

Kharkov, 1942

A Flames of War Mega-Game Scenario

After a very difficult winter of 1941, German forces on the eastern front spent the spring rebuilding and fending off ever weakening Soviet attacks, while preparing for resuming the offensive. The Soviet leadership, while agreeing on assuming a primarily defensive posture initially, authorized a number of attacks to divert German forces from an expected drive on Moscow. The largest and most important of these was aimed at the city of Kharkov.

Two salients had been secured in German lines near Kharkov, allowing a tantalizing possibility for encircling the powerful German 6th Army. Stalin authorized his Southwestern Front, commanded by Marshall Timoshenko, to launch an offensive aimed at recapturing Kharkov and damaging or destroying 6th Army.

At the same time, the German forces were readying themselves for Hitler's critical Case Blau offensive, which would start by clearing the very bulges the Soviet forces would be assaulting from. A classic case of counter envelopments was set, and the Soviets managed to strike first.

This scenario allows this pivotal action to be recreated on a large tabletop. It provides a unique situation where both sides need to attack and defend in different areas of the front, and allows a wide selection of early Mid-War forces to be fielded.

Special Terrain rules:

- Donets River – the Donets River was very high from the spring thaw, making it very wide and deep and presenting a significant obstacle. It is impassable except over bridges and may only be crossed using the Flames of War River Crossing rules (from the Firestorm book). The north side of the river was bordered by a tall dike, which blocks line of sight unless a stand is adjacent to its crest and provides concealment to stands at the crest.
- Bridges – due to the difficulty of crossing, the bridges over the Donets were significant objectives. Each bridge on the tabletop is an objective, and control of it is determined as for any other objective.
- Hills – the terrain in this area gave significant importance to the elevated areas due to the generally flat basin area the battle was fought over. Any unit or vehicle on a hill can see over forest or buildings, but not over city terrain. Hills are treated as difficult ground and provide concealment to any team or vehicle on them.
- Railroad– rail lines were critical to moving goods and people given the poor nature of the Russian road network. Railroads in the Donets Basin are not built on elevated banks and therefore provide no cover or protection. They are level, so they count as roads for any movement that follows along them. Due to the difficulty in their banks, entering, leaving or crossing a rail line requires a bog check for any wheeled vehicles doing so.
- Forest – this area still had areas of dense forest, although less so than less populated regions. Forest terrain is very difficult going and uses the normal Flames of War rules for forest.
- Crop fields – this area was heavily cultivated, so a large number of crop fields should be placed on the tabletop where no other terrain is indicated (at least one field per 1' by 1' terrain tile). This soon after the spring that, crop fields offer no concealment but are very muddy and count as difficult going for gun teams other than man-packed guns, and for fully and half-tracked vehicles, and very difficult going for other vehicles.

Deployment:

