

## Minsk, 1944

### *A Flames of War* Mega-Game Scenario

Minsk was the central node for Army Group Center prior to Operation Bagration, and served as critical Soviet objective once the outer defense lines were breached. A series of desperate actions were fought around Minsk, particularly for control of the key railway evacuation routes for the high number of wounded and stragglers who had congregated there.

This scenario allows a large table to accommodate a scaled down version of the fateful clashes during the fall of Minsk. It provides a unique opportunity to field large Late War Soviet forces with the latest equipment, against a mix of German 2<sup>nd</sup> rate troops and a few elite units trying desperately to stem the tide.

#### Special Terrain rules:

- Marshes – Byelorussia has a high proportion of marshy terrain, which made it difficult for vehicles in many areas. Marshes are treated as difficult ground (very difficult to wheeled vehicles, except American 4x4 trucks) and provide concealment to any infantry or man-packed gun team touching them.
- Peat bogs – peat bogs and cuttings were quite common in this part of the Soviet Union. Peat bogs are treated like marshes, except that they provide no concealment
- Hills – the terrain in this area gave significant importance to the elevated areas due to the generally flat steppe area the battle was fought over. Any unit or vehicle on a hill can see over the railroad embankment and sunflower fields. Hills are treated as difficult ground and provide concealment to any team or vehicle on them.
- Railroads– due to the marshy nature of the ground, railway lines offered a decent level area for vehicle movement. Any vehicle moving along a railway line can ignore any difficult areas crossed for movement purposes (move as if in clear terrain, cross-country). Railways are not elevated and provide no cover or concealment for stands in contact with them.
- Rivers – rivers in Byelorussia were significant obstacles. Rivers are treated as very difficult terrain for vehicles, and restrict infantry and man-packed guns to using the river crossing rules. Each river should have a bridge at each railroad line, highway and trail crossing, and also one ford at some point along its length. Fords are treated as difficult going.

#### Deployment:

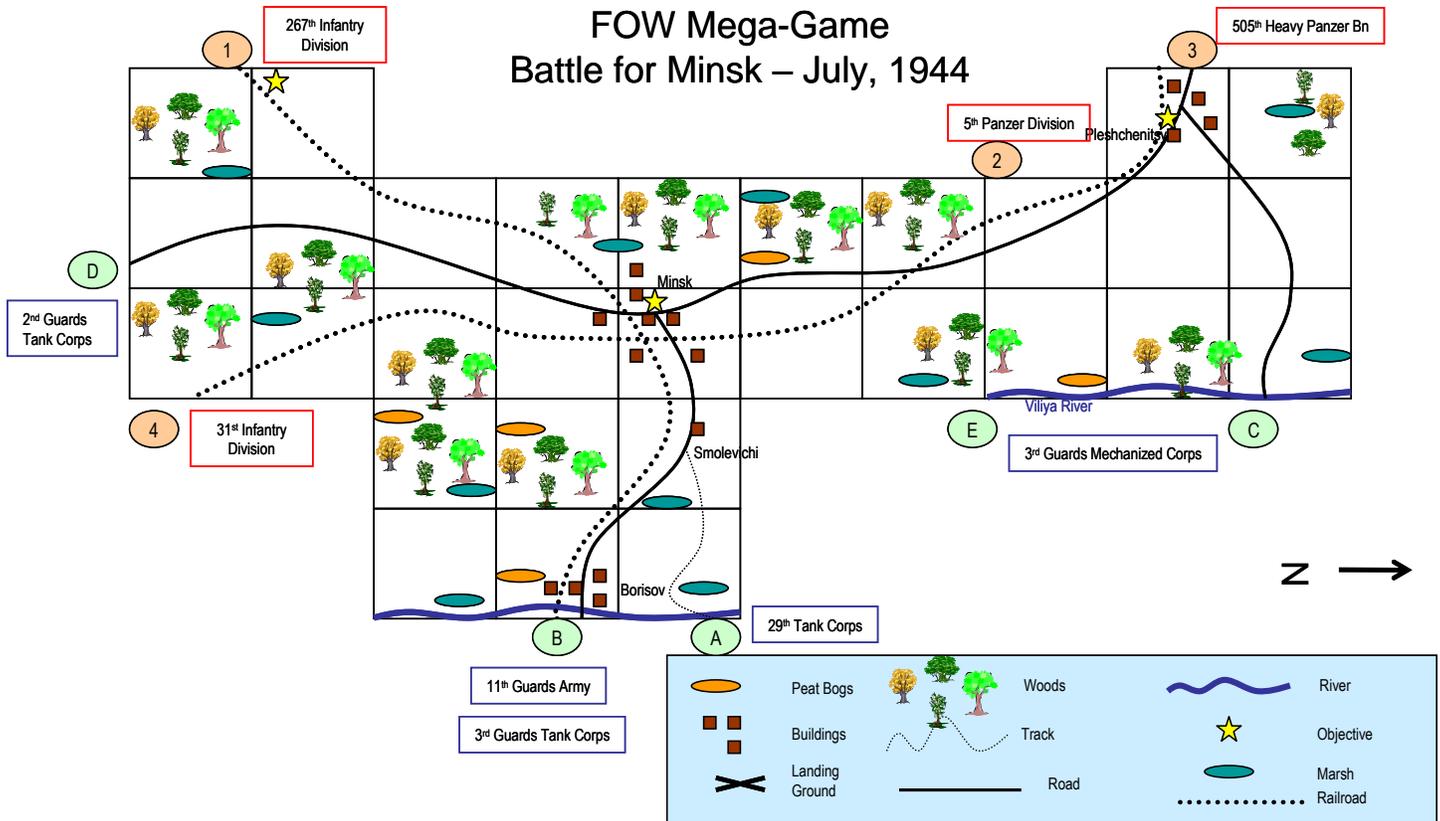
The German forces listed as on the table are deployed first, followed by the Soviet forces. The Soviets take the first turn.

