

Von Manstein's Backhand Blow

Exclusive Rules

A Schwerpunkt Series Game

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Situation: *Von Manstein's Backhand Blow* simulates the Soviet offensive in southern Russia in February/March 1943 and the German counterattacks. The Red Army tried to liberate the farmlands of the Ukraine and the important Donets Basin and to trap two Axis armies against the Sea of Azov. With a considerable superiority in men and material (more than 1,800 Soviet tanks were facing 354 German *Panzer*), it seemed logical from the Soviet point of view to continue the advance and extend the success of Stalingrad from the Soviet point of view.

However, the Red Army faced two strong adversaries: an overstretched logistical network and Erich von Manstein, probably the most brilliant operational commander of World War II. The wide frontages and scarce resources, combined with the massive commitment of mobile formations by both sides created an extremely wild, fluid, and dynamic battle. *Von Manstein's Backhand Blow* represents the high water mark of operational art during the 20th century.

The Game: *Von Manstein's Backhand Blow* is a two-player operational simulation and is basically intended for two players, one on each side, although it is also suitable for solitaire play. One side represents the German forces of *Heeresgruppe Süüd* while the other side controls the Red Army forces of Southwest and Voronezh Fronts. The cardboard playing pieces represent the actual units which participated in the campaign, while the map represents the terrain over which the battle was fought.

Von Manstein's Backhand Blow is the first game in GMT's *Schwerpunkt* series of World War II games. Certain concepts and mechanics of *Von Manstein's Backhand Blow* can be found in other games of the designer, especially **Turning the Tables** (published by **Moments in History** in 1998), **Drive to the Baltic!** (published by **Moments in History** in 1999), and **Velikye Luki** (published by **Moments in History** in 2000). However, even veteran players who are familiar with the other games should study these rules carefully.

Note: GMT Games published a game titled **Lost Victory** on the same topic in 1994. The game covers the campaign in greater detail and is still available from GMT.

Course of Play: The game is played in game turns, each representing three days of real time. During a game turn a player moves and fights with his units and expends C3I Points.

Object of the Game: The Soviet player must liberate the farmlands of the Ukraine and the important Donets Basin. The German player must hold the cities in order to keep the Ukraine and the Donets Basin under his control.

2.0 GAME EQUIPMENT

Each copy of *Von Manstein's Backhand Blow* includes:

- One 22 x 34 inch map
- 280 die-cut counters
- One Rules Booklet
- 7 Player Aid Cards
- Two six-sided Dice

If any of these parts are missing or damaged, we apologize for the inconvenience and ask that you contact us to receive any replacement parts needed.

Please send your correspondence to:

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BEGIN SPECIAL OFF SET BOX

Answering Rules Questions

Should any questions concerning play arise, we will gladly answer them. Please follow the guidelines printed below to expedite the process and assure a response:

* Please refer to the numbered rules section(s) applicable to each question.

- Mail your questions and a self-addressed stamped envelope to GMT Games at the address listed above

For those on the Internet, we can be reached as follows:

dirk.blennemann@t-online.de (the designer)

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For ongoing online support of this game, visit our website at www.gmtgames.com. It features a set of "Living Rules" (a set of rules that we continually update) as well as a discussion board where you can ask questions and get the latest tips and tricks from the designer/developer, as well as other players.

We can also be found, along with most of the rest of the GMT designers/developers, on Consimworld's discussion boards, at www.consimworld.com. We heartily recommend this site to anyone interested in wargaming.

END SPECIAL OFF SET BOX

2.1 The Rules

Each major section of the rules is assigned a whole number (1.0, 2.0,...). Subordinate rules are assigned a corresponding number to the right of the decimal place. For example: 2.1, 2.2,... under rule 2.0; and 2.11, 2.12,... within sub-section 2.1. This system allows quick and easy cross referencing of rules.

2.2 The Game Map

The game map represents the area of southern Russia in which the fighting took place. It is based on contemporary German military maps, Red Army military maps captured by the Wehrmacht, and contemporary Soviet topographical maps. Each hex on the map has a four-digit identification number, used for game reference purposes only. **Example:** The city of Kharkov is located in hex 2510.

