with a significant fraction of the defenders unaffected you'll probably be cut to ribbons. The balance point shifts every game and is tough to define.

Rate 65/35 pro German. Consider giving the Russian another 82mm mortar and crew which should make it 55/45 pro German.

Scenario 107-Disaster On The Dnieper Loop

Who's on first? Russians see SNAFU raised to high art.

Russians might want to consider influencing the 315-3F6 road from 5KI but the German is so mobile it's almost of no value. I've given up carefully plotting drop hexes; crazy arrival times and places are the rule rather than the exception. Plan to gather what you may from the scatterings into platoon groups even if it takes time. Spread your partisans out to allow rapid cross woods movement and better cover. Play this not to kill anyone but simply to be there in as many places as possible at the end of turn 8.

German, stay mobile, do split your forces and aggressively pursue isolated Russians. I like one leader and two squads in the 3N2 building but I've a weakness for heights. Don't ever think of fronts. Do think of merry blazes crackling through the wheatfield at 3S4 and of lovely spreading fire rolls every advancing fire phase.

Play balance? I think it's* more fun for the German but tough victory conditions.

Scenario 108-Block Busting In Bokruisk

Germans are back to interlocking defense. An upfront defense won't work in the face of excellent Russian fire support. Consider putting the 50mm ATG in either I J2 or I J5. I like the 75mm ATG in either I H3 or I H5 and try to retreat it across the street into the I J4 building. The HMG all by itself in the I L7 building severely impedes an east flank move by the Russian. I tend to clump my wire in I B3, I C3 and I C2 but putting one in I B6 has real potential. You can't cover the East flank well so my temptation is to set a couple of squads up front with a couple of decoy positions to delay a Russian rush while the majority of my A group sets up in row G and pulls back to row J. You must not move your AFVs out from behind the shadow of second story buildings until the Russians abandon Hill 498. Try to put the armored car before the Stug so that if the AC is busted the Stug is hull down (additional + I armor). Remember that crews can very effectively wield ATMs.

For the Russian it should be fairly straightforward. Use Hill 498 for your JSU. Pick either the I F5 or I F3 building and advance through the woods towards it after wire has been swept up by assault guns. A little pounding of selected hexes by the 152 and 76mm guns and you're in the city. Hold back your full offensive till the tanks arrive. Leave one squad mounted per truck to draw fire and get behind the Germans. Whenever possible, shoot first at ATGs. You have tons of time so don't get overeager. The advance must be infantry's pace. Note that IC4 is fairly well protected from second story fire. Push that infantry gun forward so that you'll have four smoke laying tubes for the final assault.

Rate as 51/49 pro Russian with the game often turning on a couple of die rolls in the final assault.

Scenario 109-Counterattack On The Vistula

This scenario should be popular if only because of the presence of King Tigers.

The Russian must play for time as you are almost impotent without tank support. A small blocking force of two squads around the 5P5 woods should adequately delay any northern diversion. Obviously, you'll need to screen across board 4. The question is where. I tend not to hold up front as those Tigers are so potent. Two squads are posted in building 4P6. Then I screen across 4U I woods, 4U3 woods and 4W6 wheatfields down to 4U8 woods. Your major problem will be the placement of the ATG. Building 4X I and 4P6 are the only overrun-proof spots and are probably favored but do note that 4CC6 cannot be reached till turn 3 and will be able to shoot freely through the wheatfield at any impudent halftrack without being seen. You will end up fighting for the bridges so try to save some infantry to block the 5W9 woods/gully hex.

As the German I wouldn't even bother with the northern woods road unless it's very weak. You must lead with your Tigers aggressively. Unfortunately, the number of effective anti-halftrack weapons is so great and the penalty for losing a loaded 251/1 so high you'll have to abandon the halftracks early and slog in on foot. By tending to stay down to one edge of Board 4 and firing your Tigers on the move, you should be able to put fire on the bridge crossings by turn 4. Your final goal should be to use superior gunnery and armor to out duel the JSs while your infantry approach the bridges through the gully.

Play Balance 55/45 pro Russian as the German losses often cancel a terrain victory.

Scenario 110-The Agony Of Doom

Finally we see the tide at full ebb. The German leadership edge is almost gone and their troop quality has also faded. Now the German must depend on mass while the Russian may probe.

The German major fear should not be a quick Russian strike into town. Rather, the German should try to slow the Russian drive for dominating positions and shield one flank. The northern flank is rather easily defended by the Tiger around 3Q2 and infantry in buildings about 3R2 and M. These dispositions are definitely long view arrangements to protect 3N2. For those into immediate gratification, it is easier to shield the east.

Try infantry with LMGs and PFs in 3W4 aided by the Tiger in 3W6 and the ATG in 3W5 pointing east. Infantry beneath the tank will help guard against close assault. Use the rest of your infantry around 3P7 and buildings 3T4 and 3S3. Any infantry stuck up in 3N2 will be bracketed by Russian 122 fire till gone so forget second story positions. On turn 2 you dig in at 3T7, retreat the ATG to 3V5, retreat the Tiger to 3S7 and await developments. If at all possible, try to cover your JgPzs with at least three infantry units, perhaps around 3N5.

For the Russian your thrust can be broad enough to threaten everywhere as long as you plan to regroup for the dagger-like thrust by turn 3. Early truck moves of infantry to the 3X8 and 5M2 woods will probably be ignored as the German holds his fire for bigger fish. How to leapfrog your armor in

behind the 3DD8 woods or Hill 498 or along the northern woods road will depend on the German setup and facing. I like the JSU152 atop Hill 498 and try to use my SU 122 for overruns. These are really all details to your prime job of pressuring the German to spread those crummy squads and leaders as much as possible. Once spread, you hammer at his weakest point, forcing him to choose between defending his JgPzs with infantry or his final building. Do not become overawed by the JgPz VI or overwhelmed by the desire to destroy it. In general, the German is so dazzled by + 5 armor and a 128L gun that he'll overprotect it from infantry assault which may allow you to grab the final building.

Play Balance is rated as 55/45 pro German.

We enjoyed playing these and hope they've added to your pleasure. If we as playtesters and Don as developer do our respective jobs well you will be left with a multi-level entity that can be anything from a beer and pretzel game to intense simulation of the feel of WWII combat. It is an organism in evolution. Wait till you see *CRESCENDO OF DOOM*.