

Scenario Replay: WCW7 Eye of the Tiger

Hello and welcome to another exciting installment of the Scenario Replay. Today's featured scenario is "Eye of the Tiger" from the excellent Windy City Wargamers scenario pack. This scenario features some wonderful Combined Arms action and is highly recommended. If you do not own the WCW Scenario Pack, contact Louie Tokarz <mglouie@home.com> RIGHT AWAY to get your copy.

Joining me this time out is my longtime nemesis John Slotwinski, who will take the Mean Nasty Evil SS Bad Guys. Much as I hate to say it, John is a very good player who knows what he's doing out there and won't hesitate to exploit a weakness. A special treat for all of us is the addition of JR Tracy as Neutral Commentator. JR is one of the best ASL players around, as well as being one of the nicest people you'd ever want to meet. Despite this, I have no doubt that he'll be quick to second-guess my hapless defense. In fact, I'm counting on it – how ELSE am I ever gonna learn this game?

I also want to thank Rodney Kinney for special assistance during the final compilation of this Replay.

Summary of the scenario: The date is August 1944. See p. 3 for a board setup; note the terrain changes specified by SSR and overlays. Only the area shown is in play. The game is 6 turns long. The Germans win at game end if they control more stone buildings than the Russian without taking 30 CVP of casualties. Russians get 3 T-34M43's and an SU-85 entering on the west board edge of bd 42 on turn 1. The Germans receive one Fire Mission of 280mm OBA (from the Prinz Eugen) which takes place during Game Turn 1.

Enjoy the game. Please report comments or questions to Tom Repetti <tr@mindspring.com>

Neutral Pregame Comments – JR Tracy

EotT is a terrific OstFront metafest – if you like your ASL fast and furious, this is the ticket. I look forward to watching Tuomo and Dr. John hammer each other. I've played them both and find them very good players sharing several traits – careful planners, thoughtful executors, but each willing to try something crazy from time to time to shake things up. EotT demands a lot of the latter so we'll see who responds best when the time comes to improvise.

The German in EotT has an extremely powerful force, and the absence of Russian OBA means he can concentrate that firepower without fear, pick a point and smash into the Rooskie line. The opening blast of the Prinz Eugen won't net many casualties against an experienced Russian, but it will assure a dispersed defense and the FFE:2 should disrupt the movement of the reinforcing AFVs. The attacker must also consider the possible side effect of such a large-caliber bombardment – flames. Bringing it down in the wrong place, such as the grainfield on the Russian right, could start a conflagration and shut down a flank, something that hurts the SS far more than the Reds. The VC are very achievable, but the German has to keep an eye on the CVP cap – the Mk IVs and the Pumas brew up with alarming speed, and even the Tiger is vulnerable to the SU-85 or a frisky T-34.

The Russian setup has one key question – where to put that ATG? The safe spot is in the back, typically on the Russian right, where it can handle rampaging Pumas and Mk IVs. However, the 4GG4 woods hex has some serious ambush potential versus the opening German move, and I've even seen it placed in 4W4 or 4X4 which can also be a bit of a shock. Regardless of where Tom chooses to put it, John will have to respect the possibility of an up-front location and enter accordingly. Otherwise, the Russian has to spread out to make sure the OBA can't bag more than one squad, yet have enough bodies forward to peck away at the German OoB from the outset. The OBA-mandated dispersal and the reinforcing armor puts the Russian in a reacting role – the German dictates the tone of the scenario and there isn't much the Russian can do at the outset to channel the flow of the assault.

Russian Pregame Comments – Tom Repetti

I wish I had more of a clue about this scenario, I really do. Some scenarios you look at just seem to read like an open book and you instantly know what you want to do and how you want to do it. Not so here; the terrain doesn't point to any obvious defense (at least to me) and the only thing I can say about the attack is that it'll most likely be a sweep down one board edge, angling in toward the center to grab the VC buildings around 42J2 and then an ugly fight for the last 3 buildings. No great insight there, and not much I can reasonably do to deflect it, either.

The buildings east of the 42A5-P3 road will certainly fall; my job is to keep John out of two buildings on the west side of that road. Winning by CVP cap would be nice, but I can't count on it in the initial stages; there's simply too much uncertainty in how the armor battle will go.

And make no mistake, the armor battle is crucial. We've got combined arms here, but the winner of the armor battle will have a serious leg up on the Victory Conditions. I can't imagine holding on to the requisite number of VC buildings if John has a tank or two floating around while all of my AFV's are dead; it will be too easy for a German AFV to get into the Russian rear area and encircle the building defenders and play havoc with their rout paths. As in Wintergewitter, the infantry will do the groundwork, but the armor fight is Job One.

Toward that end, this should be an interesting brouhaha. This is not your typical late-war Heavy Metal "hit/kill" scenario – the AFV To Kill #'s will hover around 5 to 9, offering plenty of opportunities for high drama. There's also lots of APCR to go around, adding to the spice, along with increased SS Depletion Numbers (C8.2), various smoke dischargers, and armor leaders to complete the AFV smorgasbord. It may not be in the Russian's best interests to gallivant around the countryside doing Funky Armor Tricks to the German tanks, but I personally doubt that I'll be able to restrain myself; there's just too much drama out there waiting to unfold. And truthfully, if the Germans start to edge up to about 20 CVP, I'm going to think seriously about hunting down the last of the German armor and try to win the game via the CVP cap.

My Setup Phase consisted of staring at the board for a good long time, even though I've played this scenario once before. Thank goodness this isn't FTF. Primarily I'm concerned about getting whacked by the Prinz Eugen OBA; anything that comes under its Volkswagon-sized guns is going to be obliterated right-quick. Note that the OBA has the real potential to create some serious Fires out there, especially if it lands in the Grain. If I were John, I'd probably start the game with the OBA pre-registered around 42J2 and then correct it toward whatever group of Russians seems most annoying. Bringing the OBA down on the front of the Russian defense (the first 4 hexrows of bd 4) is tempting, but I think there's too much potential for it to hamper the German's own attack.

So the word for the Russians at start is: Spread Out. Don't let the OBA catch more than one hapless unit at a time. One neat idea that came into my mind is that John will probably not pre-register the OBA near the 42A or P hexrows for fear of having it scatter offboard. Therefore, those areas should be relatively safe from the initial OBA round, and who knows, John might be fearful of correcting the FFE over to the board edge during the Russian Turn 1 DFPh for the same reason. We'll see how this interesting bit of psychology plays out.

The first unit I put on the board is actually the 45LL ATG. Not that it's the most powerful unit out there, but settling its placement does a lot for settling the question of how I'm going to play the defense. The ATG could go up front and plan to whack the Germans as they come across board 4 (the German schwerkpunkt is likely to be a "target rich environment"), but somehow I feel like I want to keep the ATG around well into the middle-game. Putting the ATG up front might bag a Puma or maybe get a Deliberate Immobilization on the Tiger, but its discovery will take a big question mark off the table and I want John to be worrying about the ATG for several turns at least, with the threat of side shots against the PzIV's or the Tiger. 42P4 is a nice location in the rear, not likely to catch any OBA rounds, with reasonable LOS to the center of the board where the action will be. The ATG will boresight 4S2 in anticipation of whacking a German vehicle using VBM to freeze the defenders in that hex; note too the

potential for getting a side-shot against German vehicles VBM Freezing the 4R1/S2 or 4R1/Q2 hexsides.

The 9-1/HMG comes next. I'm almost loathe to stack these two together for fear of losing both to an OBA round, but it's simply too good a combination for this Russian infantry force which will be hard-pressed to hurt ML8 Germans in stone buildings. The piggy weight of the HMG dictates a safe placement in one of the stone buildings on bd 42, but those buildings are uncomfortably close to where I think the OBA might come down, so I'll look elsewhere. John knows I'm a nut for Firelanes, but I simply don't see any good locations where the HMG could lay a reasonable firelane onto bd 4 while being able to fall back onto bd 42 when the middle-game begins. 42A3 is about the closest I can see, but I'd rather set up in concealment terrain just to keep John guessing. Therefore, I'll settle for 42A4, where the HMG can put some serious hurt on any Germans coming down the 4FF/GG hexrows; the free LOS check allowed to a boresighting Scenario Defender (C6.42) shows a clear LOS to units bypassing 4GG7. Units starting in 42A4 can also retreat back to the B6, D5, or F3 stone buildings if need be.

I've recently twigged to the concept of using a Set DC on defense to deny an important piece of terrain to the attacker. Certainly there's probably time to attempt a Set DC here, but I don't see any obvious terrain that could benefit from it. Toward the end game, the Russians in the H5/J5/K5 buildings will find it difficult to skulk away from defensive fire and it might be nice to rubble one of these buildings, thus creating some Inherent Terrain which could be skulked behind and making the hex immune from VBM Freeze, but all in all, it seems like a stretch. I'll keep the DC and hope to have some fun with it in another way.

Like I said above, I love firelanes, so the next priority is seeing where I can lay some nice firelanes across the likely German paths of attack. There certainly are some juicy FL possibilities on bd 4, but they all tend to suffer from being overly VBM-Freezable (and thus negatable, A9.223) or uncomfortably close to the OBA. Also, since I'm gonna want a leader to direct the firelane and keep it from covering (A9.22), it seems like I'd be risking a lot just to lay a firelane of uncertain effectiveness. Therefore, I'm gonna restrain myself and put one of the leaders and LMG's in 42H8 to act as a reserve.

Having been a Good Boy and minded one of Sun Tzu's recommendations in the Art of War (namely, Have A Reserve, Dummy!), I feel emotionally free to indulge myself with the second LMG. I can't just abandon bd 4 when the firelane potential is so great, and risking a 2 FP LMG isn't all that huge a loss, so I'm going to put an LMG in 42X1 where it has several nice FL options. Since John will instantly figure any ?+3's for a leader/squad/LMG combo, I'll get tricky and not stack a leader here. Sure, the firelane might cower, but it's worth it to not risk one of my valuable leaders in this front-of-the-front role, and any messing I can do with John's head is worth it.

Having set up what I've got so far, it's apparent that some kind of anti-tank option might be nice on the north edge of the board, so I place a squad/ATR combination in 42E2, along with two Dummy counters so they'll look like the aforementioned leader/squad/MG combo. 42D1 might be more convincing as a likely location for an MG firelane, but it's not Concealment terrain and therefore any units setting up in it must be real, and I want to keep John guessing as much as possible.

The last issue is where to place the third Russian leader. With leaders in A4 and H8, apparently the southern end of the map needs a leader. Placement in the big woods mass around N6 would be safe, but I think there's potential to place him where he can do some good while still avoiding the OBA. Putting the 7-0 and a squad in 4R1 would do much to help the lone squad in 4S2 against a southern board push; it's not likely that John would risk two AFV's in VBM-Freezing both of these hexes, and I've got the 45LL ATG backing them up anyway. If things do get hot and heavy, we'll give them the DC to place or throw onto a German tank; certainly it'd be a worthwhile tradeoff. Finally, if the Germans attack along the north board edge, the 7-0 can easily reposition to the center of the board, perhaps linking up with the LMG squad in 4X1.

The remainder of the real Russian units are placed in a spread-out pattern where two units won't simultaneously catch an OBA round, and then the remaining Dummy counters are placed to fill in the gaps and present a relatively uniform front.

I'm hoping to spend the first turn surviving the OBA and getting my armor into positions where they can hit the German armor as it moves in turn 2. There could be a battle between hull-down units behind the northern walled area; not sure I want to get too involved with that, but certainly the sequence of play gives me (the defender) the advantage of getting the first serious shots in. After that, it'll be a matter of settling the armor battle while the infantry hunkers down in the stone buildings and awaits the German push across the road.

I'm ready John, let's rock!

Russian Setup

42A4	?, 9-1,458/HMG	4Y3	Sniper
42B6	?, ?, 458	4X1	?, 458/LMG
42C4	?, ?	4U1	?, 447
42E2	?, ?, 458/ATR	4S2	?, 447
42F3	?, 447	4R1	?, 7-0, 458/DC
42H8	?, 8-0, 458/LMG		
42I3	?, 458		
42K5	?, ?		
42N5	?, 458		
42P4	45LL ATG, 228, CA: O3, Boresight 4S2		

German Pregame Comments – John Slotwinski

Eye of the Tiger (EotT) is a popular tournament-sized scenario featuring two elite combined arms (CO) OBs going head-to-head on an interesting board configuration. The popular perception is that this scenario is pro-Russian and while I think that is true, I don't believe that it is as bad as its reputation indicates. As of this writing (May 2000), the Remote Online Automated Record (ROAR) currently lists it as 61-47 pro-Russian, which sounds realistic. My previous experiences with this scenario include one playing as the Russians which resulted in a victory, and a very close defeat as the Germans.

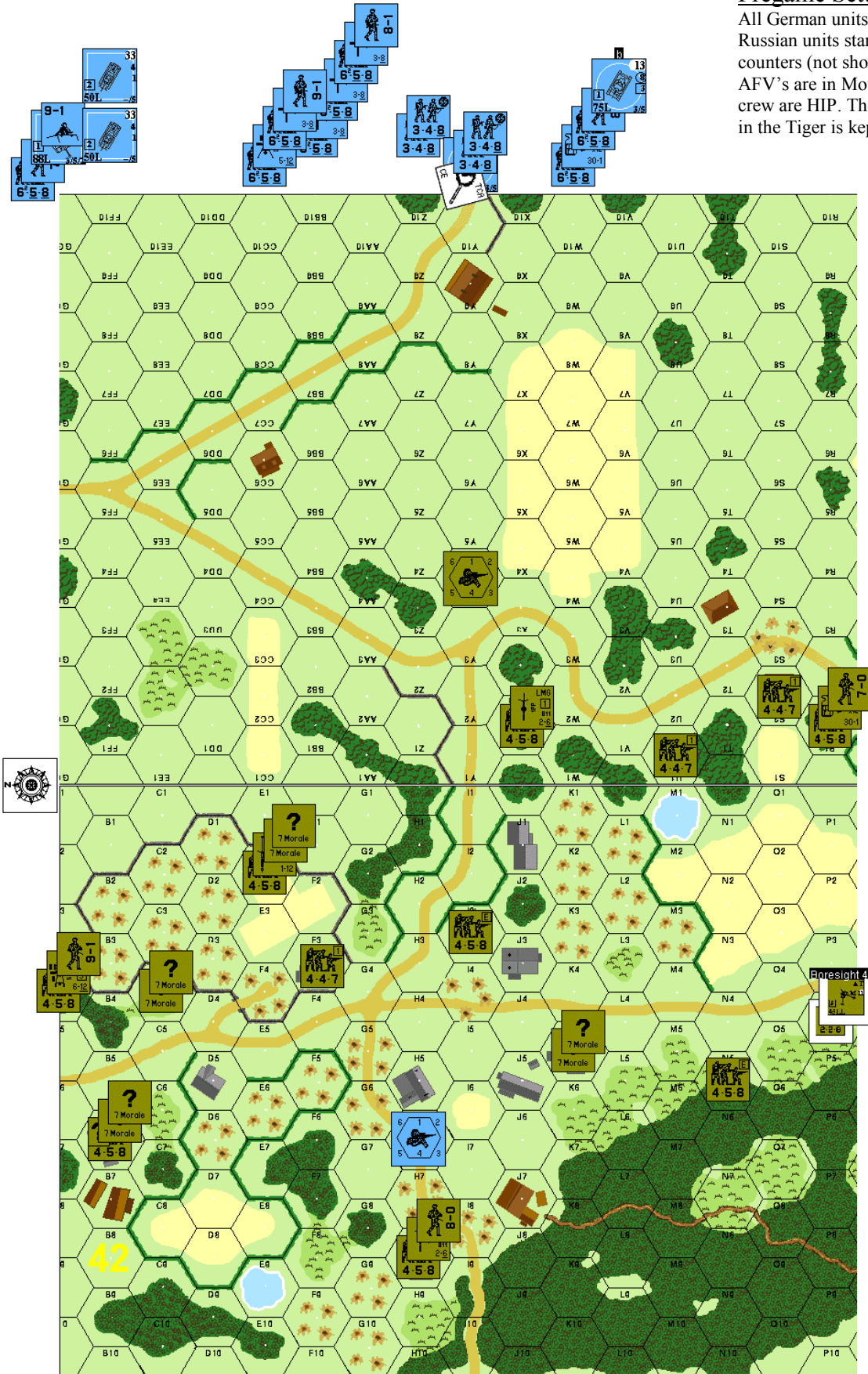
Tom and I are playing this game via e-mail, using VASL <<http://vasl.thegamers.net>>. This is a necessity since we live 2000+ miles apart, but VASL also provides an easy way for us to record the game. In addition, since play-by-email is done at a much slower pace, there is a lot of time to over-analyze moves and make contingency plans. There shouldn't be any dumb moves induced by end-game fatigue that you often have in FTF.

For this playing I've asked Tom for the Germans in part because I believe in this scenario they are the fun side to play. The key for the German attacker in EotT is good CO play carrying an aggressive, but not reckless attack. Now good combined arms play is not easy, and I am not an expert at it. However, I hope to show some competent play while demonstrating some of its features, including armored assault, riders, bounding fire, and good smoke use. In theory I believe that good CO play revolves around the infantry-AFV interaction: The infantry take out enemy anti-armor threats like anti-tank guns while the AFVs attack tough enemy infantry positions like MG nests. Of course, we will also have tank versus tank and infantry versus tank encounters.

Let's look quickly at my OB. Each German 658 SS squad has more firepower when compared to its 458 Russian adversaries. In addition, these late war troops have assault fire capability that is ideal for the attacker (A25.11). The Tiger tank is the most important piece in the German OB, featuring box '11' front armor, an 88L MA, and 8 factors of MGs which can be used while BU. Put the 9-1 Armor Leader in it and you have a formidable piece. How long this guy stays alive will strongly determine German success or failure. Smoke potential also abounds in this OB in the form of MA smoke ammo from the PzIVs, sDs, and smoke grenades (both infantry and vehicle.) Finally, the 280 mm turn 1 OBA mission may cause a casualty or two, but I think its best benefit is forcing the Russians to setup a dispersed defense.

Pregame Setups

All German units and non-Dummy Russian units start the game under ? counters (not shown for clarity.) German AFV's are in Motion. Russian ATG and crew are HIP. The German Armor Leader in the Tiger is kept offboard until used.



Grain is in effect; note the SSR which changes all orchards to shellholes and the addition of the brush overlay in 4EE2 and the woods overlay in 4X1.

All graphics used in this example are screenshots from VASL 3.02, courtesy of Rodney Kinney (programmer), Carl Fung (counter images), and Bruce Mansfield, Rodney Kinney, and Gordon Molek (board images).

Even with this nice OB, I will have to play my 'A' game in order to win. Simply put, the Germans have to seize a majority of the stone buildings on board 42, in a short amount of time, while trying to limit their own casualties to less than 30 CVP. Ouch. This is a stern test, even for these ubermen.

Before looking at Tom's setup I've selected 42E4 for my pre-registered hex, for reasons which I will outline below in my general plan.

The last time I played this I attacked up the middle of the board 4, through the wheat-field, and bullied my way into 42I1 and the buildings beyond. I think that plan would work this time around too, but Tom is setup pretty heavy on the south side of board 4. I suppose I could cut those units off with a tank in 4X4 (CA:W3), forcing them to take the long way back into the village via the large board 42 wheat-field. But I think I'll try something different this time around.

My basic plan this time is to seize control of the board 42 walled area within the first two or three turns of the scenario, and then use this area as a jumping off point to assault the stone locations on board 42. I believe that this stone wall area is the key to the scenario. Whoever controls this area will benefit from the +2 TEM for their infantry and the hull down status for their tanks. This is especially important for my Tiger, which has a frontal AF of 14 while hull down. I simply must try to keep the Tiger alive, and keeping him HD will help protect him against the SU-85.

This plan explains my pre-registered hex of 42E4. Provided that the initial FFE is accurate (2/3 chance) this FFE will keep any turn 1 Russian AFVs from trying to get hull down positions in 42D4, E5 and/or F4. It will also attack any Russians in the 42F3 stone building with a 36(+2) attack, and may even rubble the location. Any Russians that are in wall TEM will be subjected to a nasty 36 (+0) IFT attack [+1 wall indirect fire TEM (B9.34), -1 for OBA heavy payload (C.7).] Finally, there is only one grain location within the proposed FFE that could ignite, something that I want to avoid.

Tom's defense looks dispersed, obviously respecting the lethality of the 280 mm OBA. I'm guessing that 42H8 contains a squad/HMG and '-1' leader. From this stone building these guys could cover five other stone buildings, and much of the surrounding terrain, so it's a good spot for them. 4X1 looks like a squad and maybe an LMG to lay the obvious but effective firelane down the road out to 4DD4. I suppose the HMG could be here, but that would be a gamble since its owner wouldn't be able to rout away with it or withdraw from the position easily. Might be an ATR too. I'm not really worried about the ATR in general, provided that it doesn't get a rear/side shot on the Pumas. It could be used for Deliberate Immobilization attempts, but I'll try to minimize that opportunity as well.

Other possible locations for the ATRs/LMGs are 4R1, 42E2, 42B6, and 42A4. Where are the dummies? I can't tell for sure, but 4R1 and 42E2 seem likely. Hex 4R1 is way out of the way, and 42E2 might be kind of devious; it is grain and thus concealment terrain, but that might be overlooked by the attacker since the wall provides a nice +2 TEM. Except that there aren't any good shots from this position. Maybe a FL down to CC5, but I'm not convinced. I'm thinking it's a dummy stack. Maybe I need to count counters. Having 23 counters under concealment might mean that there are three dummy stacks (?+1, ?+1, and ?+2). So now I think maybe 42E2 is not a dummy.

I have no clue where the ATG is. There are plenty of spots to choose from, but none of them cover large chunks of the battlefield, except for maybe some risky up-front position. Personally I might put it back around the board 42 village. My Tiger has nothing to fear from the 45LL through its front armor; my PzIVs have to be a little concerned; and my Pumas have to be concerned a lot! Actually this gun's best use might be as a high-ROF anti-infantry weapon. We'll see. In the meantime we'll try not to worry too much about where it is and focus more on keeping my best armor facing the enemy.

The German right flank is the way I want to attack and Tom's initial defense will let me go that way relatively safely! The only units that I have to worry about, at least until Tom starts reinforcing the area, are the HIP gun, and the stacks in 4X1 and 42E2. So first the FFE will land in 42E4. Then an PzIV with two half-squads as riders will move to around 42D1, turn the turret and dump the riders. These guys might break, especially if

42E2 turns out to be real, but if they do they'll be able to rout back to FF1. If they survive I will benefit by having a little infantry up front. The Pumas will move to around 4BB3 and CC4 and stay in motion. These guys will try to hit their sDs on turn 2 to protect the SS infantry which at that point will be trying to cross the road. The Tiger will setup in/around 4FF5 to protect the Pumas against any Russian armor which gets frisky and attacks down the 42I1 - 4Y1 road. My infantry all CX down the north half of the board, except for two squads and a leader which CX down the W row to W5. The remaining PzIV will take up position somewhere on the German left, with the thought of firing smoke ammo in the turn two prep phase.

A late thought: My plans could really be ruined if the gun is in 4GG4 (CA:EE4). From here he could take side/rear shots at my vehicles as they approach the wall. And the Pumas would be toast. I think I need to CX a squad down the 4GG row to enter 4GG4 during the advance phase. Or maybe the Tiger will take a bounding mg shot into there on turn 1. Or maybe I'll use the 7-0 as a scout. I have to think about this.

I'm also glad there are no Russians in the 42H1 wood mass, although a HIP ATG in here might also ruin my day. By turn two the turn one FFEs and up-front armor will hopefully have softened up the wall area enough to let the infantry move in. From there the board 42 stone locations will be assaulted.

A final word on the lowly Pumas. These guys are my most vulnerable armor, especially from the ATG, but even from the ATR. This is a problem since together they are worth an easy 10 CVP. So these guys will stay in motion and try to use their sDs where appropriate. On the next to last turn they might dash for bypass positions in some unprotected stone buildings, and then be abandoned to get control of those buildings on the last turn. In a pinch, if the situation warrants (i.e. safe from AT fire) I might use one of them to bypass-sleaze-freeze a Russian strongpoint. Then watch as a stack of SS waltzes up to deal out some deadly point blank advancing fire. We shall see.