2.3 Charts And Tables

The Player Aid Cards contain charts, tables, tracks and displays used to assist players throughout play. These are listed below, in alphabetical order:

- *Activity Table* - lists possible actions of one player during one Schwerpunkt Segment.
- *Attrition Table* - resolves Attrition Checks.
- *Combat Results Table (CRT)* - resolves combat.
- *Game Turn Record Track* - shows the passage of time, lists C3I Points and Victory Points.
- *Game Turn Sequence Track* - lists the segments and phases to be undertaken each game turn.
- *General Records Track* – records Action Points, C3I Points, and Victory Points.
- *German Combat Chits Chart* - lists the effects of German Combat Chits.
- *German Substitute Unit Display* - holds the counters of German units currently not in play.
- *German Variable Reinforcements Table* - brings German Variable Reinforcements into play.
- *Random Events Table* - resolves Random Events.
- *Reinforcement Schedule Chart* - lists reinforcements entering play and the removal and addition of Combat Chits.
- *Soviet Combat Chits Chart* - lists the effects of Soviet Combat Chits.
- *Soviet Substitute Unit Display* - holds the counters of Soviet units currently not in play.
- *Terrain Effects Chart (TEC)* - lists the number of Movement Points to enter each hex on the map, and how the different terrain types influence combat.
- *Terrain Key* - shows the meaning of the various map colors and symbols.
- *Weather Table* – determines the weather conditions of the current game turn.
- *Weather Track* – shows the weather conditions of the current and previous game turns.

2.4 The Playing Pieces

German *Variable* Reinforcements are marked with an “R” in front of their setup code. German *Verfügungskräfte* and Soviet Uprising forces are stationary and may not move; they have a movement allowance of zero.

2.41 Color Scheme

A unit’s nationality is shown by its color scheme. In addition, it differentiates between Soviet Regular and Guards units and German Heer, Luftwaffe and Waffen-SS formations.

A. German

Heer	gray
Luftwaffe	blue
Waffen-SS	black

B. Soviet

Soviet Regular	red
Soviet Guards	gold

2.42 Historical Identification

A. German

Many German units are designated by two groups of numbers/letters. In most cases, the group to the left of the unit identification box identifies the parent formation; the group to the right of the unit identification box identifies the unit itself. **Example:** 320-586 reads 586th infantry regiment of 320th Infantry Division.

Some German units are designated by one group of numbers/letters. The numbers/letters identify the units itself. **Example:** FJ11 reads Fahnenjunkerregiment 11.

Arb:	Arbeits-Bataillon (labor battalion)
Bau:	Bau-Bataillon (construction battalion)
Bel:	Bjelgorod (city; Belgorod)
Cha:	Charkow (city; Kharkov)
Dne:	Dnepropetrovsk (city)
Don:	Donets (river)
DF:	Der Führer (unit designation)
DR:	Das Reich (unit designation)
Dsch:	Deutschland (unit designation)
EIW:	Eisenbahninstandsetzungswerk (major railway repair shop)
FBB:	Führer-Begleit-Bataillon (unit designation)
FEB:	Feldeisenbahn-Betriebs-Abteilung (field railway battalion)
Fel:	Feldwirtschafts-Bataillon (field distribution battalion)
FJ:	Fahnenjunker-Regiment (regiment of officer aspirants)
FSS:	Frontsammelstelle (collecting center)
Füs:	Füsilier (unit designation)
FUS:	Feld-Unteroffizier-Schule (field NCO school)
FZK:	Feldzeug-Kommando (staff for technical services)
G:	Genesenen-Bataillon (convalescent battalion)
GD:	Grossdeutschland (unit designation)
Ger:	Germania (unit designation)
GFA:	Grenadier-Feldausbildungs-Regiment (field training regiment for riflemen)
Gre:	Grenadier (unit designation)
Her:	Herzog (commanding officer's name)
HGN:	Heeresgruppen-Nachrichten-Regiment (signal regiment of an army group)
Süd:	Heeresgruppe Süd (Army Group South)
HIW:	Heeresinstandsetzungswerk (major repair shop)
KG:	Kampfgruppe (task force)
KoR:	Rückwärtige Dienste eines Korps (base services of a corps)
LAH:	Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler (unit designation)
LGN:	Luftgau-Nachrichten-Rgt (air sector signals' regiment)
Nor:	Nordland (unit designation)
NSF:	Nachschubführer (supply quartermaster)
PD:	Panzer-Division (tank division)
Pol:	Polizei (police)
SDK:	Streifendienst-Kommando (patrol services detachment)
SS:	Schutzstaffel
UFS:	SS-Unteroffizier-Schule (Waffen-SS NCO school)
Sta:	Stalino (city)
TB:	Transport-Begleit-Regiment (transport guard regiment)
TE:	Theodor Eicke (unit designation)
Tec:	Technisches-Bataillon (technical battalion)
Thu:	Thule (unit designation)
T:	Totenkopf (unit designation)
Tur:	Turkmenisch (Turkmenian)
Url:	Urlauber-Bataillon (battalion formed out of men returning from leave)

Ukr:	Ukraine (area)
VK:	Verfügungskräfte (security forces)
W:	Wiking (unit designation)
Wac:	Wach-Bataillon Hermann Göring (guard battalion Herman Göring)
Wes:	Westland (unit designation)
WWB:	Wehrwirtschaftliches Bergbau-Bataillon (mining battalion for war economics)
Zap:	Zapozezhe (city)

B. Soviet

Soviet units are designated by one group of numbers/letters to the right of the unit identification box identifies. **Example:** 41G reads 41st Guards Rifle Division.

