

BEGINNERS TIP

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Strategy & Tactics magazine in its title sums up what is needed in almost all war games and a good player needs skill in both fields. I have been playing simulations for just two years now and although a great strategist (my opponents may not agree) I am afraid I all too often fall short on the tactical side. This is a pity really because great strategic moves cannot be made without the tactics to back them up.

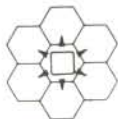
This failing of mine became most apparent when I tried Battle for Germany against an opponent who was, I must admit, a better tactician than myself. I watched in amazement as my East Germans melted away like butter on a hot plate!

I had deployed my Germans something like that shown in diagram 1. (This is the set up at the start of the Russian Combat Phase in turn 2). Experienced gamers can perhaps see the danger immediately as did my opponent. His now legendary battle cry "Ah! Ah! Surround and kill" sums up why my deployment was such a blunder. The point is that in Battle for Germany and other games with rigid and semi-rigid Zones of Control it is impossible to surround a solid line in the movement phase. However, such a line as I had formed (single units on adjacent hexes) is very vulnerable to being surrounded in the combat phase by a well co-ordinated pincer attack. (See diagram 1 and notes).

The best policy therefore is to maintain, as much as possible, the positions in the initial set up i.e. singly, and if possible, doubly stacked units every alternate hex. Now even if you are pushed back you cannot be destroyed at such low odds as 1:2 (See diagram 2).

Although I have based the above advice on Battle for Germany, it is a general principle to be applied to all games where it is impossible to surround units in the movement phase.

[7.0] ZONES OF CONTROL



GENERAL RULE:

The six hexagons surrounding a hex constitute the Zone of Control of any units in that hex. Hexes upon which a unit exerts a Zone of Control are called controlled hexes, and inhibit the movement of Enemy units. All units must cease movement when they enter an Enemy controlled hex.

CASES:

[7.1] EFFECTIVENESS OF ZONES OF CONTROL

[7.11] All units exert a Zone of Control at all times during the entire Game-Turn. The presence of Zones if never affected by other units.

[7.12] Units do not pay any additional Movement Points to enter an Enemy controlled hex (as in some other SPI games).

[7.13] Units may only leave an Enemy controlled hex at the beginning of their Movement Phase. A Friendly unit may never move directly from one Enemy controlled hex to another. It may, however, leave an Enemy controlled hex at the beginning of the Movement Phase, go to a non-Enemy controlled hex and then enter another Enemy controlled hex.

[7.14] Friendly Zones of Control never affect Friendly units; only Enemy units.

[7.15] Obviously, if a given unit is in an Enemy controlled hex the Enemy unit is also in its controlled hex. The two units are equally and jointly affected.

[7.16] Zones of Control extend into all six hexes adjacent to the controlling unit's hex, with the exception of blocked and lake hexesides.

[7.17] There is no additional effect of having more than one unit casting its Zone onto a given hex.

The notes to the diagrams concentrate on the situation on the bend of the Vistula.

DIAGRAM 1

Russian Player Turn 2

Pol. on 2623 attacks German Infantry 20 (2-3-5) on 2523. Die roll = 4 (@ 1:1). German retreats to 2522, Pol. advances.

1st Guards (7-7-4) and 3rd Guards (6-4-6) on 2224 attack 56 Panzer (4-3-5) on 2324 @ 2:1. Die roll = Ex. Loose the 6-4-6 and advance the 7-7-4.

The relatively strong German stack on 2424 (a 4-3-5 & 3-4-4, total strength 7) is now attacked by the 3rd and 8th Russian Guards armies (7-7-4's) @ 1:1. A 3 is rolled and, being unable to retreat, the Germans are destroyed.

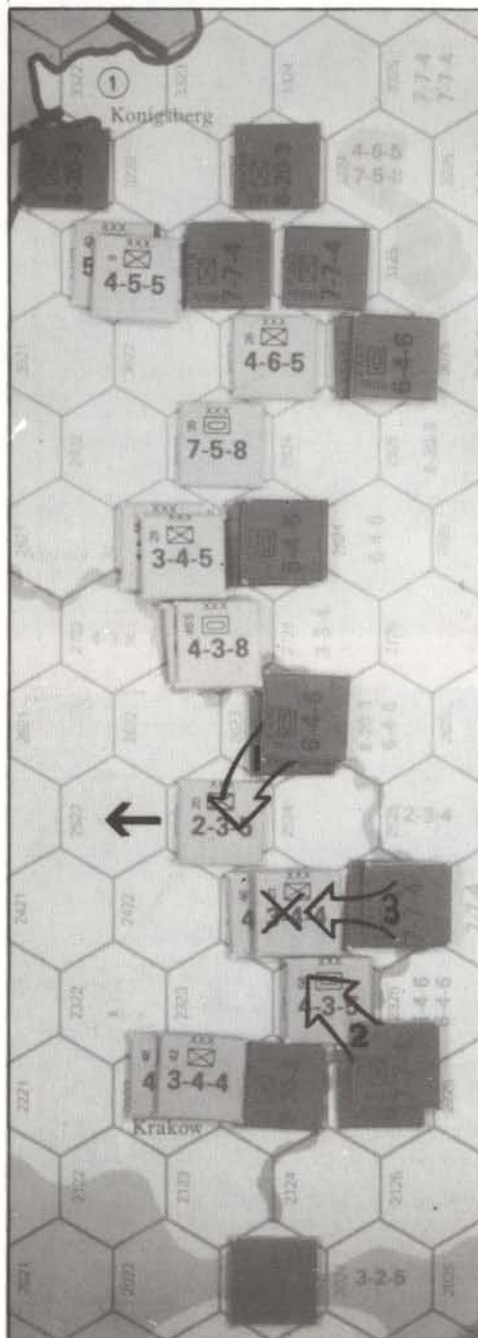


DIAGRAM 2

Unfortunately the bend of the river has had to be evacuated due to the rather lucky advance of the Ukrainian Front (8-20-3) over the river following a successful 1:2 attack.

(Experienced gamers please note that this deployment as shown is not necessarily the best possible one for this game but is merely to describe the points made in the text.)