Comments on Opening Comments – JR Tracy

Tom twigs to the true imperative of the Russians by keeping his forces well dispersed. I can't quibble with the placement of the ATG, but I do question the boresighting location. I don't anticipate many German assaults against the Russian right flank, and besides, the S2 hex is already hindered by loads of Grain, and anyone in Bypass will likely only have been seen for two or perhaps three MPs. Add in the +2 Moving TH DRM and you're looking at a DR of five or so, and that's **with** the BS modifier! I'd go for a bore-sighted hex more toward the center of the board, in the I4/H4/G4/F4 area. That's where an AFV or two is sure to bubble out, and will help offset the DRM for changing CA.

As for the Infantry, I feel Tom has too much up front – those four squads **might** get some licks in on the German's opening move, but they'll get a lot of attention in the AFPh. The LMG/458 combo in 4X1 is unlikely to still be around to lay a Firelane down the road by the time the Germans are crossing it. Also, I believe it's a stronger defense than the Russian needs on the right, for reasons stated above. I like maybe two squads up front with some dummies for show, and the rest in back. The HMG on the left is a bit of a gamble – if John uses the Prinz Eugen to scare the Russian armor away from the wall, the 9-1/HMG team will have to beat feet to safety before the FFE gets corrected on top of their heads. Regardless, Tom will be reacting to John's opening move, so the trick will be coordinating these on-board squaddies with the reinforcing armor, all the while cognizant of the threat of a corrected FFE:2.

Ooh, wait, one more thing – what's with this clear LOS from 42A4 to the 4FF6/4FF7/4GG7 bypass vertex? It's blocked on my boards – I tried three different board pairs and it's blocked every time by the Woods in 4GG4. Hmmm, must be a vagary of VASL – kids, don't try that BS location at home!

As for the German opening, I like John's plan to go for the walled region on the Soviet left. Grabbing those precious HD positions will be a boon in the armor exchange, and will certainly put the T34's and the SU85 on their back feet. The threat of the Prinz Eugen's FFE will surely keep the Russian armor off the back wall along 42C4/D4/E5/F4, so John will be able to establish himself on the opposite side by the end of his second MPH. The one drawback to a German drive down that board edge is the inability of the

Pumas to jump the wall. If they want to be part of the midgame, they'll have to come down the road, a tough proposition in the face of the various armor killing weapons at Tom's disposal.

It looks like John doesn't suspect the HMG position, so Tom might catch him unawares with some devastating First Fire. I believe John's making the right choice in basically ignoring the threat of the ATG – he can't let it dominate his thoughts, since careful play will assure it only bags one AFV. However, he seems to be waffling a bit about a possible up-front ATG gambit in 4GG4. John's also sensitive to the liability of the Pumas CVP-wise – they are very useful vehicles, but vulnerable - he will be sorely tempted to throw them into harm's way at some point in the game. My money says Tom will have those ten CVP in the bank by game's end.

Overall John's plan is sound – a powerful concentrated attack, utilizing the Prinz Eugen to pave the way to a very strong opening position.

German Setup

- 42H6 Sniper
- 4GG11 ?, Tiger (CA:FF9), 9-1 AL, 7-0, 658
- 4FF11 ?, Puma (CA:GG10)
- 4FF12 ?, Puma (CA:GG11)
- 4CC11 ?, 9-1, 658/LMG, 658/MMG
- 4BB11 ?, 8-1, 658/LMG, 658/LMG, 658/LMG
- 4Z11 ?, 348, 348
- 4Y11 ?, PzIV (CE, CA:Z9) with two 348 Riders
- 4W11 ?, PzIV (CA: X9), 8-0, 658, 658/DC

All German AFV's are in Motion

German Turn 1

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 6,5 no change

Prep Fire Phase

1. German pre-registered hex is 42E4; place AR in 42E4.
 Accurate on dr = 1-4 per C1.732. Accuracy dr = 6, not accurate
 Scatter direction = 2, distance = 1 (halved, FRU to 1) moves center of OBA to F3. Flip to FFE:1 in F3.
 Resolve OBA in F3: 36(+2): DR = 1,4 K/4, possible Rubble creation.
 Rubble Creation dr = 5, no effect
 4MC vs surviving 237 HS: DR = 6,6 Casualty Reduced, KIA

Resolve OBA vs terrain, 36 column of IFT:

- F2: DR = 2,5 - no effect
- G3: DR = 6,2 - no effect
- G4: DR = 6,6 - no effect
- F4: DR = 6,6 - no effect
- E4: DR = 1,4 - Shellholes, but they already exist in E4, so no effect
- E3: DR = 5,6 - no effect

Replace FFE:1 with FFE:2

Tom - Geez. Can I start complaining about the VASL dice bot yet? All those boxcars and I couldn't get one of them for the 36(+2) shot on my squad?

Movement Phase

1. Puma moves from FF11

John - As I was setting up my force I began wondering if the stack in 42A4 actually contained the HMG. Tom pulled a similar board-edge-setup for the HMG in another scenario we played. I could be getting paranoid in my old age, but if it is the HMG that would put a crimp in my plans to enter GG4 (w/a CX leader and squad) to look for the gun since I think 42A4 can see the bypass vertex of 4GG7. So I'll send the Puma in first to hit the sD in FF6. It looks out of place but I think it works. Maybe FF5 or GG6 would be better, but I want my Tiger in that general area and don't want to hinder his upcoming shots.

- a. FF10 - 3
- b. FF9 - 6

- c. FF8 - 9
- d. FF7 - 12
- e. FF6 - 15
- f. sD attempt DR = 2,2 successful, place +2 Grey Dispersed Smoke - 16 MP
- g. GG6 - 19
- h. CA: FF4 - 20
- i. FF5 - 21
- j. EE5 - 22

Tom - Passing by in full view of the ATR in 42E2, but the Puma's frontal armor would knock the final TK # down to 3, which isn't good enough to make me drop concealment with the ATR squad. Sure, the ATR may not be good for much better than this kind of shot, but I want to keep concealment here if I can, and hope John gets over-aggressive with a Puma or PzIV, maybe presenting the ATR with a side shot later on.

- k. DD4 - 23
- l. CC4 - 24
- m. BB3 - 25
- n. AA3 - 26
- o. Z2 - 33, end in Motion, still concealed (although it's obvious from the Open Ground MP expenditure that this is an Armored Car)

John - Note that Tom doesn't momentarily reveal anyone to strip concealment on my Puma. Keeps me guessing about whom is real before I bring up my infantry. This is a wise move. Based on my MP expenditure he already knows it's a Puma, and since I stayed in motion he can reveal someone to strip concealment during FINAL FIRE, when the Puma will be giving up concealment anyway.

2. 7-0, 658 move from GG11 using Double Time

- a. GG10 - 1
- b. GG9 - 2
- c. GG8 - 3
- d. GG7, byp FF7/FF6 - 4
- e. Russian 9-1, HMG fire from 42A4
 6(+0) DR = 1,4 1MC, ROF (colored dr always listed first)
 1MC vs CX7-0 DR = 6,4 breaks, ELR to 6+1
 vs CX658 DR = 4,3 Pins

Tom - Good thing for John that he got that sD smoke in FF6, or this would have been a KIA shot with the extra -1 FFMO DRM and without the +2 Smoke Hindrance DRM. I was hoping to boresight GG7 with the HMG just to be able to hit units bypassing AA7, but that's NA because you have to have LOS to the hex center dot to BS the hex. Still, I can't complain; usually my HMG's lose rate on their first shot.

3. Puma in 4FF12 moves

- a. FF11 - 3
- b. FF10 - 6
- c. FF9 - 9
- d. FF8 - 12
- e. FF7 - 15
- f. FF6 - 19
- g. GG6 - 22
- h. CA: FF4 - 23
- i. GG5 - 26
- j. Bypass GG4/FF4 (TCA: GG4) - 32
- k. Attempt sD7 DR = 4,6 no, ends in Motion

Tom - Between this move and other game-time comments of John's, it looks like he's really concerned about my 45LL ATG being in GG4. Good to see him worrying like this. If the ATG were in GG4, it would be automatically revealed at the end of the MPh (A12.42), although it would be restricted to firing within its own hex (A7.212) – the infamous “VBM Freeze”.

John - I'm still paranoid that the gun is in GG4. The second Puma went into bypass there and tried for sD. This looks aggressive, but if the gun is there the TH will be bad for the Russians: +2 moving, +2 in-hex case (C5.5), and the gun would also have to turn (since I didn't enter on a CA hexside – C5.51) for another +6. While this guy is in there he restricts the gun from firing outside the hex. And if he isn't there the Puma is still in position to

lay down some sD on turn 2. If he is there he'll be revealed at the end of my MPH. (A12.42)

4. CE PzIV and Riders move onboard from Y10

- a. up the road to EE6 for 4 MP
- b. BU, EE5 - 5
- c. EE4 - 6
- d. EE3 - 8
- e. EE2 - 10
- f. Russian 458 fires from E2 at the riders
4(+0) DR = 4,5 NE, 2 RFP

g. Same unit SFF's at the riders

- 2(+0) DR = 1,4 NMC
- NMC vs 348 DR = 1,2 OK
- vs 348 DR = 3,4 OK

h. EE1 - 11

i. C1 - 12

j. A4 fires at riders, who don't get Wall TEM (B9.3)

- 8(-1) DR = 6,4 PTC, 1 RFP
- PTC vs 348 DR = 1,1 OK
- vs 348 DR = 2,4 OK

Tom - Aargh! What the hell. These guys should have been mincemeat.

k. stop, TCA:D2 - 13

- TCA change forces Riders to Bail Out (D6.21) and take Bail Out NMC's
- NMC vs 348 DR = 5,2 OK
- vs 348 DR = 3,6 breaks, DM

1 RFP hits

- 1(-1) DR = 3,2 NMC
- NMC vs 348 DR = 4,3 OK
- vs DM348 DR = 2,5 OK

A4 SFF's

- 4(+0) DR = 5,4 NE

Tom - So these two riders took three NMC's and a PTC and only one broke. Uh-huh. Russum Frussum.

John - I'm clever enough to see the LOS from 42A4 to the 4GG6-FF5-FF6 vertex, but not the simple LOS from 4A4 to 4C1. I was willing to suck up a 4 flat from E2 but I would never have moved these guys here if I saw the simple LOS from the HMG stack. Stupid! I was just trying to put the 4FF1 trees between myself and the possible gun location in 4GG4. Fortunately I luck out and my ubermen pass all their morale checks. One HS trips on the treads and breaks while bailing from the tank, but the other is in good shape. That's why I put two HS on the tank in the first place, allowing one of them to bust, but realizing that the chances of both breaking while bailing out was slim. Of course, if I had failed my MCs from the HMG shots I'd look real stupid now. But lady luck bails me out (no pun intended.) It may seem like I'm getting real risky now and doing my best to throw away points. But, the only infantry that I've really risked are the two HSs. And any TH chances on the Pumas from likely ATG positions would be low odds, I think. The PzIV is up front, but in a great spot. So far these risks seem worth it. Now where *is* that damn ATG?

5. PzVI enters from GG11

- a. GG10 - 1
- b. GG9 - 2
- c. GG8 - 3
- d. FF7 - 4
- e. FF6 - 6
- f. CA: GG5 - 7
- g. GG6 - 10 (expending more MP than necessary, F11.74)
- h. CA: FF4 - 11
- i. Stop - 12

6. PzIV enters from W11:

- a. W10 - 1
- b. W9 - 2

- c. W8 - 3
- d. W7 - 4
- e. W6 - 5
- f. go CE, CA: V4 - 6
- g. V5 - 7
- h. V4 - 8
- i. attempt sD DR = 4,4 no
- j. CA: W3 - 9
- k. Stop - 10

7. Infantry in W11 Double Time

- a. W10 - 1
- b. X9 - 2
- c. X8, bypassing W9, W8 - 3
- d. X7 - 4.5
- e. X6 - 6
- f. X5 - 7.5

8. 348 in Z11 double times

- a. z10, bypass aa11,aa10 - 1
- b. z9 - 2
- c. z8 - 3
- d. z7 - 5
- e. z6 - 6

9. 348 in Z11 double times

- a. z10, bypass aa11,aa10 - 1
- b. z9 - 2
- c. z8 - 3
- d. aa8 - 4
- e. aa7 - 6

10. CC11 moves

- a. CC10 - 1
- b. CC9 - 2
- c. cc8 - 3
- d. cc7 - 5
- e. DD6 - 6 - lose ? to 42E2

11. BB11 moves

- a. bb10 - 1
- b. BB9 - 2
- c. CC9 - 3
- d. CC8 - 4
- e. CC7 - 6

Defensive Fire Phase

- 1. ATR in E2 fires at Puma in GG4
TH DR = 2,5 miss

Tom - Nerts; had a side turret shot here, which would have been sweet.

Advancing Fire Phase

- 1. DD6 at E2
4(+2) DR = 4,3 no
- 2. tank in C1 fires CMG at E2
2(+0) DR = 2,6, no
- 3. tank in C1 fires MA at E2
TH DR = 3,1 hits both concealed and unconcealed units, Russian SAN IFT resolution 12(+0) vs unconcealed, 6(+0) vs concealed
DR = 3,4 1MC vs unconcealed, NMC vs concealed
?+1 Dummy unit revealed as a result of NMC
1MC vs 458/ATR DR = 5,2 Pin
Russian sniper dr = 6, no
- 4. Puma in GG4 fires CMG at A4
1(+1) DR = 6,4 no

5. Tiger fires MG's at X1
2(+2) DR = 2,5 no
6. Tiger fires MA at Y1, Area target type
TH DR = 2,3 -1 Acq
7. tank in V4 rotates TCA to W3 and fires MA at X1 using Area target type
TH DR = 3,3 -1 Acq

Rout Phase

1. DM348 in 42C1 to 4EE1, 4FF1

Advance Phase

1. 4Z6 to 4Z5
2. 4AA7 to 4AA6
3. ?CX658 in 4X5 to 4W5
4. remainder of 4X5 to 4X4
5. ?658/LMG in 4CC7 to 4BB6
6. remainder of 4CC7 to 4CC6
7. 4DD6 to 4DD5

Close Combat Phase - no actions

Tom - Evidently John is using the OBA to screen his advance; there's no way I'm going to contest the west side of the wall around 42D3 with the OBA out there waiting to flatten anybody stupid enough to try. To my chagrin, I hadn't anticipated the OBA being used this way, but it's a great move, and one which I'll definitely remember should I ever get the Germans in this scenario. John has pretty much guaranteed he'll be able to bring the Tiger and a PzIV into Hull Down positions around 42D3, which brings him right up to the stone buildings he needs to take. Still, should it come to a tank vs tank exchange across the B5/F4 road, I'll get the first shots in, and hopefully I'll be able to win that fight with the help of special ammo and Intensive Fire. If not, this'll be a short game.

John - At the end of my half of turn 1 I'm in pretty good position, and did this with a minimum of heartburn. I probably got overly obsessed about the possibility of having the Russian gun in 4GG4, but I simply had to make sure it wasn't there, or if it was, that it couldn't wreck my armor. My entire armor force stays intact, and my only brokies are the lame 7-0 (now a 6+1) and the HS that fell off the up-front PzIV. As an aside, why do 8-morale SS formations get 7-0 leaders? Having a 6+1 is even worse.

I found two dummy counters on the ATR/458 stack in 42E2, leaving five. I'm surprised by the HMG in 42A4, but at least I considered this possibility before eating a 6(-3) from it. This stack is now out of position unless it wants to hammer my HS in 42C1. I suspect that Tom will be moving it during his turn one. If it stays there I might send a Puma or the Tiger to play with these guys on turn two. In either case, I might be able to shift my 280 mm OBA over to discomfort them.

Speaking of 280 mm: My OBA is inaccurate but the drift is only 1 hex and at least it eliminates a squad and doesn't cause any flames. I'm not happy about having the 42E5 and 42D4 hull-down positions FFE-free, but Tom will still be reluctant to drive any AFVs into those locations during turn 1 since he has to respect my ability to correct the FFE2. And since those tanks will be harmed on a DR ≤ 7 (-1 heavy payload, +1 all armor factors ≥ 4, 7 on the 36 FP column is a shock/immobilization depending on the hit location) I think he'll avoid these locations. The squad in 42E2 is particularly vulnerable, although some clever moves might extricate him.

My next turn will center on getting smoke (from the Pumas) onto the board 4 AA3 – GG6 street, and moving my SS infantry into the AA1 woods area and beyond. I'd like to put some pressure on the HMG stack as well, and achieve HD status with my armor in the walled area. But my movement will depend a lot on what Tuomo does with his reinforcing armor.

JR - Overall John has to be happy with this opening move. The arty landed where it needed to and Tom wasn't able to convert the few opportunities he had to inflict some damage on the Germans. The Russian would like to score a couple CVPs every Player Turn, and Tom had a great shot at those Riders, but there will be plenty more opportunities to kill Germans. I am surprised John didn't push a bit harder and try to get more armor up to the

wall – despite his opening comments he still seems a bit spooked by the possibility of an up-front ATG.

It is interesting to see the effect of Tom's HMG placement. After the shot with the phantom LOS to 4GG7, John sorta forgot about it. Sometimes you *want* your opponent to be aware and obsessed with a big piece, so it shapes his actions. In this case, John drove his tank with Riders right up to the wall, blissfully ignorant of the impending 8(-1) shot – and of course gets away with it and has a halfsquad in a handy spot as a result. Had he remembered the HMG, it's possible he would've been more cautious, and thereby unwilling to go for the wall.

One little nitpick – John has to be worried about a Firelane out of 4X1 – why not Stop the Puma in 4AA3 in order to provide a hard Hindrance and make the Firelane a 1(0) shot?

Russian turn 1

Rally Phase

1. Set up Russian reinforcements, all CE in Motion:
42A10: T34, CA: B9
42I11: T34, CA:J9
42I12: T34, CA:J10, 9-1 Armor Leader
42I13: SU-85, CA:J11
2. Wind Change DR = 2,5 no
3. DM6+1 attempts self-rally in GG7 DR = 2,1 no
4. Remove DM's from all units

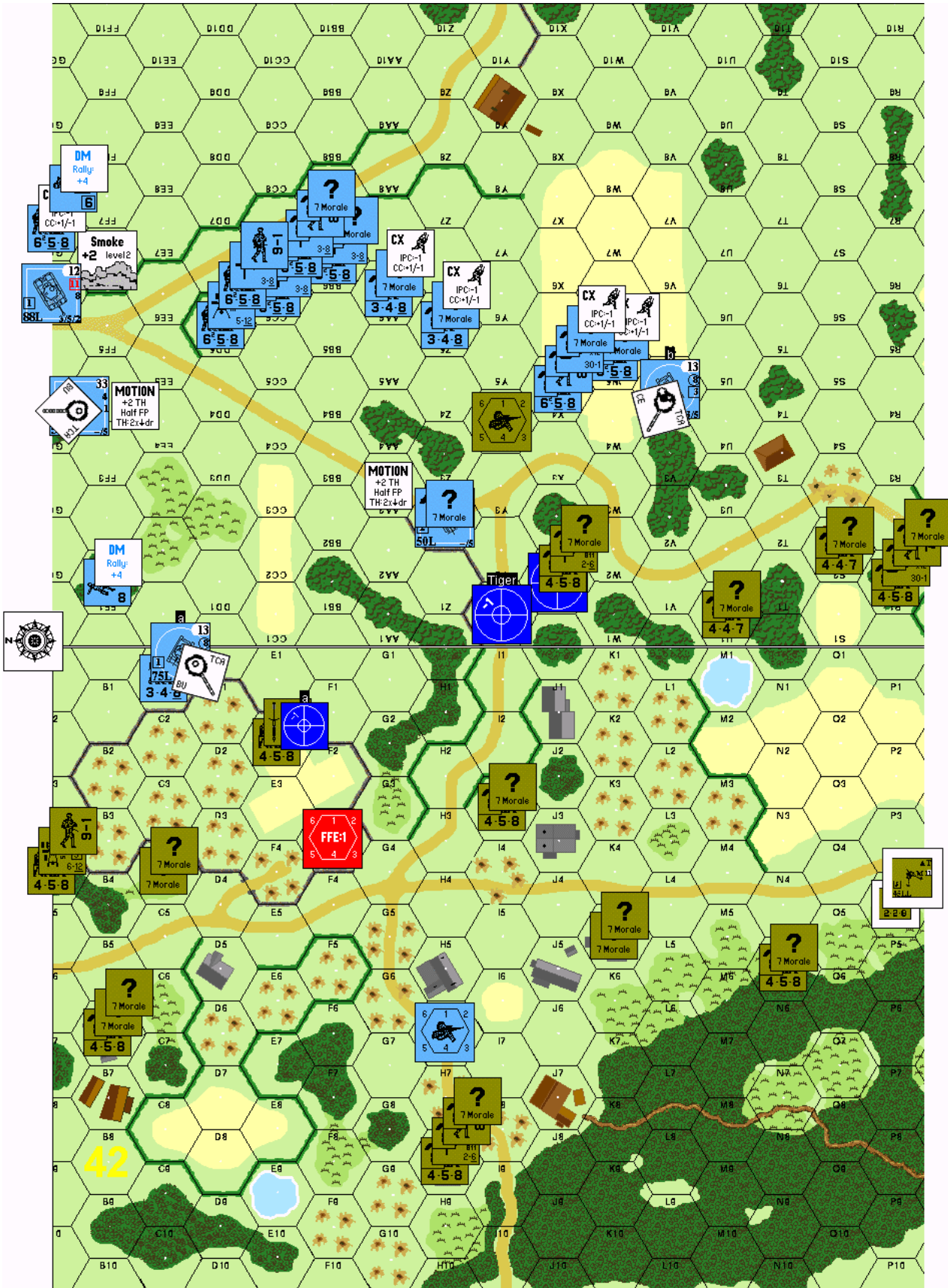
Prep Fire Phase

1. E2 fires ATR at GG4
TH DR = 3,6 miss

Tom - E2 doesn't have anywhere good to retreat to, so he sucks it up and indulges in some Prep Fire, hoping to take out the Puma before he goes down. T was not to be.

2. E2 fires inherent arms at DD5
2(+1) DR = 2,5 no

Board Status at the end of German Turn 1



Movement Phase

Tom - The Plan now is to scatter as much as possible, not giving John a chance to nail more than one unit in his DFPh FFE, and giving him absolutely no chance to bring down the OBA on a Russian AFV.

- 1. 42A4 moves
 - a. A5 - 1
 - b. A6 - 2
 - c. A7, bypass B6 - 3
 - d. B7 - 5
- 2. C4 moves
 - a. C5 - 1
 - b. D5 - 4
- 3. ?+1 in B6 moves
 - a. A6 - 1
 - b. A5 - 2
- 4. ?+1 in B6 assault moves A7 - 2
- 5. 4X1 assault moves 4W1 - 2
- 6. 42I3 moves
 - a. J2 - 2
 - b. j1 - 4
- 7. 42K5 moves
 - a. J4 - 1
 - b. I5 - 2
 - c. h5 - 4
- 8. 42N5 moves
 - a. M5 - 2
 - b. L5 - 4
- 9. 42H8 moves
 - a. I8 - 2
 - b. J7 - 4
- 10. 4R1 moves
 - a. S1 - 1.5
 - b. T0 - 3.5
- 11. 4S2 assault moves T1 - 2
- 12. 4U1 assault moves V0 - 2

- 13. T-34 in 42A11 moves
 - a. A10 - 1
 - b. A9 - 2
 - c. A8 - 3
 - d. A7, bypass B7 - 5
 - e. BU and enter bldg in B6 - 13
Bog Check DR = 5,5 Bogs

Tom - A very scary thing to do, risking the tank to falling into the Cellar on a Bog Check colored dr of 6 (B23.41). Still, the TEM of the building may offset the tank's disadvantage should the Germans take up Hull Down positions on the east side of the walled area around D3. And actually, the OBA could scatter onto this hex, where the Building TEM will enhance the tank's survivability.