The following abbreviations appear on Soviet units as part of their historic identification:

C	Cavalry
G	Guards

2.43 Unit Types

All units in the game belong to one of the following three categories - motorized, non-motorized, or stationary.

A. Motorized

Armored/Mechanized Infantry [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

Armored Reconnaissance [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

Tank [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

B. Non-Motorized

Alarm [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

Infantry [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

C. Stationary

Verfügungskräfte [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

Uprising forces [ILLUSTRATION: show type here]

2.44 Unit Size

The unit-size-symbols printed on top the unit type boxes mean:

[II] Battalion-seized ad-hoc unit

III Regiment

KG Kampfgruppe

XX Division

XXX Corps

2.45 Steps

All Soviet Tank and Cavalry Corps as well as certain German units have four steps. Certain Soviet Infantry Corps have three steps. These units are represented by two counters, only one of which may be in play at any one time. The lower-valued units are marked with a "S". At the start of play, these units should be positioned on the Soviet and German *Substitute Unit Displays* until needed (i.e., they are only introduced into play as combat losses are absorbed).

2.5 Game Markers

The Game Markers are used as record-keeping devices on the mapboard or play aid cards. Their use is covered in the rules.

- *Activity Points Markers* - used on the General Records Track to mark the number of available Activity Points. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *Administrative Movement Markers* – used to mark units that conducted Administrative Movement. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *Combat Chits* - used for combat resolution. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *C3I Points Markers* - used on the General Records Track to mark the current C3I Points available to a player. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *Game Turn Marker* - indicates the current game turn. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *Segment Marker* - indicates the current game turn segment. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *Soviet Front Markers* – indicate the supply head of a Soviet front. [ILLUSTRATION: show marker here]
- *Weather Markers* – indicate the weather of the current game turn, the previous game turn, and the number of continuous game turns with Deep Mud. [ILLUSTRATION: show markers here]

2.6 Game Scale

Each hex on the mapsheet covers approximately eight kilometers (8 km) from side to side. Each game turn represents three days of real time. Military units are corps, divisions, regiments, Kampfgruppen, and battalion-seized ad-hoc units.

3.0 STANDARD PROCEDURES

3.1 Hex Control

Hex control is immediately lost if a unit no longer exerts a ZOC into the hex in question. A hex free of units and ZOCs is controlled by neither player. Hex control changes are immediate, and may occur and reoccur in the same hex any number of times during play.

Note: Unlike most wargames, hex control is lost as soon as a unit does no longer exert a ZOC into a hex in *von Manstein's Backhand Blow*. This was done because both sides had insufficient forces available to cover the entire front at all times.

3.2 Formations

Certain German units are permanently grouped into *formations*. All units belonging to a specific formation can be easily identified by their designation to the left of the unit identification box; this designation signifies the unit's parent formation. In addition, the unit identification boxes of all units part of the same formation are identically colored. The *Wiking* and *19th PD* formations consist of *four*, all other formations consist of *three* elements each. Formations are important for Stacking, (Regular) Movement, Administrative Movement and Integrity.

4.0 THE GAME TURN

Von Manstein's Backhand Blow is divided into a maximum of 17 "Game Turns" (or less for Scenario One: "Red Army's High Water Mark").

4.1 Outline Sequence Of Play

- I. Administrative Segment
- II. First Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment
- III. First German Schwerpunkt Segment
- IV. Second Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment
- V. Second German Schwerpunkt Segment
- VI. Soviet General Segment
- VII. German General Segment

4.2 Expanded Sequence Of Play

- I. Administrative Segment
 - A. Advance the Game Turn Marker to the next higher numbered box on the Game Turn Record Track to indicate the start of a new Game Turn.
 - B. The Soviet player determines the Weather, and places Weather Markers in the corresponding boxes of the Weather Track.
 - C. The German player may announce that he is conducting the *Rochade* this game turn.
 - D. Both players simultaneously check for Supply. Mark units Out Of Supply, and conduct Attrition Checks if required.
 - E. The German player determines German Variable Reinforcements, and places eligible Variable Reinforcements on the map.
 - F. The Soviet player places eligible Reinforcements either on the map or in his Administrative Movement Box #1 (player's choice).
 - G. The German player places eligible Reinforcements either on the map or in his Administrative Movement Box #1 (player's choice).
 - H. The Soviet player receives and spends Replacements.
 - I. The German player conducts *Frontnahe Auffrischung* for motorized units (see 13.1).
 - J. Both players add and remove Combat Chits according to the Reinforcement Schedule, and adjust the C3I Points Markers on the General Records Track according to the Game Turn Track.