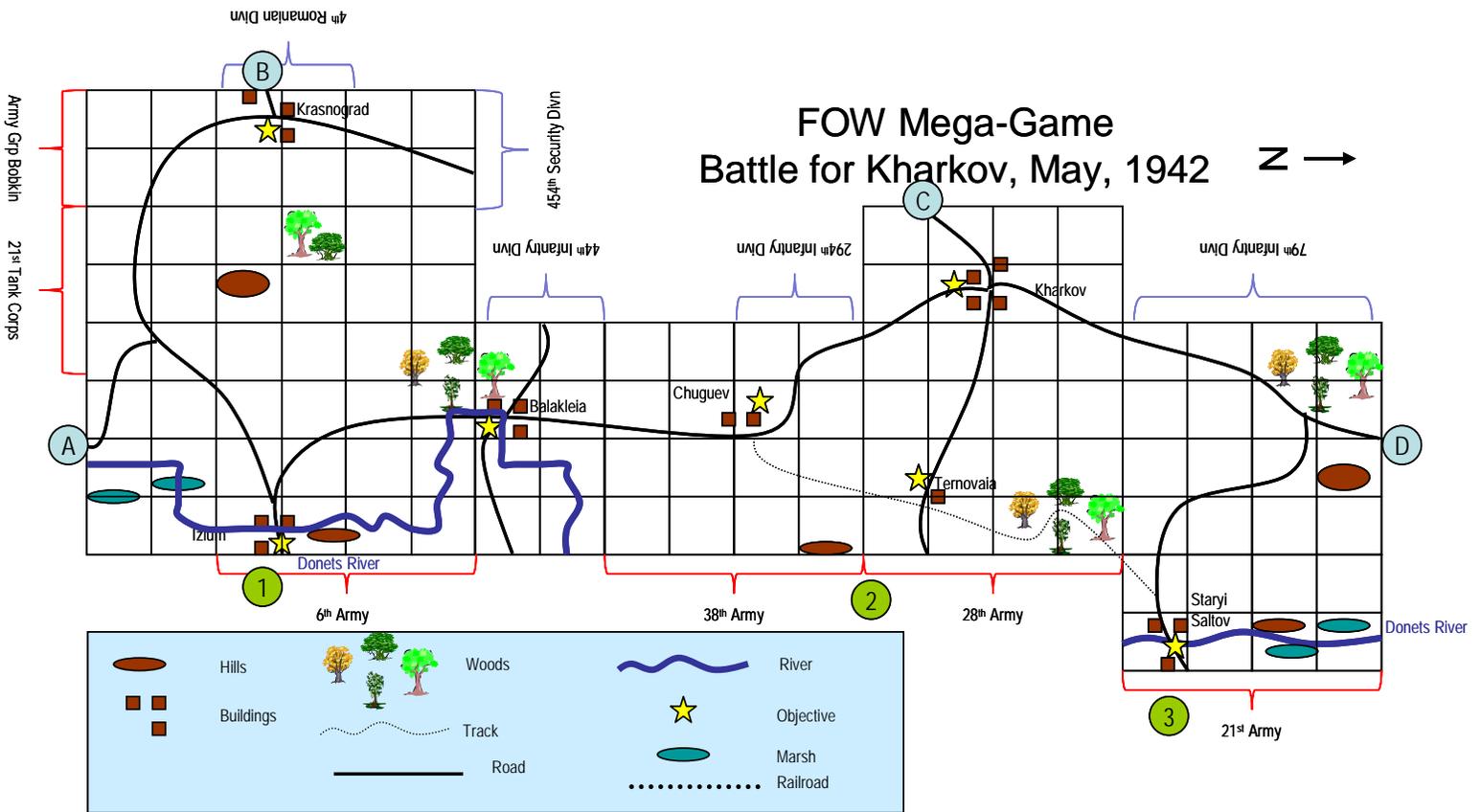
The German forces listed as on the table are deployed first, followed by the Allied forces. The Allies take the first turn.

Reinforcements:

Units listed as reinforcements will show the first turn they may arrive. For simplicity, they will arrive on this turn.

Optionally, reinforcement arrivals may be randomized - the owning player rolls a d6 at the start of each turn commencing the turn noted. The reinforcement will enter on a roll of 4+, if not the player rolls again the following turn.

Map:



Forces - Axis:

4th Romanian Division

Rating: regular except as specified in the list

Core List: Eastern Front book – Romanian Batalion Puscasi

Points: 1200

Added units: none

Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbar, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe

Deployment: deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 24" in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[4th Romanian]

454th Security Division

Rating: Confident Trained except as specified in the list

Core List: Eastern Front book – German Luftwaffe Feldkompanie (although not LW troops, front line security divisions were trained and organized similarly)

Points: 1200

Added units: receives one free allied Hungarian puskas platoon (full strength) at no charge

Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbar, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe

Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 24" in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[454th Security]

44th "Hoch und Deutschmeister" Division

Rating: Confident Veteran except as specified in the list

Core List: Eastern Front book – German Grenadierkompanie

Points: 1500

Special Rule: Elite Unit – up to twice during the entire game, may re-roll a motivation test and must accept the second result

Added units: none

Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbar, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe

Deployment: starts anywhere within 18" of Balakleia. At least one platoon must start on the east side of the Donets River. May deploy up to 8 barbed wire sections, 2 AT obstacles, and 4 minefield sections anywhere in its deployment area.

[Hoch und Deutsmeister]

294th Infantry Division

Rating: Confident Veteran except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – German Grenadierkompanie
Points: 1500
Added units: receives 1 free Assault troop with 2 heavy squads, which MUST be deployed within 6” of Temovaia
Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbär, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe
Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 24” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[294th Infantry] _____

79th Infantry Division

Rating: Confident Veteran except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – German Grenadierkompanie
Points: 1500
Added units: none
Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbär, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe
Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 24” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[79th Infantry] _____

3rd Panzer Division

Rating: Confident Veteran except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – German Mittlere Panzerkompanie
Points: 1500
Added units: receives 1 free Czech panzer platoon of 5 tanks
Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbär, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe
Deployment: enters from entry point C on turn 2