John – Tom has always been into stylish moves. Driving AFVs into buildings definitely counts as one of these. To be fair though, in this case the AFV is now sitting in the comfortable confines of +3 TEM, and since he's on the defensive, this move has more tactical substance to it than mere style.

JR - Aaagh! Is he insane? Risk dropping a T34 into the Cellar this early in the game? That's nuts! The position isn't worth taking that kind of chance! Aaaagh!

- 14. T-34 in I11 moves
 - a. I10 - 0.5
 - b. I9 - 1
 - c. I8 - 1.5
 - d. I7 - 2.5
 - e. I6 - 3.5
 - f. I5 - 4.5
 - g. j4 - 5.5
 - h. CA: L4 - 6.5
 - i. K4 - 7
 - j. L4 - 7.5
 - k. M4 - 8
 - l. N4 - 8.5
 - m. O4 - 9
 - n. CA: N2 - 11
 - o. O3 - 12
 - p. O2 - 13
 - q. N1 - 14
 - r. stop, BU - 16

- 15. T-34 in I12 moves
 - a. I11 - 0.5
 - b. I10 - 1
 - c. I9 - 1.5
 - d. I8 - 2
 - e. I7 - 3
 - f. I6 - 4
 - g. I5 - 5
 - h. j4 - 6
 - i. k4 - 7
 - j. L3 - 9
 - k. M3 - 10
 - l. BU, CA: L1 - 11
 - m. stop - 16

Tom - The tanks in M3 and N1 are there to bring fire upon the German infantry encroaching onto the woods line at the board join as well as threaten a 2-on-1 tank battle against the PzIV out in 4V4.

- 16. SU-85 in I13 moves
 - a. I12 - 0.5
 - b. I11 - 1
 - c. I10 - 1.5
 - d. I9 - 2
 - e. I8 - 2.5
 - f. CA: H6 - 3.5
 - g. BU and stop - 16

Defensive Fire Phase

- 1. OBA is corrected to C5, requiring an extra chit draw
Draw = black
Accuracy dr = 5, inaccurate
Scatter direction = 1 (distance is 1 hex automatically)
Scatters to C4

- Resolve OBA vs C4 DR = 2,4 possible flame
Kindling DR = 3,1 no
- Resolve OBA vs B4 DR = 2,3 possible flame
Kindling DR = 3,2 no

Flip FFE:2 to FFE:C

- 2. tank in C1 fires CMG at E2
4(+0) DR = 1,4 1MC
1MC vs 458 DR = 3,4 Pin
- 3. tank in C1 fires MA at E2
TH DR = 2,4 hit
IFT resolution 12(+0) DR = 5,6 no
- 4. 348 in C1 fires at E2
2(+0) DR = 3,3 cowers, misses

5. DD5 fires at E2
12(+2) DR = 3,5 worthless PTC
6. CC6 fires at E2
12(+4) DR = 5,3 miss
7. tank in V4 fires at X1 to increase Area Acquisition
TH DR = 5,5 -2 Acq

Advancing Fire Phase

1. T-34 in B6 area acquires D3
TH DR = 5,5 -1Acq
2. T-34 in M3 rotates as an NT vehicle and area acquires X1
TH DR = 3,6 -1 Acq
3. T-34 in N1 rotates as an NT vehicle and area acquires X2
TH DR = 5,4 -1 Acq
4. SU-85 in I8 rotates as an NT vehicle and acquires F3
TH DR = 6,2 -1Acq
(Note that HE must be used for area acquisition, but we did not realize that the SU-85 has a HE7 depletion #. We will catch this mistake in a turn or two, but technically this should have been an out-of-ammo non-shot. Had Tom remembered the Depletion # of 7, he'd have not taken this shot.)

Rout Phase - none

Advance Phase

1. 42A5 to A4
2. 42B7 to C7
3. 42A7 to B7
4. BU all Russian vehicles
5. 42L5 to K5
6. 4W1 to X1
7. 42J7 to I8
8. 42D5 to D4
9. 42N0 to N1, with the DC being transferred to the 7-0
10. 4T1 to 4S2

Close Combat Phase

1. Conceal C7
2. Remove FFE:C

Tom - Not too shabby. Survived the OBA by losing just one squad, but I'm at a big positional disadvantage on the north side. I expect John to try to solidify his hold on the area this turn. I don't expect much from the LMG squad in 4X1, but at least he's still concealed and he may surprise me by surviving prep fire. Meanwhile, the infantry attempts a general northward shift while the armor boys hope to make the most of their numerical advantage on the south side.

John - I didn't have a good choice for the FFE correction, so I placed it where it might cause the most damage. I had hope for a scatter onto 42C6 but instead I got the scatter direction that gave me no results. At least it still dissuades daring Russians from advancing up to the wall. Whine Time: I can't believe the squad in 42E2 is still alive! I threw five different shots at him, including a 1 MC and a 12-flat HE effects DR. But he shrugs them all off. This guy is exactly the kind of picket squad that could hold up most of my force on turn 2 if I decide to Prep on him and don't break him. I'll probably try to eliminate him with some BFF instead, and try to keep my force moving towards the enemy.

JR - The end of the Russian Turn 1 finds a lot of Ivans still up in the front - I wonder how many will survive the fallback. I admire Tom's guts with that move crashing into the 42B6 building, but sheesh, that's pretty scary. I don't think I'd risk a 1/6 chance of killing my own tank at this point. As it stands, Tom knows he can't defend the west side of the wall, but he can't bring himself to allow John a free ride, either. Having a single T34 there might not be enough, however; John can get the Tiger to 42C3 to duke it

out with that fellow while a Mk IV goes to 42E4 and dares the SU85 or its friends to challenge the position.

On the south end of the map, Tom is pretty aggressive with the T34s - I like the way he gets 'em right up into the action and starts to prepare a little welcoming committee for the encroaching 658's. Tom is right about the armor fight being the key to this game, but those T34's make good infantry killers as well, particularly as they move up in the relatively light cover of the woods line. The two T34's are more than a match for the lone MkIV on this flank, and they have the added advantage of the HIP ATG watching their backs. The SU in turn is well placed to cover the road. The mistake with the AP Area Acquisition shot is a common one - we'll see if it matters.

I noticed from the Board Status illustration that Tom has his Armor Leader in a T34 - why? I believe that fellow belongs in the SU85, his best tank killer. The TK numbers for the Reds are iffy as it is, and I'd hate to miss by one with my best weapon, due to lack of an available armor leader. Again, we'll see if it matters as the game progresses.

German Turn 2

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 3,6 no
2. 348 attempts self-rally in 4FF1
DR = 1,6 yes
3. 6+1 attempts self-rally in 4GG7
DR = 6,2 no

John - This turn's goal is simple: I must eliminate any firelane (FL) possibility from the unit in 4X1. If this guy is not dealt with, my guys will have a tough time crossing the 4Z2-4FF5 road.

Prep Fire Phase

1. Remove smoke from 4FF6
2. tank in 4V4 attempts to fire smoke in W3
DR = 2,4 yes

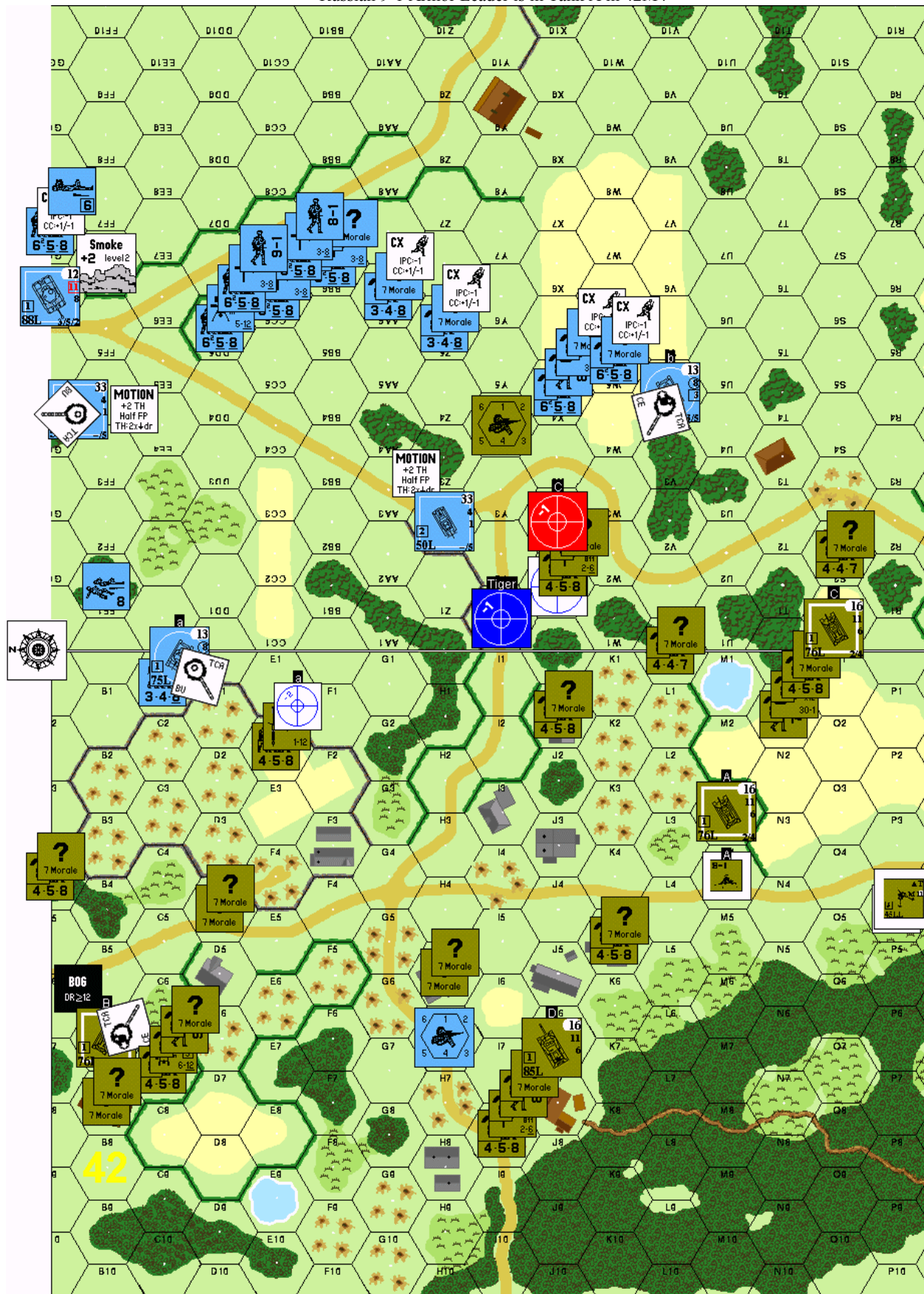
John - I could smoke 4X1, but that won't prevent him from applying a FL with -2 shots. So I smoke 4W3 instead, which should help get my guys in the X4 wheatfield safely into X3.

JR - Ah, nice placement - 4X1 is indeed the obvious choice but Tom's aggressive T34 positioning forces John to cover fire from that side of the board.

3. tank in 4V4 rotates TCA to U3 and fires MG's at S2
4(+3) DR = 6,2 no

John - I wanted to check the LOS to S2, and am pleased to see it's clear.

Board Status at the end of Russian Turn 1 –
All Russian AFV's are still Concealed, but the 5/8" ? counters are not shown for clarity
Russian 9-1 Armor Leader is in Tank A in 42M4



Movement Phase

1. tank in 42C1 moves

a. Bounding Fire MA at E2

TH DR = 2,2 hit, Russian SAN

I FT 12(+0) DR = 1,2 K/3

3MC vs 248/ATR DR = 5,3 breaks, DM

Russian SAN dr = 4, no

John – Whew! Two good DRs take out that guy. He could have been a major pain this turn. That’s the beauty of Bounding First Fire with vehicles – you can shoot at the enemy and still move, at the expense of not putting down the acquisition counter that you would get when firing in the advancing fire phase.

b. Bounding Fire CMG at E2

2(+0) DR = 6,3 no

c. start - 1

d. C2 - 3

e. B2 - 4

f. B3 - 5

g. CA: C5 - 6

h. stop - 7

Tom – I can’t recall how we resolved the Wall Advantage question here – I probably would have taken it even though it would have shown A4 to be real, as that unit was slated to retreat next turn anyway.

JR - Yikes, a Bounding First Fire CMG shot at a brokie! That scares me a bit – wouldn’t like to see this guy HOB into a 10-morale thorn in my side. As for ending up in 42B3, as I note above I like 42E4 for this guy, as it’s not covered by any Russian AT weapon (that we can see) and will give John first shot at Sov AFV’s responding to the threat from the walled area.

3. 348 in 42C1 assault moves D1 – 3

JR - A very cautious move – this halvesquad risked life and limb to get where he is, and moving a single hex kinda throws that away – doubletiming to 42D2 using the shellholes would help end the brokie’s war, and still leave him with a Rout path should Tom lay a glove on him.

3. 348 in 4FF1 moves

a. 4EE1 - 1

b. 4DD0 - 2

c. 42E1 - 3

d. 42F1 - 4

4. Tiger moves

a. start - 1

b. 4FF5 - 2

c. CA: GG4 - 3

d. 4FF4 - 4

e. FF3 - 5

f. FF2 - 6

g. GG2 - 7

h. CA: FF0 - 8

i. GG1 - 9

j. 42A1 - 10

k. 42A2 - 11

l. stop -12

Tom - Hmm. Seems like this guy should be in the middle of the action a bit more than this. John may be thinking about trying to surround the B6 tank from different angles, counting on the doubling of the Case A To Hit modifier for my being in a building. Shrug. I’m still going to get the first shot in, and it doesn’t feel like a good idea to risk Bogging a tank in the woods. Still, this will bear watching.

JR - Another cautious move. The 42C3 location isn’t as attractive without a panzer in E4 to protect him from a frisky Bolshie AFV moving up to F4, so

John’s move makes sense in this situation. I’d still have tried to take on that T34 in B6, having little to fear from his return fire while HD.

5. Puma in Z2 moves

a. sD attempt DR = 3,6 no

b. Y2 - 3

c. Russian 458/LMG drops ? in X1 and fires a MG To Kill attempt at the Puma, laying a Firelane out to DD4

TH DR = 1,5 turret hit

TK DR = 6,5 miss

Tom - As per Q&A from Journal issue 1, a firelane does not have to be canceled if a BU CT AFV enters the hex (VBM Freeze). So I laid the FL before the Puma got into the hex. Shrug.

d. Puma stops for 4 MP

e. Puma BFF’s MG’s at X1

4(+1) DR = 2,5 no

f. Puma BFF’s MA at X1

TH DR = 1,5 miss, ROF

g. Delay for 5 MP and BFF again at X1

TH DR = 1,4 miss, ROF

h. Delay for 6 MP and BFF again at X1

TH DR = 4,3 miss

i. start - 7

j. Y1 - 8

k. 42I1 - 9

l. stop - 10

JR - Wow, quadruple whiff – this move leaves the Puma a little bit in the thick of things, but it will likely end the turn with plenty of infantry support.

6. Puma in 4GG4 moves

a. FF3 - 3

b. CA: DD3 - 4

c. EE4 - 7

d. DD4 - 10

e. CC4 - 11

f. BB3 - 12

g. AA3 - 13

h. Z2 - 14

i. Y2 - 17

j. stop - 18

k. BFF MG’s at X1

4(+1) DR = 6,1 miss

l. BFF MA at X1

TH DR = 2,2 hit, ROF, Russian SAN

I FT resolution 6(+0) DR = 1,5 1MC

1MC vs 458/ATR DR = 2,3 OK

Russian sniper dr = 5, no

m. Delay for 19 MP, ROF MA at X1

TH DR = 6,1 miss

n. Delay to 26 MP

o. Start - 27

p. X1, bypass X1/Y1 - 33 (going CE and ending in Motion)

firelane is canceled as per J1 Q&A

Tom - Of course, if the BU CT AFV enters a hex where a firelane is coming from, all he has to do is go CE as he enters and suddenly the firelane is canceled. Doesn’t seem like the Q&A really does much to lessen the effectiveness of VBM Freeze, if indeed that was the intent.

q. 458 takes a PAATC to attempt CCRF

PTC DR = 4,5 Pins

r. 458 fires inherent arms at CE Puma crew

6(+2) DR = 2,2 cowers to 4 column, NMC

NMC vs Puma crew DR = 6,6 Casualty MC = Recall. Puma BU’s and Stops.

Tom - Can’t complain, I guess - trading the LMG Firelane for the Puma. Recalled AFV’s don’t count against CVP caps, though, so it’s gonna be more

difficult for me to approach the German CVP cap of 30. Still, a little poetic justice, I think.

John – My Pumas go an a BFF ROF tear (5 shots!) on the Russian FL dude, but I still get no effect. So I'm forced to freeze him with a CE Puma (A9.223 Q&A.) An exciting exchange as the Russian pins, and they cover on the IFT-shot. But my Puma commander takes a bullet to the head (12 DR on the MC) and is recalled. At least the FL is gone, the Russian fire is restricted, and the road is clear for movement. The recalled Puma also does not count towards CVP. Overall I think this exchange ends in my favor. If the picket squad and FL were both still active things would be very grim.

JR - Responding to Tom's comment, forcing a VBM-Freezing AFV to go CE makes it vulnerable to TPBF as well as giving the defender another pip on the dice in CC. In that sense, it doesn't make the Freeze less effective, but it certainly makes it more risky, as John finds out here. Though I'd have done the same in his position, I'm not sure I agree with John that a Puma was a fair price for shutting down a 1 FP Firelane. At least this Armored Car is headed home and won't add to Tom's CVP tally...as long as John breaks that 458! If he doesn't, he's gonna be dead on a Russian CC DR of 6, or Immobilized on a 7 (base CCV 5, +1 DRM for Pinned, -1 Ambush, -1 Immobile AFV, -1 No Usable MGs).

7. 8-0/DC moves from X4

- a. X3 - 1
- b. Russian reveals T-34 in N1 and checks LOS from N1 to strip concealment - LOS clear
- c. X2 - 3
- d. T-34 in N1 fires MG's
6(+0) DR = 6,1 NMC, 2 RFP
NMC vs 8-0/DC DR = 6,1 OK
- e. T-34 in N1 fires MA
TH DR = 6,6 malfs MA
- f. 7-0/DC and 458 in N1 fire
4(+0) DR = 5,1 NMC
NMC vs 8-0/DC DR = 3,1 OK, Russian SAN
Sniper activation dr = 2, warm
Scatter direction 3, distance = 3
Moves sniper to 4BB5, Russian chooses to attack 4BB6, pinning the squad there.

g. Infantry in N1 SFF's at 8-0

- 2(+0) DR = 6,3 no
- h. place DC on X1 - 5
2 RFP attacks 2(+0) DR = 1,2 1MC
1MC vs 8-0/DC DR = 3,1 OK, Russian SAN
Sniper activation dr = 1, hot
Scatter direction = 1, distance = 3, scatters to 4BB3.
Russian chooses to attack 4DD5
Random Selection dr's:
9-1: dr = 4
658/LMG dr = 5
658/MMG dr = 2
So the LMG squad is broken

Tom - Geez, another ubermensch effort from the German infantry, the DC toter passing two NMC's and a 1MC to place the DC. Again, though, I'm effectively trading off the LMG squad for the German DC, while pinning another German squad and breaking another. I think that's not such an awful tradeoff, even without the Sniper activity. Still, you hate to see units passing multiple morale checks; makes the other player less cautious, which tends to be a Bad Thing.

And malfing the MA on the tank in N1? AAARRRRGGGHHH! That's gonna hurt. I'm gonna need every gun barrel I can muster, but I need to think twice about repairing the MA because X'ing it out on a dr of 6 would Recall the vehicle (D3.7). Still, maybe this guy can get along OK without the MA for a while; there's plenty of anti-tank capability over on the south side, and his MG's could come in handy against the German infantry pushing up the center of the board.

John – The 8-0 with the DC is 'da man. Once again I miss the easy LOS and once again lady luck bails me out from my sloppy play. For some

reason I just don't see the board well when it's on VASL. But the 8-0 is an Iron Cross recipient and he gets the DC successfully placed.

8. 658 moves from X4

- a. Y4 - 1
 - b. Y3 - 2
 - c. Y2 - 3
9. Z5 moves
- a. AA5 - 1
 - b. AA4, bypass BB4/BB3 - 2
 - c. AA3 - 3 - losing ? to the 458 in X1
 - d. Z2 - 4

10. AA6 moves

- a. AA5 - 1
- b. AA4, bypass BB4/BB3 - 2
- c. AA3 - 3 - losing ? to the 458 in X1
- d. AA2 - 4

11. CC6 moves

- a. CC5 - 1
- b. CC4 - 2 - losing ? to the 458 in X1
- c. BB3 - 3
- d. BB2 - 4
- e. BB1, bypass CC2/CC1 - 5
- f. BB0 - 6
- g. Late CX, 42G1 - 7

12. 9-1, 658/MMG in DD5 moves

- a. CC5 - 1
- b. CC4 - 2
- c. BB3 - 3
- d. BB2 - 4
- e. BB1, bypass CC2/CC1 - 5
- f. BB0 - 6

13. W5 moves

- a. V4 - 1.5, losing ? to X1
- b. V3 - 3.5

14. 658 in GG7 moves

- a. GG6 - 1
- b. GG5 - 2
- c. GG4 - 4

Defensive Fire Phase

1. 42A4 fires at 42D1
4(+1) DR = 1,5 PTC
PTC vs 348 DR = 2,6 OK
2. infantry in 42I8 fires at G2, mainly to check LOS for the tank.
LOS blocked by H5
IFT DR = 5,2

3. tank in I8 area acquires H1 (an illegal shot since he depleted HE7 last turn)

TH DR = 6,3 -1 Acq

4. tank in B6 rotates TCA to A5 and area acquires B4

TH DR = 3,2 -1 Acq

Advancing Fire Phase

1. DC goes off in X1
30(+1) DR = 6,4 1MC
1MC vs 458/LMG DR = 1,2 OK

John – Naturally. The 8-0 risks his butt placing the DC for zilcht result.

2. Y2 and Z2 firegroup vs X1

8(+1) DR = 5,1 1MC
1MC vs 458/LMG DR = 6,2 breaks, DM

John – Of course the Russian shrugs off the huge 30(+1) attack, but breaks on the relatively wimpy 8(+1). See what I mean about the benefits of assault fire? Two squads can firegroup on the 8-column all the way out to 5 hexes, after moving.

3. 348 in D1 fires at E2
2(+0) DR = 3,1 1MC
1MC vs DM248/ATR DR = 4,2 passes
4. F1 at E2
2(+0) DR = 5,3 miss
5. F0 at E2
4(+1) DR = 4,3 miss
6. G1 at E2 (no LMG's)
8(+2) DR = 6,2 miss
7. GG4 at A4
1(+1) DR = 5,1 miss
8. Tiger fires MG's at A4
4(+1) DR = 3,1 1MC
1MC vs 458 DR = 4,4 breaks, DM

Tom - Geez. I kinda expected the 458 to be able to shrug off the Tiger's MG fire, even unconcealed. Still, this guy will be able to rout to safety and hopefully rally with the aid of the 9-1. John rolled the Russian SAN three times during the AFPh but got no result: aargh.