II. First Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment (skip this segment during *Deep Mud* game turns):

The Soviet player conducts the following activities:

- A. Move Front Markers one hex each.
 - B. Conduct Administrative Movement in the following order:
 - (1) Move any one unit from Administrative Movement Box #2 onto the map.
 - (2) Move all units from Administrative Movement Box #1 to Administrative Movement Box #2.
 - (3) Place any one unit from the map into Administrative Movement Box #1.
 - C. Declare in what order the Combat and Movement Phases will be carried out.
 - D. Spend C3I Points and check the Activity Table. Divide Action Points between Southwest Front and Voronezh Front, and adjust Action Points Markers on the General Records Track according to the result.
- Note:** The Segment ends if the player spends zero (0) C3I Points.
- E. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase.
 - F. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase.

III. First German Schwerpunkt Segment (skip this segment during *Deep Mud* game turns):

The German player conducts the following activities:

- A. Conduct Administrative Movement in the following order:

- (1) Move any one unit (or all units part of the same formation) and any number of Variable Reinforcements from Administrative Movement Box #2 onto the map.
 - (2) Move all units from Administrative Movement Box #1 to Administrative Movement Box #2.
 - (3) Place any one unit (or all units part of the same formation) and any number of Variable Reinforcements from the map into Administrative Movement Box #1.
- B. Declare in what order the Combat and Movement Phases will be carried out.
- C. Spend C3I Points and check the Activity Table. Adjust Action Points Markers on the General Records Track according to the result.
- Note:** The Segment ends if the player spends zero (0) C3I Points.
- D. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase.
- E. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase.
- G. Conduct *Personalersatz* for non-motorized units.

IV. Second Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment (skip this segment during *Deep Mud* and *Mud* game turns): Same as “First Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment“.

V. Second German Schwerpunkt Segment (skip this segment during *Deep Mud* and *Mud* game turns): Same as “First German Schwerpunkt Segment“.

VI. Soviet General Segment

The Soviet player conducts the following activities:

- A. Move Front Markers one hex each.
- B. Conduct Administrative Movement in the following order:
 - (1) Move any one unit from Administrative Movement Box #2 to the map.
 - (2) Move all units from Administrative Movement Box #1 to Administrative Movement Box #2.
 - (3) Place any one unit into Administrative Movement Box #1.
- C. Declare in what order the Combat and Movement Phases will be carried out.
- E. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase, provided that no unit can conduct *both* combat and movement in this segment.
- F. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase, provided that no unit can conduct *both* combat and movement in this segment.

VII. German General Segment

The German player conducts the following activities:

- A. Conduct Administrative Movement in the following order:
 - (1) Move any one unit (or all units part of the same formation) and any number of Variable Reinforcements from Administrative Movement Box #2 to the map.
 - (2) Move all units from Administrative Movement Box #1 to Administrative Movement Box #2.
 - (3) Place any one unit (or all units part of the same formation) and any number of Variable Reinforcements into Administrative Movement Box #1.
- B. Declare in what order the Combat and Movement Phases will be carried out.
- D. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase, provided that no unit can conduct *both* combat and movement in this segment.
- E. Conduct either the Combat or Movement Phase, provided that no unit can conduct *both* combat and movement in this segment.
- G. Conduct *Personalersatz* for non-motorized units (see 13.2).

Last game turn of a scenario: The players consult the Victory Conditions to determine the winner.

5.0 WEATHER

Weather is important for the number of segments in the current game turn, the number of available C3I Points, and (Regular) Movement.

The weather is always *Frozen* on the first game turn of the game. Starting with the second game turn, the Soviet player determines the weather of the current game turn by consulting the *Weather Table*, and places Weather Markers in the corresponding boxes of the Weather Track.

5.1 Procedure

The Soviet player rolls two dice and applies any modifiers. The result is either *Frozen* or *Mud*. If the result is *Mud* and the previous game turn has been either *Mud* or *Deep Mud*, the weather for the current game turn becomes *Deep Mud*.

5.2 Effects of *Frozen* Weather

- Use the appropriate columns on the Terrain Effects Chart.
- Both players receive their full number of C3I Points (the left number on the Game Turn Record Track).
- The game turn consists of two Soviet Schwerpunkt Segments and two German Schwerpunkt Segments.

5.3 Effects of *Mud* Weather

- Use the appropriate columns on the Terrain Effects Chart.
- Both players receive a reduced amount of C3I Points (the right number on the Game Turn Record Track).
- The game turn consists of one Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment and one German Schwerpunkt Segment (skip the 2nd Soviet and 2nd German Schwerpunkt Segments).