#### 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:

German Forces –

- Rear Area Troops > represented by a 1,200 point company chosen from the following types: sicherungs or walkure (from website pdf). It starts the game deployed on the tabletop, anywhere within 6" of Minsk. This force may also deploy 3 free flak nests anywhere within 24" of Minsk.

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- KG Von Saucken > represented by a 1,200 point company chosen from the following types: grenadier, sperrverband (Hammer & Sickle). It receives von Saucken and Lt. Windgruber for no points cost. It starts the game deployed on the tabletop, anywhere between 24" and 36" from Borisov and more than 12" from Smolevichi.

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- 5<sup>th</sup> Panzer Recon > represented by a 1,200 point Aufklarungs Schwadron (Festung Europa) with 1 free platoon of 2 Tiger I tanks [from Schwere Panzer Abteilung 505]. It may take no further heavy tanks. It starts the game deployed on the tabletop, within 12" of Smolevichi.

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- 5<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division > represented by a 1,500 point company chosen from the following types: panzer kompanie, gepanzerte or panzer grenadier kompanie (Fortress Europe). It enters on turn 1 anywhere within 12" of entry point 2.

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- 505<sup>th</sup> Heavy Panzer battalion > represented by a 1,800 point schwere panzer kompanie (Hammer & Sickle). It enters on turn 3 anywhere within 12" of entry point 3.

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- 31<sup>st</sup> Grenadier Division > represented by a 1,200 point Sperrverband or Sperr Pionier Company (Hammer & Sickle). It enters on turn 2 anywhere within 12" of entry point 4. A maximum of 1 platoon may be deployed in ambush anywhere within 48" of entry point 4.

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- 267<sup>th</sup> Grenadier Division > represented by a 1,200 point Sperrverband or Sperr Pionier Company (Hammer & Sickle). It enters on turn 2 anywhere within 12" of entry point 1. A maximum of 1 platoon may be deployed in ambush anywhere within 48" of entry point 1.

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#### Russian Forces –

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Guards Mechanized Corps – Advanced Gd> represented by a 1,500 point rota razvedki or motostrelkovy battalion. They start on table, deployed anywhere within 12" of entry point E. They may deploy two heavy pontoon crossings in addition to the ford during deployment, anywhere on the Vilya River.