Rout Phase

1. DD5 to CC6
2. E2 to E3, F3
3. A4 to A5, A6, B6, C7
4. Broken Russian in 4X1 to W1, V0, U1

Advance Phase

1. F1 to F2
2. D1 to E2
3. BB0 to 42F1
4. CX (8-1,658/LMG) from G1 to G2
5. CX658/LMG from G1 to H1, causing SU-85 in I8 to lose concealment
6. Y2 to Y1
7. Z2 to Z1
8. AA2 to Z1
9. X2 to Y2
10. V3 to V2
11. GG4 to GG3
12. Puma in 42I1 goes CE

Close Combat Phase

1. Automatically gain concealment in E2 and G2
2. Roll for concealment in GG3 dr = 5, no
3. Roll for concealment in F1
9-1 dr = 4, yes
658/MMG dr = 1, yes

Tom - Would like to take some joy in a slightly slower-than-expected German advance, but in reality the Germans are doing just fine. The only advantage I'll be able to get is the opportunity to reposition the infantry in the center and south using Non-Assault Movement out of German LOS, thus retaining concealment. Not a minor thing, but I'd rather have a functioning Main Armament on that tank in N1. We'll spend the next turn getting everybody into their places for the real hugga-mugga, because after German turn 3 there won't be much opportunity to reinforce weak spots without being interdicted by German dfire.

John - At the end of the turn 2a I still have not suffered any CVP losses. In my advancing fire phase I manage to break the Russian in 42A4, giving my Pz IV some extra protection against an infantry assault. I didn't really want to fire on the Russian brokie in E2, but he had a rout available and I wanted to kill him. Perhaps some better infantry movement on my part could have cut off his rout path. I'm pretty pleased with my progress so far, especially

considering that I have three squads and a leader (the lame 6+1) behind the lines and out of the action. A final note: I suspect that Tom had an LOS from 42H5 to my units bypassing 42BB1. That's why I only moved one squad at a time at first. The best shot would have been a 2 flat (no resid) with the brush hindrance, but he didn't even try to strip my concealment so he might have missed it, or it's a dummy stack.

JR - I believe John let a little of the advantage of his good start slip away this turn. The cautious moves on the right, where he has local armor superiority, may cost him a turn of fiddling later in the game. He can afford to take some chances now as Tom's force is still suffering the effects of the Prinz Eugen-induced dispersal. However, the SS do have a nice chunky concentration of stormtroopers in the center of the map. That's a hell of a lot of firepower, and that 458 in 42J1 is probably getting a little nervous about the sound of all those hobnailed boots stomping toward him. Tom's armor on the right does its job, keeping that flank secure. Now let's see if he can get his infantry around and into the center of the action before John's in a position to do something about it.

Russian Turn 2

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 1,2
2. Self-rally dm458/LMG in U1 DR = 1,6 no
3. 9-1 rallies dm458 in C7 DR = 3,1 yes

Tom - Very nice roll; allows the 9-1 and HMG squad to separate from the second 458, thus covering the area much better.

4. Rally 6+1 in GG7 DR = 3,6 no
5. Remove DM's, except for 42F3, which is still ADJACENT to a Known Enemy Unit (A10.62)

Prep Fire Phase

1. SU-85 in I8 fires at H1
(again, an illegal shot since this guy doesn't have HE)
TH DR = 2,5 miss, -1 Acq

Movement Phase

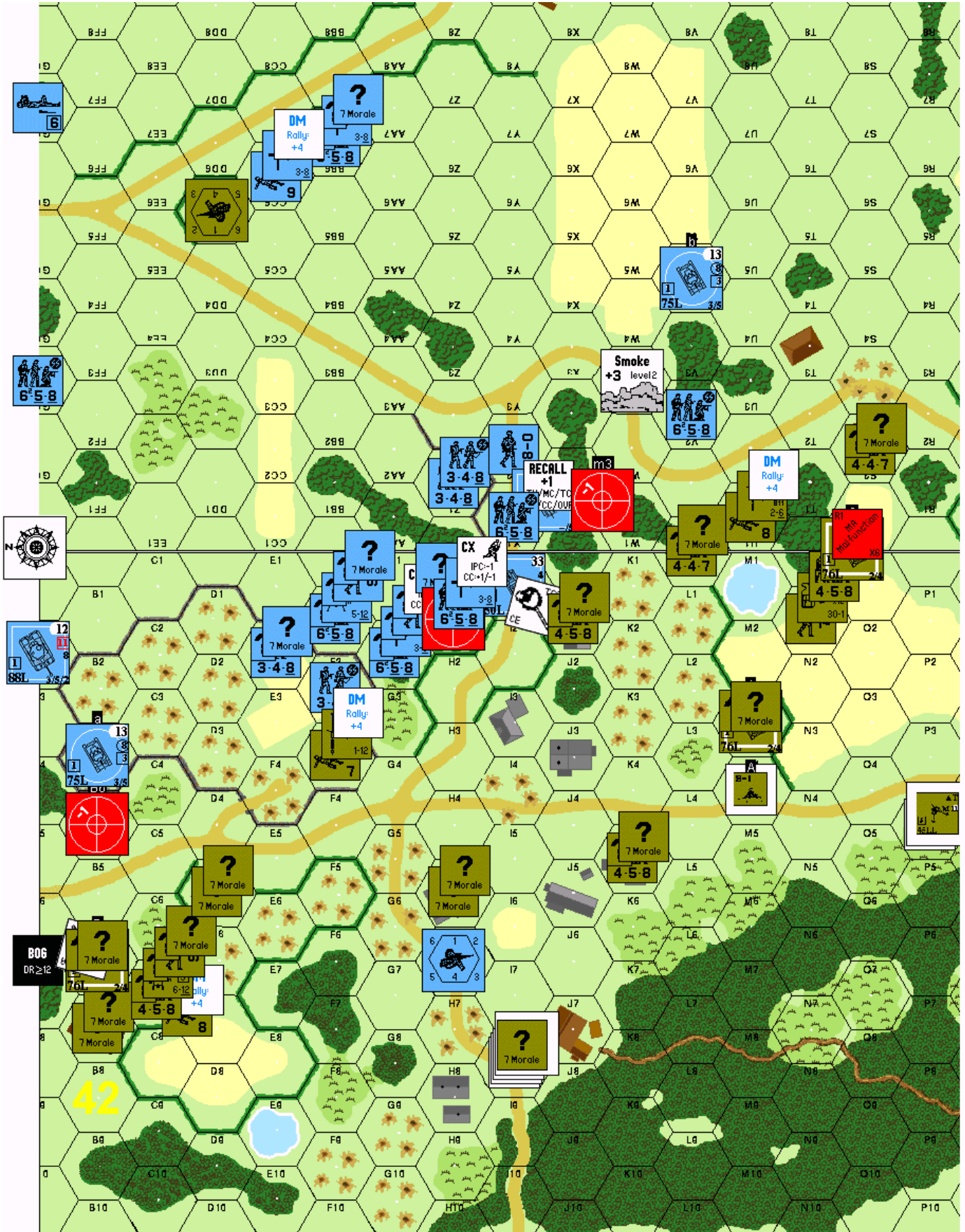
1. I0 moves
 - a. L1 - 2
 - b. K2 - 4
2. J1 moves
 - a. K2 - 1
 - b. K3 - 2
 - c. J3 - 4
3. S2 moves
 - a. S1 - 1.5
 - b. O1 - 3
4. Tank in B6 attempts to un-Bog
 - a. Start DR = 2,3, starts for 10 MP and un-bogs
 - b. Stop - 11

Tom - Taking advantage of the momentary lull in the German attack to un-Bog himself, which might come in useful later on.

JR - Damn, Tom's clever! I'd never have had the presence of mind to do this.

5. ?+1 in B7 moves
 - a. A7 - 2
 - b. A6 - 3
 - c. A5 - 4

Board Status at the end of German Turn 2



6. ?+3 in C7 assault moves to D6 - 3

7. Tank in N1 moves

- a. start - 1
- b. change CA:L1 - 2
- c. M2 - 3
- d. L2 - 5
- e. K3 - 6
- f. J3, bypass J2, TCA pointing toward I1 - 8
- g. ESB, ask for 1 DR = 3,1 yes
- h. I3 - 16
Bog DR = 3,1 OK
- i. Stop - 17

Tom - A very scary kind of move that I most probably shouldn't have made, but there it is. Without a MA, this guy is pretty vulnerable to all of the German AFV's, and there isn't anywhere safe on the board to just park him and fire his MG's at the German infantry. Given that he's pretty much got to attempt to fix the MA, I'd rather risk Recall with a Bugged or Immobilized vehicle than with a live one. In the meantime, this tank's MG's will anchor the immediate area around J3, allowing the local infantry to skulk away next turn and retain concealment.

All in all, though, probably a dumb move, risking both ESB AND dropping into the Cellar of J3.

JR - Aaaagh, *again* with the insane tank-into-building thing! *Again* he gets away with it! This time it's not such a huge risk given this is the MA-less T34, and actually, it's a pretty nice spot for a non-covering 4 FP MG. Those squareheads are gonna have to cross the road, and in the meantime 4(+1) shots across the way will at the very least cramp John's style. Also, assuming this AFV doesn't die to a PF shot, he'll force John to make a PAATC to get into I3.

8. Tank in M3 moves

- a. start in reverse - 1
- b. M4 - 5
- c. stop, start in forward - 7
- d. L3 - 9
- e. stop - 10

Tom - Setting up a little trap here; I expect the PzIV in 4V4 to swoop over to M2/N2/N3 and attempt a Bounding Fire shot at the side of the tank in L3. During the swoop, the 45LL ATG in P4 ought to get some kind of side shot at the PzIV.

JR - We're seeing some nice coordinated defense here. The L3 T34 covers the arc of terrain from 42L0 around to 42J2 within its TCA, and enjoys the protection of the SU85 on one flank and the still-HIP 45LL ATG on the other. I'm not sure John will fall for this trap but it's a well-constructed position nonetheless.

9. infantry in N1 move

- a. O2 - 1,5
- b. O3 - 3
- c. O4 - 4
- d. N4 - 5
- e. M4 - 6

10. H5 assault moves H6 - 2

11. I8 assault moves H8 - 2

Defensive Fire Phase

- 1. Puma in I1 fires AP at tank in I3
TH DR = 4,6 miss, -1 Acq
- 2. G2 fires at F3
8(+3) DR = 2,5 NE, DM's F3

- 3. E2, F1, and F2 firegroup at F3
20(+4) DR = 1,2 2MC, ROF on MMG
2MC vs dm248/ATR DR = 1,2 OK

4. tank in B3 rotates VCA to D3, TCA to C5

Advancing Fire Phase

- 1. tank in L3 area acquires J1
TH DR = 1,6 -1 Acq
- 2. tank in B6 area acquires B4
TH DR = 3,3 -1 Acq
- 3. tank in I3 fires CMG at Y1
2(+1) DR = 1,1 1MC, German SAN
1MC vs 658 DR = 6,4 breaks, DM
German sniper activation dr = 5, no

Tom – Definitely cheesy but I'll take it, cuz I've *received* it plenty of times before.

- 4. tank in I3 fires bmg at G2
1(+1) DR = 2,5 no

Rout Phase

- 1. F3 routs F4, G5, H5
- 2. Y1 routs to X1

Advance Phase

- 1. A5 to A4
- 2. H8 to G8
- 3. H6 to H5
- 4. D5 to D4
- 5. D6 to D5
- 6. K5 to J5
- 7. K2 to J1
- 8. J3 to I3
- 9. M4 to M5, Squad gets the DC
- 10. O1 to N1

Close Combat Phase

- 1. Gain Concealment in C7 and M5

Tom - All set for the German push, wherever it comes. The absence of German LOS to the Russian skulking areas enabled me to retain a lot of concealment as I repositioned; a slightly more aggressive German push to even get one CX halfsquad into the 4W1 tree line would have really paid off for John, IMO.

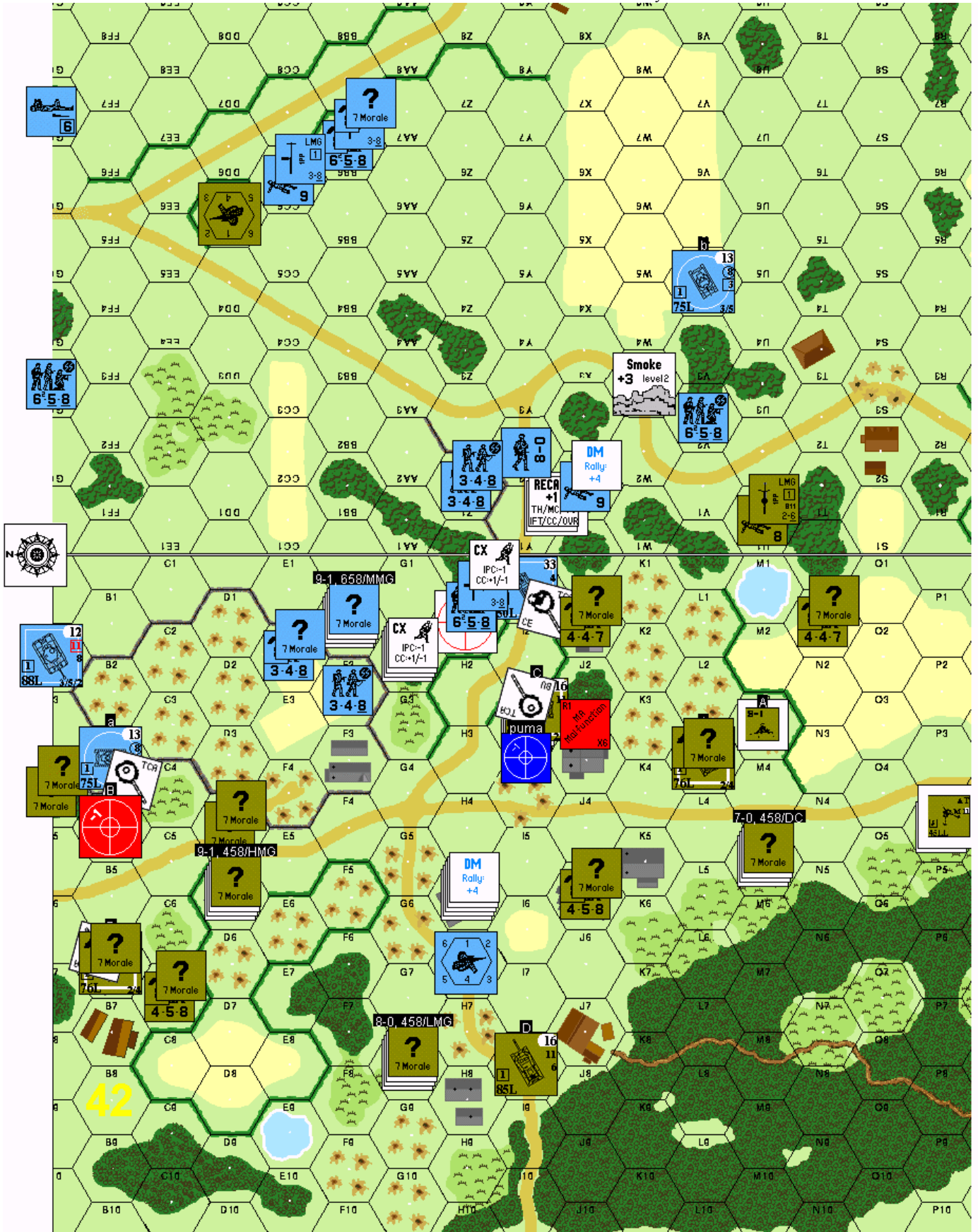
I'm excited to see what the tank in 4V4 does with the bait I've set in 42L3 - that 45LL ATG is itching to get into the fight!

John - Tom does some repositioning and now I'm wondering: He's left the Russian right flank open. I'm tempted to jump all over this with my Pz IV sitting on that side of the board, but at the same time I'm wondering if it's a trap. Perhaps that ATG is hidden over there in the brush?

My Puma also had a decision to make. I could have done a motion attempt to get away from the T34 that moved into the I3 building. But its MA is broken and not likely to get repaired. In addition, the T34 has his side hull facing the Puma. Provided that I hit the hull my TK is a 8 [50L TK = 13 +1 range = 14 vs. 6 side hull.] With the two-hex range to-hit benefit, and my ROF of 2 I think I'll stay and take some shots at him. The odds seem to be in my favor.

JR - Tom astutely notes a lack of Germans in the 4W1 tree line allowed him to reposition his squaddies relatively unhindered. However, I don't think John had much choice – getting a body into W1 would've been tough given the amount of firepower the Russians could lay into W2. John's final comments reveal he's just a little leery of all that wide open space on the southern flank. As for the Puma/neutered-T34 duel, let's hope for John's sake he doesn't forget his APCR.

Board Status at the end of Russian Turn 2
A Concealed Russian 458 is under the AFV in 4213
H5 contains a DM Russian 248/ATR and a ?+1 Dummy stack



German Turn 3

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 4,6 no
2. Self-rally squad in CC6 DR = 3,3 yes
3. Self-rally leader in 4GG7 DR = 1,1 yes(!)
4. Repair MA in I3 dr = 1, yes (!)
5. Remove DM's

Tom - Huge repair dr in I3; that Puma in II is in serious trouble, as is any German infantry in the area.

John - Wonderful. Well, I still think the odds are in favor of the Puma.

JR - Did I say Tom was insane for driving into I3? Obviously I meant to say he's a genius. What a timely dr. As for John's comment, well, here on Planet Earth the smart money is on the T34.

Prep Fire Phase

1. Flip smoke to +2 side in 4W3
2. Puma in II fires AP at I3
TH DR = 3,6 hit, -2 Acq
TK # = 13 + 1 (range) - 11 (armor) = 3
TK DR = 5,1 no
3. Puma in II Intensive Fires with A5 ammo
TH DR = 3,4 no shot, no APCR
4. Puma in II Intensive Fires with normal ammo
TH DR = 2,3 hit
TK # = 13 + 1 (range) - 11 (armor) = 3
TK DR = 3,2 no

Tom - Interesting use of Special Ammo as Intensive Fire; I'll have to remember that one. But the AP TK # of 3 is so low here that I gotta wonder if that Puma would have been better off doing anything else. Even as a burning wreck, he'd at least suck up the T-34's MA fire and provide some smoke cover.

John - All I needed was one hull hit. Is that too much to ask for? I figured to get 3 shots during this phase, including a special ammo attempt and intensive fire if necessary, but instead I got squat. My last remaining Puma is doomed.

JR - I think John had a decent crack at the T34 - the use of APCR for IF was interesting. Perhaps Tom doesn't realize John's looking at a flank hull facing <correct! - Tom>, but he'd have killed the T34 with either TK roll had he managed a Hull hit. To top things off, Tom might have a crack at the Recalled Puma - the shortest route off the board may well involve reversing out of 4X1 into Y2 and the LOS of the I3 T34.

Movement Phase

1. CC6 CX's
 - a. CC5 - 1
 - b. CC4 - 2
 - c. BB3 - 3
 - d. BB2 - 4
 - e. BB1, bypass - 5
 - f. BB0 - 6
2. BB6 CX's
 - a. BB5 - 1
 - b. BB4 - 2
 - c. BB3 - 3
 - d. BB2 - 4
 - e. AA2 - 5
 - f. Z1 - 6
3. GG3 moves
 - a. FF2 - 1
 - b. FF1, bypass - 2

- c. EE1 - 3
- d. 42C1 - 4
4. HS in Z1 CX's
 - a. Y1 - 1
 - b. X0 - 3
 - c. J1 fires
8(+0) DR = 6,4 no, 4 RFP
 - d. K1 - 6
 - e. tank in L3 fires MG's
6(+0) DR = 4,5 no, 2 RFP

John - Ubermen. These guys are simply Ubermen.

JR - Good, now the Germans have someone behind the cover in the 42J hexrow. That should constrain Tom's freedom to redeploy.

5. V2 moves
 - a. U2 - 1, DM's U1
 - b. T1 - 3

6. E2 assault moves D2 - 2

7. F1 assault moves F2 - 2.5

8. Tank in V4 moves
 - a. start - 1
 - b. U4 - 2
 - c. T3, bypass U3 - 4
 - d. T2 - 5
 - e. S2, bypass T1 - 7
 - f. S1 - 8
 - f. change VCA: N1 - 9
 - g. O1 - 10
 - h. O2 - 11
 - i. N2, TCA:L2 - 12
 - j. 45LL ATG fires from P4 using A6 ammo
TH DR = 6,3 no APCR, no shot

Repeat the shot using AP ammo
TH DR = 5,5 miss, -1 acq, place ATG onboard unconcealed

Tom - Yay and crap. I so enjoy it when things go according to plan; having this trap work was quite pleasing, even if I lose the game. You've gotta take your little victories where you can get 'em. Still, you'd think the ATG could have hit the tank with two tries.

John's tank is in big trouble; there's no way he can present full-frontal armor to both the T-34 and the ATG from the hex he's in. If I were him, I'd keep driving forward into N3, forcing the ATG to Intensive Fire and forcing the T-34 in L3 to turn his TCA two hexspines in order to defend himself. Sure, the PzIV would be way over-extended, but he's already in that situation and he might as well make it as difficult as possible for the Russians to kill him. Who knows, maybe his infantry support can advance to the K2/L2 area and threaten the tank in L3 with a faust.

JR - Whoa, John ignores his intuition and waltzes right into Tom's trap! Indeed, this panzer is in deep doo-doo, with no support and nothing but Russians in sight. Let's see if he can salvage this - with a touch of luck he might be able to take down the T34 before he dies.

- k. PzIV turns VCA: O4, TCA: L2 and goes CE - 13
- l. ATG intensive fires
TH DR = 3,4 misses, -2 acq

Tom - THREE misses. This guy is proving to be pretty useless. Still, not a great shot to take; the PzIV had not stopped yet, so was not a huge threat to hurt L3 with a Bounding Fire Motion shot. Better to wait for a Stop MP - as it is, the ATG is out of defensive fire options and the PzIV could ESB for 2 or 3 MP and get out of the ATG's covered arc. What can I say, I had the blood lust coursing through my veins.

- m. ESB, ask for 1 DR = 6,2 successful

n. stop - 14
 o. tank in L3 rotates TCA and fires APCR
 L3 wins the Gun Duel because his TH mods are +3 (ST, BU) while the Pz's mods are +5 (C1)
 TH DRM = +2 (caseA) +1 (BU) +1 (hedge) -1 (range 2) +3 (case J1) = net +6

TH DR = 4,1 hits with the revelation of the 9-1 armor leader in L3
 TK # = 20 +2 (range) -3 (armor) = 19
 TK DR = 3,5 burns

German CVP count = 6

Tom - Phew. Gotta love that special ammo; in this case, the shot was either going to hit or not happen at all, because the To Hit # (6) equaled the APCR depletion number. If I had rolled above a 6, I'd have probably turned the whole tank as an NT-type vehicle toward the PzIV to present full-frontal armor. (In retrospect, instead of turning as an NT-type vehicle, I could have done it in stages - first turn just the turret and fired at the PzIV, possibly obtaining a kill. If that failed, then use the bmg and cmg to fire at the PzIV's CE crew, pivoting the VCA and then the TCA to eventually point both at M2, facing the PzIV with my best armor).

All in all, not a good idea for John, IMO, especially if he suspected the ATG was lying in wait. Perhaps he thought the ATG was in the grain around O2 and he'd get an OVR opportunity out of it. Regardless, without infantry or armor support to back this move up, this tank was driving into trouble and paid the price. I think he'd have been better off doing something less exciting but still important for the German cause, maybe Overrunning 42N1 or taking up a bypass position in V0/U1 where he could lob smoke shells toward the J3 area while still defending himself against the T-34 and presenting a viable flanking threat on the east side.

But hey, who am I to poo-poo aggressiveness; I've been spending this game ESB'ing and driving into buildings.

By the way, the burning wreck is an error - the TK # of Russian 76L APCR is actually only 14, so this TK DR should not have burned the tank. Ewps. One would think that this would cause me to review what the AP To Kill Number of a Russian 76L gun is, but NOOOOOO. Up to (and beyond!) this point, I'd been thinking it was 17 like everybody else's 76L guns and thus fully capable of taking on a Tiger from the front. Sadly, it will be a turn or two yet before I fully realize what the TK #'s are. Proof that it is better to be lucky than good.

JR - John was taking an enormous risk swanning about with his Pz IV, unsupported - the German needs to form a tight fist of power in this scenario - he's done so with his infantry but the armor is another story.