5.4 Effects of *Deep Mud* Weather

- Use the appropriate columns on the Terrain Effects Chart.
- Neither player receives C3I Points that game turn.
- The game turn does not consist of Schwerpunkt Segments (skip the 1st and 2nd Soviet and German Schwerpunkt Segments).

5.5 Historical Weather

The historical weather of each game turn is printed on the Game Turn Record Track for reference purposes. In addition, players may decide to use the historical weather instead of weather determination (see above).

Note: We recommend weather determination.

6.0 ZONES OF CONTROL

Units do *not* exert a ZOC into *City* hexes in *von Mantein's Backhand Blow*.

7.0 SUPPLY

German supply sources are all hexes on the western map edge. Soviet supply source hexes are all hexes on the eastern map edge from hex 4100 (inclusive) to hex 4125 (inclusive).

8.0 C3I POINTS

8.1 Weather & C3I Points

The weather (see 5.0) of the current game turn influences the number of C3I Points available to a player.

Frozen → full amount of C3I Points (left number on the Game Turn Record Track).

Mud → reduced amount of C3I Points (right number on the Game Turn Record Track).

Deep Mud → no C3I Points

Example: The weather is *Mud*; the Soviet player receives ? C3I Points on Game Turn 6.

8.2 Rochade

Starting with Game Turn 7, the German player may declare the *Rochade* (“Castling the King”) *once during a game* on any one *Frozen* weather game turn.

Effects:

- The number of German units that may conduct Administrative Movement is increased.
- The German player may neither receive nor spend C3I Points during the *Rochade* game turn (C3I Points accumulated on previous game turns are unaffected). Instead, the German player rolls on the *Rochade* column of the Activity Chart during each of his two Schwerpunkt Segments.

9.0 ACTIVITY POINTS – SOVIET FRONTS

The Soviet player must divide the number of available Activity Points as evenly as possible between *Southwest Front* and *Voronezh Front*. If an even number of Activity Points is generated, each Front must receive the same amount of Activity Points. If an odd number of Activity Points is generated, one Front (Soviet player’s choice) will receive one more point than the other. The Soviet player may spend Activity Points assigned to a given Front for movement and combat without further limitations.

The German player is not restricted in this way.

10.0 STACKING

10.1 Soviet Stacking

The Soviet player may stack up to three divisions and/or corps in one hex. Soviet Uprising markers stack for free. Soviet units that have their combat strengths in brackets () stack for free.

10.2 German Stacking

The German player may stack up to four regiments and/or *Kampfgruppen* in one hex. Each German formation counts as two regiments. German formations consist of either three or four

regiments/Kampfgruppen; the third and fourth regiment/Kampfgruppe stacks for free if two other regiments/Kampfgruppen of the formation are stacked in the same hex. Therefore up to eighth German units from two formations may stack in one hex. German units that have their combat strengths in brackets () stack for free.

11.0 REINFORCEMENTS

11.1 Reinforcement Arrival

German Variable Reinforcements (see 11.2) may be placed on the map (only).

Soviet Reinforcements enter the game in one of three different ways:

- (1) Via their Entry hex (see the Soviet Reinforcement Schedule);
- (2) Via Administrative Movement Box #1;
- (3) They are placed on top of a Soviet Front Marker (see the Soviet Reinforcement Schedule).
Entry hexes 3800 or 4103 (see the Soviet Reinforcement Schedule) → Voronezh Front
Entry hexes 4114 or 4119 (see the Soviet Reinforcement Schedule) → Southwest Front

11.2 German Variable Reinforcements

All units marked by an “R” are *German Variable Reinforcements*. Following the Setup Instructions, all German Variable Reinforcements have to be placed in one container or cup from which they can be easily drawn at random. Starting with Game Turn 2, the German player consults the German Variable Reinforcements Table once during each Administrative Segment. He rolls one die and cross-references the result under the appropriate column. The result indicates the number of German Variable Reinforcements drawn by the German player at random. This process stops for the remainder of the game if all German Variable Reinforcements have been drawn.

German Variable Reinforcements show a setup code next to their “R” marking. They must be placed in that hex, and may not be initially placed in the Administrative Movement Box. A German Variable Reinforcement is permanently lost if its setup hex has been Soviet controlled *at any time* during the game. The German player may not re-draw other German Variable Reinforcements in such a case.

12.0 SOVIET REPLACEMENTS

The Soviet player receives *Replacements* to strengthen units that suffered step losses. Replacements come in two types: *Motorized* and *Non-motorized*. Starting with the second game turn, the Soviet player determines the number of replacements by consulting the Soviet Replacement Table during the Administrative Segment of each game turn, and places Replacement Markers in the corresponding boxes of the General Records Track..

Replacements may be accumulated from game turn to game turn. It is *not* necessary to divide them evenly between the two fronts.