[3rd Panzer] _____

14th Panzer Division

Rating: Confident Veteran except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – German Mittlere Panzerkompanie
Points: 1500
Added units: receives 1 free Czech panzer platoon of 5 tanks
Prohibited units: may not field Pz III L, M or N, Pz IV G, T-34, Tiger, Flammpanzer, Brummbär, radio-controlled tank units, StuG F8, G or StuH42, PaK 43/41, Ferdinand, Hornisse, Panther, Hummel or Wespe
Deployment: enters from entry point A on turn 2

[14th Panzer] _____

Forces - Soviet:

21st Army

Rating: Fearless conscript except as specified in the list

Core List: Eastern Front book – Strelkovy Batalon list

Points: 1500

Added units: none

Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85, KV-85 or any flame tanks

Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 24” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[21st Army]

28th Army

Rating: Fearless conscript except as specified in the list

Core List: Eastern Front book – Strelkovy Batalon list

Points: 1500

Added units: receives a free storm group (with reinforcement but not reserve group)

Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85, KV-85 or any flame tanks

Deployment: enters on turn one from anywhere in the zone indicated on the map.

[28th Army]

38th Army

Rating: Fearless conscript except as specified in the list

Core List: Eastern Front book – Strelkovy Batalon list

Points: 1500

Added units: none

Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85, KV-85 or any flame tanks

Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 24” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[38th Army]

3rd Guards Cavalry Corps

Rating: Fearless trained except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – Strelkovy Batalon list
Points: 1500
Added units: receives a free Light Tankovy Company equipped with 5x T-34 obr 41
Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85, KV-85 or any flame tanks
Deployment: enters on turn 2 from entry area 2

[3rd Guards Cavalry Corps]

6th Army

Rating: Fearless conscript except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – Strelkovy Batalon list
Points: 2000
Added units: receives a free Light Tankovy Company equipped with 10x T-60 obr 42
Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85, KV-85 or any flame tanks
Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 48” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone), as long as no stand is deployed within 12” of an Axis stand.

[6th Army]

Army Group Bobkin

Rating: Fearless conscript except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book – Red Army Strelkovy Batalon list
Points: 1500
Added units: receives 2 free Mounted Kazachiy Companies, each of 2 platoons
Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85, KV-85 or any flame tanks
Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 12” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[Army Group Bobkin]

21st Tank Corps

Rating: Fearless conscript except as specified in the list
Core List: Eastern Front book –Red Army Tankovy Batalon list
Points: 1500
Added units: none
Prohibited units: may not use Sherman, Churchill, SU-152, SU-85 or KV-85 tanks
Deployment: starts deployment zone noted on map, may deploy up to 12” in from their specified edge (but not to either side of their deployment zone).

[21st Tank Corps]

Airpower:

At the start of the Soviet offensive, most of the Luftwaffe forces in the south were focused in the Crimea, and the Soviets were able to establish temporary air superiority.

Once the extent of the offensive became clear, the Luftwaffe transferred overwhelming strength into the area and dominated the skies, significantly impacting the Soviet forces' ability to move and inflicting punishing losses.

No player may purchase air support for the battle. Instead, airpower is awarded as follows:

Turn	Outcome
1 and 2	Soviets CiC receives 2x air strikes
3	Axis CiC receives 2x air strikes
4+	Axis CiC receives 3x air strikes

Air Interdiction – from turn 4 onward, the Luftwaffe completely dominated the skies and interdicted any significant Soviet movements. To reflect this, any Soviet unit that moves over 6" during this time rolls 1d6 and on a 6 loses 1 stand or vehicle to aerial strafing. Any unit that moves at the double must roll 3 dice instead of one.

Initial Bombardment:

The Soviets opened their assault with a large barrage, providing a hint of their future ability to mass bombardments to start offensives.

To reflect this, the Soviet CiC may use a preliminary bombardment (using the Flames of War Preliminary Bombardment special rule) against all Axis units that are within 30" of any Soviet unit. Any Axis recon platoons may give up their recon move to ignore preliminary bombardment.

Weather:

The weather throughout the battles around Kharkov was generally good. The weather for the battle is assumed to be clear.

Winning the Game:

There are seven objectives shown on the map. If the Soviets take Kharkov or the Axis take the Iziurm bridge the game immediately ends with an overwhelming victory for that side. If the game does not end in this manner, fighting stops at the end of turn 8 and the side which controls the higher number of objectives has won a marginal victory. Any other result and the game ends in a draw.