9. Y2 leader moves
 a. X2 - 2
 b. W2 - 3
 c. N1 fires
 4(-2) DR = 1,2 KIA, 2 RFP
 German CVP count = 7

Tom - Momentary lapse of attention by John; a good sign.

John - *&^%\$@#*&^%\$

JR - Ouch! John's clearly still suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome following the loss of his PzIV. Been there, done that.

10. HS in Z1 moves
 a. Z0 - 2
 b. H1 - 4

11. Tiger moves
 a. start - 1
 b. CA:C2 - 2
 c. B2 - 4
 d. C2 - 5

e. D1 - 6
 f. E2 - 7
 g. F2 - 8
 h. G3 - 11
 i. stop, go CE - 12
 j. Bounding Fire at tank in I3 using A5 ammo
 TH DRM = + 4 (BFF) -1 (range) +3 (bldg TEM) = +6
 TH DR = 4,3 no APCR, no shot

Repeat shot using AP ammo
 TH DR = 1,4 turret hit when 9-1 armor leader is revealed, ROF
 TK # = 20 - 11 (armor) = 9
 TK DR = 5,1 Kills tank
 Crew Survival DR = 6,4 no

Tom - Aargh! What a huge result. If this had happened in the AFPh, it'd be bad enough, but at least I'd have been able to get off a DFPh shot with the T-34 and probably have killed the Puma in I1. As it is, suddenly I3 is looking pretty vulnerable.

As a point of armor tactics, when I'm thinking defensively and when the To Kill #'s are high, I try to keep the other guy's To Hit #'s at 5 or below, which translates to a 28% chance of him hitting me. If you try to get the TH #'s below 5, you're usually going to greater lengths than it's worth. Here, I could have responded to the Tiger's threatened Bounding Fire shot by kicking into Motion, but John's To Hit # was a 4, which is low enough for me to not worry about. Had I remembered his 9-1 armor leader and entered him into the equation, John's To Hit # would have risen to a 5, which still wouldn't have made me kick into Motion and vacate that strong defensive position in I3.

I could have tried to squeeze off a shot from I3 at the Tiger, but John would have won the Gun Duel (C2.24) because his Firer-Based To Hit mods would have been lower than mine. John was looking at +4 Case C -1 (armor leader) = +3, while I was looking at +4 (case A, doubled for being in a building) +1 (BU) = +5, so he was guaranteed to get the first shot off.

Because John knows his armor game, I can virtually guarantee that he calculated the Gun Duel mods in his head before he made this move. If he was going to lose the Gun Duel, he would have considered whether the Tiger's armor was strong enough to risk a 76L shot from the T-34 in I3 (most likely, he would have risked it since the To Kill # for Russian 76L's isn't that much better than the Tiger's front armor factor of 11).

John - Unbelievable. Getting a shot off at the Russian tank in I3 was really not my main reason for parking in G3, I just thought it was a good spot. Killing it on a bounding first fire shot is huge. Keeping ROF is even bigger, because it will let me rotate my entire tank as an advancing fire shot later this turn, thus pointing my front armor towards more of the enemy. My Puma breathes a sigh of relief because he would have surely died in defensive fire or the next Russian Prep phase if the T34 in I3 was still active.

JR - Ah, John makes a solid, aggressive move and gets a nice payoff. Tuomo's repair roll gave him a very strong central position, but the Tiger's BFF shot swings things back his way. His Tiger is in a great spot, dominating the center of the village; John is now starting to reap some of the potential of his initial plan.

12. leader in GG7 CX's
 a. FF6 - 1
 b. EE6 - 3
 c. EE5 - 4
 d. DD4 - 5
 e. CC4 - 6
 f. BB3 - 7
 g. AA3 - 8

13. 8-1 in G2 assault moves G1 - 1

14. 658/LMG in G2 assault moves G3 - 2

15. 658/LMG in H1 assault moves G2 - 2

- 16. tank in B3 moves
 - a. start - 1
 - b. VCA: C2, TCA:D3 - 3
 - c. B2 - 4
 - d. VCA: D2, TCA: D2 - 5
 - e. C2 - 6
 - f. D1 - 7
 - g. CA: E3 - 8
 - h. E2, TCA: D3 - 9
 - i. E3 - 10
 - j. E4 - 11
- Russian ?+1 in D4 can't claim Wall Advantage and are revealed as Dummies.
- (Not sure if it's mandatory that they be revealed; we maybe could have just allowed the PzIV to have the WA and retained ? on the Dummy stack. Whatever.)
- k. stop - 12

JR - Good spot – it covers the approach to the buildings on the north end of the map, keeps the B6 T34 from getting too frisky, and can swing around to help deal with a thread to the Tiger from either the SU or the southern T34.

17. Recalled Puma in X1 runs off the board via the Y2/FF5/Y10 road and is let go.

Defensive Fire Phase

- 1. tank in B6 fires BMG at E4 to check LOS
LOS is blocked by C5/D5 hedge
DR = 4,6
- 2. tank in B6 fires CMG at F2
LOS blocked by north side of wall opening in E4
DR = 2,3
- 3. squad in J1 final fires at K1
4(+1) DR = 6,2 no
- 4. G8 fires at G3
6(+2) vs tank leader, 6(+0) vs squad
DR = 2,3 NMC vs tank leader, 1MC vs squad
NMC vs 9-1 AL DR = 6,3 Pins (causes him to BU)
1MC vs 658/LMG DR = 1,1 HoB
HoB DR = 1,2 (-1 for Elite) results in Hero creation

Tom - Crap. Heroes running around with Panzerfausts is a real bad thing, especially against a stretched-thin defense like mine.

JR - Nice break for John – having a ‘free’ unit to help cross the road is very handy in a CVP cap game like this. The Hero won't be able to control a building but he can certainly become a pain in Tom's backside.

- 5. tank in I8 area acquires F3 (yet another illegal shot since he has no HE ammo)
TH DR = 3,1, -1 Acq
- 6. tank in B6 area acquires D3
TH DR = 4,4 -1 Acq

Advancing Fire Phase

- 1. G3 at J1
4(+2) DR = 2,4 miss
- 2. Tiger fires MG's at J1
4(+3) DR = 6,6 breaks MG
Random Selection CMG dr = 1, BMG dr = 6, so BMG breaks
Tiger rotates as NT-type vehicle to CA:H4 using the ROF on the MA (but no shot)

Tom – Not sure if a Pinned Closed-Top Vehicle crew should have been allowed to have a ROF shot, A7.82 is unclear on this point. Ah well.

JR - Some cheesy advice – if you can, fire the BMG and the CMG together, even if it doesn't boost you a column on the IFT (though it does here) – if you roll boxcars, it's nice to cut the chance of breaking the CMG by 50%. As for Tom's comment re ‘Pinned’ AFV Crews and ROF, I'm pretty sure they got it right.

- 3. F2 fires at H5
4(+2) vs unconcealed, 2(+2) vs concealed
DR = 1,3 NMC on unconcealed, PTC reveals Dummies, Russian SAN NMC vs DM248/ATR DR = 6,3 eliminates HS
(F2 retains concealment since no GO unit saw this shot)
Russian sniper dr = 5, no
- 4. G2 fires at G8
2(+1) DR = 3,2 PTC
PTC vs 8-0 DR = 3,4 OK
vs 458/LMG DR = 6,2 OK
- 5. tank in E4 area fires at D5
TH DRM = +1 (BU) +4 (Bounding Fire) +2 (concealed target) = +7
TH DR = 1,1 possible Improbable Hit (C3.6)
Subsequent dr = 5, miss

Rout Phase

- 1. Broken Russian in U1 dies for failure to rout

Advance Phase

- 1. T1 to U1
- 2. AA3 to Z2
- 3. Z1 to Z0
- 4. H1 to I1
- 5. G1 to G2
- 6. 4BB0 to 42F1
- 7. F2 to F3
- 8. E3 to E4
- 9. D2 to D3
- 10. C1 to C2
- 11. K1 to K2

Close Combat Phase - no actions

Tom - Lotta action. John made up for losing the PzIV in N2 with a very good move of the Tiger into G3. Even without a Bounding Fire kill, he stood a reasonable chance of surviving the fire from the T-34 in I3.

As it is, we've got an extremely interesting Mexican Standoff with the armor, both sides having taken up good positions to affect the infantry game but out of LOS of the enemy armor. My guess is that it won't last long; both of us are too aggressive with our armor and neither side wants to send his infantry up against the opponent's tanks without armor support.

John - I knew the gun was there...

I felt like I was being lured in...

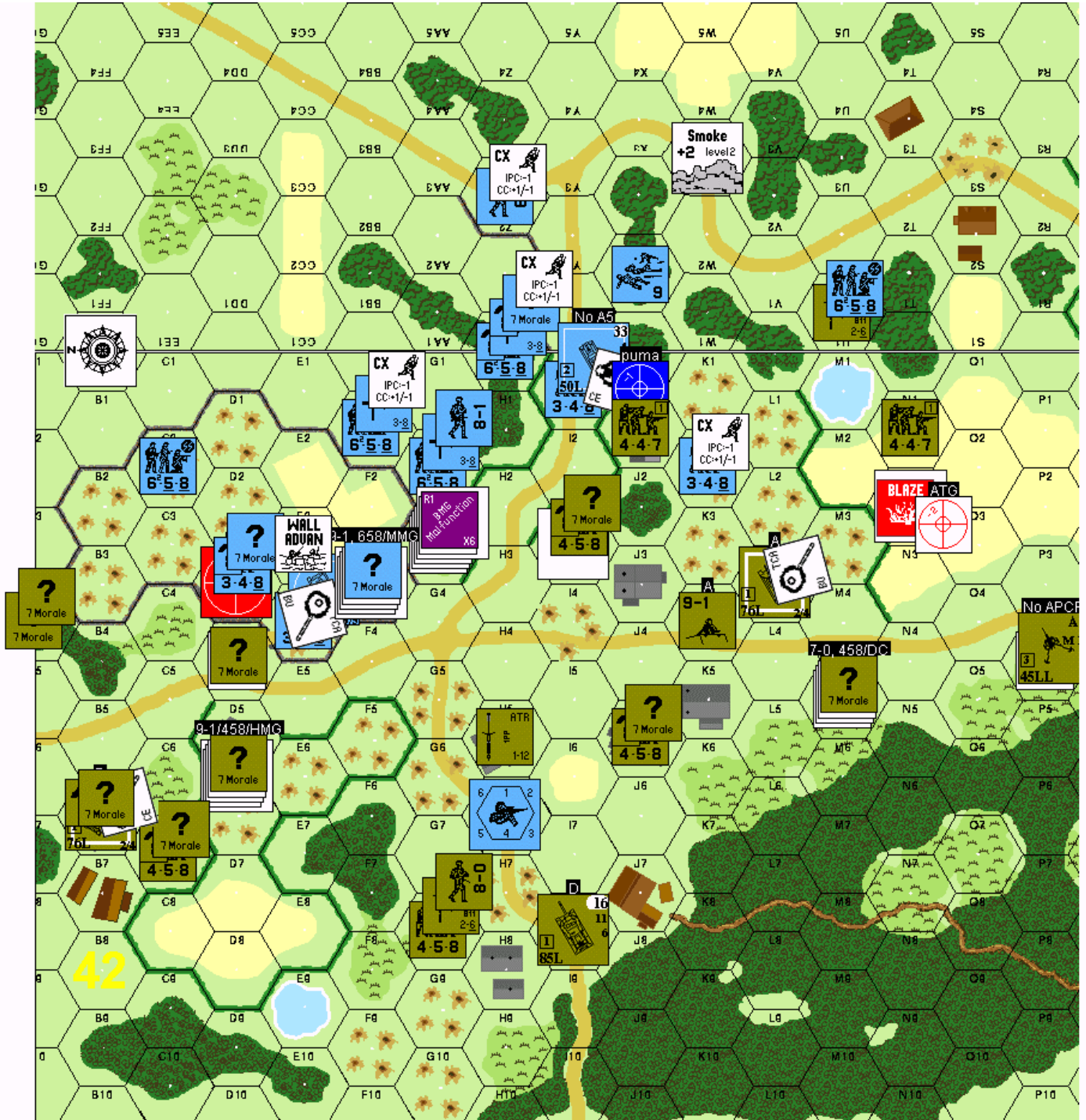
I went in anyway...

I got burned...

Serves me right for not listening to the little voice in my head. Still, I knew the gun would have several positive modifiers affecting his shot: +2 moving, wheat hindrances etc. I really felt like it was the T34 I had to worry about and this turned out to be the case. I had already figured that I would lose the gun duel by 1 (or 2 if the AL was there) but I only needed a 6 to hit him on BFF (+4 moving, +1 C1, -1 range) while he needed a 4 to hit (+2 moving, +1J, +2 turn, +1BU, +1 hedge, -1 range) or 5 if the AL was there. But the AL is there, he hits on a 5, and I lose a tank.

Oh, how about that questionable CX HS advance into K2? He's very vulnerable there and not much of a threat on the IFT. However, as long as he doesn't KIA, the Russian squad in J1 will die for failure to rout if it breaks. Tom must realize this. With the I1 Puma and HS in his face he has some tough choices to make. And if he wants to spend other shots at my

Board Status at the end of German Turn 3
German Tiger tank is in 42G3 (CA:H4), along with a German 658/LMG and Hero.
F3 contains the German 9-1, 658/MMG, concealed.



lowly CX HS, shots that could be used on more dangerous looking SS that would be great.

I already mentioned above how wonderfully unexpected it was for the Tiger to take out the T34 hiding in the stone building, so I won't belabor that. The only thing I have to add is that I feel like I'm in great position at the end of turn 3. Most of my infantry is in +2 TEM, the tanks are in mutually supporting positions, hull-down to the ATG, and out of LOS of the other tanks. I may keep them there for the rest of the war. If Tom wants to take them out he has low odds shots against the Pz IV (hull down, ATG must turn) or he'll have to bring his own tanks forward into exposed positions. It's an Armor-Mexican-Standoff. I'm happy to keep them where they are and use them to hammer Russian infantry or fire off some smoke ammo.

JR - This was an action-packed turn! The MkIV/T34 tradeoff is probably about even, but that's not exactly the way I would have scripted it! John now has the strong central position I've been harping on, and Tom will have a tough time repositioning to deal with it without exposing himself to a few shots. I like the CX HS in 42K2 – the German has to kill off the Russian squads and he's well-placed to do so or absorb Russian Prep better directed elsewhere. It's not much of a risk as he'll have a valid rout path unless Tom gets a little crazy with the 447 in 42N1.

Though I feel John's in good shape, the clock is ticking – he has to grab the J1/J3/I3 buildings next turn so he can have two full turns to grab a couple on the far side of the road. Losses have been light, thanks to the new lease on life for the remaining Puma, but soon his stalwart SS goons are going to be eating some unfavorable modifiers....

Russian Turn 3

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 3,1 no change
2. Germans recover LMG in U1 dr = 5, yes
3. Attempt to fix the Tiger's BMG dr = 3, no

Prep Fire Phase

1. tank in I8 fires s7 smoke at F3
TH DR = 6,2 no smoke, no shot
Now we realize that the SU-85 also has HE7, and has depleted it for some time.

Tom - Crud, that would have been nice to have. As it is, the SU-85 is looking like a pretty expendable vehicle, having no MG's, no Smoke, and no HE ammo. And being BU and an NT-type vehicle, he's not even doing a great job of defending the center of the board against enemy armor. If I ever need somebody for a suicide mission, I think this is the guy.

JR - As stated above, I disagree with Tom here. This fellow has an AP TK of 17, APCR of 19 – his best weapon against the Tiger. I'd hold off on the suicide charge for a bit and try to work a coordinated assault on the big cat toward game end.

2. ATG in P4 rotates CA to N4 and fires at the tank in E4
TH # = 8, DRM = +3 (case A)
TH DR = 3,4 miss, -1 Acq, lost ROF because of CA change lowering ROF by 1 (C2.5)

Intensive Fire, same shot
TH DR = 1,2 turret hit, -2 Acq
TK # = 11 - 4 (armor) = 7
TK DR = 2,2 kill
Crew Survival DR = 6,4 no
German CVP count = 13

Tom - Huge throbbing result. This ATG crew has done its job; they can retire for the rest of the war. My guess is that John didn't see this LOS from all the way across the board; even though the range is only 11 hexes, it's easy to develop "tunnel vision" and mentally separate the two halves of the board.

JR - Wow – I don't like taking shots like this myself, as Tom had a 16.7% chance of breaking his gun versus a less than 12% chance of killing the panzer on that IF shot. But, you can't argue with the results – this takes away John's remaining Smoke tube, and leaves him outnumbered 3:2 in the AFV count. The Russians have reaped 12 CVPs by my calculation.

3. Infantry in D5 fire at E4
8(+1) DR = 5,1 1MC
1MC vs 348 DR = 6,2 breaks, DM

Tom - Another good result, opening up the possibility for my tank in B6 to think about moving up to C4 and crimping the style of the Germans on that side. Were it not for that verdammt ?+1 in D3. Well, let's see what develops.

D5 actually would have rather Skulked to D6, but the LOS from E4 to D6 looks good. Maybe sitting there doing nothing would have been better than losing concealment, but I guess I figured it's Crunch Time and let fly.

JR - This was a necessary shot – pecking away at John's vanguard hurts him in two ways, as they are now the Tiger's only flank protection on the north side and are also the ones who can AM onto the road for the push into D5 next turn.

4. J1 fires at I1
8(+2) vs CE Puma crew, 8(+1) vs HS
DR = 2,4 NMC vs Puma crew, 1MC vs HS
1MC vs HS DR = 6,2 breaks, DM
NMC vs Puma Crew DR = 2,6 Pins (BU)

Tom - Wow, good things happening everywhere. Without good infantry support in the area, this Puma is vulnerable. The T-34 in L3 pricks up his ears.

This is another unit that Prep Fired because he had no Skulking option.

5. tank in I8 fires AP at F3
TH # = 6, DRM = +1 (BU) +3 (TEM) = +4
TH DR = 6,1 miss, -1 acq

Tom - Sure, it's low-odds, but the German SAN is 2 and an 85mm AP shell has an HE equivalency of 2. If I can just get a hit.

Movement Phase

1. T-34 in L3 moves
 - a. start - 1
 - b. K3, TCA:I1 - 2
 - c. K2 - 3
 - d. HS in K2 looks for a panzerfaust
dr = 5, no
 - d. K1, TCA:I1 - 4
 - e. stop, go CE - 5

Tom <said after the turn ends> – HUGE mistake here...

JR <said while reading the move> - D'oh! What's he doing? This guy is RST! He can't shoot! Well, he can't drive into buildings now either so at least he won't be dropping into a cellar this turn.

- f. delay - 6
- g. Puma in I1 turns TCA:K1 and fires HE at the T-34
TH # = 8, DRM = +2 (case A) +1 (BU) +3 (case J1) -1 (range) = +5 net
TH DR = 2,5 miss, -1 acq, ROF

JR - Good move by John, firing HE – I see a lot of players neglect this option against CE but otherwise-invulnerable vehicles.

h. T-34 announces a Bounding Fire shot at the Puma but is reminded that as an RST vehicle, he can't fire while CE. Pause a moment for much wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Tom - I can't believe that I forgot this rule. It's one of those rules that bites me in the butt every now and then. In this case, that bite's gonna stay with me for a long time. It's not reflected here, but that Bounding Fire shot was low enough to kill the Puma. Damn!

In a standard friendly game, most opponents would have let the tank stay BU. John and I have decided to play by a stricter standard here - not quite "tournament rules", but not allowing a mistake like this to go by, especially when it could result in an AFV going down. I'm not entirely happy about it, but dammit, it WAS my mistake.

As it is, the T-34 has to get out of trouble.

JR – Tom sees the error of his ways.

i. Puma in I1 fires CMG at T-34
4(+4) DR = 6,6 mal's CMG

j. T-34 fires BMG at 4X1 to DM the broken squad there
1(+1) DR = 2,3 DM's 658

l. T-34 starts - 7

m. Puma in I1 fires HE again at T-34
TH # = 8, DRM = +1 (BU) +2 (case J) -1 (range) -1 (acq) = +1
TH DR = 4,3 hit, ROF lost, -2 Acq
Collateral Attack IFT resolution 6(+2) DR = 2,2 1MC
1MC vs 9-1 Armor Leader DR = 5,2 Passed

n. T-34 VCA: J2 TCA: I1 - 9

o. K2 - 10

p. CX 348 in K2 Subsequent First Fires
4(+3) DR = 3,1 PTC, Russian SAN
PTC vs 9-1 AL DR = 5,3 OK
Sniper activation dr = 5, no

p. VCA: L3 TCA: L0 - 11

q. L2 - 12

r. M3 - 13

s. M4 - 14

t. N4, TCA:L4 - 15

u. ESB, ask for 2 MP
DR = 6,2 +2 (2 MP requested) +1 (Russian) = 11, OK

v. VCA: L4 TCA:L4 - 17

w. stop - 18

(Pause to catch breath)

Tom - Sheesh. This guy is leading a charmed life. The Lord smiles on dummies, even if they're 9-1 armor leaders.

JR - This Russian just can't move a tank without risking the treads! The Gods smile on Tom and he goes unpunished for the CE gaffe. This is a good spot for the T34 to end up as it dominates the open terrain in the center of the action, and is out of LOS of the Tiger.

2. M5 assault moves L5 - 2

3. I3 assault moves J3 - 2

4. N1 assault moves O1 - 1.5

Tom - I'm hoping that the vehicle blaze in N2 will spread to the rest of the grainfield, effectively shielding the flank of the T-34 in N4. Still, that hasn't happened yet, and for the moment, this 447's job is to guard the T-34 from the SS squad in U1.

5. G8 assault moves F7 - 2

6. A4 assault moves A5 - 1

7. tank in B6 hastily reads the rules about RST and Buttons Up

JR - I didn't notice this fellow was CE – that would've been embarrassing had he still been CE when the stormtroopers made their move against D5!

Defensive Fire Phase

1. F3 fires at CE tank in N4

8(+1) DR = 4,1 1MC

1MC vs 9-1 AL R = 1,5 OK

2. G2 (without leader) and G3 firegroup at J5

8(+2) DR = 4,1 1MC

1MC vs 458 DR = 6,3 breaks, DM

3. Tiger fires CMG at J5

4(+3) DR = 6,2 no

4. Tiger fires MA at J5

TH # = 8, DRM = +1 (BU) +3 (TEM) = +4

TH DR = 4,3 miss, -1 acq

5. H0 at J1

8(+5) DR = 1,2 NMC, ROF

NMC vs 447 DR = 6,3 breaks, DM

Tom - OUCH! I don't have the strength to shrug off fluke breaks like this. I'm way outgunned and outnumbered; I need to count on concealment and stone building TEM.

John - !!!!!!!!!

JR - Easy there, big fella. John has been rolling up a lot of MC's and Tom only has two broken squads to show for it.

6. D3 looks for a panzerfaust dr = 5, no

Tom: Crap, I hate it when my opponent is resourceful enough to think of using panzerfausts against infantry in hard targets. Especially in this situation where it costs John very little to take such potshots but could cost me dearly, as my line is stretched pretty thin and can't afford any holes.

Advancing Fire Phase

1. F7 at I1, no LMG

1(+1) DR = 4,5 no

2. B6 changes TCA to C5 and fires HE at D3, losing ? in the process

TH # = 8, DRM = +4 (case A in a bldg) +1 (BU) +2 (wall TEM) -1 Acq = +6

TH DR = 3,6 -2 acq

3. Blaze spread in N2

Grain Kindling DR = 4,4 yes, remove wreck (B25.14)

Tom - Kewl. Soon that entire grainfield should be ablaze, which ought to protect the flank of the T-34 in that area pretty well. Of course, this Blaze shouldn't be there since the German vehicle in N2 shouldn't be burning, as we used the wrong TK # for the Russian 76L APCR last turn.

Rout Phase

1. J1 dies for failure to rout; No Quarter is declared for the Germans.

2. X1 to X2

3. I1 to X2, X1

John – The E4 halfsquad can't rout to the leader in F3 because he would be moving closer to the enemy tank in N4 and the gun in P4. That eliminates the G2 woods as a rout destination as well. I don't have any good choices here with this guy. I think I'll take a chance and keep him where he is and try to get a leader to him eventually.