A Soviet unit that has suffered one or more step losses during previous game turns may receive *one* replacement (maximum) during the Administrative Segment of any game turn if the unit is both In Supply and in range of a Front Marker. Eliminated Soviet units may not receive replacements and may not be rebuilt in that way (eliminated Soviet units are out of play for the remainder of a game). Each replacement rebuilds one step; motorized replacements are limited to motorized units, and non-motorized replacements are limited to

non-motorized units. Simply flip the unit in question to its front side, or bring into play the “stronger” counter in case of a tank or cavalry corps. Reduce the Replacement Markers on the General Records Track by “1” for each replacement spent. Replacements may set up in an EZOC.

Note: Units located in the Administrative Movement Box may receive replacements.

Also note: Soviet units that received replacements are permitted to move and attack as normal on the turn they receive replacement steps.

13.0 GERMAN REORGANIZATION

The German player may strengthen units that suffered step losses by *Reorganization*. Reorganization is done in two ways:

- *Frontnahe Auffrischung* for motorized units
- *Personalersatz* for non-motorized units

13.1 *Frontnahe Auffrischung*

The German player receives two markers labeled *Frontnahe Auffrischung* (“reorganization near the front under battlefield conditions”) on Game Turn 7. One marker is grey and used for German motorized formations of the *Heer*, the other marker is black and used for German motorized formations of the *Waffen-SS*.

The German player may place the markers on any German motorized unit(s) during each Administrative Segment *starting with Game Turn 7*. The unit(s) in question may be either on the map, or in the Administrative Movement Boxes. The unit(s) must be In Supply and may not be adjacent to an enemy unit during placement. Both markers may be placed in the same hex.

All units that are part of *one* formation (German player’s choice) located in the same hex receive up to two steps *each* during the Administrative Segment of the next game turn. Previously eliminated units of the formation in question may be rebuilt in that way; they are placed in the same hex. A formation may not conduct *Frontnahe Auffrischung* if all units that are part of the formation are eliminated; these units are out of play for the remainder of the game.

Units undergoing *Frontnahe Auffrischung* may neither move (including Administrative Movement) nor attack during the game turn in question; they defend normally. The grey marker is limited to formations of the *Heer*; the black marker to formations of the *Waffen-SS*. Therefore the German player may conduct *Frontnahe Auffrischung* with all units of one formation of the *Heer* located in the same hex (or Administrative Movement Box), and with all units of one formation of the *Waffen-SS* located in the same hex (or Administrative Movement Box). Starting with Game Turn 7, both markers are available each game turn.

13.2 *Personalersatz*

A German non-motorized unit that previously has suffered a step loss may be flipped back to its front side by disbanding one German *Variable Reinforcement* unit during any German Schwerpunkt Segment. Both units must be either stacked in the same hex, or be located in the Administrative Movement Boxes. The units in question may be Out of Supply. German Variable Reinforcements spent (disbanded) in that way are out of play for the remainder of the game. Eliminated German non-motorized units may not receive *Personalersatz* (“personal replacements”) and may not rebuild in that way (they out of play for the remainder of the game).

Note: The units receiving *Personalersatz* may be located in *one or both* Administrative Boxes.

14.0 SOVIET FRONT MARKERS

The Soviet player controls two *Front Markers*, labeled Southwest Front and Voronezh Front. They represent the command and logistical centers of the appropriate fronts of the Red Army. Unlike German units, Soviet units must be in range of a Front Marker in order to conduct one of the following activities:

- receive Activity Points
- conduct Administrative Movement
- receive Replacements
- full capabilities of certain Soviet Combat Chits

A unit is in range of a Front Marker if it can trace a line of not more than *twelve* hexes (count the Front Marker's hex, but not the unit's hex) to the Front Marker. The line may be interrupted by enemy units and/or EZOCs. The unit must be only in range at the moment the selected activity (see above) is supposed to occur. Units placed in the Soviet Administrative Movement Box are always considered to be in range of a Front Marker.

14.1 Restrictions On Front Markers

A Front Marker must be able to trace an uninterrupted line of contiguous hexes (in the mind's eye) back to a Soviet supply source at *any* time during a game turn. Such a path may be of any length, but may not

- enter hexes occupied by enemy units;
- enter hexes containing EZOCs unless there is a friendly unit in the hex to nullify that EZOC for this purpose

The Soviet player immediately displaces a Front Marker to the next available hex the front marker could legally move into *closer* to a Soviet supply source and fulfilling all requirements if

- the hex is entered by an enemy unit;
- the Front Marker fails to trace an uninterrupted line of contiguous hexes back to a Soviet supply source

14.2 Moving Front Markers

The Soviet player may move Front Markers during Soviet player segments. Front Markers do not move like units; Activity Points, Movement Allowance, Terrain Effects, Terrain Features and EZOCs are not checked. Instead, each Front Marker may move exactly *one* hex during each Soviet player segment.

