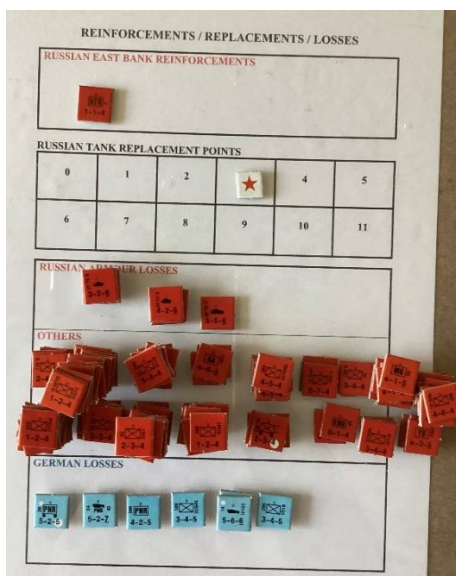


TPS CAMPAIGN - WEEK 9

8th November

With most of the German forces fresh, it was a question of whether there would be enough co-ordination in daylight to make major inroads into the last few defenders. The first attack into the Red October factory was thwarted by rubble - both attacking armour units failed to enter, and whilst the infantry did clear the spent units they didn't achieve an overrun. But the Luftwaffe was able to clear out the last unit without creating more rubble. However the following attack on the Red Barricades factory ends daylight, and a short night ensues with little opportunity for attacks or regrouping.

Situation at dawn on 9th November:



9th November

The attack on the Red Barricades factory eliminated a unit but generated rubble. The Spartakovka attack was a miserable affair, just breaking one unit. Similarly the Tractor Factory attack succeeded but with minimal effect. Overnight the rubble got cleared and an attack overran the spent unit in the Barricades factory setting up a strong force for the following day. The rubble was also cleared in the Tractor factory, allowing an attack which, whilst it eliminated two units also re-created the rubble.

10th November

11th November

Attacks in Spartakovka and the Tractor Works, and a useful overrun in the Sports Park. The Luftwaffe also took out two units in Spartakovka with the highest roll it could get without creating rubble - phew. Successful overnight attacks remove the rubble in the Brickworks, and then the Engineers pull back to allow a full-strength attack to go in at daybreak.

Situation at dawn on November 12th;



REINFORCEMENTS / REPLACEMENTS / LOSSES					
RUSSIAN EAST BANK REINFORCEMENTS					
RUSSIAN TANK REPLACEMENT POINTS					
0	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11
RUSSIAN ARMOUR LOSSES					
OTHERS					
GERMAN LOSSES					

12th November

Into the Brickworks with a 17 strength attack, but even when it wins by 7 points it still only eliminates 2 units. A really short day (and the Russians hold the initiative), so when the Spartakovka attack on phase 4 end the day, that's it. The Sports Park was attacked overnight and substantially reduced, but still holding on until the surviving remnants succumbed to an overrun.

One anomaly on reaching the German withdrawals for the 13th is that since one of the 14th Pz units had been eliminated, by the letter of the rules the Russians could bring on units in areas A, B or C. We ignored it.

REINFORCEMENTS / REPLACEMENTS / LOSSES

RUSSIAN EAST BANK REINFORCEMENTS

RUSSIAN TANK REPLACEMENT POINTS

0		2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11

RUSSIAN TANK LOSSES

OTHERS

GERMAN LOSSES

Spartakovka finally falls after two attacks and a Luftwaffe bombardment. An attack into the Brickworks eliminates the two spent AA units in an overrun. The rubble in the Tractor Works is cleared ... things are getting ominous.

The vultures gather for the next day's attacks...