Advance Phase

1. N4 buttons up for the duration of the war <JR – heh>

2. L5 to K5

3. F7 to F6

4. A5 to A4

5. C7 to B6

6. J3 to I3

7. O1 to O2

Close Combat Phase

1. Conceal F6
2. Check LOS from O2 to U1 for Concealment gain - LOS blocked, so conceal O2.

JR - I'm always torn about giving up free checks like this - the ? is nice to have, but if the LOS is clear John gets first crack next PFPh. However, in this instance John probably has other plans for the LMG/658 in 4U1 - the battle for the center now begins in earnest and he'll be needed in the J hexrow.

Tom - A turn of ups and downs. If the stupid tank commander had remained BU and killed the Puma, things would definitely have been looking good for the Russians. As it is, the Mexican Standoff continues, but the Russian infantry strength is waning more rapidly than we'd like. From now on, I'm gonna be needing people to rally under DM and low-odds things of that nature, not a good prospect.

I expect John to push on the north side of the board now; the defense is strong there, but that's where the German is strongest too, and the terrain is congested enough that individual smoke hexes could become important. The Russian defense has practically no reserves or ability to reinforce trouble spots, which means it's primed to be overwhelmed at the point of John's choosing.

John - Right after I felt like I was in good position the Russian floodgates open up a little bit. I lost my second panzer IV even though it took an intensive fire shot at a hull down target. One and a half squads also broke. The J1 Russian spoke loudly and I felt that the CX SS HS would be taken out in CC. But an improbable 8(+5) shot breaks that key 447, saving my HS and opening up that part of the board a little bit. For the record, I don't normally take these low odds shots, but I was desperate and needed a break. I guess I was due for one.

A final word: Once Tom went CE with his charging T34 I knew that I was safe. Those RST tanks can't fire while CE, and since he changed his CE/BU status during his MPh, I knew that he had to remain CE for the rest of the phase (D5.33). No chance at all for the Puma's 50 mm HE to take out that T-34, but the collateral 6(+2) attack could get an effect on the exposed crew. Getting the 1MC on the exposed crew was nice; too bad he didn't stun.

JR - Overall, Tom has to be happy with this turn - he is sweating his infantry losses a bit but he now has the upper hand in the armor battle. John could really use some Smoke for crossing the street, but it's not to be. Losing the 447 in J1 to a +5 shot is certainly a bummer, though - John needs to seize that middle clump of buildings ASAP and now it looks like he can do it next Player Turn.

This is still too close to call - the German has all his infantry (alive, if not Good Order) but has lost both PzIV's with nothing to show for it. A time will come where John will have to trade CVP's for buildings, and his margin for error is greatly reduced. VBM Freeze will come into play at some point and he has only two vehicles at his disposal, and one of 'em is a bit too valuable for that kind of mission. I like Tom's disposition of forces - the armor is well-placed, the 458 in I3 will sell its life dearly, and the remainder of his squads enjoy a combination of good cover and juicy LOS'. I look forward to the end game.

German Turn 4

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 3,3
2. Squad in X2 attempts to self-rally DR = 4,1 yes
3. Tiger attempts to repair BMG dr = 3, no
4. Puma attempts to repair CMG dr = 2, no
5. Remove DM's.

John - The goals for this turn are (1) Eliminate the Russian in I3 and secure the I3/J1/I3 buildings; and (2) Shift some Axis pressure onto the Russian left flank.

Prep Fire Phase

1. Remove smoke from 4W3
2. 42G2 declares Opportunity Fire

JR - What's John up to? He must be contemplating an AFPPh shot against the soon-to-be revealed 458 in I3, but he has enough bodies he should be throwing them at that guy, including this stack. Time's a wastin'!

3. HS in 42D3 looks for a Panzerfaust vs D5 dr = 5, no

Movement Phase

1. 6+1 in 4Y2 moves
 - a. 4Y1 - 1
 - b. 42I1 - 2
 - c. 42I2 - 3
 - d. I3 - 6 - revealing 458 and bumping 6+1 back to I2

Tom: Well, I suppose, but that 458 was gonna be firing this turn anyway, so losing concealment is no big deal. Still, whaddaya gonna do with a 6+1. Guess I'd use him to rally 4X1.

JR - It's not clear there's a real unit in I3 - using the 6+1 saves John the possibility of wasting a turn sneaking up on the hex only to have Dummies revealed in the CCPH.

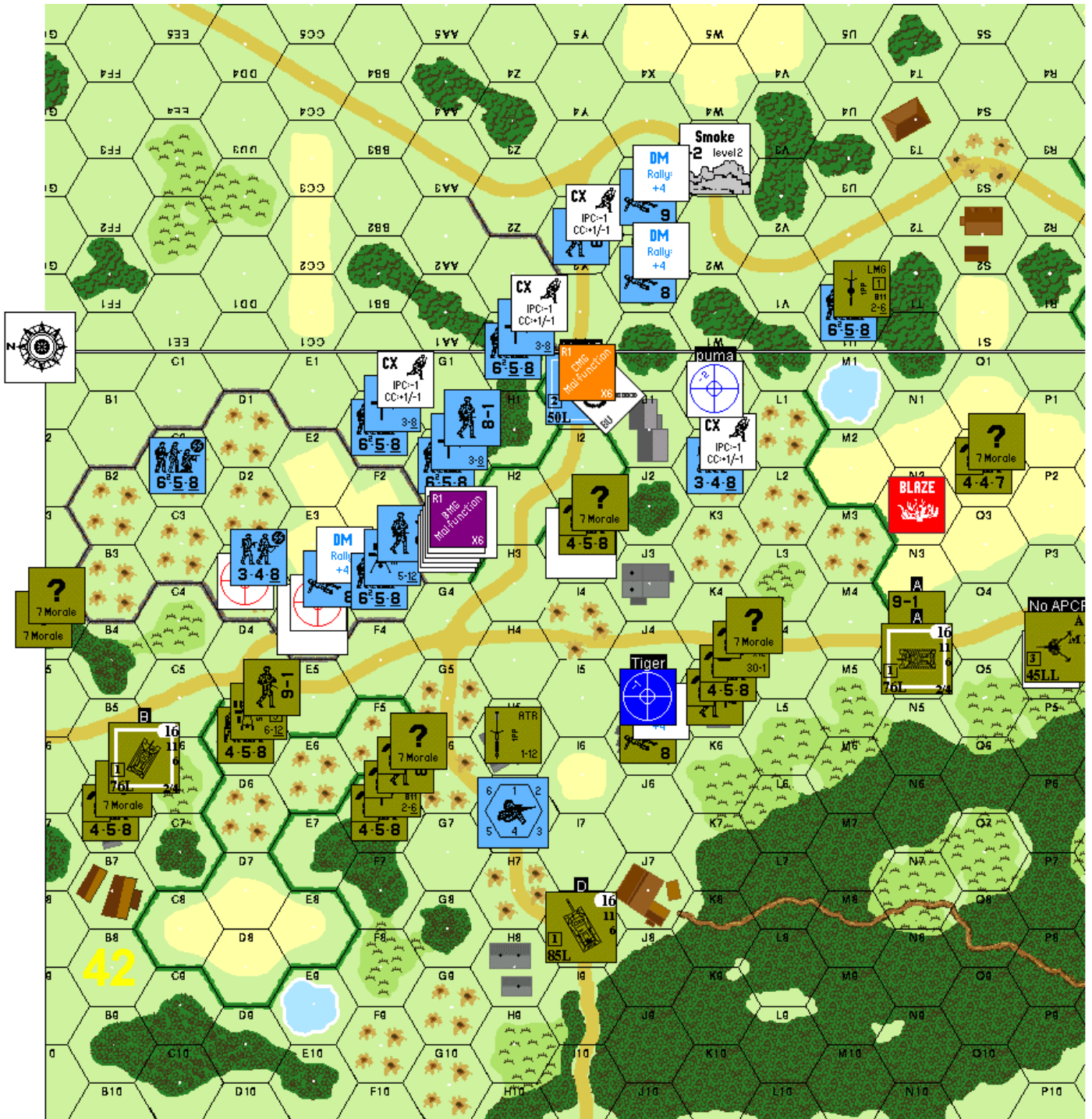
2. K2 assault moves J2 - 2
3. 658 in 4X2 moves
 - a. X1 - 2
 - b. X0 - 4
4. 658 in 4U1 moves
 - a. 4V0 - 2
 - b. 42O2 fires, losing concealment
4(+1) DR = 3,1 1MC, 1 RFP
1MC vs 658 DR = 2,4 OK
 - c. 42O2 SFF's
2(+1) DR = 2,3 PTC
PTC vs 658 DR = 1,6 OK
 - d. continue move to 42K1 - 4 (entering shellholes at 2 MF)
 - e. squad and leader 42K5 fire, losing concealment
4(+0) DR = 4,4 miss, 2 RFP
 - f. K5 SFF's
2(+0) DR = 4,1 NMC
NMC vs 658 DR = 2,2 OK, Russian SAN
Sniper activation dr = 3, no

Tom: Another frustrating penetration by one of John's supermen. Not everybody is gonna attract fire like this, but when the threat seems big enough, it's frustrating to pour fire on a guy and have him just laugh at you.

JR - Ain't it the truth. It's good to see John ignoring the south end and focussing on the real action in the center.

5. Puma moves
 - a. start, change TCA to 42J2 - 1
 - b. VCA:42H2 - 2
 - c. go CE, move to I2 - 2.5
 - d. stop - 3.5
 - e. Bounding First Fire MA at squad in I3
TH # = 8, DRM = +4(bounding fire) +3 (stone TEM) -2 (range) = +5
TH DR = 3,2 miss
 - f. ends move

Board Status at the end of Russian Turn 3
42G3 contains the German Tiger tank (CA:H4), along with a German 658/LMG and Hero.



Tom: Huh. I was worried about something more daring by the Puma, like VBM Freezing I3, or at least going CE and trying for crew smoke in I2. Seems like a good use for this guy. In retrospect, John is probably worried about CVP, rightly so.

John – I can't waste this guy to some fluky CCRF DR. I think I'm doing ok CVP-wise, but I'd like to keep the crew alive in case I need them to seize a building during the end game.

JR - I'd have given the sDs a whirl here.

6. 658 in 42C2 assault moves
 - a. C3 – 2 (into shellholes)
 - b. place infantry smoke in his own hex – 3 smoke dr = 2, successful

7. Hero in 42G3 assault moves G2 – 2

JR - It's clear John is taking a cautious approach this turn – the Hero might have been useful drawing the fire from I3 and freeing up the rest of the boys to move more aggressively.

8. Tiger moves
 - a. start – 1
 - b. VCA:E3 – 3
 - c. F2 – 5
 - d. E2 – 6
 - e. D2 – 7
 - f. VCA:C4 – 8
 - g. attempt sN smoke usage DR = 1,4 yes – 9
 - h. D3 – 10
 - i. stop – 11

JR - Tom's getting a lot of mileage out of those Dummies in A4. John now has the Tiger facing off with the B6 T34, with plenty of PF coverage on the flank against the other two Red AFVs. The Tiger will nicely support the leap across the road.

9. 658/LMG in 42F1 moves
 - a. E2 – 2.5
 - b. E3 – 4

10. 42F3 assault moves E4 – 1

11. Remaining Infantry in 42G3 assault move F3 – 3

11. 42H0 loses CX and moves

- a. G1 – 1
- b. G2 – 3

12. Russian tank in B6 makes a motion attempt, which can be done at any point during the opponent's MPh, including after all movement is completed (D2.401). dr = 3, successful based on 3 MF that the 658 expended in C3. Tank makes a Bog Check to change VCA: DR = 6,4 successful (but close!). Tank changes VCA:D6, TCA:C5.

Tom: Phew. Not getting Motion (or getting Bugged) would have put this tank in a tough spot. Probably a stupid idea to risk the Bog, but I was caught up in the moment.

Now that I realize just how low the Russian 76L To Kill # is, this T-34 isn't going to stand and duel with the Tiger; time to reposition to where it can still affect the infantry game from out of the Tiger's LOS.

JR - Tom sees discretion as the better part of valor. To get out of the Tiger's LOS with its initial MP expenditure in the next MPh, the T34 will have to go into C7 in Bypass along the C6 hexside (it will be at the C6/C7/D6 CAFP for LOS purposes). Tom could have used Reverse Motion to escape as well, assuming both players agreed to the use of this optional rule. Using a successful Motion Attempt to change VCA is a good thing to keep in mind in a fight like this – it could make the difference in a successful getaway.

Defensive Fire Phase

1. D5 at E4
 - 8(+1) DR = 3,3 1MC, ROF on HMG
 - 1MC vs 9-1 DR = 1,2 OK
 - vs 658/MMG DR = 1,5 OK
 - vs broke348 DR = 4,4 OK, but DM

Same shot with HMG ROF
 6(+1) DR = 5,2 PTC
 PTC vs 9-1 DR = 1,3 OK, Russian SAN
 vs 658/MMG DR = 6,2 OK

Russian Sniper dr = 3, no

2. ATG in P4 fires HE at E4
 - TH = 6, DRM = +1 (vehicle hindrance in N4) +2 (wall TEM) –2 (acquisition) = net +1
 - TH DR = 3,4 miss, ROF, -1 acq

Repeat same shot
 TH DR = 1,4 hit, ROF, -2 acq
 IFT resolution: 4(+0) DR = 1,1 K/2, German SAN
 Random selection for K/2: 9-1 dr = 2, 658/MMG dr = 3, dm348 dr = 6
 KIA the HS, remaining units take a 2MC
 2MC vs 9-1 DR = 6,3 breaks, DM
 vs 658/MMG DR = 2,4 pins
 German CVP count = 14
 German Sniper dr = 5, no

ATG repeats same shot
 TH DR = 1,4 hit, rate
 IFT resolution: 4(+0) DR = 6,5 miss

ATG repeats same shot
 TH DR = 2,4 - miss, rate

ATG repeats same shot
 TH DR = 1,1 - final TH DR is a 3 (with net +1 TH DRM) which is not less than half of the Modified TH # of 6, but we do a subsequent dr to see if this is an Improbable Critical Hit (C3.7). Subsequent dr = 1, yes

Random selection determines who receives the CH: dm9-1 dr = 1, 658/MMG dr = 2, so the squad takes the CH while the leader takes a normal hit

IFT resolution: 8(-2) vs squad, 4(+0) vs leader
 DR = 1,4 K/2 vs squad, 1MC vs leader
 1MC vs dm9-1 DR = 3,3 OK
 2MC vs 348 resulting from the K/2 vs the squad: DR = 2,5 breaks, DM
 German CVP count = 15
 German Sniper dr = 3, no

Tom: Yow! E4, The Hex of Death! Glorious Defenders of the Revolution lapel pins for that ATG crew!

JR - Oh, the humanity!

3. Tank in N4 fires MG's at J2
 - 6(+2) DR = 4,1 NMC
 - NMC vs 348 DR = 3,5 Pins

now fire MA at J2
 TH # = 8, DRM = +1(BU) –1 (AL) +1(TEM) = +1
 TH DR = 5,5 miss, -1 acq

4. I3 fires at G2
 - 4(+1) DR = 4,4 cowers, misses

5. tank in I8 fires AP at F3
 - TH # = 8, DRM = +1(BU) +3(TEM) –1(acq) = +3
 - TH DR = 6,2 miss, -2 acq

6. ATG From Hell continues abuse of E4
 - TH # = 6, DRM = +1

TH DR = 6,5 miss, no ROF (shock and dismay!)

JR - I'm sure John shed a sympathetic tear for Tom's loss of ROF here.

Advancing Fire Phase

1. Blaze to Flame spread from N2 (DR of 6 required to flame the Grain):

- M2: DR = 6,1 successful, place Flame
- N1: DR = 2,3 no
- O2: DR = 3,6, successful, place Flame
- O3: DR = 1,3 no
- N3: DR = 5,1 successful, place Flame

2. G2 at I3 (not using the LMG that moved)

12(+1) DR = 1,3 2MC, ROF, Russian SAN

2MC vs 458 DR = 1,1 HoB, German SAN

HoB DR = 5,6 (-1 Elite +2 Russian) = 12.

As per Q&A, No Quarter makes this normal "Surrender" result into Berserk.

Russian Sniper dr = 1, hot

Scatter direction = 2, distance = 2, moving Russian Sniper from 4DD5 to 4FF4. Closest German is the 658 in 42C3, so Sniper moves there and breaks that unit.

German Sniper dr = 4, no

JR - Ouch, No Quarter bites John in the ass. The Berserker may not be long for this world but all that careful crafting of the G2 FG seems wasted now.

3. LMG in G2 uses ROF to DM J5 (with the Leader directing)

2(+2) DR = 5,4 DM's unit

JR - Howzzat? Can a Leader do that? I thought if he directed the inherent

FP in one attack he can't direct the MG fire elsewhere.

4. F3 Assault Fires on K5 without the LMG

4(+3) DR = 1,4 NE

5. K1 Assault Fires on K5 without the LMG

4(+3) DR = 4,1 NE

6. Tiger fires CMG at D5 (BMG is NA since the Tiger is Hull Down, D4.223)

2(+3) DR = 4,6 no

7. Tiger fires MA at D5

TH DR = 5,3 miss, -1 acq

Rout Phase

- 1. E4 Low Crawls to D3, headed toward A4
- 2. J5 routs to K5

Advance Phase

- 1. 6+1 in I2 to J1
- 2. 42K1 to K2
- 3. 4X0 to 42J1
- 4. 348 in 42D3 to C3
- 5. 42F3 to E4
- 6. 42E3 to D3
- 7. 42G2 to G3

Close Combat Phase – no actions.

Tom – As expected/feared, John saw the better avenue for attack and shifted over to the Russian left. I've got some good infantry over there, but the 9-1 and his HMG squad are feeling somewhat uncomfortable just 2 hexes from the Tiger and its supporting infantry. The tank in N4 and ATG in P4 are doing a nice job of throwing shells into the fray; I don't see any need to move them for now, but I imagine that tank will find something urgent to do pretty soon. Gotta love the way the fire is spreading through the grain, protecting the Russian assets on that side. The Berserker in I3 isn't entirely unwelcome, as he had dedicated his life to defending that block of buildings anyway and may be harder to take out now that his Morale is 10. I do wonder, however, if a little more aggressiveness with the Puma would have given John a better grip on the I3/I2 area, something he surely could leverage in the coming turns.

John – I probably didn't move as much as Tom thought I would, but I didn't feel the need yet. I'm still on time to get the buildings that I need. In addition to the buildings around J2, I have my sights set on B6 and D5. My Puma crew is now in position to seize the I3 building. I get the 2MC that I wanted on the Russian in I3, but he goes berserk instead of breaking. And can we talk about the Russian ATG? Remember earlier when I said that it might be used as an anti-infantry weapon? I didn't expect a six-shot-ROF-spree. Tom also threw in a critical hit for yucks. My 8-morale guys should be able to withstand a few 4-FP shots from this gun but instead they crumble. In addition to eliminating the new 'zerker I have to keep an eye on the Russian squad in O2. He's looking frisky and I bet he's thinking about moving into my backfield around 4X1. He might be looking for some cheap real estate.

JR - I agree with Tom – I expected John to make a big push against I3 this turn. As it stands, he has two turns left and a lot of buildings to take. The ATG had a nice little run against E4, but that's gonna happen. The Berserker will likely die going after the J2 HS, but John's gotta be bummed that it is still in the game at all. John is in decent shape at the north end of the map, but given the slow going in the center, I feel the balance is swinging toward Tom.

Russian turn 4

Rally Phase

- 1. Wind Change DR = 1,5 no change
- 2. 7-0 in K5 rallies DM458 DR = 4,5 no
- 3. Leader in 42D3 attempts self-rally DR = 4,6 no
- 4. Tiger attempts to fix BMG dr = 1, yes
- 5. Puma attempts to fix CMG dr = 4, no
- 6. Remove DM's

Prep Fire Phase

- 1. ATG in P4 fires at E4
TH # = 6, DRM = net +1, as in previous DFPh
TH DR = 2,2 hit, ROF
IFT resolution: 4(+0) DR = 6,4 no effect

same shot with ROF
TH DR = 4,5 miss, no rate

- 2. tank in N4 fires BMG at J2
2(+2) DR = 6,6 malfs BMG
- 3. tank in N4 fires CMG at E4
4(+2) DR = 1,6 no
- 4. tank in N4 fires MA at E4 using Area Target Type
TH # = 7, DRM = +1(BU) -1 (AL) = +0
TH DR = 6,1 hit, -1 Area Acq
IFT resolution: 6(+2) DR = 6,1 no effect

Board Status at end of German Turn 4
D3 contains a Tiger (CA:C5), 658/LMG, DM9-1, DM348/MMG
E4 contains a Hero, 658/LMG, and a PzIV wreck
G3 contains an 8-1, 658/LMG, 658/LMG



5. D5 fires at E4
8(+1) DR = 5,5 no

Tom: Drat. Skulking the boys in D5 back to D6 was the safer, probably smarter, move, but I felt the urge to put a dent in John's infantry force and wasn't real happy about the potential LOS from D6 to the German squad in E4. "Do it then regret it" seems to be the Russian motto here.

JR - Ooh, iffy decision here. Let's see if John can capitalize on this.

Movement Phase

1. Berserk 458 in I3 charges into J2 - 2 MF
a. 348 in J2 fires
8(+0) DR = 2,5 1MC, 4 RFP
1MC vs bz458 DR = 3,3 OK

b. J2 SFF's
4(+0) DR = 1,2 2MC
2MC vs bz458 DR = 3,4 OK

c. J1 fires (not using the leader)
12(+0) DR = 5,6 NE, RFP bumped up to 6

d. J1 SFF's
6(+0) DR = 1,1 covers to 4 column, K/2
2MC vs bz248 DR = 6,1 OK

JR - John cuts the Berserker in half - the 348 has a decent chance of taking care of this menace in the CCPh.

2. Tank in I8 moves
a. start - 1
b. H7 - 2
c. G7 - 3
d. G6 - 4
e. F5 - 6
f. Puma fires
TH # = 10, DRM = +3(moving target, only 2 MP spent in LOS) +1(hedge) = +4
TH DR = 5,3 miss, -1 acq
g. F4 - 8 (E4 claims Wall Advantage)
h. stop - 9
i. squad in E4 looks for a panzerfaust dr = 6, pins
j. same squad looks for another panzerfaust dr = 4, no
k. Tiger in D3 turns TCA to E5 and fires
TH # = 10, DRM = +3 (moving target, 2 MP in LOS) +2 (case A) +1 (BU) -1 (AL) -1 (range) = net +4
TH DR = 1,4 turret hit, ROF, -1 acq
TK # = 20 - 11 (armor) = 9
TK DR = 1,2 flames tank

Tom: Ah well. With no HE, no Smoke, and no Machine Guns, the SU-85 was pretty much waiting for an opportunity to go out in a blaze of glory. His mission was twofold: to suck up defensive fire from D3 and E4, and if he survived, to threaten the Tiger with a Bounding Fire shot. Getting fausted and leaving a burning wreck in F4 would not have been fun, as it would have hindered the fire from N4 and P4 toward the left-hand side of the board, but somehow I felt lucky and didn't think the squad in E4 would be a problem. The Tiger's dfire shot was somewhat annoying, as I had hoped the SU-85's Hull Down position would have deflected the shell. And keeping ROF, to boot!

Ultimately, not a good move, I realize. The threat of creating a burning wreck in F4 was too great, and the extra gun barrel could have come in handy in the tank-vs-tank duel on the Russian left. Still, the opportunity to throw a counterpunch is something I always enjoy (apparently to the detriment of my chances to win the game...)

JR - Whoa! That seemed a bit hasty, and to add insult to injury, the Tiger maintains rate! And John now has some cover for the cross-road assault to

boot! Ew. I liked the SU where he was, a good spot for the endgame. This was a little on the reckless side IMO.