15.0 MOVEMENT

In addition to "normal" movement, *von Manstein's Backhand Blow* uses *Administrative Movement* (see below). Please check the Sequence of Play.

15.1 Administrative Movement

Administrative Movement does not cost C3I Points, Activity Points, or MPs. A player may conduct Administrative Movement even if he spends zero C3I Points during a current Schwerpunkt segment.

Each player may conduct Administrative Movement during each of his Player Segments in the following order:

(1) Move one unit (or all units part of the same formation in the case of the German player) from Administrative Movement Box #2 to one hex on the map. In addition, the German player may move any number of German Variable Reinforcements from Administrative Movement Box #1 to hexes on the map.

The unit/stack in question may be placed adjacent to or stacked with friendly unit(s) (or a Soviet Front marker in the case of the Soviet player) in a hex free of EZOCs to which the unit/stack can trace an uninterrupted line of contiguous hexes free of enemy units and/or EZOCs (a friendly unit in the hex does *not* negate an EZOC for this purpose) to a friendly supply source. Stacking limits are in effect.

(2) Move all units from Administrative Movement Box #1 to Administrative Movement Box #2.

(3) Move one unit (or all units part of the same formation that are stacked in the same hex in the case of the German player) from the map to Administrative Movement Box #1. In addition, the German player may move any number of German Variable Reinforcements from the map to Administrative Movement Box #1.

The unit/stack in question is picked up from the map and placed in Administrative Movement Box #2. The “pick up hex” has to be In Supply and may not be in an EZOC. A friendly unit in the hex does *not* negate an EZOC for this purpose.

Restrictions

- Units may either use Administrative Movement *or* (Regular) Movement during one player segment, *never both*.
- Out Of Supply units may *not* conduct Administrative Movement.
- Units using Administrative Movement may *not* attack during the same player segment.
- German units undergoing *Frontnahe Auffrischung* cannot conduct any kind of Administrative Movement.

Important: Neither player may conduct Administrative Movement during Game Turn 1 (all segments).

15.11 Additional Soviet Restrictions

Soviet units must be in range of a Front Marker in order to conduct Administrative Movement. This is true for units placed on the map (from Administrative Movement Box #2) and units picked up from the map (and put in Administrative Movement Box #1).

15.12 Rochade

If the German player has declared the *Rochade* (see 8.2), he may move *up to five* units (or all units part of *up to five* formations) during any one segment of the game turn in question from Administrative Movement Box #2 to the map. The units may be placed in different hexes, but all units part of the same formation must be placed in the same hex.

All other rules and restrictions are in effect.

Note: It is possible to “mix” *individual* units and *formations*; however, the maximum number is five (e.g., the German player could move all units that are part of three formations plus two individual units.)

15.2 Moving German Formations

German units belonging to the same formation may move as one stack. These units must begin their Movement Phase already stacked, move together, and end their movement in the same hex. Reduce the Activity Points Marker on the General Records Track by “1” for each stack that has moved (not by “1” for each unit that has moved) during a German Schwerpunkt Segment.

Of course, stacked units of a formation may move independently, however, in that case *each* unit pays 1 AP.

15.3 Moving German Variable Reinforcements

German Variable Reinforcements move for free (always, for the entire game). Do *not* reduce the Activity Points Marker on the General Records Track during a German Schwerpunkt Segment.

Note: All other rules are in effect.

15.3 Terrain Effects

15.31 Rivers

Crossing a River may cost a unit *all* MPs during certain weather conditions. The unit in question must start its Movement Phase adjacent to the river hexside and may cross it by expending all MPs. A bridge negates River crossing movement costs.

15.32 Road Hexes

A unit that is moving from one Road hex directly to another adjacent Road hex through a hexside crossed by the Road symbol ignores all other terrain in the hex entered (including Stream hexsides) and uses the Road movement rate (see the TEC).

16.0 COMBAT

In Soviet attacks at least one participating unit must be in range of a Front Marker if APs are to be spent.

16.1 Combat Odds

The column headings on the CRT range from 1:2 to 19:1. Attacks which are worse than 1:2 yield an automatic combat result of “4/0” (but roll two dice to determine Random Events or SNAFU). Attacks which are better than 19:1 are treated as 19:1 (but roll two dice to determine Random Events or SNAFU).

16.7 Combat Modifiers

16.71 Concentric Attack

A Concentric Attack can never be created by units attacking into a City hex or across a River hexside.

16.72 Terrain Effects

Certain terrain features generate DRMs favorable to the defender. See the TEC for full details.