Situation at dawn on 14th November:



REINFORCEMENTS / REPLACEMENTS / LOSSES

RUSSIAN EAST BANK REINFORCEMENTS

0	1	★	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11

RUSSIAN TANK REPLACEMENT POINTS

RUSSIAN ARMOUR LOSSES

OTHERS

GERMAN LOSSES

14th November

The North artillery does not refit ... ouch! And a second, and a third time. Meanwhile the Germans attack the Tractor Factory and win by 7 CP, but lose in the Brickworks. And the day ends. Night ... regroup and attack again (but with the artillery managing to recover in the nick of time). The first attack causes 7 CP, regroup out; the second causes only 1 CP but the artillery fails the counterbattery check. Regroup out, and the third attack eliminates the fresh units; and still the night continues.

A test of nerve ... the impulse marker is on "6"; there are 9 friendly units in the factory, and three spent Russian units. Do you regroup the spent stack out and attack with a large group, but potentially fail the night roll, or attack immediately with a strength 8 armoured unit? The Germans regrouped, rolled an 8, and got to

attack again. They attack, succeed in clearing the factory with 8 CP. But the Russians use the initiative to take a re-roll ... they may well hold the factory.

The result ...6 CP against the three spent units and they all (just) die. But time is up and it's the end of the game!

The Russians end up holding the Brickworks (not a ferry landing); the Germans have 27 VP and lose by one point. It was a lot closer at the finish than seemed the case earlier.

Ending situation:



REINFORCEMENTS / REPLACEMENTS / LOSSES					
RUSSIAN EAST BANK REINFORCEMENTS					
RUSSIAN TANK REPLACEMENT POINTS					
0	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11
RUSSIAN TANK LOSSES					
OTHERS					
GERMAN LOSSES					

... and then we realised that the Russian armoured reinforcements should have stopped when the factory first got to a German-caused rubble-2 level. Doh! Look like we're going to have to go back and start again!! Actually, we were in such a positive mood at this point over the game we nearly did so.

Overall Thoughts

We thoroughly enjoyed it; more than I expected. The second half of the game plays differently, and faster, than the first half. The Russians really have to think about throwing units into the meat-grinder to just hold German attacks, yet getting them chewed up and eliminated - in this regard I think the game does a good job of replicating history.

Learnings from our German player:

Get fresh unit(s) into an area to stop Infiltration, but make sure they are strong enough to survive a counterattack. Think about using armour to stop Russian units being able to advance from one area to another.

Create space to have two large attack groups - one attacks and regroups at night, and the other stack recovers and attacks the following day. But see the note above - keep a fresh unit in the area to stop it re-populating overnight.

Think about the Engineer conundrum - in order to deal with a heavily-rubbled area should you attack the rubble with fresh units in the area (and often fail, so lose the Engineers for 4 days) or wait for the attack to go in, but then it does so against a rubbled area and the additional defence strength. Or try lots of smaller Engineer attacks against the rubble and one will succeed ... but you don't have the time ... what wonderful decisions the game causes you to have to take. Maybe I should have had fewer, stronger Engineer attacks.

The tactic of grouping artillery observers in key segments of the board to suppress Russian artillery worked well.

Learnings from the Russian player:

Rubble everywhere you can. I did so much we ran out of counters. Also do lots of attacks in high TEM areas that may also cause rubble to accrue - especially when the area isn't free and you can't do rubble creation in your own activation.

No surprise, infiltrate and cause nuisance attacks. Get at least one unit out in front of every important area - this will fragment the German attacks as they have to remove it in order to get a good attack at you.

If you have spare activations, do try and reorg units into affiliated units. This is not a game-winner, but if you do have to attack into an area don't feel the German is the only one who can get a Regimental bonus.

Really go after German units which have to be withdrawn - if you can eliminate them then this can give you some juicy-level reinforcements.

Any single German unit is fair game. Next time I will do much more attacking.

Overall

Really fun; will do it again.

Game aids

I modified my 'dead units' sheet to give more space to Russian casualties. 😞

I do have a 'Tables and Reminders' sheet which I need to revise and will then post.

I need to re-type the reinforcement chart with bigger text for the withdrawals.