3. motion tank in B6 moves
a. Bounding Fire the CMG at D3
1(+2) DR = 2,2 NE, DM's broken units there

b. Move into C7, bypassing on C6 side (TCA facing C6) - 4
c. stop - 5

JR - Tom knows John isn't likely to attempt a high-DRM shot with the Tiger so he goes ahead and takes the CMG shot. However, this means he forgoes an acquisition shot with the MA in the AFPPh.

4. A4 assault moves A5 - 1

5. B6 assault moves C7 - 2

6. 447 in O2 CX's
a. N1 - 1.5
b. N0, bypass M1 - 2.5
c. 4U1 - 4.5
d. 4V1 - 5.5

Tom: Falling back with this guy would have been easy and brainless, but the opportunity is there to DM the German unit in X2 and put some pressure on the Germans trying to solidify their hold on the J1-J3 area, at very little cost. This is perhaps a *smart* counterpunch, as opposed to what the SU-85 did.

JR - I really like this move - this 447 threatens the German rear, and will force John to divert some resources from the main assault to deal with it.

7. Squad in K5 drops DC and assault moves to L5 - 2

8. Leader in K5 assault moves L5 - 2

Tom - I'm hoping that somebody will survive dfire in L5 and be able to return to K5 and recover the DC. Feels like better odds than having the 458 take the DC into L5 and hoping he can survive dfire there unbroken and unpinned.

Defensive Fire Phase

1. K2 at L5
8(+0) DR = 6,5 no, eliminates captured Russian LMG

2. G3 at K5
16(+1) DR = 4,4 1MC
1MC vs bk458 DR = 4,3 OK but DM

3. D3 at D5
8(+3) DR = 3,4 miss

4. Tiger in D3 fires CMG at D5
4(+3) DR = 4,2 miss

5. Tiger fires MA ROF to fire at D5, HE on the Infantry Target Type
TH = 8, DRM = +3(bldg TEM) +1 (BU) -1 (AL) -1 (range) = net +2
TH DR = 2,4 hit, -1 acq
IFT resolution 16(+0) DR = 1,1 2KIA (!!!)
Subsequent dr to see if bldg rubbles (needs a 1) dr = 4, no
Possible Flame creation DR = 2,5 no
Random SW destruction for HMG dr = 3, HMG eliminated

Tom: AAARRRRGGGHHH! Who IS this guy?

JR - Barkmann, I believe. Most unpleasant for the Russians. Skulking is rarely the wrong choice (he says smugly).

Advancing Fire Phase

1. Flame to Blaze spread:
M2: DR = 4,6 yes

O2: DR = 4,4 yes
 N3: DR = 4,3 yes

2. Blaze to Flame spread:
 O3: DR = 1,1 no
 N1: DR = 6,4 yes

3. L5 at K2
 2(+1) DR = 5,4 no

4. Berserker in J2 fires at HS in his hex
 2(+1) DR = 1,3 NMC
 NMC vs 348 DR = 5,4 breaks, DM

JR - Criminy, this guy will live another Player Turn! Tom's one break of the turn.

5. 4V1 at 4X2
 2(+2) DR = 5,4 DM's broken unit

Rout Phase

- Germans in D3 rout E3, F3. (Routing via E4 would have caused them to see the Russians on the eastern side of the board, keeping them from further routing toward F3)
- Germans in 4X2 ignore X1 as being equidistant from the enemy unit in 4V1 and rout to Y3, Z3.
- Germans in 42J2 to J1, J0

Advance Phase

- 4V1 to 4W1
- 42L5 to K5
- 42A5 to B4
- 42F6 to F5
- 42C7 to B6

Close Combat Phase – no actions

Tom – Not, I repeat, NOT good. Not only do I create the smoke hindrance in F4 with my own burning wreck (an outstandingly dumb move), but D5 goes down in a heap, giving John a clear avenue across the road. The line is patched up with the arrival of the 8-0 and 458/LMG in F5, but it's razor-thin out there and John has a lot of options for his attack. Methinks that tank commander in N4 has found that "something urgent" I was talking about before.

John – Letter to Berlin: I've got a new tank-ace in the making here! My Tiger wrecks the SU-85 and keeps ROF. He then trashes the 9-1/458/HMG sitting in a stone building. If you throw in the T-34 from earlier, the Tiger has trashed 18 CVP worth of Russians all by himself.

I stopped Defensive firing on the Berserk Russian once he reduced to a HS. I figured that I'd wait for CC and my upcoming 3:2 attack. I didn't expect for my guy to break on the wimpy 2(+1) advancing fire shot. The J2 area has suddenly become dicey for me with the Berserker still alive in the front and the 447 coming in through the rear. Still, overall this had been a pretty good turn for the Germs. It looks like it's going to come down to the wire though

JR - Whew, that player turn evened things out a bit. Tom's raid into board 4 with the 447, and the survival of the Berserk HS, are the meager highlights for the Russians. I think the SU85 and the HMG stack died needless deaths, and the Russian left is now in deep peril. I'd have brought the T34 up to L4, where it would be six hexes from the burning wreck and in a better spot to affect the upcoming German dash across the road. This has been a wild one so far – give Tom credit, he's an active defender, but his aggressiveness finally caught up with him this turn.

German Turn 5

Rally Phase

- Wind Change DR = 2,5 no effect
- Self-rally broken leader in 42F3 DR = 1,3 yes
- MMC self-rally in 42J0 DR = 4,3 no
- Leader in 42F3 tries to rally dm348/MMG DR = 1,5 yes
- Tank in N4 attempts to repair BMG dr = 3, no
- Leader rallies dm458 in K5 DR = 1,3 successful
- 458 recovers DC in K5 dr = 2, successful
- Puma attempts to repair CMG dr = 2, no
- Remove DM's, except for 42J0 which is still ADJACENT to the Known Enemy Unit in 4W1.

JR - Deploying the squad in J1 would've given John a bit of help fending off the 447 in 4W1 – though the 6+1 isn't exactly the picture of inspirational leadership.

Prep Fire Phase

- Remove sN smoke laid last turn in 42D2
- F3 and G3 firegroup vs F5
 12(+1) DR = 4,4 NMC
 NMC vs 8-0 DR = 2,4 OK
 vs 458/LMG DR = 1,5 OK

Tom: Le pant, le heave... Steady, boys!

JR - These guys gotta move! Move move move! They've got the burning SU for cover, and besides, that's why these guys have 8 morale!

- J1 and K2 (without the leader) fire on J2
 24(+1) DR = 2,4 3MC
 3MC vs bz248 DR = 6,3 eliminated

John – I'm glad to be rid of that guy.

Tom – Why do all MY berserkers crumble like this, but my opponents' berserkers just laugh these attacks off?

- Puma fires MA at F5, using acquisition gained last MPH vs the moving SU-85
 TH = 8, DRM = +1(BU) +1 (hedge TEM) -1 (acq) = net +1
 TH DR = 5,2 hit, -2 acq
 IFT resolution 6(+0) DR = 5,2 NMC
 NMC vs 8-0 DR = 5,1 OK
 vs 458/LMG DR = 3,2 OK

Puma Intensive Fires vs same target (net +2 TH DRM now)
 TH DR = 5,4 miss

Tom: HOLD THE LINE, BOYS!!! In actuality, F5 has already done a big part of its job, just sucking up German Prep Fire. K5, N4, and P4 can cover the road running from F4 to K4; F5 is needed to fire out to C4 and to cover the tank in D6. Guess I expected more moving and less firing from the Germans this turn; F5 might be another good target for a TPBF Freeze by the Puma or even the Tiger. Shrug: John must be counting his armor CVP losses or figures he doesn't need to push real hard since he can win the game if he takes and holds B6, D5, I3, and J3, something that's distressingly plausible.

John – I'm not gonna need the MA on this guy after the crew abandons, so Intensive Firing is no big deal.

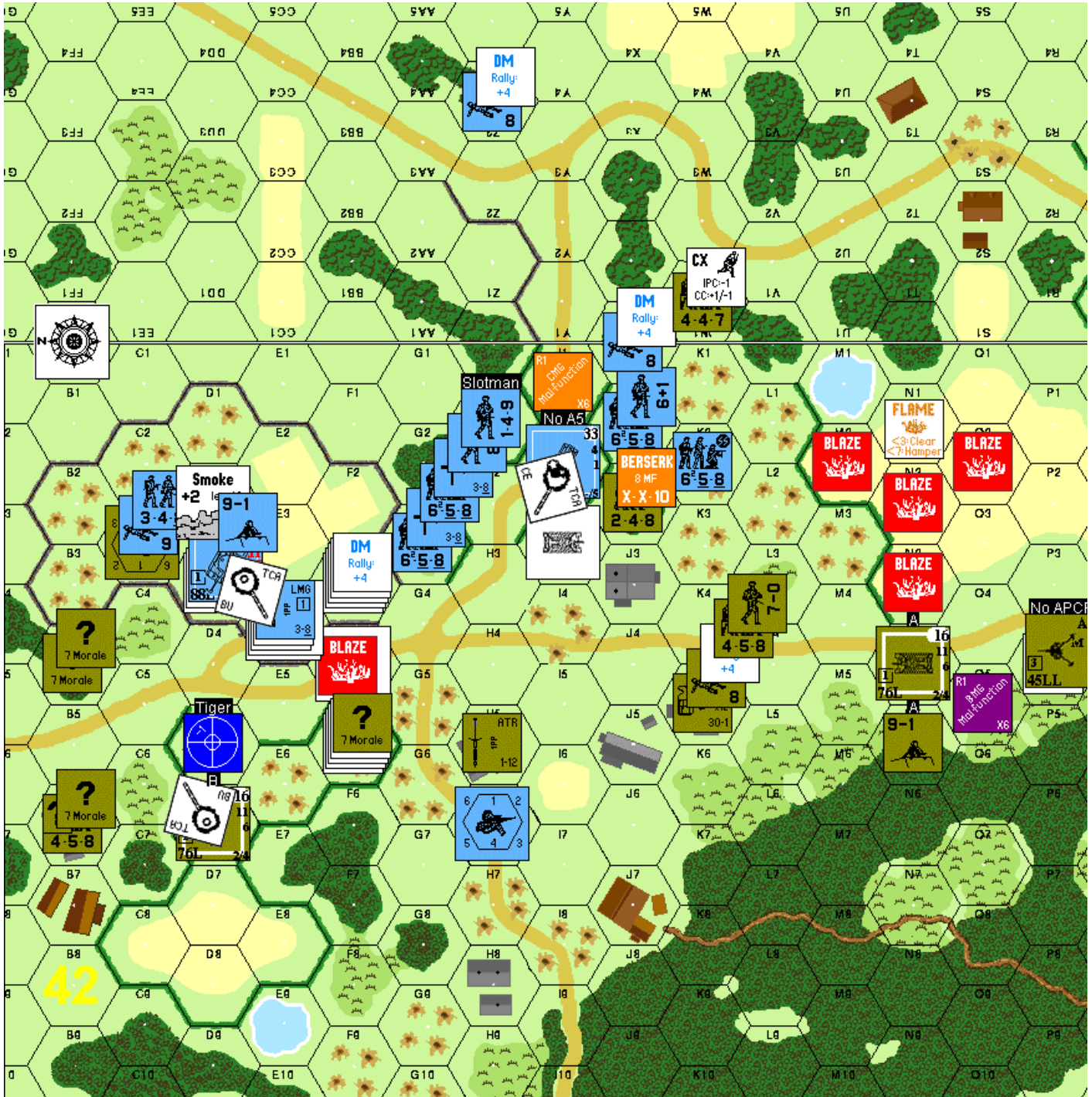
JR - Not a bad shot, but this Puma could've had some fun rolling up into G5 or G6 CE, drawing some fire. I feel I'm harping on John's cautiousness, but in this case it's simply a matter of taste.

Board Status at the end of Russian Turn 4

F3 contains a DM9-1, DM348/MMG

E4 contains a Hero, 658/LMG

D3 contains a Tiger, 658/LMG



Movement Phase

1. 6+1 moves
 - a. I1 - 2
 - b. 4Y1 - 3
 - c. Y2 - 4
 - d. Z2 - 5

Tom: The following move is one of those where time slows down because things are happening so quickly...

2. Tiger moves
 - a. start - 1
 - b. VCA=TCA=E5 - 2
 - c. D4 - 4
 - d. tank in N4 shoots APCR
TH = 8, DRM = +3(moving, 2 MP spent in LOS) -1 (size) +1 (BU) -1(AL) +2 (wreck blaze hindrance in F4) = net +4
TH DR = 5,4 no APCR, no shot

repeat same shot with AP ammo
TH DR = 4,6 no, -1 acq

Tom: Not a great shot, but I thought the Tiger was going to go into Bypass of D5, thereby getting out of N4's LOS.

- e. sN attempt DR = 6,6 no, no MP's spent

Tom: I sure wish smoke dispensers would malfunction on a DR of 12. Chrome, to be sure, but fun chrome. A good move for John that should have paid off.

- f. E5 - 5
- g. tank in N4 intensive Fires
TH = 8, DRM = +2(moving target) +1(BU) -1 (AL) +2 (Intensive Fire) -1 (size) +2 (smoke hindrance) -1 (acquisition) = net +4
TH DR = 3,5 miss, -2 acq

Tom: Aargh; N4 had a side shot!

- h. stop - 6
- i. Tiger Bounding Fires MG's vs F5
8(+1) DR = 4,2 1MC
1MC vs 8-0 DR = 6,6 breaks, wounds. Wound severity dr = 1, just a flesh wound
1MC vs 458/LMG DR = 6,1 Pinned
- j. Bounding Fire MA vs F5
TH = 8, DRM = +4 (case C) +1 (BU) -1 (AL) +1 (hedge TEM) -2 (range) = net +3
TH DR = 6,5 miss

Tom: Just to compare and contrast styles, I'd be sorely tempted to Overrun F5 and stay in the hex (with turret pointed toward D6 for defensive purposes). The 12-flat OVR attack had a good chance of working, and the German infantry would have an easier time crossing the D4/E5 road with the Russians TPBF-Frozen in F5. Shrug. John is probably (rightly) concerned about losing the Tiger to a CC Reaction Fire attack from the infantry being Overrun, and since so much German infantry is sitting under Prep Fire markers, there wouldn't be many units to cross the undefended road anyway.

- k. Tank in D6 rotates TCA to E5 and attempts an APCR shot vs the Tiger
TH = 10, DRM = +1(BU) +2 (case A, ST turret) +3 (moving target, 3 MP in LOS) +1 (hedge TEM) -1 (size) -1 (range) = net +5
TH DR = 2,3 turret hit, -1 acq
TK # = 14 +2 (range) -14 (strong turret armor) = 2
TK DR = 2,6 no effect

Tom: When, oh WHEN will I remember that my APCR ammo has a lower TK # than regular ol' AP? Years of thinking "APCR = more powerful" seems to have me brainwashed. That's gonna bite me in the ass sooner or later.

More importantly, doesn't John realize that N4 and P4 have side shots on the Tiger in E5? The Tiger still has plenty of MP's remaining to start up and move to a better defensive position.

JR - This Tiger is not in a great spot - a move to E6 and a BFF shot against the T34 would've had a fair chance of whacking the Rooskie and still leave some MP to swing around and hose the F5 Infantry with the MGs, while screwing up their Rout options. As it is he's got three tubes aimed at him, two with side shots. Tom's suggested Overrun into F5 would've offered a side shot to the D6 T34. As for Tom's comment on the 76L AP versus APCR TK #s, I think he's confusing the Russian 76L AP TK # (13) with the non-Russian TK # (17). <still - Tom>

3. 348 in C3 assault moves B3 - 2
(claims Wall Advantage, thus revealing the Russian Dummy in B4)
4. 658 in E4 assault moves, attempts infantry smoke in D4 dr = 5, no
5. D3 dashes
 - a. D4 - 2
 - b. pinned 458 in F5 fires (no LMG)
1(-2) DR = 2,1 K/1
1MC vs 348 DR = 1,1 HoB
HoB DR = 4,3 -1(elite) = 6, so 348 goes Fanatic and creates a Hero
German CVP count = 16

Tom: Oh for crying out loud. Those guys by themselves could crack the left side. Certainly the tank in D6 is now in serious trouble from a panzerfaust or a CC attack with ATMM. Dangit! This is now a HIGH PRIORITY target!

JR - Hubba! A Hero/Fanatic HS beats the heck out of plain ol' 658!

- c. B6 fires
2(-2) DR = 5,4 no effect, 1 RFP
- d. B6 SFF's
1(-2) DR = 6,2 no
- e. Tank in N4 fires CMG
2(+3) DR = 4,1 no, loses -2 acq on Tiger
- f. Gun in P4 fires, HE on the Inf target type
TH = 6, DRM = +2 (dash) +1 (vehicle hindrance in N4) +2 (wreck blaze hindrance in F4) +2 (wall TEM) -1 (FFNAM) = net +6 (shot was taken before the Russian player realized how bad the DRM's were)
TH DR = 1,2 miss, -1 acq, ROF

JR - These guys are pulling all the Acqs off the Tiger, a nice little bennie that slightly improves the beast's chance of survival.

- g. German units continue to D5 - 4
- h. tank in D6 fires MG's, losing acq on Tiger
12(+2) DR = 5,2 NMC
NMC vs Hero DR = 6,3 OK
vs fanatic348 DR = 4,5 Pins
- i. tank in D6 intensive fires his MA vs D5, HE on the ITT
TH = 8, DRM = +1 (BU) +2 (intensive fire) +3 (TEM) -2 (range) -1 (FFNAM, only vs Hero as the 348 is Pinned) = net +3 vs Hero, +4 vs Pinned HS
TH DR = 3,1 hits both units, -1 acq
IFT resolution: 12(+0) DR = 1,2 K/3
Random selection to see who takes the Casualty Reduction: Hero dr = 2, HS dr = 1, so Hero is Wounded. Wound Severity dr = 2, just a flesh wound
fanatic 348 takes a 3MC: DR = 5,5 breaks

Tom: PHEW. At least, for now - the Hero can still take out the tank all by himself, though.

JR - Tom didn't have much choice here - that little combo was going to be a handful otherwise. The Hero is still around and very dangerous, but the HS will have to scamper away. They sucked up a lot of fire but John has nothing left to take advantage of it.

Defensive Fire Phase

1. K5 at G3
 8(+1) DR = 5,3 PTC
 PTC vs 8-1 DR = 3,5 OK
 vs 658/LMG DR = 6,5 Pins
 vs 658/LMG DR = 3,3 OK

2. W1 at K2
 4(+2) DR = 6,2 no

3. ATG fires at Tiger with ROF
 TH = 8, DRM = +2(case J) +1 (AFV hindrance in N4) +2 (wreck hindrance in F4) -1 (size) = +4
 TH DR = 3,6 miss, ROF, -1 acq

ROF, same shot with net +3 DRM
 TH DR = 6,4 miss, -2 acq

Advancing Fire Phase

1. Flame to Blaze in N1: DR = 5,2 yes
 2. Blaze to Flame spread:
 O1: DR = 2,5 yes
 P1: DR = 1,5 yes
 P2: DR = 1,2 no
 O3: DR = 1,5 yes

3. Hero in D5 looks for a panzerfaust. dr = 5, no
 4. E4 fires at F5 (no LMG)
 4(+3) DR = 4,5 no

Rout Phase

1. Broken HS in D5 tries to rout to B4, risking interdiction in C5
 Interdiction NMC DR = 3,5 OK
 (and makes it to B4, continuing to A4)
 2. Broken Russian leader in F5 routs to F6

Advance Phase

1. B3 to B4
 2. D5 to C5
 3. 658/LMG in E4 to E5
 4. F3 to E4
 5. 8-1, Hero, 658/LMG in G3 to F3
 6. 6+1 in 4Z2 to Z3
 7. K2 to J2

Close Combat Phase – no actions

Tom – The Hero didn't go into CC against the tank in D6 – why? With an ATMM, he had a 42% chance of killing or immobilizing the tank. Mega-shrug. The Russians on the right are drooling at their Prep Fire prospects to get a side hit on the Tiger...

John – I don't send the hero after the tank because I need him to help secure the B6 building during my next MPh. The J2 area looks a little better right now, but I still have to be careful about Dfire and a Russian counter-attack. The big push next turn will be to take building B6. Even though my dashing guys broke I still earned control of the D5 building, since they were Good Order when they entered it. I wonder if Tom realizes that I control it?

<Tom – I did realize it, but kudos to John for his honesty in placing Control markers on the board. Once the 9-1/HMG stack went down in a heap. I think D5 was mentally written off in my mind. >

JR - It looks like John has D5 and I3 in hand; he'll have a fight on his hands for B6, and I'm betting some of the Russians in K5 end the next Player Turn in J3, complicating matters there. The Tiger has to feel a little nervous sitting in E5 – there's a good chance Tom's shots will bounce off its 8 factor side armor, but that's nothing to bank on. John has the materiel in place to get the job done, but he is a little out of position. Ideally he'd be bracing to defend his gains on Turn 6, but in fact he has yet to grab them in the first place.

Russian Turn 5

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 6,2 no
 2. Puma attempts to repair CMG dr = 3, no
 3. Wounded leader attempts self-rally in F6 DR = 3,6 no
 4. tank in N4 attempts to repair BMG dr = 6, disables BMG
 5. 6+1 rallies broken 348 in 4Z3 DR = 2,1 successful
 6. Remove DM's

Prep Fire Phase

1. ATG in P4 fires at Tiger
 TH # = 8, DRM = +1 (AFV in N4) +2 (wreck blaze) -2 (acq) -1 (size) = net +0
 TH DR = 4,3 hull hit, no rate
 TK # = 11 - 8 (armor) = 3
 TK DR = 6,6 dud

Intensive Fire, same shot (now with net +2 TH DRM)
 TH DR = 6,3 miss

2. B6 fires at C5
 4(+0) DR = 1,3 1MC
 1MC vs 138 Hero DR = 5,4 eliminates Wounded Hero [A15.2]

John – Another 4-flat that ruins my day. I needed this guy to help get B6. Why is it that the dangerous shots have no effect on me while the little shots are devastating?

JR - Nailing the Hero should be a priority – that's gotta be a relief for Tom.

3. tank in D6 fires AP at Tiger
 TH = 10, DRM = +1 (BU) +1 (hedge) -1 (size) -1 (range) = +0
 TH DR = 1,4 turret hit, ROF, -1 acq
 TK DR = 5,5 no effect

JR - Hmm – this T34 had a much better chance at a Deliberate Immobilization attempt than an outright kill.

4. tank in N4 fires AP at Tiger
 TH = 8, DRM = +1 (BU) +2 (blaze hindrance) -1 (AL) -1 (size) -2(acq) = net -1.
 TH DR = 4,2 hull hit, no ROF
 TK # = 14 - 8 (armor) = 6
 TK DR = 2,1 burns
 German CVP count = 23

Tom: Definitely should have taken this shot before firing the ATG in P4 or the tank in D6; not sure why I held off, as N4 had far and away the best chance to kill the Tiger. Ah well. A BIG moment.