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- 3<sup>rd</sup> Guards Mechanized Corps > represented by two 1,750 point Soviet Battalions chosen from the following types: heavy tank battalion (Stalin's Onslaught), motostrelkovy battalion or Inomarochnikiy tankovy battalion (Hammer & Sickle), or Engineer-Sapper battalion or self-propelled artillery regiment (River of Heroes). If an Inomarochnikiy tankovy battalion is chosen, the player may field Kapitam VI Nevsky for no point cost. They enter within 12" of entry point C on turns 2 and 3.

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- 3<sup>rd</sup> Guards Tank Corps > represented by a 1,500 point Soviet Battalion chosen from the following types: rota razvedki, motostrelkovy battalion or gvardeyskiy tankovy battalion (Hammer & Sickle). If a gvardeyskiy tankovy battalion is chosen the player may field Brigade Komissar Dedov for no points cost. They enter within 12" of entry point B on turn 2.

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- 11<sup>th</sup> Guards Army > represented by a 1,500 point Soviet Battalion chosen from the following types: otdyelnaya shtrafnoy battalion or udarny strelkovy battalion (Stalin's Onslaught). They start on table, deployed anywhere within 6" of the Berezhina river.

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- 2<sup>nd</sup> Guards Tank Corps > represented by two 1,500 point Soviet Battalions chosen from the following types: rota razvedki, motostrelkovy battalion or tankovy battalion (Hammer & Sickle) They enter within 12" of entry point D on turn 3.

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- 29<sup>th</sup> Tank Corps > represented by a 1,500 point Soviet Battalion chosen from the following types: rota razvedki, motostrelkovy battalion; or tankovy / gvardeyskiy tankovy battalion (Hammer & Sickle). They enter within 12" of entry point A on turn 1.

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### Stragglers:

Minsk was filled with stragglers and lightly wounded troops from units that had been swept away by the ferocious Soviet assault. Each turn, the German command can attempt to rally some of the stragglers to aid the defense. He rolls 1d6, adding 1 if no stragglers were rallied the previous turn. If a 6 is scored, he may immediately deploy a platoon of walkure infantry anywhere in Minsk.

### Airpower:

The aerial action over the Minsk area was fierce but almost totally one-sided in the favor of the Soviet forces.

No player may purchase air support for the battle. Instead, the Russian CiC automatically receives 2 air strikes on the first two turns of the game. After that, each turn the CiC for each side rolls a d6. Subtract the German die roll from the Soviet die roll and compare the results on the table below:

Differential	Outcome
-3 or less	German force receives 1x 1 plane air strike
-2	No air support for either side
-1 to 0	Soviet CiC receives 1x air strike
+1 or more	Soviet CiC receives 2x air strike

### Weather:

The weather throughout the battles around Minsk was variable, but generally good. There is a chance for intermittent thunderstorms during the afternoon. To reflect this, the German CiC rolls a d6 at the start of each turn commencing on turn 4. On a roll of 6 there are thunderstorms for the turn.

Thunderstorms reduce visibility for the turn to 24" and all rolls to spot, range in and hit receive an additional -1 modifier. The German player adds 1 to his airpower die roll on a turn with thunderstorms.

### Winning the Game:

There are three objectives shown on the map. If the Soviet side controls all three at any point during the game it immediately ends with an overwhelming victory for the Red Army. If the game does not end in this manner, fighting stops at the end of turn 8 due to darkness and the side which has accumulated the highest number of victory points has won a marginal victory. If either side has accumulated double or more VPs, then that side has achieved a significant victory. Any other result and the game has ended in a draw.

Victory Points are scored based on the table below:

<u>Soviet VPs</u>	<u>German VPs</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
5	2	Side controls# Minsk (per turn)
3	-	Minsk is contested#
-	3	Train escapes Minsk* (each)

# - Minsk is considered controlled if there is at least one friendly unit, and no enemy stands within 4" of any building in the city. If neither side controls the city, it is considered contested.

\* - every odd turn after turn 2 the Axis CiC can send a train out of Minsk filled with stragglers and rear area personnel. The train may leave via either entry area 1 or area 3, as nominated by the Axis CiC. Any Soviet stand within 16" of the rail line between Minsk and that exit point may fire at the train as it rolls past, such firing replaces any other firing for that turn. Each stand choosing to fire at the train fires at ROF 1, and automatically hits. The train is destroyed if any hit makes its firepower roll. It escapes (and the Axis players earn VPs) if no hit makes its firepower roll.