16.721 Streams And Combat

Streams generate a DRM of -2 if *all* units are attacking across Stream hexside(s). Streams generate a DRM of -1 if at least *one* unit is not attacking across Stream hexside(s).

16.722 Rivers And Combat

Units attacking across a River hexside have their combat strength *halved* and do not qualify for a *Concentric Attack*.

A unit must stop a retreat after crossing a River hexside; it may not retreat further. A unit cannot cross a River hexside to extend a retreat path to a second hex.

Units may *not* advance a second hex if attacking across a River hexside, or if the advance would require crossing a River hexside.

Bridges do *not* negate the above effects.

16.723 Cities And Combat

Units attacking a City hex do not qualify for a *Concentric Attack*. A defending force located in a City hex is *never* forced to retreat, however, it may do so (defending player's choice).

16.724 Swamps And Combat

Combat is not permitted into and out of Swamp hexes. Motorized units can never advance or retreat into Swamp hexes.

16.73 Combat Chits

Certain Soviet Combat Chits require the defender's hex to be in range of a Soviet Front Marker.

16.74 German Integrity

The Tactical Rating of a defending or attacking German unit that is part of a formation may be increased due to the *Integrity Bonus*. In order to receive the Integrity Bonus, a German unit must be part of a formation and stacked with at least one other unit of its parent formation.

Exception: A unit that is part of *Wiking* or *19th PD* formation must be stacked with at least *two* other units of its parent formation.

A unit fulfilling the above requirements receives a *Formation Integrity Bonus* of two (+2). This bonus may become unavailable if units of the formation have been eliminated.

16.8 SNAFU Combat Result

SNAFU effects are generated by *unmodified* die rolls of 3 or 11 during combat resolution (Step G of the Combat Resolution Process). If an unmodified 3 is rolled, the *defender* suffers one *additional* Combat Hit. If an unmodified 11 is rolled, the *attacker* suffers one *additional* Combat Hit.

16.9 Comprehensive Example Of Combat

!!! To be added!!!

17.0 UPRISING

The Soviet player consults the *Soviet Uprising Table* whenever a Soviet unit first moves within three hexes of any City hex. The result may be either *Failure* or *Success*.

Note: There is only one uprising attempt per city hex per game.

Uprising Results:

- **Failure:** Nothing happens, play continues.
- **Success:** The counter showing the German stationary *Verfügungskräfte* of the city in question is flipped over to its back side, showing the Soviet Uprising Forces. The *Verfügungskräfte* are permanently lost. The city becomes friendly to the Soviet player if no other German unit is located in the city hex now. The Soviet Uprising Forces are permanently lost if at least one other German unit is still located in the city hex.

18.0 THE SCENARIOS

Von Manstein's Backhand Blow includes two scenarios. First, players choose which scenario they will play and then select which side they will command. The "Soviet player" commands all Soviet units, while the "German player" commands all German units.

The first game turn of a scenario always starts with the 1st Soviet Schwerpunkt Segment (see 4.2). Weather is always *Frozen* during Game Turn 1, and neither player may conduct Administrative Movement during game turn 1 (all segments). Place the Soviet C3I Points Marker in the "5" space, and the German C3I Points Marker in the "2" space on the General Records Track. All other markers are placed in the "0" space on the General Records Track. Starting with Game Turn 2, the regular sequence of play is in effect.

18.1 Scenario One - Red Army's High Water Mark

This scenario starts with Game Turn 1 and finishes at the end of Game Turn 4, covering the first 12 days of the campaign. It can be completed in less than two hours, allowing players to get their feet wet with the game system.

Victory is determined at the conclusion of Game Turn 4.

- **German Victory:** No Soviet units are west of the Donets River.
- **Soviet Victory:** One or more cities on the map are Soviet controlled.
- **Draw:** Any other result.

18.2 Scenario Two – von Manstein's Backhand Blow

This scenario recreates the entire campaign, which stretched over 51 days of fierce fighting. The scenario starts with Game Turn 1 and finishes at the end of Game Turn 17, allowing players to recreate the historical campaign in its entirety. With an estimate playing time of 10 hours, this scenario is the centerpiece of the game.

Victory is determined at the conclusion of Game Turn 17.

- * **German Decisive Victory:** All cities are German controlled and have at no time been Soviet controlled during the course of play.
- * **German Major Victory:** No Soviet units are west of the Donets River.
- * **German Minor Victory:** All cities are German controlled.
- * **Soviet Minor Victory:** Two cities are Soviet controlled.
- * **Soviet Major Victory:** Three cities are Soviet controlled.
- * **Soviet Decisive Victory:** Four or more cities on the map are Soviet controlled.
- * **Draw:** Any other result.

19.0 HISTORICAL COMMENTARY

20.0 DESIGNER'S NOTES

CREDITS

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