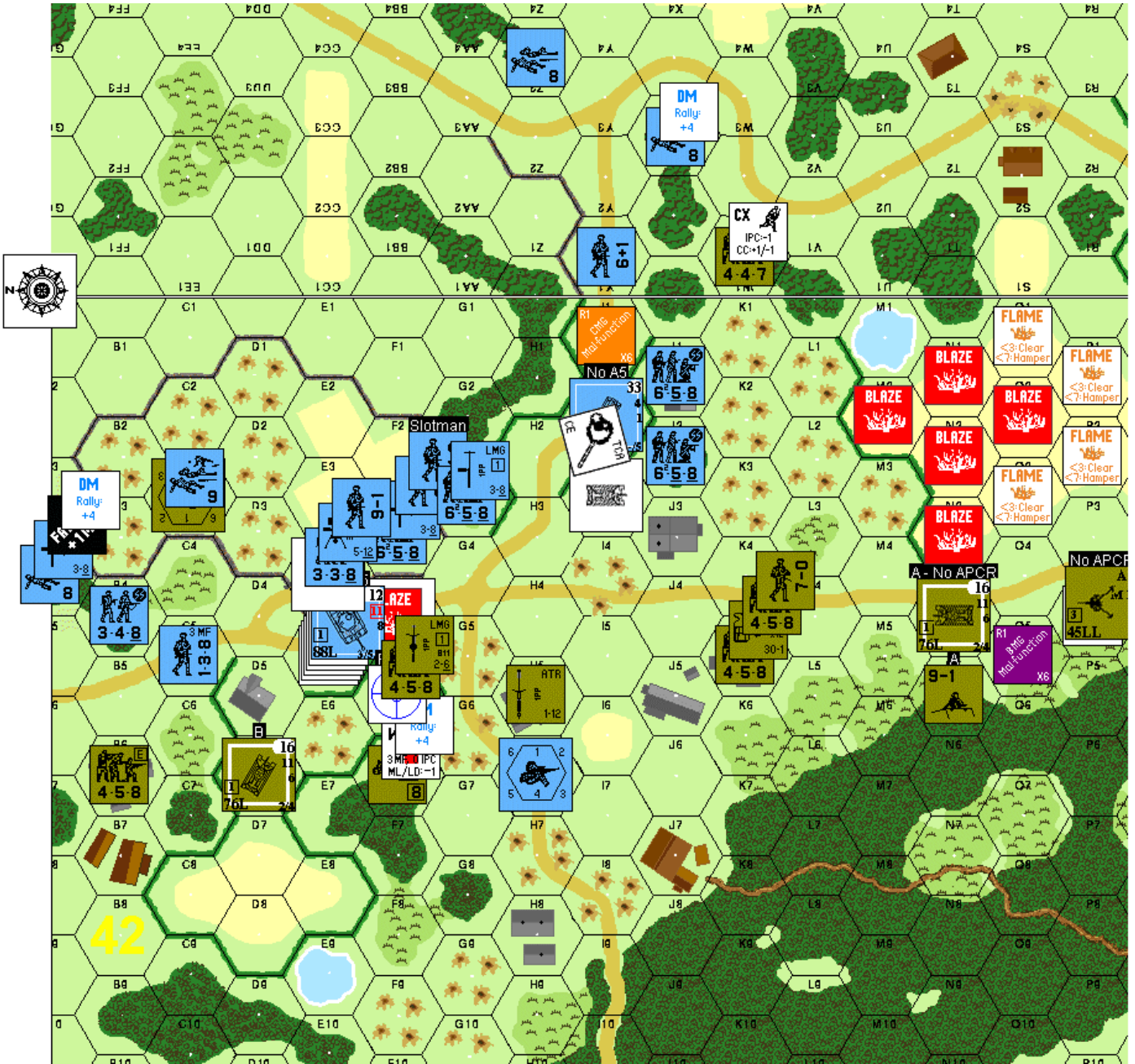
JR - The Tiger's exposed flank proves to be its demise. I think Tom is up to 23 CVP. However, where does he get a 14 TK for the 76L? The Final TK should be 5, therefore no burning wreck. This might matter, as a chance at Crew Survival could have saved John four CVP (two for the crew, two for the AL).

5. tank in D6 uses remaining BMG/CMG shots to rotate his VCA and TCA to C5, losing acquisition on Tiger's location

6. tank in N4 fires CMG at J2
 4(+2) DR = 4,5 no, loses acq on Tiger's burning wreck

7. K5 fires at G3
 8(+1) DR = 3,4 NMC
 NMC vs 658/LMG DR = 6,2 Pins

Board Status at the end of German Turn 5



Movement Phase

1. W1 assault moves X0 – 2
 - a. J1 fires 12(+1) DR = 6,2 NMC, 6 RFP
NMC vs 447 DR = 1,3 OK
 - b. J1 SFF's 6(+1) DR = 5,5 no
2. F5 assault moves F6 – 3 (Puma tracks him with –2 acq)

Defensive Fire Phase

1. F3 fires at K5
8(+2) DR = 5,5 no
2. E5 fires at F6
8(+4) DR = 3,2 PTC, DM's wounded leader
PTC vs 458/LMG DR = 2,1 OK
3. HS in B4 looks for a panzerfaust dr = 3, no
4. Puma fires MA at F6
TH # = 8, DRM = +1 (AFV hindrance in I3) +1 (hedge TEM) –2 (acq) = net +0
TH DR = 1,5 hit, ROF
IFT resolution: 6(+0) DR = 1,1 1KIA
Random Selection to see who dies: leader dr = 1, squad dr = 6. Squad eliminated, leader casualty reduces from "breaking" while broken. Wound severity dr = 1 (+1 for already being wounded), still just wounded
Subsequent dr for Random SW Destruction of the LMG: dr = 2, LMG KIA'd

Tom: Oh for crying out loud. A KIA? It has to be a KIA? We can't just break the squad and let it block the German advance with its body? The squad stands up to a rampaging Tiger but gets whacked by a crummy 50mm shell from a Puma? No Justice!

JR - Get a grip, Tom – you cooked the Tiger, killed the Hero – John was due for a break!

5. Puma uses ROF to rotate and fire at 4X0
TH # = 8, DRM = + 4(case A) +1 (woods TEM) –1 (range) = net +4
TH DR = 1,3 hit, -1 acq, ROF, Russian SAN
IFT resolution: 6(+0) DR = 3,5 PTC
PTC vs 447 DR = 2,6 Pins

Tom: Now, who is THIS guy???

Russian Sniper dr = 2, warm
Scatter direction = 4, distance = 4, moves Russian sniper from 42C3 to 4EE2. From there, it comes back and DM's the unit in 42C3.

Puma uses ROF to do same shot, this time with a net –1 TH DRM
TH DR = 5,6 miss, -2 acq

Puma Intensive Fires, same shot, this time with a net +0 DRM
TH DR = 5,4 miss

6. Z3 fires at X0 (no leader)
2(+1) DR = 3,2 worthless PTC vs already-pinned unit

JR - Well the 447 survives a lot of very hostile attention – he'll come in handy in the bottom of the sixth.

Advancing Fire Phase

1. Flame to Blaze spread:
 - O1 DR = 2,6 yes
 - O3 DR = 4,1 no
 - P1 DR = 4,4 yes
2. Blaze to Flame spread:
 - P2 DR = 5,4 yes
 - N0 DR = 2,2 no
3. 42J0 at J1
2(+3) DR = 6,3 no

Route Phase

1. Germans in C3 rout D2, E3, F3

Advance Phase

1. 7-0 in K5 takes the DC, advances to K4

Close Combat Phase – no actions

Tom – We go from the high of nailing the Tiger to the low of getting a whole squad killed outright by the Puma. John's AFV guns are certainly doing a number on my infantry over on that side. For now, the goals for the last German player turn are:

1. Hold on to B6, using the tank in D6 to provide covering fire
2. Think about having the 7-0 throw his DC into J3 once the Germans take that building. The DC might be better used in a Russian turn 6 counterattack, but if it looks like the 7-0 could be broken before then, he's flingin' it.
3. Have the broken leader in F6 block the approaches to H5 and H8 with his body. The Germans can execute an Infantry Overrun, but it would cost 6 MF to cross the hedge and enter F6, MF the Germans don't have to waste.

Worse comes to worst, John will take B6, D5, and J3, which will require me to retake a building in order to win. J3 or J1 are the likely candidates, with help from the AFV in N4. Hold on to your hat!

John – I can't believe I didn't see that dumb side shot against the Tiger. Well, I still control D5, J1, and F3 and I should get J3 and I3 during my next turn. If I'm lucky I might even be able to sneak someone into H5. The key building will be B6. I can't get a lot of guys in there, even if B4 rallies, but if I can at least tie up the Russian in melee, I can position my guys to fire into the location during the next Russian DFire phase. Maybe I'll survive in Good Order and he'll break.

JR - I really expected Tom to try to get someone into J3 – given his manic play up to now, his new-found caution seems out of character. He needs to kill some bad guys in the coming turn. John can grab all the buildings he needs, but will have to suffer some fire to do it. He's running up against the CVP cap – J3, I3, and D5 are his, but he's bound to take some losses grabbing B6. The T34 and 458 can inflict a lot of pain and the SS don't have any cover on the approach. On top of that, the Russians will have the bottom of the sixth to kill some more stormtroopers. Let's see how John handles this.

German Turn 6

Rally Phase

1. Wind Change DR = 2,5 no change
2. fanatic 348 self-rallies in A4 DR = 3,6 yes

JR - Very useful – John needs this HS up and active.

3. Leader rallies DM348 in F3 DR = 5,1 yes
4. Wounded Russian leader self-rallies in F6 (hey, it could happen)
DR = 5,6 no
5. Remove DM's

Prep Fire Phase

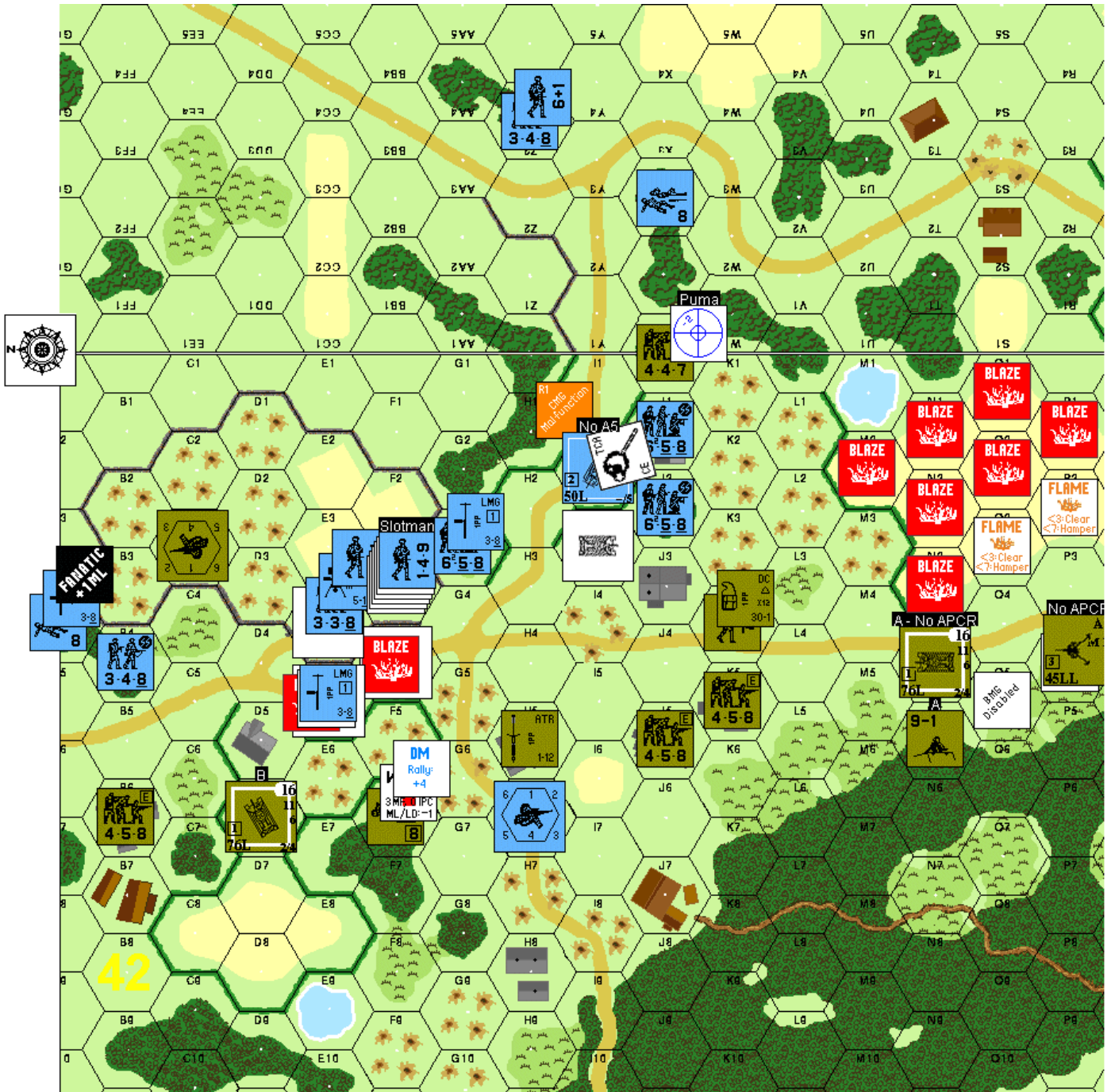
1. J1 at J0
12(+1) DR = 3,4 1MC
1MC vs 447 DR = 1,1 HoB, Axis SAN
HoB DR = 4,3 +2(Russian) = 9, Berserk
German sniper dr = 2, warm
Scatter Direction = 1, distance = 2, moves sniper from 42H6 to H4, thence to J5 where he pins the 458 there.

Tom: More wackiness! Could that Berserker be the key to retaking J1 should I need to?

John – ANOTHER berserker?!?!?

JR - Oof! Instead of a plain ol' pain in the ass, this guy is now a 10-morale pain in the ass! He should come in very handy in a Russian counterattack if John doesn't take him down pronto.

Board Status at the end of Russian Turn 5
F3 contains an 8-1, Hero, 658/LMG, DM348
E5 contains a 658/LMG and a burning wreck



Movement Phase

1. J2 assault moves J3 – 2
2. E5 assault moves E6 – 3 (into Shellholes)
3. B4 assault moves B5 – 1
 - a. B6 First Fires 8(-1) DR = 1,6 1MC, 4 RFP
1MC vs 348 DR = 4,4 breaks, DM
4. A4 moves
 - a. A5 – 1
 - b. A6 – 2
 - c. B6 SFF's at 4(-2) DR = 4,3 1MC, 2 RFP
1MC vs 348 DR = 2,1 OK
 - d. A7 – 4

Tom: For once, I resist the temptation to Final Protective Fire – I simply cannot risk the chance of breaking here.

JR - Agreed. The temptation here to FPF is great, but Tom can't risk handing the game over with a nine or greater IFT DR.

5. E4 assault moves D4 – 1

JR - Hmm. I guess this guy will step into D5, but there are other men available for that job, like the E6 guys. I don't think the Fanatic HS in A7 is enough for the job of taking B6.

6. 8-1, Hero, 658/LMG in F3 move
 - a. F4 – 3
 - b. F5 – 5 (not moving into the shellholes)
 - c. Tank in D6 rotates TCA to E5 and fires CMG
4(+0) DR = 4,4 miss
 - d. Tank in D6 fires MA
TH = 8, DRM = +2 (case A) +1 (BU) –1 (range) –2 (FFNAM/FFMO) = net +0
TH DR = 2,6 hit, -1 acq
IFT resolution: 12(+0) DR = 4,3 1MC, 6 RFP
1MC vs 8-1 DR = 4,4 breaks, DM
vs Hero DR = 4,6 wounds. Wound severity dr = 4, Pinned as per A15.22, since he'd already expended > 3 MF when he got wounded
1MC vs 658/LMG DR = 2,6 breaks, DM (!!)

Tom: HUGE result. John's plan was for a late CX into G6, followed by advancing into H5 – a very nice move.

JR - Uh oh! At first, I thought this was crazy, believing John should focus on taking B6. However, I see Tom's point and it is a clever move, with a better chance of success than risking the T34's wrath in B5, C5, and/or C6. But if he was heading toward G6 from the outset, why not declare Double Time initially? That would have given him the extra MF needed to pay for the shellholes – one more pip on the TH DR and that shell would've missed. Now this is very dicey.

7. G3 assault moves F3 – 3

JR - I guess this fellow is meant to hold F3 against a Russian counterattack. Given the failure of the attempt to reach G6, I'd have sent this guy doubletiming down toward B6 – if John doesn't take that building there won't be a need for a Russian counterattack.

8. 4Z3 moves
 - a. Y4 – 1
 - b. X3 – 2
 - c. X2 – 4
 - d. X1 – 6

9. Puma crew abandons

Defensive Fire Phase

1. J5 and K5 firegroup at J3

6(+3) DR = 5,4 no

2. 42J0 fires at J1
8(+3) DR = 2,5 no

3. 7-0 throws DC from K4 to J3
30(+5) vs J3 DR = 6,1 1MC
1MC vs 658 DR = 2,5 Pins
30(+3) vs K4: DR = 1,6 2MC
2MC vs 7-0 DR = 5,1 breaks, DM

4. ATG in P4 fires HE at J3
TH = 8, DRM = +3 (TEM) +1 (AFV hindrance) = net +4
TH DR = 5,5 miss, -1 acq

Repeat with Intensive Fire, now with a net +5 TH DRM
TH DR = 5,3 miss, -2 acq

5. Tank in N4 fires HE at J3
TH = 8, DRM = +3 (TEM) +1 (BU) –1 (AL) = net +3
TH DR = 4,4 miss, -1 acq

Repeat with Intensive Fire, now with a net +4 DRM
TH DR = 3,2 miss, -2 acq

JR – Intensive Firing was a risky move – Tom wants this tank in action in the bottom of the turn. He'll have a better Prep Fire shot then.

6. Tank in N4 fires CMG at J3
4(+3) DR = 5,1 no

7. Tank in D6 intensive fires MA at E6
TH = 8, DRM = +2 (intensive Fire) +1 (BU) –2 (range) +1 (TEM) = net +2
TH DR = 5,2 miss, -1 acq

8. Tank in D6 rotates VCA to E5 (TCA:F6) and fires BMG vs E6
4(+4) DR = 3,4 no

Advancing Fire Phase

1. (Ignore pointless exercise in flame and blaze creation on the right-hand side of the map)

2. A7 fires at B6
2(+3) DR = 1,2 PTC
PTC vs 458 DR = 3,6 Pins

JR - Ouch! Nice roll, giving John an ever so slightly better chance of winning the coming CC.

3. D4 fires at B6
4(+2) DR = 6,2 no effect, but Encircles B6

Tom: Nice thought. I'd think the 9-1 and 658 would be better used in moving up adjacent to B6 and threatening CC, though.

JR - I agree with Tom 100% here.

4. E6 looks for a panzerfaust vs adjacent tank dr = 1, yes
TH = 8, DRM = +2 for advancing fire
TH DR = 3,1 hit, Russian SAN
TK # = 31 – 11 armor = 20
TK DR = 5,3 burning wreck
Russian Sniper dr = 6, no

5. 4X1 fires at X0 without the leader
2(+1) DR = 2,3 worthless PTC

6. J3 fires at K5
2(+3) DR = 4,3 no

7. F3 fires at K5, no LMG
4(+3) DR = 6,2 no

Rout Phase

1. Germans in B5 rout to B4, Germans in F5 stay put

Advance Phase

1. A7 to B6
2. E6 to D5
3. D4 to D5
4. Vehicle crew in I2 to I3
5. 4X1 to 4Z10

Close Combat Phase

1. Ambush in B6: German dr = 6, Russian dr = 2 (+1 Pin) = 3, Russian Ambush

Russians cannot withdraw since they are Pinned, so they attack at 1:2 (-1)
Russian Attack DR = 2, 1 KIA

2. Ambush in 4Z10: German dr = 2, Russian dr = 5 (+1 Berserk) = 6, German Ambush. Germans will attack at 1:1 (+0). German attack DR = 1,5 miss. Russians will attack at 1:2 (+1). Russian attack DR = 3,4 miss

German player concedes, as he only controls 5 buildings (J1, J3, I3, F3, and D5) and needed to control 6 to win.

John – My plan to tie up the B6 squad in melee looked good when he could only get a 1:2(-1) against me. But of course he KIAs me and I have to concede, coming up just one building short.

JR - That's the ballgame. The Ambush came as a shock, but even Tom's 3 wouldn't have done the job had there been even another German HS in the building.

Russian Postgame Comments

PHEW! Talk about TENSE! In a game filled with moments of outrageous luck for both sides, I get to have the last one with that Close Combat Ambush/KIA in B6. I don't deserve it, but, sure I do. Would have been really interesting to see what the last turn would have looked like if I had needed to retake one of the buildings. Most likely it would have failed, as I only had one tank and two squads to work with.

Interesting, exciting game, as games with John always are. He used the German OBA to good effect, allowing him to easily grab the walled area around 4ZD3 and leverage that as a jumping-off point for the attack into the other parts of the town. Aside from vexatious Russian luck, particularly with the ATG From Hell, about the only things I'd question are the PzIV's flank move along the Russian right and the Tiger's giving up a side shot in E5. Still, I more than matched his questionable moves with several real doozies of my own. Such is the way of it when you're in the heat of battle against a skilled opponent.

Putting together this Scenario Replay with 20/20 hindsight gained through the several years since this scenario was completed, I'm struck by how well-grounded John's attack was, both in concept and execution. He knew what he wanted to do and had a realistic view of how much force he needed to accomplish the various German goals. He kept a good eye on the clock as well, even as I was wondering why he wasn't being more aggressive. I think he clearly deserved to win, if winning was based solely on merit (thank goodness it isn't). My own defense, on the other hand, was full of the relentless pursuit of Style Points which, unfortunately, aren't mentioned in the VC's. Thank goodness I've learned to control my emotions since then <koff>. I certainly played fast-and-loose FAR too often, as JR correctly noted.

The other interesting thing to me is reading John's and my opinions about how the game was going – what events were important or not and what constituted the big threats on the board. At times we agreed, even to the point of both describing the end of German turn 3 as a "Mexican Standoff". At other times, we had very different views on what was happening – it's not to my credit that I seemed to spend more time critiquing John's attack than playing a good game of my own.

That's the real value of these Scenario Replays, in my opinion. By encouraging both players to comment freely during the game, one gets a chance to see the game as the players do, right or wrong, and thus improve

one's own concept of how to play the game. Thanks to John and JR for providing some excellent food for thought.

German Postgame Comments

Throughout the game I generally felt like I was running on schedule and sticking to the plan. I had to rush a little bit at the end, but I had two buildings (B6 and H5) within reach and I only needed one of them to win. Tom of course played a good game and held things together.

Looking back at my pre-game comments I think that I did manage to illustrate some of the basic tenets of CO play. I'll leave it to the reader to decide if it was *good* CO play. In the end I lost my Tiger, but not before he earned his pay by earning 18 CVP and eliminating two hexes worth of key units during the game. I missed some dumb LOSs during the game. A few cost me (leader, Tiger) and hot dice saved me the other times. Driving my tank into an obvious tank-trap was probably my second-dumbest move of the game (losing the Tiger was first.) But in the end I was still in the game.

In three playings I still have not seen a German victory in this scenario, but I still think that it is a balanced, fun scenario. Thanks for the game Tom!

Neutral Postgame Comments

That was a tough loss for the Germans. On the last turn John had enough to do the job, but they had too far to go, and thus were exposed to too many shots, to do it. I believe a concerted effort against B6 was the best plan, but I can't second-guess the move toward G6 (and on to H5) other than to question using a late CX rather than Double Timing from the git-go.

The contrast in styles in this game was wonderful – John, on the attack, husbanded his forces for the most part, shunning a reckless pell-mell assault with the exception of the unfortunate Mk IV in the grainfield. Tom, on the other hand, played a ferociously aggressive defense, with an up-front setup, T34's crashing into buildings, and the SU85 hurtling forward to a glorious death. The edge traded back and forth in the midgame, as Tom asserted, then relinquished, and finally asserted once more the upper hand. There were some questionable moves (the Mk IV, the SU85, the Tiger's final move) and some mistakes (burning Tiger), but some very good ASL as well. John's initial plan was sound and well executed. Tom handled the dispersion of his forces well, creating a strong right flank and offering the right balance of 'give' and delay in the middle. In terms of dice, a small nod to the Soviets, though John pulled a couple of clutch high-DRM shots and managed a pretty good record on the morale checks.

This was a rock-'em sock-'em match in the true spirit of the scenario. With a touch more good fortune we'd have a game-ending Russian counterattack to analyze, which would have been almost a scenario unto itself. The joy of this particular scenario is that the game usually doesn't come down to a single hex – there are ways for either player to win all over the map. I enjoyed watching this play out, and look forward to the next time I get a chance to match wits against either of these gentleman over an ASL battlefield.

Board Status at the end of German Turn 6 (Game End)

